

nine holes instead of twenty-five. The popular explanation of the purpose for which these stones were designed is as follows: Various ingredients, such as sandal-wood, flowers, sweet oil, etc., being placed in the holes, the devotee gazed fixedly at them hour after hour, till at last, through the efficacy of his meditation on the fading flowers, and so on, he was enabled to realize the impermanence of all things. But some doubt is thrown on this explanation by the fact that Mr. Bell, who is in charge of the excavations at Anurādhapura, found a contemplation stone underneath another stone of large dimensions, the latter being on a level with the floor of the building that was being exhumed. It is difficult to see why the contemplation stone should have been placed in this situation, if used for the purpose described. I understand that nothing is said about these curious stones in the old Pāli books, and it would be very interesting if any of the readers of the *Journal* could throw light on the subject.—I am, faithfully yours,

ERNEST M. BOWDEN.

8. A BURMESE SAINT.

SIR,—I enclose herewith an interesting paper by Major R. C. Temple, which appeared in the *Rangoon Gazette* of October, 1893, on a supposed Mahomedan saint called *Badar* or *Budder*, revered by Mahomedans, Hindus, and Buddhists, in Arakan and Tenasserim, who is supposed, more especially, to exercise an influence over maritime affairs.

Major Temple comes to the conclusion that he was a Mahomedan Fakir, and that *Maddra*, the name usual in Tenasserim, is a corruption of *Baddra* or *Budder*.

Curiously, however, the legend at Akyab says he was discovered by *Hindus*.

Major Temple points out that there are spots from Arakan¹ to Mergui in Tenasserim where he is revered as a *nat* or *deva*, and that "his worship is precisely that which is common all over the East to supernatural beings."

I would suggest that instead of Maddra being a corruption of Baddra it is the reverse, and that *Maddra* is the short for Samudra (or Samudda) Devatā. The Chittagonian Hindus, being the chief navigators of that part, on their conversion to Mahomedanism, naturally made him a Pir (Peer) or saint.

I cannot understand the contradictory assertion that "Buddhamaw is a corruption of (Urdu) Budder-makam," though "Buddha" may be a corruption of "Buddar."

March 29th.

R. F. ST. ANDREW ST. JOHN.

To the Secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society.

PIR BADAR IN BURMA.

Dr. Anderson, "English Intercourse with Siam in the Seventeenth Century," 1890, p. 338, makes the following statement:—

"On the day following [the 28th June, 1687] the ship *James*, the consort of the *Curtana*, arrived in Mergui harbour; and Armiger Gosline, her commander, was ordered to ride near the *Resolution* opposite Mr. White's house, to prevent the crew taking the vessel to the other side of Banda-makhon."

In a long footnote Dr. Anderson remarks on this statement thus: "The Banda-makhon of Davenport is the island that forms the western side of Mergui harbour In the map of the northern part of the Mergui Archipelago, published by James Horsburgh, hydrographer to the Hon. East India Company, Feb. 1, 1830, and corrected at the

¹ I cannot hold myself responsible for the spelling of others. Arakan appears to be the official way of spelling the name.—St. A. Sr. J.