

## CORRESPONDENCE.

## 1. THE AŚOKĀṢṬAMĪ FESTIVAL.

*Ganhati.**April 17, 1900.*

MY DEAR SIR,—In my article on Aśwagrāntā, published in the January number of the Journal, I made reference, on p. 25, to the Aśokāṣṭamī festival. Perhaps it may be of interest to state that the Hindus bathe in the Brahmaputra in Assam, on the eighth day of the bright half of the month of Chaitra, in order to become Aśoka, free from sorrow. They also use in performing *pūjā* on this occasion the flowers of the Aśoka-tree (*Jonesia Asoka*). The customs of the people therefore leave the original meaning of this curious name for the eighth day of the light half of the lunar month Chaitra in the same uncertainty as it is left in by the dictionaries. Colebrooke had already called attention to the name in 1792 in the “Asiatic Researches,” iii, 277.

I may also state for your information that I intend to ask the Kamrup Local Board for a small grant of money to preserve the carving of the Ananta Sajya (reproduced in your Plate II) from destruction by the erection of a small building over the carving.

Since I wrote the article above referred to, the shrine has been honoured by a visit from Her Excellency Lady Curzon of Kedleston, who examined the carving with great interest.—Yours faithfully,

P. R. GURDON,

Honorary Director, Ethnography, Assam.

*To Professor Rhys Davids,  
Secretary to the Royal Asiatic Society.*