

JOURNAL
OF THE
BOMBAY BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.

OCTOBER, 1844.

ART. I.—*Two ancient Inscriptions, in the Cave character, and Sanskrit language, which, engraved on Copper plates, are translated into English, by BALL G. SHASTREE, Esq., with remarks by the Secretary.*

TO JAMES BIRD, Esq., *Secretary to the Bombay Branch R. A. S.*

MY DEAR SIR,—I have now the pleasure of returning the Copper plate, you gave me the other day, with correct transcripts in the original and Balbúd characters, as well as a translation of its contents into the English language.

On comparing the names of kings, mentioned in this grant, with Mr. Walter Elliott's genealogy of the *Chalukya* race, as ascertained from the numerous inscriptions collected by that gentleman, (Journal Roy. As. Society, London, No. VII. p. 7,) I am disposed to think that the Prince, *Vishnu Vardhan*, referred to in this grant, must be the grandson of king *Vikrama*, or *Vikramaditya*, the beginning of whose reign is placed in the *Shaka year* 655, or in 733 A. D.; and whose son, the father of our donor, according to both authorities, is of the name of *Kirtí Varma*. The antiquity of the document is fully borne out by the nature of the character; which, were there no proof to the contrary, may indeed make it two or three centuries older, as may be easily seen from an inspection of Mr. Prinsep's Table of the ancient Alphabets, in the VIIth Volume of the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal. We would certainly be at liberty to identify *Vikrama* with an elder prince of that name, the date of

whose reign is 514 *Shaka*, if it were not for a disagreement in the names that follow.

The language of the grant, unlike that of other writings of this kind, is extremely simple; and the description of the family of the reigning monarch is confined to two of his ancestors. These circumstances may perhaps be attributed to the decline of the power of the *Chalukyas*, which soon afterwards was very much curtailed, if not altogether annihilated, at least, for a considerable length of time.

The inscription is full of orthographical errors, too numerous to be enumerated. There is one particular symbol used, which I have not where met with. I allude to the mark \circ for \ddot{r} (i) instead of σ . The medial \ddot{r} (\acute{u}) is expressed both by \mathfrak{U} as well as \mathfrak{r} , which latter form, being that of the modern Deva Nagari, may indicate that the Cave character was in a state of transition when the grant was written. The inscription on the seal is literally श्री बिदुरस, *Shri Bidurasa*, which I must leave to your superior judgment to explain. The village of Aland Tirtha, the grant of which is commemorated in the Plate, may be identified with Alandi near Puna, as I know of only one other Aland, but it is situated to the north of the Bhima and not to the south.

Connected with the history of the *Chalukyas*, I send you herewith an Inscription, taken from a Copper plate grant, of the 5th century of the Christian era, which Professor Orlebar presented to your Society in 1841, after carefully comparing it with the original at my request. As confirming the few records of that period found by Mr. Elliott, it is a document of some importance; and as it has not up to this day been published in the Transactions of the Parent Society, to whom I believe, it was transmitted, you may, if you think proper, give it a place in your Journal, along with this additional relic of the *Chalukya* family, which has been brought to light through your exertions.

I am sorry that I could not prevail upon the Thakur, who brought me the Plate, to part with it on any consideration.

Believe me, dear Sir,

Your's most sincerely,

BALL G. SHASTREE.

7th August, 1844.

No. 1.

Translation of a Copper plate grant of land, found at Sattara, and now in possession of JAMES BIRD, Esq.

Blessing. King *Rana Vikrama* was descended from the family of the *Chátúkyas*; the sons of *Hariti*, of the same Gotra as the descendants of *Mánú*, meditators on the feet of *Swami Mahasena* (1); the chain of whose arms was protected by the body of the mothers of the world, and who had been blessed with the Boar signet, by Vishnu on being aroused from his slumbers in the milky ocean. May this king be glorious; who, being himself a good ruler, was gifted with good ministers and good counsellors; who had humbled the pride of all his enemies, and who had acquired great renown by his virtuous deeds in chastising the wicked men of the *Kuli Yúg*. His son *Kirti Varma* was a famous protector of the earth, and reigned for a long time, distinguishing himself for worthy actions. His son was as handsome as *Kandarpa* (2). Knowing his duties and having a feeling of gratitude, he equalled Arjuna, as if he was intended by the Creator, like that hero, to remove the vanity of men who support themselves by arms. This prince named *Vishnu Vardhan*, while he had conciliated the attachment of the world, and was in the habit of receiving homage from the crowned heads of numerous humiliated vassals, during his regency (3), bestowed formally, (pouring water, &c.) on the 15th Kartika at Kummarathya, a village called *Aland Tirtha*, situated to the south of the Bhima and to the north of the free hold called Anopalwa, upon the sons of Lakshumana Swami of the *Kaushika Gotra*, (the descendants of Viswamitra,) who had penetrated through the Vedas with all their branches—to Achala Swami, Deva Swami, Aditya Swami, Nagkumara with all their sons, grandsons, &c. This grant is made to support the performance of *Vaishwadeva*, *Agnihotra*, and other ceremonies, with the view of securing virtue to the donor himself and his parents, and is to last as long as the sun, the moon, and the earth exist. Let it be known to all the authorities on the frontier, our

(1) The son of Mahadeva, usually called Kártikeya, and Commander-in-Chief of the celestial armies.

(2) The god of love.

(3) This passage is susceptible of a different interpretation. It may mean the "Grant is made by the regent of Vishnu Sharma, named Vishnu Sidhi."

vassals, heads and great men of the place, &c. that this village is not to be entered into by troops of the state or of persons living on usury. Knowing that the grant is lawful, and that the duration of this life is as transient as the waves of the sea agitated by a gale, the same should not be resumed. Whoever, having his sense obscured by the mist of ignorance, should interrupt our grant or approve of its being interrupted, shall be guilty of the five great sins. As Vyasa, the expounder of the Vedas, says; He who makes a grant of land, lives 60,000 years in heaven; whoever resumes it, or approves of its resumption, is doomed to reside in hell for an equal length of time. Sagara and many other kings, &c. who make grants of land, do not gain so much merit as those who protect the grants of others. O king Yudhishtira! maintain with care all the former grants of land. O good king, the preservation of a grant is a more virtuous act than the giving of it. A man, though he may be on the verge of death, should never think of depriving a Brahman of his estate; for what is burned by fire springs up again, but what is burned by a Brahman's curse never revives. Whoever seizes the land, &c. Those who resume grants of land become black serpents in the hollows of trees in the arid deserts of the Vindhya. This edict is written in the 8th year of the king.

No. 2.

Translation of an Inscription of a Copper plate grant, belonging to a Thákur of the name of NAKSU BHALA, of Nandgám in the Northern Konkan. 1841.

Peace. Glory be to the Boar (1), in whom Vishnu was made manifest, who agitated the ocean, and bore the earth on the tip of his uplifted right tusk. *Shri Kirti Varma Rája*, whose body became pure as the Avabhritha bath of the Ashwamedha sacrifice, adorned the family of the prosperous *Chalukyas*, of the same Gotra (2) as the descendants of Manú; who are praised by the whole world; the sons of Háríti (3); brought up by seven

(1) The third incarnation of Vishnú for the recovery of the earth from the waters.

(2) A distinctive appellation of Bráhman and Kshatriya families, denoting their descent from particular Rishis.

(3) Probably some local goddess, worshipped by the family.

mothers, who were even as the seven mothers of the world (4); who, through the protection of Kártikeya, gained a succession of blessings; and who, under the eye of the Boar signet, obtained through the favour of the god Narayan, subjugated all the kings of the earth. His son was *Shri Palakeshi Vallabha*, whose lotus-like feet were touched by the crowns of many hundred kings; whose firmness was as that of the mountains Merú, Malaya, and Mandara, whose whole army of infantry, cavalry, chariots, and elephants, was increasing day by day; who on his noble horse Kanta Chitra (5) reconquered his own dominions, and (afterwards) the three kingdoms of *Chera*, *Chola*, and *Pandya*; who gained a new title by the defeat of *Shriharsha*, lord of the northern countries; who ever meditated upon the feet of *Shri Nága Vardhan*, and was an eminent follower of Mahádeva. His younger brother *Jaya Sinha*, the supporter of the earth, subdued all his rivals. His son, the prop of the three (6) worlds, *Raja Shri Nága Vardhan*, informs all the present and future kings:—Be it known to you that at the request of *Ballám Thakúr*, we have assigned (pouring water &c.) for the support of the holy inhabitants of Balegram, and in furtherance of the Guggul worship of *Kapaleshwar*, the said village, which is situated on the boundaries of Goparashtra, with its public buildings, and appurtenances, with the quarters of the impost and the military; (7) that (the glory of) our father and mother may endure as long as the sun, the moon, the sea, and the earth exist, and that our own virtue and fame may be promoted. May then this our grant be respected and observed by our descendants, or other future kings, remembering that life is as transient as the clouds of November. According to the saying of the holy Vyasa, “Sagar and many other kings have enjoyed the earth, whoever may be the master of the earth, this is the fruit thereof. Whoever resumes the land which

(4) Seven female deities well known in the Hindú mythology as Bráhmi, Maheshwari, &c. the energies of Brahma and other gods.

(5) कंठचित्राख्य is erroneously written कंठान्द्राख्य.

(6) Here we have नृभुवन, instead of त्रिभुवन.

(7) This was the sense that the passage appeared to me to convey, when I originally translated the Inscription. I have been however satisfied, that it means “the village is not to be entered into by the troops and followers of the king.”

either he himself or others have given, becomes a worm, doomed to pass sixty thousand (8) years in filth."

Remarks on the foregoing Inscription.

1.—The Copper plate, of which a copy and an English translation are herewith submitted to the Society, consists of two pieces 7 inches by 5, connected by two rings, one of which bears a seal, which is exactly represented in the fac-simile. It belongs to Narsu Bhalá, a Thakur, originally an inhabitant and a Wataudár of Kavanái, in the valley of Trimbakeshwar, but now living at Nándgam in the Northern Konkan. His family has been in possession of it from time immemorial, and believing that it contained some grant to his ancestors, he was induced to send it to me to be decyphered.

2.—By the help of Mr. Prinsep's table of the Indian Alphabets, I succeeded in reading the whole of the inscription without much difficulty. The character in which it is written will be found to bear a close resemblance to that of the Allahabad Pillar, which, according to the Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society for March 1838, belongs to the 5th century of the Christian era.

3.—The Plate bears no date, nor makes any mention of the place where the deed was written; but it will be found that the grant was made by Nága Vardhan, the nephew of Pulakeshi, the most mighty of the well known Chalukya race of Kallian (in the Dekhan), on whose history much light has already been thrown by the elaborate researches of Mr. Walter Elliott, of the Madras Civil Service. (9) If according to the Copper deed in the possession of Major Jervis, quoted in Mr. Elliott's paper, Pulakeshi reigned in the year 411 of Shalivahana, the Inscription now submitted cannot be more than a few years later than that period, a result which remarkably verifies what is stated as probable in the preceding paragraph.

4.—On comparing the present Inscription with one that accompanies Mr. Elliott's paper, the fact that first strikes notice is the great similarity of language. Both the documents begin with the same invocation to

(8) The word वर्ष, a year, is spelled वरिष.

(9) See Mr. Elliott's Essay on the subject p. 8. R. A. Society's Journal for May 1837.

Varáha, and designate the Chalukya family as "Manovyasa Gotra," "the children of Hariti," "supported by the seven mothers," and as having subdued all their enemies in an instant by the boar signet obtained from the favour of Bhagván Naráyan." An indubitable proof of the identity of the king Pulakeshi, mentioned in both grants, is furnished by the allusion to his horse "Kantha Chitra," and the performance of the "Ashwamedha" sacrifice, which from the amount of its expense and the difficulty of its conditions, (of which the exaction of tribute from all the contemporary sovereigns is the principal one,) has not been undertaken by many modern princes. This king, according to Mr. Elliott's genealogical table, is the son of Rána Raja or Rája Sinha, while according to the Inscription before us, he is the son of Kírti Varma. There is, however, no real contradiction between the two accounts; for as the name Rája Sinha occurs in one place according to Mr. Elliott, and he regards it as doubtful, we may suppose it was a mere title of honour like Rána Rája, and that Kártik Varma is the proper name of this king. It will be seen that the younger brother of Pulakeshi bears the name of Jaya Sinha, the same as that of his grandfather, who may be supposed to be the founder of the Chalukya (10) dynasty in the Dekhan. Thus the Copper plate now brought to light, supplies us with three additional names of the Chalukya kings; viz. Kírti Varma, Jaya Sinha, and Nága Vardhan, the father, the younger brother, and the nephew of Pulakeshi.

5.—With regard to the position of the "Gopa Rashtra," on the frontiers of which "Balegrama" is said to have been situated, we have some ground on which to hazard a conjecture. A tradition exists that near the village of Anjan Niri, about five miles from Trimbakeshwar, where extensive ruins of a town and a strong fort are still to be seen, there formerly stood the capital of the *Gaoli* or Cowherd kings. We may therefore suppose that the valley of Nashik was called Goparashtir in the time of the Chalukya kings. This hypothesis is further supported by the site of the original residence of the Thakur's family, where it is reasonable to suppose that the grant must have been found. (11)

6.—On asking Narsú Bhálá whether there was any tradition current

(10) Cháluka is a common family name among the Marathas.

(11) Balegram near Yavlé, may be said to be situated on the frontiers of this Goparashtira, but it would require a better proof to identify it positively with the village mentioned in the grant.

in his family or in his tribe respecting Ballam Thákur, at whose request the village is said to have been granted, I could obtain no information. The mention of his name, however, on so old a document proves, that the Thakurs formed a portion of the original inhabitants of the Dekhan ; and some of them possessed great influence with the reigning sovereigns of the time.

7.—In conclusion I have only to remark that the language in which the deed is written is elegant, but simple and unaffected ; and is evidently the production of a period anterior to that when the taste of the Hindus was vitiated, and they became fond of a bombastic style, abounding in laboured rhymes, far-fetched metaphors, and childish play upon words. The few errors, which occur principally in the spelling, are marked on the margin of the translation.

8.—I have already said that the character of this grant is nearly the same as that of the Allahabad Pillar. None of the initial vowels occur, with the exception of उ (u) ; the medials are more nearly allied to those of the Gujarat Plates of the 4th Century than of the Allahabad Inscription ; the only difference being that ई (i) is written ८ instead of २ ; and ए (e) and ऐ (ai) are joined as in modern Bálbudh, and not as in Bengali to which the corresponding letters in the Gujarat Plates are al.ke. Among the consonants I notice some dissimilarity in the following letters :—

	च	थ	ब	म	ल	स	ज्ञ	श्री
Allahabád Inscription.	४	०	□	□	५	५	५	५
The Nandagám.	८	८	५	५	५	५	५	५

I may observe that म and स of the Plate exactly correspond to those in the Gujarat Plates. It is worthy of notice that the letter ण (n) occurs in two distinct forms ४ and ५. The former of these is that of the Allahabad Pillar, and the latter of the Kutila Inscription from Bareilly of the year 992 A. D. The first form however is found only in composition.

Additional remarks on the two preceding Inscriptions, by the Secretary.

The earliest records of the Hindu social system, contained in the *Ramayana*, *Mahabharata*, and *Manu*, confirm the uniform traditions of the people, that Bengal, Orissa, and the whole of the Dekhan, south

of the *Nermada* river, were about the beginning of the Christian era inhabited by outcaste and barbarous tribes, similar to the people called by Pliny *Calingæ*, or *Parthiales*; who inhabited the sea coast, at the summit of the bay of Bengal, from point Godaveri to cape Negrais. The ascertained independent origin of the primitive words of the *Tamul* language, which are not derived from *Sanskrit*, afford strong confirmatory evidence of the comparatively recent amalgamation of these tribes with the present Hindu state, and that they were converted to the Brahmanical system, and from barbarity, by an enlightened and civilized people from the North. The numerous inscriptions, on copper and on stone, which have been arranged and commented on, with great research, by Mr. Walter Elliott, of the Madras Civil Service, supply additional proofs, relative to this subject; and clearly indicate that the *Brahmans* of the North, who introduced the foreign faith and language, were accompanied by a warlike race of *Kshatriyas*; who, from their devotion to the worship of fire, and the ceremonial observances enjoined by the *Vedas*, were denominated *Agnikulas*, and subsequently *Rajputs*. The inscriptions here translated, relative to this stage of the Hindu history of the South, are of considerable interest; and illustrate the origin of the Rajput family of the *Chalukyas*, who ruled over *Kuntala Desha*, in the Dekhan, of which the capital was Kalliani.

In an inscription, engraved on copper, in a very ancient type of the Purvada Hallá Kanara character, and in the Sanskrit language, dated Shaka 411, (A. D. 490),* the *Chalukyas*, are said to be descended from *Manu*, by the lineage of *Harita*;† who, according to the *Vishnu Purana*, was one of the sons of the *Kshatriya Viswamitra*, who obtained Brahmanhood through devotion; and from whom the *Gotra*, or family of the *Kaushika Brahmanas* derive their origin. According to the inscription just mentioned, and in the possession of Major T. B. Jervis of the Bombay Engineers, the earliest member of the *Chalukya family*, cotemporary with the date of the grant, A. D. 490, was *Pulakeshi*, who conquered the South, and subdued the kingdoms of *Chera*, *Chola*, and *Pandya*, or Mysore, Tanjore, and Madura. He is mentioned in No.

* See Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London, volume V. p. 343.

† According to the *Vishnu Purana* the *Harita* are classes of gods, belonging to the *twelfth Manwantara*; but in the preceding Inscriptions the name is feminine *Haruti*, who among *Bauddhas* is a *Yakshane*, or female demon