

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

## I

## ON HILLS—NORTH EAST OF CHIENGMAL.

I have been asked to write a note by way of clarifying the position in regard to certain high lands lying to the N. E. of Chiengmai. Some such statement is becoming increasingly necessary as collectors of everything from birds to plants are visiting the area and some confusion as to names and localities has already arisen.

Three hills are identifiable from the published maps of the district viz:—

*Jas. McCarthy, (unpublished) approx. 1893:—*

Rough bearing from Chiengmai:—

North hill,	unnamed,	1843 metres,	49°
Centre „	do.	2012 „	62°
South „	Doi Pa Chaw,	1816 „	77°

*A. Pavic, 1909:—*

Centre hill, unnamed, 2220 m.

*W. M. Gilmore, Physical features with small map. (Siam, Nature and Industry, 1926):—*

Centre hill, Doi Pa Dyo, 2012 m.

*Survey Dept. maps, 1:64,000, 1921—1927:—*

Useful for the purpose of this note, but making no claim to delineate hills:—

*Survey Dept. maps, 1:200,000, 1932—1933:—*

North hill, unnamed, 1843 m.

Centre „, Kao Pa Chaw, 2012 m.

South „, Doi Saket, 1816 m.

It will be seen that the position and approximate heights of the three hills agree well, and discrepancy only occurs in the names thus:—

McCarthy's map shows the South hill as Pa Chaw and subsequent cartographers give this name to the highest and centre hill. One may presume, therefore, a printer's error in the 1893 map and that the centre hill was intended for Doi Pa Chaw (ดอยผาจ้อ). It is this centre hill, the fourth highest in Siam, that forms on that account, an attraction to collectors. It is called locally, Doi Langkā (ดอยลังกา), the name Pa Chaw being quite unknown. It is somewhat difficult of approach from Chiangmai, and though clearly to be seen from the plain, when once among the surrounding hills, there are only a few high points where its summit is visible, and the steep and circuitous route necessary, make a scale of distance of little service.

Mr. McCarthy mentions this difficulty of locating summits of Siam hills<sup>1</sup> and in this connection it should be noted that the Lao *Mieng* growers of Ban Me Tawn regard the Kiu Luang as the top of Doi Langka. This is understandable from their view point, and due no doubt to the prominence of that spur, and the way the ridge falls away behind it to the left, making the real summit appear almost like a separate hill. The *Mieng* growers further away at Doi Hua Mot and elsewhere having the true top of Langka as their skyline, make no such mistake. At least one collector, unprovided with an aneroid, appears to have fallen into this error.

It is usually rather a moot point when collecting on a big hill, as to where one should commence using the name of the central massif, in addition to its outlying features; so a misplaced centre is, to say the least, unfortunate.

Doi Langka is unattractive in that ascent is more or less restricted to knife-like ridges punctuated by Chick Dois and is without water, the whole well deserving the name Pa Chaw, if only the local people had thought of it first.

In common with other little known hills of Siam the Langkā area will no doubt be found to contain a small quota of as yet unrecorded species of flora. *Rhododendron microphyton*, a small but beautiful and many flowered shrub, is found there, as well as on the Me Tawn—Me Sawi watershed. It is interesting to note here that H. H. Prince Dhani reports it as having been found by H. S. H. Prince Prasobstri on Phu Krading, Loey Province at about the same elevation. Forsters will be interested to know that *Bucklandia populnea* occurs

<sup>1</sup> *Surveying and Exploring in Siam*, pp. 131-2.



Rhododendron microphoton on Phu Krading, Loey.

*Photos by H. S. H. Prince Prasobsri.*



high up on Langkā, though for that reason the supply is likely to be limited and inaccessible.

My Mèo guide said that since they had come to the district, they had killed three *Sā* (hill rhino), all females, and two of them small, and he pointed out (8 Oct./38) places where they had shot *kating* on the grass land at the summit and said that these animals could run fast on a slope so sheer, that one would have barely expected them to be able to stand.

*The route from Chiengmai:—*

Days—

To Doi Saket (ดอยสะเก็ด) (Wat Nawng Bua), car 2½ hrs and up the Me Dauk Deng (แม่ดอกแดง) to Ban Pong Kum (บ้านโป่งกุ่ม).	1
Up the Me Lai Noi (แม่ลายน้อย) to Pang Chum Pi (ปางชุมปี); a short day, but to go further in the rains entails tents for carriers.	2
Over into the Me Wong (แม่หวง) and over into the Me Tawn (แม่ต๋อน).	3
Up the Me Tawn and over high watershed into the Me Sawi (แม่สวี่), Lampang District.	4
A long day to top and back, and in the rains too long.	5

Visitors should not omit to see the Tewadas at the river Wat at Ban Pong Kum (บ้านโป่งกุ่ม) made by Nan Mao of Lampun, a craftsman skilled in work of the kind. Last but not least, the old Mèo lady at the Me Sawi village, reputed 105, and her relative, who remembering a former visit, extended to me a kindly welcome, will always be a pleasant recollection.<sup>2</sup>

*The North hill*, unnamed on any of the maps, *Doi Hua Mot* ดอยหัวหมด.

It is easily found. Follow the track to Chiengrai till just North of the Doi Nang Keo pass (ดอยนางแก้ว), turn West at Pang Kia (ปางเกี้ยว) and thence half a day to Bān Hui Ton Num (ห้อยต้นนุ่น), the head-quarters of the *Mieng* growers round its base. The hill is encircled on the North by the Mē Chedi (แม่เจ็ด), a tributary of the

<sup>2</sup> She was alive a few months ago, when I sent her a photograph which, as her people cannot write, was acknowledged by a small skein of Cannabis fibre which is woven in this country only by the Mèo puak. (30.4.1940).

Mê Lao เม้อลาว. Easy of ascent on the East it has the sharp ridges characteristic of Langkâ, notably one running approximately N. and S. well described as the Kiu or San Kom Dap (กัวคตบ). On its upper ridges a beautiful little blue *Gentian* is plentiful in April and May and near its summit an *Allium*, not yet identified. On the 13 Dec. 1933 there were many old tracks of *kating* on its summit.

*The South hill, 1: 200,000 maps, Doi Saket (ดอยสะเก็ด).*

Visitors must enquire for Doi Lan or Mawn Lan (หมอนล้าน). From information I received from the Survey Dept. they are well aware of the latter name, and although I have no authority to say so, the change is probably due to another Doi Lan in the Chiengmai district just South of Doi Chawn Hot (ดอยจอมหมอก). The locally known Doi Saket is a small hill near the Amphur's court of that name. It is well shown on the 1: 64,000 maps.

It would take about five days from Chiengmai to ascend Doi Lan, it being dependent on the time of the year how far one can take motor transport up the Me Awn valley. I have not been higher than the *Mieng* villages on its slopes. The track up crosses the divide between Ban Kun Me Awn (เม้ออวน) and Ban Kun Me Chesawn (เม้อช้อน) and one should allow three days from the latter village.

These hill-tops are seldom visited and it may be necessary to cut through much dense growth in places; thus I found the ascent of Langka easy going in 1933 but very difficult in the rains of 1938, and this change was presumably due to fire in 1937/8 as it was a surprise to the Mêo guide.

Finally the Survey Dept. maps will be found very accurate as regards the position and elevation of the three hills; all that one might suggest is that when a change of name is considered necessary, the local name should be added in brackets as is customary when changing the name of a street:

	Lat. and Long.	
Doi Pa Chaw (Langka)	{ 19° 00' 05" 99° 24' 31"	2024 metres
Doi Saket (Mawn Lan)	{ 18° 51' 46" 99° 23' 01"	1832 metres

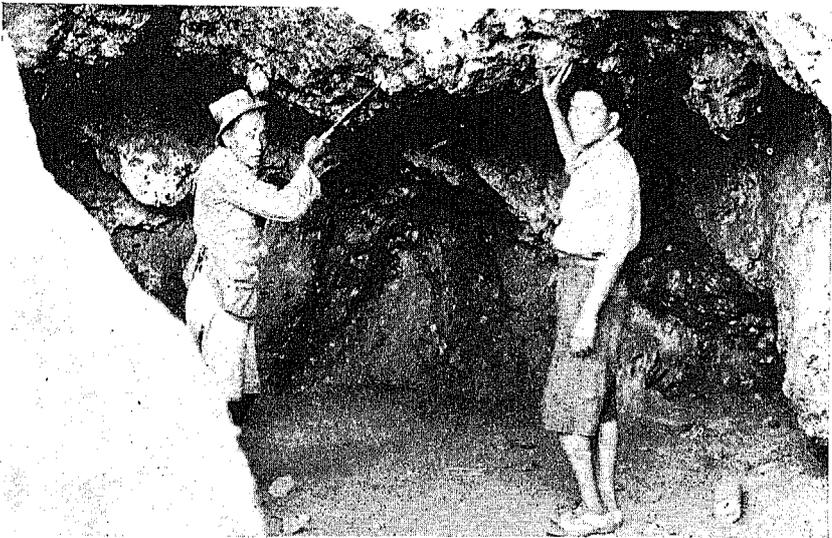
With acknowledgements to the Survey Department.

H. B. G. GARRETT.  
Chiengmai.



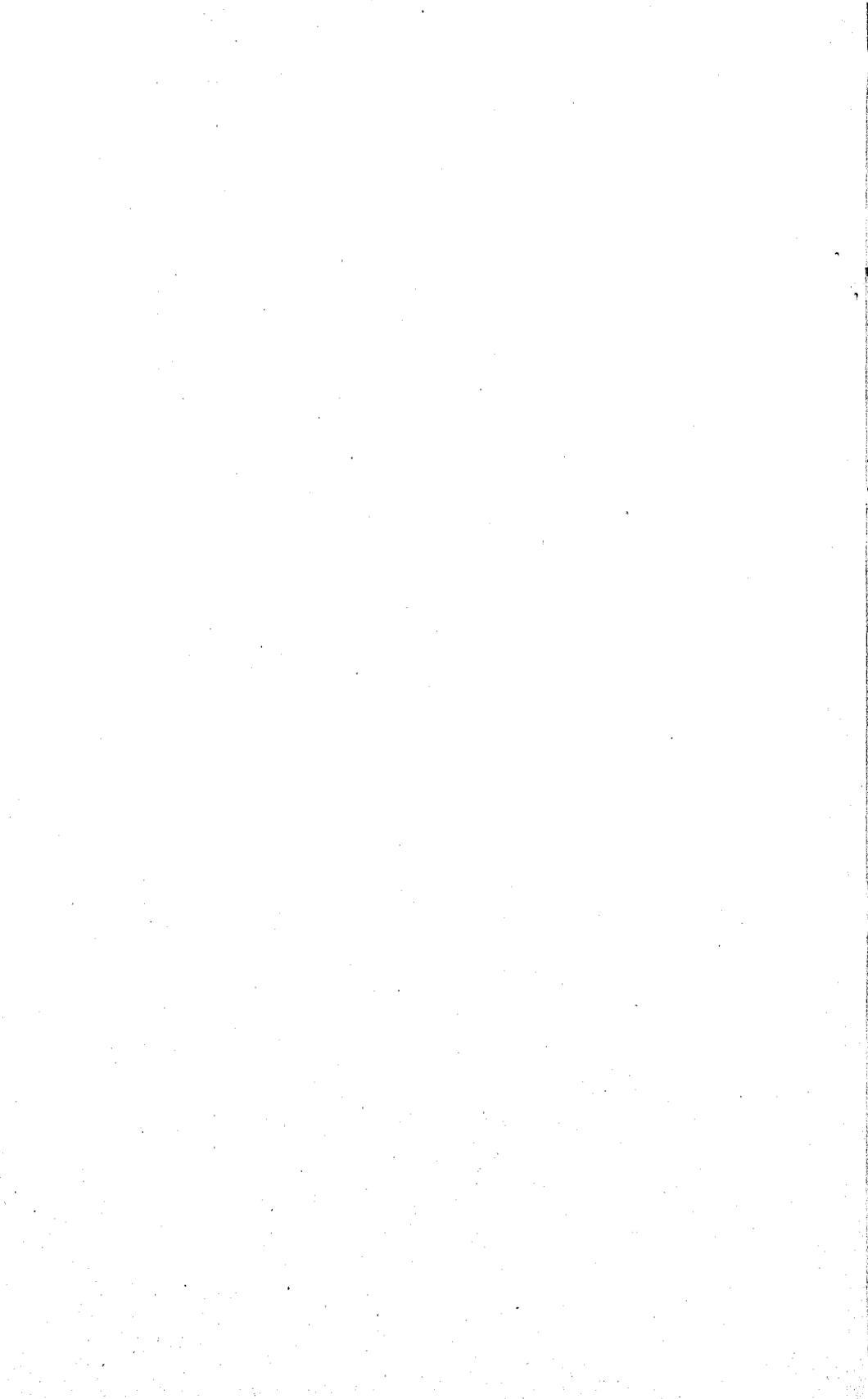
Old Mèo woman, reputedly 105 years of age, at the Me Sawi village.

*Photo by H. B. G. Garrett.*



Old Lawa Iron Mine at Huei Homsen on the Ping river. (see page 40).

*Photo by Mr. T. W. Bevan.*



## II

## THE LION SKIN ON THE THRONE.

In *Man*, July 1939, there is an article (No. 91) by Maurice Canney on the *Skin of Rebirth*, in which the author surveys the uses of animal skins in Africa, more especially from an ethnological point of view. He goes on towards the end to describe the significance of skins in India, citing the young Brahman's antelope skin and its use as a covering for the seat of a worshipper at his devotions. He suggests that the skin signifies rebirth because of its employment in the rite of initiation into a new rank or status such as that for a king or god. He mentions also that the coronation ritual as prescribed by the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* ordains an investment of the king with a garment known as the inner caul of sovereignty etc. He mentions also that the antelope skin used in ancient India when a Brahman was raised to the rank of a god confirms the idea of the skin of rebirth.

Major Seidenfaden has kindly drawn my attention to this and suggests my examining the problem with regard to its possible connection with our local customs. It has of course been thought that the Brahman ceremonies of the Thai coronation had considerable connection with those prescribed in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa*. I should be more inclined, however, to modify the statement by saying that ours were more likely to have been derived from an earlier source which in its turn might have even influenced the *Śatapatha*. My reason for so saying is that many essential points of the rituals of the *Śatapatha* find no place in ours, which seem more simple. Professor M. K. Arya, formerly of the National Library of Thailand, was once entrusted by His late Majesty King Rama VI to make a critical examination of the *mantras* in use by the Thai Court Brahmins. These had been handed

down in a curious corruption of an Indian language long suspected to have been some form of Sanskrit, although obviously not the classical phase of the language. Dr. Arya was of opinion that it was a kind of Tantric Sanskrit and was able to trace some of the *mantras* to the *Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa* and *Taittirīya Āraṇyaka*, others to the *Upanishads*. They were then translated by the professor and were later published in English in my handbook to the Coronation of His Majesty King Prajadhipok, 1926. I have been informed, however, by Professor P. S. Sastri, a member of the Thailand Research Society, that these mantras are in old Tamil.

While seriously doubting the admissibility of any ethnological connection between the African belief in the idea of a skin of rebirth and that of India, I am ready to admit that the coincidence is remarkable. Regarding this nation, however, I fail to see any connection between the significance of the lion skin on the Throne with even the Indian beliefs mentioned above, and very much less so with those of Africa. The implication of rebirth does not seem to exist in our use of the lion's skin, the *Nang Rajasih*, as a spread for the Throne of Thailand. I should rather be inclined to ascribe this custom of ours to the influence of Buddhist iconography. It might be added, moreover, that the idea of the "Lion's Skin" as a spread for the throne in this country has become so conventional that one often sees the "skin" represented by a gilt slab with the figure of the *rajasih* painted on it.

D.

Bangkok, 20th February, 1940.

## III

## THE CHATRI.

Under the title of *The Javanese Wayang and its Prototype*, a summary of the above-named communication by Dr. H. Meinhard to the Royal Anthropological Institute appears in *Man* Vol. xxxix, No. 94. The survey of Dr. Meinhard's material concerning the Indian shadow-play, or *chāyānāṭaka*, and its continued existence down to the present day is, of course, interesting and informative, but what is of special interest to us on this side of the Indian Ocean is the statement that itinerary showmen in the Kanarese-speaking southern Deccan, immigrating from the Marāṭha country, who perform shadow-plays from subjects taken out of the two great Epics of Sanskrit and are most commonly known as Killekyāta or by slightly different names according to localities, *style themselves Chatri* in consequence of their claim of descent from a Kshatriya who is believed to have followed the Pāṇḍava brothers of the *Mahābhārata* into exile.

Now, in this country, there is a primitive kind of classical dramatic dance called the *Lakon Chātrī*, which is thought to have been the prototype of the *Lakon ram*, or what is now generally known as Thai classical dancing. The performers of the *Lakon Chātrī* are, of course, Thai, and claim no such descent. They are, moreover, mostly female, with the exception of the clown. The subjects of their performances are not inspired by the *Mahābhārata* or the *Ramayana* but are taken from local folklore, known as the *Paññāsa Jāṭaka* or the *Collection of Fifty Birth-stories*. These tales seem to have been indigenous, although they are clothed in Indian nomenclature and the stories, which are written in Pali, bear Indian place-names. It is of course possible that the authors might not have been at all aware that the place-names in their stories were outside their own country.

The respect for the person and teaching of the Lord Buddha was so deep-rooted in those days that no devout Buddhist in Burma or Thailand or Laos ever seemed to realise the possibility of the Enlightened One having been born of a race foreign to his own.

Another form of this primitive type of dramatic dancing exists, according to scholars, in the Thai parts of the southern peninsula, more especially Nakhon Sri Dharmaraj. This is known as the *Nora*. The name is that of the heroine, *Manoharā* from the *Sullhama Jātaka*, also of the *Fifty Birth-stories*. The heroine, a beautiful daughter of the King of the mythical race of *Kinnara* fell prey to a hunter's noose. The hunter, a native of northern Pañcāla, presented his catch to the heir to the throne of his country. The Prince was charmed by her beauty and wedded her. During his absence on a military expedition, the King, his father, decided to offer up his daughter-in-law for sacrifice in order to atone for a dire illness which had befallen him. The lady fled to her father's abode on Mount Kailāsa. When the military expedition came to an end, the Prince returned, only to find his wife gone. He became desolate and went in search of her. After a long and arduous journey he found his wife, and all ends happily.

It will be seen therefore, that although the name of *Chātrī* exists in this country, its nature is quite different. It is a form of dramatic dancing and its repertoire is altogether different. It is not known what connection there might have been between our *Lakon Chātrī* and its Indian namesake. It is tempting to suggest that the dances came from south India with the Pallava colonists, but more details will have to be known before any real conclusion can be arrived at accurately.

It may be also noted that besides being applied to the type of a dance, the word *Chatrī* is also used in Thai to signify a warrior, in fact a *Kshatriya*, such as, เป็นเชื้อชาติชาตรี, meaning of *warrior stock*.

D.

Bangkok, 20th February, 1940.