

ART. XIV.—*On the Rock Paintings in the Weka Pass.* By A. MACKENZIE CAMERON. Communicated by PROF. J. VON HAAST, Ph.D., F.R.S.

[Read before the Philosophical Institute of Canterbury, 4th April, 1878.]

“ 1, Cascade Terrace, Cascade Street, Paddington,
“ Sydney, 9th February, 1878.

“ To Professor Julius von Haast, President Philosophical Institute,
Christchurch, Canterbury, New Zealand.

“ My Dear Sir,—You have already received my hurried acknowledgment of the receipt of your kind communication enclosing photographs of the newly-discovered rock paintings in New Zealand, with notes on them supplied by yourself and the Rev. Mr. Stack.* I now proceed to offer some suggestions on the figures, premising that being connected with the Society of Biblical Archæology of London, and having in the course of extensive travels in old Asiatic countries come across and studied many very ancient remains (some fully 3000 years old), and further, having made early alphabets and symbols special studies, I was entrusted lately in London for elucidation, by my very old friend, Dr. Thomas Allan Wise, M.D., F.R.S. Edin., with drawings of rock sculptures and figures which he (delighting in antiquarian researches) had at considerable labour and expense made in various parts of the kingdom of Scotland, and which may be seen on Plates in the ‘Transactions of the Royal Society,’ Vol. XXI. I have thus materials at hand for comparison besides my own studies and experience. I may add that I am pleased to see Mr. Stack’s name, as I happened in England to be well-known to, and sometimes associated in work with, his venerable and respected father, the Rev. James Stack.

“ To proceed to the figures, I have to state—(1.) That such ancient remains are to be found in such distant parts of the globe as Ireland, Scotland, India, and Borneo, and the distance from the last to New Zealand is not so great as the distance of Ireland or Scotland from India. (2.) In the western countries there are two sets of figures—one Eastern in origin and pre-Christian, and the other Native, and post-Christian. They are easily distinguishable. (3.) The pre-Christian figures were made by Phœnician traders and Buddhist missionaries from India. Both were of the same age of the world’s history. The first were well known for maritime enterprise, and if they made for one extremity of the world in Cornwall for tin, and down south-east to Taprobane and the *Aurea Chersonesus* for other merchandise and gold, why should it be improbable that they visited the ‘Isles of the Sea’ expressly mentioned by Ezekiel, and reach to the end of the chain which begins with Sumatra and ends with New Zealand? We have

* Vol. X., p. 44, et seq., pl. I.

clear philological testimony that the *serpent-race* of India in early times obtained a foothold in New Zealand. This will be further brought out below. Again, as to the Buddhist missionaries, they were noted for their enterprise and travels for their faith. They carried their faith, doctrines, and symbols to the extreme east, north, and south of the great continent of Asia; over seas, deserts, and extended barriers of eternal snow, and all through to the extreme west of Europe. Is it improbable that, whether with the *serpent-race* from India, or in Phœnician vessels, they arrived in New Zealand? The association of the Buddhist cross with Phœnician letters on inscriptions in the west is a fact.

“These observations will serve to clear up the following remarks on the figures transmitted by you:—First, I may say that the figures strike me as divisible into pre-Christian, Indian, symbolic, and later native. The pre-Christian are generally the hieroglyphics, while most of the drawings of men with marine monsters appear to be later native. This may be a mere supposition, but you have other circumstances to decide this point. Secondly, figures 2, 6, 13, 21, 21A, and, perhaps, 24, constitute, along with, very probably, 15, 16, 18, one group—the Trinity symbol—and are pre-Christian. I can only briefly explain here this symbol. It may suffice to state that spirit, matter, and organised life, as the result of the action of the first on the second, are supposed to form the *pan-theo-cosmical* (if I may coin such a word) nature or universe of the ancient religious creed of India, and which was carried by the Buddhist missionaries over the world. The symbol of this cardinal and esoteric doctrine of religion was three circles near each other, and, in my opinion, also two joined circles, crossed with the zig-zag figure (supposed by some to be also a Masonic symbol) usually called the ‘spectacle ornament,’ the crossing zig-zag figure representing probably spirit. We find these symbols alike on great Buddhist temples in India, on the Bhilsa ‘topes,’ on the standing stone in Aberdeen, and on the Dingwall stone in North Britain. The figures composing the symbol are either plain or ornamented, and disposed in various ways. The variations are remarkable, and give a clue, as I believe, to the true signification of figures 2, 6, 13, 15, 16, 18, 21, and 21A. In all these, the three parts are distinctly made out, especially in figures of 2, 6, 21, 21A. In my opinion, figures 13, 15, 16, 18 are similar to the ‘spectacle ornament’ of North Britain. Figure 14 may be a representation of the same symbol, or of a Buddhist temple, the form of which figures in North Britain, explaining unmistakably the zig-zag line, and the sacred nature of the Trinity symbol.

“I make no observations on fig. 17, of which there are several similar representations in other parts of the world. Figs. 4, 9, 22, and perhaps 24, also have counterparts elsewhere. The Buddhist cross (and Phœnician

tau) is probably intended in figs. 5 and 12, though the execution is very degenerate. (The same may be said of all the other symbols). The very remarkable figure 23 probably represents the early Phœnician and Hindoo Fish-god. I have certainly seen it before somewhere in India. This establishes the early age of the drawings, the race of workmen, and the sacred character of the drawings. (See also the philological notes lower down.) You will perceive that I have not noticed the theory of figs. 2, 6, 13, 21, 21A, representing any oriental characters, ancient or modern, for this reason: that amid the numerous and complicated alphabetical forms of various Eastern languages some resemblance is sure to be found. In this view I might recognise fig. 2 as Arabic, figs. 13 and 21 as Sanscrit, and fig. 24 actually as the Hebrew *aleph*. Fig. 2, to me, is conclusively a Buddhist symbol. Fortunately, however, your communication encloses several notes furnished by Mr. Stack, and I find there abundant philological proof that New Zealand had early intercourse with India.

“*Te kahui tipua*—the definite particle (Greek *to*, English *the*, Malay *itu*, etc., etc.), limiting, indicating; *kahui tipua*, the deceitful, wicked dog-race (Malay *tipu*, deceitful, and *kuh*, the dog-race), remnants of whom are still to be found in the north-west of Burmah. Of course I may be mistaken in this interpretation, and I should wish to know which is the adjective.

“Again: *Ngapuhi*—*nga puhi*, the *serpent-race*. This race is to be found in parts of India, and plays an important part in early Indian history. My Hindoo mythology is rather dull at present, but, if remembrance serves me, I believe the Aryan race had a long and desperate contest with the earlier *serpent-race*, and, succeeding, drove these last into hills and mountains, and beyond the seas. Sanscrit *naga*, great serpent; and *puh*, race, descendants.

“I may be tempted on to great length with these and other words furnished in Mr. Stack’s letters, and therefore shall conclude here, only adding that should any portion of the observations I have made require further explanations I shall be happy to give them to you.—I remain, &c.,

“A. MACKENZIE CAMERON.”

“P.S.—With reference to some of your own remarks, made in your last annual speech, I should state that figure 15 resembles an Indian bow and arrow; figure 18, a war conch; and figure 14, a broad-brimmed hat, nearly similar in shape to those used in Malayan countries. Notwithstanding all these resemblances, I still adhere to the opinion that they represent Buddhist symbols. The P.S. of your own speech would appear to dash my theory to the ground, but what is the meaning of your own words, ‘they are of a more primitive nature’? and of Mr. Stack’s assigning them to ‘the oldest inhabitants of this island—*somewhat mythical people*—of whom there are any