

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES TO PRELIMINARY ESSAY.

NOTE I.

EXTRACT FROM THE PERIPLUS OF THE ERYTHRÆAN SEA.

(Circa A.D. 80-89.)¹

“BEHIND this country² the sea comes to a termination somewhere in THIN; and in the interior of that country, quite to the north, there is a very great city called THINÆ, from which raw silk and silk thread and silk stuffs are brought overland through Bactria to Barygaza, as they are on the other hand by the Ganges River to Limyrice.³ It is not easy, however, to get to this Thin, and few and far between are those who come from it. The place lies quite under the Little Bear; and it is said that its territories adjoin the remoter frontiers of Pontus and the Caspian Sea, beside which you find the Lagoon Mæotis which has a communication with the ocean.

“Every year there come to the frontier of Thin certain people of dwarfish stature and very broad in the face, scarcely superior to wild creatures, but harmless, who are said to be called SESADÆ.⁴ They come accompanied by their wives and children, and bring with them great

¹ This is Müller's view; see his *Prolegomena to Geog. Græci Minores*, i, xvi-vii.

² *Viz. Chryse*, “The Golden Land,” apparently Pegu and thereabouts, the *Suvarna Bhumi* or Golden Land of the old Indian Buddhists. *Sonaparanta*, a term of like meaning, is still the sacred or classical term for the central territories of Ava.

³ The meaning is probably the same as that of Ptolemy's statement, extracted in the next note, that there was not only one road from the Sinæ or Seres to Bactriana by the Stone Tower, but also another direct to Palibothra on the Ganges.

⁴ In the work styled *Palladius on the Brahmans*, embodied in the Pseudo-Callisthenes published by Müller (*Script. de Alex. Magno*, pp. 103-4) there is an account apparently of the same people under the name of *Bisades*, the gatherers of pepper. They are described as “a dwarfish and imbecile race who dwell in rocky caves, and from the nature of their country are expert at climbing cliffs, and thus able to gather the pepper from the thickets.... These Bisades are pygmies, with big heads and long straight unclipt hair.” Sir J. E. Tennent applies this to the Veddahs of Ceylon. But there is nothing, I think, in the passage to fix it to Ceylon. It is given on the authority of a certain Scholasticus of Thebes, who finding an Indian vessel in a port of the Axum country took the opportunity it offered of visiting distant parts. The story is probably not genuine. For as Müller points out, the *Besidæ* are mentioned by Ptolemy (vii, 1) as a people, otherwise called *Tiladæ*, who live north of Mæandrus (a moun-