

#### THE RACES OF INDOCHINA.

Some friends, having read my review of the late Sir George Scott's book "Burma and Beyond", published in *J. S. S.*, vol. XXIX, pt. II, have drawn my attention to certain statements made in that review (p. 142) and asked for a clarification of my views on the racial questions in Indochina. It is quite true that I have quoted Mr. F. H. Giles (Phya Indra Montri) as saying that he thinks that the Riang people were the autochthones of Burma. Mr. Giles now informs me that by saying so he did not mean the true aborigines, i. e., the very first inhabitants of that country, but only a very ancient people.

Though I think that my personal opinion has been expressed elsewhere ("Anthropological and Ethnological research work in Siam", a lecture given before the International, Anthropological and Ethnological Congress, London, 1st August 1934, published in *J. S. S.*, vol. XXVIII pt. 1, and the *Asiatic Review*, October 1934), I shall repeat here that according to my opinion the Semang pygmies formed the aboriginal population of Indochina. The Semang may be immigrants themselves, if so they have come from India. Furthermore to quote Dr. J. H. Hutton (see my review of Sir O. Winstedt's "A history of Malaya," p. 154) the Proto-Amtraloids came afterwards and the result of their union with the Negritoes were the Melanesoids. The proof of or the probability of the correctness of this theory are the finds of negrito skulls, and skulls resembling the Papuan, made in certain limestone caves in Tongking, and the undoubted strain of negroid blood in many tribes in Burma (the Kachin) and Cambodia (Khmer, Samrae, Kui and Chong) and also in certain hill tribes in Tongking. The Melanesoids were next driven out or absorbed by the Austro-Asiatics, i. e., the Môn-Khmer people coming from the west. Did the Austro-Asiatics come from west via India, or via Central Asia-China? I believe anyhow that some of them came

from India, from where they brought the megalithic culture of the Mundas. A succeeding wave were the Proto-Malays coming down from the Tibetan marches in Burma to the Malay Peninsula and Insulinde. With regard to the Sakai these probably represent an Australoid people strongly mixed with Indonesians, and as such are later than the Semang. Later waves were the Tibeto-Burmese and Shan (Thai) in Burma; the Thai in Siam and French Laos and Tongking. The Annamites, who originally were a branch of the great Thai people, came from the coastlands of S. E. China.

There are no Melanesians left in Indochina or even in Insulinde now, they having been driven eastwards long ago to New Guinea and the western Pacific islands. All the other races are still to-day represented in Siam. There are thus negritos in Pattani and round Pattalung; Proto-Malays, the Selu'ng, in Puket; Malays in Pattani and Nakon Srithammarat, and plenty of Austro-Asiatics represented by Môn; the Chong in Trat; Khmer and Kui in Buriram, Surin and Khukan; Lawū in North Siam; and Sô, Sack, Khamu <sup>(1)</sup> and Kalu'ng in N. E. Siam; and even a few Khā (Brao and Hin Liao) are found along the banks of the Mekhong. Tibetans we have also in North Siam in the form of the Mussö or Lahu or Kô as well as the Lissu with other unclassified Mongols like the Maco, Yao and Tin. Mr. Giles says that when the Siamese speak of the Kariangs meaning the Karen, they are speaking with the voice of racial memory. Now the Riang are a Môn-Khmer people and, though I admit that my personal knowledge of the Karen is too slight to go against such an authority as Mr. Giles, still I am in doubt as the Karens, so far, have been classified among the Sino-Thai. Their language is certainly not a Môn-Khmer tongue. The Siamese designation of the Karen as Kariang (Gariang) may be due to a confusion of names. Capitaine Jean Rispaud, in his painstaking analysis called "Les noms à éléments numériques des principautés Tai", J. S. S., vol. XXIX, pt. II, p. 94, says:— "The ethnical Thai designation Yang leads to confusion. While in Siam and Burma it means in generality Karen (White, Red, etc.), the designation Yang dam (black Yang) on the Sino-Burmese frontier stands for the Riang, a group belonging to the Palaung-Wā which is well known to be very different from the Sino-Thai among which are grouped the Karen".

1) also called Phuthu'ng.

Mr. Giles thinks that there formerly existed a great Khā empire stretching from Burma in the west to Tongking in the east, and that the Riang formed the most important factor in this State. Mr. Giles has informed me that he is preparing a paper on this subject which, one must hope, shall prove to be of substantial help in future researches on the autochthonous populations of the northern parts of Indochina.

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