

## REVIEW OF BOOKS.

PROFESSOR DR. WILHELM CREDNER.—*Yünnan Reise des Geographischen Instituts der Sun Yat Sen Universität*, Kanton 1931.

In *Mitteilungen aus der Geographischen Instituts der Sun Yat Sen Universität*, Kanton 1931. (Communications from the Geographical Institute of the Sun Yat Sen University in Canton) Professor Dr. Wilhelm Credner, so well known from his travels and geographical studies in Siam during the years 1927/29 has written a very interesting and instructive account of a journey through Yünnan. The publication is entitled *Yünnan Reise des Geographischen Instituts der Sun Yat Sen Universität* (A journey through Yünnan undertaken by the Geographical Institute of the Sun Yat Sen University) which was made during the summer and autumn of the year 1930. Prof. Credner, being the leader of the expedition, was accompanied by 8 teachers and students from the above mentioned university and the aim of the expedition was to teach the students the practical study of geography in the field.

The expedition left Canton on the 15th June 1930 and went first by sea to Haiphong (in Tongking), from where it proceeded via Hanoi by the famous Yünnan railway to Yünnaifu or Kun Ming, to use the modern name of the capital of the Yünnan province.

From Yünnaifu the expedition set off by foot, its luggage and scientific instruments being carried on pack mules. The first part of the journey took the expedition roughly westwards through hilly country, mainly inhabited by Lolos, a Tibetan people. They represent the aboriginal population of North Eastern Yünnan but are now strongly mixed with Chinese immigrants, who are little by little making them completely Chinese. Talifu, lying near the shores of the great inland lake, called Erh Hai or Tali lake, marked the end of the first stage of the expedition. The plains round the great lake are peopled by the Minchia, who are now to all purposes Chinese in their dress, customs and manners, but who have retained their original language.

From the Tali lake the expedition continued its journey westwards, crossing mighty mountain ranges and the two great rivers

Mekhong and Salwin, till it reached the large town Teng Yü, the westernmost Chinese point d'appui, which lies in a lovely country inhabited by the Payi or Shan people. The Payi are not yet much influenced by Chinese culture and their houses and dress strongly reminded the author of Northern Siam. Here Prof. Credner also made the interesting observation that, while the Chinese settlers in Eastern and Northern Yunnan have occupied the valleys and plains, driving the aboriginal population to the hills, the opposite is the case in the sub-tropical Salwin country where they move to the higher places, leaving the low and hot plains to the acclimatized Shans.

From Teng Yü the expedition went north parallel to the Salwin valley, for some 120 kilometers, through a country inhabited by the Tibeto-Burmese tribe, called the Lissu or Lissaw. The Lissaw are still moving southwards. They have invaded the British Shan States and a few of them are even to be found in the Mu'ang Fang district of the circle of Phayap in Northern Siam.

While travelling among the Lissaw the author became acquainted with the Chinese system of colonization, which mainly consists in inveigling the aborigines into heavy debts to the Chinese capitalists. The latter, by and by, succeed in laying hands on the fields and property of the aborigines until the once gay and free Lissaw become mere tenants completely in the power of their unmerciful creditors who finally reduce them to landless coolies.

The author speaks highly and sympathetically of the Lissaw, whom he describes as an attractive people. The position of woman is very high among them and the young girls often possess fine lithe figures and pretty, almost European faces. He heard the young people of both sexes singing their ancient tribal songs, and was astonished to note the likeness in tune and rhythm to the Slavic popular songs as well as to certain Bengalese songs.

Leaving the Lissaw country and travelling northeastwards the expedition re-crossed first the Salwin and then the Mekhong river reaching Tsiu Tshuan which lies to the north of the Tali lake. From here the track went southeastwards to the banks of the mighty Yangtze-kiang and finally back to Yunnanfu.\*

The original plan to return to Canton through the province of Kwangsi had to be given up because of the civil war going on in that province. The expedition therefore entrained at Yünnanfu and proceeded home via Hanoi and Haiphong and then by sea by the route it had come.

Canton was reached on the 2nd November 1930 after a very successful and instructive journey, rich in results of geographical, geological and ethological importance.

The thing which, however, most of all will interest readers of the J. S. S. and every patriotic Siamese was the discovery, by the author, near the village of Tai Ho Tsün, 8 kilometers south of Talifu, of the ruins of a large and ancient city. The old city wall could be followed from a point in the west to the east, till it reached the shores of the great inland lake, for fully 1,500 meters. The remains of a fortress, built on a hill inside the town and completely commanding this, like an acropolis, were also seen by the author. Afterwards through a topographical examination compared with what is told in the Chinese *History of Nan Chao* (written about 1550 A. D.), Dr. Credner came to the conclusion that this ruined city could be nothing else than Tai Ho, the so-called new capital of the Nān Chāo empire which was founded by King Pi Lo Ko (728 - 748 A. D.).

The leader of the expedition also found that in the village of Tai Ho Tsun is shown an old stela erected by the famous Thai warrior king, or rather emperor, Ko Lo Fong (748 - 778 A. D.) in memory of his crushing victory over the Chinese army in the year 751.

The writer of this short review has communicated with Prof. Credner, now a Professor Extraordinarius in Geography at the university in München, and asked him to write a detailed account of this discovery of the capital of Nān Chāo, so important for all Thai studies. It may therefore be hoped that an article on this subject from the hand of Prof. Credner will appear in this journal in a not too distant future.

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