

XXII.—*A Letter from Lieutenant-Colonel WILLIAM MACBEAN GEORGE COLEBROOKE, of the Royal Artillery, F.R.S., M.R.A.S., &c. &c., transmitting three Fac-similes of Inscriptions discovered on the Island of Ceylon.*

Read 19th of January 1833.

To GRAVES C. HAUGHTON, Esq., M.A., F.R.S., Secretary to the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland.

London, 12th of January 1833.

SIR :

I have the pleasure to communicate to the ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY of GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND, the copies of some inscriptions* which were taken from a rock in the district of Batticaloa in the island of Ceylon, by Mr. N. J. MOYAART, of the Civil Service, and transmitted to me by that gentleman. The character is, I believe, unknown ; but on reference to the ninth volume of the Asiatic Researches, pages 272 and 278, a character resembling this appears in some ancient inscriptions copied by the late Colonel COLIN MACKENZIE from a Jaina temple at Calyani.

On

* Vide Plate 13.—The plan of the Hot Spring, which is given on the plate over the inscriptions, has been retained, because it is so placed in the original drawing ; and it is not improbable that the inscriptions may bear some reference to it, particularly as they are not above a mile and a-half from the spring. The natives in general attach something of a sacred character to these phenomena ; the hot wells near Trincomalee, for instance, are said to have been a favourite resort of the sage AGASTYA, and medical writings attributed to this Hindú Esculapius are still held in the highest estimation over the whole of the Southern peninsula of India. Another example of the sacred character of these springs is afforded in the account of the hot wells near Surat, by the late Dr. WHITE, which is inserted in the present volume of the Transactions. The spring, which is the subject of this note, is apparently one of those referred to by Dr. DAVY, in his account of Ceylon, page 46. The temperature of the water is there stated to be too high to be borne by the hand, and sufficient to dress meat and vegetables ; a use to which it is applied by the natives. The spring is constantly bubbling, and the specific gravity of a specimen of the water examined by Dr. DAVY was 1.0011.

On shewing the Batticaloa inscriptions to two distinguished Orientalists, I was informed that the same character is to be met with in the north-western parts of India ; a fact which tends to prove that a connexion existed between those countries and Ceylon at a very remote period.

I remain, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

(Signed) W. M. G. COLEBROOKE.

