



## THK MALAY DICTIONARY.

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### THE MALAY DICTIONARY.

(CLIFFORD AND SWETTENHAM.)

#### PART III.

Letter "Ch," Part III. of Messrs. Clifford and Swettenham's Dictionary, has now come before us for review. To express any disagreement with the talented authors on their system of arrangement and transliteration would be merely to re-open an old argument as to which it has been tacitly agreed that there is something to be said on both sides. We shall, therefore, waive entirely all questions of grouping and orthography in dealing with the number now in our hands.

To begin with, it does not appear to have been very carefully revised; for instance, under the word Chûram occurs the note "(see Chôram)," but Chôram is not to be found; and in the pretty pantûn quoted to illustrate "Chêlah" the word itself does not occur at all, "rûang" having apparently been repeated twice by mistake. Printer's errors, too, are numerous; e.g. "Chêrut" for "Chêrut" on p. 356, "bleeching" for "bleaching" on p. 340 and the amazing monstrosity "onomatopoetic" on p. 312. It is to be regretted that the authors have not devoted more attention to the derivation of alien words, and that their diagnosis of the languages from which such words are taken should so often be open to criticism, while in many cases words really of foreign origin are not referred to the parent tongue, so that the reader is left to suppose them to be indigenous. "Chânai" to whet, is simply Tamil, yet it is entered as a pure Malay word. "Chêrut" is surely not of English origin, as the authors would have us suppose. Granting, as we must do, that the connection of the Tamils with the people of Malaya was anterior in point of time to our own, it is much more probable that the word "Cheroot," which is pure Tamil, entered Malay from that language and not from English. The Tamil word is "Chûruttu," or in fuller form "Pogei-elei Chûruttu,"—"Smoke-leaf-rolls" or "rolled





leaves for smoking" from the verb "Churuttu" to roll up. The final "tu" in this word, necessary to the Tamils as they cannot pronounce a word which ends sharply in a surd, would drop on its introduction into Malay, leaving chūrūt or chērut, the identical word in our Dictionary. It might also be suggested that "Chabok," a whip, has really found its way into Malay direct from the Tamil, to which language Malay owes so many names of things in common use among civilized nations. The Tamil word is "Chavukku"; strike off the euphonic "ku" and we have "Chavuk," which is almost identical with "Chabuk." "Chat," paint, is Chinese but this the lexicographers fail to note; and though they have a long description of the game of "Cheki" they make no mention of its curious derivation from "cháp jī ki," literally the 12 pieces, *i.e.*, the 12 cards or wooden dominoes containing certain letters, and which form a kind of adjunct to the common game played with the cards known as pai-á. The Malays have taken the last two words of the phrase, really meaningless without the rest, to give the name to the game played with Chinese cards; and the game so carefully described in the dictionary is not the true "Chap jī ki" at all, but that played with a different kind of pack known as "pahkaú." Another error is that of putting down "Chadar," a sheet, as Persian. This word is given as Hindi in Forbes's Hindustani Dictionary; though "Chadir," a veil, is given by Marsden as Persian. NLB



So far as the purely Malay words are concerned, the authors are, for those whose experience is limited to the Colony of the Straits Settlements, above or rather beyond criticism. On a rough estimate about 50 per cent. of the words dealt with are seldom or never to be heard in the Colony, and it is to be regretted that those of local are not more clearly distinguished from those of universal use. There are, however, certain omissions of words in more or less common use in British territory to which we venture to draw the authors' attention. Such are "Chingeh," often used in Penang and Province Wellesly in the sense of "cunning," "crafty," and not to be confounded with the word "Chingi," "frivolous," given in this dictionary. "Chikar," a nautical expression, "hard over," used of the helm, *e.g.* "kanan chikar," "hard a-starboard;" "chapas" (Hind.) a badge, especially a peon's badge, also commonly used in the Straits of the badges worn on the arm by syces and ricksha coolies; and "Chinting" (Ch.), an opium farm-revenue officer. Of omitted words in less common use we may notice "Chengkiak," the red fighting ant, also called Kēlōngkiák (of the proverb "Degil macham kēlōngkiák," as obstinate as a red fighting ant.); "Chikar," "full up," said of a cart or boat when so laden

that no more can be put into it; "Cheput" said of two pieces of cloth sewn together too close to the edge and so liable to be torn; "Chéchiŕ," "to talk foolishly," more commonly used in the compound form, e.g. "menchéchiŕ seperti perampuan tua," to prattle like an old woman; "Chendaku," or "hantu chendaku," a man who can take the form of a tiger—an unholy practice to which the Korinchi people of Sumatra are said to be much addicted; "Chéŕaka," the name of a common shrub with white or red flowers; and "Chéŕkau," "to scratch," e.g., "di chéŕkau-nya muka budah itu dengan kuku-nya," "he scratched the child's face with his nails."

The notes on certain words are occasionally incomplete. For instance under "Chérah" no mention is made of a common use of the word in the sense of "cleared, bare of jungle"; under "Chôbah-châbek," "ragged," we might expect to see quoted the commoner form "rôbak-râbek"; while under "Chandu" one is surprised at the absence of the well-known phrase for smuggled opium "Chandu glap." To "Cholok" is found attached as a secondary meaning, "anything by means of which fire is transferred from one thing to another," but surely the word is commonly used for a torch made by wrapping rags on the end of a stick and dipping it in oil? "Changkat" in the Addenda is given as "a hill," "a rising ground," but in a Dictionary on the scale of that before us, attention should have been drawn to words of similar meaning such as "permatang" and "guar" and the shades of difference in their signification pointed out. "Changkat" in the sense of "shallow" is in very common use in the northern Settlement, and deserves a place as a separate word from "Changkat" "a hill," and the synonyms "tôhor," &c., should be quoted as they are under "Chétek." Instances might be multiplied of this omission of synonyms, a very grave defect in a dictionary, and one which we hope that the authors will rectify in their next edition. The word "Chingge," "a masquerade of children," is rightly classed as of Chinese origin, but it would be of more interest to the student were he told that the

word is derived from "tsng ge" meaning an ornamental frame carried in idolatrous processions with incense and boys dressed as girls. The word "Chingge" is also used for a great triennial procession at which such frames are carried.

The illustrations and quotations are very full but sometimes they occupy too much space, many lines being quoted where a few words would amply suffice to show the meaning; and the propriety of including such illustrations as the last but one given under "Chuping," may well be doubted.

We feel that in this short notice we have but touched the surface, and no doubt scholars more versed in Malay as it is spoken in the various Native States of the

Peninsula will be able to make many other suggestions in the way of friendly criticism for the improvement of a work which should, when finally completed and revised with care, be looked on as the standard authority on Malay as written and spoken within the British sphere of influence in Malaya.

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