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NOTES TO ACCOMPANY A MAP OF CAMBODIA.

THIS map was compiled for the purpose of registering some items of geographical information obtained from Constantine Monteiro, a Native Christian in the service of the King of Cambodia, who was sent to this Settlement in July last, to solicit the aid of the authorities in ridding the Cambodian coasts of the pirates who infested them. The positions of many of the places in the interior of Cambodia may probably be incorrect, as they are not fixed by scientific observations, but in the total absence of all authentic information concerning that country, Mr Monteiro's contribution must be considered as a valuable addition to our geographical knowledge of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula.

Coast Line.

The eastern and south-eastern coast lines as far to the south as Cape St. James are laid down from the Admiralty Chart of the China Sea, published in 1840, and as the celebrated hydrographer, Captain Ross, fixed the position of this cape, and the chain of longitudes has been carried to the various headlands along the coast of Cochin-China, this part of the peninsula is as well surveyed as most of the coasts of these eastern countries. But scientific research has gone no further, for throughout the entire remainder of the coast, from Cape St. James to Siam, an extent of between 500 and 600 miles, no single position has been fixed by a scientific observer. The position of the south point of Cambodia can be obtained with tolerable accuracy, as it lies only a quarter of a degree to the north of Pulo Ubi, an island well known from its being often seen by ships passing up the China Sea. The coast-line from South Point of Cambodia to Chantibun is laid down from a manuscript chart of unknown authority, which the masters of European trading vessels resorting to Kampot find to be much more accurate than the published charts. It was probably compiled from observations by commanders of East Indian country-ships, which were in the habit of resorting to the Gulf of Siam some years ago. The only addition made in the accompanying map, is a reef to the north-east of Koh Dud, on which the English Barque *Sea Gull* was wrecked during last year, shortly after leaving her anchorage at Kampot to return to Singapore. The portion of coast between Cape St. James and the South Point of Cambodia, including the western mouths of the Cambodia river, (which have not been frequented by European ships for many years past) are laid down from the information of Constantine Monteiro, collated with the maps attached to Mr Crawford's "Mission to Siam," and to M. Abel Remusat's translation of a Chinese account of Cambodia in the 13th century.

Mountain Ranges.

The peninsula is traversed by two parallel mountain ranges, running in a direction nearly N. N. W. and S. S. E. The western range terminates on the north side of the Kampot river, in Lat. 11° S., but there are several isolated hills further to the south, of which the hill of Basak, near the centre of the delta formed by the embouchures of the Cambodia river, is the principal. This range is rich in metals, and furnishes a superior description of marble which takes a high polish, and is manufactured by means of turning-lathes into vases and cups by the Siamese and Cambodians. The western base of this range abounds in teak timber, especially near Chantibon. The eastern range terminates between Cape St. James and Cape Padaran. It is less rich in metals than the western range, but many mines of silver and iron are worked by the Cochin-Chinese. These ranges form the natural boundaries of Cambodia to the East and West.

Rivers.

The Me-kong is the single great river of Cambodia, for, with the exception of a stream which disembogues at Kampot, it drains the entire basin formed between the mountain ranges mentioned above. The Me-kong is said to have its sources in the steppes of Chinese Tartary in Lat. 35° in which case its length, in difference of latitude alone, must be 1,500 miles, and certainly the immense body of water poured out by this river during certain seasons shews that it must be the source of drainage to a large extent of country. The river has many mouths, all of which, with the exception of the Basak and Cancao channels, are navigable by vessels of burthen. The Cancao channel is a mere water-course as it is nearly dry during certain seasons of the year. About thirty years ago, the Cochin-Chinese, who had taken possession of the delta of the Me-kong, cut a canal from Cancao to a bend of the great river, to facilitate the transport of troops and munitions of war to the frontiers of Siam, with which country they were then at war; but it has since been filled up in parts during a panic caused by a rumoured invasion by the Siamese. The western branch of the main river is navigable by vessels of moderate burthen as far as the great lake. The country which bounds the river is uniformly level, and during the dry season, the banks are between 30 and 40 feet above the level of the stream, but during the freshes, the water rises enormously, and often overflows the country. At these times, so strong is the current that it becomes difficult for a sailing vessel to ascend the river, even with the aid of a strong monsoon. During the dry season again the channel is impeded by sand-banks, and the quick-sands at the mouths of the river are constantly shifting, rendering the navigation peculiarly dangerous. These circumstances coupled with the misfortunes which have befallen Cambodia during the last century, have

caused the once flourishing foreign trade to be abandoned. In 1850 a small vessel, the *Scotia*, belonging to an European merchant of Bangkok, ascended the river to the capital of Cambodia, and was well received. The Siamese crew were imprisoned by the authorities on the return of the vessel to Bangkok.

The geography of the upper portion of the Me-kong river is little known. In 1641, a gesant or envoy from the Dutch factory then established in Cambodia, Gerard van Wusthoff, ascended the river to Winkjan, the capital of the Lao nation, which he estimated to be 250 Dutch or 1,000 English miles above Eauwek, the then capital of Cambodia. The ascent, which occupied 103 days, was much impeded by several water-falls and rapids, which rendered it necessary to unload the boats and carry them beyond the obstructions.

Ports and Harbours.

The Coasts of the Indo-Chinese Peninsula abound in places affording shelter to shipping, that of Cochin-China being a constant succession of head-lands and inlets, and the islands which stud the shores of the Gulf of Siam render the western coast a complete series of harbours. The Cambodian portion of the coast consisting almost exclusively of the delta of the Me-kong, with its shelving alluvial banks and numerous quick-sands, is less safe to approach than other parts of the coast, although the mouths of the great river are excellent harbours when once a ship has succeeded in getting in safely. The Kochien mouth is the most easy of access for vessels of burthen, and was generally used by the Dutch, English and Portuguese vessels which traded with Cambodia during the 17th century. The easternmost mouth is the safest for vessels of moderate burthen, as there are fewer banks, and Cape St. James is a good mark for entering. The depth of water is less than in the Koehien channel. The Basak mouth can only be entered by small vessels. but is said to be more frequented than all the others, as the town of Basak has a large native trade, and the vessels of the Chinese and Cochin-Chinese engaged in it are all of small burthen. Cancao or Ahtien, on the western side of the Cambodian delta, is an excellent port for vessels not drawing more than 18 feet water. The western embouchure of the Me-kong enters the port, but it is only navigable, even by boats, during the rainy season, and the canal that was cut by the Cochin-Chinese to afford communication at all times with the main river, has been blocked up. Nevertheless a considerable trade is carried on with Singapore in small junks and topes. Cancao has been for some years past in the possession of the Cochin-Chinese. Pontaimas, formerly the emporium of Western Cambodia, was situated on the south side of the harbour. It was destroyed during an invasion of the Siamese about a century ago. Kampot, the only port now remaining in the actual possession of the Cambodians, lies about

25 miles to the north of Cancao. The anchorage is good at all seasons, about 5 miles S. S. W. from the western entrance of the river, in 3 fathoms, and deeper water may be obtained by borrowing on Koh Dud, an island occupied by Cochin-Chinese, who dwell at peace with the Cambodians except when urged to aggression by their government. The trade with this port is chiefly carried on in square-rigged vessels of about 200 tons burthen, owned or chartered by Chinese merchants residing here. Small as the trade is, it forms the sum total of commercial intercourse carried on between this port and the Indo-Chinese Peninsula in European vessels.

Towns and Provinces.

Cambodia seems never to have had a fixed capital, the different kings selecting the spot for their residence which best suited their taste or circumstances, after the Tartar fashion. This accounts for the confusion that exists respecting the name of the capital of Cambodia, no two original maps including the Me-kong river that the writer has had opportunity of inspecting, agreeing in this particular. Only two of these, indeed, appear to have been compiled from authentic information; that attached to Valentyn's "Oost Indien" published in 1726, and a modern map of the river Basins of Europe and Asia by Professor Berghaus of Berlin. During the period in which the Dutch maintained a factory in Cambodia from 1635 to 1672, Eauwek, stated to be 60 Dutch miles up the river, was the capital. This is probably the spot indicated by Monteiro as "Holandez." A sketch of Eauwek is given in Valentyn's work, from which it appears that the buildings were composed of no more durable materials than wood and attap, which could be removed to another spot in the course of a few days. The present residence of the king is situated on the banks of a tributary which joins one of the branches of the Me-kong a little to the south of the Lake Bein Ho.* A hostile demonstration on the part of Siam would probably induce the king to remove nearer to Cochin-China, but if both pressed him, he would have no other resource than to take refuge for a time among the Lao of the north. Olompéh, a city of Pagodas and Royal tombs, occupied by Buddhist priests and their dependants, is the real capital of Cambodia, as all the inhabitants of the country who are sufficiently wealthy to travel, take up their residence there periodically, to offer up prayer and sacrifices and perform funereal ceremonies. This is probably the city called "Columpé" in Valentyn's map, and "Penomping" in that of M. Abel Remusat. The banks of the river between this and the lake are very densely inhabited, the people living chiefly in towns strewed along the banks of the river, which each contain from 500 to 2,000 adult

* The name and position of this lake, as given by Monteiro, perfectly accord with those laid down in Berghaus' map of the River Basins.

males, who are registered as soldiers, and nearly the same number of Talapoins or priests. This part of Cambodia, and the country extending along the base of the range towards Kampot, is the only portion of the territory that can be called independent at the present moment. Batambong, (formerly called Kutambong) the capital of the country producing cardamums, a valuable description of spice, is in possession of the Siamese, who have also an establishment at Angcor, a sacred city on the north shore of the lake. The entire left bank of the Me-kong, from Simbor to the sea, is under the influence, if not in the actual possession, of the Cochín-Chinese. Bahonom (the *Bilbanon* of Valentyñ) is the most important city on this side of the river.

Kampot, the solitary sea-port town at present in the possession of the King of Cambodia, is a small place, occupied chiefly by traders, and governed by a civil functionary who has a small body of troops at his disposal. Communication is kept up with the chief city by a road which lies over low and level land, that in times of peace, is cultivated for rice. This product from the vicinity of Kampot forms the bulk of the return cargoes of vessels from Singapore, which are filled up with wax, cardamums, raw silk, benjamin, gamboge, and other less bulky articles, which are brought from the interior on the backs of elephants. It is said that the lands already brought under cultivation on the banks of the Me-kong could supply the entire Archipelago with rice, and that the present population would suffice to cultivate it, but a free water carriage to the sea, and ample protection for the agriculturists, would be necessary before these advantages could be fully availed of.

Basak, the southernmost Province of Cambodia, is one of the most productive, from the facilities afforded for exchange with foreign traders. When this province was under the King of Cambodia, the annual tribute amounted to 10,000 koyans (about 20,000 tons) of rice, and as many of salt and now that it is ruled by the Cochín-Chinese it is probably not much less. The agricultural population is exclusively composed of Cambodians, but there is also a large floating population of Cochín-Chinese, who are chiefly occupied in fishing, in which they are very expert, and the neighbouring waters afford them an abundant harvest.

Outline of History.

The Cambodians are probably, in common with the other nations distinguished by the appellation of Indo-Chinese, an off-shoot from the great Lao nation which occupies the upper basin of the Me-kong and other large rivers which have their sources in Tibet. According to Chinese records, Cambodia commenced sending ambassadors and tribute to the rulers of China in A. D. 616, but as no conquest is spoken of, this probably means that a commercial intercourse commenced between the two nations during that

year, when the smaller power would naturally send presents to the larger. Cambodia soon became the greatest nation of the Indo-Chinese peninsula, if it was not so before, and according to the records of the Ming dynasty, Cochin-China was annexed, and incorporated with the Cambodian empire about A. D. 1200. Siam seems also to have been under the yoke of Cambodia previous to A. D. 1351, when the Siamese records commence. (*Chinese Repository* vol. v. p. 56). In the early part of the 16th century, European influences came into play. The Portuguese opened an intercourse with Siam, Cambodia and Tonkin soon after their arrival in the east, and the English and Dutch followed. Cambodia was eventually disgusted with the quarrels which took place between the Portuguese and the Dutch, which often led to bloodshed, and in 1672 the factory of the latter was withdrawn. In the mean time Siam and Cochin-China, the weaker powers, encouraged intercourse with Europeans, especially the French, whose military tastes and abilities rendered them apt instructors in the art of war. French influence soon became paramount in Cochin-China, where the people were taught to construct fortifications, cast cannon, and to use the musket with effect. As a military nation is not calculated to attract commerce, they were not disturbed by other Europeans; but in Siam, where the Dutch had established a factory many years previous to the arrival of the French, the influence of the latter did not become paramount, although it has always been great. The Siamese proved apt scholars in the art of war, but never arrived at an equality upon this point with the Cochin-Chinese. The results to Cambodia were inevitable. Deprived by its own exclusiveness of that intercourse with Europeans which would have familiarised it with the improvements of the age, the territory on either hand has been annexed by its more warlike neighbours, and the small remnant owes its preservation solely to the jealousy of the rival invaders, who have at length met in the course of conquest, and turned their forces against each other.
