

I have gone into these details from a desire to support the story if possible, but I admit that the chronology is a difficulty. It is due to Mr. Whinfield to point out that the apparent anachronisms in the story were noticed by him several years ago, in the introduction to his translation of the quatrains.

H. BEVERIDGE.

5. ARI.

The histories of Burma, as stated by Sir A. P. Phayre in his work, published by Trübner & Co., p. 33, make mention of certain recluses or priests, called ARI, who conducted the religion prevalent at Pagan in the year A.D. 1000. Sir A. Phayre seems to think that they were the priests of Nāga worship, and that their "practices resembled those of the Vāmāchāris of Bengal." He, however, makes no attempt to explain the word, and now Mrs. Bode, who does not pretend to know anything about Burmese, suggests that it may be connected with *ariyo*. Mr. Tawseinko says, in his notes on the Kalyānī inscriptions of King Dhammaceti of Pegu (A.D. 1469): "A debased form of Buddhism, which was probably introduced from Northern India, existed at Pagan. Its teachers, called Arīs, were not strict observers of their vow of celibacy; and it is expressly recorded in native histories that they had written records of their doctrines, the basis of which was that sin could be expiated by the recitation of certain hymns." He, too, makes no attempt to explain this word, whose spelling ought to have attracted notice.

As given in Stevenson's Dictionary, and in the copy of Burmese history in my possession, it is spelt အရိတ္တံ, which properly transliterated would be *araññā*, but, according to the modern pronunciation of Burmese, is now *ari*.

If this word were pure Burmese it would be a noun formed from the verb ရိတ္တံ, which might be pronounced either as *rī*, *reh*, or *riñ*, with a heavy accent. There is

no verb of this kind in present use, though one, now obsolete, is found in the word ရည်ဝတ်း *ri:tāz*, 'to indulge in mutual love.'

It is therefore reasonable to suppose that the word has been borrowed from some foreign language—Sanskrit or Pāli; and, if so, the : at the end shows that it has been abbreviated.

There is a similar word, ဗျည်း *byeez*, 'a consonant,' which is undoubtedly the shortened form of ဗျာဏ္ဍိ *byañjanāṃ*.

As the letter ဩ in the middle of a word is usually *ññ*, as in ပဏ္ဍာ *pañña*, သုဏ္ဍာ *suñña*, I feel sure that ဒေရည်း stands for *araññaka* or *araññako*, 'one who dwells in the forest.'

Whether these 'forest-dwellers' were priests of a Nāga cult, or like the Vāmāchāris of Bengal, according to Phayre, remains to be proved. Burmese histories cannot be relied on, especially with reference to the period prior to A.D. 1000. They have evidently been written up according to the fancy of the compiler or his patron.

For instance, Phayre says (p. 21): "Nearly two centuries later (A.D. 924) it is related that in the reign of an usurper, Soa Rahan, a corrupt worship called Nagā, or dragon worship, was introduced." He also states that Soa Rahan caused the image of a dragon to be set up and worshipped.

Other historians, however, state that Soa Rahan, or Puppā-tsoa-raham (Pubbā-chao-araham) was a monk who married the queen of the preceding monarch, and was an exceedingly religious Buddhist, who was learned in the Bidagat and Bedin (Pitaka and Vedas), and make no mention of Nāga worship or other heresies.

Seeing that the historians of Burma cannot be relied on, the only course is to search thoroughly for the early traces

of the prevalent religion amongst the ruins of Tagoung and Old Pagan, in latitude 23° N. or thereabouts, and not in New Pagan below Ava, which was not founded till many years later.

R. F. ST. ANDREW ST. JOHN.

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6. THE TANTRAS.

CHER MONSIEUR RHYS DAVIDS,—Je viens de lire l'article qu'un de vos plus éminents collaborateurs a bien voulu me faire l'honneur de consacrer dans notre Journal à l'examen d'un volume d'études bouddhiques que j'ai récemment publié (Octobre, 1898, pp. 909 et suivantes).

Voulez-vous me permettre de vous dire deux mots à ce sujet. Aux déductions de M. Rapson, je pourrais opposer des arguments tout aussi solides à mon point de vue, et l'unique résultat de cette joute courtoise serait d'accuser la divergence irréductible de nos opinions, de notre méthode, de nos tendances. Une remarque cependant : au fond, comme il arrivè presque toujours, la divergence initiale porte sur la définition des termes : M. Rapson appelle 'Bouddhisme' la doctrine prêchée par Śākyamuni ; j'appelle 'Bouddhisme' l'état général de croyance qui s'est condensé autour du nom du Buddha. L'un comme l'autre sont en dehors de notre atteinte directe ; l'hypothèse est notre seul guide et bien arbitraire. Le temps, les découvertes nouvelles, la connaissance plus exacte de l'Inde tireront sans doute la lumière de ce chaos. Soyons, en attendant, indulgents les uns aux autres ; essayons de nous comprendre, cherchons à nous aider les uns les autres.

M. Rapson ne cache pas son mépris pour "l'infect Tantrisme." Je ne suis vraiment pas suspect de tendresse à l'égard des Tantras : j'en ai étudié quelques-uns—besogne pénible et qui de prime abord ne vous paie pas de vos peines. Eh bien, je les trouve intéressants, je constate qu'ils sont inhérents à toutes les formes religieuses de l'Inde, je