

CORRESPONDENCE.

1. A REMNANT (?) OF BUDDHISM IN INDIA.

SIR,—A somewhat curious addition to the printed literature of Pali has recently come under my notice. This is a tract of 31 pages printed at Chittagong in 1889, consisting of extracts from Pali scriptures with Bengali explanations. The book, entitled “Buddha-bhajanā,” is stated in the Bengali preface to be compiled for the “assistance of our Buddhist community” (*āmāder Bauddha samājer upakār*) in those parts. The name of the compiler, Duryodhana Bhikshu, and of others who assisted in the publication of “the Mahāthero,” Lālamohana Dhāmmāchārī (*sic*), and Doctor Bhagīrathachandra Vaduyā (“Borooah”), have quite a Bengali-Assamese appearance, and do not at all suggest a mere colony of Burmese Buddhists. Still less has the tract the appearance of an emanation of the Neo-Buddhism of Col. Olcott and his friends. It would be interesting, therefore, to know the origin of this “Bauddha samāj.”

The Pali is of the most extraordinary description. Is it the result of faulty oral tradition or merely of imperfect knowledge on the compiler’s part of the character of the alphabet from which he was transcribing into the Bengali character?

The work begins :

Buddha vandanā.

Buddhapāttati buddhātam, buddhānāmam tābhāmntisa,
bujjhāti dhāmmā ulārām, buddhordiḍam nāmāmāhām.

A note or rubric follows in Bengali, explaining that this confused jargon of Pali is to be used in making flower-offerings.

The work consists of headings, written in Bengali, expressing the main topics of Buddhist devotion and meditation, each followed by a passage of curiously corrupted Pali, which is further explained where necessary in Bengali. Special features of this supposed Pali are (1) the prevalent use of ā for ă—perhaps, as Prof. Rhys Davids has suggested to me, in order to guard against Bengali-speaking Buddhists using the corrupt Bengali pronunciation (= ö) of the Sanskrit-Pali ă; (2) the use of the palatal sibilant (ञ, ç) not preserved in Pali; (3) the ungrammatical use of n for ñ.

It will be interesting if any of our readers in Bengal can tell us more of this Buddhist community, and of the literary and manuscript material (if any) on which this curious contribution to Pali literature is founded.

CECIL BENDALL.

British Museum, November, 1891.

2. TSONKHAPA.

8, *Upper Woburn Place, London,*
July 2nd, 1891.

DEAR PROFESSOR,—In reference to the ‘Aphorisms of Tsonkhapa,’ about which you enquired, it seems that by this the work called *Sñags rim* (སྒྲུབ་ཀྱི་རིམ་) might be intended, which is mentioned in the German translation of Tāranātha, p. 325, l. 4, and which must have been (and is probably) at the command of Wasilieff. Neither it nor any other of the works of this author is in the Tanjur. The title means ‘Method of Dhāraṇi.’ Besides the above there are mentioned in Schmidt and Böhlingk’s ‘Verzeichniss, etc.’ (Bulletin iv.),