

CONFERENCE
OF
DAGBAMBA (DAGOMBA) CHIEFS

*held at Yendi from the 21st to the 29th
November, 1930, to enquire into and Record*



THE
CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE
OF
DAGBON

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THE CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE OF DAGBON

I have the honour to forward you minutes of the Dagbamba Conference held at Yendi in the month of November, 1930—
Appendix I.

PROCEEDINGS AT OPENING OF CONFERENCE

2. The Conference was opened by His Honour the Acting Chief Commissioner of the Northern Territories on the 21st November in the presence of a large gathering of Africans and Europeans.

3. He was escorted by a large body of Dagbamba horsemen from his house to the palaver ground where he was received with a guard of Honour and trumpeters provided by the Gold Coast Police.

4. After inspecting the Guard, the Acting Chief Commissioner made the round of the leading Chiefs who were seated in a hollow square with the Na of Yendi in the middle.

5. Having greeted the Chiefs, His Honour returned to the covered stand and took his seat.

Passage of Dagbamba History recited and played by the Na of Yendi's drummers.

6. The District Commissioner, Mr. Blair, then made a short introductory speech, explaining how the history of Dagbon had been preserved through the medium of the drum chant, which was solemnly and liturgically recited from time to time. A section of the drum history was then chanted, punctuated the crash of the drums all beaten together to mark the different periods and passages of the recital.

The story told was of the appointment of Na-Zangina as Na of Yendi by the Na of Mamprusi long ago when the Dagbamba were unable to decide amongst themselves as to who should be their Chief.

This was followed by an account of the exploits of Na-Zangina and Na-Bangumanga, ending with a triumphal dance.

by the executioners to mark the death of Golon-Golon-Kumpatia, the King of Gonja.

7. After this performance, the Provincial Commissioner gave a short address of welcome in Hausa introducing His Honour the Acting Chief Commissioner to the Na and his Chiefs, and explaining briefly the reasons for the Conference. This was interpreted by Mallam Halidu into Dagbani.

8. His Honour the Acting Chief Commissioner then addressed the Conference and declared it open. A copy of his address is attached to the end of this report, vide Appendix I.

9. The Na of Yendi replied to the address and said that he was very pleased to welcome so many Europeans and very gratified at their presence.

He said that he and his people were very glad to think that Dagbon was to be united as one country again, and said he hoped that all the aboriginal tribes would be gradually assimilated. With regard to His Honour's remarks about finance, he wished to stress the fact that at present Dagbon was a poor country and there was not much money.

10. The interpretation of the Acting Chief Commissioner's address into Dagbani and the Na's reply into English was performed by Mr. H. A. Blair, Acting District Commissioner, Eastern Dagomba.

11. After the Na had resumed his seat, displays of dancing were given by a troupe of Konkombas and a troupe of Dagombas from Miong.

12. While this was in progress, the Acting Chief Commissioner and the European visitors strolled round the assembly and chatted informally with the Chiefs, after which His Honour took his departure.

MINUTES OF CONFERENCE

13. The first meeting of the Conference took place on the 24th day of November and continued on the 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th days. The meetings were presided over by the Provincial Commissioner and attended by the District Commissioner, the Na, his Divisional Chiefs and some hundred Sub-Chiefs.

A feature of the proceedings was that the enquiries were conducted directly in Dagbani by Mr. Blair, or in Hausa by

the Provincial Commissioner and interpreted by Mallam Halidu, a well-known Hausa resident of Yendi, in the confidence of the Na, who has spoken Dagbani since childhood.

In this way the mistakes liable to occur through faulty interpretation were considerably lessened and the confidence of the Chiefs gained.

AGENDA OF CONFERENCE

14. The first three items on the Agenda were:

- (a) Description of Dagbon, its extent, boundaries, etc.
- (b) Description of the people and classification of the various tribes and languages.
- (c) History of the growth of Dagbon and its ruling dynasty from as far back as it was possible to go up to the present day.

This information is contained in paragraphs 4 and 5 of the minutes of the Conference and Appendix II.

15. Briefly the Kingdom of Dagbon, as it is called in the vernacular, is some 8,082 square miles in area.

It is bounded on the north by the State of Mamprusi in the Northern Province, on the east by the tribes of Chakosi, Konkomba and Bassari in French Mandated Territory, on the south by the States of Adjati and Nanumba and Gbanya, and on the west by the State of Gbanya (Gonja).

16. The inhabitants of this State do not form one homogeneous people, but are a collection of tribes, invading Dagomba and Chakosi and the aboriginal Konkomba, Bukimbung, Gbimba, Nafeba, Saboba, Nagbova, Chamba, Dagomba, Bohoru, B'mawba and Kpariba.

17. With the exception of the Kpariba, the languages of the so-called aboriginal tribes, so-called because they were in the country prior to the Dagomba invasion, are allied to each other and are said to belong to the Gur (Grumah) language group.

The Kpariba, who inhabit the Tamale area, are akin to the Guan or Gonja people, but now talk Dagbani and regard the appellation of Kpariba as somewhat in the nature of an insult. The Na of Savelugu referred to them in a speech as the Konkomba of Western Dagomba.

In addition to these tribes, there are a number of people living in Western Dagomba, who although to-day they speak Dagbani and have apparently lost their tribal names and distinctions, are classed as aborigines by the Dagbamba and known collectively as Tin-Bihe—literally, children or sons of the land, from Tin, land, Bihe, children. They are most probably descended from the ancient Guan inhabitants of the land.

Dagbani as a language, is spreading through the country and influencing the aboriginal languages which may in the probability die out in time or turn in a corrupt Dagbani.

The Chakosi people, whose history I will deal with later on in this report, speak a language closely resembling the Nzima and Aowin speech, in which there are also a few Mandingo words. While making a list of Chakosi words at Yendi for classification, Mr. Dick, the District Clerk, a native of Aowin, recently arrived in the Northern Territories, found that the Chakosi were talking his language and he commenced to speak to and be understood by them without any difficulty.

HISTORY OF THE DAGBAMBA

18. As has already been stated, the history of the Dagbamba is preserved through the medium of the drum chant and it is passed down through generations of drummers who are taught their work from early youth.

Owing to his knowledge of Dagbani, Mr. Blair was to obtain the Dagbamba history as it was recited from time to time by the drummers and this history is given in Appendix II.

19. The history starts with the adventures of a man of Zamfara called Toha-Jie, the Red Hunter, in the Kingdom of Melle or Mande, but as a matter of fact, Dagbamba tradition goes back before this, although I do not know if it is recorded in the drum history.

According to this tradition, the Dagbamba tribe was originally at a place called Tonga or Tunga, which, as far as can be ascertained, lay somewhere to the east of Lake Chad on the road to Wadai.

They were forced to move from there by the inroads of the men of the desert, probably the Imoshagh (Tuareks), and migrated to Zamfara, one of the "banza bokwoi" Hausa states, which as C. K. Meek says in *The Northern Tribes of Nigeria* may mean bastard or upstart, but may also mean unclothed.

He further states that there is a persistent tradition among the pagan tribes who were displaced by the Hausa (e.g. the Bachama) that they were driven south by invaders who wore baggy trousers.

To-day the Zamfara people, whatever their origin, talk Hausa, but the tribal-marking is identical with that of the Dagbamba, and the two peoples refer to each other as "Abokin Wassa"—literally, playmates.

It is interesting to note that the Dagbamba language is particularly full of Hausa words and the Hausa influence amongst the ruling dynasty must at one time have been very strong, in fact its influence in manner, dress and language can still be seen to this day.

20. Whatever the causes, the ancestors of the present Dagbamba were forced to move from Zamfara and so came into the kingdom of Melle where they wandered for a while.

The drum history commences with the story of Toha-Jie, the Red Hunter, who rendered a service to the King of Melle by killing a bush-cow which was lurking near a water-hole and preventing the people from drawing water.

After this feat, he took service with the King of Melle and eventually married one of his daughters known now as Paga-Wobuga, the lame woman.

He left the court of the King of Melle and lived in the bush where a son was born.

This son was afterwards able to assist the King of Melle in battle as his father had done, but refused to settle down with him and wandered off until he came to what is now the Fra-Fra country, where he married the daughter of a Tingdana and settled at Biung under the name Kpaganumba.

He killed his father-in-law and became Tingdana in his stead.

Twin sons were born to this couple called Nyamzisheli and Nyarigili, who may have been the parents of the Talansi and Nabdam tribes, which both speak a dialect of Dagbani.

The history goes on to relate that Kpaganumba gained so great a name for himself as warrior that the King of Grumah, one Abudu Rahamani gave him his daughter, Soyini, in marriage.

She gave birth to Na-Gbewa, who became on his death the great ancestor fetish of Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Nanumba—possibly of Moshi and Kusasi as well.

On the death of Kpuganumba, Gbewa settled at Pussiga (Anglo-French Frontier—Kusasi District), then under the Chief of Grumah, and the Dagbamba claim him as the first Na of all the Dagbamba, from whom spring Dagbon, Mamprusi and Nanumba, and as has already been stated, possibly Moshi and Kusasi:

FOUNDATION OF MAMPRUSI DYNASTY

21. This Na-Gbewa had two sons, Zirli and Fogo. Zirli killed Fogo and succeeded his father.

He left two sons, Tohugu and Sitobu, who quarrelled.

The former settled eventually at Nalerigu and founded the Mamprusi Royal House, while Sitobu stayed at Wale-Wale (Gambaga District).

FOUNDATION OF DAGBAMBA DYNASTY

22. Sitobu, the younger brother, then sent out his sons and younger brothers southwards to found a kingdom for his people, and he made his brother, Biemoni, Chief of Karaga, and created the Nam (Chieftainship) of Savelugu.

FOUNDATION OF NANUMBA DYNASTY

23. At the same time, the little kingdom of Nanumba was founded at Bimbilla by Natambo, another brother.

It is said that the name Nanumba comes from the words Na-ne—literally, arm of the Na which he threw southwards. Thus though the Na of Yendi is, strictly speaking, junior to both Nalerigu and Bimbilla, has ancestor having been the youngest brother, yet in fact he has always been of necessity the strongest, since he alone has had to fight seriously for his kingdom.

24. Sitobu afterwards moved to Bagale near Namburugu where he died and his son Nyagsi, said to be the first Dagomba to wear a cloth, succeeded him.

He made his court at Dipali near Diari and commenced to make war upon the aboriginal races throughout the country.

In what is now Western Dagomba, the aboriginal races do not seem to have put up much of a fight and speedily lost their independence and even racial names, for to-day they are all classed by the Dagbamba as Tin-Biho, children of the land, in contrast with the Konkomba and other tribes of Eastern Dagomba who preserved their independence long enough to develop their religious constitution.

During the occupation of Western Dagomba, Na-Nyagsi slew nearly all the Tingdanas and appointed Dagbamba in their stead. Why he did this is not certain, but the fact remains that to-day, there are in Western Dagomba few, if any, aboriginal Tingdanas. Possibly he was emboldened by the example of his ancestor Kpuganumba in killing the Tingdana of Biung, but such a course was most unusual, for in all the histories of the invading tribes in this part of Africa, although they put at the head of a district a man of their own race in order to guarantee the submission of the conquered population, never for a moment did they imagine that they were qualified to offer sacrifices to the deities of the land.

This was left to the conquered people, and as time went on the former indigenous chiefs became merely religious leaders.

The Dagbamba kingdom proper, therefore, may be said to have been founded during the reign of Na-Nyagsi, and was first of all confined mainly to what is now known as Western Dagomba.

25. It is interesting to note that Professor Leo Frobenius writing in his book *Auf dem Wege nach Atlantis* published in 1911, referring to the Dagomba story of Toha-jie, the Red-Skinned Hunter, whom he calls Torse, says "This Saga is nothing else but a variation of the old historical sunjatta* legend of the Mande in Upper Senegal (Sudan), which describes in his transparent fashion the historical events before and after the year 1352.

*Sunjatta or Soundiata or Mari-Diata, King of Melle or Manding who lived at Kangaba or Dieliba on the Niger below Bamako.

According to the historian Ibn Khaldoun a Soninke Prince named Sou Mangarou, a vassal of the King of Ghana, living at Soso between Goumbou and Bamako, threw off his allegiance and made himself master of Ghana.

This is said to have occurred in A.D. 1203. In A.D. 1235, Soundiat King of Mande, Manding, or Melle, fought and killed Soumangarou near Boulikoro and sacked the town of Ghana which ceased to exist from that time.

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"Malna corresponds with the Mali-Na, that is to say, ruler of Mali and Torse to Traori-se. The bush-cow had on each side the same horns of precious metal and in other respects the smallest points agree with one another—moreover not only did we see preserved in north-west Togoland the same remembrance of historically correct events of the middle ages, we could also say with considerable exactitude that this Dagomba Kingdom must be an offshoot of the ancient and famous kingdom of Mali (Mande) whose centre of gravity lay between the Niger and the Senegal."

26. This name Traori or Tara-ore is to-day the name of one of the Mandingo or "Wangara" clans of which I am informed there are four, Tara-ore, Koulibaly, Ouattara and Soganorgo. Tara-ore is said to mean in Mandingo the hunter with the red eyes; apparently the founder of the clan was a great hunter after leopard.

The facial marks of the Tara-ore and Koulibaly and Ouattara clans resemble those of the Kagbanya and Chakosi.

This information was given me by a Dioula trader at Yendi who came from Kong and who spoke Hausa fluently.

He himself had no facial marks as he said he belonged to the Soganorgo family, descendants of a mallam and therefore moslem.

FOUNDATION OF THE MOSHI DYNASTY

27. Professor Frobenius, in his book *Und Africa sprach*, published in 1912, gives a genealogical tree of the rulers of Moshi down to the present day, in which he shows the first King of Moshi to be one Uidi Rago who died at Timbuctoo in 1329, after a reign of 54 years.

He must therefore have begun to reign in 1275 A.D. He was the son of Nyallanga or Jendanga, daughter of the Na of Gambaga (Mamprusi), and Torse or Tonsa, Riale-Riale, King of Bingo (Gruma) a mighty hunter.

Here again the same name Torse, the Red Hunter crops up.

At the time of Uidi Rago's accession, there were four Kingdoms in the Eastern part of the Niger Bend, namely:

(a) The Songhai kingdom bounded on the West by the kingdom of Melle or Mande.

(b) The Kingdom of Borgu lying on the Niger to the South of Songhai.

(c) The kingdom of Bingo (Grumah) stretching from West of Borgu to what is to-day known as Dagomba.

(d) The kingdom of Gambaga in Mamprusi.

28. The Rev. Mr. Shirer, an American Missionary of the Assemblies of God Mission, stationed at Ouagadougou and a fluent Mole speaker, told me that one day at Yako, north of Ouagadougou, while on a tour of preaching, he was teaching the natives some new games by the light of the moon, and also got them to teach him some of theirs.

In one of them they sang a song, one verse of which is as follows:

"Na yo sia yo, kwabaga la piga na yo, mam ba
na yo ti kwili Gambaga, Gambaga kwili noma;"
literally "will pay, will pay, hundred and ten will pay,
my father will pay to go home to Gambaga, Gambaga
home-going is sweet."

Mr. Shirer enquired why they sang of Gambaga and called it "home", to which they replied "White man, that is where our forefathers came from years ago."

Subsequent investigation bore out this and Mr. Shirer later on made a trip to Gambaga to verify it.

29. To return however to Dagomba history, after the death of the great Na-Nyagsi, there was a succession of Chiefs until on the death of Na-Gungobili, when all the Na-Bihe (sons of a Na) wished to succeed and no decision could be arrived at.

30. It was therefore decided to take the matter before the Na of Mamprusi at Nalerigu, who ordered the drummers of all the candidates to beat out their respective proverbs. But none of them pleased the Na of Mamprusi who called on Zangina, the youngest, for his proverb, which was "when the kapok pods hang together on the tree none can tell which is the eldest."

At this there was a great acclamation and Zangina was appointed Na.

31. It is said that Na-Zangina had been for some time in Hausa country as a boy and it was he who sent for a copy of the Koran and for Hausa mallams to come and settle and teach the people. He is also said to have introduced the wearing of clothes and the art of weaving also from Hausaland, and he built the first Mosque.

It was this particular portion of Dagomba history that was recited at the opening of the Conference.

32. Na-Zangina was the greatest and most progressive of the Dagbamba kings; under him the kingdom expanded and the Gonja were driven out of the Gulpeogu (Tamale) area.

During their invasion of Eastern Dagomba, whether it was that they had become more enlightened or whether the aboriginal races were too strong for them, they did not repeat their tactics of slaying all the Tingdanas, so that in Eastern Dagomba to-day, in contrast with the state of affairs in Western Dagomba, the Tingdanas belong to the subjects races of Konkomiba, Chamba, etc.

33. After the appointment of Na-Zangina as Ya-Na, the Na of Mamprusi, in order to prevent further disputes, appointed three places from which the future Chief of Yendi could be chosen: these were Karaga, Savelugu and Mion, and so it has remained to this day.

34. After the death of Na-Zangina, in the reign of Na-Gariba the Ashanti attacked him. The Chiefs of Savelugu, Tolon, Karaga and Kumbungu, who were not on good terms with him, refused to come to his aid and he was defeated and taken prisoner and had to be redeemed with a ransom of 1,000 slaves.

From that time a yearly tribute of slaves was paid to the King of Ashanti, but it is said that the Ashanti always treated Dagbon with respect as a powerful kingdom although tributary to their King.

35. Na-Gariba was followed by six Chiefs in whose time nothing much of note occurred, but with the reign of Na-Nulunku the troubles of Dagbon began, and there were dissensions among the Dagbamba, followed by civil war until the reign of Na-Abudulai who resorted the prestige of Dagbon and refused to continue paying the tribute of slaves to Ashanti. After his death, there was again civil war in the country and it took his successor, Na-Andani, some time to restore order.

As the history says, all these wars made his people few in number.

At this period, 1897, Barbatu the Zaberrima Slave raider, fugitive from the French in British Territory crossed into neutral zone and joined forces with Na-Andani.

He might again have become a power to be reckoned with had he not died in Yendi, from the bite of a tarantula, so it is by those old men living at Yendi who knew him.

Slaves

*Yearly tribute of slaves
Paid to the Ashanti by Dagbon*

Division Among Dagbambas

Barbatu death

He was buried there and his descendants are still there.

Shortly after this the Dagbamba came into open hostilities with the Germans against whose rifles and machine guns they were no match.

With the German occupation of Yendi and the Convention and Declaration between Great Britain and Germany, November, 1899 the Dagbamba kingdom ceased to exist as such and was split in two by the International frontier.

Two out of the three Divisional Chiefs—Na-Bihe, from whom the heir to Yendi can be chosen, Karaga and Savelugu—found themselves cut off from Yendi in British Territory while the elder in charge of Gulkpeogu (Tamale Division) who was in Yendi on a visit, remained there and never returned.

Later on the Divisional Chiefs of Tolon, Nanton and Kumbungu found themselves put arbitrarily into the Savelugu Division under the Na of Savelugu, with whom they were of equal rank.

This has now been rectified and they have again become Divisional Chiefs answerable only to the Na. In the Tamale area thrown into confusion by the continued absence of the Gulkpe-Na, the Dakpema of Tamale seized the opportunity to increase his own power and importance, actually making a journey to Gambaga, the then Government Headquarters, to invite the Government to build a station in his town where he said there was plenty of water.

At the time the Chiefs, such as Karaga, Savelugu, Tolon, Kumbungu and Nanton, who found themselves cut off from the Na were apparently unwilling to co-operate with us and held themselves aloof.

RECAPITULATION

Mr. Blair in his commentary on the drum history, writes as follows: "It is a general rule, that amongst people whose sole knowledge of their origins consist of a succession of legends of heroic deed performed by their leaders, these leaders and their wanderings and deeds represents tribes and their movements.

"It is only necessary to quote, in support of this rule, the now accepted interpretation of the patriarchal legends of the Old Testament, which represent the movements of early nomadic tribes, under eponymous Chieftains."

German Occupations

He adds "the Drum History of Dagomba bears the marks of legend, rather than of myth. The difference between the two is that a legend is a faint and probably exaggerated reminiscence, whilst a myth is a later accretion of unhistorical incidents, built up to explain a fact of nature, or a place-name. And although small incidents in the Drum History are evidently mythical, it does as a whole bear the stamp of the legendary upon it, even to the casual hearer."

From the Drum History and other information, the tribal movements seem to have been as follows: From Tonga or Songa said to be between Lake Chad and Wadai to Zamfara, driven out probably by the Imoshagh (Tuareks).

Driven out of Zamfara by fresh invaders, the tribe pressed further West, leaving a portion who had remained behind to be conquered by the invaders, whose language and culture, i.e., Hausa, they assumed. As I have already stated, the people of Zamfara in Hausaland who speak a kind of bastard Hausa, recognise the Dagbamba as their kindred and have the same facial markings.

The tribe under their leader Toha-Jie or Torse, the Red Hunter wandered for some time in the country of Melle or Mande where they rendered assistance to the King of Melle, probably intermarrying and picking up Mandingo words, songs and dances.

The name of the big annual dance and festival of the Dagomba, Gonja and Mamprusi known as "Damba" is a Mandingo word meaning "big dance."

It is curious that the Dagomba legend of the flight of their leader Toha-Jie is analogous to the Mandingo legend of Sunjatta, founder of a Melle dynasty.

From the Kingdom of Mande or Melle, they came to Biung in the Fra-Fra country of the present Zuarungu District leaving traces of themselves and their language, and from there went north-east into Grumuh, probably an aboriginal tribe, against whom they fought.

Lastly came the movement southwards, the scattering of the clans and the foundation of Gambaga, and later on Namumbaba, Dagbon and Moshi. It is said that at one time the Dagbamba were very light coloured, and one still sees fair-skinned Dagombas here and there, some with the large hook nose that suggests a throw back to more aquiline-nosed ancestors.

It would be of interest to know what was the original name of the parent stem during its many wanderings before it finally settled down in the Northern Province.

There is a sharp contrast between the histories of the Dagbamba and Gbanya kingdoms.

In the former the Dagbamba came in as a tribe or group of clans, slew many of the Tingdanas and impressed their language on the peoples of the land, aboriginal Grushi and Guan, or driving them out as in the case of the Konkomba, etc.

On the other hand from the evidence at hand, the Kagbanya were a mere raiding band of Mandingo stock, who conquered the Guan and Vagella countries but owing to their small numbers could do no more than establish a ruling dynasty over the many tribes and ended in losing their language and adopting Guan, the language of one of the conquered tribes. The only evidence of their origin is in the few Mandingo words now surviving in the Gbanya language.

The Dagbamba also picked up some foreign words in the course of their wanderings, and their language contains Hausa, a few Mandingo and one or two Songhai words, notably the word "Alfa" for Mallam, which is pure Songhai.

THE CHAKOSI

37. Before concluding this report, it is necessary to give a brief account of the Chakosi people who occupy a portion of Dagbamba Territory.

The capital of the Chakosi people is at Sansanne Mango in the French Mandated Territory and only a portion of them lie in British Territory in the north-east of the Eastern Dagbamba District.

Their traditions say that they came from a place called Mango-Toro, behind Bontuku and that they came originally to Gambaga as mercenaries for the Na of Mamprusi.

According to Mamprusi history, one of the Nas of Gambaga had made a slave-raiding expedition as far as Bitugu in the Ivory Coast near the Komoe River and to commemorate this he had some Kola trees cut down and a drum made out of them.

Later on in the reign of another Na, he quarrelled with his younger brother Kuga, who fled until he came to the country of Mangu Tora.

N/B-

"Tora" says the Hausa manuscript as translated by Mr. J. Withers Gill, "is the name of a certain country but Mangu-Tora is the name of a town being Mangu of the Torawa."

The fugitive, Kuga, collected some of the men of Mangu, returned to Gambaga and with their help made himself Na.

The chronicle runs "And Kuga told the men of Mangu they could do what they liked in the whole land. But they said they were warriors and knew no luxuries save war. And he pointed out to them certain places which inclined to his elder brother who had been killed and they fought the people there, subdued and enslaved them.

"Up to the land of Barba (Bariba, i.e., Borgu) they made a camp midway between four territories—Barba, Mobs, Konkomba and Gurma.

"They opened a road from there to Gambaga so that whoever wills can go thither and come thence. Roads also were opened to Gurma and Sanghai. They fought until a road had been opened to the banks of the Quorra (Niger). The people travelled there going and coming from Hausaland to the Camp of the Mangu people. The place became a big city and is known no longer as the camp of Mangu, but as the city of Mangu."

The name Sansanne was given to it by the Hausa, and the word means a larger or war camp, which is further evidence of the origin of the place.

X Mr. Mackay, District Commissioner, Southern Mamprusi, in his history of the Mamprusi states how Na-Atabia during his wars went as far as Buna in the Ivory Coast and then south to Mangu. He writes, "The Mangu people seem to have put up a great defence and so were not put to death, but were captured and men, women and children brought back and given land in the vicinity of Sansanne Mango."

He says later on that these people came from Mango or Mango-Turi and were used as troops against the Gurma people.

X At the time of Mr. Ferguson's visit to Sansanne Mango in 1894, the Chakosi seemed to have become more or less independent and to quote from the confidential paper published in 1897 on the position of England and other European Powers in the West Coast of Africa and in the Hinterlands "The extent of Chakosi Territory was described by the king to Mr. Ferguson in words to this effect—We are coterminous with Mamprusi, Borgu and Dagomba."

Na Atabia

Ferguson

"Tis true we are surrounded by a belt of savago tribes called Pampamba, but we are frequently fighting with them, and they dread and respect us. In fact, had their country been an organized one with a Chief, such Chief would long ago have recognised us as his master."

As stated earlier in this report, the Chakosi language closely resembles Nzima and Aowin, languages of the Agni Twi group, although I imagine that it contains also a number of Mandingo and Gurma words.

A French Map of West Africa, No. 10, published in 1900. Armand Colin et Cie, Editeurs, shows the town of mango or Groumania as lying some eighty kilometres west of Bontuku in the Ivory Coast and the district is marked Anno or Mango-Tori, which is obviously the same as Mango-Toro. From enquiries made from native merchants from Kong, I was informed that the language spoken in this region to-day is identical with Chakosi. The Chakosi in Dagomba to-day form a division under their Chief, the Famo of Djereponi, who ranks as one of the Na's Divisional Chiefs.

38. With regards to the other items on the Agenda (d) to (h), no comment is, I think, necessary as they have been fully dealt with in the minutes of the Conference and on the various appendices.

THE SUBJECT RACES.

39. The most difficult problem before the Dagbamba Native Administration is how to secure the obedience and co-operation of the subject races. In the old days, obedience was enforced with the sword, but now that is no longer possible, and the pugnacious Konkomba care nothing for the Na and very little for the Administration.

There are continual murders and fights amongst themselves and the attitude of their headmen towards the Na and the Government is that they refuse to betray their own people.

Instructions have been issued to the Political Officers that every effort must be made to get the Na to decentralise and to work through his Chiefs and headmen.

The Divisional Chiefs are to be taught to govern the primitive pagan as they themselves are governed and that is through their headmen instead of dealing with them directly.

I am convinced that if these aboriginal people are allowed to elect their own headmen or group Councils from amongst themselves it would be more satisfactory.

The Dagomba
and Konkomba

In fact the continual trouble amongst the groups of "Konkomba" tribes—and I used the word in its Dagbamba sense, signifying barbarian—is largely due to the fact that they fear and dislike their Dagbamba overlords.

RESULTS OF THE CONFERENCE

40. Resulting from the information received and recorded at the Conference, the following facts are known:

- (a) That the Chiefs of Dagbom definitely desire to be reunited in one kingdom under the Na.
- (b) The history of Dagbom.
- (c) The manner in which the kingdom is constituted and administered under the Ya-Na.

RECOMMENDATIONS

41. We are at present faced with the anomaly that whereas the Na of Yendi has by law complete jurisdiction over his subject in British Territory, in the Mandated Area his jurisdiction is limited to natives of the British Sphere and a fine of five pounds is the maximum penalty that can be imposed in his court.

However, from both Section 15 of the Northern Territories Administration Ordinance and Section 9 of the British Sphere of Togoland Administration Ordinance, it is implied that the Native Tribunals possess inherent rights of jurisdiction, and we are now awaiting the Ordinance to define and regulate the exercise of these powers and jurisdiction.

At the present moment, Dagbom is divided into two districts with Commissioners at Yendi and Tamale.

In order to preserve and strengthen the prestige of the Na, his representative is stationed at the Court of the District Commissioner, Western Dagomba at Tamale, who issues any instructions he may have to give to the Chiefs of Western Dagomba through his representative who communicates them to the Chiefs in the name of the Na.

However, this is an unsatisfactory and make-shift arrangement and if any real progress is to be made in Native Administration, Western Dagomba should be absorbed into Eastern Dagomba with Yendi as headquarters and Tamale as a sub-station. All court appeals would go naturally to the Na and

from thence to that of the local Political Officer, whilst the duties of the Assistant at Tamale would be confined to those of Cantonment Magistrate, Officer-in-Charge Prison, and the inspection of a portion of the Dagbamba kingdom.

I foresee no difficulty in amalgamating the two districts; on the contrary I cannot see how the Native Administration can be made to succeed if this is not done.

I have already put forward a scheme by which Dagbon should have its own little staff of permanent and relieving officers, three in all, so that when the senior officer of the district is on leave, his place is taken by the next senior, who could also succeed him in command of the district when the turn of the senior officer comes to go south to qualify for promotion.

This would preserve the continuity of policy and ensure that the district would never be left to an officer unfamiliar with the Chiefs, the language and local politics.

42. It may be of interest to report that the Ya-Na's tribuna, has been organised with the Tribunal Clerk, Mr. Tamakloel who submits regular monthly returns and the State Treasury has been started with an account at the Colonial Bank, Kumasi.

CONCLUSION

43. In conclusion, I would like to bring to your notice the excellent work performed by Mr. H. A. Blair in compiling the Dagbamba history and obtaining the information which enabled the Conference to take place.

His success has been due not only to his own keenness and hard work, but also to his knowledge of the Dagomba language and the confidence with which he has been able to inspire his Chiefs.

A. DUNCAN-JOHNSTONE,
Commissioner of the Southern Province.

TAMALE, N.T.,

3rd January, 1931.

APPENDIX I.

ADDRESS BY E. A. T. TAYLOR, ESQUIRE, ACTING
CHIEF COMMISSIONER, AT THE OPENING OF THE
DAGOMBA CONFERENCE AT YENDI,
21st NOVEMBER, 1930

Ya-Na and Chiefs of the Dagomba people. I am very happy to meet you here this morning and to see so many of the Dagomba people present; and I wish to thank you personally for the enthusiastic welcome you have given me on this my first official visit to your principal town.

Your Provincial Commissioner has spoken of the importance of this Conference to the Dagomba State, and its importance in the eyes of Government may be measured by the number of Europeans who have travelled here to attend its opening. I hope that this occasion will mark an epoch in the history of Dagomba. That history has hitherto been locked up in the minds of men, and you have given me this morning a demonstration of its communication to the people. These methods have been used in all countries all over the world; but a time comes in the history of every nation, when it becomes advisable that its customs and traditions should be recorded in a form to which reference may be more conveniently made than by the somewhat cumbersome process of assembling meetings of historians and drummers.

You know that, since the whole Dagomba State came under the English Government, the laws which govern it are made by the Governor at Accra. But the Governor does not legislate for this territory without consulting the Commissioners who are on duty in these parts. It is our duty to advise him concerning the customs, law and history of the people so that his legislation may be of an appropriate kind; and we cannot so advise him if we have to call a meeting every time we desire information on a particular point. That is why you have been asked to assemble your Chiefs and people—so that an authoritative and accurate record may be made, and communicated to the Commissioners, who will then have ready access to what information they may require from time to time.

There is a particular reason why this important record is required at the present time. It is because the Governor has

APPENDIX . II

MINUTES OF THE CONFERENCE HELD AT YENDI
ON THE 24TH, 25TH, 26TH AND 27TH DAYS OF
NOVEMBER, 1930 TO ENQUIRE INTO THE ORGANI-
SATION AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATE OF
DAGBAMBA

The Conference opened on the 24th day of November, 1930,
in the presence of the following:

President

Mr. A. C. DUNCAN-JOHNSTONE, Commissioner, Southern
Province.

Members

MR. H. A. BLAIR, District Commissioner, Eastern Dagomba.
ABUDULAI, YA-NA, Paramount Chief of Dagomba.

Divisional Chiefs

YAKUBU, Gushie-Na
MAHAMA, Yelzore-Lana
ISA, Nantong-Na
IMORU, Gulkpe-Na
YAHYA, Sunson-Na
ALASSAN, Tolon-Na
ALASSAN, Zohe-Na for Kumbungu-Na (deceased)
ZIBRIM, Karaga-Na
BUKARI, Savelugu-Na
ABUDULAI, Mion-Lana
BUKARI, Kworli-Na
ANDANI, Demon-Na
MALBA, Djereponi-Fame

Members of Ya-Na's Judicial Council

Kuga-Na, Zohe-Na, Kumlana, Balo-Na, Malle, Bung-Lana,
Gugbindana, Kpahagu, and Gullana.

Advisory Council

Mbadugu, Zankolana.
The DAMBALIA, Spokesmen for the Na.

In addition to the above over a hundred subordinate Chiefs
were present during the proceedings.

OPENING ADDRESS BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE

2. The President having greeted the Ya-Na and his Chiefs, addressed them on the subject and reasons of the Conference.

He told them that in the past, Dagbon had been a great and powerful kingdom, but owing to various reasons—civil wars, lack of central authority and the division of the country between the British and German Governments—its power had declined until it had almost disappeared. He explained both the policy of the Government in desiring to administer the country through the medium of the Chiefs and also the proposed Native Administration Ordinance by which the powers of the Chiefs would be regulated. He went on to say that, however, before any such Ordinance could be applied to the State of Dagbon there were certain things it was necessary for Government to know and they were as follows:

- (a) Description of Dagbon, its extent, boundaries, etc.
- (b) Description of the people and classification of the various tribes and languages.
- (c) History of the growth of Dagbon and its ruling dynasty, from as far back as it was possible to go, up to the present day.
- (d) Constitution of the State of Dagbon, how administered and position of the Ya-Na.
- (e) List of Divisional Chiefs owing Allegiance to the Na and their precedence, if any *inter se*.
- (f) Constitution of Dagbamba State Council and list of members.
- (g) List of Chieftainships from whom candidates are eligible to aspire to the Nam of Yendi.
- (h) Rules governing appointment to Divisional Chieftainships.
- (i) Rules regarding deposition or abdication of the Ya-Na.
- (j) Rules regarding deposition or abdication of subordinate Chiefs.
- (k) List of Chiefs holding Na-Bihe (Sons) Chieftainships.
- (l) List of Chiefs holding Kpamba Elder Chieftainships.
- (m) Devolution of powers of Chiefs.
- (n) List of Tribunals and titles of members thereof.
- (o) Formation of a Yendi Division.
- (p) The affairs and constitution of the Gulpeogu Division (Tamale).

The information conveyed under these heads would be recorded in writing and signed by the Na, his Divisional Chiefs and Councillors. A copy of this record would be handed to the Na, one to the District Commissioner, and the original sent to Government.

The President went on to say that in the past all Dagbani history and custom had been handed down from father to son by word of mouth, and in those days men had more leisure in which to do so, but now, with the advance of civilization, the times were changing and soon this method would not be satisfactory; in order to preserve these things therefore it was necessary to record them in writing.

All Dagombas knew the power that lay in the written word, they had only to look at the Koran whose laws they knew bound together moslems the world over and served as a guide to them.

This record of their history and customs would be their guide in the future and school-boys growing up would be taught to read it.

Once the information concerning their customs was recorded and confirmed by the Chiefs, nothing could be changed unless they met in Council to do so and he therefore solemnly charged them to speak only what they felt to be true, for the good of the State but not for their own ends, and he warned them further that the onus of giving information that was incorrect would be on their own heads.

He further stressed the point that the fact that they were to be allowed to exercise a measure of their former power did not mean that they were to become independent of Government, but that they were to take a more active part under Government in assisting the Administration to govern the country.

The president pointed out to the Ya-Na that it was his duty as Paramount Chief to know all his Divisional Chiefs and be acquainted with the customs of his country.

The power which was being restored to the Chiefs was for them to use, not for their own purpose and aggrandisement, but for the good of their people—both Dagbamba and the primitive peoples of the country—and they were being given a great opportunity to progress which he was quite certain they would make good use of.

With regard to certain items in the Agenda:

- (a) Description of Dagbon, its extent, boundaries, etc.;
- (b) Description of the people and classification of the various tribes and languages;
- (c) History of the growth of Dagbon and the ruling dynasty from as far back as it was possible to go up to the present day—

The District Commissioner had already held several preliminary conferences with the Ya-Na and his Chiefs and the description of Dagbon was as follows:

3. DAGBON—EXTENT AND BOUNDARIES.

8,082 square miles.

Boundary East-South-East.—The Zabzugu Division with the country of Basari across the Anglo-French Boundary.

Boundary South-East.—The Nakpali Division of Zorglini and Jarkpanga with the Adjati country.

Boundary South.—The Nakpali Division with the State of Nanumba, Yendi Division with the State of Nanumba, Mion Division with the State of Gonja at the Palari River.

Boundary South-West.—The Tolon Division with Gonja at the River Volta near Daboya, the Gulpeogu Division with the Gonja Division of Kawshaw.

Boundary West.—Nyankpali with Gonja near Akiri-Yili Zantumi, at a river at Gariku-Lila.

Boundary North.—Diari Section with Mamprusi, the Karaga Division with Mamprusi at Yogu-Zan-Dua; the Gushiogo Division with Mamprusi at Somayili and Kahogori.

Boundary North-East.—The Djereponi Division (Chakosi) with the River Komba at the Anglo-French Boundary.

Boundary East.—The Sunson Division with the Basari tribes Anglo-French Boundary, the Demon Division with the Chamba and Basari tribes Anglo-French Boundary.

The Ya-Na and the Chiefs agreed with this description.

(b) DISTRIBUTION AND CLASSIFICATION OF THE VARIOUS
SUBJECT RACES AND LANGUAGES AS GIVEN BY THE NA
AND HIS COUNCIL

Divisions of Dagbon	Subject races	Language
Gushiogo ..	Komba ..	Distinctly allied to Konkomba.
	Bukumbung ..	
Zabzugu ..	Karbur ..	Karbur.
	Chamba ..	Allied to Komba.
	Konkomba ..	Kokomba allied to (Grumah Gur language group).
Sunson ..	Gbimba ..	Allied to Grumah.
	Konkomba ..	Allied to Grumah.
	Nafeba ..	Allied to Gbimba.
	Saboba ..	Allied to Konkomba.
Mion ..	Konkomba ..	Allied to Grumah.
Nakpali ..	Nagbiba ..	Unclassified.
	Konkomba ..	Allied to Grumah.
Djeroponi ..	Chukosi ..	Allied to Nzima-Aowin with some Mandingo words.
	Nafeba ..	
	Komba ..	
	Bokosu ..	Allied to Komba.
	B'mawba ..	Allied to Grumah.
Demon ..	Konkomba ..	
Nantong ..	Tinbihi ..	This is a name given to unclassified Aboriginals meaning children of the land.
Yendi ..	Konkomba ..	
	Nefaba ..	
	Gbimba ..	
	Saboba ..	
Gulpeogu ..	Kpariba ..	Allied to Guan.
Karagu ..	Tinbihi ..	This is a name given to unclassified Aboriginals meaning children of the land.
Savelugu ..	Tinbihi ..	do.
Tolon ..	Tinbihi ..	do.
Kumbungu ..	Tinbihi ..	do.

(c) HISTORY OF THE GROWTH OF DAGBON AND THE RULING
DYNASTY FROM AS FAR BACK AS POSSIBLE UP TO THE
PRESENT DAY

5. The President said that this history had been largely written down by the District Commissioner, Mr. Blair, as it was recited by the Head Drummer and was therefore the official history of Dagbon as given by the tribal historians. It would be included as an appendix to the minutes of the meeting and he himself would add a commentary, Appendix III

(d) CONSTITUTION OF THE STATE OF DAGBON, HOW
ADMINISTERED AND POSITION OF YA-NA

6. It was agreed that the State of Dagbon was administered by the Ya-Na assisted by a Judicial Council of Elders and a State Council* composed of the Divisional Chiefs and Elders.

This last was, in the past, only summoned in matters of importance affecting the kingdom such as a declaration of war or the changing of a custom.

The Na said that if he had occasion to make a new law it would not be customary to summon the full council, he would merely promulgate the law and make it known to his Divisional Chiefs.

All Chiefs are appointed either by the Na or by the Divisional Chiefs, there is no such thing as election by the people to any Dagomba chieftainship.

Descent is patrilineal except:

(a) in the cases of "Officer" chieftainship of the Na's Forces because these officers were trained by the Chief of Mampong, Ashanti, at the time when Dagomba was tributary to Ashanti;

(b) in the case of aboriginal headmen of villages who are also Fetish Priests and whose succession is hereditary and who follow rules of succession at present unknown but definitely matrilineal.

There are two broad distinctions to the appointment of Dagomba Chiefs and the Chiefs are divided into two classes:

(a) Ya-Na-Bihi, i.e., Chiefs in the line of succession to Yendi.

A Nam (Chieftainship) of this kind may be held by the sons, grandsons or descendants of a Na, the general rule being always that a son may never rise higher than his father.

(b) Ya-Na kpamba, i.e. Ya-Na's Elders.

These Chieftainships are held by any one whom the Na cares to appoint, but they may also be held by Na-Bihi in certain instances.

*Note.—In this connection, it should be remembered that the Chiefs of Dagbon were and still are hide-bound by Tabu.

They are divided into three classes:

- (i) Those chieftainships generally held by grandsons;
- (ii) Those generally held by Elders of the Na not of Royal Blood;
- (iii) Those held by descendants of an original Chief of place, e.g. Gushiogu, Yogu, etc.

The Chieftainships of Zabzugu, Sunson, Nantong Diari are examples of Class (i); Tolon, Kumbungu, Gulpeogu, Lumbungu are examples of Class (ii). All are appointed by the Ya-Na.

No grandsons of a Na have ever yet succeeded to the Nam of Yendi.

As a general rule in the case of an elder Chieftainship, the Na's descendant's sons, etc., may succeed, but a "son" Chieftainship must never be alienated from the Royal Family.

7. The president asked the leading Divisional Chiefs if they were all agreed in recognising the Ya-Na as their overlord and the answer being in the affirmative, he said he would ask them to sign a document to this effect to which they agreed.

Acknowledgment by the Divisional Chiefs that they are the subjects of the Ya-Na and agree to serve him from henceforth *Vide*—Appendix A.

(f) COMPOSITION OF THE STATE OR LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

8. Appendix B gives the list of those Divisional Chiefs and Elders who form the State or Legislative Council of Dagbon, and is signed by the Ya-Na and members of the Council.

The Ya-Na stated that in the past, the state Council had only been summoned to confer in matters of supreme importance such as—

- (a) declaration of war.
- (b) changing of a custom or the making of a new one.

He said that formerly, if the Na made a new law, he did it in Council with his Elders but did not consult the Divisional Chiefs.

9. After the above document was signed the Conference was adjourned until the 25th November, 1930.

25th November, 1930.

The Conference continues at 8.30 a.m.

**RULES OF SUCCESSION AND LIST OF THOSE
CHIEFTAINSHIPS FROM WHICH A CANDIDATE
IS ELIGIBLE TO ASPIRE TO THE PARAMOUNT
CHIEFTAINSHIP, THE NAM OF YENDI**

10. The Paramount Chief of Yendi, i.e. of Dagbon, is chosen from the holder of the Chieftainship of

KARAGA
MION
SAVELUGU.

See document to this effect—*Appendix C.*

METHOD OF ELECTION

The Gushie-Na, the Kuga-Na, the Tuguri-Nam and the Gomli form the committee of selection. All these candidates present themselves for selection and recourse is made to the spirits of the dead Chiefs, the cult of whom is controlled by the Gulkpe-Na, Baghali-Na and the Kuga-Na and, from the results of a sacrifice, it is decided which of the candidates is the possessor of a "good head", i.e., the man whom the spirits desire. Having been selected the candidate is taken into a dark room by the Zohe-Na where he is made to choose one of a number of staves which he cannot see. These staves are believed to be imbued with the souls of the dead Chiefs and according to the staff chosen so does the soul of the respective dead Chief enter into the body of the new Na. He, the Na elected, remains in this dark room for some days, during which time the actual investiture takes place. The object primarily conferring the power on the newly-elected Na is the "Bolon" a lump of wood which is kept by the Chief of Kpatia and which is brought from there to Yendi for the investiture by the Togasi-Nam and the Gomli who are the only other persons who may touch or ever see this highly sacred object. When seated upon the "Bolon," the Na is stripped of his clothes and washed, from which moment he becomes a Bumbiogo (an object of Tabu).

He is then invested with the beads and the hat in which the secondary power lies.

RULES GOVERNING APPOINTMENT TO DIVISIONAL CHIEFTAINSHIPS

11. The rules were discussed and a document embodying the rules of appointment drawn up and signed by the Ya-Na and the State Council—*Vide* Appendix D.

There are two classes of Divisional Chiefs:

- (a) Kpamba (Elder)
- (b) Bihi (Sons or Descendants of a Na).

No holder of a Kpamba Chieftainship can ever aspire to Yendi.

DIVISION OF CHAKOSI

This Chief is a foreigner living on his own land by treaty with Dagbon under whose protection he or his ancestors put themselves.

The Chakosi have conformed to Dagomba custom and submit the candidates for the chieftainship to the Na for approval.

This portion of Chakosi was cut off from the Head Chief at Sansanne Mango by the Anglo-French International Boundary of 1920.

RULES REGARDING THE ABDICATION AND DEPOSITION OF THE YA-NA

12. All reference to this is Tabu; and any allusion made appeared to shock the subordinate Chiefs and elders so profoundly that it was deemed inadvisable to bring up the subject. At all events it seems quite clear that no Na has ever abdicated or been deposed unless by death or warfare. As an instance of this it is recounted in Dagomba history how Yakubu the Na of Yendi became insane and took to wandering about and burning men's houses. How in the day time he would start shooting at people in the market and cutting them down with his sword. In spite of this no one was allowed to lay hands on him, and one Chief Kwatire Lagafu who proposed to forge fetters of silver to keep the Na from wandering about was attacked by the other Chiefs and slain.

RULES REGARDING THE DEPOSITION OF SUBORDINATE CHIEFS

13. The holder of a chieftainship cannot be deprived of his office except by death.

This is on account of the spirits of the dead Chiefs of whom the holder may be a descendant. A Chief misruling his area, in the past was, if his conduct grew too intolerable, made war against by the Na who, if he gained the victory, had the erring Chief slain.

The converse may perhaps have also been the case. This was the only legitimate means of deposing a Chief from his office—*Vide* Appendix E signed by the Ya-Na and the subordinate Chiefs. Abdication is unknown to native custom, the spirits of the dead ancestors not permitting this.

PRINCIPAL NA-BIHE CHIEFTAINSHIPS IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

14. *Vide* Appendix F.

PRINCIPAL KPAMBA CHIEFTAINSHIPS IN ORDER OF PRECEDENCE

15. *Vide* Appendix G.

TRIBUNALS

16. The list of Tribunals and the titles of the members comprising them are shown in detail in Appendix H.

There are 14 Divisional Tribunals with an appeal to the Na and his Judicial Council.

There are a number of villages directly under the Na whose cases are dealt with by an elder appointed by the Na with the title of Mbadugu.

For judicial purposes these villages constitute practically a division, for all cases from them unless very grave ones are heard by the Mbadugu assisted by the Yendi Elders.

LAND CASES

17. The Na stated that he owned all the land and all land cases were tried by him. He said that quarrels between Chiefs over land and farming rights were by no means uncommon. He then qualified his first statement by saying that any land case arising between two Chiefs directly appointed by the Na must come direct to him as a Court of First Instance for settlement, but that a dispute between Chiefs appointed by a Divisional Chief was heard by the respective Chief with an appeal to the Tribunal of the Na.

In all cases the Tingdanas of the land in dispute would be summoned to sit in the Tribunal and assist the Chiefs and elders hearing the case.

Note.—It is advisable here to make an explanatory note. It is understood by the Dagombas that the land is owned by the Na and a stranger who settles in a Dagomba village wishing to build a house and farm must go first to the Chief, representing the Na, for permission to settle. The Chief then sends for the Tingdana, to whom he gives a fowl, whereupon the Tingdana retires and calls the Baga (Soothsayer) to cast the lots. The Tingdana then performs the sacrifice and with the aid of the "Baga" and his "Kwelegu" (bag of bones from sacred animals), the stranger's choice of site is confirmed or otherwise.

It should be emphasised that the Tingdana is the principal Fetish Priest, the hereditary holder of the office, whose duties are connected with the land boundaries, but he does not own the land. The land and everything growing on it belongs to the Fetish, or rather it is less the land than the produce of it which is in question.

When the Dagomba invaded Western Dagomba prior to their occupation of Eastern Dagomba, their leader, Na-Nyagsi slew nearly all the Tingdanas and appointed Dagombas. Why he did this is not certain, but there are very few aboriginal Tingdanas, if any, in Western Dagomba to-day. The aboriginal people of the district are however known as Tin-Bihi (Children of the land) and are sometimes consulted in connection with land cases.

When later the Dagomba invaded Eastern Dagomba, for reasons unknown, whether they had become more enlightened or whether the tribes were stronger, they did not kill off all the Tingdanas, many of whom are still of the aboriginal tribes of Gbimba, Konkomba, Komba, etc., to this day.

18. The President said that he understood that the Divisional Chiefs and their Sub-Chiefs were anxious to get back to their farms on account of another threatened invasion of locusts. He said that as they had dealt with all the Agenda and signed all the necessary documents concerning their share in administering Dagbon, there was no reason why they should not withdraw from the Conference, and he wished them a safe journey home. The Divisional Chiefs, led by the Gushie-Na, then took leave of the President and withdrew from the Conference.

The Conference was then adjourned until the 26th November.

The Conference continues on 26th November, 1930.

19. *Discussion of the affairs of the Gulpeogu Division*

Note.—When the kingdom of Dagomba was split in two by the British and German occupation, the Division of Gulpeogu (Tamale Area) was left without a head as the elder in charge of this division happened to be making one of his periodical stays at Yendi and on the division of the kingdom never went back to Tamale. The people of this area are not Dagombas but belong to aboriginal tribe of Kpariba akin to Guan or Gonja.

This division together with the divisions of Tolon and Kumbungu was put arbitrarily under the Chief of Savelugu, thus increasing his importance. At the same time the elder in charge of the Tamale market, the Dakpema, profiting by the fact that the British Government had made Tamale the headquarters of the Northern Territories Administration increased out of all proportion in power and importance, from an elder he became in fact what Captain Rattray terms "a Government Chief."

When the Dagomba Conference was mooted an agitation was set on foot by certain persons in Tamale to show that:—

(a) the Gulpeogu Area had never been under the Na of Yendi.

(b) the Dakpema had always been supreme in the division.

This was afterwards denied by the Dakpema and his elders in a letter to the District Commissioner and he acknowledged that he followed the Na of Yendi through the Gulpeogu-Na and the Gumi-Na.

Dagbon
split into
two
German
British

a.

Apart from this the other Chiefs of the division Kanvilli, Letting and Choggo stated that so far from the Dakpema being independent he was, not even the senior Chief in the division.

Statement by the Wulshe-Na officially representing the Dakpema of Tamale

The Wulshe-Na stated publicly before the meeting that any person who made a statement that—

- (a) the Tamale Dakpema did not follow the Ya-Na through the Gulkpe-Na,
- (b) he did not follow the Gulkpe-Na,
- (c) he was the senior Chief in the Gulkpeogu Division, was lying for his own ends.

All present agreed and the President said that he was glad to see the matter amicably settled. He said that he wished to discuss the question of the Gulpe-Na going to live in the Gulkpeogu (Tamale) Division as he did not think it a good thing to have an absentee Chief or rather elder living at headquarters away from the division of which he was in charge.

The Na replied that in former times the Gulkpe-Na had divided his time between Yendi and Gulkpeogu, making visits to his division.

The president remarked that this was by no means an uncommon case and it had happened in Gonja and also in the Fulani Emirates of Northern Nigeria that heads of divisions had resided at the headquarters of the Paramount Chief. However, he said, customs changed with the times and to quote an Ashanti proverb "In the reign of one king hides are cured by being dried in the sun, in the reign of another they are cured by smoking them over a fire."

The Na said he appreciated this and would like to discuss the matter with the Gulkpe-Na and his elders.

COMPOSITION OF THE GULKPE-NA'S TRIBUNAL

20. The next item under discussion was the composition of the Gulkpe-Na's Court, and who should be president of the court during the absence of the Gulkpe-Na.

Note.—At a preliminary discussion with the Na and the District Commissioner, Mr. Blair, the Gulkpe-Na gave it as his considered opinion that the Chief of Kartvilli should be President of the Court during his absence in relation to affairs touching Dagbon. The other Chiefs said however, that in matters concerning the foreign residents of Tamale, the Tamale Dakpema should preside in his, the Gulkpe-Na's absence, for the supervision of the market had been traditionally entrusted to the Dakpema.

This implied that he had been given jurisdiction over strangers who had settled in Tamale on account of the market.

The Gulkpe-Na at first demurred to this but was overruled by speeches from the Ya-Na and the Karaga-Na, who both said that this was not only expedient but in accordance with tradition. The President said that he would like the Na, his councillors, Gulkpe-Na and Gulkpeogu Chiefs to talk over the points raised and let him have their recommendations before he left Yendi.

DUTIES OF THE NA'S REPRESENTATIVE IN WESTERN DAGOMBA

21. The Na then requested information as to the duty of the representative he had been instructed to keep at Tamale.

The President replied that at the present time the districts of Eastern and Western Dagomba had not yet been amalgamated, nor had the Native Administration Ordinance become law and the District Commissioner, Tamale, had therefore still certain duties to perform in connection with the Western Dagomba Chiefs. In order not to lessen the prestige of the Na and further to bring it home to the people that he was Paramount in Dagbon, the District Commissioner, Tamale, had been instructed to issue any instructions he might have to give to the Chief through the mouth of the Na's representative.

The latter would issue all instructions in the name of the Ya-Na, would travel with the District Commissioner and keep the Na acquainted with everything that went on. The President said formerly it had been the practice to issue instructions through the Government Interpreter but this had been stopped, and he wished to emphasise the fact that the Interpreter was nothing but a mouthpiece for the Commissioner and that all

orders would be given to the Na's representative. The Na then said that he understood and was very satisfied with the arrangement.

The meeting was then adjourned.

The Conference continues on the 28th November.

22. The President asked the Na if he was now in a position to reply to the points raised in connection with the Gulkpeogu Division on the 27th November.

23. The Gulkpe-Na said that he intended to make periodical visits to his division and stay there for several months at a time residing at Zogoyuli near Kanvilli outside Tamale.

In his absences at Yendi he would arrange to delegate powers to one of the five others who constitute his court, i.e. Choggo-Na, Kanvilli-Na, Wulshe-Na, Tamale Dakpema and Vitting-Na.

24. The President said that this completed the business of the Conference and he would take leave of the Na and his Councillors.

25. The Ya-Na in reply said that he would like to mention that the President had for several days taken great trouble over the affairs of Dagbon and he felt very strongly that it was through his help that Dagbon would again be a united state.

He said he would support all efforts to help his people.

He wished to thank Government and the Provincial Commissioner for the turn affairs had taken.

26. The President then declared the Conference to be at an end.

APPENDIX III

I.—HISTORY OF THE DAGOMBA.

The history of the Dagomba is preserved through the medium of the drum chant, which is solemnly and liturgically recited from time to time. The history itself is passed down through generations of drummers, who are taught their work from very early youth. See the Dagomba who live at or near a big Chief's town will know the history, though they must never impart any of it, and therefore an excellent check is kept upon the accuracy of the history as related by the drummers. In this way the history is as permanent a record as a written document—possibly even more so; for one has only to consider the vagaries of the various texts of the classics, or of the New Testament, to realise the number of glosses, repetitions, and bad readings which can creep into manuscripts of early times, which need the highest ingenuity of criticism before one probable common version is resolved.

I am indebted to Mallam Halidu of Yendi for the framework and many of the stories in the outline which I give below. He had explained it all to me on very many occasions, in Dagomba (which he has spoken from childhood), which he has been able to do by reason of not fearing the Tabu upon it, himself being a very cultured Hausa. It was told to him in his youth by the chief drummer of Yendi, since whose death he has been at liberty to repeat it.

Some of the details of the history I have also learned from having on several occasions listened to the drum history myself, which I could only partially understand, since it is recited in traditional and classical Dagomba, and is often completely drowned by the drumming.

A.—THE DRUM HISTORY

Once upon a time, a man came from the country of Zamfara, from which he had been driven, into the kingdom of Melle.

This man was light in colour, and came bearing a bow and arrows; and before long he gave such evidence of his hunting powers, that he was named by the Mande people "Toha-jie", the Red Hunter.

One day he was hunting far away in the bush, when he came suddenly upon a hut. In this hut was an old woman, whom he asked for a drink of water. But the old woman said "Alas! Neither I nor my grandsons have had water for many days. Look how thin they are." She then explained that there was an enormous bush-cow which lurked near their pool, and drove away all who came to draw water.

So Toha-jie asked for two calabashes shaped , which

he took one under each arm, and went to the pool. As he dipped them in to fill them, they made a loud gurgling sound, which the bush-cow heard, and at which it bellowed. And as the bush-cow charged from his covert, Toha-jie shot him with an arrow. He then took the tail and the horns and returned and was greeted with joy by the old woman and all the village. The headman then took him to the Chief of Melle, and told him how he had killed this much dreaded bush-cow.

Upon hearing this, the Chief of Melle solicited his help, in his wars, which Toha-jie gave to him; and no sooner had Toha-jie arrived at the scene of war than the Chief of Melle's enemies were put to flight, terrified by the tremendous feats performed by Toha-jie.

Upon his return to Melle, the Chief greeted him as a hero, and offered him his choice of any of his daughters as wife. Of these Toha-jie chose a lame one, known as "Paga-wo'buga," the Lame Woman; and in spite of all the protests of the Chief, he refused to change his mind, and asked permission to leave.

With great regret the Chief allowed him to go, carrying Paga-wo'buga on his shoulder. But the old woman chose three youths to follow Toha-jie, to find out where he settled down.

These youths took with them a miraculous gourd, and followed Toha-jie until he reached a cave, which he entered. They remained there until they made sure that he was making it his home, and then planted the magic gourd. In course of many years the gourd grew until it reached the house of the old woman.

In due course, another Chief succeeded the previous Chief of Melle, and he too made war with great energy. But there came a time when matters began to go badly for him, and he

looked for help. Upon this the original old woman (whose tale of years must by this time have been phenomenal) came to the Chief, and told him to send for Toha-jie if he was still alive.

The messengers duly followed the gourd and soon arrived at the mouth of the cave, where they stopped, and called "Toha-Jie," but none answered. As they were about to enter, however, a tall and powerful youth, dressed as a hunter, leapt out, and announced himself as the son of Toha-jie, now dead. And he said "Whatever you require of Toha-jie I will do." So he slung his bow on his shoulder and followed the messengers back to the Chief of Melle, who explained to him the parlous state of the wars.

As before when Toha-jie had gone to his assistance, his son's appearance upon the field of battle caused a debacle in the enemy's ranks, and the Chief of Melle was victorious.

The Chief then wished to give the youth a wife and let him settle in Melle, but he refused, and took his leave. After many days travelling in the bush he came to some very thickly wooded country, and lay down in wait for possible game. But instead of game, he saw a graceful maiden carrying a calabash to the water-side. He loved the maiden at sight, and leapt to his feet, while the maiden modestly ran away. But he cried "Stop! I come in peace." So he stopped. He asked what village she had come from, and she said it was Biung, and that this was the country of the Fra-Fra. She further told him that her father was the Tingdana.

He accompanied her to her father's house, who cried, at the sight of him "You have brought a wonderful fellow to the village (a kpugi numbu na)," from which time the youth's name was known as Kpuganumbu.

He settled at Biung, and in due course married Sisabigi, the maiden, daughter of Tingdana.

Now one day he asked Sisabigi, "How does your father dress when he goes out to make sacrifice to the fetish?" And Sisabigi told him that he rode a donkey, and carried a spear and a gungong (drum). So that evening, Kpuganumbu mounted his donkey, took a spear and a drum, and rode down to the Tingdana's house, beating the drum.

As he approached, the Tingdana, his father-in-law, came out, and Kpuganumbu killed him with the spear. He then cut off his head and threw it into the Tingdana's younger

brother's compound,—he being the natural successor. After which, he arrayed himself in the beads and skin of the dead Tingdana, and returned home.

The next morning, the son of the Tingdana found his father dead, and follow the trial of blood until he reached the head, in his uncle's compound. This started a battle, in which Kpuganumbu was so skilfully impartial in supporting first one side and then the other, that he was at length enabled to overcome both of them—at which they all cried "This strong warrior must be our next Tingdana, seeing that he has now married into the Tingdana's line."

In due course Sisabigi gave birth to a son whom she called Namzisheli. "The Chief has no strength" (literally "knows nothing," referring perhaps to her unfortunate father), and two days later a twin son, Nyárigilí, perhaps meaning "The melting", referring to her approaching end, for she died soon after. These two may well be the parents of the Talansi and Nabdam tribes, which both speak a dialect similar to Dagomba.

Kpuganumba himself gained a great name as a warrior by fighting against certain savage tribes up there; so much so that Abudu Rahamani, the Chief of Grumah, offered him his daughter Soyini in marriage, and she gave birth to Na-Gbowa, the great ancestor-fetish of Dagomba and Mamprusi and Nanumba alike—possibly of Moshi and Kusasi as well, but I know nothing of them.

At the death of Kpuganumbu, Gbowa rose and went to Pusuga (Anglo-French Boundary—Kusasi District), which was then under the Na of Grumah; and Gbowa was the first Na of all the Dagomba, from whom spring Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Nanumba, and (as I have said) perhaps Moshi and Kusasi too.

The mode of Gbowa's attaining the chieftainship, indeed everything about him, is terribly Tabu; but there were great deeds, and bloody ones done at that time, of which few Dagombas know, and those who know the most, least like to speak of them.

But Kpuganumbu was the first of all to change at death into an undying animal, which is to this day associated with his name. He is the first of the Bad Things, which every Na of Dagomba, Mamprusi or Nanumba has always been since then.

Now whilst Na-Gbewa sat at home and pondered upon the welfare of his people, his two sons, Zirli and Fogo, went out to war amongst the Grumah, and they did great deeds, so much so that they rendered the Royal house of Abdu Rahamani and his descendants very anxious for peace. And they remained away for the three years.

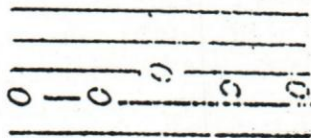
Now Gbewa's family was large, and consisted of one daughter Katchiogo, and seven sons, Zirli, Fogo, Tokugu, Sitobu, Biemoni, Buguyaligu, Nantambo, and Sibie.

When many years had passed, and Gbewa was old and blind, he called for the mother of Fogo, because he wished Fogo to succeed to the Nam. But the servant sent to call her knew the reason for which she was called; and did not like her. So he called Zirli's mother instead.

So Zirli's mother came to Gbewa, and feigned to be Fogo's mother. And Gbewa said to her "I am now old and near to death. Call therefore your son Fogo from the war, that I may place upon his shoulders the skin of the chieftainship. For if I have not myself given to him the skin, Zirli will sieze it by force."

And she then sent a secret messenger to Zirli, telling him what Na-Gbewa intended to do. Now Zirli and Fogo were still far from Pussuga, making war upon the Grumah people. So Zirli called Fogo to a palaver, and sat down with all his friends and elders round him; and he dug apit in front of him which he covered with skins, upon which he placed a cushion. When Fogo arrived, he motioned to him to sit down upon the cushion, and so Fogo fell into the pit and died.

Now a certain elder, called Gushie-Na, possessed a band composed of "Yuya," small trumpets with a high note, and "Lugunyini," large trumpets with a low note, and drums. And when Fogo died, he made his trumpets play "Zirli ku Fogo" (Zirli has killed Fogo)



(were the notes played);

whilst the lugu-nyini groaned the note of sorrow and the drums beat forth "Mbaye, Mbaye."

At this time Na-Gbewa was sitting in front of his house, and when he heard this message carried faintly to him on the clear air by Gushie-Na's trumpets and drums, he was swallowed up by the earth, which took pity on his grief. After which he became the great fetish of the Dagomba, Mamprusi, and Nanumba.

Zirli then claimed the chieftainship, but was opposed by Katchiogo, his elder sister. He however approached her house by night with "bull-roarers," which made such a terrifying noise that she fled to a hollow kapok tree (gung-yogu). Thus terrified she returned penitent to Zirli, who conferred upon her the chieftainship of Gundogo (so called from the hollow tree she fled to); and the Woman-Chief of Gundogo is today Chieftainess over all the Women Chiefs.

At Zirli's death, there was again a quarrel for the chieftainship, and Tohugu and Sitobu left Zirli's children in Grumah, and fled quarrelling south. Tohugu settled eventually at Nalerigu, and founded the Mamprusi Royal house, whilst Sitobu stayed at Wale-Wale (Gambaga District).

But Tohugu, being the rightful heir after Zirli, was senior to Zirli's sons, in Grumah and Kusasi. And Mamprusi holds the Kusasi, and owns Pussuga to this day.

Now Sitobu, having separated himself from Tohugu, his elder brother, and having settled at Wale-Wale, sent out his sons and younger brothers southwards to found a kingdom for his people. To his next brother, Biemoni, he gave the Nam of Karaga, to Buguyaligu he gave Sunson, and to Shibi he gave Kuga.

The then Sunson was in a different place from now, and Kuga-Na lived then near Bagale. Karaga was where it now is.

The Nam of Savelugu also came into being at that time. For when Sitobu and his brothers came to Gambaga, all the people fled, and left only an old woman behind, with her sheep and cattle. So Sitobu and his people lived on the meat of these beasts for many days, until only one beast was left, the meat of which barely sufficed him and his people. Upon which the old woman came and claimed her share of this meat, and continued to beg Sitobu for it, until he, in a fit of petulance, struck her down and killed her. For many nights following this, the ghost of the old woman haunted Sitobu who fled with his people to Wale-Wale where they settled;

And Zombla died, and Ningmatoni reigned.

And Ningmatoni died, and Dimani reigned.

And Dimani died, and Yenzo reigned.

And Yenzo died, and Dariziogu reigned, and he was killed fighting against the Gonja at Palari.

And Dariziogu was succeeded by a strong Chief named Lulu, who first came to the present Yendi, warring against Konkomba. The name of Yendi was then called Kyali.

Even before Na-Lulu had become Na of Yendi, his exploits were in everybody's mouth. For he had gone from chieftainship to chieftainship producing peace wherever he went. He was Chief of Kunkon, Bogeli, Tampiung, Zogu, Nakpali, Sunson, Mion, Savelugu, Karaga, and Zabezugu, and finally attained to Yendi.

But Na-Lulu did not stay at Kyali, but returned to Dipali, which was then Naya (the Na's town).

And when Na-Lulu died, Tituguri became Chief.

And Tituguri died, and Zagali reigned.

And Zagali died and Zokuli reigned.

Na-Zokuli had two sons, the elder of whom was Chief of Galwe, and the younger Chief of Yamalkaraga. Now when Zokuli died, Galwe-Na called his young brother, Yamalkaraga-Na, and said to him "If you will help me to become Na of Yendi, you shall be Chief of Galwe." But his brother replied "I have no horse, no wife, and no money, so how can I become a big Chief." So Galwe-Na gave him a horse, a wife, and some money, and they went to a soothsayer to learn the will of the oracle; and the soothsayer said that Yamalkaraga-Na should succeed to Yendi.

At this Galwe-Na was angry, and so he and his brother went to another soothsayer near Tamale, who however uttered the same decision. Again they went to Daboya, but it was useless, for the oracle was the same. And they went to soothsayer after soothsayer, but all the oracles gave the same decision.

So all the Chiefs were angry, and when the gathering of Dagomba was made for the appointment of the Na, Yamalkaraga-Na's appointment was announced, "but" said the Chiefs "this was a very left-handed decision of the oracles

(gun-gobili), so we will never again agree to submit the choice to soothsayers." And the new Na was known from that day as Na-Gungobili. But the soothsayers have never since then been consulted about the appointment of a Na.

Gungobili too warred much at Yendi, but he too returned west after the wars.

As was expected, at the death of Na-Gungobili, all was in confusion, for all the Na-Bihe wanted to succeed to Yendi, and no proper method of reducing the number of aspirants had been devised to take the place of the oracles. Gushie-Na and Kuga-Na were powerless to make a satisfactory choice. So they all decided to go to the Na of Mmaprusi at Nalerigu, for him to choose the next man.

And there was then a mighty gathering of Chiefs at Tundi (for Tundi-Na is the spokesman of Nalerigu-Na). And Gushie-Na was very angry at the choice being taken out of his hands, and specially at the jeering message from Tundi-Na, who said "If the other birds eat the ears of guinea corn, what will be left for the bush-fowl," But a servant of Gushie-Na made a great saying in reply to this, for Gushie-Na to send, "But if the bush-fowl has already eaten the guinea-corn seed in the ground, there will be no ears for the birds to eat." After which Gushie-Na killed his servant, lest it should be thought that he had taught him wisdom.

So Gushie-Na too went to Tundi, and added his voice in the election.

And the youngest of the Na-Bihe was named Zangina, or Zangin-bla (for he was only a youth); and he gave money and goods to all the Dagomba Chiefs, so that he might get a hearing.

Then the drummers of every chief beat forth their respective proverbs, but none of them pleased Nalerigu-Na. So at last he called upon Zangina for his proverb. Zangina protested that he was a youth and knew no wisdom. But at last he uttered his proverb "When the kapok pods hang together on the tree, none can tell which is the eldest" (gungunga-gumdi tigi yiliya, kum bang kpema). At this there was great acclamation, and Zangina was appointed Na. And Bangumanga, a son of Na-Zagali, was called upon to pronounce another proverb, because his has been less foolish than the rest; and he was appointed to be Na-Zangina's right hand man.

and there he made a charm, in which he tied up the old woman's ghost, and which he hurled away southwards and which fell at the then Kankanga. Since that day the town has been known as Savelugu, because Sitobu "threw far away the bound-up thing" (o'lob' sa viligu). So Sitobu stayed at Wale-Wale. But Nantambo went south and founded the little kingdom of Nanumba, at Bimbilla.

Now when Sitobu grew old, he longed to see again his favourite son Nyagsi, but all his councillors told him that it was a bad thing for a father to go to his son. The son should rather come to his father.

But Sitobu was sitting idly one day, when he saw a sheep running to its lamb, which was near him, bleating pitifully. And he thereupon arose, saying "Even the animals follow their young," and went to Bagale, where he was met by his son Nyagsi, who was the first of the Dagombas to wear a cloth. But Sitobu would not wear the robe his son brought him, but kept his skin, on which he sat (o zi бага-li), hence the name of the place.

And Sitobu stayed at Bagale until he died, and gave the Nam to Nyagsi, refusing to allow his own brothers to succeed him—whilst Nyagsi's two elder brothers succeeded to Karaga, and Sunson; hence Karaga-Na and Sunson-Na are always addressed by Ya-Na as "Ba-kpema"—"my father's elder brother," for they were in this relation to Nyagsi's son who succeeded him.

Upon his father's death Nyagsi left Bagale, for Sitobu became a very powerful ancestor fetish, and his spirit dwelt at Bagale-Biung, in the form of a hippopotamus which never dies. And to this very day, no one of the Royal house of Yendi may visit Bagale, or see the great baobab at Namburugu under which Sitobu died.

So Na-Nyagsi made his court at Dipali, near Diari, and went and warred all about the country. It was he who, accompanied by Gushie-Na, drove out the Konkombas from Gushiogo, and gave the chieftainship to Gushie-Na. The place was previously called Bogeli, but was named Gushiogo after Gushie-Na. And Gushie-Na (with Kuga-Na and Gulkpe-Na) was one of the great tenders of the ancestor spirits of the Chiefs, and has as his special instruments the "Yuya" and "Lugunyini," all on account of his having given

bad news to Na-Gbewa of his son's death. But now, the relic of Gushie-Na's power is that he, with Kuga-Na, assisted by two elders Tuguri-Nam and Gomli, appoints each Na of Yendi.

Kuga-Na now lives outside Yendi, but his people and his following of villages are Bagale, Suguri, and villages near Diari, whither he moved, which he visits not more than twice in his tenure of Nam. The Nam of Bagale is in Ya-Na's appointment—Bagale-Na being the attendant fetish priest of the dead Chiefs of Yendi who dwell in the sacred Lake at Bagale.

Na-Nyagsi was a mighty Chief and went on warring until he was old. And he was killed in war; and his tomb is at Yogu in the north-east of Tamale District. And his son Zulandi became Chief of Yendi, whilst another son became Chief of Yogu, whose descendants tend the tomb of Na-Nyagsi to this very day.

Now Zulandi and his son Nagalogo led separate armies, and a day came when Nagalogo was mortally wounded. So he sent to tell his father that he was dying. On the same day Zulandi was dying and sent to call his son Nagalogo. The two messengers thus met each other, and they went to Zulandi, took the Royal insignia and carried them to Nagalogo. But Nagalogo was already dead. So they invested his dead body with the insignia, and then invested his young brother Datorli, who became Chief of Yendi. He too lived at Dipali, near Diari.

And he too warred, and died, and Burugu-Yomda reigned.

And Daligu died, and Zolegu reigned.

And Zolegu died, and Zombla reigned.

Now Zombla had a son, who went out one day and saw a maiden. Struck by her beauty, he persuaded her to allow her virtue to be conquered on the spot. When Na-Zombla's people saw this, they said, "It is not right for the Na's son to be seen in such a shameful posture." So they made a ring round them to screen them from the public eye.

But Zombla saw this concourse, and went out to see what was happening. And they all cried out "O Ning otoni" (i.e. he is violating the lady). And so his name was called "Ning-matoni."

* Now Na-Zangina warred until he came to Sabari at the crossing of the Oti, and he stayed there, and sent for Mohammedan Mallams. He built a mosque there, and had his people and his children taught the Koran. And he perpetually warred against the Konkomba.

But Yelzori-lana, Nantong-Na, and Sunson-Na went home to their towns, and said "We should have been Chiefs of Yendi instead of this boy. We are therefore greater Chiefs than Yendi; our successors shall never be Chiefs of Yendi; for a great man will never leave his great place to become a small Chief." Therefore, those Chiefs can never aspire to go further than their own chieftainships to this day.

And Nalerigu-Na appointed three places from which the Chiefs could be chosen as Chiefs of Yendi; these were Karaga, Savelugu, and Mion,—so that there should be no further quarrelling.

Now Bungumaga, also known as Asigeli, made great war against the Gonja, and drove them from the parts round Tamale as far as Daboya. And at the death of Zangina at Agbandi, near Sabari, he became Na.

It was Na-Bangumanga who killed the great Chief of all the Gonjas, named Golong-Golong-Kumpatia, at Kirizang, near Tamale. And he also defeated a rebellious Dagomba man near Karaga, and killed him. And in his day, Dagbon was irresistible. But he himself died between Pong-Tamale and Savelugu, where his grave is now.

Bangumanga was succeeded by Bimbiogo, and this is the story of his accession. He was an ungainly and unsightly youth with yaws. And when the assembly was made for the choice of the new Chief, his mother and some other women, as a joke, put all the Na's insignia upon this ugly boy, to see how he looked. But when it was all put upon him, he broke away out of the house, and ran out into the presence of the assembled Chiefs and Elders. So they all cried "Has this unsightly creature (bim-biogo) put on the regalia? Yet we cannot take them off him again; for his appearance in public in them would put us all to shame if he were not the Chief." So he became Chief, and the rule of choosing the Chief from Karaga, Savelugu, or Mion was broken by means of women's folly.

But Na-Bimbiogo was a good and strong Chief, and the magic of the regalia cured his yaws.

He first came to Kyali, and made his court there; and he renamed the place Yane (Yendi). It is also called Na-Ya, for it is the Na's town. And he did much to conquer the Kon-komba.

And he was followed by Na-Gariba.

Now many of the great Dagomba Chiefs had been angered by the appointment of Bimbiogo to the Nam. So when the King of the Kambonsi (Ashanti) came and fought against Na-Gariba, neither Savelugu nor Karaga, nor Tolón, nor Kumbungu, answered Gariba's call to arms. So he fought them with only his own soldiers and those of the near-by Chiefs, and was conquered. And the Kambonsi captured Gariba, who had to be redeemed with ransom of 1,000 slaves.

From that time a tribute of slaves was paid yearly to the King of Ashanti. But Ashanti always feared Dagbon, and treated the Dagomba as powerful people, though tributary to their King (compare Dupuis p. 170, who even speaks of a town called Kikiwhary in the heart of Ashanti as having been destroyed by the Dagomba—p. 35).

Na-Gariba had 180 sons, and when he died, Na-Sa succeeded him. And Na-Sa built a mighty house for himself, and brought water from Sabari for the swish; for he said that the Yendi water was polluted by people washing in it.

And Na-Sa died, and Na-Ziberim reigned.

And Na-Ziberim died, and Na-Andani, the first, reigned.

And Na-Andani died, and Na-Mohama reigned.

And Na-Mohama died, and Na-Kulunku reigned.

And in Na-Kulunku's time, the troubles of Dagbon started, for he drove out the sons of Na-Andani, and succeeded his younger brother Mohama. This deed of his roused the wrath of the dead Chiefs, and they sent discord amongst the Dagomba.

And Na-Kulunku died and Na-Zoli reigned.

And Na-Zoli died, and Na-Yakubu reigned.

And Na-Yakubu became mad, and went about killing his people in the market. But no one would restrain him, because his person was sacred. At last, Yelzort-Lana Lagfu, a great Chief of Zabezugu, the most powerful of all the Chiefs of his time, came to Yendi, and urged Zohe-Na to bind Na-Yakubu with silver chains.

Slaves

Trouble of Dagbon

At this all the elders and Chiefs said that he was trying to make himself Na of Yendi, whereas he was only a Na's nephew on the woman's side, and had anyhow taken the Nam of Yelzori, from which a man may not aspire to Yendi.

So they all rose up and fought against him, and slew him at Demon. And his tomb is there to this day.

Then there was more quarrelling over the appointment of the Chief of Karaga. For the Karaga people refused to accept Na-Yakabu's nomination of his younger brother, Kundung-kumda. And Abudulai, the eldest son of Yakubu joined with the Karaga people and fought against Yendi; and he drove the Yendi people to Sambue, then Southwards across the Palari river, and into Gonja country, where they established a town for themselves, called Dogon-kadi (probably a corruption of Hausa "Dagon-gedi").

But Na-Yakubu fled to the Klukpini river, where he was captured, and brought back to die; and Abudulai became Na.

Now Na-Abudulai was a strong Chief, and it was he who first refused to continue payment of slaves to Ashanti. He also made war upon the Basari people, but failed to conquer them. And Dagbon was great in his time.

In his time Na-Andani of Savelugu made war upon the Zabarima, and prevailed for a time. But he was eventually driven back.

And Na-Abudulai died, and Na-Andani of Savelugu reigned.

In his time, the Chief of Kumbungu (Abudulai) and Na-Alasan of Karaga raised the standard of revolt. But after they had won some early victories, Andani conquered, and killed them both.

He then fought against the Gonja once more, and defeated them at Salaga, where the Kpembe-Wura was slain.

All his wars had made his people few in number. But when the Germans came, and offered battle at Adibu, Andani and his people laughed, and said "They are but few." And they ran towards them to take them by hand, but the Germans shot them with a machine gun, and they all fled. Andani himself fled to Kulpanga, but came back and was not killed by the Germans. And Kworli-Na Bukari, a grandson of Na-Yakubu, was driven from Nakpali, and sat down at Yendi,

Yendi
Dagbon
Germans & Dogonkadi
Adibu War

namani had held his forty days of the Nam, and had been succeeded by Alassan who succeeded him. And the dead spoke to Alassan, and said "Why is our grandson sitting in Yendi idly?" So Alassan made him Chief.

At Alassan's death this Bukari of Karaga dared to go to Yendi, but died at Tamale as a punishment for his

by general consent, Bukari of Savelugu was selected as Chief of Yendi, but the British (then in Dagomba) saw he was old, and persuaded the people to give him the title of the appointment, whilst actually giving the Nam to Abdulai the second, who still reigns.

B.—CONCLUSIONS FROM THE DRUM HISTORY

A general rule, that amongst people whose sole knowledge of their origins consists of succession of legends of deeds performed by their leaders, these leaders and wanderings and deeds represent tribes and their move-

It is only necessary to quote, in support of this rule, the accepted interpretation of the patriarchal legends of the Old Testament, which represents the movements of early tribes, under eponymous chieftains. That is not to say that these legendary heroes had no individual existence: it is undoubtedly true that tribal victories tend after a long time to crystallise into legendary exploits of a single individual. No doubt the individual bore his part in those

And, finally, the Drum History of Dagomba bears the marks of history, rather than of myth. The difference between the two is that a legend is a faint and probably exaggerated recollection of a fact, whilst a myth is later accretion of unhistorical incidents, built up to explain a fact of nature, or a place name. Although small incidents in the Drum History are evidently historical, it does as a whole bear the stamp of the legendary, even to the casual hearer.

These two facts established, the tribal movements shadowed in the History seem to be as follows:

The Chief Drummer of the Na has told me that the starting point of the tribe is traditionally said to be Tonga, on the road to Mocca.

Assuming that as the birthplace of Dagomba, of which, however, nothing more is known, we find the tribe emigrating south-west, driven perhaps by Araba, to Zamfara in Northern Nigeria.

There it seems that they settled for some time, until Hausa invaders pressed them further and further west. At last the warrior portion of the tribe emigrated again westward, leaving the majority to be conquered by the Hausas, whose culture and language they assumed. It is known that these people of Zamfara had once a language of their own, and they are recognised as kin by the Dagomba.

The emigrating tribe, then, under their leader, identifiable probably as the Red Hunter, moved across to the land of Melle, where they gave assistance to the King of Melle, afterwards intermarrying, and doubtless picking up Mandingo words and dances.

From there they moved to Zuarungu District, leaving traces of themselves everywhere in the scattered tribes of the Fra-Fra, who speak a language near akin to Dagomba.

From there they moved north-east again, waging war against the Grumah.

And lastly came the emigration southwards, and the scattering of the clans.

In this, I have taken no account of the kindred clans which inhabit Lawra and Wa districts, and which may well be the remnants of the tribe which remained in Melle, until the Mandingo were scattered by the invading Songbai.

But this does at least seem to provide a rational framework, upon which to build a more detailed structure, for which further investigation should provide the bricks and mortar.

LIST OF APPENDICES

- 1930—"A" Acknowledgment by Divisional Chiefs that they are subjects of the Ya-Na.
 1930—"B" List of Dagomba State Council.
 1930—"C" List of Chiefs eligible for appointment to the Nam of Yendi.
 1930—"D" Rules governing appointments to Divisional Chieftainships.
 1930—"E" Rules regarding deposition of subordinate Chiefs.
 1930—"F" List of Chiefs holding Na-Bihe Chieftainships.
 1930—"G" List of Chiefs holding Kpamba Chieftainships.
 1930—"H" Devolution of powers of Chiefs.
 1930—"I" Composition of Ya-Na's Judicial Council.
 1930—"J" List of Tribunals of the Dagbon State.

APPENDIX A

UNDERSIGNED DIVISIONAL CHIEFS OF THE DAGBAMBA,
 BY ACKNOWLEDGE THAT WE ARE THE SUBJECTS OF
 AND AGREE TO SERVE HIM AS NA OF ALL DAGBON
 HENCEFORTH.

	..	..	..	Their
na Yakubu ("Elder" Chief)	..	..	..	X
ana Mahama ("Elder" Chief)	..	..	..	X
ng-na Isa ("Elder" Chief)	..	..	..	X
na Imoru ("Elder" Chief)	..	..	..	X
na Yahiya ("Elder" Chief)	..	..	..	X
na Alassan ("Elder" Chief)	..	..	..	X
na Alassan for Kumbungu, vacant	..	..	..	X
				marks