

Short account of the Balha manuscripts belonging to the library of the East India Company House.

### I

A joint of bamboo; a small piece of paper annexed to it, has a specimen of Balha writing, with a knife written and preserved by J. Anderson Esq. It contains: on the left side (or on the bottom) which is separated by a line from the right side (or the top): the Balha numbers from one to ten (put down by the King of Bante pane<sup>x</sup> at the request of Mr. Anderson see pag 156 <sup>his</sup> ~~his~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~to <sup>the</sup> ~~the <sup>East</sup> ~~East <sup>coast</sup> ~~coast~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~of <sup>Sumatra</sup> ~~Sumatra.)  
On the right side: a memorandum for Mr. Anderson (called here Dasik) not to forget sending to the King of Bante Pane two dogs from Penang. (i.e. pag 156)~~~~~~~~~~

<sup>x</sup> This proper name is continually spelled Munte panci in Mr. Anderson's his ~~his~~ <sup>is</sup> ~~is~~ <sup>to</sup> ~~to~~ <sup>the</sup> ~~the <sup>East</sup> ~~East~~ <sup>coast</sup> ~~coast~~ <sup>of</sup> ~~of~~ <sup>Sumatra</sup> ~~Sumatra.~~~~

### II

On the cover; surgery; the pages are three inches by two. The one side (containing nineteen pages); inside on the first page it written: prescriptions against poison. The contents are:

a How to make remedial against diseases caused by angry ancestors.

b What dreams are caused by the anger of ancestors and what means there are to prevent the dreadful consequences.

c. What sentences to utter are to be recited to cure the ghosts of angry ancestors. The other side (containing twelve pages) inside on the first page it written: midwifery it contains: an account of charms against various sorts of evil. This part is much spoiled and besides incomplete. From want of sufficient knowledge of the language I am unable to restore the reading so as to ascertain the contents. About the end mention is made of charms against the haunting of women who have died in being delivered of their children.

### III

The cover is goatskin; on both the sides of this skin are eleven pages of 4 inch by two. The one side contains:

An account of the days of the month,  
their mystical names (for the most part being those of  
animals) and ominous qualities particularly in undertaking  
a journey.

The other side: a continuation of the above work

↳ account of the five periods of a day called  
after the names of Indian deities (viz. Manid, Bisnu, Siva,  
Nala and Börmel) and their ominous qualities for cock-fighting,  
undertaking a journey, making war etc etc.

#### IV

On the cover: leljund and invocations respective a regular con-  
tract to ad to obtain the good will of the community; the  
pages are  $4\frac{1}{2}$  by 3. The one side (of 10 pages):

↳ What sentences there are which may be  
successfully muttered against internal poisons (rasa)  
the other side (of 11 pages); inside on the first page is written:  
old names of battles and entitles of (former times between Datta  
Jang Majma and Datta Dalor of Takbit. The contents:

What it is to be done to secure the favour  
of the powerfull spirit Bairud (incomplete.)

#### V

A small piece of paper annexed to it has: presented by  
H. Barry Esq 3d June 1817. The pages are 5 by  $2\frac{1}{4}$ . The one side  
(of 16 pages, the three last of which were designed for another  
work, as may be inferred from the figures on pag. 15 but have  
not been filled up with the characters.) The side on the first page  
is written: medical prescriptions against poisons and other

The contents are: a account of remedies against various det.  
poisons.

↳ how to cure those to whom antimonial  
poisons (rasura) have been administered.

↳ What formulae or sentences to be used  
in curing detested particularly poisons.

d What is to be administered to those who  
have been afflicted by the baneful influence of mountain-shots.  
The first side: a How to write amulets against the influence  
of the devil. (Satan)

b account of charms against the influence  
of the powerful St. Basil's knots.

c how to prevent being hurt by lightning.

d How to bewitch a person.

e How to be secured against the consequences  
of the curses of any person.

## VI

Pages of his inches length and breadth; one side has 23 pages  
and the other 22. This is the great warbook being a collection  
of a great many prescriptions (pöda), the principal of which  
are: how to destroy the enemy by incantation, under what  
part of the body of the celestial dragon (panina bölow) to  
stand in order to gain the victory, what drug to be mixed  
to bewitch the enemy, what amulet to wear round the waist  
in order to be invulnerable, what is to be done to make  
arrows unerring, what preventative there are against the  
charms of the enemy etc etc. This manuscript is remarkable,  
as it contains a large list of the plants of the Batta country,  
and is of considerable antiquity.

All these manuscripts are written in the genuine Batta  
dialect, quite different from that which is spoken at Mandi  
Köling where the language has been influenced by Malay and  
where the manuscripts exhibit spoiled orthography, as may be  
inferred from a manuscript at Amsterdam belonging to  
Dr. Millier who it was presented by Mr. Willer. The  
Königst. Institut va Kunst- & Wissenschaften it possessed  
of a large Batta manuscript, of which the contents of which  
are similar to those of VI, and which exhibits the same dialect.