

No. IX. Interpretation of the Tibetan Inscription on a Bhotian Banner, taken in Assam, and presented to the Asiatic Society by Captain Bogle.

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[In a letter to the Secretary of the Asiatic Society; see also Proceedings of the Asiatic Society, 4th May, 1836.]

According to the request conveyed in your letter of the 30th April, I have translated the piece of magical superstition which you have faithfully transcribed from the Bhotian board. With exception of the salutation at the beginning and the conclusion, and a few terms in the middle, the whole is in the Tibetan language. The purport of it, as will be evident from the tenor of the translation, is, to obtain the favour and protection of several inferior divinities, to increase the prosperity, &c. of the person and family for whom the ceremony was performed, and this magical piece was erected or set up.

It may be that the flag-staff, with the wooden board containing this inscription, was carried before the Tibetan chief in his march, and so used as an ensign in war; but it is more probable that it belonged originally to the house-top or terrace of the prince in Bhotan: for the houses of great personages in that country are generally decorated with such ensigns of victory at the four corners of the terraced roof. They are called in Tibetan

རྒྱལ་མཚན་ *rgyal mtshan* (ensign of victory), and always con-

tain inscriptions of similar purport with this.

In regard to the orthography of the piece, it frequently occurs in Tibetan writings and books, that the vowel signs are removed from their proper places, on account of the dependent letters of the line above; several cases of this occur in your transcript. The intersyllabic points at the end of a line are

generally also omitted, except with the conjunction དང་ which

will also be remarked here. I have made a copy in Roman characters, and have also endeavoured to make a literal translation: the words in Italics I cannot properly interpret.

Om svasti, pronounced by the Tibetans *om soti*, is rendered by them in their language ཨོཾ་ བདེ་ལེགས་སྤུ་གྱུར་ཅིག་ *om bdé*

egs-su gyur-chig: “ Oh may it please, may it be prosperous.”

khyab-mug (for *hjug*) Rahula (for *Ráhula*) ki-kang (for *kañkar*)
 Vis'hti dus mts han
 ma *pi-ling khra ts'ha* sogs gnyan-po hdré Srin dang
 phyogs mts'hams steng hog gnas-pa rnamdang
 khyad-par-du nyi-ma dé-ring gang-la rgyú vahi sa bdag
 Snang srid lha srin sogs thams-chad srid-pa
 Huhi phyag rgya hdi-la ltos-shig, Snang srid lha srin
 Sdé brgyad khed rnamdang-kyis, Thub-pahi bstan-pa
 la rab-tu dad-pahi rgyu sbyor sbyin-pahi bdag
 po hkhor dang bchas-pahi ts'hé dang bsod
 nams dpal dang khyor-pa thams-chad
 zla-va yar-gyi ño ltar gong-nas gong-du
 hphel-zhing rgyas-par mdzad-du gsol.—
Om akani nékani abhila mañ'dala
Mantrayé Sváhá, Sarva maṅgalam.

Translation.

O ye divinities ! all hail !—(Ye) all the eight classes of the divine imps (S. *Rákshasas*) ; also ye gods, regents of the planets, constellations (in the path of the moon), and of the lunar days, having your influence upon the year, the lunation (or lunar month), and the different seasons or periods ; ye possessors of the earth or land (land-proprietors), all the eight kinds of the *Nágas* (Hydras), &c. Ye powerful chiefs and attendants, *VISHNU RÁHULA*, and the menial (instrumental cause) *Vis'hti* ; ye goddesses (or nymphs) *pi-ling-khrra ts'ha*, &c. ; ye fierce inferior imps, who dwell in (or towards) the cardinal, intermediate, zenith and nadir points (or in the ten corners of the world) ; and especially ye divine imps, &c. who are rulers of those regions, wherein the sun this day is moving, ye all look on this emblem (seal, image, or signed writ, &c.) of *HU*, the regent or governor, (or set up, or erected by *HU*.) Ye divine eight principal imps (*Rákshasas*), rulers of the world (or keepers of light), I beseech you, that you will make that this patron, the bestower of charitable gifts, for obtaining the fruit of his works and actions, who is very faithful to the doctrine of the Muni (*SHAKYA*), may together with his household or family, increase more and more, and abound in life, fortune, (prosperity), honour, and in all his substance or wealth, like the increasing face of the moon. *Om akani nékani abhila mandala, mantryé, Sváhá Sarva mangalam.*

Tettelia, 9th May, 1836.

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