A

JOURNEY OVER LAND

TO

INDIA,

PARTLY

BY A ROUTE NEVER GONE BEFORE BY ANY EUROPEAN,

By Donald Campbell, of Barbreck, Esq.

WHO FORMERLY COMMANDED A REGIMENT OF CAVALRY IN THE SERVICE OF

HIS HIGHNESS THE NABOB OF THE CARNATIC.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS TO HIS SON.

COMPREHENDING

HIS SHIPWRECK AND IMPRISONMENT WITH HYDER ALLI,

AND

HIS SUBSEQUENT NEGOCIATIONS AND TRANSACTIONS IN

THE EAST.

"——— HEU QUIBUS ILLE
"JACTATUS FATIS."

LONDON,

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JOURNAL OF AN EMBASSY

FROM THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA

TO THE COURT OF AVA, IN THE YEAR 1827.

Uniformly printed in 1 Vol. 4to. with Plates.

BY JOHN CRAWFURD, ESQ.

LATE ENVOY.

With a Geological Appendix by Dr. BUCKLAND and Mr. CLIFT, and a Botanical one by Dr. WALLICH.

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and naturalist. I had the good fortune to find in Captain Dangerfield a skilful astronomer, surveyor, and geologist; and Mr. Finlayson with zeal and talents had made highly respectable acquirements in botany and zoology. The John Adam, an Indian-built ship of about 380 tons burthen, was appointed for the accommodation of the mission.

Having received my instructions, and being charged with letters addressed from the Governor-General to the Kings of Siam and Cochin China, accompanied by such presents as are required by the usages of the East, we embarked, on the 21st of November, 1821, and dropped down the river with the ebb-tide, which took us as far as the Government manufactory of gunpowder, about eight miles below Calcutta, carrying us within a stone's throw of the left bank of the river, and along the most picturesque part of it; that bend of the Hoogly which Europeans call Garden Reach, a series of beautiful and magnificent country-houses belonging to some of the principal merchants of Calcutta.

Nov. 23.—There being no wind yesterday to enable us to stem the flood-tide, we could only make progress during the ebbs, and from the intricacy of the navigation, this only during daylight. This morning a favourable breeze sprung up from the north-east, which enabled us to stem the flood-tide, and we successively passed Fultah and the James and Mary Sand, and anchored at Culpee for the night. The passage of the James and Mary Sand, formed by the junction of the Rupnarain with the Hoogly, is the most dangerous part of the navigation of the river. The bank is a hard sand, and the channel constantly changing. In running down we had met the Forbes, a ship of 600 tons, which had struck upon it, and was consequently obliged to return to Calcutta for repair. No ship which draws above fifteen feet when loaded can navigate the Ganges with safety and economy. The ships of the East India Company, usually of the burthen of 1000 and 1200 tons, and drawing above twenty-two feet water, are totally unfit for this purpose; they take in their cargo 100 miles from Calcutta, and, besides this inconvenience, commonly lose many of their crew from the great insalubrity of the stations where they usually lie.

Nov. 24.—Calms with light winds not enabling us to stem the flood-tides, we reached to-day no farther than the land which, with the north end of Saugor Island, forms Channel-creek, or Lackams Channel. In the evening, being close to the shore, a small party of us landed. The country farther than the eye can see is here covered with an almost impenetrable forest of low wood, the trees of which do not exceed eight or ten feet high. The timber which they afford is fit only for firewood. The soil is entirely alluvial, and the successive depositions of strata are distinctly perceptible on the shore. The land could not be less than twelve feet above the level of the sea or river at high-water, and might therefore be cultivated with advantage. The crew of the pilot-boat which accompanied us, assured us that the place abounds with deer and tigers, and that it was dangerous, on account of the latter, even to attempt to cut a little firewood within a few yards of the shore. We had not, indeed, penetrated above a few yards into the wood, when we discovered in the soft soil many traces of deer, and those of one tiger.

Nov. 25.—We sailed from Culpee in the morning, and in the evening anchored below Kadegree, and opposite the Island of Saugor. Three years ago, a plan was set on foot to clear this island; and the Government of Bengal, knowing that its culture, on the part of the natives, was hopeless, departed from its usual policy, and made extensive grants to a society of English gentlemen and others at Calcutta, who subscribed a large sum towards the purpose of clearing and bringing it into culture. The project has been attended with but very partial success, chiefly owing to natural obstacles. The island is low, being little better than a sand bank, a few feet above high-water mark. The soil is scanty and sterile, and there is no command of water for artificial irrigation. In the first attempts at clearing it, the nearest lands to the shore were chosen; but so little coherence was there in the soil, when the roots of the trees

were removed, that on more than one occasion the high tides, which took place during gales of wind in the S. W. monsoon, swept away the whole cleared land. When it is considered that abundance of unreclaimed land of the finest description exists in almost every part of India, the capital laid out on this unprofitable project may be considered as little better than a sacrifice to the unwise and narrow-minded, anti-colonial policy of the East India Company.

Nov. 28.—During the two last days we moved by slow degrees, under the pilot's charge, over the reefs and sands which obstruct the entrance into the Hoogly. The pilot left us last night in nine and a half fathoms water, and we now proceeded under the auspices of the north-east monsoon, having a six-knot breeze, serene weather, and a cloudless sky. In the complicated and difficult navigation of the Hoogly, it has taken us seven days to sail one hundred and forty miles; which is the distance between the town of Calcutta, and what is called the Reef Buoy, the extreme limit of the dangers of the river. With the assistance of a steam-boat, ships might be towed down in two days without difficulty. The freshes in the river, which continue two months, and during which the ebb-tide is sometimes found to run at the rate of eight miles an hour, might prove an obstacle to their employment at that season; but, at all other periods of the year, they might surely be used to advantage, whether for towing vessels or conveying passengers. Under such favourable circumstances, and in a country where either wood or coals may be had for fuel, it is some reflection upon our want of enterprise in India, that steam-vessels have not yet been established.* In quitting or approaching the Hoogly, it is impossible not to be struck with the extraordinary difficulties which the early European navigators had to contend against, in navigating it, before the establishment, as at present, of an intelligent

* The first steam-vessel used in India, was built about three years after this passage was written. There are at present about ten, of all descriptions, in the Hoogly—some belonging to the Government, and others used for conveying passengers, or towing ships up and down.

and experienced, although most costly class of pilots. Some share of their success is to be ascribed to the convenient size of the very small vessels which they employed, and a large one to their courage and enterprise. The reputation of the country to which it opened a road, no doubt powerfully prompted them to the undertaking. With all the difficulties and dangers of the Ganges, the English, if their Indian conquests be any advantage to them, owe almost as much gratitude to it as the Hindoos themselves, for unquestionably to it they are indebted for their Indian empire. It is the great military road which enabled us to conquer the richest provinces of Hindustan, the acquisition of which enabled us eventually to conquer and maintain the rest of our possessions.

Dec. 3.—During the last four days we proceeded on our voyage without any occurrence worth mentioning. This morning at daybreak the Island of Preparis appeared in sight, and being considerably to windward, we bore down upon it with the intention of landing, and availing ourselves of the opportunity that offered of gaining some knowledge of the natural history of a place so near to the Indian capital, but of which, notwithstanding, little or nothing is known. We were, however, disappointed; for the north-east wind blew so strongly upon the eastern shore, the only safe one to approach, that we could not venture to land. We came within a short mile, however, of two small islands lying to the northern extremity of the principal one, called by navigators the "Cow and Calf." At the depth of ten or twelve fathoms, the lead brought up fragments of coral rock, which we plainly saw under the ship's bottom, with some sharks swimming over them. We skirted the eastern shore of the large island itself, the highest part of which may be about two hundred feet above the level of the sea. It is entirely covered with a forest of considerable height, leaving only a narrow beach of white sand, having a few ledges of rocks here and there scattered through it. The Island of Preparis is seven miles in length from north to south, and uninhabited except by monkeys and squirrels.

The western side and southern end are surrounded by a coral reef, which in several parts appears above water, and upon which three small islands have been formed. The approaches to the Preparis are imperfectly known and very dangerous, and have occasioned many shipwrecks. In the year 1817, the Francis and Charlotte, a transport, bringing part of his Majesty's 78th Regiment from Java, after the restoration of the Dutch colonies, struck, at night, on the reefs to the southern end of the Preparis, and was lost. The troops were conveyed to the main island, where the greater part of them had to remain feeding on a little biscuit saved from the wreck, with some shell-fish picked up on the shore, and devoured at night by mosquitoes, until relief was brought to them from Calcutta.

Dec. 4.—Last night we passed the Island of Narcondam, visible by moonlight, and this morning had a fine view of it from the deck. The island rises in the form of a cone abruptly from the sea, and is of small extent: it bears all the exterior forms of a basaltic formation, and its summit even exhibits the appearance of the exhausted crater of a volcano. Barren Island, of similar size and appearance, lying within seventy miles of it, has a volcano, which has been in a state of activity since the year 1791. In ordinary weather Narcondam is visible, as we now experienced, at fifty miles distance, and in clear weather at seventy. By an observation, not taken, however, under very favourable circumstances, we made its height 2589 feet above the level of the sea.

Dec. 7.—We sailed during the last two days with delightful weather and favourable winds; and early this morning found ourselves (the coast of Siam, visible for the first time in the distance, on our left) near the Sayer Islands, the most northerly of which is in latitude 8° 43′ north, and in longitude 97° 48′ east: they are six in number. At noon one party landed on the largest island, usually called the Great Sayer, and another on that lying immediately west of it. The coasts of the whole group are bold, and the navigation easy. A ship of large size might come within fifty yards of the Great Sayer, without danger. We found

e two islands which we visited, to consist entirely of granite,—present- g an appearance of irregular stratification,—of a very large grain, with rrow veins of quartz running here and there through it. Immediately ver the rocks, which are washed by the sea, vegetation commences; and he islands are covered with a forest of trees, rather undersized if com- ared with the magnificent woods of the great Indian Archipelago. The ea which surrounds them abounds in fish, and on the rocks are found rich supply of shells, and some corals, of which considerable collections were made. A few storks, of a lead-blue colour, were the only birds we saw; and the only inhabitant of the forest appeared to be the large bat *(Vespertilio)*, of which great numbers were seen; which proves that wild fruits abound, as these constitute their principal food. The Sayer Islands are uninhabited, and deserve to be so, for the granite of which they consist is covered with a mould so thin, that it would not suffice for raising a sufficient supply of the plants necessary to the subsistence of man. These islands are the last of the chain which extends along the coast of Siam for eight degrees, and which navigators have called the Mergui or Tennasserim Archipelago. They are also the last of the long chain which, with but a partial interruption, the delta of the Irrawadi, covers the eastern coast of the Gulf of Bengal. It deserves to be remarked, that a similar chain of islands extends along the eastern coast of the Gulf of Siam; while the western coasts of both, but especially of the former, have comparatively few such islands along their shores. A similar observation may be made in regard to harbours. The eastern coast of the Bay of Bengal abounds with them, but there is not one on the western. There are several fine harbours on the eastern coast of the Siamese Gulf, but scarcely one which deserves the name on the western.

Dec. 8.—During the night we steered a course to bring us close to the shore of the mainland of Siam; and in the morning found ourselves within a mile and a half of it, in the latitude of 8° 14′ N., and within five miles of the narrow straits which divide Junk Ceylon

from the continent. The coast is here bold, and safe to approach. The country inland, as far as we could see, was mountainous, leaving along the coast a narrow belt of two or three miles of lower land; still elevated, however, perhaps eighteen or twenty feet above the sea. Nothing was to be seen, at first, but one universal forest of stately trees. We afterwards, however, saw one neat village within a mile of the Papra Strait. On the shore we observed a few fishermen drying their nets, while their canoes lay on the beach. One canoe pushed off, as we believed with the intention of coming on board; but in this we were disappointed, although we did not fail to endeavour to make our wish for an intercourse intelligible by signals. At length we sent a boat to the shore; and after considerable hesitation, two individuals consented to come on board, but not until one of our men was left behind as a hostage for their safety. This extraordinary timidity arises from the situation in which these poor people are placed. They live on the territory disputed between the hostile Burmans and Siamese, and consequently are in a state of perpetual distrust and insecurity; while they are rarely visited by European shipping. Our visitors proved to be a Siamese and a creole Chinese of Siam, who had so much of the native blood of the country in him, that in complexion and features he was no longer distinguishable as a Chinese, and could only be recognized as claiming the name by the fashion in which he wore his hair. We addressed them in Malay, but they understood but a few words, and we could carry on no conversation with them. The coast abounds in fish, and for the value of two rupees we obtained a very large supply of an excellent description. As it fell calm, a party landed at ten o'clock, to examine more nearly the appearance of the country. The beach is a beautiful white sand, with a few ledges of rocks interspersed at considerable distances. We landed on one of the latter, which appeared to proceed from a point of land elevated above the surrounding country, and which promised a favourable opportunity for geological examination. We

found both this point, and every other part of the coast which we examined, to consist of the same large-grained granite which composes the Sayer Islands, perhaps a little more diversified by the occasional appearance of gneiss, and of a darker and smaller-grained granite.

On coming on board in the afternoon, we made sail, still keeping close to the shore, and soon passed the western opening of the narrow strait which divides Junk-Ceylon from the continent. Sandy points form the mouth of the strait on each side, which is not more than half a mile broad. It was low water, and so shallow is it, that the sea was breaking over a reef which crosses it, and which, at all times, renders it unnavigable for large vessels: even boats, indeed, can pass only at high-water. A severe squall forced us to keep at a respectable distance from the coast of Junk-Ceylon, but still we had a distinct view of the shore, and even of much of the interior. The shore is bold and precipitate, and the coast frequently so deeply indented, as to give to many of the headlands at a distance, the appearance of islands. The aspect of the country presents a perpetual succession of hills or mountains, apparently so close upon each other, that there can be little room for extensive valleys capable of affording room for profitable cultivation. The whole appeared covered with an immense forest, and not a single habitation or a single patch of culture was discernible. A view of the eastern or sheltered side of the island would, no doubt, have presented a somewhat more favourable aspect, but it is sufficiently known that the island is but thinly inhabited and poorly cultivated.

Dec. 9.—During all night and to-day, we have had a great deal of rain and blowing weather. This prevented us from landing, as we intended, on Junk-Ceylon, and other islands which we passed. We were now within the Straits of Malacca, and the limits of the Malay name and navigation. This is discovered by the sudden alteration of names of places, always significant in the Malay language; and especially by the constant occurrence of the word Pulao or Pulo, meaning an island, in the

vernacular language of that people. In the course of the day we passed Pulo Raja, the Brothers, and Pulo Butung.

Dec. 11.—In the morning we had a near view of Trutao, Langkawi, and Lada, large islands which are inhabited. Langkawi in particular, not less than twenty-five miles long, contains a considerable portion of the population of the Malay state of Queda. Penang was visible in the course of the forenoon, and at ten o'clock at night we got into the harbour. This morning we landed, and our whole party was received into the hospitable and elegant mansion of my friend Mr. Phillips, the Governor of the island. Mr. Phillips's residence is called Suffolk, after the native county of the first owner, Mr. Francis Light, the founder of the settlement. In the time of this gentleman, the ground was little more than an ordinary pepper garden, but the taste of Mr. Phillips has rendered it the most beautiful spot of the kind in India, after Barrackpoore, the country residence of the Governor-general: it is, in short, an English gentleman's mansion and park, where clove and nutmeg trees (in full bearing during our visit) are substituted for oaks, elms, and ashes. The grounds contain from two to three hundred spotted deer.

We found the settlement in a state of alarm, consequent upon an invasion of the territory of the King of Queda by the Raja of Ligor, a dependent prince or chief of Siam, of which Queda is a vassal. This chieftain, a few days before, had suddenly made his appearance at Queda in the night-time with an overwhelming force. A trifling scuffle ensued between his people and the Malays, in which some of the principal chiefs of the latter were killed, but the greater number of the people took to flight without offering the least resistance. The King, after leaving his treasure and property, of which he had more than usually fall to the lot of Malay princes, and having several of his family made prisoners, took refuge at Penang, to which the Siamese chief sent an insolent and threatening message and letter, to demand him. In this letter he hinted pretty directly at the punishment of any one who should screen the fugitive prince. The terror of this threat alarmed the timidity of the native inhabitants, and the usual supply of grain and other necessaries, for which Penang almost entirely depends upon Queda, being interrupted, the settlement was subjected to considerable temporary inconvenience.

We had scarcely landed, when we were met by the commander and the pilot of a Siamese ship, thus far on her voyage from Calcutta to Bungkok. I had frequently seen these two men at Calcutta, and availed myself of my acquaintance with them, to add to our information. They were both, especially the pilot, shrewd and well-informed men, and the details they communicated respecting their country, supplied more useful and practical knowledge than all we had before obtained from printed sources. They were descendants of Mohammedan settlers from Arcot on the Coromandel coast, and inherited the religion and language of their country. They told us that they had quitted Calcutta with a very favourable opinion of our nation; and they stated, that they had already communicated accounts of our mission to the Raja of Ligor, with the view of being transmitted to Siam.

Penang, Dec. 12.—I had resided three years at Prince of Wales's Island, and then knew the place well, but I had not seen it for ten; and when I went over George Town and the cultivated part of the island this morning, I found the whole so much changed, that I could hardly recognize it. The town, which had been once almost entirely burnt down, was now constructed of more solid materials, and many new roads had been formed through the country; which, however, presented a less busy and active scene than in former times, and even exhibited some marks of decay, which I am told are since more evident.

Dec. 13.—Accompanied by Captain Dangerfield and Mr. Finlayson, I made, this morning, an excursion to the falls of water at the foot of the hills which supply the flour-mills of Lowe Ami, an old and enterprising

Chinese inhabitant of the town. The bed of the rivulet which supplies the mills, afforded us an opportunity of examining the rock, which was throughout granite. The huge blocks of stone which were on the surface, were of red granite a good deal decomposed. The more deep-seated rock was a hard grey granite, exhibiting many distinct crystals of quartz and mica.

Dec. 17.—We paid this morning a visit to Mr. Brown, at Glugar, about five miles from George Town. Mr. Brown is the greatest proprietor in the island, and a person distinguished for his enterprise and intelligence. He raises on his own estates, yearly, about eight thousand piculs of pepper, or more than a million of pounds; worth, at the present time, not less than twenty thousand pounds sterling. The estate of Glugar is of a poor soil, and unfit for the growth of pepper. Mr. Brown has planted it with nutmeg and clove-trees, which are in full bearing, and have a very thriving appearance, the effect of skilful culture and of great care, despite of the sterility of the soil. Although it was not the usual season of the mangostin, Mr. Brown produced a few very delicious ones, highly acceptable to such of our party as had never tasted this fine fruit, the most acceptable to the European palate of all tropical ones.

Dec. 22.—This morning we ascended the Flag-staff Hill, the height of which is 2223 feet above the level of the Government House at Suffolk, and about 2300 feet above the level of the sea. The ascent is steep, yet not abrupt or difficult. A stranger to the vegetation of warm climates is here presented with a very favourable view of the luxuriant and magnificent spectacle of a tropical forest. The greater part of Prince of Wales's Island consists of a rapid succession of hills and narrow valleys, clothed with a forest of the tallest trees, in a livery of perpetual green. These trees, rising often to the height of a hundred and thirty feet, from the close pressure of the forest, are as straight as an arrow, and throw out no branches until within fifteen or twenty feet of their tops. Where the soil is dry, the exclusion of the sun's rays prevents the growth of grass

or underwood, with the exception of rattans and the gigantic parasites, which, extending fantastically from tree to tree, give a tropical forest so singular and unexpected a character. This scene, however, is more splendid than useful. The timber of the forest trees is generally of inferior quality, and very little of it is applicable to useful purposes. In passing through these woods, the paucity of animal life is peculiarly striking:—it is seldom that those of Penang are disturbed, except by the loud shrill noise of the grasshopper, or the occasional chattering of a herd of monkeys.

On the top of the hill, water boils at 207½ of Fahrenheit. At 1800 feet above the level of the sea, the character of the vegetation begins to change. The operation of forming the road exposes the external part of the structure of the mountain, which is a yellow-coloured clay, intermixed with gravel, resulting from the disintegrated granite, of which the island seems entirely composed. The granite itself is here and there exposed on the highest parts of the hill, and appears in abundance in the valleys.

Dec. 24.—Last night two messengers arrived from the Raja of Ligor, bearing a letter to my address. They waited upon us this morning, feigning the great joy of their master, the Governor of Ligor, at hearing that the Governor-general of India was sending an envoy to Siam. They disclaimed, on his behalf, all hostile or unfriendly intentions towards us in the invasion of Queda. As an earnest of the Ligor chief's sincerity, the messengers informed us that he had not failed to punish certain of his followers, who had presumed to enter the British territories on the opposite coast in a hostile manner; the officer who commanded having received thirty strokes of a rattan, and each of the private soldiers five a-piece. In respect to the offenders in question, the fact was this:—A Siamese detachment, of an officer and thirty men, had crossed the river which forms the boundary between the Queda and British territory, and, with or without authority, commenced plundering our frontier villages. A native

sergeant, with twelve sepoys, was sent in pursuit, and took prisoner and disarmed the whole Siamese party without resistance. They were sent back to the chief of Ligor, and their conduct disavowed. The appearance of the messengers was sufficiently uncivilized:—their dresses were scanty in amount, and not of the best description in point of quality. Above all, their bare and shaggy heads gave them a wild and unpromising aspect. Notwithstanding this, Mong Narrain, the principal, was a man of intelligence, and spoke with an air of much confidence and apparent frankness.

Dec. 28.—Juragan Soliman, an old Malay trader, came to call upon me. He had travelled into several parts of the interior of the Malayan peninsula, and often gone across it to the opposite coast. According to him, from Trang, on the western coast, to Ligor on the eastern, the distance, by elephants, is but three days' journey; and a man on foot can travel despatch in two. From Queda to Sungora, the nearest Siamese province to the Malays, on the side of the Gulf of Siam, he says that merchandize is carried on elephants in five days. This last route is so safe and expeditious, that a great deal of merchandize is sent by it; and it is not uncommon for native vessels from Siam, to send back half their returns in this direction, as well for expedition as to divide the risk. The state of Queda is divided from Patani, the bordering Malayan principality to the north-east, by a chain of mountains, one of the peaks of which, called *Titih Bangsa*, is very lofty; I should suppose, from the comparison made by my informer with other mountains, not less than 6000 feet high. From the mouth of the river Muda, in the territory of Queda, in lat. 5°. 40′. N., to nearly the foot of the Patani hills, is a voyage of ninety-six hours in boats, by a very winding course. From thence four hours' journey on elephants carries the traveller across the mountains to Kroh, in the Patani territories, where there are tin mines. These mines are said to be rich, but unskilfully worked. The Juragan, that is to say, the trading commander, computes that they yield at present, 1500 bahars, of three Chinese piculs each, annually, which I suspect is considerably exaggerated. When asked what manner of people the Patanis were, he replied in a style very characteristic of the language and manner of the Malays: "They are simple and uncultivated men, and you may hold them by a hair, if you have only the discretion not to pull it too hard."

Dec. 29.—We paid a second visit to Mr. Brown at Glugar. He brought to meet us an old Chinese inhabitant of Penang, named Che-wan, one of the few survivors of the original settlers of the island. Che-wan left his native country, the province of Fokien, at three-and-twenty, and has never since returned to it. He is now at the age of sixty, preparing for himself a splendid tomb, after the Chinese fashion, cut from hewn granite, in a very beautiful and romantic spot. There is an inscription on it in Chinese and English; and this simple monument will last for ages, and after many a revolution of those ephemeral structures which Europeans raise in this country, for mere comfort or utility. Che-wan in conversation is lively, communicative, and sensible. His details are characterized by a degree of European precision and good sense, which one rarely meets with in the East, except among his countrymen. He has visited many parts of the interior of the Malayan peninsula, and several provinces of Siam, as well as the capital of that country. He has a bad opinion of the court of Siam, and thinks the government inferior even to that of Cochin China, which he has also visited; or as he expresses it in the Malay language, "There is less compassion for the people."

Jan. 4, 1822.—We took leave of our kind friends at Suffolk this morning, and re-embarked to pursue our voyage; our party being increased by the addition of three interpreters. Two of these spoke and wrote the Siamese and Malay languages, through the last of which they interpreted to us. The third was a Chinese, who spoke both English and Malay fluently: he was to be our only medium of communication with the Cochin Chinese,

for it was in vain to look for an interpreter in the Anam language who spoke any dialect understood by us. The government of Penang, conformably to the instructions received from Bengal, committed to us the conduct of a negociation for the settlement of their claim of sovereignty to the island, and for the adjustment of the disputes between Queda and Siam.

I shall take this opportunity of giving my reader a short account of the Island of Penang, or Prince of Wales's Island, a place of some importance in the commerce of the East, and of which there are no recent or authentic details before the public.

Penang is about sixteen miles in length from north to south, and from seven to eight in breadth, lying between the latitudes of 5°. 16′. and 5°. 30′. North. By far the greater part of the island is mountainous, rocky, sterile, and covered with a forest of tall trees. A portion of the south and of the eastern parts is level, and these alone constitute the cultivated and inhabited quarter of the island. The highest hills are above 2000 feet in height, and on these the thermometer is about ten degrees lower than on the plain. The harbour, which was the principal inducement to its occupation, is formed by the island, with the mainland two miles distant. The whole island, like the countries in its neighbourhood, is one mass of granite, exhibiting very little variety. In the valleys, traces of alluvial deposits of tin are found. The soil is every where thin and scanty, seldom exceeding a few feet in depth, and often not many inches: it consists, in the plains, of disintregrated granite washed down from the mountains, which, in a few favoured spots, where the best husbandry is conducted, is mixed with a little vegetable mould. The mountains, from the thin soil with which they are covered, and the impracticability of carrying on the labours of agriculture on their steep and precipitate sides and ridges, may be looked upon as condemned to perpetual sterility. The seasons are irregular: rain is frequent throughout the year; but the regular wet season is of short continuance, beginning with September and ending with November. The coldest months are December and January; and the hottest, June

and July. In rural economy, the rainy season is the spring of the year; and January, February, and March, constitute autumn. In the former the rice crop is sown, and in the latter it is reaped. But the great irregularity of the seasons is exhibited in the progress of the pepper plant towards fructification; for the same individual plant blossoms twice a-year, namely, in April and in October, and affords two crops, one of which is reaped in January, and the other in June.

The husbandry of Penang is favourably distinguished from that of any of the rest of our Eastern possessions, and, when we consider the barren and limited nature of the spot, may be quoted as a remarkable proof of the efficacy, as well as safety, of European colonization. This colonization has sprung out of necessity or accident. The land could not be cultivated without the aid of European enterprise and capital, and therefore Europeans were allowed, as a matter of mere exigency, to become proprietors of the soil. The landed proprietors of Penang consist, however, of persons of all the races which inhabit it; but the chief proprietors, and the *only* improvers, are the two most industrious classes—the Europeans and the Chinese. The terms of the grants of land are in perpetuity, on payment of a trifling yearly quit-rent to the state, of one-fifth of a Spanish dollar for an orlong, a measure of one and one-third English acres. Fifteen hundred and seventy of these grants have been given, and about 12,000 acres of the area of the island are in a state of culture.

Notwithstanding these favourable tenures, the natural barrenness of the island and the limited extent of its territory, necessarily exclude from its husbandry all such productions as demand either peculiar fertility of soil or an extensive range for their growth. In an agricultural point of view, it may be strictly said to be unfit for the growth of rice or any other grain,—of the sugar-cane, cotton, coffee, and indigo—the grand staples of tropical husbandry; but, in the culture of articles where skill can compensate for natural defects, the agriculture of Prince of Wales's Island is much superior to that of any other country of Asia. This

is especially seen in the culture of pepper, and in the production of such fruits as find a ready market from the frequent resort of strangers. So neat and perfect a specimen of husbandry nowhere exists in the East as the pepper culture of Penang,—the joint effect of the superintending activity of Europeans, and the industrious labour of the Chinese. In Penang, the average of all pepper vines gives an annual product of two catties, or forty-two and two-thirds of an ounce avoirdupoise. In Malabar, the produce of a vine is no more than seven and one-fifth of an ounce, and according to the monopoly culture of Bencoolen, but six and a-half ounces. Agreeably to this estimate, an acre planted with pepper yields, at Penang, 2040 lbs., in Malabar, 344 lbs., and in Bencoolen, 310 lbs. In the expense of culture, there is, to be sure, a wide difference. To clear an acre of land at Penang, to supply the young plants, and to plant themselves, and their vegetating props, costs a hundred and twenty Spanish dollars. After incurring all this charge, with loss of interest of capital for four years, until the gardens begin to bear, they are let to Chinese cultivators on lease, the farmer paying one-third of the net produce as rent, and restoring the pepper gardens in good order. It is evident that very little of what is strictly rent enters into the elements of the proprietor's revenue, which is chiefly composed of the profits of stock.

The fruits cultivated at Penang, in the greatest perfection and quantity, are the orange, the plantain, and the pine-apple; all excellent, but the two last better than I have any where else found them. Both are in season throughout the year, and a hundred pines, of a middling size, are procurable in the market for a Spanish dollar. Those weighing six and seven pounds may be had at the rate of fifty for the same money. The mangusteen and durian, the two most costly fruits, are imported from the neighbouring coasts of the peninsula, but are cheap and abundant in their season.

The fisheries at Penang constitute a valuable property among a population, the great bulk of which consumes no other animal food, and a large

proportion of this. The Chinese are the fishmongers, and the Malays and other islanders are the fishermen. The modes of taking fish are innumerable. The smaller kinds are caught by hand-nets, a few with the line, but the greater quantity by the seine, and, above all, by stake-nets, with which a portion of the shallowest part of the harbour is covered. The most delicate, and one of the most abundant, of the fishes taken is the pomfret.

When the English took possession of Penang, in 1786, it was wholly uncultivated, and had no other inhabitants than a few occasional Malayan fishermen. It now contains* about 39,000, according to a regular yearly census, taken ever since 1815. This population consists of the following motley ingredients, viz. Indian islanders, Chinese, natives of the Coromandel and Malabar coasts, usually called Chouliahs by Europeans, natives of Bengal, Burmans and Siamese, Europeans and their descendants, with a few Arabs, Armenians, Persees, and African negroes, to which is added a floating population of about 1500. The Indian islanders amount to 15,456, and have greatly increased within the last few years, in consequence of the anarchy and disorder prevalent in some of the neighbouring Malayan states. The tribes of which they chiefly consist are Malays, Achinese, Battaks, and Bugis. They find employment as fishermen, woodcutters, constructors of native houses, and field-labourers. We seldom find them employed as artisans, and not often as traders. The Chinese amount to 8595, and are landowners, field-labourers, mechanics of almost every description, shopkeepers, and general merchants. They are all from the two provinces of Canton and Fo-kien, and three-fourths of them from the latter. About five-sixths of the whole number are unmarried men, in the prime of life: so that, in fact, the Chinese population, in point of

* By the census taken in 1824, the population of the island, including the annexed territory on the opposite coast, was found to have increased to 55,000, chiefly in consequence of emigration from the Malay state of Queda, produced by the invasion of the Siamese.

effective labour, may be estimated as equivalent to an ordinary population of above 37,000, and, as will afterwards be shown, to a numerical Malay population of more than 80,000! The Chouliahs amount to 6417; they are employed as porters, field-labourers, as clerks and police-officers, as shopkeepers and as merchants, and, occasionally, as mechanics. The natives of Bengal amount to 4624, and form a far less valuable part of the population than the two last classes. About 1700 consist of military and camp followers, about 1300 are convicts, and the remainder settlers, employed as labourers, domestic servants, and shopkeepers. The rate of wages paid to the different classes, when engaged in similar labour, affords a very striking picture of their relative skill, industry, and physical strength—in a word, perhaps of their relative state of civilization. A Malay field-labourer works only six and twenty days in the month, and receives but two dollars and a-half as wages; a Chouliah works twenty-eight days, and receives four dollars; and a Chinese works thirty days, and receives six dollars. The labour of a Chinese, therefore, to himself and the public is worth fifty per cent. more than that of a Chouliah; the Chouliah's, seventy-five per cent. more than that of a Malay; and the Chinese no less than one hundred and twenty per cent. beyond the latter. When skill is implied in the labour to be performed, the disparity is still more remarkable. A Chinese carpenter at Penang receives fifteen dollars a-month, a Persee also fifteen, a Chouliah eight, and a Malay six. I have little doubt but a scale might be constructed upon this principle, which would exhibit a very just estimate of the comparative state of civilization among nations, or, which is the same thing, of the respective merits of their different social institutions.

Notwithstanding the deaths by the cholera morbus, which carried off 1131 persons, or near one thirty-second part of the inhabitants, the population of Penang has increased since 1815, the first year in which an accurate census was made, by 5243. The cholera first made its appearance at Penang in October, 1819, in the midst of the rainy season, and disappeared in the end of February,—thus continuing for a period of four months.

It chiefly raged during the first, second, third, and fourth weeks, and in the fifth began sensibly to diminish. It reappeared in the beginning of May, 1821, in a season perfectly the reverse, and continued for two months, with a character of far less virulence, however, than on the first occasion. The weak, the ill-fed, and the ill-lodged, were as usual the principal victims. The natives of the continent of India, evidently the weakest of the inhabitants in point of physical frame, lost in the first attack between a fourteenth and a fifteenth part of their whole numbers; the Malays and other islanders, certainly ill-fed and lodged, but with frames more vigorous and better suited to the climate, lost but one forty-second of their number; the Chinese, well-fed, well-lodged, with robust frames, lost but one one-hundred-and-thirteenth part of their numbers; and, lastly, the mortality among Europeans and their immediate descendants, amounted to no more than one in two hundred. The mortality was incomparably greatest in marshy and swampy situations; and the deaths most frequent after a rainy night. The mortality in the town was five and two-thirds in a hundred, and in the country but one and one-third.

Penang is supplied with rice from Bengal, from Achin; but, above all, from the territories of the King of Queda. The Achin rice is of very inferior quality; but the Bengal and Queda bring nearly the same price in the Penang market. It may be considered about twenty-five per cent. dearer than at Calcutta, and above thirty-five per cent. dearer than at Queda. The whole, under proper arrangements, ought to come from the latter country; but the Prince of Queda, in contravention of an existing treaty, and contrary to good policy, charges a duty of twenty per cent. on all the rice exported to Penang; and contrives, by arbitrary regulations, to restrict the production to certain districts in which the impost cannot be evaded, while the trade is in the hands of petty dealers, who are incapable of conducting it with skill and economy. The daily consumption of rice in Penang, excluding the military population, about one thousand seven hundred, is 32,000 pounds, which gives a consumption for each individual

of seventeen-twentieths of a pound. There should be deducted from this calculation the small portion of wheat used by a few of the inhabitants, and the rice consumed in the distillery of arrack and by cattle, which is, however, inconsiderable. Perhaps three-quarters of a pound a-day will be very near the real consumption per head. I am thus particular in giving this statement, because nowhere else is there afforded an opportunity of ascertaining a fact of this nature, with so much precision.

The history of this little establishment is very shortly told. After the war which ended in the peace of 1783, and during which we had had to struggle for naval superiority with the French, the want of a good harbour in the Bay of Bengal, as a resort for our ships of war, became evident; and Penang, after other abortive and injudicious attempts had been made, was at length fixed upon, under the administration of Sir John Macpherson. The person who recommended it to the attention of the Government of India, was a Mr. Francis Light, who had traded and resided for a number of years at Siam and Queda, and who had a title of nobility from the former country. The settlement was formed in the year 1786, and this gentleman appointed to the charge of it, under the title of Superintendant. There is no foundation whatever for the idle story which has gained currency, of Mr. Light's having received Penang as a dowry with a daughter of the King of Queda. It was made over to the East India Company, in consideration of a yearly payment of 6000 Spanish dollars, to compensate for any loss of revenue which might arise to this petty prince from its occupation. It soon rose to considerable prosperity; and in the year 1791, five years after its occupation, we were already at war with the Prince of Queda on account of it. In the year 1800 we received an accession of territory by a cession of waste and uninhabited land on the opposite shore, three and twenty miles along the coast, and three miles inland, which now contains near 6000 inhabitants. The place still continued to prosper, to increase in wealth and population, and to prove of much utility to the general interests of In-

n commerce. In the year 1805, however, this utility was strangely aggerated, and an extensive plan formed for converting it into a grand val depôt and dock-yard, though neither the island nor its vicinity oduced a stick of timber fit for ship-building. The authorities at home ought themselves warranted, on some vague conception of its merits, to eate it into a separate Presidency, and to load it with a burthensome id expensive civil establishment. On a reduced scale, the civil establishient even now amounts to the enormous sum of *five and fifty thouand pounds sterling a-year!* and the military charge, which cannot be o correctly estimated, is certainly not under *thirty thousand*,—making an ggregate expenditure of *eighty-five thousand pounds sterling a-year!**

The real utility of Penang consists in its being a place of convenient resort for both our military and commercial navy, especially in time of war; but, above all, in its constituting a depôt, or emporium, at which is concentrated, for the convenience of the distant and general trader, the scattered traffic of numerous petty and barbarous tribes, separately trifling; but when thus united, of real importance. In none of these views, however, was it probably the most eligible situation which might have been selected. In passing through the Straits of Malacca from the west, it is a good deal out of the direct track, and the time wasted in visiting it is considerably increased by some difficulties in entering and quitting the harbour. The Island of Junk-Ceylon would, as a naval station, have been greatly preferable; and for commercial purposes, Singapore is incomparably superior. Junk-Ceylon is, however, not likely to be a competitor; and Penang, although it will lose, by means of Singapore, the more valuable native commerce that comes from the East, will preserve, from its situation, the trade of its immediate neighbourhood, which will embrace the greater portion of the pepper trade, the trade in Areca

* The settlements of Singapoor and Malacca have been recently annexed to Penang, and an enormous increase made to the civil and military establishments wholly uncalled for.

nut, and a very considerable share of that in tin. A respectable opinion will be formed of the utility of Prince of Wales's Island as an emporium, when it is stated that the value of its exports and imports in 1820 amounted to 4,808,688 Spanish dollars.*

The whole revenue afforded by Prince of Wales's Island amounts to about two hundred thousand Spanish dollars, or very little more than one-half the expenditure. Financial resources so respectable, however, ought to be adequate to the maintenance of an establishment on a plan still sufficiently liberal, and infinitely better suited to the purposes of good government than the present cumbrous and burthensome one.

The sources from which the Penang revenue is derived are—duties upon the trade; and excise duties, in the form of licences or monopolies, with a variety of minor items, such as quit-rents, &c. The imposts upon trade amount to about 90,000 dollars, and the excise duties to about 96,000. In a port, the great utility of which consists in the facilities which it should afford to the common trade of the nation, and the commerce of which is but a mere transit trade, no duties whatever ought to be levied upon merchandize, because, however trifling their amount, the very act of subjecting the petty cargoes of the ignorant native traders to the examination and control of the officers of customs is, from the vexation necessarily attending it, a serious obstacle to their resort. A trifling duty upon tonnage, if any duty at all be worth levying, would be less easily evaded, more easily and cheaply levied, and in all probability equally productive.†

The excise duties are levied upon the consumption of opium, spirits, hemp used as an intoxicating drug, betel and pepper leaves, and pork. The

* In 1824-25, the exports and imports had increased to 5,265,902 Spanish dollars.

† The Custom-House, duties have recently been abolished at Penang, but the formalities somewhat unreasonably kept up. The abolition of this impost arose out of an attempt of the local Government to levy duties on the trade of Singapoor and Malacca. The subject was brought forward in Parliament—the Home Authorities interfered, and the imposition of duties at all the three settlements was judiciously prohibited.

monopoly of the vend of each of these is sold to a farmer by public sale from year to year. Some of these objects of taxation are themselves very injudiciously selected. The tax on pork can be no better than a capitation tax on the Chinese, in a situation where the bulk of the rest of the population is Mohammedan. The tax on betel-leaf, which, besides being extremely unproductive, is one which falls peculiarly heavy upon the poorest class of the population, and exempts many of the rich. The most judicious and suitable subjects of taxation are opium, spirits, and hemp, used as an intoxicating drug. The great consumers of opium are the Chinese and the Malays, and to a smaller extent the Siamese, Burmans, Chouliahs, and Bengallis. The regular and constant consumers of arrack, or native spirits, are the Chinese, but they seldom or never drink to the extent of inebriety. The native Christians, the Chuliahs, and the Bengallis, drink irregularly, but when they do, always to excess. The Burmans and Siamese are looked upon as hard drinkers. The Malays are extremely temperate.

In former times a tax was levied on gambling, more productive than all the rest put together; but on the institution of the Court of Justice, it was presented by the Grand Jury as a nuisance, and abolished. This was, perhaps, being too fastidious. The Chinese, the Malays, native Christians, Burmans, and Siamese, are violently, and without a revolution in their manners, not certainly to be brought about by mere municipal regulation, incurably addicted to gambling. The Chinese especially, habitually repair to the gaming-table after a day of severe toil. It would, perhaps, have been better to have regulated and controlled this propensity, than vainly to have attempted to eradicate it. The consequence of attempting the latter has been, that gaming still goes on clandestinely—heavy fines are levied by the police, and its officers are afforded a pretext for vexatious interference in the private concerns of the inhabitants.

The industry, activity, and energy of the population of Penang, in comparison to that of other Asiatic countries, is exemplified in its capa-

city to pay taxes. Excluding the military and convicts, amounting together to above 3000, and who, scarcely in any respect, contribute to the finances, the population of Penang pay, exclusive of custom-house duties, 112,759 dollars, which exhibits a rate of taxation of three dollars, thirteen cents, per head.*

* The inhabitants of our territorial dominions on the Continent, Custom-house duties included, pay only five shillings per head, or about a third part of the amount stated in the text, yet they are the most heavily taxed of the two. The annual revenue of our Continental dominions is about 22,000,000 sterling. Were our subjects there as well governed or as industrious as even the inhabitants of Penang, the revenue ought to be 66,000,000, and the people less oppressed!

CHAPTER II.

Departure from Penang.—Description of the Principality of Queda.—Description of the Dinding Islands.—Account of Perak.—Arrival at Malacca.—Incidents there.—Description of the Place.—Visit to the Carimon Islands.—Arrival at Singapore.—Incidents there.—Ancient settlement of the Malays.—Chinese Navigation.—Account of the race of Malays called Ourang-laut.

Jan. 5.—We went out of the harbour of Penang by the Southern channel, through which ships drawing no more than eighteen feet may always pass without risk, and thus save a day or two in their route to the Eastward. In passing out we landed upon the little island of Järjak, about a mile and a half long, and separated from Penang by a deep and narrow channel. We found it to consist, like other places which we had visited in the neighbourhood, of the usual grey granite. It was at this place that the construction of naval docks was contemplated, but neither here nor any where else in the vicinity of Penang, is there a sufficient rise and fall of the tide, or any other peculiar advantage for such a purpose.

7.—During the three last days our progress had been impeded by calms, and light or unfair breezes, a very usual occurrence in these places. To-day we passed the southern limits of the Malay state of Queda. The principality of Queda, of which a rapid sketch will not here be out of place, is about one hundred and ten geographical miles in length, from north to south. Its breadth is unequal, and every where inconsiderable; for the utmost width of this portion of the peninsula itself is but one hundred and thirty miles; and this it shares every where with Patani, a

chain of high mountains running north and south, dividing its breadth between them. The boundary to the north, between Queda and Siam, is Lăng-gu, in latitude 6° 50′, and that between it and Perak Kurao, about the latitude of 5°. Besides the territory on the main, several large islands belong to this state. The principal of these is Lăngkawi, which is twenty-five miles long, and which has a considerable share of culture and population. Trutao, the next in size, is fifteen miles in length, and has but few inhabitants. The character of this territory in general is, that of being extremely woody, marshy, and mountainous. From Lănggu to Kurao, inclusive—for both these give names to rivers—there are counted not less than six-and-thirty streams. Six of these are of very considerable size, and might be useful both to commerce and agriculture. In the range of hills in the interior, there are many mountains of a great height; and Jărai, a detached one near the western coast, is supposed to be six thousand feet high. Although the country is little cultivated, it does not seem to be destitute of fertility; and its capacity of production is satisfactorily shown in its power of supplying the principal consumption of Penang, now possessed of a population nearly equalling its own. The country is supposed to contain from 40 to 50,000 inhabitants, divided, according to ancient custom, into one hundred and five petty districts, each of forty-four families. By another old institution, the country was classified and sub-divided into petty divisions, each of twenty-four houses.* If we can rely upon the information of Commodore Beaulieu, who visited this country in 1620, it must have contained, seven years before his visit, a population of 60,000 souls; for he tells us that an epidemic which raged about that time, carried off 40,000, or two-thirds of the whole number.

The indigenous inhabitants of the territory of Queda, consist of four classes, namely; Malays, Samsams, Siamese, and Sămangs; but chiefly of the two former, among whom the second are said to be the most numerous. By Samsams, are meant people of the Siamese race, who have adopted the Mohammedan religion, and who speak a language which is a mixed jargon of the languages of the two people; a matter which, in the opinion of the latter, brings some reproach with it. The following is a specimen. "Saya na pai naik keh bun gunung." "I want to ascend the mountain;" in which the first word is Malay, the two next Siamese, the fourth Malay, the fifth and sixth Siamese, and the seventh or last Malay again.

* Called tăngga, or stairs; every dwelling-house having a stair to it.

The Sămang are the same Negro race found from the Andamans to New Guinea. They are here distinguished into two races, the Sămang and Bila; the latter holding no intercourse whatever with the inhabitants of the plains, but the former frequenting the villages, and carrying on some traffic with the more civilized inhabitants. Neither have any fixed habitation, and roaming through the woods, exist chiefly on the produce of their hunting, feeding indiscriminately upon every description of animal, whether quadruped or reptile. They appear to be a timid and harmless race.

The revenue of the petty chief of Queda amounted to about 42,000 Spanish dollars a year. The country, from the earliest knowledge of Europeans, has been a tributary or vassal state of Siam; and, besides contributing in war to the assistance of the paramount state, in men, arms, and provisions, by immemorial usage, the King of Queda sends to Siam, in common with other Malayan princes, a triennial token of submission, in the form of a little tree of gold, which hence comes to be applied by the Malays of these parts to any tribute whatever. About the beginning of the seventeenth century, Queda was conquered by Achin, which held it for some years in a state of vassalage.

Jan. 9.—Yesterday morning we were in sight of the islands usually called in the maritime charts the Dindings, (correctly Pangkur, for Dinding is the name of a place on the opposite main,) and the group of islets further south, called by the Malays, Pulo Sambilan, or the Nine Isles. We gratified our curiosity by landing on the largest Dinding. The sea-breeze

carried us in between this island and the mainland of Perak, with which it forms a beautiful and safe harbour, running north and south, and seemingly sheltered from every wind. After rounding the south point of the island, of which we sailed within one hundred yards, we came upon a little cove, with a sandy beach, and here landed. The island consists of abrupt hills of a few hundred feet high, clothed with tall wood almost to the water's edge. Except in one or two spots, such as that on which we landed, there was no beach, the coast being formed of great blocks of granite, the only rock which we any where perceived. Tin ore is asserted to be fouud on the island. It is utterly uncultivated and uninhabited; but near the landing-place we observed two or three temporary and unoccupied huts thrown up, consisting of a few boughs of trees and some long grass. This is a famous haunt of pirates, and our Malay interpreters informed us that these huts were of their construction. In the seventeenth century, the Dutch occupied the island as a post to control the trade of the country, and chiefly to secure a monopoly of the tin of the Malay principality of Perak. Dampier, who visited this place in the year 1689, gives an accurate description of it. Relying upon his known fidelity, we sought for the remains of the Dutch fort, and found it exactly as he described it. The brick walls are still standing after a lapse of one hundred and thirty-two years; concealed, however, from the first view, by the forest which has grown round them. The fort was merely a square building of masonry of about thirty feet to a side. A platform, about sixteen feet high, contained the guns and troops, and in the walls were eight round embrasures for cannon, and sixteen loop-holes for fire-arms. The governor and officers' apartments were in the upper-story. There was but one entrance to the fort, and this by a flight of steps towards the sea-side. Dampier tells us that the governor had a detached house near the sea, where he passed the day, but which, for security, he always abandoned for the fort at night; and accordingly we found, in the situation he mentions, the terrace on which the house in question stood, with fragments of broken bottles and coarse china-ware

scattered here and there in its neighbourhood. The whole appearance of the place conveyed a very good picture of the state of alarm and distrust in which the garrison perpetually lived—the effect of the lawless and unprofitable object in which they were engaged. Dampier tells a very ludicrous story to this effect:—While the captain of his ship and a passenger, with his wife, were entertained by the Dutch governor, in his house without the fort, an alarm was given of the appearance of Malays! His Excellency, without any warning to his guests, bolted out of one of the windows, and ran off to the fort, followed by all his servants and attendants. The feast was left standing, and the garrison began to fire the great guns, by way of giving the Malays to understand that they were prepared for them. The year after Dampier visited it, the garrison was cut off, nor have I heard that it was ever re-established. We discovered that the place had not been without some occasional European visitors, for on the plaster of the embrasures were carved the initials of several names, and in very plain figures, the years 1727, 1754, and 1821. This island, like others in these latitudes, affords a rich field for the botanist. Mr. Finlayson here discovered a new epidendron, of gigantic dimensions. The flowering stem was six feet long, and had from ninety to one hundred flowers upon it, each of which was two and a half inches broad, and four inches long, of a rich yellow colour, spotted with brown, and emitting a very agreeable fragrance. Deer and wild hogs seem to abound in the island; for we discovered many of their tracks in the sand.

As an European establishment, with which view it has been contemplated, this island, though the harbour be good, more easily accessible than any other which has been named for such a purpose, and far more in the direct track of active commerce than Penang, is certainly, upon the whole, unsuitable. It is, on the one hand, too far within the Straits for a place of resort and refreshment for our navy coming from the Bay of Bengal; and, on the other, much too far to the west, to be an emporium

for the commerce of the nations to the eastward of the Straits of Malacca. Independent of these primary objections, there seems scarcely a spot in the island level enough for cultivation, or even for convenient and comfortable habitation. The prospect of deriving any benefit from the working of tin-mines in this island, even under an European Government, supposing the ore to exist in sufficient abundance, appears to me to be more than questionable. The whole island is an abrupt hard granite rock, from which ore could not be extracted with any profit in the state of skill and industry which exists among the natives of the country, or even among the Chinese themselves. In Banca, and other places where abundance of tin is produced, the ore is found in situations extremely different, that is, in streams through the soil of the low lands, from which it is easily extracted, readily smelted, and finally when smelted, affording a metal of superior value to what is obtained by the laborious process of mining in rocky districts.

Jan. 11.—We had now passed the territories of Perak and Salangore. Perak contains one hundred and five *mokims*, or petty parishes, and is said to be more populous than Queda. It extends about seventy-five miles along the coast, in by far the broadest part of the whole peninsula. This is the most productive part of the western coast in tin. I have never heard any exact statement of the quantity it yields, but of the 15,000 piculs, or about 2,000,000lbs, imported yearly into Penang, a very large share is from this country.* Perak, like Queda, is a vassal of Siam, and being refractory, about two years ago, was reduced to subjection by the Queda Chief, in consequence of orders from the Lord Paramount.

Salangore extends about ninety-six miles along the coast, where the peninsula begins to grow narrow. This is a very petty state, and inferior in population to Perak and Queda. The reigning family is Bugis of

* Its produce is reckoned at 4000 piculs, of 133⅓lbs. of avoirdupois.

the Waju race, that is of the most commercial and enterprising of the nations of Celebes. In this state, at a place called Lukot, situated immediately to the north of Cape Rachado, a valuable tin mine has lately been discovered, and is now worked.

Jan. 13.—Last night we came into the roads of Malacca, saluting a Dutch sloop of war and the fort; and this morning, about ten o'clock, we landed in the Dutch Governor's accommodation-boat, which had been politely sent for us. On landing, we were received on the wharf by the Governor's secretary, charged with an invitation from Mr. Timmerman Tysen, the Governor, whom I had had the pleasure of knowing some years before at Batavia. Such of our party as could be accommodated accepted the invitation, and the rest took up their residence in the town. This morning I walked round the hill of Malacca, and surveyed those ruined fortifications which, under the Portuguese, had resisted twelve sieges. On the top of the hill, which is about a hundred feet high, are the ruins of the Portuguese church of St. Paul, still a conspicuous landmark in approaching the roads. It was built soon after the Portuguese conquest, and towards the beginning of the sixteenth century. The Dutch, after getting possession of Malacca, used it as a Protestant church and burying-ground; and hence the unusual spectacle which it presents of the tombs of conquerors and conquered, Catholics, and heretics, blended together in one spot. Without reading the inscriptions, the tombstones of the respective people are to be recognised by their age, and the different materials of which they consist. The Portuguese tombs are of granite from China, and the Dutch of a hard black trap rock from the Coromandel coast, for neither Malacca nor its vicinity afford either. Among the tombstones we read, in very distinct characters, and in the Latin language, the inscription on that of Dominus Petrus, second Bishop of Japan, who is stated to have died in the Straits of Sincapore, in the year 1598. The body of St. Francis Xavier, the Apostle of the Indies, who died in China, once reposed here, but the sacred relic was disinterred and finally conveyed to Goa.

Jan. 14.—I called upon Mr. Milne this forenoon. This industrious and highly respectable character is an Englishman by birth, and the second in rank of the Protestant Mission to China, in connexion with the Malay, denominated the Ultra-Gangetic Mission. This fraternity has been established at Malacca since the year 1815, and since 1818 an Anglo-Chinese College has been established, the chief object of which institution is the cultivation of Chinese and English literature, and the diffusion of Christianity in the countries and islands lying to the eastward of Penang. Mr. Milne is one of the best Chinese scholars living, and the result of his indefatigable labours is, a version of the Scriptures, in great progress, a periodical work in the Chinese language, another in English, called "The Indo-Chinese Gleaner," and a little volume, entitled, "A Retrospect of the First Ten Years of the Protestant Mission to China," which last contains some excellent remarks on the manners and literature of the Indo-Chinese nations. These have all issued from the press of the seminary itself at Malacca. The labours of such men as Mr. Milne, Dr. Morrison, Dr. Carey, and Mr. Marchman, are of incalculable benefit to the cause of humanity and civilization, while it is acknowledged on every side, that their means and motives are equally unexceptionable and pure. Mr. Milne, in conversation, furnished us with some valuable hints respecting the objects of our Embassy to Cochin China, and with notes on the geography and commerce of that country; the result of his inquiries among the traders from thence, who have of late years visited the Straits of Malacca.

Jan. 16.—Last night Mr. Timmerman, the Governor, gave a ball and supper, in compliment to the departure of the military officers of the station, relieved by fresh troops from Batavia. Besides the inhabitants of the place, the party consisted of the officers of three Dutch men-of-war lying at the time in the Roads. This occasion gave us an opportunity of observing the manners and appearance of the colonists. Out of thirty-seven ladies, two or three only were Europeans, and the rest born in the country, with a large admixture of Asiatic blood. The female dress, of the younger

part, was in the English fashion; and a very few only of the elderly ladies dressed in the Malay kabaya, a sort of loose gown, or wore the hair in the Malay fashion. The long residence of the English in the Dutch colonies, —the influence of the French, and lately, of their own more polished countrywomen,—have nearly banished these external marks of barbarism. Before the last ten years, the habits and costume of the female Dutch colonists partook more of the Asiatic than the European. Instead of Dutch, they spoke a barbarous dialect of Malay; they were habited, as I have described, in the dress of that people; they chewed the pawn-leaf publicly, and even in the ball-room each fair dame had before her an enormous brass ewer to receive the refuse of her mastication.

Jan. 17.—We re-embarked last evening, the Dutch Governor politely attending us to the wharf, and at eight at night, a fine sea-breeze having set in, we weighed and made sail towards Singapore, in company with a Dutch corvette.—The following is a short sketch of the place we had just left, the result of previous inquiry, as well as of examination on the spot. The territory of Malacca is forty miles in length along the sea, and extends thirty miles inland. The principality of Salangore bounds it to the north at Cape Rachado. Jehor bounds it to the south, at the river Mora, and the territory of Rumbo to the east. The largest mountain in the territory of Malacca is Ledang, which the Portuguese, and other Europeans in imitation of them, have denominated Mount Ophir. This is distant from Malacca twenty-four miles, in a straight direction, and thirty-two by the windings of a very bad road. Its height is about 4000 feet. Besides a number of petty streams, there are in the territory of Malacca two considerable rivers, namely, Mora, already named, and Lingituah, the embouchure of which is a little to the south of Cape Rachado. The granitic formation, which characterises the countries we have hitherto visited, partially disappears at Malacca; the whole territory of which, as far as we could learn, is one uniform mass of cellular iron-ore. The valuable minerals found within the territory of Malacca are gold

and tin; but the first, nowhere in sufficient abundance to have fixed the imperfect industry of the native inhabitants; of the second, it is said to produce 4000 piculs. The soil must be considered as decidedly deficient in fertility, for at no period of its history does Malacca appear to have been capable of supplying its own scanty population with bread corn. Bad government must not be assigned as the sole cause, for Malacca has had various forms of European government; all of them, however bad or imperfect, generally superior to the native governments of several neighbouring countries, producing an abundant supply of grain. Fruits, the perfection of which depends more, in these latitudes, upon the culture they receive than upon the quality of the soil, and which are never skilfully cultivated but by Europeans, are produced in great excellence and variety at Malacca. Seventy-two species have been produced at once at a dessert; but, of course, the greater number very worthless. The mangustin and pine-apple are unrivalled at this place. The durian, the orange, the plantain, the shaddock, and the dukuh, are also very fine. Poultry and hogs are of good quality, and in abundance, but sheep do not exist, and horned cattle are scarce.

The present population of the town of Malacca and its territory is 22,000; a number which does not seem to have varied for at least the last six-and-twenty years; a fact which proclaims in intelligible language the decrease of wealth, or at least the absence of prosperity. A place which has been the seat of European commerce for three centuries, and was for more than two centuries and a half before in the possession of an active and commercial race of natives, and yet contains little more than eighteen inhabitants to a square mile, must be considered as labouring under some natural, and perhaps insuperable defects.*

* While we occupied Malacca, during the war, its population was estimated at 25,000. The Dutch estimated it, as stated in the text, at 22,000. By a census, or estimate, made in 1827, it is reduced to 16,000.

The permanent inhabitants of Malacca are the Malays, a brown-coloured race of savages, with lank hair, called Benua and Jakong; a race of Hindu colonists from Telinga; the descendants of the Portuguese conquerors; and those of the Dutch. To this list may be added the usual admixture of Chinese, and of Mohammedans of the coast of Coromandel. To a brief account of these, I shall premise a short sketch of the history of Malacca.—About the middle of the twelfth century, when Europeans were as yet in ignorance of the existence of such a people, a colony of Malays, from Menangkabao, or perhaps more correctly from the north coast of Sumatra generally, are said to have settled at Singapura, at the extremity of the Malay peninsula, the very spot on which we ourselves have lately formed an establishment. After a residence short of a century at this place, they were driven from it by the Javanese, and retiring to the westward, founded Malacca in the year 1252. Four-and-twenty years after this event they were converted to the Mohammedan religion, and two hundred and fifty-nine years later they were conquered by the Portuguese, who, after one hundred and twenty-nine years possession, were expelled by the Dutch. The Malay population of Malacca are the reputed descendants of the first colonists from Sumatra. The Jakong and the Benua are wild races of men living in the deep forests of the interior of the peninsula, being spread over the territories of Malacca, Rumbo, and Jehor. They exist principally in the hunter state, some of the least uncivilized practising a little rude husbandry. Their persons are nearly naked, and their habitations extremely rude. A death happening in a tribe is always the signal for abandoning their habitations, and taking up a new encampment. They appear to practice no cruel rites, and in their manners to be altogether extremely inoffensive. What renders this wild people most remarkable, is their differing totally in language and physical form from the Negro races which inhabit the interior of the more northern parts of the peninsula. They are, in fact, Malays in the savage state. Doctor Leyden, who visited them in 1811, on our way to the conquest of Java, could discover in their language but seven-and-

twenty words which differed from common Malay; and on examination of the specimens he gives, I find, that at least six or seven of these are extremely doubtful; while two or three appear original Malay words, for which Sanscrit ones have been substituted in the more modern dialect. Whether this rude people be the true original stock of the wide-spread race of the Malays, or a degenerated one from the colonists of Sumatra, before their conversion to Mohammedanism, is a matter not very easily determined. With respect to the Malays of the neighbouring state of Rumbo having emigrated from Sumatra, there is no question made. Other Malays denominate them "people of Menangkabao;" they speak the precise language of the people of this last country, ending their words always with a short *o* instead of a short *a*, as done by other Malays. A friendly intercourse is always maintained between the two states; Menangkabao being acknowledged the paramount one, and the Prince of Rumbo receiving a regular investiture from that country.

The Hindus of Malacca are the only ultramarine colonists of that people of whom I have heard. The popular notion of its being forbidden to Hindus to quit their country by sea, is sufficiently contradicted by their existence; and how indeed, without supposing such emigration, are we, in common sense, to account for the once wide spread of their religion among the distant islands of the Indian Ocean. The Malacca colony amounts at present to about two hundred and fifty families, and in the more prosperous days of the settlement, is said to have been far more numerous. The colonists are of the Telinga, or Kalinga nation, and at present composed only of the third and fourth, or mercantile and servile classes of the Hindu orders. Not a great many years ago, there were still a few Bramins and Chatrias among them. The Malacca Hindus practise all the ordinary rites of the Hindu worship; they refuse to eat with persons of other religions; and in their food reject beef and pork, but consume fish, goat's flesh, and fowls. Those of the mercantile order employ themselves as traders, accountants, and assayers of gold, in which last occupation they have a high reputation both for skill and fidelity. Persons of the lower order are employed in the usual occupations of the servile class, including agriculture. The family of Bisara Seti, the present chief of this tribe, from whom I derive my information, settled in Malacca one hundred and forty-three years ago; but he can give no information respecting the establishment of the first colonists. He states generally, however, that the greater number settled at Malacca during the Portuguese rule. When the Hindu settlers first came over, they were unattended by their families, and formed connexions with the women of the country, particularly with those of Celebes; they soon however abandoned this practice, as is evident enough from their preserving the genuine Hindu features, and a stature considerably beyond that of the islanders.

The Portuguese amount to 4000, and are all of the lowest order. Although with a great admixture of Asiatic blood, the European features are still strongly marked in them. I have no doubt there are among them many of the lineal descendants of the haughty, intolerant, and brave men, who fought by the side of Albuquerque; but they certainly inherit no part of the character of their ancestors, and are a timid, peaceable, and submissive race. They offer to us a spectacle not frequently presented in the East—that of men bearing the European name, and wearing the European garb, engaged in the humblest occupations of life, for we find them employed as domestic servants, as day labourers, and as fishermen.

Malacca is probably doomed to sink into still greater insignificance than that into which it has already fallen, but it is associated in our minds with one of the most interesting events in the history of our species—the discovery of a new route to the Indies, and the heroic achievements of the Portuguese which immediately followed it. We cannot, as Europeans, but survey with pride the spot on which stood the bridge by which Albuquerque, at the head of 700 Europeans, stormed walls and intrenchments

that were guarded by 30,000 barbarians—an achievement superior to any of those of Pizarro, inasmuch as the Malays were a braver and even more civilized enemy than the Americans. An Englishman will see, with some mortification the ruins of the fortification which the Portuguese constructed shortly after the conquest. It surrounded the little hill, on the top of which was the church of St. Paul's, already mentioned. The walls were of solid masonry, and of the iron-stone of the country. To the west it was protected by the sea, to the north by the river, and it had a moat to the other two sides. This specimen of the art of fortification in the beginning of the sixteenth century, the only one existing in these parts, and the pride and trust of the native inhabitants, was, by a piece of policy, equally barbarous and unnecessary, blown up by us in the year 1807.

The Dutch support at Malacca a most unnecessary civil and military establishment, which, independent of the revenue of the place itself, costs them three lacks of rupees, or near 30,000*l.* a-year. In a place remarkable for the peaceable character of its inhabitants, and without an enemy, European or native, they have an effective body of 400 troops, besides keeping on foot a militia or burgher corps. Fifty regular soldiers would have been quite adequate to the protection of the place, and a municipal establishment upon the humblest scale the most suitable for its good government.*

Malacca, in every stage of its history, owed its prosperity to its being the only port in the Straits of Malacca, where there was tolerable security for life and property. The Dutch themselves did much towards its ruin by the highly illiberal system of exclusive trade, which they long persevered in. The establishment of Penang, on different principles, brought the matter nearly to a crisis, and that of Singapore has completed its fall. The symptoms of decay are too striking to escape observation, and the traveller who has quitted either of those settlements, cannot fail to contrast their industry and activity with the lifeless dulness which reigns at Malacca.

* Shortly after this passage was written, the Dutch judiciously reduced both their civil and military establishments. The place, as is sufficiently known, is now a British possession, and although not likely to be of much value, it may be rendered at least not burthensome to us, if its establishments be kept within the bounds of moderation. For taking an opposite course, it would be extremely difficult to find any pretext.

Jan. 18.—At daylight this morning we had Pulo Pisang behind us, Pulo Kakab to our left, and the Carimons and other islands to our right, with Tanjung Bulus, (correctly, Buros,) the most southern extremity of the continent of Asia, in latitude 1° 15′ north, before us. We bore down upon the Carimons, with a view of making some inquiry respecting them; and at ten o'clock landed upon the Little Carimon, the latitude of the northern end of which is 1° 8½′ north. This island is about two miles long, and the highest part of it perhaps about 500 feet in height. The whole is high land, covered with a lofty forest, and the coast steep and rocky. The island is uninhabited, and indeed, from its formation and aspect, does not appear a fit residence for man in any stage of civilization. The Great Carimon is divided from the little one by a very narrow and deep gut. It is twelve miles in length, by five in breadth; has a great deal of low land, apparently suited for culture; and two peaked mountains about the centre, the highest of which did not appear to us to be less than 1800 or 2000 feet high. I am told there are a few Malay settlers upon it. To the west of the Carimons are distinctly visible many islands, the very names of which are unknown to Europeans.

We examined, with considerable attention, that side of the Little Carimon on which we landed. The rock of which it is composed is porphyritic hornstone, varying in appearance as the grain is larger or smaller: it is extremely hard and flinty, and exhibits a conchoidical fracture. The surface of the rock has every where a honeycombed appearance; and the hollows, when examined, are discovered to be drusy cavities, many of them containing portions of secondary lime-stone. One of these

cavities I measured, and found to be four feet three inches long, two feet broad, and eighteen inches deep.*

Jan. 19.—At twelve o'clock to-day we passed the narrow channel of the Rabbit and Coney, the western entrance of the Straits of Singapore, and soon found ourselves surrounded in every direction by beautiful verdant islands. The sea was smooth, the sky clear, and the whole prospect equally novel and pleasing. From the deck there could be counted between fifty and sixty green and woody islands of various dimensions, and from the mast-head above seventy. I do not believe there is any part of the world which can afford a prospect, in its way, of superior beauty, and this indeed has been observed and confessed by all voyagers. At six o'clock we anchored in Singapore Roads.

Jan. 21.—Last night my old friend Colonel Farquhar, resident of Singapore, sent his staff, Captain Davies, on board to invite us on shore. We landed this morning; and Mr. Scott, a merchant of this new settlement, and the son of my respected friend, Mr. Robert Scott, an experienced and most intelligent merchant of Penang, hospitably and obligingly gave his house up for our accommodation. In the evening we dined with Colonel Farquhar, and went through the greater part of the new settlement. Notwithstanding the state of abeyance in which the political question regarding the settlement was involved, there was universally an air of animation and activity. Several miles of new road were already formed, and the habitations were so numerous, and the population so great, that we could hardly imagine that the whole was the creation of three short years.

Jan. 23.—We had to-day a visit from some individuals of the race of Malays, called Orăng-laut,—that is, "men of the sea." They have a rough exterior, and their speech is awkward and uncouth; but, in other

* In the autumn of 1825, while resident of Singapore, I visited the Carimon Islands (correctly written Krimun); the hornstone mentioned in the text is confined to the coast, and is merely a partial and overlaying formation. The interior is composed of granite, with veins of white quartz, and abounds in tin-ore. The inhabitants of the larger island amount to 400 in number.

respects, I could observe little essential difference between them and other Malays. These people have adopted the Mohammedan religion. They are divided into, at least, twenty tribes, distinguished usually by the straits or narrow seas they principally frequent. A few of them have habitations on shore, but by far the greater number live constantly in their boats, and nearly their sole occupation is fishing; those who are most civilized cultivating a few bananas. They are subjects of the King of Johore, and the same people who have been called *Orang Sallat*, or, "men of the straits;"—the straits here alluded to being, not the great Straits of Malacca, which are extensive beyond their comprehension, but the narrow guts running among the little islets that are so abundantly strewed over its eastern entrance. Under this appellation they have been notorious for their piracies, from the earliest knowledge of Europeans respecting these countries.

Jan. 27.—We went yesterday morning along the coast, to the westward, and visited the new harbour, or Sălat Panikam, as it is called by the Malays. This harbour is formed by Singapore and the islets which lie off the western limit of the roadstead. The entrance is narrow and difficult; but when a ship is once moored within it, she is secure from every danger,—from rocks, elements, and even from an enemy, for half a dozen guns would make it impregnable to any attack from sea. The prospect we had on entering it was beautiful and unexpected. We found ourselves completely landlocked, in every direction, by the green and woody shores of the islands surrounding us; and the sea, though considerably ruffled without, was here as smooth as glass. This is a favourite retreat of the Orăng-laut. On our arrival, their proas were lying along the shore; but as the flood-tide made, they advanced into the middle of the channel, and began to fish. Their principal mode of taking fish is by spearing, and hence the native name of the Strait, which has this meaning. The larger fish are followed by the proas, and easily traced through the water, which is perfectly clear and trans-

parent. They are speared with a long trident, and with such dexterity as to be seldom missed. This mode of taking fish must be tedious and unproductive. It is suited, however, to the poverty of the people, who, perhaps, cannot afford the necessary supply of nets, and, I have no doubt, is strongly recommended to them by the pleasure they derive from the pursuit. They complain, I understand, of the numerous stake-nets erected by the industrious Chinese, in the harbour of Singapore, as detrimental to their employment, pretty much in the same way as European labourers complain of the introduction of new machinery, and with the same justice. The boats of the Orăng-laut are mere canoes, covered by a light shed of palm-leaves. We saw their whole families on board, men, women, and children; and both in their fishing and management of the boats, the women appeared to take as active a share as the men.

Feb. 2.—A junk which arrived a few days ago, had on board a native Cochin Chinese merchant, a man of respectability and intelligence, who paid us a visit to-day. According to his statement, the French are in considerable numbers in different parts of the Cochin Chinese empire, but they are mostly religious persons. He states that a French frigate came to the Port of Han, or Turan, in 1819, and made a demand for that place and its adjacent territory. The king replied, that he was not a petty Malay prince to barter his dominions for money, and ordered the ship to depart forthwith. Several French merchant-ships have also visited Cochin China since the peace; and two American ships have obtained full cargoes at the Port of Saigon, or Longnai, as it is called by the Chinese.

Feb. 3.—I walked this morning round the walls and limits of the ancient town of Singapore, for such in reality had been the site of our modern settlement. It was bounded to the east by the sea, to the north by a wall, and to the west by a salt creek or inlet of the sea. The inclosed space is a plain, ending in a hill of considerable extent, and a hundred and fifty feet in height. The whole is a kind of triangle, of which the base is the sea-side, about a mile in length. The wall, which is about

sixteen feet in breadth at its base, and at present about eight or nine in height, runs very near a mile from the sea-coast to the base of the hill, until it meets a salt marsh. As long as it continues in the plain, it is skirted by a little rivulet running at the foot of it, and forming a kind of moat; and where it attains the elevated side of the hill, there are apparent the remains of a dry ditch. On the western side, which extends from the termination of the wall to the sea, the distance, like that of the northern side, is very near a mile. This last has the natural and strong defence of a salt marsh, overflown at high-water, and of a deep and broad creek. In the wall there are no traces of embrasures or loop-holes; and neither on the sea-side, nor on that skirted by the creek and marsh, is there any appearance whatever of artificial defences. We may conclude from these circumstances, that the works of Singapore were not intended against fire-arms, or an attack by sea; or that if the latter, the inhabitants considered themselves strong in their naval force, and therefore thought any other defences in that quarter superfluous.

Feb. 4.—On the stony point which forms the western side of the entrance of the salt creek, on which the modern town of Singapore is building, there was discovered, two years ago, a tolerably hard block of sand-stone, with an inscription upon it. This I examined early this morning. The stone, in shape, is a rude mass, and formed of the one-half of a great nodule broken into two nearly equal parts by artificial means; for the two portions now face each other, separated at the base by a distance of not more than two feet and a half, and reclining opposite to each other at an angle of about forty degrees. It is upon the inner surface of the stone that the inscription is engraved. The workmanship is far ruder than any thing of the kind that I have seen in Java or India; and the writing, perhaps from time, in some degree, but more from the natural decomposition of the rock, so much obliterated as to be quite illegible as a composition. Here and there, however, a few letters seem distinct enough. The character is rather round than square.

It is probably the Pali, or religious character used by the followers of Buddha, and of which abundant examples are to be found in Java and Sumatra; while no monuments exist in these countries in their respective vernacular alphabets. The only remains of antiquity at Singapore, besides this stone, and the wall and moat before mentioned, are contained on the hill before alluded to. After being cleared by us of the extensive forest which covered it, it is now clothed with a fine grassy sward, and forms the principal beauty of the new settlement. The greater part of the west and northern side of the mountain is covered with the remains of the foundations of buildings, some composed of baked brick of good quality. Among these ruins, the most distinguished are those seated on a square terrace, of about forty feet to a side, near the summit of the hill. On the edge of this terrace, we find fourteen large blocks of sand-stone; which, from the hole in each, had probably been the pedestals of as many wooden-posts which supported the building. This shows us, at once, that the upper part of the structure was of perishable materials; an observation which, no doubt, applies to the rest of the buildings as well as to this. Within the square terrace is a circular inclosure, formed of rough sand-stones, in the centre of which is a well, or hollow, which very possibly contained an image; for I look upon the building to have been a place of worship, and, from its appearance, in all likelihood, a temple of Buddha. I venture farther to conjecture, that the other relics of antiquity on the hill, are the remains of monasteries of the priests of this religion. Another terrace, on the north declivity of the hill, nearly of the same size, is said to have been the burying-place of Iskandar Shah, King of Singapore. This is the prince whom tradition describes as having been driven from his throne by the Javanese, in the year 1252 of the Christian era, and who died at Malacca, not converted to the Mohammedan religion, in 1274; so that the story is probably apocryphal. Over the supposed tomb of Iskandar, a rude structure has been raised, since the formation of the new settlement, to which Mohammedans, Hindus, and Chinese, equally resort to do homage.

It is remarkable, that many of the fruit-trees cultivated by the ancient inhabitants of Singapore are still existing, on the eastern side of the hill, after a supposed lapse of near six hundred years. Here we find the durian, the rambutan, the duku, the shaddock, and other fruit-trees of great size; and all so degenerated, except the two first, that the fruit is scarcely to be recognized.

Among the ruins are found various descriptions of pottery, some of which is Chinese, and some native. Fragments of this are in great abundance. In the same situation have been found Chinese brass coins of the tenth and eleventh centuries. The earliest is of the Emperor of Ching-chung, of the dynasty of Sung-chao, who died in the year 967. Another is of the reign of Jin-chung, of the same dynasty, who died in 1067; and a third, of that of Shin-chung, his successor, who died in 1085. The discovery of these coins affords some confirmation of the relations which fix the establishment of the Malays at Singapore, in the twelfth century. It should be remarked, in reference to this subject, that the coins of China were in circulation among all the nations of the Indian islands before they adopted the Mohammedan religion, or had any intercourse with Europeans. They are dug up in numbers in Java, and are still the only money used by the unconverted natives of Bali.

Feb. 6.—We made an excursion yesterday to some coral banks lying among the islands which form the western boundary of the harbour of Singapore. These banks exhibit the strangest and most fantastic forms of organic life that can be imagined, in the various shapes of corallines, madrepores, asteria, and sponges. In still deeper water, and off the southern extremity of the island, there are found those gigantic sponges, which are peculiar to the coast of Singapore, and which Europeans have called Neptunian cups. The natives brought them to us in great numbers.

Feb. 7.—I had yesterday a farewell visit from the commander of the Siamese ship and his pilot, whom I had so often met at Calcutta, and more recently at Penang. They had arrived at this place before us, and had been waiting, like ourselves, for the abatement of the strength of the

north-east monsoon to proceed. They were determined, if possible, to reach Siam before the vernal equinox;—the period of a great festival of the worshippers of Buddha, and which, by all accounts, is celebrated at Siam with much solemnity. Parts of their investment were intended for the celebration of the festival; and as they had been absent fourteen months, they had some apprehension of the bastinado, or something worse, if they did not arrive without farther loss of time. I had before obtained from them a great deal of useful information; but as we approached Siam they became much more shy and reserved, and now communicated nothing without a strict injunction to secrecy. They constantly resisted our solicitations to assist in translating the Governor-general's letter into Siamese,—observing, that the communication of his Majesty's titles would be considered as the divulgement of a state secret, which might cost them their lives. The commander, who spoke Hindustani imperfectly, passed his hand over his neck on such occasions, to represent the operation of a sword, that no doubt might be entertained of the nature of his apprehensions.

Feb. 10.—Mr. Finlayson and I visited, this morning, a Cochin Chinese, a Chin-chew, or Fo-kien, and a Siamese junk.* Our interpreter accompanied us, and we had therefore an opportunity of making some interesting observations regarding their internal economy, management, and trade. We were received by all with uncommon civility and attention; but the people of Fo-kien, who are least accustomed to Europeans, were remarkable for the earnestness of their hospitality, which much more than compensates for the rusticity and bluntness of their manners. They pressed us to sit down, to eat with them, to drink tea with them, and to smoke their pipes; and when we apologized for the number of our inquiries, the commander assured us, that we did them honour by taking an interest in their affairs. It is the custom, when persons of any respectability visit the Chinese junks, to beat the gongs at their arrival and departure; and

* Junk is apparently an European corruption of the Malay word *jung*, the common term for any large vessel.

this compliment was paid to us. The Cochin Chinese junk carried 4000 piculs, or was of the burthen of about 240 tons. Her crew consisted of the commander, two officers, and thirty-two men; and the sailors were paid for the voyage from Saigun to Singapore, calculated to last about three months, at the rate of twenty Spanish dollars a-head, which gives about seven Spanish dollars a-month, being equal to the wages of an able seaman in our country; whereas, the quantity of labour he performs, even in his own way, amounts numerically to only one half; twice the number of Chinese being required to the same amount of tonnage as there would of European mariners. The Chinese sailors are of course fed, and at sea receive salt pork, salt fish, occasionally poultry, with rice, and sour or salt krout; and when in harbour, they receive fresh animal food and fresh vegetables. The charge of feeding a sailor from Cochin China is reckoned at a dollar and a quarter a-month, but from Canton it amounts to full three dollars. The Fo-kien junk was a small vessel of 1600 piculs, or near ninety-five tons; and the Siamese junk was of 1500 piculs, or about ninety tons. The first, cost in the river of Kamboja, where she was built, 4000 dollars; and would have cost in Canton, had she been constructed there, 5000. The second was built in Fo-kien, and cost no less than 3000 dollars. The Siamese junk was built in the river of Siam, and cost only 1350 dollars. The cost of building per ton, according to this statement, is at the following rates:

	Dollars.	Cents.	
Siamese junk	15		per ton.
Cochin Chinese do.	16	66	——
Canton do.	20	83	——
Fo-kien do.	30	58	——

It ought, however, to be remarked, that the Chinese junks are built of fir; whereas, the Siamese one has her upper works entirely of fine teak, and her lower of a hard, durable wood, the name of which I could not ascertain. Admitting, however, that the materials of both were of the

same quality, we have here exhibited a fair comparative scale of the price of food, labour, and materials in the different countries in question; for the degree of skill must be supposed to be the same, the Chinese being, in all these cases, the architects and workmen. Labour and materials are cheapest in Siam and Kamboja; twenty-five per cent. dearer at Canton; and more than one hundred per cent. dearer in Fo-kien, which has, notwithstanding, by far the largest share of the foreign Asiatic trade of China.

All Chinese junks are, with trifling variation, built on one model, indescribably awkward and clumsy; but from which, notwithstanding, it is forbidden by law to deviate. In point of convenience of structure, they are much inferior to the trading craft of the rudest tribes of the Indian islands; a circumstance which, notwithstanding the superiority of the Chinese in industry, intelligence, and enterprise, proves a serious and indeed insuperable obstacle to any great success in their foreign commerce. The hold of a junk is, as is well known, divided into compartments, across the vessel's length. The number of these varies. The large Cochin Chinese junk which we had just inspected was divided into six compartments, and the small Fo-kien junk into no less than fifteen. All the compartments are separately waterproof, and their sole intention is to add strength to the ship, and, in case of leaking, to prevent the water from extending beyond the subdivision in which the leak actually takes place. The Chinese are ignorant of the use of the pump on board a ship, and have no means of discharging the water but by hand-buckets.

The only guide of the Chinese mariner appears to be the compass. Each of the junks we visited had a small one divided into twenty-four parts, as usual. This was placed close to the little temple near the stern of the ship, dedicated to the protecting deities of the winds and seas, which is invariably found in Chinese vessels. They have no instruments whatever for observing the heavenly bodies, nor any means even of determining a vessel's dead reckoning, and they keep no log or journal. When the wind is

not tolerably fair, they can make little progress. When the wind is aft, however, they sail tolerably well. The commander of the Cochin Chinese junk told me, that at the height of the north-east monsoon, he sailed right before the wind from Pulo Kondor, on the coast of Kamboja, to Pulo Timun, on the coast of the Malay peninsula, in three days and a half, a distance of about four hundred and thirty miles, which is at the rate of one hundred and twenty-three miles a-day, or little more than five miles an hour. With the winds which he had, it is not improbable that an ordinary English merchant-ship would have sailed at least eight miles, and a good one perhaps twice the distance of the Chinese junk. By the same person's account, the ordinary rate at which money can be borrowed in Cochin China, for maritime adventure, is forty-eight per cent. and the expected rate of profits is proportional,—namely, from eighty to one hundred per cent.

The commander of a ship is usually part owner of her, and the goods are received on freight, the shippers commonly embarking with their own property, which, however, is always under charge of the commander during the voyage, the proprietors having no access to them. On the Cochin Chinese junk, the rate of freight paid for goods I found to be as follows: fine goods, as cottons and silk stuffs, five per cent.; tea, ten per cent.; sugar, twenty per cent.; and rice, forty per cent. In the Fo-kien junk, the freight paid for black tea was one dollar forty cents per picul; which, allowing nine and a half piculs for each ton, is at the rate of thirteen dollars thirty cents.

While on the subject of the trade and navigation of the Chinese, I may take the opportunity of mentioning the very singular species of adventure carried on by them in the Straits of Malacca, in large row-boats, commonly known by the native name of *prahu pukat.** One of these which I mea-

* Literally a seine-boat,—this description of vessel having probably been first used for fishing with a net of that description.

sured, was about sixty-five feet long, nine feet in the beam, and about four feet in depth, and carried a cargo of from one hundred and eighty to one hundred and ninety piculs, or near twenty tons. She was rowed by twelve oars and fourteen paddles, and had the occasional assistance of a sail with fair winds. She had a crew, consisting of the commander and twenty-six rowers. Such a boat is usually the property of the commander, and the cargo belongs to the crew, each according to the capital he has contributed to the joint adventure. There is not one idle person on board; for the commander steers, and each of the adventurers has his oar or his paddle. Their adventures are confined between the islands at the eastern extremity of the Straits of Malacca, and the town of that name, out of the influence of the monsoons, and under the protection of the variable winds which characterize these latitudes.* From the rapidity of their course, they are quite secure from the attack of pirates. The voyage backwards and forwards, may, of course, be performed at every season. In fair weather, one of them will sail between the Island of Linga and Singapore in two days; and in the least favourable weather, in six; performing the voyage, therefore, on an average, in four days. The distance is about one hundred and eighty miles; so that these boats go, under the most favourable circumstances, at the rate of ninety miles a-day, or close upon four knots an hour, and, at an average, forty-five miles a-day. Three voyages may be performed in a month, if the state of the markets do not occasion extraordinary delays. When pepper is the cargo, as very frequently happens, the adventurers are contented, I am told, with a profit of three-fourths of a dollar per picul, when the selling price of this commodity is ten dollars. This supposes a profit of $8\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on each adventure.

During the last month I had many personal and favourable opportunities of inquiring into the manners and habits of the Orăng-laut.

* In the westerly monsoon they often pass out of the Straits of Malacca, visiting the different trading ports on the eastern shore of the Malay Peninsula.

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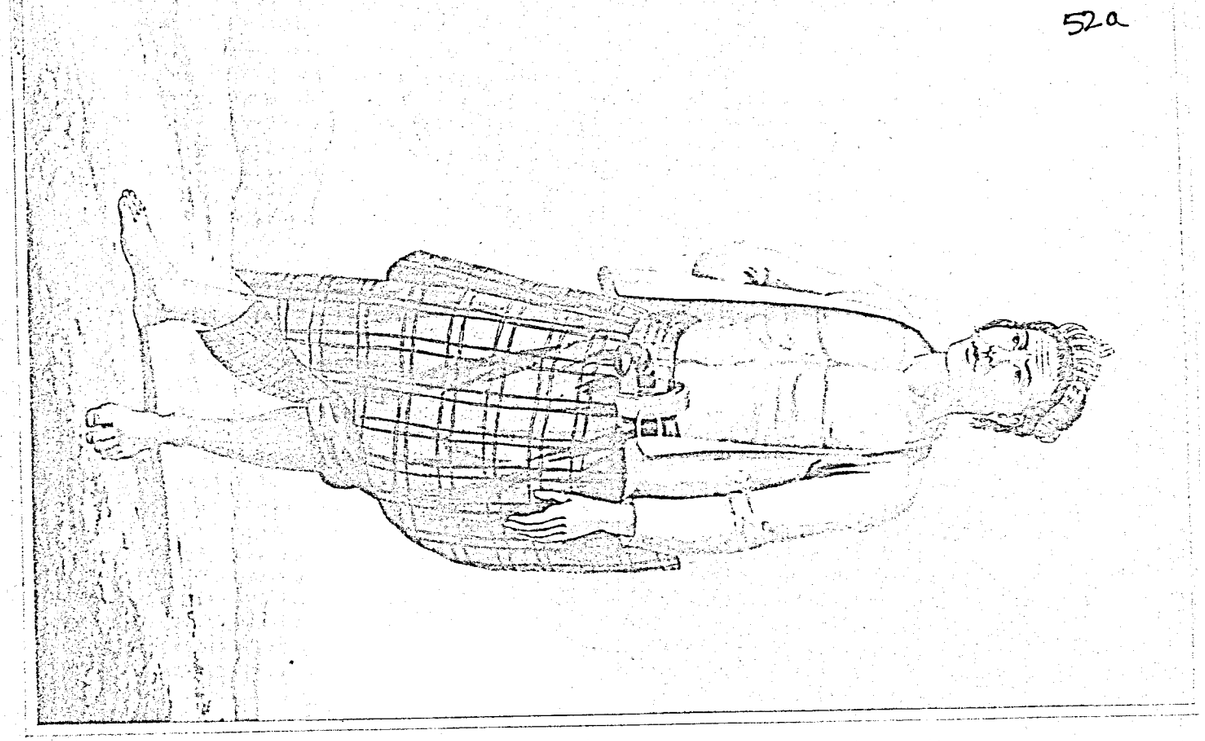

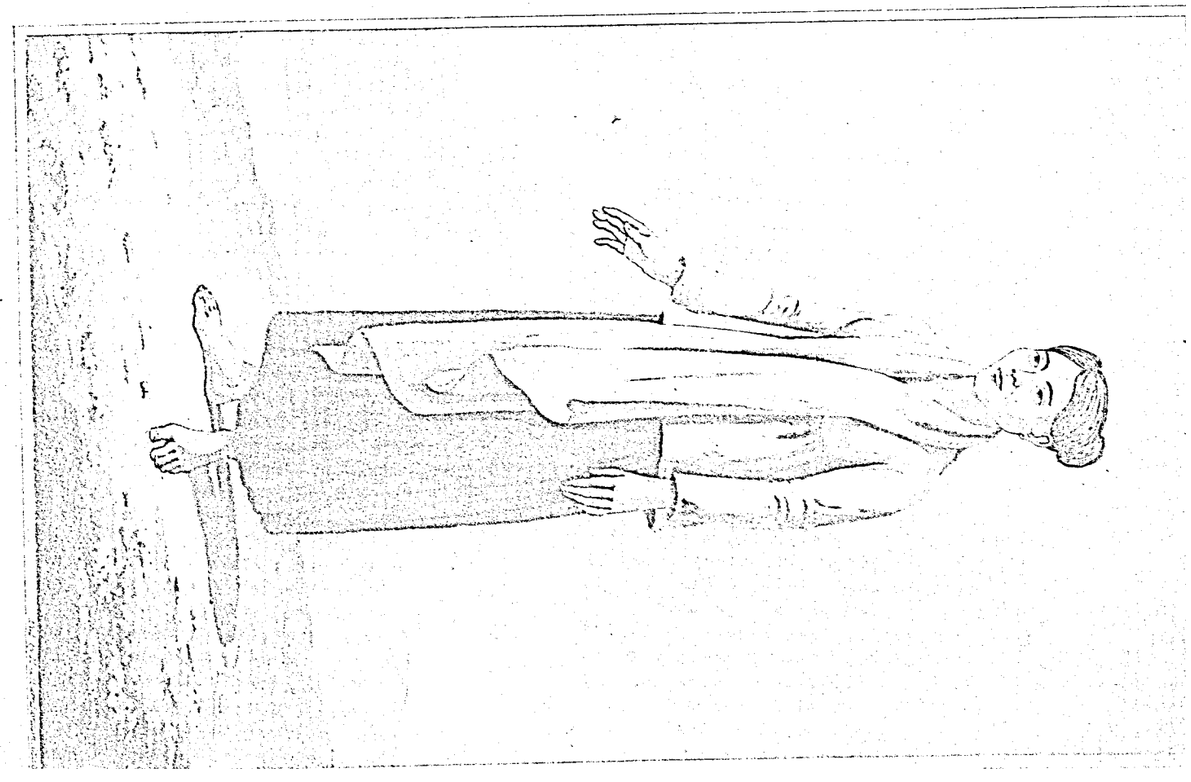

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The term is used to characterize the race of Malays who have their habitations exclusively on the sea, in opposition to those who have fixed abodes on shore,—the Orăng-darat, or "men of dry land." They are sometimes called Orăng-sălat, or "men of the straits," under which appellation they have been stigmatized for their piracy as long ago as the time of John De Barros, whose work was composed in the sixteenth century. At other times we hear them called *Ryots*, or "Subjects;"—that is to say, subjects of the king of *Jehor;* but under this name, too, their reputation is no better, for the Western Malays use the term Jehor as synonymous with that of pirate or robber. I had no conception that any of the tribes bearing the Malay name were in so low a state of civilization as these people are. By far the greater number of them are born, live, and die in their miserable canoes, and the few who live occasionally on shore are scarcely more comfortably situated. These are ignorant of the culture of rice, and plant very few roots, neither do they cultivate the cocoa nut, a plant which conduces so much to the comfort of the other tribes of the eastern islands. The plantain, or *banana*, from the rapidity of its growth, and the volume of food which it supplies, is the great object of their attention in an agricultural view. Whether their habitation be on land or water, fishing is the great employment of the Orăng-laut; and what they do not consume themselves, forms the only fund from which they are supplied with the other common necessaries of life. In their general character, they are indolent, improvident, and defective in personal cleanliness. Like the other islanders, however, they are neither selfish, cunning, nor mendacious. In their external demeanour they are clownish, their manners unceremonious, and their dialect uncouth; but, withal, their behaviour is neither rude nor disrespectful. Of the character they exhibit in their predatory excursions, I am not competent to judge, but it is sufficiently bad.

A more accurate test, however, of this people's state in society than can be conveyed by a general description, is afforded by a short sketch of the

actual expense of their mode of life. A house costs about five dollars, and the best seldom above twenty. A dwelling boat costs no more than six dollars, and a fishing canoe about four. The only furniture, if there is any at all, is a bedstead and pillows, worth four dollars, and a cast-iron cooking-pot, of Chinese or Siamese manufacture, worth about half a dollar. With the art of weaving these people are utterly unacquainted, and, as far as they are clothed at all, they are clothed in foreign manufactures. The *sarong*, or lower garment, of both sexes, is the manufacture of Celebes; it costs four dollars, and lasts four years. The turban, or rather handkerchief, which binds the head of the men, is the manufacture of the same country; it costs half a dollar, and lasts at least as long as the *sarong*. The vest of both sexes is white cloth of Coromandel, or at least what has once been white. The principal vegetable food of the Orăng-laut is crude sago, which is not the produce of their own country, but received by them from certain low islands on the north coast of Sumatra, where it is produced in great abundance. Rice is looked upon as a superior food, and even as a luxury; as much so, at least, as wheat would be considered by an Irish peasant. Sago is purchased on the coast of Sumatra, in cakes weighing about seventeen pounds each, at the rate of something less than half a dollar a picul of 133⅓ pounds, and is commonly consumed by the Orăng-laut, at the price of about two-thirds of a dollar for the same quantity. A moderate price for rice among the same people is 3⅓ dollars per picul; so that this grain is weight for weight five times the price of sago. It is however considered 2½ times more nutritious, or each portion of rice goes as far as 2½ portions of sago,—making the real cost of sago, considered simply as an article of nutrition, equal to 1⅔ dollar per picul. The difference of price beyond this is supposed to be made up by the superior agreeableness of rice as an article of diet. I have no doubt, the cheapness of sago, and the facility of obtaining fish, contribute materially to impede the progress of civilization among them. Did they not live in a state of great anarchy and disorder, it is probable that with such food they

would become as numerous as abject. The aggregate expenses of one of these demi-savages, it may be inferred from the statement now given, will not exceed a dollar and half monthly; and this in a situation where the lowest description of vegetable food, on which he can exist, will alone cost him nearly three-fourths of this amount.*

* It is proper here to observe, that the establishment of the European settlements has produced a great and salutary change in the habits and manners of such of these people as reside near, or at our establishments. The change which a few years have effected at Singapore is very striking.

CHAPTER III.

Departure from Singapore.—Passage to the Coast of Borneo.—Malayan Islands in the Channel.—Visit to Pulo-Ubi, and Description of it.—Numerous islands on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Siam.—Island of Phu-kok described.—Arrival in the roads of Siam.

Feb. 25.—THE violence of the easterly monsoon detained us at Singapore until this day; when, the weather becoming more moderate, we weighed anchor and sailed in prosecution of our voyage. At night, the ebb-tide failing, we anchored off the coast of Jehor, about thirty miles distant from the town of that name, where the Malays established their Government, when driven by the Portuguese from Malacca, in the beginning of the sixteenth century. That place is situated ten miles up a navigable river, the mouth of which is opposite to the east end of the Island of Singapore. It has been long abandoned as the seat of Government, and is at present no more than a poor village of fishermen.

Feb. 26.—We weighed anchor this morning, and, in passing down, spoke the Topaze frigate, the ship which had an affray with the Chinese, in which some lives were lost, and which occasioned a considerable sensation, both in England and in India. She had been but eight days from Manilla; which afforded us, going in an opposite direction, no very favourable prospect of a speedy passage.

Feb. 27.—We anchored again last evening. Being close to the shore, Mr. Finlayson, Mr. Rutherford, and myself, landed. The spot was within a few miles of the extremity of the peninsula. Here the shore was bold, and the land elevated; but the chain of mountains which pervades the northern part of the peninsula, has long ceased, and the formation

of the land is scarcely hilly. The same deep forest prevails as elsewhere, and, as far as the eye could see, no trace of human habitation was discoverable. On the coast, frequent ledges of rock ran into the sea, between which are small sandy bays, where it is easy to land. The wood was so close, that we found it difficult to penetrate; and we were dissuaded from persevering in the attempt, from observing on the sand the tracks of hog and deer, and of a leopard, or young tiger. The rocky formation is porphyritic hornstone, containing small grained crystals of felspar of a pink colour. From its hardness it would admit a fine polish, and is probably well fitted for statuary and ornamental architecture. The wild and desolate woods of this part of the peninsula are known to be inhabited by a few naked and wandering savages. The whole coast, from Johor to the extremity of the peninsula, affords good anchorage and shelter, and several situations not inferior, in convenience for a commercial emporium, to Singapore itself.

We weighed anchor early this morning, and at eleven o'clock passed Cape Romania and Pedro Branca. We had no sooner lost the shelter of the Malay coast, than we felt the full force of the monsoon. There was a heavy swell of the sea, and a strong southerly current. The course along the western shore of the Gulf of Siam was evidently difficult or impracticable. We therefore stood across for the coast of Borneo, intending to make our northing under shelter of that island, and then to stand across the China Sea for the Point of Kamboja, from whence an easy passage might be effected to the head of the Gulf of Siam.

Feb. 28.—The wind keeping well to the north, favoured our passage to Borneo. At noon, the little island called Victory in the charts, was visible from the mast-head, and at eight o'clock at night we passed close to windward of Saddle Island, which lies in latitude 1° 16′ north. This small island rises abruptly and precipitately from the sea to the height of four or five hundred feet. We passed within three hundred yards of it, and observed the white surge breaking loud and high upon its rocky

coast. Situated as we were, it would have been more prudent to have passed to leeward of it; for any trifling accident might have driven us upon its coast, and this, from the state of the weather, must have been attended with the total loss of the ship.

March 1.—Early this morning, the Island of Tambilan was visible on our lee-quarter. This is inhabited by true Malays, very poor and very inoffensive. It forms a portion of the territory of Jehor.

March 2.—The high land of Borneo was in sight yesterday afternoon, and at daybreak this morning we found ourselves within a few miles of the coast, opposite to three conical mountains of great elevation. Our meridian observation made us in 1° 33′ north; so that we were twenty miles to windward of the entrance of the great river of Sambas, between which and that of Pontiana lies the country so well known in these parts for its extensive production of gold. We had no sooner approached the coast of Borneo, than the water became smooth, the winds variable, and there was no longer a southerly current.

March 4.—High Island, or Sapata, so called in the maritime charts, and the most southern of the group denominated the Natunas, was visible yesterday, and we passed this morning within a few hundred yards of a small island lying off its coast. Sapata is the island called Sarasan by the Malays; and the great Natuna, a very large island, they denominate Bangoran. The name Natuna is not known in their language, and, it is probable, was imposed by the Portuguese. The Natunas, like Tambilan, are inhabited by true Malays, subject to Johor. As we passed close to Sarasan, we had a good opportunity of observing its general aspect. It is about seven or eight miles in length, with a bold coast, and it is high land throughout. A few fields of mountain-rice were discernible towards the south end.

Early this morning we passed a dangerous reef, two miles in length, which was not laid down in our charts. This part of the coast of Borneo has not been much frequented by European navigators. Off the north

end of Sarasan, there are no less than six islands not delineated in the ordinary charts. The north-east monsoon having returned with considerable force, our progress was very slow.

March 7.—On the morning of the 6th, the sky was overcast, and the wind veering round to the south-west, with much thunder and rain, we were unable to stand our course; but to-day the monsoon, returning, blew so favourably as to enable us to stand at once for the Cape of Kamboja.

March 10.—The wind continuing favourable, we crossed the China Seas with clear, serene, and pleasant weather, the thermometer at noon being seldom above seventy-nine. At six o'clock this morning, Pulo Ubi was in sight, and at noon we saw the shore of Kamboja, the lowest land which it is possible to imagine; for the trees appear as if they were actually growing out of the water; and this indeed is no doubt the fact, those on the border of the sea probably consisting, as usual within the tropics, of the rhizophora, or mangrove. As we approached the land of Kamboja,—and the same appearance prevailed until we passed Pulo Ubi,—the water was as disturbed and muddy as at the mouth of the Ganges, in the westerly monsoon. This, as I afterwards understood, was occasioned by the river of Camao, called by the Kambojans, from the abundance of mud which it carries along with it, Takmao, or the "black stream." At three in the afternoon, we landed on Pulo Ubi, and spent two or three hours in rambling over the hills. In a little sheltered cove and valley, within a short distance of the place where the ship lay at anchor, we saw a single hut, with some persons moving round it, and we rowed towards the spot. As we approached the shore, a little elderly man, with a long grey beard, ran out upon a pier of stones close to the landing-place, and with many gesticulations, but in a language which none of our party understood, seemed to warn us not to land. We payed no attention to his remonstrances, but landed without hesitation. On observing this, he came up to us with an air of entire confidence, and invited us to his hut, earnestly pressing us to partake of his simple hos-

pitality. After this first meeting, there was neither shyness nor distrust displayed by the poor inhabitants of Pulo Ubi. These proved to be eight Cochin Chinese, and two Chinese of the Island of Hai-nan. Through the latter we made ourselves intelligible. One of the party only was a woman, and there were two or three children, of whom she was the mother. In the little valley which surrounds the bay, there is a scanty cultivation of maize, sweet potatoes, and some coarse esculent greens; but all this was evidently inadequate to the subsistence of the inhabitants, who derived their chief supply from the charity or piety of the Chinese traders, who are in the habit of touching at the island to water, in their voyages up and down the Gulf of Siam. It is not improbable they may derive occasional assistance from the use of a species of *dioscorea*, with an enormous root, which grows wild in the woods. These weigh forty and fifty pounds each. The pits from which they had been dug out, were seen by us in several places as we walked through the woods. The only domestic animals which we saw were a few hogs. Some European writers have reported, that the inhabitants of Pulo Ubi are persons banished for their crimes; but there seems no foundation whatever for this opinion. The old man, our first acquaintance, turned out to be a priest. He had, by his own account, been twenty years on the island; and his business was to officiate at a small temple, dedicated to a certain deity, called Ma-cho-po, a sort of Chinese Amphitrite. Chinese mariners make votive offerings to this worthy, whose image we saw in the temple in question, with a wax taper burning on each side. Close to the image was suspended on strings twenty or thirty small painted boards, with inscriptions on them,—the offerings of as many junks which had touched at Pulo Ubi to water, or take a fresh departure, in the course of the season.

Pulo Ubi has several smaller islands lying off it, and is itself about two miles in length; bold elevated land every where, the highest hills appearing about eight hundred feet above the level of the sea. The thin soil seemed every where to rest upon an extremely hard, small grained, grey granite,—

a circumstance which, taken together with the extreme steepness of the hills, seems naturally to account for the unsuitableness of the place for culture and occupation. The woods on the hills of Pulo Ubi are composed of trees of a dwarfish size, and there is no large timber. A species of banana, or plantain, the *musa troglodytarum*, was frequent in the forest. The only quadruped which these woods afford, according to the natives, is a small species of squirrel, of which we saw several individuals. Close to the sea-side were every where to be seen flying from tree to tree numbers of white pigeons, with the end of the wings and tail, to the depth of three or four inches, of a jet black. This bird is an inhabitant of the coasts of many of the smaller islands of the Indian Archipelago, and has been described under the name of *Colomba littoralis*. The name Pulo Ubi is Malay, and not improbably derived from the large species of dioscorea, or yam, to which I have above alluded;—the term meaning, in Malay, literally, the Island of Yams. From very early ages, an intercourse has existed between the Kambojans and the Malays; and considerable numbers of the latter are not only at present settled at Kamboja, but Malayan rovers still continue to infest its coast by their depredations. The island, in the language of Kamboja, is called Kŏ Tam-bung; in Cochin Chinese, Kon-gui; and in Siamese, Ko-Man:—all of which terms, I understand, have the same signification as the Malayan name.

We embarked in the afternoon, and the natives soon followed us on board; which gave us an opportunity of requiting their kindness, by presenting them with a little rice, tea, clothes, and some money.

March 11.—We sailed from Pulo Ubi last night, and this morning passed false Pulo Ubi, in the latitude of 8°, 56′, and longitude 104°, 38′ east. The land of Kamboja was still as low as when we first discovered it, but the water was no longer muddy and discoloured. We had now regular land and sea breezes, and the weather was remarkably fine.

March 12.—Having discovered, in the course of this day's sailing, that the coasts and islands were, as indeed we expected, very erroneously

laid down in the ordinary charts, we resolved not to proceed at night, but come to an anchor, which we did at ten o'clock in six fathoms. At day-break this morning we found ourselves surrounded by islands of various size, from mere rocks with a few trees upon them, to those that were five and six miles in length. The eastern coast of the Gulf of Siam was probably never much frequented by European navigators, and has not, that I know of, been visited by them at all within the last century. It is no wonder, therefore, that it should be erroneously delineated.

At six in the morning we weighed anchor, and were soon in sight of a very singular group of islands, consisting of one large island, about four miles in length, encircled by a ring of smaller islands, of which I counted twenty. This is the group called in the charts Hon-co-thron; but correctly, Hon-co-tre. The name is from the Anam, or Cochin Chinese language. At ten o'clock it fell calm, and we landed on a small island close to us. This, which was not a mile in circumference, was covered with low trees. The rocky formation was potstone, with compact feldspar: I found, however, a rolled piece of granite on the shore, although no vestige of this rock was discoverable in the interior, which we travelled over.

In the evening we again landed upon another islet not far from the last. This also was entirely composed of potstone. On both these islets we found, in great numbers, the same white pigeons which we saw at Pulo Ubi. Three sail of vessels were seen in the course of the day, which we took to be Chinese or Cochin Chinese junks.

March 13.—We came to an anchor again last night, being still surrounded by innumerable islands, respecting which, both our charts and directions were silent. We sailed this morning in the direction of a large island which lay north-west of us.

March 14.—We anchored close to the large island, and conjectured, from the number of fishing-boats which were sailing up and down the coast, that it was inhabited. Several of these boats came close

to us this morning, and the people seemed anxious to pay us a visit; but, their fears being greater than their curiosity, they finally left us, without venturing to come on board. We were compelled at length to lower one of our boats, and on holding out a white flag from it, a few, at length, visited us. They proved to be Cochin Chinese; and through the few words of Siamese which they knew, they gave us to understand, that if we landed we should receive a hospitable reception.

A large party of us accordingly landed at one in the afternoon, purposely unaccompanied by any part of the military escort, that no alarm might be excited. Some of the natives waited our arrival on the beach, armed with long spears, and, by their gestures and vociferations, warned us to keep off. We took no manner of notice of these remonstrances, but leaped on shore, and walked up to them at once. They soon recognized among our party our Chinese interpreters and servants, and some of themselves being Chinese of the Island of Hai-nan, all was soon confidence and cordiality betwixt us. They informed us that our's was the first European ship which they had ever seen; and we learned, that upon our first appearance they had sent their women and valuables into the forest. The first surprise being over, they invited us to their houses, and offered us both food and betel. We gained their favour by offering them small specimens of English cutlery and other trifles. I observed that the women and children crowded round us as well as the men, and that the former betrayed no symptoms of Oriental reserve or fastidiousness. In their persons, these people, of both sexes, were short, squat, and ill-favoured. They paid small attention to cleanliness, either in their dress or habitations. They were evidently very poor, and, after they had experienced our little bounty, made no scruple in asking for every little trifle about our persons that excited their notice. After walking several miles along the coast, and looking at every thing we thought worth seeing, we returned on board in the evening,

two of the principal people accompanying us. These persons were so well pleased with their reception, that they insisted upon passing the night on board. They partook heartily of our fare, and especially made free use of our brandy and liqueurs, to the neglect of tea and all other thin beverages. They were as communicative on the subject of the island, as our imperfect means of understanding each other would admit. This consisted in one of the Chiefs and our Chinese interpreter writing question and answer in the Chinese character, without attempting to exchange one syllable with each other orally. The Chinese character is, as is well known, a language only to the eye, and understood by all the nations from the spot we were now in, to Japan and Corea eastward, who in this sort of pantomime can understand each other, however different their vernacular languages.

The place which we had now visited is called by the Cochin Chinese, Phu-kok, and by the Siamese Koh-dud, or the "far island;" the last name having reference to its relative distance, compared to other islands, from the coast of Kamboja. In the Kambojan language it is called Koh-trol, or "shuttle island," which is evidently the Quadrole of the old maps. It is the largest island on the east coast of the Gulf of Siam, being by our reckoning not less than thirty-four miles in length. It is commonly bold high land, the highest hills rising to seven or eight hundred feet. A few spots here and there on the coasts only are inhabited,—the rest being, as usual, covered with a great forest, which, we were told, contained abundance of deer, hogs, wild buffaloes, and oxen, but no leopards or tigers. Its most valuable produce, however, is the lignum aloes, or agila. All the hilly countries and islands on this part of the coast of the Gulf of Siam abound in this production. We used every endeavour to obtain specimens of the tree in a fit state for botanical description, but without success. The lignum aloes, by the account of the natives, is a diseased portion of the wood. The tree, one of the tallest of the forest, is sufficiently common; but not so the individuals in a diseased state; and hence the high price of the odoriferous

substance. They showed us several large portions of the timber in its ordinary state, and presented us also with pieces of the fragrant wood, recently extracted.*

The inhabitants of Phu-kok were described to us as amounting to from four to five thousand, all of the true Cochin Chinese race, with the exception of a few occasional Chinese sojourners. They grow no species of corn, and their husbandry is confined to a few coarse fruits, and esculent green vegetables, and farinaceous roots. Of the last, the best and most abundant was the Convolvulus Batata. They import their rice from Kang-kao, which lies opposite, and is an abundant grain country. The inhabitants of Phu-kok seemed to us to be all fishermen, and the eastern shore of the island had the appearance of a place well suited for their occupation. It was an extensive bank, having frequent overfalls. The fishing-boats were seen sailing, in considerable numbers, up and down the coast. These were managed with much dexterity, and were altogether the smartest vessels of the kind which I had seen in any part of India. Their rigging consisted of two shoulder-of-mutton sails, made of a very white mat, which had a neat appearance. The fishery of tripang, or bech-de-mar, was conducted near the shore in two and three feet water. This was carried on in small canoes, in which there was one person only, who stood up in the boat with a spear in his hand, and struck the animals as they presented themselves. Numbers of persons were thus employed as we came off in the evening.

March 15.—Our guests took leave of us this morning, and at eight o'clock we set sail with the intention of going round the southern extremity of the island. The natives had indeed informed us, (and we afterwards found, from good information, their statement to be perfectly correct,) that there was a good navigable channel between Phu-kok and the main; but we did not think it safe to place implicit reliance upon

* The tree is frequent in the woods of Singapore.

this account. We now sailed, therefore, in a southerly direction along the coast of Phu-kok, and in the evening, when it fell calm, we anchored off a small bay, close to the south end of the island. Several fishing-boats were seen, and at night the lights from a village in the bay were sufficiently distinct.

March 16.—At eleven o'clock last night, a stiff gale of wind came on from the south-east, making the island a lee-shore, and the ship dragged her anchor. This obliged us to get under weigh, which we effected with considerable difficulty. The heavy swell compelled us to wear the ship, in which manœuvre the water shoaled so rapidly, as to put us to considerable risk of suffering shipwreck. As we sailed along, we now saw that much of what we had hitherto considered as portion of the great island, was a chain of islets, twelve in number, extending from its southern extremity. The water, as we approached these, deepened so as to enable us to sail within two or three hundred yards of them, in twelve and thirteen fathoms. The gale of wind which we experienced through the night was of short continuance, and at one o'clock we had a dead calm; this gave us an opportunity of landing upon several of the small islets in question. The rock formation here was sand-stone, with immense masses of imbedded conglomerate. We had no opportunity of making any geological remarks at Phu-kok itself, the coast where we landed consisting every where of a long sandy plain, in which no rock was exposed; and the hills in the interior being every where distant several miles, as well as rendered difficult of access by a deep forest. At the small islets, the rise and fall of the tide struck us to be remarkably great for so low a latitude. It appeared from the high-water mark on the rocks, not to be less than eighteen feet; whereas the usual rise in this part of the world, within a few degrees of the equator at least, seldom exceeds eight or nine feet. The botany of these islands proved extremely interesting. Among other forest plants we found the cashew-nut tree *(Anacardium)*, which is commonly supposed to be exclusively a native of America, in full bearing. A greater quantity of sea fowl

than usual, so near the equator, were seen upon the rocks interspersed amongst the islands. They consisted of gulls *(Larus)*, sea swallows *(Sterna)*, and noddies *(Sterna stolida)*. Several of the last, with their usual stupidity, lighted on the ship, and suffered themselves to be taken without difficulty. All these small islands seemed destitute of inhabitants.

My poor friend, Mr. Finlayson, caught, from the severe exertions he made to-day under a burning sun, the malady which afterwards proved fatal to him; and which, during the remainder of the voyage, unfortunately deprived me of the active exercise of his valuable talents.

March 17.—This morning we stood on our course to Siam, along the western side of the island of Phu-kok, with a favourable breeze from the east. Just as we were making sail, a very smart Chinese junk, which had lain at anchor close to us during the night, came down and spoke us with perfect confidence. She belonged to the island of Hai-nan, being one of the many junks which trade between that place and the capital of Siam, to which last port she was now bound like ourselves. We met two more junks in the course of the day. At three in the afternoon we had reached the northern extremity of Phu-kok, which is divided by a narrow channel from another island, the first of a chain running in a northerly direction to the distance of seventeen or eighteen miles. In the course of this day's sailing we saw a few fishing-boats. At dusk, a group of islands, seven in number, called, in the Siamese language, Hwi-su, distant about seventeen miles, was in sight. No notice whatever is taken of this group in the ordinary charts. Indeed, the whole of this coast is perhaps less known to European navigators than any portion of the globe of equal magnitude and importance. Our charts and maps, indeed, are thickly studded with islands; but they are without names, and put down at random, all that is known regarding them, being that they exist in great numbers.

March 18.—As every thing now appeared clear a-head of us we did not anchor last night as we had done for some days before, but proceeded

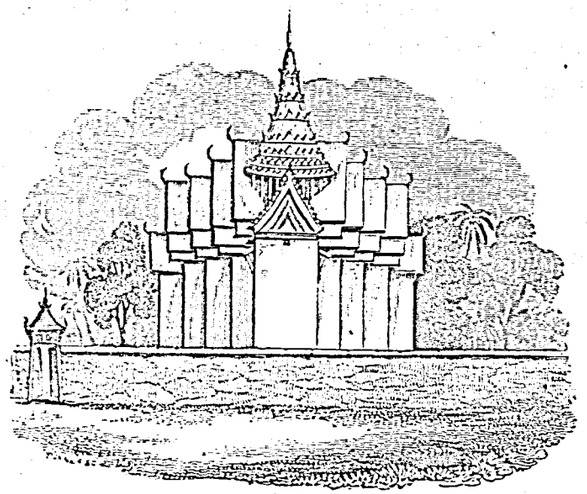
without interruption. The Chinese junk which spoke us yesterday morning, was still close to us, although we had a seven-knot breeze during the night. This afforded us an opportunity of judging what this description of vessels is capable of doing, when going with a fair wind, as upon the present occasion. Some of them, it would appear, are nearly a match for an European vessel. On the other hand, from their flat construction, the Chinese junk is quite incapable of beating against a foul wind, and of course in the utmost danger when such a resource is called for.

March 20.—During the 18th and 19th we were out of sight of land, but to-day close in with the continent in the latitude of 12° 38′ and longitude 101° 30′ East. Two ranges of mountains of considerable height, formed the back-ground before us, between which and the sea was an extensive tract of lower land. The mountains which we now saw, were those which lie to the northward of Chan-ti-bon, one of the most productive and populous districts of the kingdom of Siam, abounding in rice, pepper, gamboge, and cardamums. This portion of the coast, in opposition to that which we had before passed, was open and unsheltered. One small rocky island was close to us, and upon this a party landed, while we waited for the sea-breeze. It was so surrounded by reefs that, although perfectly calm, it was difficult to find a place to land upon. Its shores had everywhere the appearance of a place much frequented by fish—the sea for miles in the neighbourhood being covered with spermatic animalculæ. There were numbers of sea-fowl on the rocks, and shoals of porpoises sporting about the shore. Some of the latter pursued their prey into such shallow water, that we were encouraged to make our boatmen wade out with the hope of intercepting them and forcing them to run ashore, but in this expectation we did not succeed. Several fishing stakes were set on the shore of the island next to the continent, and the fresh footsteps of the fishermen were visible in the sand; but we saw nobody, and there were no habitations. This island is formed of granite and quartz rock, and is about five miles distant from the mainland.

March 21.—A numerous group of islands lay before us last evening, and we found it therefore prudent to come to an anchor for the night. We weighed at four this morning, and at ten came up with the islands in question. With the view of shortening our course, we passed the channel which divides them from a promontory on the main, called by the Siamese, Sam-me-san, and in our charts, Lyant. This channel, which is about a quarter of a mile wide, and about two miles in length, we passed with a light, but a leading wind, encountering no dangers, and never having less than four and a half fathoms water. Our boat went a head of us all the way, sounding. We found two small junks lying at anchor here, and we afterwards heard that the channel was a common route for the largest vessels of this description. The scene, as soon as we entered, was striking and picturesque. The shore on each side consisted of a series of sandy coves, and the country of a succession of hills, here and there bare of wood, pressing upon each other down to the sea. No habitations were to be seen, except those of a few fishermen on the coast, and the interior seemed to be an universal wilderness. We spoke one small vessel, with a Siamese crew, two days from Bang-kok, and from her we acquired the names of some of the principal islands and headlands. The group of islands now passed is much frequented by turtle, the collection of the eggs of which is a business of some importance, and is said to bring a considerable revenue into the Siamese treasury. We found the latitude of Cape Lyant to be 12° 36′ 30″, which is ten miles further north than it is laid down in the charts, and its longitude, by two good chronometers, 101° 11′ east, being sixteen miles further west than it is usually delineated.

March 22.—A great many islands were in sight last night, and we had them this morning on our starboard, for we did not think it safe to proceed during the night in the channel between them and the main. This, however, we afterwards learned is a common route of the largest Chinese junks, and is perfectly safe. Many of the largest islands in

question are inhabited, such as Ko-kram and Ko-han. The inhabitants are a mixture of Siamese and Cochin Chinese, for the latter people, although the country be under the dominion of Siam, have penetrated thus far to the north. At noon we were in the latitude of 13° 8′. The high mountains of Bang-pa-soe were in sight to the eastward, but no land a-head. By our reckoning, however, we were within a few miles of the roads of Siam, and at five in the afternoon we came in sight of them, which we only ascertained by discovering three large Chinese junks lying at anchor, for the land at the head of the gulf was extremely low, and not yet visible. At seven o'clock we anchored in 3¾ fathoms water close to the junks, having thus performed the voyage from the Straits of Malacca with ease in twenty-three days.



Front of the main Building of the King of Siam's Palace.

CHAPTER IV.

Communication of our Arrival made to the Court of Siam.—Entertainment given to the Mission.—Negotiation for proceeding to the Capital.—Ship ascends the River, appearance of its Banks.—Arrival at Bang-kok, appearance of the place.—Delivery of the Governor-general's Letter.—Visit to the Prah-klang, or Foreign Minister.—Delivery of the presents for the King.—The Mission lands.—Description of its Residence.—Visit to the Prince Krom-chiat, now King of Siam.—Arrangement of the Ceremonial for our Presentation to the King.—Second Visit to the Foreign Minister.—The Mission presented to the King.—Description of the Ceremony.—Inspection of the White Elephants, &c.—The Mission receives a visit, and is entertained by the Foreign Minister.

March 24.—As soon as we had come to an anchor, we prepared a letter for the Prah-klang,* or minister who conducts the affairs of strangers.

* Literally, Lord or Master of the Warehouses.

In this we briefly informed him of our arrival, the number of our party, and such other particulars of the same nature, as we were given to understand would be expected. This was transmitted early yesterday morning by one of the officers of the ship to Pak-nam,* the first station in ascending the river. The officer returned this morning with a civil message from the Chief of Pak-nam, accompanied by a present of fruit, and he brought with him a pilot to conduct us over the bar.

March 25.—At seven o'clock this morning we weighed anchor, and attempted to cross the bar, but when about half-way over, the ship struck in the soft mud, in which, as the tide fell, she sunk four feet. We had, at the same time, not above four feet water. As the evening tide made, she floated, and we crossed the bar without sustaining any injury. A strong and favourable breeze soon carried us to the mouth of the Menam, a distance of not less than ten miles from the outer edge of the bar, ploughing almost all the way through the thin ooze; and at seven o'clock at night we anchored off the village of Pak-nam, about two miles and a half from the mouth of the river, upon its left bank.

March 26.—A Portuguese interpreter, dispatched from the Court, came on board this morning. He brought a message from the Chief of Pak-nam, the purport of which was, that he had received instructions from the Court to entertain us, and that a barge had been sent down to bring us to the Capital, but that before the ship proceeded it would be necessary to land our guns, according to invariable usage in such cases. We returned a civil answer, and sent the chief a small present, taking this occasion to remonstrate against the landing of our guns, as well as to signify to him that one boat was totally inadequate to the accommodation of so large a party as ours. In the forenoon his nephew came on board to wait upon us. He stated that the orders of the governor on the subject of landing the cannon of foreign ships were peremptory, and could not be dispensed with, but

* The word means mouth of the river, or rather water; it is applied to the *debouchcur* of any river.

that a reference would be made to the Court for instructions. On the subject of the barge, it was explained that the numbers of our party were not known, or more accommodation would have been furnished. This was not true, for we had stated the exact number of the party in the letter to the Prah-klang, and the circumstance of sending a single boat only, was evidently an early attempt to underrate the Mission and the authority by which it was sent. A temperate resistance, therefore, however unpleasant, became necessary.

Our visitor had brought an invitation to our party to land in the evening, and partake of an entertainment which the chief had prepared for us. This, after some hesitation, was accepted, and at the landing-place we were met by the Governor's nephew, who escorted us to the chief's house. A crowd of men, women, and children, were collected out of curiosity, the greatest share of which seemed to be directed towards our Indian servants, whose neat, gay, and clean attire, formed a striking contrast to their own rude and slovenly semi-nudity. After passing a short way through mean lanes crowded with huts, we came upon the dwelling of his Excellency the Governor, formed of the same mean and perishable materials as the rest. We were ushered into a large apartment, raised a few feet from the ground, on a platform of split bamboos, which formed the floor. The thatch within was ill concealed by broken and soiled Chinese paper-hangings, and from the roof was suspended a motley collection of old Dutch chandeliers of miserable glass, and Siamese and Chinese lamps, covered with dust, with cobwebs, and with the smoke of oil, incense, and tobacco. The Governor civilly met us at the door, and shook hands with us very heartily in the European fashion: Chairs were placed for our accommodation. This chief was a man about forty-five years of age, of rugged features, but cheerful manners, and he seemed desirous to please. His nephew, who had ushered us in, and his secretary, sat upon a carpet before him. A messenger, who had just arrived from the Court, and who was deputed to conduct us thither, was also present. The name, or rather the title, of this person, with whom

the Mission had afterwards a good deal of intercourse, was Luang kochai-asa-hak, formerly Nakhoda Ali. He was one of those Mohammedan adventurers whose ancestors had come several ages ago from the coast of Coromandel. He had visited Queda, Penang, and Calcutta, and spoke the Malayan language tolerably, for which reason it was that he was selected to attend us. In the centre of the apartment we found a table laid out in the European fashion, under the direction of the Portuguese interpreters, with plates, knives, forks, silver spoons, and some tolerable English glass-ware. It was loaded with viands, such as pork, fowls, ducks, egg, and rice, and with abundance of fruit, particularly mangoes, oranges, and lichis, all of which were in season.

A curtain, which was suspended across one end of the apartment, attracted our notice. We were told, to our surprise, that behind it lay in state the body of the late chief of Pak-nam. This person was brother to the present chief, and the father of the young person who had visited us in the forenoon. This last, indeed, had then informed us that his father had died five months ago; that his body was lying embalmed at Pak-nam, and that his funeral would take place on the 24th day of the present moon; but we had certainly no idea that we were to be favoured with the presence of the deceased during the repast to which we had been invited. Mr. Finlayson and Mr. Rutherfurd, when they landed the following morning, their curiosity being strongly excited on the subject of the body which was lying in state, ventured to make some inquiry concerning it. Their questions were by no means taken amiss by the son, to whom they were addressed, but considered rather complimentary; and he invited them without ceremony to view the body. It was lying in a coffin, which was covered with tinsel and white cloth, and the lid of which when removed exhibited the corpse wrapped up in a great many folds of cloth, like an Egyptian mummy, apparently quite dry, and covered with such a profusion of aromatics, that there was nothing offensive about it.

The chief alone sat down at table with us, but without partaking of

our fare. He was assiduous in pressing us to the good things which were placed before us. My interpreter explained to me, that he requested us to "*eat heartily and not be abashed*"—a customary form of compliment, it appears, among the Siamese, in addressing a guest. No questions respecting the objects of the Mission were put to us during the entertainment, and I considered the visit as a matter of mere form and etiquette, but in this I was much deceived; for the repast was no sooner over, than question followed question with great vivacity. We were first bluntly asked what was the object of the Mission. We answered in general terms that the English and Siamese nations were neighbours, and that on our part we were desirous that a friendly and frequent intercourse should subsist between us, and that we were deputed to request such an intercourse. This did not satisfy the chief; he urged us over and over to state what particular request or demands we had to make of the Court upon the present occasion. We declined giving him the satisfaction he required; observing, that in proper time and place we should explain ourselves fully. We were next requested to state the quality and amount of the presents brought for the King, and a secretary placed himself behind the chief to take notes of what was said on this subject—one apparently of the first interest. We evaded giving any answer, except in very general terms, but were cross-questioned with dexterity and perseverance. I had noticed that among the presents there were some fire-arms. The chief begged to know their number. I said a few hundreds. He begged me to conjecture some approximation to the actual number. I added, probably three or four hundred. The answer was, "be good enough to say either the one or the other." I endeavoured to divert the chief's attention from the detail of muslins, broadcloths, crystal, looking-glasses, and such matters, by calling his attention to an English horse, which was one of the presents. He immediately requested to know his height, his age, his colour, the length of his tail, and finally, what fortunate or unfortunate marks he had about him. We put an end to all this importunity,

by informing the Governor, that as soon as we returned to the ship, we would direct a clerk to make out a list of the presents for his satisfaction. This conversation afforded an early, but a good specimen of the indelicacy and rapacity which we afterwards found so characteristic of the Siamese Court and its officers, upon every question of a similar nature.

After the discussion respecting the presents, the chief reminded us of the compliment which his Siamese Majesty had paid the Mission, in so promptly dispatching an accommodation-boat to convey us to Bang-kok; and he entreated us to make no difficulty about accepting this gracious mark of royal attention, while he besought us also to comply with the established usage in landing the guns of the ship. We repeated what we had said before, of the total inadequacy of a single boat to accommodate our large party, which consisted of seventy-four persons. With respect to landing the cannon, we stated that a Portuguese man-of-war had, two years before, been permitted to visit the capital, and that a Mission from the British Government had a right to be treated with equal favour. Much pains were taken to convince us, that it would be proper to comply with the wishes of the Court, but we persevered in our objections. With this discussion our visit ended. It was a striking contrast to European usage, that the whole of this demi-official conversation passed in the presence and hearing of a great crowd of the lower orders, who occupied the entire area of the court, opposite to the place where we sat. The people indeed pressed up to the very door of the saloon. The chiefs by no means checked their curiosity, and on their part they listened to what passed with respectful attention.

What we saw in our visit to Pâk-nam, was not calculated to impress us with a very exalted opinion of the progress of the Siamese nation in the arts which conduce to the comforts or reasonable enjoyments of life. The cottage of an English peasant, not on the brink of a workhouse, possesses more real comfort than did the mansion of the Governor of Pak-nam, who, as we were told, exercised an arbitrary authority over 50,000 people.

March 28.—As soon as I had returned to the ship after my visit to Pak-nam, I addressed a letter to the Prah-klang, recapitulating what I had urged to the chief of that place, on the subject of our conveyance to the capital and the landing of our guns. Yesterday no answer was received, but this morning Ko-chai-sahak, who, in the interval, had been at Bang-kok, came on board, to inform us that the Court had given us permission to ascend the river with our cannon, or, in case we preferred going in boats supplied by the Court, that a sufficient number would be sent down in a few days. We adopted the plan of going up in the ship, as the most independent, speedy, and commodious; and at ten o'clock we began to ascend the river against the tide, but with a strong breeze in our favour. The river at its mouth and up to Pak-nam is about a mile wide, but shortly after diminishes to one-half of this width,—a breadth which, with few exceptions, it preserves all the way to Bang-kok. Opposite to Pak-nam there is a sand-bank, bare at low-water,* and a few miles beyond it the ruins of a small brick fort, built by the Dutch, about a century and a half ago, when they carried on a trade with Siam. This last, by the encroachment of the river, is now within the stream, and covered at high-water. These two, and they are easily avoided, constitute the only dangers of the Menam, from its mouth to the capital. After passing them, a ship may range from side to side of the river, with from seven to ten fathoms water, approaching so near to the banks that her yards may literally overhang them. At one o'clock we reached a couple of forts, or redoubts, of masonry,—one on each side of the river,—which is here considerably contracted. The

* Our contest with the Burmans so alarmed the Siamese, that during its progress they fortified Pak-nam with the sand-bank mentioned in the text. On these works there are said to be mounted about 200 pieces of heavy ordnance, some of which are good English guns, but the greater number brass-cannon, cast at Bang-kok, and of the worst description. In the hands of a people of any courage or military skill, these fortifications would render the access to the capital impregnable. Such, however, is the ignorance and pusillanimity of the Siamese, that, in all likelihood, they would prove no serious impediment to an attack by European shipping.

neighbourhood is occupied by a colony of the people of Pegue and Lao, refugees from the territory disputed between the Burmans and Siamese. A flag was hoisted from both forts, and we were serenaded by a Peguan band of music as we passed. A well dressed chief, in the Burman or Pegue costume, came on board here, bringing us two boat loads of fruits and other refreshment.

Close to the river, and at least for twelve miles up, the land appears to be unfit for culture, owing to the saltness of the water, which occasionally overflows it. All this tract is occupied by rhizophoras, and by the cocos-nypa, the leaf of which is so abundantly used by the inhabitants of tropical India as thatch. Beyond this again, and all the way to the capital, the banks of the river are more elevated, and the country as far as we could observe it, presented every where a rich extent of cultivation, consisting of rice-fields, interspersed with numerous villages, surrounded by orchards of palm and fruit-trees. The rice stubble was on the ground, for the crop had been reaped two months before, and among it were grazing numerous herds of buffaloes, the only description of cattle which were to be seen. This appearance of fertility and industry formed a pleasing contrast to the waste of rocks, mountains, and impenetrable and unprofitable forests, to which we had been accustomed for the last three months.

At four o'clock we came to an anchor for a couple of hours, waiting for the flood-tide, and took this opportunity to land. The fields afforded a great number of birds of different descriptions, and we were successful in adding several specimens to our collection. The natives, wherever we met them, received us with kindness, and betrayed no symptoms of distrust or timidity. As soon as the flood-tide had made, we weighed, and at twelve o'clock at night reached the town of Bang-kok.

March 29.—The morning presented to us a very novel spectacle—the capital of Siam, situated on both sides of the Menam. Numerous temples of Buddha, with tall spires attached to them, frequently glittering with gilding, were conspicuous among the mean huts and hovels of the natives,

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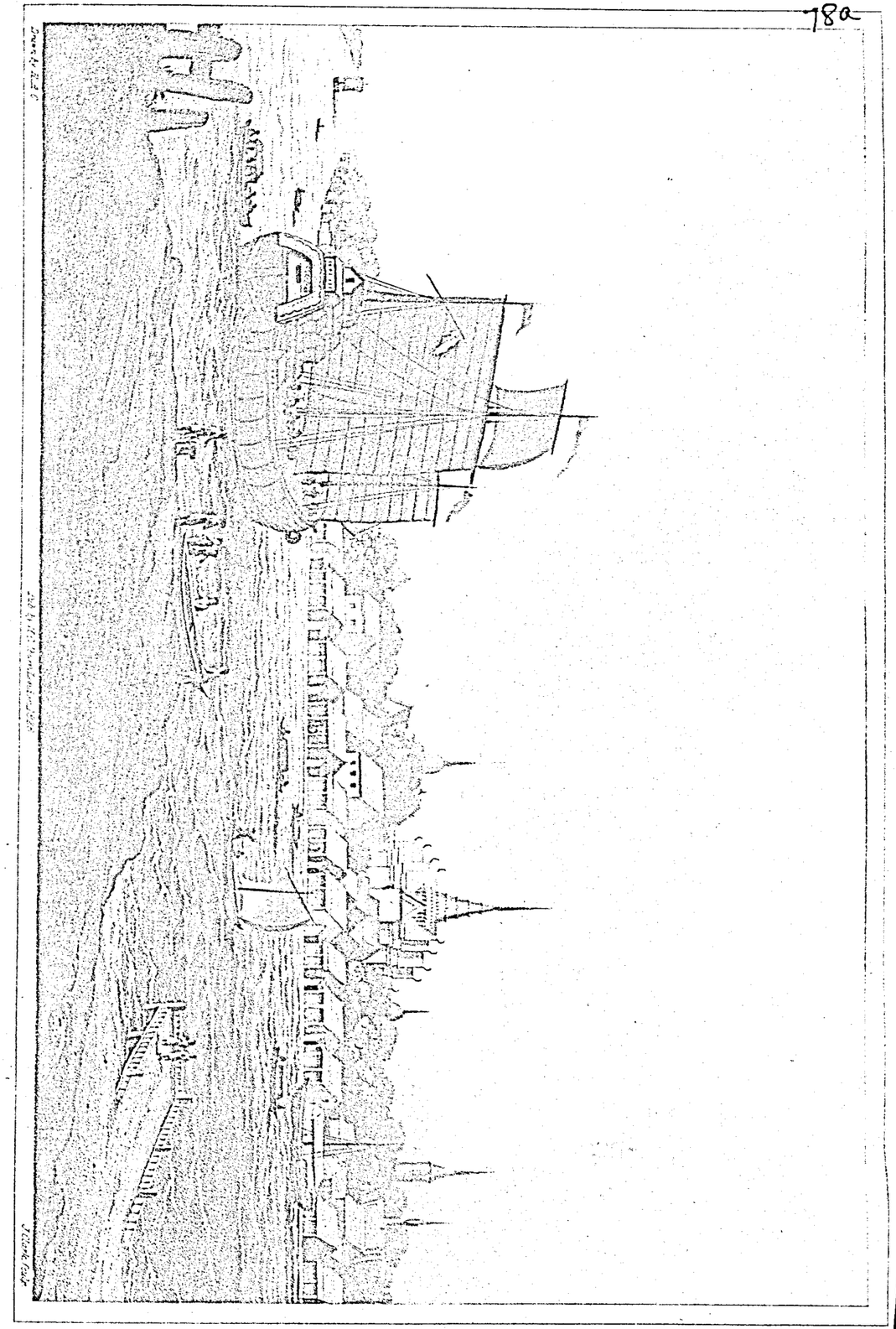

VIEW OF THE CITY OF BANGKOK.

78b

throughout which were interspersed a profusion of palms, ordinary fruit-trees, and the sacred fig *(ficus religiosa)*. On each side of the river there was a row of floating habitations, resting on rafts of bamboos, moored to the shore. These appeared the neatest and best description of dwellings; they were occupied by good Chinese shops. Close to these aquatic habitation were anchored the largest description of native vessels, among which were many junks of great size, just arrived from China. The face of the river presented a busy scene, from the number of boats and canoes of every size and description which were passing to and fro. The number of these struck us as very great at the time, for we were not aware that there are few or no roads at Bang-kok, and that the river and canals form the common highways, not only for goods, but for passengers of every description. Many of the boats were shops containing earthenware, *blachang*,* dried fish, and fresh pork. Venders of these several commodities were hawking and crying them as in an European town. Among those who plied on the river, there was a large proportion of women, and of the priests of Buddha; the latter readily distinguished by their shaved and bare heads, and their yellow vestments. This was the hour in which they are accustomed to go in quest of alms, which accounted for the great number of them which we saw.

In the course of the morning, a boat was seen coming alongside with two persons of distinction in her. These were the son and nephew of the Minister, lads not above fourteen years of age, who were sent on board to compliment us on our arrival. They brought us a present of fruit and fine tea, and communicated a request from the Minister, that the ship would drop down a few hundred yards, and opposite to his own house, where a deputation would be sent on board to receive the letter of the Governor-general. The son of the Minister was a sprightly and intelligent lad, but seemed to have been greatly indulged. They were

* A fœtid condiment in very general use in the countries beyond the Ganges, and generally composed of bruised shrimps and other small fish.

served with coffee and sweetmeats, and after this repast chewed betel, and smoked tobacco profusely, so as to give us rather an unfavourable impression of the education and habits of a young Siamese nobleman.

In the course of the day a secretary came on board well attended. He had his note-book and his pencil in his hand, and the object of his visit was to examine the English horse, which was one of the presents, and to take minutes for the information of his Majesty, from whom, and not the Minister, he took care to inform us, he was directly sent. His Majesty, it appears, had heard of the horse, and not being able to restrain his curiosity, had sent this person for the express purpose of drawing up a formal description of him.

In the evening, according to the intimation which had been given, a deputation came on board to receive the letter of the Governor-general. The principal member of it was Pia-pipat kosa, the deputy of the Foreign Minister, a fine-looking old man, above seventy years of age, of frank and pleasing manners. Siamese and European notions on the subject of foreign missions differ essentially. Among the Siamese, the principal honours are paid to the letter which is brought, and not to the envoy who brings it, and who is considered in little better light than that of an honourable messenger. In delivering the letter of the Governor-general, it was necessary to advert to this circumstance, and to see that every proper ceremony was attended to.

The chief of the deputation began by informing us, that according to Siamese etiquette, letters from foreign States must be delivered to the officers of Government before presentation to His Majesty, for the purpose of being authenticated and translated. We requested to know if a copy would not be sufficient. We were told, in reply, that the letter itself must be seen, that it might be ascertained that all necessary forms had been complied with. These forms have especial reference to the shape and quality of the paper, and envelope, titles, and such like matters. We then stated, that we expected the letter would be returned to us previous to our audience, in order that we might have the honour of presenting it personally to the King. We were informed that this was contrary to usage, but a pledge was given that the letter should be produced at the audience, and a Siamese translation of it read in our presence. The Governor-general's letter was now produced, and taken by the old chief in a gold vase brought for the purpose. It was received by the escort on the quarter-deck under a salute, and handed into the boat, where it was deposited under a state umbrella.

Ko-chai-sahak, who formed one of the deputation, stayed behind until the other members had gone away. His object was to deliver to us a message from the Minister, requesting I would favour him, in the evening, with a private interview. I agreed to this, with some hesitation; and Captain Dangerfield and I landed, accordingly, at six in the evening, and proceeded to the Minister's house, immediately on the river side. In compliment to us, he met us at the door, offering us his hand in the European fashion. He seated himself upon a silk cushion, and pointed to one opposite, which Captain Dangerfield and myself took possession of. None of his attendants or family came within several yards of him, but lay prostrate on their knees and elbows in an attitude particularly undignified and servile. The hall in which we were received was neat and well-furnished beyond our expectation. The window-curtains consisted of a handsome English chintz. The room was lighted by a pair of good cut-glass English chandeliers, and by several handsome Chinese lanterns.

Suri-wrung-kosa, for this was the Foreign Minister's name, was a man about thirty-eight years of age, rather a heavy figure, inclining to be corpulent, and of a complexion dark for a Siamese. His features were expressive of good sense, but there was an air of sullenness and reserve in them not calculated to gain confidence. His person was without ornaments, and, indeed, it may be said, nearly without dress; for he wore nothing, saving a piece of crimson silk, which was wrapped round his loins. Altogether, whether in person or manner, he had very much the appearance of a

frugal Hindoo of the mercantile cast, in good circumstances. His questions, upon this occasion, were sensible and pertinent throughout, and evinced none of the troublesome importunity which I experienced from the Chief of Pak-nam. His principal inquiries were directed to the objects of the Mission; and he seemed satisfied with the explanations which were given. He requested us, as we had made a long voyage, to repose ourselves for a few days, when we should be presented to the King. It would, however, he added, according to the custom of the place, be requisite that we should be previously introduced to the Prince Kromchiat, the eldest son of the King, who superintended the foreign and commercial department. Our conversation was carried on in Malay, through the medium of Ko-chai-sahak; for our interpreters, although they accompanied us, were not allowed to act. Before we took our departure, a very neat dessert of choice fruits, sweetmeats, and tea, were served up to us.

The report made by the secretary, respecting the English horse, had so strongly excited the curiosity of His Siamese Majesty, that he was unable to repress it until the regular delivery of the presents; and a polite message was sent to request that he might be allowed to land. One of the boats employed to convey elephants, with a train of attendants, was sent to receive him, and he was safely landed last evening; the first of his race, I am sure, that ever reached the shores of Siam. He was a handsome thorough-bred entire horse, about fifteen hands high. Such an animal, in a country where horses are rare, and the few that exist mere ponies, was necessarily an object of much curiosity.

March 31.—In the morning, Seignor De Silveira, a gentleman who had been residing at Siam as Portuguese Consul during the last two years, sent his assistant, or secretary, to wait upon us; excusing himself from coming in person, as it was contrary to Siamese etiquette for a person in his situation to visit us before we had been honoured with an audience of the King.

We should now, after a long confinement on board of ship, have

been glad to have gone abroad, and gratified ourselves with an inspection of the many novel objects which seemed to offer themselves, but this was contrary to etiquette. We were not indeed forbidden to go about, but it was stated to us, that to do so, before a public audience had placed us under the immediate protection of the Court, might expose us to be treated with rudeness by the populace.

April 1.—The presents for the King were landed this morning, at the particular request of the Court. The pretext for this, was to afford an opportunity of examining and registering them before they were presented at the audience, but I am afraid the real motive was no other than an anxious desire to be put in immediate possession. A trifling circumstance, which took place in delivering them, afforded a singular example of indelicacy on the part of the officers of the Siamese Government. Among a great many pieces of British muslin, which constituted an article of the presents, it was alleged that there was a short delivery of four, as the numbers did not correspond with the list given in at Pak-nam. This *serious* defalcation was communicated to me by a formal message, and a hope expressed that the deficiency would be made up. At the same time, no notice was taken of two pieces of fine Genoa velvet, which were delivered beyond the quantity expressed in the list, although of ten times the value of the muslins! As soon as our clerk brought this last circumstance to the notice of the messengers, not another word was said about the alleged defalcation in the muslins!

In the course of the morning, two of the Court interpreters called upon us; the one a Christian and the other a Mohammedan. They dealt very freely with one another's character, and each assured us, in his turn, that the other was totally unworthy of confidence.

April 2.—Our party landed last night, and took possession of the dwelling allotted to us. It was a new house, of very coarse masonry, with a tiled roof, and consisting of four lower and as many upper apartments, all small and inconvenient. A house of a similar size and ap-

pearance was supplied, a few days afterwards, for the accommodation of such of our party as could not, upon the present occasion, find room. The Prah-klang had furnished our apartments after the Siamese taste; but so little to ours, that we soon discovered the necessity of landing our own furniture, and by this means made ourselves as comfortable as our situation would permit. Our new dwelling was within a few yards of the river, of which, as well as of the most populous part of the town, it afforded an extensive view to the front, while behind it overlooked the court-yard of the Prah-Klang's house and his chamber of audience, so that, without exercising an impertinent curiosity, we were afforded an opportunity of witnessing, from time to time, a good deal of what passed. I had a message in the morning, to request that I would favour the Prah-klang with another visit. I declined doing so, as he had not returned the first visit paid to him; although he explained that his not doing so was in compliance with the etiquette of the Court, which forbade all open intercourse with foreign agents, until publicly recognized.

April 3.—The ceremony of our presentation to the Prince Kromchiat was fixed for this night, and as had been previously arranged, a twelve-oared barge came at eight in the evening to convey us. Mr. Rutherfurd alone accompanied me, the other gentlemen being indisposed and unable to attend. The Prince's palace is situated a little beyond that of the King, about two miles up the river. Upon our arrival, we were received in an anti-room by Pia-pipat-kosa, the aged officer whom I have described as coming on board to receive the Governor-general's letter. We were not long detained here, but soon summoned to the Prince's presence, by a message, conveyed to us in a few words of broken English, by the Intendant of the port, a native Christian, whom I had not before seen. We ascended the hall of audience by a flight of two or three awkward steps. Fronting the door of this apartment, was a large wooden skreen, to preserve the privacy of the interior. As soon as we had passed this skreen, we had a view of

the Prince, sitting in full court, and offering a spectacle rather singular and imposing. The hall, which appeared about eighty feet long, and of a well-proportioned breadth, was covered with a profusion of gilding and vermilion. At the upper end of it there was a handsome altar-piece, which we were informed, contained a small golden image of Gautama, but it was concealed from our view by a crimson satin curtain. To our left hand, and about the middle of the room, there was an elevated pulpit, and from this, we were told, that the Talapoyns chant their hymns, and deliver their moral discourses, when the Prince is disposed to receive instruction, which frequently happens, for he has the reputation of being very devout. The hall was decorated with European lustres of cut-glass, with European and Chinese mirrors, and with a profusion of Chinese lanterns. The Prince, a heavy and corpulent figure, about thirty-eight years of age, but having the appearance of fifty, sat on a mat towards the upper part of the room, leaning against a pillar, which was one of a row that divided the hall by its whole length. His countenance was sensible and good-natured; but, destitute as he was of becoming attire, he had but a mean and undignified appearance. The courtiers kept at a great distance, crouching to the very ground, with their hands clasped before them. Among these were several Mohamedans of the sect of Ali, descendants of emigrants from the Coromandel coast. These people, who from education and circumstances are naturally subtle and intriguing, have considerable influence in the foreign department of the Siamese administration. Among the courtiers, the Prah-klang alone was a little in advance, but prostrate like the rest. Mr. Rutherfurd and I sat down upon a carpet which was pointed out to us, between the Prince and his courtiers. Near us we found the presents of the Governor-general to the Prince. We were no sooner seated than the Christian Intendant of the Port directed us, in a tone of authority bordering on rudeness, to make the customary obeisance. I felt under the necessity of rebuking him, by observing, that unless he could express

himself with more propriety and decorum, he must not presume to address us at all. This had the desired effect, for we were not again importuned by him during the rest of the evening.

It had been provided that our interpreters should be admitted, but this was a promise which was by no means intended to be kept. To be admitted to the presence of the Prince, was considered too great an honour for persons of their condition, and besides a very inconvenient restraint upon the conversation which would ensue. Accordingly, when they attempted to follow us into the hall, they were jostled by the attendants and forced to withdraw. I even found that Ko-chai-sahak was not of sufficient rank to address the Prince directly. Another Mohamedan of superior rank, who was a little in advance for this purpose, received the Prince's words, and Ko-chai-sahak, who lay crouched behind us, rendered them to me in the Malay language. I was first asked if peace or war prevailed in Hindoostan, and then followed a number of questions, which were personal towards the Governor-general,—such as inquiries after his health, how long he had governed India, what was His Excellency's age, and whether or not he was brother to the King of England? When these inquiries were satisfactorily answered, the Prince observed, "I have heard of his reputation for justice and wisdom, from the merchants, of all nations, who have of late years resorted to this country."

The Prince after this referred to a subject of less dignity, but one which interested him more,—the fate of a ship, which, about fourteen months before, he had sent on a commercial speculation to Bengal. This was the vessel which we had seen at Calcutta, Penang, and Singapore, and which had left the latter place before ourselves, although she had not yet arrived. He asked whether we had seen her, when she might be expected, and whether or not she had an European pilot on board. After this last question, he wished to know whether we thought European or Indian mariners most skilful. The answer was not difficult; and he explained, in a tone of compliment, "When I speak of Europeans in general, I do not

mean the English, for their superiority over all other people, in this respect, is well known." One question touching the subject now introduced was calculated to excite a smile. The Prince desired to know whether, during his residence at Calcutta, the commander of the Siamese ship had dressed in the English fashion, and conformed to the manners and customs of Europeans. The individual from whom this compliance with foreign manners was expected, was an unwieldly old Mohamedan of sixty, and of most uncompromising Oriental habits.

The next question put, touched slightly on the subject of European politics, and the Prince was especially solicitous to know, whether the British and Portuguese were at present at peace. It was readily answered, that the English and Portuguese nations had been friends and allies for many ages, and that there was every probability of their continuing so. The Siamese naturally form an undue estimate of the power of the Portuguese nation, from having at all times seen and heard more of them than of any other European people; and this accounts for the present questions.

We were asked after this, what objects we had in view after quitting Siam? This question afforded an opportunity of explaining the real objects of the Mission. The Prince observed upon this, in a strain of compliment, "It is wise in the Governor-general of India, to seek friendship and commerce with distant nations."

Besides these, many trifling and unimportant questions were also put—such as the ages of the different gentlemen composing the Mission, the length and nature of their services, the number of European and Indian languages, which they had acquired, &c. The audience lasted nearly two hours, and was not over until between eleven and twelve o'clock at night. These late hours, as we afterwards found, are the favourite ones amongst the Siamese for the transaction of business. During this visit, no repast was served to us, but we had no sooner reached home, than we found eight large tubs of sweetmeats, sent to us as a present by the Prince.

April 5.—The 8th was appointed by the King for granting us an audience, and the ceremonial of our introduction was, in a good measure, arranged to-day. It was settled that a barge should be sent, to convey us from our residence to the landing-place opposite to the palace, and that from thence we should be conveyed in palanquins or litters. I had wished to stipulate for elephants; but we found that the use of these, so general in all other parts of the country, had been long discontinued at the modern capital, or, at least, interdicted to all but a few of the chief officers of Government. To ride on horseback, we found, was not considered respectable. We experienced, in the discussion of this question, a striking example of the singular and extravagant national vanity of the Siamese. This people, of half-naked and enslaved barbarians, have the hardihood to consider themselves the first nation in the world, and to view the performance of any servile office to a stranger, as an act of degradation. We had a hundred examples of this during our stay at Siam; and upon the present occasion, it was not without the greatest difficulty, and the utmost reluctance on the part of the chiefs, that they were at last brought to consent to allow us a few carriers to convey our litters.

I had apprehended much embarrassment about the nature of the obeisance which would be required of us at our presentation; but, upon the whole, this matter was arranged without any extraordinary difficulty. The Siamese officers, on their part, had great apprehensions that we should give offence by persisting in following our own customs in disparagement of their's. It was finally determined, that upon appearing in the presence, we should make a bow in the European fashion, seat ourselves in the place usually assigned to foreign missions, make an obeisance to His Majesty, when seated, by raising the two joined hands to the forehead, but, above all things, take care not to exhibit our feet, or any portion of the lower part of the body, to the sacred view of his Siamese Majesty.

April 7.—I had yesterday evening an urgent communication from the Prah-Klang, intreating I would wave ceremony, and meet him at his house, as he had matters of considerable importance to communicate. I was extremely unwilling to throw any unnecessary obstacle in the way of the mission, in the present stage of its progress; and therefore assented to his wish. I visited him this morning, in company with Mr. Finlayson. His desire was to discover, previous to the audience, what objects of Siamese ambition would be conceded on our parts, in return for such commercial advantages as might be granted to the British nation by the Siamese. With this view he asked pointedly, whether, if a treaty were made with the Governor-general of India, Siamese vessels would be permitted to purchase fire-arms and ammunition freely at British ports? The reply to this question was, that if the Siamese were at peace with the friends and neighbours of the British nation, they would certainly be permitted to purchase fire-arms and ammunition at our ports, but not otherwise. This pointed too plainly at the Burmans, and the interpreter hesitated to explain it;—informing me, in an under tone, that, according to Siamese notions, it was considered uncivil to make any allusion to the national enemy; an observation which shows the rancorous and irreconcilable temper with which those two nations view each other. This demand of supplying them with fire-arms, scarcely compatible with a strict neutrality, was that on which the Siamese set the greatest value throughout the negotiation, and I have to regret that I did not feel myself authorized to yield to it. The Minister began to discourse familiarly on the subject of trade, respecting which he evinced much shrewdness and intelligence; but his views were those of a keen trader, and not of a statesman. He complained that he had not found the trading adventures made to Bengal profitable; and it was no wonder, for the voyages had occupied eighteen months, and the goods had been consigned to native agents of indifferent character at Calcutta. He then dwelt upon the variety of productions which Siam afforded suited for foreign trade, and said, that the culture of coffee had been begun in consequence of

the encouragement which the Americans had given him to grow this article. Before I took leave of him, he again reverted to the favourite subject of our supplying fire-arms, to which I gave the same answer as before.

We were informed this forenoon, whether truly or not I could not determine, that the Chinese had been very busy in misrepresenting the objects of the mission. They were stated to say, that the English came now with smooth words, pretending to want trade only—that in a little time they would ask for a factory—then for leave to build a wall round it—that on this wall they would soon plant cannon; and finally, that they would seize upon the country, as they had done upon many similar occasions. It was farther added, that as the English had no wars now on hand in Hindoostan, they had a large disposable army that wanted employment. It is not to be denied, but that the strange history of our Indian aggrandizement must always afford a subject of jealousy to the neighbouring nations, and ground to misrepresent even our most laudable views and enterprises.

April 8.—The ceremony of our introduction to the King having been fixed upon for this day, we left our dwelling at half-past eight in the morning for the palace. A twelve-oared barge, with the rowers dressed in scarlet uniforms, was furnished by the Court, for the conveyance of the gentlemen of the mission; another for our Indian attendants, about twenty in number; and the sepoys of the escort were conveyed in the ship's launch. It was made a particular request, that our servants, but especially the sepoys of the escort, should form part of the procession. About nine o'clock, we landed under the walls of the palace, where we found an immense concourse of people waiting to view the spectacle. The accommodation for conveying us to the palace consisted of net hammocks, suspended from poles, furnished with an embroidered carpet, and, according to the custom of the country, borne by two men only. The management of these unstable vehicles was a matter of some difficulty, and our awkwardness became

a subject of some amusement to the crowd. The escort, after saluting us at the landing-place, fell in and formed part of the procession. After passing the first gate, we came to a very extensive market, crowded in every part with the populace. This led directly to the second gate, where a street of Siamese soldiers in single file was formed to receive us. These were of a most grotesque appearance, their costume being neither Asiatic nor European, but a strange mixture of both. Their uniforms consisted of a loose jacket of coarse scarlet broadcloth, buttoned in front; a pair of small loose trowsers barely reaching to the knee; and a hat with a small round crown and broad brim, which was coated with red paint or varnish, and composed of rhinoceros hide, a substance which is sabre-proof. Their arms consisted of muskets and bayonets, coated, like their hats, with a thick red varnish. Some of the muskets were without ramrods, and altogether in a very poor state in regard to efficiency.

At the second gateway we dismounted from our litters, and left the escort, which was not permitted to go farther. We were also compelled at this place to part with our side-arms,—no person whatever, we were told, being permitted to come armed within the immediate precincts of the royal residence. Passing through this gate, we went along an avenue having a line of sheds on both sides, under each of which was a cannon of enormous size. In this avenue also a street of Siamese military, similar to those just described, was formed to receive us. Turning a little aside from this avenue, we were conducted into an immense hall, which seemed to be not less than eighty or ninety feet long, and forty or fifty broad. This, I believe, was the principal hall of justice; but it did not seem to be much frequented, for pigeons, swallows, and sparrows, had nested in the roof—and were now flying about without fear or interruption, as it is a religious maxim not to disturb them. Close to this building, ten elephants, caparisoned, were drawn out; the first we had seen since our arrival.

Carpets were spread for us, and we were requested to wait a sum-

mons into the royal presence. We were not detained above twenty minutes when the summons arrived, and we proceeded to the hall of audience. This portion of the royal inclosure was, like the rest that we had passed, filled with a crowd of people who were curious and clamorous, but not rude. A number of officers, with white wands, attended to keep off the crowd; and two officers, after the manner of heralds, preceded us. We now reached the third and last gate, which contains the principal palace, a building with a tall spire, and roofed with tin; the hall of audience, distinct from the palace; and an extensive temple of Buddha. We were here requested to take off our shoes, and to leave behind us our Indian attendants. None of our party whatever, indeed, were permitted to go beyond this spot, except the four British officers of the mission. I had previously stipulated that our interpreters, although not admitted into the presence, should be within hearing; but in the hurry of the moment they were jostled, and hindered from following. As soon as we had entered the gate, we found a band of music, consisting of not less than a hundred persons, drawn up to form a street for our reception. The instruments consisted of gongs, drums, brass flutes, and flageolets.

Opposite to the door of the hall of audience there was an immense Chinese mirror, of many parts, which formed a screen, concealing the interior of the Court from our view. We had no sooner arrived at this spot than a loud flourish of wind instruments was heard, accompanied by a wild shout or yell, which announced, as we afterwards found, the arrival of his Majesty. We passed the screen to the right side, and, as had been agreed upon, taking off our hats, made a respectful bow in the European manner. Every foot of the great hall which we had now entered was literally so crowded with prostrate courtiers, that it was difficult to move without the risk of treading upon some officer of state. Precedence is decided, upon such occasions, by relative vicinity to the throne; the princes being near the foot of it, the principal officers of Government next to them, and thus in succession down to the lowest officer who is

admitted into the presence. We seated ourselves a little in front of the screen, and made three obeisances to the throne, in unison with the courtiers. This obeisance consisted in raising the joined hands to the head three times, and at each touching the forehead. To have completed the Siamese obeisance, it would have been necessary to have bent the body to the ground, and touched the earth with the forehead at each prostration. I thought the place assigned to us, although not a very distinguished one, the highest it was intended to concede; but we had no sooner made our obeisances than we were requested to advance, and were finally settled about half-way towards the throne. The assigning to us the first place, and our advance afterwards to a more honourable one, was evidently an artifice of our conductors to exact a greater number of obeisances than we had pledged ourselves to make; for when we were seated the second time, the whole Court made three additional obeisances, in which we were compelled to join, to avoid the imputation of rudeness.

The hall of audience appeared a well-proportioned and spacious saloon, of about eighty feet in length, perhaps half this in breadth, and thirty feet in height. Two rows, each of ten handsome wooden pillars, formed an avenue from the door to the throne, which was situated at the upper end of the hall. The walls and ceiling were painted of a bright vermilion; the cornices of the former being gilded, and the latter thickly spangled throughout with stars in rich gilding. Between the pillars we observed several good lustres of English cut-glass. The apartment would have been altogether in good taste, but for the appearance, against the pillars, of some miserable lamps of tin-plate, which had been imported from Batavia, and which were in all likelihood prized only because they were foreign.

The throne and its appendages occupied the whole of the upper end of the hall. The first was gilded all over, and about fifteen feet high. It had much the shape and look of a handsome pulpit. A pair of curtains, of gold tissue upon a yellow ground, concealed the whole of the upper

part of the room, except the throne; and they were intended to be drawn over this also, except when used. In front of the throne, and rising from the floor, were to be seen a number of gilded umbrellas of various sizes. These consisted of a series of canopies, decreasing in size upwards, and sometimes amounting to as many as seventeen tiers. The King, as he appeared seated on his throne, had more the appearance of a statue in a niche, than of a living being. He wore a loose gown of gold tissue, with very wide sleeves. His head was bare, for he wore neither crown nor any other ornament on it. Close to him was a golden baton, or sceptre.

The general appearance of the hall of audience, the prostrate attitude of the courtiers, the situation of the King, and the silence which prevailed, presented a very imposing spectacle, and reminded us much more of a temple crowded with votaries engaged in the performance of some solemn rite of religion, than the audience-chamber of a temporal monarch.

The King seemed a man between fifty and sixty years of age, rather short in person, and disposed to corpulency. His features were very ordinary, and appeared to bespeak the known indolence and imbecility of his character; but upon this subject it was not easy to form any correct opinion, owing to the distance we were at from the throne, and the sort of *chiaro scuro* cast upon it, evidently for effect.

To the left of the throne we saw exhibited the portable part of the presents from the Governor-general; a secretary proceeded to read a list of them; and I make no doubt they were represented as tribute, or offering, although of this it was impossible to obtain proof. The letter of the Governor-general was neither read nor exhibited, notwithstanding the distinct pledge which had been given to that effect.

The words which His Siamese Majesty condescended to address to us, were delivered in a grave, measured, and oracular manner. One of the first officers of state delivered them to a person of inferior rank, and this person to Ko-chai-sahak, who was behind us, and explained them in

the Malay language. The questions put, as they were rendered to us, were as follows: "The Governor-general of India (literally, in Siamese, The Lord, or Governor, of Bengal) has sent you to Siam—what is your business?" A short explanation of the objects of the mission was given in reply. "Have you been sent with the knowledge of the King of England?" It was here explained, that, from the great distance of England, the political intercourse with the distant nations of the East was commonly entrusted to the management of the Governor-general of India. "Is the Governor-general of India brother to the King of England?". To this question it was replied, that the Governor-general of India had been the personal friend of his sovereign from early life, but that he was not his brother. The following questions were successively put: "What difference is there in the ages of the King and Governor-general?"—"Was the Governor-general of India in good health when you left Bengal?"—"Where do you intend to go, after leaving Siam?"—"Is peace your object in all the countries you mean to visit?"—"Do you intend to travel by land or water, from Sai-gun to Turan?"—"Is it your intention to visit Hué, the capital of Cochin China?" After receiving replies to these different questions, His Majesty concluded with the following sentence: "I am glad to see an envoy here from the Governor-general of India. Whatever you have to say, communicate to the minister, Suri-wung-kosa. What we chiefly want from you are fire-arms."

His Majesty had no sooner pronounced these last words, than we heard a loud stroke, as if given by a wand against a piece of wainscoting; upon which the curtains on each side of the throne, moved by some concealed agency, closed upon it. This was followed by the same flourish of wind instruments, and the same wild shout which accompanied our entrance; and the courtiers, falling upon their faces to the ground, made six successive prostrations. We made three obeisances, sitting upright, as had been agreed upon.

As soon as the curtain was drawn upon His Majesty, the courtiers,

for the first time, sat upright, and we were requested to be at our ease, —freely to look round us, and *admire the splendour and magnificence* of the Court—such being nearly the words made use of by the interpreter in making this communication to us.

During the audience, a heavy shower had fallen, and it was still raining. His Majesty took this opportunity of presenting us each with a small umbrella, and sent a message to desire that we would view the curiosities of the palace at our leisure. When we arrived at the threshold of the hall of audience, we perceived the court-yard and the roads extremely wet and dirty from the fall of rain. We naturally demanded our shoes, which we had left at the last gate. This was a favour which could not be yielded, and we were informed that the first princes of the blood could not wear shoes within the sacred enclosure in which we now were. It would have been impolitic to have evinced ill-humour, or attempted remonstrance; and therefore we feigned a cheerful compliance with this inconvenient usage, and proceeded to gratify our curiosity.

The greatest of the curiosities to which our attention was directed were the white elephants, well known in Europe to be objects of veneration, if not of worship, in all the countries where the religion of Buddha prevails. The present King has no less than six of these, a larger number than ever was possessed by any Siamese monarch; and this circumstance is considered peculiarly auspicious to his reign. Four of them were shown to us. They approached much nearer to a true white colour than I had expected: they had, indeed, all of them more or less of a flesh-coloured tinge; but this arose from the exposure of the skin, owing to the small quantity of hair with which the elephant is naturally covered. They showed no signs of disease, debility, or imperfection; and as to size, they were of the ordinary stature, the smallest being not less than six feet six inches high. Upon inquiring into their history, we found that they were all either from the kingdom of Laó or Kamboja, and none from Siam itself, nor from the Malay countries

tributary to it, which last, indeed, had never been known to afford a white elephant.

The rareness of the white elephant is, no doubt, the origin of the consideration in which it is held. The countries in which it is found, and in which, indeed, the elephant in general exists in greatest perfection, and is most regarded, are those in which the worship of Buddh and the doctrine of the metempsychosis prevail. It was natural, therefore, to imagine that the body of so rare an object as a white elephant must be the temporary habitation of the soul of some mighty personage in its progress to perfection. This is the current belief, and accordingly every white elephant has the rank and title of a king, with an appropriate name expressing this dignity—such as the "pure king," the "wonderful king," and so forth. One of the Jesuits, writing upon this subject, informs us with some *naïveté*, that his Majesty of Siam does not ride the white elephant, because he, the white elephant, is as great a king as himself!

Each of those which we saw had a separate stable, and no less than ten keepers to wait upon it. The tusks of the males, for there were some of both sexes, were ornamented with gold rings. On the head they had all a gold chain net, and on the back a small embroidered velvet cushion.

Notwithstanding the veneration with which the white elephants are considered in some respects, it does not seem to be carried so far in Siam as to emancipate them from occasional correction. Two of them were described as so vicious, that it was considered unsafe to exhibit them. A keeper pricked the foot of one, in our presence, with a sharp iron until blood came, although his majesty's only offence was stealing a bunch of bananas; or rather, snatching it before he had received permission!

In the stables of the white elephants, we were shown two monkies, whose presence, the keepers insisted, preserved their royal charges from sickness. These were of a perfectly pure white colour, of considerable size, and of the tribe of monkies with long tails. They were in perfect health, and had been long caught; but we were advised not to play with them,

as they were of a sullen and mischievous disposition. These were both taken in the forest of Pisiluk, about ten days' journey up the Menam.

From the white elephants we were taken to the crowd of their brethren which had the ill luck to be born black, and were therefore doomed to toil, or harsh usage. They did not appear to us to be remarkable either for size or beauty; but some of our Indian servants, who were better judges than ourselves, considered them as possessing, in an eminent degree, all those points which are admired by amateurs, and which distinguish the noblest race of this animal.

We were struck with the great number which were partly white, principally about the head and trunk. One of these, which was kept in a separate stable, had the whole head and trunk white: it was eight feet high, and in point of symmetry quite perfect. This, like some of the white elephants, was caught in the forests of Lao. The elephant usually rode by his Majesty was exhibited among the rest; it was tall and very docile, but not remarkable for beauty.

A glance at his Siamese Majesty's stud of horses was quite sufficient to satisfy our curiosity. It consisted of a few ponies imported from the Eastern Islands, and of a small breed of horses, said to be brought from the Chinese province of Yu-nan. There were a few horses from Western India, old and miserable. One of these, we were informed, had been presented by Mr. Light, the first Governor of Prince of Wales's Island.

As we passed along, we were requested to examine the large cannon which we had seen on entering. They consisted of seven or eight pieces lying on beds, and were mere objects of curiosity. Some of them were eighteen feet long, the walls of enormous thickness, but the calibre not exceeding nine inches. They appeared to have been perfectly well cast. Each had an inscription upon it, inlaid in silver, which, as we were told, described its charge of powder, but, from what we could understand, in very exaggerated terms. These guns bore no comparison in point of size to some of those cast by the Mahomedan

princes of Hindostan, and neither in size nor workmanship, to several which we afterwards saw in Cochin China.

We were now conducted to the great temple of Gautama. This consisted, like all other Siamese temples, of an immense square inclosure, and contained one principal temple, with several inferior ones. There was a colonnade and covered passage all round, and here the walls were covered with Siamese paper, the paintings upon which represented the Adventures of Rama, a favourite subject with the Buddhist nations. The principal temple was a spacious square chamber, at one end of which was a kind of altar, about eight feet high, containing a number of gilded figures of Buddh, in the sitting posture in which he is most commonly represented. In the middle of these gilded figures was one of the same deity, of a green-coloured stone, and about eighteen inches high. This, our conductors assured us, was made of emerald, but the material had not the least appearance, either of that or any other gem, being, although highly polished, dull and opaque. It was not within reach of examination, but it is not improbable that it was a light-coloured malachite, imported from China.

Our examination of this temple was but cursory, and I shall not attempt any detailed account of it, as we had afterwards much better opportunities afforded us, of examining and describing other Siamese temples of the same character, but upon a much larger scale. I ought, however, to observe that the first appearance of a Siamese temple made a forcible impression upon us. It was impossible to see the extent of the buildings, and the laboriousness and costliness of the workmanship and materials, without feeling that we were amongst a numerous people, who had made considerable advances in civilization, and who were ruled by a despotic government and a superstitious priesthood.

After having thus viewed such of the royal curiosities as were exhibited to us, we were led back to the hall where we had first rested, before our presentation. There was here prepared for us a repast,

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consisting of abundance of dried fruits and Siamese confectionary, served up with great neatness and propriety.

After partaking of this repast, we bent our way back, receiving the same compliments and marks of attention as when we entered, and we reached home about noon, so that the whole affair did not occupy above three hours and a half.

We had scarcely arrived at home when officers came to us from the King with a civil message, bringing a large supply of Siamese confectionary, and from twenty to thirty tubs of Chinese dried fruits and sweetmeats. By the same opportunity, we were informed that the Minister, Suri-wung-kosa, would visit us in the course of the afternoon, having received directions to furnish us with an entertainment at our own house, and there to do the honours of the feast.

This visit afforded an opportunity of observing one of the most singular and whimsical prejudices of the Siamese. This people have an extreme horror of permitting any thing to pass over the head, or having the head touched, or in short bringing themselves into any situation in which their persons are liable to be brought into a situation of physical inferiority to that of others, such as going under a bridge, or entering the lower apartment of a house when the upper one is inhabited. For this sufficient reason, their houses are all of one story. The dwelling which we occupied, however, had been intended for a warehouse, and consisted, as already mentioned, of two stories, while there was no access to the upper apartments except by an awkward stair and trap-door, from the corresponding lower ones. This occasioned a serious dilemma to the minister. A man of his rank and condition, it was gravely insisted upon, could not subject himself to have strangers walk over his head, without suffering seriously in public estimation.

To get over this weighty objection, a ladder was at last erected against the side of the house, by which his Excellency, although neither a light nor active figure, suited for such enterprises, safely effected his ascent about

three o'clock in the afternoon. The native Christians, of Portuguese descent, had prepared an abundant entertainment after the European manner, which was now served up. The minister sat at table, but without eating. His son and nephew, the youths whom I have before mentioned, also sat down, and partook heartily of the good things which were placed before them. No oriental antipathies were discoverable in the selection of the viands. Pork, beef, venison, and poultry, were served up in profusion, and there was certainly nothing to indicate that we were in a country where the destruction of animal life is viewed with horror, and punished as a crime. The fact is, that in practice the Siamese eat whatever animal food is presented to them without scruple, and discreetly put no questions, being quite satisfied, as they openly avow, if the blood be not upon their own heads.

The minister put several questions of a public nature to us while we sat at table. He asked, If an account of the present mission would be transmitted to the King of England? I replied to this, That circumstantial accounts of every transaction of the Indian Government were regularly transmitted to England. Upon hearing this explanation, he asked pointedly, Whether the King of England, when he heard the result of the present mission, would address a letter to the King of Siam? I replied, That his Majesty the King of England had generally delegated his authority to the Governor-general of India, but that, if it were particularly wished for by the King of Siam, I made no question but a letter would be immediately addressed to him. There can be no doubt but that these and the similar questions put during the audience, were dictated by the pride of the Siamese Government, which was evidently reluctant to maintain an equal intercourse with the delegated Government of India, and courted a direct one with the Sovereign. With respect to the East India Company, it is absolutely unknown as such by the princes of the further East, who could not, were it right to attempt an explanation, be made capable of comprehending the delegation of a vast political power

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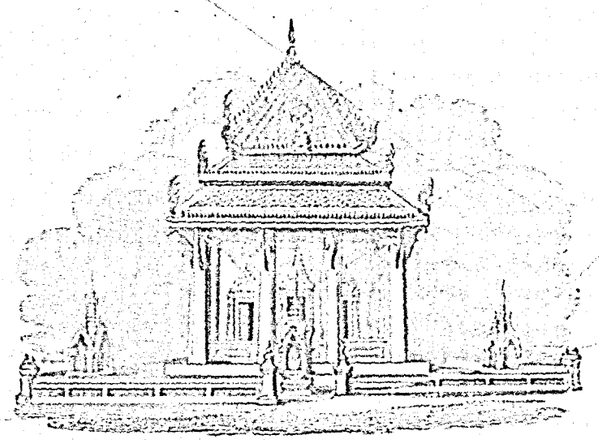
to a body of merchants. Even the natives of Hindustan, who frequently use the English word "Company," attach no other meaning to it than the governing power, or supreme political authority as exercised by the English.

In reference to the reception which we had received in the morning, Suri-wung-kosa observed, That he trusted we were now well pleased that we had visited Siam, after the reception which his Majesty had given us in the morning; and he added, "you are about to visit other countries, and from the reception you get there, you will have an opportunity of appreciating the honours which have been conferred upon you by the Court of Siam." The minister now begged to inform us that his Majesty would in future discharge the expences of the mission; and a silver bowl, containing 240 ticals,* was, with considerable ostentation, placed upon the table, and I was requested to accept of this money, as a month's allowance for our whole party. The paltriness of this sum, which was scarcely adequate to forty-eight hours ordinary consumption of the persons attached to the mission, I am convinced never struck the Siamese officers:—I have no doubt, on the contrary, that they thought they were acquitting themselves handsomely,—such is the sordid and pitiful manner in which the Government is accustomed to reward its own officers, even those exercising the highest trusts; and such, in a word, is the real poverty both of Government and people! I endeavoured to explain that we were all amply and liberally remunerated by our own Government, and that it was forbidden to persons in public employment to accept of money from strangers, or for the discharge of a public duty. It was necessary, however, in the sequel, to accept of his Siamese Majesty's bounty, in compliance with immemorial usage, and to prevent giving umbrage; for a gift by his Majesty, whatever its amount or nature, is considered to confer so great an honour upon the person who receives it, that to reject it would be viewed by his subjects as little better than an act of sacrilege.

* The tical is worth about half-a-crown.

The demeanour of Suri-wung-kosa during this visit was not peculiarly prepossessing. His manner was cold, without being well-bred or dignified. To the inferior persons who accompanied him it was coarse and familiar. These individuals consisted chiefly of Christians and Mahomedans, whose situation was not very enviable; for the first, consisting of the Portuguese interpreters, and even the Intendant of the port, waited upon us at table as footmen, and the last were compelled to feign to relish his Excellency's bad jokes respecting their prejudice against pork and wine, which he pressed them to partake of.

White Monkey in the Elephant stables.



Siamese Temple.

CHAPTER V.

Mission visited by the Portuguese Consul.—Rapacity of the Court.—State of Parties.—Visit to the Portuguese Consul.—Visit to Siamese Temples, and description of them.—Number and Variety of the Votaries.—Their conduct.—Visit to the town of Bang-kok.—Buddhist Temple.—Hindu Temple.—Ancient Ruins.—Commencement of the Negotiation.—Relics of Gautama.—Despatches sent by the Mission across the Peninsula.—Visit to the Prince Krom-chiat, and Conversation held with him.—Opinion entertained by the Siamese respecting our Indian Conquests.—Funeral of a Siamese.—Excursion to the Neighbourhood of Bang-kok.—Religious Regard of the Siamese for Animal Life.—Splendid Temple constructing by the Prince Krom-chiat.—Negotiation renewed.—King's Character and Employments.—Annual Ceremony of the King's holding the Plough.—Punishment of a Christian Interpreter.—Arrival of a Portuguese and an English Merchant Vessel.

April 9.—We received this morning a visit from Mr. De Silveiro. This gentleman had come to Siam about two years before, with the title

of Consul from the Viceroy of Goa. The Siamese Government had given him a small piece of ground to build a factory upon, and he had also commenced the building of a large ship. Mr. de Silveiro, whom we frequently saw during our residence in Siam, was a native of the Brazils. He spoke French and English with facility, and made many communications to us with frankness, from the respectable stock of local information which he had already collected.

In the evening Ko-chai-sahak called, and took care to remind us that we had dropped some hints respecting certain small presents which we intended to present to the King and the Prince Krom-chiat. These consisted of some spectacles, and a few specimens of English cutlery. Such was the anxiety even for these trifles, that the officers of Government had not the decorum to wait until they were regularly offered. In this visit, Ko-chai-sahak made various attempts to extract from us the object of our visit to Cochin China; but, above all, to ascertain the nature and value of the presents intended for that Court. He received no satisfaction upon these points; not because concealment was of any advantage to us, but because explanation was not due to a conduct that was obviously indelicate and improper.

April 10.—I had a message from the Prah-klang to know which of the princes or chief officers of Government we wished to visit; and hints at the same time were thrown out, with a view of ascertaining what presents we intended to offer to each. I replied, that I would wait upon any of the princes whom he would point out as proper to visit; but considering the hints respecting presents indecorous, I took no notice of them. It was evident, however, that our visits were chiefly requested on account of the presents expected, and that our acquaintance was not considered of any value without them. There were, at this time, two parties at the Court of Siam: at the head of one of which, was the Prince Krom-chiat and the then Prah-klang; and at that of the other, the Prince Chao-fa,*

* Literally Lord of the heavens, or sky.

the eldest legitimate son of the King, and his maternal uncles. The Prah-klang, therefore, was perhaps glad, on this occasion, to avail himself of any excuse to prevent an intercourse between us and his rivals.

April 11.—The Chinese festival of Lanterns commenced to-day, an occasion which seems to be equally respected by the Siamese. No business whatever was transacted, and the time was devoted to amusements, to religious ceremonies, to feasting, and to making presents to the Talapoins. At night the Chinese vessels in the river were decked with lanterns, presenting a fanciful and striking appearance. The Siamese call this festival Sung-kran, which is probably the corruption of some Sanscrit or Bali term.

In the afternoon we returned the visit of Mr. de Silveiro, at the Portuguese factory, which was about two miles farther down the river than our own dwelling. The Menam exhibited a scene of considerable activity, and afforded evidence of the existence of a respectable trade. We counted seventy junks, large and small, engaged in foreign trade. There were five or six of the largest description on the stocks, and, besides these, there was a numerous small craft engaged in the internal trade, as well as many rafts conveying merchandize. Mr. Silveiro showed us the ship which he was building, and which was a vessel of between three and four hundred tons burthen, entirely of Siamese teak.

April 12.—We were now at full liberty to go abroad, and, in consequence, this morning passed several hours in examining some Siamese temples. A temple, or monastery—for they are nearly inseparable, called in the language of the country, Wat or Wata,—is always a large square enclosure, consisting of the following parts—a place of worship, with the images of Gautama, an extensive area, a library, and the dwellings of the Talapoins. The largest temple which we visited on this occasion is called, in Siamese, Prah-chet-tăp-pon, or the "temple of the people," because accessible to every one. A sketch of this building will suffice to convey a notion of all Siamese temples. Each side of the wall which surrounds it measures a hundred Siamese fathoms, or six hundred and fifty English

feet. The central building is in the form of a parallelogram, and contains a single sitting figure of Buddha, of gigantic proportions. The walls of the fane are hung with painted paper, containing mythological representations, and the gilding, carving, and other decorations are highly laboured.

Around this central temple, and upon a terrace, was a series of small pyramidal pagodas surmounted by a spire. Each of these contained a stone not unlike in form to a bishop's mitre; on which very solid ground it was, that some of the early Roman missionaries fancied that Christianity and prelacy must have been established in Siam in remote times. These stones are considered essential to every temple, but no one can tell either their origin or object.

Surrounding the main temple, and after the intervention of an area of considerable extent, there was a triple square-formed range of buildings, each row of which was connected with the other at the angles. Each of these angles again consisted of three distinct temples, one belonging to each row, so as to make the whole amount to twelve in number. They were connected with each other by long galleries of about half their own height. Several of the twelve fanes now alluded to contained gigantic statues of Gautama, and the galleries an endless series of images of the same deity, smaller, but all much above the human size.

The first of the distinct fanes of this portion of the building to which we were introduced, contained a figure of Buddha in an erect posture, of the enormous height of five fathoms and a half Siamese, which is equal to thirty-five feet and three quarters English. The breadth of the image at the shoulders was six cubits, and the length of each foot two cubits and two inches. This idol was principally composed of brass, but some portion of the drapery was of wood—a circumstance, however, which we should not have discovered, without being told of it, for the figure is richly gilt all over, so as completely to conceal the nature of the materials of which it is composed. In the wall of the chamber which contained this image was a stone tablet, with an

inscription in the mixed Bali and Siamese character. This was explained to us by the chief lay-attendant; and its purport was, that the temple was built in the year 2338, of the sacred era of the Siamese, corresponding with the year 1795. The most curious portion of the inscription is the estimate which it gives of the cost of the whole temple. The single item of clearing the ground on which it stands, and making provision for the original occupants, who were turned out, is reckoned at 16,400 ticals, and the total charge is stated to have amounted to 465,440 ticals. These sums in sterling money, valuing the tical at 2*s.* 6*d.*, are equivalent to 58,180*l.* A second chamber exhibited Gautama sitting under a fig-tree *(ficus religiosa)*. The tree, with its branches, leaves, and fruit, were tolerably well imitated. It was of considerable height. The paper-hangings of this chamber represented the war of the Ramayana.

A third chamber represented the god, with two votaries, or disciples, in an attitude of supplication before him. The figures of Gautama, in these two last chambers, represented him in the usual sitting attitude, with the legs crossed, and the soles of the feet turned up.

In a fourth chamber he is represented sitting on a secluded mountain. At his feet are an elephant presenting a cup of water, and an ape offering him a honeycomb from the branch of a tree. The figures of these animals are of brass, and not gilded,—being, indeed, the only ones that are not so, throughout the temple. The walls of this chamber contain representations of the Hindoo creation, and full-sized figures of natives of Lao, Pegue, China, Tartary, Hindustan, and Persia. The objects thus represented, we were told, were considered matters of indifference, as they were purely ornamental, and not of a religious character. There appeared, indeed, no question respecting this point; for the wall of the same chamber was also decorated with several Chinese copies of French and English prints, by no means according with the character of the building—such, for example, as the portrait of an English lady—"*la pensive Anglaise!*"

A fifth chamber contained Gautama, again sitting under a fig-tree, upon

the coils of a seven-headed and hooded snake, the heads forming a canopy over him. This idol, including the pedestal, or, in other words, the coils of the snake, measured twenty-four feet high. The representations on the walls here, exhibited sketches of the modern city of Bang-kok. The river is shown, with Chinese junks and European shipping; and among the most prominent figures are several Europeans, in the grotesque costume of the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries.

In a sixth chamber, the god is represented with five votaries before him, and a minister at his feet publishing his orders. Here the paper-hangings represented Gautama preaching to the assembled deities of the Hindoo Pantheon.

The long galleries which connected these chambers were occupied, without interruption, with the images of Gautama,—all in a sitting attitude, ranged in regular order, and of an uniform size in each gallery. The area, which intervenes between this central temple and the quadrangular range, contains at each corner a tall pyramid of masonry, with an iron trident at its apex. These, although I am not acquainted with their intention, seem to be inseparable from every Siamese temple.

Between the quadrangular portion of the building now described, and the outer wall, is an extensive area, in which are several scattered and detached buildings. The first of these which we entered was a long arcade, which contained no images; but on the walls of which were daubed many human figures, thrown into attitudes the most whimsical, distorted, and unnatural that can well be conceived. Under these figures were inscriptions in the vernacular language, giving directions how to assume the attitudes in question, and recommending them as infallible remedies for the cure of certain diseases. In many of the cases which we saw, the remedy, if practicable, would certainly be worse than the disease, whatever that might be.

We were next conducted to certain dark and gloomy galleries, corresponding in number and position with the sides of the quadrangle. These

contained a great number of figures of Buddha, remarkable for the variety of attitudes in which they were exhibited, when compared to the general uniformity which prevails on this subject. A few were in the usual sitting posture, a great many were standing; some were upon their knees, with the body thrown backward; and some were reclining at full length, supported by pillows and cushions. One figure of Gautama, but one only, was exhibited as dead, in a wooden coffin, the lid and front side of which were left open, and a votary was seen embracing the feet.

The chapel was the next object shown. This was an oblong square building, which contained a large figure of Gautama, with a smaller one on each side, and two pulpits very richly carved and gilded. Close to the chapel, but distinct from it, was the library, which seemed to be viewed as the most sacred portion of the whole building. This alone was in the immediate charge of the priests, of whom we scarcely saw one in the body of the temple. They hesitated to admit us into the interior; but we offered, of our own accord, to pull off our shoes before entering—and this little civility induced them to open the doors at once, without insisting upon any inconvenient ceremony on our part. The library was as rich in decoration, as carving, gilding, and bright vermilion could make it; and this was not confined to the inside only, but extended also to parts exposed to the weather. The platform on which it stood, however, was composed of rough planks, ill-joined, and so was the flight of stairs which formed the ascent to it—these parts affording a contrast truly barbarian, with the building itself. The centre of the library contained a sort of ark, or sanctuary, composed of a dome surmounted by a spire. The workmanship of this was rich and elaborate beyond the rest. The doors were thrown open to permit us to inspect from a distance the sacred volumes, which, we were told, were fifty in number. To gratify our curiosity, one was taken out; it consisted, like all other books of the same description in this country, of long narrow slips of palm-leaf, filed

at both ends on a cord. The writing, which was in the Bali, or religious character, seemed to be neatly executed. The edges of the volume were richly gilded, and the manuscript had in all respects a neat and handsome appearance.

Between the library and chapel there was a small pond, which contained a considerable quantity of fish, and a single alligator, which the priests were in the habit of feeding.

One or more tall spires would appear to be a necessary and inseparable portion of every Siamese temple. The area which I am now describing contained no less than twenty-one—a group, consisting of one large and four small ones, being distributed at each corner of the square. Besides these, there was one remarkable spire close to one of the gateways; this measured ninety-seven feet to a side at the base, which was square, and its height was described to us to be one hundred and sixty-two English feet. These spires are called, by the Siamese, Prah-chădi, and are the same which are known in Ceylon by the name of a Dagoba.

Towards each of the four gateways of the enclosure, are a pair of monstrous and gigantic statues, representing warders. This is an enumeration of all that is contained within the walls of the temple; the entrances to which are by four arched gateways, of laboured architecture, each surmounted by the favourite spire.

After passing the walls of the temple, we still meet several detached objects connected with the establishment. The principal of these are the cells of the Talapoins; for every Siamese temple is not only a place of worship, but also a monastery. The cells of the monastery now described were wooden structures, raised on pillars, and extending in a regular range along one whole face of the square.

As we passed towards these, and close to one of the gates of the temple, we perceived a handsome belfry, and near to it an enormous urn, full

twenty feet high, formed of brick and mortar. Here are deposited the ashes of all the high-priests of this temple. There is no door or other entry to it, and an aperture must therefore be made whenever there is occasion to make a fresh deposit. Not far from this spot we saw the chief-priest, seemingly no pattern of humility or moderation. He was conveyed in a crimson silk litter by inferior priests, and had over him a yellow umbrella, an emblem of high honour and distinction. We would willingly have held some conversation with this dignitary, and sent him a message to that effect, but he did not seem to be desirous of our acquaintance.

The temple which we had now visited contained, as we were informed, no less than fifteen hundred images, large and small, four hundred of which were of gigantic proportions. This statement is most probably an exaggeration; but certainly, situated as we were, I can safely say they were too numerous for us to count. The number of regular Talapoins attached to the temple, or, as we should express it, on the foundation, we were told was five hundred, and the number of noviciates, or pupils, seven hundred and fifty.

Having recrossed the river, we visited another temple, much smaller than the one now described, but neater and in better order: its general plan resembled the last. There was a quadrangular wall, with four gates; a wide area, containing the chapel, library, and other detached buildings, with the sacred spires or Prah-chá-dis, a single quadrangular range of buildings; and finally, after the intervention of a small area, one great, central temple. In this case, the quadrangular range was a colonnade, open towards the temple; and, as we had an opportunity ourselves of ascertaining, for we counted them, contained one hundred and twenty sitting figures of Gautama, all gilt, and of gigantic proportions. The central temple contained three great figures of Gautama. Among its ornaments were some English and Chinese mirrors, several of them in handsome gold-burnished frames. There were also several lustres of cut-glass of English manufacture. During our visit, two large and costly Chinese mirrors arrived at the temple, as a present from the King. They were in standing frames, and on pedestals, and intended as screens to be placed before the principal idols. The workmen began to put them up while we were present.

All around the inner temple, there were handsome earthen jars, with some plants of the Indian lotus (*Nelumbo Indica*) growing in each; which had a very pretty effect. The area between it and the colonnade was paved with slabs of Chinese granite.

All the temples of Siam are constructed of brick and mortar; the roof is made of timber, covered with red tiles;—and all the principal structures are of a square form, with gable-ends. The arch and dome seem nearly unknown to Siamese architecture. All the buildings are of one story only, in consequence of the prejudice to which I have already alluded,—the strange horror which every man entertains, confining the expression to its literal sense, of suffering his neighbour to pass over his head. That portion of the building which is of masonry, is thickly coated over with plaster, in which there is no dearth of rude ornament, but the materials are coarse, and this part of the workmanship is not skilfully finished. The greatest skill, labour, and expense, are bestowed upon that portion of the buildings which is of wood, in which are comprehended the gable-ends, eaves, doors, windows-frames, and shutters, and the whole inside of the roof. These are painted, varnished, gilt, and carved in the most profuse and laborious manner—all this decoration being equally bestowed upon what is exposed to the open air, as upon what is under cover. Of the images, the greater number were a composition of mortar and plaster; but, whether of this coarser material or of metal, they were invariably and throughout richly gilt.

With all this labour and expense, a Siamese temple seems far from being calculated to excite those feelings of reverence and solemnity which should belong to a place of worship. The want of magnitude in any one part, the want of height every where, and the mean and perishable

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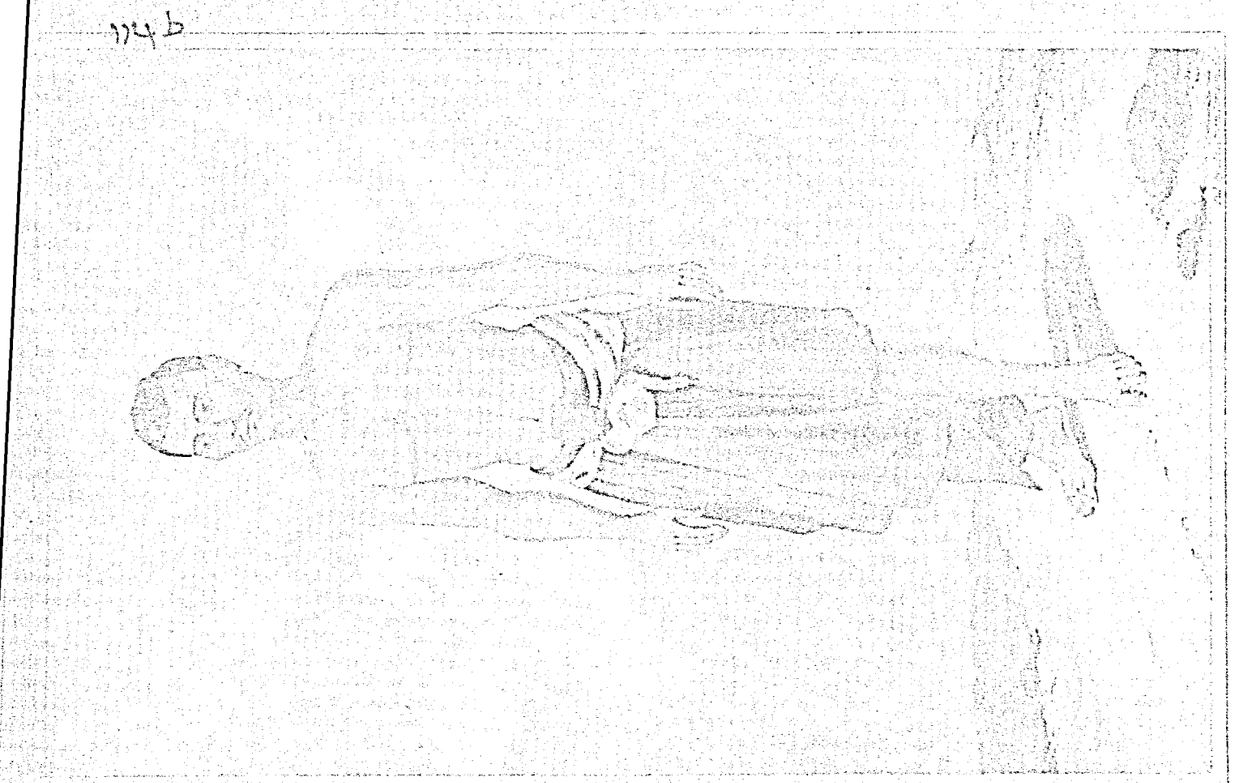
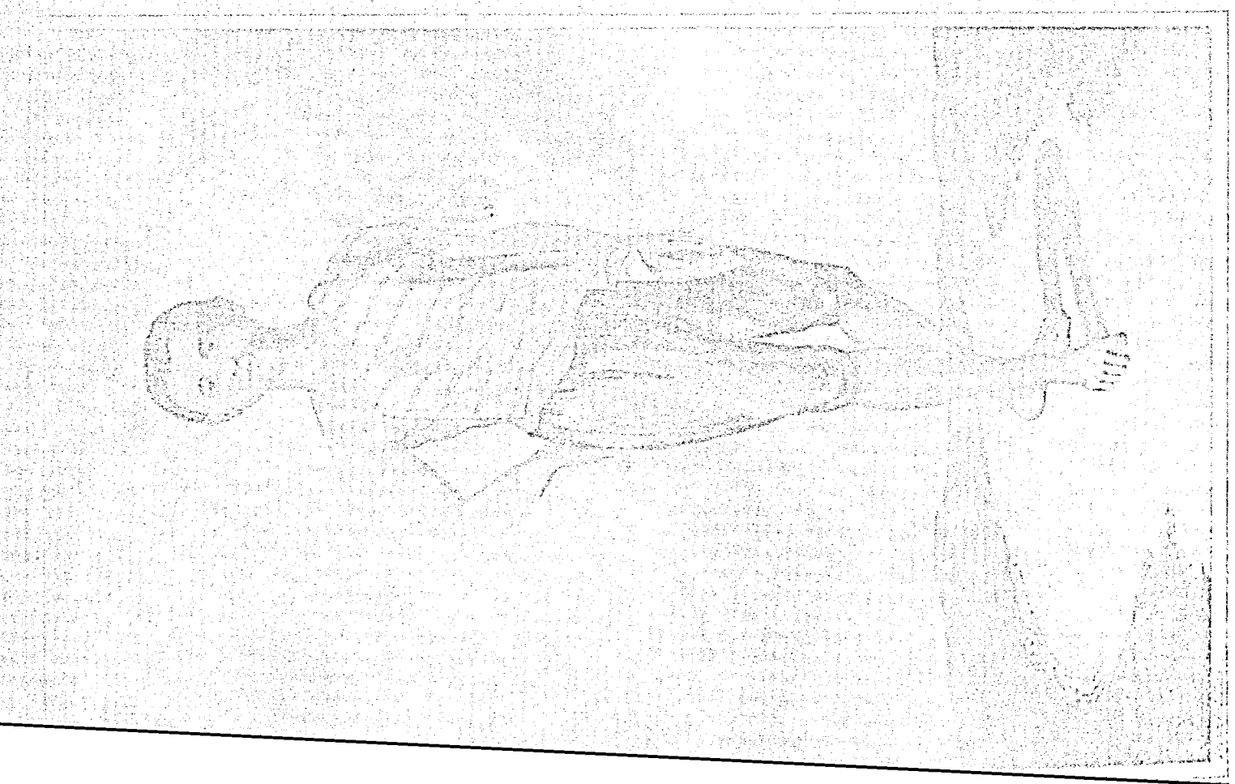
nature of some portion of the materials, with the gaudy meretriciousness of others, are far from being calculated, according to European notions, to excite sentiments either of respect or veneration. Although, perhaps, not less costly and more ostentatious, they are greatly inferior in grandeur, and even in taste, to the Hindoo and Mohammedan monuments of Western India, as well as to the ancient monuments of Java, consecrated to the same form of worship as themselves.

This character of the temples of Siam may be accounted for without difficulty. The alluvial tract of the Menam affords no materials for a substantial and durable architecture; and thus what would have been expended on solid materials, is wasted upon gilding, carving, and other temporary embellishments. The frame of society, perhaps, greatly contributes to the same effect. Every temple is built and endowed by some one in power, from personal motives of piety or ostentation. He can leave behind him, from the character of the Government, no secure funds for the maintenance of the establishment, and no successor capable of supporting it. The absence of a hereditary priesthood interested in maintaining the honour and character of particular temples, most probably conduces to the same result. The motives, therefore, to construct lasting monuments do not exist. There are scarcely, I am told, any ancient monuments in Siam, notwithstanding the religious zeal, which is evidently predominant. Several of the temples of Bang-kok, although the place is little more than forty years old, are already in a state of decay and neglect; and many of the splendid temples of the old capital, described to us by the European writers of the close of the seventeenth century, are at present abandoned and in a state of ruin, the principal images having been transported to the present seat of Government.*

* Another cause, beyond those referred to in the text, is, that the great religious merit consists in building a temple; whereas, there is little or none in repairing or keeping it up. This accounts, in a great measure, both for the great number of temples which exist, and the want of durability in their materials.





During the visit which I have just described, all the temples, but particularly the larger one, were, on account of the holidays, crowded with visitors, and this incident afforded us a striking picture of the manners and habits of the people. The votaries were of all ages and sexes, and the women were not less numerous than the men. The bulk were Siamese, but there were also Cochin Chinese, Cambojans, people of Lao and Pegue, and a great number of Chinese. Instead of the gravity and decorum which might have been looked for in a temple, the demeanour of the visitors was noisy, clamorous, and playful. They were at one moment prostrate before the idols, and at another engaged in some frolic, or singing an idle song. One man, for example, coolly lighted his segar at an incense-rod which a devotee had just placed as an offering before one of the idols, and another deliberately sat down before an image and played a merry air on a flageolet, while many were engaged at the same shrine in performing their devotions.

The women mixed in the crowd, unveiled, as indeed they always are, and were neither shy nor timid; on the contrary, there was considerable familiarity between the sexes; and our conductors, Mohammedans, hinted to us, although I cannot pretend to say with how much truth, that the temples were frequent places of assignation. All this levity certainly formed a very striking contrast to the decent and reverencial devotion of a Christian, or even of a Mohammedan people, and struck us with surprise.

The women were the most decorous in the performance of their religious duties, and also the most assiduous. They went about sprinkling the images with perfumes, and making offerings to them. The oblations were of various descriptions—such as lighted incense-rods; fresh lotus, and other flowers; chaplets of artificial flowers, and cloths of various descriptions. There were, indeed, few of the many idols which I have mentioned, that were not decked with a scarf of silk or cotton cloth, commonly of a yellow colour, the offering of some votary. The Chinese, on their part, burned sacrificial paper, and hung up, as votive offerings, from

the roofs of the temples, banners of cloth or paper with Chinese inscriptions upon them.

No officiating priests were to be seen; and, in truth, as I have already mentioned, there was not a Talapoin within the precincts of the temple, except the few whom we met in the library, and these were distant from the crowd, and appeared to take no share whatever in what was passing.

I should mention, that those who frequented the temple were not confined to the lower classes. One group of well-dressed females was pointed out to us, consisting of above thirty persons. These were one of the concubines, and an infant-child of the Prince Krom-chiat, with their attendants. The infant, apparently not above three years of age, appeared to have been well-tutored, for he went through his prostrations with great composure before the principal image in the central temple. Several of the followers were young and handsome; and we were somewhat surprised, at hearing our conductors request us to point out any amongst them that we might desire to form a matrimonial connexion with during our stay in Siam.

Our appearance in the crowd excited a degree of curiosity, which stopped short only of rudeness.—We were followed wherever we went. Our presence was sometimes announced by shouts, and a hundred idle questions were put to us, which either our interpreters would not explain to us, or we had no time or inclination to answer. A strong inclination was also felt to ascertain, by personal examination, the quality and texture of our dress, and the nature and use of the trinkets which we had about our persons. In all this, the ludicrous importance and vanity of the Siamese character was conspicuous, even among the lowest persons whom we encountered.

April 13.—We made an excursion this morning through the town of Bang-kok. The ground on which it is built is a rich tract of alluvial land, low, but not marshy, and intersected by numerous winding creeks

and canals. We crossed the river, from our dwelling, towards the palace, which lies along the western bank of the river. A kind of canal surrounds it, and this, which was navigable, and communicated with the river, we entered in our boats at the southern angle of the fortification, passing under the walls, which had some mean bastions, with small embrasures, but no cannon. The canal was crowded with merchant-boats, loaded with rice, salt, cotton, dried fish, oil, dye-woods, &c. As we passed along, there was pointed out to us, on our right-hand, the residence of the fugitive prince who, under countenance of the Siamese Government, lays claim to the throne of Kamboja: it was a very poor dwelling, indeed.

In our progress, we had to pass under a bridge, which, after the profusion of expense which we had lately witnessed in the temples, afforded a surprising example of the stupid inattention of a despotic Government and a superstitious people to all objects of public convenience and utility. The value of a very few of the brass images which we saw yesterday, would have been sufficient to build a noble bridge at this place, where it was so much required; but the one which we now saw, consisted of a single plank, and was elevated to the giddy height of at least thirty feet. The passengers, for safety, took hold of each others' hand as they passed along it. Out of politeness to us, and in deference to the prejudice which I have already alluded to, that makes it a dishonour to have others pass over our heads, those who intended to go over, halted until our boat had gone through.

After passing on between two and three miles behind the palace, we came to a spacious temple, which was commenced by the present King about two years before, and was not yet finished. This was of the same general form as those I have already described, but in costliness and magnificence far excelled them. The doors and window-shutters, and the capitals and pedestals of the wooden columns, were curiously and laboriously carved almost throughout, exhibiting figures of flowers, trees, and animals: this carved work was again richly gilt. The central temple, which, in this

case, was raised on a very elevated terrace, consisted but of one chamber, or fane, measuring fifty-eight and a half English feet in height, seventy-one and a half in length, with a breadth equal to the height. A single brass statue of Gautama occupies this noble chamber, for such it unquestionably is. The image, exclusive of the pedestal, measures, in its sitting posture, twenty-nine and a quarter feet: from the point of one knee to that of the other is twenty-two feet nine inches. This was an ancient statue, lately brought down the river, from the town of Sokotai, by order of the King. The minor images in the gallery of the quadrangular inclosure of this temple were one hundred and sixty in number, all of plaster, and most of them in an unfinished state.

At the temple we found that the festivities of the season were celebrating with deafening tumult and discord. The principal chamber was crowded with people, and a noisy band of music was playing before the idol. In the same situation there was a set of comedians, who excited the mirth of the crowd by their extravagant and ludicrous buffoonery.

The Prah-cha-di, or "tall thin spire," with a broad base, appears to be a favourite emblem of the Buddhist religion. Accordingly we noticed that the whole loose earth of the area of the temple now visited, was here and there raised into little temporary conical mounds, on the top of each of which a rod was fixed, containing a slip of paper, on which was written the name of the votary who had taken the trouble of erecting it. In the course of the day we frequently observed floating along the river and canals, on the stems of banana-trees, numerous little mimic temples, which contained similar mounds of sand or earth with those I have just described.

Close to this temple of Gautama our conductors showed us a Hindoo place of worship—a novelty in this part of the world, and therefore calculated to excite our curiosity. There were three temples within one inclosure, each consisting of a long brick building, with an ordinary tiled roof. Access to them was from one end, while the altar and images

were at the opposite one. They were dreary and comfortless-looking places, destitute of all ornament, and their poverty and simplicity afforded a remarkable contrast to the wealth and magnificence of the Buddhist establishment in their neighbourhood. There was no mistaking the religion which had the countenance and protection of the State. One of the three buildings contained fifteen large handsome images, all in a standing posture, of brass, with their crowns, amulets, and drapery gilded. The most distinguished was a figure of Mahadewa, nine feet high. There were several smaller ones of the same deity, with figures of Prawati, Padmi, and Vishnu, and one statue of Brahma. A second building appeared to be dedicated to Ganesa, whose statue was the most conspicuous. Here were also four statues of Mahadewa. The third building appeared to be dedicated to the worship of the Linga, of which there was a large gilded figure in the centre of the altar, surrounded by forty or fifty small brass images—such as those of Siwa, Ganesa, Naraina, Hanuman, the Bull Nandi, &c. &c. We were told that all these images had been brought, at different times, from Western India.

There was no one in attendance at the temples, but the priests attached to it lived at no great distance, and one of them came at our request. He was an elderly person, of slender form, and still retained much of the peculiar features of the Hindoo. He had a white scarf over his shoulders, and, in opposition to the cropped heads of the Siamese, he wore his long hair tied in a knot behind. He informed us, through our interpreter, that he was a Brahmin, and the fifth in descent from his ancestor who had first settled in Siam, and who, according to his statement, came from the sacred Island of Ramiseram, between Ceylon and the Main. He was gratified at the slender acquaintance which we displayed respecting the Hindoo religion, and took a pleasure in continuing the conversation with us on this subject.

Not far from this temple were erected two enormous wooden-posts, or pillars, joined at the top by a cross-beam. Each of these pillars

was certainly not less than seventy feet high, and in size equal to the main-mast of a ship of four or five hundred tons. Certain ceremonies of the Buddhist worship, the nature of which I could not ascertain, are annually performed at this spot.

The tide having retired and left the creek, by which we had reached the temples which we now visited, dry, our boats were previously sent round to a convenient wharf, higher up the main river, and we walked to where they were. This led us to a very extensive bazaar, paved throughout with brick, and with a row of very good shops on each side, chiefly in the occupation of the Chinese. Among the articles exposed for sale, were large quantities of Chinese crapes, which are much worn by the Siamese women, principally in the form of scarfs. These shops also contained considerable quantities of Indian printed goods, and English chintz and broadcloths.

Quitting the bazaar, we passed under the walls of the Fort or Palace. This has no ditch, the curtain no embrasures; and the bastions, although having embrasures, are without cannon. As a place of strength it is too contemptible to deserve any notice.

As we passed along, the gunpowder manufactory, which is extensive, and the public prison, where the Burman captives are confined, were pointed out to us. We could not ask, however, to inspect these, for fear of exciting suspicion.

April 16.—We were now at perfect liberty to go about the town as we pleased,—a privilege of which we availed ourselves, by making frequent excursions on the river. In one of these, in the course of this forenoon, I passed the ruins of the old Portuguese fort. These lie on the western bank of the river. The dilapidated brick walls are now patched up, and within it is the palace of Krom-a-lŭăng, one of the principal ministers of the Siamese Government, and a great favourite of the King. Opposite to it was situated the fort occupied by the French, at the close of the seventeenth century, in the extraordinary attempt

made by Louis XIV. for the civil and religious conquest of Siam. Farther up the river, on its right bank, we came to the extensive ruins of the palace of the Chinese King, whose power was overthrown by the father of the reigning monarch. Although this event took place only forty years before, the ruins might be supposed, from their appearance, to be centuries old.

April 17.—The occurrence of the holidays, the loved procrastination of the Siamese in every thing, and, I have no doubt, also the reluctance of the Court to enter upon the subject, delayed the commencement of the negotiation until yesterday, when we had our first conference with the Prah-klang. This, as well as all the succeeding ones, took place at the Minister's house, and always between the hours of eight and ten at night, the customary time for transacting all public affairs in Siam. The Minister stated that the King perfectly understood the nature of the request made by the Governor-general of India, but he wished us specifically to state the extent of the demands which we had to make. The answer to this was, that the wishes of the Governor-general of India, generally, were to see the imposts upon European commerce at Siam lightened, and the intercourse rendered, in all respects, so free and fair, as to make it agreeable to both parties.

This sentiment was by no means conformable to the wishes of the Siamese negotiator, and he immediately gave the conversation another direction. He said, that undoubtedly the more English ships that visited Siam the better; and he was so anxious upon the subject, that he wished for a specific engagement, that not less than four should come yearly. I said, that it would be difficult to specify any particular number; but I was thoroughly convinced that many more than the number to which he alluded would come, if the intercourse was put upon a fair and easy footing.

In justification of the demand now made, the Prah-klang observed, that two years ago the Siamese had made a commercial treaty with the Portuguese, and reduced the import duties from eight to six per cent. No Por-

tuguese ships, however, had come to Siam since; and it was therefore a matter of some scandal to the Siamese Government, that it had made a treaty, as it were, about nothing. I explained, that the Siamese were not unaware of the commercial resources of the English nation, and that there could be no possible risk on this account.

The Prah-klang now stated that a letter would be prepared, in reply to that of the Governor-general of India, in which it would be stated, that the concessions granted to the English commerce in Siam had been fully explained in person to his agent, and he trusted this would answer every purpose—an observation which showed at once the reluctance which the Court felt to enter into any specific arrangements, or fetter itself by a written treaty. I answered, that matters of this nature, according to our customs, would not be considered satisfactory unless committed to writing. The answer to this was:—"The Governor-general, in his letter to the King, has stated that you are his representative, and therefore whatever is told to you is the same thing as if told to himself." I, of course, persevered in my objection; and he concluded by saying, that such a written document as I required would be furnished.

After the public discussion was over, the Minister entered freely into a great deal of private conversation. The subjects introduced upon such occasions had always some personal and interested object in view. He mentioned that the Island of Ceylon now belonged to the English, and that it was full of relics of Gautama; adding, that there was one relic in particular highly venerated by the Siamese, a certain elephant's tooth, which his Majesty the King of Siam was extremely desirous to be put in possession of through the good offices of the Governor-general. I replied, that as the relic in question was also venerated in Ceylon, and in the custody of the Cingalese priests, this would be impracticable; as it was an invariable rule with the British, wherever they were masters, never to violate the religious feelings of the native inhabitants.

The Prah-klang observed, that the relic in question had two years ago

shown to some Siamese priests by an English gentleman at Candy, f whose learning, on subjects connected with their own religion, as as politeness, they spoke in high terms. This, I believe, was the late ohn Doyle, at the time Commissioner of the Candian Provinces.

he Prah-klang, and those who sat with him, perceiving that we took nterest in the subject of the Siamese religion, put a number of ques- to us respecting it. He said, that a country called Magada was the -place of Gautama—asked whether it was a British possession—how far as from Calcutta—whether there were any worshippers of Gautama in country—whether the present language of the people was Pali, and ether there were any relics of the god. He was also particularly anxi- s to ascertain whether the British Government would permit Siamese lgrims to visit Magada. I need scarcely add, that the country alluded is the British province of Bahar, and more especially that portion of called Buddha Gya. We were enabled to give satisfactory answers to nost of these questions, and with respect to the last, in particular, I gave n assurance that every facility would be afforded.

About this time the Prah-klang sent us word that a dispatch-boat was about to be sent to Ligor, from whence there was an easy communication with Queda and Penang. We availed ourselves of this opportunity to forward letters to Bengal and England, which we found afterwards had arrived safely.

April 18.—We had last night an audience of the Prince Krom-chiat. The avowed object of it was to renew the public discussion; but the subject was never once touched upon, and was in all probability purposely evaded. We had, however, a great deal of desultory conversation upon a variety of topics, the most striking parts of which I shall now relate.

We reached his Royal Highness's palace about half-past eight o'clock at night, and were detained at least an hour in the anteroom before we were introduced, for his Highness was engaged in his devotions. During the whole of this time, indeed, we heard the voices of a crowd of Talapoins,

chanting prayers, or Buddhist hymns, in a loud, drawling, and monotonous tone. When they had done, they departed, without waiting for the audience, and passed through the anteroom where we sat, without taking the slightest notice of us or of any one else, for it is their duty to feign the most absolute indifference towards every temporal concern.

This was a private audience, and the Prince was surrounded only by a few of his personal friends. The interpreters, upon this occasion, were allowed to enter. The Prince began by making civil inquiries after our healths, and the nature of our occupations and amusements since our arrival in Siam, and was particularly desirous to have our opinion of the temples which we had visited, in comparison with similar buildings in other countries. He had heard of our conversation with the Prah-klang respecting Ceylon, and renewed it. With the assistance of Mr. Finlayson, who had resided several years on that island, satisfactory answers were given to many of his inquiries. He asked if the whole island of Ceylon belonged to the English, and then, whether it was subject to the authority of the Governor-general of India. To this last question it was answered, that Ceylon had a governor of its own, not subject to the authority of the Governor-general, and that it was the only part of our Indian dominions so circumstanced. He observed, that no doubt the King of England had made this distinction because Ceylon was *holy ground!* He asked whether the Governor of Ceylon was equal in rank to the Governor-general—what was the amount of the revenue of Ceylon, and whether it was remitted to England. It was explained, that the revenue of Ceylon, although considerable, was inadequate to the maintenance of the island, and that it was necessary to remit large sums from England for this purpose. He immediately said, "If this be the case, it can be of no use to you; and for what purpose was it conquered and is it now retained?" We endeavoured to explain, that during the wars in which we were lately engaged with our European enemies who occupied the coast of the island, they harassed our

commerce from its ports, and therefore, in self-defence, there was a necessity for taking possession of it.

Our power and our conquests in the East, of whatever nature and description, never fail to excite the alarm and jealousy of the nations of India, and hence the origin of such questions as the present. In several conversations which we held with the Siamese chiefs, they displayed a degree of knowledge and acuteness on the subject of our Indian power, which were scarcely to be looked for in their situation. A striking example of this was afforded in a conversation which a gentleman, attached to the mission, held with the Prah-klang. The gentleman in question described our nation as now at peace with all the world, but, perhaps a little indiscreetly, dwelt upon the strength and numbers of our navy. The Siamese chief coolly observed, "If you are at peace with all the world, why do you keep up so great a navy as that which you now describe?"

The Prince, after his questions respecting Ceylon, turned the conversation to a subject of a different nature. He inquired what profession Mr. Finlayson followed. It was answered that he was a physician and a naturalist. He then asked whether he had studied medicine for amusement or for utility; how many diseases the human frame was liable to; if Mr. Finlayson knew all their names, and could cure them all; how many races of men there existed in the world; with a number of questions of the same nature. He said that he had heard that the English were acquainted with an antidote against the small-pox. In answer to this, we took considerable pains in explaining the discovery of the cow-pox and its value. His Highness wished to know whether the Governor-general of India would, if requested, send a skilful person to Siam, to instruct the Siamese in the use of this antidote.

During this conversation, the behaviour of the Prince to those about him was affable, and even familiar. Among them were several Shias, or Mohammedans of the sect of Ali, whom he condescended to rally, by asking us

whether, in any part of Hindustan, there were practised such fantastic and extravagant ceremonies as those observed by the Mohammedans residing in Siam during the festival of the Mohorrum. The impression which his conversation throughout the night made upon us was favourable, and he seemed certainly to maintain the character assigned to him in public estimation, of being the most intelligent of all the princes and chiefs of the Siamese Court. The Portuguese Consul afterwards told me an anecdote respecting him, which showed that he was not insensible to deeds of high renown, or unacquainted with the great events which had recently passed in Europe. Mr. De Silveiro stated that the Prince had frequently expressed to him his admiration of the great achievements of the Emperor Napoleon; and that he had at last offered him a handsome sum of money, if he would translate from the French into the Portuguese language a history of his wars, for the purpose of being rendered into Siamese through the Christian interpreters. Our audience lasted until near twelve o'clock at night.

April 20.—We had heard much of the singular ceremonies practised at the funeral of a Siamese, and yesterday a party of us passed the principal portion of the forenoon in witnessing the forms of one. The bodies of Siamese of all ranks are with few exceptions burned upon a funeral pile, and the spot chosen for this purpose is always the court of one of the temples. Some of the temples are more frequented with this view than others; and we were assured that if we went to the temple called Tan-le-na, on the left bank of the river, and some way down the stream, we might be quite certain of seeing funeral rites performed between the hours of twelve and three. We accordingly proceeded thither yesterday, and arrived on the spot at about twelve o'clock. The ceremonies of a funeral were just about to commence. The body, in a coffin which rested upon a bier, was lying under some fig-trees, of which there were numbers in the court or gardens surrounding the temple. These are highly venerated by the Siamese, who hold it to be as great a sacrilege to lop off one of their branches, as to

slay one of the nobler animals, also a high offence against religion. Yet in Siam the sacred fig is not a handsome, spreading, or shady tree, "the benefit of it," as Knox says of the same tree in Ceylon, "consisting principally in the holiness of it."

The coffin and bier together were at least seven feet high, and, instead of having a dismal funereal look, had a gay and lightsome air. The bier was covered with white cloth, and the coffin itself with a gold tissue on a red ground, while its lid was decorated with tinsel ornaments. Over the coffin there was a canopy of white cloth, ornamented all round with festoons of fresh jessamine flowers. Both bier and coffin, besides these ornaments, were decorated with cornices of fresh plantain stem fancifully carved.

The different parts of the ceremony were ushered in by the discordant music of a brass flageolet, a gong, and two drums. The first part of the ceremony in order was the reading of prayers. This was done by a priest of twenty-three or twenty-four years of age, from a pulpit under a wooden shed in the court-yard. The prayers were in the Bali language, and read from slips of palm-leaf. A small circle of persons, chiefly females, sat on a platform underneath the pulpit, with a taper before each. They were neither serious nor attentive, and most probably did not understand one word of what was said. The prayers lasted about half an hour.

While this part of the ceremony was going forward, the court of the temple was crowded with Talapoins of all ages, who, however, paid no attention to the solemnities which were passing within a few yards of them. On the contrary, they escaped from them, and flocked round our party, exhibiting a degree of curiosity, familiarity, and confidence beyond any thing we had yet witnessed, or rather any thing we had yet been subjected to. There was, however, no absolute rudeness, or, at least, no apparent intention of giving offence.

After the ceremony of reading prayers, the priests were called upon to act their part. To the head of the coffin there was attached a piece

of white cloth, at least twenty feet long, of which they laid hold, ranging themselves on each side. In this situation they muttered three short prayers. This being over, the coffin and bier were dismantled, and the cloth which covered them distributed as presents among the Talapoins.

The next part of the ceremony was that of washing the body. This was performed by one of the secular attendants of the temple, whose fee for each funeral is one tical. Upon the present occasion he certainly earned it well, for the body had been kept for four days, with the thermometer often above ninety-six, and was therefore in a most offensive state.

The deceased had been a man about sixty years of age, and considerably above the lowest rank in life. His sons, daughters, and relatives, attended the funeral, and indeed took an active share in the performance of the different rites. Their demeanour was grave and decent; but no symptom of grief escaped from any of them, with the exception of one individual, who might well be called the chief mourner. This was a young woman, about eighteen or twenty years of age, and, as we were told, the favourite daughter of the deceased. She was in mourning,—that is, had her head shaved, and was dressed in white. She sat down before the bier, and, at sight of the body, began weeping and sobbing bitterly, and appeared to be in real distress.

The bier, with a layer of wet earth laid upon it, upon which was placed a heap of dried fuel, constituted the funeral pile. This circumstance distinguished the funeral from a more ordinary one; for on common occasions the bodies are simply burned upon a low earthen terrace, which was close at hand, and on which were still lying several heaps of vulgar and neglected ashes.

The pile being thus prepared, the body was replaced in the coffin, and carried three successive times round it, borne by the sons and sons-in-law of the deceased, and followed by the favourite daughter, uttering

loud lamentations. It was then deposited upon the pile. A number of wax tapers and little incense rods were now distributed to the by-standers. A priest, ejaculating a prayer, set the first fire to the pile, and was followed by the rest, and among others, by ourselves, for we had been offered tapers, and particularly requested to join in the ceremony. As soon as the first flame had ascended, the daughter began to distribute small pieces of money to some beggars who were present, and who consisted chiefly of elderly women, dressed in white, who reside in the temple, and who perform menial services for the priests. The male relations of the deceased at the same time went through a most fantastic ceremony. They tied their clothes in a bundle, and standing on each side of the pile tossed them over it six successive times, taking great care not to allow them to fall to the ground. The object of this formality we could not learn, nor was it, probably, capable of any rational explanation. This ended the ceremony—the relations, however, continuing by the pile until the body was consumed.

April 22.—Continuing our excursions through the town and its vicinity, we made a very long one yesterday, which occupied us six hours. After ascending the river, for a short way, we entered a large branch called Ban-kok Yai, nearly opposite to the palace, and on the right bank. We proceeded upon this in a westerly course, for about two miles, and then entered a smaller ramification, which connects the three great branches of the Me-nam with each other. This last, which runs in a southerly direction, is known by the name of Bang Luang. On the principal branch there was the appearance of a brisk internal trade, for this is the principal channel by which salt, teak, and Sapan-wood are brought to the capital.

The first singular object that struck us in ascending the principal branch, was a pair of neat wooden pillars painted white, one being on each side of the stream. Upon arriving near these, our conductor, who was a Mohammedan, observed, That beyond these posts one might "sin" with-

out danger, but that all within them was sacred. He meant by this that the space within the pillars in question, was considered as an asylum for the lower animals, but that beyond them they might be slain with impunity. In truth, it is not only forbidden to kill the larger animals within a certain distance of the King's palace, but it is even forbidden to fish in the river, within the boundaries which are marked by the pillars which we now saw.

We proceeded in all about five miles, having on each side of us a low rich country, universally cultivated, and thickly inhabited. In our route, we counted no less than twenty-two temples; some very large, and all of considerable size. Our visit terminated at that which was constructing by the Prince Krom-chiat, and which he had called "Wat-chan-tong," or, "The temple of the golden sandal tree." This, for style and neatness, far exceeded the temples which we had before visited. It was still in an unfinished state, thus exhibiting to us, in an interesting manner, the progress of the different parts of the work. The casting of the principal image was the first thing that attracted our notice. The different portions of it were lying about under an extensive shed, preparatory to being joined. The metal of which it was composed, was an alloy of tin, zinc, and copper, without much regard to proportions, which, indeed, would have been a matter of some difficulty, for we were informed, that when an image of this description is founding, it is the practice of the pious to contribute to it, and that no contribution, however trifling or incongruous, is rejected. The metal was, of course, a mere case about two inches in thickness. The casts, as they came from the moulds, were very imperfect, and there was a great deal of patchwork, occasioned by filling up crevices. These defects would be of little consequence when the work was completed, as the whole image would be covered over, as in other cases, with a rich coat of gilding. The image was to be a sitting one, and from one knee to the other measured ten feet, which would have made it equal in size to a standing figure of about twenty-two feet.

The plan of the temple was generally similar to that of others, and consisted of a quadrangular enclosure. The central temple which was intended for the reception of the principal image, composed but a single apartment, and formed a noble and spacious room. The pedestal for the image was already constructed, and was extremely handsome, being cased all over with Chinese marble, upon which was carved in relief devices of plants and animals. The roof of the temple had a singular, but not unhandsome appearance, being covered with green tiles, which colour we were told was communicated to them by a kind of varnish. The usual area or court of the temple in this case was a neat garden, planted with ornamental and fruit trees. The dwellings of the priests were altogether in a new style—for instead of the wooden cells which accommodated the Talapoins at other temples, these were constructed of brick and mortar, and neatly tiled and whitewashed. Their individual appearance put us, in fact, in mind of neat English cottages, in spite of the situation and the opposite character of their tenants. They amounted to fifty in number, and were confined to one side of the square. At each end of the row there was a building much more spacious than the rest. These were the houses of the prior and abbot, for in a monastery of Talapoins there are dignities corresponding to these titles. This temple, I have no doubt, owed its existence and superior splendour to the wealth acquired by the Prince in his superintendance of the extensive foreign trade, which Siam has lately been conducting. We went into the prior's house by invitation. He received us with politeness, but the pride of his order would not allow him to pay us much personal attention. He however directed a dessert of fruits to be placed before us. Here we saw a number of priests assembled, and engaged in their studies. For this purpose they were seated upon the ground, each with his book before him placed on a neat reading-desk. Every thing exhibited an appearance of cleanliness, comfort, and abundance. We were permitted to go over the different apartments without any difficulty. Some portion of the ornaments of

that of the prior himself, struck us as odd, if not out of place. These were stiff Chinese copies of English pictures in gilt frames. One, for example, exhibited a fox chase, another the charms of a country life, and the third and fourth were portraits of celebrated English beauties. Many of these are copies of our best prints, and the Chinese, by extraordinary cheapness of price, have contrived to disseminate them widely. In Siam they are very frequent, and I have no doubt a traveller would also discover them in the heart of Kamboja, Lao, or Chinese Tartary. We may see from this example, that in the intercourse of nations, it is impossible to discover beforehand, whether or not the productions of one be suited to the taste of the other, until the price be rendered low enough to meet the consumer's means of purchasing.

Sitting amongst the priests, we observed a man of intelligent appearance, and about forty years of age, in a secular habit. Our conductor informed us that he was a person of great learning, and that in his younger days he had been a priest, but falling desperately in love with a young woman in the neighbourhood, he had quitted holy orders to marry her, and although courted for his acquirements and requested to resume the monastic life, he had ever since refused to quit his family. He was now employed in instructing some of the young priests. He entered freely into conversation with us; readily answered such questions as we put to him, and supplied us, on the spot, with a short vocabulary of the Bali language. With all his frankness, however, he was extremely desirous to be assured that we had a sufficient respect for his religion, and not satisfied with our assertions to this effect, he would have us attest our sincerity by making an obeisance to an image of Buddha, which was in the apartment where we were sitting.

On our return home, we visited a temple, which contained a relic of Gautama. This was the impression of a foot, or as such relics are called by the Siamese, a Prah-bat, or holy foot. This was deposited in a small temple on the top of an artificial mount, which lay behind an ordinary

Buddhist temple. The mount was of masonry, and of a quadrangular form. The extent of each face was about twenty-seven paces, and the height of the whole about twenty-two, exclusive of the little temple which contained the relic. Underneath it were many dark and winding passages, in imitation of caverns; for the object of this monument was to represent one of those mountains to which Gautama in his life-time had retired as an ascetic. The doors of the little temple were shut, and owing to the accidental absence of the keeper, but not to any reluctance to exhibit it, we had no opportunity of examining the relic.

April 23.—We had a conference with the minister last night, which lasted from nine to twelve o'clock. On this occasion, I explained at length the nature of the commercial arrangements which we were anxious to make, and for this purpose took with me notes for a treaty, which provided generally for a free and fair trade; for the determination of the export and import duties, and of all fees and charges; providing at the same time security for the persons and properties of British subjects resorting to Siam. The Portuguese having obtained permission for the residence of a commercial agent, and a promise to a similar effect having, as was understood, been made to the Americans, we hinted at a like arrangement for the British Government. In general, no negative was put upon these various requisitions at the time, with the exception of that which provided security for the person and properties of British subjects. In answer to this proposition, the Prah-klang distinctly stated, that the King of Siam would make no alteration in the established laws of the country in favour of strangers. This indeed was a point which could not be insisted upon. If the subjects of a free and civilized government resort to a barbarous and despotic country, there is no remedy but submission to its laws, however absurd or arbitrary, so impossible is it in all respects to reconcile the fair and equal commerce of nations in opposite states of civilization with the freedom of conduct which must be supposed vested in every independent government, whatever its nature. It could scarcely be hoped,

although it has sometimes happened, that an arbitrary government should concede to strangers a degree of liberty and security which it denied to its own subjects. Before parting, it was agreed upon that the conference should be renewed on the following night.

April 24.—I had a sudden and unexpected visit this morning from the Prah-klang, who came, as upon the former occasion, by scrambling over the gable-end of the house into the corridor. I thought this visit was intended to prevent or anticipate the conference which was agreed upon in the evening, but he came with very different views. He told us that he had come for the purpose of requesting assistance in recovering two pairs of ordinary glass lamps, which he alleged had been offered to the King by an individual belonging to the mission-ship, but afterwards sold to some one else. He said that his Majesty had set his heart on the lamps, that he was highly indignant at any one else presuming to purchase them, and that he had threatened half his courtiers with corporal punishment on account of his disappointment. I promised to inquire into the transaction, but could not help informing him that amongst us, the person who gave the best price for a commodity was generally considered as establishing the first claim to it.

In the evening I had an apology from the minister, and a request that the conference might be put off to another time. The excuse made was a singular one, that his father-in-law, or at least, one of the numerous persons who stood in that relation to him, had broken a favourite mirror, at which the minister was in such distress that he was utterly incapable of attending to public business.

April 26.—We were awakened in the night by the cries of some one suffering corporal punishment in the court-yard of the Prah-klang's house, immediately under our windows, and in the morning we heard that this was the Christian interpreter, attached to the mission-ship. He had failed to report the sale of the four lamps, of which the King had become so unaccountably enamoured, and this was the offence for which he had received castigation. He called upon us in the course of the

day, and when we expressed our sympathy for the unmerited chastisement he had received, he only answered, that "he and the other Christians had nothing but patience to support them in the country where their lot had been cast." These men are, notwithstanding, the descendants of the Portuguese conquerors of India, and, possibly, some of them may have in their veins the blood of a Di Gama, or an Albuquerque; men whose very names made the monarchs of the East tremble.

April 27.—This was a day of some celebrity in the Siamese calendar, being that on which the kings of Siam, in former times, were wont to hold the plough, like the Emperors of China, either as a religious ceremony, or as an example of agricultural industry to their subjects. This rite has long fallen into disuse, and given place to one which, to say the least of it, is of less dignity. The ceremony took place about two miles from Bang-kok, and I am sorry to say we were not apprised of it in time enough to be present. A Siamese, however, who had often witnessed it, gave me the following description:—A person is chosen, for this occasion, to represent the King. This monarch of a day is known by the name of Piya-Pun-li-teb, or King of the Husbandmen. He stands in the midst of a rice-field, on one foot only, it being incumbent on him to continue in this uneasy attitude during the time that a common peasant takes in ploughing once round him in a circle. Dropping the other foot, until the circle is completed, is looked upon as a most unlucky omen; and the penalty to "the King of the Husbandmen" is said to be not only the loss of his ephemeral dignity, but also of his permanent rank, whatever that may be, with what is more serious—the confiscation of his property. The nominal authority of this person lasts from morning to night. During the whole of this day the shops are shut; nothing is allowed to be bought or sold; and whatever is disposed of, in contravention of this interdict is forfeited, and becomes the perquisite of the King of the Husbandmen.

Another ceremony, we were told, accompanies the ploughing. Specimens of all the principal fruits of the earth are collected together in

a field, and an ox is turned loose amongst them, and the particular product which he selects to feed upon, is, on the authority of this experiment, to be considered as the scarcest fruit of the ensuing season, and therefore entitled to the especial care of the husbandman.

The circumstance which led to the punishment of the Christian interpreter was fully explained to us this morning, and was such as to exhibit the Siamese Monarch and his Court in a very ludicrous if not disgusting light. Suri-wung-kosa, the Prah-klang, had shown his Majesty nine pairs of small globe lamps which were offered for sale, and of which his Majesty approved; but it so happened, that before the bargain was finally concluded, two pairs had been disposed of to some other person. The King missed the lamps, flew into an ungovernable passion at his disappointment, and threatened the Ministers all round with the bastinado if they were not produced. Our acquaintance, the Prah-klang, was to have had for his share a hundred blows; and the King informed him, in good earnest, that his being a relation (which he was) should not screen him. In fact, we were told, that he finally escaped only by keeping out of the way until the royal anger had abated. The Ministers thought proper to consider Mr. Silveira, the Portuguese Consul, who was under pecuniary obligations to the Court, as implicated in the transaction. He was accordingly sent for, put under an arrest, and treated with indignity; one of the Ministers informing him that he was liable to corporal punishment. All Bang-kok was in a state of agitation for two days respecting these lamps, the intrinsic value of which might be about four pounds sterling! They were at last discovered in the possession of an old woman, who hastened to the Palace and offered them as a present, pretending that it was with this intention she had purchased them.

The monarch, who was liable to these gusts of anger, was the unbounded lord of the lives and fortunes of perhaps not less than five millions of people. It is but justice to him, however, to observe, that the country prospered under his administration—that he was rarely guilty

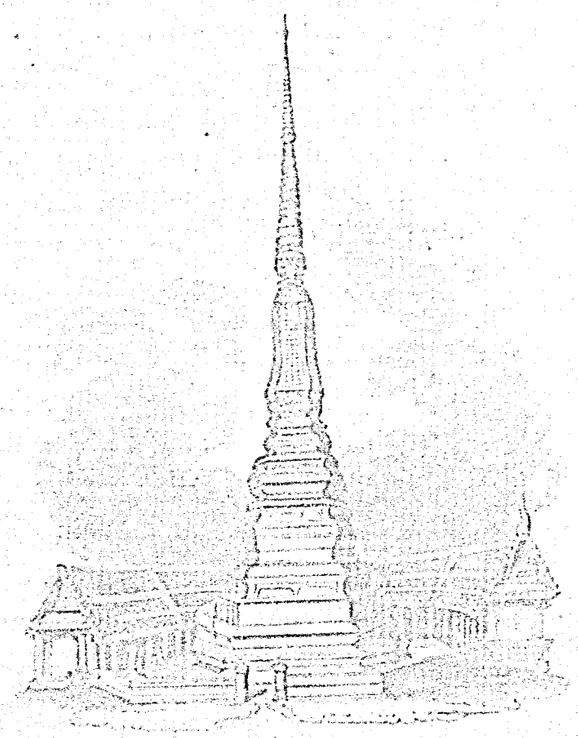
of acts of atrocity, and that upon the whole he was admitted to be one of the mildest sovereigns that had ruled Siam for at least a century and a half.

April 29.—At rather an unseasonable hour last night, a messenger came to us from the King. He had with him a puppet near three feet high, not ill executed, and purporting to represent an European. The object of the message was the singular request, that any of us who were skilled in such matters, would give the necessary directions for having the figure attired, so as to represent the late Emperor Napoleon; or if this was a matter of difficulty, that the puppet might be put into the costume of a young Englishman. Four tailors and two shoemakers accordingly made their appearance this morning, with a supply of cloth, velvet, gold lace, and leather; and as an Indian tailor was one of our attendants, he received directions for carrying his Majesty's wishes into effect. The King of Siam has a taste for such amusements as these, and is besides a very pious Prince. Every day he is said to gild with his own hands a small image of Gautama, which he presents as an offering to some temple, thus at once combining the indulgence of a favourite passion with a religious duty. In every matter of moment he is entirely in the hands of his ministers, but upon certain small occasions, he now and then, and somewhat outrageously too, asserts his prerogative, if not his dignity; as, for example, in such an affair as that of the four glass lamps.

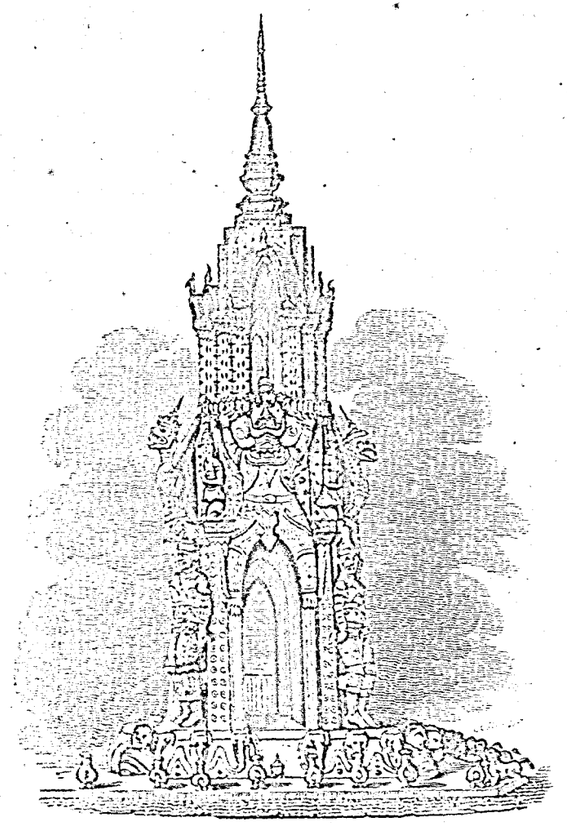
May 1.—A Portuguese brig arrived to-day from Macao, and brought an account of the favourable termination of the quarrel which we had with the Chinese authorities at Canton, in consequence of the affair of the Topaze frigate. This transaction was already well-known in Siam, and the Prah-klang had put several questions respecting it to some of our gentlemen.

May 2.—We received to-day accounts of the arrival of the English brig Phœnix, from Calcutta. This vessel brought us public and private

letters, and files of English and Indian newspapers. We felt secure from all violence, and therefore could read with indifference, or with a smile, the assurance which one of the Calcutta editors gave his readers, on the authority "of authentic letters kindly handed to him," that "the King of Siam was to seize our persons, until the Raja of Queda, who had taken refuge at Penang, was delivered up to him."



A Prah-chedi, or Sacred Spire.



Spire of the Temple called Wat-a-raga.

CHAPTER VI.

Negotiation put off, owing to his Majesty's changing his Residence.—Acquaintance made with a Siamese Priest.—Arrival of a Ship belonging to the King of Siam from Bengal.—Anecdote illustrative of the Character of the Siamese Government.—Visit to a singular Temple.—Renewal of the Negociation.—Arrival of Ambassadors from Cochin China, and their Reception.—Second Visit to the Siamese Priest, and Conversation.—Practice of kidnapping Strangers, and selling them in Siam for Slaves.—Death of a Princess from Cholera Morbus.—Visit from some Brahmins, and an account of them.—Account of a Siamese Ceremony.—A Conference with the Prah-klang, or Foreign Minister.—Siamese Letter-writing.—Visit from a Chief of Lao.—Setting in of the South-West Monsoon.—Siamese Reptiles.—Arrival of an American Ship.—Another Conference.—Cochin Chinese Ambassadors visit the Prah-klang.—Visit to the Catholic Bishop of Siam, and Conversation with him.—Another Conference with the Minister.—Final Conference with the Prah-klang.—Answer to the Letter of the Governor-general, and Commercial Engagements.

May 5.—THE negociation was now again interrupted, and the important cause alleged was the King's changing his residence from one portion

of the palace to another, a matter which was said to give occupation day and night to all his ministers. The benediction of the Talapoins was necessary to the King's new residence, and a few days ago we were told that several thousands were assembled to bestow it, who, in return for prayers, were well fed, and presented with new garments.

The right bank of the Menam, where our residence was, had only a narrow strip of dwellings along the river-side. Behind these, the country, which is extremely fertile, is intersected with narrow and inconvenient foot-paths, and frequent canals, over which there are no other bridges than single narrow planks or trunks of trees. There is no cultivation of grain to be seen any where near Bang-kok, but the whole of the land in question is occupied by fine orchards—for the culture of fruit-trees seems to be the most advantageous that can be followed so near the capital. Among these orchards here and there occur a temple. For want of a more convenient promenade, several of our party were in the habit of strolling over this quarter in the evening. In one of these excursions, I found an agreeable and instructive acquaintance, in the person of the chief priest of a new temple, which the Prah-klang was constructing. I had several interviews with the same person afterwards, and invariably found him kind in his manners, and cheerful in his behaviour. In point of intelligence, he was greatly superior to any other Siamese with whom I had conversed; and he was always ready to communicate his knowledge without reserve or ostentation. In my first visit, we entered freely into conversation respecting the history and tenets of his religion. In the course of it, he informed me that the Buddhists gladly received converts, but did not go about seeking for them; and he mentioned that four proselytes had been recently made from among the Christian inhabitants of Bang-kok, and many more from the Mohammedan population. He exhibited to us the library of the temple, which was seemingly composed of about a hundred handsome volumes. Several of these were produced for our inspection. They consisted, like those I had before seen, of smooth slips

of palm-leaf, about two inches broad, and a foot and a half long, filed at both ends, on a silken cord. They were all gilt at the edges, and some of them handsomely illuminated. Upon this, as on all future occasions, we were presented by this respectable individual with tea and betel.

May 6.—The arrival of his Majesty's ship, which had been to Calcutta, was announced two days ago. She took eighteen months to perform this voyage. The Prah-klang estimates the loss which the King would sustain from this adventure at three piculs of silver, or twenty-four thousand ticals; and it is most probable that the Siamese will not soon again attempt a project so much beyond their skill and strength as a voyage to Bengal. The Siamese ship left Singapore ten days before we did. Attempting a direct passage up the Gulf, she was tossed to and fro for six weeks at the entrance of the Straits of Malacca, and finally falling to leeward, she run a-ground near the Dutch settlement of Rhio. Here the local officers of the Dutch Government took the opportunity of settling an old account with the Siamese Government, by making the commander pay a balance said to be due, on account of certain arbitrary transactions of the latter at Bang-kok, relating to three Dutch ships which had come to Siam in 1824 for cargoes of salt, for the supply of Java in a season of scarcity.

Every day brought to light some new occurrence calculated to display the ceaseless jealousy and suspicious character of the Siamese Government. A government so arbitrary and unjust, can place no reasonable reliance upon its own subjects, and seems to be in perpetual dread that they are to be excited to insurrection or rebellion by the example of strangers. This is unquestionably the true explanation of the hectic alarm and distrust which it entertains of all foreigners. One of the interpreters of the Mission reported to-day the circumstances of a conversation which he held the day before with one of the brothers of the Prah-klang, who was much in the minister's confidence. This person said, that "the English were a dangerous people to have any connexion with, for that they were not only the ablest, but the most ambitious

of the European nations who frequented the East." The Interpreter answered, that it was impossible the English could have any ambitious views on Siam, "for what," said he, "could they, who have so much already, and are accustomed to convenient countries, do with such a one as yours, in which there are neither roads nor bridges, and where you are ankle-deep in mire at every step. The reply, according to the Interpreter's report was, "Do not speak so; these people are clever and active, and the country would not be long in their possession, before they made it such that you might sleep in the streets and rice-fields." It may be necessary to mention that the person who made this communication was by birth a Siamese, and by disposition very talkative and communicative.

May 7.—We rowed several miles up the river yesterday morning. On the right bank, and opposite to the most northerly angle of the palace-walls, there are a great number of long sheds, under which are placed the war-boats, and the King's barges of state. One of the latter description, I am told, is a great curiosity, on account of its enormous length;—its being hollowed out of the single trunk of a tree, and the richness of the gilding and carving by which it is ornamented. We had no opportunity, however, of gratifying our curiosity, by inspecting "the royal navy," for the tide was low, and an intervening bank of deep mud prevented our approach.

The town, with its floating houses, continues along both banks of the river as far as we could see; and such of the Siamese who now accompanied us as had visited the old capital, stated that both sides of the river were well-peopled all the way to that place. The distance cannot be less than sixty miles.

In returning home we visited the temple, called by the Siamese Wat-nak, or in Pali Wata-naga, or the temple of the snake, which has a singular spire and belfry attached to it. This remarkable object is, within, of ordinary masonry, but externally exhibits an odd and fantastic species of Mosaic; being overlaid throughout with pieces of small china-ware of every hue and colour. The figures carved upon this motley

fabric consisted of many snakes of monstrous size, from which it takes its name, of figures of elephants, of lions, and of monstrous human forms, male and female.

The temple to which this belfry is attached had nothing remarkable about it. The central fane contained a great figure of Gautama in brass, with a group of disciples at his feet, all gilded in the usual manner. The priests who ushered us in would have us pull off our shoes, but this we declined to do, as the same demand had not formerly been made by persons of more respectability. What we saw on entering was not calculated to excite our peculiar respect. Several Talapoins were lying fast asleep and stretched on the floor before the altar, and a priest and a layman were playing chess close to the feet of the God, whilst a crowd of idle fellows, both lay and clerical, were looking on. The players stopped to explain to us the nature of the game, which is nearly the same as our own, the powers of the pieces being, however, more restricted. The same curiosity was displayed to-day, as upon all former occasions, when we came into contact with large numbers of the people, but there was no rudeness nor ill-humour.

May 8.—I succeeded, after many difficulties, in renewing the conference, and last night had a long discussion with the minister. This chief had within the last few days been raised to the permanent post of Prah-klang, in which he had before only officiated, and now obtained the name and title of Suri-wung-kosa, instead of Suri-wung-muntri, which he had formerly borne. Every advance in rank or station is in a similar manner marked by some alteration in the title.

From what I had observed of the temper and character of the Siamese Government, and particularly the specimen of their conduct towards the Portuguese Consul, which had come under our observation since the last conference, the prudence of forbearing from urging the proposal for a resident British agent became obvious, although, indeed, such an appointment had been first suggested by the Siamese themselves, the

year before, to an English merchant of Singapore, who was the bearer of letters from the Resident of that place, as well as from the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island. No direct negative was now put upon it, but there was, notwithstanding, an evident reluctance to it, and I therefore resolved to drop the subject altogether, lest it might interfere with objects which promised to be more attainable. There is no question, at the same time, but that such an officer is extremely desirable, and will ultimately afford the only means of giving security, respectability, and extension to our commercial interest at Siam. In the present state of our acquaintance with the Siamese, however, such an appointment might lead to difficulties. An indignity offered on their part could not be overlooked—a quarrel might be the consequence, and such a quarrel might involve, in spite of ourselves, a breach of that neutral policy which we have long made it a rule to pursue in reference to the continental nations beyond the Ganges.*

A Siamese translation of the sketch of the treaty which I proposed, had been furnished to the Prah-klang since the last conference, and the Siamese Court was, of course, now fully aware of the nature and extent of our demands. No objections were made to the greater number of the detailed arrangements which we proposed, but a very decided one to a free and unrestrained trade. The Prah-klang insisted upon the King's right of preemption, stating that it was a prerogative which had existed from time immemorial, and could not be surrendered. He well knew, that as long as this was maintained, all the minor arrangements might readily be defeated. The mode of carrying on the foreign trade at Siam, is, in short, this: when a ship arrives, the officers of Government, under pretext of serving the King, select a large share of the most vendible part of the goods, and put their own price upon them. No private merchant, under penalty of heavy fine, or severe corporal punishment, is allowed to make an offer for the goods until the agents of the Court are satisfied. A large portion, and often the whole, of the

* This passage was written before the Burmese war.

export cargo is supplied to the foreign merchant upon the same principle. The officers of Government purchase the commodities at the lowest market rate, and sell them to the exporter at an arbitrary valuation. The resident Chinese alone, from their numbers and influence, have got over this difficulty, and of course are carrying on a very large and valuable commerce. This pernicious and ruinous practice is the only real obstacle to the European trade in Siam, for neither the duties on merchandize or tonnage are excessive, property is sufficiently secure, and the country is fertile, abounding in productions suited for foreign trade beyond any other with which I am acquainted. A stout resistance was made to the exercise of this right, and the freedom from official interference which existed, not only at all our own Indian ports, but in China and elsewhere, was particularly urged. I addressed myself, however, to a party deeply interested in maintaining the present order of things—to the individuals, in short, whose emoluments arose from the very source of corruption which was complained of, and who were not therefore likely to be convinced by any arguments. The injustice of the principle was too apparent to be openly maintained, and the Prah-klang only attempted to palliate it by urging the moderation with which it was exercised, and the security which the interference of Government afforded to the foreign merchant in realizing his returns.

At this interview the Prah-klang asked whether the British Government would enter into a contract with that of Siam, for the supply of salt for Bengal; a commodity, he said, which Siam afforded, of an excellent quality and in great abundance. He observed that the King of Siam would contract at once to supply 400,000 piculs, or about 24,000 tons, and a larger quantity afterwards, if required. I was unprepared for the discussion of this point at the time, but resolved to renew it at a future interview, hoping that some advantage might be drawn from it.

May 9.—On the 28th or 29th of April, the arrival, at the mouth of the Menam, of an embassy from the new King of Cochin China was announced. The Siamese Court received this mission with much respect

and attention. Great preparations were made all the way from Pak-nam to the capital for its accommodation and reception, which were in all respects as magnificent as the Court could contrive. The Ambassadors were feasted on the way, serenaded with Siamese music, and amused with gymnastic and theatrical exhibitions, wherever they rested. The preparations took so long a time that it was only last night that the mission arrived at Bang-kok. About five o'clock in the afternoon, the procession passed, and we had a full and near view of it from our windows. It had certainly a very gay and imposing appearance. There were not less than twelve or thirteen gilded barges, each rowed, or rather paddled, by from twenty-five to fifty boatmen, who were uniformly dressed in scarlet, and who pulled with great animation, keeping time to a Siamese song. This equipage was entirely furnished by the Siamese Government; for the three small junks in which the embassy had arrived, were still at the entrance of the river. The Cochin Chinese Ambassadors took up their residence on the opposite side of the Menam to us, and within the enclosure of the Palace.

I had some days ago sent the Mission-ship down the river, with directions, if possible, to cross the bar, that no delay might take place in quitting Siam, as soon as the negotiation should be brought to a close. Both the commander and Siamese pilots reported, upon this occasion, that it would not be practicable to get over the bar with less than thirteen and a half feet water, and that at present, at the highest flood-tide, there was not above twelve. This proved, in our situation, a serious disappointment; for the delay which it occasioned, threatened to defeat some of the subsequent objects of the Mission, and, what was still worse, to bring us in the mean time into an unpleasant state of collision with the Siamese authorities.

May 12.—The Cochin Chinese Ambassadors were yesterday presented to the King. They were received, I am told, without much ceremony, the intercourse being considered of so friendly and familiar a nature as not to call for extraordinary formalities.

We were now permitted to go abroad freely, and at all hours, but our visits never extended beyond a few miles of the town. The jealousy of the Siamese Government was sufficiently apparent, and every precaution was necessary to prevent its taking alarm; a matter, indeed, which, after all, was nearly impossible. I once made a proposition to visit the old capital, which would have shown us a good deal of a country not for many years visited by Europeans; but it was received with so much coldness that I took care not to renew it.

Frequent engagements to renew the conference were as often put off, and for several days to come the Prah-klang had an apology in the affair of his eldest son's tonsure, one of the most important events in the life of a Siamese.

May 14.—I paid another visit to the old Prior of the Prah-klang's monastery. He was extremely communicative on every subject respecting morals or religion, but upon matters of a temporal nature he refused to speak, showing above all a strong reluctance to touch upon any thing that was in the remotest degree of a political character. For example, he would make no communication whatever on the subject of the civil history of the country. In the course of the conversation he repeated to us the ten commandments of the Buddhist system of morals. The fifth of these says, "You shall not drink wine or the juice of the palm." The old man thought this a fitting occasion to address a lecture to us, and, pausing, he besought us, as we valued our happiness, to desist from drinking wine, for that the punishment of that crime in another state of existence was to have a stream of melted copper perpetually poured down the throat! We assured him of our moderation, but this did not satisfy him; for he seemed to consider the most trifling violation of the precept as scarcely a less offence than the sin of drunkenness itself.

In reference to the commandment which forbids the destruction of animal life, we brought to his notice the practice of the Jains of India, who often wore a cloth over the mouth, to prevent even the accidental

ingress of insects—who always looked before they trod the ground, and who made it a practice to strain the water before drinking—all out of tenderness for animal life. He seemed to consider all this as highly meritorious, and said it was a degree of piety which the priests of Siam had not attained, and that they might reasonably be ashamed of their inferiority.

Returning home after it was dusk, we met two persons conversing together in the Javanese language. Its accents, in this remote place, excited our curiosity, and we entered into a conversation with the strangers. One of them recognized me as an old acquaintance, and described himself as one of a party, consisting of seven young men and six young women, who had been kidnapped at Samarang, in Java, about three years before, by the Commander of a Chinese junk, and sold as slaves to the Siamese. The Siamese Government has encouraged this nefarious practice. I am told, that of late years, upwards of four hundred young Chinese have been kidnapped by their countrymen, and brought to Siam, and sold as slaves. Notwithstanding the vigilance which prevails on this subject in our own ports, the King of Siam's ship contrived to carry off from Calcutta, and Prince of Wales's Island, five young African negroes. They were presented as curiosities to the Prince Krom-chiat and the Prah-klang, and we had frequent opportunities of seeing several of them.

May 15.—The epidemic *cholera morbus* which, two years ago, committed dreadful ravages in Siam and the neighbouring countries, broke out afresh at Bang-kok, with considerable activity about this period. About twelve o'clock last night I was awakened by a message from the Palace, informing me that one of the Princesses, sister to the King, was attacked by the epidemic, and requesting that Mr. Finlayson might prescribe for her. Although at the time suffering severely from the effects of the malady, which afterwards proved fatal to him, Mr. Finlayson went without hesitation. He was not, however, permitted to see his patient, but kept waiting in the Palace of the Prince Krom-chiat for upwards of

three hours, with the view of obtaining an opinion upon the symptoms and progress of her complaint, as they were reported by her attendants. The Prince kept him company all the time. His conversation was chiefly upon medical questions; and, according to Mr. Finlayson's account, he put many extraordinary ones.

The Princess died a few hours after Mr. Finlayson left the Palace. She was a young woman of about sixteen years of age, and unmarried. The event seemed to create much affliction among her relatives. The more joyous parts of the festivities now going on at the Prah-klang's house, were in consequence, for a time, interrupted. Not knowing of her death, and thinking it an act of civility, I sent a messenger to inquire after her health. The person to whom it was delivered, the brother of the Prah-klang, returned for answer, that the subject was one which he dared not even speak of. All the other Siamese to whom I introduced the subject, spoke of it in the same mysterious manner, as if persons of the royal blood were exempted from the common law of mortality, or that at least it did not belong to the vulgar to imagine otherwise.

May 16.—The Prah-klang sent to wait upon us this morning the Brahmins who were acting as astrologers at the ceremony of his son's tonsure. Among these was the person with whom I had formerly conversed at the Hindu temple; but the principal man, and the chief of all the Hindus at Bang-kok, was a person whose name, or rather, I suppose, title, was Prah-maha-raja-kro-putra-guru. The first of these words means Lord, and is the common appellative of the priests of Buddha in Siam; and the two last, which are Sanskrit, "the son of the spiritual guide;" for his father, by the account he rendered to us, was the first of his family that came to Siam about seventy years ago. Putra-guru was a tall slender old man, with much of the Hindu form of features, although born of a Siamese mother. The account he gave of himself, and of the rest of the Hindus of Bang-kok, was, that their forefathers were all emigrants from the sacred isle of Ramiseram; that they came without their families, and intermarried with

the women of the country; that they were all of the two first Hindu classes, or priests and soldiers, and of the sect of Siwa. We had an opportunity of observing, upon the present occasion, that they painted the forehead according to the type of that sect, and that they wore the cord which marks the higher orders of the Hindus. They told us that they had lost the use of the vernacular language of their forefathers, but that they had writings amongst them in the Sanskrit language, and in the provincial character of their original country. They honour Buddha not as a God, but as a saint of great reputation. Their learning appears to be small, and they live upon the reputation of their astrological knowledge, being constantly consulted by the Court, and by persons of rank, to give prognostications; for astrology, as an art, is forbidden to the Talapoins. I am not aware that they possess any astronomical knowledge, although it was from the predecessors of these people that La Loubere obtained the first Indian astronomical tables brought to Europe, and which afterwards excited so great a share of curiosity.

Some questions put to our visitors upon the present occasion, respecting the origin of the Hindu images we saw in the temple, elucidated a point of some consequence in the history of Hindu emigration. They stated that the images in question were brought to Siam from Western India in the year 765 of the vulgar era of the Siamese, which corresponds with the year 1406 of our time. This fact, if correct, proves that an intercourse subsisted between Western India and Siam a full century before Europeans had found their way to the latter country.

We made the Brahmins, before parting, a present of some white Indian cloth, which is their only wear, and upon which they set a high value. They thanked us, and were about to depart, but recollecting themselves they returned, and said, that if we had no objections they would make a short prayer for us on the spot, as the country was threatened with a visitation of sickness. They accordingly seated themselves once more, and chanted a brief prayer for our health and prosperity, and

then retired, apparently satisfied with having performed their duty, and discharged their obligation for the present which had been made to them.

May 17.—The ceremonies attending the tonsure of the Prah-klang's eldest son, which commenced on the 13th, ended only to-day. The whole took place immediately under our windows, and we had an opportunity, at all hours, of observing what was going forward. These festivities appear to me to afford both an interesting and striking picture of the religion, manners, and opinions of the Siamese, and I shall therefore offer a sketch of them. The Brahmins, acting as astrologers, had divined that the fortunate day and hour for commencing the ceremonies were the 9th of the dark half of the moon, and the 3d watch of the day. The ceremony began with a feast, and as the guests sat down, the music, consisting of two full bands of not less than fourteen or fifteen musicians, struck up. About four o'clock in the afternoon, the young chief made his appearance, and although thirteen or fourteen years of age, he was carried upon the shoulders of an attendant. He was gorgeously decked out with a load of gold and jewels. Seven Brahmins dressed in white preceded him, and led him to a seat in the centre of the open saloon, the same in which the Prah-klang was accustomed to receive ourselves when we visited him. A crowd of Talapoins had by this time assembled. These keeping at a distance from the guests who were still feasting, as well as from the procession, began to chant prayers or hymns in a loud but not harmonious strain. This lasted for two hours. Several heaps of yellow cloth in ready-made dresses, were displayed upon the floor, and from these a dress was distributed to each Talapoin, as soon as the prayers were over. They received and put them on on the spot without any acknowledgment, for this is beneath the dignity of a priest of Gautama, however high the rank of the donor, or valuable the gift. Slender attention was paid to the prayers. Most of the auditors were eating, and some were smiling or laughing, others yawning. These prayers being in the Bali language, must have been unintelligible to most

of them; but independently of this, the Siamese laity make a complete surrender of all spiritual concerns to the Talapoins, being of opinion that when they pay them sufficiently well, they discharge every necessary religious duty, and it may be presumed most of their moral obligations also. During all this time the music continued playing, the musicians seemingly striving with each other, not for melody, but for noise.

At night the saloon was brilliantly and even tastefully lighted up, for this is an art which the Siamese understand very well. At one end of it there was a fancy altar-piece, decorated with coloured lamps, and artificial and natural flowers. On the top of it was displayed the Prah-klang's library of sacred books, consisting of thirty or forty very handsome volumes. In the court-yard, and before the saloon, a pulpit was erected, having over it a canopy of white muslin. From this the priests delivered discourses almost all night, relieving each other at intervals. Songs, some of them, as we were told, of a licentious and indecent character, were occasionally introduced; but what gave most satisfaction were the jests and mimicry of a professed buffoon, who set the company in a roar. This singular medley of feasting, praying, singing, and buffoonery, went on with little interruption, leaving only a few hours in the morning for the inmates of the house to repose. From the third day, indeed, the more joyful parts of the ceremony were in some measure interrupted, owing to the death of the princess already mentioned. From that time there were no more songs or buffoonery, and the gymnastic and dramatic exhibitions which were promised were not exhibited.

Early on the morning of the fourth day of the ceremony the actual tonsure of the head took place. On this occasion the Brahmins, as before, had predicted the fortunate moment. They ushered the young man, still on the shoulders of an attendant, but dressed in a suit of white, into the saloon. The Talapoins repeated hymns, and the tonsure was effected by the hands of two Siamese of considerable rank, as no person of an inferior condition could presume to touch so sacred and inviolable a part of the young chief as his head, without dishonouring him. After this operation, which consisted in shaving the whole head, he was placed under a canopy erected in the court-yard, and here a quantity of water was poured over him. He was then dressed in a new suit, and furnished with a sword. Thus habited he walked back to the saloon without being carried; all this part of the ceremony being intended to express his emancipation from childhood, and his entering upon the condition of manhood. The Prince Kroma-chiat honoured this part of the ceremony with his presence.

After the ceremony was so far concluded, a vast quantity of ready-dressed food was served to persons of all descriptions and denominations; the better sort of people feasting within the saloon, and the crowd in the court-yard. The Talapoins alone, to whom it is unlawful to eat out of their monasteries, had between thirty and forty huge Chinese jars of dressed victuals and sweetmeats, apparently containing a meal for several thousand persons, sent to them. We could discover no vestige of religious antipathy on the part of the motley guests, who consisted of lay Siamese, Kambojans, Chinese, Christians, Mohammedans, and Brahmins. The latter not only eat food dressed by Siamese cooks, but made a hearty meal in the same apartment where the other guests were consuming beef, eggs, and such other articles as their forefathers would have deemed an abomination. But the Hindus, like other men, notwithstanding their stubborn pretensions, yield in this, as in many other things, to the force of necessity, and learn the wisdom of accommodating themselves to their situation.

May 18.—Yesterday being the fifth and last day of the ceremony, the Prah-klang, in compliment to us, gave an entertainment, and the Portuguese Consul, with his secretary, and the commanders and officers of the English vessels in the river, were invited to meet us. The party consisted of fourteen Europeans, most probably the greatest assemblage which had met together in Siam since the visitation of the French, 130

years before. The dinner was in the European fashion, the Christian interpreters acting as *footmen*, and the Christian intendant of the port as *maître-d'hotel*, for the Siamese chiefs are reckless how they use or abuse these poor people. The table was abundantly furnished with viands, dressed in a cleanly way, not offensive to the European palate, as is most commonly the case with Indian cookery. Among the viands there were, beef, venison, and abundance of poultry. The Prah-klang, observing that we were somewhat surprised at this, smiled, and begged us to put no questions, but eat heartily, and that this was the principle upon which he himself acted in similar cases. During the entertainment he sat near us, doing the honours of the feast, without however partaking of it. His son and nephew sat down as upon a former occasion, and eat heartily and indiscriminately of every description of animal food, refraining scrupulously, however, from wine. The Prah-klang, who, from the frequent resort of European and American vessels of late years, has acquired some knowledge of our customs, proposed to us to drink the following toasts, in the order in which I now mention them. "The King of Siam," "the King of England," "the King of Portugal," "the Prince Kroma-chiat," "the Governor-general of India," and "the Viceroy of Goa." He noticed that we did not drink the health of the King of Siam with three cheers, as he had observed Europeans and Americans do on similar occasions. It was explained that this tumultuous mark of consideration was omitted out of respect to his grief for the melancholy event which had recently taken place in the Palace. He replied with vivacity, and in the true strain of an Eastern courtier, "If this house should fall on my head, let no mark of respect to the King (literally the owner of heads) be omitted, for the greatest misfortune befalling me or any one else, is not to be put in comparison with the most trifling honour which is due to my King." We got up from the entertainment between eight and nine o'clock, serenaded by a Siamese band of music as we departed.

May 19.—Upon the occasion of a young man's tonsure, friends and

relations are in the practice of making presents. The Prince Kroma-chiat had given the young chief five catties of silver, or 400 ticals, and I took the opportunity of presenting him with seven or 560 ticals, in the name of the Marquis of Hastings.

The conference was renewed to-day at twelve o'clock. I urged the necessity of unrestricted trade, and the advantage which would accrue from foregoing the claim of pre-emption. The Prah-klang feigned to be of my opinion, but said, that after due deliberation, he and the rest of the ministers had decided, that the proposal implied so great an innovation upon the established customs of the country, that they dare not mention it to the King, and that I must propose it personally, at an audience, which would be granted in a few days for this purpose. I was much surprised at this unexpected offer, and although its sincerity was suspicious, I gladly closed with it.

The subject of supplying salt to Bengal was introduced, and I stated the terms upon which it could be admitted, consistently with the fiscal regulations of the Indian Government. The subject excited a strong interest—Chinese accountants and *sanpans* were put in requisition, and the necessary calculations were made on the spot. It was declared as the result, that no profit could be made by these speculations, and the project was therefore abandoned. An open trade in this article with the Bengal provinces, would probably add great facilities to the establishment of an extensive intercourse between them and Siam; for salt, which is produced in such excellence and abundance in the latter country, must always form a great part of the cargoes exported to other Indian countries, where there is a scarcity of that commodity. It is chiefly by means of it that Siam maintains, at present, so considerable a traffic with Palembang, the Straits of Malacca, and other portions of the Malay country.

At this meeting the Prah-klang requested me, as a favour, to afford my assistance in rendering an intelligible translation into Siamese, through the Malay language, of a letter which he had received from one of the

secretaries of the Indian Government. I undertook this, and as soon as I had reached home was waited upon by the Christian Intendant of the port, accompanied by three Siamese secretaries. It was an extremely difficult matter to satisfy them. They cavilled at and discussed every sentence as my Malayan interpreter proceeded. When they came to the conclusion of the letter, they pointed out some broken lines in the original, of which they desired a literal translation. This was nothing more or less than the European complimentary form which precedes the subscription. No possible translation could have been given of this, which the vanity of the Siamese would not have construed into an acknowledgment of inferiority on the part of the writer and his Government. Eastern ideas may be rendered, without difficulty, into the copious and flexible languages of Europe; but to render the peculiar idioms and formalities of the languages of Europe into the meagre and obdurate dialects of India is altogether impracticable, except when we write with an express view to future translation, which is the safest course to pursue in our intercourse with the Eastern nations. When, about two years before our arrival, the Governor of Macao addressed a letter to the King of Siam, he expressed the deep regret which he felt at not being able to repair in person to Siam, that there he might have "the honour of kissing his Majesty's royal hand." If the Governor of Macao had really been at Siam, he would not have been permitted to approach within twenty yards of the King's person. His proposal, therefore, which was intended for respect and civility, was considered by the Siamese as highly offensive, and was expunged by the ministers before they would venture to explain the contents of the letter to the King.

In the afternoon I had a visit from a native chief; a circumstance which did not often take place, for our vicinity to the Prah-klang's house, and the fear of exciting the jealousy of the Government, prevented many persons from calling upon us, who were otherwise well disposed to do so. The manners of this individual, who was a native of Lao, were singular. When he entered the room, I begged him to be seated; but before complying,

he made three obeisances towards the palace, then three towards the residence of the Prah-klang, and three more to the company before him. His conversation was frank and intelligent, and he appeared well-informed respecting his own country, which forms so interesting and considerable, but to Europeans so little known, a portion of the present Siamese Empire.

May 20.—Within the last two or three days the rains, which had hitherto been moderate, set in with great violence. It blew fresh every day from the south-west, and this description of weather lasted until the beginning of July, a period of about six weeks, constituting the only tempestuous season in the Gulf of Siam, which is fortunately free from the violent equinoctial gales which are a scourge to many other portions of the Indian seas. These heavy rains tempered the weather, which had been before sultry and oppressive, the thermometer in the shade rising almost every day to ninety-five and ninety-six between the hours of twelve and four o'clock in the afternoon. These advantages, however, were counterbalanced by inconveniences of a different description. Our ill-constructed house leaked every where, and the rains brought from their hiding-places swarms of insects and reptiles. Among the most troublesome of the latter, was the Gecko, or Tokai of the Malays, correctly pronounced Täkke, a large species of lizard from six to nine inches long, marked with red and green spots, and frequent tubercles.* These are much more frequent in Siam than in Java or any other country of the Indian Archipelago, and in the evening deafened us with their singular, loud, and monotonous cry. Snakes of different descriptions were also very numerous, and some of them from ten to fourteen feet long. These last were Pythons, erroneously called Boa Constrictor. One of this description, about eleven feet long, was taken alive last night in our kitchen during a heavy fall of rain. It had come to prey upon some fowls, and was very active. Although severely beaten over the head, it recovered, and after a month's confinement, effected its escape from a large chest, in which it was kept, although the lid was

* Le Gecko de Siam, Cuvier.

pressed down by several large stones. Two more were seen on board the vessels in the river, and one of them, about fourteen feet long, killed. How they got into these situations it is not very easy to understand, but it is most probable they crept up the cable.

In the forenoon, the commander of the American ship, Aurora, arrived in Bang-kok, having left his vessel off the bar of the river. He stated that he had come for a small quantity of sugar to fill up his cargo, and unacquainted with the modes of transacting business in Siam, and the difficulties he had to encounter, he promised himself that he would be detained no more than four or five days, as would be the case in an American or European port.

May 21.—The re-appearance of the epidemic *cholera* spread great alarm amongst the people, a matter which was apparent enough from the precautions which they took against its attacks. The King, under some superstitious imagination, which I am unable to explain, directed the people to keep at home, and abstain from all work for seven days. The temples at this time were more frequented than usual, and numbers of persons were to be seen wearing shreds of white cotton yarn round the neck as amulets, whilst others endeavoured to recommend themselves to the good will of the gods by purchasing fowls and other animals from strangers, with a view of giving them their liberty and saving them from slaughter. The secular superintendant of the great temple, which was the first we visited, called upon us in the course of the day, and said that he had no fear of the *cholera morbus,* as he made frequent prostrations before the idols, and wore a skein of cotton thread round his neck as a charm. As he spoke, he pointed to this potent amulet!

I had another long conference last night with the Prah-klang. Thanmun, an officer of some rank, was present, and took an active share in the conversation. The commander of the American ship came in while the discussion was going forward. The Prah-klang seeing him, introduced the subject of the American trade, and said, "these people bring us what we

are most anxious to receive, plenty of fire-arms and ready money, and take away large cargoes of sugar, and other produce of the country." He added, although evidently without any ground for the assertion, that he expected this year, eight or ten of their ships. The Siamese Government had indeed found the American trade hitherto a very lucrative matter, because they had made their own terms with the few vessels which had visited the place; but the advantages were all on one side, and the Prah-klang was disappointed as to the return of the Americans, for few or none have visited Siam since.

At this conference, the subject of the invasion of the Malay state of Quedah by the Siamese, and the flight of the Rajah to Prince of Wales's Island, which I had hitherto carefully avoided, that it might interfere as little as possible with the principal object of the Mission, was at length introduced. The Siamese negotiators stated, that they knew nothing more of this matter, than that the Rajah of Quedah, a tributary of Siam, had abandoned his own country, and fled to a foreign one for protection. They said, that instead of seeking an asylum at Prince of Wales's Island, he should have come to the capital, and represented his grievances to the King, and they added, that if he would still come, ample justice would be done to him. They proceeded to enumerate the offences with which the Malay Prince was charged by the Siamese Governor of Ligor, the officer who superintends the affairs of all the Malayan tributaries. They stated that this officer had received an order from the Court to invade the Burman territories; that for this purpose, he had assembled an army, and making the usual demand for contributions from the Rajah of Quedah, the latter had contumaciously refused them; the consequence of which was, that the Siamese chief had marched upon Quedah to enforce his demand. I endeavoured to extenuate the conduct of the Malay chief, dwelling upon the poverty of his country, and the frequent exactions by which it was harassed by the Rajah of Ligor. I now felt myself obliged to bring to the notice of the negotiators the overbearing and intemperate letters which the latter Chief had addressed to the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island;

for this individual, as before stated, had written with great presumption, claiming the instant surrender of the Rajah of Quedah's person, and *threatening with punishment whoever* should *venture to detain him.* They feigned entire ignorance of this last circumstance; but on my return home, I sent them copies of the original correspondence.

I hinted at various proposals for our mediation in restoring the Rajah of Quedah to his principality; but the only alternative which would be admitted was this Prince's repairing to the Court in person, and submitting his cause to the justice of the King. From what passed at this conference, there could be no question, indeed, but his having sought an asylum at Prince of Wales's Island had wounded the Siamese pride exceedingly, and given rise to much irritation.

It was remarkable that neither at this, or any subsequent conference, was our right in Prince of Wales's Island, or the right of the Rajah of Quedah to dismember his fief, questioned. This possession was obtained by us in a period of great weakness and anarchy on the part of the Siamese Government, and when its tributary States had rendered themselves nearly independent. Six-and-thirty years undisputed occupancy may be considered as having given us a strong prescriptive claim to it; but still the Siamese Court could not be unaware of our defective title, or of the legal incapacity of the Malayan chief, then as now a tributary, to alienate a portion of his territory. Its silence, therefore, could only be accounted for by its fears, which prudently induced it to abstain from making a claim which it had not the power to enforce. This is corroborated by what took place afterwards, with respect to the quit-rent which had been paid for the island to the Malay prince. The Siamese, upon taking possession of Quedah, laid claim to this; but, upon its being once disallowed, it was never afterwards renewed.

The Prah-klang gave, last night, a formal audience to the Cochin Chinese Ambassadors. As always happened upon such occasions, we saw the whole ceremony from our windows. The Ambassadors landed at the

wharf near our house, between nine and ten o'clock at night, and walked up the short avenue to the Prah-klang's house, which was lined on both sides with torches in compliment to them. The present, consisting of two large cases of silk, went before; then came the Ambassadors, four in number, moving with that slow measured and solemn step which with us is confined to funeral processions, but which the Chinese, and the nations who imitate them, consider so peculiarly dignified upon all occasions. They were themselves dressed in long silk robes, and wore caps of ceremony. They were preceded by four men, each carrying a sword in one hand, and a flambeau in the other. These persons wore a frock of scarlet broad-cloth, and had caps on their heads with a plume of cock's feathers at the top. They were, in fact, the first specimens that we had seen of Cochin Chinese soldiers. The Prah-klang received his visitors with much formality. He sat on a velvet cushion at the upper end of the hall, surrounded by all the inferior chiefs of his department. The Ambassadors on their part seemed, as far as could be observed, to conduct themselves with dignity. The first Ambassador, as soon as he entered, demanded with a motion of his hand the place intended for him; and when it was pointed out, assumed it, after making a slight bow to the Prah-klang, which the latter did not return. The others followed his example. There were no prostrations after the Siamese fashion, nor even such as a Cochin Chinese would have performed to a superior of his own nation.

May 23.—In one of my excursions yesterday, being near the residence of the Catholic Bishop of Siam, I took the opportunity of paying him a visit. The extreme jealousy with which all strangers, and especially Europeans, are watched in Siam, had rendered this, on my part, a matter of difficulty; nor was it at any time possible for the Bishop to visit us, so guarded was the conduct which he found it necessary, upon all such occasions, to observe. I had a long and interesting conversation with this dignitary, who is a native of Avignon, and whose

titular dignity is Bishop of Sozopolis. He had lived either in Siam or Cochin China for the long period of thirty-four years, having left France the year before the Revolution; of the wonderful scenes of which, as well as the changes to which they have given rise, he scarcely knew any thing but by rumour. He had passed his long sojourn in a singular manner for an educated European, and above all, for a sprightly Frenchman, which the Bishop still was, notwithstanding that he bordered on sixty, and had passed the prime of life under circumstances apparently so depressing. He has lived for years together without an European within a thousand miles of him—without scarcely ever hearing the accents of his native language; and finally, among a race of barbarians, who treat the followers of the religion of which he is the pastor, with contumely.

M. Sozopolis is of the order of Dominicans, and the successor of the first Bishop appointed for Siam by the See of Rome, as early as the year 1659, and who arrived in the country about three years thereafter. His spiritual authority extends over all the Catholic Christians of Siam and the Malay peninsula. Those of Siam alone amount to three thousand, of whom a thousand are at the capital. These are the whole fruits of a hundred and sixty years' labours, not to mention the earlier efforts of the Portuguese, and the occasional assistance of the Jesuits.

The Bishop informed us that there were three Christian churches in the town of Bang-kok—Santa-Cruz, Santa-Anna, and Santa-Asomption. The last is a new church close to the residence of the Bishop, and which, for want of funds, is not yet finished. We now visited it; it had a sorry appearance indeed, in comparison to the gorgeous temples of the heathen. At the old capital, I am told, is still standing the chapel which was built by the Greek adventurer, Constantine Phaulcon. It is said to be a handsome piece of architecture, and the Siamese, being of this opinion, have converted it into a temple of Buddh.

The person whom the Bishop sent with us to point out the new

church was a native Christian priest, who had lived long in the Malay countries, and spoke the language with perfect fluency. The restraint of an interpreter being removed, he spoke upon various points with great freedom. He praised the facility with which converts were made at Prince of Wales's Island, and assured us that in Siam the Christian priests seldom or ever made a proselyte, for the Siamese were a very untractable people in this respect. We wished to know what objections the Siamese had against the Catholic religion. His reply was, "they consider it too difficult and troublesome a road to Heaven,"—an observation which perfectly agrees with the religious apathy and loose morality of the Siamese.

On our return from the visit to the new church we renewed our conversation with the Bishop, and asked whether the accounts we had received of several Christians having adopted the Buddhist religion and become Talapoins, were correct. He assured us that the statement we had received was much exaggerated, and that he knew but of one example of a Christian becoming a Talapoin, which was that of a dissipated youth, who had fallen upon this easy means of evading the demands of his Christian creditors. The Bishop drew an animated picture of the Siamese character. He said that they were firmly of opinion that they were the first people on earth, and that they treated with ridicule the notion of having any equal, especially among European nations. This, however, he observed, did not prevent them from entertaining, in secret, very serious apprehensions of the power of the English. As to the French, he said they were not known to the Siamese of the present day, and that the connexion which once subsisted, was now remembered only as a tale of other times.

May 25.—I had another long conference last night with the Prah-klang, the results of which, I am sorry to say, were far from satisfactory. When the English ship in the river had first arrived, an assurance was given that the import duty would be reduced from eight to six per cent. and that she should be allowed to dispose of her cargo freely, without

any of the usual interference on the part of the officers of Government. This arrangement having been most completely evaded, and in a manner the most irksome and disingenuous, it became necessary to bring the matter to the notice of the Minister. In explanation, it was pretended that the reduction of duties should take place only when the English ships frequenting Siam should amount to five in number, as first stated. As to the unrestricted trade, it was constantly insisted upon that this was granted, but that the goods were so high in price that no one would buy. The fact was, as I had been well informed, that a secret order had been issued by the Prah-klang, forbidding all persons to hold any dealings with the English vessel, under pain of fine or corporal punishment. The determination, indeed, of the party who profited by it to maintain their monopoly was resolutely taken, and it seemed almost in vain to struggle against it. On this question they finally informed us, that the reply to the letter of the Governor-general would be ready for delivery on the 26th.

By far the greater part of the conference was taken up in discussing the affair of Quedah. The Prah-klang said that the Governor of Ligor had been ordered to Court to render an account of his proceedings in that country. He observed, however, that a dispatch had been received from him yesterday, and that all seemed to be well, as he represented the country in a state of perfect tranquillity, and a friendly intercourse going on with Prince of Wales's Island. He insisted, at the same time, that it was still necessary for the Rajah of Quedah to appear at the Court to vindicate himself. The words which he made use of, as translated to me, were nearly as follow. "The Governor of Ligor and the Rajah of Quedah are alike slaves of the King of Siam; and if a dispute arise between them, they must both repair to the Court to have the matter settled. The King of Quedah is not a child, he knows the customs of the kingdom, and if he wishes to be restored to his country, he must understand the necessity of appearing in the presence." Considering the threatening language which the Chief of Ligor had used towards the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island

when he demanded the delivery of the King of Quedah's person, I thought it my duty to make a firm and distinct reply to this observation; and stated, that if the King of Quedah were of his own free will disposed to come to Siam, the British Government would put no obstacle in his way; but that if otherwise, no power should remove him, since he had thrown himself upon our hospitality. The Prah-klang asked whether if the King of Siam addressed a letter to the Governor-general, requesting him to seize the King of Quedah, and send him forcibly to Siam, such request would be complied with. I readily assured him that it would not; and farther explained that such request would not be considered friendly, as it would necessarily imply a belief that we were capable of violating the laws of hospitality, by delivering up an old friend who had sought an asylum amongst us.

The point of getting possession of the person of the Rajah of Quedah seemed one upon which the Siamese Court was fully bent, and in which they believed their honour or character implicated. The restoration of this prince being a point of considerable moment to us, I proposed, as an easy means of settling the quarrel between him and the Rajah of Ligor, the sending of a Siamese commissioner, superior in rank to both parties, to the spot, to inquire into and adjust the affair. This proposition, which the Siamese imagined would have brought their authority within the influence of our power, owing to the neighbourhood of the Quedah territories to ours, was without hesitation rejected. The Prah-klang feigned to understand that the proposal amounted to sending a Siamese commissioner into the British territories there to make the inquiry; and he said, that he was convinced that if two tributaries of the British Government were to quarrel, and one of them were to fly to a foreign power for protection, we should never think of deputing a commissioner into the territory of such foreign power to investigate the quarrel; but on the contrary, that we should direct the parties to repair to the seat of Government, for the purpose of having the matter adjusted. I ex-

plained the real nature of the proposal which I had made, but the Prah-klang still insisted that it was contrary to the customs of the country, and that the King wished to look into all matters of this kind "with his own eyes," which was the expression he made use of.

The Prah-klang, after this, inquired whether the King of Quedah exercised sovereign authority over his own followers, who had fled along with him to Prince of Wales's Island. The reply to this was, that no foreigner whatever could exercise such an authority within a British settlement, as all were equally under the protection, and equally amenable to the local laws. The Siamese Minister observed, that such a state of things must be extremely inconvenient to the Rajah of Quedah, and that he wondered how he continued to reside at Prince of Wales's Island, instead of coming to seek redress from the King. In a letter which I had sent a few nights ago from the Rajah of Quedah, this prince had thrown himself upon the mercy of the King of Siam, and petitioned for his restoration to the throne as an act of grace. The Prah-klang, in reference to it, now observed: "The Rajah of Quedah himself has acknowledged his fault, and therefore why does he not repair at once to the Court and ask forgiveness?"

The language which I was compelled to use at this interview was such as a Siamese Minister could not have been much accustomed to listen to, and such, of course, as must have been offensive to his pride. The reception given by our Government to the King of Quedah, and our refusal to deliver him up, wounded the vanity of the Siamese; and there can be no doubt but that this had throughout a prejudicial influence upon the main objects of the Mission, although these, indeed, might not have been attainable without such obstacle.

May 27.—Ko-chai-sahak waited upon us yesterday, bringing with him, for our satisfaction, a copy of the dispatch from the Governor of Ligor, referred to in the conference of the 24th. The following is nearly a literal

translation of this specimen of Siamese diplomacy, which appears to have been got up with considerable art.

"The army of Quedah is now at rest, and there is no misunderstanding with the people of Penang. The Governor of that place has given, according to former custom, two small vessels of war, to guard the coasts against pirates. The commander of one of these vessels came to me, and a friendly intercourse took place between us. The Governor of Penang and the English are satisfied that the Siamese army intend them no mischief, and the Governor allows the Siamese to frequent the island as heretofore. The commander of one of the vessels of war above alluded to, returned a second time with three English officers of consideration along with him. These stated, that two vessels, loaded with rice, had brought a letter from the Governor of Bengal to the Governor of Penang, directing him to consider Quedah as a tributary of Siam, and prohibiting him from interfering.

"The people of the island Langkawi having rebelled, the army went thither, beat them, and obtained possession. I sent news of this to Penang, accusing the King of Quedah of having stirred up the Malays of Langkawi to rebellion. The Governor of Penang replied, saying, that the English would not encourage the Rajah of Quedah, contrary to the interests of the Great King, and that they would by no means interfere in the affairs of Langkawi or the other dependencies of Quedah, nor permit the King of Quedah to send out stores or ammunition to assist the rebels of Langkawi.

"The different traders who come to Quedah represent the country now as in a state of greater prosperity than at any former period, and they describe the people of Penang as saying among themselves that small boats, with four or five men, can now go over to Quedah with safety, for there is no longer any fear of pirates. News from the same place also states, that the Tangku Abdullah, son of the Rajah of Quedah, took

a Malay woman and offered her for sale as a slave. The woman made her complaint in the court of justice. The Governor of Penang replied, 'that if the Prince did so again, he should be considered an offender.' A great number of the slaves of the King of Quedah have become free since they came to Pulo Penang. The King had punished some slaves. This came to the knowledge of the Governor, who sent word to the King to say, 'That he had sought protection under the English flag, and that he must submit to the customs of the English, which did not admit of individuals taking the law into their own hands, and that if he had any grievance, he must seek redress in a court of justice."

The evident object of sending this letter to us, was to convince us that every thing was right, and that perhaps we were no losers in having the Siamese for our neighbours instead of the Malays.

Last night, at the usual hour, I had another and my final public interview with the Prah-klang, which was as unsatisfactory as any of those which preceded it. One of the principal objects of it was to read to me a draft of the reply intended to the letter of the Governor-general. With their wonted procrastination, however, the draft was not ready, but was promised to be produced during the course of the day. I took this last opportunity of recapitulating the arguments which I had already so often made use of in favour of an unshackled trade; but as I was by this time fully aware of the strong interest which militated against them, I was not surprised that they were repeated to little purpose. I dwelt particularly upon the favourable treatment which Siamese vessels had received in our ports. This was acknowledged, and nothing very reasonable could be said against what was urged, the constant answer being the difficulty of changing the long established usages of the country. The proposal of introducing us to a second audience of the King was now altogether abandoned, without any cause being assigned for it; but I have reason to believe that the Prah-klang and his party apprehended, that from the freedom of the communications which had already been

made on the subject of the affair of Quedah, the interview might have been attended with disclosures unfavourable to their own peculiar views.

May 28.—At three o'clock yesterday afternoon, messengers came to inform us, that a draft of the letter to the Governor-general was now ready for our inspection. I proceeded accordingly to the house of the Prah-klang. The Chief was himself absent, under pretext of indisposition; but his deputy, Pia Pipat-kosa, the venerable old Chief who had come on board to receive the letter of the Governor-general, but who had not been present at any of the former conferences, received us in his stead. Along with him was Pia Raja Chula, the head of the Mohammedan settlers, who had also not been present at any of the former conferences. Two drafts of letters, in answer to that of the Governor-general, were exhibited. One of these was in the name of the Prah-klang, and addressed directly to the Governor-general; and the other was from his deputy, addressed to the Secretary to Government. The purport of both was the same, and the cause of preparing the two was to afford us an opportunity of selecting whichever we might prefer. A direct address from the King to the Governor-general had been declared contrary to the etiquette of the Court; and on the other hand, I had caused it to be made known, at an early period, that no direct address from a Minister to the Governor-general would be received. The great object which the Prah-klang, although but a Minister of inferior rank, had in view, was to place himself upon an equality of station with the Governor-general of India. This pretension was of course to be discouraged; and the draft which was in his name was at once rejected, and the other approved. The pretensions which were thus set up were indeed sufficiently absurd, and yet certainly less ridiculous than those made by the Burman Ministers, who, when preparing the draft of a letter to the Governor-general in 1810, wished to style the King of England a tributary of his Burman Majesty!

A third document was then exhibited, which was a letter from Pia

Raja Chula, the Superintendant of the Customs, addressed to myself; and this contained such concessions to our trade as the Siamese Court had resolved to grant. It stipulated for an unlimited admission of British ships into the port of Bang-kok, and for the reduction of the present import duty of eight per cent. to six, as soon as the annual number of vessels arriving should amount to five. The document in its present form, I concluded, was an ultimatum, and I had no intention of offering any objection to it; but the Siamese officers having requested to know whether I had any alteration to propose, I requested that the stipulation for the reduction of duties might not be contingent upon the number of ships arriving, but unconditional. This proposition, very unexpectedly on my part, gave rise to a discussion of two hours' continuance. They earnestly requested that I would be satisfied with a verbal assurance to the effect which I required; but this, with the knowledge which I now had of Siamese assurances, as well as the character of the proposal itself, I necessarily declined.

The person who took the most active share in this day's conversation, was Pia Raja Chula, the chief of the Mohammedan settlers, from the west of India. This class of persons, possessing a large share of the characteristic disposition of the natives of Hindustan for intrigue, have considerable influence, and in our affair it was certainly exercised prejudicially. They subsist upon the perquisites and plunder of the foreign trade; and to have placed this upon a fair and equitable footing, would have deprived them of a considerable share of their emoluments. Their friendship, therefore, was not to be expected.

June 6.—The letter of the Governor-general was ready on the third instant, but I heard nothing of the commercial document until last night, when it was reported to me to be ready, and I had another interview with the Siamese chiefs for the purpose of hearing it read. It was translated passage by passage by our own interpreter, and I was surprised to find the whole document much altered. It now stipulated for no reduction of duties in any case, but instead of it there was an express stipulation for that free and unrestrained trade which I had all along struggled for. I of course accepted this document at once, without offering any comment upon it.

June 7.—In the course of this forenoon, our attention was attracted by a handsome and gay procession passing down the river towards one of the temples: it consisted of four magnificent gilded barges, each pulled by twenty-four rowers in scarlet dresses. The vessels were decked with royal umbrellas and banners, pointing out that they had come from the Palace; and from the gay appearance of the procession, we expected to hear of some Prince or Princess going upon an excursion of pleasure. We were therefore surprised to find, that the boats conveyed the *sordes* of the body of the Princess, who had died on the 15th of the epidemic *cholera,* and of which a party of her friends were proceeding in charge, for the purpose of having them consumed on a funeral pile at one of the temples.

June 9.—Ever since the arrival of the Cochin Chinese Ambassadors, I was anxious to form an acquaintance with them, believing that this might possibly be of use as an introduction when we should arrive in their country. Every thing that bears a political character, however, it must be again repeated, is received in Siam with so jealous a suspicion, that I was aware that to succeed in this was a matter of no small difficulty. Both the British and Cochin Chinese Missions were, in fact, strictly watched. Yesterday I sent one of our interpreters to make some preparatory inquiries at the residence of the Cochin Chinese Envoys. He found it surrounded by Siamese guards, and inaccessible. His inquiries were answered with rudeness or incivility, and he was in some danger of being taken into custody as a spy. It was necessary, therefore, at once to desist from all farther attempts. The Portuguese Consul informed me, that he had requested permission of the Prah-klang to pay a visit to the Cochin Chinese Ambassadors, and that he had received a pointed refusal.

June 12.—The Cochin Chinese Ambassadors left Bang-kok yesterday afternoon, on their return to their own country. We saw them drop down the river quietly in the small junks which had conveyed them to Siam, and no ceremony whatever attended their departure.

In the course of the evening, the reply to the Governor-general's letter, and the commercial document, were finally brought to us. In compliment to them, a ladder was put up against the end of the house, and in this manner they were conveyed to the apartment where we received them. The originals of both were in the Siamese language, but they were accompanied by Portuguese translations, which last only were open for inspection,—the former being inclosed in silk envelopes, duly sealed, and deposited in large red lacquered bowls, according to the custom of the country. A request to have copies of the originals in Siamese was refused, most probably under an apprehension that on examination this might give rise to some unpleasant discussion respecting the phraseology made use of. It was necessary to open the silk envelopes to ascertain the true contents of the original letters. This was accordingly done, and translations having been effected, I had the mortification to discover that the pledge of unrestrained trade, or, as it was expressed in the original draft, "free permission to British merchants to buy and sell with the merchants of Siam," was entirely omitted, and an ominous one of assistance from the Superintendent of Customs substituted for it. After the struggles I had already made, I felt that farther remonstrance would be useless, and might even, in the present state of things, be productive of such additional irritation, as might prejudice our future prospects. Under this impression, I forbore from noticing the deception which had been practised in the terms which it well merited.

The answer to the letter of the Governor-general, as translated through the medium of the Malay, was as follows:—

"The letter of Paya Pipat-Racha Balat Kosa, second Prah-klang at the Court of Prah Maha Nakon Si-Ayuthia, to the Secretary of the Govern-

ment of Bengal, makes known to him that the Governor of Bengal sent a letter by Mr. Crawfurd, the subject of which was to explain that England has been at peace with all the nations of Europe for a long time, and that the Governor of Bengal* is anxious to be in friendship with the kingdom of Siam, and to increase it beyond the friendship of other times; and farther, that he wishes that the merchants of Siam should trade to English ports, whether in Europe or in other parts of the world; and that the English should have the same liberty to frequent this kingdom; and moreover, that as the imposts on trade in Siam are high, he requests the King of Siam would make them lighter, to the end that by this means English merchants might be encouraged to extend their trade in Siam. Mr. Crawfurd having come as the Envoy from the Governor of Bengal to offer presents to his Majesty, and representing the person of the Governor of Bengal, &c. the Chao Pia Prah-klang, first Minister in this department, gave him all assistance, and introduced him to his Majesty's presence, with the letter and offerings of the Governor of Bengal, and explained the contents of the said letter fully to his Majesty. His Majesty on this caused it to be distinctly made known to his grandees of every rank, that the Governor of Bengal, with good-will, had chosen Mr. Crawfurd to convey *offerings* to his Majesty, having a desire to strengthen the existing friendship, and farther to increase it; and, in consequence of that, that merchants might be encouraged to resort with their ships to the kingdom. His Majesty was much gratified at all this; and, in regard to the imposts upon trade, Mr. Crawfurd was directed by his Majesty to confer with the principal officers connected with this department, according to custom. His Majesty has ordered the officers in charge of the royal magazines to return presents to the Governor of Bengal as follows:—Ten elephant's teeth, weighing

* In the original, the Governor-general is styled Chao Muang Bangkala, which may be translated Lord of the kingdom or principality of Bengal. This title, Chao Muang, is applied by the Siamese to the governors of great provinces, as well as to the dependent princes of Lao.

two piculs; eagle-wood, two piculs; benzoin, two piculs; cardamums, of one sort, one picul; of another, three piculs; tin, fifteen piculs; pepper, one hundred and fifty piculs; sugar, one hundred piculs; and gamboge, five piculs. These presents have been delivered to Mr. Crawfurd.

Written on Tuesday, in the seventh month, on the eight day of the bright half of the Moon, in the year of the Horse. (26th May, 1822.)

The commercial document was as follows:—

"The Governor of Bengal commanded Mr. Crawfurd to come to Siam, to open a way to friendship and commerce, and to request permission for English ships to trade to this capital, buying and selling with the merchants of Siam, and paying duties as heretofore. The Pia Prah-klang, by authority of his Majesty, directs me, in consequence, to express his satisfaction at the contents of the letter of the Governor of Bengal, and to address a letter to Mr. Crawfurd in the form of an agreement, to say, that if English merchant-ships come to the port of the capital, upon their arrival at the mouth of the river, they shall be searched by the Governor of Pak-nam, and their small arms and cannon landed according to former custom, and then that the ships shall be conducted to the capital. As soon as they are anchored, the Superintendent of Customs shall afford all assistance in buying and selling with the merchants of Siam, and the duties and charges shall not be more than heretofore, nor afterwards be raised. Let the English merchants come to Siam to sell and buy in comformity to this agreement."

This letter of agreement is written on Thursday, in the seventh month, the second day of the dark half of the Moon, in the year of the Horse. (10th June, 1822.)

CHAPTER VII.

Obstacles to European Trade in Siam.—Not applicable to that of the Chinese.—Ordination of Siamese Priests.—The wild race denominated Ka.—A Servant belonging to the Mission drowned.—Consecration of an image of Gautama.—Son of the Minister initiated into the Priesthood.—Visit from a Portuguese Christian.—Visit to the Prah-klang.—Visit from a French Priest.—Anecdote of a late King of Siam.—Visit to the Prince Krom-chiat.—Departure from Bang-kok.—Land in dropping down the River.—Colony of Peguans.—Mouth of the River and its neighbourhood infested by Musquitos.—Ship crosses the Bar of the River.—Description of it.—Arrival at the Sichang Islands.—Incidents there.

June 21.—Our business in Siam having now been brought to a conclusion, we should have been happy to have embraced the earliest opportunity of quitting the country,—as well to avoid the risk of any collision with the Siamese, as to avail ourselves of the most favourable season for the prosecution of the remainder of our undertaking,—but unfortunately the result of another examination of the bar of the River was unfavourable, and it was declared that there was not yet water enough to enable the ship to pass out. The American ship sailed about this time, after being detained near six weeks; and the commander, although he required but a small quantity of sugar to make up his cargo, and had paid for it in ready money, was subjected to much vexation and imposition. The English vessel from Calcutta was treated in the same manner. The Chinese, in fact, are the only foreigners whose trade is upon a fair footing: they are allowed to buy and sell without any inconvenient restriction; and fourteen or fifteen of their junks, which had arrived from Penang and Singa-

pore long after the English and American vessels, had already disposed of their cargoes, although these included at least a hundred thousand Spanish dollars' worth of opium, *an article which is contraband.*

We had last night a violent thunder-storm, with a heavy fall of rain. A celebrated gang-robber, whose apprehension had cost the Siamese Government a great deal of trouble, and who was placed in charge of the Prah-klang, took this opportunity to effect his escape. The mode in which he accomplished this, afforded some insight into the character of the servants of the Siamese Government. The robber seduced the whole guard, and walked off with them,—thus not only effecting his own escape, but taking with him an armed and organized body of depredators.

June 26.—It was now the eighth month of the Siamese year, which is that set aside for the ceremony of the ordination of the Talapoins. The Siamese were seen everywhere busily engaged in this important concern,—for such it is, whether viewed as a civil or religious institution. To defray the expense of ordaining a priest, is considered on the part of the wealthy as an act of piety; and every person who is able, is at the expense of ordaining one or more, according to his means. The Prah-klang on the present occasion ordained seven; which afforded us an opportunity of seeing part of the ceremonies. The principal wife of the Minister, and her handmaids, had for many days before been busily employed in dyeing of a yellow colour, and making up, great quantities of dresses to be presented to the Talapoins. Yesterday afternoon a number of priests made their appearance, to whom these dresses were distributed. The seven *Nen*, or noviciates, presented themselves at the same time for ordination, with their heads newly shaved. White scarfs (upon this occasion, of Bengal silver-flowered muslin) were thrown over their shoulders, and prayers and hymns were chanted at great length. These last did not appear to us to differ from the usual ones, except in this particular, that their monotony was frequently interrupted by loud and most barbarous yells, which we did not hear upon other occasions. The principal

portions of the ceremony were, however, performed at the Prah-klang's new temple, and these we did not witness because the whole females of the Chief's family were present; and we thought it on this account a matter of delicacy to absent ourselves, although indeed, in points of this nature, the Siamese are not over-scrupulous.

Among the young priests ordained by the Prah-klang on this occasion was a Javanese youth, one of the individuals who had been kidnapped, as I have already mentioned. I had met this person, a few nights before, near the temple of the Prah-klang, after he had made up his mind to change his religion. He was a native of the interior of Java, and had all the docility, simplicity, and carelessness which are so characteristic of the primitive inhabitants of that island. I inquired into the motives of his change of religion. Without adverting at all to the principles of the faith he had abandoned, or the new one he had adopted, and about which he neither knew nor cared any thing, he proceeded at once with considerable vivacity to a detail of the temporal immunities and advantages of the Siamese priesthood,—such as respect from the people, fine clothes, abundance of food, and, above all, a total exemption from labour. One of my interpreters, a staunch Mohammedan, upbraided him for his apostasy; but he got nothing for his pains from the apostate but to be laughed at for his own scruples.

June 29.—I had brought to me to-day an individual of the wild race called Ka. This people inhabit the mountainous country lying between Lao and Kamboja, and still preserve their rude independence. The Siamese make no scruple in kidnapping them whenever they can find an opportunity. In consequence of this practice, a good number of them are to be found in a state of slavery at the capital. My present visitor had been taken about three years before. His features differed strikingly from those of a Siamese, and so did that of others of his nation who had been pointed out to me in my walks. In intelligence I found him greatly superior to what might reasonably have been expected.

July 3.—Notwithstanding the discouraging reports which had been made respecting the state of the bar of the River, we resolved to attempt to cross it with the next spring-tides, and were now busy in making preparations with this intention.

Our baker, a Chinese, with one of his countrymen, was drowned last night by the upsetting of a boat within a few yards of the bank of the River, and opposite to our dwelling. It was a bright moonlight night, and assistance was immediately rendered,—for both the Siamese and Chinese, unlike the natives of Hindustan, are very prompt upon such occasions,—but it was ineffectual. The bodies were picked up this afternoon, about five miles down the stream, and immediately burned by the Siamese, according to custom upon such occasions. It is, after all, surprising to find how few serious accidents take place on the Menam: the face of which is covered with boats night and day, some of them the veriest cockle-shells that can be imagined, and often managed by old men, women, and children. Numbers of them are upset, but commonly without any fatal consequences.

July 8.—The Prah-klang suddenly made his appearance yesterday morning, in a sort of workshop close under our windows, where the wood-work for his new temple was preparing. The carpenters, as it happened, were asleep, or smoking segars, when they should have been at work. Six of them received the punishment of the bamboo on the spot, under the personal direction of this minister of state. These symptoms of patriarchal government, however, are by no means so frequent in Siam as we afterwards found them in Cochin China.

In the evening, the Prah-klang was busy consecrating a new image of Guatama. The idol, which was of brass, and gilded, was placed in the centre of the saloon which I have so often mentioned, and had a silk cloth of gold tissue thrown over it. A band of Talapoins surrounded it, repeating their orisons. At certain passages of these, a crowd of boys and young men in the court-yard raised horrid shouts, seemingly, to all appearance, more suited to raise an evil spirit than to invoke a god, as was their

ostensible object. To aid them in these yells, they forced their hands into their sides, making all the while hideous grimaces. Part of the ceremony consisted in the priests passing round from one to another a flaming torch, each waving it twice or thrice over his head before delivering it to his neighbour.

The eldest son of the Prah-klang, the youth whose tonsure I lately described, assumed, within the last few days, the yellow garment of the priesthood, in the character of a *Nen*, or noviciate, in conformity to the almost universal practice of the Siamese, of whatever rank. This morning, between six and seven o'clock, we saw him, for the first time, going forth to beg, in his new character. He had a large scrip upon his back; but as he was a delicate and weakly lad, a servant followed him, to carry it occasionally. Fifteen or twenty women, retainers of the Minister, threw themselves in his way as he was going out, and bestowed charity upon him, in the shape of boiled rice and fruit. His father and mother appeared at the same time, and now made him an obeisance, for which, in conformity with the sacred character, he made no acknowledgment.

July 10.—I had, in the course of this forenoon, a visit from a person of singular modesty and intelligence, Pascal Ribeiro de Alvergarias, the descendant of a Portuguese Christian of Kamboja. This gentleman holds a high Siamese title, and a post of considerable importance. Considering his means and situation, his acquirements were remarkable; for he not only spoke and wrote the Siamese, Kambojan, and Portuguese languages with facility, but also spoke and wrote Latin with considerable propriety. We found, indeed, a smattering of Latin very frequent among the Portuguese interpreters at Bang-kok, but Señor Ribeiro was the only individual who made any pretence to speak it with accuracy. He informed us, that he was the descendant of a person of the same name who settled in Kamboja in the year 1685. His lady's genealogy, however, interested us more than his own. She was the lineal descendant of an Englishman of the name of Charles Lister, a merchant, who settled in

Kamboja in the year 1701, and who had acquired some reputation at the Court, by making pretence to a knowledge in medicine. Charles Lister had come immediately from Madras, and brought with him his sister. This lady espoused a Portuguese of Kamboja, by whom she had a son, who took her own name. Her grandson of this name also, in the revolutions of the kingdom of Kamboja, found his way to Siam; and here, like his great uncle, practising the healing art, rose to the station of Maha-pet, or first physician to the King. The son of this individual, Cajitanus Lister, is at present the physician, and at the same time the minister and confidential adviser of the present King of Kamboja.* His sister is the wife of the subject of this short notice. Señor Ribeiro favoured us with the most authentic and satisfactory account which we had yet obtained of the late revolution and present state of Kamboja.

July 12.—I addressed a letter to-day to the Minister, informing him of our approaching departure, and containing expressions of general good-will. I received a verbal message in return, with a request for an interview.

July 13.—I called at the house of the Minister this afternoon, and had a long conference with him. He said he had a message to deliver to me from the King, and pointed out to three chank shells which lay before him. These, as is well known, are sounded by the officiating Brahmins in performing the ritual of Hindu worship in the temples of Hindustan, and the Buddhists also employ them for religious purposes. Ordinary ones are of little or no value; but when nature produces a *lusus*, by inverting the usual order of the spiral convolutions of the shell, they are in great request, being valued, according to their size or beauty, at from one to two hundred pounds sterling a-piece. One of the shells exhibited by the Minister was of this description, and had been presented to the King by the Rajah of Ligor. Over and above its own supposed value, it was richly set with pearls and rubies. In Siam no subject is allowed to be possessed of one of these shells. They are not em-

* As Resident of Singapore, I afterwards maintained a correspondence with this individual.

ployed in the common ceremonies of the Buddhist worship, but upon solemn occasions only, when they are filled with water, over which certain incantations being repeated, the element is considered holy, and thought to confer a blessing upon whomsoever it is sprinkled. The object of exhibiting the shells upon the present occasion, was, to point out the difference between them, and to beg that I would request one of the precious ones from the Governor-general for the King.

The subject of our commerce, and the dispute respecting Quedah, were introduced in the course of the visit. Respecting the former, the Prah-klang plainly stated, that what the Court most required in an intercourse with the English were fire-arms; and on the latter subject he said, that the Governor of Ligor would soon be at the capital, and that all matters should be amicably arranged. At parting, the Minister wished us a safe journey, and with the characteristic aversion of a Siamese for the sea, asked if we were not afraid of so long a voyage. I replied, that such of us as were sickly, hoped to gain benefit by the change of climate, and by the sea air. He smiled at this remark, and appeared quite incredulous,—observing, that the Siamese and English must differ widely in this respect, for that even a few days of a sea voyage made a Siamese miserable, altering his appearance to such a degree that his acquaintances could scarcely recognize him!

In the evening, the Christian bishop sent one of the priests of the establishment to pay us a visit. This was a French gentleman who had recently arrived at Bang-kok, from Prince of Wales's Island, by a journey across the peninsula. He made the bishop's apologies for not visiting us in person,—taking pains to explain, on his behalf, the extreme circumspection which the character of the Siamese Government rendered indispensable in his situation. We had indeed ourselves seen quite enough, to render these explanations on the part of the bishop superfluous. Our visitor enforced his explanations, by recounting to us the story of the punishment inflicted upon the Christian priests in Siam,

about forty years before, and which, as I have heard it told more at length from others, is as follows. Pia Metak, the adventurer of Chinese parentage, who mounted the throne of Siam upon the expulsion of the Burman invaders, was partially deranged for some years before he lost his throne and life. He had become fanatical, and entirely devoted to the priests of Gautama, to whom his charities were unbounded. In one of his religious frenzies, he took it into his head, that by still more intense devotion than he had hitherto practised, he might attain the supernatural gift of flying, and by this means be enabled to ascend direct to Heaven, as if it were by a sort of short cut, or, as it was explained to me, in the easy and rapid manner in which a bird soars to the sky. He sent for the priests of Gautama, who declared the project to be quite feasible. The bishop and other Christian clergy were then sent for and asked their opinions. They had the temerity to attempt to reason his Majesty out of the delusion with which he was possessed, by explaining that flying was incompatible with the physical form of the human body. For this small piece of philosophy, and also for certain opinions offered about the same time, concerning the unlawfulness of polygamy, deemed heretical in Siam, the bishop and his clergy received each a hundred blows of the bamboo, and were banished from the kingdom.

July 15.—Every thing being prepared for our departure, we embarked at five o'clock last evening. Just as we were going on board, we received a message from the Prince Krom-chiat, expressing an earnest desire for a farewell interview. Although such a visit was rather inconvenient, I resolved to comply, and accordingly waited upon him in the course of the night, accompanied by Mr. Rutherford. He received us very courteously, and seemed anxious to make a favourable impression upon us at parting. He began by informing us that he had a message to deliver to us from the King. The purport of the message in question was, that his Majesty expressed his regret that he was not able to give us an audience of leave, owing to the great distress he was in, occasioned by the deaths

which had recently taken place in his family,—thus alluding to the loss of his sister, his brother-in-law and favourite, and the high-priest; but the Prince added, that the friendly sentiments which his Majesty entertained towards the English, would hereafter be proved by the protection he should afford to all the merchants of our nation who should visit his country. The Prince then proceeded to offer assurances of his own friendly sentiments, and condescended to say that he would direct prayers to be offered for our safe voyage. He dwelt at length upon his anxiety to prosecute a trade with the British possessions, and referred to the circumstance of his having twice sent the King's ship to Calcutta with this view. These voyages however, he said, were unsuccessful, owing to the great distance of Bengal and the unskilfulness of the Siamese mariners. After an audience of about an hour and a half, we took leave.

July 16.—Yesterday forenoon the ship was unmoored, and we dropped down a few hundred yards only. In the evening an officer came on board from the Prah-klang, with a message and a present of fruits and vegetables. The officers of police or customs also visited us, in order to take a census of the ship's crew and followers of the Mission, with the view of ascertaining that we carried away none of the inhabitants of the country—a matter respecting which the Siamese Government, viewing as it does the population of the country as its own private property, is especially jealous and tenacious. It ought here to be mentioned, that no description of charge whatsoever was made against the ship—her bearing a foreign embassy being considered to exempt her from all the numerous charges incident to a merchant-vessel.

As soon as it was daylight this morning, and we could steer clear of the Chinese junks and other craft in the River, we again dropped down, and, passing along many fine and highly cultivated reaches of the Menam, anchored at noon at the village of Klong-toe, the same spot where we had anchored on our voyage up. Here the banks of the river, to the depth of several hundred yards, were occupied by villages, and by a belt of orchards and gar-

dens. The lower ground behind these again presented a wide extent of rice-lands. Shortly after anchoring, we landed on a shooting excursion, but were not successful. The country indeed now was nearly inundated and impassable. The peasantry, often up to their middle in water, were engaged in preparing the ground for the ensuing crop. The Chief of the village informed us, that he expected a return of forty-fold for the seed which he sowed, and that he would consider thirty but an indifferent crop.

In the course of our visit to the shore, we came accidentally upon a village temple, near to which there were about half-a-dozen priests. This was an oblong building of brick and mortar, composed of a double colonnade all round, supporting an ordinary tiled roof. At one end of it there was an altar crowded with gilded images of Gautama and his disciples. It may be presumed that either these were of little or no value, or that the crime of sacrilege is not common in Siam, for the temple was open all round, and there was no one watching or in attendance. In the course of the present excursion, as well indeed as upon all other occasions when we went amongst the peasantry, we met with nothing but good-nature, and, as far as regarded our persons and property, felt the same confidence and security, in rambling through the villages, that we should have done in the most civilized country in Europe.

July 17.—We weighed again this morning, and at nine o'clock arrived off the Pegue forts. As the ship dropped slowly down, a party went on shore and examined the fort which is on the right bank of the River. This was a square building of masonry, slightly constructed without a ditch, bastion, or any other defence, save the bare rampart or wall. I felt surprised, in going up, to hear that this and the opposite fort, which had the appearance of places of some consequence, should be intrusted to refugees from Pegue; but a nearer acquaintance explained the matter. Both forts are completely dismantled, their cannon had some years before been carried off to the capital, and even the gates had been removed. In the one which we examined, the peasantry of the

neighbourhood were employed in converting its area into a rice-field. This particular part of the Menam, if adequately fortified, might, no doubt, be made sufficiently strong, for it does not seem above 250 yards broad. This is, however, what cannot happen in the hands of the Siamese, either here or at any other part of the river; and their capital, as now situated, must always be exposed to destruction by the sudden invasion of any active enemy.* Refugees from Pegue seeking protection, under the Siamese Government, from the excesses of the Burmans, are the only inhabitants of the immediate neighbourhood of these forts, where they have been planted by the Government in the manner of a colony. We could easily distinguish this race from the Siamese, by the long hair of the women, and the painted, or rather tatooed, limbs of the men. This latter practice is sometimes carried to a great degree of extravagance. One person of some consideration whom we met, had, for example, not only his legs and thighs tattooed, but an inscription tatooed, across his breast, in the Pegue or Mon character, every letter of which was at least an inch long. In the little intercourse we had with these people, we found them cheerful and communicative, and seemingly anxious to be upon good terms with us.

July 18.—After dropping down the river slowly all night, we found ourselves, at about six o'clock in the morning, opposite the village of Pak-nam, and at noon anchored beyond the mouth of the Menam. The view of the sea, which now presented itself, and of the high mountains to the eastern side of the Bay, formed a cheering and enlivening prospect, after our four months' confinement to the Siamese capital, with all the irksome restraints incident to the relation in which we stood with the despotic and suspicious Government of Siam.

The village of Pak-nam, which I have just mentioned, is about two miles from the mouth of the River, on its left bank—a long, straggling, and poor

* These forts were repaired, and cannon mounted on them, after the commencement of our contest with the Burmese.

place. It is not, I am told, unhealthy, which is surprising, for the situation is low, swampy, and comfortless. The swarms of musquitoes which infest it are prodigious, and render it intolerable to strangers. This plague must even render it miserable to the inhabitants themselves; the very lowest orders of whom are compelled to use musquito curtains, and cannot get a moment's rest without them. Our own experience of them, in the course of last night, more than realized the accounts which we had read of them in the travels of voyagers to Siam, and which we before considered as exaggerated. In going up the River, a fresh north-east monsoon had blown, and we then felt no inconvenience whatever from these insects, but the opposite monsoon now prevailed; and when it fell calm, about six o'clock yesterday evening, they came on board in such swarms, that we were compelled to betake ourselves to the protection of boots, gloves, fans, and finally our musquito curtains. They appeared to be not only more numerous, but more venomous than the oldest of us had experienced in any other part of India.

July 19.—The Christian interpreter, Bastian, came on board this morning with a message from the Chief of Pak-nam, expressing his regret that we had not stopped at his residence and afforded him an opportunity of paying us attention. It is but justice to this person to observe, that he had been constantly polite to every individual of our party with whom he had any intercourse, since our first arrival in the country.

July 25.—About nine o'clock last night, we crossed the bar of the River, having taken no less than seven days in warping the ship over a mud flat, ten miles in extent. The outer edge of this flat is sandy and of harder materials than the inner part, being little more than two hundred yards broad. The rest of the flat is so soft, that when the ship grounded during the ebb, she often sunk five feet in the mud and clay which supported her upright, so that we were subjected neither to risk nor inconvenience. The highest water on the bar of the Menam in the hot months, from February to September, is about thirteen and a half

feet; and in the remaining four months, somewhat more than fourteen feet—a difference probably produced by the accumulation of water at the head of the bay, after the south-west monsoon, and by the heavy floods of the rainy season. The extensive mud flat and bar of the Menam are serious obstacles to its navigation, and, on this account, foreign trade ought perhaps to be confined to vessels not exceeding two hundred or two hundred and fifty tons burthen. In all other respects, the River is extremely safe and commodious. Its mouth is no sooner approached, than it deepens gradually; and at Pak-nam, two miles up, there are six and seven fathoms water. This depth even increases as you ascend, and at Bang-kok is not less than nine fathoms. The only danger is, or rather was, a sand-bank off Pak-nam, bare at low water. On this a fort or battery has been erected since we left the country, which affords at all times a distinct beacon. The channel of the River is at the same time so equal, that a ship may range from one side to another—approaching the banks so closely, that her yards may literally overhang them. The navigation is said to be equally safe all the way to the old capital.

July 26.—Two of the Christian interpreters came on board this morning, with an answer to a letter which I had brought to the Prah-klang from the Resident of Singapore. The reply to that from the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island had only arrived three days before. All this was perfectly agreeable to the spirit of procrastination which characterises every measure of the Siamese Government that came under our knowledge.

August 4.—From the 26th of July till the 2nd of this month, we were occupied in putting the ship in a condition to enable her to sail with safety to a group of islands close at hand, called by our old navigators the Dutch Islands, and by the natives Ko Si-chang; for, in order to enable her to pass the bar, she had been dismantled, and her draft of water reduced from fifteen to twelve feet. During all this time, and indeed from the moment we quitted Bang-kok, we had a constant succession of fine and serene weather. We reached the group of islands in question yesterday afternoon, and had

here the satisfaction to find a safe and beautiful harbour, formed between Si-chang, the principal island, and Koh-kam, the next in magnitude. A party landed in the evening. On the large island we discovered nothing but an uninhabited hut, close to which it was evident there had been a considerable extent of culture not many years back; for a number of hardy plants, such as capsicums, yams, and the indigo plant, were still propagating themselves over a tract of two or three acres of ground close by. At this visit we could discover no other signs of occupation or habitation than what is now mentioned. We afterwards visited Koh-kam, forming the eastern side of the harbour. This island, composed of one hill of moderate elevation, about a mile long, is generally cleared of forest, cultivated with maize, cucumbers, gourds, and bananas; and on the shore of the harbour is a village of ten or twelve fishermen's huts. The inhabitants showed no marks of timidity; but on the contrary received us with much kindness,—readily offering to share with us their yams, bananas, and fish, without bargaining for any remuneration.

Early this morning we paid a second visit to Si-chang, and landed on a sandy beach farther up the harbour than the spot which we had reached last night. Here we perceived a shed covered in with a tiled roof. Near to the shed a good pathway led into the forest, and conducted us, after a walk of a quarter of a mile, to a fountain of clear and fine water. The same path, after a distance of a quarter of a mile more, ascending the hills of which the bulk of the island is composed, led to a second fountain of water, near to which we unexpectedly perceived a Prachidi, or "holy spire," of solid masonry, and about thirty feet high. Still there was no sign of inhabitants. This edifice was, in fact, a place for the traders between Bang-kok and the east side of the Gulf to pay their devotions at. We also paid a second visit to Koh-kam, the inhabitants of which received us with the same familiarity and attention as before. Several of them accompanied us to the summit of the hill, from which we had an extensive view of the neighbouring continent, not above ten or twelve miles distant, as well as of the innumerable islands scattered over the eastern shore of the Gulf.

August 5.—We had this forenoon a visit from the commander of two small Chinese junks, with their followers, which had come in, in the morning, bound from Tung-yai to Bang-kok, with cargoes of pepper. Our visitors were of various races—some being Chinese, others Cochin Chinese, and others Siamese and Kambojans; for the provinces on the eastern shore of the bay are inhabited by a mixture of all these different nations, as well as by other tribes still ruder. The Chinese commanders informed us, that the country of Tung-yai and Chan-ti-bun produce pepper, cardamums, and eagle-wood; the first, however, only in large quantity, and which, at Tung-yai alone, might amount to 15,000 piculs yearly. They stated that the coasting trade of Tung-yai and Chan-ti-bun was greatly harassed by the depredations of pirates from Tringanu, and other parts of the Malayan peninsula.

Among our visitors, I found an individual of the wild race of the Chong, who appear, as far as I could learn, to be the aboriginal inhabitants of the territory of Chan-ti-bun and Tung-yai. In features and complexion, the individual whom I now saw appeared to differ essentially from the Siamese: the hair was softer, the beard more copious, the features more prominent, and the complexion much darker. This might however have been all peculiar to the individual. He gave me a short vocabulary of his dialect,—judging by which, it seems to be essentially an original language, although borrowing a considerable number of extrinsic terms from the Kambojan.

August 9.—We buried two of our people this morning, a sepoy and a washerman: the first, a weakly young man, died of a chronic diarrhœa; and the second, an old man, of a hemorrhage from the lungs. These, with the exception of a Lascar, who died of pulmonary consumption, were the only deaths from sickness during a voyage of thirteen months' continuance, and the only casualties in our party, with the exception of the Chinese who was drowned in the Menam. When it is considered that we amounted in all to one hundred and thirty persons, including the ship's company, and that we lay in the Menam for four months, during the most unfavourable

season of the year, and not very comfortably situated, this statement may be adduced as strong evidence in favour of the salubrity of the climate of Bang-kok.

August 14.—We had now been nine days at the Si-chang Islands, without suspecting that there was a single inhabitant on the larger one. Yesterday morning, however, directly abreast of the place where the ship lay at anchor, we discovered a foot-path, which conducted us through the forest, until it brought us to a plot of cultivated ground, ten or twelve acres in extent, surrounded in every direction by the deep forest. In the centre of it was a single hut, the inhabitants of which were an old man and woman, each seemingly above seventy years of age, and very frail. The man was a Chinese, and his companion a native of Lao. Although we came suddenly upon them, and were probably the first Europeans they had ever met with, they received us familiarly, and without apprehension invited us immediately into their cabin, and cheerfully offered us plantains and Indian corn. The old woman was particularly earnest and kind in her attention. They stated to us, that their business, in that sequestered spot, was to cultivate vegetables for the supply of the trading boats and vessels which passed and re-passed between Bang-kok and Chan-ti-bun; and that one of the party, the husband of the old woman, was absent at the time at Bang-kok. The ground was neatly laid out in the Chinese style of husbandry, and planted with maize, yams, battatas, capsicums, and cucumbers. This part of the island presented a greater extent of level and good ground, than might have been looked for from its rugged aspect from the harbour.

This morning the old man, conformably to a promise which he had made, paid us a visit on board, and returned very well satisfied with the presents which we made him for himself and his companion.

CHAPTER VIII.

Departure from the Si-chang Islands.—Description of them.—Crossing the Gulf of Siam.—Samroi-yot, or the "Three Hundred Peaks."—Group of Islands called Pulo-panjang.—Mission visits Pulo-condore.—Ruins of an English factory.—Description of Pulo-condore.—Cape St. James.—Arrival in the River of Saigun.—Intercourse with the Chief of Kandyu, and description of the place.—Visit to Saigun.—Audience of the Governor.—Elephant and Tiger fights.—Description of Saigun and its River.—Departure from Saigun for the Capital.

April 5.—HAVING completed our wooding and watering, and otherwise prepared the ship for sea, we weighed anchor at ten o'clock this forenoon, in prosecution of our voyage to Cochin China, and stood across the Bay, making for the projecting land on the western coast, called in European charts the Point of Cin.

The following is a brief description of the Si-chang Islands. They are eight in number, and the largest five miles in length, and about a mile and a quarter in its broadest part. Their coasts are in general bold and rocky, with here and there a sandy cove intervening. With the exception of a few spots, where the rocks are so steep and abrupt, as to preclude any soil resting upon them, their surface is covered every where with forest-trees. The rock formation is primitive, consisting of granite, occurring so low in position, as generally to be visible only during the ebb of the sea. There then occurs quartz rock, and finally blue granular limestone, on which repose the soil and vegetable mould. The occasional minerals found were white quartz, in veins intersecting the limestone, quartz, and granite—veins of dolomite occurring in the limestone only; and on one of the smaller islands, veins of jaspery iron-ore in the quartz rock. On the bolder parts of the coast of the larger island, there were several caverns,

to which we had access from our boats, and which, from the fantastic forms of the stalactites and stalagmites with which they were commonly lined, presented a very singular and picturesque appearance.

Mr. Finlayson described the botany of the island as highly interesting, and as having afforded him a number of new species. Among the plants, no palm is to be found,—a novelty in countries so close to the Equator. Tuberous rooted plants abounded; amongst which, one was of so singular a description, that it deserves particular mention. This, according to Mr. Finlayson and Dr. Wallich's opinion, was a new species of menispernum. What was chiefly remarkable in it, was the enormous size of the tuberous roots. One of these, which we brought on board, weighed 150 lbs.; another, 350 lbs.; and a third, 474 lbs. The last measured nine and a half feet in circumference. These, with several smaller ones in a living state, were conveyed to the botanical garden of Calcutta. Not above one-fourth part of the enormous mass of these roots was buried in the soil, the rest being entirely exposed. The small size of the stem, which was scandent, formed a singular contrast with the bulk of the root: it was scarce half an inch in diameter in its thickest part. We found this extraordinary plant growing on two or three of the smaller islands, generally in a scanty and rocky soil, not far from the shore, and always under the shade of trees. Its substance was white, dense, farinaceous, and somewhat bitter to the taste. The natives, with some propriety, called it Pai-pun-chang, or the "elephant yam;" and informed us that it was capable of affording an esculent farina, which they sometimes had recourse to in times of scarcity, but they evidently put little value upon it.

The only quadrupeds which we observed on these islands, were a large species of rat, and a small squirrel about a foot long. This last was numerous in the forest, and we obtained several specimens. It was of a milk-white colour, the paws excepted, which were black.*

* This appears to be a new species, and Dr. Horsefield has appropriately named it after the late Mr. Finlayson.

Among the birds, the most frequent was the white pigeon, already mentioned. On one of the small islands, we saw and succeeded in obtaining specimens of what we considered a new species of pigeon. This was somewhat larger in size than an ordinary domestic pigeon, of a reddish brown colour, with a metallic gloss over the neck and back, having the wings and tail black, and the head ash-coloured. It was a very shy bird. A small species of green pigeon, or dove, with a yellow breast, was also procured. Fishing eagles, of a large size, were seen in considerable number, and specimens obtained.

The harbour of Si-chang and the neighbouring seas appeared to abound in fish; but the natives were indolent and unenterprizing, and seemed satisfied with taking what was sufficient for their own immediate wants, and no more.

Hamilton* is the only writer whom I have met with that takes notice of this group of islands. He calls the whole, the Dutch Islands, and the principal one, or Si-chang, "Amsterdam." They appear to have received these names on account of the ships of the Dutch East India Company which frequented Siam in the seventeenth century, being in the habit of taking shelter at them in the south-west monsoon. English ships, it would appear, had been occasionally in the habit of doing the same thing.

August 15.—A fine steady breeze brought us yesterday quite across the gulf, which, at its head, does not appear to be above fifty miles broad. In the passage, the high land was generally visible on both sides. At noon, to-day, we were in the latitude of 13° 2′, close to the western shore, and in five fathoms water. A few miles to the north of us was seen the entrance of a river, upon which is situated the town of Kwi. The view to the west of us was novel and imposing. The shore was a sandy beach, and behind it was a narrow strip of land, beyond which

* Hamilton's new account of the East Indias, from 1688 to 1723, vol. ii.

nothing was to be seen but a succession of peaked mountains to the verge of the horizon. Some of the peaks appeared to be not less than 3000 feet high. Several were insulated, and, rising abruptly from the plain to the height of many hundred feet, presented the appearance of artificial cones. The Siamese give to these mountains, with some propriety, the name of Sam-roi-yot, which means, in their language, "the 300 peaks."

August 17.—We continued all yesterday and last night to work along the western shore of the gulf; and when we had made the headland, which is called in the charts the Point of Cin, but correctly written Kwi, we stood across the bay with a six-knot breeze for Pulo Ubi.

August 20.—On the 17th and 18th we continued our course across the bay with a favourable wind, and yesterday afternoon, at three o'clock, anchored off the group of islands called Pulo Panjang, to the north side of the largest island, in eighteen fathoms water. A party landed immediately. The island, which is about three miles long and two broad, is composed of a mass of sand-stone, in which we found some common jasper, of a reddish brown colour, and some veins of jaspery iron-ore. The coast, wherever it was visible to us, consisted of huge fragments of this rock, piled one upon the other, and rendering the landing difficult and precarious, even with the fine weather which we enjoyed at the time. The island, elevated every where, but exhibiting no peak or hill distinct from the general aspect, was as usual covered with thick wood, into which we found it difficult to penetrate even for a few yards, on account of the prevalence of climbing plants. The only quadruped we saw was a handsome greyish brown squirrel, which was new to us.

This group of islands consists of seven. The name Pulo Panjang, or "long island," is Malayan, and has probably been imposed by the Malay pirates, who occasionally visit it in their passage across the gulf when engaged in their predatory expeditions against the Siamese and Kambojan establishments on the eastern coast. In the course of our excursion we came accidentally upon a copious fall of fresh water, and

leading to it saw a pathway, which, however, had not lately been trodden. This spot was most likely the usual place of resort of the rovers in question.

At daylight this morning we set sail, passing close to the two islands which lie immediately south of the principal one. These exhibited several sandy bays, upon which a landing might be effected without inconvenience.

August 21.—Last night we passed the false Pulo Ubi, and, at four this morning, the true Pulo Ubi, at the distance of two miles, and between it and the main of Kamboja. We had now fairly entered the Chinese Sea, and pursued our course towards Pulo Condore.

August 22.—Yesterday afternoon, we passed the little islands, or rather rocks, called The Brothers. The largest is not above a mile in circumference; a steep and almost inaccessible rock, with a few stunted shrubs growing on the summit. We passed within half a mile of it. It was covered with innumerable sea-fowl, chiefly black and white mews. We came within a few miles of Pulo Condore in the course of the evening, and lay to all night, that we might have daylight to enter the harbour. We accordingly sailed into the bay this morning, which presented a very noble prospect. An amphitheatre of steep mountains terminating in a bold and rocky coast, forms the harbour to the southern and western sides. The northern and eastern are formed by six islets of various sizes, which afford a much less effectual protection. We had scarcely come to an anchor, when a native boat came alongside;—thus affording an example of early confidence on the part of the Cochin Chinese, which pleased us when we compared it with the distrust and timidity always evinced by the Siamese throughout their intercourse with us.

After breakfast, a large party landed, and passed several hours in visiting the village, or rambling over the shores and woods. Opposite to the place where we anchored was a sandy beach about two miles in extent, with a tract of low land behind it, extending to about a mile and a half to

the foot of the hills. This plain is sandy, and covered with a tall forest, which, being free from underwood, admitted our walking through it without difficulty. Towards one extremity of it there was a brook of fresh water, in following which, and about half a mile from the shore, we came suddenly upon the ruins of the English factory which had once existed at Pulo Condore. These consisted of the foundations of the fort; scattered bricks and stones; fragments of coarse earthenware, and porcelain in very considerable quantity, and broken pieces of tobacco-pipes of European manufacture. The forest about the ruins, was as tall and luxuriant as any where else. The establishment had been destroyed one hundred and eighteen years before, having been formed in the year 1702, and treacherously cut off by its own native garrison in 1704. The English who had formed the settlement at Pulo Condore, were the same who had been forced to abandon the factory of Chusan in China; and the remnant of whom having afterwards formed the settlement of Banjarmassin, in Borneo, were driven from this place also through their great imprudence. The Governor, Mr. Ketchpoole, had, according to the practice of those times, engaged some natives of Celebes as soldiers, stipulating to discharge them in three years —an engagement which he failed to fulfil, and the breach of which provoked these sanguinary people to rise upon the English, and murder all who were within the fort, in the dead of the night, and as they lay in their beds. A few who lodged outside the fort, hearing the cries of their countrymen when attacked, took the alarm, and, gaining the beach, embarked in a boat that happened to be ready; and after a perilous voyage reached the territories of the King of Jehor, who received them with humanity and kindness. I found, on inquiry, that the natives were not unaware that Europeans had once been settled amongst them; but it was an affair of mere vague tradition, and they could give no precise information on the subject.

At the only village in the plain before-mentioned, the natives welcomed us with great frankness, and with a confidence which was extraordinary, considering that they have little or no intercourse with Europeans. As we approached the village, we found the young men playing at foot-ball on the sand. They interrupted their sport to accompany us to an interview with the Chief. This person, a respectable-looking man, of about forty-five years of age, received us at first under a shed, but, as our acquaintance and familiarity grew, conducted us to his own house, and communicated without reserve on every topic of our inquiries. We were, in every respect, highly gratified by our intercourse with these poor people. After returning on board, the Chief and a large party of natives paid us a visit. Almost every one had a small present to offer. The Chief, on his part, presented us with some fresh fish and a turtle; and from the rest we received fowls, eggs, cucumbers, melons, and other vegetables. They were reluctant to take payment in money for any thing they offered, but gladly accepted cloth, cutlery, and other articles of European manufacture. In the conduct of this little traffic between us, there was a degree of delicacy shown on their part, favourably opposed to the rapacity which pervaded every class of the Siamese, with which we held any intercourse. One of our gentlemen presented an old man with a piece of white cloth, while we were on shore. He immediately produced a hen, in return. This the gentleman at first declined accepting, but was compelled to do so when the old man threatened to return the cloth. The gentleman, upon this, made him an additional present; upon which, the old man produced two additional fowls, resolving not to be outdone. We parted very good friends in the evening, after a pressing invitation, on their part, to prolong our stay. The chief, on going away, begged us to furnish him with a writing, stating that the Mission had called at Pulo Condore, which he might show to any English ships that might hereafter frequent the place. This I gladly complied with, and, I think, I may safely recommend future navigators, visiting the islands, to the hospitality of Cham-Kwan-Luang, which was the name of this worthy person.

The islands known by the name of Pulo Condore are twelve in num-

ber, of various sizes. The largest is twelve miles in length, and about four in its greatest breadth, but not above half this in some places. Others of the group are little better than rocks. Pulo Condore is the farthest limit of the Malayan navigation to the eastward. For what purpose, or under what circumstances, these people were in the habit of frequenting the island, I am unable to tell; but I think it not improbable that it was a station from which, in the days of their power, and probably before the arrival of Europeans, they conducted their piratical depredations against the peaceable coasts of Kamboja and Cochin China. The two words Pulo Condore mean, in the Malay language, the *Island of Gourds*—a name not known to the Anam language, in which it is called Koh-naong. The centre of the large island lies in latitude 8°. 40′ North, and in longitude 106° 42″ East, about forty-five miles distant from the mouth of the western branch of the Kamboja river. The general aspect of this group of islands, compared to all that we had hitherto seen, was bleak and rugged. The land is mountainous and precipitate, commonly ascending at an angle of even beyond 45° from the very sea. The great island especially is one mountainous chain of this description, the highest part of which is, to all appearance, little less than 1800 feet above the level of the sea. Wherever the hills are exposed to the direct influence either of the south-west or north-east monsoons, they are either altogether bare, or covered only with coarse grasses or herbaceous plants; but, on the contrary, where there is shelter, the forest is as luxuriant as in the countries upon the Equator itself. The geological structure of the island is primitive, consisting, wherever we examined it, of sienite or sienitic granite, and common grey granite; the latter, however, only in small quantity: The rock was so hard, especially where the sienite prevailed, that it destroyed our hammers, and we found great difficulty in obtaining even a few hand specimens. Nothing can be more unfavourable to the accumulation of soil than such a structure as that of Pulo Condore,—where the rock is so hard, as to be little liable to decomposition—where the hills

are precipitate,—and where heavy rains prevail, which must wash down the little soil that might otherwise be disposed to rest upon a surface so unfavourable.

Mr. Finlayson found the botany of the island exceedingly interesting by its novelty and variety; more especially, as many of the plants were at the time in flower or fruit. The common mango *(Mangifera Indica)* was discovered in the forest, where we also found an esculent grape. Dampier, whose account of Pulo Condore is marked by his wonted fidelity, says, that both these, as forest fruits, were ripe when he visited the island in the months of March and April. He states that the last of these was agreeable to the palate, and the first equal to any cultivated variety of the same fruit which he had ever eaten. In respect to the mango, we had no opportunity of bearing testimony to his accuracy.

Of quadrupeds we saw only monkeys and squirrels. The most frequent of the last was a small animal of a jet black colour all over. Of this we obtained a living specimen. It had been reported that wild oxen were to be found in the forests of Pulo Condore, the descendants of those introduced by the English settlers; but the natives stated that this was not the case. The white pigeon was again seen with a very large green pigeon, common in the Malayan peninsula and the adjacent islands, and which I believe to be no other than the copper-coloured nutmeg-eater of the Moluccas.

The village on the large bay consists of three hundred inhabitants. There are two other establishments upon the island, and the whole population, according to the information supplied to us by the Chief, amounts to eight hundred persons. These are all natives of Cochin China; and there are neither Chinese amongst them nor Kambojans, as has been asserted. Among those whom we saw, there was certainly no appearance of want of comfort. The houses were all built upon a level with the ground, the dry and sandy nature of the soil precluding the necessity of raising them upon posts. Persons of all ages had a healthy look, and many of them, being well clothed, had even a decent and respectable appearance.

Numbers were marked with the small-pox—showing that this disease had been committing its ravages among them. There was nothing seen to warrant a belief of what has been reported of the unhealthiness of the climate. The inhabitants of Pulo Condore cultivate a small quantity of rice, of which we saw some patches in the forest; but their principal supply is obtained from Saigun. Besides rice, they plant a little maize and some cocoa-nuts, and raise a few cucumbers and other common esculent vegetables. Their principal occupation, however, is catching turtle, fishing, and extracting dammer, a kind of pitch, and wood oil, from the large forest-trees. It is these last objects, with live turtles, oil made from turtle fat, and dry fish, which they exchange for clothing and food at Saigun. In live turtle also they pay their tribute to the King of Cochin China, to whom the islands belong.

Of late years, Pulo Condore has rarely been visited by European voyagers. Lord Macartney, in his way to China, in 1792, touched at it with the expectation of receiving refreshments for his sick, but was disappointed, and went on to Turan. The Chief of the island informed us, that although he had seen many ships pass close by the island, none had ever come into the bay in his recollection. Five years ago, one European vessel sent her boat in, and received a few refreshments.

The Hai-nan junks carrying on the trade between that island and Siam, and now the Cochin Chinese junks trading with Singapore, make a practice of touching at Pulo Condore for wood and water, and these are the only description of vessels which frequent it. Its convenient and favourable position, as a commercial emporium, are sufficiently obvious, and did not escape the sagacity of Dampier.

We heard at Pulo Condore, that the King of Cochin China was at present residing at his capital, the city of Huè; and that Chao-Kun, the Governor of Lower Cochin China, the person of greatest influence in the kingdom, was at Saigun. We were particularly desirous of having an interview with this last individual, as well as of visiting the city of Saigun, which, with the exception of Kachao in Tonquin, was reported to be the richest and most commercial part of the kingdom. Accordingly, with this object in view, we sailed from the bay of Pulo Condore at five in the evening, directing our course for Cape St. James.

August 24.—Early yesterday morning, Cape St. James was visible at the distance of about twenty-five miles, having then the appearance of three small islands. It falling calm, however, and the tide being against us, we anchored until the afternoon, when we again made sail, and early this morning reached the Cape, and anchored off the bay of Cocoa-nuts. Cape St. James's, a promontory of from three to four hundred feet high, forms the eastern entrance of the river of Saigun, and occurring, after passing a low coast of two hundred miles extent, where not a hill or elevated spot is seen, forms an excellent land-mark for the entrance of the river, which cannot well be mistaken. Being within little more than a mile of the shore we landed, while the ship was waiting for the flood-tide. The prevailing rock which forms the hilly range of Cape St. James, is a tough, hard granite, intermixed occasionally with sienite. The mountains are wholly uncultivated, being covered with a scanty forest, of which the bamboo forms a considerable part. We heard the crowing of the wild cocks in the woods, and saw some fishing-eagles and ring-doves, but no quadrupeds.

In the afternoon, when the flood-tide made, we sailed for the anchorage of Kandyu, which we reached before dusk. As we passed the village of Pungtão, which lies in the angle of the bay, where the ridge of hills forming Cape St. James's ends, the Mandarin, or petty officer of the place, came on board with a large party of followers. He was a little, lively old man, whose age was little short of sixty. We were forcibly struck with the contrast which he and his followers formed with the first Siamese with whom we became acquainted at the entrance of the Menam. The Cochin Chinese were more decently clad, and instead of being sluggish and sullen in their manners, were lively and civil. This

officer recommended to us to write a letter to the Governor of Saigun, to be forwarded through the Chief of Kandyu, who was his superior officer. We accordingly wrote an English letter to His Excellency, with a French translation, understanding at the time that several French gentlemen were at Saigun, and that it was possible there might be no person there who could understand the original. This letter we transmitted to the Mandarin of Kandyu. He sent a polite message, in answer, to say that a list of the persons attached to the Mission, of the ship's company, and of the guns, arms, and ammunition, in the Chinese character, would be necessary to send to the Governor of Saigun, with our letter. This requisition was complied with.

The point of Kandyu may be looked upon as the actual mouth of the river on its right or western bank. From Cape St. James to this place, a distance of nine nautical miles, may be viewed rather as a bay of the sea than a portion of the river. On the western side, opposite the high lands of Cape St. James, an extensive mud-bank, proceeding from a flat shore, narrows the channel for ships entering to about two and a half nautical miles. From the edge of this bank to the shore on the eastern side, this spacious bay is not less than four and a half miles broad. In mid-channel there is everywhere from six to nine fathoms; and after you have fairly entered the river, rarely less than ten; so that this fine stream is navigable for ships of almost any burthen, and it scarcely requires a pilot throughout. Relying upon our bearings and soundings, and on our charts, we stood boldly on at night, as if we had been entering a harbour well known to us. The actual breadth of the true mouth of the river is about one and a half English mile.

We were now anchored immediately behind the Point of Kandyu, secure from every wind. To the eastward, the hills of Cape of St. James, and more to the north an elevated range of mountains, seemingly about twenty-five miles distant, were visible. Everywhere else nothing was to be seen, but the low and wooded shore, with fishing villages here and

there thinly scattered over it. The extraordinary clearness of the water, for so large a river, coming through an extensive alluvial tract, forms a striking contrast with the disturbed and muddy streams of the Ganges and Menam.

August 25.—The Mandarin of Kandyu, whose authority seems to extend over all the inhabitants about this part, amounting, as we were told, to about two thousand in number, had promised last night to pay us a visit in the course of to-day, and accordingly he came on board as early as seven o'clock in the morning, with a great number of followers. He was superior in appearance to any of those who came on board yesterday. He seemed near seventy years of age, but full of vivacity. Neither he nor those who accompanied him were, in any respect, less civil or obliging than our visitor of yesterday. We soon found our new acquaintances to be great and vehement talkers, and their conversation was accompanied by a more than moderate portion of gesticulation. It readily occurred to us, that there was in exterior, although it unquestionably amounted to nothing more, some foundation for the Cochin Chinese being called the French of India. The old chief brought us a supply of fresh fish, and we presented him, in return, with some cloth, cutlery, and what seemed to be no less welcome, some brandy. He promised to forward, with all speed, our letter to the Governor of Saigun, and said, that in a day, or a day and a half we should have a reply; and that he rested assured the Governor would be gratified with the visit which we proposed paying him.

August 26.—Mr. Finlayson, Mr. Rutherford, and myself, visited the old chief last night, and were received with great cordiality. Tea and tobacco were served to us. Kandyu is but a poor place, and the chief's residence a very paltry one; but the hospitality of our reception made some amends for the homeliness of our entertainment. At an early hour this morning he visited us again. A number of fishermen had come on board in the course of yesterday, and furnished us with an ample supply of fine fish

at very low prices. Encouraged by our prompt payment, they had repaired to us again this morning, and the old chief found two of them on board. It appears they had come *without orders*, and the followers of the man in office began, in a manner quite unexpected to us, to punish them summarily on the spot for this alleged breach of duty. Our attention was called to this practical illustration of Oriental government, by seeing one of the fishermen taken into custody; the officer, as he carried him off, cuffing him over the face, and kicking him with such ludicrous address, that his foot, at every effort, reached sometimes the loins and sometimes the shoulders of the alleged offender. The fisherman's defence consisted in throwing himself on his face, on the deck, making three prostrations, acknowledging his offence, and crying for mercy. I complained to the chief of this piece of violence; but he treated the matter very lightly, and seemed to regard the fisherman's offence rather as a breach of etiquette, or neglect of customary forms, than as any thing more serious; and assured us that it should be attended with no inconvenience to us, or farther injury to the fisherman, who was immediately released. The old man, after partaking of tea and liqueurs, left us.

In the forenoon, Mr. Rutherford and myself went on shore, and were received by the old Mandarin with the same cordiality as upon the first occasion. Requesting us to leave our Indian attendants behind, he conducted my companion and myself into his private apartments. Here we found a respectable-looking middle-aged woman, the chief's wife, and three young and comely girls, his daughters. The ladies did not appear by any means abashed or discomposed by the appearance of strangers. Seeing that we were disposed to take the diversion of shooting, the old man sent two of his principal people to accompany us, and we wandered over the fields near the village, passing through the principal part of the latter on our return. The village of Kandyu is built upon a creek, connected with the river. The inhabitants consist of about three hundred families, or between one and two thousand inhabitants. The men were, I believe, chiefly out fishing; but

the women and children were very numerous. Although the land lies here so low, the houses are all upon a level with the ground, and not raised on posts as amongst the Siamese. Our appearance excited a good deal of curiosity, and the inhabitants flocked round us in numbers, observing a very civil and respectful demeanour. The village appeared well stocked with hogs and poultry, and there were at least no outward marks of want or misery.

During our excursion, we visited two temples about a mile distant from the village. They were built of brick and lime, and roofed with red tile, having the ridges and eaves ornamented with figures of animals carved in wood and painted. Each consisted of two chambers, in the first of which was an altar of brick and lime, having upon it two figures of storks opposite to each other. The inner chamber contained a number of elevated masses of brick and mortar, resembling tombs. The walls were painted with figures of tigers and fish, and with dragons and other monstrous animals. There seemed no distinct object of worship, either statue or picture. We were told, however, that the temples were dedicated to certain great fishes, which were represented as the tutelary deities of the place, and the protectors of the fishermen of Kandyu and its neighbourhood. The mounds of brick and mortar, resembling tombs, of which I have spoken, were alleged to contain the remains of some of the fishes in question, which had been stranded on the shore of the bay of St. James.

Connected with each of the temples, was a poor mean-looking house, where justice, we were told, was administered. Near at hand was an extensive burying-ground, the tombs commonly consisting of rude mounds of earth, the outer sides now and then cased with rough stones.

August 28.—This morning early, the Mandarin of Kandyu came on board to inform us, that a reply to our letter had arrived late last night, and that a deputation had reached the place from the Governor of Saigun, to invite and escort us up to his residence. We were informed that the persons who composed the deputation, waited only for our sanction

to come on board. Upon receiving this, they accordingly came off without delay. The deputation consisted of seven Mandarins in four boats, the two largest of which, meant for our accommodation, were manned each with forty oars. The rowers were dressed in scarlet, and had on a kind of helmet, with a plume of cock's feathers. They rowed the boats standing upright, and facing the prow.

The members of the deputation were well dressed in silks, and had in all respects an air of much respectability. Their manners were brisk and lively; they spoke and laughed a great deal and seemed under no constraint. Our conversation only touched upon our visit to Saigun. We endeavoured to provide as well as we could against detention, and were assured by them that we should not be delayed there beyond three days. We had at first intended to have gone up in the ship, but finding that our passage up and down in this manner would be tedious, we abandoned the project, and resolved to proceed in the barges now sent down to receive us. In the discussion which took place, perfect urbanity and good humour were observed on the part of all the members of the deputation. Few questions were put by them, and these few were not ill-bred or importunate, as in our first intercourse with the Siamese. The most material one had for its object to ascertain whether the Mission came from the King of England, or from the Governor-general of India. To this we generally answered that His Majesty the King of England sent no embassies to any of the princes of the East, and that when they were necessary, he usually deputed his authority to the Governor-general of India. After partaking of tea and liqueurs, the deputation took their leave, and were saluted.

August 29.—At six o'clock yesterday evening, Mr. Finlayson and I embarked for Saigun. The whole of our party consisted of thirty-three persons. One of the boats afforded very comfortable accommodation for Mr. Finlayson and myself, but the rain poured down in torrents during the night, and we could not avail ourselves of the moonlight to observe the appearance

of the country as we ascended. As soon as day broke we observed, on each side of the river, a wide extent of champaign country, cultivated every where with rice, and over which villages were thickly scattered. At eight o'clock the city of Saigun was visible on the right or western bank of the river. Before coming to it we saw, for several miles, on each side of the stream a fine avenue of trees, and a public road, which we were told led to the city. At nine o'clock we reached the usual landing-place, where we had to wait for a considerable time before the house destined for our accommodation was determined on. The apology offered for this detention was, that the day was a great festival, and that the Governor and other Chiefs were engaged at the temples in their devotions.

We were, at length, conducted through a large creek, or canal, which falls into the western side of the river, and which communicates with the fortress, to the place destined for our reception. This was a large public edifice, a kind of town-hall, exactly in the form of an Indian bungalow, with a porch and arcade in front. A number of persons were employed in preparing it for our reception, and there was a great bustle. An officer and twenty soldiers were ordered as a guard for us, and double sentinels were placed at the gate to keep off the crowd, that from curiosity was pressing in to see us. A number of servants were also appointed to wait upon us. About one o'clock a deputation of two Mandarins of rank came to compliment us upon our arrival, and, losing no time, also to discuss public matters with us. These two persons, we were given to understand, were judges of the principal tribunal of the city. Their manners were very good, but had more of Chinese gravity in them than those of the persons who had come to meet us at Kandyu. They were far superior in rank to even the senior of the latter, who, I observed, stood up in their presence; for this is the attitude of respect towards superiors among the Cochin Chinese. They began by requesting that we would recommend to our followers and people a guarded conduct in their intercourse with the inhabitants of the country; for that

if any disputes arose, it would be an unpleasant matter to us, and an affair of great scandal to the Cochin Chinese Government. We assured them that the strictest injunctions had been given to our people upon the subject. After this we were asked whether the Mission was deputed by the King of England, or by the Governor-general. We replied, by the Governor-general, by whom the diplomatic intercourse with the princes of India was commonly conducted, since his Majesty the King of England was too far away to conduct such matters directly with convenience. We were then asked how long we had been from Bengal, what countries we had visited, how long we had remained in them, &c. &c. When Siam was mentioned, we were asked if we had had an audience of the King, and whether there were now any English ships there; to which questions we answered in the affirmative. The evident object of such interrogatories was to ascertain the nature of our reception, and the result of our mission. We were now asked, if we had been directed by the Governor-general of India to visit the Governor of Lower Cochin China. We said, that we had the Governor-general's sanction to do so, if we thought it necessary. The deputies answered, that if this was the case we had a letter for the Governor of Lower Cochin China as a matter of course. We said we had no letter, for it was not the custom of our Government to address a subject, however high his rank, without the authority and sanction of his own sovereign. The deputies then demanded to know for what purpose we had visited Saigun. To this question a full, and to all appearance a satisfactory explanation was given. It was then asked, if there were any presents for the King of Cochin China. In reply to this, a few of the principal articles were enumerated. This was deemed quite enough, and no farther questions were put respecting this matter.

A more difficult topic, however, was now started. The deputies had informed us, that the Governor of Lower Cochin China wished to see the letter of the Governor-general to the King, that he might have an opportunity of making a report upon it to the Capital.—We mentioned, in a few words, the purport and contents of the letter, and gave the deputies to understand, that we had offered to show it to the deputation that came to wait upon us at Kandyu, and that we had also tendered a copy and translation of it to be presented to the Governor of Lower Cochin China, but that both proposals were declined as unnecessary. We dwelt on the inconvenience and delay, at such an advanced and precarious state of the monsoon, that would attend our sending for the letter to the ship, as even a day or two was now of consequence to us. In their reply to this, they took no notice of the circumstance of the Mandarins who went to Kandyu, declining the proposal of seeing the letter there, or bringing copies of it to Saigun, but asked us how the Governor, in writing to Hué, could reasonably describe a letter, the contents of which he had no opportunity of verifying by his own inspection. We now offered to exhibit the letter to any officer who might be sent down to the ship to inspect it, and in the meantime to bring up copies and translations. This, however, was not deemed sufficient. Several messages passed and repassed between the deputies and the Governor during the conference, the purport of which we could not learn. This business ended by the Mandarins informing us that the matter would be taken into farther consideration to-morrow morning, when we should have a final answer. During this long conversation, in accordance with their mixed character of lawyers and diplomatists, no inconsiderable share of skill and dexterity in questioning and cross-questioning was displayed by the Cochin Chinese deputies. The interview lasted between five and six hours, so that, with our journey, it left us thoroughly fatigued. At parting, the Mandarins presented us, on the part of the Governor, with a quantity of rice, fruit, sugar, fowls, poultry, and a hog. The last is a description of present peculiarly demanded by the customs of the country, and never omitted on an occasion of any importance. Mr. Finlayson, who understood the Portuguese language, acted upon this occasion as interpreter, and his words were rendered into Cochin

Chinese by a very intelligent native Christian, whose name was Antonio, and who, during our stay at Saigun, proved very useful to us.

Monsieur Diard, the only French gentleman at present in the place, dined with us in the evening. This gentleman is a naturalist and physician, and travels under the latter name. He has been at Saigun only three months, having come from Hué. He had before visited Bengal, Sumatra, and Java, and is well known for his active pursuits in the department of natural history.

Aug. 30.—Immediately after breakfast this morning, we had a visit from a Mandarin of the military order, called Ong-kwan-beng. This person, a man of about fifty, of very respectable appearance, with a flowing white beard reaching nearly to his girdle, was of higher rank than our visitors of yesterday. His object was to urge the request already made for the Governor-general's letter to the King. Finding this could not be evaded, we yielded with as good grace as possible, after receiving a pledge that we should not be detained beyond three days, and that the letter should not go out of our own hands. The Mandarin was quite satisfied with this; and, in concluding the conversation, assured us that the Governor's request was strictly conformable to the laws and usages of the country, and hoped we should put no unfavourable construction upon his conduct.

While Ong-kwan-beng was with us, the two Mandarins who had visited us yesterday made their appearance. They bowed to him respectfully, but not servilely, as they came in, and seated themselves on the same bench with, but behind him. During the conversation, both to-day and yesterday, I was a little surprised to find that instead of avoiding to explain themselves through our interpreters, as was always the case in Siam, the Chiefs frequently volunteered this, and seemed indeed to give them a preference to their own.

A message came to us in the course of the day from the Governor, to say that we were at liberty to go abroad, and visit any part of the city we might think proper, and that either elephants, horses, or boats, would be supplied to us as we might prefer.

The letter of the Governor-general arrived to-day about half-past ten o'clock; the boat sent to the ship having proceeded with such despatch as to have taken in all no more than twenty-two hours in going and coming. Notice of this was, without delay, sent to the Mandarins charged with our business, and the three persons, who had visited us before, presented themselves in less than half-an-hour.

We had by this time found that our Cochin Chinese friends were extremely ceremonious, and partial to display and parade in little matters to the extent of ostentation. This humour was complied with, in exhibiting the letter of the Governor-general. As soon as it was opened, the Mandarins proceeded to inspect it minutely, examining by turns the writing, the illuminated paper, and above all the seal of the Governor-general. This being done, we proceeded jointly, through the medium of a Portuguese translation which accompanied it, to render it sentence by sentence into Cochin Chinese. After this process had gone on a little time, the deputation considered it unsatisfactory, and begged that a written translation in the Chinese character might be effected. This was done accordingly. They now examined my credentials, and begged a Chinese translation of those also, and they farther required English and Portuguese copies of all the documents. This too was acceded to. On perusing the translation in the Chinese character, the Mandarins expressed entire satisfaction at the general purport of the letter; but advanced many objections to particular expressions, which they declared it was impossible to submit to his Majesty the King of Cochin China; the use of them, they said, however respectfully meant, being against the laws of the country. For example, towards the conclusion of the letter of the Governor-general, "His Excellency sends certain presents in token of his profound respect and esteem for His Majesty the Emperor of Cochin China." This was not to be endured, because, as the matter was explained to us, profound respect and esteem must be considered as matters of course from any one that addressed His Majesty of Cochin China. At the suggestion

of the Mandarins, the passage was rendered as follows: "I send your Majesty certain presents, because you are a great King." Strong objection was made to the expression in which His Excellency had disclaimed any wish for lands or fortresses; because it was not to be imagined for a moment that any one could desire lands or fortresses belonging to the King of Cochin China, and the disclaiming the wish to obtain commercial factories alone was inserted. In the letter of the Governor-general, His Majesty was styled Emperor of Anam, a common term for Tonquin and Cochin China; and as it was well known that he had conquered a great part of Kamboja, and, as was asserted of Lao, Sovereign of these countries, also was added to his titles. This was much objected to, and the Mandarins informed me that it was no honour to the King of Cochin China to be styled "a king of slaves," for as such, it seems, the inhabitants of the conquered provinces are deemed by the governing race, that is, by the Anam nation, which includes both Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese. After the conference was over, I asked the Christian interpreter, in consequence of hearing this last observation, what opinion the Cochin Chinese entertained of the people of Kamboja. He had visited Bengal, and said without hesitation, "pretty much the same opinion that the English entertain of the black inhabitants of Hindoostan!!" The whole of this tedious conference lasted eight hours. The luckless interpreter, Antonio, was so overcome with the intricacy, not to say the danger of his part of the task, and the difficulty of pleasing every body, that he declared, that to have done it justice, would have required the head of an elephant!

Sept. 1.—Not satisfied with the tedious details of yesterday, and the pains taken to satisfy his Majesty's, the King of Cochin China's, feelings in the Chinese translation, one of the Mandarins returned this morning to inform us, that, on mature consideration, it was decided that there were still two improper words in the Chinese translation. These were accordingly rectified. He then informed us, that duplicate copies of the Governor-general's letter in English, in Portuguese, and in Chinese; of my credentials in the same languages, and duplicates of my letter to the Governor of Saigun in English and French, with a Chinese translation, also in duplicate, were farther wanted. The object of these voluminous documents was, that one copy of them might be sent to Court, and another kept at Saigun. They were so particular, in regard to these papers, that each required my personal seal and signature.

All this was completed by twelve o'clock, at which hour we set off to pay a visit to the town of Saigun, accompanied by Monsieur Diard. The town properly called Saigun, is about three miles distant from the residence of the Governor of the province. It is situated upon a small river, navigable for good-sized boats all the way to Kamboja, with which it is the principal medium of communication. Straggling houses nearly join the fort and residence of the Governor with Saigun. The banks of the stream are well cultivated on both sides, and extensive plantations of areca palm form the principal object of culture. At the town of Saigun the river forms many branches and canals. Over these are bad bridges, consisting of one or two planks. The river, however, is usually ferried over in boats. The regulation of these ferries is a little singular. The women alone pay, and all the men, under pretext of being the King's servants, that is, public officers, pass freight-free. A similar regulation exists in the Menam. The principal bazar is a wide and spacious street. The numerous shops were not rich, but sufficiently neat. The principal articles exposed for sale were Chinese earthenware, manufactured silks, chiefly of Tonquin, and of the place itself, and commonly made up into dresses, paper, and great quantities of amazingly coarse tea from the northern provinces, which had more the appearance of broken tobacco-leaves than real tea. There was abundance of poultry, including the common fowl, [illegible], and geese, which last are not reared in Siam, and rarely in any Malay country, except where Europeans reside. There were also plenty of hogs, of an excellent breed. The want of intercourse, direct or in-

direct, with European nations, was sufficiently evinced by the general absence of European manufactures. A few common glass-bottles, and some broad cloth, were all that was to be seen.

Women alone attended in the shops. The sex was to be seen going abroad every where, without any reserve. Judging from the specimen we saw to-day, the Cochin Chinese women appear to be well and becomingly attired. Many of them were much fairer in complexion than we could have expected, and some were handsome, making due allowance for the peculiarity of their features, or what, at least, is considered such, according to our notions of beauty. The appearance of Saigun is respectable for an Indian town. A large proportion of the houses are covered with tiles instead of thatch. The houses of the Chinese are all good, and such as we visited during the day, spacious, comfortable, and, after their fashion, well furnished.

Our appearance excited a good deal of curiosity, unaccompanied however by the slightest appearance of rudeness. The reception we met with from the Chinese merchants was most hospitable and flattering. Three of the principal families, without giving us any previous notice, presented themselves at the doors of their respective houses, and invited us separately to come in. In each house we found a handsome entertainment ready prepared for us, served up with much neatness and propriety. Not satisfied with providing for ourselves, a board was also spread for all who accompanied us, including our Indian servants and Cochin Chinese escort. The persons whose hospitality and urbanity we now experienced, were all descendants of Chinese long settled in the country, and in point both of manners and intelligence were of a very superior order. The Chinese of Saigun amount in all to between three and four thousand in number. They have several temples, and that which belongs to the Chinese of Canton is the handsomest building of the sort that I have any [illegible] seen. We returned about five o'clock in the evening, well satisfied with our visit.

Sept. 2.—Every thing was arranged last night for our audience, and, at the desire of the Mandarins, a Chinese list of the presents, written according to the custom of the country upon a scrap of pink-coloured paper, was transmitted. Little previous arrangement was made for our reception, or for the ceremonies we were to perform on our introduction; indeed, no stress appeared to be laid upon matters of this last description. Every thing being ready, about half-past seven o'clock I made a demand for the palanquins or elephants that were to convey us. There were none ready, and I was given to understand indirectly, that it was expected we should go on foot. I gave those that communicated with us to understand, that we would not move a step without a suitable conveyance, and in less than ten minutes five elephants were produced to accommodate us. This was evidently an attempt of some of the lower Mandarins to impose upon us, and I make no question was wholly unknown to the Governor. About eight o'clock we quitted our house for the palace, accompanied by thirteen of our attendants, but leaving the guard of sepoys behind us. Mr. Finlayson carried the letter of the Governor-general. A number of spearmen on foot, and some horsemen mounted on small spirited ponies, similar to those of the Indian islands, accompanied the procession. In about twenty minutes we reached the fort, to which the canal, on the banks of which our house was situated, leads by a straight course, having a good road on each side of it. A great number of spearmen were drawn out to receive us along every avenue of the fort through which we passed, and especially in front of the hall of audience. We did not dismount from our elephants until we came within a hundred yards of the latter. This building was quite open in front, very long but narrow, and entirely constructed of wood, nowhere either varnished or painted. It was altogether a poor place; and the houses of the Chinese, which we visited yesterday at Saigun, were real palaces compared to it. It is the custom of the Cochin Chinese to sit either upon broad tables, elevated about a foot and a half from the ground, or upon platforms raised about

eight or nine inches from it; those of highest rank, in either case, sitting in front, and those of inferior rank behind. These benches, or platforms, are always covered with handsome mats. In the middle of the hall was one of the platforms in question, somewhat higher than usual, on which the Governor was seen sitting. We advanced in front and made him a bow, which was not returned. Chairs were pointed out to us to the Governor's right-hand, of which we took possession. On his left was seated by himself the second in authority, a venerable and fine-looking old man about seventy. The rest of the Governor's Court were seated on the same side with us, but behind us, upon another platform. The first in place among these was Ong-kwan-beng, the military Mandarin who had transacted business with us. The old Governor is by repute an eunuch, but without having been told so, we probably should not have discovered it. He was, indeed, totally destitute of beard; but the beards of the Cochin Chinese in general, although they are fond of wearing them, are usually very scanty. His voice also was feeble and feminine, but not to so remarkable a degree as to excite suspicion.

This individual, who acted a distinguished part in the late wars and revolution of Cochin China, was, at the period of our visit, fifty-eight years of age. His countenance was animated and intelligent, his person rather short and slender, but he appeared active and subject to no bodily infirmity but the tooth-ache, which had deprived him of a great part of his teeth. The other Mandarins were richly dressed in figured silk. The Governor, on the contrary, seemed to be careless and indifferent about his dress, which consisted of a plain black silk gown and a crape turban of the same colour.

He began his conversation with us, by asking how long we had been on our voyage; after getting a reply to which, he proceeded at once to the main subject, and said that the English were welcome to trade in Cochin China, complying with the laws of the country; that the imports

were not heavy, and that they were the same to all nations. We answered, that this was exactly what the Governor-general of India desired and no more. The Governor added, that if the Cochin Chinese, for the purposes of trade, visited the British dominions, they must submit to our laws; and if we came to Cochin China we must do the same thing. It was replied, that friendship and good understanding could not exist among nations on any other terms. The Governor then observed, that he would forward a particular account of our Mission to the capital, and recommend us to the Mandarin of Elephants, the chief of the foreign department. He now observed, that kings only wrote to kings, and that his Majesty the King of England should have written to the King of Cochin China, and that the Governor-general should have addressed himself to the Mandarin of Elephants. We explained, as we had done on similar occasions before, that the King of England was at too great a distance to be able conveniently to maintain a direct correspondence with the princes of the East, which, therefore, was principally conducted by the Governor-general of India. He answered, that this practice was totally contrary to the customs of Cochin China, but that the informality, on the commencement of a friendly intercourse, should prove no obstruction to the Embassy. We now offered to present his Excellency with a few presents from the Governor-general of India, and the Chinese list of them was read by a secretary. His Excellency, after the list was read, said that he felt obliged to the Governor-general of India for his politeness in sending presents to him; but that the negociation being in a state of abeyance, he could not now with propriety accept of them; but as he hoped many English vessels would visit Saigun hereafter, there would be time enough for presents. We made no objection whatever to this, which struck us at the time as forming so remarkable a contrast with the rapacity of the Siamese officers on similar occasions.

We were now asked when we wished to leave Saigun. The time was mentioned. The Governor answered that every thing would be in readi-

ness for our accommodation. We fully expected that the Governor-general's letter would have been opened, if only out of curiosity; but the Chief simply looked at it, without even taking it from its silk envelope, and politely returned it immediately, requesting, that as we were about to amuse ourselves, it might be sent back to our residence; and he ordered, as a mark of respect, three caparisoned elephants to accompany it. In the course of conversation, the Governor asked my companions' age, and my own. Our Indian servants and their dresses excited his notice, as they did that of every body else during our visit. The Cochin Chinese are total strangers to the inhabitants of Hindustan, of whom not an individual is found residing at Saigun. Their persons, features, manners, and costume, therefore, excited a far greater degree of curiosity than any thing respecting ourselves.

After tea was served to us, we were invited to be present at an elephant and tiger fight; and for this purpose mounted our elephants, and repaired to the glacis of the fort, where the combat was to take place. The Governor went out at another gate, and arrived at the place before us in his palanquin. When the hall broke up, a herald or crier announced the event. With the exception of this ceremony, great propriety and decorum were observed throughout the audience. The exhibition made by the herald, however, was truly barbarous. He threw himself backward, projecting his abdomen, and putting his hands to his sides, and in this absurd attitude uttered several loud and long yells. The tiger had been exhibited in front of the hall, and was driven to the spot on a hurdle. A great concourse of people had assembled to witness the exhibition. The tiger was secured to a stake by a rope tied round his loins, about thirty yards long. The mouth of the unfortunate animal was sewn up, and his nails pulled out. He was of large size, and extremely active. No less than forty-six elephants, all males of great size, were seen drawn out in line. One at a time was brought to attack the tiger. The first elephant advanced, to all appearance with a great show of courage, and we

thought from his determined look that he would certainly have dispatched his antagonist in an instant. At the first effort he raised the tiger upon his tusks to a considerable height, and threw him to the distance of at least twenty feet. Notwithstanding this the tiger rallied, and sprang upon the elephant's trunk and head up to the very keeper, who was upon his neck. The elephant took alarm, wheeled about and ran off, pursued by the tiger as far as the rope would allow him. The fugitive, although not hurt, roared most piteously, and no effort could bring him back to the charge. A little after this, we saw a man brought up to the Governor, bound with cords, and dragged into his presence by two officers. This was the conductor of the recreant elephant. A hundred strokes of the bamboo were ordered to be inflicted upon him on the spot. For this purpose he was thrown on his face upon the ground, and secured by one man sitting astride upon his neck and shoulders, and by another sitting upon his feet, a succession of executioners inflicting the punishment. When it was over, two men carried off the sufferer by the head and heels, apparently quite insensible. While this outrage was perpetrating, the Governor coolly viewed the combat of the tiger and elephant, as if nothing else particular had been going forward. Ten or twelve elephants were brought up in succession to attack the tiger, which was killed at last merely by the astonishing falls he received when tossed off the tusks of the elephants. The prodigious strength of these animals was far beyond any thing which I could have supposed. Some of them tossed the tiger to a distance of at least thirty feet, after he was nearly lifeless, and could offer no resistance. We could not reflect without horror, that these very individual animals were the same that have for years executed the sentence of the law upon the many malefactors condemned to death. Upon these occasions a single toss, such as I have described, is always, I am told, sufficient to destroy life.

After the tiger-fight we had a mock battle, the intention of which was to represent elephants charging an intrenchment. A sort of *chevaux*

de frise was erected to the extent of forty or fifty yards, made of very frail materials. Upon this was placed a quantity of dry grass, whilst a show was made of defending it, by a number of spearmen placed behind. As soon as the grass was set on fire, a number of squibs and crackers were let off; flags were waved in great numbers; drums beat, and a single piece of artillery began to play. The elephants were now encouraged to charge; but they displayed their usual timidity, and it was not until the fire was nearly extinguished, and the materials of the *chevaux de frise* almost consumed, that a few of the boldest could be forced to pass through.

After these amusements were over, the Governor begged us to come near and converse with him. He wished to know the precise time we wanted to depart, and hearing that we had fixed on to-morrow morning, was extremely anxious that we should put off our journey for a couple of days, that we might see more of the town, and above all, that he might exhibit to us a dramatic entertainment. We urged the precarious state of the monsoon, and our great anxiety to secure our passage to Hué. Seeing that we were intent on proceeding on our voyage without delay, he said that every thing should be ready for us at as early an hour as we might think proper to name. The orders respecting our departure were accordingly given on the spot, and we had thus an opportunity of seeing how such matters are conducted in Cochin China. The Governor delivered his commands personally, in a high tone of official authority, and twelve or fourteen inferior Mandarins received them standing before him. As soon as he had done speaking they made the accustomed obeisance, which consisted in prostrating themselves four successive times upon the ground, their faces being prevented from touching the earth only by their joined hands, which were placed before them. His Excellency asked what provisions we required for ourselves and the ship's crew, and requested us to specify them, that our wants might be fully supplied. We answered, that we stood in need of nothing, but made

suitable acknowledgments for this liberal offer. Having made our bow we took leave, after thanking him for the polite and handsome reception he had given us, and we returned to our residence. In our progress to the Governor's palace and back, a great crowd of the populace followed us. Their conduct was lively and playful, but by no means disrespectful. The soldiers who accompanied us never interfered with them, as long as they took care not to mix with the procession, but whenever they did, the rattan was liberally applied, and the offenders retreated, generally with a hearty laugh.

We had scarcely reached home, when one of the principal Mandarins came with the compliments of the Governor, and a present of provisions. These consisted of a live buffalo, a hog, a quantity of poultry, rice, and fruit. This Mandarin informed us, that the Governor, though he could not publicly accept of any present, would be happy to accept privately of the pistols and telescope which we had offered. I returned my respects to say, that I should be happy to send them. They were not however taken; the Governor, in lieu of them, requesting we would send him some fine gunpowder, on our return to the ship; which was done. A little time after this, arrived, with great ceremony, a hog roasted whole, with a large quantity of dressed rice, another present from the Governor. This, according to the customs of the country, is considered a token of proffered friendship.

In the afternoon we took an early dinner with M. Diard, and viewed his collection of animals. From this gentleman we received many marks of civility and attention, during our short residence at Saigun. In the evening we went through the markets and town of Pingeh, for this is the proper name of the Governor's residence. The streets for an Indian town are wide and regular, and the bazars well supplied with every thing necessary to the comfort of the people according to their notions. We visited a pretty, gaudy, little Cochin Chinese temple, dedicated to the Chinese form of worship. We expected to have found many temples

of Buddha, in a place so near to those countries where his religion is universal, but hitherto we had met none. As we passed along one of the streets in this excursion, our curiosity was excited by observing two persons in violent altercation. They were sitting upon the ground, and one had a hold of the waistband of the other from behind. This last was a woman, who charged her prisoner, an eunuch, as we were informed, with defrauding her of some property. This was according to a custom of the country. When one person charges another with an offence, he has only to lay hold of him or her by the waistband, and the law expects that the accused shall forthwith submit to this species of arrest without offering any resistance.

Sept. 3.—At six this morning, the hour appointed for our departure, every thing was ready for our accommodation, with a punctuality any thing but Oriental, and we left Saigun with the same number of boats and attendants with which we had come to it. The river of Saigun, which is called by the natives the Saong, does not appear to me to be quite so broad as the Menam, but it is broad enough for all useful purposes, and so deep and free from dangers everywhere, that the largest ships may go with perfect security up to the city, and much further if it were necessary. Its banks, for twenty-five miles below the city, are one extensive sheet of rice cultivation, but from thence to the sea the water is salt, and unfit for irrigation or culture, and the country is extremely low, and covered by a forest of undersized trees, fit for no purpose but fire-wood. At eight o'clock we came to the mouth of the river which leads to Dong-nai, a considerable town about two days' journey from Saigun, which gives name to the whole province. The river of Dong-nai is navigable for vessels of considerable burden. About fifteen miles before coming to Kandyu, there is the mouth of another considerable river, to the same side which leads to a place called Bariya, towards the hills which are visible to the east. Here there are said to be manufactories of silk. We reached the ship between four and five o'clock, the whole voyage having taken up little more than ten hours, and having proved a very agreeable one. Neither in ascending nor descending the river did we observe any defences whatever. The smallest vessel of war might, therefore, go up to the city without a pilot, and destroy it without risk or opposition.

The city of Saigun is, as I think I have already mentioned, about fifty miles from the sea. The place consists of two distinct towns, at the distance of three miles from each other. Pingeh, the seat of the Governor and of the citadel, lies on the western bank of the great river, and Saigun, properly so called, is situated upon a small river, which communicates directly with Pingeh. Saigun is the principal seat of commerce, and the residence of the Chinese and other merchants, though the river on which it lies is navigable only for small craft, and the larger junks all lie before Pingeh. This seems to be a matter of very little inconvenience, where the navigation is always so sure and easy for cargo-boats. These two towns are nearly about the same size, but I could not gain any specific information respecting the amount of their population. During the period we were at Saigun, the whole of the junks for the northward and eastward were absent, having sailed on their respective voyages, and there remained only six junks for the Straits of Malacca and Siam. As we saw Bang-kok, it certainly presented a far busier scene of commerce than Saigun, and its actual commerce is indeed much superior. By the accounts we obtained at the latter place, the actual foreign commerce of the place amounts to no more than between 7 and 8000 tons.

The citadel of Saigun, or rather of Pingeh, is, in form, a parallelogram, distant from half a mile to three-quarters of a mile from the western bank of the river, the principal part of the town intervening. I conjecture, from appearance, that the longest side of the square may be about three-quarters of a mile in length. The original plan appears to have been European, but left incomplete. It has a regular glacis, an esplanade, a dry ditch of con-

siderable breadth, and regular ramparts and bastions. With the exception of the four principal gateways, the whole of the fortress is constructed of earth, now covered everywhere with a green sward. There are no guns mounted any where, though there be several hundred lying in the arsenal. The gates consist of four large and as many small ones. The large gateways are built of stone and lime, and are very substantially constructed, although a Chinese tower, with a double-canopied roof gives them a grotesque and unmilitary appearance. The approach to them is by a zig-zag in the glacis, and they are connected with the counterscarp by a mound, without any drawbridge. The two angles of the Fort which came within our view were protected by horn-works. The fortress, as it now stands, is not capable of regular defence. One angle of it approaches so near to the river, that a ship of war might breach it in a few hours. The interior is neatly laid out and clean, and presents an appearance of European order and arrangement. The principal buildings consist of the officers' quarters, barracks, arsenals, and the residence of the Governor. There is a good parade, and the place is not incumbered, as usually happens in Indian fortifications, with a motley assemblage of huts, sheds, and petty buildings. The late King made this place the seat of his Government during the rebellion, but on recovering the northern provinces he removed to the old capital.

Saigun proved to us a far more agreeable residence than Bang-kok, and I have no doubt that the character of the people, and the nature of the country itself, would always render it so to any European visitor. The average of the thermometer at noon, during our six days' stay, was 81°. Venomous and troublesome insects, the plague of all hot and low countries, are fewer at Saigun than it is easy to imagine in such a situation. We saw few ants or flies while we were there, and mosquitoes were so little troublesome that we might have slept with little inconvenience without gauze curtains. This could not be ascribed to the season, for it was the very height of the rains when insects are always most abundant; nor

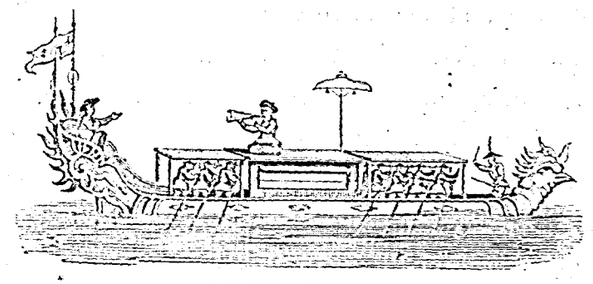
to our situation, for we were upon the very banks of a canal which was always dry at low-water. The markets afford the necessaries and even comforts of life in great plenty and cheapness. For hogs and for poultry, the latter consisting of geese, ducks, and common fowls, the soil and climate appears to be peculiarly favourable. A hog weighing 200lb. may be had for seven Spanish dollars, which is less than twopence-a-pound; ducks and common fowls are found in greater perfection here than in any other part of India, being remarkable both for size and flavour. The first, which are in great demand among the Cochin Chinese themselves, may be had eight for a Spanish dollar; and of fowls, which are hardly ever eaten by the natives, twenty-four or twenty-five may be had for the same money. The latter are all of the game breed. The Cochin Chinese are great cock-fighters; his Excellency, the present Governor, fights cocks regularly twice a month, and invites the chiefs to be present. Goats are in considerable numbers, and the sheep, an animal which seldom thrives in the damp climates near the equator, thrives tolerably at Saigun. The race is a small hardy breed, similar to that of Lower Bengal. They are much more cheap and abundant, however, I am given to understand, at Kang-kao in Kamboja than at Saigun. The buffalo and the ox are both of them very good and very cheap, and may be had in any quantity. The variety and the excellence of the fish can scarcely be equalled. Besides river-fish, great quantities of sea-fish are brought up fresh for the market of Saigun; the largest kind being conveyed by dragging them after the boats, and the smaller in wells in their bottoms. During our short stay, we were daily supplied from the ordinary markets, with the three best fish which the Indian seas afford, the cockup, the pomfret, and the mango fish, all exquisite in their kind. There are, however, besides the articles now enumerated, others exhibited for sale in the market of Saigun, not so well suited to the European taste, such as the flesh of dogs and alligators. These, indeed, are in little esteem, and not eaten by persons of any consideration. The first day we arrived, we saw two whole alligators carried upon men's shoulders to the

market, and afterwards frequently saw the flesh of this animal cut up in large junks, and exposed for sale in the stalls and booths. The price of rice, when we were at Saigun, was a dollar a picul. This was considered extravagantly high. For fruit, the season of our visit was the most unfavourable in all tropical countries to the north of the equator. We found, however, abundance of oranges, and plenty of ordinary fruits, such as pumplenoses, bananas, and custard-apples. In their proper seasons, I am told, that the mango, the lichi, and orange, are in great perfection; but, upon the whole, Saigun, for variety of fruits, is far inferior to Bang-kok. Neither the mangostin nor the durian, so abundant in the Malay countries to the south of Saigun, and in Siam to the north of it, are found here. Whether this has arisen from carelessness, or real unsuitableness of soil and climate, we could not learn; but, in all probability, to the former.*

Sept. 4.—Early this morning, Antonio, the Portuguese interpreter, who had come down with us from Saigun, came on board, bringing us a small present of fruit from the Chief of Kandyu. He received a sum of money and a piece of cloth for his services. The amount of the donation, although far from extravagant, surprised him exceedingly; for persons in his situation are miserably rewarded in Cochin China. He begged for a certificate of his skill and good conduct, which he might present to English merchants frequenting the place; for on the visits of strangers, he said, his fortune depended. This favour was readily granted. He took this opportunity of informing us, that his pursuit was a very difficult and critical one, and that even since our arrival he had been in constant terror of the bamboo, which he complimented us by saying he had escaped through our discretion. When the two American ships visited Saigun about a year before, he told us he had received fifty strokes for an error in judgment respecting the delivery of a certain supply of rice to one of the ships in question.

* At Singapore we afterwards received occasional supplies from Saigun of the largest and finest oranges I ever saw.

At eight o'clock in the morning we set sail, and at ten passed Cape St. James with a strong and favourable breeze. When about two and a half miles to the east of it, and pursuing the course laid down in the common nautical directions, we came suddenly upon the edge of a sand-bank, and struck soundings in two and a half fathoms water, nearly the ship's draft. We immediately hauled up, and steering a westerly course, were soon out of danger. This shoal is not laid down either in the charts of M. Dayot or Captain Ross. At night we had heavy squalls and much rain, and were, notwithstanding, compelled to pass through the channel between Cow Island and the De Brito Shoal. This last has its name from a Portuguese navigator, who suffered shipwreck upon it.



Cochin Chinese State Boat.

CHAPTER IX.

Voyage along the Coast of Cochin China. — Account of its Harbours.—Arrival in Touran Harbour.—Visit from the civil Mandarin of the place.—Description of the Town of Touran. —The Mission receives a Letter and Presents from the Governor of Fai-fo.—Visits made to the Villages in the neighbourhood of Touran.—Invitation to the Court.—Voyage to Hué, the Cochin Chinese Capital, and arrival there.

Sept. 5.—To-day, at noon, we were in latitude 11° 26′, after passing Cape Pandaran, considered the Cape of Good Hope of Cochin Chinese navigation, on account of the difficulty of weathering it, and the heavy sea which rolls in upon it, owing to its exposed situation, the coast immediately changing its direction after passing it, and trending suddenly to the north. All the way from Cape St. James, there was nothing but high coast, and many chains of mountains running in a north-east and south-west direction. The shores, in many situations, consist of sand-hills—the mountains are covered with a scanty forest, and the whole aspect of the coast is that of great sterility. Thus far the south-west monsoon blew strong and steady, and we sailed, with little exception, between eight and nine knots an hour, during the last twenty-four.

Sept. 6.—Yesterday afternoon we lost the monsoon, were becalmed, at night—had a regular land-wind, and to-day a sea-breeze. The coast was here extremely bold, and the country as far as we could see very mountainous; the peaks of some hills appearing to be not short of three thousand feet high. The coast of Cochin China, after passing Cape Pandaran, becomes a great deal more broken and indented,—has small islands scattered along it, and abounds with ports and harbours, perhaps beyond

any other country in the world. To-day, at noon, we were in latitude 12° 6′, having the bay of Ya-trang within a few miles of us. This, which is protected by the large island Tre, forms a good harbour. A river which falls into it, and is navigable for vessels drawing seven and eight feet water, conducts to the town of Ya-trang, which gives name to the bay. At this place the late King caused a fortification to be constructed, after the European manner, under the direction of M. Olivier, a French engineer. The place was besieged in the year 1794 and 1795, by the rebel brothers, the Tysuns, and relieved by the King's fleet, after a siege of six months. It is well situated, and commands the province of Ya-trang and the neighbouring ones. This place is the entrepôt of the commerce of all this part of the country, and the seat of considerable manufactories of silk. It is four days' long journeys by land from Saigun, and five from the capital.

Sept. 7—Yesterday evening we passed the harbour of Kon-köe, represented by M. Dayot as a very fine one; but at which a few fishermen only reside. Early this morning, we were off Cape Varela, the most remarkable point of Cochin Chinese navigation. The mountain forming the Cape, seems to be between fifteen hundred and two thousand feet high. On one of the peaks is a remarkable rock, representing the appearance of a huge broken and falling column; which is seen from fifteen to eighteen leagues distant, either from the north or south. This mountain has the reputation of containing veins of silver, and is known to contain, at about half its height, a hot-spring of remarkably high temperature. Immediately after passing Cape Varela, the land recedes, and the coast is much less elevated. This recess forms the great bay of Fu-yin. In this bay is situated the finest port in all Cochin China, and which consists of three distinct harbours, all represented as excellent. The province of Fu-yin which gives name to the bay and port, is the finest in Cochin China. In entering the harbour, according to M. Dayot, the prospect is highly pleasing. The land is cultivated from the sea-side all the way to the tops of

the hills, and the country everywhere interspersed with houses and cottages, giving to the whole the appearance of one extensive garden. From the rugged mountains with which the coast is bound, so rich a country could scarcely be looked for. Rice is the great object of culture in the province of Fu-yin, as, indeed, in every tropical country of the East distinguished for fertility. The town of Fu-yin is about four short day's journey by land from Hué. Our Chinese interpreter, who had travelled from Saigun to the capital, stated that the road from Fu-yin as far as Hué was excellent; but that that from Fu-yin to Saigun was mountainous and difficult.

We had now regular land and sea-breezes. Our latitude at noon was 13°. In the morning early, we could count, coasting close to the shore, thirteen small junks, of from five to seven hundred piculs burthen, returning, as we were informed, from the Capital to Saigun, after discharging their cargoes of rice, and other articles of revenue and contribution.

Sept. 8.—In the course of the night, we passed the harbour of Kwin-nyon (Quin-hone,) about the latitude 13° 41′. This place is accessible only to vessels drawing no more than three or three and a-half fathoms water. Its principal protection is formed by a narrow tongue of land, about four miles in extent, which is fortified. Within fifteen miles of the port is a city of the same name, before the late rebellion a place of great trade. A river nearly connects it with the port, and a number of other small rivers fall into the latter, which give great facilities to the communication between the harbour and the country. Lying nearly in the centre of the kingdom, Kwin-nyon is looked upon as of much importance by the Cochin Chinese, but does not appear at present to be a place of any considerable trade. The vicinity is a country of extensive rice culture. M. Dayot informs us, that it was here, in the year 1792, that the late King obtained a signal and decisive victory over the rebel brothers, capturing six ships of war, ninety large gallies, and upwards of a hundred of inferior size, and three hundred and thirty-seven pieces of

artillery, of which forty-six were good brass cannon. Kwin-nyon is three long days' journey by land from the Capital. The coast still preserved the same appearance of low hills after passing Varella Point, but appeared less rude and rugged than that to the south. Our latitude at noon was 14° 30′, nearly in the parallel of Tang-kwan, in the river of which the late King, in 1793, obtained another and final naval victory over the rebel brothers, capturing sixty gallies. Land and sea-breezes continued regularly.

Sept. 10.—We had nothing on the 8th and 9th but calms and light airs. We were to-day, at 12 o'clock, in the latitude of 15° 14′, in the channel between the main and Pulo Canton, called Callao Rai by the Cochin Chinese. This island appears to be about four miles in length, and consists of a tract of low land, with three distinct hills running through its length. It is, although apparently not rich, well cultivated, and well peopled. The appearance of the main-land is here much changed. There is an extensive tract of low land, interspersed with rising grounds between the sea and the high-land, and this last appears to be cultivated and inhabited. Nearer the shore there are extensive downs, with only a tuft of trees here and there. We counted off the coast, this morning, about ninety fishing-boats, all of good size, and under sail. This seemed to show that we were in the vicinity of a populous country.

Sept. 12.—Calms and light winds still continued to prevail. Last evening we passed through the cluster of islands called Cham Calao, which lie within a few miles of the point which forms the northern entrance of Touran harbour. This group consists of eight islands, of which one only is of considerable size, probably four miles in length. Their aspect is bold and barren, covered with a low wood, and exhibiting, both on the shore and throughout their surfaces, the huge bare masses of rock. All these islands are uncultivated, but in a bay lying on the south-west side of the great island, there is a small village of fishermen. A strong current running through the channel, between the Cham Islands and the main, and which was adverse to us, compelled us early at night to come to an an-

chor. At daylight this morning we weighed, and stood on our course. We counted forty fishing-boats which had come out of the river of Fai-fo as we ran close along the coast. These were of a different construction and equipment from the neater vessels which we had seen near Saigun. The latter had two masts, which raked much aft, and lug-sails; the former had three masts, with a small sail on each, and a fourth between the main and foremast.

Sept. 15.—Light airs and calms, and an adverse current running at the rate of three miles an hour, baffled all our efforts to gain the entrance of the harbour of Touran until yesterday afternoon, when a favourable sea-breeze of a few hours continuance enabled us to accomplish our object. In the evening we anchored off the great cape which forms the southern entrance of the harbour. This morning being calm, a party landed to examine the coast, which was within a mile and a half of us. The ridge of mountains of which it is composed is not less than 1400 feet high, and its acclivity very steep. The shore itself is so bold, and the swell of the sea was so considerable, although a calm, that landing was a matter of some difficulty and even peril. No rock was to be seen but granite of a grey colour and small grained, exhibiting frequent embedded masses of mica and quartz. The forest which covers the mountains is very stunted, and fit for no purpose but fire-wood. A number of wood-cutters were close at hand, employed in felling it for this purpose, and several boats were loading with it on the coast. In a very short search we obtained a number of interesting and beautiful plants, differing entirely from what our travels had yet afforded us, and indicating plainly that we had arrived in a new vegetable zone. The sea-breeze sprung up about ten o'clock in the morning, and we got, with great facility, into the harbour, where we anchored between twelve and one o'clock. The harbour of Touran is spacious, secure, and easily defended. It is completely land-locked. Two-thirds of the circumference of the bay is formed by an amphitheatre of mountains, the feet of which are washed by the sea, and some of the peaks appear to be not less than

2000 feet high. To the south-east side alone the mountains are wanting, and here is the seat of culture and population, and where lies the arm of the sea or gullet which conducts to Fai-fo.

We saluted the fort, after anchoring, with twenty-one guns, which was returned with three. At half-past two o'clock, a Mandarin came on board. This was the Civil Chief of the place. His appearance was respectable, and his manner unassuming. He informed us that he and the Military Mandarin were only deputies of the Governor of Fai-fo or rather Fu-chim, for this last is the name of the chief town and province, and that it was necessary for him to make a report of our arrival to this officer; for which purpose he requested a list of the persons composing the Mission,—of the ships, crew, &c. The list had been prepared beforehand in Chinese, and was immediately put into his hands. The questions put by this visitor were neither numerous nor importunate. He wished to know, as others did, whether the Mission was from the King of England, or the Governor-general of India. We satisfied him upon this subject, and gave him a similar explanation to that which I had occasion to give at Saigun. He said, that in three days there would be an answer from the Governor of Fai-fo, and that he hoped in ten days more we should be invited to the Court. This person, who had visited China, spoke the Chinese dialect of the province of Canton fluently; and as our Chinese interpreter was a native of that part of China, we had an easy means of communicating with him.

Sept. 16.—M. Borel, a French gentleman, who had a commercial establishment at Touran, and who, with his brother, were the only Europeans at the place, paid us a visit this forenoon. M. Borel informed us, that our visit to Saigun had been known for the last six days at Court, and that, of course, our arrival was every hour expected.

Sept. 19.—Yesterday forenoon we had a visit from the Civil Mandarin of Touran, the same person who had come on board the first day of our arrival. We thought he had brought some decisive answer from the Go-

vernor of Fai-fo; but the visit, ostensibly at least, was one of mere ceremony. He entered into very familiar converse with us, asking many questions respecting the ship, her cannon, equipment, &c. At his particular desire, he was shown every part of the vessel.

In consequence of an invitation from our visitor, I went on shore to-day with Mr. Finlayson and Mr. Rutherford, to pay him a visit. The village of Touran is a little way up the creek which leads to Fai-fo, on the right-hand as you enter it. At the angle formed between the sea and the river, there is a neat earthen redoubt; and on the opposite side, but a good way back, are two more. The ramparts of all these redoubts were manned with armed men—a spearman and a musqueteer being alternately posted. This was done in compliment to us. After being presented with a dessert of sweetmeats and tea, at the public hall where the Mandarin met us, we were sent with proper guides to see the village and its market. It is superior to what I expected, and is probably greatly improved since the time of Lord Macartney's visit, in 1793. The creek, on which it is situated, is about two hundred yards broad at its entrance, and probably half as much at the village. Within there is every where a sufficient depth of water; but it is obstructed at its mouth by a bar of sand, on which there is no more than six feet at the highest spring-tides, and it is often bare at low water. The whole of this part of the country, including the site of the village, is nothing but a plain of sand, over which there is here and there a little scanty soil. The place is dry, and, I should suppose, generally healthy; for there are no noisome mud flats, or other obvious sources of insalubrity, near it—the shore and even banks of the river consisting every where of nothing but hard, clean sand. The market appeared to be well supplied with every thing necessary to the comfort of the people. Fish, poultry, rice, pulses, and coarse tea, were in abundance. All the venders and the greater proportion of the buyers were women. Europeans are by no means such strangers here as at Saigun, and therefore our appearance excited no particular curiosity. The inhabitants were every where, however, remarkable for their

civility and good humour. The distance from the village to the anchorage cannot be less than three miles; which is an inconvenience to trade. We now met no obstruction or inconvenience in our intercourse with the people, which was as unconstrained as we could desire. Fishing-boats were constantly alongside of the ship.

Sept. 20.—We received a message this morning from the Mandarin of Touran, informing us that a messenger had arrived from his principal, the Governor of Fai-fo, bearing a letter and present, and that he would come on board himself at noon to deliver both. He came accordingly at the hour promised, accompanied by three boats carrying the presents, which consisted of an ox, two hogs, a quantity of poultry, and an ample supply of fruit and vegetables. The letter was received with a salute of eleven guns. This compliment was due to the rank of the writer, who was Governor of an extensive province, and bore a high title. The Mandarin of Touran, after coming on deck, put on his gown of ceremony at the gangway, before he would advance to deliver the letter. After this preparation, he strutted forward with it with much formality. The letter simply announced the presents, and felicitated us upon our safe arrival. A verbal message from the Governor of Fai-fo, was now communicated. We were requested by it to communicate in writing our desire to visit the Court, and to state in a few words the nature of our business. This was done immediately in a letter, in the Chinese and English languages, addressed to the Governor of Fai-fo, and the Mandarin of Touran, at his own request, stayed to receive it. We were asked, during this visit, whether our Embassy was undertaken with the knowledge of the King of England, or otherwise. I explained again, in answer to this, that every act of our Government was with the virtual knowledge of His Majesty the King, and had the sanction of our laws. The Mandarin left us at three o'clock, after passing several hours in the same social and easy manner as at his former visits.

Sept. 22.—We were now daily in the habit of making excursions on shore, and, wherever we met the natives, were invariably treated with

kindness and attention by them. We seldom passed through a village without being invited into some house or another, and requested to partake of tobacco and betel. This morning we visited some of the villages situated on the narrow isthmus which divides the bay of Touran from that of Fai-fo. The soil is scarcely any thing but sand, and yet the cultivation exhibits considerable appearance of industry. The villages have a remarkably neat and clean appearance, to which, I have no doubt, the nature of the soil contributes perhaps still more than the habits of the people. There is, however, an appearance of real comfort and plenty, —at least we no where observed any traces of abject poverty or want. The culture of silk has extended even to this arid spot. In one house which we visited to-day, we observed several baskets full of cocoons, and others in which the worms were feeding upon the leaf of the mulberry, of which there were several fields in the vicinity. Returning home, we passed through an extensive burying-ground, among the sand hills, close to the shore. The tombs consisted of mere tumuli of loose sand surrounded by a circular trench. A great number of the graves were open, for, it seems, it is the custom of the Cochin Chinese, after the body has been three years interred, to disinhume the bones, and remove them to another situation, close to their dwellings, the ground in which they are then deposited being in a great measure viewed as a place of worship.

Sept. 23.—I made an excursion this morning to a village, which is the first stage from Touran to the capital, and distant from the common anchorage about six miles. It is situated in a beautiful little cove, on the west side of the bay. This place is of considerable extent, very neat, clean, and supplied with a good market. For the accommodation of travellers of rank, that is, of public officers, but particularly of the Sovereign himself, there is here a spacious and handsome house, after the Cochin Chinese fashion, capable of affording room to several hundred persons. It is in the centre of a square fort, of from one hundred and forty to

one hundred and fifty paces to a side, having a glacis, a ditch, and a rampart, but no bastions. This little fortification is very neatly constructed, every part of it being cased or paved with round stones. The gates were open, and we entered without any obstruction. We at first saw nobody, and thought the place uninhabited, until we stumbled by accident upon two persons wrapped up in mats, and fast asleep. These were the sentinels, or watchmen, who had charge of the place! Going into the environs of the village, we there found the whole male population of the place occupied in hunting the wild hog. They were all armed with spears, and accompanied by dogs, these being common curs, such as are found in numbers in every part of the East. Their object was to insulate a woody promontory, which composes one side of the little bay; and for this purpose they were affixing nets, consisting of thongs of buffalo-hide, to stakes driven in the ground. In the mean time, a great number of persons were engaged in beating up the wood and alarming the game with dogs, horns, and incessant shouting. They received us with their usual good humour.

In the evening, as we were sitting down at dinner, our former visitor, the Civil Chief of Touran, came on board, without having previously given any notice of his visit. He came, he said, to inform us, that a Mandarin had arrived at Touran, with an invitation to us from the King to go up, and with two galleys, of forty oars each, for our accommodation. He explained, that he was charged to inform us, that the number of persons of our party who could be conducted to the Court, could not in all exceed twelve individuals. We informed him, that our party consisted of more than four times this number; and that leaving our servants and escorts behind, would be extremely inconvenient as well as contrary to usage. He answered, that the orders from Court were peremptory, and that he was convinced the deputy dared not depart from them; and he insisted that neither the Embassy from Siam, nor the French Mission, had been so well accommodated. I had nothing

to offer in reply to this last circumstance, because I was possessed of no information on the subject. In the evening we sent our interpreter on shore, to remonstrate on this topic with the Mandarin, who had arrived from Hué.

Sept. 24.—Our interpreter returned this morning, with a message from the deputy from Hué, to say that he regretted he could not depart from the orders he had received with respect to the numbers of our party who were to proceed to Court. It was useless to offer any resistance; and, making therefore a merit of complying promptly, we sent word that we should be ready to start on our journey at two o'clock. The two galleys were alongside precisely at that hour—the Cochin Chinese exhibiting in this, as on many other occasions, a degree of promptitude and punctuality rarely, if ever, shown among an Eastern people, and which, I think, must always be looked on, where it is found, as indicating a certain advance in civilization. The Deputy was a military Mandarin, and of the rank of "Commander of 2000." A number of inferior Mandarins accompanied him. He was received with a salute of thirteen guns. Our visitor was a man of sixty-five years of age, a hale and active person, above the usual stature of the Cochin Chinese, and of a manly and striking deportment. His manner was very frank and cheerful. He ran over every part of the ship with the activity and curiosity of a young man, and nothing escaped his notice. A little after him, the civil Mandarin of Touran came on board. After a great deal of discussion, they agreed to augment our party to fifteen, including the crew of the ship's launch, which was allowed to accompany us to convey our baggage. During this conversation, I happened to say, that I did not suppose that two or three individuals, more or less, would be considered of any moment by the Court. The Mandarins answered, that they did not know how it might be in our country, but that the slightest deviation from the express order of the Sovereign was looked upon in Cochin China as a crime deserving the severest punishment; and they gave us plainly to understand, that if they

complied with our wishes, the least risk they ran would be to receive the bastinado.

At six o'clock we left the ship; Mr. Finlayson alone accompanied me, it being impracticable, from the restricted numbers, that Captain Dangerfield or Mr. Rutherford should proceed. During our voyage, we had an opportunity of examining our conveyances, and observing the discipline of the crews. These galleys are the regular war-boats of the King; they were each not less than ninety feet long, but very narrow in proportion; they were strongly built, and their rigging consisted of two lug-sails; they had each five large swivels, as handsomely cast and modelled as any European cannon, but they were intended to carry many more. Their crew consisted of forty rowers, besides the commander and officers, all well and uniformly clothed. The discipline preserved on board was more strict and regular than I could have imagined: the rowers plied incessantly and in perfect unison—an officer beating time by striking against each other two cylindrical sticks of sonorous wood, and cheering them with a song. All communication between one galley and another was made by sound of trumpet; and while lying at anchor, a regular watch was kept, and the sentries challenged at intervals. Every soldier is supplied with a pair of the sonorous sticks which I have just mentioned, and with these the challenge is given and answered by the sentinels.

The low coast as we went along appeared to be nothing but a series of sand-hills, and the mountains to be of the same granite as we noticed along the rest of the coast. The weather we experienced was remarkably fine.

Sept. 25.—About two o'clock we arrived at the mouth of the river of Hué. Pilot-boats were in readiness to conduct us in, and the commander of the fort came out to compliment us upon our arrival. The breadth of the river at its mouth is no more than four hundred yards. On the right-hand going up, is a strong fort which completely commands the entrance of the river. It is of a quadrangular form, with a regular glacis and ditch. The rampart is neatly constructed of stone and lime, and the cannon mounted

upon it in barbette, or without embrasures or parapet. In compliment to us, the walls as we passed along were manned with troops in regular scarlet uniforms, and amounting, as we were told, in number to three hundred. This, with the look of the little fortress itself, rising green amongst the sand-hills, made a very pretty appearance. At half-past two, we anchored a little beyond the fort. At this place, the river, receiving a great number of tributary streams at its western bank, is greatly increased in breadth, and forms an extensive basin and good harbour, nearly land-locked by the narrowness of the mouth and the bend which the river immediately makes. The river of Hué is fitted only for ships of a small draft of water. At high-water spring-tides, there are no more than nine Cochin Chinese cubits on the bar, which make exactly twelve feet six and three-quarter inches. The breadth of the bar, which is hard sand, is ten fathoms, and the channel through it is no more than thirty fathoms broad. There seems, however, for vessels of small burden, no great difficulty. Three years ago, the *Henri*, a French ship drawing twelve feet, came over the bar without inconvenience. Out and inside of the bar there are four fathoms and a half water, sufficient for ships of almost any burden. A heavy surf rolls in, on both sides of the river, even in the most moderate weather, such as we now experienced; and at the height of the N.E. monsoon, the roadstead being totally exposed, there must always be a heavy and dangerous sea on the bar.

The spot we were now at, was the scene of the misfortunes of our predecessor, Mr. Chapman, the agent of Mr. Hastings, who was deputed for a similar object with our own. From real or imaginary fears of treachery on the part of the Government, then in the hands of the Tonquinese, he suddenly fled from Hué, and escaped on board his little bark, which lay where our galleys were now anchored. Hostilities commenced between him and some batteries upon the shore; and after more than twenty days of a perilous and unequal contest, at the height of the N.E. monsoon, when it was most difficult to get out of the river, he at last succeeded, by a fortunate slant of

fair wind, in crossing the bar and effecting his escape. Besides his own interesting narrative of this event, I have had an account of the transaction from an eye-witness, one of his companions, the Chinese Lao Ami, a respectable and well-known inhabitant of Prince of Wales's Island, whom I have mentioned in another place.

In consequence of our launch not having arrived, our conductor dared not go up the river without first obtaining leave. This detained us until nine o'clock at night, when a despatch-boat sent up returned with orders for our galley to proceed, but for the Mandarin to wait the arrival of the launch. We reached the city about twelve o'clock at night. The river continues of a considerable size throughout, being little inferior in breadth to that of Saigun, or to the Menam at Bang-kok, but it is very shallow.

CHAPTER X.

Visit from the Intendant of the Port.—The Mission lands, and is placed in a state of surveillance.—Discussion respecting the letter from the Governor-general to the King.—Mission jealously watched by the officers of Government.—Visit to the Mandarin of Elephants, or Foreign Minister, and account of the discussion which took place with him.—Mission refused an audience of the King.—Visit to the fortifications of Hué, and description of them.—Visits to the two French Mandarins.—Posthumous honours paid to civil and military officers of distinction.—Negociations continued.—Excursions in the environs of Hué.—Royal Mausoleum.—Temples of Gautama.—Collation sent by the King to the Mission.—Negociations.—Cochin Chinese cookery.—Opinion of Chinese residents respecting Cochin Chinese Government.—French Mission to Cochin China.—Another visit to the Foreign Minister, and discussions which ensued.—Commencement of the monsoon with a gale of wind and heavy fall of rain, which inundates the town of Hué.—Visit from the two principal assistants of the Foreign Minister, and discussion with them.—Final visit to the Foreign Minister, and termination of the negociation.—Striking circumstance, in illustration of Cochin Chinese manners.

Sept. 26.—At six in the morning, one of the royal galleys came alongside, with the Intendant of the Port and other Mandarins on board, to invite us on shore. A house was prepared for us quite close to the place where we anchored, and we landed immediately. Our accommodation was very good, according to the habits of the people. The house was tiled, and consisted of ten apartments, constructed of substantial wood upon a well-raised terrace, with abundance of office-houses. There was a court-yard in front. One side of the house looked towards the river, and the other towards one of the principal streets of the town. At both these quarters, from which alone ingress or egress was practicable, there was raised for the occasion a stockade of bamboos, and a strong party of

not less than an hundred men was directed to guard, or rather to watch us;—in a word, we were, for the time at least, state prisoners. The Intendant of the Port waited upon us immediately, and told us he was requested by the Mandarin of Strangers to receive the letter of the Governor-general and the translations. I made no hesitation in complying with this demand, and immediately produced the letter itself,—a correct Portuguese translation made at Calcutta, and a translation in the Chinese language made by Mr. Marshman, the learned missionary of Serampore. The only questions now asked respecting the letter or Mission were—whether the Governor of Lower Cochin China had actually seen the Governor-general's letter to the King; and whether the letter itself was written with the knowledge of the King of England. The Intendant of the Port required of us, in civil terms, not to go beyond our house, or pass the sentinels of our guard, until the letter of the Governor-general was approved of by the King—this being the invariable usage of the Court, with regard to all missions from foreign countries.

About noon an officer came with a letter from the Mandarin of Elephants. He brought a quantity of provisions and thirty quans* in money. This last we were compelled to accept to avoid giving umbrage, which a refusal would unquestionably have done. The intention of the money, it was said, was to obviate the necessity of our servants going to market where there might be a risk of disputes with the inhabitants.

The Mandarin of Touran, who left that place the same night we did, and made his journey by land, arrived at the capital this morning, and paid us a visit. He had been directed to repair here on our account.

Sept. 27.—Shortly after breakfast, the Intendant of the Port and other Mandarins called with the Chinese translation of the Governor-general's letter. They informed us, that the translation which we had furnished to the Governor of Saigun was correct in its style, but that the present one

* About fifteen Spanish dollars, in a miserable coin composed of zinc.

was very objectionable; as, besides other errors, the Governor-general there claimed an equality of rank with the King of Cochin China. They admitted that the letter was good Chinese, but that the etiquette of the Court was greatly violated in it. It was stated in reply, that in the English letter the style was unequivocally respectful, and such as the Governor-general would have used in addressing his own Sovereign; beyond which, nothing farther could reasonably be expected from him. The alterations now required in the Chinese translation, however, were not material, and therefore submitted to without difficulty. The same objections were made here, as at Saigun, to our disclaiming any wish to possess forts or territory; and the expression in the Governor-general's letter, mentioning the death of the late King, was considered improper. His Majesty, it was observed, ought to have been represented as not dead, but merely gone to Heaven! The Mandarins, who had the conduct of this business, were not less fastidious, or less troublesome, in matters of minute detail, than their brethren at Saigun. They insisted that our interpreter should transcribe every word of the copies taken *in his own handwriting*, and that the documents should be signed by him as well as both signed and sealed by myself. This tedious matter occupied from ten in the morning to five in the evening, when the Mandarins left us apparently satisfied.

Sept. 28.—In our new residence we found ourselves treated with perfect respect, but we were close prisoners. Interpreters and Cochin Chinese servants were always at hand to do every office for us, but our Indian servants were not allowed to move beyond the doors without two or three persons to watch them, and this only once or twice in the course of the day. A singular exception was made in favour of our Chinese attendants. These were permitted to go abroad with entire freedom, and no suspicions entertained of them, any more than if they had been natural-born subjects of Cochin China itself. It is obvious from this, that all intercourse between European nations ought to be conducted through the instrumentality of the Chinese, and that the greater number of these

people there are attached to an European mission, the fewer obstacles it will be likely to encounter.

A singular mixture of jealousy and respect was observed to us in this early stage of our intercourse with the Cochin Chinese Court. While we were not permitted to go beyond the threshold of our doors, an order was given, that all persons on horseback should dismount as they passed our dwelling, out of compliment to us, or rather, in all probability, in consequence of our being supposed to be under the immediate protection of the King; and it was expressly forbidden to any one to stand and gaze at us from the street. The bastinado was liberally applied to the passengers, in execution of these orders; and, for neglect of duly enforcing them, seven soldiers of the guard received fifteen strokes apiece this morning. The punishment, in such cases, follows the sentence and offence, with a rapidity truly summary. A sentinel, for example, neglects to strike his rattle when challenged with military promptitude; the officer comes out, throws him down upon his face, and forthwith gives him ten or more strokes of the bastinado! The former, by a prostration, acknowledges his obligations for the parental correction, and the business is ended. The military men are so regularly broken in to the bastinado, that they receive it without a murmur. When the seven soldiers, already alluded to, for example, were flogged, they threw themselves down upon their faces, and received the strokes of the bamboo as a mere matter of course,—duly making a low obeisance to the officer who directed the punishment, when it was over. The civil classes do not seem to be just so well trained, and, as we had ourselves an opportunity of observing, never failed to make some resistance, and occasionally an effectual one. Slight corporal punishments appeared to be carried inexorably into effect. One of the interpreters, detected in imposing upon our servants in the purchase of some trifling articles, was sentenced to receive ten strokes of the bamboo. We were informed of this, and requested, for our satisfaction, to send a person to see the sentence put into effect. We begged that no such chastisemen

should be inflicted upon our account, stating that the matter in question was not of the slightest moment; but our remonstrances were of no avail, and the punishment was duly inflicted; while the culprit was admonished, that the next offence would be punished by the infliction of the *cangue*, or, "wooden ruff."

It may indeed be said, that the Cochin Chinese are a well-flogged nation; and one might expect that the universality of this brutal system would render them not only servile, obsequious and cowardly, but also timid, gloomy and suspicious: but, in the latter respect at least, the case is quite the contrary; and the lower orders of the Cochin Chinese, as far as we could judge from outward appearance, seemed to be vain, cheerful, good-humoured, obliging and civil, beyond all Asiatic people whom we had seen.

Sept. 29.—The Intendant of the Port, and other Mandarins, called yesterday, requesting two additional copies of the Chinese translation of the Governor-general's letter, which were accordingly given, and they presented to us the compliments of the Mandarin of Elephants, saying that he would be prepared to receive us about ten o'clock, if we would favour him with a visit. We agreed to do so; and an accommodation galley being sent for us, Mr. Finlayson and I left our dwelling about half-past twelve. The Mandarin's residence is situated above the new fortress, or rather fortified city, on the banks of a highly picturesque and beautiful reach of the river; and our journey occupied near an hour and a half, being principally along two faces of the fortress. M. Chaigneau and M. Vanier, two French gentlemen who had the rank of Mandarins at the Court, met us as we landed, and accompanied us to the dwelling of the Minister. We found this personage seated in an open hall of great size. A crowd of people surrounded the place, but there were no persons of any distinction within, and the upper end of the hall was occupied by the preparations for a Chinese drama. It was hung with some Chinese pictures, and there were a few English prints representing naval actions. The place, although

spacious, had but a mean, unfinished look, and, in point of neatness and comfort, was very inferior, indeed, to the habitations of those chiefs whom we visited at Siam. Its only handsome ornament was a large board of ebony, on which were written some Chinese characters, every one of which was not less than eight or nine inches in length. These were raised upon the wood, and formed of mother-of-pearl, constituting a brilliant and beautiful piece of mosaic. This was suspended over the place where the Minister usually sat.

The Minister, a little, lively old man, dressed in a rich habit of orange-coloured silk, covered with flowers and devices, received us with great politeness. We made a bow to him, and were requested to occupy a bench prepared for our accommodation beforehand. The French Mandarins sat on chairs on each side of us. The Cochin Chinese Minister began the conversation by apologizing for the trouble he had given in requiring so many copies of the Chinese translation of the Governor-general's letter, and then desired to know if we had any request to make verbally beyond what was contained in that document. We said, that we had no request whatever to make, except what was connected with the subject of the Governor-general's letter; and added, that since arriving in Cochin China, we were given to understand, that new and liberal regulations upon the subject of foreign commerce had been promulgated, which appeared to be entirely satisfactory; and that we wished to be furnished with official copies of the regulations in question. The Minister answered, that he was authorized by the King to communicate to us, that the request made by the Governor-general of India was acceded to; and that English ships would be admitted freely to trade in the King's dominions. He added, that a copy of the new regulation for foreign trade was already prepared for us, and would be sent without delay. On this subject he observed, that he farther pledged himself personally to use every means in his own power to insure despatch in the transaction of the business of such British merchant-ships as might visit Cochin China.

He also said, that an answer to the letter of the Governor-general would be given before our departure, and indeed as soon as required. In alluding to the imports upon foreign trade, he observed, "In England, imposts are no doubt levied upon foreign commerce, as here; every nation has a right to do this, for its own benefit."

The Minister now stated, that in the letter of the Governor-general mention was made of certain presents for the King, and that they were specified in a communication from the Governor of Saigun. He wished to be more particularly informed on this subject. The necessary information was given, and the presents mentioned. He requested to be furnished with a written list of them, that he might lay it before His Majesty. This was supplied on our return home in the evening. The Minister, as if he wished to consider every thing as now settled, requested to know if we wished to gratify our curiosity by seeing the city and its environs,—observing, that when we desired to go abroad, he should be ready to supply us with barges or palanquins, as might be most suitable to the places we intended to visit. No notice having been taken of introducing us into the presence of the King, and it being evident that this was intentional, I now pointedly brought the subject forward, and desired to know whether a day had been appointed for granting us an audience. The Minister answered, that the subject of our Mission being a commercial one, it was not customary for the King, on such occasions, to grant an audience. It was stated, in answer, that it was true that one great purpose of the Mission was commercial, but that it had also for its object to congratulate the King upon his accession to the throne. The Chief shifted his ground, and said, that, according to the custom of the country, audiences were only granted by His Majesty to the bearers of letters from Kings; and that if the letter had been from the King of England, there could have been no question about an audience. The Governor-general, he was aware, he said, was the viceroy of a great

country, but he was not a sovereign prince. I observed, in answer, that the Governor-general of India was in habits of direct correspondence with the first princes of the East, into whose presence his representatives were always received. It was stated, that the present Mission had also had an audience of the King of Siam a few months ago. To this he replied promptly, "What is done in Siam is no rule for this country." I added, on this subject, that it was so far from contrary, even to the customs of Cochin China itself, that His Majesty's father had granted two audiences to the representative of the Governor-general of India, no longer ago than eighteen years, and at a time when our Indian empire was neither so great nor powerful as at present. Upon this, I brought to his notice the circumstances connected with the Mission of Mr. Roberts, deputed by the Marquis of Wellesley, in 1804. The old Chief stated, that he remembered the circumstance well, and he intrepidly asserted that Mr. Roberts was never admitted to an audience. I was aware that M. Vanier, who sat at my right hand, had received Mr. Roberts at Touran, and that he must, therefore, have been present either at the audience or at the capital, at the moment of Mr. Robert's visit; and therefore I referred to him. M. Vanier stated, that he was sick at the time, and not actually present at the audience, but that there was no question of Mr. Roberts having had an audience of the King. This was explained to the Mandarin, who was once more compelled to change his ground; and now stated, what was perhaps nearer the truth, that the customs of the country, in this respect, had been changed by his present Majesty, whose policy, in all such matters, differed widely from that of his father. We afterwards indeed learned, that, since his accession, the Court etiquette had, in every way, become more ceremonious and uncomplying, and that it was the great ambition of the King to mimic the ceremonial of the Court of Pekin. I finally requested the Minister to represent to His Majesty our desire to have the honour of an audience. He endeavoured, for

some time, to evade this demand; but at last assented to convey our request, promising that we should have an answer on the following day.

In the course of this last part of the conversation, the national vanity of the Cochin Chinese, and the exalted opinion they entertain of themselves and their Sovereign, were sufficiently conspicuous. "It is natural enough," said the Mandarin, with a smile, "that you should employ every expedient in your power to attain the honour of being presented to so great a King."

During our visit, a handsome entertainment of meat, fruits, and wine, was served to us; and while the Chinese drama was acting, the Chief affably explained the most striking parts of it. This audience lasted from two to near six o'clock, and we returned home by the opposite walls of the new city from those by which we had proceeded, so that in going and coming we made the whole circuit of it. This was no doubt done to give us an opportunity of admiring this splendid and extraordinary work, to which I do not imagine there is any thing parallel in the East.

Sept. 30.—Notice was sent to us yesterday forenoon, that an accommodation-barge would be sent, to take us to whatever part of the city we wished to visit, and that the French Mandarins would accompany us. At three o'clock MM. Chaigneau and Vanier accordingly waited upon us, and said that they had orders from the King to conduct us into the new city, and to show us the works. We ascended the river, and landed on the west side of the new fortification, or walled city, where we found a Cochin Chinese Mandarin waiting to receive us.

The new city, which is of a quadrangular form, is completely insulated, having the river on two sides of it, and a spacious canal of from thirty to forty yards broad on the other two. The circumference of the walls, or of the city, which is the same thing, is upwards of five miles. The form of the fortification is nearly an equilateral quadrangle, each face measuring 1180 toises. The late King himself was the engineer who formed the plan, under the instructions and advice, however, of the French

officers in his service, but whose personal assistance he had lost, before he commenced the undertaking, in the year 1805. This singular man proves to have been no mean proficient in this branch of European military science; for the works, as far as we could judge, are planned and constructed on technical rules, and the materials and workmanship are not inferior to the design. The fortress has a regular and beautiful glacis, extending from the river or canal to the ditch; a covert way all round; and a ditch which is thirty yards broad, with from four to five feet water in it, all through. The rampart is built of hard earth, cased on the outside with bricks. Each angle is flanked by four bastions, intended to mount thirty-six guns a-piece, some in embrasures, and some in *barbette*. To each face there are also four arched gateways of solid masonry, to which the approach across the ditch is by handsome arched stone-bridges. The area inside is laid out into regular and spacious streets, at right angles to each other. A handsome and broad canal forms a communication between the river and the fortress, and within is distributed by various branches, so as to communicate with the palace, the arsenal, the granaries, and other public edifices. By this channel the taxes and tributes are brought from the provinces, and conducted at once to the very doors of the palace or magazines. The palace is situated within a strong citadel, consisting of two distinct walls, or ramparts. Within this we were not invited; but the roof of the palace itself was distinguishable by its yellow colour; and one handsome temple, consecrated to the royal ancestors of the King, was also noticed. This last, which has no priests attached to it, was the only place of worship within the new city.

In the whole of this extensive fortification, there is scarcely any thing slovenly, barbarous, or incomplete in design. Perhaps the only exceptions are the Chinese umbrella-shaped towers over the gates, and the embrasures of one or two of the bastions finished by his present Majesty, and in which he has taken it into his head to invert the rule of science and common sense, by making the embrasures to slope inwards instead of out-

wards. The banks of the river and canal forming the base of the glacis, are not only regularly sloped down every where, but wherever the work is completed, for it is still unfinished in a few situations, they are cased from the foundation with a face of solid masonry. The canal within the walls is executed in the same perfect and workmanlike manner; and the bridges which are thrown over it, have not only neat stone balustrades, but are paved all over with marble brought from Tonquin.

The first object in the interior to which our curiosity was particularly pointed, was the public granaries. These form ranges of enormous length in regular order, and are full of corn, being said to contain many years' consumption for the city. It has been the practice of the late and present King, to add two or three ranges of granaries every year to the number. The pernicious custom of hoarding grain against years of scarcity, and the unavoidable effect of which is to aggravate, or even to create, the evil it is intended to obviate, seems to be a received and popular maxim of Cochin Chinese government. It has its use in maintaining the tyranny of a despotic government.

The barracks were the next object pointed out to us, and here we found the troops drawn out. These buildings are excellent, and, in point of arrangement and cleanliness, would do no discredit to the best organized army in Europe. They are extensive, and surround the whole of the outer part of the citadel. We were informed that from twelve to thirteen thousand troops were constantly stationed at the capital.

The most extraordinary spectacle was still to be exhibited—the arsenal. A violent fall of rain, and night coming on, prevented us from inspecting the whole of this; but what we did see, was more than sufficient to excite our surprise and gratify our curiosity. The iron cannon were first pointed out to us, consisting of an extraordinary assemblage of old ship-guns of various European nations—French, English, Dutch, and Portuguese. These were objects of little curiosity compared with the brass ordnance, the balls, and shells, all manufactured in Cochin China, by native workmen, from

materials supplied by Tonquin, and after French models. The ordnance consisted of cannon, howitzers and mortars. The carriages were all constructed, finished, and painted, as substantially and neatly as if they had been manufactured at Woolwich or Fort William, and the field-carriages especially were singularly neat and handsome. The cannon are of various calibres, from four to sixty-eight pounders, with a large proportion of eighteen pounders. Among them were nine remarkable guns cast by the late King; these carry each a ball weighing seventy Chinese catties, or, in other words, are ninety-three pounders; they are as handsomely modelled and as well founded as any of the rest, and placed upon highly ornamented carriages. On these remarkable pieces of ordnance is inscribed the name of the late King, Ja-lung, and the day and year in which they were cast. The King used to say that these would prove the most durable monuments of his reign—no great compliment to his administration.

The art of casting good brass cannon, under the direction of Europeans, appears to have been long known in this part of the world, for among the cannon in the arsenal were a good number of very well founded ordnance, apparently of the size of long nine-pounders, as old as the years 1664 and 1665. These had an inscription in the Portuguese language, importing that they were cast in Cochin China, or Kamboja, and bearing the dates in question, with the name of the artist. Although very inferior indeed to those recently cast under the direction of the French, still they were very good specimens of workmanship. The balls and shells in the arsenal throughout were neatly piled up, and arranged in the European method: the gun-carriages were all painted, and in short the arsenal was in the most perfect and complete order in all its organization.

The chief of the artillery had been directed to exhibit the whole of it to us, and we found him waiting for us on our arrival. This was one of the old warriors of the late King, a venerable and fine-looking old man, habited in a rich suit of velvet. Besides being chief of the arsenal and artillery, this Master General of the ordnance, was also in-

tendant of the household, and in this last situation, according to all accounts, was charged with certain details scarcely compatible with his military character. It was his business, for example, to superintend the royal kitchen, and to make a registry of all the pregnancies and births within the seraglio, that all possible care might be taken to exclude illegitimacy from its sacred enclosures.

The whole of the cannon within the fortified city are not only raised on platforms to protect the carriages from damp, but placed for security against the weather in the arsenal; and there is not one mounted upon the works, with the exception of a few upon the walls of the citadel. The cannon, it is said, which are required for the sixteen bastions, amount to five hundred and seventy-six, and for the whole of the works the requisite number is about eight hundred. I do not know what the exact number in the arsenal is, but it probably far exceeds this amount.

The powder magazine is constructed with the same intelligence as the rest of the works: it is fenced by a strong wall, and has a broad and deep ditch completely surrounding it. Close to it is an extensive parade, for the exercise of the troops.

It is hardly necessary to say, that against an Asiatic enemy this fortification is impregnable: its great fault is its immense extent. I presume, it would require an army of 50,000 men at least, to defend it;—a force which would be far more effectually employed in harassing an European enemy, (the only enemy to be apprehended,) by those common desultory modes of warfare, which it is alone safe for an Asiatic enemy to oppose to a disciplined army. An European force, either by making regular approaches, or by a bombardment, could not fail to render itself soon master of the place; and this occurrence, by putting it in possession of the treasure, the granaries, and principal arsenal of the kingdom,—by destroying the principal army, and thus cutting off all the resources of the Government,—would be virtually equivalent to conquering the kingdom at a single blow. We did not reach our residence till eight o'clock at

night,—well drenched and fatigued, but highly gratified at the novel and striking scene which we had witnessed.

M. Vanier called upon us to-day, and we accompanied him on a visit to his house. M. Vanier is the senior French Mandarin,—a gentleman of pleasing manners, and of much practical information respecting Cochin China, in which he had now resided thirty-three years. He was an officer in the King's marine;—served in the whole of his wars, and now held a high rank and title. In his youth, he served in the French navy, and was present with the combined French and American army, to which Lord Cornwallis surrendered at Little York, as well as in the action between the Comte de Grasse and Lord Rodney. He had prints of the battle of the 12th of April on the walls of his room, and dwelt upon its details,—pointing out how the French ought to have won it, and how they lost it through the errors of their commander, and the superior skill of the English admiral.

M. Vanier told us that he and M. Chaigneau had been sent for in the morning by the King, for the express purpose of being asked what opinions we had given respecting the new fortifications and other public works; and that he was gratified when he understood that we had expressed great surprise and admiration at all we saw. In the course of conversation, he dwelt upon the jealousy and apprehension which the extensive conquests of the British in India had excited among the Cochin Chinese and other nations of the farther East. In reference to the Mission of Mr. Roberts, in 1805, he remarked upon the indiscretion of some of the presents offered by us, stating that one of them was a series of prints representing the capture of Seringapatam, and the death of Tippoo Sultaun!! When the late King saw these, he said, "The Governor-general of India wishes to intimidate me, by exhibiting to me the fate of this Indian prince."

Oct. 1.—We called this morning upon M. Chaigneau, the other French Mandarin. This gentleman had been twenty-eight or twenty-nine years in the country. He returned to France in 1819, and came back with

the appointment of Consul-general for Cochin China, from the French Court. We did not find M. Chaigneau at home; he had been summoned to a council by the King, but we were received by his son and nephew—the latter an intelligent young man, lately come from France. In company with these gentlemen, we visited the great market, which appeared to be well stocked with all the usual articles of native consumption.

Returning home, there was pointed out to us, but we were not allowed to visit them, some singular temples on the western side of the river. These, which I think were six in number, and constructed of stone and lime, with tiled roofs, were surrounded by an extensive wall of masonry, and appeared altogether neat and spacious. They compose a sort of pantheon, built by the late Emperor, and consecrated to the manes of departed Mandarins of the military class. There is a similar group farther up the river, consecrated to the souls of worthies of the literary or civil order. In these temples the bodies are not buried, and nothing more is done than dedicating a small pillar to each of the departed, on which his name is inscribed. These cenotaphs have no priests, and are kept constantly shut, except on the annual festival set aside for the performance of religious honours to the souls of deceased ancestors. Among the heroes whose names are honoured with a monument in the military cenotaph, are a Frenchman and an Irishman. The first was a corporal, of the name of Manuel, who blew himself up in a small vessel, when about to fall into the hands of the Tysons. Our countryman was an officer,—a person of great gallantry, and a favourite of the King, but I could not learn his name. The King was desirous of giving an eminent place in the literary cenotaph to the soul of the Bishop of Adran, and spoke to him on the subject;—but the catholic prejudices of the latter revolted against it; and it was one of his dying requests, that this pagan compliment might not be paid to his memory. The Bishop is buried within four miles of Saigun, at which place he died in 1799. A handsome monument was erected to him, at which, during the life-time of the late

King, a guard of two hundred soldiers kept constant watch. We were not acquainted with this circumstance, when we were at Saigun, or we should certainly have paid our respects at the tomb of so remarkable a person.

Oct. 2.—Shortly after our return home from our excursion yesterday, the Intendant of the Port waited upon us with a communication from the Minister; and the two French Mandarins, by order of the King, shortly afterwards joined him, to assist in explaining the Minister's message. The Intendant of the Port began by informing us, that every thing being now settled, we were at perfect liberty to go abroad wherever we pleased; that we might again visit any part of the fortifications we wished, or go into the country, on shooting excursions, or, in short, take any other amusement we thought proper. This part of the communication was said to come directly from the King himself, who desired us not to take offence at the guards placed over our dwelling, which were intended only to protect us against the importunate curiosity of the lower classes of the people, and to prevent depredations upon our property, which, were they to take place, would be a matter of indelible disgrace to the Cochin Chinese Government.

The subject of the presents was then introduced. We were informed that the King could not accept of any part of them, because, as it was alleged, we had come here only to ask for trade, and had not yet gained any actual advantage from our intercourse. It was added, that as soon as we should have reaped any benefit from a connexion with Cochin China, the King would be happy to accept of any thing that should be presented to him. On this point we answered, that we had no observation whatever to make, and that His Majesty would accept or refuse the presents as he thought best. Great care was taken to show no disappointment at the refusal of the presents, and in consequence some uneasiness appeared to be felt by the Cochin Chinese at the indifference which we evinced on this subject. The Intendant of the Port intreated on behalf

of his chief, that no unfriendly construction might be put upon the rejection of the presents by His Majesty, and a quiet assurance was given by us that no unfavourable impression whatever was produced by this circumstance.

The subject of trade was next introduced, and on this point entire satisfaction was given; more, in fact, being conceded, than was contemplated by the Indian Government, or than it was believed when the Mission was determined upon, that the supposed anti-commercial prejudices of the Cochin Chinese would have admitted. It was stated, that all the ports of the Cochin Chinese empire worth frequenting would be open to British commerce, upon the same terms as to the Chinese of Canton, and that official copies of the *tariff* and regulations of trade would be furnished. We desired to know whether the port of Kachao in Tonquin, and of Kang-kao or Hattian in Kamboja, were included among those where British trade would be admissible. The Mandarin answered, that the ports contemplated by the Court were those of Saigun, Faifo, Touran, and Hué, but that Kachao and Hattian, at our desire, would be added to the number.

The French Mandarins, by authority of the King, introduced the subject of His Majesty's declining to grant us an audience, and stated expressly, that as this had been refused to others in our situation, it could not now be consistently granted. The circumstances connected with a recent Embassy from the Court of France, and which had scarcely been hinted at before, were now distinctly brought forward as a conclusive reason for His Majesty's declining to grant us an audience, and accepting the presents of the Governor-general. The French gentlemen stated, that on the 25th of December, 1817, the French frigate Cybelle, of forty guns, arrived at Touran with a mission from the French Government. The Envoy was M. Achille de Kargariou, a captain of the first class in the French Navy. He was charged with a letter from the Minister of Marine to the first Minister of the Cochin Chinese Government, and with valuable presents from the

King of France to His Majesty of Cochin China, but there was no letter from the one Sovereign to the other. The King of Cochin China consequently refused to grant the Envoy an audience, and even declined to receive any of the presents. This happened during the lifetime of his late Majesty; the same prince who lay under so many obligations, if not to the French nation, at least to many individuals of that country. Whatever might have been the ostensible reasons for refusing to receive the French Envoy and the presents of the King of France, there is good ground for believing that the true cause was the nature of the demands which the Envoy was instructed to make. He is alleged to have required the fulfilment of the treaty of 1787, by which a considerable territorial cession, and many other political advantages, were yielded to France. But the situation of the Cochin Chinese monarch was now very different from what it had been when he signed that convention, the hard conditions of which were extorted from him by his necessities only, nor could he now, in his prosperity, be expected to receive with complacency a proposal for its renewal, especially since he had surmounted all his difficulties without its assistance. Upon this subject, of course, nothing was said by the French Mandarins, nor did it become us to put any questions.

Oct. 3.—In company with the French gentlemen, we made last evening an excursion into the environs of the town, taking with us our fowling-pieces. Our journey, which lasted several hours, took us over a good deal of the country on both banks of the river. Although the soil is light and sandy, it is every where in a high state of cultivation, and this consists of rice, mulberry-trees, cotton, and orchards of fruit-trees. It is thickly strewed with villages, universally surrounded by hedges of live bamboo; and I am told this last appearance is general throughout the inhabited country. The banks of the river are well raised, and in some places extremely picturesque and beautiful, more resembling the scenery of an European, than a tropical country. Hué is, I dare say, the only Indian city in the East, the neighbourhood of which has good roads, good bridges and canals.

Here are a number of highways, straight, broad, and well constructed, and besides the stone bridges connected with the fortifications, there are a number of wooden ones, extremely neat, and built on European rules. In the course of the excursion now described, we passed along the banks of a deep and regular canal, which extends, as we were told, for twelve or fourteen miles, and serves the double purpose of irrigation and navigation. Boats laden with rice, just as it had been reaped, were passing along it to the city. By means of many canals of the same description, and embankments towards the sea, extensive tracts of land have been rendered available to agriculture, which were before flooded by the tide, and therefore a waste.

All this was the work of the late King, whose active mind appears to have been devoted to projects sometimes of utility, but oftener of ostentation and ambition. It is probable, that his subjects lost at least as much by the last as they gained by the first. All public works are accomplished by corvées and forced contributions, which are an intolerable burthen to the people. The new fortress, scarcely yet completed, has been, for example, entirely constructed on this principle, and has been now seventeen years in executing. In such a state of society and government, there can be no security that the labour of the people shall not be wasted, even under the most respectable princes, in schemes of folly or ostentation, or in monuments of superstition. The late King, for example, constructed a splendid mausoleum, and laid out extensive gardens, as a place of interment for himself and his favourite Queen, upon which thousands of his subjects were occupied for years. The following account of these gardens was given to us. They are situated in a romantic part of the mountains, and about ten leagues to the north of the capital. The tombs are the least splendid part of this undertaking, which consists besides, of spacious gardens and groves, laid out in walks and terraces, and, as it is said, with no mean taste. In the course of this splendid undertaking, hills were levelled,—mounds thrown across from one hill to another,—canals and tanks dug, and spacious roads constructed. The Queen, a woman of great beauty and merit, who

had accompanied her husband in his exile in Siam,—in his retreat among the desert islands, in the Gulf of that name, and who was besides his constant companion in all his warlike expeditions by sea and land, was buried here about seven years before our visit. Four years afterwards, the King himself was placed by her side. The same spot, before being decorated in the present magnificent manner, was also the ancient burying-ground of the predecessors of the present race of kings. The place was represented to us as a delicious and a romantic spot, exceeding in beauty every other scene in the country. We wished for permission to pay it a visit, but were politely informed that the King was always reluctant to permit the visits of strangers, whose presence, he said, might "*trouble the repose of the spirits of his ancestors.*"

In the course of the day's excursion now described we visited two temples. One, a spacious and large building, was dedicated to the ordinary form of Chinese worship; but the other, a mean little building in one of the villages, afforded the first example which we had seen of the worship of Buddha or Gautama. There were two altars in this last, on the principal of which was an image of this Indian divinity sitting cross-legged. It was made of wood, but gilded, with the exception of the head, which was painted black. The features had a kind of negro cast, and, like the representations of the same object of worship in Siam, the hair of the head was curled. There were several paintings of Buddha also upon the wall. On the other altar was the figure of two storks in carved wood, such as we had seen at Kandyu. There was but one priest belonging to this temple, and he was sick, so that we could not see him. The priesthood, of whatever form of worship, is but in slender repute in Cochin China. Instead of stumbling on one at every step, as in our walks in Siam, here, from their small number, we scarcely ever met any.

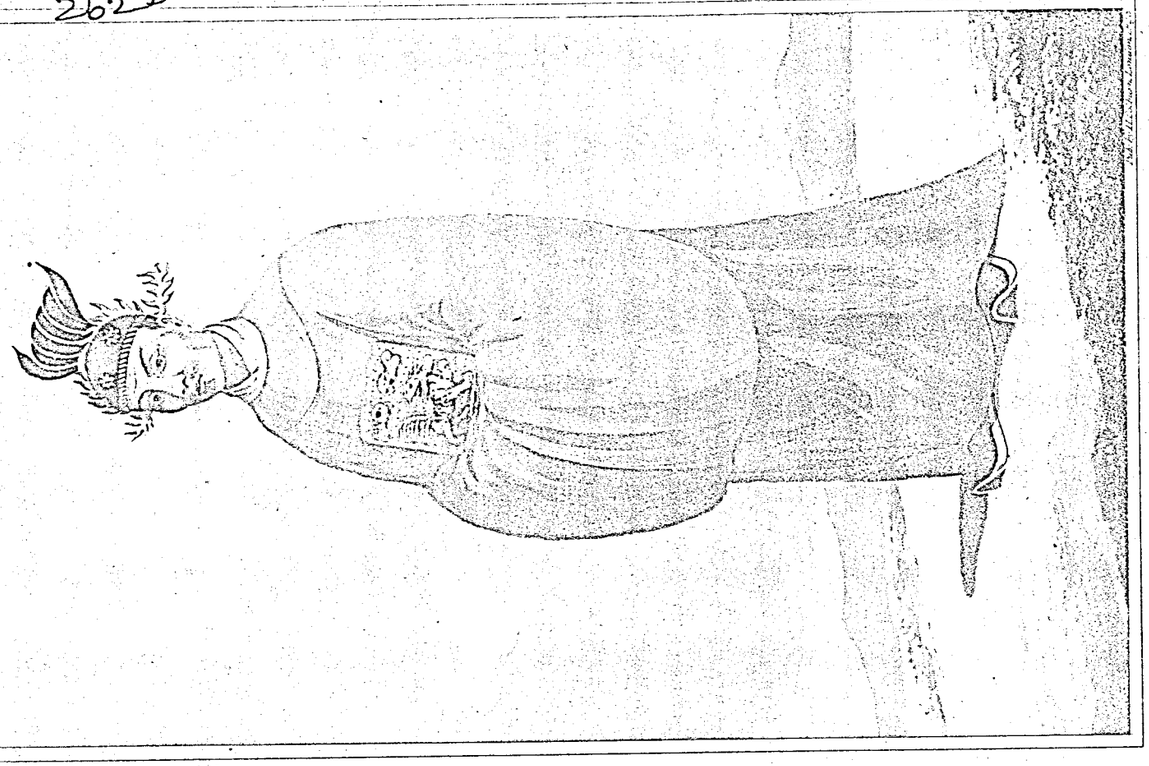
In our excursion to-day, we were a good deal surprised at discovering, among the feathered tribe, an early and familiar acquaintance, which I had not seen before in any part of India;—this was the common European magpie *(Corvus Pica)*, which was in considerable numbers about all the

villages. Its habits, manners, and appearance, seemed to differ in no respect from those of the European species.

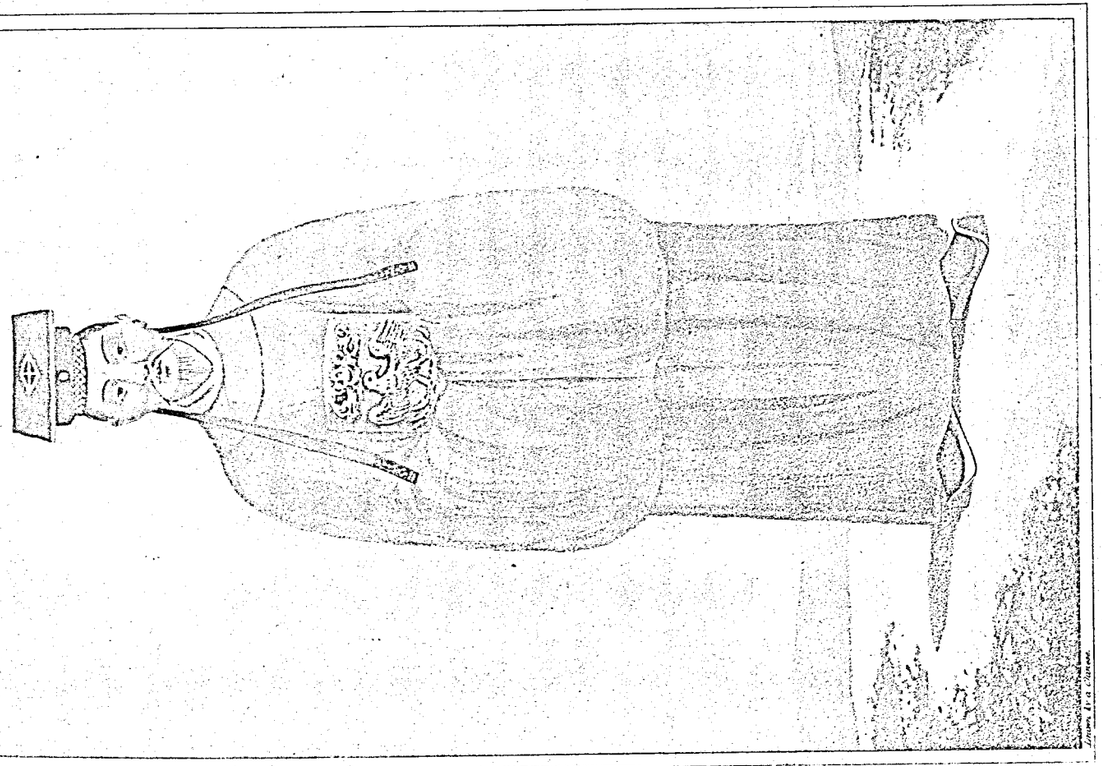
Oct. 4.—Mr. Chaigneau entertained us yesterday, at his house on the banks of the river. The repast was entirely French. We had been entertained in a similar manner, the day before, at M. Vanier's. All the French at the place were on both occasions invited to meet us. These consisted of a gentleman of the medical profession, who was old enough to have been a surgeon of the first class in the fleet of M. Suffrein, of the nephew of M. Chaigneau, and of his two sons born in the country. The Missionaries are all in a place fifteen leagues distant, and we did not see any of them. The lady of M. Chaigneau is the daughter of a French gentleman, and accompanied her husband to France three years ago. Mad. Vanier is a Cochin Chinese, a fine-looking woman, tall, and as fair as a native of the South of Europe. Both the gentlemen and ladies dress in the Cochin Chinese fashion—a compliance with the customs of the country, indispensable to every stranger who takes up his permanent residence in it. Even the Chinese, who are not very tractable in matters of this nature, are obliged to submit to it; for such is the vanity of the people, that the dress of a stranger, of whatever country, is considered by them as nothing less than ridiculous, and is sure to attract so much curiosity as to prove very inconvenient.

Our hosts, the French Mandarins, were in politics decided Royalists; and it was their devotion to royalty that fixed them, and the greater number of their countrymen, in this remote quarter of the world. In short, it was the French Revolution which achieved the revolution in Cochin China, and established the existing order of things in that country. Whatever their political feelings, however, like all good Frenchmen, our friends were warm lovers of their country. In their conduct to ourselves, nothing could surpass their politeness, hospitality, and real kindness; and I trust we shall always have a grateful recollection of their attentions.*

* These gentlemen have all quitted Cochin China since; and I had the pleasure of seeing the greater number of them at Singapore, on their way to France, in 1825.



MANDARIN OF THE MILITARY ORDER, IN HIS DRESS OF CEREMONY.



MANDARIN OF THE CIVIL ORDER, IN HIS DRESS OF CEREMONY.

While we were at M. Chaigneau's, a message was brought to us to say, that at 12 o'clock, a deputation of two Mandarins would wait upon us, at our residence, with a present of fruit and confectionary from his Majesty, and we were requested to return home without loss of time to receive it, that no mistakes or delay might take place on a subject of so much importance. We returned accordingly, and found the house already spread with mats, and all requisite preparation making, with great formality, for the reception of his Majesty's gift. This consisted of a ready-dressed entertainment, contained in four very handsome varnished and gilded cases, carried by porters, accompanied by a military guard, and preceded by a military and civil Mandarin of rank, with their secretary,—all in their dresses of ceremony. The Mandarins wore a cap of a peculiar form, and on a square piece of silk, on the breast of their gown, was embroidered the badge of their order. That of the military chief was a boar, and of the man of letters a stork. The utmost formality was observed throughout the whole of this affair, as if it had been a matter of the first consequence to both parties. We received the deputation at the bottom of the stairs. In the long portico of the house, Mr. Finlayson and myself, with our Indian servants, stood on one side, and the Mandarins, with their followers, on the other, forming a street for the presents which passed between us. A list of them was then read by the secretary from a scroll of paper with much formality, and the honour conferred upon us duly notified. There is nothing of the slightest moment done here, in public matters, without writing—whereas at Siam, on the other hand, it was found impossible to get the officers of Government to commit a single sentence to paper upon almost any subject. After the list was read, we were politely requested to turn towards the presents, and make them an obeisance after our own manner, which Mr. Finlayson and myself complied with. After this ceremony the Mandarins were presented with tea, and took their departure with the same formalities as they had come. It was suggested to us through the Mandarin of Touran, that it would be a proper mark of respect to his Majesty's gift, to make an offer of a sum of money to the Mandarins

who brought it, which, as a matter of course, would be declined, but that the offer alone would have the appearance of a handsome acknowledgment of his Majesty's condescension. This proposal I rejected, informing the Mandarins, that if the money were really to be accepted, it should be given, but that nothing would be tendered for the avowed purpose of being rejected, such not being our custom. This was acquiesced in, after some hesitation and a good deal of disappointment.

Oct. 5.—The Mandarin of Touran called upon us this morning, and entered into familiar conversation. The points on which he was most anxious for information, were the reason of our long war with France, and the cause of our separation from the Americans, who, he observed, were, in look, manners, and language, the same as ourselves. These were intricate questions, to which it would have been extremely difficult to have given answers that would have been either satisfactory or intelligible to his mind, and no direct attempt at explanation was made on our part.

Oct. 6.—Yesterday forenoon, the old Intendant of the Port called with a message from the Minister, on the subject of our trade. It seemed that the question had been discussed yesterday morning in the council where the King in person was present. The question now put to us was, whether, in levying the duties upon our ships, we should prefer having a fixed sum for vessels of all dimensions, of 3000 quans, or a rated impost, as levied upon the Chinese junks, according to the breadth of the vessel's beam. The second proposal was of course preferred, not only as the most fair and advantageous, but as that least repugnant to custom and usage.

After this point had been disposed of, the Intendant of the Port requested to know what articles the English could import into Cochin China, cheap enough for the Cochin Chinese to purchase. Cotton fabrics, woollens, iron, fire-arms, lead, tin, and salt-petre, were mentioned as staple articles. He pointed out woollens as the most suitable of these, stating that the King's army was clothed in English woollens; and he suggested iron as a fit article of importation into Saigun. He strongly

recommended that our ships, on their return from China, should touch at the ports of Cochin China for cargoes, bringing with them Chinese goods which were in universal demand in the country.

We had a message in the morning to say, that a deputation would wait upon us in the course of the day, with another present from his Majesty, consisting, as before, of an entertainment. About three o'clock it arrived, with the same forms and ceremonies as upon the first occasion; and one of the Mandarins, a matter which was pointed out as a mark of particular attention, was the fourth person in rank about the Court. After the entertainment was laid out upon six small tables in an adjoining apartment, the Mandarins requested that we would be pleased to go and "admire it," which was the expression made use of. In point of quantity, it was certainly more than abundant for two gentlemen, one of them in delicate health, for it consisted of fifty-two covers. The cookery was by no means contemptible, and the feast was served up in a very neat and cleanly manner. It principally consisted of pork, fish, and poultry, prepared in a great variety of forms, and of abundance of confectionary. One of the Cochin Chinese dainties served up on this occasion ought not to be omitted; it consisted of three bowls of hatched eggs. When we expressed some surprise at the appearance of this portion of the repast, one of our Cochin Chinese attendants observed, with much *naïveté*, that hatched eggs formed a delicacy beyond the reach of the poor, and only adapted for persons of distinction. On inquiry, we, in fact, found that they cost some thirty per cent. more in the market than fresh ones. It seems, they always form a distinguished part of every great entertainment; and it is the practice, when invitations are given out, to set the hens to hatch. The fête takes place about the tenth or twelfth day from this period,—the eggs being then considered as ripe, and exactly in the state most agreeable to the palate of a Cochin Chinese epicure. It is singular that the Cochin Chinese, who are in general indiscriminate, and even gross in their diet, have an antipathy to milk, amounting to loathing. They insist, that the practice of using

it as food is little better than that of drinking raw blood. Our Indian servants, to the great scandal of the Cochin Chinese, not only declined partaking of the royal banquet, but felt their prejudices much shocked at some of the details of it. I proposed distributing the principal part of it among our Cochin Chinese guard, and for this purpose sent for the commander. He said, he dared not lay a finger upon what came from the King, without an express command; and it was found necessary to send a message to the Mandarins of the deputation, to obtain the necessary leave.

Oct. 8.—We made another short excursion into the country yesterday, accompanied by some of the French gentlemen, and in returning home passed through the principal part of the town. The appearance of the country was such as I have already described it,—thickly strewed with villages, all surrounded by bamboo hedges, and having good pathways communicating between them. The soil, as before experienced, was light and sandy. We entered several temples, none of them dedicated to the religion of Buddha. On the altar of one temple there was the figure of the cap or coronet of a female of rank, and under it an inscription. This temple, which was an extremely neat and pretty building, was, we were told, founded by a pious lady. We found all these temples carefully locked up; but, when requested, they were readily thrown open to gratify our curiosity. There was not a single priest, as far as we could discover, attached to any of them.

One of the most striking objects in Cochin Chinese landscape is, the little religious groves which are here and there interspersed among the villages, and commonly near the burying-places. Of these we saw many in the course of this day's excursion. They are of a circular form, and consist of a variety of thick and umbrageous trees. A single entrance conducts by a winding passage to the centre of them, where there is an open space, and one or more little temples, or rather rude altars. These retreats are consecrated to the

manes of the dead, and their gloom and solemnity render them well-suited to this purpose.

Oct. 10.—Having made application to the Minister to return to Touran by land, and afterwards to visit Faifo, we received a civil message from him yesterday, to say that we should be allowed to return in the manner most agreeable to ourselves, and that an order would be sent to Faifo to receive us with attention. A Chinese merchant of respectability called upon us in the course of this day, and furnished much information respecting the trade between Hué and China. The resident Chinese are the class of persons to be chiefly relied upon in these parts of the world for useful information, and I have seldom applied to them in vain. They possess a degree of practical good sense and intelligence scarcely ever to be found in the natives of the country. The individual in question spoke in discouraging terms of all commercial transactions with the Court, and on this subject used the following strong expression: "Men of rank are full of caprice in this country, and there is nothing but vexation to be got by dealing with them. If, for example, you offer them for sale a set of tea-dishes, it may happen that they will fancy the cups and reject the saucers,—or the contrary. I never," he added, "have a transaction with them, that I do not feel my *neck the smaller* for it;"—meaning, of course, by this expression, that he never thought his life altogether safe upon such occasions. This person informed us, that a good deal of suspicion and jealousy regarding our views were entertained on our first arrival, which had now abated. I have reason, indeed, to confide in the fidelity of this report of the apprehensions of the Cochin Chinese, of which, in the course of our visit, we received many proofs. Among others, I may mention the following: A Chinese, on the day of our arrival, sent us word through our interpreter, an old acquaintance, that he did not believe the Court would allow the English to trade to the country, as they desired no intercourse whatever with them. The

expression he used was, that "the Cochin Chinese looked upon the men with red hair and white teeth,—that is to say, Europeans,—to be as naturally prone to war and depredation as tigers."

In the evening we made another excursion into the country. A little below the town we entered a considerable river, which is navigable almost all the way to Tonquin. Every spot of ground, as far as we could see, was well cultivated. This was the period of ploughing for the great rice harvest, and a number of ploughs were at work. The soil was so light, that a single buffalo was sufficient for a plough. In a few spots, favourably situated for irrigation, the grain was already in the ear. It appeared a very light crop, as might have been expected from the nature of the soil. In Java, or Bengal, or Siam, it would have been looked upon as a poor one. After proceeding some way on the river above named, we turned into a canal, or rather a branch of the main stream. This leads into a salt-water lake, about two miles distant, and also communicates with the great river of the capital. The salt-lake in question abounds in fish, and we met a number of boats on their way to it. The Cochin Chinese are great consumers of fish; and their seas, rivers, lakes, canals, and even brooks, afford a great supply. The fisheries indeed exhibit almost the only active display of industry which is to be seen among them.

At night we received accounts that our launch, which we had despatched some days ago with our heavy baggage, had fortunately succeeded in crossing the bar of the river, after having been detained by a heavy and dangerous surf, and which, now that the north-east monsoon had fairly set in, rendered the entrance generally impassable.

Oct. 12.—The French Mandarins called upon us yesterday, by order of the King, to inform us, that to-day the Foreign Minister would show us the answer to the letter of the Governor-general,—that to-morrow certain presents intended for the Governor-general would be presented

to us in the hall of ceremonies in the palace; and that on the succeeding day, or as soon after as we should be inclined, every thing would be in readiness for our journey overland to Turan. At an early hour this morning, a barge was ready to convey us to the house of the Mandarin of Elephants, and we set out immediately after breakfast. The French Mandarins accompanied us. We found the Minister in the hall where he had formerly received us. Along with him were his two assistants, and two Mandarins deputed by His Majesty to present the letter to us. After some complimentary observations, we proceeded to business. The Minister began with some remarks touching our visit to Saigun, and asked whether it was the custom with us to send letters from one great personage to another open as our's was. I said, that it was not the custom in Europe; but that the princes of Western India simply inclosed their letters to one another in a silken envelope, and that in our correspondence with them we conformed to this practice. He said, "It is His Majesty's wish, when the Governor-general writes again, that the letter may be sealed, for this is the custom of Cochin China." We were now pointedly asked, whether we had voluntarily shown the Governor-general's letter to the Governor of Saigun, or whether it had been demanded of us? We stated the latter, explaining that we did not comply until assured that doing so was conformable to the customs of the country. The Mandarin replied: "It is not agreeable to the customs of the country, that any one should inspect letters addressed to His Majesty, before they reach his own presence. A copy, or a duplicate, would have been enough for the Governor of Saigun." These observations probably arose out of jealousy of the Court towards the latter personage. By the concurrent testimony of every person with whom I have spoken on the subject, this Chief is considered not only as the first subject in the kingdom in point of rank and power, but the most distinguished also for his firmness, his talents, and his integrity. His leaving the Court was regretted by the

people as a misfortune; and I have been assured, that the corruption of the lower Mandarins has known no bounds since they have lost the restraint imposed upon them by his vigilance and severity. His Majesty is naturally jealous of his influence and popularity.

The Minister, after these observations, proceeded to inform us, that certain presents had been prepared, by order of his Majesty, for the Governor-general, and some for the Mission, and that they would be presented to us to-morrow morning at the palace, where we should be received in state by the Minister of Ceremonies, who would be in attendance for the purpose. I had full time to deliberate upon the subject of these intended presents; and had resolved to decline accepting those for the Governor-general, as a necessary consequence of his Excellency's presents having been declined on the part of the Cochin Chinese Court. It was at the same time necessary, in doing so, to avoid, as far as possible, giving offence to the pride and pretensions of the Cochin Chinese. With this view it was stated, that presents were now superfluous, as a friendly acquaintance had commenced; while to receive them would be contrary to custom and to our instructions, except in the event of those brought by us being accepted by the King. A direct refusal of them was as far as possible avoided, and the presents for the Mission were accepted with due acknowledgments. The Minister answered, that the presents tendered for the Governor-general of India were mere trifles, not given for their value, but as tokens of his Majesty's friendship. He showed great anxiety that the presents should be accepted; but, on our part, persevering in our first resolution, he at last waived the point; and it was agreed, that we should repair on the following morning to the hall of ceremonies to receive the presents for the Mission only. We hoped, that in this manner a question respecting which we had anticipated considerable difficulty, had been amicably and temperately disposed of.

Drafts of the different papers were now exhibited to us. The first

of these was the letter for the Governor-general. It was explained by our own Chinese interpreter; and the language of it appeared, as far as we could judge through this medium, unexceptionable. It was not a letter direct from the King, but from the Minister, by command of his Majesty. It stated—that a letter in the English language, understood by nobody at Court, but translated by our interpreter, had been received from the Governor-general of British India—that this letter expressed a desire that a commercial intercourse should take place between the Cochin Chinese and the English; and that it disclaimed all desire for lands or establishments in Cochin China. His Majesty's answer to this was, that the wish expressed by the Governor-general had given him satisfaction, and that he had issued the necessary orders for the admission of English ships into the ports of his kingdom. The letter then proceeded to give the reasons for the King's declining to receive the presents of the Governor-general, being the same which I have already mentioned, and concluded with the list of the presents sent to his Excellency as tokens of his friendship. These last were as follow: three pairs of elephant's teeth; four rhinoceros' horns, set in gold feet; cinnamon of the first quality, three catties; of the second quality, five; and of a third quality, ten; agila wood, of the first quality, five catties; and of the second, ten catties; and three piculs of sugar-candy. These are the customary presents sent to foreign princes by the Court of Cochin China. The amount determines the rank of the person to whom they are sent, or at least that conceded to him by the etiquette or vanity of the Cochin Chinese. The cinnamon of the first quality here mentioned, I may observe, is reserved exclusively for His Majesty, and it is death to a subject to trade in it. An incredible value is put upon this commodity, viz. twenty dollars the tael, or three hundred and twenty dollars the catty, of one and one-third pound avoirdupois.

The subject of commerce was then introduced. The Minister observed, that His Majesty had granted permission to English ships to visit three ports of the kingdom only, viz. Saigun, Han or Touran, with Faifo, and the

capital. With regard to Tonquin, he said, the river was too small for the navigation of English ships. We answered, that in former times the English, and other European nations, had conducted a considerable commerce with Tonquin, and that then the river had water enough for ships of large burden. The Minister replied, that the King was resolved not to permit foreign trade, at present, to Tonquin, as that country was a recent conquest, and for which reason it was not deemed convenient to encourage the resort of strangers to it. I was disappointed at this communication, after the assurance which had been made on the subject; but I saw, from the tone in which it was made, that it was conclusive, and that remonstrance would be useless, and might excite jealousy and suspicion. I therefore acquiesced at once in the decision; and only expressed a hope, that when we became better acquainted, the port of Tonquin would be thrown open to us with the same liberality as the rest.

Our Chinese interpreter, after this, translated the tariff and regulations at the three different ports at which we were to be licensed to trade. They were what had been promised, and without variation the same as those conceded to the Chinese.

After this conversation, the arrangements for our journey were made. We were allowed any number of porters and carriers that we thought proper to name, and the Minister offered us his own barge to convey us the first stage, which is by water. A very handsome entertainment in the Cochin Chinese manner concluded, as we hoped and believed, the whole affair, and we should have been glad to have taken leave. As soon as it was over, however, one of the Mandarins, the Chief of Touran, our earliest acquaintance, stood up and said, that it seemed extraordinary that because we had brought certain presents from the Governor-general of Bengal, and that these presents had been declined, we should dream, in return, of declining the gifts of so great a King as His Majesty of Cochin China. This was the very point the discussion of which we were so anxious to avoid. I felt much annoyed that the topic should now be renewed, after it had to all appearance been so well disposed of—

even the Minister himself seeming to be entirely satisfied with the arrangement. We therefore requested, that as the matter had been finally settled, no farther discussion should take place concerning it. Several of the inferior Mandarins, however, agreed in the opinion expressed by the Chief of Touran; and the first determination of the Minister was evidently shaken; and he accordingly informed us, that the letters and papers which we saw sealed and placed in a casket upon the table before us, ready to be handed over, could not be delivered, as the presents were mentioned in the letter, and it would be necessary to take the farther orders of His Majesty on the subject. The Minister, and other Mandarins, with the two French gentlemen, repaired immediately to the palace, to report what had taken place to the King, and we returned to our own residence, which we reached about five in the evening. The Minister displayed great good-humour and affability during the whole conference. He spoke familiarly of his own private affairs. Four or five of his children stood beside him; and this led him to inform us, that he had in all fifty-four, thirty-six of whom were living in his house. During the entertainment he sat down to table with us, but did not eat. Not so the four inferior Mandarins, who did great justice to the feast. The Cochin Chinese, like the Chinese and Japanese, eat with chop-sticks, which, in point of delicacy, is not a whit better than the naked hand of other Asiatics. The bowl, in which the viands are contained, is applied to the very mouth, and the food dexterously tossed in, in immense quantities, and with a kind of beggarly scramble, as if the guest was fearful that any part of it should be snatched from him.

Oct. 14.—For the last three days it rained almost incessantly. I never knew rain more heavy or more continual. The river overflowed its banks and completely inundated the whole town. In the street before our door there were three and a half feet water, and boats were seen passing to and fro in it, as if it had been a regular canal. All the houses, with the exception of our own, which was raised upon a high terrace, were completely flooded; and the inhabitants were compelled, for the security

of their property, to deposit it in boats at their doors. For ourselves, we were driven into the interior and higher parts of our dwelling for shelter, there being at least four feet water in the low court-yard in front, and even the verandahs of the house being overflown. At the same time there was a violent gale of wind from the N.E., so that our situation was extremely uncomfortable. For some days, indeed, we were completely insulated, and had no communication with the Government.

The Mandarin of Touran, Ong-hep, called upon us in the morning, paying his visit in his barge, and landing at the street-door. He spoke much on the subject of our rejection of the King's presents, and sought to excuse himself for the impediment thrown in the way of the negociation, by his unseasonable interference at the last conference. While he was with us, a message came from the Minister, to inquire how we were after the inundation, and to inform us, that as soon as the waters had subsided, our business should be proceeded in.

Oct. 15.—The two Mandarins, assistants of the Minister, called upon us this forenoon unexpectedly, and without giving us any notice of their visit. They came, they said, by order of the Minister, to inform us, that as we would not accept of the King's presents for the Governor-general, His Majesty had thought proper to decline sending any answer to His Excellency's letter, but that the commercial document was ready to be delivered. To this I answered, that this depended solely upon His Majesty's pleasure;—that if the letter was given, we would take charge of it; and that if it was not given, we should make a faithful report of this, as of every other circumstance connected with the Mission, to the Governor-general of India on our return. They were sensibly disappointed at this reply; and after consulting with each other for some time, they put the question pointedly, whether we would be glad to have the letter or not. We answered, that we should be happy to take charge of any letter from the King, as a matter of course. They then finally explained, that if we would accept of His Majesty's presents for the Governor-general, the letter would be furnished; but if this form, which was according to the custom of the Court of Cochin China, was not complied with, no written answer could be given. In reply to this, we stated distinctly in a few words, that we had delivered our deliberate opinion upon this subject on Saturday to the Minister, and had nothing new to say now. We explained, that our principal business in coming here was to settle a friendly commercial relation between the two countries, and that this being adjusted, we were perfectly satisfied. On hearing this, the Mandarins proceeded to deliver the commercial document. They finally asked when we wished to take our departure for Touran. We fixed on the 17th. They begged to know whether we would call to take leave of the Minister. We agreed to do so to-morrow, and they departed.

Oct. 16.—We called on the Minister to-day, according to promise. Neither the French gentlemen nor any Cochin Chinese of rank were present. Although the visit purported to be one of mere ceremony and civility, yet the Minister immediately entered upon business. He stated, that in consequence of our declining to take the King's presents for the Governor-general of India, his Majesty could not answer the Governor's letter; as, according to immemorial usage, such presents as were named in it, must indispensably accompany it. He then proceeded to explain, that the King had declined receiving the Governor-general's presents only because the English had as yet gained no benefit by their intercourse; but that as soon as we had, he would accept of any presents which should be offered. We answered that we did not complain of the King's declining the Governor-general's presents, but that among us it was customary not to receive presents where those tendered by ourselves were declined. He said, if we would accept of the presents, they should be presented in the palace, with all due form; and he stated, as an inducement to comply, that His Majesty would be present on the occasion in person. To this it was replied, that if His Majesty desired to send the presents to the Governor-general, we would with pleasure convey them to Bengal, without,

however, pledging ourselves to their being accepted. The Minister declined giving the presents on these terms.

He next adverted to our commerce; and said, that he hoped that every thing connected with this subject was settled to our satisfaction. He begged to assure us, that English ships visiting the ports of Cochin China would meet with every assistance that he could personally render them; and requested that his respects might be offered to the British Governor-general with this message. We now told him of our anxiety to leave Hué to-morrow. He answered, that the boat intended to convey us the first day's journey would be ready at an early hour, with four palanquins for the remainder of the journey.

During our interview, the permission to visit Faifo was confirmed; and we had also leave to visit the marble rocks or other curiosities in the vicinity of the Bay of Touran. The Minister paid us polite attention throughout, and entered into familiar conversation after our business was terminated. He told us with some exultation, that he had served three Kings of Cochin China. He was a great favourite of his late Majesty, whom he accompanied in his flight to Siam, throughout the desert islands on the eastern coast of the Gulf of that name, and, in short, through all his wars and peregrinations. With the present King, although permitted to retain office, he is not a favourite; and this accounts readily enough for the junior Mandarins having taken it upon themselves to oppose his opinion, even in our presence, in the conference which took place on the 12th. He took leave of us with great kindness, and wished us an agreeable and prosperous voyage.

During our visit, the females of the Minister's family, as they had also done upon the two former occasions, crowded to the skreen, which was in front of us and behind the Chief, to gratify their curiosity. Here they laughed, and nodded, and beckoned in such a manner, as to give us but a very indifferent opinion of Cochin Chinese female modesty in high life! All whom we saw were young, and two or three of them fair and pretty, after the manner of Cochin China beauties.

Another incident, of which we were eye-witnesses, deserves to be mentioned, as highly illustrative of Cochin Chinese manners and Cochin Chinese government. While we were entering the court-yard of the Minister's house, we saw a company of comedians, who had been exhibiting, as upon the first occasion. It seems that they were not perfect in their parts, or at least that their performance did not satisfy the taste of the great man. They were accordingly undergoing the universal panacea for all breaches of moral, social, and political obligation,—for all errors of omission or commission; that is to say—the bamboo. The first object that caught our attention was the hero of the piece lying prone on the ground, and receiving punishment in his full dramatic costume. The inferior characters, in due course, received their share also, as we afterwards ascertained from hearing their cries, while we sat with the Minister. This conference virtually terminated the diplomatic intercourse of the Mission with the Cochin Chinese Court.

CHAPTER XI.

Departure from Hué.—Journey by land to Touran, and description of the Route.—Cochin Chinese Palanquin-bearers.—Arrival at Touran.—Presents for the Mission received.—Worship of Buddha.—Visit to the town of Fiafo.—Marble rocks and grottos.—Account of the town of Fiafo.—Temples of Buddha.—Account of the country between Touran and Fiafo.—Typhoon.—Departure from Touran for Singapore.—Description of Touran.—Land-birds met at Sea.—Anambas Islands.—Arrival at Singapore.

Oct. 17.—Every thing having been arranged for our journey, we left Hué this morning at eight o'clock. The first part of our route was performed by water, and the Mandarin who had conducted us from Touran accompanied us with an escort of soldiers. Our whole party occupied an accommodation-boat and two galleys. After ascending the river until we were opposite the citadel and palace, we sailed into a canal in a south-easterly direction. The appearance of the country here was strikingly beautiful and picturesque, and had more of the variety and interest of European landscape than of tropical scenery. After proceeding about a mile on this canal, we saw two or three excellent houses, surrounded by gardens and walls. The houses resembled large and spacious Indian bungalows. These habitations were occupied by some of the princesses of the late King's family. Here the low hills, which approached close to the river, were naked of wood, with the exception of one, which exhibited the unusual spectacle, in a tropical country, of a plantation of timber-trees. A little beyond the residence of the princesses now mentioned, and on the opposite bank of the canal, was seen the manufactory of bricks, from which the fort and other public works were supplied. This extended, I believe, for not less

than a mile and a half along the canal. We had the curiosity to count the number of kilns, and found them to amount to 255!

It took us four hours to pass through the canal, and, at the rate we were going, I suppose it to be about fourteen miles in extent. This was the work of the late King, now indeed highly useful to the agriculture and communication of the country; but effected, we were told, at a vast expense of labour and of life. During the first five miles, the canal is about twenty yards broad, and raised above the level of the surrounding country: it has a neat footpath on each side, and, at convenient intervals, flood-gates for inundating at pleasure the adjacent rice-lands. The rest of the work is wide, irregular, on a level with the marsh through which it passes, and destitute of foot-paths. The whole of the lands through which the canal passes, are rice-grounds. After the recent heavy falls of rain, these were so completely inundated, that they had more the appearance of a vast lake, than of a country under culture. Boats were passing and repassing over the fields, and some persons even engaged in fishing where crops of grain would be reaped in a few months.

The canal terminates by a narrow sluice, a great internal lake, or, more correctly, in a wide arm of the sea, with a very narrow neck. Either owing to the freshes, or the canal being elevated above the lake, there was a considerable fall and rush of water at the sluice, which made the passage a matter of some difficulty—and even danger, if a number of persons on each side, armed with long poles, had not directed the boats as they passed through. It took us two hours, with smooth water, to row across the arm of the sea just referred to, the breadth of which appeared to be about seven miles. The entrance into this spacious bay from the sea is to the north-east, and, as already said, very narrow. We had noticed it as we proceeded by sea to Hué, but had then no conception of the extent of the sheet of water into which it led. The depth of this bay is no more than two fathoms throughout, and therefore, as a place of shelter it is fitted only for small vessels. In the language of the country it is called the bay of Mukgot.

At four in the afternoon, we reached the end of the stage, the village of Kao-hai. This is a large hamlet, situated in a fertile valley, between the foot of a chain of hills and the bay, and to the southern side of the latter. The valley is well cultivated, and, we were told, contains a thousand families. A pretty rivulet winds through it, which was full of boats. From the favourableness of its situation, this valley gives two crops of rice a-year: one had just been reaped, and preparation was making for sowing the other. We had an excellent house to reside in, and every convenience that travellers in our situation had a right to expect. Our place of accommodation was a sort of caravansera resembling others of the same description, found regularly at intervals of eight or ten miles, all the way from Saigún to the extreme limit of Tonquin, where it borders on China. It was well raised upon a terrace, and was a hundred feet long, and half as broad. It consisted of one great hall, with a double row of pillars, having an elevated place at one end for the King's throne, and a large chamber at the other end for the security of property. It was substantially and excellently built.

Oct. 18.—We left Kao-hai at six o'clock this morning, and reached the foot of the first range of hills in about an hour. After crossing this, which is narrow, and not above three hundred feet high, we entered an extensive valley. Travelling through this, until half-past eight o'clock, we halted at Nuk-mang, "the place of sweet water," a remarkably pretty and neat village. We breakfasted here, and resumed our journey at half-past eleven. Still traversing low ground for three quarters of an hour, we reached a second range of hills, of nearly the same elevation as the first: this terminated the valley, which appears to be about nine miles broad. It is, generally speaking, sandy, sterile, and in a state of nature; but towards the hills, on both sides, the soil improves and is well cultivated. Here we saw reapers in the fields; among them were many women. They used a sickle, as in Europe; and their work was performed with something like the energy and vigour of European labour.

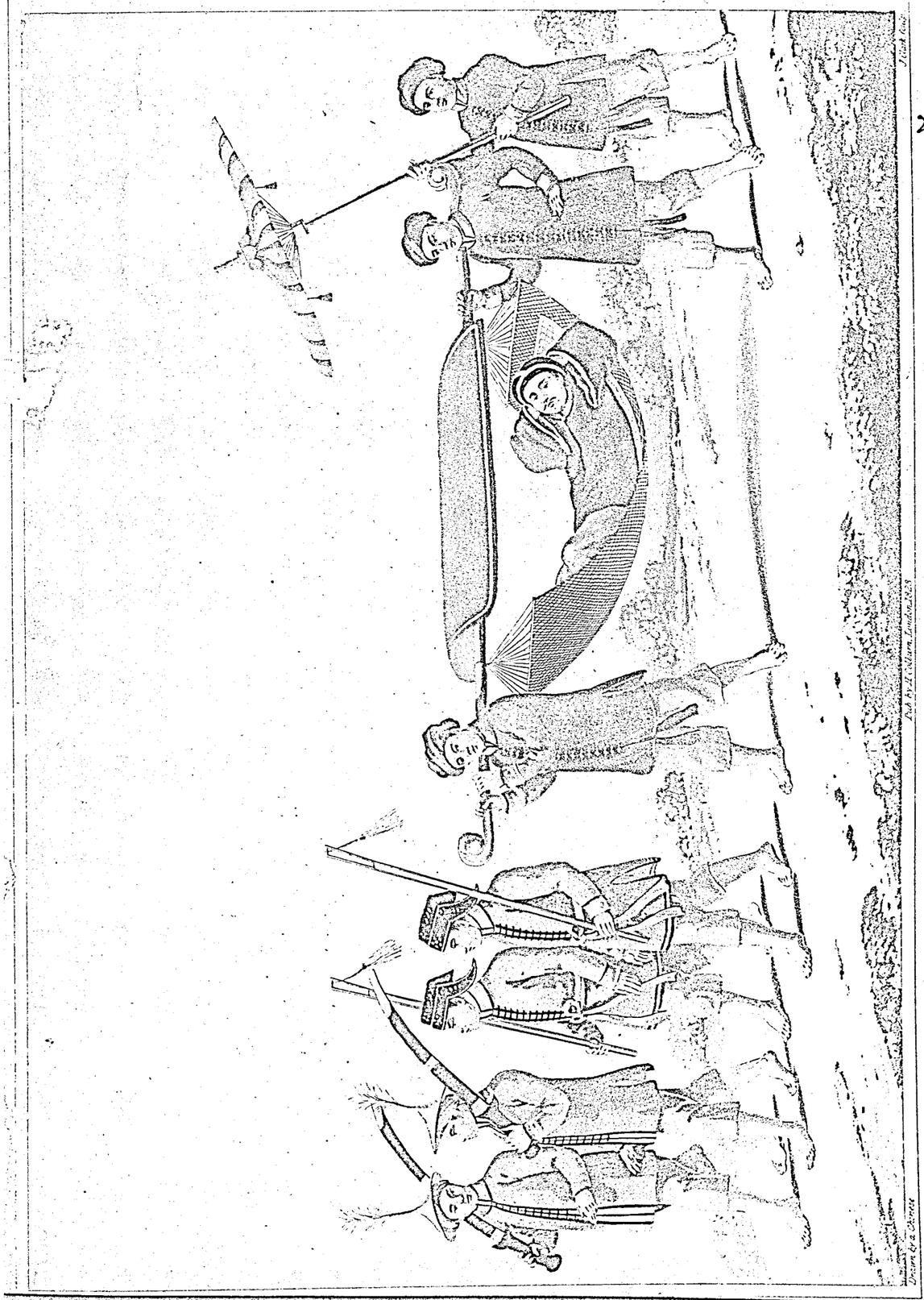
As soon as we had reached the top of this second range of hills, a beautiful and unexpected view was presented to us. On one side was the valley which we had just quitted; on another the open sea; on a third high ranges of wooded mountains; and before us, what we took at the time for a great internal lake, surrounded every where by steep and wooded hills. This extensive piece of water proved, however, to be another arm of the sea. We skirted it along its eastern shore, passing a great deal of forest, but our journey being over a most excellent and well-finished road. In this part of our route in particular, and generally indeed throughout the whole of it, we observed along the road many monuments of Cochin Chinese superstition, in the form of little temples, at which votive offerings were presented as well as occasionally on the pinnacles of rocks. These offerings consisted usually of little bits of gilded paper and similar trifles, and were most usual in wild and solitary spots, considered by the Cochin Chinese to be the natural dwellings of evil spirits. At one spot which we passed, on the summit of a hill, and in the depth of the forest, there was erected a post, having on it a board, on which was represented a hideous human face with an inscription underneath. Our native companions informed us that the writing was a sacred text, and that it and the ugly face were intended to frighten away an evil spirit of peculiar malignity which haunted this particular spot. They said, that when people travelled in numbers, or in fine weather, the evil genius in question was not to be apprehended, but that he took advantage of solitary travellers, especially of women, and that he was most mischievous in storms and gloomy weather!

At two o'clock, we arrived at Hai-mung, the end of our stage. This was a considerable village on the sea-side, just at the entrance of the bay already mentioned, and which, in the native language, is called Vung-dam, or the harbour of Dam. It appeared to be about five miles across, in its broadest part, and seven or eight long. The depth of water in the middle is ten Cochin Chinese cubits, or almost fourteen feet English.

The entrance is extremely narrow, I should think not above one hundred and twenty yards, and here there is only a depth of from seven to eight and a half feet. For a mile inland, the bay consists of a narrow gut or channel, which expands all at once to the breadth which I have just stated. A tremendous surge rolls in upon the beach or rocks towards the entrance of the bay on both sides, the narrow channel alone being free from danger.

In the forests through which we passed in the course of this day's journey, we were informed that tigers and elephants were numerous. Of wild poultry *(Phasianus Gallus)* we saw several flocks. One of these, not far from a village, appeared so little shy that we at first imagined it consisted of domestic fowls, and hesitated to fire. In the winter, or cold season, innumerable flocks of ducks and other water-fowl are described as visiting Cochin China. These had not yet arrived, but we observed preparations making for insnaring them. These consisted of a number of artificial birds, intended for decoys. They were so well imitated, that one of our party fired twice among a flock of them, mistaking them for real birds.

This day's journey was performed in palanquins, of the fashion of the country. These vehicles consist of a net, hung from a single pole, and having a pent roof of very light materials. On each side, as well as behind and in front, there are curtains of wax cloth. The weight of a good one is about thirty catties, or forty pounds, and of a small one, not more than half that amount. Two men, and no more, carry these vehicles, and four is the greatest number of bearers employed for persons of any weight, including the relief. In this employment, the Cochin Chinese exhibit a degree of strength, dexterity, and activity, of which I had not believed them capable. They travel at a quick pace, and change the palanquin from shoulder to shoulder, or relieve each other without even halting. Each of our sets of bearers carried us at least nine or ten miles. In every respect, I conceive them superior to Indian palanquin-bearers. They per-



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ORDINARY MODE OF CONVEYANCE OF PERSONS OF RANK IN COCHIN CHINA.

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form the same work, at least equally well, with less than one half the numbers employed in Hindustan. This superiority is, in a good measure, owing to the greater lightness of the vehicle employed; but, I have no doubt, in some degree, also, to the superior physical strength of the Cochin Chinese over the natives of Western India. We found the Cochin Chinese palanquin the most comfortable and least fatiguing vehicle in which we had ever travelled.

Oct: 19.—We commenced our journey this morning at half past five, by crossing the narrow channel which forms the entrance of the bay. Immediately before us was the high range of mountains, which divides the bay of Vung-dam from that of Han or Touran. We immediately began to ascend, and when we had got to the elevation of four or five hundred feet, had a beautiful and extensive prospect of the bay which we had just left—of the open sea, and even of a portion of the bay of Nuk-got, which we had crossed in the first day's journey. Here was a temple to the Spirit of the Mountain, and on the altar some incense still burning, left by travellers who had gone on before us. Our course was now along the sea, but at a considerable elevation over it, while it was generally concealed from view by the thickness of the forest. The scenery now, and for the rest of the day, was bold and romantic. The forest was as tall and luxuriant as close to the Equator itself, and the sound of brooks and waterfalls was perpetually murmuring in our ears. Two or three waterfalls were visible at a distance, one of which appeared to have a fall of about two hundred feet. Its white foam made a fine contrast with the uniform verdure of the surrounding forest. The road was frequently very steep. All that labour could do to make it good, had indeed been tried, but this was not much among the vast masses of granite of which the mountain consisted, and where there was scarcely an inch of soil, with which to form an even surface. Every step we took was from one block of granite to another, both in ascending and descending. The dearth of human inhabitants was ill made up by numerous herds of monkeys. We saw no less than five herds of these animals while we were passing the

mountain. These were all of the same species which we had seen at the bay of Touran, the Douc *(or Simia nemoris,)* in colour one of the handsomest of the Ape tribe. At the elevation, as we conjectured, of six or seven hundred feet, we observed for the first time the tea plant cultivated. The trees seemed to be little attended to, — were at least twelve feet high, and the leaves appeared large and coarse. At half past eight o'clock, we reached the highest part of the mountain. The thermometer, which on the plain was the day before, at the same hour 83°, here sunk to 76°, and the barometer showed that our elevation above the level of the sea, was about 1600 feet. The high road, however, lay over a comparatively low part of the range, some peaks of which appeared to be at least 4000 feet high. Near the highest spot to which we ascended, was a neat village, with the advantage of a good market, and of, what an European at least would consider, a fine climate. In the shops refreshments, consisting of tea, rice, and other articles, were ready laid out for travellers, of which we saw a good number in the course of this day's and yesterday's journey. These persons, among whom were women and children, travelled unarmed, and without guards, and apparently without apprehension. This, at least, was a favourable sign of the vigilance and energy of the Government.

As soon as we had reached the summit of the hill, we enjoyed a grand and extensive prospect, which exhibited at one view the bay and peninsula of Touran, the bay of Faifo, and the marble rocks which lie between them. The rest of our route was a rapid and not very easy descent to the western shore of the bay of Touran. This occupied an hour and a half. At ten o'clock we reached the little cove which I had visited on the 23d of September. Here we breakfasted, and embarking at twelve o'clock, after a beating passage against a strong sea breeze, reached the ship at four o'clock in the afternoon, and had the happiness to join our friends and to find them all well.

The geological formation of the country which we passed in this journey is entirely primitive. The extremity of a small ridge of hills, which terminates at the side of the river opposite the palace, we found upon examination to be quartz rock. Throughout the rest of our journey granite, with occasional beds of horn-blende rock, were the only formations which occurred. In the vicinity of the capital there seems to be more variety, for we found besides quartz and granite, specimens of mountain lime-stone, which we were told had been brought from a distance of no more than ten or twelve miles.

Oct. 20.—Early this morning the military Mandarin of Touran came on board to congratulate us upon our return, and to inform us that the presents from the King for the officers of the Mission were ready to be delivered, and that it would be necessary for us to go on shore to receive them. We agreed to do so, and landed at ten o'clock. We were formally received by the two Mandarins of the place, and by one of the assistants of the first Minister, who had come down from the capital for the express purpose of delivering the presents. The presents for the Envoy consisted of a pair of elephant's teeth, the horn of a rhinoceros, five catties of cinnamon of the second quality, and five of the third quality. We were perfectly satisfied at being told that all was right; but the Mandarins insisted upon our opening every box separately, and examining the articles one by one. The presents of provisions consisted of ten bullocks, ten goats, ten hogs, one hundred ducks, one hundred fowls, and one hundred and twenty measures of rice, amounting to about eight thousand pounds. The Mandarins, by way of demonstrating to us that there was no foul play, would have us to examine these articles also in detail; but this we positively declined. There is a paltryness and want of delicacy, or even decorum, in the conduct of these people, in matters of this nature, which is quite surprising. We presented the assistant of the Minister with a piece of broad-cloth and some British cottons. He had been little accustomed to a gift of this magnitude, and received it thankfully, but was very anxious that the circumstance should be kept strictly secret.

Oct. 21.—A party from the ship ascended this morning the hill opposite to the anchoring-place. The whole peninsula of Touran is one long mountainous range of granite, the most elevated parts of which are about two thou-

sand feet in height. On the brow of the hill, about a quarter of a mile up, we found a little temple of Buddha, the exterior of which was little better in appearance than a common hut. It contained a sitting image of the god, and an erect one of one of his disciples. These were of porcelain, and were of a manufacture much superior to what might have been expected from the situation they were in. We were afterwards told that the late King had caused them to be brought from China, and placed here, in gratitude for his final triumph over the Taysons. The kings of Cochin China, however, are not of the Buddhist religion; but, I presume, that, like the ancient polytheists, they are inclined to honour every mode of worship followed by their subjects; hoping, no doubt, that this indiscriminate piety may sometimes prove profitable to them in a temporal point of view.

Oct. 22.—While at Hué, we had obtained leave to visit the town of Faifo. This place is one of the principal seats of Chinese commerce, and for this reason we were anxious to be acquainted with it. Mr. Rutherford, Captain Brown, the commander of the ship, and myself, accordingly left Touran at five o'clock this morning, in two boats, on our voyage to it. Touran and Faifo are connected with each other by a salt-water creek, or a natural canal, running all the way parallel to the shore, and separated from it by a range of sand-hills from a mile to a mile and a half broad. At nine o'clock we reached a singular group of rocks, situated on this narrow strip of land,—rising in a bold and picturesque manner from among the sand-hills, and altogether unconnected with the nearest range of mountains, which I think cannot be less than fifteen or twenty miles distant. These rocks are six in number, of an oblong form, and all running in a direction nearly east and west. They rise from the sands almost perpendicularly. Wherever there is shelter or room for a little soil to rest, they are covered with a luxuriant vegetation of arborescent plants. Most generally, however, they are quite naked. They consist of crystallized limestone, or marble, which has no regular appearance of stratification, but rises in perpendicular columns, presenting at the summits a serrated appearance. We made a

geometrical measurement of two of them with much care. The lowest of these was 212 feet from its base, and the highest 300. On the almost perpendicular face of the loftiest was seen a herd of small monkeys clambering up and down with as much *sang-froid* as if they were upon the level ground. Another rock, and the most singular of the group, appeared to us to be about fifty feet higher than this last, but as it did not afford the same conveniences for measurement, we did not ascertain its exact height.

We had been told that there were some caves in these rocks, containing images which were worshipped by the natives, but this circumstance was not noticed in such a manner as to excite in us much curiosity. We resolved, however, to see them, and were well rewarded for our trouble. They are contained in the highest and largest portion of the range which lies nearest the sea. We walked up a steep ascent of sand-hills, which covered the base of the rocks to a considerable height, and entered them by a rent or chasm, which forms a bold and striking approach. Inside we were surprised to find some dwellings, surrounded by very neat gardens. A guide, whom we found here, led us to the principal cave. The approach to this was by a natural gallery in the rock, partly open and partly closed at top, 180 feet long. As we came near the termination of this, we had a view of the grotto itself, to which we descended by a flight of thirty-seven artificial steps. The cave measures eighty-four feet in length, and seventy-two in breadth. The height appeared to be not less than eighty or ninety feet. The top is a natural dome with three or four wide rents in it, which let in a sufficiency of light. The parasitical plants growing without struck down their shoots in various directions through these, and some even took root at the very bottom of the cave. The interior presented the appearance of rude natural columns, or rather pilasters, and in general had the venerable look of a Gothic ruin. The north-east side was occupied by a temple dedicated to the religion of Buddha, a form of worship that, in theory at least, delights in the recesses of rocks, mountains, and forests. On the principal altar, there were two gilded figures of Buddha in the common sitting

attitude; and near him, in stone, were two figures of his ministers or disciples. On another altar, to the right hand, was a gilt female figure, also in a sitting attitude. This, I suppose, may have been the tutelary deity of the rocks. Two monstrous figures stood as warders at the entrance of the grotto, and two more in front of the temple of Buddha. Such figures as these seem never to be wanting in Buddhist temples of any magnitude.

From this grotto we were led to other parts of the same group of rocks. In one place we were conducted through a natural arched gateway into a square enclosure, which seemed about one hundred and fifty feet in every direction, having perpendicular walls, not less than seventy or eighty feet high. Opposite the gateway by which we entered this enclosure was a second gateway, from which we had a noble view of the sea, not above three hundred yards distant from us,—of the Chamcallao islands directly before us, and of the beach, lashed, at the time, by a loud surge.

From this portion of the rocks we descended, and turning to the north-east, passed through some more gardens and habitations, and entered another fine cave, although inferior in size to the first. This was nearly open at top, but shaded by the foliage and branches of a number of fine trees growing over the rocks. One side of this cave was occupied by a temple, in which was a single female figure, similar to that in the first temple. This, we were informed by our conductors, was the divinity of the place, the protectress of the grotto. This temple, in opposition to the one before mentioned, appeared to be Cochin Chinese, and to have no marks of Buddhism about it.

The neighbourhood of these rocks, although there is scarcely any thing to be seen but naked sand, is inhabited, and several villages lie immediately under the rocks themselves. The inhabitants of these are principally fishermen, and a few of them seem to gain a livelihood by making small culinary utensils out of the marble. This material is in some places white, in others streaked with a bluish vein, but more commonly

it is of a grey or bluish colour. I am told that it is inferior to the marble of Tonquin, principally because, from the frequent fissures in it, it does not admit of being cut into blocks of sufficient magnitude. After breakfasting under shelter of one of the rocks, we set off for Faifo at one o'clock, and reached it at half-past ten at night.

Oct. 23.—We spent this day, notwithstanding that it rained incessantly, in visiting every part of Faifo. This is almost entirely a Chinese establishment, being principally inhabited by that people or their descendants. It lies upon the west bank of the creek, or that farthest from the coast, and consists of a single street, about three quarters of a mile in length. The whole permanent population was stated to us to amount to about five thousand. It contains six hundred Chinese families, and is the principal mart of the foreign commerce of this part of the kingdom. Our visit was made in a very dull and uninteresting period; but in the season of the junks it is a busy place, a kind of fair being held at it, at which, including the crews of the junks and the inhabitants themselves, not less than ten thousand Chinese are alleged to be collected. Sugar and cinnamon are the great articles of exportation.

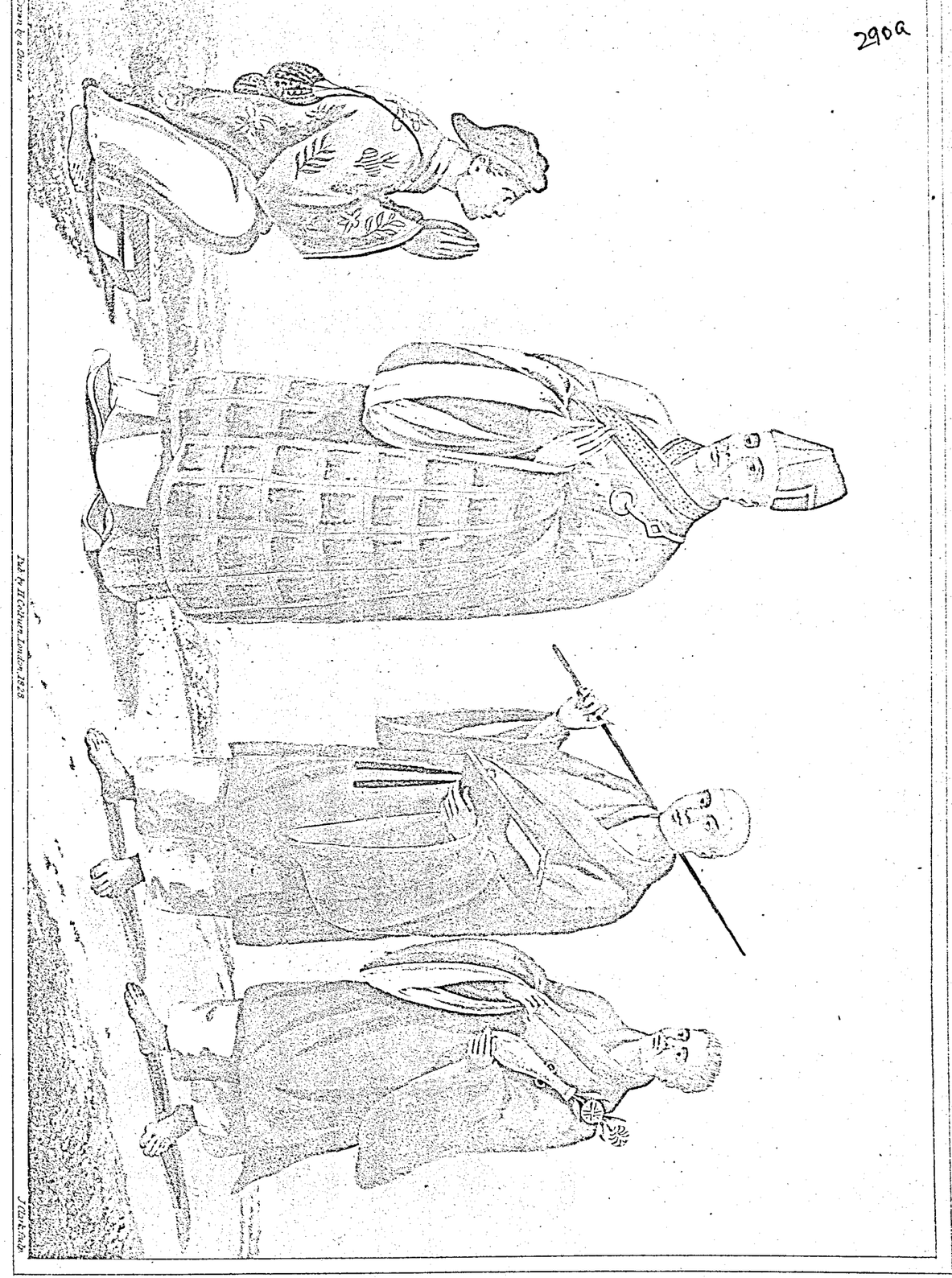
The Chinese houses of Faifo are all built of stone and lime, and very neatly and substantially roofed with tile. That which we occupied might, with little arrangement, have been made a very comfortable residence. Faifo contains two handsome Chinese temples, dedicated, we were told, to the Protectress of Commerce and Navigation. The principal of them was built, about a century ago, at the cost of a Chinese merchant, who brought from China the principal materials, and even the artisans who constructed it. In this temple we saw an immense iron vase, eight feet high, and in the broadest part about four feet in diameter. This also was the workmanship of China. It stood in front of the altar; behind it was a fountain, in which fifteen or twenty small land tortoises were sporting. At Faifo also we saw the largest temple of Buddha which we had met with in Cochin China. There was a single gilded image of Buddha in

it, behind which was a painting probably representing one of his disciples. This last was remarkable for being exhibited in a crimson drapery, with a gold embroidery upon it.

I may here remark, that all the figures of Buddha, which we saw in Cochin China, differed materially in appearance from the common representations in Siam and Western India. The Cochin Chinese Buddha had Tartar or Chinese features, instead of Hindu, and a drapery thrown over both shoulders instead of one. It resembled the common Buddha in attitude, in the pendant ears, and in the mode in which the head is dressed. Some of these images were fabricated in China. May not the Buddhist worship of the Chinese and Cochin Chinese be that of the first Buddha, received direct from Tartary? and may not the Buddhism of Siam and other western countries be the modification of it, introduced by the second or Indian Buddha, the Prince of Magadha or Behar? This is a plausible supposition, but not corroborated by any historical facts. On inquiry, we found, for the first time, that to the temple just alluded to there were priests attached. They were unluckily all absent, however, upon a pilgrimage to a place in the mountains, six or seven days' journey from Faifo. The following account of them was given to us, viz., that they lived in a state of celibacy—that they did not destroy animal life, or even eat animal food—that they wore a peculiar cap as a head-dress —that either yellow or red was the colour of their garments, and that the Buddhists of Cochin China burnt the dead bodies of their priests, but not of the laity.

Faifo is not the capital of the province in which it is situated. The Governor resides at a fortified place, about six miles distant from it, called Fu-chi-am, and which is in consequence considered as the principal place. The whole province is called Cham, and extends to the range of mountains which borders the south-west side of the Bay of Touran. It is said to contain 50,000 inhabitants.

Oct. 24.—We left Fiafo this morning at six o'clock, and arrived at



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Touran at five in the evening. The north-east monsoon having regularly set in, and with considerable violence, we had some difficulty in making the ship, well sheltered as that part of the Bay of Touran is, where she lay. Judging from the rate at which we travelled on our return, and the time our journey occupied, I imagine the whole distance from Faifo to Touran is about thirty-five miles. Faifo is however six or eight miles from the sea; so that the whole length of the creek which connects the two places, cannot be less than forty miles. Towards both extremities, with the exception of the sand-bars at the entrances, there are at least three fathoms water, and it is between two and three hundred yards broad. For a short way however, towards the middle of its course, it contracts to a breadth of between twenty and thirty yards, and at high-water there are not here above two or three feet of depth. In going up, although we had very flat boats, we were detained for two hours at this part, and had to drag our boats over the shallowest portions. A considerable number of boats were to be seen passing and repassing the creek, both sides of which, but particularly the land side, were well inhabited; and although the soil was uncommonly thin and scanty, every practicable spot was cultivated. There was evidently no want of industry among the people. The poverty of the soil was attempted to be remedied by manuring it with a species of alga, or sea-weed, fished up from the bottom of the creek. In ploughing, we noticed that the same person held the plough and drove the cattle, an improvement which I have nowhere else seen in India. The corn too was neatly stacked, as in Europe; and the villages altogether presented the same neat and clean appearance which had, in other parts of this country, attracted our notice. It was the fisheries however, and not the land, which had encouraged the people to settle on the banks of the creek. From Touran to Faifo, and, I suppose, through the rest of its course, the creek is filled, and indeed in some places almost choked up with various contrivances for catching fish. The most considerable of these are a sort of stake-nets, consisting of a series of compartments, diminish-

ing in size until they end in a small trap, where the fish is finally taken. A series of these snares is placed on each side of the river, opening in opposite directions, and leaving but a narrow channel in the middle of the stream for boats to pass. In other situations, faggots of bamboo canes, with the branches on, were fixed in the middle of the creek, forming thick circular bushes, which allured the fish by the cool retreat they afforded. When the fish are to be taken, these bushes are surrounded by nets, and the prey scared out and taken. Another mode of fishing was practised here, and is frequent in all parts of the coast of Cochin China. It consisted of a net affixed to a long crane and lever, from the bow of a boat, which, by being well-balanced, was sunk and raised without difficulty. With this machine prawns and other small fish only were caught, its use being confined to shallow water. In other situations there were ponds on the banks of the creek for feeding and preserving fish, such as are common in some parts of Java, and in that country extremely productive. The banks of the creek abounded with mews, coots, and other common water-fowl, and with two large species of crane, of which we shot specimens.

Oct. 31.—On the twenty-seventh we were ready to sail, but about twelve o'clock of the night of the twenty-sixth, a heavy gale came on from the north-east, accompanied with torrents of rain. This was a true Typhoon. The gale did not abate until early yesterday morning, nor was there the least cessation of rain until twelve o'clock of the same day. In short, it rained heavily and incessantly for a period of eighty-two hours. We observed upon this occasion a phenomenon which I had never noticed any where before, nor indeed heard of. The quantity of rain was so great, that it covered the whole bay with a stratum of fresh water; so that we filled our cask alongside the ship, with water good enough for the cattle and poultry. During the height of the gale, the harbour of Touran where we lay was quite undisturbed, and we experienced no inconvenience whatever from the fury of the gale.

At half-past twelve to-day we weighed anchor, and stood on our course to Singapore, on our return to Bengal; our long detention at Siam having brought the season unluckily to so advanced a period, as to render it impossible for us to follow the route of the Phillippines and Dampier's Straits, according to our first intentions. Complimentary messages passed between us and the Mandarins of Touran before parting.

The bay of Touran, or more correctly the bay of Han, may be described in a few words. It is of great extent, but this, instead of being an advantage, is its principal defect. Its entrance is to the north, between a high island to the right, and the high land of the extremity of the peninsula of Han to the left. This channel cannot be less than five miles broad: from the entrance to the bottom of the bay at the village of Touran, the distance is not less than twelve miles. Across the bay, from east to west, the breadth is at least eight miles. To the east, the bay is formed by the high land of the peninsula of Han; and to the west, by a range of mountains still higher. The south and south-east sides alone are formed by low sandy land. The anchorage notwithstanding the great size of the bay is but of moderate extent. It lies to the north-east angle, within a few hundred yards of the high land of the peninsula; and behind a small promontory, off which there is a stony islet. In sailing in, the best anchorage is determined as soon as the entrance of the bay is closed in. To the southern side, the extent of the harbour is limited by a low flat sand coming out from the entrance of the creek. Upon the whole, it is not above a mile and a half in extent in any direction, notwithstanding the spaciousness of the bay itself. Every other part of the bay except the small cove where the village is situated, which forms the last stage from Hué, is just as exposed as the open sea, and upon the western coast especially, a formidable surf always prevails, which renders landing both difficult and dangerous, even in the finest weather. We left the ship one morning when it was perfectly calm, and after a long continuance of fine weather, with an intention of exploring this part of

the bay; but found the swell and the surf running so high, that we dared not attempt to land, although we approached within a few yards of the shore.

Nov. 2.—The wind with which we were beating out of the bay of Touran on the 31st, having failed us on the same evening, we were compelled to come to an anchor, but at twelve o'clock at night a strong breeze having sprung up from the north-west, which soon increased to a fresh gale, we made sail. At noon, on the 1st of November, we were in the latitute of 15° 18′ north, and to-day, assisted by the same favourable wind, and by a strong current setting with the monsoon, we ran the extraordinary distance of two hundred and forty-nine miles of latitude, and found ourselves, by our meridian observation, in 11° 9′. At sunset we were in sight of Pulo Sapata, one of the three islands, or rather rocks, called The Catwicks, and which are considered by navigators the southern limit of hurricanes or Typhoons. Pulo Sapata, the second of the same name mentioned in this journal, is a bare inaccessible rock, visible thirty miles off from a ship's deck, and is the undisturbed habitation of thousands of sea-fowl. We were to-day, for the first time for near nine months, in the ordinary track of European navigation.

Nov. 6.—We lost the regular monsoon on the 2d, and ever since had nothing but light airs and calms, the season being too early for the setting in of the regular periodical wind so far to the south. At noon to-day, our latitude was 5° 13′, and our longitude 106° 3′. At daylight two European sail were in sight, the first we had seen for near nine months. In the course of the day we spoke the American brig Comet, of Salem, direct from Canton, but obtained no news from her. The other vessel had the appearance of a British ship bound for India. Within the last few days, although distant at least two hundred miles from any land, we were accompanied by an extraordinary number of land-birds, such as swallows, yellow-hammers, and hawks. Of all these we caught specimens, as they lay asleep on the rigging, exhausted by fatigue. Of hawks, we caught in this manner no less than six of two species. These animals, notwithstanding the precarious situation they were in, hunted the smaller birds, and caught them in our presence as coolly as if they were in their native woods and hills. It is remarkable, that at the same time we did not see any water-fowl, with the exception of a single pelican.

Nov. 7.—The group of islands called the Anambas, being little out of our course, and imperfectly known, we considered that a visit to them would prove of some interest, and accordingly stood down for them in the course of yesterday. Early this morning they were in sight, appearing more numerous and more extensive than they are represented in the common charts. By noon we were close to one of the most northern group, when our latitude was 3° 26′ North, and our longitude by chronometer, 105° 56′ East. At five in the evening we were within 300 yards of a small island; and the wind being then unfavourable, we would have anchored for the night, but there was no ground in less than thirty-seven fathoms. As we passed the eastern side of this island, a little sandy cove was opposite to us, immediately above the beach of which, but in no other part of the island, was a grove of old cocoa-nut trees. There was no sign of dwellings, but it is probable, from the appearance of the cocoa-nut trees, that the place was once inhabited; yet the island is extremely small and steep, and the bay could have afforded no shelter for fishermen or their boats in the north-east monsoon. Upon this beach the surf ran so high, although it had the appearance of being sheltered, that we were unable to effect a landing. The rock formation appeared to be sand-stone.

Nov. 9.—During the night of the 7th we lay off and on, not being able to come to an anchor from the great depth of water. In the morning we found ourselves in an extensive basin, closed in on all sides, except the north and north-west, by groups and chains of islands. During the day we endeavoured to reach a long chain which lay to the west of us, and which from appearance promised to contain what we were

most anxious to find,—a secure harbour. Contrary and baffling winds, and a heavy swell, made it however impossible for us to reach it, and we came to an anchor at night in thirty-two fathoms. This morning the same unfavourable weather still continued, and our time admitting of no longer delay, we were reluctantly compelled to quit the islands, without making those inquiries which we were so anxious about, and we made sail, continuing our route towards the Straits of Singapore.

The islands, called by European navigators the Anambas, a name not known to the Malays of the country, are properly called by the various names of Siantan, Jamajah, and Sarasan, which make the northern, middle, and southern Anambas of our charts. They are, in all, about fifty in number, and form, along with the other islands between the Malay peninsula and Borneo, from the longitude of 104° to 110° East, dependencies of the principality of Jehor. They are generally hilly and sterile, and inhabited by true Malays, always poor, and commonly inoffensive. These people cultivate a little mountain rice and maize, cocoa-nuts, and sago; and their shores afford the tripang, or holothurion. The population of the Anambas Islands is said to amount to fifteen hundred. They carry on a traffic with the Straits of Malacca, which has considerably increased since the establishment of the new settlement of Singapore.

Nov. 13.—Ever since we left the Anambas, we encountered nothing but calms, or light and baffling airs. To-day, at noon, we were in latitude 2° 17′; Bintang Hill, in the Straits of Malacca, visible from the mast-head before us, and the islands Timun (Tioman), Pisang, Aor (Awar), and Pulo Tingi, in sight to the north. The islands now named, except Pisang, are scantily inhabited by Malay fishermen, who cultivate a few roots and ordinary fruits, but none of them contain a harbour. Pulo Aor is of importance to navigation, as being the universal point of departure for ships bound to China, as well as the mark by which, on their return, they steer for the Straits of Malacca and the Java seas.

Nov. 16.—On the 14th, we passed the white rock, which lies in the very

entrance of the Straits of Malacca, and which is so well known to European navigators under the Portuguese name of Pedro Branco; and this morning we had the pleasure of seeing the British flag flying at the new settlement of Singapore. We anchored in the course of the day, and landed in the evening. We had now, after an absence of nine months, and after being without any accounts from England for a whole year, the pleasure to receive the numerous communications of our Indian and English correspondents, with files of Indian and English journals and periodical publications.

Nov. 23.—After a stay of six days at Singapore,* and after witnessing the rapid improvements which had been effected in this flourishing settlement even during the short period of our own absence, we embarked last night, in pursuance of our voyage, and made sail at daylight this morning. Dr. Wallich, the Superintendent of the Botanical Garden at Calcutta, whom we found at Singapore, where he had come for the restoration of his health, became the companion of our voyage to Bengal. In the evening, it falling calm after we had passed the channel of the Rabbit and Coney, we followed our usual practice, and landed. Dr. Wallich accompanied Mr. Finlayson and myself. The island which we visited is called in the charts Alligator Island, and lies close to another which is known by the name of Barren Island. The first consists of a mass of sandstone of various colours and textures, in which are frequent veins of clay iron-ore, the formation in fact differing in no way, as far as we could discover, from that of Singapore. Dr. Wallich described the vegetable productions of all these islands as equally rich and novel, and was, in fact, carrying back with him a curious and extensive botanical collection.

Nov. 25.—Last night we passed Malacca, and at noon to-day were off Cape Rachado. Here the Straits are not above thirty miles broad, and while we pass within a few miles of the coast of the continent, the Sumatran shore is distinctly visible. Dr. Wallich and I landed in the evening, and made a short examination of Cape Rachado. This is a promontory,

* An ample account of Singapore will be found in a subsequent chapter.

rising boldly from the sea to the height of one hundred and fifty feet. Its geological formation is quartz rock, interspersed with frequent veins of clay iron-ore. It appears to be the extremity of a ramification of the great chain of primitive mountains, which runs thus far throughout the whole Malayan peninsula. Beyond it, and all the way down to Point Romania, there are detached hills, but no continuous range of high mountains. A rapid current passes Cape Rachado, occasioning a swell of the sea even during a calm, as was the case when we now visited it. On each side of the Cape there is a sandy cove. We landed on that to the N.W., which we found wild, romantic, and very pretty. Here, as every where else, we added many novelties to our botanical collection.

Nov. 29.—The island of Dinding or Pangkur having proved in our outward voyage so rich a field for botany, we were induced to touch at it last night for a few hours. A party landed near the ruins of the Dutch fort, and was very successful in obtaining specimens of living plants for the Botanical Garden at Calcutta. Among others, we procured several fine ones of the splendid epidendron, which Mr. Finlayson had discovered in our former visit.

Dec. 2.—This morning we anchored in the harbour of Penang, having come in by the southern channel. After breakfast we landed, and at the delightful mansion of the Governor, Mr. Phillips, were received with the same hospitality and kindness as on our first visit, just one year before.

Dec. 5.—I paid a visit this morning, at the suggestion of the Governor, to the Raja of Queda, accompanied by the Secretary, Mr. Cracroft. This chief was an old acquaintance: I had paid him a visit at Queda in the year 1810. At that time he was a young man of little more than thirty, of goodly appearance, and extremely fair for a Malay. He was now very much changed, indeed, and although only forty-two or forty-three, had the appearance of sixty. His manners, like those of all Malays of rank, and generally, indeed, like those of the whole race, were soft, pleasing, and unassuming. I had the mortification of being the channel

of communicating to him the result of my unsuccessful efforts at Siam in his behalf. He received my statement with composure, and said that, with the assistance of his friends, the Princes of Perak, Salangor, and Siak, he would make an effort to recover his country; which, after laying it waste, and driving the population into exile, the Siamese themselves had now in a great measure abandoned.

Dec. 8.—Having communicated with the Government of Prince of Wales's Island respecting the result of my Mission to Siam, and afforded every necessary explanation, we embarked this morning for Bengal, and at eleven o'clock quitted the harbour. Besides a great quantity of dried specimens of plants, we brought with us from Penang, for the Botanical Garden at Calcutta, fourteen large boxes of living plants.

Dec 10.—The coast of Queda, between Penang and Junk-Ceylon, is fronted by numerous islands of various sizes. The principal of these are the Ladas which mean the Pepper Islands, Lang-kawi, Trutao, and Butong. Yesterday morning we were within two miles of the most southern, or Lada Islands. Between these is a fine harbour, very conveniently situated for the common track of navigation. This is called, by the English, Bass Harbour. The country, notwithstanding the deceitful appearance of its luxuriant forests, so apt to mislead an European stranger, appears so steep, so rugged, and so inhospitable, that it is difficult to imagine it capable of being converted to any useful purpose in the present state of society in these regions. Lang-kawi is the largest island of the group, and is said to contain from four to five thousand inhabitants, all Malays. This population is situated upon the eastern or sheltered side of the island, opposite to the main-land. During our absence, the Siamese invaded the island, and took possession of it. In consequence of this, a great number of the inhabitants fled to Prince of Wales's Island. From these, and other refugees from the Queda territory, the Government of Penang has established a colony on the narrow strip of land which we hold upon the Peninsula, and which, at the period of our visit,

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already amounted to nine thousand persons. It may here be worth mentioning, that Lang-kawi, an island now so little frequented, was visited in 1672 by Commodore Beaulieu, the sensible and intelligent Frenchman who conducted the first adventure of his nation to the Indies. It was then celebrated for its production of pepper, a commodity which it now affords in too inconsiderable a quantity even to deserve mention. Trutao, commonly called by us Trotto, is scantily inhabited by a peculiar race, who have the physical appearance of the Malays, speak a dialect of the same language, but have not yet adopted the Mahometan religion. They are strictly fishermen, living as much as possible on a fish diet, and almost entirely neglecting the cultivation of a soil, which indeed appears to offer them little temptation. They are called, by the Malays, Orang Laut, or Men of the Sea; the same denomination by which the fishermen of the opposite extremity of the Straits of Malacca are also known, and which indeed is frequently applied to races of similar habits in other parts of the Archipelago.

Dec. 12.—To-day we passed along the coast of the Island of Junk Ceylon, called by the Siamese Talang. The Malays, who, from the narrowness of the strait, which divides it from the continent, can hardly be induced to consider it an island, have corrupted it into Ujung Salang, which means the point or cape of Salang, which our mariners, and after them our geographical writers, have converted, with no small violence to orthography, into its present name. We were again, therefore, in the vicinity of our friends the Siamese, for this island belongs to Siam, and its native inhabitants are the Siamese race. Geographically, it runs in a direction nearly north and south, between the latitudes of 7° 46′ and 8° 9′, and in the longitude of 98° 20′. It is twenty-four miles long, and about nine miles broad. On the western side it presents a mountainous, bold, woody, and uncultivated aspect. The eastern side, lying opposite to the large island of Pulo Panjang, is the cultivated and inhabited portion, and contains several bays or harbours, the most considerable one of which is about four leagues from the south-east extremity. This last is a good

harbour, and the principal town or village of the island, called Teroa, is situated about a mile and a half up a small river which falls into it. Junk Ceylon is divided from the main land by the Straits of Papra, about fifteen miles in length. The eastern extremity of these straits forms a good harbour.

The mountains of Junk Ceylon are granitic, and it is highly probable, therefore, that the soil is scanty and far from being fertile. It abounds, however, in tin, and is probably, next to Banca, the most productive country in the East, in this metal. In the year 1787, according to the description of Mr. Francis Light, the first Governor of Prince of Wales's Island, the whole produce of the island amounted to four thousand piculs of tin, or to two hundred and thirty-eight tons. I have no means of ascertaining its present produce. Mr. Light also gives a description of the process of mining, from which it appears that the ore is found in a situation exactly similar to that of Banca, viz. in alluvial soil, at from ten to thirty feet below the surface, and often close to the sea-side. The stratum of ore is, as in that island, mixed with fragments of granite and quartz, and as there too, always lies upon a bed of white friable clay. From this statement, there can be little doubt of the fertility of the mines. The account which Mr. Light gives of the economy of the mines, and of the process of working them, shows that they are wretchedly managed, compared even with those of Banca; a matter easily accounted for, since the first are under the direction of the Siamese, and the latter managed by the intelligent and industrious Chinese.

During the last fifty years, Junk Ceylon has been a frequent bone of contention between the Siamese and Burmans. In 1810, the Burmans invaded and captured it with a very large force; but in the course of a few months, they were compelled to surrender to the Siamese at discretion, to the number of 4,000. The chiefs, on this occasion, were all beheaded, and the lower classes carried into captivity. We saw a few of the survivors working in chains in Siam when we were there.

Dec. 16.—In the latitude of Junk Ceylon, and up to the Seyer Islands,

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we had variable winds and a good deal of rain. On the evening of the 13th, we passed between the latter islands and the main land. We then got the regular north-east monsoon, which is a fair wind between the Straits of Malacca and Bengal, both going and coming; and towards the east side of the Bay always brings with it, during the months of December, January, and February, serene and delightful weather, such as we now experienced. Last night, we passed the Island of Narcondam at no great distance; this morning, the Cocos, and in the evening the Preparis. The Cocos are two small woody islands which form a portion of the Andaman chain, being connected with them by soundings of no great depth. They take their name from a few cocoa-nut trees seen upon the beach, but they are uninhabited.

Dec. 29.—From the 16th to the 27th we had fine weather, but light and baffling winds. On the latter day we received a pilot. On the 28th, having reached the Island of Saugor, I embarked for expedition in a native boat, and, rowing all night, reached Calcutta on the afternoon of the 29th, after an absence from that place of above thirteen months. On the same day, I made my report to the Marquess of Hastings, whom I found on the point of sailing for England. His Lordship was pleased to approve of the discretion with which, under many difficult and embarrassing circumstances, the affairs of the Mission had been conducted; and I had afterwards the honour of receiving the official approbation of his immediate successor, my amiable and lamented friend the late Mr. Acland.

Before bringing this narrative to a close, it will be necessary briefly to advert to the subsequent circumstances of our connexion with Siam and Cochin China, chiefly in so far as they relate to the Mission. We left on our departure from Siam the British trading-vessel already mentioned at that place. Her commander and supercargo, very discreet and respectable men, had presented to the King upon their arrival an Indian horse of no great value, and chiefly selected on their part on account of his colour, which was white. The King had accepted the offering, and kept the horse for several months; but pretending to discover that he had unlucky marks, and in reality finding that he was much inferior in value to the horse

presented by the Governor-general, he was unceremoniously returned just as the ship was on the point of sailing. The vessel was small, deeply laden, and had, on her return, to beat against the monsoon. It was, therefore, impossible to accommodate the animal, and it was resolved to destroy him. Very imprudently, and in ignorance of the religious prejudices of the Siamese, this was done publicly, and without any precaution. The officers of the Siamese Government took high offence, and resolved to punish the authors of the alleged sacrilege. They had not, however, the courage to venture upon this step publicly, and therefore, under a false pretext, seduced the commander and supercargo to the house of the Prince Krom-Chiat. Here they were beset by hundreds of persons, jostled, thrown down, brutally beaten, put in irons, imprisoned four days, and, finally, compelled to sign an unqualified apology, written in the Siamese language, not one word of which they either understood, or was explained to them. The Siamese Government, however, had some misgivings of the prudence of this proceeding, and thought it necessary to address an apologetic letter to the Governor-general, in which the conduct of the commander and supercargo was, with a good deal of address, represented in aggravated and false colours. The Prah-klang, the writer of this letter, insisted that the crime of killing a horse was worthy of death, and that had it been committed by a native of the country, it would inevitably have been followed by that punishment.

The letter of the Prah-klang also contained accusations against the officers of the Mission and other persons connected with it. The matter of these, notwithstanding the precautions taken to disarm the jealousy of the Government, chiefly referred to the inquiries which we had made respecting the geography and statistics of the country, few and guarded as these were. Our interpreters in the Malay and Siamese languages not being wanted for the remainder of our voyage, had, at their own request, when we proceeded to Cochin China, been left at Siam, with the view of enabling them, by an overland journey, to return the sooner home. These persons, it was pretended by the Siamese Government, had given the most

unfavourable representation of the objects of the Mission. Extracts of the letter of the Prah-klang will be found in the Appendix, as well as the reply made to it by the Governor-general.

During the period that I was Resident at Singapore, as Agent to the Governor-general for Siam, Cochin China, &c. I carried on a frequent and friendly correspondence with this same Prah-klang, whom I found, as during my residence in Siam, a shrewd, wary, and very mercenary personage. He, as well as the other officers of the Court, traded extensively with Singapore, and it would have been impossible to gather from his conduct or correspondence that he had ever expressed a sinister opinion, either of our policy or commerce.

After the breaking out of the Burmese war, a second mission was sent by the Governor-general, the object of which was to gain the assistance of the Siamese, and to improve our commercial relations. The first object might have been gained by giving up to the Siamese our conquests on the coast of Tenaserim; but this was a measure which could not be taken without compromising our honour; for it was discovered, on the occupation of the country in question, that the inhabitants, either themselves Burmese, or long reconciled to the Government of Ava, bore a rancorous hatred to the Siamese, which would have made their surrender to this power, on any terms, a measure of cruelty and discredit. The Siamese sent armies into the field, and showed a disposition to cooperate with us, but when they found there was nothing substantial to be gained, they withdrew, and stood neuter, making warm professions of friendship to both the belligerant parties, but obviously more apprehensive of us, in the long run, than of their hereditary and inveterate enemy, the Burmese.

In a commercial point of view, the result of the last mission was a consolidation, without any reduction of the duties and charges. This, has been accompanied by no beneficial results, nor is it likely to be. In consequence of the expectation of extending British commerce with Siam by a direct intercourse, some intelligent, enterprising, and extensive efforts were made with this view by the merchants of Singapore, backed by the capital of London and Liverpool. They may be said, however, to have totally failed, and one establishment, after an experience of two or three years' actual residence, has recently, and since the date of the last treaty, abandoned the undertaking as hopeless. In fact, the residence of English merchants, owing to the political fears of the Siamese, is extremely repugnant to the wishes of the Government of the country, while the free and independent conduct of our countrymen is so incompatible with the servility and obsequiousness which is looked for, not only from natives but from strangers, that it must, of necessity, prove repulsive and offensive to the pride and prejudices of the Siamese chiefs. To these obstacles to the establishment of a free trade on our part, must be added the strong motive to counteract it which exists in the personal interests of the chief officers, who now enjoy a monopoly of lucrative privileges, which any approach to free trade would impair or destroy.

One object of the last Mission was the restoration of the Prince of Queda to his throne, and the emancipation of the Malayan tributaries of Siam from its thraldom. These objects were not only not attained, but we bound ourselves by the stipulations of a treaty from all future interference. As a specimen of the political sagacity and shrewdness of the Siamese Court, I give in the Appendix its reply to the memorial of the Envoy, adding my conviction that the conduct of this officer throughout was not only able but highly prudent and discreet.

With respect to Cochin China, I have but few observations to make. The repeated professions of the foreign minister, as well as of the Governor of Kamboja, tendering offers of protection and assistance to such British merchants as might frequent the country, induced me, not long after I took charge of Singapore, to furnish the supercargo of a British merchant-ship proceeding to Hue and Saigun, with letters of introduction. The Governor of Kamboja received the letter, addressed to him, with great civility and replied to it, and a friendly correspondence en-

sued. The reception of my letter to the foreign minister was very different. The bearer of it was declared to have violated the laws of the Empire in bringing a letter from a stranger, and, in fact, to have committed such an offence as, with a native of the country, would have entitled him to capital punishment. This however, it must be added, amounted only to a threat or insinuation, for no violence was offered to himself, or real impediment thrown in the way of his business.

I shall conclude with a few remarks upon the most expedient and suitable manner of maintaining our future political and commercial relations with the Courts of Siam and Cochin China. With the strong excitement which our conquests in Hindostan has produced, probably the most prudent, if not the most profitable, mode of conducting our trade will be through the channel of the Chinese junks. This is an intercourse which, as it offers no offence to their manners or political prejudices, they are not less anxious to promote than ourselves. In reality, it not only increases in amount from year to year, but considerable improvements have taken place even in the mode of conducting it, which promise to render it in no long time equally extensive and advantageous.

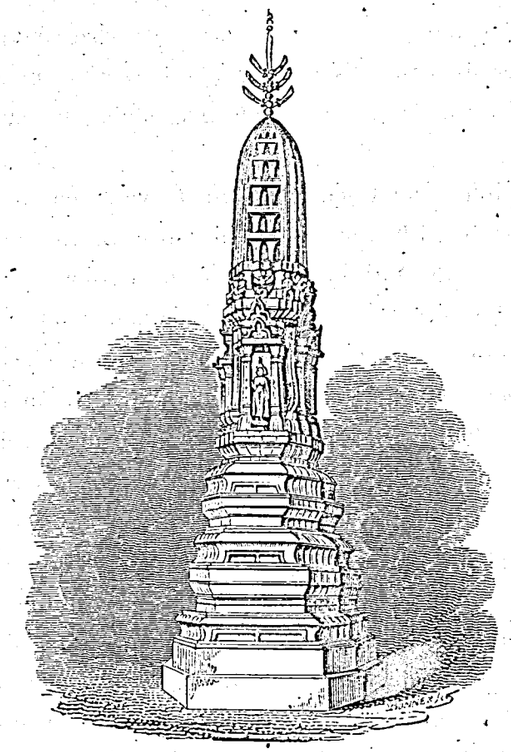
Our political relations with the Siamese must, from their nature, be left to the management of the Governor-general of India, whether our territorial acquisitions be under the direct administration of the crown, or the delegated one of the East India Company. The necessity for this arises from the recent extension of the British as well as Siamese dominions, an extension through which we have become immediate neighbours, and which consequently brings the Siamese within the pale of our Indian diplomacy. The details of our diplomatic intercourse in this quarter may, with propriety and convenience, be entrusted to the local officers on the British frontier; and it appears to me that either an envoy, or a resident agent at the court of Siam, will not only, in general, be unnecessary, but even a source of jealousy and irritation. The sea on one quarter, and impracticable mountains

and forests on another, are barriers which, together with the fears and discretion of the Siamese Government, will in all likelihood preserve us long at peace with this people. Another motive will tend to the same effect: there is no territorial acquisition which we could make from them, with the exception, perhaps, of a good port among the islands at the upper end of the gulf of Siam, which would not prove both useless and burthensome.

The circumstances of the Cochin Chinese are very different; they are not our immediate neighbours, but far removed from the sphere of our Indian politics. The cautious and prudent foreign policy of this people is sufficiently shown by the history of their relations with China and with France, as well as by that of our own and of the recent Burmese Missions. They have nothing to apprehend from us, nor do I conceive that our Indian power can ever have any thing to apprehend from them. The fears entertained by our Government, at one period, always exaggerated, arose from the existence of French party in Cochin China. This party is now extinct; and I have no doubt, in the present state of the Government of that country, that its prudence is such that it would maintain a strict neutrality in the event of future hostilities between us and France. Another revolution in Cochin China, and the formation of another French party, which would very probably follow it, would be the only event likely to prove inconvenient to us. The numerous and fine harbours of Cochin China might in such a case prove safe and convenient retreats, from which a French navy might harass or destroy our commerce with China. But this evil might be readily averted, and the Cochin Chinese Government reduced to almost any terms, by the easy and practicable blockade of two or three of the principal ports from which the capital and other portions of the kingdom derive their food and other resources. As to any formidable danger to our Indian Empire from so poor a country as Cochin China, with its scanty and unwarlike population, even if the whole kingdom were a province of

France, I conceive it to be quite visionary; for what could be the resources of such a country, in comparison with our extensive, productive, and populous territorial acquisitions in Hindostan, long, permanently and regularly organized?

The reluctance of the Cochin Chinese Government to maintain any diplomatic intercourse with the delegated Government of India, was sufficiently displayed in the history of our own Mission, as well as in that which preceded it; nor do I see any advantage, but the contrary, in attempting to persevere in it. It is another serious objection, that all the acts of the Indian Government are at once associated in the minds of the Cochin Chinese, with our territorial aggrandisement. A direct intercourse with the Crown has not this disadvantage; and, as it would conciliate and flatter the Court of Cochin China, and thus tend to extend and improve our commercial relations, it ought, I think, occasionally to be cultivated. In the present state of that country, we have nothing to ask, and the intercourse therefore would be purely complimentary. The delivery of a letter, and a trifling present from the King, will require no extraordinary selection of diplomatic talents. An intelligent and prudent commander of one of His Majesty's ships on the Indian station, would be both the fittest and the cheapest ambassador to employ on such an occasion. Two or three of his officers, and a few marines, would form an appropriate suite, sufficient to ensure respect and attention; and the only extra assistance necessary, would be a Chinese interpreter understanding the English language, always readily obtained at Singapore, or Prince of Wales's Island, both of which lie in the route to Cochin China.



A Siamese Temple at Bang-kok.

CHAPTER XIII.

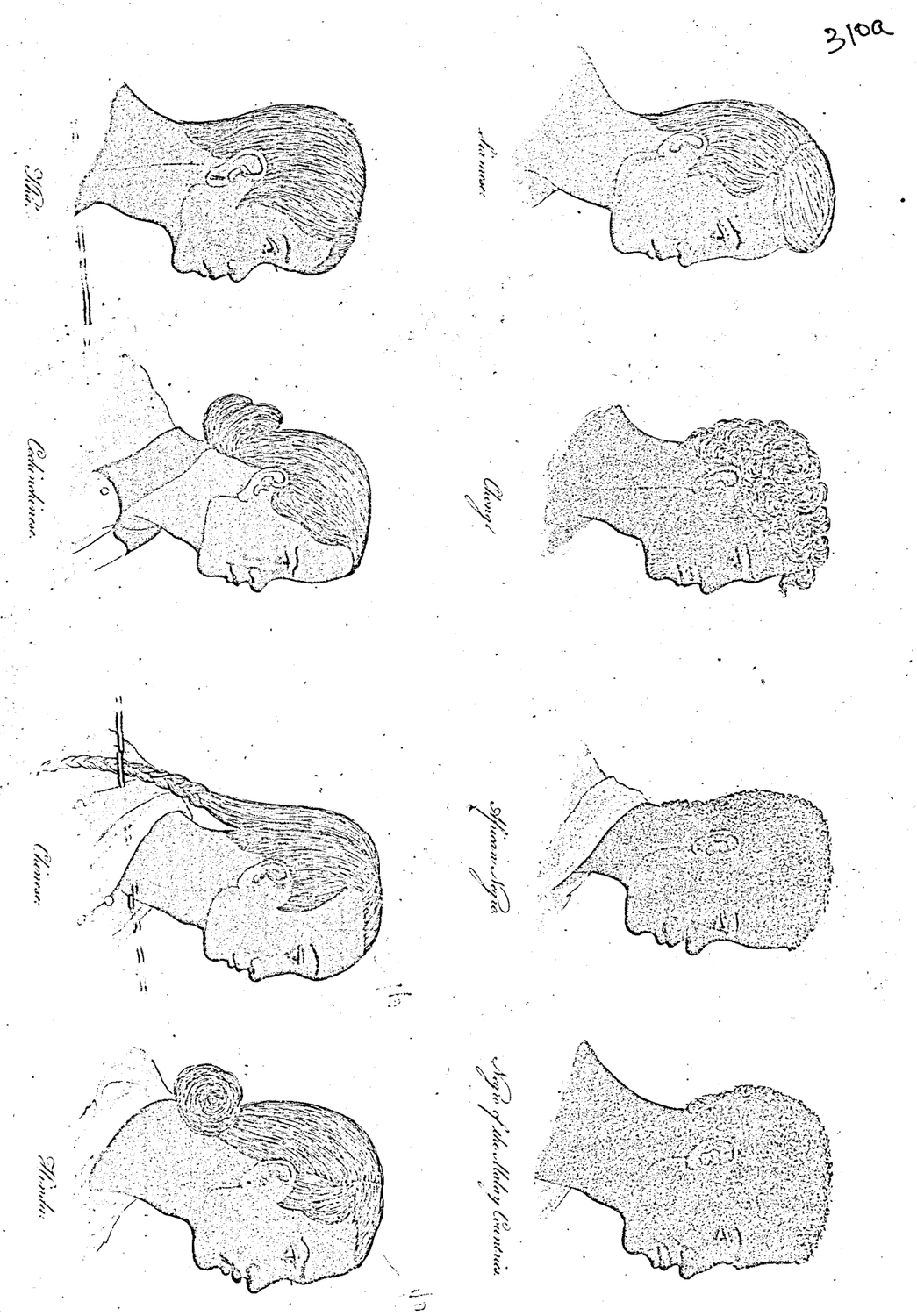
Physical form.—Siamese notions of beauty.—Dress.—Various customs and usages.—Funerals.—Progress in the useful arts.—Architecture.—Progress in higher branches of knowledge.—Kalendar.—Arithmetic, weights, measures, and coins.—Geography and navigation.—Music.—Alphabet.—Language.—Siamese literature.—Bali or sacred literature.—Education.—General observations on the nations and tribes between India and China.—General estimate of the character of the Siamese.

In the remaining chapters of this work, I shall lay before the reader such information respecting the people whom I visited, and their country, as was collected by myself, or others, during our voyage, and which could not be included in the Journal without frequently interrupting the nar-

rative, and thus impairing the interest which might otherwise belong to it. The details of this subject will naturally commence with Siam, the earliest object of inquiry.

The Siamese are one of the most considerable and civilized of the group of nations inhabiting the tropical regions, lying between Hindostan and China. These nations, while they differ widely from those adjacent to them in physical form, in the structure of their language, in manners, institutions and religion, agree with one another in so remarkable a manner in all these characters, that I am disposed to consider them entitled to be looked upon as a distinct and peculiar family of the human race. The following delineation of the physical form of this race is drawn from the Siamese, but probably applies to the whole family.

In stature the Siamese are shorter than the Hindoos, the Chinese, or the Europeans, but taller than the Malays. The average height of twenty men, taken indiscriminately, was found by us, on trial, to be five feet three inches, the tallest being five feet eight inches, and the shortest five feet two inches. This would make them about an inch taller than the Malays, and an inch and a half shorter than the Chinese. Their lower limbs are well formed, contrary to what obtains among the natives of Hindostan. Their hands are stout, and destitute of the extreme softness and delicacy which characterize those of the Hindoos. Their persons in general are sufficiently robust and well proportioned, being destitute, however, of the grace and flexibility of the Hindoo form. On the other hand, their make is lighter, less squab, and better proportioned, than that of the Indian islanders. Their complexion is a light brown, perhaps a shade lighter than that of the Malays, but many shades darker than that of the Chinese. It never approaches to the black of the African negro or Hindoo. Writers on the natural history of man, judging from the remote analogy of plants, have been disposed to undervalue colour as a discriminating character of the different races. But still I am disposed



EIGHT NATIONAL PORTRAITS.

Drawn from the life by Edwd Reid.

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to consider it as intrinsic, obvious, and permanent a character, as the form of the skull, or any other which has been more relied upon. The hair of the head is always black, lank, coarse, and abundant. On every other part of the body it is scanty, as with the Malayan and American races, and the beard especially is so little suited for ornament, that it is never worn, but on the contrary plucked out and eradicated, according to the practice of the Indian islanders. The head is generally well proportioned, and well set upon the neck and shoulders, but frequently of remarkable flatness in the occipital part. The face differs greatly from that of the European or Hindoo, the features never being bold, prominent, or well defined. The nose is small, round at the point, but not flattened, as in the negro, and the nostrils, instead of being parallel, diverge greatly. The mouth is wide, but not projecting; the lips are rather thick; the eyes are small, having the iris black, and the white of a yellow tinge, following as usual the complexion of the skin. The outer angles are more turned up than in the Western races; the eyebrows are neither prominent nor well marked. But, perhaps, the most characteristic feature of the whole countenance is the breadth and height of the cheek bones, which gives the whole face the form of a lozenge, instead of the oval figure which constitutes the line of beauty among the nations of Western Asia and Europe. Upon the whole, although we often meet among the Siamese with countenances that are not disagreeable, and admit that they are certainly a handsomer people than either the Chinese or Indian islanders, beauty, according to our notions of it, is a stranger to them. The physiognomy of the Siamese, it may be added, conveys rather a gloomy, cheerless, and sullen air, and their gait is slow, sluggish, and ungraceful. This is the judgment of an European, and probably would be so of a native of Western Asia; but it is necessary to add that the Siamese, vain in every thing, have a standard of beauty of their own, and are by no means disposed to bow to our opinions on this subject. I one day pointed out to some Siamese at

Calcutta a young and beautiful Englishwoman, and wished to know their opinion of her. They answered, that I should see many handsomer when I visited Siam! La Loubere, by his own account, exhibited to the Siamese the portraits of some celebrated beauties of the Court of Louis XIV., and was compelled to acknowledge that they excited no admiration whatever. A large doll which he exhibited was more to their taste; and a young nobleman, according to the Siamese method of estimating the fair sex, said with admiration, that a woman of such an appearance would be worth, at Yuthia, five thousand crowns!

If this description of the physical form of the Siamese be applied to all the inhabitants of the wide region to which I have alluded, it must be taken, with some allowances, at the extreme points, where, no doubt, some intermixture has taken place with the neighbouring races. Thus the Cochin Chinese, the neighbours of the Chinese, have a little more beard, and are fairer than their neighbours immediately to the west and south of them. On the other hand, the Burmans, and still more the people of Aracan, Cassay, and Assam, who, no doubt, have intermixed more or less with the Hindoos, have more beard, more prominent features, and a darker complexion than their neighbours to the south, and this in proportion as they are respectively nearer to, or more distant from, the country of the Hindoos.

The dress of the Siamese is sufficiently singular and extravagant. Both sexes wear fewer clothes than any other tolerably civilized people of the East—the head and feet being always naked, the upper part of the body generally so, and the loins and thighs alone therefore being covered. The garment for the latter consists of a piece of silk, or cotton cloth, of from five to seven cubits long, which is passed round the loins and thighs, and secured in front in its own folds, leaving the knees entirely bare, a practice considered by their Malayan neighbours—such is the force of custom—at once rude and indecent. The better

classes permit the ends of the dress to hang loosely in front, but the lower orders tuck them under the body, securing them behind. This is not a matter which is left to the discretion of the parties, but enforced by law, or by a custom equally imperative; for the plebeian who infringes it is liable to summary punishment from the followers of any person of condition who may casually meet him. The only other material portion of dress is a narrow scarf, about four cubits long, and commonly of silk. This is worn either round the waist, or thrown carelessly over the shoulders. When in this last situation it forms an imperfect covering for the bosoms of the females, which, however, are much more frequently wholly exposed and unprotected. I have sometimes, however, seen the lower orders of women wear a tight vest for comfort or convenience, when engaged in labour. The colours of which the Siamese are fond are dark and sombre, and light colours or white seldom enter in any considerable quantity into their dress. The last, except as mourning, is worn only by the lay servants of the temples, and by certain mendicant nuns, neither of whom are much respected.

The mode of dressing the head is singular and grotesque. A man when he is full dressed ought to have the whole hair of the head closely shaven, with the exception of a circle on the crown, about four inches in diameter, where the hair is allowed to remain of the length of about an inch and a half or two inches. As the process of shaving the head, however, is not very punctually performed, it commonly happens that the common hair of the head is an inch or two long, and the circle on the crown double that length, the whole, from its natural strength, staring and standing upright, so as to convey not only a whimsical but a very wild look. Women do not shave the hair of their heads, but always crop it short, leaving also a circle on the crown, which is effected by plucking out the hairs in a narrow line from the brows backwards. No turban or other covering to the head is worn by either sex, with the exception of a fantastic conical cap put on by the chiefs at certain formal court ceremonies. In this respect,

as well as in the mode of wearing the hair, the Siamese agree entirely with the Kambojans, but differ from the people of Pegue and Ava, who wear their hair long, and cover the head with a handkerchief. The Siamese of both sexes in the upper ranks wear a kind of slipper.

Jewellery and trinkets are not much used. The men seldom or never wear ear or finger rings, and amongst females of condition the most usual ornaments are gold necklaces, bracelets, and armlets. The greatest care and expense are bestowed on the dress of children up to the age of fourteen. At an entertainment given to us by the Prah-klang, his own children, and those of his brother were loaded with jewels, among the most remarkable of which was a kind of golden coronet covering the circle of longer hair on the crown of the head.

The Siamese, like the Chinese and other nations of the farther East, permit the nails of their hands to grow to an unnatural and inconvenient length. All the nails of both hands are treated in this manner, and the practice is general with both sexes, and with persons of all ranks; the only difference being that persons of condition carry the practice to the greatest extreme. Some successful amateurs may be seen with nails two inches long; and as cleanliness is not a national virtue, this usage has a very offensive appearance to a stranger.

The Siamese have the same prejudice against white teeth with many other Eastern people, and at an early age they stain them with an indelible black, without, however, filing and destroying the enamel of the front teeth, like the Indian islanders. In other respects, they evince no disposition to disfigure the natural form of the body, and are especially to be distinguished from the Burmans and Peguans, by the general practice of tattooing the whole body, which prevails among the two last tribes.

Among the Siamese the use of tobacco has become universal; they chew it in moderate quantities, but smoke it perpetually. A Siamese is seldom to be seen without a cigar in his mouth, or stuck behind his ear ready

for use. Of the areca and betel-nut they are perhaps the most constant and persevering consumers of all the people of the East, exceeding in this respect even the Malays themselves. The soil and climate are peculiarly suited to the production of both, and the cheapness which is the consequence, no doubt contributes, along with the indolent character of the people, to render the consumption so great. The preparation, as they use it, is the same as in other countries, with the exception of the catechu, which forms no part of the ingredients.

Of the customs observed at marriages, I have little information that is new to communicate. Marriage ceremonies, as in other countries of the East, are accompanied by theatrical representations, gymnastics, music, and distribution of presents. The actual ceremony is performed by the senior male relations; it consists in joining the right hands of the bride and bridegroom with a white cotton thread, and passing a similar one round their heads, brought into juxtaposition. The priests repeat hymns in the Bali language, and an elder of the family pronounces the words "Be man and wife, and live together until death part you."

Funeral rites are matters of great moment, and I have already given some description of them in the body of the narrative. Those to which I have alluded, are not, however, the only ones practised. The bodies of the great are always kept for a long time embalmed before being consumed on the funeral pile. The period is determined by the rank of the deceased, and extends from one to twelve months. The persons to whom these honours are paid in the most distinguished manner, are the high officers of state, the princes and princesses of the blood, but above all, the high-priest and the king. The costliness and splendour of the rites on these occasions, may be judged of, from the following description of those observed at the funeral of the late king. It was furnished to me by Mr. Gillies, a most respectable and intelligent British merchant, who resided for some time in Siam, and was an eye-witness.

"Immediately on the death of the King, which happened in July, 1824, the building of a large edifice in the form of a temple, was commenced for a funeral pile for burning the body on, according to the custom of the country; not only in regard to the kings, but to all classes of the people. This building, which took nine months in finishing, was very extensive, and covered at least half an acre of ground. It consisted of a large open dome, about fifty feet high, supported upon immense wooden pillars, the finest that could be procured in Siam. The roof, which was of various fantastic forms, the parts rising one above the other until it came to a point, was covered with tiles. From the centre of it rose a spire, composed of five or six flights or stories, decreasing in size as they rose, and each flight terminating in a gallery, or circular walk. The edifice was crowned with a tall slender rod. The height of the whole fabric I could not exactly learn, but, from its appearance, I should think it could not be less than three hundred cubits. The whole of the interior, as well as exterior of the building, was painted partly green and partly yellow, and in some places covered with gold and silver leaf, which gave it a very rich and splendid appearance, especially at a distance. It was also surrounded with a variety of images representing their deities. Inside the great dome there was a small temple precisely in the form of the large one; in the centre of this, and about two-thirds up, was a platform, over which was a small spire supported upon four pillars about thirty feet high. On this platform was to be placed the body. The whole of this interior building, but particularly near the place where the body was to be deposited, was highly gilded, and otherwise richly decorated with gold and silver leaf. The great building was surrounded with low sheds or houses, for the accommodation of the priests who flocked from all parts of the kingdom to assist at the ceremony. Outside of these sheds there were erected twelve small pagodas, at convenient distances from each other, and these also were decorated in a manner corresponding with the large temple. The

ground within the sheds just mentioned, which was about thirty yards wide, was covered in with basket-work of bamboos, as were also all the passages leading from the palace, for the better accommodation of the royal pedestrians. This was the state of the preparations a few days previous to the commencement of the ceremony.

"The 23d of April, 1825, was the day fixed upon for the removal of the remains of his late Majesty from the palace to the funeral pile.* I was invited, along with some of my friends, to see the ceremony. We reached the place appointed for us as early as seven o'clock in the morning, to avoid the bustle of the crowd collecting from all parts. The situation appointed for us was not the most convenient, being only an open shed close by the road along which the procession was to pass. Here we were much annoyed with heat and dust, but being as well provided for as the Cochin Chinese Ambassador, who had come to Siam for the express purpose of honouring the ceremony, we had no right to complain: we had, moreover, the honour of being accompanied by the Prah-klang's son, and by the Intendant of the Port. The procession began to move at nine o'clock, or in Siamese time at three o'clock, and in the following order.

"Several hundred soldiers, dressed principally in blue and red camlet, with caps of the same material, walking at a slow pace, without order, and bearing in their hands long poles of bamboo in the manner of flag-staffs, on the tops of which were artificial flowers of large size.

"A similar number of men, not soldiers, carrying banners of silk and cloth, of a triangular shape, upon which were various devices; consisting of dragons, serpents, and other monsters, painted or embroidered.

"Two carriages, each drawn by a single horse.

"The figure of a rhinoceros of the size of an elephant, upon a

* The King died on the 20th of July, 1824, and his body was therefore kept for full nine months.—C.

sledge or carriage upon low wheels, drawn by men and horses, with a small temple on its back, in which was a quantity of yellow dresses, to be given to the priests as offerings.

Two figures of elephants (very large), drawn as above.

Two figures of horses, similarly drawn.

Four figures of large monkeys, two and two.

Four figures of eagles, two and two.

Four figures of cocks, two and two.

Four figures of wild men or giants, two and two.

Four figures of lions of immense size, two and two.

"These were followed by the figures of a variety of other indescribable beasts and birds, two and two, and each figure bore its supply of dresses for the priests.

"Eight hundred men dressed in white, with white caps or helmets. These represented celestial messengers, and their purpose was, as if to show the soul of the deceased King the way to Heaven. Along with these were many bands of music.

"The late King's household. Some of these bore over their heads a large umbrella or canopy, composed of three or four tiers, and having long fringes suspending from it. Others had swords of state in their hands, and all walked in the procession in great disorder and confusion.

"The late King's brother, in a handsome open carriage, of singular form and workmanship, highly gilded and ornamented, and the roof terminating in a small temple containing cloth for the priests. This was drawn by a number of men and horses.

Choufa,* the late King's son, in a similar carriage, but still handsomer.

Choufa Noë,* the late King's nephew, a boy, in a very superb carriage, holding in his hand the end of a sash of gold tissue, the other end being attached to the next carriage immediately after him, and which contained the body of the late King. This last was most elegantly gilded and decorated, and supported by the great officers of state, walking in single files at the sides of the carriage, all dressed in white, having helmets on their heads, sandals on their feet, and carrying white wands in their hands.

"A carriage containing a quantity of sandal-wood, and other perfumes for the pile.

"The bier was followed by soldiers, figures of animals, musicians, and messengers, of the same number and kind with those which preceded it, and in the same order. After these, came the late King's brothers, forty in number, all on horseback, in single file, and according to seniority. Each was followed by a train of servants on foot, dressed in white. The procession terminated at twelve o'clock, with little confusion, and no outrage whatever, notwithstanding the immense crowd which was collected, and which consisted of nearly the whole population of Bang-kok, and a vast number of strangers from the most distant provinces of the kingdom.

"On the following day, we were invited to see the body lie in state on the funeral pile, in the small temple, within the great dome, previous to its being burnt. On our arrival within the palace enclosure, we were conducted in by old Phya Chula and his son,* who of course did not forget to exact from us all the necessary marks of respect to the body of their late master. The large dome had four entrances, each of which was guarded night and day by a prince of the blood, from the time the body was placed within it. On our arrival at one of these entrances, we were obliged to take off our shoes. Having then paid our compliments to the Prince, we proceeded to the place where the body lay. On approaching it, we made our obeisance, and sat down, of course, on the floor, which was, however, well covered with mats. The scene presented here was the most mag-

* This was the eldest legitimate son of the late King, and his intended successor, but the throne, as will be seen in another place, was usurped by his illegitimate brother, the present King.—C.

† This and the last are titles, and literally mean the Prince, and the Little Prince, of Heaven.

* Mahomedans of the sect of Ali, employed in the department of the customs.

nificent I ever saw. From the roof of the large dome were suspended the most beautiful ornaments of Siamese manufacture in gold and silver, made for the occasion, as well as an infinite variety of European chandeliers, lamps, &c. But the small temple was still more sumptuously ornamented, being literally covered with gold and silver leaf. Over the body were suspended a variety of gold and silver branches, or small trees; and the floor round it was covered with a variety of musical instruments, clocks, looking-glasses, and other furniture, all that could be begged or borrowed throughout the country. The whole had a surprising effect. Having taken our leave of this place, with the same reverence as we entered it, we proceeded to view the amusements provided for the evening; consisting of fire-works, tumbling, rope-dancing, wrestling, &c. The most amusing part of the exhibition, was the scrambling of the mob for the pieces of money, scattered among them from four small tablets erected for the purpose. These were placed at short distances from each other, immediately before the place where the King and his suite sat. From each of these were thrown occasional handsful of coin, consisting of half and quarter ticals. In this manner, a few hundred ticals were expended nightly, during the continuance of the festival, which lasted ten days. In addition to this, there were given away in alms daily at the palace, during the same period, five hundred ticals. The amusements generally, were very poor. What appeared to me deserving of more admiration than any thing else, was the very orderly manner in which the people conducted themselves, notwithstanding the vast concourse collected from all parts of the country. The preparations and conduct of the whole affair did the Siamese much credit, and would not disgrace any country in Europe. They certainly thought not a little of it themselves, and frequently asked me if I ever saw the like before. I was obliged to confess I had not. The fire from which the pile is lighted they pretend is celestial, having, as they allege, been taken from a ball of fire which fell at the door of the palace several centuries ago, and which has never since been suffered to extinguish."

Charity to the lower animals is considered by the Siamese as a religious virtue of great merit, and this frequently gives rise at funerals to a disgusting and abominable rite, never performed, however, except in compliance with the dying request of the deceased. It consists in cutting slices of flesh from the corpse, and with these feeding the birds of prey and dogs, which are seen in numbers about the temples, waiting for this horrid feast. After this ugly rite, the remains of the body are buried in the usual manner. The only honourable funeral amongst the Siamese, consists in burning the body, and the practice is very general. It seems to be viewed as a religious rite, and as a ceremony necessary to assist the passage of the soul to a higher grade in the scale of transmigration, and finally to its extinction or rest. The persons not deemed worthy of this rite, are women dying pregnant, or in child-birth; persons who come to a sudden death; persons who die of the small-pox, and malefactors. The death of all such is considered as the punishment of some offence in the present or a former state of existence. They are consequently deemed unworthy of regular funereal rites, and buried. Under ordinary circumstances, so much importance is attached to the rite of burning the dead, that if the ceremony cannot be performed soon after death either from poverty, or from the party dying at a distance, the body is first buried, and afterwards, as soon as convenient or practicable, disinhumed, and consigned to the funeral pile. Of persons of distinction, a few of the bones are kept, and either preserved in urns in the houses of their relatives, or buried, with little pyramidal monuments over them, in the ground adjacent to the temples. Of these monuments, we saw a good number; they are small and paltry, without any inscription.

The practice of immolating living victims with the dead, as practised in Hindostan, and some other countries of the East, is unknown to the Siamese in any form—one advantage, at least, if there be no other, which humanity gains from the avowed principle of the doctrines of *Buddha*, which denounces the shedding of blood.

There is one species of suicide, however, which is reckoned meritorious. This is considered as a solemn religious sacrifice of the highest order. The victim who devotes himself to self-destruction, sits down on the ground, covered all over with quantities of cloth dipped in oil and smeared with other combustibles. He sets fire to the materials himself, and patiently suffers death, with his hands raised before his face, in an attitude of devotion. The relations of one who performs such a sacrifice are for ever after taken under the special protection of the sovereign. Such sacrifices as these are extremely rare, as may be inferred from the nature of the reward.

The progress which the Siamese have made in the useful arts is extremely slender, nor would it indeed be very reasonable to expect either expertness or industry from a people who are compelled to devote one-third of the labour of their manhood to the service of a highly oppressive government. Every mechanic of any skill is immediately seized upon, and becomes the retainer of the King, or of some courtier, or other man in authority, who employs him for life on some useless service of vanity or ostentation. It is accordingly a matter of difficulty for a private individual, or a stranger, to obtain the services even of the most homely mechanic, and the few that can be procured are usually natives of China, or Cochin China, and not Siamese. There is no one useful art in which the Siamese have attained any distinction, and their industry appears never to have produced any ingenious fabric that can bear a moment's comparison with the cotton manufacture of Hindostan, or the wrought silks and porcelain of China. It is even remarkable, that in the fabrication of jewellery, a proficiency in which has often been remarked among ruder people, they have attained little skill; and, in fact, their gold and silver trinkets, and their vessels of gold and silver, are commonly imported from China. The only exception to this consists in certain gold and silver vases, fabricated in the palace, and presented to the chiefs, as orders or insignia of title and office. These are of handsome form and neat workmanship; a circumstance which may be attributed to their being of one invariable form, and the consequent dexterity which the artificers acquire by frequent practice. This form has not varied for at least one hundred and thirty years, for the figure of one given by La Loubere is an exact representation of those in use at the present day.

The Siamese also receive their utensils of zinc and brass from China, and the resident Chinese are the only manufacturers of articles of tin, although a product of the country. It is through the ingenuity of the same people, that the stores of iron-ore, in which the country abounds, have been of late years rendered available. At present, a considerable quantity of malleable iron is produced, and at Bang-kok there are several extensive manufactories of cast-iron vessels, wholly conducted by the Chinese, and from which the Malay tribes are now very generally supplied with culinary utensils. The cutlery and tools in use amongst the Siamese are of the rudest and simplest description, and they have not even acquired any skill in the fabrication of implements of destruction, a circumstance to be expected among an unarmed and unwarlike people. The fabrication of fire-arms has scarcely, I believe, been attempted; and for these the Siamese appear always to have trusted to the casual supply derived directly or indirectly from Europeans.

The manufacture of silk and cotton fabrics is in Siam abandoned wholly to the women, and very little skill is displayed in either; both being of a very coarse and homely texture, and greatly inferior even to the corresponding manufactures of the islands of Java and Celebes, prepared under similar circumstances. The art of dyeing is on the same low scale, and this is the more remarkable, since the country abounds in the materials necessary to it. The art of printing silks or cottons is not practised by the Siamese in any shape or form.

The most common description of coarse pottery suited for ordinary domestic purposes, is manufactured by the Siamese, but all the ordinary and better descriptions of porcelain are imported from China, and in large quantities.

The useful architecture of the Siamese is in a very humble state of advancement. The habitations of the lower orders consist always of simple and perishable materials, suitable enough, perhaps, to their climate, and certainly so to their poverty and incapacity of extending the sphere of their enjoyments. In the low alluvial lands, where we had an opportunity of observing their dwellings, they were all raised upon piles, like the habitations of the Malays, the principal material employed in them being the bamboo, and the leaf of the Nipa palm *(Nipa fruticans)*. In the higher lands, the houses, I am told, cease to be built on piles, and the bamboo and nipa give way to ordinary woods and grasses. I could not learn that solid materials, either of stone, or brick and mortar, were employed anywhere in the construction of the habitations of the peasantry. The houses of the chiefs are most commonly of the same frail materials and inartificial structure as those of the peasantry, but we found a few at the capital constructed of brick and mortar, and roofed with tile. That of the Prah-klang, especially was even a comfortable and commodious habitation, but being so had a foreign air, and harmonized so little with the meaner structures around it, as to appear altogether out of place.

Edifices and structures for public convenience and utility have not, as far as we could hear or see, any existence in Siam, and neither piety, superstition, charity, nor interest, seem to have led the rulers of this country to construct bridges, wells, tanks, or caravanseras, such as are to be found more or less among all the other considerable nations of Asia. The bridges which we observed at the capital, and in the immediate vicinity of the palace, consisted generally of no more than a single plank; and even within the walls, they amounted to no more than laying over abutments of coarse brick and mortar, a few rough and naked beams. We nowhere observed any attempt to construct an arch.

The absence of public roads is not less remarkable. We were informed that there were but two considerable roads in the kingdom—that

from the new to the old capital, and that from Chantabon to Tung-yai. In the vicinity of Bang-kok there are none at all, and here travelling is almost entirely aquatic. In extenuation, however, it ought to be remarked, that both here and in other parts of the low country, the internal navigation is so extensive, cheap, and commodious, as to account, in some measure, for the absence of public roads, and even to compensate for that absence. At Bang-kok, wheel carriages are altogether unknown; and even elephants are prohibited, except to a few of the principal lords. In the upper parts of Lao again, as well as in the mountains to the south-west, much of the commerce and intercourse of the country is conducted by means of these animals, which are the beasts of burden best suited to the narrow and steep pathways, which in these parts supply the place of roads.

It happens with the Siamese, as has been observed with all other rude nations, that the chief efforts of their architectural skill are bestowed upon their religious edifices. What Knox observes of the Kings of Ceylon, is not less applicable to the monarchs of Siam. "It appeared," says he, "they spared not for pains and labour to build temples and high monuments to the honour of this god, as if they had been born only to hew rocks and great stones, and lay them up in heaps."* If nothing existed of the Siamese but their temples, we should be apt, upon a superficial consideration, to pronounce them a people considerably civilized, tolerably well governed, and enjoying no small share of happiness and comfort. Extensive monuments of this nature, indeed, could not exist among a race of mere savages; and their presence argues a certain advance of civilization, some progress in the art of securing a permanent supply of food, and the existence of a population more numerous than the precarious habits of mere savage life could afford; but beyond this, they can be adduced in proof of nothing but despotism on the part of

* An Historical Relation of Ceylon, an Island in the East Indies, p. 81.

the government, and superstition on the part of the people. These temples have already been fully described. The enclosures and lower walls are constructed of brick and mortar, and destitute of ornament. The roof, gable-ends, doors, and windows, are of solid timber, the first being protected by a covering of tiles. It is upon this portion of the temples that ornament and decoration are most profusely lavished. The wood-work is very generally laboriously and curiously carved, and gilding on wood, in which the Siamese have acquired considerable skill, is not only bestowed upon the inside of the buildings, but upon the outside also, even in situations the most exposed to the weather. The portions of a temple which are best executed, and most in accordance with European taste, are the detached tall pyramids and spires by which they are surrounded. These are constructed of solid masonry, and produce a very good effect. Kemfer states that the Siamese temples "do not equal our churches in bigness, but far exceed them in outward beauty, by reason of the many bended roofs, gilded frontispieces, advanced steps, columns, pillars, and other ornaments." I am not, however, of this opinion, and consider that the effect produced by these edifices, is wholly inadequate to the labour and expense bestowed upon them. Their want of height, their inelegant form, the absence of domes, arches, and columns, divest them of all pretension to grace or sublimity, while it is impossible in viewing them to get rid of the association attached to the temporary and perishable nature of the materials. The bare antiquity of a Hindoo or an Egyptian temple, is calculated to give rise to sentiments of veneration, but we can entertain no such feeling in regard to edifices, however costly, raised for temporary purposes, incapable of durability, and unassociated with historical recollections.

Statuary is practised by the Siamese for religious purposes only. Indeed its limits are still more restricted; it is generally confined to the fabrication of one form, the image of Buddha, and this commonly in a sitting attitude. I saw but two or three statues of this God hewn

from stone, and they were brought from China. The greater part of the numerous images of Siam are formed of a composition of plaster, rosin, and oil, mixed up with hair. When the figure is formed, it is covered over with varnish, upon which is laid a thick coat of gilding, so as to conceal all the baser materials. The best images are made of bronze, or brass, and the fabrication of these may be considered as the acme of Siamese skill in the arts. The parts are cast separately, and after being put together, are richly gilded, so as not to be distinguished from those of plaster, without particular examination. The surprizing magnitude of some of these images has been already described. Even these, however, are not calculated for the same lasting durability, as images, or other monuments of stone, being subject to spoliation or destruction during the frequent revolutions and convulsions to which these countries are liable. I was assured that some of the best images were either melted down or carried off entire during the last Burman invasion.

It ought here to be remarked, that while the useful arts practised in Siam are commonly in the hands of Chinese and other strangers, every thing connected with their religious monuments is entirely executed by native Siamese.

The large produce of grain, oil, salt, sugar, and pepper, which Siam affords, might at first view be considered as some proof of skilful industry on the part of the people; but the two last owe their existence entirely to the Chinese settlers, and the rest depend so much upon peculiar advantages in soil, climate, and communication, that they could scarcely fail to have existed in any state of society or government; and the Government of Siam, with all its faults, has at least this advantage, that it is capable of maintaining a moderate share of internal tranquillity, and of securing the people against the violence of one another, to an extent unknown to many less despotic, but feebler Asiatic states.

In other rude states of society, the priesthood is commonly the deposi-

tary of whatever learning and science may exist; but of this advantage the Siamese, and the followers of Buddha, are deprived by a precept of religion, which proscribes to the priesthood all temporal learning, and makes every acquirement unconnected with this subject profane and sinful. The consequence of this is, that medicine, astrology, and astronomy, the favourite sciences of semi-barbarians, are abandoned to the casual culture of a few strangers. At Bang-kok, we found that all the medical practitioners were Chinese, or Cochin Chinese,—that these were in much repute, and that they imported all their medicines or nostrums from China. Divination and astronomy are now, as at all former periods of our acquaintance with Siam, in the hands of the Brahmins settled in the country. It was from these that we obtained the first Indian astronomical tables brought to Europe; but the present race, from all I could learn, are very ignorant, and even incapable of making the necessary calculations for regulating the kalendar, which is at present effected with the assistance of the Pekin almanack, the arrival of which is anxiously looked for by the first Chinese junk of the season, which is commonly one of those from the Island of Hai-nan.

The following is a sketch of the mode of reckoning and dividing time amongst the Siamese. The day commences at sun-rise. The forenoon is divided into six watches, and the afternoon to sun-set into the same number. From sun-set to midnight makes only two watches, and from midnight to morning again makes the same number. The day watches are called in Siamese *Mong*, and those of the night *Thum*. I did not hear that any smaller sub-divisions of time obtained. The time-keeper made use of is similar to the contrivance used by the Hindoos, viz. a cup with an aperture at the bottom, placed in a bowl of water, and which sinks at the termination of each watch.

The Siamese week is of seven days, and these correspond generally with those of the other nations of the old world. They are as follow, viz.—Sunday, *Athit;* Monday, *Chan;* Tuesday, *Angkhan;* Wednesday, *Phut;* Thursday, *Prahat;* Friday, *Suk;* and Saturday, *San*. The months are

alternately of twenty-nine and thirty days, and twelve months or three hundred and fifty-four days make a year. The months, with the exception of the two first, of the derivation of which I could get no explanation, take their names from the Siamese numerals, the word *Duan*, or moon, being prefixed to each. They are repeated as follow:—

	Days.
1. Duan-ai	29
2. Duan Ji	30
3. Duan Sam	29
4. Duan Si	30
5. Duan Hà	29
6. Duan Hoe	30
7. Duan Chet	29
8. Duan Pet	30
9. Duan Kàu	29
10. Duan Sip	30
11. Duan Sibet	29
12. Duan Sip Song	30
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The Siamese year is solar, and to preserve it as such an intercalary month of thirty days is added to every third year, after the eighth month. The months, it is also to be remarked, are divided into a dark and a bright half, or an increasing and waning moon, as among the Hindoos; and it is the days of these divisions, and not of the month itself as among us, which are reckoned. The Siamese year does not commence with the first month, but corresponds with that of the Chinese. In the year 1822 the new year, fell on the 11th of April, being the 5th day of the dark half of the moon.

The great divisions of time are into two cycles, the larger of which is of sixty years, and the lesser of twelve, each year of this last taking the name of some animal in the following order, thus: *Chuat*, the rat; *Chalú*, the

ox; *Khan,* the tiger; *Tho,* the hare; *Marong,* the greater snake; *Maséng,* the lesser snake; *Ma-mia,* the horse; *Ma-mee,* the goat; *Wok,* the ape; *Raka,* the cock; *Cho-cho,* the dog; and *Kun,* the hog.

The Siamese have two epochs, or, as they denominate them, *Sa-ka-rat,* a sacred and a popular one. The sacred era dates from the death of Gautama, and the year which commenced on the 11th of April, 1822, was the year 2365, according to this reckoning. This year is used by the Talapoins, and in all matters connected with religion. The vulgar era is said to have been instituted in commemoration of the introduction of the worship of Gautama into Siam, and to date from that event, which took place in the 1181 year of the sacred epoch, corresponding with the year of Christ 638.* The year commencing with the 11th of April, 1822, was accordingly the 1184 of Siamese time. This epoch is said to have been instituted by a king whose name was Krek. It is used in matters of business; but on ordinary and popular occasions, such as in epistolary writing, it is not unfrequently omitted,—the year of the lesser cycle only being written, together with the day of the week, and of the moon's increase or decrease, in the following manner. "Written on Tuesday, in the 7th month, on the 8th day of the bright half of the Moon of the year of the Horse," which corresponded with the 26th of May, 1822.

The knowledge which the Siamese possess of arithmetic is, from all I could learn, imperfect and superficial. As accomptants, they are slow and inexpert, even with the assistance of the Chinese *sanpan,* upon which they principally rely. They are acquainted with the decimal system of notation, which they mark by characters peculiar to themselves, and which vary much if they do not altogether differ from those employed by the people of Lao, Pegue and Ava, while they agree with those employed by the Kambojans.

In the regulation of their measures, weights, and coins, the Siamese

* By some authorities, the vulgar era is said not to have been instituted until three years after the introduction of the worship of Buddha.

have some advantage over their neighbours. Gold and copper are not used as money in Siam, and the currency consists only of cowry shells and silver. The denominations are as follow: two hundred bia, or cowries, make one p'hai-nung; two p'hai-nungs, one song-p'hai; two song-p'hais, one fuang; two fuangs, one salung; four salungs, one bat, or tical; eighty ticals, one cattie; one hundred catties, one picul.

The standard coin is the bat, which Europeans, on what ground I do not know, have called a tical; but there are also coins, though less frequently, of the lower denominations. These are of a rude and peculiar form. They are, in fact, nothing more than small bits of a silver bar bent, and the ends beaten together. They are impressed with two or three small stamps, not covering the whole surface of the coin. The cattie and picul are, of course, only used in speaking of large sums of money. Gold and silver are weighed by small weights, which have the same denominations as the coins. The p'hainung, the lowest of these, is in this case subdivided into thirty-two sagas, or red beans, the *abrus precatorius* of botanists.

The bat, or tical, was assayed at the mint of Calcutta; it was found to weigh two hundred and thirty-six grains; its standard, however, was uncertain, and the value of different specimens varied from one rupee, three anas, and three pies, to one rupee, three anas, and seven pies. The value therefore in sterling money is about 2*s.* 6*d.*, and it is so considered in the course of this work.

In respect to ordinary measures, the Siamese cattie is double the weight of the Chinese cattie, which, as is well known, is equal to one and one third lb. avoirdupois. The picul, however, is of the same weight, consisting, in the one case, of fifty catties only, and in the other of one hundred. In weighing rice and salt, a large measure is used, consisting, in respect to the first, of twenty-two piculs, and of the last of twenty-five: rice is also measured by the basket, of which one hundred go to the large measure above mentioned.

The long measures are as follow: twelve finger breadths make one span;

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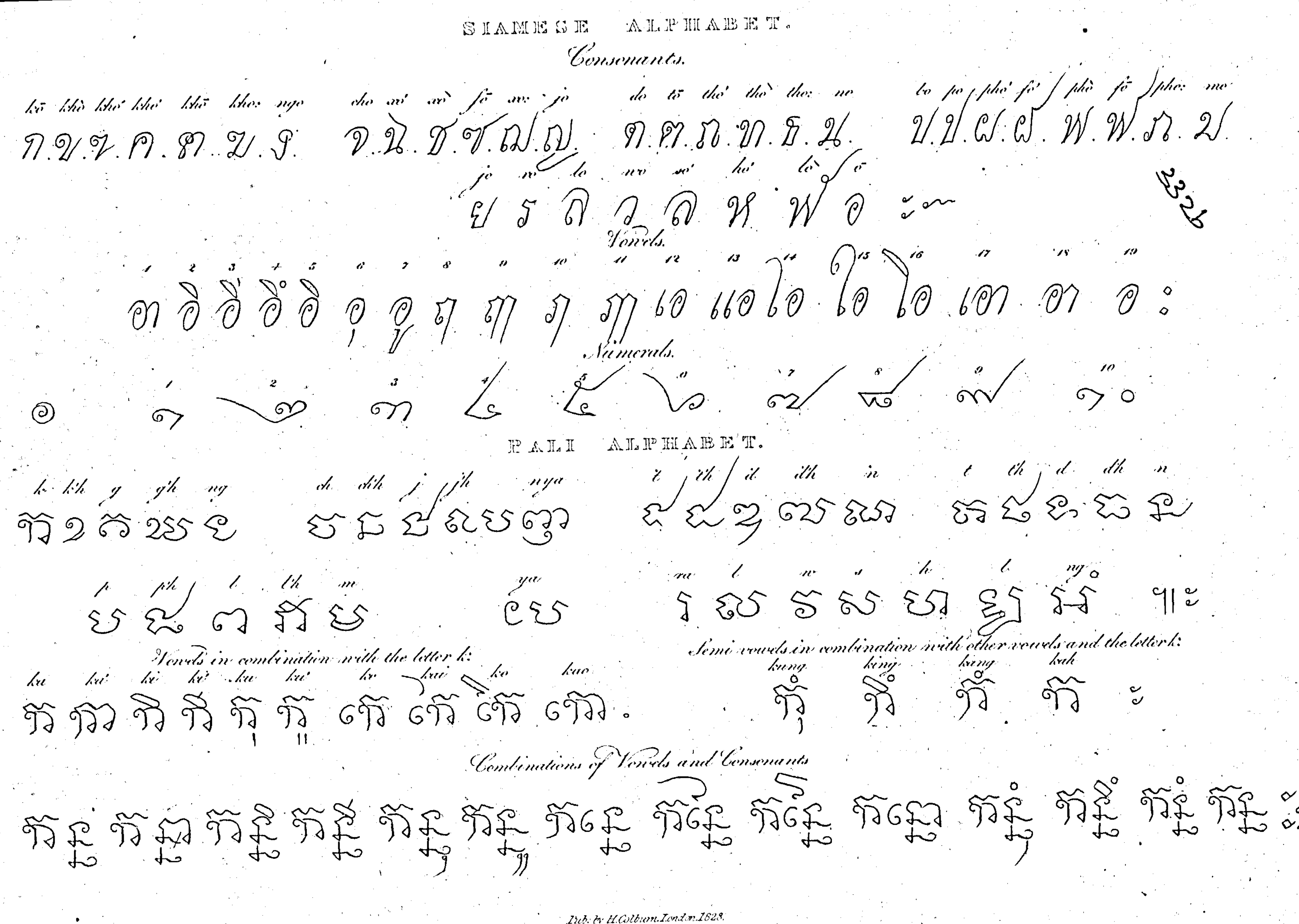
two spans, one cubit; four cubits, one fathom; twenty fathoms, one sen; and one hundred sen, one yuta; or, as it is more commonly pronounced by the Siamese, yut. The fathom is the measure of most frequent use, and the Siamese have a pole of this length divided into its fractional parts. This, as near as I could ascertain, is equal to about six feet six inches. The sen appears to be also used in the admeasurement of land, and to be the name of a square measure of twenty fathoms to the side.

On the subject of geography, the knowledge of the Siamese is extremely limited indeed, and of distant nations they scarcely know any thing but the name. The Chinese are the only considerable foreign people with whom they hold much intercourse, and whose superiority to themselves they are at all disposed to admit.

I was informed that some attempt had been made by the Court to compile a rude map of the kingdom from native surveys. The following meagre list comprehends the names of all the foreign nations or countries with which the Siamese are acquainted, according to their own pronunciation, viz. Mon, Pegue; Pama, Burma; Lao, Laos; Khomen, Kamboja; Cham, Champa; Yuan, Anam, that is Cochin China and Tonquin; Tang-kia, Tonquin; Chek or Chin, China; Ya-pun, Japan; Khek, Malay; Chowa, Java; Mung-nge, Celebes; Hua-prek, African, that is to say, "pepper heads," Piam, Hindostan; Thet, Telingana, or the Coast of Coromandel; Langka, Ceylon; Farang, Europe; Frangsit, French; Wilande, Dutch; Angkrit, English; Markan, Anglo-American.

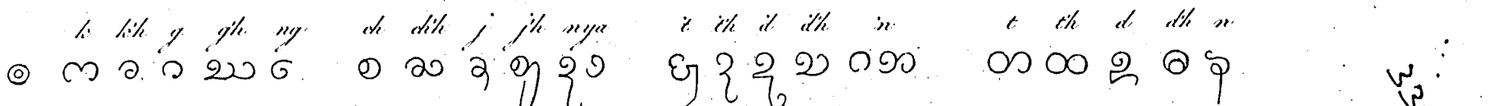
The modern Siamese have nearly as great an aversion to the sea as the ancient Persians. The institutions of the country, as will be seen hereafter, are completely destructive of the spirit of foreign enterprise. Avarice, indeed, seems often to have seduced the Siamese to attempt foreign commerce, and never to so great an extent as at the present moment. In such enterprises, however, the native Siamese seldom engage personally, for both the pilots and crews of their ships consist of Christians or Chinese.

In music the Siamese are entitled to some distinction among Oriental

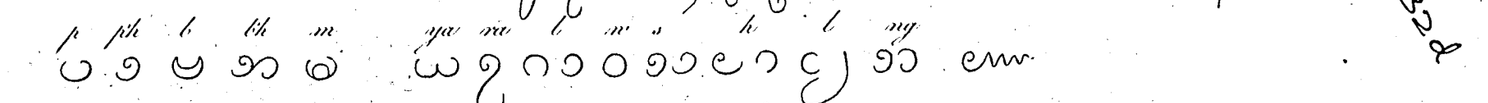

SIAMESE ALPHABET.
Consonants.
Vowels.
Numerals.
PALI ALPHABET.
Vowels in combination with the letter k:
Semi vowels in combination with other vowels and the letter k:
Combinations of Vowels and Consonants
Pub. by H. Colburn, London 1828.

MON OR PEGU ALPHABET.

k kh g gh ng ch chh j jh nya t th d dh n

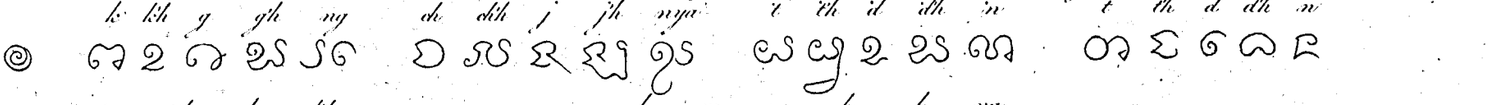


p ph b bh m y r l w s h l ng



LAO ALPHABET, as Written at Chantanaburi or Lanchang.

k kh g gh ng ch chh j jh nya t th d dh n



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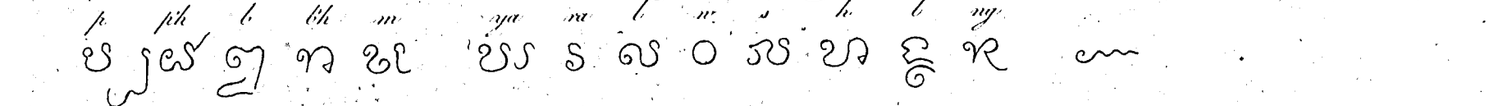
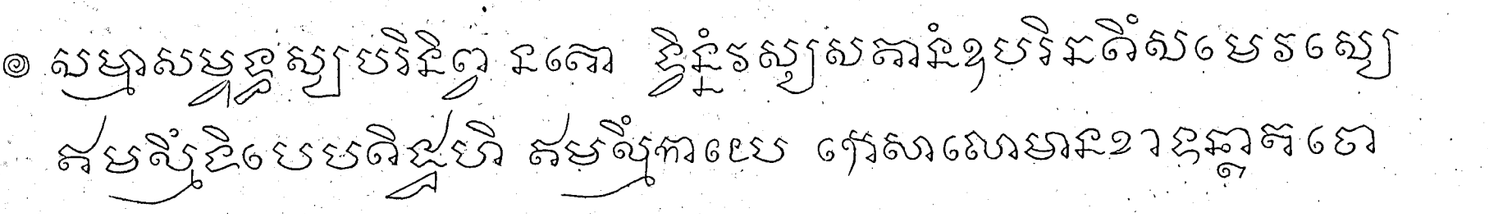
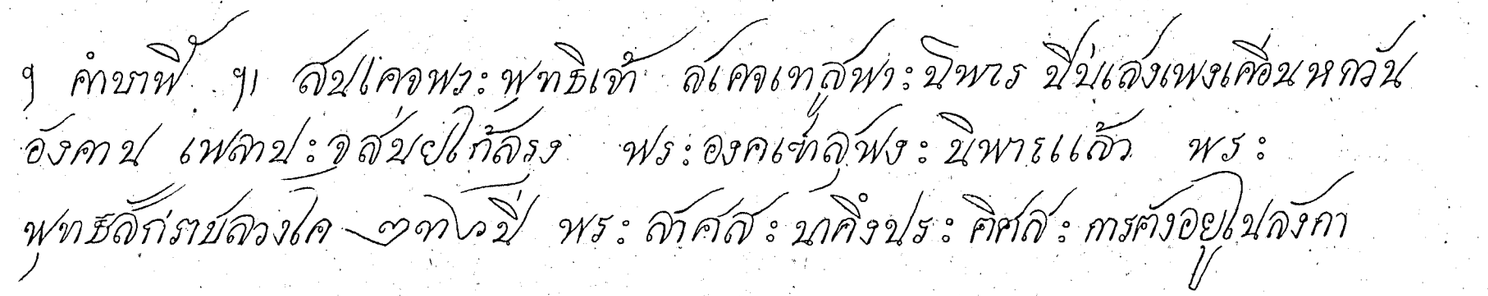


SPECIMEN OF PALI.



SPECIMEN OF SIAMESE.



Pub. by H. Colburn, London, 1828.

EXPLANATION OF THE VOWELS OF THE SIAMESE ALPHABET IN THE ANNEXED PLATE.

(To face page 333.)

FIGURE 1. The long sound of a; 2. the short Italian i; 3. the same vowel long; 4. a sound for which there is no character in the European languages, but which has some resemblance to the French *u*; 5. the corresponding sound, long; 6. the short Italian u; 7. the corresponding vowel, long; 8. 9. 10. 11. these four characters borrowed from the Sanscrit, and which are sometimes included with the consonants, and sometimes with the vowels, are thus expressed in Roman letters by the Portuguese, ric, ri, lic, li; 12. the letter e of the Italian Alphabet; 13. the same vowel long; 14. a diphthong composed of the short a and short i; 15. the same diphthong, long; 16. a long o; 17. a diphthong composed of the short sounds, a and u; 18. a sound intermediate in length between the long and short a; 19. the short breathing which is necessarily inherent in every consonant; and which the Hindoos, as Sir W. Jones observes, pronounce like our a in 'America.' The Siamese pronounce it more like a short o; and it is so written in the Roman character by the resident Portuguese. In some Alphabets which I have seen, there are five additiona vowels and diphthongs, forming combinations, however, which it would be difficult to express in Roman characters. It is to be observed, that all the vowels in the Siamese Alphabet, with the exception of the short a, are rather orthographic marks than distinct characters. They cannot therefore be written except in combination with that letter or a consonant.

nations—their airs being more agreeable at least to an European ear than those of any Eastern people, with the exception probably of the Turks and Persians. The melodies of the Siamese are sometimes in a wild and plaintive strain; but more commonly they are in a brisk and lively style, resembling Scotch and Irish music—thus forming, to all appearance, a violent contrast with the sluggish and frigid temper of the people themselves. A full Siamese band ought to consist of not less than ten instruments. The first of these in rank is a kind of staccato, in the form of a semicircle, within which the player sits striking with two small hammers, the notes, or keys, which consist of inverted vessels of brass. The second is another staccato of the same materials, but less compass, in form of a boat; the third, a violin with three strings; the fourth, a guitar of four strings, played with a bit of wood, fastened to the finger; the fifth, a flute; and the sixth, a flageolet. To these are occasionally added an instrument with four strings, in form of a boat, which is said to be borrowed from the Peguans; and the band is completed by the addition of a drum, cymbals, and castanets.

The interesting question of language requires more attention and learning than I can bestow upon it. My information is derived from others, for I had neither leisure nor opportunity to acquire any thing beyond a very superficial acquaintance with its elements.

The alphabet of the Siamese consists, as they write it, of thirty-nine, but in reality of thirty-eight consonant characters. The vowels and diphthongs are very numerous, and some of them such as neither Europeans nor the natives of Western Asia can pronounce. Notwithstanding the number and variety of the consonants, the language does not embrace several sounds of this class,* which are familiar to the nations

* The sound expressed in English by sh, the Persian and Arabic gutturals expressed in Roman letters by kh with z, v; and several others have no existence. G and d have been borrowed from Western India, but are pronounced respectively as k and t; so that Ganga (the Ganges) becomes Kanka; and Dewata, a god, Tewata.

of the West. The alphabet, for its own purpose however, is perfect. It is formed on the system and classification of the alphabets of the continent of India, but with considerable modifications, which lead me to believe that the Siamese possessed an original written character at a very early period, and that the present arrangement, in all likelihood, followed the introduction of the worship of Buddha and of the Bali language in times comparatively recent. The character is written from the left hand to the right, like all the original alphabets of the countries lying between Arabia and China. The consonants consist of five classes,—namely, gutturals, palatals, dentals, labials, sibilants and liquids, each class having its own peculiar nasal. In each consonant the short vocalic breathing, "a or o," for sometimes it is pronounced as the one, and sometimes as the other, is always understood, unless the contrary be expressed by an orthographic mark. The character for this is included with the consonants, and is the last letter of the alphabet. The other vowels are but orthographic marks, which, in some cases, are written over or below the consonants, and in others precede or follow them. If a word or syllable begin with a vowel, the character is expressed by affixing the peculiar mark of such vowel to that of the short "a."

Such a variety of intonations as is implied by this account of the Siamese alphabet, seems to be necessary to a language, the great majority of the words of which consists of monosyllables. In this language, and indeed in all that are kindred to it, the same distinctions of meaning are produced by the alteration or modification of a single letter which are brought about by us through whole syllables, of which a few examples may be given. The monosyllable *klai*, with a short *a*, means *far*, but with the same vowel long, it means *near*. If in the last form of this monosyllable, as it would be written in the Roman character, the fourth letter of the series *k* be substituted for the first, which it is that exists in the words meaning "far" and "near"—then we have an entire new meaning, viz. the adverb *almost*. The following is an example, perhaps, still more striking. A syllable, which in Roman letters would admit only of being

written *se*, becomes according as the intonations are varied, the verb to buy—the adjective fit or proper, and "a tiger," "a vest," "a mat." The language, I am told, abounds in examples of this nature.*

The Siamese language is characterised by great simplicity of grammatical structure. It is destitute of inflexions, and hence its construction depends wholly upon the principle of juxtaposition. The nominative precedes the verb, and the verb the noun, which it governs. The adjective follows the noun which it qualifies. There is no relative pronoun, and no distinction between the pronouns of the second and third persons.

The political slavery of the people is deeply impressed upon their dialect; and hence the existence of a phraseology, and of distinct terms to indicate the relative ranks of the speakers—the one party using a language of flattery and adulation, and the other of command and authority. In our intercourse with the Siamese chiefs, we soon discovered their extraordinary fastidiousness on this subject. They displayed an uncommon repugnance towards making use of the interpreters of the Mission; and, accustomed to the incense of flattery, seemed to be in constant dread, not only of hearing unpleasant truths, but even of the risk of having their ears and dignity offended by the accidental errors in phraseology, of rustic and uncourtly interpretations. The language, I am told, is copious, or rather possesses that species of redundancy which belongs to the dialects of many semi-barbarous nations, and which shows a long but not an useful cultivation.

The literature of the Siamese is from all accounts meagre and uninteresting; and in point of imagination, invention, force, or correctness, is much below that of the Arabs, the Persians, or even of the Hindoos. Their efforts seem scarcely indeed to rise beyond the rank of those of the tribes of the Indian islands; and judging from a few trans-

* The remarkable accuracy of pronunciation attained by the Eastern nations, and the copiousness and perfection of their alphabetic systems, afford a striking contrast with the paucity and vagueness of their ideas. It would seem as if they systematically set more value on sound than on sense.

lations of what were said to be their best works, I have no hesitation in pronouncing them singularly puerile and jejune.

Siamese literature is naturally divided into two classes—a profane and a sacred; the one written in the vernacular language, and the other in the Bali. All composition in the vernacular language is metrical, with the exception of ordinary epistolary writing—a fact from which it may be seen, that it is not utility or instruction that is aimed at, but mere amusement; and this, indeed, is a matter openly avowed by the Siamese. A great variety of different measures are said to be in use, and even to be used in the same composition,—the metre being varied so as to adapt itself to the subject which is from time to time introduced.

The style of Siamese composition is simple, and destitute of those strong metaphors and hyperbolical forms of expression which are commonly ascribed to Eastern languages. Brevity is affected by the Siamese in their composition, but by no means precision or perspicuity; on the contrary, they hint obscurely at, rather than express their full meaning, and to a stranger, at least, superficially examining their language, there appears a studied ambiguity in all their forms of expression. Their ambition, in fact, is to mystify their ideas. I was told that our downright, plain, and unmasked style, either in speaking or writing, was viewed by them as harsh, rustic, and undignified. This style is of course derived from the manners and habits of the people.

Siamese compositions consist of songs, romances, and a few histories, or chronicles. The first, are usually in the form of a dialogue between persons of opposite sexes, in which quaint allusions are made, amusing to those who are intimately acquainted with the idiom of the language. The usual subject of them is love, or, more correctly, intrigue. Some of them that are sung in public, are said to be highly licentious; while their recitation is accompanied by gestures which set modesty at defiance. Many of these were sung in our hearing, during the festivities which accompanied the tonsure of the Phra-klang's son; and, as already mentioned, were followed by or alternated with the incantations of the Brahmins, the hymns of

the Talapoins, the feats of tumblers and dancers, profane music, and dramatic exhibitions.

The romances are stated to be upon an equality with the other efforts of the Siamese intellect, destitute of ingenuity, and crowded with extravagant, supernatural, and incredible fictions. The subject is usually the adventures in love and war of some chief or prince, borrowed from the remote and fabulous history of the country,—the wide-spread legends of the Hindoos, and now and then from Javanese and Malayan story. The history of the Hindu god and hero Rama, is of all others the most favourite topic; and there exists in the Siamese language an extensive composition, comprising all the adventures of this worthy, which they call Ram-kian,—a word which I take to be a corruption of *Ramayana*, the name of the well-known Sanscrit poem. The Siamese story is so voluminous, that it is said to be comprised in four hundred cantos, or parts, and when dramatized, to take up six weeks in acting. Of this I was informed personally by the Prah-klang.

The Siamese have no dramatic compositions,—that is to say, no performances containing a regular written dialogue. Their plays are founded on the romances already mentioned, the actors being left to their own wits for converting the subject into a suitable dialogue. A prompter stands by, and refreshes their memories, from time to time, from the written volume which he holds in his hand.

The Siamese are said to have some historical compositions; and it is probable that the dry chronology of their kings, and the leading events of their history for a few centuries, may be told by them with sufficient fidelity; but it cannot for a moment be imagined that they are capable, any more than other rude people, of writing a rational and connected narrative of their national story. The chiefs with whom I conversed on this subject, appeared either to be very ill-informed, or very little disposed to communicate information. I was told that the only documents of any value existed in the palace, being records of passing

events composed by a state chronologist. To these, which are deposited in the public archives, the officers of Government have recourse whenever occasion requires. If I am to judge by the minute care with which the particulars of the conversations held with ourselves on public occasions were taken down by the Government scribes, the records in question ought at least to be very voluminous.

It is to sacred literature only that the Siamese attach any importance. It is this alone which they consider a pursuit meriting any serious attention. The language dedicated to religion in Siam, is the same as in all other Bauddhist countries, the *Bali,* or *Pali,* commonly pronounced in Siam Ba-li, as if it were written in two syllables, agreeably to the monosyllabic idiom of Siamese pronunciation. The Siamese priests also occasionally denominate it *Pasa Makata,* which is only a corruption of *Bahasa Magadha,*—meaning the language of Magadha, or Bahar, the birth-place of Buddha. The term *Bali* is applied in Siam either to the written character or to the language itself, but most frequently to the latter. It is a little remarkable that the character or alphabet of the Bali is very generally denominated by the Siamese *Kam-kom,* or the writing of Kamboja. Some allege that it is so called because the Siamese are said to have acquired their first knowledge of it, and of the Buddhist religion through Kamboja; but others, with more probability, affirm that it has this name because it is the only character known to the Kambojans, both their religious and popular writings being composed in it. According to the information furnished to me, the Bali language, as it obtains in Ceylon, in Ava, Pegue, Lao, Siam, and Kamboja, is exactly the same; while time and distance have occasioned a considerable diversity in the mode of writing the character. The Bali writings of Siam and Kamboja are identically the same. Those of Pegue, Ava, and Lao, differ a little from each other, and a good deal from the two former. The writing of Ceylon differs very considerably from all the rest. The result of this is, that the writings of the priests of Siam and Kamboja are at once mutually intelligible to each other; that the writings of

these, and of the priests of Ava, Pegue, and Lao, may be reciprocally read without any extraordinary difficulty; but that the priests of all these countries encounter considerable difficulty in deciphering a Bali manuscript of Ceylon. The compositions in the Bali language appear to be confined to religious subjects, and the works which exist in Siam do not, from all accounts, differ from such as are current in Ceylon and other Bauddhist countries.

Almost all Bali books, and such works in the popular language as the Siamese put any value on, are written on slips of palm leaf with an iron style, a black powder being thrown over the impression, which is thus rendered sufficiently distinct and legible. These slips are from a foot to a foot and a half long. They are tied up in small bundles, and very generally richly gilt, and painted on the edges, forming thus a volume which is carefully placed in an envelope of silk or cotton cloth. For more ordinary works, as well as for keeping accounts, and taking minutes of public transactions, the Siamese use a thick stiff paper, prepared with a black paste, so as to receive an impression with the stone pencil used in writing upon it, which is a bit of soap or pot-stone. The paper in these cases consists of a strip, ten or twelve cubits long, and about a foot broad, which is folded zig-zag, so as to form pages of about three inches deep. After one side of the whole is filled, the sheet is turned up, and the subject continued upon the reverse. The writing upon such paper can be expunged, so that the same material may be repeatedly used, in the same way as writing upon a slate with us. The paper on which epistolary correspondence is carried on is a miserable fabric, soft, spongy, and uneven. This also is written upon with a pencil, for ink is a material almost unknown to the Siamese.

As among other Asiatic nations, a smattering of education is very generally diffused among the Siamese,—that is to say, they can read and write awkwardly and imperfectly; but one does not meet amongst them, as in Hindostan, with either dexterous scribes or clever accountants,—almost all

their arithmetical calculations especially being made with the assistance of the Chinese *Sanpan*. Their education in the vernacular language, such as it is, appears to be casually acquired, for I could not learn that they had any schools for this special purpose. Some knowledge of the Bali tongue is also very generally disseminated, owing to the singular custom or institution which calls upon every individual of the male sex to devote some portion of his life to the priesthood. Every temple has a considerable library of Bali books, and the chiefs also have their private collection, which they are proud of exhibiting. That of the *Prah-klang*, for example, was displayed during the festivity of his son's inauguration into the priesthood, upon an elevated bench, along with English fowling-pieces, specimens of cut-glass, Chinese porcelain, and similar objects. Of the degree of learning which the Siamese Talapoins possess in comparison with other priests of Buddha, I had no means of forming any judgment. Symes and Buchanan seem to consider it as an acknowledged point, that the Siamese are more learned than the Burmans and Peguans, and the Siamese themselves are by no means backward in making such a claim. Whether however from real inferiority, or from respect to the classic land of Ceylon, they are ready to acknowledge their inferiority to the Cingalese. Of the Sanscrit language the priests of Siam know nothing but by reputation, and no one could even be found at Bang-kok who could read or write the Dewanagree character. The Talapoins informed me that they had neither a grammar nor dictionary of the Bali, and that their acquisition of the language was consequently attended with much labour and difficulty.

After these observations on the language and literature of the Siamese, I shall take the present opportunity of offering a few remarks on the affinity subsisting between the races of men which inhabit the wide regions between Bengal and China;—rejecting, however, the Anam nation, which,

owing to vicinity and frequent subjugation to China, has stamped upon it to so great a degree the type of the Chinese character, as necessarily to be separated from the rest of the group, although in all probability originally belonging to it. The most civilized and leading nations within this wide range are the Burmans, the Siamese, and the Peguans. Next to them come the people of Kamboja, Lao, and Aracan. Those of Cassay, Champa, Cachar, and Assam, constitute a third order; and then we have a number of petty races, in a savage or half savage state,—such as the Kyen, Karian, Law'a, K'ha, Chong, Moi, &c. &c.

The dialects of these nations bear each other a common resemblance in structure and in idiom. They have borrowed much from each other, yet appear radically distinct. The foreign tongues of which words are found most extensively intermixed with them, are the Sanscrit, or rather Bali, and the dialect of the Chinese province of Canton, but the influence even of these appears to be merely extrinsic.

In treating of the principal nations now referred to, an important and interesting fact will soon present itself, viz. the striking accordance which they offer in all essential points amongst themselves, and their no less obvious dissimilitude to all other Asiatic races. They possess the same physical configuration; their languages radically agree in structure and idiom; and their manners, habits, and usages, are alike. This parallel may, without any violence, be extended to such matters as are little better than arbitrary or accidental. Thus, one form of religion, with scarcely a shade of difference, pervades all those that are civilized; they have the same literature, the same laws, and the same civil and political institutions. It may farther be observed, that the history and revolutions of this group of nations have been confined to themselves;—that their social state has been very little influenced by strangers; and that judging from the evidence of language, and the absence of historical monuments to prove otherwise, they appear never to have been subjected to foreign conquest,—an immunity, if it be one, which

they owe to the strong natural barriers which have arrested the tide of conquest as well as civilization to the east, the west, and the north. The great geographical distance, and the trackless and impracticable wildernesses, which divide them from Tartary, have secured them from being overrun and subjugated by the invasions of the nomadic tribes of the north. It is to similar causes they owe their independence of the Chinese. The only external agencies which seem to have made a lasting impression upon them, are religion and commerce, but especially the former. While secured, however, from foreign aggression, their own history, from all that is known of it to Europeans, has presented a constant scene of internal warfare, and of alternations of conquest and subjection; in the course of which, the three most numerous and civilized tribes have taken the lead, viz. the Burmans, Peguans, and Siamese; while the secondary nations, such as those of Aracan, Lao, and Kamboja, with the less civilized tribes, have stood neuter when permitted, or followed the fortunes of the temporary victor.

In drawing the character of the Siamese, it cannot be denied but that the dark greatly overbalances the bright side. Judging from those with whom we held intercourse, I make no hesitation in confirming what has been often asserted of the Siamese by European writers, that they are servile, rapacious, slothful, disingenuous, pusillanimous, and extravagantly vain.

Servility is of course to be expected as a necessary consequence of the rigid despotism by which the Siamese are weighed down. Subordination of rank is so rigorously marked in Siam, as to destroy all appearance of equality, and therefore all true politeness. Towards their superiors, the conduct of the Siamese is abject in the extreme, and towards inferiors it is insolent or disdainful. This character seems indeed impressed even upon their external deportment. Their gait is not

only never graceful, erect, or manly, like that of the military tribes of Western Asia, but on the contrary, always sluggish, ignoble, and crouching. Perhaps the very attitudes in which submission to superiors is expressed, contributes to banish even the graces of external deportment; and it seems indeed impossible to associate any elegance of external manners, however superficial, with the habitual practice of crawling upon knees and elbows, knocking the forehead against the earth, and similar observances.* The universal disuse of wearing arms in Siam by the authority of the Government, and the substitution, if not of law, at least of arbitrary authority, for the private right of avenging wrongs, has in all probability a considerable effect upon the manners of the Siamese, rendering their demeanour less guarded and delicate than in conditions of society even less civilized, but where the habitual use of arms and the consequent fear of assassination beget a constrained politeness, and a fastidious impatience of affront and insult.

All the persons with whom the Mission had any intercourse displayed a singular share of rapacity, scarcely attempted to be disguised by the thinnest veil of decorum. They asked without scruple for whatever there was the least chance of their obtaining, and were neither offended nor repelled by a refusal. The lower orders in this respect imitated their superiors, and never scrupled to beg for whatever struck their fancy. In our walks through the villages in the vicinity of Bang-kok, we were frequently importuned for our pencil-cases, seals, watches, pocket-handkerchiefs and neckcloths. One modest matron asked one of our

* We had occasion to observe on the knees and elbows of some of our acquaintances the effects of this practice, in the black indelible scars with which they were marked. The effects of these repeated prostrations were particularly obvious on the limbs of the Prah-klang, whose duty led him, at least twice a day, to perform them at the palace. The Chinese, I believe, are allowed on such occasions the use of pads for the protection of their limbs and garments; but such precaution on the part of the Siamese would be looked upon as intolerably disrespectful, and deserving of the bamboo.

gentlemen for his coat. He pointed out, as well as he could, that it would be inconvenient to return home without it. Not repelled by this objection, she pointed to his shirt and waistcoat, informing him that these would be sufficient for so short a journey as he had to perform!

We found the chiefs, at least, as slow to give as they were ready to ask; and the Court especially, both in its intercourse with foreign nations and with strangers, exhibits the utmost paltryness in this respect. Any presents are received, however trifling, and a show is made of conferring a favour by making a return,—care being always taken, however, that a gain of thirty or forty per cent. shall be made by the transaction. Certainly not a vestige is to be found among the Siamese of the munificent liberality or prodigality which is so frequently met with among the chiefs and princes of Western Asia. All their bounty appears to be bestowed upon the Talapoins, and it seems as if they had no room for the exercise of liberality or charity in any other form.

The Siamese appeared to us to exhibit in great perfection the indolence, disinclination to labour, contempt for the value of time, and disregard of punctuality which are always so characteristic of the subjects of a bad and barbarous government. In point of candour and sincerity, their character is eminently defective; and the impression left on our minds, from our intercourse with persons about the Court, was, that they had no conception of the advantages of a manly, direct, and upright conduct, and that they practised dissimulation and artifice to as great an extent as the natives of Hindostan, although not with one-half their dexterity. We found, indeed, no reason to dissent in this respect from the opinion which the Abbé Gervaise expressed of them near a century and a half ago,—that they were universally given to dissimulation, and that although "as enemies they were not dangerous, as friends they could never be relied upon."

I make no question, from the little we saw of the Siamese, that they are generally destitute of personal courage. Cowed by the worst political institutions, and deprived of the liberty of wearing arms, the use of which even under arbitrary governments preserves to the individual some share of self-respect, and habitually accustomed to the infliction of the lash, it would be strange, indeed, if it were otherwise. La Loubere insists that "the determined air of a single European, with a cane in his hand, is enough to make a score of them forget the most positive orders of their superiors;" and this is saying every thing of a people accustomed, under ordinary circumstances, to yield their leaders the most implicit obedience.

The most distinctive features of the character of the Siamese, as well as the most unreasonable and unaccountable, is their national vanity. It is no exaggerated description of the excess of this folly, which is given by the Abbé Gervaise, when he says, that "they commonly despise other nations, and are persuaded that the greatest injustice in the world is done to them when their pre-eminence is disputed." During our residence in Siam, we could obtain, neither by intreaty nor promise of reward, the services of the lowest of the people for menial purposes. On the day on which we were presented at court, it was made a matter of special favour to grant us a few bearers to carry our palanquins or litters, and it was with great difficulty that we afterwards obtained, and at exorbitant prices, a few rowers for our boats. The lowest peasant considers himself superior to the proudest and most elevated subject of any other country. They speak openly of themselves and their country as models of perfection; and the dress, manners, customs, features, and gait of strangers, are to them objects of ridicule. It is difficult to account for so great an excess of weakness and delusion, but no doubt the general causes are their ignorance of the world beyond themselves, their seeing no strangers but such as come to supplicate their government for favours, and the dominion and superiority which they have immemorially exercised over the barbarous and inferior tribes which immediately surround them. From whatever cause

it arises, there can be no question but that the Siamese, ignorant as they are in arts and arms,—without individual or national superiority,—half naked and enslaved, are yet the vainest people in the East.

The virtues of a Siamese are all of a negative complexion, and the catalogue of them is brief. They are generally temperate and abstemious; placable, peaceable, and obedient. The temperance of such a people is in all probability the joint result of climate, constitution, and necessity. Religion prescribes a vegetable diet, and as the slaughter of animals is forbidden, one might expect to find that animal food would be scrupulously rejected, as with the most rigid of the Hindoo castes. But this is far from being the case; for they use indiscriminately every sort of flesh, not rejecting from their diet such loathsome objects as dogs, cats, rats, lizards, &c. provided always that they have had no hand in the death, and that there be a plea for placing the sin at the door of another. The same is the case in respect to wine and intoxicating drugs which are strictly prohibited by their religion, and the inhibition enforced by the civil power. A strong passion for the use of ardent spirits appeared to us notwithstanding to be nowhere more general, and no present which we could make to the lower classes, was more acceptable than a supply of ardent spirits, for which we were secretly importuned whenever an occasion offered. We saw, however, no excesses, and heard of none, and I am convinced that the Siamese are, upon the whole, a moderate and temperate people, although, at the same time, impure and indiscriminate in their diet, and uncleanly in their persons.

The Siamese are favourably distinguished from their neighbours, the Malays, aud other inferior tribes of the Eastern Islands, by the absence of that implacable spirit of revenge which forms so prominent a feature in the character of the latter. A Siamese, when wronged, seeks redress through his chief, and never attempts to retaliate with his own hand. Acts of desperation similar to the mucks committed by the Malays, are never heard of amongst them, nor is the tranquillity of the country disturbed by private feuds and animosities, as among more warlike and turbulent barbarians. The same spirit of forbearance, however, is by no means observed towards the public enemy, and their wars are conducted with odious ferocity. Prisoners of rank are commonly decapitated, and those of the lower orders condemned to perpetual slavery, and labour in chains. The peasantry of an invaded country armed or unarmed, men, women, and children, are indiscriminately carried off into captivity, and the seizure of these unfortunate persons appears to be the principal object of the periodical incursions which are made into an enemy's territory.

The peaceable and obedient habits of the people are sufficiently indicated by the security of life and property which exists in Siam, and are, at least, some compensation for the despotism to which they certainly owe their origin. A traveller accustomed to the insecurity and lawlessness which prevail to so great an extent in many other countries of Asia, reposes with some confidence and satisfaction in the security which he finds, at least at the capital of Siam and its neighbourhood. We walked for miles unarmed and unattended in the vicinity of Bangkok without receiving insult or offence from any one, and never for a moment suspected danger to our persons or property. I feel convinced that the property of a merchant or other stranger visiting Siam, is as secure from treachery or violence at Bangkok, either through the act of the government, or of private individuals, as it would be in the best regulated city in Europe.

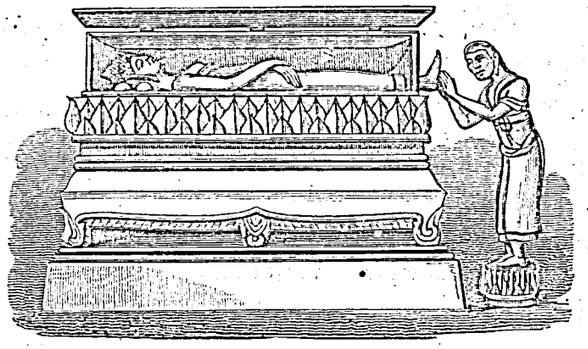
In domestic life the character exhibited by the Siamese is, under all circumstances, commendable. Parental affection is strong, and perhaps too indulgent, and filial duty is prescribed even by the sanctions of religion, nor did we hear of any barbarous or revolting usages tending to impair the force of these ties. The Siamese women are not immured as in many other Asiatic countries, nor rigorously excluded from the society of strangers of the other sex. The numerous wives of the Phraklang were in the habit of passing and repassing our dwelling unveiled, and without any attempt

at concealment. On the river we often met large parties of females belonging to the families of the King and princes, sitting under canopies in their barges. On such occasions they drew aside the curtains to satisfy their curiosity, and afforded us an ample opportunity of gratifying ours in return, for concealment was by no means their object. Notwithstanding these outward appearances, women are far from being treated with respect, but on the contrary are viewed, as in other barbarous countries, as beings of a lower order. It is but justice, however, to state, that we never saw them subjected to any species of brutality or ill treatment. The severe toil which they are compelled to undergo, for they perform every description of outdoor and field labour, such as carrying burdens, rowing, ploughing, sowing and harrowing, cannot fairly be quoted as examples of ill treatment towards them, for these labours fall naturally to their share, and are the necessary consequences of the conscription, which calls the men from their natural employments to the worthless and unprofitable drudgery of the State. As far as we could judge, the Siamese set no very high value on female virtue. The women, however, are not profligate, and at Bangkok they value themselves upon their chastity when compared with the Burman, Peguan, and Cochin Chinese women, who furnish the greater number of public prostitutes, a class sufficiently numerous. Divorces are frequent, being granted without difficulty, and on slight occasions. The punishment of adultery is not heavy, being a pecuniary fine, varying according to the rank and wealth of the offender, from two catties of silver (twenty pounds) to six catties (sixty pounds), or the substitution of imprisonment and the bamboo when the mulct is not forthcoming. Polygamy is allowed by the law and religion of the country, and the rich indulge in it to the extent of their ability. When we were in Siam his Majesty the King had three hundred wives, of one description or another; and the Prahklang forty. The indulgence, however, is far from common, being of necessity limited by the small number of individuals, in any state of society, capable of maintaining more than one family. "When I was in

the country," says the Abbé Gervaise, with much good sense, "they would have me to believe that the lower orders were chaste through virtue, because polygamy was not common amongst them; but, for my own part, I have always believed that it was not so, because the object was to save the expense of supporting many wives."

The Siamese are a ceremonious people, attaching, like most other Oriental nations, an undue and ridiculous importance to mere form and ceremonial, breaches of which are rather considered in the light of political crimes than offences against mere etiquette. A Siamese seldom stands or walks erect; and an inferior never does so in the presence of a superior. In the latter relation, the crouching attitude, as I have already described it, is the most frequent of all. The tenderest embrace between equals consists, as the language expresses it, in "smelling" the object of affection. This practice is common to them and many of the Indian islanders. Hugging is another practice frequent among friends, or where a profession of friendship is made. There was not one of our own party, during our stay in Siam, who, at one time or another, was not subjected to this inconvenient ceremony. Our new acquaintances, who happened to take a fancy for us, generally conferred this mark of their regard in a very sudden and unexpected manner, and often in the public streets. They were commonly persons from the country, and, as well as I can recollect, frequently natives of Lao.

In drawing this unfavourable picture of the Siamese character, it should be recollected that our experience was very limited, being confined to the inhabitants of the capital, with a few occasional strangers. I was assured, on what I considered good authority, that the character of the provincial inhabitants is much more favourable.



Gautama represented dead, with one of his disciples worshipping him.

CHAPTER XIII.

Buddhist religion.—Its doctrines and precepts.—Duties of the Talapoins.—History of the Buddhist religion.—Its effects on the character and manners of the people.—Government.—Attributes of the King.—Siamese nobility.—Division of the people and conscription.—Administration.—Revenue.—Arms and Insignia.—Law.—Written Code.—Evidence.—Contracts.—Inheritance.—Marriages.—Military force.

THE worship of Buddha is nearly universal in the countries lying between Bengal and Cochin China. In its doctrine, practice, and morality, it is the same religion that prevails in the island of Ceylon, but appears materially to differ from the Buddhism of Tartary, Hindoostan, China, Japan, and Anam, as will appear by the following short sketch of it. The leading doctrine of the religion of Buddha is that of the transmigration of souls. Its followers believe in a kind of immortality of the soul, and in the doctrine of rewards and punishments after death: they are of opinion, that after a suitable number of transmigrations, and the practice of the requisite virtues in each state, the souls of good men, after being received into a succession of heavens, will be at length admitted into a state of perfect felicity. This state, in which men are no

longer born and no longer die, and are emancipated from the cares and passions of all other conditions of existence, is called in the popular language Ni-ri-pan, which is, I understand, a corruption of the Pali word Pari-ni-pan, meaning "all extinguished." This is the abode of many worthies, whose histories are commemorated in Siamese legend, and Gautama himself occupies the highest place in it. The heavens and hells of the Siamese creed are numerous, but the exact number is not agreed upon. A well-informed Siamese assured me, that the number of heavens was twenty-two, of which six were superior and sixteen inferior; but he stated that the places of punishment amounted only to eight. The Siamese do not believe in one Supreme God, the Creator and Director of the Universe. It is not even easy to make them comprehend the abstract and refined notions of a Supreme Divinity. Prah-Pak-krom, the superior of the Prah-klang's temple, conversing with me on this subject, said, there was no one greater than Gautama, and that even his power would expire in about five thousand years. They say, that the world was created by chance—that it will be destroyed—reproduced, and destroyed again, without end. They admit the existence of tutelary gods, and every spot has its own guardian divinity; but these personages are of very inferior rank or power. They neither worship nor believe in the gods of the Hindoo Pantheon. They consider these as heroes, kings, and conquerors, and make them the subjects of their romances, their dramas, and their legends. They even exhibit them as paintings and sculptures upon the walls of their temples, but this affords no proof of their worshipping them; for they exhibit, in the same situations, representations of Europeans, of Persians, of Chinese, and other strangers, without intending them as any thing else than mere decorations of the buildings. A person of good sense told me distinctly, that the Hindoo deities had been mere men like ourselves, and translated to heaven for great and good deeds. The Minister Suri-wung-Kosa said, without scruple, in conversation upon the subject, that the story of Rama was

"full of falsehoods." The King of Siam, to whom Louis XIV. sent two missions, and to whom he made the indiscreet proposal of changing his religion, had no scruple, while he firmly rejected that proposal, to hang up in a distinguished part of his palace a portrait of Christ and the Virgin, which he had received as a present from his Holiness the Pope. It is obviously their indifference and want of zeal which leads the Siamese into this course.

The moral precepts of the Siamese are contained in the following ten Commandments:—1. Do not slay animals. 2. Do not steal. 3. Do not commit adultery. 4. Do not tell lies, or backbite. 5. Do not drink wine. 6. Do not eat after twelve o'clock. 7. Do not frequent plays or public spectacles, or listen to music. 8. Do not use perfumes, or wear flowers or other personal ornaments. 9. Do not sleep or recline upon a couch that is above one cubit high. 10. Do not borrow or be in debt. —The first five of these precepts are applicable to all mankind, but the rest imperative only on the Talapoins. With the exception of one or two of these axioms, founded on the inevitable and universal principles of natural ethics, they are either frivolous or ridiculous, and the very first on the list, when contrasted with their practice, goes far to justify the censure passed upon the Siamese by La Loubere, that they have "a greater horror of shedding blood than of committing murder."

A strict observance of religious duties is expected only from the priests. The laity, if they pay the customary honours to the Talapoins, bestow daily alms upon them, make them gifts, observe the usual holidays, visit the temples; and if rich, endow temples and monasteries, imagine they perform every necessary duty of their situation, and delegate all spiritual concerns to the priesthood, who, on their part, are commanded to abstain from all temporal occupations whatsoever.

Religion is a great business of life in Siam, and even the principal source of recreation and amusement. Every male in the kingdom must, at one period or another of his life, enter the priesthood, for however short

a time. Even the King will be a priest for two or three days, going about for alms, like the rest, and the highest officers of the Government will continue in the priesthood for some months. This step, in short, seems to be looked upon as a sort of necessary spiritual confirmation. A man may enter the priesthood at whatever age he pleases, and also quit it whenever he is disposed. If a married man, however, he must previously obtain a divorce, and make an arrangement for the maintenance of his family. If after entering the priesthood he quit it, and enter a second time, then he must continue in the order for life. The usual age of entering the priesthood, is that of puberty; but it is common to enter at all ages, from this to twenty-one. I have described the ceremonies of ordination in another place, which consist of the tonsure of the party—ablutions—long prayers from the Talapoins—processions—feasting, and the distribution of largesses to the priests and the poor, but chiefly to the former.

The season for entering the priesthood, is the sixth, seventh, and eighth months of the year, and that for quitting it, the eleventh month. It happens, therefore, that from the eighth to the eleventh month the number of priests is very great, but from the eleventh to the sixth and seventh, it is much smaller; for many, after making a short experiment of the monastic life, are, notwithstanding its immunities and distinctions, glad to return to the world, with all its ordinary cares and troubles, and the thousands superadded to it in Siam by a bad and tyrannical Government.

The priests live together in monasteries, containing from ten to several hundred Talapoins. The monasteries are always attached to a temple, and consist of a regular series of cells on its outskirts, generally encompassing one or more angles of the building. The Talapoins in Siam are divided into six grades. When they first enter the order, they are denominated Nen, that is, noviciates or scholars, and are promoted to higher ranks, according to their learning and standing. Every monastery is under the direction of a superior or abbot, and the larger ones have also a prior. Under the direction of these dignitaries, a regular system of subordination and discipline is

maintained. The superiors, however, can exercise no magisterial or judicial functions, and inflict no corporal punishment; their authority being confined to exhortation, reproof, or finally, to expulsion. Each superior priest within the monastery has his own particular disciples, who pay him the same honours that a Hindoo scholar does to his Guru, or spiritual guide. Whenever they come into his presence, for example, they prostrate themselves before him, touching the earth with their foreheads, as we had frequent opportunities of witnessing. Almost all the education received by the male Siamese children is in this manner bestowed on them in the monasteries. In return, they perform menial services to the priests; but I believe that no very rigid discipline is insisted upon, for I have commonly seen the young idlers loitering about, doing nothing. They are fed in the monastery, as far as voluntary charity and its endowments will afford, and the deficiency is made up by the parents.

The greater number of the temples with the monasteries attached to them, are endowed by the Government, or by wealthy individuals, under whose immediate protection they are. The patrons, or founders, give from time to time assistance, according to the measure of their piety and liberality, but casual alms and casual gifts form the principal support of the priests. As an example of the assistance given by the Government, it may be mentioned, that the King, besides keeping in repair the temple called that "of the people," makes an annual allowance of two thousand four hundred ticals to the priests and lay attendants.

The Talapoins are enjoined to observe a strict celibacy, to refrain from all temporal occupation, to abstain from the use of wine and intoxicating drugs, and from destroying animal life; while they are required to pass their time in seeking alms, in religious study, meditation, and prayer. Celibacy is one of the injunctions of their order, the most rigidly insisted upon, and by law the punishment of incontinence is death; although I believe, in Siam, it is usually commuted for degradation and expulsion from the order. No young female is to be seen near the temples. A

Talapoin ought never to be seen in conversation with a woman, nor, if possible, looking at one. The exclusion from temporal employment is also very strict. A Talapoin can exercise no political or judicial functions. He is also precluded from engaging in trade, or from performing any species of manual labour for hire or reward. Some of the more rigid will not even touch gold or silver, and none of them can, or at least ought to have money in their possession. The only species of manual labour which I ever saw them perform, was rowing a boat when going in quest of alms, or performing the same office, or carrying a litter for an individual of very high rank of their own order. Even the study of the sciences and liberal arts is forbidden, as partaking too much of the profane business of the world. To betray any curiosity, indeed, respecting most of these things, would be a matter of scandal. The prohibition against the use of vinous and spiritous liquors, and intoxicating drugs, is general among all the followers of Buddha; and at Siam the Government feigns to take considerable pains to enforce it. How the injunction is obeyed by the Talapoins in particular, I could not learn; but to judge from our limited experience, the passion for wine and spirits appeared to be nowhere stronger than amongst the lay Siamese. It is certain that the Government winks at the infringement of the law, and this too in a manner the most discreditable; for a duty on the manufacture and sale of ardent spirits constitutes one of the largest branches of the public revenue. The Talapoins, while they are enjoined to abstain from the use of ardent spirits, wine, and opium, partake freely of tobacco, and the preparation of betel and areca.

The preservation of animal life is a necessary and essential maxim arising out of the doctrines of the metempsychosis, but in their observance of it, the Talapoins of Siam are inconsistent, if not hypocritical. They care not to what extent they are accessary to the death of any animal, provided they have no immediate hand in it; and will eat of almost any species of animal food whatever, whether the animal have died a natural or a violent death, and this too without asking any questions respecting it. At

Bang-kok, pork is publicly hawked and cried every morning about the streets and on the river. Knox says, that the most reproachful epithet which the Cingalese applied to the Christians, was "beef-eating slaves." We found the Siamese more liberal. Some little difficulty was made about slaughtering the larger animals, but, when once killed, no troublesome questions were put. At the table of the Phraklang, we had abundance of poultry, pork, and beef, of which the Siamese chiefs, admitted to sit down with us, partook heartily. Some one indiscreetly asked how the beef was obtained. The Phraklang evaded the question, and requested the person who put it not to be so curious on such subjects. To this it may be added, that there is probably no country in Asia of the same extent, in which so many wild animals are killed for profit. Fish also forms a considerable article of the food of the people. These, they say, they do not kill but only draw out of the water. In war, the excuse is, that they do not aim directly at the enemy, but only fire at them. Any subterfuge, in short, appears to satisfy their easy consciences, and they seem determined to suffer no serious inconvenience from an over rigid adherence to this dogma.

A Talapoin ought to be exempt from all worldly cares, and to busy himself respecting domestic concerns is entirely beneath his dignity. He ought neither to lay in a store of food, nor make any arrangement for preparing it for use. It is this principle which makes begging in a Talapoin honourable. They must not, however, ask for charity, but present themselves at the doors of the laity and expect it in silence as a matter of right, never condescending to thank the donor. They can receive nothing as alms but food or clothing, and the first always ready-dressed.

The day of a Talapoin is passed as follows. At seven in the morning he sallies forth in quest of alms, and at this time the streets and river at Bang-kok are so crowded with the priesthood, that they appear to form a very large proportion of the population. Having returned to the monastery, they make their first meal at eight o'clock. They make a second at noon,

after which hour, according to their rules, it is unlawful to eat solid food, although liquids are permitted. The afternoon is spent in study. From five to seven in the evening the Talapoins assemble in the oratory of the monastery, and pray together in a loud and chaunting tone, which may be heard a quarter of a mile off. The beating of a drum announces the conclusion of this part of the ceremony, and of the diurnal duties of a Talapoin.

The other duties of the Talapoins are to read hymns, prayers, and moral discourses to the people in the chapels of the temples, on the 1st, the 8th, the 15th, and the 23rd days of each moon; to ordain priests; to consecrate idols and temples; to assist in solemnizing marriages, and in performing funeral rites. In all these cases they are relieved from the drudgery and manual labour, whatever it may be, their duties being confined to the reading or repetition of hymns and prayers in the Pali language, unintelligible to the multitude, and most probably not very well understood by themselves. The temporal concerns of the places of worship are, for example, in the hands of secular attendants clad in white, and the ceremonies at funerals are performed by mean persons similarly attired.

The Talapoins, as already mentioned, are divided into six grades or ranks. Above all, is the San-krat, or high priest, who is chosen by the King, and always lives within the walls of the palace. To this person unbounded honours are paid, not only by the priests themselves, but by the people. No Talapoin is qualified to ordain without a license from him, but otherwise he has no temporal or spiritual authority. Indeed it may be remarked, that there exists no organized system of subordination and discipline among the priests of Gautama in Siam; the King being as much the unlimited head of the Church as he is of the State.

A stranger immediately recognizes the Talapoins by the singularity of their dress and appearance. Instead of being more than half-naked, like the people of every rank and degree, they are always decently and respectably clothed. The dress of a Siamese Talapoin is the same with that of the

priests of Buddha in Ava and Ceylon. The colour must always be yellow; the fabric may be either silk or cotton, and the form or fashion is upon one uniform model, not to be deviated from. It consists of four distinct parts, the principal of which flows in an easy drapery over the body. The scrip to receive alms is suspended over the left shoulder by a band of yellow cloth, and must consist of an iron basket covered over with cotton, silk, or woollen stuff, usually of a red colour, and as rich in texture and embroidery as the taste and means of the owner can supply; always, however, to the exclusion of the precious metals. The naked and close shaved head of the Talapoin has no protection against the inclemency of the weather, except what is afforded by a small fan held over it with the hand. This article, which is an inseparable part of the dress of a Talapoin, is very commonly made of the leaf of the Palmyra, and hence denominated by the Sanscrit word *Talpat*, from which it may be conjectured that the name Talapoin itself has been borrowed by Europeans. Twice a-month, about the new and full moon, the priests of Gautama shave their heads and eyebrows in token of mortification, and also, according to their own modest statement, lest they might prove too agreeable to the fair sex!

Every Talapoin is considered as the representative of Buddha, or Gautama, on earth; and hence the colour and form of his dress; the moral and religious functions he is expected to perform; the reverence due to him from the laity; and the immunities to which he is entitled from the State. The very name by which they are recognized shows the veneration with which they are considered. This name is *Phra*, a word of the Pali language, which means Lord. As a generic word, and indefinitely, it is applied to them, and to the idols of Buddha in the temples; and definitely, to Gautama, or Buddha, to the King, to the White Elephant, &c.

Secular persons, whatever be their rank, must make an obeisance to a Talapoin in passing or meeting him, and the latter must not return the salutation, but take this piece of homage as a matter of course. Even parents and

aged relations must bow to their children, when the latter have entered the priesthood. A Talapoin cannot be punished by the secular arm for any offence, until first degraded, and any offence offered to him is doubly penal. The temples are viewed as places of refuge for criminals, which ought not to be violated. The Talapoins are exempt from taxation, but above all, from the conscription, the heaviest burthen which weighs upon the Siamese. These honours and immunities, on the other hand, it must not be forgotten, are paid for at a heavy price, by exclusion from all temporal aggrandizement and occupation—a rigid celibacy, loss of the society of friends and relatives, and a life tedious and monotonous. It consequently happens, therefore, that by far the greater number of the priests, after a few years, or even a few months stay in the monasteries, return to the body of the people, and form matrimonial connexions. I was assured by a person of intelligence, that there were few or none who, at one period of their lives or another, had not formed such a connexion; so that the old and resident priests consisted of persons who, from chagrin or disgust to the world, had assumed the monastic habit a second time, and who were not then permitted to drop it. The practice of religious austerities and mortifications is, according to the Buddhist religion, highly meritorious; but these appear by no means to be carried to the same excess and extravagance as among the followers of the Brahminical worship. The mortifications recommended to the Buddhists, consist in retiring, in imitation of Gautama, into the solitude of mountains and forests, for the purposes of a more intense devotion, the practice of which they believe leads to supernatural gifts and endowments. Devotees of this class are not, I am told, very frequent in Siam, and the thing does not appear to be very much in fashion. Down to the end of the seventeenth century, it was the invariable custom for the Talapoins, quitting their temples and convents, to retire into the country at a certain season of the year, and there, in temporary huts, to pass twenty days in severe meditation and prayer. This practice now no longer exists.

The Buddhist religion, like others, enjoins pilgrimages to holy places. The most noted of these are, the alleged foot-marks of Gautama, called Prah-bat, or "the holy foot." There is a celebrated shrine of this description at a place called Patowe, in Lao, on the summit of a hill bordering a lake. There is a second between Pripri and Mergui, but the most celebrated is that *par excellence* called the Prah-bat, about a day's journey to the east of Ayuthia.

It should be noticed, that in Siam there are no monastic institutions appropriated to females. Aged women, however, are permitted to retire to the monasteries, where cells are allotted to them. They have nothing, however, to do with the worship performed in the temples, and are neither honoured nor respected; endeavouring to recommend themselves, and to gain a subsistence by the performance of menial offices to the Talapoins. We seldom visited the temples that we were not importuned for charity by these poor women. In the Siamese language, they are called Lung-ki, and dress in white, like the other secular attendants.

The history of Buddhism, one of the forms of worship which has produced the longest and the most extensive influence upon the destinies and opinions of mankind, has justly excited much interest and curiosity; and I shall therefore relate, in some detail, the few facts in regard to it, which fell under my observation in Siam; premising, that in order to prepare myself for any favourable opportunities of inquiry which might arise, I had been furnished by Mr. Horace Wilson, the enlightened and accomplished Secretary of the Asiatic Society of Calcutta, with a series of learned notes. The reader will be enabled to judge how far the hints which I have collected tend to confirm or correct the opinions of Mr. Wilson; and to put it in his power to come to a fair judgment, I shall begin by transcribing the most material portion of the notes in question.

"The original *Buddha*," says Mr. Wilson, "seems to have been of Scythian or Tartar extraction, and to have existed above one thousand

years before Christ. The records of China, as mentioned by M. de Guigne, assign about this date, and call Cashmir the seat of his nativity. The Raja Tarinjini, however, or History of Cashmir, which may, by reasonable inferences, be made to agree tolerably well with the Chinese statement of the date, does not mention where he was born, and connects the prevalence of his religion in Cashmir, with a Tartar, or *Tarushca*, a Turk, or Scythian subjugation of the country. The existence of the Bauddhaic creed in Tartary, may be traced from a very early period to the present day, and is a corroborative proof of its indigenous origin.

"Although, however, the Northern origin of *Buddha* might be easily made out more satisfactorily, the fact is scarcely worth investigating with reference to the present condition of the Buddha faith; there is merely a nominal connexion between them,—the real founder being *Gautama*, the son of *Sudhodana*, a prince of *Magadha*, or Behar, who flourished in the sixth century before Christ, or 542. This personage might have borrowed the anti-vedaic notions of the elder *Buddha*, and the tenderness for animal life; he was probably, however, instigated very much by animosity towards the Brahmans, as it is a curious part of the history of a religious innovator in India, that he should be a *Chetriya*, or of the military caste.

"Very great confusion has been occasioned in all discussions relating to *Buddha*, by identifying these two persons,—an error originating with the Hindoos themselves, and easily accounted for; the Puranas, the earliest authorities for the accounts of Buddha, being unquestionably some centuries later than *Gautama*. With his history, therefore, their authors were familiar, whilst a faint and imperfect tradition kept alive some recollection of his predecessor. They consequently mixed up the two, and blended, obviously, in a very awkward manner, the *Buddha*, the ninth Avatar of Vishnu, who appeared shortly after CRISHNA, with the Prince of Magadha, the son of *Sudhodan* and *Máyá Devi*.

"For the names and birth-place of *Gautama* we have the authority of all the Hindu accounts, and their *Magadha* is manifestly the *Mokito* of the Chinese, the Mokokf of the Japanese, and the Macadesa of the Singalese; for the date, we must be content with the foreign notions, the Siamese placing Gautama's birth 544 years before Christ; the Singalese 542; and the Burmans 546; Indian history so far confirming this, as to place the family of Gautama on the throne of *Magadha* from the seventh century to the third of Christ.

"A very common name of *Gautama* is *Sácya*, *Sácya Muni*, or *Sácya Sinha*, the *Xakia* of the Archipelago. It generally occurs as a synonyme of *Gautama*. Whether it properly belongs to him may be doubtful. The term *Buddha* is a generic one—it might have been a proper name once, but it has since become an epithet, and instead of calling Gautama Buddha, we should be quite right in calling him *a* Buddha. A *Prácrit* vocabulary, brought by a Burman priest to Calcutta, and which seems to be little more than a translation of the *Amera Cosha*, opens with a string of thirty generic names, the first of which is *Buddha*. Several others are familiar, as *Sugata*, *Dhermarája*, *Magavar*, *Na'th*, &c. They might be rendered, —The Wise—The Virtuous—The King of Justice—The Lord—The Master. Then come the synonymes of *the* Buddha, commencing oddly enough with *Jina*; the rest are *Sácya*, *Siddhanta*, *Saudhodini*, *Gautama*, *Sácya Sinha*, *Sácya Muni*, and *Aditya Bandhu*. They certainly are all applied to one person. But there were more than one pre-eminent Buddhas; the Singalese enumerate five, of whom the fifth, Maitréya, is yet to come. The vocabulary of *Hémachandra* names seven—*Vipaswi*, *Sic'hi*, *Viswabhu*, *Cratuch handa*, *Canchana*, *Cásyapa*; and the seventh, as usual, *Sácyasinha*, &c. The Burman priest alluded to above, asserted there were twenty-eight Buddhas. Hamilton, in his Nepal, separates *Gautama* from *Sácyasinha*, calling the former the fourth, the latter the fifth *Buddha*, and stating this last to have lived in the first century of the Christian era. There is so far particular reason to think this not impossible, that there seems to have been a new source of confusion introduced into the history of *Buddha*, by blending him again with a different person, or with *Sálivahana*, as in the *Aji Saka* of the Japanese; and the stories of Devatat and Devadatta, the enemy of *Sácya*, or *Salivahana*.—Now, quere, whether this confusion may not all be resolved into the various senses of the word *Sácya*, which is a regular derivative from *Sáca*, meaning a *pot-herb* or an *era*; or from *Sáca*, a native of a country, the position of which is unknown, but identified etymologically with that of the *Sacæ*, or Scythians. Now the Sanscrit etymologists have abandoned the explanation of the term *Sácya*, merely making it a grammatical formative from the root *Sac*, to be able or powerful. As there was no authority for its import, conjecture was at liberty to explain it, and hence the confusion. *Sácya* may, therefore be applicable to any *Buddha*, as to one who confines himself to vegetable food. It is applicable to *Salivahana*, the institutor of the era, the Saca still in use; whilst as a specific term it seems to be a foreign one, and to confirm my views of the Scythian origin of the faith. There being no satisfactory Sanscrit explanation of it, except as an attribute, is rather in favour of this notion. The addition of *Sinha* and *Muni* only imply preeminence. Hence *Sacya sinha* is explained by Sanscrit writers to be the chief of the *Sacyas*; but they do not tell us, at least satisfactorily, who the *Sácyas* were. I am rather disposed to think that the name is the lawful property of the first *Buddha*, erroneously given to *Gautama*: it may also belong to *Salivahana*, but in a sense quite unconnected with the Buddha religion.

"The next question is, at what period was the Buddha religion conveyed to the East and South. According to the Chinese, it came through Tibet to China in the days of Buddha or Fo himself, one thousand years before the Christian era; this might have been the case, but the present faith was of much later introduction. *De Guigne* says, about sixty years after Christ. It was introduced into Ceylon somewhere between A. D. 250 and 405.—A fresh batch of it was carried to China by *Dherma*, who fled thither in A. D. 519. Thence it reached Japan, Tonquin, and Cochin

China in 540, and Corea in 543. It seems to have got to Siam and Laos at a very early period. Marshman supposes three or four centuries before Christ. In that case, however, it seems strange that it should have reached the Burman empire only about six centuries ago, according to Buchanan. The most flourishing period of the Buddha faith to the eastward, and that in which it assumed its present form, extends, no doubt, from the commencement of the Christian era, to the tenth century, during which, we learn, from *De Guigne* and *Morrison*, a very active intercourse, much of which was of a religious character, subsisted between India and China. The latter mentions that in the year 950, three hundred priests were sent to India, to procure relics of Fo, and books of the Bauddhas.

"If this intercourse subsisted from a very early period, what are we to understand from the new impulse given to the Bauddha faith in China by the arrival of *Dherma* so late as 519? Was that event connected with the persecution of the Buddhas in Hindostan? I have had occasion to express an opinion to this effect in the Preface to my Sanscrit Dictionary, and have inferred from various authorities, that although the Bauddha sect was by no means annihilated in India much earlier than the thirteenth century, yet that it was assailed at a very early period, and completely humbled by the Brahmans and their followers about the fifth and sixth centuries of the Christian era. The suppression of a widely extended sect could not be the work of a moment, and it is more extraordinary that it should have ever been so thoroughly eradicated, than that it should have long resisted, and occasionally triumphed, over the assaults of its enemies. There were, no doubt, periods at which it suffered occasional humiliation, and the beginning of the sixth century might have been one of these,—the consequence of which was so large a transfer to the eastward, of Buddha sectaries and teachers, as to engross the religious faith of the native population.

"As the fate of the Bauddha religion is a problem of great interest in the history of India, all information calculated to confirm or correct the

above views will be very valuable. Some may, perhaps, be obtained from the East, but we have no reason to expect much satisfactory matter, if we may judge by that which Ceylon has afforded. There may be some books peculiar to the countries from which something may be gleaned, and I am told that the Burmans have a work in Magadhi, called the *Buddha Bansa* or Buddha-race, which may contain some information. The general ideas of the Buddhas on religious matters, have been made tolerably familiar by the Essay of Buchanan. Of their literature we know little or nothing, but there is no doubt that the sacred branch of it is infinitely voluminous.

"The sacred language of all the *Buddha* countries is *Gautama's* vernacular tongue, the *Mágadhí*, or dialect of *Magadh* or Behar. From the specimens I have seen, it differs in no respect from the *Mágadhí* or *Pracrit*, found in Sanscrit books, especially the *Nátacs* or Plays. It differs only from Sanscrit in enunciation, being more lisping and effeminate, omitting nasals and liquefying rough and harsh sounds. Thus it calls *Sacya sinha, Saca seeha; Nara sinha, Naraseeha; Dherma raja, Dhemma raja; Gautama, Gotama; A'ditya, A'dichcha; Munindra, Muninda; Bhagaván, Bhagava;* &c. If I am rightly informed, it is a misnomer to call this language *Pali*, the *Pali* being the name of the character in which it is written—*Mágadhí* or *Pracrit*, that of the language, corresponding, in fact, to the terms *Nágarí* and *Sanscrit*. In this way *Pali* may have a meaning, being the writing of the *Palli* or villages, whilst *Nágarí* is that of the *Nagar* or city, in the same manner that *Pracrit* is a rustic or common, and *Sancrit* a perfect or polished tongue. Whether this be the case or not, there can be no doubt that Buchanan was misinformed as to the *Pali* or *Mágadhí* of Ceylon, Siam, and the Burman empire being different. It is not unfrequently written in the common characters of each country, and hence, perhaps, the mistake.*

"The ground-work of the Bauddha literature is Sanscrit, much translated directly there is no doubt, as for example, the vocabulary I have mentioned above. They have also the code of Menu amongst them, and we know that

* This is the case in Ava, but not in Siam.—A.

the Hindoo legends and fables are spread throughout the Archipelago. They have, however, a mass of literature of their own. Those books read by the Rahans, and comprising the duties of devotees—men, and gods, have been named to me as the Vinaya Pitácam, Sutantra Pitácam, and Abhidherma Piticám. Buchanan makes mention of the *Burmas* having many historical works also, which might be worth procuring. It is of little use, however, to bring away the books of the Burman empire, as there are so few who are able to read them. The most valuable works are probably in the *Mágádhí*, a language only intelligible through the medium of the Sanscrit, and presenting to a Sanscrit scholar a stumbling-block in the character in which it is written, as life is not long enough to leave leisure for a perpetual decyphering of handwritings. I should think, therefore, if it is worth while to obtain access to the contents of the Palí books, the readiest method of procuring it would be to have them copied in the Nagari characters, when they would be legible enough. There are Brahmans to be met with in those regions who might be able to effect this transcript, and even some of the Rahans may perhaps be acquainted with the *Nagari* letters. The same arrangement would be still more desirable for *Mágadhí* books in the country characters. Works in the language of the country should be suffered to remain in their own shape; as where a language is to be learnt, it is no great matter to learn the letters into the bargain.

"The Bauddhas, according to *Mádhava*, are of four classes:—Madhyámicas, Yogácháras, Sautranticas, and Vaibhháshicas. Other works also mention *Cshapanacas* and *Saugatas* as distinct classes of Bauddhas, though in general they are considered synonymes."

So far the ingenious suggestions of Mr. Wilson, and I proceed now to offer the results of my own enquiries, founded upon them. According to the Siamese, and following their own orthography, Buddha, the founder of their religion, was the son of *Sud-to-ta-ma-Rat* (Sudhdana raja) and *Sri-maha-raya-tivi* (Maya devi). The place of his birth was *Kábila-pat*, in the country of *Mákata* (Magadha). By their account, his

death took place in the first year of the sacred era, being the year of the little snake, on Tuesday, being the full moon of the sixth month of the year. The year 1822 was the year 2364 of the era in question; and as Buddha is stated by them to have died when eighty years of age, his birth, by this account, took place 462 years before the Christian era.

The titles, or synonymes of Buddha, as they were given to me in Siam, are as follow:—Kotamo (Gautama); Sakya-rat, Sakya-sinha, Sakya-muni, Putthá (Buddha); Sukat-ta (Saùgata); Sam-ma-racha (Dar màraja); Páka-wà (Bagawan); Nato (Nat'ha); and China (Jina). Somanakotamo, agreeably to the interpretation given to me, means, in the Pali language, the priest Gautama; and Puti-sat is a name of this personage before he entered on his spiritual mission. Of these, by far the most common name is Gautama, corrupted Kotamo. Buddha, corrupted Put-tha, is rarely used. The priests of Siam say, that four great spiritual instructors have made their appearance in the world and died, and that a fifth is expected. The names of the first four are, *Kokosánto*, *Kona-komano*, *Katsapo*, and *Kotamo*, and that of the expected one, *Metrayo*.

The Buddhist religion, according to the Siamese priests, was introduced into Ceylon two hundred and thirty-six years after the death of Gautama, or in the two hundred and thirty-sixth year of the sacred era, by Prah-Puthá-kosa. From Ceylon, which the Siamese call by the Sanscrit name Langka, Buddhism, according to the same authority, was in the first place introduced into Kamboja, then into Lao, and finally into Siam. The conversion of the Siamese took place in the year 1181 of the sacred era of Siam, corresponding to 639 of the Christian era, under a chief, or king, whose name tradition states to have been Krek, and who, in honour of the event, instituted the popular era three years thereafter, or in the year 642 of our time. From these notices it will be seen, that the opinions of the Siamese, notwithstanding some considerable discrepancies, agree in all their material features with the judicious conjectures of Mr. Wilson.

The inference to be drawn from all this is, that the Buddhism of Siam has no direct connexion with the worship of that name as it originated in Tartary, of which the Siamese appear to know nothing—that it is derived from the reform or regeneration of that religion, which originated in Magadha, the modern Behar, in the 6th century before the birth of Christ—that from thence, after many centuries, it found its way to Ceylon, and eventually to Kamboja, Lao, and Siam, in the 7th century of the Christian era.

I could not learn that there were any sectaries amongst the Buddhists of Siam, although such are known to exist, or to have existed in Hindostan. The religion of the country is indeed completely identified with the Government; and those who have had an opportunity of observing the sweeping and all-levelling despotism of Siam, will find it difficult to imagine any one daring to broach a schismatic opinion, or at least any one succeeding in establishing a heresy. There exists, indeed, no religious distinction, save that of clergy and laity; and, above all, it is of importance to remark, that there is no trace whatever of the institution of the castes, which in the country of the Hindoos exerts so wide an influence over society.*

The French writers of the end of the 17th and the beginning of the 18th centuries, assert that some of the chiefs and persons of rank entertained religious opinions of a more elevated and philosophical character than those of the people at large; and especially that they believed in the existence of one God, the creator and preserver of the universe. We could not learn that any such refined notions were at present prevalent. In the strange attempt made by Louis XIV. to convert the King of Siam to the Christian religion, the existence of such opinions in this monarch is asserted; but it may be safely averred, that if the Siamese King entertained the refined notions which the French Jesuits ascribe to him, he

* I think it not improbable, from what I afterwards found in Ava, that the burners of the dead are a class of outcasts.

must have been a remarkable man, and many centuries advanced beyond the bulk of the nation over which he ruled. The history of the transaction deserves to be briefly adverted to, as well on account of its own singularity, as for the light it throws on the character of the Siamese. The French monarch, in his instructions to the Chevalier Chaumont, his ambassador, told him, that the conversion of the King of Siam was the main object of his mission; and even in his letter to the Siamese monarch himself, urged his adoption of Christianity. The ambassador, true to his instructions, importuned the Minister Phaulcon upon the subject. The wily Greek, in reply, communicated the following, real or pretended, but, in either case, curious message from his Siamese Majesty.

"But to reply to the Ambassador of France," continued the King, "you will tell him from me, that I feel greatly obliged to his royal master, convinced as I am, from his memorial, of the friendship of His Most Christian Majesty. The honour which this great Prince has conferred upon me is already published throughout the East, and I cannot sufficiently acknowledge such civility. But I am truly grieved that my good friend the King of France should propose to me a thing so difficult, and of which I have no knowledge. I refer to the wisdom of His Most Christian Majesty, to judge of the importance and difficulty of an affair so delicate as that of changing a religion received and followed throughout my kingdom two thousand two hundred and twenty-nine years.

"At the same time, I am surprised that my good friend the King of France should so strongly interest himself in a matter which regards God alone; in which God himself takes no interest, and which he leaves entirely to our discretion. For this true God, who has created the heavens and the earth, and all the creatures which we see, and who has given to them natures and dispositions so different, could he not, had he willed it, in giving men bodies and souls of a similar description, inspire them also with an uniformity of sentiment in regard to that religion which they ought to follow, and that worship which was most acceptable to him, ordaining the

same religious laws among all nations of the world? Might not this order amongst men, and uniformity in the works of Divine providence, have been introduced with as much ease as the variety which has existed in all ages? Is it not reasonable to believe that the true God takes as much pleasure in being adored by different forms of worship and different ceremonies, as in being glorified by myriads of living creatures who praise him each in his own way? Would the beauty and variety which we admire in the natural order of the universe be less admirable in the spiritual, or less worthy of the wisdom of God? However this may be," concluded the King, "since we know that God is absolute master of the world, and are persuaded that nothing is done contrary to his will, I commit my person and my kingdom to the arms of Divine mercy and providence, and with all my heart I pray his eternal wisdom to dispose of them according to his good pleasure."

Although, no doubt, the document now referred to contained some of the sentiments of the Siamese King, and of his nation, yet I am inclined to believe the principal part of it must have been a fabrication of the Minister Phaulcon himself; the able, dexterous, and subtle adventurer, who, from a low condition, raised himself to be the Minister and favourite of a foreign sovereign; who, educated in the Greek religion, adopted the Protestant in London, the Catholic in Siam, and who, besides, had been long familiar with all the various forms of worship prevalent in the East.

On the subject of the variety of the religious opinions prevailing over the world, I once asked a Siamese his opinion of the cause, and whether that variety was agreeable to superior intelligences or otherwise. His answer was that the different sects which existed were all schisms from one true religion; and that the variety of them was pleasing to some superior beings, but displeasing to others, for the Gods were not all of the same way of thinking upon the subject.

There is a person of some celebrity connected with the religious opinions of the Siamese, whom it is necessary to mention. This is Tavitat,

alleged to have been a younger brother of Gautama; to have rebelled against him, and, on this account, to have suffered crucifixion along with thieves. Finding some circumstances of resemblance between the history of this person and of Jesus Christ, the Talapoins, according to the Christian Missionaries, insist that they are one and the same; and hence, it is supposed, has arisen one great obstacle to the propagation of Christianity in Siam.

The Buddhists of Siam admit proselytes of all ranks and nations without discrimination, and the Talapoins are vain of making converts. They have not zeal enough, however, to take much trouble on the subject; still less are they disposed to persecute for religious opinions.

I shall conclude these observations with a few remarks on the influence which the Buddhist religion appears to have produced on the Government, manners, and character of the Siamese. There is certainly one unpromising fact which must early occur to any one who inquires into this subject, and it is this,—that all the nations professing that form of worship, and with whom it is the paramount faith, are, among Asiatic nations, of secondary rank only, and that not one of them has ever attained the first rank in arts or arms, or produced individuals known to the world as legislators, writers, warriors, or founders of new forms of worship. This applies not only to the countries lying between the Berhamputr and river of Kamboja, but to Ceylon, and in some respects to Thibet, and the other Buddhist countries lying to the north of Hindostan. Climate, geographical situation, and physical circumstances, have therefore, in all probability, no agency in this deterioration of character. The abhorrence of shedding blood inculcated in theory by the worship of Buddha has had no influence whatever in elevating and humanizing the character of its votaries; for the history of the Singalese, the Burmans, the Peguans, and Siamese, abounds in acts of the utmost cruelty and ferocity;—in a word, there are no countries in Asia in which human life is held so cheap as in those in which the shedding of blood is considered sacrilege. This, as it appears to

me, may in a great measure be ascribed to the institution of the Talapoins. The theocracy of Siam has no effect whatever in restraining or balancing the despotism of the Sovereign, but on the contrary tends in every way to support and confirm it. The Sovereign himself is the real head of the religion of the country. The Talapoins depend upon him for subsistence and promotion. They have neither rank nor endowments independent of his will. They are not hereditary; they have no civil employments; and no tie which unites their interests with those of the people. They may therefore be considered as a kind of standing force, ready at all times with spiritual arms to enforce obedience to the will of the Sovereign, and to strengthen and aggravate his despotic authority.

The Government of Siam, of which I am next to speak, is as thoroughly despotical, as the absence of all legal restraint with the aid of religion and superstition can well make it. We hear, in other parts of the world, of pious individuals, who do not pronounce the name of the Deity without pausing; but his subjects, it is pretended, cannot pronounce the name of the King of Siam at all. It is certainly never mentioned in writing, and is said to be known only to a very few among his principal courtiers. I think it doubtful, however, whether a King of Siam has in reality any other name than the formidable epithets under which he is usually mentioned. Neither must his health be inquired after, because, however sick or wretched, it must be taken for granted that he is free from bodily infirmities. No heir to the throne is appointed during the lifetime of the King; for to imagine the death of the King is not only in its legal, but in its popular acceptation, high treason. In Siam, indeed, every thing connected with the Government is spoken of only in whispers. In common parlance, the King of Siam is designated by various gentle epithets, among the most frequent of which are, *Phra-penchao-yahuwa*, "the Sacred Lord of Heads;" *Phra-pinchao-chuit*, "the Sacred Lord of Lives;" and *Kong-luang*, "the Owner of All." The following epithets are also in very general use in regard to him—"Most

exalted Lord, infallible, and infinitely powerful." The language of adulation extends to the members of his body. His feet, his hands, even his mouth, nose, and ears, are never mentioned without the word *Phra*, meaning "Lord," or "Sacred Lord," being prefixed. Golden, is another epithet appropriated to whatever belongs, or is attached to his Majesty's person. Thus to be admitted into the royal presence, is to have reached the golden feet; and whatever comes to His Majesty's knowledge, is said to reach the golden ears.* The following was given to me as a literal translation of the ordinary prelude to all addresses to His Majesty, either in speaking or writing:—"Exalted Lord—Sovereign of many Princes, let the Lord of Lives tread upon his slave's head, who here prostrate, receiving the dust of the golden feet upon the summit of his head, makes known, with all possible humility, that he has something to submit.

A large share of the veneration attached to the person of the King, is derived from the belief that his body is the vehicle of a soul in a highly advanced stage of migration towards a final state of beatitude, rest, or extinction. The bare fact of being a King is considered satisfactory evidence of religious merit and piety in former conditions of existence. In rank, there is no comparison between the Sovereign and the most exalted of his officers or courtiers, and the idiom of the language itself takes care to mark the immeasurable distance which exists between them. This gives rise to forms of expression which appear highly ludicrous to a stranger. The King, for example, will call a young Prince, or a young nobleman, dog, or rat, with the incongruous epithets of Royal, Noble, Illustrious, &c.; and these terms, far from being considered as opprobrious, will be received by the young aspirants as expressions of kindness and condescension.†

* After all, this word "golden," so frequently applied to the monarchs of Siam and Ava, and which appears so absurd and extravagant, when literally rendered into European languages, may mean, in the mouth of a Siamese or Burmese, nothing more than "royal" or "preeminent."

† Among the many examples of striking resemblance between the state of society in Siam and Ceylon, even in matters purely arbitrary, the custom now alluded to may be quoted as

The manners of the Siamese Court, and the etiquette observed, seem to be nearly the same at the present day as they are described by the earliest European travellers. The King gives two audiences to his ministers daily, one in the morning and one late at night; asks each of them a few common-place questions respecting his particular department, and decides on the spot on a few easy and trivial cases brought before him. His Majesty passes the rest of the day between the company of his women and that of the Talapoins. The latter pray to or for him; the former occasionally amuse him with reading romances.

With a few trifling exceptions in the provinces, there is no hereditary rank in Siam; no aristocracy of wealth or title; the despotism which reigns over all levelling before it every distinction, and rendering all subservient to its pleasure or caprice. The people seem to be considered as the mere slaves of the Government, and valued only in as far as they minister to the pride and consequence of the Sovereign, or of those to whom he delegates any share of his power. The most important feature of the Siamese Government, is the universal conscription which prevails, and through which the labour and services of the adult male population, whether for ordinary labour, or for military or menial service, are placed at the disposal of the Government. Every male inhabitant of Siam, from the age of twenty-one upwards, is compelled to serve the state for four months in each year. The only exceptions are, the whole of the Talapoins; and the desire to escape from this servitude accounts for the universality of the practice of passing

one. "The King," says Knox, "they call by a name that signifies somewhat higher than a man, and next to God. But before the wars, they stiled him *Dionanxi*, which is a title higher than God, by the addition of *Nanxi*. This title the King took before the Rebellion; but since, he forbade it. When they speak to the King concerning themselves, they do not speak in the *first person*, and say *I did so or so*, but *Baulagot, the limb of a dog, did it, or will do it*. And when they speak of their children unto the King, they call them *puppies*. As, if he ask them how many children they have, they say so many *puppy dogs*, and so many *puppy bitches*. By which, by the way, we may conjecture at the height of the King, and the slavery of the people under him."—Relation of Ceylon, page 105.

a portion of life in their order;—the whole Chinese population, because they pay a commutation in the form of a poll-tax;—slaves;—all public functionaries, great and small, and every father of a family who has three sons of a serviceable age. An exemption is purchased by a fine of from six to eight ticals a-month, or by furnishing a slave, or other person, not liable to the conscription, as a substitute. In some parts of the country, a commutation is taken in certain of the rude produce peculiar to each province, as sapan-wood, wood of aloes, saltpetre, ivory, and peltry. By the ancient constitution of the country, the forced services amounted to six instead of four months in each year, and are always so represented by the French writers down to the close of the seventeenth century. The important and favourable change, which reduced the period of servitude from one-half to one-third of the year, is said to have been brought about by the grandfather of the present King, to gain popularity, after his usurpation of the throne by putting to death his predecessor.*

The whole population enrolled for service, as now mentioned, is divided into two equal divisions, called the division of the right-hand and the division of the left. Each of these again is subdivided into bands of thousands, hundreds, and tens, each of which has its own chief, who takes his title from the number of his band; such as *Nai-sip*, (Decurion); *Nai-roe*, (Centurion); *Naipan*, (commander of a thousand, &c.) The grades of title in Siam are nine in number. The first of these in dignity is *Chao*, which may fairly be translated "prince." It is bestowed upon the King's sons and brothers, upon some of the tributary Malay princes, and upon the here-

* Le peuple Siamois est une milice, où châque particulier est enrôlé: ils sont tous soldats, en Siamois *Taban*, et doivent tous six mois de service par an à leur prince. C'est au Prince à les armer, et à leur donner des elephans, ou des chevaux, s'il veut qu'ils servent ou sur des elephans, ou à cheval; mais c'est à eux à s'habiller et à se nourrir. Et comme le Prince n'employe jamais tous ses sujets dans ses armées, et que souvent il ne met point d'armée aux champs, encore même qu'il soit en guerre avec quelqu'un de ses voisins, il employe à tel travail ou à tel service qu'il luy plait, pendant six mois par an, ceux de ses sujets, qu'il n'employe pas à la guerre.—*Description du Royaume de Siam*, par M. de la Loubere, tom. i. p. 237.

ditary governors of some of the distant provinces of Siam and Lao. *Chao-Pia*, correctly written *Phriá*, is the second title in point of rank, and is bestowed upon some of the principal ministers. The *Phraklang* was raised to this rank during our stay in Siam, having only been of the third order when we first arrived. This third order is *Phriá*, which is given to the deputies or assistants of the principal ministers, and to persons of similar rank. These are followed by the inferior titles of *Luang Khun* and *Muan*, with *Nai-pan*, *Nai-roe*, and *Nai-sip*, already explained.

According to the ancient form of the Siamese Government, the two principal officers of State are the *Kala-hom* and the *Chak-ri*. The *Kala-hom* is considered the chief of the right-hand division of the enrolled population, chief of the military department of the administration, and minister of justice. He has also a superintending jurisdiction over the south-western provinces of the kingdom. The *Chak-ri* is considered the chief of the left-hand division of the enrolled population, minister of the revenue, of the commercial and foreign departments, and he is vested with a general superintendence over the south-eastern provinces of the kingdom.

Under the *Kala-hom* are two great officers, called *Yoma-rat* and *Tar-ma*. The *Yoma-rat* is the chief judge, administering justice personally at the capital, and hearing appeals from the provinces. The *Tar-ma* is governor of the capital, and mayor, or superintendent, of the palace. Under the *Chak-ri* there are also two great officers, called *P'houlat'hesse* and *P'hra-klang*. The first of these has charge of the department of the land revenue and other internal taxes, and the last of all commercial matters; and hence, as all foreign relations are viewed in a commercial light only, he is minister of foreign affairs. This is the officer whose proper title, meaning Lord of the Warehouses, is corrupted by Europeans into *Barcalon*, and the person best known to all strangers visiting Siam, as with him alone their chief intercourse is conducted.

The capital, with an extensive tract of country in its vicinity, is

under the direct jurisdiction of the Government itself; but the distant provinces are administered by a delegated authority, being managed according to their distances or importance by a Governor or Viceroy, and some by their own hereditary or tributary rulers. The four chiefs of Lao, viz. those of Chiang-mai, Lan-chang, Pasak, and Luang-prah-bang, with the chiefs of the southern provinces of Ligore and Sungora, may be denominated Viceroys, and have the power of life and death. These are denominated *Chao Muang*, meaning great lords or rulers of their provinces. This title of *Chao Muang* was that which the Siamese Court gave to the Governor-General of British India in their correspondence. The governors of the provinces nearer to the capital, such as *Pi-si-luk* and *Chan-ti-bun*, have no power of life and death in their hands, are in all respects invested with an inferior authority, and have only the rank of P'hria. The Malayan tributaries, with the exception of Patani, which is reduced to the condition of a province, are left to the government of their own hereditary rulers, who have the title of P'hria, the King of Queda alone being designated by the higher title of Chao-P'hria.

It is to be observed, that officers in the provinces holding the same titles as those at the Capital, are considered of inferior rank; and that even persons of superior title in the former, when they visit the Court, are bound to acknowledge their subordination to some inferior officers about the Court, by making them the customary obeisance. This distinction arises from the adventitious rank which the mere usage of being admitted into the royal presence is supposed to confer.

There exists occasionally in the Siamese Government an officer of very high rank, called the Wang-na, whose title has been translated by the Portuguese "second King," and whose duties are implied in this version of it. This dignity, it is obvious, corresponds with the Vizier of the Mohammedan Governments of Western Asia. The office did not exist when we were in Siam; but the present King has since re-established it.

Such was the old constitution of the Siamese Government; but the late King introduced a considerable innovation, which is now to be described. Under the high title of Krom, he created four great officers of state, among whom he divided the administration of the kingdom, placing under their authority the ancient officers, *the Kala-hom and Chakri*, with their respective deputies. The four officers thus created are designated *Krom-luang*, *Krom-kun*, *Krom-sak*, and *Krom-chiat*. The first of these superintends the palace, determines all matters that are personal towards the Sovereign, and is the King's confidential counsellor. The second is charged with the judicial branch of the administration, and has a general superintendence over the northern provinces of the kingdom, including Lao. The third is charged with the war department, and has a general jurisdiction over the south-western provinces. The fourth is charged with the commercial and foreign departments, and has a general jurisdiction over the south-eastern provinces, from *Bam-pa-soi* down to the confines of Kamboja and Cochin China. When we were at Siam, this last office was exercised by the eldest illegitimate son of the King, and who afterwards succeeded to, or usurped the crown.

Every public officer in Siam takes, on admission to office, an oath of allegiance, which is afterwards periodically repeated once in every year. I have seen the formula of this oath, in which all the terrors of religion and superstition are invoked, and in which the party calls down upon himself, should he prove disloyal, every curse and punishment of the present or a future world, naming in detail some of the most horrid and revolting.

The *Revenue* of the Siamese Government is derived from the following sources. A tax on the consumption of spirits, a tax on gaming, a tax on fishing in the Menam, a shop-tax, monopolies, profits on trade, customs, tax on fruit-trees, land-tax, Corvées, a poll-tax on the Chinese, and tributes. Of all these, a short account will be necessary.

A tax on the manufacture and vend of spirits distilled from rice is very general throughout the country. This tax is farmed, and hence its amount has been ascertained with some accuracy, and was stated to me to be for the whole kingdom 460,000 ticals, or 57,500*l.* per annum. The amount of this tax was given to me for the following fourteen towns, which, as our means of obtaining information were so very imperfect, I give in detail with the view of pointing out their relative importance. The tax at Bangkok amounts to 144,000 ticals; at Yuthia, the old capital, to 48,000; at Sohai, to 8,000; at Tachin, to 8,000; at Raheng, to 8,000; at Kampeng, to 8,000; at Chainat, to 1,600; at Lanchang, the capital of Laos, to 24,000; at Korat, in Lao, to 16,000; at Kanburi, to 1,600; at Champon, to 2,400; at Patyu, to 1,600; at Chaia, to 640; and at Talung, to 2,400.

Gaming is an offence against religion, as well as drinking. The revenue arising from licensing gaming-houses is farmed in the same manner as the tax on the consumption of spirits, and, according to the statement given to me, is at least equal to it in amount.

Killing fish is an offence against religion, not less than taking any other description of animal life, but the payment of a tax is also a sufficient dispensation for incurring this guilt; and the fisheries of the river Menam, with the exception of that part of it which flows near the walls of the palace, are farmed yearly for the sum of 800 catties, or 64,000 ticals, equal in sterling money to 8,000*l.*

The shop-tax is levied on the following rude and summary principle. A dealer in cloth pays four ticals a-year; a dealer in rice, two ticals; a fishmonger, one and a half ticals; a vender of tobacco, betel-leaf, and arecanut, half a tical. Besides these, every boat used as a shop, of which there are many on the Menam, pays yearly, whatever may be the commodity dealt in, two ticals. This tax is also farmed, and its yearly amount at the capital is 64,000 ticals. If its amount in the provinces bear the same proportion as the tax on spirits and gaming, which is probable, its total amount would be 121,880 ticals, or in sterling money 15,235*l.*

The King of Siam is both a monopolist and a trader: in some cases, claiming an exclusive right to the commodity; in others, exercising only an arbitrary and undue influence, in order to obtain it under the market price; and in a third, receiving it in the shape of a tax or contribution. These are so blended and mixed up with each other, that it is impossible to define their limits. Tin, ivory, cardamums, eagle-wood, gamboge, esculent swallows' nests, the eggs of the green turtle, and sapan-wood, may be viewed as royal monopolies; whilst sugar and pepper are articles which the subject is permitted to deal in,—the Government securing to itself as much of them as it desires at low prices, for which advances are made to the cultivator, labourer, or merchant. To render any full or complete account of these sources of revenue would be impossible, but I shall lay before the reader such notices in regard to them as came under my observation.

Of the first article, tin, 4000 piculs are received into the King's warehouses, worth at Bangkok, at a moderate average, about twenty-seven ticals per picul, making 108,000 ticals. Not more than one-half of this can be considered as a net revenue, after deducting the advance made to the miners, the charges of superintendence, and the expenses of the distant transport from Junk Ceylon, Talung, and other places where it is obtained. This will amount in sterling money to 6750*l.*

The quantity of ivory delivered to the King is 400 piculs a-year, and as it is given in as a tribute, free of expense, it is nearly a neat revenue, and will amount, at the average of 100 ticals for each picul, to 40,000 ticals, or 5000*l.*

Of the value of the revenue derived from Cardamums, I have not been able to obtain any account; and the same observation applies to Sapan-wood—in bulk, at least, one of the most considerable articles of exportation from Siam. The King's monopoly price of this last commodity is four ticals per picul; but I am unacquainted either with the prices paid to the wood-cutters, or the quantity disposed of at the settled price now quoted.

Eagle-wood, or wood of aloes, is an object of strict monopoly, and 100

piculs of it are delivered annually to the King, free of expense, worth, at an average of its different qualities, 450 ticals per picul, and therefore affording a neat revenue of 45,000 ticals, or 5625*l.*

Four hundred piculs of gamboge are paid to the King as tribute, worth sixty ticals a picul, giving a revenue of 24,000 ticals, or 3000*l.*

From esculent swallows' nests, which constitute an invariable subject of monopoly with the government of every country in which they are found, the Siamese Government derives, I was informed, a revenue of about 100,000 ticals a-year, or 12,500*l.* The eggs of the turtle afford only 5000 ticals, or 625*l.*

According to a statement which the minister, Suri Wung Kosa, furnished me with, 40,000 piculs of pepper are annually paid into the Royal magazines, for which the Government pays to the cultivator eight ticals a picul, besides the charge of conveying it from the east coast of the Gulf, to Bangkok. It sells for twenty. This would probably leave a profit of about ten ticals on each picul, or 400,000 for the whole amount,—50,000*l.*

For sugar of the best quality, the Siamese Government pays to the manufacturer about seven ticals a picul, and at this rate it may have any quantity required. It commonly receives about 35,000 piculs a-year, which is easily disposed of in ordinary times at ten ticals a picul. The difference is a revenue of 105,000 ticals, or 13,125*l.*

I possess no data for estimating the profits made by the Siamese Government on its foreign adventures to China, Java, or the Straits of Malacca; but it is probable, from the great impositions practised by the Chinese commanders, and other persons employed, and the frequent shipwrecks which are known to take place, that they are very trifling.

The duties and other imposts levied on external trade are somewhat complex, and differ in degree according to the class of vessels subjected to them, and which consist of junks carrying on trade with China proper, junks of the Island of Hai-nan, junks trading to the Malayan islands, and European shipping. The imposts consist of a duty on the measurement or dimensions of the vessel, an *ad valorem* duty upon imports, and a

rated tarif in most cases, with an *ad valorem* duty in a few, on exports. The first-named class of vessels, viz. the large junks trading with the principal ports of China, pay no measurement or import duties, because these are vessels belonging to the King, or to the Princes, or such courtiers whose perquisite it is to be licensed to engage in this branch of trade. The Hai-nan junks pay forty ticals per Siamese fathom, on the extreme breadth of the vessel. The junks trading to the Malay countries, in lieu of measurement duty, pay one hundred and thirty ticals each, without regard to size. Neither of these vessels pay import duties. The measurement duties on European vessels is estimated at one hundred and eighteen ticals per fathom, besides an inconsiderable impost in the form of an anchorage fee. The cargoes of these alone pay an import duty, which is reckoned at eight per cent. *ad valorem* levied in kind. The tarif on exports is imposed indiscriminately on all classes of vessels, and the following are some of the particulars of it.

Sapan Wood,	per picul	670	cowries.
Rose Wood,	do.	450	do.
Ivory	do.	2½	ticals.
Stic-lac	do.	½	do.
Sugar, if exported under an European flag,	do.	1½	do.
Do. if under an Indian flag	do	1	do.
Salt	per coyan	4	do.
Dinding, or Jerk Beef,	per picul	2	do.
Cabus, (a river fish)	do.	½	do.
Shrimps, (dried)	do.	2	do.
Deer Sinews	do.	4	do.
Pepper, (long)	do.	½	do.
Areca Nut	do.	¼	do.
Mangrove Bark	do.	480	cowries
Peacock Tails, each	do.	640	do.
Ray Skins	do.	3	ticals.

Buffalo, or Bullock Hides	per picul	1	tical.
Wing Feathers of the Pelican	do.	6	do.
Elephant's Bones	do.	1	do.
Deer Skins (small)	per 100	3	do.
Deer Skins (large)	do.	8	do.
Deers' Horns (old)	per picul	¼	do.
Deers' Antlers (soft)		20	per cent.
Sharks' Fins (white)	per picul	6	ticals
Sharks' do. (black)	do.	3	do.
Esculent Swallows' Nests		20	per cent.
Cotton freed from the Seed	per picul	½	tical.

Such was the tarif when we visited Siam in 1822, but it is by no means immutable, for every Prince at his accession commonly issues a new one, and does not scruple to enhance or diminish, at his pleasure that of his predecessor.

A conjecture, but nothing better, may be hazarded respecting the amount of revenue derived by the Government from these imposts. The whole external trade of Siam is roughly estimated at 527,450 piculs, or about 33,000 tons; and the revenue derived by the Government from the European branch of it, is ascertained, from very correct statements, to amount to forty ticals on each ton. Did it amount to the same on the whole tonnage, the Government would, in fact, be in the receipt of 1,320,000 ticals; but such an estimate would be very wide of the truth, for, as already mentioned, the other branches of the foreign trade pay no import duties, pay a small admeasurement duty, or none at all, and, above all, possess more adroitness and readier means of evading duties of all descriptions than the European trader. With these deductions, the whole duties ought not perhaps to be estimated at a higher rate than one-fifth part of those on the European trade, which would afford, however, a yearly revenue of 264,000 ticals, or 33,000*l.*

The land-tax in Siam is of two descriptions, viz. a tax on fruit-trees

and certain other productions of the soil, according to their number and value; and a fixed tax on all corn-lands, according to their extent, without regard to their quality. The land itself, with respect to the proprietary right in it, admits also of a double distinction—gardens, orchards, and houses being viewed as the private property of the occupants, and capable of any description of alienation; whilst corn-lands, constituting in value and extent the great bulk of the cultivated part of the kingdom, are viewed, as under other Asiatic monarchies, as the property of the State—the tenant or peasant, however, standing little risk of ejectment or removal, not on account of the tenderness of the Government for his interests, but the necessity which it feels for his services as a drudge and a cultivator. Even this description of land is occasionally private property, held under a formal grant of "eight seals" from the King.

The produce of fruit-trees and certain other raw productions of the soil being rather objects of luxury than necessity, the tax upon these may be viewed as a mode of levying an excise duty which falls upon the consumer in the enhanced price which he pays for the produce. The amount of this tax is as follows:—On each durian-tree *(Durio Tibethinus)*, one tical; on each mangoe-tree, one-eighth of a tical; on each mangosteen, the same; on every eight cocoa-nut trees, one-eighth of a tical; on every eight areca-palms, one-sixteenth of a tical; on every eight betel pepper-vines, one-eighth of a tical; on every bed of bannanas, a quarter of a tical; on every hundred tobacco-plants, the same; on every bed of sugar-canes, the same also. All other fruit-trees, except those now named, as well as pepper, are exempted from this species of tax. The tax on fruit-trees, and nearly in the same form, although differing somewhat in amount on each object, existed at the close of the seventeenth century, and is particularly described by La Loubere. Its annual amount, according to the statement furnished to me, is about 520,000 ticals, or 65,000*l.*

The Siamese territory is so thinly peopled, and there has been so little occasion to have recourse to lands of an inferior description, that it is probable, that very little of what is strictly rent exists. For this reason, and as a natural counterbalance to the burthen of the conscription, or public corveés, we find the land-tax extremely light, in comparison to what it is in Hindostan, and other densely peopled countries of Western Asia.

According to the accounts rendered to me, it amounts, on all lands cultivated with rice, to a yearly fixed tax of two and a half *tangs*, or baskets of the grain in the husk, on each measure of twenty Siamese fathoms square. The *tang*, by calculation, is found to amount to 29.33lbs. avoirdupois of clean rice, and the measure in question to $\frac{30}{100}$ of an English acre. The tax, therefore, amounts to 36.66lbs. for every such measure, or to 94.25lbs. on each acre; which, taking the average price of rice at Siam, for good and bad years, at sixteen ticals per coyan of twenty-two Chinese piculs each, will give little more than a tax of 5.89 pence on the Siamese measure of forty fathoms square, or about fifteen-pence halfpenny per English acre. This, it will be observed, instead of being a tax of one-half, of one-third, or one-fourth the gross produce of the soil, as in Western India, will probably not be found to exceed a sixth, an eighth, or a tenth part of it. The rate of the land-tax, as given by La Loubere, or a quarter of a tical for a measure of forty Siamese fathoms square, amounts to no more than 4.84 pence per English acre, or less than one-third even of the moderate rate at which it was stated to me, which would not amount to a twentieth share of the gross produce of rice-lands upon a most moderate estimate. Of the amount of this tax I heard no estimate given while I was in Siam; and being indeed an impost paid in kind, it is probable that it has never been ascertained with any degree of correctness. A rough conjecture, however, may be offered on the subject. Siam, in the fertility of its soil, the character of its agricultural industry, and the civilization of its inhabitants, more nearly resembles Java than any other country. In this last country, a tolerable approximation has been made in ascertaining the proportion of cultivated land to the population. If the proportions be the same in Siam,

and the population be taken at five millions, the cultivated land would in that case amount to 4,442,590 English acres, which, at a tax of fifteen-pence halfpenny per acre, would afford a gross revenue of 2,295,338 ticals, or 286,917*l.* 5*s.* 5*d.* which is, at all events, probably not an exaggerated statement.

The conscription and corvées form unquestionably not only the heaviest tax upon the people, but, if they can be so called, the most considerable branch of the public revenue. The age of servitude is twenty. This would include about one-tenth part of the whole population of the kingdom, estimated at 5,000,000; from which, however, must be deducted officers of Government, slaves and priests, probably amounting to about 100,000; leaving therefore 400,000 subject to the conscription. As the period of service is one-third part of the year, the number of persons actually engaged in the corvées, or at the disposal of Government for every description of service, will amount to 133,333; equal to a money revenue, at the lowest composition, taken for a conscript, or six ticals a month, to near nine millions six hundred thousand ticals per annum, or 1,200,000*l.* Such an estimate, however, after all, is much less a statement of the revenue which the Government receives, than an index of the waste and prodigality of these forced services; since it would be utterly erroneous to estimate at so high a value the unwilling, slothful, and ill-directed services of the indiscriminate multitude that composes the conscription.

The Chinese colonists are the only class of the population exempted from the conscription, in lieu of which every male of twenty years of age and upwards pays a poll-tax, with the exception of a few individuals bearing Siamese titles. Every individual who has discharged his contribution for the year is directed to wear upon his wrist a badge, bearing the seal of the officer to whom he has made payment; in failure of which, he is liable to be seized, and compelled to make a second payment. The amount of the tax, for each individual, is two ticals to the Government, and a fuang and a half to the collector. I was informed, that the number of

sons paying the contribution within the city of Bangkok and its jurisdiction was 31,500, but I had no opportunity of ascertaining its amount oughout the rest of the kingdom. The following analogy, however, l perhaps be considered to afford grounds for a reasonable conjecture the subject. The Chinese are the principal consumers, and therefore principal contributors to the spirit tax, which in Bangkok and its isdiction amounts to 144,000 ticals, and in the whole kingdom to),000. If the Chinese liable to the poll-tax be in a similar proportion, ir contribution to the State will amount to 201,250 ticals—25,156*l.* 5*s.*

The following exhibits a recapitulation of the different taxes now umerated:

	Ticals	£
Spirit-tax	460,000	57,500
Gaming	460,000	57,500
Fishery of the Menam	64,000	8,000
Shop-tax	121,880	15,235
Monopoly of tin	54,000	6,750
Do. of ivory	40,000	5,000
Cardamums and Japan-wood		
Eagle-wood	45,000	5,625
Gamboge	24,000	3,000
Swallows' nests	100,000	12,500
Turtle's eggs	5,000	625
Pepper	400,000	50,000
Sugar	105,000	13,125
Customs	264,000	33,000
Tax on fruit-trees, &c.	520,000	65,000
Land-tax	2,295,338	286,917
Corvées	20,000,000	2,500,000
Chinese poll-tax	201,250	25,156
Total Ticals	25,159,468	£3,144,933

From this statement, it will appear that the revenue of the Siamese Government actually paid in money amounts to 2,091,130 ticals, or 260,891*l.*, or in money, and produce immediately convertible into money, to 2,864,130 ticals, or 658,016*l.* The land-tax paid in grain I have estimated at 286,917*l.* The total revenue in money or kind, therefore, exclusive of the corvées, is 5,159,468 ticals, or 644,933*l.*; a mean and inconsiderable sum for a country so fertile and extensive, possessing such natural facilities for internal intercourse, so favourably situated for external trade, and containing so considerable a population. La Loubere informs us that the revenue of Siam, paid in ready money before his time, used to be reckoned at 1,200,000 livres, or 400,000 ticals, 50,000*l*; but that the reigning sovereign of his day had raised it to 2,000,000 of livres, or above 83,000*l.* If this statement, and that which I have offered, can at all be relied on, they will afford a proof that Siam has greatly improved in wealth and resources during the long internal tranquillity, of between fifty and sixty years, which has prevailed since the expulsion of the Burmans, and especially during the last forty years of that period.

Besides the objects of revenue which I have enumerated, the Government of Siam derives some less considerable advantages from other sources; such as tributes and occasional contributions paid by or levied upon the dependent states, with fines and confiscations derived from the administration of justice; but of these I have no materials for forming an estimate.

The Siamese, like other rude and arbitrary Governments, has in general no distinct and allotted fiscal establishment. The department of trade, and the charge of the customs and monopolies, are under the management of the Phraklang, and the collection of the land revenue and tax on fruit-trees, as already mentioned, is conducted by the Phonlateb, both being subject to the Chakri; but the agents of these persons are the same who conduct all other departments of the administration; and in the distant Governments, the viceroys and hereditary chiefs appear to act on their own authority, only remitting the taxes to the capital. The remuneration for the trouble of collecting, as well indeed as for every other description of service, is a tithe, or tenth of the revenue realized, called in the Siamese language Sib-lot, without any salary or other reward, excepting the services of a certain number of the conscripts, according to the rank of the party.

The revenue and expenditure of the Siamese Government, I was told, are nearly balanced; and it is said, that there are seldom above 240,000 ticals in the public treasury, over and above a small quantity of Spanish dollars, and Chinese silver ingots ready for coinage.

One subject connected with the Government, and of some importance with a vain and ostentatious people, remains to be noticed—the arms and insignia of the state. The royal seals are three in number. The great seal used in correspondence with foreign states, has upon it the impression of a lion. That of the next importance, has upon it a human figure holding a lotus flower in the hand. The third is simply a lotus flower. The two first are only used in affairs of consequence; the last, in all daily current business. The banner of the kingdom is a white elephant on a crimson field.

In Siam, except in some cases of appeal, there appears to exist no establishments exclusively for judicial purposes. The same chiefs who are charged with the military, civil, and revenue administrations, are also the only judges and magistrates, and the final decision or judgment resting always with the individual exercising the chief local authority, whoever that may be, while the inferior officers institute the process, take the evidence, and point out the law in the character of assessors.

The Siamese have written laws, of which it not unfrequently happens that each new sovereign, on his accession, publishes a new edition, making such arbitrary changes as he thinks proper. To what extent the letter of this code is complied with in the practice of the courts, I am unable to state; but, in such a condition of society, it is probable that

it is not very rigidly adhered to. La Loubere, after mentioning that a particular officer reads aloud the title of the law, touching the cause before the court, makes the following observation:—"Mais ils disputent dans ce pays là comme en celui-ci du sens des loix. Ils y cherchent des accommodements à titre d'Equité; et sous prétexte que toutes les circonstances du fait ne sont jamais dans la loi, ils ne suivent jamais le loi."

Captain John Lowe, of the Indian army, an indefatigable scholar, and who has the merit of being the only Englishman who has ever acquired a knowledge of the language and literature of the Siamese, has furnished the Royal Asiatic Society with an abstract of the Siamese laws, drawn from their own codes. Several of these are of an antiquity much beyond what I should have expected. One is dated as far back as 1053 of Christ; another in the year 1614, and a third in 1773. In one of these, reference is made to a code as old as the year 561 of Christ.

Witnesses, according to the Siamese law, are examined upon oath, on formal and solemn occasions only, which is agreeable to the universal practice of all Eastern nations. The form of oath administered is not only a curiosity in itself, but strikingly illustrative of the religious opinions and character of the people, and therefore I shall transcribe it from the translation of Captain Lowe. It is as follows:—"I, who have been brought here as an evidence in this matter, do now, in presence of the divine Prah-Phutt'hi-rop (Buddha), declare that I am wholly unprejudiced against either party, and uninfluenced in any way by the opinions or advice of others, and that no prospects of pecuniary advantage or of advancement to office have been held out to me; I also declare that I have not received any bribe on this occasion. If what I have now spoken be false, or if in my farther averments I should colour or pervert the truth, so as to lead the judgment of others astray, may the three Holy Existences, viz. Buddha, the Bali (personified), and the priests, before whom I now stand, together with the glorious Dewatas (demi-gods) of the twenty-two firmaments, punish me.

"If I have not seen, yet shall say that I have seen; if I shall say that I know that which I do not know, then may I be thus punished. Should innumerable descents of the Deity happen for the regeneration and salvation of mankind, may my erring and migrating soul be found beyond the pale of their mercy. Wherever I go, may I be encompassed with dangers, and not escape from them, whether arising from murderers, robbers, spirits of the earth, of the woods, of water, or of air, or from all the divinities who adore Buddha, or from the gods of the four elements, and all other spirits.

"May blood flow out of every pore of my body, that my crime may be made manifest to the world; may all or any of these evils overtake me within three days, or may I never stir from the spot on which I now stand, or may the *hatsani*, or lash of the sky (lightning), cut me in two, so that I may be exposed to the derision of the people. Or if I should be walking abroad, may I be torn to pieces by either of the four supernaturally endowed lions, or destroyed by poisonous herbs or venomous snakes. If when in the waters of the rivers or ocean, may supernatural crocodiles or great fishes devour me, or may the winds and waves overwhelm me; or may the dread of such evils keep me, during life, a prisoner at home, estranged from every pleasure, or may I be afflicted by the intolerable oppressions of my superiors, or may a plague cause my death; after which, may I be precipitated into hell, there to go through innumerable stages of torture, amongst which may I be condemned to carry water over the flaming regions in open wicker-baskets to assuage the heat felt by Than-Wetsuwan, when he enters the infernal hall of justice, and thereafter may I fall into the lowest pit of hell; or if these miseries should not ensue, may I after death migrate into the body of a slave, and suffer all the hardships and pain attending the worst state of such a being, during a period of years measured by the sand of four seas; or may I animate the body of an animal, or beast, during five hundred generations; or be born a hermaphrodite five hundred times, or endure in the body of a deaf, blind, dumb, houseless beggar, every species of loathsome disease during the same number of generations, and then may I be hurried

to Narak, or hell, and there be crucified by Phria-Yam,* one of the Kings of Hell."

With respect to the persons competent or incompetent to give evidence before a court of justice, the Siamese betray the usual caprice of barbarians. The best witnesses are openly declared to be priests and men in office. Of incompetent witnesses we have a list of not less than eight-and-twenty; containing a very curious medley, as follows:—Contemners of religion; persons in debt, the slaves of a party to a suit, intimate friends, idiots, those who do not hold in abhorrence the cardinal sins, among which are enumerated, besides theft and murder, drinking spirits, breaking prescribed fasts, and reposing on the mat or couch of a priest or parent; gamblers, vagrants, executioners, quackdoctors, play-actors, hermaphrodites, strolling musicians, prostitutes, blacksmiths, persons labouring under incurable disorders; persons under seven, or above seventy; backbiters, insane persons, persons of violent passions, shoe-makers, beggars, braziers, midwives, and sorcerers.

On important occasions, torture is applied to extort evidence; and the usual mode of putting a witness to the question, in such cases, is by pressing the temples between two boards, and then producing frequent concussions by the strokes of a piece of raw hide. Torture is commonly had recourse to only in cases of treason and atrocious robbery.

The ordeal is now and then had recourse to, and the common forms of it consist in the litigant parties diving in water, or immersing their hands in boiling oil or melted tin. In the first case, he who continues longest under water gains his cause; and in the second, the party that withdraws his hand harmless from the burning liquid. La Loubere mentions another extremely whimsical form of ordeal, of which I was also informed. When goods are stolen, and suspicion of theft falls upon a number of persons generally, the practice is to administer certain emetic medicines to the whole, under the direction of a medical practitioner. In this case,

* The Lord Yama, that is, the Hindoo Pluto.

the person who vomits first is deemed the culprit; or, in other words, a strong stomach implies an honest man, while a delicate one is sufficient proof of knavery. The watery ordeal is chiefly had recourse to in cases of adultery, and the trial by boiling oil and melted tin in trials for theft.

According to the Siamese law, all contracts touching matters of property ought to be in the form of a writing. Debts recovered in a court of justice are taxed, for the benefit of the Government, with a tithe of the amount realized. The ordinary interest of money is three per cent. per month; but its accumulation cannot exceed the amount of the principal. Compound interest is not allowed. The King, it is said, is entitled to seventy-five per cent. per annum interest, for such money as he may lend to a subject.

The law in respect to debtor and creditor, is as follows:—A debt not paid in three years is considered to be doubled only, provided the creditor have neglected to put in his claim for the usual interest. Payment is enforced by imprisonment, by shackles, by stripes, and finally by exposure, without protection, to the direct rays of the sun, which process is denominated in the Siamese language "exsiccation," that is, drying a man. Finally, should the creditor be unable to discharge his debt, the law adjudges him to become the slave of the King, or of his creditor, according to circumstances.

The law of inheritance is this. Wills may be either written or nuncupatory, but in either case must be made in the presence of four witnesses. A man may will his property in any proportion he pleases among his wife and children, but cannot pass these over in favour of strangers. If a man die intestate, his widow has the usufruct of the estate during her lifetime or widowhood; on the termination of either of which, the property is divided amongst the children. Daughters receive according to circumstances from half a share to a whole share more than sons, and the children of concubines are entitled only to one half the share of those of a wedded wife. No prefer-

ence whatever is given to an elder son. If a man have no wife or children, his property goes to his father and mother, and in failure of these is divided amongst his brothers and sisters. It ought to be stated that the property of persons of rank, that is to say, of the superior officers of Government, is often confiscated under pretext of malversation,—the King in this case exhibiting an account against the estate of the deceased, of which he is himself the framer and the auditor.

The nature of the marriage contract among the Siamese, does not differ essentially from its condition among other Oriental people. Indeed, it may be remarked, that there is no feature in Eastern manners in which there is so general an agreement as in this. The Siamese suitor usually pays a price for his bride—a betrothing precedes marriage—the marriage is a civil contract, in which the Talapoins do not meddle, except by offering prayers for, and bestowing benedictions upon the parties, and both concubinage and a plurality of wives are legal. Divorces appear to be obtained without difficulty, and are frequent among the lower orders. An unequivocal and reciprocal expression of the desire of the parties for a separation, seems all that is requisite. When the divorce is desired by one party only, there is a little more difficulty. The party suing in this case, pays a fine for the benefit of the other. In any case of a divorce, each party receives back what it originally contributed to the common stock,—the wife, however, receiving no share of the gain or accumulation. If the children be grown up, they follow the father or mother at their own option; but in the event of their being young, the distribution which the law enacts is remarkable,—the female children going to the father, and the boys to the mother; on the alleged principle that the girls are most likely to prove useful to the first, and the boys to the last.* A divorce has no sooner taken place, than the parties are at perfect freedom

* The distribution, as given by La Loubere, is different. According to him, the first and every odd child goes to the mother—the even numbers to the father; so that if there be but one child, the mother receives a preference.

to form a new connexion, without any of those jealous restraints which the laws of the Hindoos and Mohammedans have entailed upon the weaker sex.

A breach of the marriage vow does not at present appear to be viewed in Siam as a very heavy offence. It is punished by a pecuniary fine,—the adulterer, if a man of rank, paying a mulct of six catties of silver, (60*l.*); and if of the lower orders, one-third of that amount.

The penal code of Siam bears a strong analogy to that of China, especially in the liberal and indiscriminate application which it makes of the bamboo for the punishment of all offences. Petty larcenies are punished by thirty blows; higher degrees of theft, by ninety blows, and an imprisonment, longer or shorter according to circumstances of aggravation; robbery, with ninety blows and imprisonment, with hard labour for life. The legal punishment of an incendiary is mutilation by cutting off the offending hand, which the late King used to commute for the highest punishment of theft. Murder is always punished with death, and the mode of execution is by decapitation with a sword. Forging the royal signet and counterfeiting the current coin, are also, by law, punishable with death; but in these cases, too, the punishment has of late been commonly commuted for imprisonment for life, and the heaviest infliction of the bamboo. Among the offences for which the law prescribes a capital punishment is the violation of the law of chastity in the Talapoins. This is now frequently commuted into the punishment of cutting grass for the royal elephants for life; and there were several ex-priests so employed when we were in Siam. Sedition and treason are of course unpardonable offences under such a government as that of Siam. The law ordains, in these cases, that the criminals shall be trodden to death by elephants, or devoured by tigers. No such barbarous punishments, however, had been inflicted during the late reign, although, by the testimony of well-informed European writers, they appear in other periods of the history of Siam, to have been sufficiently frequent.

Abusive language and assault are commonly punished by a pecuniary

mulct; and if the injury be offered by an inferior to a superior, or by one of the laity to a priest, corporal punishment is added to the fine. Except in this particular, the Siamese law, unlike that of the Hindoos, makes no distinction in the measure of its punishments arising out of the rank of the parties. The Talapoins especially have no immunities like the Brahmins; on the contrary, their sacred character is reasonably considered as an aggravation of any offence of which they may be guilty. It is true, they cannot be proceeded against in their character of priests; but the process of degradation, stripping them of their sacerdotal habit, is summary and easy, and then they become amenable to the temporal jurisdiction for offences committed as Talapoins.

It deserves to be noticed, that neither the law of retaliation, nor the practice of paying a pecuniary composition for crimes, exists among the Siamese. It would be incompatible with the spirit of Siamese government, under which the people have been disarmed, and tamed down to the lowest state of submission, to leave in their hands so large a share of free action, as would be implied by abandoning to them the right of vindicating their own quarrels.

In civil suits, the delays of the law are as notorious in Siam as in any European country. I was told, that a civil cause of any consequence was seldom brought to a termination under one year, and that a suit often lasted three and four. La Loubere's estimate of the procrastination of justice in his time is still stronger. "Every process," he says, "ought to end in three days, and there are some which last for three years."

Of the military force of Siam we had little opportunity of obtaining any correct knowledge. It consists of such part of the general conscription as the ambition, caprice, or necessities of the Sovereign may put into requisition for the exclusive purposes of war. There is every reason to believe that the armies of Siam, however numerous, are little better than a rabble,—timid, ill-armed, and undisciplined. Their tactics, in common with those of other Hindoo Chinese nations, are now sufficiently well known. Their

timid warfare consists in skirmishes, partial actions, and attack of insulated posts, conducted from the security of stockaded entrenchments, and commonly tedious and indecisive. Neither the character of the Siamese, nor that of the country which they inhabit, leads them to hazard general actions similar to those great pitched battles which among the more warlike people of Western and Northern Asia have often decided the fate of nations. I was informed, when in Siam, that the army did not fall short of 30,000 men, armed with swords, spears, and European muskets; of which last they have of late years obtained a large supply from ourselves and from the Americans. Judging by the guards we saw in the palace,—and most probably these were among the best troops,—the Siamese armies must be extremely contemptible, and such as may reasonably be expected from a force indiscriminately levied from an unwarlike peasantry, held together only by the terror of proscriptions and executions, with ignorant chiefs as officers, and a rude Government to organize and direct them.

The force, of which this is the general character, consists principally of infantry, with a very inconsiderable number of cavalry, mounted on the small horses or ponies of Lao and Yunan, and an artillery equally inefficient. Siam contains between twenty and thirty walled towns, which, judging from the fortifications of the capital, are feebly and unskilfully constructed, and quite incapable of being defended from the attacks of an enemy possessing the least military knowledge. The bastions and ramparts of Bangkok have no cannon mounted upon them—these being kept in sheds, under pretext of protecting them from the weather, but in fact to prevent their being turned against the palace in the event of sedition, always held in constant dread by the Siamese Government.

CHAPTER XIV.

Siamese History.—Ancient Story.—First intercourse of Europeans with Siam.—Conquest by the Burmese.—Story of the Greek adventurer Constantine Phaulcon, and connection with France.—Invasion and conquest of Siam by the Burmese.—Burmese driven out of the country.—Reign and death of the Usurper, commonly called Pia-Metak.—Present Dynasty.—Trade.—Internal commerce.—Trade with China.—Trade with Kamboja, Cochin China, and the Malay countries.—Natural History.—Climate.—Mineral products.—Vegetable productions.—Quadrupeds.—Birds.—Reptiles.

THE following is a brief sketch of Siamese history. The Siamese call themselves T'hai; by the Burmans they are called Shan, and by the Chinese, the Kambojans and Malays, Sëam, which last is no doubt the origin of the name by which they are recognised amongst European nations. In addressing letters to foreign countries, the name of the capital, or, more literally, of the palace or residence of the King, is by a figure applied to the whole country. This term, Si-Ut'hiya, appears to be of mythological origin, and, I have little doubt, is a local corruption of the Sanscrit Sri Ayudhya, the name of the kingdom of the Hindoo god and hero Rama,—a personage familiar to Siamese legend. From this come again the European corruptions of the name of the old capital of Siam, Yuthia, Odia and Judia, all of which are to be found in our maps and charts. La Loubere states that the Siamese are divided into two nations,—the T'hai Yai and the T'hai Noe, or the great and little Siamese—the latter being the proper Siamese, as generally known to Europeans, and the other a more ancient people. I could not find that any such distinction was at present generally recognised in

Siam, but was informed that the people of Lao, who speak a dialect of the Siamese, were occasionally denominated T'hai Yai.

The authentic history of the Siamese is of no very remote antiquity; and the only facts in regard to it which are to be relied upon, can scarcely be said to date farther back than the era of their first acquaintance with European nations. I was informed in Siam, that a person in the character of an historiographer is regularly employed by the Court to chronicle passing events, and that the records thus compiled by him were deposited in the public archives. If such materials for history really exist, they are not accessible to strangers, and there is no opportunity of appreciating their value. The Phraklang, and other chiefs with whom I conversed, appeared either very ill-informed, or very reluctant to communicate what they knew. I was anxious, for example, to ascertain from them some particulars respecting the origin and history of the dependence of the Malayan states on Siam, but could get no satisfaction whatever—being only told that the thing had been so time out of mind.

The few scattered facts of Siamese story known, or accessible to Europeans, may be very shortly told. The earliest historical event which has come to my knowledge, is the introduction of the religion of Gautama from Ceylon, which took place in the year of Christ 638, and, as stated in another place, under a sovereign known by the name of Krek. From that period, down to the year 1824, there had reigned, according to the Siamese, sixty princes; which would agree very nearly with the European computation of twenty years for the average of each reign. In the year 1187, the twenty-third Siamese king had the seat of his government at Lakontai, a town situated nearly in the twentieth degree of North latitude, and upon the borders of Lao. The late capital, Yuthia, was founded by the twenty-seventh Siamese king, in the year 1350.

In 1502, we have the first notice of Siamese story on European authority. In that year, the King of Siam sent an unsuccessful expedition against the principality of Malacca. In 1511, the Portuguese, after the

conquest of Malacca by Albuquerque, established their first intercourse with Siam. In 1547, a revolution took place in the country; and in 1549, another. In 1567, the Burmans conquered Siam, and held it in subjection until the year 1596, when the Siamese recovered their independence. The character and circumstances of this invasion resemble in many respects that which took place about two centuries thereafter, and nearly in our own times. The first intercourse between our own nation and the Siamese, appears to have taken place in the year 1612; when, on the 4th of August of that year, an English ship ascended the river to Yuthia. In the year 1621, the Portuguese viceroy of Goa sent a mission to Siam; and in the same year, the Dominican and Franciscan monks found their way into the kingdom. In 1627, another revolution occurred, by which a new dynasty was placed on the throne.

The son of this usurper, the fifty-second Siamese king, was the well-known correspondent and ally of Louis the Fourteenth. In 1683, we find a Greek adventurer of the Island of Cephalonia, the son of an inn-keeper, raised by a singular destiny; and, after filling various inferior employments in the service of the English East India Company, to the post of Phraklang, or Foreign Minister of Siam. This was the celebrated Constantine Phaulcon, of whose story Voltaire with justice remarks, that it affords a striking example of the intellectual superiority of the European over the other races of men. Through the influence and intrigues of this person, and the skill and activity of the Jesuits, the reigning King, himself an extraordinary man for an Asiatic prince, undertook in 1684 to send an embassy to Louis the Fourteenth, whose vanity was flattered, as the celebrated writer just quoted remarks, by such a compliment from a country ignorant until then that such a place as France existed. In the same year, the Siamese ambassadors, who had come from their own country in an English merchant-ship, are said to have concluded in London a commercial treaty with the Court of St. James's, then in strict friendship and alliance with that of France. In 1685, Louis the

Fourteenth sent the Chevalier Chaumont at the head of a splendid embassy to Siam. Two years thereafter he sent a second mission, with a squadron of ships and a force of five hundred French soldiers. In the same year, 1687, a massacre of the English took place at the Siamese port and city of Mergui, to all appearance provoked by the intemperance and arrogance of Englishmen in authority. In the following year, the English factory, which had been for some time established at Yuthia, was finally removed from Siam.

In the year 1690 a revolution took place in Siam, through which the reigning family lost the throne, the Minister Phaulcon his life, and the French were expelled from the country; thus losing, by want of moderation in the beginning, and of energy, decision and political courage in the sequel, an early and apparently an easy opportunity of establishing a French Empire in the East. In 1719, Mr. Collett, the Governor of Madras, is stated to have taken upon himself to cancel the commercial treaty concluded by the Siamese ambassadors in 1684, and to declare war against the Siamese in the name of the East India Company.

A new dynasty sat on the throne from the year 1690 down to 1767, during which long period no political or diplomatic intercourse took place between the Siamese and the nations of Europe, and the commercial intercourse appears to have been very inconsiderable. In 1733, a civil war broke out between the son and grandson of the usurper of 1690, and Siam was thrown into a state of anarchy and weakness, which continued until the year 1759. Of this state of things the ambitious and able Burman adventurer, who had lately possessed himself of the kingdoms of Ava and Pegu, and who is commonly called by Europeans Alompra and Manlong, took advantage, and resolved to effect its conquest. The pretext for the war was the asylum afforded to a Peguan general when he put into the port of Mergui, on his way to seek assistance from the French Government at Pondicherry. Alompra advanced to Martaban, and finally fixed his residence for a time at Tavoy, which at this period was

independent either of Siam or Pegu. From thence he sent an armament, which succeeded in destroying the towns of Mergui and Tennasserim, and in occupying the whole province. Encouraged by this success, he marched in person, with a large army, upon the Siamese capital, in 1760, ravaging the country through which he passed with fire and sword, and his troops committing, as usual, the most brutal excesses. When within three days' march of Yuthia, Alompra was seized with a mortal disorder. The army, however, still advanced, and having attacked the town, were, after repeated assaults, forced to give up the enterprise, and commenced a retreat. This last measure was chiefly necessary, owing to the death of Alompra, and the necessity which existed for his heir, who was in camp, to return to Ava to contend for the succession to the throne.

During the short reign of the immediate successor of Alompra, the Burmans undertook no hostile movements against the Siamese; but shortly after the accession of Shembuan, the second son of Alompra, and the same prince who had been present with his father in the irruption made by him into Siam, the war against the Siamese was recommenced. Its first object was the reconquest of Tavoy in 1766; the Burman governor of which had, since the year 1761, declared his independence, and now entered into an alliance with the Siamese. In the beginning of 1765 the Burman forces, by surprise, recaptured Mergui, which during the last reign had fallen back into the hands of the Siamese, and shortly afterwards they obtained possession of Tennasserim. From Mergui the Burman army marched upon Yuthia, to effect which it was necessary to traverse extensive forests, and to pass steep mountains. The Siamese collected their forces,—met the Burmans in a general action, and were routed. After this victory, the Burmans met no resistance in the open country, which they ravaged without mercy. Their unskilful and protracted military operations, notwithstanding the admitted pusillanimity of their enemy, lasted for a whole year; for it appears, that in the month of March 1766, they had approached within two leagues of the capital, and it was not until the April of the

following year that the place was taken by assault. The excesses committed by the Burmans, upon this last occasion, are described to have been of a most ruthless description. The inhabitants were plundered of their property, many massacred, some put to the rack to extort the discovery of hidden treasure, and thousands carried off as slaves and captives. What seems singular in a people professing the same religion, the Burmans pillaged and destroyed the Siamese temples, carrying off or melting down the images of brass, and tortured or murdered the Talapoins. The first officers of the kingdom were loaded with irons, and condemned to row the Burman war-boats. The King of Siam, recognized by the assailants, was killed at the gate of his palace. His predecessor, who had abdicated the throne and retired to a monastery, was dragged from his retreat, and carried a prisoner to Ava, along with the princes and princesses of his family. The Burman general and his army retired from Siam in the month of June, without apparently making any arrangement for the permanent occupation of the country. They had no sooner retreated, than the Siamese were in a state of insurrection, rising upon the Burmans and their partizans, and massacring them wherever they met them. A chief of Chinese descent put himself at the head of the insurgents, and in the year 1769 seized upon the throne, and proclaimed himself King. This was the person commonly known under the name of Phia-tak, an abbreviation of Phria Metak (the Lord or Governor of Metak), which is the name of a Siamese province on the borders of Lao.* The usurper is admitted to have been a man of courage, good sense, and discernment. In the same year he exerted himself with skill and success to relieve a famine with which the country was afflicted. Afterwards he suppressed a rebellion which broke out under a Siamese prince, who had returned from the

* Without the help of a native instructor, it would not be possible to discover this derivation in the European corruptions of it, which have been current. Turpin, for example, writes the name "Phaia-Thâe;" and Col. Syme, much more erroneously, "Pieticksing."

island of Ceylon; apprehended the insurgent, and executed him. He reduced to obedience the provinces of Piseluk and Ligor, the governors of which had, during the Burman invasion, declared their independence.

The Burman King, in 1771, prepared an expedition for the reconquest of Siam, which totally failed, in consequence of a mutiny among part of the troops which had been raised in the conquered provinces of Martaban and Tavoy. The reign of Phia-tak may be stated to have commenced in the year 1769. The character of activity, moderation, and good sense which distinguished the early part of it, was changed in his last years for caprice, superstition, and tyranny, which led to a general belief that he was labouring under insanity. This brought on a formidable rebellion against his authority in the year 1782, headed by the great officer of state named the Chakri, who was at the time in command of an army in the kingdom of Kamboja. This chief marched to the new capital, Bangkok, dethroned the King, put him to death, and seized upon the Government.* The first prince of the present dynasty sat on the throne until the year 1809, when dying, he was succeeded by his eldest son, the late King, on the 11th of September of the same year. During this reign the Burmans, in the year 1785, and under the fifth prince of the race of Alompra, attempted the conquest of Junk-Ceylon, of which they obtained temporary possession, but were finally discomfited and expelled.

In 1786 the King of Ava, in person, again attempted the conquest of Siam, an army advancing from each of the three ordinary principal points of attack, Tavoy, Martaban, and Chiang-mai. The King was at the head of that which advanced from Martaban, and soon after entering the hostile frontier, was encountered by a Siamese army, lost his cannon, and was

* The manner of executing any person of the royal family in Siam, for there is a repugnance to shed their blood in its literal acceptation, is to beat them to death over the head with a club of sandal wood, and then throwing the body into a bag, to toss it, without funeral rites, into the Menam. Phia-tak, although base-born, had the honour of suffering death after this fashion.

nearly taken prisoner. From 1786 to 1793 the Burmans and Siamese contended for the possession of the sea-coast of Tennasserim, with considerable animation. It finally continued in the possession of the former by a truce concluded between the parties in the last-named year.

The late King of Siam succeeded to the throne, as already mentioned, in the year 1809. Thirty-six hours after the demise of his predecessor, he put to death one hundred and seventeen chiefs and other persons suspected of being unfavourable to his pretensions to the throne. Among these was the Prince Chao-Fa, his nephew, the chief object of his jealousy, and with whom he had promised to his own father, on his death-bed, that he should live as a brother. His reign, after this act of atrocity, was far from being of a sanguinary character. On the contrary, it was marked by a commendable share of moderation. I was assured, by persons on whose fidelity I could rely, that during the two years preceding our own arrival in the country, not one execution had taken place. His reign was disturbed by three inconsiderable insurrections only. The last of these took place a few months previous to our visit, and originated among the Talapoins, who had conspired to resist an unusual attempt to fill the ranks of the army from among their numbers. Seven hundred priests were arrested upon this occasion, but the greater number were soon liberated—none were executed, and a few only were punished, by being stripped of their sacerdotal habits, and condemned to cut grass for the royal elephants. In his wars against the Burmans he was successful in resisting their encroachments, and during the whole of his reign lost no part of the Siamese territory. In the year 1810, shortly after his accession, the Burmans fitted out a numerous armament for the capture of Junk-Ceylon, of which they took temporary possession; but a superior Siamese army having assembled, the Burmans were overpowered, and compelled to surrender at discretion. On this occasion the principal chiefs were beheaded, and the inferior prisoners carried off as slaves to Bangkok, where we saw some of the survivors working in chains. This is the last transaction of any mo-

ment which has taken place in the incessant warfare of these irreconcilable nations, who, however, except when restrained by the inclemency of the rainy season, when the country is inundated and impassable, are perpetually engaged in a system of petty hostilities on the frontier, consisting in inroads and incursions, the chief object of which is, the seizure of the peaceable inhabitants, for the purpose of carrying them off as slaves.

This Prince not only lost no part of the territory which he had inherited, but in the first year of his reign added considerably to his kingdom by the acquisition of the fertile and extensive Kambojan province of Ba-ta-bang. The late King of Siam, after an illness of a few days, died of a strangury on the 20th day of July, 1824. On the same day, his eldest but illegitimate son, the Prince Kroma-Chiat, ascended the throne without opposition; and notwithstanding the defect in his title and the frequency of such occurrences in the commencement of a new reign, the succession was not attended by any acts of proscription or bloodshed. His legitimate brother, a young man about nineteen years of age, and the presumptive heir to the throne, withdrew to a convent, according to custom, to save his life and liberty.

I obtained the following details, respecting the trade of Siam, during my stay at Bangkok, or afterwards at Singapore, from the communications of Siamese and Chinese traders. The inland and coasting trade is very considerable: the principal part of this domestic traffic is carried on on the Menam and its branches, and the produce is carried in flat boats, or on large rafts of bamboo. The upper part of the Menam where it begins to be navigable, is practicable in the months of August and September. Boats which quit Lao in these months, do not arrive at Bangkok until November and December, when the river is crowded with them. Grain, salt, cotton, sapan wood, oil, and timber, are brought to the capital by this mode of conveyance. Elephants generally constitute the land carriage, and are especially much employed in carrying goods in the mountainous and uncultivated parts of the country. The distant inland traffic of the Siamese is with Lao, Kamboja, the Chinese province of Yu-nan, and with the Malayan peninsula. From Lao there are imported stic-lac, benjamin, some raw silk, ivory and bees-wax, with horns and hides; and the exportation to that country consists of salt, salt-fish, and Chinese, Indian, and European manufactures. Between the river Menam, and the great river of Kamboja, there is water-carriage all the way by the river Ban-pa-kung, which in the season of the rains has generally a depth of five cubits, and in the dry season from a cubit to a cubit and a half, being therefore navigable during the former for boats of considerable burthen, and at all times for small boats. The importations from Kamboja into Siam consist of gamboge, cardamums, stic-lac, varnish, raw hides, horns, and ivory. The inland intercourse between Siam and China is conducted through Lao and Yu-nan. These countries are divided from each other by a strong natural barrier of mountains and forests, over which goods are transported with difficulty by small horses. The imports from China in this quarter I am told consist of coarse Chinese woollens, some English broad-cloths, pins, needles, and other descriptions of hardware, with some gold, copper, and lead.

The traffic between the countries lying on the shores of the straits of Malacca and bay of Bengal, with the Siamese capital, is conducted by three different routes over the mountains of the peninsula. The first of these lies between Queda and Sungora; the second, the most frequented, between Trang and Ligor; and the third, between Pun-pin, opposite to Junk-Ceylon and Chai-ya. The land part of the journey is from five to seven days on elephants, the only description of carriage made use of. When the goods reach the shore of the gulf of Siam, they are shipped in boats for the capital. By these routes are brought to Bangkok tin and ivory from Junk-Ceylon, esculent swallows' nests, opium, Indian and British cotton goods, with some miscellaneous British manufactures. In 1821, there were exported from Prince of Wales's Island to Siam opium and European and Indian piece

goods to the value of 122,200 Spanish dollars, of which by far the largest part went by the channels now alluded to.

Of the foreign trade of Siam, the most important branch is that with China. This is wholly carried on in vessels of Chinese form, navigated by Chinese, but the greater portion of them built in Siam. As far as Siam is concerned, the whole of the Chinese trade centres in Bangkok, with the exception of a few junks which trade to Sungora and Ligor. The ports of China which carry on trade with Siam, are Canton, Kiang-mui, and Changlim, in the province of Quanton; Amoy, or Emwi, in Fokien; Limpo, or Nimpo, in Che-kiang; with Siang-hai, and Sao-cheu, in Kiang-nan; besides several ports of the great island of Hai-nan. These junks are expected in Siam in the following order. Those of the island of Hai-nan usually arrive in January, and those from the provinces of Canton, Fokien, and Che-kiang, in the latter end of February and down to the beginning of April. They all sail from the Menam in the months of June and July, when the south-west monsoon is at its strength, and of course there is but one voyage performed yearly. I am told, however, that the junks occasionally make short voyages on the coast of China in the intermediate time between their arrival there, and their proceeding on a new voyage to Siam. The imports from China are very numerous, consisting of what are called in commercial language "assorted cargoes." The following is a list of the principal commodities; coarse earthenware and porcelain, spelter, quicksilver, tea, lacksoy (vermicelli), dried fruits, raw silk, crapes, satins and other silk fabrics, nankeens, shoes, fans, umbrellas, writing-paper, sacrificial paper, incense rods, and many other minor articles. Not the least valuable part of the importations are passengers.

The exports from Siam are also very various, but the following list comprehends the most considerable; black pepper, sugar, tin, cardamums, eagle-wood, sapan-wood, red mangrove bark, rose-wood for furniture and cabinet work, cotton, ivory, stic-lac, rice, areca-nuts, salt-fish, the hides and skins of oxen, buffaloes, elephants, rhinoceros, deer, tigers, leopards, otters,

civet cats, the pangolin; of snakes, and rays, with the belly-shell of a species of land tortoise; the horns of the buffalo, ox, deer, and rhinoceros; the bones of the ox, buffalo, elephant, rhinoceros, and tiger; dried deers' sinews, the feathers of the pelican, of several species of stork, of the peacock and kingfisher, &c. and finally esculent swallows' nests.

The commercial intercourse between Siam and China has existed since the earliest acquaintance of Europeans with these countries, but it has become considerable only since the accession of the Prince who ascended or usurped the throne of Siam, on the expulsion of the Burmans in the year 1769, and who was himself of the half Chinese blood, as already stated. La Loubere, who visited Siam one hundred and thirty-five years before our own mission to it, estimated the whole Chinese in the country at only between three and four thousand, and from other authorities the Chinese trade does not appear to have exceeded a few junks annually. All foreign intercourse in Siam is viewed as coming under the head of commerce, and this applies even to that with China, although the King of Siam professes himself to be a vassal of that empire. This vassalage, however, is purely nominal, but under pretext of it the Siamese Court is enabled every year to send two large junks of fifteen thousand piculs, or between nine hundred and one thousand tons each, to Canton, which, at the expense of a few trifling presents, are exempted from the payment of all duties. Ambassadors proceed on these annually to Canton, and there pay their respects to the Viceroy of that province, and every third year repair to Pekin, after being rendered worthy of that honour by being invested with a Chinese title of nobility, and assuming the Chinese costume. When the embassy is to the Viceroy of Canton, the presents consist of the staple products of Siam,—such as tin, pepper, and sugar; but when to the Emperor, there is added to them a tree of gold and of silver, resembling the similar tributes paid to the King of Siam himself by his Malayan vassals.

No adequate data exist for offering a correct account of the extent

of the trade between Siam and China; but a probable estimate of it may be formed.

The Siamese junks trading to the province of Canton are as follow:—three large junks, of from 10,000 to 15,000 piculs each, trade to the port of Canton; fifty, from 2000 to 5000, to the same place; and two of 7000 to Changlim. The Siamese junks trading to the province of Fokien, amount to two of 6000 piculs each; those proceeding to the port of Nimpo amount to eight, measuring from 5000 to 8000 piculs each. The junks proceeding to the province of Kiang-nan, amount to one junk of 5000 piculs, for the port of Sao-cheu; and fifteen junks, from 5000 to 8000, for that of Siang-hai. A fair average of this branch of the Chinese trade of Siam, will not give less for the whole than 393,000 piculs, or 24,562 tons.

Besides this trade, conducted in what may be called Siamese bottoms, an inferior, but still a considerable one is carried on in similar vessels belonging to China. From the port of Kiang-mui in the province of Canton, there come five junks, measuring from 3000 to 5000 piculs; from Changlim, one junk of 5000 piculs; and from Amoy, two junks of 3000 each. With the ports of Canton, Nimpo, and Siang-hai, there is no trade to Siam under the Chinese flag. All the junks carrying on the trade between the island of Hai-nan, which is a dependency of the province of Quantong, belong to China. They are small vessels measuring from 2000 to 3500 piculs, and seldom less than fifty come yearly. Taking the average of this branch of the trade, the whole will probably not be overrated at 168,500 piculs, or 10,531 tons. The numerical account of the whole trade between Siam and China will, according to this statement, be about 140 junks, and the tonnage employed will not be less than 561,500 piculs, or 35,093 tons.

No accurate details can be furnished respecting the value of the trade which Siam carries on with China; but some interesting particulars may be stated, which will assist us in forming a general notion of it. The

junks belonging to Siam are all built at Bangkok, and at that place commonly from six to eight of the largest description are launched annually. They are built under the direction of a Chinese head-carpenter, the ordinary workmen being usually Siamese. The frame-work is commonly of the wood called by the Malays marbao (*metrosideros amboinensis*), and the deck and planks of teak (*tectona grandis*). The cost of one of the larger description ready for sea, is estimated at twenty-five ticals per ton, or about 3*l.* 2*s.* 6*d.* Assuming this rate for the whole, the value of the Siamese shipping trading to China will be 614,050 ticals, or 76,756*l.*

The shipping belonging to China carrying on the Siamese trade, are built at the respective ports of that country from which they sail, and cost differently at each. They are built of inferior woods to the Siamese junks,—I think, generally of fir,—their rudder, anchor, and masts being commonly of suitable wood procured in Kamboja, Siam, or the Malayan islands. At Amoy in Fokien, the cost of ship-building is at the rate of above forty-two Spanish dollars per ton; but at Changlim in Canton, only thirty-two Spanish dollars. These Chinese junks undergo a thorough repair every four years, and such repairs are indefinitely carried on until the junk be finally lost by shipwreck, for it appears not to be the practice in any case to condemn a vessel and break her up.

The great majority of the mariners navigating these junks of both classes are Chinese; for Siamese are found only on board those which trade to the port of Canton,—this nation being, it appears, like Europeans, strictly excluded from all other parts of China. A Chinese junk is manned with an extraordinary proportion of hands, if compared to European vessels—a circumstance which chiefly arises from the awkwardness of the rudder, the cable and anchor, and the weight and clumsiness of the enormous square-sails which are made use of. A junk of 8000 piculs, or about 500 tons, requires a crew of ninety men, and the proportion of hands is still greater for vessels of smaller size. The officers and crew, in the larger junks at least, are commonly paid in the following manner. The com-

mander or *Chinchu* gets no fixed salary, but receives a hundred piculs of tonnage in both the outward and homeward voyage, has the cabin accommodation for passengers at his disposal, worth from 150 to 200 dollars, and gets a commission commonly of ten per cent. on the net profits of the voyage. The pilot receives 200 dollars for the voyage, with 50 piculs of tonnage; the accountant 100 dollars, and 50 piculs; the captains of the steerage, 15 piculs of freight; and the captains of the anchor and the hold, 9 piculs each. Each seaman receives 7 piculs of freight, and no wages. These proportions apply to a junk of 6000 piculs, but vary a little as the vessel is larger or smaller.

The rates of freight which are charged will show the profits which are expected from these adventures. From Bangkok to Changlim in the province of Canton, the freight paid for tin is two and a half dollars per picul; for esculent swallows' nests, ten dollars per picul; and for such commodities as tripang or bech-de-mer, three dollars. All gruff commodities, such as dye-woods, barks, &c., are constantly taken on speculation by the owners of the junk. The return freights are,—for earthenware, tea, and other bulky articles, one Spanish dollar per picul; and for such fine articles as wrought and unwrought silks, five Spanish dollars. The freights to and from Amoy are a good deal higher.

Passengers form the most valuable importation from China into Siam. The rate of passage-money between Bangkok and Amoy is eight Spanish dollars, and between Bangkok and Changlim six Spanish dollars,—ready money in both cases. The commander furnishes provisions. A single junk has been known to bring 1200 passengers to Bangkok; and I am told that the annual immigrations into that place may be moderately estimated at seven thousand. The staple articles of import are coarse chinaware, coarse teas, and raw and wrought silks; but the imports do not equal the exports without including a quantity of Chinese silver in ingots. The staple articles of exportation are black pepper, sugar, stic-lac, sapan-wood,

cardamums, cotton wool, eagle-wood, rice, hides, and wood for furniture. I give the quantities of some of these as they were stated to me, without however venturing to vouch for their accuracy. The produce of Siam in pepper is 60,000 piculs, and nearly the whole of this goes to China. The production of sugar equals that of pepper, of which about one half is said to be sent thither. The export of stic-lac is given at 16,000 piculs, and the sapan-wood at 30,000; the ivory at 1000 piculs; and the fine cardamums at 500.

The Phraklang informed me that the most profitable part of the trade was that carried on with the ports of Siang-hai, Nimpo, and Sao-cheu; and the least so that with the ports of Canton and Amoy, but especially the latter. It is indeed a fact generally understood, that at the two ports in question the duties are heavier, and the conduct of the public officers more vexatious, than in any other part of China.

The remaining branches of the external trade of Siam are all conducted nearly in the same manner and with the same class of vessels, and may be comprehended under one head. These branches consist of the coasting trade, which Bangkok, the capital, carries on with the Siamese ports on the eastern and western side of the Gulf—the trade with Kamboja and Cochin China, and the trade with the different countries of the Malayan Archipelago. Bangkok carries on a coasting trade with the ports of Champon, Chai-ya, Bandon, Ligor, Sungora, and Tălung, on the western coast of the Gulf, and with Ban-pa-soi, Ban-pa-kung, Bang-prah, Banpomung, Rayong, Passeh, Chantabun, Tung-yai, and Ko-kong on the eastern coast. The great object of this trade is to collect produce for the Chinese market,—such as pepper, cardamums, gamboge, ivory, eagle-wood, dye-woods, and barks. A considerable number of the junks employed in this traffic belong to the King, and are engaged in carrying from Chantabun and Tung-yai the royal tributes in pepper and other commodities. It may here be remarked, that the intercourse between Bangkok

and the eastern coast of the Gulf, which is sheltered by a long chain of islands, may be carried on without interruption nearly throughout the year, the monsoons opposing no serious obstacle.

The Siamese trade with Kamboja is conducted with the ports of Pongsom, Kang-kao, Tek-sia, and Kamao; here the exports from Siam consist of Chinese, European, and Indian manufactures, with iron; and the imports of gamboge, cardamums, ivory, hides, and horns, with dried deers' flesh, and salt-fish, chiefly for the Chinese market.

The Siamese trade with Cochin China is carried on with the ports of Saigun or Long-nai, Sincheu or Fai-fo, and the capital Hué, but by far to the greatest extent with the first-named place. The number of junks conducting this trade is from forty to fifty, all small. The exports from Siam consist of unwrought iron, iron pans, tobacco, opium, and some European Chinese goods. They take back mats for bags and sails, wrought and unwrought silks, &c.

The trade with the different countries of the Malayan Archipelago has within the last few years been greatly extended, and become indeed of very considerable consequence. It is conducted with the following ports:—Patani, Kalantan, Tringano, Pahang, Rhio, Singapore, Malacca, Penang, Batavia, Samarang, Cheribon, Palembang, and Pontianak. In this intercourse the staple exports of Siam are sugar, salt, oil, and rice; to which may be added the minor articles of stic-lac, iron pans, coarse earthenware, hogs' lard, &c. The returns are British and Indian piece goods, opium, with a little glass-ware, and some British woollens from the European settlements, with commodities suited for the Chinese market,—such as pepper, tin, dragons' blood, rattans, bech-de-mer, esculent swallows' nests, and Malayan camphor from the native ports. In 1824, the Siamese junks which visited the ports in the straits of Malacca, and all of which finally cleared from Singapore, amounted to forty-four. This is undoubtedly at present the most extensive branch of the foreign trade of Siam, after that with China.

The junks carrying on the different branches of the trade just described,

are all built and owned in Siam, and are formed and equipped in a manner considerably different from the junks intended for the Chinese trade, and such as to make them more manageable, and more cheaply navigated. Their ordinary size runs from 1000 to 3000 piculs, although there be a few which are as large as between 6000 and 7000. The proportion of the crew to the tonnage is smaller than in the junks of Chinese construction, and may be estimated at about sixteen hands to the hundred tons. In the coasting-trade, these crews are partly Chinese and partly Siamese; but in the more distant and difficult navigation, almost exclusively Chinese.

The whole number of junks carrying on the branches of trade now referred to, were estimated to me at about two hundred; which, from what I had an opportunity of observing personally, I am not inclined to consider as an exaggerated statement, since nearly a fourth part of the amount is made up by the trade of the Straits of Malacca alone. Taking the average of each junk at 2250 piculs, the whole of this trade will amount to 450,000 piculs, or 28,125 tons.

After the data now given, a conjecture may be hazarded respecting the number of mariners engaged in the whole external trade of Siam. The Chinese trade of Siam conducted in Siamese bottoms has been estimated at 24,562 tons, which, at the moderate estimate of twenty hands to every hundred tons, will give 4912 mariners. The coasting-trade with that of Kamboja, Cochin China, and the Malayan countries, at sixteen men to each hundred tons, will give 4500; so that the whole mariners belonging to Siam will in this manner amount to 9412. If to these be added the mariners' navigating vessels belonging to China, of which the tonnage was estimated at 10,531, and whose numbers will amount to 2106 hands, the whole mariners carrying on the external trade of Siam will amount to 11,518. This statement, as far as it can be relied upon, is calculated to convey a respectable impression of the foreign trade of Bangkok; which, indeed, I have every reason to believe, far exceeds that of any other Asiatic port not settled by Europeans, with the single exception of the port of Canton in China.

In point of climate, considerable variety must necessarily exist in a country which extends from the seventh to at least the twentieth degree of North latitude, and which at the same time presents much diversity of physical aspect, exhibiting in some situations extensive alluvial plains, subject to periodical inundation; and in others, hilly tracts and extensive ranges of mountains, commonly covered with primeval forests. I can speak only of the climate of Bangkok, to which my experience was confined. As in other tropical countries not distant from the Equator, the year in the latitude of the Siamese capital consists of two seasons only,—a wet and a dry. In 1822, during our visit, the periodical rains commenced early in May; they were at first light, but about the middle of that month rain fell in torrents, accompanied by very tempestuous weather; and this state of things continued until the beginning of July, when serene and moderate weather followed, and continued without interruption until the middle of August, when we quitted the Gulf. In March and April we also experienced similarly fine weather, and were informed by Europeans, who had resided in the country, that the climate in the colder months was moderate and agreeable throughout. In April and May, before the rains had set in, the thermometer in the shade rose daily to from 95 to 96 of Farenheit. In December and January, we were told that it occasionally fell to 72. These may be considered the extremes of heat and cold in this country. Of the winds it is scarcely necessary to speak. As in other Indian countries to the north of the Equator, a north-east wind prevails throughout the winter, and a south-west throughout the summer solstice, leaving a period of about six weeks of inconstant winds and calms at each of the changes.

The Siamese themselves, in reference to the rise and fall of the Menam within the tract of inundation, give the following account of their seasons. In the sixth month of their year, generally corresponding to the end of April and beginning of May, the rainy season commences, and the ceremony of the Sovereign holding the plough on the 6th day of the bright half of this moon is intended to commemorate that event as well as the commencement of rural labour. In the seventh month the rain is heavier, and the greatest fall takes place in the eighth, ninth, and tenth months. In the eleventh month the rain is light, and about the middle of the twelfth it ceases altogether. The Menam at Bangkok does not begin to rise until the tenth month: it continues to do so during the eleventh, twelfth, and first months, when the inundation is at its height. In the second month the waters subside, and they are at the lowest during the fourth, fifth, and six months. Although the Menam does not begin to rise at Bangkok until the tenth month, it commences farther to the North much sooner, and towards the northern frontier as early as the seventh month. The greatest rise of the river is eighteen feet.

The climate of Bangkok, although the heat be great in the warm months, the place itself low, the surrounding country subject to periodical inundation, and covered with fields of marsh rice, is far from being unhealthy. Our party amounting, including the ship's company, to one hundred and thirty persons, resided for four months on the banks of the Menam, not very conveniently lodged, and yet in all this period, commonly considered the most unhealthy season in tropical countries, no death occurred from any complaint contracted by the climate, nor indeed was any one affected with a serious malady which could be connected with our situation. The natives of Bangkok themselves consider the country healthy, and their frames, robust and vigorous for an Indian people, appear to afford evidence that they enjoy the advantage of a wholesome climate.

The geology and mineralogy of Siam are as yet almost unexplored, and on this subject I have little better to offer than the information given to me by the natives of the country, always vague and uncertain. The tin formation consisting, I believe, always of granite, and which is well ascertained to pervade the whole Malay peninsula, even from

within a few miles of Cape Romania, the most southern extremity of the continent of Asia, extends through the Siamese territory as far on the coast of the bay of Bengal as Tavoy, in about the fourteenth degree of North latitude, and on that of the gulf of Siam as far as Cham-pon, in about the eleventh degree. The ore found within this wide range, as far as has been ascertained, is always common tin-stone, or oxide of tin, occurring in alluvial formations, technically called "streams." The richest mines of Siam exist in the island of Junk Ceylon, and here the ore is found in precisely the same situation as in the island of Banca, and the mines are probably not inferior to those of the latter in fertility. The other places in which mines are wrought are Sungora, Mardilung, Ligore, Cham-pon, Ma-ya, and Tavoy.

Gold, which appears in the Malay peninsula to have as wide a geographic distribution and a similar geognostic situation with tin, is also found under the same circumstances within the Siamese territory. The places in which, according to my information, gold is obtained, are Bang-ta-pan, and Ra-chan. At the first place, which is in about the twelfth degree of North latitude, the ore is said to be above nineteen carats fine. The whole quantity produced, however, is not sufficient for the consumption of the country, owing to the quantity expended in gilding temples and images; in consequence of which, quantities are imported from the Malayan countries.

Iron however, of all the metals, occurs in the greatest relative abundance in Siam. The mines of it all existing at a great distance from the capital, we had no means of determining what particular ores of it were used for smelting; but that the mines were fertile, appeared sufficiently evident from the low price at which the metal itself is sold at Bangkok, and which for cast-iron does not exceed a dollar and a half the picul, nor for malleable iron above double that amount. The most productive mines of iron are in the districts of Pi-si-luk, La-kon-sa-wan, Ra-heng, and Me-tak, all situated on or near the Menam.

Copper, lead, zinc, and antimony, are also found in Siam, which, from the list now given, will appear to be no less distinguished for the variety and abundance of its mineral, than it is acknowledged to be for its vegetable productions. Copper mines were attempted to be worked by the French in the time of Louis XIV., and lately to a small extent by the Chinese. The mineral is found in a low range of primitive mountains near Louvo or Nuk-bu-ri, in about the fifteenth degree of North latitude. Lead appears to be found more abundantly. The mines exist at a place called Pak-prek, in the mountains of the barbarous tribe of Lawá. They are worked only by this people, who produce yearly about two thousand piculs of the metal. This fact would seem to prove satisfactorily that the mines must be both fertile and accessible; for had the case been otherwise, the metal would not have been procurable at all, through the unskilful labour of so rude a people. Zinc and antimony are found in the district of Rap-ri, to the eastward of the Menam. The mines of the first have not hitherto been wrought, but the ore of antimony is smelted in small quantities, and, it is said, although the fact appears very doubtful, used by the Chinese manufacturers of cast-iron utensils to assist the fusion of the iron. Of the ores of the different metals now mentioned, we obtained no specimens, and therefore I am unable to give any description of them.

The only gems which are ascertained to be minerals of Siam, are the sapphire, the Oriental ruby, and the Oriental topaz. These are all found in the hills of Chan-ta-bun, about the latitude of 12 degrees, and on the eastern side of the Gulf. The gems, from what we could learn, are obtained by digging up the alluvial soil at the bottom of the hills, and washing it. The gravel obtained after this operation is brought to the capital for examination. A quantity of it was offered to us for sale, which consisted principally of the peculiar mineral called *uclase*, in which were to be found a few minute specimens of blue sapphire. Both the ruby and sapphire of Siam are greatly inferior in quality to those of Ava. Several

specimens were shown to us during our stay, but none of them of any value. The mines of Chan-ta-bun, notwithstanding this, are a rigidly guarded monopoly on the part of the King.

The *botany* of Siam and its dependent provinces, would afford a rich and varied field to the scientific observer that had time and opportunity to examine it,—means, however, which are not for a long time likely to be at the disposal of any European capable of availing himself of them, owing to the singularly suspicious and jealous character of the Government of the country. Of the interior we ourselves saw very little, and what we did see, differed in no essential respect from other Indian countries; for the neighbourhood of Bangkok is a low, tame, and fertile tract, cultivated with ordinary tropical productions, and affording few novel objects for the examination of the botanist.

I shall confine myself, therefore, to giving a very brief sketch of the useful vegetable productions of Siam, whether agricultural or otherwise. Of the *Cereal Gramineæ*, the only plants which we observed to be cultivated in Siam, were common rice, oryza sativa, called in the Siamese language Kao-san, and Indian corn, zea mays, called by the Siamese Kao-pot. The principal varieties of rice cultivated are the upland and marsh grains; —each, but especially the latter, consisting of many sub-varieties, as in other Indian countries not distant from the Equator, where this grain has been long and generally cultivated. The climate of Siam, and its soil within the tract of inundation, appear to be admirably suited for the production of rice, and to be inferior in this respect to no country in the world. With the exception of Bengal, Siam unquestionably exports more rice than any country in Asia. I was informed that in the rice-grounds in the vicinity of Bangkok, a return of forty-fold for the seed was expected by the husbandmen. The certainty with which the crops of this grain are yielded from year to year, is probably of still more consequence than their occasional abundance. The conviction of this fact has produced a salutary influence even upon the jealous and arbitrary Government of Siam, which, in opposition to the practice of other Asiatic states, generally permits the free exportation of rice, no doubt from a long habitual experience of the safety of this policy. Maize is extensively cultivated in Siam, particularly in the mountain districts, but does not form in this, no more than in any other Asiatic country, an article of exportation, being a commodity of too little value to bear the heavy freights of Indian navigation.

Of leguminous plants, the *Phaseolus Radiatus*, the *Phaseolus Max*, and the *Arachis Hypogaea*, are the most commonly cultivated, and the first is exported in considerable quantities to China and the Malay islands. Of farinaceous roots, the Siamese have the usual varieties cultivated in other tropical countries, the most useful and valuable of which is the *Convolvulus Batatas*, or sweet potatoe.

Of palms, the coco and areca alone are extensively cultivated in the lower parts of Siam. The first, however, only is remarkable for its fecundity, and affords an extensive produce of oil for exportation at very low prices.

The fruits of Siam, or at least of the neighbourhood of Bangkok, are excellent and various, surpassing, according to the experience of our party,—and one or other of us had been accustomed to the fruits of Bengal, Bombay, the Malay peninsula, Ceylon and Java,—those of all other parts of India. The Siamese themselves consume great quantities of fruit, and the whole neighbourhood of Bangkok is one forest of fruit-trees,—having, it appears from the French accounts, been remarkable for its orchards at an early period, and affording in the time of the French embassies, the principal supply for Yuthia, the then capital. The most exquisite fruits of Siam are the mango, the mangustin, the orange, the durian, the lichi, and, if the taste of an European who is a stranger to tropical fruits were consulted, the pine-apple might be added. All these fruits, and many inferior ones, were in season during our stay in Siam, from April to July. It may be considered as somewhat singular, that the mangustin (*Garcinia Mangostana*) and the durian (*Durios*), which refuse to

bear fruit in all the British provinces in Hindostan, yield abundantly in parallel latitudes in Siam, and even as far north as Korat, between the 16th and 17th degrees of latitude. Both these trees, it would appear by the name given to them by the Siamese, and which are pure Malay, must be exotics. The lichi (*Scytalia Litchi*), which is in season in Siam for a few weeks towards the end of March and beginning of April, has, as in other countries, been introduced from China; and as it is not, like the two last-mentioned fruits, taken notice of by the European writers of the seventeenth century, who treat of Siam, I presume it to be a modern introduction, although I could not ascertain the exact period when it was first cultivated in this country. It is singular how very few native fruits of delicate flavour any one country can boast of;—Siam, for example, which has now so rich and varied an assemblage of choice fruits, owes the best of them to foreign countries. Besides those already mentioned, Siam seems indebted to European intercourse for the guava (*Psidium Pomiferum*) and the Papia fig (*Carica Papaja*); the first of which is called, in the language of the country, the fruit of Malacca (*Maloko*), and the second, the banana of the Franks (*Kloa-Farang*).

The sugar-cane has been known in Siam, as in other parts of India, time out of mind; but its culture, to useful and extensive purposes, does not date beyond twelve years before the period of our visit to the country, and originated in the industry and enterprise of the Chinese settlers, encouraged by some liberal concessions yielded to or extorted by them at the time from the Siamese Government. The result, in the year 1822, was a production of sugar, generally the whitest and best in India, to the extent of above 60,000 piculs, or above eight millions of pounds, exported to China, the western parts of Hindostan, Persia, Arabia, and Europe. The districts in which the sugar-cane is raised are Bam-pa-soi, La-kon-chai-se, Bang-kong, and Pe-triu, all within the fertile valley of the Menam. The cane is planted in the seventh month, or June; cut in the first month, or December; and sugar is produced in the market

of Bangkok in the second month, or January. The cultivators of the cane are always Siamese; but the manufacturers of sugar invariably Chinese.

Black pepper is produced only in the districts of Chan-ta-bun and Tung-yai, about the 11th and 12th degrees of latitude, which, it may be remarked, coincides with the countries which yield the same commodity in Western India. The Siamese pepper is superior in quality to that of the Malayan countries, but scarcely known in any foreign market, except that of China. The annual quantity produced is about eight millions of pounds, of which two-thirds are delivered to the King of Siam, who pays to the cultivator about eight ticals the picul, and vends it, after being conveyed to Bangkok, at about double that amount. I do not know whether or not black pepper, *Piper nigrum*, be an indigenous plant of Siam; but from its being produced in a climate and situation similar to Malabar, where it is known to be a native, as well as from its name, in the language of the country, viz. Siamese pepper, *Prik-thai*, it is not improbable that it is.*

The same parts of the country which produce pepper, with the adjacent districts of Kamboja, afford another product common to them with the coast of Malabar, viz. cardamums. These in the market are of two qualities, varying in price from fifty to three hundred ticals the picul. The best are occasionally sold in China as high as five hundred dollars the picul. According to the accounts rendered to us, the cardamums of Siam and Kam-

* The following may be considered as a probable estimate of the whole pepper produce of the world. I give it in piculs of about 133½ pounds of avordupois, at which rate the total will be 50,062,500 pounds:—

Produce of the west coast of the island of Sumatra	150,000
East coast of ditto	60,000
Islands in the Straits of Malacca	27,000
Malay Peninsula	28,000
Borneo	20,000
Siam	60,000
Malabar	30,000
Total Piculs	375,000

boja are of two species, the productions of two distinct plants, in accordance with which they are known by two different names in the Siamese and Kambojan languages,—those of the first quality being called Kra-wan, and those of the second Ri-u. The forests producing them are royal preserves, and strictly guarded. Although making repeated inquiries, we had no opportunity of examining the plants either in Siam or Kamboja, and several trials which I afterwards made in Singapore to propagate them from the seed entirely failed; so that we had no opportunity of determining whether they be new species of *Amomum*, or only a variety of the ordinary *Amomum Cardamomum*. The capsules of the best description were white, about three times the size of the finest Malabar cardamums, and the seeds highly aromatic. It is not easy to account for the extraordinary request in which the Kambojan cardamums are held by the Chinese; but it probably arises out of a similar caprice with that which induces them to put an arbitrary value to Malayan camphor, esculent swallows' nests, and similar commodities.

Tobacco, which is known to the Siamese by the singular term "medicine," is very generally cultivated throughout the country, but in the greatest perfection in the districts of Chan-ta-bun and Bam-pa-soi. It is one of the striking indications of improvement among the modern Siamese that this plant, which used not many years ago to be largely imported from Java, no longer continues to be so, but on the contrary is exported in considerable quantity to Cochin China, and to several of the Malayan countries.

Several descriptions of cotton, (Fai in the Siamese language,) all herbaceous and annual plants, are grown in Siam; but whether the common *Gossypium Herbaceum*, and *Gossypiam Indicum*, reared in other Asiatic countries, or other species, we had no opportunity of learning. Cotton does not thrive within the tract of inundation, and is principally grown in the provinces of Ligor, Pak-prek, and other upland districts. That of the first-named country is of inferior value. We observed large importations of cotton

brought into Bangkok, which, notwithstanding its high price, viz. from eight to thirteen ticals per picul in the seed, is exported to the island of Hai-nan, and to the annual extent, it is said, of twenty thousand piculs, freed from the seed.

A gum resembling benzoin, and hitherto confounded with it, is a native product of the Siamese territories. The Siamese call it kam-nyan, which is nearly the Malayan term, and represent it as the spontaneous product of a forest tree growing in Lao, in the districts of Raheng, Chiang-mai, and La-kon, as far north as the twentieth degree of latitude. From this description, the tree is probably a different plant from the *Styrax Benzoin* of Sumatra, which grows close to the Equator, and is an object of cultivation. As the Siamese gum is comparatively cheap and abundant at the capital, no doubt the tree yields it plentifully.

That portion of Kamboja which now belongs to Siam, and some parts of the Siamese territory bordering upon it, afford the well-known medicine and pigment, gamboge, and indeed, I believe, are the only parts of the world that do so. The districts yielding gamboge correspond generally with those affording pepper and cardamums; that is to say, the countries on the east coast of the Gulf of Siam, from the latitude of ten to twelve degrees. The gum is obtained from a species of Garcinia, to which it gives name, by making incisions in the bark of the forest trees, from which it exudes, and is collected in vessels suspended or affixed to them. In these it soon assumes a concrete form, and is fit for the market without farther preparation. The districts which afford this production, deliver to the Kings of Siam, Kamboja, and Cochin China, fixed quantities of it yearly as tax or tribute. In the Siamese and Kambojan languages, this production is called Rong, from whence is evidently derived the Portuguese name Rom. The derivation of our own, and of the Latin name, is sufficiently obvious.

Another singular production, of nearly the same countries, is Agila, Agle, or aloes-wood, called by the Siamese *Kisná*. The large forest

tree which affords this production seems to exist in all hilly countries, from the 24th degree of latitude down to the Equator. The scented wood is, from all accounts, the result of a deceased action in the tree. It appears to be more or less frequent according to soil and climate, and from the same causes to differ materially in quality. It is produced both in the greatest quantity and the greatest perfection in the countries and islands on the east coast of the Gulf of Siam, from Bang-pa-soi in 13° 30′ downwards. The late Dr. Roxburgh introduced the plant into the botanical garden of Calcutta, from the hills to the eastward of the district of Sylhet, and described it under the name of Aquillaria Agalocha. It is of the class and order *Decandria Monogynia*, has an *umbel* for its inflorescense, a *drupe* for its fruit, and the leaf is *lanceolate*. The foreign names of this plant afford a curious example of corruption. The original one is Sanscrit, and correctly written "aguru." From this is derived the Malayan name "agila;" from which, in its turn, are derived the following European corruptions:— agila wood, aguillaria, agalocha, bois d'aigle, and eagle-wood.

The *Cæsalpinia Sappan*, or sapan tree, called *Fang* by the Siamese, valuable for the red dye of its wood, is a very abundant production of the Siamese forests, where it grows to the height of fifty or sixty feet, and often to the diameter of two feet. The places remarkable for its production, are the mountains of the peninsula lying between the 10th and 13th degrees of N. latitude. Sapan wood, in point of quantity, if not of value, is the most considerable of all the exports of Siam. It is principally sent to China, but of late a very considerable quantity of it has been exported to Europe and Bengal.

A tree affording a valuable timber, and known to the Siamese by the name of *Wai-deng*, or red wood, is produced in the forests of *Pe-tri-u*, and in those of *Ra-yung* and *Bang-po-mung*, between the 12th and 13th degrees of latitude, on the eastern coast of the Gulf. This wood, although called by the Portuguese Christians, *Pao Rosa*, or rose wood, bears no resemblance to the fancy or ornamental woods known under this name in Europe. The

tree grows to a large size. Its wood, as its name imports, is of a red colour, fine grained, and admitting a good polish. The Chinese export it largely for cabinet work. We had no opportunity of examining its place in the botanical system, nor do I believe it has hitherto been determined.

The Teak forests of Siam appear, by all accounts, to be considerable. It is almost superfluous to say, that the Teak of Siam is the *Tectona* of botanists, and that there is but one species of the genus. Of the timber, at least, there are two varieties in Siam, according to the statement of the natives, differing in degrees of hardness. The harder kind, which is the most valued, is produced in the hilly countries of Raheng and Chang-mai; and the soft, or inferior description, in the low country of Pisaluk. No Teak appears to be produced in the lower provinces of Siam, nor, from all accounts, farther south than about sixteen degrees North latitude. The situation of the Teak forests of Siam, in fact, appears to correspond in latitude with the best and most abundant of those of Ava.

Teak wood is much used by the Siamese themselves in the construction of junks, and, above all, in that of their numerous temples. Very little of it has hitherto been exported, nor is there likely to be much until the business of ship-building in our settlements in the Straits of Malacca shall be established on an extensive scale; when, as in the parallel cases of Rangoon and Calcutta, Teak will, in all probability, become a valuable article of trade in our intercourse with the Siamese. In the meanwhile, persons of all descriptions in Siam, having a licence from the Government, are permitted to fell Teak, and deal in it as an article of trade. For the use of the capital, it is floated down the Menam in the eighth and ninth months of the Siamese year, and commonly arrives in the ninth and tenth.

The zoology of Siam, except in its more ordinary and familiar features, is an unexplored field. Of carnivorous quadrupeds, Siam furnishes the Bear, which I believe to be the same found in Borneo, and the Malay peninsula. This was formerly called the Ursus Malayanus; but my friend Dr. Horsefield, the greatest discoverer and the most accurate observer of all writers

on Indian zoology, considers it to be a new genus, and describes it under the name of Helarctos. A species of Otter is very generally found about the rivers of Siam. We saw them even at Bangkok; their skins are bought up by the Chinese, and exported to China. This I believe to be the Leutra Leptonyx of Dr. Horsefield.

Of the canine family, the Dog is the only species known in Siam. According to the Siamese, it exists in some of their forests in a wild state, and is said by them to burrow like the fox and jackal. The domestic Dog, an ugly prick-eared cur of considerable size, and commonly only of three colours, black, brown, and white, is frequent, to the extent of a nuisance, in all the Siamese towns and villages. It is, as in other parts of the East, unowned and unappropriated; and as the natives, from religious motives, do not disturb it, and have not, like the inhabitants of Mohammedan countries, a repugnance to this animal, it is very familiar, and voluntarily accompanies them when they go abroad. The Wolf, the Jackal, the Hyena, and the Fox are, as far as is yet known, strangers in Siam, as I believe they are in every country from Arracan to China.

Several species of the Civet, or *Viverra*, exist; and the true Civet *(Viverra Civetta)* is reared by the Siamese for the musk which it produces. Of the feline tribe, the species which are known to exist in Siam are the common Cat, in its wild and domesticated state, the royal tiger, and the leopard, both spotted and black. The Tiger and Leopard are extremely frequent in the forests of Siam, but especially the latter. I found in the market of Bangkok, one day, the dressed skin of a handsome animal of the feline tribe. The same animal, it appears, exists in Sumatra, and a live specimen of it was brought home by the late Sir Stamford Raffles. My specimen, which, from the tip of the nose to that of the tail, measured about five feet and a half, is now at the museum of the India House. The animal has recently been described under the name of *Felis nubilus* and *Felis macroselis*. The skins both of leopards and tigers form a considerable article of exportation to China; but what is more remarkable, *the bones* of the second, which the Chinese consider to be possessed of medicinal qualities.

Of the order of gnawers, the following are ascertained to exist in Siam. The common mouse, the Rat *(Mus decumanus)*, several species of squirrel, and the porcupine *(Hystrix cristata)*. Two specimens were given to us of what appeared to be a new species of mouse or rat. Of this singular little animal, drawings were made under the directions of the late Mr. Finlayson, and are now at the India House. Neither the hare nor rabbit are known in the lower parts of Siam, another singular feature of their zoology.

Among the toothless animals, Siam produces the Pangolin, (*manis pentadactyla*)—the scaly skin of which is to be seen in the shops of Bangkok, prepared for sale to the Chinese; among whom it appears to be used for its alleged medicinal virtues.

We find in Siam the Elephant—the hog—and the Rhinoceros *(Rh. Indicus)*. The Elephant, called in the Siamese language *Chang*, is found in every part of the Siamese territories, including the Malayan and Kambojan tributaries, and Lao. The finest are found in the forest of Suphan, between the fourteenth and fifteenth degrees of latitude, and to the westward of the capital. Siam has been esteemed the genial land of the Elephant, and among those in which this animal attains the highest perfection. Not being amateurs, the individuals of our party could perceive no sensible difference between them and those of Chittagong and Cochin China. The Siamese elephants, however, appear to have been in high esteem, even in so distant a place as Delhi, in the flourishing periods of the Mogul Government; a circumstance alluded to by Bernier in his interesting history of the Revolution which placed Aurungzeeb on the throne. They were in all probability imported into Hindostan from Mergui, being brought to the ports of the Coromandel coast, by the Mohammedan merchants of that country. The use of Elephants is prohibited at the modern capital, except to a few persons of very high rank, chiefly, I presume, because of the inconvenience which would attend the employment of them, on account of the nature of the country. In all other parts of the kingdom they are freely used, both for riding and as beasts of burden. Lanchang, the capital of Lao, takes its name from the number of elephants which are used by its inhabi-

tants, the word in the Siamese language meaning the place of ten millions of elephants. A native of that town informed me, that they were used for a great many domestic purposes, "even," he added, "for carrying women and fire-wood." Elephant-hunters are employed in Siam to shoot and destroy the males, chiefly on account of their tusks,—an occupation described to be laborious, and somewhat dangerous. Ivory is a royal monopoly; but not one very rigidly enforced. The quantity received yearly by the King is said to amount to no more than four hundred piculs. Not only the ivory, but the hides and bones of the elephant are in request in China, and every year largely exported to that country.

The single-horned Rhinoceros, called Ret in the language of the country, is hunted by the Siamese on account of its hide and horn; and if what was asserted to us at Bangkok be true, that a thousand Rhinoceros' horns are annually exported to China, this animal, comparatively scarce every where, must exist in unusual numbers in Siam. A Rhinoceros' skin brings weight for weight, nearly double the price of any other hide. The horns are employed by the Chinese for supposed medicinal virtues. Their price depends neither upon their apparent qualities nor size, but upon certain superstitious marks by which the Chinese distinguish them. Thus, a cattie weight of ordinary horns will generally sell for about ten ticals; whereas a single horn of moderate size, and having the approved marks, has been known to fetch no less than two hundred and forty.

The hog, called Mu in Siamese, an animal which appears to be universally distributed through tropical Asia, exists also in great abundance in the forests of Siam. Through the care of the Chinese, it is extensively bred in the towns; and I have been assured, that at Bangkok no less than two hundred were slaughtered every morning. The lard, prepared with great nicety by the Chinese, is exported to the European settlements of the neighbouring countries.

Of the single-hoofed quadrupeds, the horse (*Ma*, in Siamese) is the only species known in Siam or its dependent provinces; for even the ass, so general in the dry countries of Central and Western Asia, as well as in

many parts of China, is here a stranger. The full-sized horse is unknown in every tropical country to the eastward of the Burrumpooter, whether insular or continental, China not excepted. The horses of Siam are ponies under thirteen hands high. Few are reared within Siam Proper. The greater number are produced in the more northerly country of Lao, and a few are said to be imported from the neighbouring Chinese province of Yu-nan.

Of the ruminating quadrupeds, Siam produces, according to the Siamese, seven distinct species of deer (*Cervus*), the Goat, the Ox, and the Buffalo. The most common species of deer are the ordinary Stag (*Cervus Elaphus*), and the Indian Roe (*Cervus muntjac*). In the southern provinces, the *Chevrotin* (*Moschus pygmœus* and *Javanicus* of Buffon) is frequent. The Axis, or spotted deer, and the Antelope, of every species, are, as far as I could understand, unknown. The Goat (*Pe*), in the wild state, is stated by the Siamese to be found in some of the mountains of their country, and to be shot for their horns, which are prized by the Chinese for certain alleged restorative qualities. A small race is found in the domestic state, occasionally seen about the temples, but producing very little milk; and their slaughter being forbidden by the religion of the country, they are put to no useful purpose. The Sheep (*keh*) is neither a native of the country nor naturalized.

The Ox (*Bos Taurus*) is found wild in the Siamese forests, and exists very generally in the domestic state, particularly in the northern provinces. Those we saw about the capital were short-limbed, compactly made, and frequently without horns. They were generally of a red or a dark brown colour, and never of the white or grey, so prevalent amongst the cattle of Hindostan. They also want the hump over the shoulders, which characterises the latter. They are used only in agricultural labour, for their milk is too trifling in quantity to be useful, and the slaughter of them, publicly at least, is forbidden even to strangers. When, during our stay, we wanted beef for our table, our servants were obliged to go three or four miles out of town, and to slaughter the animals at night. The wild cattle, for the protection of religion does not extend to them,

are shot by professed huntsmen on account of their hides, horns, bones, and flesh, which last, after being converted into jerk beef, forms an article of commerce to China. Within the tract of the Menam, the Buffalo (*Bos Bubalus*) called by the Siamese both by the native term of Kwai, and the Malayan one Karbu, is more frequent than the ox, being by its superior strength and habits more suitable for agricultural labour in the deep and marshy soil which prevails in this situation. The Siamese Buffalo in all respects resembles the same animal as it exists among the Eastern Islands, and unless the Rhinoceros and Hippopotamus be excepted, is, after the Elephant, the largest of all quadrupeds.

Respecting the birds of Siam, neither the state of my information respecting them, nor my general acquaintance with the subject, will enable me to furnish any thing better than mere gleanings. The birds of prey which we had an opportunity of seeing, were a White Eagle, of which various specimens were obtained and drawings made, and the Vulture (*Vultur*) the same species found in Bengal, and here exhibiting on the tops of the Siamese temples, and close to the places where funerals are performed, its sluggish and disgusting form waiting for its prey. The Kite, (*Milvus*) is also very common. The two last, with the carrion Crow (*Corvus corone*), are found in vast numbers near the Siamese capital, and never being disturbed by the inhabitants, their impudence and familiarity is excessive. Not less frequent is the domestic Sparrow *(Fringilla domestica)*, with more than its European familiarity. In proceeding towards the Equator, it appears here for the last time, not to my knowledge being found in any Asiatic country to the south of Siam, except in a few spots where it has been introduced by Europeans.

The Swallow which produces the esculent nest *(Hirundo esculenta)*, is found within the Siamese territory, both on the east coast of the Bay of Bengal, and the west coast of that of Siam. It does not, however, exist, according to the information which we received, on the east coast of the latter, which appears a little singular.

The gallinaceous birds whch we ascertained to exist in Siam, are the

common peacock, (*Pavo cristatus*), the cock, (*Phasianus gallus*), a new species of fire-backed pheasant, (*Phasiamus ignitus*), the quail, (*Tetrao coturnix*), with many species of pigeons. The peacock is numerous in the Siamese forests, where it is shot for its feathers, which are exported to China. The dependent Malayan provinces produce a delicate and beautiful bird, resembling a diminutive peacock. This was heretofore called the double-spurred peacock; but has recently been erected into a new genus, and called *Polyplectron bicalcaratus*. The cock, (*ki,*) in its wild state, exists in the forests of Siam; and we found the common fowl at the capital not only very good, but cheap and abundant. I do not know whether Siam itself, or the provinces lying north and east of it, produce any pheasant except the fire pheasant already mentioned; but its Malayan tributaries produce the common fire pheasant,* the Argus pheasant, (*Phasianus Argus*), and in great abundance, two undescribed species, of which specimens were collected in our voyage, and are now deposited in the museum of the East India Company. Of the grey partridge, (*Tetrao cinereus,*) so frequent in Hindostan, no trace is to be found, at least in the lower parts of Siam; but in the adjacent Malayan countries there are several species. One of these is the *Roulul* of Malacca, and the other the *Tetrao curvirostris.*

The most numerous order of birds in Siam, appeared to us to be water birds, with cloven feet, the grallæ, or waders, of Linnæus. This might be looked for, from the character of the country. Web-footed birds, in the southern latitudes of Siam at least, appeared to be comparatively unfrequent. These, however, being generally birds of passage, were probably not observed by us, only because we did not see the country in the winter, their season of visiting it. About the coasts of

* This is a large, bold, and beautiful bird; and, being very hardy, might probably be naturalized in this country, without much difficulty. On our return from Siam, in 1822, we carried one along with us from Prince of Wales's Island, which was deposited in the menagerie at Barrackpore, where I saw it in high spirits, five years afterwards, seemingly unaffected by the cold, or other change of climate.

the islands were observed a considerable number of mews (*Larus*), and sea-swallows (*Sterna*). At Bangkok we saw the common pelican (*Pelicanus onocrotalus*); and at the islands at the head of the Gulf, the cormorant (*Pelicanus carbo*), and the booby (*Sula*). We could not learn, that in the lower parts of Siam, the goose (*Anas anser*), or the common duck (*Anas boschas*), were natives of the country, or found in the wild state. The domestic duck (*pet*) is reared by the Chinese, and is cheap and abundant. The goose, called *han* by the natives, no doubt a corruption of the Hindoo word *hans*, is scarcely known to the Siamese. The Muscovy duck, (*Anas moschata*,) now very generally found throughout the East, although a native of America, is bred in small numbers about Bangkok. Its name, Pet-Manila, or the duck of Manilla, indicates the direction from whence it reached the country. The domestic fowl and common duck may, indeed, be described as the only poultry known to the Siamese, among whom want of wealth and comfort, not less than religious prejudice, prevents the rearing of such birds as are familiar in our poultry-yards in Europe; such as the goose, the turkey, the peacock, the pintado, &c. &c.

Feathers form a material branch of trade from Siam to China. Those most frequently exported, are those of the peacock, the king-fisher, the blue jay, the pelican, and of several birds of the crane and stork families.

The reptiles of Siam are, from all accounts, numerous, and would form an interesting and extensive subject of inquiry to the naturalist. Tortoises and crocodiles did not appear to us to be near so frequent in the Menam as in the Ganges. The green turtle (*Testudo Mydas*) is found abundantly near some of the islands on the east coast of the Gulf; and their eggs, which are in great request amongst the Siamese, as an article of food, constitute a considerable article of royal revenue. Lizards we found very numerous, and several beautiful species fell under our notice. One of the most singular and frequent of these is "the gecko," often described. This is "the gecko of Siam;" but frequent also in Java and many other islands of the Archipelago. It is more frequent in Siam

than in any other country; and, from its loud, harsh, and monotonous cry, proves a real annoyance through the night, for its habits are nocturnal. As soon as the rainy season had set in, snakes became very frequent, and we obtained many specimens, even in the court-yard of our dwelling. Among these we found no poisonous ones. The hooded snake, however, (*Coluber Naja*,) is known to exist. Of the boa constrictor, or rather the python, we met three specimens; none of which exceeded twelve or thirteen feet in length; although this animal, in Siam, attains its usual enormous size of twenty and twenty-two feet.

We found the fish of the Menam, like that of other Indian rivers, in general, of very inferior quality. It is, however, sufficiently abundant; and one description, called, in commerce, *Cabus*, is, along with dried shrimps, a very considerable article of exportation to foreign countries. In regard to fish, the Siamese find it a matter of necessity or convenience to get rid of their horror of taking animal life; and therefore catch and use them as food, without reserve, with the exception however, already mentioned, of fishing within a certain distance of the royal residence.

Among insects, the only one which deserves mention for its utility, is the *Coccus Lacca*, called in Siamese, *Krang*, which produces the valuable dye and gum called Lac in commerce, and which has of late years assumed so much importance from the discovery in Bengal of a cheap process for obtaining a valuable colouring matter from it. The places which produce this commodity are the forests of Pi-sa-luk and So-ko-tai, with that of Chang-mai, and other parts of Lao, and of the mountains of the Isthmus, lying between the Bays of Bengal and Siam. The lac of Siam is of very superior quality, containing a larger portion of colouring matter than that either of Bengal or Pegu. I was informed, when in Siam, that in some parts of the country the lac insect is bred as the *Coccus Cacti*, which affords the cochineal, is in Mexico.

CHAPTER XV.

Geography.—Boundaries and Extent of the present Siamese Empire.—General aspect.—Rivers.—Explanation of Native names of places.—Description of the Coasts of Siam, and adjacent Countries and Islands.—Siam Proper.—Lao, Siamese Kamboja, and Malayan tributaries.—Account of the different races inhabiting or sojourning in the Kingdom of Siam.—Population.

THE present Siamese empire is composed of the following parts, viz. Siam, or the proper country of the Siamese race; a large portion of Lao, a portion of Kamboja, and certain tributary Malay States. Its limits, in this wide acceptation, may be stated as follows: Its farthest southern boundary, on the western shore of the Malay Peninsula, is Kurao, in about the latitude of five degrees North. Its boundary, on the eastern shore, is Kamamang, in nearly about the same parallel. The northern boundary, in the present state of our information, is very little better than conjecture, but probably extends to about 21 degrees; so that the dominions of Siam have a range of no less than 16 degrees of latitude.

The extreme western limits of Siam, including some desert islands in the Bay of Bengal, are nearly in 97° 50′ East longitude. Its eastern boundary probably extends to at least the 105th degree; so that it has a range of about 7 degrees of longitude. Its area may be estimated at 190,000 geographical miles.

The greater proportion of the Siamese territory, although it contains a few rich alluvial plains, appears to be mountainous. One great primitive chain, in some situations not less than 5000 feet high, extends, from its southern limit, to at least the 18th degree North latitude; and indeed, in all

probability, pervades its whole length. With the exception of about sixty miles at its head, the coast of the Gulf, as far as we observed it in our voyage, appeared every where to be extremely mountainous; and, according to the native accounts, the extensive territory of Lao is of the same character.

The Siamese territory abounds in small rivers. There are however but three great navigable streams,—the Menam, the river of Kamboja, and the river of Martaban. In relation to the Siamese, the first of these is by far the most important, because it pervades their whole territory, and they are in entire possession of its use and navigation nearly throughout. With the exception, however, of about eighty miles from its mouth to the old capital, Europeans have really less acquaintance with it than with the Niger. According to native accounts, it has its origin in the mountains of the Chinese province of Yunan, where it is called the Nan-king-ho. Its whole course, therefore, does not probably exceed eight hundred miles. Down to Chang-mai in Lao, which is placed, in the map accompanying this work, in 20° 14′ North latitude, it is navigable only for small canoes. After receiving a number of tributary streams, it becomes, at the old capital, Ayuthia, a fine navigable river; and continues so until it disembogues itself by three channels, at the head of the Gulf, between 13° and 14° of North latitude. The eastern, or largest of these channels, the only one navigable by European ships, has already been described in the Journal. The Western mouth of the Menam is known to the Siamese by the name of Meklong, from a town of the same name near the sea. The central mouth is called Tachin, also from the name of a town. These two, like the greater branch, are obstructed by a bar of sand and mud, over which, at the highest spring-tides, there are not, according to the season of the year, above from four to six cubits water: no vessels of large burthen, therefore, can navigate them. On the central branch, it may be observed, is manufactured the principal part of the fine bay-salt, which supplies the whole kingdom, and is so largely exported to foreign countries. On the same branch, and a little farther up, there is a considerable manufacture of sugar from the cane.

From this statement, it will be seen that the Menam is among Asiatic rivers, of but second or third-rate magnitude.*

The river of Kamboja, as far as it is known, will be described in the geographical sketch of the Cochin Chinese Empire. That of Martaban forms merely a portion of the frontier which divides Siam from the Burman and British territories; and, as far as the Siamese are concerned, passing also by a mountainous and uncultivated country, is of small importance.

Before submitting to the reader the few notices collected respecting the interior of Siam, and which will be given under each subdivision, as already enumerated, I shall endeavour to give a sketch of the coasts and their immediate neighbourhood, respecting which details somewhat more satisfactory have been obtained. It will be necessary to premise a short explanation of a few native terms of frequent recurrence, in order to render the map and description intelligible.

The word Menam literally means "mother of waters," and seems the only one in the Siamese language for a river. It is in fact a generic and not a proper name; and although applied to the great river of Siam, (*par excellence*, the river,) it is equally applicable to any other. In the Siamese language, as in many other Asiastic ones, there seems to be no one proper name to distinguish a river throughout its course,—each separate portion of it taking its name from the principal place by which it passes, as the river of Bangkok, the river of Kampeng-pet, the river of Chang-mai, &c. which mean only different parts of the Menam.

Pak-nam means literally the "water's mouth," and is a term applied to the *embouchure* of any river whatever. Ko, in Siamese, is an "island," and is invariably prefixed to the proper name. Lem, a word of frequent occurrence, as prefixed to proper names, means cape, or headland. The word Krong, is applied to the capital, or chief town of a kingdom. Muang means a city, and also the province attached to a city. The Siamese

* The Menan is said to become navigable at Chang-mai in the months of August and September. At this time, flat boats, with rafts of timber or bamboo, containing goods of various descriptions, and covered over with sheds, begin to drop down. They take two months to reach Bangkok; where the river, in the months of November and December, is crowded with them.

apply this term to their tributary states. Bang appears to mean a district, or inferior sub-division. Ban literally means a village, but is also applied to the quarters of towns or cities, these being, in fact, looked upon as aggregations of villages, which, in reality, is no improper description of them. Fu-kao is a mountain. These two last words, like Ko, an island, are always prefixed by the Siamese to a proper name. The distinctive adjuncts Yai and Noe, "great and little," with Keo and Lai, "old," and Mai, "new," are frequent in the Siamese names of places.

The great variety of languages which prevail, especially towards the frontiers, are sources of much perplexity to a stranger in the geography of Siam, and other Hindoo-Chinese countries. On the Kambojan frontier, for example, there will be found a Siamese, a Kambojan, and an Anam, and, if the place should happen to be a seaport, a Chinese name. On the Malay frontier we have the same place called by a Siamese and a Malay name; and on the Burman frontier, by a Siamese, a Peguan, and a Burman one: of course, there is a similar inconvenience on the Chinese frontier. One example of this difficulty may be given. The trading port on the Gulph of Siam, which is called Hetiăn, in Anam, is in Kambojan called Peam; in Siamese, Muang-kaom; and in Chinese, Kang-kao. These various terms, it appears, are often mere translations of each other.

Beginning with the east coast of the Gulf of Siam, the southern limit of the Siamese territory is the island of Ko-kong, in the latitude of 10° 40′ North. This is inhabited by a mixture of Siamese, Chinese, Kambojans, and Cochin Chinese. The governor of the district to which it is attached, resides at a small town, also called Kong, a few hours' journey up a little river which falls into the sea opposite to the island. Farther to the north, are the large islands of Ko-Chang, Ko-Kud, Ko-Mak and Ko-Massi. Ko-Chang is inhabited by a mixture of different races, like Ko-Kong. On the opposite continent is the town and district of Tung-yai, a word which, in the Siamese language, means the "great plain." At this place the chain of mountains which commence at Kang-Kao, or Hattien, is interrupted, leaving a considerable extent of level land as far as Chantabun.

A broad arm of the sea leads to the town of Tung-yai: into this there fall three small rivers, on the most northerly of which the town is situated, distant about eight hours' journey from the sea. Between Ko-Chang and the main, there is a navigable channel for large ships, which, as well as the arm of the sea leading to Tung-yai, are safe harbours. Opposite to Ko-Chang is a small town, called Nam-Cheo, where there reside a considerable number of Malays.

Chantabun is the most considerable place on the east coast of the Gulf. The town was described to me by a Siamese, who had visited it, as being twelve hours' journey distant from the sea by water; the place being situated on a river of moderate size. Two Jesuits, who were driven thither by stress of weather in a Chinese junk, gave the following brief account of it towards the end of the seventeenth century. "The river is large, and its banks covered with trees, but it has little depth. Numerous brooks issuing from the forest, and which come from the neighbouring hills, fall into it. As we were desirous of conferring with the Governor, and as our vessel experienced difficulty in getting up, we embarked in a small boat for the town. Chantabun is situated at the foot of one of those great mountains, which form a chain running north and south, dividing the kingdom of Siam from that of Kamboja. It is situated on a height, surrounded by woods. On the side by which we entered it, it appeared inclosed by a fence of old planks, fitter to defend the inhabitants from wild animals, than to secure them against an enemy. Having walked for a quarter of an hour, and always up to the knees in grass, we reached the Governor's house." The place is probably considerably improved since; for both here and at Tung-yai, and some of the intermediate places, there are many Chinese settlers, chiefly engaged in the cultivation of pepper. Of this commodity, Chantabun is said to produce from thirty to forty thousand piculs yearly; and Tung-yai, about ten thousand. Within the point called Lem-sing in the map, and at the mouth of the Chantabun river, there is said to be good shelter, and anchorage in five and six fathoms water.

The districts of Tung-yai and Chantabun are the proper country of the race called Chong, whom I have mentioned in the JOURNAL, and of whose language a short vocabulary will be found in the APPENDIX. From Chantabun northward, to the alluvial tract formed by the *debouchement* of the river of Bang-pa-söe, both the mainland and the islands are hilly or mountainous. They are, indeed, from all accounts, very thinly peopled, and nearly covered with primeval forests, which afford rose-wood, barks, dye-wood, and timber for ship-building; among which, however, teak is not included. The first remarkable place in this tract, proceeding northward from Chantabun, is the deep bay of Kong-ka-ben; which, however, is exposed to the south-west monsoon, and has a depth of no more than three fathoms. The country in its neighbourhood is a mere wilderness. The channel between the island of Ko-sa-met and the main is said to be an excellent harbour; but neither on the island, nor the continent fronting it, are there any inhabitants. At Rayung and Bang-po-mung there are a few inhabitants. Ko-kram, or Indigo Island, has also a few, most of whom, I was told, are Cochin Chinese. All the isles and islets situated in this quarter, are much frequented by turtle; the eggs of which are sent fresh to Bangkok, and constitute, as mentioned in another place, an article of revenue to the Government.

Bang-pa-söe is said to be a very considerable town, containing several thousand inhabitants. It has a wooden stockade, and is considered by the Siamese as a place of some importance, as a barrier against the Cochin Chinese. This, and the district attached to it, as may be seen by the map, are fronted by the mud-flat of the Menam, and other streams which fall into the head of the Gulf. The country is a low alluvial land of great fertility, productive in rice and sugar-cane. I was informed, that from Bang-pa-söe, all the way to Tung-yai, there was a tolerable carriage-road. The river of Bang-pa-kung, on which Bang-pa-söe is situated, is said to be not much inferior in size to the Menam itself, and to have the same depth of water on its bar. Within it there are from two and a half to

three fathoms water. The chief resides at Patriyu, about a day and a half's journey up. Here there is a fort, and a considerable population. The country is cleared, and highly cultivated with rice; being not inferior in fertility to the banks of the Menam at Bangkok and Old Siam. This river has its origin in the mountains separating Siam from Kamboja, and by it the latter country has always been invaded by the Siamese.

From the Mek-long, or western branch of the Menam, to Yi-san, the coast is described as a mere forest, of no value but for the fire-wood which it affords to the capital. At the last-named place, the country is again well cultivated with rice, and tolerably peopled. The three rivers, called Bang-ta-bun-nöe, Bang-ta-bun-yai, and Bang-lem, are three branches of a river on which the town of Pri-pri is situated, ten hours' journey from the sea. This is said to be a place of considerable size, having a fortification of masonry. Its district is populous, well cultivated with rice, and abounds in the necessaries of life. One of the principal articles of its produce, and which is largely exported, is palm sugar. The river is shallow, and inaccessible to vessels of any considerable burthen.

At the point of Kwi* commences, on the eastern coast of the Peninsula, the mountainous country, which, extending to Cape Romania, embraces nearly eleven degrees of latitude, and, with very partial exceptions, the whole breadth of the Peninsula. The little towns of Kwi and Pran are situated in this neighbourhood. They are small places, and indeed the country in this vicinity is said to be throughout very poorly inhabited. Tin, which, with gold, is so widely disseminated through the mountainous country just mentioned, already presents itself at Pran.

Bang-irom, Muang-lai, and Muang-mai, are all small towns, with thinly

* The name of this place, as it is written in our ordinary maps, affords a curious specimen of mistaken orthography. It seems to have been first written Cui, which is sufficiently correct. Some transcriber, however, having transferred the dot from the i to the first limb of the u, concluded that the word was Cin. This seems afterwards to have been improved upon, by changing the supposed soft C into an S, so that, in the end, the Point of Kwi was converted into the Point of Sin!

peopled districts. The forests in the neighbourhood abound in sapan wood. From the last-named place, a military road leads towards Mergui, on the opposite coast, constructed, about thirty-three years ago, by the late King of Siam, for the purpose of invading the Burman territory. It is said to be easily practicable for elephants, and, in some measure, even for wheel-carriage. It runs over a country of no great elevation, for three days' journey. From Muang-mai to Champon, the country is poor and sterile. Here occur two small towns, called Bang-ta-phan and Pat-yu: at the first of which, gold is procured by washing; and at the last, there is a considerable fishery of shrimps, which are manufactured into the condiment called by the Malays Blachang, an article of exportation.

The next place is Cham-pon, which is the name of a town and district. The town, according to native report, is about four hours' sail up a river, commonly named Tayung. The country produces some tin, timber fit for ship-building, and excellent ratans.

Between Pumring and Bandon, the country becomes much more productive and better inhabited. This is said to be an alluvial tract of some extent, affording a considerable quantity of rice: small vessels, drawing not above twelve feet water, may enter the river, which is the most considerable on the west shore of the bay; and behind two islands, off its mouth, there is a safe harbour in either monsoon. From the head of this river to the head of that of Ponga, opposite to Junk Ceylon, is said to be but two days' journey. It is in this direction that the produce of Junk Ceylon, and some European and Indian merchandize, are transported across the Peninsula, ultimately to find their way by sea to Bangkok. According to native statements, an extensive mud-flat, dry at low water, fronts the whole coast, from the point called Lem-sui to Bandon. On this bank great quantities of prawns, crabs, and other shell-fish, are caught by the natives.

Ligor is the name of a Siamese town and district, in the Malayan language, but in the dialect of the Siamese themselves, it is called Lakon. The river, called Ta-yang, is small and shallow, with not above a cubit's

depth on its bar at low water. This leads to Ligor, which lies on a brook falling into the larger river. The town of Ligor has a brick fort, and is said to contain about five thousand inhabitants, consisting of Siamese, Malays, and Chinese; the first in greatest number. Two or three Chinese junks trade yearly with Ligor, their export cargoes consisting of cotton, and what is commonly called Malayan produce, viz. tin, black pepper, ratans, &c.

Talung is a town six hours' journey up a small river, which falls into the channel between the main and the island, which is called in our maps Tantalem. The neighbouring country is said to be tolerably productive, and was once populous; but oppression has driven the inhabitants, of late years, to emigrate to Prince of Wales's Island, and the Malay countries. From Talung to Trang, on the opposite coast, is said to be a journey of six days' travel by elephants.

Sungora, so called in Malay, but in Siamese Sungkla, is the most southerly Siamese district or province. The country is said to be poor and unproductive. The town is situated partly on the Continent, and partly on the opposite island of Tantalem; it is frequented yearly by two or three Chinese junks, which export tin, pepper, rice, and sapan wood. Taná is the last Siamese station, forming the boundary between the proper country of the Siamese and that of the Malays.

The islands on the western coast of the Gulf of Siam are far less numerous than those on the eastern, and the smaller ones are all uninhabited. Proceeding southward from the head of the Gulf, the first which is inhabited is Ko-phang-an, the Pulo Sancori of our charts: the inhabitants consist of a few poor Malays. Ko-samui is larger and more populous. The greater number of the inhabitants are Siamese; but there are also a few Chinese of the island of Hainan, whose junks, to the number of ten or fifteen, come yearly to this place to obtain cotton, its principal produce, with some esculent swallows' nests.

The large island of Tantalem, is separated from the main by a narrow channel, which has considerable depth of water at its south-western

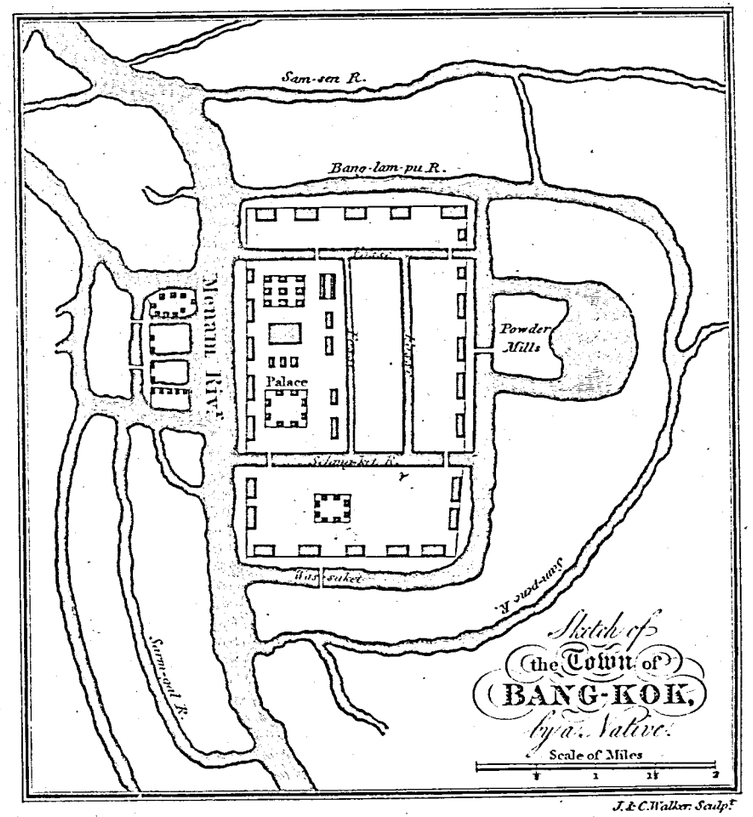
extremity; but towards the north it is bare at low-water, and even at high-water is not above two or three feet deep. It is greatly infested by mosquitos. The island itself is high land to the south, but low and marshy to the north. No part of it is cultivated or inhabited, except that which contains a portion of the town of Sungora. The name Tantalem is not known either to Siamese or Malays. Possibly the word is a corruption of Talung-lem, or the Cape of Talung.

On the shore of the Straits of Malacca and Bay of Bengal, the proper Siamese territory extends from Lungu to Pak-chan, a distance of not less than 260 miles; including a great many islands, some of them of very considerable size. In general, the country is a mere wilderness, with a few specks here and there inhabited. The best peopled portion of this territory is the island of Salang, called by us Junk Ceylon, a corruption of the Malayan word Ujung Salang, meaning the headland of Ceylon, which has already been described in the Journal. The island is under a governor, who has the title of a Phya. Subject to his jurisdiction, are seven districts on the Continent, such as Ponga, Bangri, &c. extending all the way to the Burmese frontier, or now the British, at Pakchan. The most considerable of the places in question is Ponga, which contains between three and four thousand inhabitants, among whom there are said to be from eight hundred to one thousand Chinese. Tin mines, or rather stream works, appear to be wrought in the district of Ponga, as well as Junk Ceylon.

The proper country of the Siamese race is the valley of the Menam, which, at its southern extremity, does not exceed sixty miles broad. Its length extends from the sea to Pe-chai, a distance of about three hundred and sixty miles. If the average breadth equals that of its southern extremity, its whole area will, of course, be twenty-one thousand six hundred square miles. To the west, the valley is bounded by the chain of mountains already mentioned. Another range of mountains bounds it to the east, dividing it from the great river of Kamboja; between which and the Menam there is probably no communication, although upon this subject

the native statements given to me were not very consistent. The largest towns of the proper Siamese territory, are Bangkok, the modern capital, Ayuthia, the ancient one, and Pi-sa-luk. Bangkok extends along the banks of the Menam, to the distance of about two miles and a half; but it is of no great breadth, probably not exceeding one mile and a half. The principal portion of the town is on the left bank of the river, where the palace is situated. The accounts which we received of its population were very vague and little to be relied on. Some of them made it amount to as much as one hundred and fifty thousand. Judging by the extent of ground on which it stands, I should not be disposed to estimate the inhabitants at more than one-third of this number. The old capital is still the most populous place in the kingdom next to Bangkok, and was mentioned to me as being equally so with the latter: but judging from the amount of revenue which it pays, as given in another place, there can be no doubt that this is an exaggeration. Of Pi-sa-luk I know nothing more than that it was described to me as a considerable town, lying on the Menam, and surrounded by a wall of brick. The remaining principal towns are enumerated in another place, in the order of their supposed magnitudes.

The country of the Lao, a people speaking a dialect of the Siamese language, appears to be divided between the Siamese, the Chinese, and the Burmans. It is composed of petty states, tributary to those three powers. Four of these are under the dominion of Siam; namely, Chang-mai, Lan-chang, Pasak, and Luang-phra-bang. Their chiefs are hereditary princes. The first of these named places, has sometimes been written Zimai and Jang-mai, and is evidently the district which the authors of the Modern Universal History have converted into a kingdom, under the name of Jangoma. The town is situated upon the Menam, where it is so shallow as only to be navigable for small canoes. The distance from Bangkok to it was described to me as a month's journey, chiefly by water. Lan-chang, always considered the capital of Lao, is situated in about 15° 45′ North latitude, on the great river of Kamboja, which is here as broad



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and as large as the Menam at Bangkok. It was described to me as being as populous as this last place; of which I have great doubt, because it has comparatively little foreign trade, is not much resorted to by Chinese, and is not the seat of a court. Among its inhabitants are said to be about eight thousand Chinese of the neighbouring province of Yunan, commonly known to the Siamese by the names of Ho and Nung-seh. Besides the four towns, with their provinces, above stated, a fifth considerable place was mentioned to me by a native of the country, under the name of Siang-kwang, situated about fifteen days' journey to the north-east of Lang-chang. An alphabet, and other specimens of the language of the inhabitants of this portion of Lao, was shown to me at Bangkok. It appeared to be rude, and did not, as usual, follow the classification of the Nagri. The Siamese reckon, in all their portion of Lao, one hundred and one towns, large and small.

Of the kingdom of Kamboja, Siam possesses a large province, named Batabang; the greater portion of that country being subject or tributary to Cochin China. The revolution by which the kingdom of Kamboja was dismembered, may be finally dated from the year 1809, when a civil war broke out in the country, one party calling in the Siamese to its assistance, and the other the Cochin Chinese. The latter made themselves masters of Penompeng, the modern capital, and the person of the King; who continues in the nominal government of a large portion of the country, but under the control of a Cochin Chinese Mandarin, with a Cochin Chinese garrison.

The Malayan States, which are tributary to Siam, are, Queda, on the western coast of the Peninsula, with Patani, Kalantan, and Tringano, on the east. Of late years, the Siamese also laid claim to Perak; but by a treaty with the British Government, they have recently given up this pretension. With the exception of Patani and Queda, of which they have nearly assumed the direct administration, the dominion of the Siamese over their Malayan tributaries is little better than nominal. Every three years the Malayan princes send to Siam, as a mark of their tributary condition, a

flower or tree of gold and silver; and they are farther liable to contributions in men, money, and provisions, when the Siamese are at war; and have the power, which seldom happens, to exact them.

The different races inhabiting the Siamese territories may be enumerated as follows: Siamese, Lao, Kambojans, Malays, Kariang, Lawa, Ká, Chong, and Samangs, with the following strangers or foreign settlers, Chinese, Mohammedans and Hindoos of Western India, Portuguese, and Peguans. Of the number of these different classes, I shall endeavour to furnish such brief notices, however imperfect, as I was enabled to collect, either during my residence in the country, or afterwards from other persons who had visited it. The number of the proper Siamese borne on the rolls for public service, according to the statements given to me, was said to be about three hundred thousand. This would give a population, in round numbers, of one million two hundred and sixty thousand.

The native population of Lao was stated to me, on an estimation of the number of persons borne on the public rolls, to be equal to that of Siam itself. To avoid error on the side of exaggeration, however, I shall state it at one-third less, or eight hundred and forty thousand. Of the Mon, or Pegu, race, although the Siamese be in possession of no part of their territory, there are a considerable number in Siam, chiefly emigrants, from the province of Martaban, driven from thence by the oppression of the Burman Government; and they are subject to the conscription. The number of persons of this nation borne on the public rolls of the Siamese Government, was stated to me at six thousand; which would give a population, in round numbers, of twenty-five thousand. The amount of Kambojans was stated at the same number. The Malayan state of Queda, previous to its occupation by the Siamese, in 1821, was said to contain about fifty thousand inhabitants, of whom about ten thousand have since emigrated into the British territory. The population of Tringano and Kalantan, on the opposite side of the Peninsula, has been reckoned together at about eighty-five thousand; giving thirty-five thousand for the first, and fifty thousand for

the second, the Chinese settlers not being included in either case. The state of Patani is the largest and most populous of the Malayan Peninsula; but I have heard no estimate of its population. Allowing it, however, to be equally populous with the others, it ought, from its area, to contain not less than sixty thousand inhabitants. Besides the Malays residing in their own countries, there are said to be at Bangkok not less than ten thousand, chiefly captives, carried off from Queda and Patani, but especially from the latter. The Kariang, the Lawá, the Ká, and the Chong, are wild and migratory races. The first and second of these are the same people who inhabit various portions of the Burman dominions. They are confined to the mountainous parts of Lao. The Ká, a term which in the Siamese language means slave, but who are called by the Kambojans, Panong, inhabit the mountains of Lao, bordering upon Kamboja. The Chong, a more industrious and settled people than the rest of this class, inhabit, as already mentioned, the hilly country on the eastern side of the Gulf of Siam, between the eleventh and twelfth degrees of North latitude. The Samang, as is sufficiently well known, are a diminutive race of savage negroes, dwelling in the mountainous regions of the Malayan Peninsula. I may here mention, that a youth of this race was sent to me in 1824, while at Singapore, by the Raja of Kalantan. He was placed under the charge of Mr. Thomsen, a diligent, zealous, and judicious missionary; and, in point of capacity for education, was found in no respect inferior to the other children under his tuition. Of the number of these different races I received no account whatever, but from their habits it may safely be concluded that it is very small.

The Chinese settlers in the Siamese territory, are chiefly emigrants from the provinces of Canton and Fokien; but there is also a considerable number from the island of Hainan, and some from Chekiang and Kiangnan. The few emigrants from Yunan are confined to the northern parts of Lao, and of course we had no opportunity of seeing any of them while in Siam. The Chinese resort to Siam, as to other foreign countries, unaccompanied by their

families. They soon intermarry with the Siamese, there being no scruple on either side. They even adopt, whatever may have been their religion before, or whether they had any or not, the Buddhist form of worship, visiting the Siamese temples, and giving the usual alms to the priests. A few of them even enter the priesthood, although this mode of life is by no means very congenial to their industrious and active character. What is probably a little more remarkable, they forego their partiality for costly sepulchral monuments, burning their dead like the Siamese.* They invariably dress, however, in the costume of their own country. Every male amongst them, above the age of twenty, pays a capitation tax. The number assessed to this tax at Bangkok and its vicinity, was stated to me at thirty-one thousand. Indeed it is commonly computed that one half of the population of the capital is composed of Chinese; a statement which, from what we observed ourselves, I do not consider exaggerated. The whole number assessed to the capitation tax within the Siamese territory, Malayan States excluded, was given to us at one hundred thousand. Were the Chinese population of Siam, which they are not, constituted as under ordinary circumstances, this would make their whole number amount to about four hundred and twenty thousand. It was stated to me, indeed, at a much greater rate, even as high as seven hundred and fifty thousand. The Chinese settlers, within the tributary Malay States, engaged in traffic, or in working gold and tin, have been estimated at twenty thousand.

This statement shows an extraordinary increase since the close of the seventeenth century, for I find that the French writers no where estimate their numbers at more than four or five thousand. There are at Bangkok also a good many Cochin Chinese, but of their number I can render no account. A Siamese chief pointed out their existence to me as a proof of the superiority of the Siamese over the Cochin Chinese Government, explaining, as

* Returning home one day from an excursion on the Menam, my attention was attracted by observing a Chinese, all alone, stirring up some embers, within the enclosures of a temple, with an instrument resembling a pitchfork. On landing, we found that he was completing the funeral rites of some relative. He was stirring the fire to complete the destruction of some of the larger bones, and was either cheering or consoling himself at his labour with a song!

was true enough, that there were no Siamese, under similar circumstances, in any part of Cochin China.

There are in Siam a considerable number of settlers from the southern Peninsula of India. A very few of these are Hindoos, but by far the greater part Mohammedans, of whom the most influential, although not the most numerous, are Shias, or sectaries of Ali. The professors of the Mohammedan worship in Siam are compelled, from their situation, to make a thousand sacrifices and compliances, very incompatible with their tenets. Such of them as accompanied us to the temples bowed very respectfully to the images of Buddha; and I was told, that when they had any point to carry, it was not unusual to see them giving alms to the priests, and making offerings at the temples. They even go farther than this, occasionally giving their daughters in marriage to the infidels. The grandfather of the present King, for example, took into his haram the daughter of the principal Mohammedan at Bangkok, but soon dismissed her in consequence of the lady's declining to serve alms to the priests. The number of their own mosques at Bangkok is nine; all very poor buildings indeed. According to the information given to me, the number of Mohammedan families at Bangkok was three hundred, and at the old capital four hundred; which, at five persons to each family, would make their number three thousand five hundred.

The Christians residing in Siam are all either the descendants of Portuguese, or persons assuming the Portuguese name. From a large mixture of Indian blood, or being merely the descendants of native converts, these persons are fully as dark as the Siamese themselves, and much more so than the resident Chinese. The greater number of them are engaged in the commercial department, chiefly as interpreters. They are all indigent, but very inoffensive. The whole number at Bangkok was estimated to me at eight hundred. At the old capital there are about seven hundred, and in the Siamese portion of Kamboja, probably about five hundred, making the total about two thousand.

According to these very imperfect data, the population of the Siamese Empire throughout will be as follows:—

Siamese	1,260,000
Laos	840,000
Peguans	25,000
Cambojans	25,000
Malays	195,000
Chinese	440,000
Natives of Western India	3,500
Portuguese	2,000
Total	2,790,500

The area of the country being estimated at 190,000 square miles, it follows, that the population is only at the rate of between fourteen and fifteen inhabitants to the square mile,—a miserable proportion for a kingdom of such extent, and affording conclusive evidence of barbarism and bad government. The data on which this estimate of the population of Siam has been formed are undoubtedly extremely unsatisfactory. I feel satisfied, however, that, small as it is, it is not underrated. One of the French writers, indeed, estimates it in the last century at only 1,200,000. But I suspect that he excluded from his calculation the dependencies of the kingdom, which at the time were not considerable, while the Chinese settlers were very few indeed, in comparison to their present amount.

Whatever may be the actual population of Siam, there can be no doubt whatever but that, for so extensive a country, it is extremely scanty and insignificant, when compared even with any tolerably civilized and well-governed country of Asia. This is a conclusion, indeed, at which any one who inquires into the subject must soon arrive. A Mohammedan prince of India, the King of Golconda, as he is called by the French writers, sent an ambassador to Siam, in the seventeenth century, and in his route from Mergui this officer necessarily crossed the immense wilderness which lies between that place and Ayuthia. One of the Siamese Ministers afterwards rallied him on the small extent of his master's dominions, in comparison to those of the Great King. The Indian ambassador replied, that it was true

his master's dominions were small, but they were inhabited by human beings; whereas the territories of his Siamese Majesty were for the most part peopled by monkeys!

The checks to population, in a country of which the land is often fertile, and always abundant, the communication generally easy, and the climate favourable, may be described at once to be comprised in barbarism and bad government. The conscription, already described, is the most palpable shape in which these operate. This tax on industry keeps up the wages of labour, without increasing the number of labourers. The rate of common day labour at Bangkok, which is very scarce, is equal to about eleven-pence, and that of a common house carpenter is full one shilling and three-pence. These are extraordinary rates in a country where a hundred weight of rice may always be had for two shillings, and very often for half the amount. Other necessaries of life, such as salt, palm-sugar, spiceries, vegetables, fish, and even flesh, are proportionably cheap. The price of good pork, for example, is two-pence halfpenny per pound. A duck may be had for seven-pence, and a fowl for three-pence.

The ordinary age for contracting marriages in Siam, with the lower orders, is rarely under twenty-one for the men, or eighteen for the female sex, which, for an Asiatic country, is remarkably late. Persons of rank form much earlier connexions, for the matter is one in which the parties are entirely guided by their capacity, or otherwise, to maintain a family. The condition of the lower orders of society is notwithstanding, I am led to believe, more easy and comfortable, as far as the mere necessaries of life are concerned, than might, on a first and superficial view, be expected from the character of the Government. In short, the excesses of the latter keep down the number of labourers, and so far improves the condition of this class of the people.

In a country where the price of labour is high, and the necessaries of life easily procurable, beggary from want, at least, is not very frequent. The mendicants whom we saw were either very old females, or persons of the other sex labouring under incurable disorders, such as leprosy, elephantiasis, &c. and

occasionally persons who had suffered mutilation by the sentence of the law. With the exception of the first, all these are supposed, by the religion of the country, to be labouring under some malediction. They have consequently but a small share of the sympathy of their friends and relations, and are thus thrown upon the public charity. We met such mendicants only at the temples and monasteries, where they are accustomed to repair to receive the occasional charity of the pious, or the relics of the Talapoins' food, which is often greater than the latter can themselves consume. Among the Chinese at Bangkok, notwithstanding their numbers, we saw very few beggars, and these few were confined to persons disabled from labour by some bodily infirmity. In reality, the condition of the settlers of this nation in Siam appears to be very comfortable. They are, upon the whole, lightly taxed; their taxes are fixed and certain, they are exempted from military service, and the subjection of the native inhabitants to the conscription gives them a kind of monopoly of the free labour of the country. In fact, the Chinese are rapidly increasing in numbers, and probably are the only portion of the population that is doing so. This circumstance, abundance of good unoccupied land, great commercial capabilities in the country, and a moderate distance from their own, so overstocked with labourers, readily account for the great number of emigrants that yearly settle in the country.

One class of mendicants, the priesthood, are sufficiently numerous in Siam, and their existence is no small burthen upon the people, although the tax of maintaining them be voluntary. The whole number of Talapoins at the capital was estimated to me at five thousand, and the whole number in the kingdom at fifty thousand, which would be little less than one-fortieth part of the whole Buddhist population. If this statement approaches at all to the truth, it is certain that the abstraction of so large a portion of the inhabitants from active labour, as well as the burthen which it imposes on the remainder, must prove a serious check to the progress of population.

I have described the climate of Siam, in general, as salubrious, and at all

events it seems no where to be of such a character as to impede the natural progress of population. The only material checks from disease are the small-pox and cholera morbus. The first of these, which is much dreaded by the Siamese, and appears to be injudiciously treated both by them and by the Chinese, often visits the country and proves very fatal. The last is a recent scourge, which made its appearance in Siam, for the first time, in the month of April 1820, after having ravaged Hindostan for the three preceding years. The Phraklang informed me, that the epidemic was traced from Sungora along the coast all the way to the mouth of the Menam, from which last place it travelled to Bangkok in five days. The intensity of its ravages continued here for about fifteen days only, during which short time, according to the Phraklang's statement, it carried off two persons in ten, or a fifth part of the whole population. He and other persons spoke with horror of the devastation which it committed. The deaths, they stated, were so frequent and sudden, that there was no time for the usual funeral rites, and the bodies were thrown in hundreds into the Menam; so that, according to their account, they presented the appearance of rafts of timber floating along the stream. The epidemic eventually spread to Lao on one side, and to Kamboja and Cochin China on the other, where it proved no less fatal. Of this malady, it may safely be asserted, that it is by far the most destructive which has ever afflicted the human race. It extended from Arabia to China, over ninety degrees of longitude, and from Java to the Himalaya Mountains, embracing forty degrees of latitude; in short, almost all the civilized and populous nations of tropical Asia were included in its ravages; and there can be little doubt that, from first to last, it swept off several millions. An intelligent Chinese, with whom I conversed on the subject, insisted nearly in as many words, that as the wars in which the principal nations of the world had been engaged, had recently, for the most part, ceased, this pestilence was a necessary arrangement of nature for keeping population down to the level of subsistence. No other Asiatic than a Chinese would have thought of expressing himself in such language.

CHAPTER XVI.

Geography of Cochin China.—Limits.—Rivers and Coasts.—Civil divisions.—Kamboja.—Champa, or Loi.—Foreigners resident in Cochin China.—Climate.—Mineral and Vegetable Products.—Animals.

THE present Empire of Cochin China consists of a portion of the ancient kingdom of Kamboja, of Cochin China itself, and of Tonquin; which two last are known to the natives, and to the Chinese, by the common name of An-nam. The countries which border upon it are Siam, Kamboja and Lao to the west and north-west; and to the north, the Chinese provinces of Quang-tong, Quang-si, and Yu-nan. The sea surrounds it in all other directions. The southern limit of the Cochin Chinese Empire is Pulo Ubi, in latitude 8° 25′ North, and its northern, as far as it can be ascertained, extends to about the 23° of North latitude. The point which on the coast divides it from Siam, is the island of Ko-kong, in about North latitude 10° 40′, and East longitude 103° 13′. The last village in Tonquin, before entering the province of Canton, is Quang-sai, which, as far as can be determined, appears to be nearly in the twenty-second degree of North latitude. In our translations of Chinese writers, it is stated that the boundary between Tonquin and the Chinese province of Quang-si, is marked by two pillars of brass erected many centuries ago by the Chinese; but my inquiries do not corroborate this statement. The extreme length of the whole kingdom may be estimated at above nine hundred geographical miles.

The breadth is very unequal, varying from sixty to one hundred and eighty miles. Its area, in round numbers, may be taken at 98,000 square miles.

The two extremities of the kingdom, Kamboja and Tonquin, consist, for the greater part, of low alluvial tracts, little elevated above the level of the sea; while the central part, or Cochin China Proper, is generally mountainous, with here and there valleys of considerable extent and fertility.

The Cochin Chinese Empire is at present divided into three great civil divisions, which correspond pretty exactly with the geographical and physical ones. These consist of Kamboja and Tonquin, which are administered by viceroys: and Cochin China, which is administered directly by the Court itself. The kingdom is divided into provinces, amounting in all to twenty-two. The following is such a sketch of these as I have been enabled to collect. The government of Kamboja, of which Saigun is the capital, is divided into six provinces, of which the following are the names in the Annam language: Ya-teng, Peng-fong, Fo-nan, Win-cheng, Ho-sin, and Teng-chong. The ancient Kambojan names, however, such as Dong-nai, Que-douc, Sa-dek, Mi-tho, Ca-mao, and Tek-sia, are still, I believe, more current among the inhabitants. The government of Kamboja extends from the Island of Ko-kong to Cape St. James, and consists of an extensive alluvial tract, scarcely rising above the level of the sea, and bounded on both sides, towards the sea at least, by ranges of mountains. The most considerable rivers within it, beginning from the Siamese frontier, are those of Pong-som, Kampot, Kang-kao or Hatien; of Tek-sia, of Tek-mao, the great river of Kamboja, and that of Saigun.

The river of Kang-kao falls into the Gulf of Siam, in North latitude 10° 14′ and East longitude 104° 55′. At its *embouchure* it is of very considerable width, but shallow; the highest water at flood-tide not exceeding seven cubits, while at low tide the depth is not above three feet. In the season of the rains, there was a navigable communication between this river and the great one of Kamboja; and this natural channel has, within the last few years, been converted into a navigable canal of twenty fathoms broad, and

fifteen feet deep. This extensive undertaking was going on during our visit to Cochin China, and it was said that fifty thousand labourers had been employed upon it for two months, during a succession of years. The distance is a voyage of three days and three nights; the principal place on this river is Kang-kao, or Hatien, often written Athien; a town situated on the right bank of the river, about two miles up, and containing five thousand inhabitants, consisting of Kambojans and Cochin Chinese, with a few Chinese and Malays. Towards the beginning of the last century, there existed upon this river a town of considerable trade, called by Europeans, Ponteamas, where a considerable foreign trade existed for the supply of the old capital of Kamboja, between fifty and sixty leagues distant, and situated on the great river. This place, properly written, Po-tai-mat, is about a day's journey up the river, and has never been of any consequence, since destroyed in 1717 by the Siamese, in an attempt made by them, at that period, to conquer Kamboja.

The river of Pong-som, of no great size, discharges itself into the Gulf of Siam, as far as I can ascertain, about the latitude of 10° 43′. Near the mouth of it is a town, containing, it is said, one thousand Chinese inhabitants. The neighbouring country is fertile in black pepper, gamboge, cardamums, and varnish.

The river of Kam-pot, the same which is written in our charts "Can-vot," is still smaller than that of Pong-som, and discharges itself into the Gulf of Siam in North latitude 10° 43′. There is here also a town near the mouth of the river, chiefly inhabited by Kambojans, but containing also a few Cochin Chinese, and about a thousand Malays. The surrounding country produces abundance of rice. Kam-pot is said to be distant from Pe-nom-peng or Calompe, the present capital of Kamboja, twelve days' journey; and there is a road all the way, practicable for carts drawn by buffaloes, through a populous and well cultivated country.

The river of Tek-sia disembogues itself into the Gulf of Siam, about the latitude of 9° 46′ North. This is the name given to it by the Chinese traders; but in the Kambojan language it is called Kar-mun-sa, and in the Cochin Chinese Ret-ja. It is of considerable size, and navigable

all the way to the great Kamboja river for small vessels. The country around it produces great abundance of bees-wax; but it is little cultivated, being scarcely habitable, on account of the number of musquitoes and leeches with which it is infested.

The river of Tek-mao, meaning in Kambojan the Black Water, also falls into the Gulf of Siam, opposite to Pulo Ubi. It communicates with the great river of Kamboja, and is navigable through its whole course for small boats. On this river, and about two days' sail up, is situated a town of the same name, containing two thousand inhabitants, all Cochin Chinese. The river abounds in fish, and the surrounding country is fruitful in rice, but much infested by musquitoes.

The river of Kamboja is one of the largest in Asia. It is said to have its origin in a lake within the Chinese province of Yu-nan, and to be navigable for boats even before it enters the kingdom of Lao, between the twenty-second and twenty-third degrees of North latitude. It falls into the sea by three mouths, between the ninth and eleventh degrees. These three *embouchures* are known to European navigators by the names of the Western or Basak River, the Eastern or Central Branch, and the Northern or Japanese River. The first of these is the largest, and the most suitable for navigation, and is said to have from fourteen to eighteen feet water on the bar at its mouth at high-water spring-tides.

From Kang-kao to Cape St. James, the coast throughout is remarkably low—so much so, as to be liable to frequent inundation; and no mountains are visible in the interior. Cape St. James, the first bold land which is met in proceeding to the north, marks the entrance of the river of Saigun; perhaps, in all respects, for European navigation, the finest river in Asia, as it may be navigated for vessels of any burthen, and without a pilot, for sixty miles up. It is connected, at least by two branches, with the Japanese *embouchure* of the great river of Kamboja. The source of this river is unknown to Europeans, but I was told by some of the natives of the country, that it was navigable for native crafts for twenty days' voyage above the city of Saigun, which is itself fifteen leagues from the sea.

It has probably, therefore, a course of between three and four hundred miles; and, no doubt, originates in the mountains of Lao.

The Government of Cochin China Proper* is divided into seven provinces. Commencing from the south, the first of these is Bin-thuon, lying next to the Government of Saigun, or Kamboja. It is described as a small and mountainous country, chiefly remarkable for the quantity of the precious wood of aloes which it produces. The next to it is the province of Nha-trang, an elevated and ill-cultivated district. This province contains the two magnificent harbours of Nha-trang and Camraigne; from the former of which, the principal town of the same name is distant but a few leagues, and connected by a river. Nha-trang was strongly fortified in the European manner by the late King, the work being conducted by M. Olivier, a French engineer, in his service. It is the seat of one of the royal arsenals, and, being very conveniently placed, is the centre of all the commercial transactions of this part of the empire. Silk is produced and manufactured in the province.

The province of Phu-yen is described as one of the richest in Cochin China; and the port of the same name, which contains three distinct harbours, the very finest. The country is thickly peopled and highly cultivated throughout, the "terrace cultivation" of rice being pushed almost to the summits of the hills. The principal products are rice, maize, and a great quantity of liguminous plants.

The province of Qui-nhon is described as of considerable extent. Its principal town, of the same name, distant about five leagues from the port, and connected with it by a navigable river, is still one of the largest places in Cochin China, and, before the civil war, conducted a considerable foreign trade. It was for some time the seat of Government with the Tys-sons, or insurgent chiefs of the late revolution, and is now strongly fortified, after the European manner. Qui-nhon was stated to

* The name is said to have been imposed by the Portuguese, in contradistinction to the principality of Cochin on the Malabar coast. The inhabitants call it Dang-traoing, or the Central Country, in opposition to Tonquin, which they designate the External Country.—*Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes*, 1821. *Paris*.

me, by a French gentleman, who passed through it, to be populous, and highly cultivated.

The next province is Quang-ai, a mountainous district, which produces a considerable quantity of sugar. It is much exposed to the incursions of a race of mountaineers, living on the hills lying to the west of it.

The province of Quang-nan is a very extensive one, producing rice, sugar, and cinnamon. It is this which contains the celebrated port of Turan, or Han.

The last province of this Government is that of Hué, which produces some sugar, and a considerable quantity of rice, but is not remarkable for its fertility. Much of it that we saw consisted of sterile mountains and marshes, and even in the plains which were under cultivation the soil seemed thin and sandy. The capital of the same name, but called also by the natives, Phu-chuan, and by the Chinese, Sun-wha, lies in this province, and is distant about six miles from the sea. It may be described as a long straggling town, of very little breadth, and extending, the fortress included, full four miles along the left bank of the river. In some places there are to be seen a few good houses of brick, roofed with tile; but the greater number of the habitations are poor structures of thatch and bamboo. According to the best information I could obtain, the population, including the troops, has been estimated at between fifty and sixty thousand.

The Government or Viceroyalty of Tonquin forms the most populous and valuable portion of the kingdom; but not having seen any part of the country myself, and even the French officers in the King's service having seldom visited it, I have very little to add concerning it beyond what is already before the public.

Besides the name of Annam, which it has in common with Cochin China, this country is called by the natives by the same name which Europeans apply to it, or at least one much resembling it,—Dong-kinh,* and is

* The name is said to be derived from two Chinese words, Tong and King, which mean, the "Eastern Royal City." To distinguish it from Cochin China, the natives call it Dang-ngoai, or the External Country.—*Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes*. *Paris*, 1821.

recognised by the Chinese and Siamese under the name of Tang-kia. It is an extensive champaign country, principally watered by one great river and its numerous branches. Its southern boundary is at the small village and river of Ke-ga, about eighty-five leagues journey by land from the capital, Hué, and lying, as I conjecture, between the nineteenth and twentieth degrees of North latitude.

The river of Tonquin, which has been called by some European writers the Song-koy,* has probably not a very extensive course. Its source is said to be in the mountains of Yu-nan, and it falls into the Gulf of Tonquin by two mouths, the most southerly of which is in 20° 6′, and the most northerly in 20° 15′ North latitude. The southerly channel is often used by the Chinese traders; but the northern was that navigated by Europeans when the Dutch and English traded with Tonquin. At that period there is described to have been not less than eighteen feet water at high spring-tides on its bar, rendering it navigable for vessels of very considerable burthen. I was assured, when in Cochin China, that this channel has of late years been in a great measure filled up by sands, and that it is not at present navigable for vessels above two hundred tons burthen. This was confidently affirmed both by the European gentlemen at the Court of Hué and by Chinese traders; but still I think there may be some error in the statement, and that the description may apply to the southern branch, which was at all times navigable for small vessels only.†

The river of Tonquin is a mile wide at its mouth, and heretofore was navigable for large ships at least twenty miles up, where the European shipping used to lie. At Hean, where the Chinese junks were wont to be moored, and which is eighty miles from the sea, Dampier describes the river as being broader than the Thames at Gravesend; and the same writer gives its breadth at the capital, twenty miles farther up, as being equal to that of the same river at Lambeth, but so shallow as to be fordable on horseback in the dry season.

* This word appears to be a corruption of the native term Song-ca, meaning the Great River.—*Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes.—Paris,* 1821.

† The fact, certainly a very remarkable one, is expressly stated in the *ouvelles Lettres Édifiantes;* and therefore, I presume, there can be no doubt of it.

On this river, and at the distance of one hundred miles from its mouth, is situated the capital of Tonquin, the largest city in the empire, most frequently called Ke-cho, written Cachao by us, but often, by the natives of the country, named Bak-than. Chinese traders, who were well acquainted with both, described it to me as being at least thrice as large as Hué, and it is probable that its population does not fall short of one hundred and fifty thousand. Dampier, in his time, believed it to contain twenty thousand houses, which would give a population of at least two hundred thousand. The only other considerable place, of which I have heard, is Hean, which, in the time of Dampier, was estimated to contain two thousand houses, and probably, therefore, not less than twenty thousand inhabitants.

Of the civil subdivisions of Tonquin, various accounts have been rendered. Dampier divides the country into eight provinces; the Abbé Richard into eleven; a manuscript sketch, by M. Chaigneau, into nine; and according to a native's statement furnished to me, they amount to fifteen. Their names, according to this last, are as follow:—Ke-cho, Teng-long, Wai-tak, Sang-sai, King-pak, Sing-kwang, Heng-wha, Ko-peng, Leong-san, Ching-wha, La-nam First and Lanam Second, Hai-yong, An-kwong, and Man-ning-chao. Two of these provinces, lying adjacent to Cochin China, are under the immediate management of the Court; and the rest, as already mentioned, governed by a viceroy, who resides at Ca-chao.*

On the coast of Cochin China there are many islands, of which the following is such a sketch as I have been enabled to collect, beginning from the Gulf of Siam. The Cochin Chinese race have spread themselves in this quarter as far north as the considerable island of Ko-kram, nearly in the thirteenth degree of latitude, and, in fine weather, visible from the roads of Siam. This, and other islands in its neighbourhood, however, belong to Siam, down to Ko-kong inclusive. The extensive chain of islands from this to Pulo Ubi, all belong to Cochin China, including Pulo Panjang, and Pulo We, although distant from the coast. The greater number of them

* According to the *Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes*, the number of Provinces is eleven; but the names there given differ almost entirely from those in the text. There is no doubt but that both civil divisions, and their names, are often capriciously altered.

are small, steep, barren, thickly wooded and uninhabited. Of Pulo Ubi, and Quadrole, which are among the most considerable in size, some account has been given in the JOURNAL.

In the China Seas, the only considerable islands belonging to Cochin China, are Pulo Con-dore, Pulo Can-ton, correctly Col-lao Ray, and Cham-col-lao, properly Col-lao Cham. All that I know of these has been already given in the JOURNAL. Besides these, the King of Cochin China, in 1816, took possession of the uninhabited and dangerous archipelago of rocks, islets, and sand-banks, called the Paracels, which he claims as part of his dominions, and over which his authority is not likely to be disputed.

Besides the Annam nation, the inhabitants of the present dominions of Cochin China consist of several other races, of which a short account is now to be given. The principal of these are the Kambojans, whose name, in their own language, is Kammer; but who are called by the Siamese, Kammen; by the Cochin Chinese, Ko-men; by the Chinese, Tang-po-cha, and by the Malays, Kamboja; which last is, no doubt, the word which has been borrowed by Europeans, and most frequently written Cambodia. The ancient territory of the Kambojans appears, as far as I can discover, to have embraced all the country lying west and south of the river of Saigun; extending on the Gulf of Siam as far north as the twelfth degree of latitude; and in the interior, at least to the fifteenth. The Kambojans speak a language distinct from those of all their neighbours; but in physical form, manners, laws, religion, and state of civilization, they bear a closer resemblance to the Siamese than to any other people.

Of the history of Kamboja very little is known to Europeans. It appears, however, that in early periods, possessed as it is of a fertile soil and fine rivers, it was not inferior in strength and civilization to the neighbouring kingdoms of Siam, Lao, and Cochin China. As early as the year 616, it is described as having begun, like its neighbours, to send ambassadors and offerings to China; a practice which was continued to a very late period. It appears to have been engaged in perpetual contests with Siam and Cochin China, sometimes holding these countries in

subjection, but being more frequently itself a tributary. In the tenth century, Kamboja is said to have been, for these parts of the world, a powerful kingdom. About the end of the twelfth century, it subdued Cochin China. In 1268, Kublai-khan, the Tartar Sovereign of China, being told that Kamboja was a country of great wealth, attempted its conquest; but his army was compelled to retire, receiving, however, an acknowledgment of submission from the invaded country, and a promise of paying to China a nominal tribute as heretofore. In the year 1717, the Siamese invaded Kamboja, when the King of this country called in the assistance of the Cochin Chinese, by whose aid the Siamese were defeated; and in consideration of the assistance given, Kamboja acknowledged itself a vassal of Cochin China. Kamboja from this period appears to have continued in a state of much anarchy; and about the year 1750, the Cochin Chinese seized upon Dong-nai, and other provinces lying upon the river of Saigun. In 1786, Ong-tong, King of Kamboja, dying, an officer of his Court, who had married his daughter, was created Regent during the minority of his son, a child of a few years of age. The Regent placed the kingdom under the protection of Siam, and brought the infant son and daughter of the late King to the Court of Bangkok. Kamboja in this manner became virtually dependent upon Siam, a state of things which continued down to the year 1809, when a nephew of the late King, having succeeded in forming a party, seized a portion of the kingdom. The Regent, upon this, called in the assistance of the Siamese, and the nephew, that of the Cochin Chinese. Tai-kun, the Viceroy of Kamboja, and the individual with whom our Mission had an interview, by his activity and energy, and the superiority of his troops, soon decided the contest in favour of Cochin China. He entered Kamboja with a force of 30,000 men, and met the Siamese army on its way to occupy the capital. The latter was in no condition to contest the prizes with him; a conference took place, and a peace was concluded, by which all Kamboja was to continue tributary to Cochin China, with the exception of the province of Batabang, bordering on Siam, which was ceded to that country. This arrangement

continues still in force, and under it the Kambojans, I am told, are treated with great rigour. The King has but a nominal authority; the Cochin Chinese troops and civil authorities occupy his country, and civil and military Cochin Chinese Mandarins reside at his capital, who virtually govern the kingdom, under the direction of the Viceroy of Saigun. Of this state of thraldom the Kambojans are reported to be extremely impatient, but considering the military organization of the Cochin Chinese government, and their own unwarlike disposition, it does not seem probable that they will soon be able to emancipate themselves from it.*

Kamboja, as already mentioned, is a great, and, from all accounts, a fertile champaign country, separated from Siam, Lao, and Champa by ranges of mountains. The only two places of importance which it contains are Pe-nom-peng, called also Ca-lom-pé, the present capital, and Pon-tai-pret the ancient one, the place formerly known to Europeans under the name of the city of Kamboja. Pon-tai-pret lies in about the twelfth degree of latitude, on the right bank of a branch of the great river, and eighty leagues distant from the sea. It is at present a place of little consequence. Pe-nom-peng, the modern capital, is about forty miles lower down, where the main river and the branch last mentioned meet, and situated on the right bank. This place was described to me by natives of it, whom I met in Siam, as a town of considerable size, and containing a population of from 25 to 30,000 inhabitants. Situated to the north-east of Pe-nom-peng are two extensive lakes of fresh water, which in the dry season do not contain above from one to two cubits of water, but in the season of inundation full three fathoms. The name given to the largest of them, in the Kambojan language, is Tan-le-sap, or the "fresh-water sea." The Malays residing in the country give it the name of the "Lake of Sri Rama." According to the accounts given of it by the natives, it is a voyage of a day and a night's journey across.

* While resident of Singapore, I carried on a friendly correspondence with this Chief and his Minister; in conducting it, much circumspection was necessary, to avoid giving offence to the Cochin Chinese.

The next most considerable tribe, inhabiting the Cochin Chinese territories, are the people of Champa, called, in the Annam language, Loye, or Loi. The proper country of this race is that extending from Cape of St. James to at least as far as the province of Phu-yen, and, according to some accounts, even including this last. The people of Champa, before their subjugation by the Cochin Chinese, formed a considerable state under a Chief, the seat of whose government was in the bay of Phan-rye, in the latitude of about 11° 10′ North. They profess, according to the notices which I have been enabled to collect, a species of Hindooism resembling the worship of Buddha or Jain, as these exist in Hindostan, and appear to have existed in Java before the conversion of the inhabitants of that island to the religion of Mohammed. At all events, it appears to differ widely from the Buddhism of the neighbouring countries. Numerous temples of hewn stone, containing Hindoo images, such as those of Siwa, Durga, and Buddha, are to be seen throughout the country, as I have been informed both by natives and European gentlemen; and in 1824, M. Diard, who had just passed through Champa, in travelling between Hué and Saigun, brought with him from thence to Singapore a well-finished image in stone, which I soon recognised to be that of Ganes, the Indian god of wisdom. The language of the people of Champa is a peculiar dialect, differing essentially both from the Annam and Kambojan.

The people of Champa appear to have maintained, in distant times, a considerable intercourse with various countries of the Malayan Archipelago; and about the middle of the fifteenth century, the Chronicles of Java state that the Queen of the principal sovereign of that island was a princess of Champa: a fact which seems to point out that the religion of the two people must have been similar and their manners analogous.

Independent of the people of this race inhabiting the original country of Champa, an emigration from them appears, in some remote period, to have taken place to the eastern coast of the Gulf of Siam, between the eleventh and twelfth degrees of North latitude, where they have intermixed with Malayan settlers from the Peninsula, and, I am told, embraced the Moham-

medan religion. Both the Champa and Malayan languages are still spoken by the inhabitants of this mixed colony, as I have had frequent opportunities of ascertaining from the crews of the boats of that country, which yearly visit Singapore.

Champa was subdued by the Cochin Chinese, from all I have been able to learn, between seventy and eighty years ago, and about the same period in which they wrested from Kamboja the province of Dong-nai. Since this event, the natives have retired from the sea-coast, which is now principally occupied by the Annam race. Like the Kambojans, they are treated harshly, are discontented, and in a state of frequent revolt; so that the Cochin Chinese Government is under the necessity of maintaining a number of fortresses on the hills and passes, as a security against their hostile incursions into the open country. These works are stated to be all built on the principles of European fortification.

A third original race inhabits the Cochin Chinese territory, of whom little is known but their name, and that they are an uncivilized but inoffensive people. They are called by the Cochin Chinese, Moi, and are said still to form the bulk of the population in the province of Dong-nai, which is their original country.*

The strangers settled in the dominions of Cochin China consist of Malays, a mixed race of Portuguese Christians, and Chinese. The Malays, as already noticed, are confined to the eastern coast of the Gulf of Siam, between the latitudes of eleven and twelve degrees, their chief residence being at two places, called Pong-som and Kam-pot. Here they retain the Mohammedan religion, and speak their native language, although intermixed with a number of Champa and Kambojan words. Their numbers, from what I could learn, do not exceed 4 or 5000, and they are destitute of all political influence. Those amongst them with whom I conversed, claimed their origin from the Malayan principality of Johore; but at what time the emigration took place, or under what circumstances, I could not learn.

* According to the "Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes," the country of the Moi is a strip of mountainous country, lying between Lao and Cochin China, in length, from north to south, about one hundred and twenty leagues, and having a breadth of from twenty to thirty.

With this country, and with other Malayan states, such as Pahang, Kalantan, and Tringano, they maintain a commercial intercourse down to the present day, importing into those places rice, stic-lac, coarse cotton fabrics, and silk manufactured goods. It was two of these vessels that the navigator Dampier met at Pulo-Ubi, near one hundred and forty years ago, on their way to the Straits of Malacca, and which he describes as being the neatest and most dexterously managed of any native shipping he had met with in his travels; a character which is still maintained by them.

The Christian religion was introduced into Tonquin, Cochin China, and Kamboja, about the year 1624, by the Portuguese Jesuits from Macao, and after the persecution and massacre of the Portuguese in Japan. Consequent upon this transaction, and the subsequent one of the expulsion of the Portuguese from Malacca, about the middle of the same century, a number of Portuguese of the mixed race appear to have settled in those countries, where their descendants are still to be seen; hardly distinguished, however, from the natives of the country who have embraced Christianity.

The present King and his father have neither encouraged nor persecuted Christianity. Upon the whole, it has not for many years made any sensible progress. The prohibition against the plurality of wives is said to be what is most repulsive in it to the habits and manners of the Cochin Chinese. In other respects, they are probably indifferent to its doctrines; but the Government will always view it with jealousy, as an innovation connected with a class of strangers, whose power and ambition are a source of well-founded alarm. The number of Christians in Tonquin was stated to me as amounting to three hundred thousand, which is, I think, the same number given at least fifty years ago. The number in Cochin China was given at one hundred thousand, and those in Kamboja at twenty-five thousand. This would give a total of four hundred and twenty-five thousand. One fact was generally admitted in the conversations which I held on this subject,—that the Christians were among the poorest and most abject part of the population. They have no political influence whatever, nor could I hear that since the death of the Prince who visited France

along with the Bishop D'Adran, and who, to the great uneasiness of his parents, became a devout Christian, that Christianity has been professed by any person of rank or condition.

The *Chinese* form by far the most numerous class of strangers, although they are by no means proportionally so much so as in Siam, and in some countries of the Malayan Archipelago. The cause of this, in a situation naturally so favourable, is no doubt the vigilant and oppressive rigour of the Government, and its more direct and troublesome interference with their industry, arising probably out of a political jealousy of the Chinese, which is not felt in the other countries in which they are settled. The first Chinese settlers are exempt from the conscription; and their descendants have a privilege, not granted to the natives, of paying a pecuniary composition in lieu of personal services, which amounts to fifteen quans a-year. The latter, before contracting a marriage, but not afterwards, are permitted freely to quit the country, which a native cannot do under any pretext. In Tonquin there are said to be about twenty-five thousand Chinese engaged in the iron, silver, and gold mines; and at the town of Cachao about a thousand, of greater respectability, engaged in trade. The number settled at Hué, the capital, is very small, and it was stated to me not to exceed six hundred. The Chinese of Fai-fo amount to about three thousand, and those of Saigun to five thousand. Besides these places, they are to be found in smaller numbers at Quin-hon, Kangkao, Pe-nom-peng, and other places, and perhaps the whole number within the dominions of Cochin China will not be overrated at forty thousand.

A material diversity of climate is found to obtain in the different subdivisions of the Cochin Chinese Empire, resulting as well from difference of physical aspect as from geographical situation. In Cochin Chinese Kamboja, which may be described as extending from between the eighth and ninth to between the tenth and eleventh degrees of North latitude, and which is a low country, destitute of mountains, the seasons observe the same course as in Malabar, Bengal, and Siam; that is, the

rains commence about the end of May, or beginning of June, and the wet season extends to September. This is the boisterous and inclement period of the year; and the opposite, the mild and serene one. At Saigun, towards the end of August, the thermometer in the shade stood, at six o'clock in the morning, at seventy-nine; at noon, at eighty-two; and at six in the evening, at eighty degrees. I have had no opportunity of ascertaining the temperature in the dry season.

The second climate embraces the sub-division of the Empire, called more strictly Cochin China, extending from about the latitude of eleven degrees to eighteen degrees; a hilly tract, with a high range of mountains running north and south. These last intercepting the clouds, produces the same effect upon the seasons as the central range of the Peninsula of Hindostan, or that of Celebes, with some other countries of the Indian Archipelago; that is, it reverses the seasons; so that, in Cochin China, a dry season prevails during the south-west, and a wet one during the north-east monsoon. The rains, in Cochin China, set in in the end of October, and continue until March. When we left Saigun, in the beginning of September, the rainy season was nearly at a close; and before we quitted Hué and Turan, towards the end of October, it had just set in. M. Chaigneau, a French gentleman, who had resided many years at Hué, informed me, that the greatest summer heat which he had ever experienced, did not exceed thirty-one and a half of Reaumur's thermometer, about one hundred and three of Farenheit; and that the greatest winter cold did not fall under eleven, or about fifty-seven of Farenheit. He stated, however, that the sensible cold in the winter was much greater than the cold indicated by the thermometer, in consequence of the periodical rains falling upon this season of the year; a circumstance which often rendered the weather chilly and uncomfortable.

In the flat and alluvial tract which composes the principal part of the kingdom of Tonquin, the seasons are the same as in Kamboja and other countries of the Continent of Asia, exposed to the direct influence of the south-west monsoon; and, according to Dampier, Richard, and Bissachère, the rains

commence in May and terminate in August. In this division the heat of summer is said to be occasionally excessive, and the cold of December, January, and February, to be very sharp, and often rendered unpleasant by the prevalence of heavy fogs, as in the similar country and climate of Lower Bengal. With respect to hurricanes and typhoons, their utmost severity is experienced along the coast of Tonquin. They are more rarely felt on the coast of Cochin China, especially below the latitude of sixteen degrees North. Kamboja is exempt from them altogether.

In salubrity, the climates of the different subdivisions of the Empire were spoken favourably of by different European gentlemen with whom I conversed on the subject. Messrs. Vannier and Chaigneau, after they had each resided above thirty years in the country, spoke particularly in praise of the climates of Hué and Saigun; and, I think, the sturdy and active frames of the inhabitants may be fairly adduced as proof of their goodness.

Our short residence in Cochin China afforded us but a very inadequate opportunity of prosecuting inquiries in the department of Natural History. Wherever we had an opportunity of examining the geological formation, it was primitive; and the principal mountains from Cape St. James to Hué appear to be composed of granite or syenite. Some of the lower hills and partial formations consisted of quartz, rock, marble, and mountain lime-stone. The subdivision of Kamboja, as might be reckoned upon from its formation, is remarkably poor in metallic productions, iron being, from all accounts, the only metal which it affords in any quantity; but even of this, the supply is inadequate to the consumption of the country, and the greater part of this is obtained from Tonquin, Siam, and recently from the European establishments in the Straits of Malacca. The subdivision of Cochin China is equally destitute of metallic wealth, as Kamboja. The Cochin Chinese believe that the mountains at Cape Varela afford silver, and this is reported by M. Dayot. Cochin China, however, receives its principal supply,

both of the useful and precious metals, from Tonquin. The metallic wealth of this last subdivision of the kingdom makes up for the deficiency of the other two, for it abounds in iron, gold, and silver. The following information respecting these mines was given to me at Hué, by a Chinese merchant who had visited them. The iron mines are about six days' journey from Cachao, the capital; and the gold and silver mines, about twelve days' journey, in a westerly direction, from the same place. The silver mines are estimated to produce yearly about one hundred piculs, or about 213,600 ounces; but I could not learn the amount of the gold, a large portion of which is said to be smuggled into the neighbouring Chinese provinces of Yunan and Quang-sai. According to the P. de Marini Romain, the silver mines were wrought, for the first time, in 1625 or 1630, and he states their situation to have been in the northern provinces, which he calls Bao and Ciucanghe. All the mines, whether of gold, silver, or iron, are at present worked by Chinese; and I was informed that the number of this people, natives of the island of Hai-nan and of the provinces of Kiang-nan and Fo-kien, engaged in this labour, or in employments accessary to it, amount to from twenty to thirty thousand.

The useful vegetable productions of such parts of the country as we visited, did not appear to differ from those that are well known in similar latitudes in other parts of India. Marsh rice is cultivated universally in the low countries; and within the tracts of inundation of the great rivers of Kamboja and Tonquin, the produce is said to be steady, and very abundant. The reverse is obviously the case in the thin sandy soils of the central parts of the kingdom, or Cochin China Proper, which are incapable of affording sufficient food for their own inhabitants, and draw a large share of their supply of corn from Tonquin and Kamboja.

The only other articles of food, which we observed to be raised in Cochin China in considerable quantity, were maize, the earth nut, or *Arachis hypogæa*, the Igname, or *Convolvulus Batatas*, and the cocoa nut. The Areca palm is extensively reared in Kamboja and Tonquin, from both of

which countries the nut is extensively exported to China; and the production of the former is more highly esteemed by the Chinese than that of any other.

The best fruits of Cochin China are the orange and lichi. They were not in season during our visit, but I have seen the oranges of Saigun brought to Singapore in the months of February and March, and they were of great size and excellent flavour, much surpassing those brought from China in the same season of the year. The mangosteen and durian, which are so highly prized in the Malay Islands and Siam, it is a little remarkable, are unknown in any part of the Cochin Chinese dominions. One might have expected to have found them in Kamboja, where the climate and soil are, no doubt, suitable, and to which the Malays have long ago emigrated, but I have only heard of a few trees of the first reared for curiosity in the King's gardens at Pe-nom-peng.

The sugar-cane is cultivated to a considerable extent in the provinces of Kwang-ai and Kwang-nam, which lie immediately to the southward of the capital; but not much in Kamboja, and still less in Tonquin. The Cochin Chinese themselves are both the cultivators and manufacturers, and receive no assistance from the Chinese, as in the neighbouring countries; and from hence, I have no doubt, arises the inferiority of the Cochin Chinese sugar, which ranks below that of Siam, of the Philippines, and of Java, being dark in colour and badly granulated. The quantity exported was stated to me variously at from twenty to sixty thousand piculs, the greater part of which is sent to China from the port of Fai-fo, near the bay of Turan. About five thousand piculs are annually brought into the European Settlements in the Straits of Malacca.

Black pepper, of good quality, but in small quantity, is produced in some parts of Central Cochin China, but is neither of cheapness nor of sufficient quantity to admit of being exported. The portion of Kamboja under the dominion of Cochin China produces the same fine cardamums yielded in Siam, and so much sought after in China. Of these there are

exported from Saigun yearly about eigh hundred piculs. Tonquin produces another article, which is largely exported to China, and which is known in the Annam language by th name of *Chao-kwo*. Specimens of it were shown to us at Fai-fo, and I imagine it to be a large and coarse species of *Amomum*.

The true cinnamon (*Laurus Cinnamomum*) is most probably an indigenous product of Cochin China, but we had no personal opportunities of examining the specific characters of the plant. The part of the country affording it is Central Cochin China in the dry and sandy districts lying north-west of the town of Fai-fo. It is found in small quantities in the wild state; but by far the greater part of what is known in commerce, is the produce of cultivation. No less than ten varieties are known in the markets; but whether these be the produce of different species of laurel, or the effects of different modes of culture, preparation, and soils, we had no means of determining. Specimens of the different kinds were shown to me at Fai-fo, and they were all highly fragrant, of an agreeable flavour, and containing a large quantity of essential oil. The bark of some of these varieties was extremely thin, but that of others thick, and the latter was generally preferred by the Chinese merchants. None of the kinds were freed from the *epidermis;* and therefore, so far, they were unsuited to the European market. The greater part of what is produced is exported to China, to the extent, according to the information which was given to me, of between two hundred and fifty and three hundred thousand pounds yearly. In that country it is greatly preferred to the cinnamon of Ceylon. The price of the coarsest description was stated to us, at Fai-fo, as low as twelve quans the picul, but the ordinary kinds may be reckoned at from fifty to sixty quans. A most extravagant value is put upon small quantities of a very fine sort, which is reserved for the King's use, and which is obtained by private individuals only with the utmost difficulty. Some of this is valued as high as six hundred quans the picul, and select parts at the enormous price of one thousand Spanish dollars. It is remarkable,

that this high-priced cinnamon should find a market in the neighbouring provinces of Kwang-si and Canton; the former of which, it is said, produces the cassia, which is so largely exported to Europe.

Anise-seed, (*Pimpinella Anisum*,) is a production of Kamboja, and about three thousand piculs of it are annually exported from Saigun to China by the junks.

Cotton is grown in considerable quantity throughout the country, and exported by the Chinese junks. I was informed by the Chinese, that the quality is so much superior to that of Bengal, that in the market of Canton it is worth twenty per cent. more.

The mulberry (*Morus alba*) is extensively cultivated in Tonquin and Cochin China Proper, as food for the silk-worm. We observed the cultivation in considerable quantity close to the capital; and small patches, indeed, were every where grown near the villages, for the rearing of silk-worms is a very general object of attention with the peasantry. The silk of Cochin China, and even that of Tonquin, which is better, is, like every other produce of the country demanding the exercise of skill and intelligence, greatly inferior to that of China. The hank, or skene, is too short to be suited at present for the European market; and the material itself is deprived of its gloss and beauty by using water which is too hot in reeling off the cocoons, the gummy matter being by this means dissolved. When we were in Cochin China, the price of raw silk was from three and a half to five quans per catti, according to quality; and I was informed that Fai-fo and its neighbourhood might then afford for exportation yearly about two hundred piculs Hué about sixty, and Cachao, in Tonquin, from eight hundred to one thousand. There is reason to believe that this is one of the subjects upon which Cochin Chinese industry might be most successfully employed, were a steady demand created by the establishment of an active foreign trade.

Tea is produced in Cochin China and Tonquin, but not in Kamboja. From the best accounts, it is a variety of the same species (Thea Bohea)

which is grown in China, coarse and inferior in quality from careless cultivation and preparation,—possibly also from some inferior suitableness of soil and climate. The leaf is twice or thrice the size of that of Bohea tea, and the preparation so slovenly, that when I first observed it in the market of Saigun, I imagined it, until more closely examined, a quantity of chopped tobacco-leaf. Although the leaf is large and rank, it possesses little bitterness or flavour; and to obtain its virtues, it is always boiled, instead of being infused like Chinese tea. The Cochin Chinese drink it in large bowls, with or without sugar, and consider it a highly refreshing after fatigue. We made a trial of it at Hué, and did not find it disagreeable. The plant is only grown in hilly parts of the country; so that we had but a very partial opportunity of examining it. The best is produced in the province of Kwang-yi. At an average, it costs from six to eight quans the picul for the coarser sorts; but some of the most esteemed rises to twenty quans. Of the appearance and use of the Cochin Chinese tea plant, a sensible and exact account is rendered by the P. de Marini Romain, as early as 1666. The culture of the tea plant in Tonquin and Cochin China, does not prevent the importation of a considerable quantity of tea from China; and it is this, and not the produce of the country, which is generally consumed by all persons of condition.

The Kambojan part of the kingdom, and Tonquin both afford sticklac of the same fine quality with that of Siam. Eagle-wood, an object of royal monopoly, is brought from the country of the Sing, who, I believe, are the same tribe denominated by the Siamese, Chong. This is in the highest esteem amongst the people of the country and the Chinese, not only as an incense, but for imagined medicinal virtues.

Cochin China and Tonquin produce a root bearing some external resemblance to that of the *Dioscorea alata*, or common yam, which is rich in a reddish brown colouring matter. It is called in the Annam language Năo, and in the dialect of Canton, Shu-leong. This is largely exported to China, as well as consumed in the country, as a dye stuff. We had

no opportunity of seeing the fresh plant, or of determining its botanical character; but were informed that it is a spontaneous product of the mountainous and uncultivated parts of the country.

The teak-tree (*Tectona grandis*), which abounds so much in the forest of Siam and Pegue, is, as far as we could learn, a stranger to every part of the Cochin Chinese territory. Both Tonquin and Cochin China appear to be deficient in large and good timber; but this observation does not apply to Kamboja, which is abundantly supplied. Two descriptions of timber, called in the Anam and Chinese languages, Chao, or Sao, and Go, both of very large size, are the most in use and most esteemed. The first is used in house building, and in the construction of junks. The whole of the gun-carriages of the arsenals of Hué and Saigun are also of this timber. In point of durability and strength, it does not appear to be much inferior to teak itself, but it is less buoyant.* The Go, called by Loureiro, *Nauclea orientalis*, is a hard, black, and heavy timber, admitting of a fine polish. This is used for furniture, and especially for those large broad benches which are in such general use with the Cochin Chinese.

From all accounts, the zoology of Cochin China does not differ very remarkably, at least in its ordinary features, from that of similar Indian climates. The quadrupeds of the country are the bear; the dog, resembling that of China, but smaller, and used, as in that country, as food; the tiger, of the same size, strength, and ferocity; as in Bengal with the spotted leopard, the cat, the elephant, the hog; the rhinoceros, of which the horn, on account of its supposed medicinal virtues, is in much request; the horse, several species of deer, the ox, and the buffalo. Those accustomed to Hindostan, miss, in this country, as in Siam, the jackal, the fox, the hare,

* Such was the information obtained by us from personal inquiry on the spot; but it is necessary to add, that Loureiro includes teak among the plants of Cochin China, and expressly states that it is the same which is called in the text, Chao, or Sao. He calls it Tectona Theka, giving its Anam name Cay Sao, or Sao-wood, with its Malayan synonyme jatus from Rumphius.

the ass, and the sheep. The animals domesticated by the Cochin Chinese are the elephant, the horse, the buffalo and ox, the goat, the hog, the dog, the cat; and among poultry, the goose, duck, and common fowl.

The elephant of Cochin China appeared to us to be a very fine animal, and equal fully to those of the eastern parts of Bengal. The forests of Kamboja produce the greatest numbers, and those of the best quality. I am told that in that country the price of a new elephant does not exceed forty or fifty quans. The white elephant is not, as in Siam, Pegue, and Ava, an object of veneration. There were none at Hué or Saigun; nor could I learn that the forests, from which the principal supply is derived, produced any of this variety. The Cochin Chinese use the elephant in war, but, from the natural timidity of the animal, probably to little purpose. The horse of Cochin China is a small, shabby-looking pony, inferior in size and beauty to the small horses of the Indian islands. They are used only for riding, and do not, indeed, appear to be fit either for agricultural labour, or for the purposes of a cavalry.

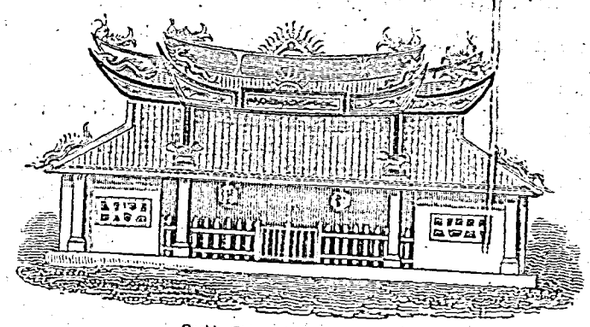
The buffalo was the animal which we constantly observed used for field labour, although it is not improbable but the ox may be so applied in parts of the country where the soil is drier and lighter. We found the buffalo at Saigun to be the same large and powerful animal as in Siam and in the Indian islands; but as we proceeded northward, and especially about Hué, it was a much inferior animal, in all respects; a fact which seems to indicate that this quadruped exists in perfection only in countries close to the Equator. The ox is a small animal, uniformly of a reddish-brown colour, and destitute of the hump so remarkable in the cattle of western India. Neither the flesh of the buffalo nor ox is used by the Cochin Chinese as food; and, as I have already noticed, they hold milk in abhorrence. A small variety of goat is tolerably frequent; and we saw, both at Saigun and Hué, a few shabby and diminutive sheep, which were kept more for curiosity than use.

The hog is a great favourite with the Cochin Chinese. In the wild

state it is found in all parts of the country; and the breed, which is domesticated, is remarkably handsome and compact. We observed at Hué that the hogs were universally stall-fed, and seldom permitted to roam at large.

The poultry of Cochin China, especially that of Saigun, is the finest I have seen in India, and is cheap and abundant. The common fowl, in the wild state, is found in the Cochin Chinese forests, as we had ourselves an opportunity of ascertaining, and they are reared in considerable abundance; but, I believe, less on account of their flesh than to gratify the propensity, which is so general amongst the Cochin Chinese, for cock-fighting. Several species of wild duck visit the country in the cold season, as birds of passage, when they are to be seen in vast flocks, covering the rivers, lakes, marshes, and rice-fields. The common duck is reared in vast quantities, and we had opportunities of seeing flocks which could not be less in number than a thousand. We saw geese only at Saigun, but in considerable numbers; large, always white, and a different variety from what is reared in China.

The seas and rivers of Cochin China appeared to be well stored with fish, from which the inhabitants of the coast, at least, to judge from the number of persons engaged in this branch of industry, must draw a great share of their subsistence. Large fleets of boats were seen to issue every morning from the creeks, bays, and harbours, which proceeded several miles to sea, for the purpose of fishing, returning in the evening. The rivers also were often seen crowded with stake-nets, and other means of decoying and catching fish.



Cochin Chinese Temple, near Saigun.

CHAPTER XVII.

Personal appearance of the Cochin Chinese.—Progress in useful Arts.—Language.—Dress.—Character.—Government.—Military Force.—Revenue.—Laws.—Religion.

In their persons, the Annam race, comprehending under this name both the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese, for there is very little difference between them, are a short, squat, and ill-favoured people. They are probably lower in stature than any people of Central Asia. Their limbs are strong and well formed, and they are altogether active and hardy. In point of features, they bear a nearer resemblance to the Malays than to any other people; but there is no ferocity in their expression; on the contrary, their countenances exhibit an air of cheerfulness and good humour. The

women appeared to us to be, to a remarkable degree, fairer and handsomer than the men. With them, the hands, arms, and feet, are well formed, and the carriage even of the lower orders is graceful.

The progress which the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese, but especially the latter, have made in useful arts, although very moderate, is certainly superior to that attained by the Siamese—the islanders of the Indian Archipelago, or indeed any people of Eastern Asia—the Hindoos, Chinese, and Japanese excepted. In this, as in other matters, they are humble and distant imitators of the Chinese. Cotton is raised by them in considerable abundance, and of good quality; and from this material there is fabricated, particularly in Tonquin, a coarse durable cloth, at so low a price, that it would not be easy to supplant it by the introduction of European manufactures under the most favourable circumstances. They manufacture no fine cotton fabric, nor any thing indeed approaching to it, and they appear ignorant of the art of calico printing in any form. Cloths, indeed, of a variety of colours, are not used in the dress of the people, and are generally repugnant to their tastes. The art which they have carried to the greatest extent, is that of rearing the silk-worm and weaving silk; but both the raw silk of Cochin China and its silk fabrics are of very inferior quality to those of China. During our early connexion with the Tonquinese, they enjoyed a great reputation for the fine varnish which their country produced, and for their skill in the manufacture of lackered ware. In the Abbé Richard's History of Tonquin, an ample but not scientific account is given of the tree which yields this commodity, as well as of the mode of preparing its produce. This tree is cultivated, and the produce either exported to China or used in the country. The lowest sort of varnish costs from ten to twelve quans the picul, and the best from twenty-two to twenty-three. The manufacture of lackered ware is still carried on extensively in Tonquin. From the ordinary sort, which is cheap, is made a variety of utensils in pretty general use. There is an

xpensive manufacture of lackered ware, richly inlaid with mother of pearl, r flowered with gold, or both, which is used by persons of rank as betel oxes and similar articles. Of this description, which is richer and handomer than any Japan ware, we obtained several specimens when at Hué. t is scarcely necessary to mention, that the smelting and working of the useul and precious metals have been long known to the Cochin Chinese and onquinese. It is in the arts connected with these that they display to he greatest advantage that singular skill in imitation which has been so ften remarked in all semi-barbarous people. The beautiful brass cannon ast in the arsenal of Hué, are the most extraordinary specimens of this kill. In 1823, when Resident of Singapore, I presented to the Minister f Elephants, with the sanction of the Governor-General of India, a highly inished double-barrelled English fowling-piece: it was sent from Turan o Hué by the English gentleman entrusted to deliver it. In the course f a fortnight it was returned, along with another double-barrelled gun, abricated, within that short time, in the King's arsenal. The imitation vas so perfect, that it was very difficult, at first sight, to distinguish the opy from the model. This effort afforded not only a proof of Cochin Chinese ingenuity, but also of Cochin Chinese vanity; for its evident obect was to show, that Cochin China was not dependent upon foreign naions for any thing. But, in truth, the imitation was more in appearance han in reality; for the Cochin Chinese artists are ignorant of tempering ron and steel: they are quite incapable of manufacturing an useful gunock; and therefore, with all their dexterity in imitation, they depend wholly upon European nations for a supply of fire-arms.*

* It is sufficient to cast the eyes over the Cochin Chinese list of exports and imports, to convey an unfavourable impression of the industry of the natives. In effect, when one sees the Chinese purchase at Turan and Saigun the raw silk, which they import again in a manufactured state; when one knows that the toys which they sell to the Cochin Chinese at so high a price, are the same buffalo bones which they had obtained from them in exchange for bad pottery, what is to be thought of the arts and commerce of such a country? The fluctuation in price of certain articles of food, their sudden rise and fall, on the other hand the affluence of the resident Chinese, whose agents traverse the country, and the rapidity of the fortunes which they make, all must convince us that the trade is to China a

The Annam language, or that of the race inhabiting Tonquin and Cochin China,—for there is no difference except now and then a trifling one in enunciation,—is a monosyllabic tongue, in structure and general character resembling the provincial dialects of China. Meagre and destitute of inflexions, it is readily acquired by a stranger, with the material exception of pronunciation. This last is a matter of nearly insuperable difficulty, although of more importance than in any other class of languages. The Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese have no literature and no written character of their own, and receive all their books from the Chinese, to whom they look up as their instructors. In writing the Chinese symbolical characters, although the elementary ones are the same, they make considerable changes in combining them. On this account, although the Cochin Chinese have no difficulty in comprehending a Chinese manuscript, a Chinese scholar requires some practice before he can decypher a Cochin Chinese one. A dictionary of the Annam language was early composed by Father Alexander De Rhodes, one mine discovered perhaps with less skill than good fortune. Almost all the arts of first necessity are exercised in Cochin China. The art of smelting and working metals is understood, as well as to spin cotton and to weave it; to prepare silk, and to make it; to construct ships, and manufacture their equipments. You will there find goldsmiths, blacksmiths, carpenters, joiners, &c. but none of these arts or trades have risen above mediocrity. The iron which they smelt, will not afford, when wrought, forty per cent. in small work, nor thirty in large bars. They have some knowledge of the art of tempering it, but their tools are always either too soft or too brittle. They work better in copper; the reason is obvious, it is always prepared by the Chinese. As to gold and silver, their artificers succeed in filagree, without, however, being able to give their work the requisite polish. If however, in these arts and in others which it is unnecessary to name, the Cochin Chinese are little advanced, it is not for want either of intelligence or address. They want only models. Do not expect invention from them, but be assured that their talent for imitation will never be in fault. It is thus that, instructed by us, they have perfected to an extraordinary degree their naval and military architecture. You would suppose their galleys from some European dock-yard, if their sail of matting, their cordage of the roots of trees, or the husk of the cocoa nut, and the thickness of their planks, did not indicate a foreign construction. Their cannon foundery is another proof of the sagacity with which they know how to profit by instruction and example. The reigning monarch (Gialong), desiring to leave to posterity some memorials of his reign, has caused nine cannon to be cast, carrying each about a ninety-pound ball, and the experiment has succeeded completely."—*Manuscript of M. Chaigneau.*

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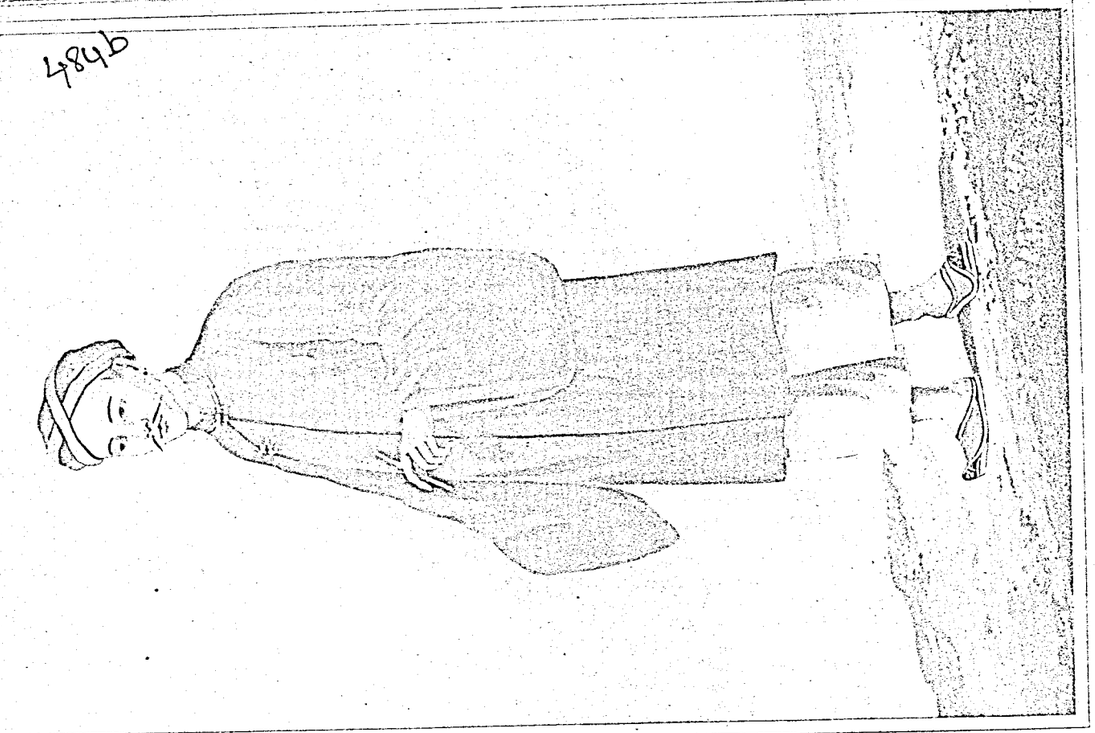

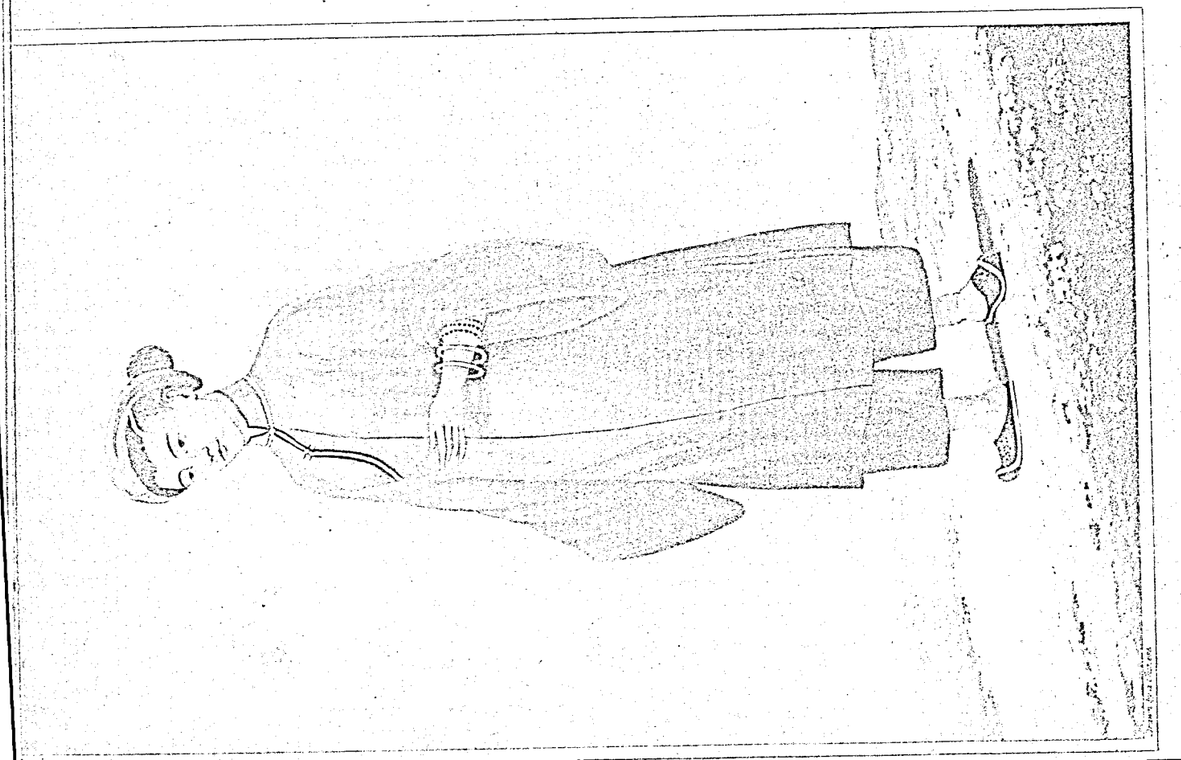

of the first Cochin Chinese missionaries, the explanation of which was in the Latin language; but one of superior accuracy exists in manuscript, by the Bishop of Adran, explained in French, which was in general use amongst the European adventurers during the late Revolution.*

The dress of both sexes is becoming,—and the same as the old costume of China, before the Chinese were compelled to adopt the fantastic one of their Tartar conquerors. Both sexes dress nearly alike. For the lower part of the body, the covering consists of a pair of loose trowsers, secured at the waist by a sash. The main portion of dress consists of two or more loose frocks, reaching half-way down the thigh. This, for such matters as among other Eastern people is uniform and constant, overlaps to the right side, and is secured by five buttons and as many loops. Its sleeves are loose, and with persons not compelled to labour, they dangle a foot, or even a foot and a half, beyond the extremities of the fingers; but the lower orders, from necessity, wear them short. With the women, the inner frock reaches below the knee, and the outer down to the ankles. When a Cochin Chinese is in full dress, as when he makes visits, or is engaged in the performance of religious rites, he always wears over the frocks now mentioned a loose silk gown reaching to the ankles. The hair of the head is worn long, and put up in a knot at the back of the head, as was practised by the Chinese before the present absurd fashion was imposed upon them by the Tartars. Both sexes wear turbans, which are put on

* Shall I speak of their literati, who pass a great part of their lives in the study of their own language and that of China,—monosyllabic tongues, of which every word, varying in meaning, according to pronunciation, may signify ten or a dozen things entirely different? They have no books but Chinese books. The philosophy of Confucius, and for a few Medicine, are the objects of their habitual study. Would it be believed that the system of Brown is to be found in Cochin China, were it not known that reveries make the circle of the globe? The physicians are divided between two opinions; the one party employing only stimulants, and the other refrigerants. Fashion runs in favour of the first. Some miraculous cures are quoted by this practice, which is conceivable in a country where the fibre is relaxed, and man is exposed to a crowd of debilitating causes." —*Manuscript of M. Chaigneau.*

with much neatness. The form of this article of dress, which is always determinate, distinguishes the civil from the military order of public officers. The lower orders, except when dressed, seldom wear these turbans. When abroad, both sexes wear varnished straw hats, little less than two feet in diameter, tied under the chin. These, which are sometimes in the form of an inverted basin, and at others resembling a sugar-loaf, afford, however grotesque in appearance, good protection against sun and rain. The materials of dress consist of silk or cotton; the first being of more frequent use than I have observed in any other country. The inner frock is cotton of domestic manufacture, always unbleached; for, literally, there is not a rag of white linen in the kingdom. The outer frocks and gown, with the better ranks, are always of silk, or flowered gauze; and the latter is commonly Chinese manufacture. The trowsers, with the same class, are either plain silk, or crape of domestic fabric. The turban is crape, always black or blue, but most frequently the former; and this is also a home fabric. The lower orders are generally clad in cotton; but, even among them, silk is not unfrequently to be seen. Their cotton dress is very generally dyed of a dark brown colour, as if tanned. This colour is given to it by the tuberous root which I have mentioned in another place. Ornaments of the precious metals, or gems, do not appear to be very general. The women wear occasionally armlets and bracelets of gold. Where gems are worn, those of most frequent use are pearls, and amber brought from Yu-nan. The women wear ear-rings, and secure the hair by a bodkin with an ornamented gold-head. Men of all ranks, and women above the labouring class, always carry about them a pair of silken bags, or purses, strung together, and usually carried in the hand, or thrown over the shoulders. These are intended to carry betel, tobacco, and money. Women of the labouring class are forbidden to use these; and men of the same order, when they meet a person of condition, must take them off their shoulders and conceal them, as a mark of respect. These purses are generally of blue satin, and with the better classes often richly embroidered. The shoes

that are worn by the Cochin Chinese are slippers without heels. It may here be remarked, that the Chinese fashion of little feet among the women is unknown to the Cochin Chinese. The royal colour is yellow, or rather orange. The King's own standard is of this colour, but the national flag is white. Cloth, figured with an emblematic dragon, can only be worn by a few officers of the highest class. White is considered mourning, and cotton only is used under such circumstances. It is not only the mourner that is put in this livery, but his equipage also, including his litter, or palanquin, and his boat.

The mixture of the areca, betel-pepper and quick-lime, is constantly masticated by the Cochin Chinese. They do not, however, add catechu to the ingredients, like the Malays and other inhabitants of the Eastern Archipelago; but their immediate neighbours the Kambojans do,—a circumstance probably attributable to the long intercourse which has subsisted between the latter and the Malayan countries, from which they still continue to derive their supply of this commodity.

The Cochin Chinese are also addicted, to an extraordinary degree, to the use of tobacco; which they not only chew with their betel, but smoke in the form of small segars wrapped up in paper. A Cochin Chinese of rank is seldom to be seen without one of these in his mouth, and an assemblage of persons of condition will be seen literally enveloped in an atmosphere of tobacco smoke.

The Cochin Chinese, in character, are a mild and docile people. The lower orders are remarkable for their liveliness. They are always to be seen talking and laughing, as if they had nothing to complain of,—as if they were living under one of the mildest and most beneficent governments in the world, instead of being the slaves of a most oppressive and despotic one. These gay and sprightly manners are far, however, from being approved. One of the French gentlemen, who had long resided in the country, stated to us, when we expressed ourselves pleased with the cheerful manners of the

lower classes, that laughing and merriment were deemed worthy of the bamboo. The higher classes accordingly affect the grave and solemn demeanour of the Chinese. In their habits and persons, the Cochin Chinese are an uncleanly—a dirty people. Like other Indians, they perform frequent ablutions; but, notwithstanding this, their hair, their skins, their hands, including the long nails which they are so fond of wearing, are absolutely impure. Their linen, not bleached at first, seems never to be washed afterwards. At home, they wear their foul cotton shirts; and when they go abroad, without changing them, they clap over them their fine silk robes. This neglect of personal cleanliness they perhaps carry to a greater length than any of the nations of the further East; but they are in no small degree kept in countenance by their neighbours the Burmans, the Siamese, and even the Chinese; and it is certainly from none of the people east of the Burrumpooter that the European notion of washing with "oriental scrupulosity," has been borrowed. There are other points also on which the Cochin Chinese evince much indelicacy and indecorum. The men, for example, were constantly seen by us, at Hué, either bathing in the river, or plying their boats in a state of perfect nudity. The nature of their diet may also be referred to, as evidence of grossness. It is impure and indiscriminate. They eat vermin, and the flesh of the alligator; hatched eggs with them are a delicacy; and their favourite sauce is a kind of *soy*, in part, at least, composed of the juices of putrid fish, and which, both from taste and odour, would be intolerable to any other people. Like the Siamese, they are nationally very vain, and consider themselves the first people in the world, being hardly disposed to yield the palm even to the Chinese—the only strangers whom they are disposed to consider *respectable*. They consider the Kambojans, as mentioned in another place, as barbarians, and scarcely think the Siamese much better. But their nationality, excessive as it is, is much less offensive than that of the Siamese; for with strangers they are sociable, good-humoured, and obliging. In our intercourse with the Siamese, we found them little better than sturdy beggars, from the

highest to the lowest. The Cochin Chinese officers of Government, from all accounts, are sufficiently rapacious also; although, from the nature of our intercourse, we had few opportunities of witnessing any display of it, but the lower classes were far from evincing any disposition of this sort. We found them throughout kind and hospitable, receiving the little presents we made to them thankfully, but always anxious to make some return.*

The Government of Cochin China is extremely despotical, both in theory and practice. It pretends, however, like that of China, which it imitates in every thing, to be patriarchal or paternal; and the object held out, is to rule the kingdom as a private family—the chief instrument, however, being the rod. Nothing seems to bound the authority of the King, but the fear of

* The state of society in Cochin China is thus described in the manuscript of M. Chaigneau.—"There are but two classes in Cochin China,—the people, and the nobility or Mandarins. Nobility is personal and hereditary; but time, which in Europe adds unceasingly to the hereditary nobility, destroys it by little and little in Cochin China. The son of a Mandarin of the first class will only be of the second. If he be in actual employ as such, his children again shall be of the third class; but if he shall not have been so employed, the children, after his death, shall return forthwith into the ranks of the people. In each generation nobility descends by one step at least, unless by his talents or his services the descendant of a Mandarin should merit preferment. This preferment is refused to no one. At the present moment almost all the great Mandarins, the Chiefs of *the five columns* of the Empire, have been common soldiers. One fact may serve to give a just idea of the little importance which is attached in Cochin China to what we call *Birth*. When it was under consideration to give to M. Chaigneau the letters of the rank which the Emperor had bestowed upon him, as the Mandarin in charge of the archives is always very punctilious concerning forms, he came much perplexed to ask the Sovereign what should be done in order to describe the family of the new officer. '*He is not of the country,*' replied the Emperor; '*he is a stranger, and therefore of my family.*' There is not only generosity in this reply, but there is also to be seen from it, that in the eyes of him who spoke, true nobility consisted in having served well. As to the people, properly so called, one would believe them happy; if to be so, it were enough to live at a small expense in a fine climate. But what an existence is a life passed in contempt, under vexations, the ratan, and the corvées? A Cochin Chinese has nothing which he can call his own,—not even that life which nature intended to make agreeable and easy to him. Notwithstanding, gay by character, he is also gentle, humane, sensible, hospitable; but joins to these good qualities all the vices which slavery and weakness of character engender. He may be reproached with inconstancy, fickleness, a vague restlessness, which makes him a ready instrument of revolt, a strong dis-

insurrection, and such immemorial and indefinite usages as exist in all countries, however bad their government. The nobility is entirely a nobility of office, and their power to do good or evil is solely derived from the authority of the sovereign. The municipal government, as in China, is vested in two classes of mandarins, or chiefs; the one civil, and the other military. These mandarins are divided into ten orders, of which the two first compose the King's council. This department of the administration is as follows:—Each province is administered by a governor, being a military mandarin; a deputy-governor, and a sub-governor; both civil mandarins. To all acts, administrative or judicial, the concurrence of these three persons is indispensable; and it would appear that, notwithstanding the inferior rank of the civil officers, it often happens, from their superior acquirements and knowledge of business, that they possess more real authority than the nominal superior. In the event of insurrection or war, the latter acts on his own sole authority, and exercises the power of life and death. Every province is divided into three departments, called *Huyen;* and each department into three or four districts, called *Tou;* which again consist of an indefinite number of villages. The administration of each Huyen is confided to two mandarins of the civil order, under whom are other subordinate mandarins, who preside over the *Tous*, or districts. The inferior officers, administering the departments and districts, are appointed by the Court, on the recommendation of the three superior mandarins of the province. The chiefs of the village are elected by the peasantry from among their

position to theft, all the extravagances of superstition, and the love of gaming carried the length of frenzy. Rice and fish form the principal nourishment of the Cochin Chinese. Of these they consume an extraordinary quantity; but the land is so fertile, and the sea so abounds in fish, that these two resources appear inexhaustible. Pork, beef, and poultry, form also a part of their food. All these are at a low price. They extract from rice a kind of ardent spirit, of which some drink to excess. The repast commences with animal food, and this is the signal for getting intoxicated. The rice once served, they drink no more spirits. After the repast, each guest swallows a copious draught of water, and washes his hands. There they are until the next meal, and you will not be able to persuade them to take any thing in the interval."—*Manuscript of M. Chaigneau.*

own number; an ancient institution, recommended to the Government, no doubt, by its utility and efficiency. This person is answerable for the collection of the taxes, and for keeping the rolls of the conscription.

The general administration is conducted by a Supreme Council and six Ministers of State. The latter are as follow:—the Minister of Ceremonies and Religion; the Keeper of the Records and Archives;—the Minister of War; the Treasurer; the Minister of Justice; and the Minister of Woods and Forests, whose functions embrace the charge of all public buildings, and the Superintendence of the Navy. Besides these six ministers and the council of state, there are three supérior officers, called *Kun.* One of these is Viceroy of Tonquin, another Viceroy of Kamboja, and the third Minister of Elephants. This last person is properly the Prime Minister, as well as Minister for Foreign Affairs.

In Cochin China, as in Siam, the Government claims the services of the whole male adult population; an institution which appears to have existed for ages, and which forms the worst feature of the administration. Every male inhabitant, from the age of eighteen to sixty, or longer, if capable of service, is at the disposal of the State. In Cochin China Proper, or the hereditary dominions of the reigning family, every third man borne on the rolls performs actual service during three years, at the termination of which he is permitted to return to his family, and remain with them for a like period. In Tonquin, a conquered country, and subject to almost yearly insurrections, the conscription is, from necessity, less rigorous, and every seventh man only is called upon to serve.

The conscripts are denominated soldiers, and wear a military uniform, every one being duly enrolled in a battalion or regiment; but the services they are called upon to perform are far from being exclusively of a military nature. They serve alike as soldiers and as sailors, are employed in rowing the King's galleys, in navigating the vessels which convey the tributes and taxes to the capital, as artificers in the arsenal, and as labourers in the construction of roads, canals, bridges, and public edifices. They

are also constantly employed as domestics and menial servants to the public officers. One of the French gentlemen excused himself one day from visiting us, according to appointment, by stating that he had no soldiers at hand to carry his palanquin. Such a system inevitably makes bad soldiers, as well as bad labourers, artificers, and domestics.

The following is the actual state of the military force of Cochin China. The royal guard consists of thirty thousand men, which is always stationed near the person of the King. The ordinary force is of two descriptions. The first consists of forty regiments, divided into five columns, called the centre, the van, the right, the left, and the rear columns. Each of these is composed of eight regiments, and each regiment of ten companies of sixty men each; so that a regiment consists of six hundred men, and the column of four thousand eight hundred. A superior Mandarin commands the column, and each regiment has a colonel, a lieutenant-colonel, ten captains, and ten lieutenants, besides a proper proportion of non-commissioned officers. To each regiment is attached a number of war-elephants, which varies according to circumstances. The whole of the elephants belonging to the Government are estimated at eight hundred, of which one hundred and thirty are always stationed at the capital. The second description of force is somewhat differently organized. This consists of five legions, each of five regiments, similar to the former. To these is to be added the provincial force, which varies according to the extent of each province. In the viceroyalty of Saigun, for example, there are sixteen regiments. There is no cavalry in the Cochin Chinese army, the puny horses of the country being unfit for this service. The country, indeed, is little adapted to cavalry movements. A large part of the royal guard, and a still more considerable portion of the other description of troops, are constantly employed in various public labour independent of their military duties.

The marine of Cochin China consists of the inhabitants of the coasts formed into regiments, organized in the same manner as the infantry. One

of these is stationed at each of the principal ports of the kingdom, and six at the capital. The war vessels consist of gun-boats, carrying from sixteen to twenty-two guns; of large galleys, of from fifty to seventy oars, carrying small cannon, or swivels, and on the prow one large gun, a twelve or twenty-four pounder; and of small galleys, of from forty to forty-four oars, carrying swivels only, with a large gun, a four or six-pounder, on the prow. The gun-boats amount to two hundred, the large galleys to one hundred, and the smaller to five hundred.

The late King of Cochin China, after the subjugation or submission of Tonquin, had, it is said, a standing force of one hundred and fifty thousand men, including his navy. When we were in Cochin China, the effective force had been greatly reduced; and the number of troops regularly clothed, armed, and disciplined, was stated as being no more than between forty and fifty thousand.

The pay of a common soldier in the Cochin Chinese army is one quan a month, with a ration of forty-eight catties of rice; and the non-commissioned officers have ordinarily only the same allowances; but when on duty, an additional ration. The second-captain has a monthly pay of two quans and two measures of rice; the first-captain, three quans and three measures; and the colonel, eight quans and eight measures. The commander of a legion has thirty quans and thirty measures. The guards have a superior rate of pay. Long service and particular merit are very frequently rewarded by additional pay and allowances, without any corresponding promotion in rank. Thus, all who accompanied the late King to Siam enjoyed double pay; and those who joined him at Saigun, in the commencement of the struggle for his restoration, had their pay increased by one-half. The dead are more liberally provided for than the living. The Government pays six quans for the funeral expenses of a common soldier, one hundred and twenty quans for that of a colonel, and in the same proportion for the other ranks, besides supplying stated quantities of oil, wax, cloth, and other requisites of a Cochin Chinese interment.

The dress is the most liberal part of the military organization. The most essential portion of it consists of a loose convenient frock of strong English scarlet broadcloth, which reaches down to the knee. The head-dress is a small conical cap of basket-work, lackered over, ornamented at the peak with a plume of cocks' feathers, and tied under the chin. This article is certainly neither becoming nor convenient. The dress of the lower part of the body consists of a pair of loose drawers, reaching a little below the knee. The legs and feet are entirely naked. The officers wear no uniform, but are clad in the ordinary dress of the country; consisting of loose silk robes, trowsers, and turbans. The soldier's dress is renewed once a-year.

The troops are armed with muskets and bayonets, or with spears; the two descriptions of arm being intermixed in the ranks in regular proportions. We repeatedly examined the muskets, and found them in very good order. They are taken great care of, and when the soldier is off duty always covered up. The exercise and evolutions taught to the troops consist of a few simple manœuvres, on the principles of European tactics. The discipline observed is strict, and offences, and even errors, are punished both summarily and severely.

By the rules of the conscription, a death, desertion, or promotion, must be made good by the village which furnished the original conscript. The officers may be considered as the only standing and permanent portion of the army; for the soldiers, from the moment they receive leave of absence, cease to draw pay and rations, and their place is filled up by the new conscripts.

The Cochin Chinese soldiers are, from all accounts, docile and obedient; and, though short of stature, strong, active, and capable of enduring hardship. Disciplined like our Sepoys, led by European officers, and serving a Government under which they would be treated with fairness and justice, I should think them capable of making very good troops; but at present, personal courage is not a virtue to be expected from them. In fact, I am led to believe, from all I saw, that although the discipline of the Cochin

Chinese army may render it, in the hands of the Sovereign, a powerful instrument of oppression towards his subjects, or even of aggression against his smaller native neighbours, it would prove no defence at all against the invasion of an European power. On the contrary, I make little doubt, but that Cochin China, with its European fortresses, and its army disciplined on the European model, would fall an easier prey to the attack of an European power, than any other considerable kingdom of Asia, and this for reasons which will appear sufficiently obvious. The subjugated countries of Kamboja and Tonquin lie at the two extremities of the empire, and being discontented, are peculiarly liable to insurrection. All the strong-holds and arsenals, including the capital, lie close to the coast, and are either accessible to a fleet, or liable to be taken by a *coup-de-main*. They could not, at all events, resist the science and courage of an European force for any length of time; and their fall, which would leave the government without resource, would be really equivalent to the conquest of the kingdom. There are other circumstances which would contribute to facilitate this event. The central part of the kingdom depends for food and other supplies upon Tonquin and Kamboja, which are almost exclusively conveyed by sea. These supplies would be readily cut off by a fleet; for these two countries, but especially Kamboja, could be most effectually blockaded by a very trifling naval force; while the least support given to the inhabitants of either would drive them into insurrection against the Cochin Chinese Government. Mr. Chapman, who saw the Cochin Chinese during the distractions of a long civil war, was of opinion, that, by taking side with one of the contending factions, a force of fifty European infantry, half the number of artillery, and two hundred Sepoys, would be adequate to the conquest of the kingdom. Matters are certainly different at present; but still I make little doubt, but that a force of five thousand European troops, and a squadron of a few sloops of war, would be quite sufficient for the conquest, and even for the permanent maintenance, of the whole empire.

Were Cochin China and the countries dependent upon it placed under the skilful rule of an European Government, according to the scheme which the French appear to have had in view, I am led to think, judging from the docile character of the people, the fertility and resources of many parts of the kingdom, the numerous fine harbours belonging to other parts, and the centrical and favourable position of the whole, that in time a power might be established in that country, more troublesome and dangerous to our Indian commerce and empire, than it is easy to imagine could arise in any other situation, or under any other circumstances.

The revenue and resources of the Government are derived from a capitation-tax, a land-tax, corvées, contributions, and imposts on foreign trade. Every male who has attained the age of nineteen, pays annually a capitation-tax of one quan and one-tenth; the quan going into the public treasury, and the fraction being a perquisite for the collector. The land of Cochin China is of two descriptions—private property and crown-lands, by far the greater amount being of the latter description. The crown-lands are described as being farmed out to the villages. The impost is levied on each measure of thirty-six French toises square. To each conscript there is assigned one measure of land, and to the widow of a soldier a smaller quantity. The remaining land pays in kind about two quintals of clean rice for each measure of thirty-six toises, as above-mentioned. Private lands pay for each measure one quan and one-tenth, which is distributed in the same manner as the capitation-tax. As to the corvées, the canals, roads, and other similar public works, are all effected through the labour of the villagers, with such occasional assistance as may be rendered by the soldiery. Every individual in the service of the State, civil or military, is exempted from the corvées, and from all direct imposts whatsoever. The rest of the male inhabitants, including all persons of the age of nineteen and upwards, are regularly enrolled, and subject to taxation. The capitation and land-tax are collected by the chiefs of villages, who pay them to the governor of the province, from whom they find their

way to the King's treasury and granaries. Payments are enforced by imprisonment and confiscation, but the collection is in general said to be made without trouble or vexation, the peasantry being well acquainted with the nature and amount of the contributions. This fact, if well authenticated, proves that taxation is not excessive or arbitrary.

The contributions and monopolies of the Cochin Chinese Government, are of far less amount and consequence than those of Siam. They consist of certain descriptions of cinnamon, of cardamums, eagle-wood, and other trifling articles. The nature of the imposts upon foreign trade will be fully explained in the account given of the commerce of the country.

Of the total amount of the revenue of the kingdom I could obtain no statement; but it is reasonable to believe, that in a country the institutions of which strike at once at the very sources of production, they must be comparatively very trifling. The King's actual treasure, however, is said to be large. One of the French officers, through whom I had my information, stated, that the present King one day informed him, that he had just received the report of his treasurer, and that there were thirty thousand bars of gold in the public coffers. Each of the bars in question is reckoned to be worth about two hundred and thirty-eight Spanish dollars, which therefore make the value of the whole 7,140,000 dollars. If the silver money bear any proportion to the gold, the King of Cochin China's hoarded wealth must be considered as very large for an Indian prince. Considering the rapacity of the Government, the exact habits of business which prevail in all its departments, and its extraordinary parsimony, I am inclined to consider the statement now given as probably not exaggerated.

On the system of jurisprudence in force amongst the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese, we had no opportunity of making any exact observations; but the laws in general are sufficiently known to be those of China, executed in a manner less skilful, and in a spirit more harsh and arbitrary.

Corporal correction by the bamboo and the wooden ruff are the most common punishments; and judging from our own short experience, it is impossible to conceive them more frequent in any country. From the parental character which is affected throughout all the institutions of the country, every superior appears to be vested with a judicial authority to correct his inferior by corporal punishment. Fathers and mothers punish their children, of all ages, with the bamboo; husbands punish their wives; the petty officers punish the soldiers for the most trifling offences, and are punished in their turn by the superior officers. Capital punishment, besides higher offences, is inflicted for robbery, adultery, and occasionally for malversation and corruption: the two last, notwithstanding, are among the most frequent offences in Cochin China.*

* "The police is exercised by the chiefs of villages. They can also impose a slight fine, inflict a few strokes of the ratan, and even in certain cases condemn to the *canque*, or wooden collar. Severity is almost inevitable in the midst of so numerous a population. Should the person convicted consider himself unjustly condemned, he can appeal from the jurisdiction of the village chief to that of the chief of the Huyen, and from this again to the governor of the province. When the penalty is small, the judgment of the governor is final; but in all affairs of consequence, whether civil or criminal, an ultimate appeal is open to the royal council. It can scarcely fail, but that an affair brought before this last tribunal, especially if the accusation be of a capital nature, should be judged with the utmost impartiality. The eyes of the master are too near at hand. Besides, the most scrupulous precautions are taken, in order that the life of the accused may not be exposed to danger through the ignorance or prejudices of his judges. The documentary evidence is reviewed with the most strict attention; the witnesses are heard anew; all is weighed and discussed gravely and deliberately. In fine, at the moment of pronouncing sentence, the judges are forbid to communicate; each considers the case by himself, and signs and seals his vote. These votes, placed on the Council Board, without being opened, are jointly put under the seal of the council, and carried into the interior of the palace, where the King takes cognizance of the affair. Should the votes be equal, the process is commenced anew. If the party accused is found to be innocent, the Emperor directs the accuser, or first judges, to be punished, according to circumstances. In the event of all the members of the council voting for a capital punishment, the King either orders execution, or occasionally directs a new trial. It is a maxim of the reigning prince, (Gialong,) that no precautions are too great when life is concerned. The chiefs of villages, of Tous and Huyens, receive the requests and petitions of the persons under their authority, and the governors of provinces give an audience each day, but without presents you can obtain no answer; so that the governors make rapid fortunes. In Cochin China, the laws make no distinction between native and stranger; and

Coming from countries like Hindostan and Siam, where systematic and national forms of worship are established, and where religion exerts so powerful a sway over society, we were surprised at the contrast which Cochin China presented in this respect. In Cochin China and Tonquin, as in China, there is abundance of absurd and harmless superstitious practices; but apparently no real devotion,—no enthusiasm, and no fixed dogmas to which the people are wedded. The ministers of religion, instead of being honoured, reverenced, and powerful, as in Buddhist and Brahminical countries, are few in number, of the meanest orders, and little respected. They seem, in short, to be looked upon as little better than a kind of fortune-tellers. Numerous petty temples and other places of worship are to be seen, to which solitary votaries repair for the purpose of offering sacrifices, as may suit their convenience; but there exist no spacious temples where the people assemble to perform their devotions in common, or to receive religious or moral instruction.

As far as I could learn, the temples of the Cochin Chinese are dedicated to inferior supernatural beings; some of them tutelary, and others malignant; and the sacrifices which are performed in them consisting in burning bits of gilded paper, lighting incense rods, and presenting votive offerings of a few trifling articles, are intended to propitiate those beings, or to solicit their intercession and good offices in the temporal concerns of the votary.

The only part of the religious belief of the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese which assumes a systematic form, or appears to reach the heart,

the latter can travel, buy, and sell, in the interior, provided he be furnished with a passport from the Minister of Strangers; for which he pays nothing, although it be customary to offer this chief a trifling present. In travelling through the country, a prudent stranger has nothing to fear; but he must not be surprised to find the people somewhat diffident, for the Cochin Chinese are naturally timid. Yet, are not prejudices arising from the same cause general everywhere? If you are a Frenchman, and they know it, every door will be forthwith opened to you."—*MS. of M. Chaigneau.*

or materially to affect the character and conduct of the people, is the worship of the manes of progenitors. This universally obtains; it is enforced by the Government not only as a religious, but as a moral and civil duty; and the honours paid to the dead appear to be considered equally necessary to their comfort and repose, as to the temporal prosperity, of the living.

I speak here of the religion which is the prevailing one amongst the Cochin Chinese, and which I presume to be the same, without material difference, with that which also prevails in China; from whence, no doubt, it has been borrowed.* With respect to the religion of Buddha, or Fo, as far as I could discover, it appears to be the belief of but a small portion of the people; and as it is not the religion of the ruling authorities, and receives no support from the civil power, it has none of the spirit, and bears even little external resemblance to the Buddhism of the countries lying immediately to the westward of Cochin China. The Talapoins of Cochin China are so few in number, that we happened not to see any of them during our stay; and as to the temples, they had neither the size, splendour, nor even form of those of Siam, and might not have been recognized as places of Buddhist worship at all, but for the images which they contained, and which were too characteristic to be mis-

* "The religion of Cochin China is, with little difference, the same as that of China. The lower orders, the women, the ignorant, follow the worship of Buddha; while persons of rank, and men of letters, are of the sect of Confucius. The temples, dedicated both to the religion of Fo and Confucius, are remarkable for their simplicity; and no form of worship in Cochin China is distinguished either for the splendour of its temples, or the pomp of its ceremonies. The opinions, the prejudices, the superstitions of the Chinese, are to be found amongst the Cochin Chinese. This resemblance, their laws digested in Chinese, the books of the learned written in the same tongue, all reveal to us by whom it was that Cochin China was first civilized. Marriages, funeral ceremonies, the worship of ancestors, festivals and æras, are all, with slight deviations, the same as in China. The language differs, but the character is the same; so that a native of Hué and of Pekin, unable to understand each other in speaking, shall be forthwith intelligible in writing."—*Manuscript of M. Chaigneau.*

taken. The worship of Fo is said to have been introduced into Cochin China and Tonquin, in the year of Christ 540, through China; but neither with respect to this circumstance, nor the peculiarities which distinguish it from the Buddhism of Siam, Ava, Ceylon, or Hindostan, could we procure any detailed information.

Idol and Painting in a temple of Gautama, or Fo, at Faifo.

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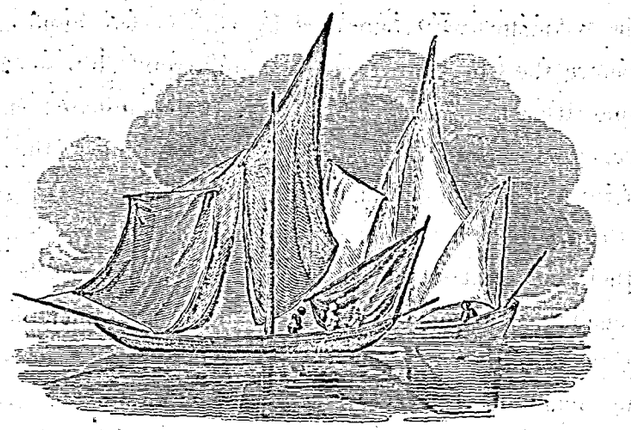


Cochin Chinese boats in the Bay of Turan.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Cochin Chinese History.—Commerce, Weights, and Monies.—Regulations of Trade.—Population.—Marriage and Condition of the Sex.—Wages of Labour.—Checks to Population.—Estimate of its Numerical Amount.

RESPECTING the history of the countries which constitute the present dominions of Cochin China, I have but few new facts to offer, and shall therefore confine myself to a very brief sketch. The Cochin Chinese dominions, although inhabited by many different races, contain only two considerable nations,—the Annam and the Kambojan. The first, by far the most numerous, powerful, and perhaps civilized, occupy Tonquin and Cochin China Proper. The inhabitants of these, although essentially the same people, speaking the same language, and possessing the same laws and manners, have generally in former ages existed as two distinct and even hostile nations, the last having sometimes been a real, but more frequently a nominal, vassal of the first.

The annals of China contain the only accounts of the ancient history of Annam.* According to these, as they are rendered to us by Eu-

* The annals of Tonquin embraces a period of about four thousand seven hundred years, of which about two thousand are utterly fabulous, and much of the remainder doubtful and unsatisfactory. We have a list of kings from the year 940 of the Christian æra to the year 1820, with the duration of each reign; the average giving only between thirteen and fourteen years,—a striking proof of the anarchy and disorder to which the country must have been subjected. The number of dynasties in the period in question was no less than seven.

ropean writers, Annam was conquered by China two hundred and fourteen years before the Christian æra; when numerous Chinese colonists were planted among its barbarous inhabitants, who disseminated amongst them the language, laws, and opinions of China. Amidst the uncertainty which characterises the whole annals of this people, one thing seems quite clear,—that they have always been an ill-governed nation; a fact which is shown by their frequent revolts against the Chinese, their constant insurrections against their native princes, and the innumerable revolutions which have taken place in their government. China does not appear to have long maintained its first acquired dominion over Annam. In the year 263 of Christ, Cochin China regained its independence, but paid tribute to China. At a long interval from this period, the following facts have been recorded. In 1280, the Tartar sovereigns of China made an ineffectual attempt to conquer Annam. In 1406, the Chinese, taking advantage of the internal disorders of the country of Tonquin, again occupied it; but, after an ineffectual attempt at a permanent conquest, abandoned it in 1428, obtaining from the native sovereign an acknowledgment of vassalage. In 1471, Tonquin made a complete conquest of Cochin China. In 1540, another revolution in Tonquin once more brought on the interference of the Chinese, when the Tonquinese consented that their kingdom should be reduced to the condition of a Lordship of China, paying tribute every three years. In 1553, Cochin China threw off the yoke of Tonquin, and regained its independence. It was at this period that the successful encroachments of a minister, or general, brought about in Tonquin a form of government like that which has long existed in Japan and in the Maratta Empire; the government of a nominal and of a real sovereign: the first called *Dova*, or *Boua*, the descendant of the ancient kings, but without any authority; and the second denominated *Chua*, or *Choua*, the hereditary descendant of a successful usurper, exercising the whole powers of administration. This form of government continued down to the year 1748, when the Boua, or nominal Sovereign, regained his authority.

From this last period, both Tonquin and Cochin China were in a state of constant anarchy, down to the revolution which broke out in 1774, and which eventually established the present order of things in both countries. Of this event the following is a brief narrative. A discontented party in Cochin China called in to their assistance a Tonquinese army, Cochin China being then a nominal tributary of Tonquin; so that, in the beginning of the struggle, the Tonquinese, who were in the sequel subdued, appeared as assailants and invaders. The great agents in the revolution, however, were three brothers, commonly known in the country by the name of the Taysons.* These persons, of whom the eldest and youngest were persons of great intrepidity, were of the lowest condition. The eldest, as I was confidently informed, was by trade a blacksmith; and the two youngest, common peasants and cultivators. Some acts of extortion, on the part of the officers of Government, in the district of which they were inhabitants, drove them to the profession of robbers; in which their success, joined to the general anarchy which prevailed, encouraged them ultimately to raise the standard of rebellion. Nhac, frequently called by Europeans Ignack, the elder of the insurgent brothers, defeated an army sent against him. The King of Cochin China himself, after attempting to negotiate with the insurgents, was defeated, at the head of a second army. His necessities then compelled him to deliver himself up to the conqueror, and he was never more heard of. His son advanced with an army to his rescue, but was defeated, taken prisoner, and beheaded. The Princess, his wife, who was with the army, however, effected her escape, carrying with her her second son, who afterwards, under the name of Gia-long, became King of Cochin China and Tonquin, and established the present empire.

The young Prince, fortunately for his own interests, placed himself under the direction of the Bishop of Adran; a Catholic missionary of the Franciscan order exercising his vocations in Cochin China. The real name of this

* The word may be translated "mountaineers of the west;" the native country of the insurgents being the mountains of the province of Quinhone, lying west of the capital.

individual, who is stated to have been a person of good education, and was, at all events, unquestionably a man of talent and resource, was Georges Pierre Joseph Pigneaux de Behaim, Bishop of Adran. This eminent individual was stated to me, by some of his European associates in Cochin China, to be a native of Brussels; but in the "Nouvelles Lettres Édifiantes," he is stated to have been a Frenchman, born at Auragrey, in the diocess of Laon.

In the year 1778, about the period of these events, Mr. Hastings, the Governor-General of British India, deputed Mr. Chapman on a mission to Cochin China, with a view of establishing commercial relations between that country and the British possessions. The British agent found the province of Dong-nai, comprehending Saigun and Lower Cochin China, in possession of the royal party, which, indeed, never seems altogether to have lost its authority in this part of the kingdom. Quin-hone and the central portion were in the occupation of Nhac, with the exception of the capital Hué and the country lying north of it, which had been seized by the Tonquinese. Mr. Chapman gives a frightful picture of the condition to which the country was reduced by the civil war,—stating, among other facts, that the famine was so great in some situations, that the people were driven for subsistence to feed on unwholesome sea-weeds, and that in the market of Hué human flesh was exposed for sale. This last circumstance was also asserted to me, while in Cochin China, to have taken place frequently in the course of the war.

In 1781, the King of Cochin China, having collected a small force, chiefly consisting of Portuguese, made an attack on the fleet of Nhac, but was defeated, and upon this occasion forced to quit the kingdom. He took shelter, with a few of his followers, in one of the islands on the east coast of the Gulf of Siam. This, as I was informed in Siam, was not the small and desert island of Pulo We, as some European writers have written, or Pulo Ubi, as others have supposed, but the more extensive and commodious one of Phu-kok, or Qua-drol, at which we ourselves touched on our way to that country. From this retreat he proceeded to Bangkok, with a view of claiming the assistance of the Siamese sovereign, to aid in his restoration.

Here he continued to reside for several years, and with a small band of his countrymen assisted the Siamese in the wars which at the time raged between them and the Burmans. The King of Siam promised the aid required, but never gave effectual assistance; and the few troops which he did send, by their habits of rapine proved more prejudicial to their ally than to the enemy. The Siamese, however, in conversation with me, claimed a large share of the credit of restoring him to his throne. A misunderstanding took place between the two kings, arising out of mutual dissatisfaction. The Siamese monarch, already married to a niece of the exile King, demanded another relation of the Prince as a concubine. The demand was refused; and the King of Cochin China, thinking himself no longer safe at Bangkok, secretly effected his escape in the night, and once more repaired to the island of Qua-drol. Notwithstanding this quarrel, upon the restoration of the Cochin Chinese monarch, a friendly intercourse took place, and was kept up between them during the rest of their lives.

But, in reality, the Cochin Chinese monarch was less indebted to himself, his subjects, or the Siamese, for his restoration, than to the courage and sagacity of the Bishop of Adran, and the skill and courage of the few European adventurers whom he brought along with him. In 1787, the King, having confided his eldest son to the Bishop's care, authorized him to proceed to France, and claim the assistance of Louis the Sixteenth. The Bishop and the young Prince proceeded accordingly, and having safely arrived, the Court of Versailles entered heartily into the views of the King of Cochin China, and the treaty, offensive and defensive, was soon entered into, the substance of which is already before the public.* France was to have furnished to Cochin China twenty ships of war, five regiments composed of Europeans, and two of Asiatic troops, and to pay a million of dollars, half in specie and half in warlike stores. The King of Cochin China, on his part, ceded to France the Peninsula of Han, the Bay of Turan, and the adjacent islands; a narrow and sterile territory, about forty miles in length,

* It will be found in Mr. Barrow's lively and agreeable narrative of his voyage to Cochin China.

and nowhere exceeding six or eight in breadth. He engaged to furnish France with sixty thousand men, if attacked within her new acquisition, and to permit her to levy to the extent of forty thousand men, to enable her to carry on her wars in other parts of India. Favourable terms to the commerce of France were also conceded.

In the meanwhile the usurpers were not idle. The younger brother, called Long-nhung, and who eventually took the royal title of Quang-trung, the most able and adventurous of the three brothers, made himself master of all Central and Northern Cochin China; and, taking advantage of a civil war in Tonquin, pushed his arms into that country in 1788, conquered it, and declared himself King. The King of Tonquin fled to China, and solicited the assistance of the Emperor, who, in 1789, sent an army, said to amount to forty thousand men, to restore his vassal to his throne. Quang-trung, who after his conquest had retired to Cochin China, hearing of this event, returned by forced marches to Tonquin, encountered the Chinese army—routed and nearly destroyed it,—and regained peaceable possession of the country. This is an achievement of which, although accomplished by a rebel, the Cochin Chinese are still vain.

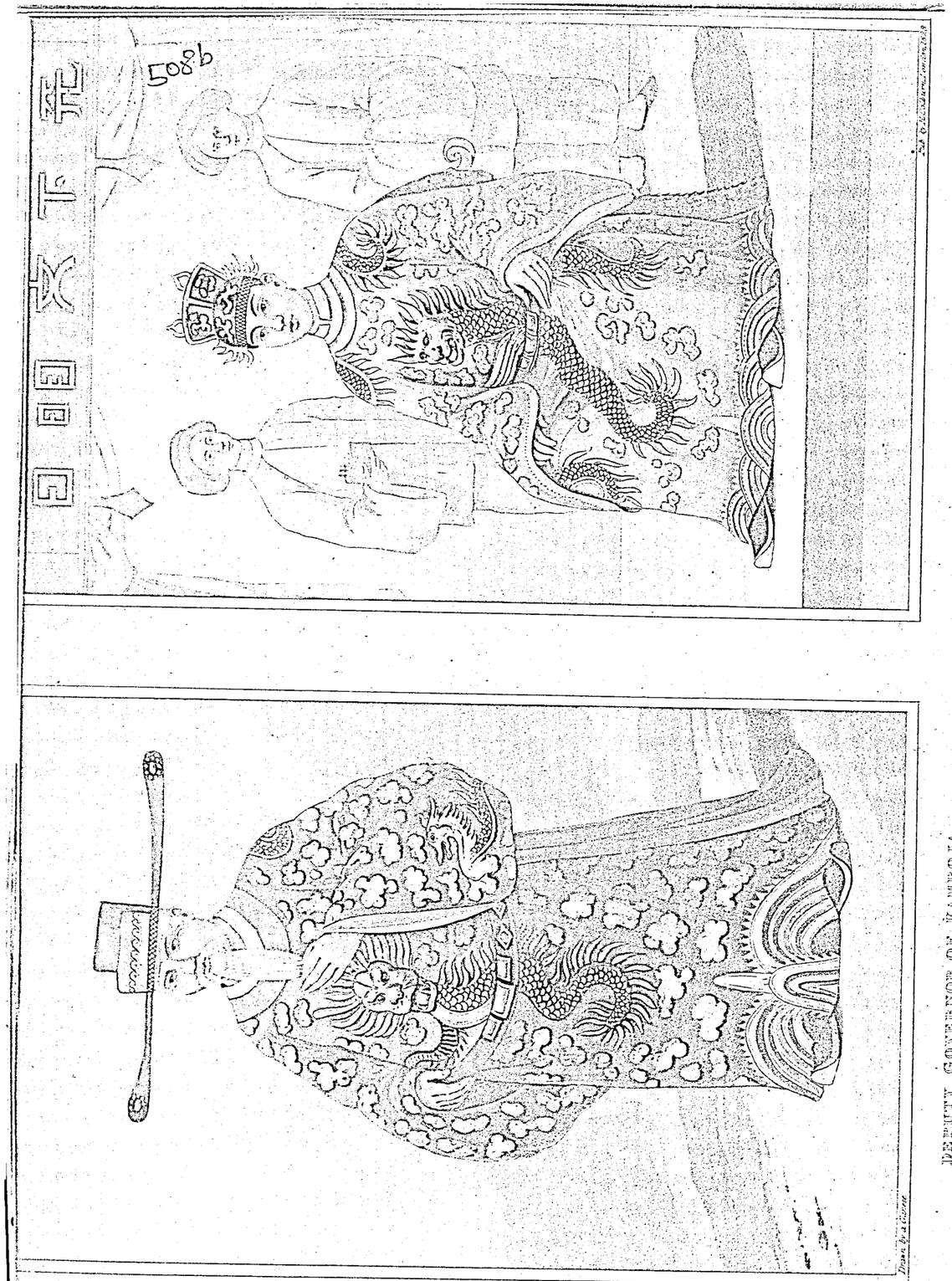
The only results of the specious prospects held out by the treaty with France were a few French officers, whom the Bishop of Adran and the young Prince brought with them from France when they returned to Cochin China in the year 1790. Had the treaty been carried into effect to the full extent of the views of the French Court, it is certain that Cochin China and the surrounding countries would virtually have become provinces of France in the first instance, and that in the sequel Great Britain would have interfered—probably supported the Taysons, and thus have established her influence, if not her dominion, in that remote part of India.

It was a fortunate accident for the King of Cochin China that the treaty was not carried into effect. Meanwhile the European adventurers, who resorted to his standard in consequence of the alliance, and who, including French, English, and Irish, never exceeded fourteen or fifteen individuals, were adequate to ensure his success, without endangering his in-

dependence. With the assistance of these persons, among whom there were naval and military officers, and engineers, he set about forming a navy, disciplining troops, and constructing fortifications after the European manner. His army and navy thus formed, although small in number, were soon an overmatch for the rude tactics of his adversaries. He commenced his operations at Saigun, which for many years continued the seat of Government. Here he built a strong fortress after the European model. In time he built others, and constructed arsenals at Gnathang, and at Quin-hone. Notwithstanding all the advantages which he possessed, it yet required a period of twelve years to exterminate the power of the Taysons. Quin-hone, the capital of Nhac, was attacked and taken in 1796; Hué, the capital of the third brother, who died in 1792, and whose son had succeeded him, was not taken until 1801; and Tonquin was not subdued until 1802. From these facts, it may be strongly suspected, that the bulk of the people were by no means so anxious for the restoration of the legitimate King, as the European eulogists of Gia-long have represented, nor the government of the Taysons so odious and unpopular. I was, in fact, assured by Chinese merchants with whom I conversed at Hué, and who had lived in the country during the rule of both, that the Taysons governed the country with more equity and moderation than either the present King or his father; and it is by no means improbable, indeed, that the Cochin Chinese have gained very little by the restoration of a family, whose acknowledged misgovernment drove them to rebellion, and who may be considered to have recovered, and maintained its authority by means foreign to the genius of Asiatic Governments.

It was not until the year 1809, that the King of Cochin China, taking advantage of the dissensions which prevailed in Kamboja, partly by force of arms, but chiefly by intrigue, annexed to his already extensive dominions the most valuable portion of that country.

Gia-long died in the year 1819, at the age of sixty-three. His merits have probably been greatly overrated, but he was undoubtedly a person of talent, courage, perseverance, method, and intelligence. His great merit



KING OF COCHINCHINA,
IN HIS DRESS OF CEREMONY.

DEPUTY GOVERNOR OF KAMBOJA,
IN HIS DRESS OF CEREMONY.

consisted in the good sense with which he submitted to, and profited by, the lessons and instructions of his European officers, and the tact and discrimination with which he availed himself of their skill and knowledge. Through their means he acquired an useful and even extraordinary acquaintance both with naval and military tactics, and the art of fortification; and thus he was enabled to organize a more regular and effective military power than probably was ever before formed in India, with such slender assistance from European civilization and science. But his talents were far better suited to reconquer a kingdom than to govern it. His views were all selfish, narrow and despotical; and the Government which he has established is, in fact, a military despotism of the most oppressive description. Some of the French officers, who had been admitted into his confidence, and even familiarity, informed me, that they had often ventured to recommend to him the encouragement of industry within his dominions, but that his constant reply was, that he did not want rich subjects, as poor ones were more obedient. They urged that in Europe disorders and insurrection were most frequent among poor and needy nations. The brief answer to this was, that the matter was different in Cochin China. Of this prince some traits of generosity are recorded while he was yet struggling for his throne; but as soon as his authority was fully established, he committed acts of ferocity and revenge equal to any on the records of Eastern tyranny. He caused the bodies of the Taysons to be disinterred, decapitated, and otherwise brutally insulted. Their whole families were put to death by being trod upon by elephants, while their members were exposed in chains, or scattered over the country. I was assured that even women and children were not spared on this occasion; and that of the former, several in a state of pregnancy were crushed to death by the elephants.

Gia-long had but one legitimate son, the prince who accompanied the Bishop of Adran to France in 1787, and who died in 1799, at the age of twenty-two; a decided convert to the Christian religion,—much to the grief of his father. This prince had evinced no talent or energy of character, and left no legitimate issue. The crown, by the will of Gia-long, devolved

to his present Majesty, an illegitimate son. This prince, who took the name of Meng-meng, was thirty-two years of age at the period of our visit. In personal appearance, he was represented to us as being rather short of stature, possessing an ordinary Cochin Chinese physiognomy, and marked by the small pox. According to Cochin Chinese notions, he is well-educated; that is to say, he has a considerable acquaintance with the written language of China, and with the laws, religion, usages, and etiquette of that empire, which are viewed as models by the Cochin Chinese and Tonquinese. His succession to the throne took place without bloodshed or opposition; and it is stated that he behaves towards his relatives not only with forbearance, but with generosity. None of them are immured, according to the custom of other Eastern countries; and even the pensions paid to them by his father, which, in accordance with the parsimonious habits of that prince, were upon a very wretched scale, have been augmented by him. His Majesty proceeded in 1821 to Tonquin, for the purpose of meeting a Chinese deputy from the Court of Pekin, and there he received a regular investiture of the Governments of Tonquin and Cochin China from the hands of that officer, as a lieutenant or viceroy of the Emperor. In the performance of the ceremony, from his servile partiality to Chinese manners, he submitted to the Imperial deputy's taking rank of him—a concession which the more manly and independent spirit of his father had always refused; and owing to which, he was never regularly invested, according to ancient usage.

The foreign trade of the Cochin Chinese Empire is greatly inferior to that of Siam. The principal places from which it is conducted are Saigun, Kang-kao or Hatian, and Saigun in Kamboja, Ya-trang, Phu-yen, Quin-hone, Fai-fo and Hué, in Cochin China, and Cachao in Tonquin. The domestic traffic is chiefly carried on by the great rivers of Kamboja and Tonquin, or by the sea-coast. By this last channel, the capital is supplied with necessaries—rice, salt, oil, iron, &c. I was assured that not less than two thousand junks were engaged in this traffic between

Saigun, and Hué, including those employed in carrying the Government contributions. These commonly measure from thirty to forty-five tons, and, by the goodness of their construction and management, are enabled, taking advantage of the land and sea-breezes, to perform the voyage against the monsoons, notwithstanding their severity on this coast. The trade between the capital and Tonquin is partly conducted along the coast, and partly by internal communication. By the latter course, goods are conveyed for one hundred and eighty miles by natural canals, or salt lagunes, which run close to the sea-side. The trade by sea in this quarter is conducted in native vessels of from fifty to seventy-five tons, which can perform three voyages a-year. These amount to about sixty, and the trade both ways is almost exclusively in the hands of the Chinese residents.

The foreign trade of Cochin China is carried on with China, Siam, and the British ports within the Straits of Malacca. Its intercourse by land is chiefly between Tonquin and the three neighbouring provinces of China, Yu-nan, Quang-si, and Quan-tong. In this branch the raw produce of Tonquin is exchanged for the manufactures of China, and even for Bengal opium, and a few British woollens. All the ports of Cochin China above enumerated trade more or less with China; but the principal part of the traffic is with Saigun and Cachao. The Chinese ports with which the intercourse is held are five places of the province of Quan-tong; viz. Canton, Chu-chao, Nom-hong, Wai-chao, and Su-heng, as well as the various ports of the dependent island of Hai-nan, the port of Amoy, or Emui in Fokien, Limpo, or Ning-po in Chekiang, and Saocheu in Kiang-nan. The amount of the Chinese trade of Saigun yearly has been commonly as follows:—from fifteen to twenty-five junks of Hai-nan, measuring from 2000 to 2500 piculs each; two junks of Canton, one measuring five, and the other 8000 piculs; one junk of Amoy, measuring 7000 piculs; and six junks of Saocheu, measuring from 6 to 7000 piculs each. The total number of junks may be reckoned at about thirty, and their total burthen about six thousand five hundred tons. The most valuable cargoes are imported from Amoy, consisting principally of wrought silks and teas; and the least valuable, from

Hai-nan. The Canton junks, before a direct intercourse was established between the British possessions and Cochin China, used to import all the opium consumed in the country, and the whole of the broadcloths and other woollens with which the King's troops were clothed, and they still continue to import a considerable quantity of both. The exports by these vessels are generally of the same description as from Siam, and the principal of them are cardamums, the areca-nut, sugar, fancy woods, eagle-wood, ebony, cotton, rice, stic-lac, ivory, peltry, hides, and horns, deers' sinews, ornamental feathers, particularly those of a species of king-fisher, &c. &c.

The Chinese trade of Fai-fo is with the same ports, and may be taken annually at the following amounts:—with Hai-nan, three junks, measuring about 2500 piculs each; with Canton, six junks, averaging 3000 each; with Amoy, four junks, averaging also 3000 each; and with Saocheu, three junks, of about 2500 piculs each. This gives about sixteen junks, giving a total burthen of near 3000 tons. The small size of these vessels is accounted for by the shallowness of the river, or rather creek, of Fai-fo, which they must enter for shelter.

The trade of Hué, the capital, is also with the same ports, and amounts in all to about twelve junks, measuring from 2500 to 4000 piculs each, and to near 2500 tons. None above 3000 piculs can load with safety in the river, and those of larger size take in their cargoes in the Bay of Turan. The exports from Hué and Fai-fo are the same, and the principal articles consist of sugar, cotton, and cinnamon.

The Chinese trade of Tonquin by sea commonly consists of the following number of junks:—eighteen from Hai-nan, of 2000 piculs each; six from Canton, from 2000 to 2500; seven from Amoy, of the same burthen as the last; and seven from Saoucheu, averaging 2500 each. This gives a total of thirty-eight junks, and a tonnage of about 5000 tons. By the statement of the Chinese traders, it appears that a junk of 3000 piculs, or about one hundred and eighty-seven tons, is the largest which can enter the river of Tonquin with safety. The exports consist of areca-nut, cardamums, cotton, salt-fish, salt, rice, varnish, stic-lac, and a variety of other dyeing drugs, with gold and silver bullion.

The Chinese trade with the minor ports of Cochin China amounts, in all, to about twenty junks not measuring above 2000 piculs each; and therefore giving a total tonnage of 2300 tons. The usual exports are rice and cinnamon. The exportation of the first-named commodity being forbidden without a special licence, many of these junks do not enter the ports of Cochin China at all, but, lying off the coast, smuggle their cargoes on board.

According to the statements now given, the whole of the junks employed in the trade with China amount to one hundred and sixteen, and their burthen to little short of 20,000 tons; which, however, is less than one-half the Chinese trade of Siam.

Between Siam and Cochin China there subsist both political and commercial relations. An interchange of complimentary embassies between the two Courts occurs almost yearly, and for a long time back there has been no rupture between them. Still, however, there is a good deal of jealousy, arising chiefly out of the question of the partition of Kamboja. The trade with Siam has already been described in speaking of that country, and is entirely conducted in vessels belonging to the port of Bangkok.

The trade with the British ports in the Straits of Malacca has chiefly originated since the establishment of the settlement of Singapore in 1819. On the average of the last few years, it may be estimated at about twenty-six junks,* averaging two thousand five hundred piculs each, which gives a total tonnage of somewhat more than four thousand tons. The importations in this trade consist of rice, salt, sugar, raw silk, and some minor commodities; and the exports of opium, gambier, or catechu for the consumption of the Kambojans; iron, taken to Saigun only; fire-arms, with some-

* This refers to the year 1824, since which time a very great augmentation has taken place, although I am unable to state its precise extent.

British woollens, and white cotton goods. This branch, and every other of the foreign trade of Cochin China, is carried on by the Chinese, who are both the merchants, mariners, and navigators: The native Cochin Chinese scarcely venture beyond their own coasts, which, indeed, the state of their municipal laws renders impracticable. I know no exception to this, but the adventures to the Straits of Malacca, made within the last few years by the King of Cochin China, on his own account, and the junks employed in which, with the exception of the Chinese pilots, are all navigated by native Cochin Chinese.

The direct commercial intercourse between European nations and the Cochin Chinese Empire is extremely inconsiderable. The Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English, had each a considerable intercourse with Tonquin about the close of the seventeenth century, which ceased almost entirely about the middle of the eighteenth, chiefly owing to the unsettled state of that country, but in some respects also to the indiscretion of the traders themselves. The English and Dutch East India Companies had factories at Cachao, the capital; and their ships ascended to the town of Domea, twenty miles from the sea, which was as far as the shallowness of the river would allow them. The European traders, at this period, imported saltpetre, sulphur, broadcloth, calicoes, (it may be presumed of Indian manufacture,) lead, cannon, with pepper and other spices. They exported raw silk, gauzes, grograms, *Gros de Naples*, and other wrought silks, grass-cloths, manufactured articles of mother of pearl and lackered ware, fine mats, ebony, ivory, tortoise-shell, cinnamon, cotton, varnish, copper and calamine; which last, it appears, the Dutch carried in large quantities to Japan. With Cochin China Proper it does not appear that European nations ever held any commercial intercourse worth speaking of.

The first attempt made by our nation to renew an intercourse with the countries forming the present Cochin Chinese Empire was in the year 1778, when Mr. Hastings deputed thither Mr. Chapman. This gentleman, as before mentioned, found the country in a state the most unfavourable to the views entertained by the Indian Government; that is, it was engaged in a civil war, which did not terminate until twenty-four years thereafter. Another attempt at establishing an intercourse with Cochin China was made in 1804, under the government of the Marquis of Wellesley,) the principal object of which was the removal of the French party, which then existed in the country, and which was imagined to exercise a degree of influence over the councils of the reigning prince, which it really never possessed. In fact, that prince had too much prudence and foresight to risk the safety of his own states, by embroiling himself in the quarrels of European nations. The Mission was undertaken under circumstances of great difficulty, and chiefly aiming at objects which were altogether unattainable,—the expulsion of the French—territorial acquisition—and the permanent residence of a British agent at the Court,—proved wholly abortive.

Soon after the settlement of Europe, in 1815, the French attempted to renew their intercourse with Cochin China; and several of their trading ships have since visited the country, but not with much success; and it is not improbable that this traffic will soon cease altogether, from the incapacity of the French nation to conduct so distant a trade, and one which derives no support or assistance from the vicinity of colonial establishments. In 1817, an attempt was made, on the part of the Court of France, to get the King of Cochin China to act upon the treaty of 1787, by sending a mission to him, the failure of which has been mentioned in another place.

The very centrical and convenient geographical situation of Cochin China, and the many fine harbours which render a resort to it so safe and easy, seem to point it out as well calculated to become the medium of extending the commercial intercourse of European nations with the less social, but far more important, country of China. This is a subject of interest sufficient to deserve a few observations. The grounds of such an intercourse are already laid in the trade of the Chinese junks with Cochin China, and in the traffic recently established between the latter country

and the British possessions in the Straits of Malacca. Through this channel, an intercourse might be opened with two of the richest provinces in China, Chekiang and Kiangnan, with which European nations at present hold no intercourse, even through native vessels; our only communication with them being indirectly through the port of Canton, where the restraints imposed upon our commerce are sufficiently known. The following goods were pointed out to me by the Chinese merchants, with whom I conversed in Cochin China, as either well suited for the consumption of that country itself, or for the market now alluded to, viz. raw cotton, tin, pepper, iron, lead, broadcloth, white calicoes, opium, saltpetre, and fire-arms, besides all the usual articles of Malayan production, such as camphor, sea-slug, esculent swallows' nests, &c. The returns which might be expected in a free-trade, would consist of the raw silk of Chekiang, the green teas and nankeens of Kiangnan; these being the two provinces which afford the greatest abundance of the articles in question, with black tea from the province of Fokien, and the northern parts of that of Canton; the raw silk of Tonquin and Cochin China itself, together with silver bullion, sugar, and probably cinnamon. The freedom which has been established of late years in the silk trade in Great Britain, will tend greatly to the encouragement of such an intercourse; but the removal of the restraints upon the tea trade, would occasion a far more important extension of it. Even in the present state of this last branch of trade, I have seen considerable importations of coarse tea, such as would be extensively consumed by the lower orders in England, brought to Singapore from Saigun, and sold to a profit at the low prices of from threepence to sixpence a pound.

I shall conclude this sketch of the commerce of Cochin China, with some account of the weights and monies of the country, and the regulations of foreign trade, as established by an edict of the late King, Gialong, in 1818. The ordinary weights used by the Cochin Chinese are those of China;—the picul, consisting of 133⅓ lbs. avoirdupois, divided into a hundred parts, or catties. At Hué and Fai-fo, however, the picul used by the Chinese in

their dealings consists of a hundred and twelve catties; and at Saigun, a picul of sugar is in reality a picul and a half, or a hundred and fifty catties. Rice is sold by the bag, which ought to consist of fifty catties; but in the market it is commonly two catties short of this amount.—The proper coined money of Tonquin and Cochin China is called a *Sapek*, or *Sapeque*, and consisted formerly of brass, but at present of zinc. It is about the size of an English shilling, bears the King's name in the Chinese character, and has a square hole in the middle, for the convenience of being strung. Sixty *sapeks* make a *mas*, and ten *mas* one *kwan*, or *quan* as it has been more usually written. The two last are only monies of account. Six hundred *sapeks*, which make a *kwan*, are commonly strung upon a filament of ratan, and in this manner kept for use; forming a bulky and most inconvenient currency. Ingots of gold and silver, stamped by the Government, are current in the country, although not considered coin. One description of these, resembling in form a piece of Indian ink, is covered all over with Chinese characters, and considered equal to two kwans and eight mas. Fractions of it, in halves and quarters, are also to be seen. This ingot, having been carefully analyzed in the mint of Calcutta, was found to be of the standard of seventeen penny-weights and a half, and to contain 578.67 grains of pure silver, and therefore to be equal in value to 1.56 Spanish dollar, or 6*s.* 2½*d.* A larger ingot is also in common circulation, which, on trial at the Calcutta mint, was found to be of the same standard as the last, and to contain 6172.9 grains of pure silver; being equal, therefore, to 16.64 Spanish dollars, or 3*l.* 6*s.* 5¼*d.* A gold ingot is coined, of the same weight as the small one of silver, and commonly estimated at seventeen times its value, or 26.52 Spanish dollars. The standard of this last has not been determined; but the gold is asserted to be of a very fine touch. The zinc coin, as well as the gold and silver ingots, are struck at Cachao, the capital of Tonquin. The punishment of death is inflicted for forging the former. The Spanish dollar is current in Cochin China, and valued at one quan and a half by the Government. The kwan of account, according to the statements now given, ought to be

worth fifty-five cents, or something more than half a Spanish dollar; but its price fluctuates with the plenty or scarcity of silver, as may naturally be expected. The price paid by the King for the metal from which the zinc currency is struck, is only twelve quans the picul; so that, of course, it passes for infinitely more than its intrinsic value, and is therefore an object of considerable revenue.

The following are the port regulations. The principal impost is a duty on the measurement of the vessel, the amount of which varies at the different ports,—being lowest at the capital, and highest at Saigun. This absurd distinction is intended to counterbalance the natural disadvantages of the northern ports, and place them on an equality with the fine port of Saigun. The manner of rating the duty is this:—The vessel being measured from stem to stern, excluding the overhanging part of the latter beyond the stern-post, the one-half of such measurement is considered the midships, where the breadth is taken within the bulwarks, and upon this the duty is levied, at so many kwans per Chinese cubit, equal to 16.2 English inches. At Saigun, the duty upon the junks of Canton, Fokien, and Chekiang, and upon the ships of European nations, are as follow:—Vessels measuring from fourteen to twenty-five cubits, pay one hundred and forty kwans per cubit; those from eleven to thirteen, ninety kwans; those from nine to ten, seventy kwans; and those from seven to eight, thirty-five kwans. At the ports of Turan and Fai-fo, the same description of vessels pay respectively in the following order:—one hundred and twelve kwans, seventy-two kwans, fifty-six kwans, and twenty-eight kwans. At the port of Hué, the rates for the same description of shipping are as follow: eighty-four kwans, fifty-four kwans, forty-two kwans, and twenty-one kwans.

The Chinese junks of Chaocheu are favourites, paying smaller duties than any others; while the small Chinese junks from Malayan ports, Siam, and the island of Hai-nan, are more heavily burtliened than any other. I can only state the rate of duties on those at Saigun, where they are the highest. The first pay as follow:—those measuring from fourteen

to twenty-five cubits, one hundred and ten kwans per cubit; those from eleven to thirteen, seventy kwans; those from nine to ten, fifty kwans; and those from seven to eight, thirty kwans. The latter description pay,—those measuring from fourteen to twenty, one hundred and fifty kwans; from ten to thirteen, fifty-five kwans; and from seven to nine, twenty kwans.

Vessels entering a Cochin Chinese port for the purpose of refitting, or for refreshment, or to inquire for a market, pay no measurement duties; and a vessel paying the measurement duty at one port is exempt from it at every other for a whole year. No import duties are levied upon any article. An export duty of five per cent. is levied upon cardamums, pepper, cinnamon, ivory, rhinoceros' horns, esculent swallows' nests, sapan-wood, ebony, and red-wood. On timber for making coffins, (an important article of domestic traffic,) and wood suited for ship-building, with cordage, a duty of ten per cent. is levied. The exportation of the following articles is contraband:—the coin of the country, gold and silver bullion, copper, agila-wood, rice, and salt. The prohibition, however, as commonly happens in such cases, is rather nominal than real. The exportation of rice is allowed by licence, and, except in times of apprehended scarcity, is sent out of the country in abundance. The same observation applies to salt; and gold and silver are at all times exported without difficulty. To this list of prohibited articles, I ought to add *men* and *women*, who are expressly named in the edict. The only article of which the *importation* is prohibited is opium; the sale of which, however, is readily effected through the usual dexterity of the Chinese. At the time of our visit, the annual importation was considered to be one hundred and fifty chests, viz.—forty for Kamboja, ten for the capital and neighbourhood, and one hundred for Tonquin.*

* "Trade is carried on almost entirely by the Chinese. Nothing equals the activity of this mercantile people. It is but very lately that the Cochin Chinese have been seen to attach themselves to this description of industry. We proceed to make known those objects of exportation and importation upon which the whole commerce of Cochin China depends. The exports are as follow:—*Cinnamon*, of several qualities: the first is sold dearer than its weight of gold. *Pepper*.—The culture has

A man marries in Cochin China as early as he can afford to purchase a wife, for such is the universal practice. The price is paid to the bride's parents, and among the more indigent is often as low as from ten to twenty kwans. From forty to fifty, however, is a more frequent price; which rises to one and two hundred, among persons of better condition. Men among the lower classes seldom marry before twenty, and this event is often delayed until thirty. The rich often marry as early as fifteen. The age of marriage with women of the lower orders, is from seventeen to twenty. These ages, it will be observed, are later than in most other Asiatic coun-

decreased in consequence of excessive imposts: the price is very variable. *Areca.*—The price has fallen in the proportion of from six to one, since the Malays have been encouraged to cultivate it for the English. Formerly the Portuguese were in the habit of taking away about nineteen ship-loads yearly. The present price is about two Spanish dollars the picul, of one hundred and twenty-five French pounds. *Cotton* in very small quantity: the price about seven dollars the picul. *Raw Silk*, according to quality, from three to four dollars the Cochin Chinese pound, of twenty French ounces. *Sugar.*—The price varies from three to four dollars the picul. *Dye-woods*, at very low prices. *Tonquinese varnish.*—*Dried fish.* This is one of the most considerable objects of Chinese trade. I have seen it purchased in Lower Cochin China at two dollars the picul, and sold at Macao at twelve. *Ivory.*—This comes chiefly from Kamboja and Lao. The price is according to quality. Two teeth, weighing a picul, are worth forty Spanish dollars.—*Gamboge.* This comes from Kamboja, and varies in price from eighteen to forty dollars. *Cardamums*, from the same country, vary in price, according to quality, from one hundred and fifty to two hundred dollars the picul. *Elephants* and *Rhinoceros' hides*, also from Kamboja. Their price is about five dollars the picul; and they are used by the Chinese for jellies and soups. *Elephant* and *Buffalo* bones, objects commonly bartered for pottery. *Siamese Cloths.*—These are cotton fabrics manufactured by the wild people of the interior. *Kamboja Cloths.*—These are of silk, and exported in very small quantity.—The articles of importation are the following:—*Wrought Silks.*—The Chinese import in the shape of satins, Pekins, and flowered stuffs, the raw silk which they had previously exported.—*Porcelain.*—*Tea.*—*Paper.*—This last is either white for hangings, flowered, coloured, or gilt for funeral purposes. *Dried fruit* and *Confectionary.*—Among the Cochin Chinese, the taste for sweetmeats is general. *Children's Toys.*—The bones of the elephant and buffalo are brought back manufactured into these articles.

"It would be desirable to render an estimate of the value and quantity of the goods exported and imported; but the trade being free, and almost entirely in the hands of strangers; and the ships, besides being subjected to no duties except those upon anchorage, estimated by their dimensions, data are wanting for a calculation worthy of any credit. There enter the ports of Cochin China yearly about three hundred Chinese junks, great and small, varying in size from one hundred to six hundred tons."—*MS of M. Chaigneau.*

tries, and show that, in Cochin China, prudence, or at least necessity, has some influence in checking the increase of population. Polygamy is of course permitted to any extent; for, in Cochin China, marriage is a state of mere convenience to the men, and the wife or wives are little better than the chattels of the husband. The first espoused, being usually a person of equal or superior rank, is looked upon as the real wife; and the succeeding ones, persons of inferior condition, little better than her handmaids. A young woman cannot be married by her parents contrary to her inclination. Marriages are indissoluble, except by the mutual consent of the parties. Before marriage, the young Cochin Chinese women are allowed the most perfect liberty, or rather licence. A breach of the laws of chastity, on their part, is considered no offence; nor, it is said, even an obstacle to a matrimonial connexion. When an unmarried woman is discovered to be pregnant, the lover is inquired for, generally acknowledges himself, and marries her; getting her at a price under the common rate. Should her pregnancy prove a matter of inconvenience, the bringing on of an abortion by secret means is not viewed among this gross people as criminal. Infanticide however, so frequent among the teeming population of China, is scarcely known in Cochin China; and when it does occur, it is viewed as a crime. The matrimonial knot once tied, there is an end to the liberty of the female sex. By the laws of Cochin China, the punishment of adultery is death to both the offending parties; often, however, commuted into severe corporal punishment. This law shows that it is not the *moral offence*, but the *invasion of property*, which is the object of punishment. The Cochin Chinese women are not immured as in most countries of Western Asia; but they are not the more respected on this account; on the contrary, they are treated with rigour or neglect, as if it were not worth while watching them. A Cochin Chinese husband may by law inflict upon his wife the severest corporal punishment, short of life, without being called to any account. We were ourselves witnesses to several specimens of this discipline. While our ship lay at the village of Candyu, one of our gentlemen saw a very decided

case of this nature, in the person of a young woman of twenty-four or twenty-five years of age. She was thrown down upon her face in the usual manner, and a man and woman held her, while a brute of the male sex, believed to be her husband, inflicted at least fifty blows of a ratan. The punishment took place in the open street, and excited very little notice among the people.

The wages of a day-labourer at Hué are considered to be one mas a-day with food, or two without it. Taking the average price of rice at two quans, or one Spanish dollar and ten cents per picul, a day-labourer will earn three piculs a-month; and as he consumes only a cattie and a half a day, his wages are equal to nine times his consumption of corn. The real value of his food however, of all descriptions, appears to be reckoned at one and a half dollar a-month; so that there remains an equal sum in money, or a picul and a half of rice, to supply food and lodging, and to maintain such part of his family as is unable to work. The quantity of corn which the wages of a day-labourer in the town of Calcutta can purchase, is very little more than one-half of this amount; but then he is free to labour on his own account as many days in the year as he thinks proper. So high a rate of wages is no doubt occasioned by the military conscription, which, engaging one-third of the able-bodied labourers of the kingdom in the unprofitable service of the State, impairs the industrious habits of the whole. This institution, if a great proportion of fertile land did not exist, and if the toil of cultivating it were not thrown upon the women, would probably have produced a high price of corn, and this would not only have arrested the increase of population, but even caused it to retrograde. The women in Cochin China perform a large share of such labour as, in other countries, belongs to the male sex only. They plough, harrow, reap, carry heavy burdens, are shopkeepers, brokers, and money-changers. In most of these cases, they are considered not only more expert and intelligent than the men, but what is more extraordinary, and what I have never heard of in any other country, their labour is generally of equal

value; so that, in fact, here there is no distinction in amount between male and female labour, as in other parts of the world; the wasteful idleness of the public service depreciating the first, and habits of industry raising the last to an unnatural equality with it. The observation in Cochin China is, indeed, frequently made, that the labour of the women supports the men; who, on their side, compelled to toil for the King, have no leisure to attend to their own affairs, and probably very little capacity. Under such circumstances, it is hardly to be supposed that Cochin Chinese husbands are likely to be much loved or respected. The women are therefore alleged to prefer strangers to them, and especially the Chinese; who, as their industry is not shackled by the conscription, or the corvées, exact no heavy labour from them, but, on the contrary, indulge them in comparative idleness, and even treat them with more respect and kindness than their own countrymen.

There is no country in Asia in which the scourge of intestine war, with the famine, disease, and misery which accompany it, has produced greater devastation than in Kamboja, Cochin China, and Tonquin, the principal members of the present Empire of Cochin China. The last civil war lasted twenty-eight years, and was conducted with great ferocity on both sides. The cultivation of the country was suspended, and the intercourse between one province and another was interrupted; so that the least fertile, which had depended in all times upon the most productive for food, were literally starved. Mr. Chapman, who was an eye-witness, draws a frightful picture of the condition to which the country was reduced in the early period of this struggle.* The kingdom may now be

* He describes his first intercourse with the natives at Cape St. James's as follows:—"When we reached the beach, I sent the linguists on shore, keeping every body else in the boat; after some time they came back, leading two or three of the most miserable-looking objects I ever beheld, upon the very point of perishing with hunger and disease. The linguists telling us we might land in safety, we did so. These poor wretches told me they belonged to a village hard by, in which were left about fifty more, much in the same condition with themselves; that a fleet of Ignaacks, in its way to Donai, which it was now blockading, had two months before paid them a visit, and plundered

said to have enjoyed an uninterrupted tranquillity since the year 1802; and it may be presumed, that its population, in that time, must have increased very considerably. The climate is generally salubrious, even for strangers, and in time of tranquillity the country does not appear to be liable to famines or destructive epidemics. Under all the disadvantages of bad government, the effectual price of labour is comparatively high and fertile, and unoccupied land is still abundant. The price of rice does not fluctuate remarkably in ordinary seasons. At Saigun, such as is consumed by the lower orders may be stated as seldom falling under a quan and a half the Chinese picul, (82½ cents of a Spanish dollar,) nor rising beyond two quans (100 cents). At Hué, it may be given at from two to three quans the picul. In reference to this subject, the pernicious practice, on the part of the Government, of hoarding enormous quantities of grain as provision against scarcity, but, in fact, as a remedy against insurrection, ought not to be passed over. Immense granaries of corn, belonging to the Government, are to be found in all parts of the kingdom, from which, out of its assumed parental tenderness, food is dispensed to the people, when hunger and its own misgovernment bring them to the brink of rebellion. This practice, well calculated to maintain the despotism of the sovereign, effectually destroys a free trade in corn, and is without doubt one great cause

them of the scanty remains left by a horrid famine, supposed in the preceding year to have carried off more than one-half of the whole inhabitants of Cochin China; and that they had nothing to eat now but a root thrown up by the surf on the beach, which caused them to break out in blotches all over their bodies; it was shaped something like a sweet potatoe, but longer. I was now no longer at a loss to account for the indifference the wretches I saw at Tringano showed to my offer of procuring their release; they were not possessed of sufficient patriotism to prefer liberty, with so scanty a fare in their own country, to slavery, with a full belly, in a foreign one. There is no slavery in Cochin China. On perceiving the mouths of two or three rivers to the north-west, and asking their names, they told me that one of them led to Donai. Several more of these objects were now gathering round me: distressed at this scene of misery, not in my power to relieve, I hastened on board my boat, and took with me an old man, who appeared the most intelligent, to inform our mandarin of all he knew, and to determine what was next to be done."—*Account of a Mission from the Governor-general of India to the King of Cochin China.*

of those scarcities for which it pretends to be a remedy. The legal prohibition to export rice to foreign countries, and the actual difficulty of exporting it, except clandestinely, or through favour, contribute too obviously to the same effect.

In Kamboja and Cochin China Proper, we scarcely saw a beggar during our short stay. This however, I was informed by Chinese who had visited Tonquin, is far from being the case in that country, where mendicity is said to be very prevalent, while population, in the vicinity of the capital at least, presses against the means of subsistence in a manner very different from what obtains in those parts of the country which we visited. The oppressive character of the Cochin Chinese Government, however, produces another race of vagrants, more pernicious to society—a crowd of public robbers. These are most frequent in Kamboja and Tonquin. One of the French gentlemen mentioned, as a proof of the vigorous administration of Thao Kun, the present Governor of Kamboja, that the number of capital trials, for some time before he received charge of the government of Kamboja, used to be about three hundred a-year, and that he had reduced it to three or four. This alteration was not effected by any improvement in the administration, or by the redress of existing grievances, but by severe examples and frequent executions, such as I have referred to in my JOURNAL.* The Cochin Chinese scarcely ever emigrate; and this fact may, to a certain extent, be adduced as proof that the population does not press upon the means of subsistence. It is true that the rigorous laws against emigration, and the veneration which the Cochin Chinese entertain for the tombs of their fathers, contribute greatly to keep them at home. These causes, however, would have been ineffectual, had food been high-priced and the wages of labour low, as may be seen

* This chief is, I believe, the individual referred to by M. De La Bissachère in the following description:—"Aujourd'hui, il n'y a plus qu'un eunuque qui soit général; c'est un homme d'une grande capacité, reconnu par tous les généraux comme le plus habile d'entre eux, et chéri et vénéré du peuple, à raison de ses grands talens et de sa *grande humanité*."

from the example of China; from whence, notwithstanding the existence of similar laws and superstitions, a greater swarm of emigrants is annually poured out than from any other country in Asia.

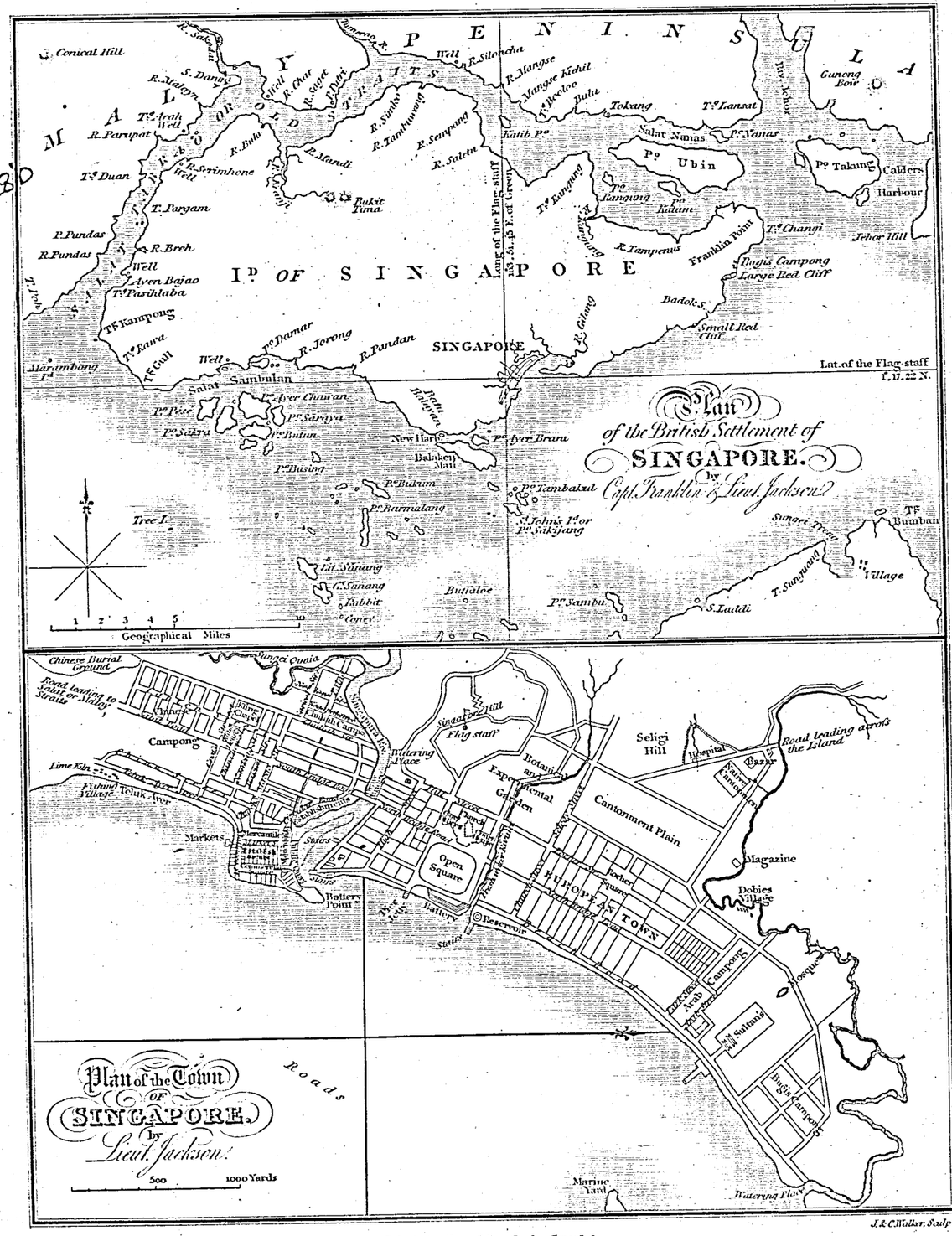
With respect to the actual population of the Cochin Chinese Empire, the only statements before the public that I am aware of, are those of M. De La Bissachère, published in his Present State of Tonquin and Cochin China, in 1812. He estimates the whole population to amount to about twenty-three millions, but the details which he offers give only about twenty-two. These are; eighteen millions for Tonquin, a million and a half for Cochin China, a million for Kamboja, and from one million two hundred thousand to one million four hundred thousand for the inferior sub-divisions of the empire. Considering the semi-barbarous condition of the people, the badness of the government, the want of industry, and the large proportion of the territory, which is admitted to be either sterile or unreclaimed and unoccupied, it is impossible to believe, that this is other than a very exaggerated statement. If the territory of Cochin China contain, as I have supposed, an area of ninety-eight thousand miles, the above conjecture will give two hundred and thirty-four inhabitants to each square mile, which is a greater density of population than exists in some of the most industrious and best governed countries in Europe. In the manuscript of M. Chaigneau, the whole population is estimated at from fifteen to twenty millions, giving an average of seventeen millions and a half, which is five millions and a half less than the estimate of M. De La Bissachère. Even this would give a population of one hundred and seventy-eight to the square mile, which is undoubtedly overrating it prodigiously. M. Vanier, a highly respectable officer in the service of the King of Cochin China, stated to me in conversation, that he did not believe the population of the whole empire exceeded ten millions. In truth, little better than probable conjecture can be hazarded upon the subject. Rolls of the population are kept by the Government for fiscal and military purposes, including, however, only the

male adult inhabitants; but these have never been seen, even by the European officers in the King's service. One of the latter informed me that the whole number of persons borne on the rolls of the military conscription amounted only to two hundred and forty thousand; but that it was generally believed that one-third of those liable to the conscription were omitted through favour or partiality. This would bring the whole number up to three hundred and twenty thousand, to which should be added the numerous train of officers, civil and military, of all ranks, in the public service, with foreign settlers of all descriptions. Reckoning the whole adult male inhabitants, above eighteen years of age, at one-fourth of the whole, the total population of the empire will amount to no more than one million two hundred and eighty thousand. This however, I have no doubt, is on the other hand greatly underrating it. Perhaps the safest estimate may be drawn from comparing the amount of the population of Cochin China with that of countries similarly circumstanced in regard to government, climate, and locality, and where an actual census has been taken. The neighbouring country of China is at present considered to contain one hundred and fifty millions of inhabitants; and, according to the map of the Jesuits, contains in round numbers, exclusive of Tartary, one million three hundred and ten thousand square miles, which area gives one hundred and fourteen souls to a square mile.* Were the Cochin Chinese Empire as densely peopled, which is very improbable, it would still contain only a population of eleven millions one hundred and seventy-two thousand, or about one-half that ascribed to it by M. De La Bissachère. Parts of Tonquin are admitted, on all hands, to be very densely peopled; but the reverse is the case with Cochin China and the greater portion of Kamboja. If we compare the population of the Cochin Chinese Empire, therefore, with that of two of the contiguous provinces of China, viz. Canton, and

* This, it may be remarked, gives nearly the same density of population as the British possessions in India; so that it is probable we have been in the habit of overrating the population of China, or its general fertility is less than has been imagined.

Yu-nan,—the one populous and fertile, and the other mountainous and thinly peopled,—we shall, perhaps, obtain a nearer approximation to the truth, than by any other process of estimating it. These two provinces of China, according to the map constructed by the Jesuits, contain jointly, in round numbers, an area of one hundred and sixty-five thousand square miles, and a population of eight millions eight hundred and seventy-six thousand three hundred and ninety-nine, of which Yu-nan, with a superficies of above one hundred thousand square miles, has little more than two millions. This gives only a population of fifty-three to the square mile. Assuming these data for the Cochin Chinese Empire, its population will be only five millions one hundred and ninety-four thousand; and I think, under all circumstances, this is more likely to be an over than an underrated estimate.*

* "The population of Cochin China is immense, especially along the rivers. That of all the empire amounts to from fifteen to twenty millions. Polygamy is allowed; but notwithstanding, a man has in fact but one wife; his other women are but concubines, real servants, of whom the labour and the fruitfulness constitute the wealth of the master. But there are other causes, physical and moral, of which the influence contributes perhaps more to the excessive population of Cochin China. The climate is generally salubrious, with the exception of some lands subject to inundation, where fevers sometimes prevail. The diet consists of rice and fish. The low price of food is the cause that no one fears to become a father, since there is a certainty of being able to support the most numerous offspring. A Cochin Chinese scarcely ever emigrates. In fine, honour itself attaches to the paternal relation. In the eyes of his children, a father is sovereign during his life, and they make him almost a god after his death."—*Manuscript of M. Chaigneau.* Upon this statement I cannot help remarking, that the very facts adduced by the writer, afford themselves conclusive evidence that Cochin China is not a densely but an under-peopled country.



CHAPTER XIX.

Island of Singapore.—Geographical description and physical aspect.—Natural productions.—Climate.—Agriculture.—Manufactures.—Trade.—Population.—Wages and profits.—Description of the town.—Markets.—Administration.—Civil and military establishments.—Revenue.—History of the settlement.

HAVING not only seen a good deal of the new and interesting settlement of Singapore, during the voyage of which I am now rendering the narrative, but having afterwards been charged with its local administration for a period of near three years, my reader will reasonably expect that I should render some account of it: I shall therefore devote this separate chapter to the subject.

The Island of Singapore, of an elliptical form, is about twenty-seven miles in its greatest length, and fifteen in its greatest breadth, containing an estimated area of about two hundred and seventy square miles. The whole British settlement, however, embraces a circumference of about one hundred miles; in which is included about fifty desert islets, and the seas and straits within ten miles of the coast of the principal island. Singapore is separated from the mainland by the old strait of its own name, which is of small breadth throughout, and scarcely a quarter of a mile wide in its narrowest part. Fronting the island, on its southern side, and at the distance of about nine miles, is an extensive chain of islands, all desert, or at least inhabited only by a few wild races, of which nothing is known but their bare existence. The intervening channel is the high road of commerce between the eastern and western portions of maritime Asia,—the

safest and most convenient track being so near to Singapore, that ships in passing and repassing go very nearly through the roads.

The aspect of Singapore presents, in general, an undulating surface; the highest hills not exceeding two hundred feet in height, and the generality not being of half this elevation. The site and neighbourhood of the settlement are composed of red sandstone, with occasional beds of shale, cellular clay iron ore, jaspery iron ore, and conglomerate. The northern and eastern portions of the island, however, which are adjacent to the continent, are composed of granite. With the exception of iron, no metals have been discovered; but it is highly probable that tin exists here, in common with the neighbouring countries.

The rivers of Singapore are not numerous, and those which exist are mere brooks. Their absence, however, is compensated by the frequent salt creeks which indent its coasts, and in several cases penetrate the island to the extent of three, and even of five and six miles. It is upon the banks of one of these, navigable for the largest cargo-boats, that the commercial part of the town is so conveniently situated.

The exceptions were so trifling when we first occupied it, that the whole island may be described as having been covered with one universal and mighty forest. The trees of which this consists are various, and many of them as yet undescribed by botanists. Amidst this variety, those fit for economical purposes do not exceed five or six in number. Of these the timber is strong and durable, and, if not fit for the purposes of naval architecture, well adapted for every object of house-building.

The wild quadrupeds found in the island may be shortly enumerated. There are numerous monkeys of several species; bats, among which are the vespertilio and galiopithecus; several species of the viverra; a newly described animal, which has been named Ictides; an otter; two species of cat, one of which is new; several species of squirrel, including the sciurus volucella, which is fully as large as the domestic cat; the porcupine, the common rat, the sloth, *(bradypus didactylus,)* the pangolin, the hog, two

species of deer, viz. the moschus pegmæus, a little delicate creature, smaller than an English hare, without horns, and frequent in many countries of tropical India, and the Indian roe *(cervus munjac.)* To this imperfect list may be added, since it is ruminant and mammiferous, the dugong, correctly written duyung. This remarkable animal, of which the flesh is esculent, and not unlike young cow-beef, is not unfrequently caught at Singapore, and I have seen it of the weight of three hundred pounds. It is remarkable, that the larger quadrupeds found on the neighbouring continent are absent not only in Singapore, but in all the islands of the same or smaller extent,—such as the elephant, the rhinoceros, the tapir, the tiger, and the leopard.

The variety of the feathered tribe in Singapore is very considerable; and Mons. Diard, a skilful naturalist, who paid much attention to the subject, informed me, that in a period of three months, he had discovered more new species here than in as many years over the wide extent of Cochin China and Kamboja. Birds of prey are very few in number; there are not, that I am aware of, either eagles or vultures; and a few crows only made their first appearance some months after the formation of the European settlement. Gallinaceous birds are still rarer, if indeed there exist any at all. This is the more remarkable, since on the neighbouring continent they are numerous, there existing there two species of peacock, at least three species of pheasant, including the magnificent argus pheasant, the wild cock, and three species of partridge. Web-footed birds are rare in Singapore: of the genus anas there is but one species, the whistling teal of India. The birds of passage of this family, which are numerous beyond the tropics, are never to be seen at Singapore or the neighbouring countries. The most numerous orders of birds are those of the passeres, the climbers and wader; but especially the first, which are remarkable alike for their novelty and beauty.

Reptiles are exceedingly numerous; among which are tortoises, *sauriens*, and serpents. Of the last, I collected, during my stay, not less than forty

species, six of which, including two species of hooded snake, were venomous. Notwithstanding, however, accidents from the bites of snakes rarely occur. I do not indeed remember hearing of a single example.

In a place little more than eighty miles from the Equator there is of course very little variety in the seasons. The greatest quantity of rain falls in December and January; but refreshing showers are experienced throughout the year. In 1820, rain fell on two hundred and twenty-nine days; in 1821, on two hundred and three days; in 1824, on one hundred and thirty-six days; and in 1825, on one hundred and seventy-one days; giving an average, on four years, of about one hundred and eighty-five rainy, and one hundred and eight dry days. The rainy months are the coldest, namely, December and January; and the dryest months, April and May, the hottest. My friend, Captain Davies, the Military Staff Officer at Singapore, kept, for a period of near eight years, a register of the weather; of which I give the following abstract for the year 1825, as sufficient for the present purpose.

ABSTRACT FOR 1825.	THERMOMETER.									Dry Days.	Rainy Days.
	MONTHLY AVERAGE.			GREATEST RANGE.			LOWEST RANGE.				
	6 o'clock, Morning.	12 o'clock, Noon.	6 o'clock, Evening.	6 o'clock, Morning.	12 o'clock, Noon.	6 o'clock, Evening.	6 o'clock, Morning.	12 o'clock, Noon.	6 o'clock, Evening.		
January . . .	75,1	80,9	79,9	77	86	83	72	75	74	13	18
February . . .	76,0	86,2	79,8	79	87	85	77	82	78	17	11
March	76,5	84,6	83,6	80	88	86	73	76	79	20	11
April	77,8	84,6	83,7	81	87	87	74	80	79	27	13
May	77,6	84,7	83,7	81	87	86	75	78	80	15	16
June	79,9	84,3	84,1	84	88	87	75	77	77	19	11
July	76,6	82,9	82,6	82	88	85	73	78	77	18	13
August . . .	76,5	82,2	81,4	81	87	85	75	78	78	14	17
September . .	77,1	83,3	80,6	82	87	85	74	76	77	19	11
October . . .	76,8	83,6	83,5	79	88	86	75	76	79	19	12
November . .	76,6	84,3	82,9	79	86	89	71	80	79	16	14
December. . .	75,7	81,7	80,8	78	85	86	77	77	77	17	14
									Total, Wet and Dry days . .	194	171

It will be seen from this table, that the lowest range of the thermometer, within the year, is 71°, and the highest 89°. The climate is hot,

but equable. From the absence of distinct seasons, it is necessarily monotonous.

The site of the town is remarkable for its salubrity, and the fevers and dysenteries of ordinary tropical countries are of very rare occurrence. I have no recollection, indeed, of any European having fallen a victim to the climate in the long period of nine years, since the formation of the settlement. This may appear at first view the more remarkable, since a considerable portion of the site of the town, and much of the neighbourhood, is a low and even noisome marsh. The healthiness of the situation is, I conceive, chiefly ascribable to the free ventilation which prevails, and which precludes the formation of those poisonous miasmata, which are the true source of most endemical diseases in warm countries. Sea-breezes prevail with considerable regularity, but chilling land-winds are scarcely known—probably another reason for the salubrity of the place. In the north-east monsoon, from October to March, the settlement is refreshed by stiff breezes blowing in from the China Seas. The westerly monsoon, interrupted by the Straits of Malacca and the neighbouring lands, is not felt. That the free ventilation of the town now mentioned is the chief cause of its salubrity, may be inferred from this, that the climate is not equally good in the only other part of the island where a considerable population is collected. This is the beautiful and romantic spot called "the new harbour," which is landlocked, and where fevers and dysenteries of a fatal character are sufficiently frequent among the Malay settlers who occupy it.

The surface of the island consists for the most part, as already mentioned, of a succession of low hills, the summits of which are barren; but on their slopes, and in the intervening valleys, there is occasionally a good deal of soil of considerable fertility. In a few situations on the north coast there are sandy plains of some extent, where the soil, however, is so scanty, that nothing will grow in them except weeds; and tall trees, under present circumstances, as useless.

The soil, like that of all the neighbouring islands, is, upon the whole,

decidedly sterile, and, generally speaking, unfit for the growth of corn, as well as of almost all the great staples of tropical husbandry. The growth of coffee has been attempted upon a small scale, but without success. A few clove and nutmeg-trees have also been planted; and the last, under the judicious care of my intelligent friend, Dr. Montgomerie, the Superintendent of the Botanical Garden, have already yielded fruit; but it may be safely predicted that the soil is not suited to the growth of either. Even pepper, which has been more extensively cultivated, does not seem to succeed. The only object of successful and extensive culture is the species of *uncaria*, which yields the *gambier*, or terra japonica, a hardy product for which the soil of Singapore, as well as that of all the neighbouring larger islands, seems peculiarly suited. The Dutch settlement of Rhio, one of these, is the source of the greater portion of this article, which is consumed by the islanders of the Archipelago. The plant is a hardy native *scandent* shrub, rising to the height of three or four feet, which comes to maturity in twelve months. It is very productive of drug, each plant being reckoned to afford yearly between five and six pounds. The catechu, or terra japonica, is obtained by simply boiling the leaves, inspiriting the juice, and adding to it, to give it tenacity, a little crude sago. The culture and manufacture may be carried on at the low rate of about three Spanish dollars per picul, of 133⅓ lbs. avoirdupois. The quantity produced in Singapore is as yet inconsiderable; but the neighbouring settlement of Rhio is said to produce above four thousand tons of the commodity yearly.

The soil and climate of Singapore are perfectly well adapted to the production of tropical fruits,—such as the cocoa-nut, the orange, the mangoe, which is found wild in the forests; the mangostin, duku, pine-apple, &c. &c. The produce however at present is quite inadequate to the demand, and large quantities are imported from the vicinity. Besides fruits, the soil is also well adapted to the growth of all those green esculent plants and farinaceous roots which are natural to a tropical climate,—such as different varieties of cucumber, the egg plant, different pulses, the yam, the batata,

and many others. The common garden pea of Europe may probably be raised with care; but it will be in vain that we attempt the culture of the cabbage, cauliflower, artichoke, or potatoe. These are not raised in Java, Cuba, St. Domingo, or Jamaica, at a less elevation than three thousand feet above the level of the sea; and in Singapore, so much nearer the Equator, their successful culture would probably require four thousand.

The agricultural capabilities of Singapore, distinct from soil, are not inconsiderable. The alterations of season are so trifling, that there is a perpetual succession of flowers and fruits; and every period of the year, therefore, seems almost equally suited for conducting the labours of agriculture. The climate is at the same time free from storms and hurricanes, or even violent gusts of wind, calculated to overthrow or impede the labours of the husbandman. The place is also secure, as far as I have been able to ascertain, from the depredation of locusts, palmer worms, Hessian flies, and similar insects, which prove so ruinous in other warm climates. The absence of the elephant and tiger are also very favourable circumstances. These immunities may, in a more advanced state of the settlement, give encouragement to many branches of husbandry, upon which it would be difficult at present to speculate. Before quitting this subject, I ought to observe, that the agriculture of Singapore, of whatever description, is almost exclusively carried on by the Chinese.

The manufactures carried on in Singapore, however trifling, deserve some notice. The most considerable is that of pearl or white sago. The raw sago is imported, as mentioned in another place, from the north coast of Sumatra. The process of converting it into pearl sago is sufficiently simple, and consists in nothing more than frequent edulcorations, drying the farina, granulating it in sieves, and finally drying, or rather baking it by a slow fire, in iron pots. The sago thus treated is at first of a pure white colour, and has all the look of new-fallen sleet, but in time it becomes more or less discoloured according to the degree of skill with which the process has been performed. The manufacturers are all Chinese, and a manufactory

employing about a dozen labourers will produce at the rate of five piculs per diem. The cost of production is reckoned at about five Spanish dollars per picul, equal to about a farthing per pound. The art of manufacturing pearl sago is a recent one, and invented by the Chinese. It was first practised at Malacca about fourteen years ago, and introduced into Singapore only in 1824. This last place is now the principal seat of manufactory.

Ship-building has not hitherto been carried to any extent, but two establishments exist, capable of giving ordinary repairs to vessels of any size, and at which a few small craft, constructed of the timber of the island, have been built. This timber however, as already mentioned, is not fit for building durable ships. Should at any period the abundant supply of teak timber produced in Siam become available, it may be expected, as there are many situations convenient for the formation of docks and slips, that the business of ship-building will be established at Singapore upon an extensive scale. The only other manufactory which may be worth noticing is the fabrication of native arms, and of domestic and agricultural implements for exportation throughout the Archipelago. In 1825, there were upward of sixty forges employed by the Chinese chiefly in this business.

The chief importance of Singapore is as a commercial emporium, and in this view it has certainly answered the most sanguine expectations. When it was founded, in 1819, it was inhabited by a few hundred piratical Malay fishermen. Down to the year 1819, both the island and the harbour may be said to have been almost unknown. It was indeed not only not frequented by European shipping, but carefully avoided. In 1820, the very year following its occupation, not less than 13,000 tons of native vessels cleared out from the port, all employed in one description of trade or another; and no less than 55,000 tons of European shipping touched at it, either for trade or refreshment. For the first three years of its occupation, no attempt was made at an estimate of the amount of the trade carried on. I made an effort to remedy this defect in 1823, when the exports were found to amount to 5,568,560 Spanish dollars. In the subsequent years, the account of the trade was taken more in detail, and as the absence of all duties and charges left few motives for concealment, the results are perhaps as accurate as the greater number of regular custom-house returns. The following is an abstract of the trade of the place for the years 1824, 25, and 26:

	IMPORTS. Span. dollars.	EXPORTS. Span. dollars.	Total.
1824	6,914,536	6,604,601	13,519,137
1825	6,289,396	5,837,370	12,126,766
1826	6,863,581	6,422,845	13,286,426

It appears from this statement, that in the years 1825 and 1826, so calamitous to the general commerce of the world, the value of the trade of Singapore, before so rapidly progressive, suffered some slight diminution. On inspecting the returns, however, it appears that the real quantity of goods, imported and exported, had considerably increased, and that the diminution in amount arose from depreciation.

There is no Asiatic and few European ports of which the trade is so diversified as that of Singapore. The following are the branches into which it may be naturally divided: The trade with Great Britain and the continent of Europe, with the British and other European possessions on the continent of India, with Malacca and Prince of Wales's Island, with New South Wales, with the Mauritius, with the Dutch possessions in the Archipelago, with the Spanish possessions in the same or Philippines, with South America, with China in European vessels and Chinese junks, with Cochin China and Kamboja, with Siam, with the Bugis nations, with Borneo, and with Sumatra and the Malay peninsula. Of each of these I shall give a succinct account.

The first direct arrival from England to Singapore was in the year 1821; in 1822, four ships cleared out with cargoes for the European mar-

ket; in 1823, nine; in 1824, twelve; in 1825, fifteen; and in 1826, fourteen ships. The greater number of these were bound for London and Liverpool, but there were some also for Stockholm, Hamburgh, and Bordeaux. The staple imports of this branch are cotton goods, woollens, iron, and spelter. The exports are very various, and may be enumerated as follow: ore of antimony, aniseed, aniseed oil, benjamin, camphor, cassia, cassia-buds, coffee, cubebs, dragons' blood, elephants' teeth, gamboge, horns of cows, deer, and buffalo; hides of ditto, mother of pearl shells, musk, nankins, orpiment, pepper, Chinese paper, Chinese raw silk, Chinese wrought silk, ratans and canes; rhubarb, cloves, mace, and nutmegs; pearl sago, Siam sugar, Japan soy, tin, tortoise-shell, turmeric, gold and silver bullion, and sapan-wood. In 1824, and I have seen no later statement, the sworn value of these articles was 1,035,868 Spanish dollars.

In point of tonnage, by far the greatest branch of the commerce of Singapore is with the European possessions on the continent of India; but the greater number of the vessels which compose it, including the ships of the East India Company, merely touch at the port for refreshment on their route to and from China, South America, the Philippines, and Java. The most important part of this trade is the intercourse with Calcutta, which is upon an extensive scale. The chief exports thither are pepper, tin, ratans, sago, and sapan-wood, with gold and silver bullion. The imports are opium, Indian piece-goods, and canvass bags.

An intercourse of considerable consequence is carried on with New South Wales, chiefly through the convict ships, many of which, on their return to England, touch at Singapore, and take full cargoes for the European market.

Ships from the Mauritius chiefly import into Singapore ebony, and lately cloves, both eventually for the Chinese market; and export the produce of the Islands and China, either for the immediate consumption of the Mauritius itself, or for re-exportation from thence.

The trade with the Dutch possessions ought to have constituted one

of the most valuable branches of the commerce of Singapore, and would unquestionably have done so, to the mutual benefit of both parties, but for the anarchy which has prevailed for some years in the Dutch colonies, and the wanton and flagrant impolicy of the commercial regulation of the Netherland Government. In 1823, there cleared out from Singapore, for Java, twenty-nine square-rigged vessels; in 1824, only twenty-two; in 1825, only thirteen. In 1826, the trade appears to have revived, the number which cleared out appearing to have been thirty. In this traffic, the imports consist of Banca tin, coffee, and spices. Opium, and Indian piece-goods are exported.

The direct intercourse between Singapore and the Philippines commenced in 1824. The imports here are mother of pearl shells, sapan-wood, sugar, rice, oil, bullion, and some Chinese goods; and the chief exports, British and Indian piece-goods, woollens, and metals.

The trade carried on between Singapore and China, in European vessels, is very considerable. A few sail direct from Singapore to Canton; but in general the trade is conducted by English and Portuguese ships from Bengal and Bombay, especially by those from the former. Many of these take Malayan produce to China; and instead of returning, as formerly, lightly laden, bring on Chinese goods to be eventually sent to Europe by the direct traders for England. These goods chiefly consist of raw silk, cassia, camphor, and nankins. In this manner, the existence of Singapore contributes, in a small degree, towards mitigating the pernicious effects of the monopoly of the East India Company with the Chinese Empire.

A direct intercourse in Chinese vessels, between China and the British possessions, never took place until the formation of the settlement of Singapore. The most valuable, but not the largest, of the Chinese junks come from the port of Amoy, in the province of Fokien; the largest come from several ports of the continental portion of the province of Quantong,—such as Canton, Changlim, and Ampo; and the smallest and

least valuable from the island of Hainan. In 1821, the number of large junks, excluding those of Hainan, was four; in 1822, five; in 1823, six; in 1824, seven; in 1825, seven also; and in 1826, ten. The articles imported by these are coarse earthenware, flooring-tiles, umbrellas, shoes, paper, incense rods, dried fruits, confectionary, sugar-candy, medicines, nankins, gold thread-lace, tea, and a great number of minor articles. The cargo of a Fokien junk is sometimes worth one hundred thousand Spanish dollars: that of a Canton junk will vary from twenty thousand to eighty thousand. The voyage from Canton is commonly performed in from ten to twelve days; and that from Fokien, in from twelve to fifteen. Owing to the directness of the course, and consequent facility of the navigation, very few of them are lost in this voyage: I can recollect but one instance. The exports consist of a great variety of articles,—such as the bark of two species of Rhizophora, or mangrove; a species of Alga, called by the Malay, Agar-agar, said to be used by the Chinese in their manufactories in room of gum; eagle-wood, ebony, and some ordinary woods; esculent swallows' nests; the holothurion, or tripang; sharks' fins, tortoise-shell, tin, pepper, areca-nut, cloves and nutmegs, hides and horns, opium, British iron, cottons, and woollens. In 1823, when, as already stated, the number of junks was six, the value of these exports was considered to be nine hundred and twenty-eight thousand seven hundred Spanish dollars; of which opium, British piece-goods, and woollens, amounted to two hundred and thirty thousand dollars. I believe that no later estimate has been attempted; but there can be no question that the trade has very greatly increased. It was only as late as 1825 that junks began first to make their appearance from the island of Hainan. With the two maritime provinces of China Chekiang, and Kiangnan, which at present trade with the Philippines, Kamboja, and Tonquin, and once did so with the Sulo Islands, we have as yet had no intercourse in Singapore; but it may be hoped, that in time the merchants of these wealthy provinces may find their way to us.

Through Chinese junks there is no question but that a large quantity

tea might be imported, in a free trade, for the consumption of Eu-
pe, without being subjected to the expense of reaching us indirectly
rough the port of Canton; the only one with which Europeans have
y intercourse. Some of the junks trading to Singapore are, from the very
ovince, most distinguished for the production of tea. In 1823, the quan-
y of tea imported into Singapore by Chinese junks was only 17,640 lbs.
the three following years, it rose progressively, as follows:—111,200 lbs.,
7,148 lbs., and 323,913 lbs. This tea is brought from almost every port
China with which we trade, and some is even imported indirectly from
amboja and Siam. The whole is intended for native consumption, and is
r the most part of the quality which in this country would be called good
rdinary Bohea. In 1825, as mentioned in another place, it was sold at so
w a price as from threepence to sixpence a pound, according to quality.
here is no doubt but any quantity and any quality for which the market
ould create a demand, might be imported in this manner. Even contem-
lating an event highly improbable, and, I think, indeed, nearly impossible,
he total exclusion of a direct intercourse in European vessels with China,
he trade might still be carried on through the channel of the junks, which, in
eality, would amount to a direct intercourse with almost every port of a
reat empire, instead of with one, as at present. This is virtually the present
state of our commercial intercourse with Cochin China, Kamboja, and
Siam; although, in the latter case especially, the navigation is longer, more
difficult and intricate, than it would be with any of the ports of China
carrying on a foreign trade.

The native trade with Siam, Kamboja, and Cochin China, in its present extent, owes its origin to the establishment of Singapore; for previous to this epoch we had no such intercourse, except with the first-named of these countries, and even this of only a few years' standing, and of very trifling amount. The ports of trade are Bangkok in Siam; Saigun and Kangkao in Kamboja; and Quinhon, Faifo, and Hué, in Cochin China. There has been no intercourse as yet with any port of Tonquin. In 1820, the number

of junks which arrived from all these places was twenty-one; in 1821, thirty-three; in 1822, forty-two; in 1823, sixty-four; and in 1824, seventy. I possess no later account than these, but understand that the trade has greatly increased. Exclusive of the junks, I should mention that there have arrived every year, for the last three, from the Cochin Chinese capital, a merchant-ship and brig belonging to his Cochin Chinese Majesty, who, notwithstanding his Chinese prejudices, has lately become enamoured of the details and profits of trade. By far the most considerable branch of this traffic is that with Siam, and next to it stands that with the port of Saigun. The great staples of import are sugar, rice, salt, oil, and culinary utensils of cast iron. The exports consist of opium, catechu, tin, British iron, woollens, cotton piece-goods, and fire-arms. In 1823, when the junks, as above stated, amounted to no more than sixty-four, the imports were estimated at the value of 300,000 Spanish dollars. The following is an actual specimen of the import cargo of a Siamese junk of the largest class, with the prices at Singapore in 1824:—

		Sp. dol.	cents.		Total dol.
Sugar, clayed, 1st quality	1350 piculs	at 6	50	. . .	8775
Sugar, coarse	80 —	— 2	66	. . .	212
Rice, fine	20 koyans*	— 68	—	. . .	1360
Ditto, coarse	35 —	— 55	—	. . .	1775
Salt	20 —	— 27	—	. . .	540
Oil	150 piculs	— 5	66	. . .	849
Stick-lac	150 —	— 13	—	. . .	1950
Nankins	1000 pieces	— 60	— per 100	.	600
Tobacco	25 piculs	— 16	— per picul		400
Salt fish	50 —	— 5	—	. . .	250
		Total Spanish dollars		.	16,711

* The Koyan, at Singapore, is a measure of forty piculs, or near 5400lbs. avoirdupois.

The largest branch of the trade of the Indian islanders with Singapore, is that of the Bugis of Wajo, a State of Celebes, the inhabitants of which have colonized in many countries of the Archipelago, and carry on what may be called the whole foreign trade of the countries in which they are settled. Through their means Singapore carries on a trade with Wajo, Mandar, Kaili, Macassar, and Pari-pari in Celebes, Bonirati, a small island on its coast, the islands of Sumbawa, Bali, Lombok, Flores, Sandal Wood, Timor, Ceram, the Arrows, New Guinea, and the east and west coasts of Borneo. The commodities of these different countries are imported by the Bugis into Singapore. The following is a brief enumeration of them:—striped and tartan cotton cloths (chiefly from Celebes, Bali, and Lombok), oil, rice, sapan-wood, tortoise-shell, esculent nests, the holothurion, birds of paradise, and a great variety of live birds of the parrot tribe, of singular beauty of plumage. Above a hundred of the proas of the Bugis make an annual voyage to Singapore, each importing a cargo worth from twelve to thirty thousand Spanish dollars. Their exports consist chiefly of opium, British and Indian piece-goods, woollens, fire-arms and gunpowder, with Chinese earthenware, and Siamese culinary iron utensils.

In the north-western portion of the Malayan archipelago, the most distant point with which Singapore carries on a trade in native vessels, is the principality on the island of this name strictly called Borneo, together with the district lying west of it. In 1825, forty proas, many of them of great size, belonging to this people, visited Singapore, importing tortoise-shell, esculent swallows' nests, mother of pearl shells, Malayan camphor, a very considerable quantity of pepper, and recently large quantities of ore of antimony; and exporting opium, iron, cottons, and woollens. The trade of Sumatra, the Malayan peninsula, and the islands adjacent to both, is, owing to vicinity and facility of communication, of very considerable extent. In this intercourse are imported tin, pepper, crude sago, benjamin, lakka, and eagle-wood, catechu, areca-nuts, bricks, tiles, timber, fruits, poultry, &c. &c. Through

the exportations of this branch are disseminated the products of Europe and the continent of India, already referred to. In this traffic is to be included the trade carried on between Singapore and the neighbouring European settlements of Penang, Malacca, Rio, and Palembang, in small craft of European construction. In 1825, there cleared out from Singapore, for these different places, about seventy sail of this class; and in 1826, no less than one hundred and fourteen.

A few remarks upon some of the staple articles will show, in an interesting point of view, the extent, value, and progressive increase of the trade of the place. I shall refer to the exports, as affording the most correct index of the actual trade.

In 1822, the quantity of pepper exported was 2,327,000 lbs.; in 1823, 4,672,500 lbs.; in 1824, it fell to 3,104,400 lbs; in 1825, it rose to 5,272,850 lbs.; and in the following year it was nearly the same amount. The export of sugar in 1823 was 27,415 cwts.; in 1824 it was 20,000 cwts.; in 1825, 33,600 cwts.; and in 1826, 27,500 cwts. All the best of this commodity is imported from Siam, and, as mentioned in another place, is manufactured by the Chinese: it is equal in quality to the best sugars of Bengal, which are in very small quantity, and much superior to the generality of the produce of that country. Were the prohibitory duties in Great Britain taken off, such a measure would tend incalculably to the local prosperity of the settlement, the benefit of the consumer, and the general interests of British trade, manufactures, and navigation. In 1823, the exportation of tin was about 22,000 cwts.; in 1824, it was about 20,000 cwts.; in 1825, it fell to about 14,800; and in 1826, rose again to about 24,600 cwts., or 1230 tons. The exportation of coffee, in the year 1823, was 6134 cwts.; in 1824, it was about 5000 cwts.; in 1825, it was about 4300 cwts.; and in 1826, it rose to better than 31,000 cwts. Some of this produce is brought from the heart of Sumatra, from Celebes, and the Malay peninsula; and of this a great portion owes its growth to the

market of Singapore. The exportation of rice, in 1823, amounted to 2920 tons; in 1824, to very nearly 6000 tons. In 1825, it fell to about 3000 tons; and in 1826 it rose again to 5100 tons. Neither Singapore, or any country in its immediate neighbourhood, produces corn. It may be quoted, therefore, as a signal illustration of the advantages of a free commerce in this most important article. Not only does it supply its own consumption, but it exports to the large amount already stated. Last year the prices were so moderate, that it was able to export rice, to a considerable amount, even as far as the Isle of France. In a period of nine years it has not only not experienced any thing approaching to a scarcity, but prices have even been moderate, and subject to very little fluctuation. In 1824, the average price of rice, on the whole year, was one dollar forty-one cents per cwt.; and in 1825, it was nearly one dollar forty-four cents, or but three cents more. This steadiness of price not only applies to one year compared with another, but to the different seasons of the same year. In a period of three years, I can recollect but of one remarkable rise in the price of grain: this was in April 1825, when rice rose to two dollars eighty-eight cents per cwt. This rise was produced by reports from Siam and Cochin China, that the Governments of those countries had put a temporary embargo on the exportation of grain. Considerable importations were soon brought from the neighbouring Malay countries, and in one fortnight the price fell to one dollar sixty-seven cents. Larger importations from Java produced a farther reduction, and for the remainder of the year the prices fell to the old standard. The average excess of the whole year, beyond the preceding one, was, as already stated, only *three* centimes on the cwt., or about two one-eighth per cent.

The same observations made in respect to rice apply equally to salt, which is brought from Siam and Cochin China, but chiefly from the former country, and of which not a grain is manufactured in the neighbourhood. Of this commodity there were exported, in 1823, about 1700 tons;

in 1824, near 2000 tons; in 1825, better than 3000 tons; and in 1826, above 4000.

Opium forms a most important article of the trade of Singapore: in 1823, the exports amounted to 69,300 lbs.; in 1824, to 144,900 lbs.; in 1825, to 120,675 lbs.; and in 1826, to 126,650 lbs. In the largest of these exportations, the value of the drug amounted to 1,118,636 Spanish dollars.

Singapore, as already stated, has become a place of depôt for some of the staple production of China. These are cassia, camphor, nankeens, and raw silk. In consequence of the monopoly of the East India Company, it is impracticable to make direct remittances to Europe from China, except by sending such portions of the produce of that country as may be dealt in according to law, indirectly to Europe through an Indian port. Goods used to be sent with this view by the circuitous routs of Madras, Calcutta, and Bombay. They are at present sent, in much larger quantities, by the more convenient channel of Singapore. In 1825, the quantity of cassia exported was 219,676 lbs., and of raw silk 136,900 lbs.

The staple articles which connect the commerce of Singapore with that of Europe, are cotton piece-goods, woollens, fire-arms, and ammunition, with iron. British cottons were exported, in 1823, to the extent of 172,500 pieces; in 1824, to the extent of 143,300 pieces; in 1825, to the extent of 153,035 pieces; in 1826, in consequence of the general depression of trade attending that period, the exports fell off to 101,765 pieces. I may take this opportunity of mentioning, that the whole exports of cotton goods, whether of Great Britain, Continental India, or the Malayan Islands, in 1825, were no less than 404,355. In 1823, the quantity of British woollens exported from Singapore was only 784 pieces; on the average of the years 1824 and 25, they had increased to 3336 pieces.

A free trade with the Indians, in fire-arms and ammunition, was unknown until the establishment of Singapore; indeed, as far as concerned our old settlements, whether the prohibition was politic or otherwise, such a traffic was contrary to law. In 1823, there were exported from Singapore

12,000 muskets and 5600 lbs. of gunpowder; in 1824, 14,411 muskets and 38,600 lbs. of gunpowder; in 1825, 6432 muskets and 73,616 lbs. of gunpowder; and in 1826, 2402 muskets and 43,397 lbs. of gunpowder. Arguments of little validity have been urged against the character of this traffic, which, it appears to me may be answered and refuted without difficulty: they amount to this,—that the supplying of the Indians with fire-arms is dangerous to our political power, and calculated to encourage piracy. Among the Indians there is a demand for fire-arms; and if we do not furnish them, our commercial competitors will. For example, the Americans now supply the whole pepper coast of Sumatra; and before the trade was tolerated at Singapore, they had supplied Siam, in less than two years, with above 30,000 stand of fire-arms. The prohibition to supply them therefore, on the part of British subjects, to nations over whom we have no political control, would amount to nothing more or less than giving a monopoly to our competitors. With respect to the supply of European fire-arms encouraging piracy, it should be recollected, that they are just as likely to be used for defensive as offensive purposes; probably, indeed, more so, as the wealthy trader is more likely to command an effectual supply than the needy pirate. If we could disarm both parties, the objection indeed would be valid, but this is wholly impracticable and out of our power. Even in a political view, solid arguments may be urged in favour of this commerce. While barbarous nations depend upon civilized ones for the munitions of war, and abandon the modes and habits of warfare natural to their condition, the former are only the more at the mercy of the latter; and it is a matter of notoriety, that no Indian nations have been so speedily subdued as those who have attempted to imitate European tactics. The effect of fire-arms in civilizing the barbarous tribes themselves, should not be overlooked. The possession of them gives the more intelligent and commercial tribes an advantage over their ruder neighbours, and thus a power is established, which cannot fail to tend more or less to the diminution of anarchy, and the melioration of law and government. If this

reasoning be well-founded, and I think it would be difficult to controvert it, a law prohibiting the sale of the munitions of war to nations and tribes over whom we exercise no control, and with whom we scarcely maintain any political relations, is to all purposes as inefficient as it is unwise and impolitic.

I shall now advert to one or two articles which have been either entirely created in consequence of the existence of Singapore, or which, as the result of that event, reach the great markets of Europe more cheaply. The article of tortoise-shell, a produce of the Indian Islands, used to find its way to Europe by the indirect route of China, loaded with the charges of an unskilful and barbarous commerce. Nearly the whole of the traffic in this article now centres in Singapore. The native importer receives for it double the price he used to do, and the article is cheaper in Europe than ever. The quantity of this commodity exported from Singapore, in 1823, was only 3224 lbs.; in 1824, it was 3671 lbs.; in 1825, it was above 10,000 lbs.; and in 1826, it was 16,000 lbs.—In 1825, it was accidentally discovered that a rich sulphuret of antimony was an abundant mineral on the north coast of Borneo. This commodity, heretofore unknown in the commerce between India and Europe, and which, in fact, could not by any possibility be exported in the former condition of the Indian trade, was tried as a remittance by the merchants of Singapore, and seems to have answered perfectly. In 1825, two hundred and fifty tons of it were exported to England; and in 1826, very nearly six hundred tons. Bullion is largely imported into, and exported from, Singapore. Gold dust is brought from Celebes, Borneo, Sumatra, and the east coast of the Malay peninsula, and chiefly remitted to Calcutta. The quantity exported in 1826 amounted to 6720 oz. The specie exported in the same year amounted to the value of 918,316 Spanish dollars.

These statements will suffice to show the extent and value of the trade carried on through the medium of the new settlement. Some speculators have conjectured that this trade was only an old one conducted through a

new channel. To carry on an old trade through a new, and it follows, if no violence be used in bringing about the change, a cheaper channel, would be no inconsiderable recommendation of a new emporium; but its advantages are not so limited, as a very brief statement will show. In the year 1818, the whole of the direct British trade with the Straits of Malacca, and generally with the Eastern Islands, excluding Java, centered at Penang, or Prince of Wales's Island, the exports from which amounted to no more than 2,030,757 Spanish dollars. This was in the year immediately preceding the establishment of Singapore. In 1824, the joint exports of Penang and Singapore amounted to 9,414,464 Spanish dollars, of which those of Singapore amounted to 6,604,601 Spanish dollars. In other words, this branch of the British trade had been considerably more than quadrupled in the short period of little more than six years.

The Port Regulations established for Singapore were upon as liberal and convenient a footing as it was possible to frame them. When I took civil charge of the settlement in 1823, certain anchorage fees were charged on vessels of all descriptions, and the wooding, watering, and ballasting of ships was a virtual monopoly for the advantage of the public officers: under the sanction of the Supreme Government, this practice was abolished. The wooding, watering, and ballasting of ships was thrown open to general competition, and no fee or charge of any sort whatsoever was levied either on account of the Government or its officers. The commanders of the European vessels were directed to render to the Master-attendant, upon honour, a written statement of their exports and imports, before receiving their port clearances; and the masters of native vessels gave in verbal statements on similar conditions. In this manner, a record of the trade of the port, probably not less accurate than most custom-house returns,—for there were few motives for concealment,—was obtained. The only attempts at regulating prices, referred to the hire of cargo-boats, and the charges for wooding, watering, and ballasting. The object of this was protection to strangers from imposition; and, having this end alone in view, it applied to no ship whose stay

exceeded forty-eight hours. Complaints were at first made that the maximus were fixed at too low a rate, but in a very short time I had the satisfaction to see that competition had greatly reduced them.

Ships lie in the Roads of Singapore, at the distance of from a mile to two miles from the town, according to their draught of water. With the assistance of a great number of convenient lighters, which are always in readiness, cargoes may be taken in and discharged, with scarcely any interruption, throughout the year. The river, or creek, upon which the commercial portion of the town lies, is accessible to these lighters at all times, and goods are taken in and discharged at a convenient quay, constructed during my stay at the place, and at the very doors of the principal warehouses. Whether from its natural situation, the absence of meddling and embarrassing regulations, or troublesome usages, there is no port of trade where commerce had been subjected to less inconvenience. Frequent holidays, which are such serious obstacles to trade in other parts of India, have, in reality, no injurious influence whatever in Singapore; for there are none which affect the population generally, so as to obstruct the daily transaction of business. It is much to be regretted that the local Government should of late, where no revenue is raised from duties of customs, have adopted so injudicious and capricious a measure as imposing all the forms and shackles of a custom-house. The mode of transacting business among the European merchants is simple and efficient. Instead of trusting their affairs to native agents, as in other parts of India, they transact them in person, with the occasional assistance of a Chinese Creole as an interpreter and broker.

In 1819, as already named, Singapore was inhabited by a few hundred piratical Malayan fishermen. About five years after this, or in January 1824, the first census was taken, and the population was found to amount to ten thousand six hundred and eighty-three. The following table shows its progressive increase down to the latest accounts:—

POPULATION.

	1824	1825			1826			1827		
	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Europeans	74	60	24	84	81	30	111	69	18	87
Native Christians	74	89	43	132	133	73	206	128	60	188
Armenians	16	8	1	9	13	5	18	16	3	19
Arabs	15	10		10	17		17	18		18
Natives of Coromandel and Malabar	390	687	3	690	573	32	605	772	5	777
Natives of Bengal and other parts of Hindostan	366	196	30	226	257	127	384	209	35	244
Siamese								5	2	7
Bugis	1,851	1,190	514	1,704	863	579	1,442	666	576	1,242
Malays	4,580	2,791	2,339	5,130	3,264	2,433	5,697	2,501	2,289	4,790
Javanese		28	10	38	113	33	146	174	93	267
Chinese	3,317	3,561	267	3,828	3,883	396	4,279	5,747	341	6,088
African Negroes								2	3	5
Total	10,683	8,620	3,231	11,851	9,197	3,708	12,905	10,307	3,425	13,732

From this statement are excluded the floating population of strangers, commonly estimated at about two thousand five hundred; the convicts sent from the continent of India, and the military, with their followers. The convicts, in my time, amounted only to two hundred; but there are at present about three times this number. The military and camp-followers, in 1824, amounted, in all, to no more than three hundred and ninety-six; and in 1825, to only three hundred and sixty-eight: in 1826, they amounted to six hundred and sixty-five; and, at present, are probably about double this number. On this estimate, the population of 1827 will amount, in round numbers, to sixteen thousand.

The most rapid increase of the population took place in the few first years after the formation of the settlement, when the field was nearly unoccupied. At this period, numerous emigrants and adventurers repaired to the place from the declining settlement of Malacca, or took shelter at it from the disorder and anarchy prevalent in the Malayan countries in the neighbourhood. The most numerous class of the inhabitants are the Chinese.

By the last return, these, in fact, are found to constitute nearly one-half of the whole fixed population. In Singapore they are commonly divided into five classes, all industrious; but generally differing from each other materially in manner, character, and language. These are the Creole, or mixed race; natives of Macao and other islands at the mouth of the river of Canton; natives of the town of Canton, and other seaports of the province of the same name; natives of Fokien; and, finally, a race of fishermen from the sea-coast of the province of Canton, commonly denominated Aya. The Creole Chinese are intelligent, always acquainted with the Malayan language, and occasionally with the English: they are considered inferior in industry to the rest, but are beneficially employed as brokers, shopkeepers, and general merchants. The emigrants from Fokien are considered superior, both in respectability and enterprise, to the rest of their countrymen. Next to them come those of the town of Canton and other principal ports of that province. The Chinese of Macao are not considered very reputable, and the lowest in the scales,—the most disorderly, but the most numerous, are the race of fishermen. In 1825, the number of emigrants which arrived at Singapore, direct from China, amounted to three thousand five hundred and eighteen; and in 1826 they amounted to five thousand five hundred and thirteen. Of the greater number of these, Singapore is the mere landing-place, for they are soon scattered among the neighbouring countries, a great number especially repairing to Rhio and the neighbouring islands, where the cultivation and manufacture of the catechu is extensively conducted. It will appear by the returns, that, in the short period of four years, the Chinese population of Singapore was very nearly doubled. The next most numerous class of the population are the natives of the islands. Incapable of maintaining competition in almost any line with the Chinese, these had rather diminished than increased during the last four years. Their principal employment is as fishermen, woodcutters, boatmen, petty cultivators, and petty shopkeepers. The most respectable are the Bugis, almost always employed in trade. Of the pure Malays, the most docile and industrious are the

emigrants from Malacca. The lowest in the scale are the Malays of the immediate neighbourhood, and the worst among these the retainers of the native princes. Even these, however, were far from being found either indocile or difficult of management. The Indians of the Malabar and Coromandel coast stand next to the Chinese, and, of the Asiatic population, come nearest to that industrious people in usefulness and intelligence. Like them, their numbers have been doubled in the period given in the return. In the last year of the statement, seven Siamese are enumerated, whose presence, however, is purely accidental; and there are no Cochin Chinese. This fact affords a striking contrast between the policy and state of society in China, and the less civilised countries of Siam and Cochin China. In the last year of the return it will be seen, that the number of European settlers, almost all British-born subjects, amounted only to eighty-seven. During the first eight years of the history of the settlement, no restraint or condition whatever was imposed upon the settlement and colonization of Englishmen,—no licence was demanded, and they were permitted to own property in the land, upon terms as liberal and easy as can be supposed in any new settled country. The badness of the soil is indeed an obstacle to their settlement as colonists; but still, the small number of settlers is a proof that there would not only be neither danger nor inconvenience in the freest settlement of Europeans in India generally; but that the measure would be beneficial beyond any other which can be contemplated. Few as the British settlers of Singapore are, they constitute in reality the life and spirit of the settlement; and it may safely be asserted, that without them, and without their existing in a state of independence and security, there would exist neither capital, enterprise, activity, confidence, or order.

In perusing the Returns of the Population, the reader will be forcibly struck with one remarkable character of it,—the numerical disproportion of females to males. For the whole population there is little more than one of the former to three of the latter. It is in the Malay population alone that there is any thing like an equality. The disproportion is of course chiefly

occasioned by the laws or prejudices of the parent countries of the principal portion of the emigrants, the natives of India, and the Chinese, but especially of the latter, of whom the women, as is well known, are never permitted to emigrate. With these last, the proportion of females to males little exceeds one to seventeen. It should at the same time be observed, in respect to the whole population, that a very large proportion consists of young men in the prime of life. It is evident therefore, taking the returns of 1827 for an example, that the effectual working and labouring population should not be reckoned, if the comparison be made with other states of society, at 13,732, as there given, but at least at double the male population, or 20,614. If we take the average value of the labour, skill, and intelligence of a Chinese to be in the proportion of three to one to those of a native of the continent of India, then the effectual population of Singapore may be considered equal in efficiency to a numerical population of 32,108 natives of Hindostan.

A few observations upon wages and profits will not be out of place. The great bulk of the labouring population are Chinese. In 1825, the wages of a common Chinese day-labourer were eight dollars a-month; and of a common artisan, twelve dollars. The bread-corn consumed by both is invariably rice, which is the highest quality of farinaceous aliment for the country and climate, bearing, as it does in the tropical countries of India, the same relation to maize, millet, sago, and farinaceous roots, that wheat does to barley, oats, rye, and potatoes in temperate regions. With his rice the common labourer consumes fish, occasionally pork, and very generally a considerable quantity of ardent spirits. The class of artificers live better, generally adding to the rations now mentioned a daily allowance of pork, a more liberal allowance of spirits, and some tea. In the year above-stated, and probably matters have not much changed since, the monthly expenses of a day-labourer were estimated as follow:—

Food	- -	4 dollars and	80 Cents.
Clothing	- -	1 —	10 —
Lodging	- -		20 —

His whole yearly expense, at this rate, will be seventy-three dollars twenty cents, and his wages being ninety-six dollars, it would be in his power to save above twenty-two Spanish dollars. The wages of the other classes of the inhabitants are much lower than those of the Chinese, being proportionate to the value of their labour, but from their habits their expenditure is also much smaller.

The rates of profit at Singapore may be estimated from the interest of money among the native traders. It is from two to five per cent. per mensem, according to the nature of the security. Among Europeans it was in 1825, on the personal security of the most respectable merchants, from ten to twelve per cent. per annum. At the same period, substantial houses of brick and mortar, capable of being insured in England, were worth about five years' purchase, and brought an interest on the capital laid out of from fifteen to twenty per cent.

The town of Singapore is naturally divided into three portions, namely, the Malay part;—that which contains the dwellings of the European merchants, the public offices, and the military cantonments; and the Chinese, or commercial portion. The two first are situated upon a plain fronting the harbour, running to the length of about a mile and a half along the shore, and having its breadth confined to about one thousand yards by a range of hills of from one hundred to one hundred and fifty feet high. The commercial portion of the town is divided from the other two by the salt creek already named, and is situated upon a narrow peninsula, lying between this last and the sea to the westward. The Malayan portion of the town lies at the eastern portion of the plain, and is chiefly occupied by the Sultan of Jehore and his followers, from whom we purchased the island, and who is our pensionary. The dwellings of the merchants and the military cantonments occupy the central and western portion

of the same plain, and the highest portion of the range of hills which I have named is occupied by the Government-house, other portions by the dwellings of public officers or merchants. Almost all the best warehouses and the whole dwellings of the Chinese are on the peninsula, to the western side of the creek, which is connected with the plain by a very good wooden bridge. The whole of the warehouses, and all the dwelling-houses in the principal streets in their vicinity, are built of brick and lime, and roofed with red tile. The more distant dwelling-houses and shops are built of wood, but roofed with tile also; and it is only in the distant outskirts that any huts with thatched roofs are to be found, although, five years ago, nearly the whole of this portion of the town was composed of dwellings of this last description. The streets are formed upon a regular plan, intersecting each other at right angles; and the roads, both in the town and the immediate vicinity of the settlement, are constructed of a mixture of sand with a clay-iron-ore, which, constituting the crust of all the hills in the island, is of course abundant. These materials make roads which are at once level and durable.

There are two public markets, the property of Government, the leases of the stalls of which are separately sold, from year to year, by public auction. These are furnished with grain, fish, poultry, eggs, vegetables, spiceries, pork, green turtles, &c. &c. The supply of these articles is always abundant; and when it is considered that most of them are imported, and some from a great distance, they are comparatively cheap.

The profit derived by the Government from the markets is the mere rent of the ground and stalls; for the sale in them of any description of goods is not compulsory, every one being at liberty to sell whatever he pleases, and where he pleases, with the necessary exception of erecting stalls or sheds in the open streets, which would, of course, amount to a nuisance, prejudicial to the health and comfort of the inhabitants.

During the first seven years of its existence, Singapore was a residency, administered by a subordinate officer, directly responsible for all his acts to

the Supreme Government of India. This officer, with the aid of two assistants, and two or three clerks, discharged the whole civil duties of the settlement, including the administration of justice, police, the pay department civil and military; while in his separate capacity as agent to the Governor-General, he conducted our political relations with Siam, Cochin China, and other countries lying to the eastward of the Straits of Malacca.

No legal sanction for administering justice existed in the early years of the settlement. The regular cession of it had not then been obtained; it was unacknowledged by the Crown or Parliament, and the Supreme Government of India, therefore, was without the power of delegating any authority to the local officers for the due administration of justice. The resident, under these circumstances, was compelled to assume an authority which by law he did not possess. Justice, civil and criminal, was administered by the resident and his first assistant, by summary process, and after the manner of a court of conscience. The fees and costs of any one suit never exceeded six or seven shillings, and more commonly did not amount to one-half this sum. Every cause was brought to a hearing within eight-and-forty hours of the commencement of the suit or trial, and unless some difficulty existed in procuring evidence, a decision was given either on the first day of hearing, or at farthest on the second. In criminal cases there were no fees or costs whatever. Punishments were confined to very small pecuniary fines; imprisonment, and hard labour, never exceeding six months' duration; and, where disgrace accompanied the offence, whipping, in no case exceeding thirty strokes of a cane. In capital offences, confining this term to murder and piracy, the only resource was to imprison the offenders indefinitely when the evidence was unquestionable, or to discharge them when it was doubtful. Among the Chinese and Malays, and the matter was entirely confined to these, several cases of murder occurred, perpetrated in open day, and witnessed by numbers. The proportion of such offences was, however, far smaller than at Penang, where there was a regular administration of justice,—a matter perhaps chiefly to be ascribed to the high effec-

tual price of labour, and the hearty and flourishing condition of the settlement.

I may here remark, that in a motley population of about fourteen thousand (strangers included), the monthly number of suits and trials seldom exceeded one hundred. A singular difference was observed in the degree of litigiousness which belonged to the different classes of the inhabitants. The two most industrious, intelligent, and wealthy classes, the Europeans and the Chinese, were by far the least litigious; neither was there much litigation amongst those of the Malay race. The natives of Western India scarcely constituted a thirteenth part of the whole population, and yet they were parties to a great majority of all the suits and trials which were instituted.

I was anxious to introduce the forms of a jury trial, both in civil and criminal cases; and an attempt was made with this view, which was defeated by the repugnance of the Europeans to sit as jurors with the natives, unless under legal sanction. The police of the town was very efficiently maintained and regulated. The funds for this purpose were drawn from the voluntary contributions of the principal European and native inhabitants, and the regulations were framed from a code of police laws drawn up for the island of Bombay, the outlines of which were sketched by a mind of a higher order than Indian legislation has often had the benefit of.* After a legal cession of the island had been obtained, farther measures were taken for a more efficient administration of justice; and with this view the principal merchants of the place, as well as the officers of Government, were put in the commission of the peace, and empowered to administer civil and criminal justice. This arrangement, however, had hardly been ordered, when the home authorities, under the sanction of an Act of Parliament, erected the three settlements of Penang, Singapore, and Malacca into one government, and in due course the Crown granted a new charter, extending the jurisdiction of the Recorder's Court of the first settlement to the other

* The code, in its original form, was framed by Sir James Mackintosh, when Recorder of Bombay.

two, and giving authority for instituting Courts of Requests for the trial of all suits not exceeding in value the trifling sum of thirty-two Spanish dollars.

In respect to the Recorder's Court, it should be explained that it differs essentially in its constitution from the King's Courts of the principal presidencies. At the last, the form of process has all the technical and intricate forms of the superior courts in England. In the Recorder's Court, the forms are so simplified as to suit the English law to the state of society among the native inhabitants,—thus making the administration of justice cheap, simple, and therefore so far efficient. This, however, is the whole extent of the advantage. The Governor, with his three counsellors, are not only judges as well as the Recorder, but all of them superior to him in rank. In this manner there is an impolitic union of the executive, legislative, and judicial functions; and the independence and dignity of the judicial character are necessarily impaired or degraded by placing the only lawyer, and only efficient judge of the court, in an inferior and dependent situation. By the modification of this court, which extends its jurisdiction to Singapore and Malacca, the court can only exist where the Governor, the keeper of the seal, is actually present, and of course no process can be issued. For two-thirds of the year, therefore, every settlement, in its turn, must be deprived of the administration of justice, excepting as far as regards the petty suits already mentioned. This is a state of things wholly unsuited to any condition of society, and, above all, to a place where a busy commercial intercourse is conducted; and, unless the error be speedily repaired, it must give rise to inconvenience seriously detrimental to the prosperity of the place.

In 1825, the Civil Establishment consisted of the Resident and his assistants, already mentioned, besides constables, &c. The annual charge of this branch amounted to about fifty thousand Spanish dollars. The Military amounted only to about a hundred and fifty Sepoys, and native artillery, without a single European, except the officers. In a period of peace, and among an industrious population, in which the elements of anarchy, discontent, or

insurrection, had no existence, this small force was quite adequate to every useful purpose. In proof of the good disposition of the inhabitants, I may quote one example. In 1825, the assassinations which had taken place among the Malays, the only armed class of the inhabitants, made it necessary, as a measure of prudence, to disarm them. This would have been an easy measure, but for the presence of the native chiefs, whose retainers encouraged their countrymen to resist. This threatened resistance coming to the knowledge of the Chinese, the most respectable of them waited upon me, to say, that they were ready to assist the authorities in carrying the measure of disarming the Malays into effect. Neither their assistance, however, nor that of the military, was necessary; for, in the sequel, the Malays quietly and peaceably acquiesced. The expense of the military garrison amounted to less than thirty-five thousand Spanish dollars a-year. To these disbursements is to be added a sum of twenty-four thousand Spanish dollars, paid as yearly stipends to the native princes, from whom we obtained the sovereignty of the island. This sum was only an annuity for life; and, by the death of one of the parties, was considerably reduced within the first year. The total ordinary disbursements of the island were, according to this statement, a hundred and nine thousand Spanish dollars. The extraordinary expenses for local contingencies, transport of troops, stores, and ammunition, may safely be estimated not to have exceeded eleven thousand Spanish dollars,—making the total expenditure, in round numbers, a hundred and twenty thousand Spanish dollars. The local revenue, in the same year, amounted, in round numbers, to eighty-seven thousand Spanish dollars; so that the actual cost of the settlement was only thirty-three thousand. The export trade of the settlement in the same year amounted to five millions eight hundred and thirty-seven thousand three hundred and seventy dollars. A branch of trade, the greater portion of which was new, was therefore carried on at a charge to the State of no more than one-half per cent. upon its amount.

I shall briefly describe the sources from which the above revenue was

raised. The following were the items, from which it will be seen that the greater portion was an excise duty collected by the farming system: a tax on the retail consumption of opium; a tax on home-made spirits; a tax on gaming; one on the licensing of pawnbrokers; with quit-rents, rents of markets, and post-office dues. With respect to opium, gaming, and spirits, a limited number of licences, according to an estimate of the necessity in each case was sold by public auction, to the highest bidder, for the period of one year, the duty being paid by monthly instalments. This was an improvement upon the old system, so long familiar to the native inhabitants of the Eastern Islands from its prevalence in all the European establishments, and which consisted in selling the monopoly of the farm of each article of revenue to one individual, instead of splitting them into a number of licences, with a view of extending competition. In 1823, the revenue of Singapore, on the old system, and arising out of these duties, amounted only to 25,796 dollars. The increased prosperity of the settlement, the augmentation of inhabitants, and the improved arrangement in its management, raised it, in 1824, to 60,672 Spanish dollars; in 1825, it rose to 75,462 Spanish dollars; in 1826, although there was some depression in the trade, the duties did not fall off, but were of the same amount as in the preceding year.

The quit-rents are at present inconsiderable, and chiefly, if not entirely, derived from those levied on the ground occupied by houses within the town. They will, however, keep pace with the progress of improvement, and no doubt become eventually an important branch of the revenue. This subject leads me to say a few words on the tenures of land in Singapore. The island was a desert when first occupied by us, and the right of property and sovereignty in it belonged to a native prince, from whom the East India Company purchased it both for themselves and their successors. To obviate the many legal difficulties which would arise in a commercial settlement, and among a population, the great bulk of whom are not English, the grants of land given by the local Government are not in perpetuity, and

to heirs of the grantee, but leases for a period of nine hundred and ninety-nine years. The technical difficulties of a real property are in this manner obviated, and the intrinsic value of the estate is in no manner impaired.

An injudicious attempt has, as I understand, been recently made to raise a revenue from the land, in imitation of the land revenue of the Hindoo and Mohammedan Governments of India. In the latter country, it is needless to say, that the principal portion, at least of the land-tax, is the rent of land,—a subject which cannot exist in a new country like Singapore, where there is a hundred times more land of the best quality, such as it is, than the inhabitants can occupy. If any tax be levied here, it must be one upon the capital laid out upon the clearing and improvement of the soil; and of course must prove so oppressive, as either to discourage improvement, or drive the cultivators altogether to another employment, or to other countries. A very short experience of this scheme will, in all likelihood, demonstrate to the local authority that it is equally impracticable and impolitic. An income tax, however unsuitable to such a state of society, it is obvious, would be less pernicious.

Upon the Excise duties, a few detailed explanations and remarks will be necessary. The annual retail consumption of opium in Singapore amounts to about five chests, and each chest being of about 150 lbs. the whole will amount, in round numbers, to 750 lbs. of the drug: the prime cost of this, or the price paid for it to the cultivator and manufacturer, is about one hundred and twenty-five dollars per chest. We may take one thousand five hundred dollars a-chest, or ten dollars per pound, for an ordinary wholesale price at Singapore. The price of the whole consumption of the place, therefore, is seven thousand five hundred dollars. The local duty paid to Government, or the amount of the farm, for the year 1826, was twenty-four thousand three hundred and eighty-four dollars; upon these two sums we must allow a moderate profit to the farmer, which at Singapore will certainly not be overrated at twenty per cent. This makes the total

cost of five chests thirty-eight thousand two hundred and sixty dollars; of one chest, seven thousand six hundred and fifty-two; and of every pound, between 10*l.* and 11*l.* sterling. The difference between this and the prime cost, by far the largest portion of which is tax, is at the enormous rate of above six thousand per cent. This is altogether a singular and curious circumstance in the history of taxation. It is an idle prejudice to suppose that the consumption of opium, in the manner it is used by the Chinese and Malays, is in any respect more pernicious than that of ardent spirits among the northern nations; it is certain that it is even less so, for those who abuse the one are infinitely fewer than those who abuse the other. The professed opium smokers, whom I have myself seen, were very few in number: and it is well known that those who use the drug to excess, are as much shunned, and considered as despicable as habitual drunkards of any other description. The real quantity consumed, after all, is comparatively trifling, although the practice is pretty general. Thus confining the opium smokers in Singapore to the Malayan races and the Chinese, and omitting the women altogether, it will be found that the real consumption of each person does not exceed one and one-fifth of a grain a-day. The distant consumers of China, Tonquin, Cochin China, Siam, and the Malay Islands, consume of course much smaller quantities. There is therefore no more foundation for saying that we poison and demoralize the nations we supply with this drug, than there would be for asserting that the French, by supplying the other nations of Europe with wines and brandies, inflicted upon them similar injuries. All the races of men, in whatever part of the globe, desire or require some one thing or another productive of intoxication; and whether this be beer, spirits, wine, or opium, seems a matter of taste or indifference. At all events, the affair is one with which the moralist or the legislator has no pretence for interference.

The revenue derived in Singapore, in 1826, from gaming, amounted to 36,500 Spanish dollars. This was a heavy tax on a propensity which

is very strong, both with the Chinese and Malays, and among all classes of them. The practice, when not carried to excess, is viewed by them as a mere harmless pastime—a necessary amusement: to suppress it is impossible. An attempt with this view was made on the establishment of the King's court at Prince of Wales's Island. The effect of this measure was the universal corruption of the inferior officers of the police, with whose connivance gambling was carried on clandestinely, instead of openly. An attempt equally unsuccessful was made at Singapore, which, in 1823, drove a thousand of the Chinese inhabitants out of the place. What it was hopeless to root out, it was found prudent to tolerate and regulate. Cock-fighting, playing on credit, and other practices, which might lead to broils or contention, were abolished; and gaming, where permitted, placed under the immediate surveillance of the police. The effect of this measure, which offered no violence to the prejudices or habits of the people, was to restrict gaming as much as, under any circumstances, it was possible; and I had the satisfaction to find, after three years' experience, that the peace and order of the settlement were never once disturbed from a cause which, in other places, had often given rise to strife and bloodshed.

The history of the formation of the settlement may be told in very few words. After the impolitic measure of restoring the Dutch colonies without any condition whatever in favour of the commerce of the nation, as far as related to the Eastern Islands, various schemes were submitted to the public or to the Indian Governments for the formation of one or more *emporia* in the Eastern seas, where the freedom and security of British trade might be established. One of these was submitted, by the late Sir Stamford Raffles, to the Marquess of Hastings, in the year 1818, and adopted by that nobleman. Sir Stamford Raffles himself, and Colonel Farquhar, before Resident of Malacca, were entrusted with the formation of the projected settlement. Down to the very moment of forming it, no particular spot was contemplated for this purpose. The present Dutch settlement of Rhio was first proposed as the most suitable situation; but it was found to

be preoccupied by the officers of the Netherland Government. The Carimon islands next attracted attention; and the expedition, under Sir Stamford Raffles, actually stopped at these for three days, intending, if found eligible, to form the settlement here.* The next place determined upon was the old town of Jehore, ten miles up the river of that name. The selection of this place, at once out of the way and insalubrious, must have been attended by a total failure. Fortunately, in passing through the Straits, the expedition, on the suggestion of Colonel Farquhar, from whose personal statement I relate the circumstance, touched at Singapore for information. The obvious advantages of the place could not be overlooked; a negotiation was opened with the native chief, and on the 6th of February 1819, two days after the arrival of the expedition, the British flag was hoisted, and the settlement duly formed.

It is singular that the island of Singapore was well known to be a suitable place for a commercial emporium, above a century before we occupied it as such. This is sufficiently proved by the following passage from Captain Hamilton's new account of the East Indies, published in 1739:—"In anno 1703, I called at Jehore on my way to China, and he, (the Prince of Jehore) treated me very kindly, and made me a present of the island of Singapore; but I told him it could be of no use to a private person, though a proper place for a company to settle a colony on, lying in the centre of trade, and being accommodated with good rivers and safe harbours; so conveniently situated, that all winds served shipping both to go out and come into those rivers."† This remarkable descrip-

* I examined the Carimon islands personally in 1825, and am of opinion that they are in some respects more eligible than Singapore. While Singapore commands but one passage, they command all the avenues of the great Straits. In a military point of view, they are more defensible; they abound in tin; there is wider room, and a better soil for agricultural pursuits; there is no want of shelter and anchorage, and the climate is salubrious.

† Here ends Captain Hamilton's accuracy; and, in truth, what is added is little better than fabulous. He found, he says, a certain bean in the island, equal in taste and beauty to the best garden beans of Europe, growing wild in the forests; and under the same circumstances sugar-cane, that was five or six inches in circumference:—there is nothing of either kind in the woods of Singapore.

tion, however, was neither known to the founders, nor to any one else at the time.

In the first agreement with the native chief, the arrangement amounted to little more than a permission for the formation of a British factory and establishment, along two miles of the northern shore, and inland to the extent of the point-blank range of a cannon shot. There was in reality no territorial cession giving a legal right of legislation. The only law which could have existed was the Malay code. The native chief was considered to be the proprietor of the land, even within the bounds of the British factory, and he was to be entitled, in perpetuity, to one-half of such duties of customs as might hereafter be levied at the port. In the progress of the settlement, these arrangements were of course found highly inconvenient and embarrassing, and were annulled by the treaty which I am about to describe.

The island of Singapore belonged to the Malayan principality of Jehore, a state which was probably never of much consequence, and for the last century had been of none at all. Sultan Mahomet, the last prince, died about the year 1810, leaving no legitimate issue. No prince of his family assumed the throne in immediate succession to him, and the country was dismembered among his principal officers. The Bindhara (treasurer, or first minister,) took to himself the territory of Pahang, on the eastern coast of the Malay peninsula, and is now commonly designated Raja of that place. The Tumangung, or chief judge, seized upon the corresponding territory, on the western side, with the adjacent islands. This is the person from whom we received the first grant of our factory. He informed me that he had settled in Singapore, for the first time, in 1811, a few months before our expedition passed through the harbour, on its route to the capture of Java. Sultan Mahomet had two illegitimate sons, who were competitors for the throne; but the claims of neither were attended to; and they continued in a state of vagrancy and poverty, until the Dutch and English Governments, for their own purposes, thought it necessary to patronize respectively one of

the parties. One of them, now acknowledged Sultan of Jehore, and who still resides in the island, came over to it a short time after our first occupation, and was in due course placed upon our pension list. It was with this individual and the inferior chief already named, that a treaty for the cession of the island was concluded in August 1824. They received for the sovereignty and fee-simple of the island, as well as of all the seas, straits, and islands lying within ten miles of its coasts, the sum of 60,000 Spanish dollars, with an annuity of 24,000 Spanish dollars during their natural lives; and it was farther guaranteed that they or their successors should receive a donation of 35,000 Spanish dollars, should they be desirous at any time of quitting the British territory and retiring into their own dominions. Other articles of the treaty provided that neither party should interfere in the domestic quarrels of the other; that their Highnesses should receive at all times an asylum and a hospitable reception at Singapore, should they be distressed in their own dominions; and that slavery, under whatever name or modification, should have no existence within the British territories. This last subject had been a source of great annoyance, both to the native chiefs and to the local administration. Their Highnesses claimed as slaves, not only their own retainers, but every Malay coming from whatever part of the state of Jehore. Their followers, where every one else was free and labour well rewarded, were naturally impatient of this assumption; and the disputes which arose were the frequent cause of serious difficulties, both in maintaining the peace of the settlement, and in the administration of justice. At present, slavery is totally unknown in the island, for the treaty emancipated even the retainers of the native chiefs.

This account of Singapore, I fear, may appear to some of my readers tedious; but there are others who, I am convinced, will read with interest a history of the rise and progress of the first settlement, in which the principle of free trade and unshackled intercourse has been fully and fairly acted upon in India.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX A.

NARRATIVE OF AN EMBASSY FROM THE KING OF AVA TO THE KING OF COCHIN CHINA.

In the year 1823, the very one following our own Mission, the present King of Ava, who had just ascended the throne, sent an Embassy to the King of Cochin China, the circumstances and results of which are so illustrative of the character of the two Governments of Ava and Cochin China, but more particularly of the last, that I have deemed a succinct account of it worth appending to the present work. The following brief explanation of the circumstances which led to the Burmese Mission, and of the manner in which the Narrative fell into my hands, and has been prepared, will be necessary.—In 1822, a certain Cochin Chinese petty chief, or inferior officer, who had once professed the Christian religion, but apostatized, represented to Chao Kun, the Governor of Kamboja, so frequently mentioned in my Journal, that a mine of wealth might be made by purchasing esculent swallows' nests in Ava and sending them as a speculation for sale to China. Such was the trivial source of a Mission from Cochin China to Ava, and of that from Ava to Cochin China, which followed it. The Cochin Chinese Mission was undertaken solely on the authority of the Governor of Kamboja, and without the sanction of his Court. At first, a mere commercial speculation, and not a very judicious one, it assumed in the sequel somewhat of a political character, and the projector was placed at the head of this Mission. He proceeded to Rangoon by way of Penang, and in due course was conducted to the Court. His credentials not being considered here as altogether satisfactory, nor his explanations sufficiently clear, he was, according to Burmese custom, imprisoned and tortured for farther elucidation. It appears that his explanations, under this process, proved satisfactory; and the new King, at the time full of ambition, and meditating projects of conquest against Siam, resolved to take the opportunity of this Cochin Chinese emissary's return, to send an Embassy to the Cochin Chinese monarch to entreat his assistance in the conquest and partition of Siam, which he denounced as a rebel province. As will be seen in the Narrative,

the Burman Mission, although hospitably entertained, was not permitted to come to Court, and the King finally declined all political connexion with Ava. The Burmese Mission was sent back, at the expense of the Cochin Chinese Government, and the junks which brought it touched at Singapore. The Ambassadors were Mr. Gibson, a native of Madras, and the son of an Englishman, and two Burmese chiefs. Mr. Gibson was a person of much acuteness, and having resided many years in the Burman dominions, and held considerable offices under the government of that country, he was thoroughly versed in the Burmese language, and intimately acquainted with the manners and customs of the people. He was, besides, well acquainted with the Portuguese language, with the Hindostani, and with the Telinga; which last may strictly be said to have been his mother tongue. Indeed, saving his acuteness and greater expansion of mind, he was rather a well-accomplished Burmese than an Englishman. While at Singapore, he handed to me his Journal for perusal, authorizing me to make such extracts as I thought proper. This gentleman was so imperfectly educated, that the original was replete with errors in grammar and orthography in every line; and therefore the manuscript as he wrote it was not only unfit for transcription, but, in reality, nearly unintelligible without his own personal comments and explanations; I therefore made an abstract of it, preserving, as far as was practicable, the writer's own modes of expression.

The war with the Burmese having broken out during the stay of the Mission at Singapore, the Cochin Chinese junks which conveyed it were taken under our protection, and safely conducted from Penang to Tavoy. They had not been at this place above two or three days, when the place was captured by a British force. The Burman Ambassadors became prisoners of war, and the Cochin Chinese were sent back in safety to their own country. Mr. Gibson, the Ex-Ambassador of his Burmese Majesty, entered the British service as an interpreter, and, after a few months, died of the epidemic cholera, while our army was on its march to Prome.

NARRATIVE.

We left Rangoon in the beginning of January 1823, in an European-built vessel, and on the 26th February reached Penang, after touching on our way at Tavoy.

While lying at Penang, on the 24th March, a Siamese junk, on fire, ran foul of the Mission ship, and burnt her. There was hardly time to save the dispatches, jewels, and other presents for the Court of Cochin China.

Having made application to the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island, a loan of 4000 dollars was given to me for a bill on the Myowun of Rangoon.* The Mission then took a passage in a Portuguese ship.

It finally sailed, on the 22d of April, from Prince of Wales's Island, reached Malacca on the 2d of May, and Singapore on the 12th. On the 18th we left this last place, and

* The return made for this piece of hospitality was the Myowun's dishonouring Mr. Gibson's draft, and trampling it under his feet. He made it, however, a pretext for levying a contribution on the town of Rangoon, as I afterwards satisfactorily ascertained, while in civil charge of the place.

on the 1st of June reached the anchorage of Vungtaô, or that of Cape St. James in Kamboja.

On the 3rd the Mission reached the village of Canju. Four barges of ceremony came here to receive us from Saigun, to which place we proceeded on the 8th. Seven elephants were sent to the landing-place to receive us when we arrived; and on the same day the governor sent hogs, poultry, fish, &c., with one hundred quans, as a present.

June 10.—The Mission received a visit from the Secretary of the Governor-General. He asked me if we had a copy of the letter from the Burman Government;—why the Burmans, so powerful a people, were unable, after so many attempts, to conquer the Siamese; and what benefit could arise from an alliance between the Burmans and Cochin Chinese, since they were at so great a distance from each other, and therefore not in a condition to act in concert. Finally, the Secretary demanded a translation of the Burman letter.

We replied, that a copy of the letter alluded to was unfortunately destroyed when the Mission ship was burnt at Prince of Wales's Island; but that when the letter itself was perused, all the objects of the Mission would be fully explained in it. We observed, that we did not consider the intercourse between the Burmans and Cochin Chinese a matter of any difficulty, since the one was in possession of the northern and the other of the southern extremity of the great river of Kamboja; and if the Siamese, who occupied the centre, were conquered, every difficulty would be removed, and an easy intercourse carried on. In another quarter, the two nations, we said, were close to each other; the tribe of the Lenjen, or Laolantao, being the only interruption to an immediate intercourse between the Burman province of Kiangoungé and the kingdom of Tonquin.

We insisted that the Siamese were rebels, having being frequently conquered by the Burmans, and that their subjugation was a point on which his present Burman Majesty was resolved. He was pleased, therefore, to see the Cochin Chinese emissary, who had visited his country and had taken that opportunity of requesting the assistance of the Cochin Chinese Government, by sending the present Mission; while he had, at the same time, recalled his army in Martaban, to make preparation for the war.

On the same day, two French gentlemen paid the Mission a visit: they informed us that of the many French who were once in the country, two of the elder ones only survived, and that the whole French gentlemen in Cochin China were only five exclusive of missionaries. The present King had openly expressed a dislike to Europeans, and had forbid the open profession of the Christian religion. He has refused to admit the two Bishops into his presence, according to former usage; and when one of them lately presented himself, he insulted him, by offering him a piece of money as to a common beggar.

June 11.—A deputation of officers of rank waited on the Mission. They requested that the letter of the Burmese Government might be opened, which was done accordingly. They asked for a copy of the original, and that a translation of it might be made in the Siamese language.

June 12.—The Secretary of the Governor-General called to know what progress had been made in the translation. We informed him, that the translation demanded much care and scrutiny, as it was an affair of great moment, and it would take at least four or five days

to finish it. He brought an invitation to us to be present at a fête that was to be celebrated in the palace. We accepted this invitation; and then, for the first time, saw his Excellency the Governor-General, a man between fifty and sixty years of age, of small stature, but of great abilities, and reputed a good soldier. He is a native of the province of Mitho, and was educated as a page to the late King Gialong. He was with him when he was a refugee in Siam. His merits soon raised him to confidential employment and higher rank. He is much respected by all the officers of the Cochin Chinese Government, and dreaded by the Kambojans and Siamese.

At this fête we held a long conversation with the chief judge respecting the King of Ava and his country, and on the benefits that would result from an alliance between the Burmans and Cochin Chinese.

June 18.—On the 12th, the translation of the letter from the Burman Court into Siamese not having proved satisfactory, I undertook, with the assistance of the two French gentlemen, and a native Christian missionary, to make translations into the French and Latin languages. These translations were effected, and given in to-day, and with them a Burman copy of the original letter.

June 19.—The second governor gave to-day an entertainment to the Mission. Several Kambojan chiefs were present: these, as a mark of peculiar favour, are now allowed to wear the Cochin Chinese dress, and to ride in Cochin Chinese litters; but the lower orders of the same people must appear in their native habit, which is nearly that of Siam.

June 20.—A Mandarin waited on the Mission, requesting to be allowed to take a muster of the dress and cap of ceremony of the Burman Ambassadors, for the purpose of being transmitted as a curiosity to his Majesty at Huè.

June 21.—The Mission had a visit from the First Minister of the King of Kamboja, and from the Governor of Kamboja, a Cochin Chinese. The Kambojans, on this occasion, expressed much dislike of the Siamese; but I thought this dislike feigned to please the Cochin Chinese, as I am convinced that the Kambojans are at present much more oppressed than they were under the Siamese Government.

June 30.—The Mission was requested to appear at an audience, for the purpose of exhibiting the presents brought from the King of Ava for the King of Cochin China. These consisted of twenty ruby and as many sapphire-rings; a gold seal and beads; and a box containing four garments of silk cloth. The presents for the Governor-General himself, were ten muskets with bayonets, and a spy-glass, bought at Prince of Wales's Island for the purpose. Much anxiety was expressed by the Cochin Chinese to see the presents: his Excellency the Governor-General asked whether the stones were real or counterfeit; and whether, if the former, the mines were in the country of Ava. It was explained, that the stones were real gems, and that the mines were in the Burman territory, which possessed besides abundant mines of gold and silver. The Governor-General asked whether we were in earnest when we said the Burmese intended to make war on the Siamese; and he added, that, in his opinion, there must also be a war between the English and Siamese, on account of the Raja of Queda, and the seizure of his country. I replied, that I had heard nothing of a war between the Siamese and English during my residence

at Prince of Wales's Island. The Governor-General farther asked, if the members of the Mission were acquainted with the contents of the letter that came to him from the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island. We said we knew nothing of it, and supposed it contained nothing more than friendly and complimentary expressions. During this visit, the Governor-General was in excellent humour, and spoke of the events of the war between the Burmese and the Siamese, when he was a refugee in Siam, with the late King Gialong, in 1787.

July 1.—The members of the Mission, having got the permission of the Governor-General, paid a visit to the city of Saigun. We travelled on horseback; our course was by a broad high-road with an avenue of trees, and the people and houses were thick on both sides. About half-way we came to two buildings, the one consecrated to the memories of worthies of the military order, and the other to those of the civil rank: in these is deposited a written testimony of the merit of each individual. As a mark of respect and veneration to these buildings, every one that passes by them is compelled to dismount, and we did so accordingly.

The Mission alighted at Saigun, at a magnificient Chinese temple, dedicated to the god of seas and rivers, where we found a collation of teas and sweatmeats prepared for us. In the evening we dined with one of the principal Chinese merchants; we were honoured with the company of Ong-him, the Lord Judge, and Ong-tam-pit, the Treasurer. The former made very free with arrack, and became drunk. On our way back we met a temple of Boodh, containing one image of that deity seven feet high, and three others of four feet each.

July 3.—The Mission, by a command of his Excellency the Governor-General, took the letter from the Court of Ava to the palace. It was conducted with much ceremony, being carried in a gilt litter, accompanied by two hundred soldiers and many elephants.

July 4.—The original letter of the Burman Government, with the Latin, French, and Cochin Chinese translations of it, were this day dispatched to the capital. The letter of the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island was sent at the same time, unopened. We were of opinion that the Governor-General did not open it, although addressed to himself, for fear of exciting a suspicion in the King and the other principal officers of the Government, that he was carrying on a secret correspondence with the British. The Governor's Secretary, indeed, stated this particularly to myself.

July 5.—We received to-day fifty quans more for our current expenses, and an order to remove to the house usually allotted to ambassadors, which had hitherto been under repair. The house which we had first occupied was required for an Inspector-General, who had come from the capital, deputed by the King, to make military arrangements, to examine into the provinces and cities in the lower part of the kingdom, to see that justice was administered, that the people were not oppressed, and, above all, that the Mandarins took no bribes, which is a capital offence.

July 6.—We paid a visit to his Excellency the Governor, who sent us to wait on the second Governor. Here we met the Kambojan Mandarins, on their way to Court, with offerings for the King. Many inferior Cochin Chinese also presented themselves to pay their respects to the second Governor, on their return from their tour of duty in superin-

tending the cutting of a great canal between the river of Kamboja and Athien on the Gulf of Siam. The common salutation in Cochin China is to bow to the ground five times to the King, four times to persons next in rank to him, three times to persons in the third rank, twice to any other Mandarins, and once to all superior officers of lower dignity.

July 9.—I paid to-day a visit to the Secretary of his Excellency the Governor-General Ong-tan-hip; we had a great deal of conversation on public matters, chiefly on the benefits that would result from an alliance between the two nations. I observed that the King of Ava had many settlements towards the northern part of the Kamboja river, by the channel of which a great trade might be carried on between the two nations; while, if a road were cut through "Lenjen" to Tonquin, an intercourse might be established in that quarter. I also dwelt on the circumstance of having the King of Queda as an ally, and the facilities which the King of Ava had for raising a naval force for the purpose of laying waste the sea-coast of the Siamese country, on account of the number of seafaring strangers residing in his territories. The Secretary replied with candour: He said that his Excellency the Governor-General was well acquainted with the numbers of the Siamese forces, their discipline, and the Siamese mode of conducting war; but that he was perfectly ignorant of the nature of the Burman army and their habits of warfare. He would therefore never undertake an important business of this description, without being made fully acquainted with the Burman nation and their military condition. I informed him, that he might easily possess himself of this information, by sending back, along with the Mission, a faithful and intelligent person to report.

July 10.—We received fifty quans more for our current expenses, and some rice. Ong-bo, our guardian, called upon us, and informed us that on the 12th eleven thieves were to be executed by means of his Excellency's favourite elephant. On these occasions the criminal is tied to a stake and the elephant runs down upon him and crushes him to death.

July 22.—We received thirty quans more for our current expenses.

July 31.—By invitation of his Excellency the Governor-General, we were present at a ceremony annually performed by him at Saigun, in honour of the memory of his mother-in-law. Such rites are common among the Chinese, but more so among the Cochin Chinese. We arrived in due time at a good house on the bank of one of the canals, which had been the residence of the deceased. Here we found the Governor, the Inspector-general, and a great many other persons of distinction. In the principal chamber or hall of the house, three altars were decorated. After the performance of the usual rites, a splendid entertainment was served to the guests. The Governor and Deputy-governor sat at one table, the members of the Burman Mission, with some Cochin Chinese Mandarins of distinction, and a Kambojan General sat at another, and the inferior Mandarins at a third table. The retinue of his Excellency the Governor-General was on this occasion magnificent; it consisted of sixty elephants, horses, litters, and a thousand men under arms and in regular uniforms. Every thing glittered with gold, and was conducted without noise or disorder.

August 4.—A courier arrived from the capital, bringing a dispatch: it summoned his Excellency to Court for a few months, provided his presence could be spared in the southern part of the kingdom.

August 10.—The Mission received one hundred and seventy-two quans, with rice for a month. Nothing remarkable occurred. Three or four thieves are executed every week. His Excellency is rigorous in the execution of justice, and permits no one to escape. He says, that wretches of this description are of no manner of use to the public, but, on the contrary, a burden. The Mandarin who brought us up from Canju, has just been convicted of bribery and corruption: the Governor has confiscated his property, confined the persons of himself and his wife, and put the heavy Cangue, or wooden collar, about their necks. The Mandarin's crime was withholding regular payment from the labourers engaged on the canal of Athien, and extorting money from the peasantry of the neighbouring villages. The amount taken did not exceed one thousand quans. In the evening, the Mission was invited to see the elephants exercise. In passing the market-place, we were told that three criminals had been executed there in the morning: their wooden collars were still lying on the ground. As soon as we had reached the southern side of the fort, the approach of his Excellency, mounted on his favourite elephant, was announced by the heralds. A mock fight was represented. The elephants, sixty in number, charged a fence made of fascines and branches of trees, and defended by a line of soldiers, discharging rockets and small-arms. The elephants broke through it and pursued those who defended it, until stopped by the riders. Good order and discipline were preserved, and the commands for advance and retreat given by trumpet and beat of drum. Another species of mock-fight was afterwards exhibited. The elephants were made to attack, two and two, the effigy of a lion and tiger spitting fire, and accompanied by many soldiers discharging fire-arms. Very few of the elephants ventured to attack these objects, but, in spite of all the efforts of the riders, ran away. One of the conductors received twenty blows on the spot for not doing his duty. His Excellency allowed his favourite elephant to go through his exercise; the animal knelt, inclined his head, and made us an obeisance. He is thirty-seven years old, and the Governor has had him twenty-five years. After the amusements, we were treated with a collation, and the Governor held a long conference with us through the Portuguese interpreter, Antonio. He said he was going to Court entirely on our account; to make ourselves in the mean time comfortable, and that matters would, in most respects, end according to our wishes, as his Majesty seldom acted in opposition to his advice. His Excellency asked whether it was probable there would be war between the English and Siamese, on account of the protection which the former gave to the King of Queda, under pretence that he was their ally, while, in fact, he was a subject and a tributary of Siam. I replied, that the English were too powerful a people for the Siamese to attempt any thing against. His Excellency said, that he supposed the English had an eye on Junk-Ceylon, Pulo, Lada, Quedah, and Perak; which would render Penang the centre of a large trade, and that the Malay peninsula was now necessary to support Penang, as she had lost the trade of the Eastern Countries through means of Malacca. I answered, that this might probably be the case, for that the English were great politicians,—that they did nothing without a reason, and would never make war on the Siamese, unless the latter were the aggressors, but that they never put up with insults. His Excellency the Governor

seemed very well informed respecting the results of the wars of the Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte, and particularly respecting the battle of Waterloo, and his death at St. Helena. He said, he lamented the misfortunes of that great man, and explained to the Mandarins who were round him, that the only fault he found in him, was his vast ambition. He added, that after bringing the world into confusion by long wars, he had finally done nothing for the good of the French nation. He ended his conversation by praising the British nation, but said, that they, too, were over-ambitious.

August 28.—Nothing particular occurred since the 10th. The Mission had frequent reports of executions for theft and adultery. To-day we were informed of the arrival of the aunt of the King of Kamboja. This lady was the wife of a Siamese prince, who, after his death, and having no children, retired to her own country. She expressed a desire to have some conversation with our Siamese interpreter, and he went to her accordingly. This affair was misrepresented to the Governor; and, in consequence, Ong-Bo, the guardian of the Mission, was severely reprimanded; an old Mandarin of inferior rank, attached to our Mission, was punished with the wooden collar; and Antonio, the Portuguese interpreter, received a hundred blows on the same account.

September 1.—This day was fixed for his Excellency's departure for the Court; but the Second Governor, a man about ninety years of age, the only person who could be entrusted with the government, was taken seriously ill; therefore his Excellency's departure was delayed. It was necessary to send for a person, to relieve his Excellency, from Hué. On account of the discontent of the Kambojans, and the intrigues of the Siamese, there is no trusting the southern provinces without a person of energy to rule them.

At this time two horrid circumstances came to the notice of the Mission, which placed the rigorous and arbitrary character of the Governor-General in a strong point of view. One of the retinue appointed to proceed with him to Court, came to solicit from him, as a favour, that he would allow him to remain a few days behind, on account of the illness of his wife. The Governor became enraged at the proposal, ordered the applicant to be forthwith carried out to the gate and beheaded, which was done accordingly. Nearly at the same time, a native of Tonquin, employed in superintending the canal of Athien, appeared before his Excellency to pay his respects; the Governor had heard something unfavourable of his conduct, and before he had finished the four customary prostrations, he ordered him to be led away and executed in the market-place.

One of the French gentlemen informed the Mission that all his countrymen were preparing to leave Cochin China immediately, as the present King is decidedly unfriendly to Europeans.

Sept. 9.—One hundred and seventy-two quans were sent to the Mission for their monthly expenses.

Sept. 21.—His Excellency the Governor-General visited Saigun to perform funeral rites at the tomb of his father and mother. Since the affair of the visit of the Siamese interpreter to the Kambojan princess, we were very strictly watched and spies placed over us.

October 1.—The Mission received intelligence that a new Governor was on his way to relieve his Excellency, for the purpose of enabling him to proceed to Court.

Oct. 6.—Three junks arrived to-day from the capital, bringing five hundred thousand quans of treasure, for the construction and repair of forts, and the payment of the troops.

The Mission received intelligence that, a few days before, a ship belonging to the King of Siam had been driven into the harbour of Cape St. James, having encountered a Typhoon on her way to China. The commander requested permission to repair the ship and to be exempted from the usual charges and duties. The last part of the request could not be granted, and therefore the commander resolved to take her to Singapore to repair her there. Another vessel arrived at the same place from England, and last from Hué; this brought several thousand muskets, which the King would not purchase because they were considered of inferior quality to the muskets imported by the French.* The commander brought a letter from Mr. Crawfurd, the new Resident at Singapore, and was very well received by his Excellency the Governor. The only news he brought was the death of Castlereagh, the Prime Minister of England. The members of the Mission were not permitted to see the English commander, and were now as closely watched as if they were confined in a gaol.

By this opportunity the Mission transmitted, through Captain Burney at Prince of Wales's Island, a dispatch to the Government of Ava. One of the French gentlemen undertook to deliver it to the English commander.

Oct. 31.—The long expected arrival of the new Governor was to-day announced to the Mission. His journey from Hué took only nine days. His retinue and escort consisted of six hundred persons; many of whom dropped behind, from the expedition with which he travelled.

The Mission about this time received intelligence that the Siamese Government, having come to the knowledge of the correspondence which is carrying on between Ava and Cochin China, has begun to fortify the city of Bangkok, and had doubled the chain, or bomb, which crossed the river Menam; even the Chinese inhabitants, who are not usually called upon on such occasions, were employed upon these works.

We received a summons to-day to appear in the palace. The first object which struck us, as we passed on our way towards it, were two men in the Cangue, or wooden collar, so large that two persons were obliged to assist in carrying it when they moved: they were soldiers, and their crime was disobeying, and using abusive language towards their superior officers.

His Excellency informed us, that he was called to Hué on our business, and should be absent about three months. His successor, a man of about seventy years of age, an old and favourite servant of the late King, sat near him. The members of the Mission were recommended to his care. His Excellency observed, that the affairs of the Burman Mission would be dispatched as early as practicable, but that the business was of much consequence, and required minute consideration; especially as the two nations had hitherto been entire strangers to each other, and a friendly intercourse was commenced between them, only now, for the first time.

* The arms referred to were old Flemish muskets.—(C.)

After the audience, an entertainment was prepared for us, of which we partook in company with several of the Cochin Chinese and Kambojan Mandarins. His Excellency was on this occasion particularly complaisant, and condescended to sit near us and pay us compliments. We were entertained the whole day long with dramatic exhibitions. On this occasion, we saw at the audience eight persons, very poorly clad, and differing in features from all those about them. The Governor presented them each with a pair of trowsers and a shirt. His Excellency informed us they were the real aborigines of the country, before it was conquered by the Cochin Chinese, and that they were more numerous than the Cochin Chinese.

Nov. 18.—His Excellency yesterday gave over charge of the city and province to his successor, and all the officers of Government received orders to wait upon the latter, and pay their respects to him. The members of the Burman Mission also received an order to pay their respects, and accordingly waited upon the new Governor to-day; a few soldiers only were in attendance. The Mandarins of the civil order were on the right hand, and those of the military on the left; a neat repast was served, both to the members and their followers. Ong-Bo, our guardian, acted as master of the ceremonies, and through him we received an assurance of protection, and an offer of elephants and horses whenever we wished to go abroad.

Nov. 19.—This was the day fixed for his Excellency the Governor-General Tai-Kun's departure. We waited on him at the place where he was to embark. About five in the afternoon he made his appearance, with a large train, two heralds announcing his approach. He was carried in a gilt litter with a double umbrella over him. A number of boats and people had gone off the day before, and about thirty galleys now attended him, with a retinue of about one thousand persons. He sent the members of the Mission a message, requesting them not to be uneasy, that he would return in three months, and settle every thing to their satisfaction. He appeared melancholy as he sat in his boat. In taking leave, his successor made four prostrations to him, as did all the other Mandarins. The whole party set off in good order, without the least noise or disorder whatever.

Nov. 23.—The galleys returned to-day from Baria, to which place they had conveyed his Excellency, and from whence he was to proceed by land to Hué. Ong-Kiam-Loto, commander of the artillery, on his return from accompanying his Excellency to Baria, was suddenly taken ill of the cholera morbus, and died at the age of sixty-five. He was placed in a coffin, well caulked and varnished, which was kept in his house. His family and relations, and every member of the corps of artillery, daily made prostrations before the body, according to custom.

A curious circumstance occurred just before his Excellency's departure. The confinement of Ong-Quan-Tabaonhy and his wife was the result of an intrigue of Ong-Tan-Hiep, the secretary and favourite of his Excellency. This man had been brought up by the Governor from his infancy; he was ambitious, able, and resentful; and hated by every one in office, notwithstanding his being rich and powerful. All the Mandarins above him in rank waited upon him at his house—a matter which we had an opportunity of personally noticing, as his dwelling was close to our own residence. Not a day passed without his receiving some

one present or another, which he sold again in a shop, kept by his people, close to his gate; which answered the purpose well, as the house was in the market-place.

The cause of the hatred between this person and Ong-Quan-Tabaonhy was this:—The latter had paid court to a rich and handsome widow, and, after emptying his purse, had nearly succeeded. The Secretary stepped in, and being a younger and better-looking person, and also the favourite of the Governor, he made her change her mind, and she would have nothing more to say to Ong-Quan-Tabaonhy. These persons were never friends afterwards, but each sought an opportunity to injure the other. The Secretary effectually succeeded in this, when, as already mentioned, he detected his rival in extorting money from the labourers on the canal of Athien. One day a handsome concubine belonging to Ong-Quan-Tabaonhy, by name Che-day, met the Secretary on the public road and spoke to him; she told him she wished he would give her permission to come to his house, as she had something particular to communicate to him. He said she was welcome to come when she liked. She accordingly watched an opportunity, when she had ascertained that he was at home, and called upon him one evening at eight o'clock. She then requested to speak to him privately, and he conducted her into his own apartment, when she entreated him to assist in obtaining her lord's release from confinement. A little after, the family heard her calling out "rape" and "murder." When they came to her assistance, she complained of having been ravished by the Secretary, when she had come to ask for the deliverance of her lord. She then rushed out into the street, crying out in the same manner, and showing every one a lock of the Secretary's hair which she had cut off. In the morning she went to his Excellency the Governor, lamenting her fate, throwing the lock of hair down before him, and calling for justice. Knowing that the crime of adultery is punished by the laws with death, the Governor examined the matter, found it was a plot laid by her and her husband to ruin the Secretary, and ordered her to be punished with a hundred blows. This young woman was not above twenty years of age.

December 1.—The Mission received accounts of a famine having taken place in the northern part of the kingdom, which occasioned the death of many of the poor: it was caused by an unusual inundation of the sea, which had destroyed the greater part of the crops in some districts.

A few days ago, a person was beheaded for flogging his wife, who had died after the punishment, although it was supposed not in consequence thereof.

The Government was at this time employed in strengthening the ramparts of the fort of Yadentain* with hewn stones brought from the hills near old Dongnai. A thousand soldiers were occupied on this work day and night.

Dec. 19.—On the 18th, two junks departed for Singapore, and another to-day, by which the Mission addressed a petition to his Majesty the King of Ava, reporting the progress of the Mission.

The brother of the deceased Commander of Artillery had gone to Athien, on the Gulf of Siam, to bring the remains of his brother's wife from some village in that neighbourhood.

* The Fortress of Saigun.—(C.)

He returned, bringing two coffins instead of one, and these, with the body of the deceased Commander of Artillery, were now buried together.

Dec. 28.—This was the birth-day of the King's mother, and the town was in consequence illuminated for three nights. An express arrived from the Government, calling Monsieur Diard, the French physician, to Court.

January 3, 1824.—Four junks arrived from China, bringing one thousand three hundred passengers. These pay six dollars each for their passage. After their arrival, they settle and spread themselves in various parts of the country, going as far as the town of Kamboja.

Jan. 6.—The Mission received one hundred and seventy-two quans, and rice from Government for their monthly expenses. We were informed of a certain medicinal wood, called by the missionaries *Akila*,* the best of which is found in the province of Quinhon, and tried its effects upon two of our attendants ill with fluxes: they were both effectually cured in a short time. The Cochin Chinese informed us they used the same remedy in cholera morbus. About this time we observed the soldiers exercised in rowing: this was on shore, in a place made for the express purpose.

Jan. 16.—Another junk arrived from China with four hundred passengers. These Chinese emigrants are settled throughout the country, along the borders of the rivers: their whole baggage, when they arrive, consists of a coarse mat, and a small bundle of old clothes full of patches. Thousands of these persons go yearly also to Siam and the Straits of Malacca.

Jan. 30.—Nothing was heard of the business of the Missiqn down to this time, nor indeed did the members expect to get any account of it until the holidays were over. This was the last day of the Cochin Chinese year, and the shops being only open in the morning, the people were busy in laying in provisions for the next four days, when there would be no market. Before every house there was erected a tall rod, on which was suspended betel and tobacco, as an offering to the gods.

Jan. 31.—This was the first day of the year. The people left off all manner of work, and tricked themselves out in their gala-dresses, going from house to house to visit each other. At every house was laid out a small table, containing sweatmeats and a lighted taper, which was an offering to the memory of their ancestors. The people, of all ages and descriptions, were seen gaming in every part of the town; and day and night were heard squibs, crackers, and other descriptions of fire-works. On the seventh of the moon, those who can afford it visit their nearest friends and relations and make them presents. In the evening, the tall staff, with the offering of betel and tobacco, is struck. The table with the offering to ancestors is also uncovered, and the contents distributed amongst the nearest elderly relations of the party. Before this is done, however, the inmates of the house and all the visitors prostrate themselves before it. The Cochin Chinese eat of every description of animal food, without distinction, and do not object to dogs, cats, rats, alligators, &c.

Feb. 13.—We were informed, through different channels, that an order had arrived from the Court to prepare a vessel to carry us back to Ava.

* Agila, or eagle-wood.—(C.)

Feb. 14.—To-day the arrival of Ong-Tan-Hiep, the Secretary, with a dispatch from the Court, was announced to the Mission. He came overland in twelve days. We now got some information regarding our own particular business.

Feb. 18.—This was the seventeenth day of the moon, and the termination of the holidays. A salute of three guns was fired from the rampart of the fort, which was followed by a discharge of muskets and crackers from the houses of the town. The whole troops were drawn out, and, with drums beating, and colours flying, they marched with much ceremony round the glacis of the fort. After this they proceeded to the river-side, where three galleys were lying prepared, from which salutes were fired, and returned with a discharge of muskets as before. The galleys then sailed about the river in procession, accompanied by a great number of small boats, ornamented with little flags, banners, lanterns, and spears.

About seven o'clock in the morning, a royal order from the King was conveyed from the house of Ong-Tan-Hiep to the Governor's in the fort with much ceremony, on a gilt stage; six elephants followed in procession, and many of the principal Mandarins attended. The new Governor appeared in a splendid military dress, having the emblem of a lion on his robe. As far as concerned the interests of the Burman Mission, we learned that three Mandarins and a Secretary, with seventy persons as an escort, were directed to accompany us back to Ava. The names of these Mandarins were, Ong-Kin, Ong-Kian, Bie Voung, and the Secretary Ong-Tri-Bohé. Ong-Kin was by descent a Chinese; his father was the chief of a gang of Chinese pirates who assisted the late King in reconquering his country. He entered into the King's service at Pulo Condore, and was created commodore of the pirate fleet, which he had brought from the coast of China. These people, when the war was over, received a settlement on the left bank of the river, where they or their descendants still exist to the number of three or four hundred, receiving regular pay and rations from the Government, and being ready for service when called upon.

Feb. 19.—To-day we paid a visit to the Governor, and were informed that a vessel was preparing to convey us back to our native country.

Feb. 22.—We received accounts, that the persons constituting the deputation which was to return with us had received an accession of rank, and that a person of superior dignity was expected from the capital with a letter and presents to his Burman Majesty.

Feb. 25.—A fire broke out to-day in the market-place, close to the Secretary's dwelling; the Governor himself appeared on the spot to assist in extinguishing it. In consequence of the exertions that were made, and the vicinity of the place to the river, two houses only were destroyed.

Feb. 26.—Coe-Doe-Lam* arrived from the capital, and by him the Mission had certain intelligence that the Governor-General would not return to the southern provinces before the month of May, and until he had assisted in the celebration of the nuptials of his nephew Cadoa with the sister of his Majesty, and daughter of the late King. He stated that his Excellency, on his arrival, had recommended the opening of the public granaries; and that rice, in consequence, had fallen in price to half a quan a basket. The scarcity had occasioned a

* This was the Cochin Chinese emissary who had gone to Ava, and whom I have mentioned in the introduction to the Narrative.—(C.)

revolt in Tonquin, and the rebels there would not lay down their arms until they had a personal conference with the Governor.

Feb. 27.—Another fire broke out close to the house occupied by the Mission, which by great activity was soon extinguished.

Feb. 28.—Monsieur Diard arrived from the capital, and the members of the Mission were informed that the presents for his Burman Majesty were coming overland. Monsieur Diard was appointed by the Cochin Chinese Court to accompany the Burman Mission, and showed the Ambassadors the mandate of the King to that effect, under the seal of the Mandarin of Strangers. He also stated that he had been expressly called to Court, and he related the whole circumstances of the transaction respecting our Mission, as it had taken place. He stated that the Mandarin of Strangers had made a speech in the Great Council against the Burman alliance, asserting that it would alarm the Siamese, and make an unfavourable change in their sentiments towards the Cochin Chinese nation. The King demanded to know whether his counsellors were afraid to enter into this new alliance; and observed, that one thing was quite certain,—that the Burmans were the avowed enemies of the Siamese. His Excellency the Governor-General Tai-Kun and the two French Mandarins, Vanier and Cheneaux, spoke in favour of the Burman alliance. They said, that the Burmans were the inveterate enemies of the Siamese, and that through them the Cochin Chinese might again become possessed of the fruitful Kambodian province of Bantaibang, and so a free commerce, favourable to both sides, might be established. The results of this debate were adverse to a connexion with the Burmese, although I am unable to explain the cause of so unfavourable a determination in the mind of the Cochin Chinese King. Upon the whole, however, I am inclined to ascribe this conduct to the extravagant conceit of the Cochin Chinese nation; who firmly believe themselves, and the Chinese from whom they are descended, to be the only civilized people in the world, and all other nations savage and barbarous. As to the Siamese, the King of Cochin China thinks he could conquer them in an instant if he desired it. There is not a person of sense about the Court or Government except the Governor-General Tai-Kun, who often smiles at the absurdities of the rest, and has even hinted to the King the extravagance of his pretensions,—since he is, in fact, no more than a tributary of the Emperor of China.

March 4.—The war-junk intended to convey us to our own country was this day launched.

March 6.—The Mission received to-day five hundred and sixteen quans, and one hundred and forty-one baskets of rice, reckoned to be three months' stock of provision for the voyage. We were requested to repair next morning to the fort, for the purpose of viewing the letter and presents to his Majesty of Ava.

March 7.—At daylight the members of the Mission repaired to the fort on foot, ushered by a Mandarin of the civil order. We missed upon this occasion our old guardian, Ong-Bo; and making inquiry, found he had been dismissed from his office. In the front part of the hall of audience, we found the letter to the King of Ava, laid out on a table, and the presents arranged to the left of it. Within the hall, four tapers were burning. The Mandarins of the military order were in one line on the right hand, and the civilians in another on the left. All were standing up, and in their dresses of ceremony. Shortly after, the Governor made his appearance, and took his place on the right-hand side; next to him stood an elderly Mandarin, said to be the General-in-chief of the Army of Lower Cochin China; the rest followed according to their ranks. At the head of the left or civil side was Ong-ho-baing, the Treasurer; Ong-kim, the First Judge, came next; then the comptroller. The Secretary was only fourth in rank.

The music began to play, and heralds on both sides having given the signal, the whole of the Mandarins advanced to the centre of the hall, and made five prostrations to the throne, as if the King himself had been sitting on it. The Mandarins who were to accompany the Burman Mission then made their prostrations. The members of the Burman Mission were then ordered to advance and bow five times in a similar manner, which they did. The King's orders respecting the Mission were then explained to them, the presents to his Burman Majesty were enumerated, and the gifts conferred upon each member of the Mission, individually, were stated. After this ceremony, we were conducted to the house of the Governor, where we had a long conference respecting the affairs of the Mission, and particularly concerning what related to our return. We now retired, accompanied by the King's letter and presents, which were conveyed with much state, and deposited in the hall of the house where we resided. The gifts intended for the individuals of the Mission were then distributed according to their ranks.

March 10.—To-day we proceeded to the fort and delivered the presents of his Burman Majesty. The Mandarins received them with great respect, in a standing posture.

March 12.—The members of the Burman Mission, according to custom, repaired this day to the palace to return thanks for the gifts which the King had condescended to confer upon them. We appeared, on this occasion, in dresses bestowed upon us by his Cochin Chinese Majesty, and the courtiers and ourselves performed the same ceremonies and prostrations as on the 7th. After this was over, the Governor entertained us at his house, and amused us with Cochin Chinese plays. We then finally took leave.

April 1.—On the 12th and 13th of March the presents and baggage were put on board. On the night of the 13th and the morning of the 14th two fires broke out. In the evening, of the last day we embarked, and dropped down the river with the ebb-tide.

On the 15th and 16th the crew were engaged in cutting firewood for the voyage.

On the 17th we reached the village of Kanju. On the 18th and 19th the crew were occupied in watering. On the 20th we again dropped down. On the 21st we anchored off Kauro. Here we continued till the 24th; the Cochin Chinese insisting, that although the wind was fair, the period was, according to their astrology, unlucky. On this last day a foul wind came on, and at night we weighed with the land breeze, but anchored again off Cape St. James; the Cochin Chinese officers alleging that it was necessary to make a report of their progress to the Government. On the 26th, a dispatch-boat arrived from Saigun to know what had become of us. While we lay here, three trading junks for Singapore passed us. We finally sailed on the 30th, lost sight off Cape St. James on the 31st, and this day got sight of Pulo Condore.

April 9.—This day we safely reached Singapore, after a voyage of ten days from Cape

St. James, and twenty-six from Saigun. Here we were informed that there was a war between the English and Burmans.

ABSTRACT OF NOTES APPENDED TO MR. GIBSON'S JOURNAL.

(GEOGRAPHICAL NOTICES.)—To the northward of the great river of Kamboja, called, in the Burman language, Meh-koan-mit, the King of Ava has many settlements, but particularly Kiang-ung-gi and Kiang-si. From these an easy communication by water might be established with the southern provinces of Cochin China, and a great trade conducted between the two nations.

From Kiang-ung-gi to Tonquin, called by the Burmans Kio-pagan, there would also be an easy communication, if a good road were cut. The nation called by the Cochin Chinese Lao-lan-tao, and by the Burmans Len-jen, will prove the only obstacle to this intercourse. These barbarous people lie to the eastern side of the great river of Kamboja, and, being in alliance with the Siamese, obstruct the intercourse between the two kingdoms.

From the royal city of Ava, in a right line due east to the river of Kamboja, is a distance of no more than one hundred geographical leagues. Twenty days' journey would conduct a traveller to Kiang-ung-gi. From Kiang-ung-gi, through Lao-lan-tao and Sandapuri, to Bak-tin, or Kachao, the capital of Tonquin, the distance is only seventy leagues; about one-third part of which only is in possession of the tribe Lao-lan-tao. From the range of mountains which separate the Lao-lan-tao and the dominions of Cochin China, the great river of Tonquin has its source.

The proper Cochin Chinese are descendants of the Tonquinese, who in times not very remote extended their conquests to the south. The Cochin Chinese territories at present seldom exceed beyond ten and fifteen leagues from the coast, being generally bounded to the west by Lao, or Kamboja. The aboriginal race, which inhabited from the province of Quin-hone to Cape St. James, were called Loi. These are still confined to the mountains as a distinct race, doing homage to the King of Cochin China. Their chief lives at a place called Phan-ri, about ten leagues from the sea-coast. These people still profess the Hindu religion, and abundant relics of Hinduism are scattered over the country, in the form of temples, images, and inscriptions. This is the country called by the Chinese, and in our own charts, "Champa."

The province of Dong-nai was originally peopled by the race called Moi, now confined to the mountains, and said to be more numerous than the Cochin Chinese. These people follow the Buddhist religion, and not the Hindu.

To the west of Cape St. James, and as far as the latitude of 14°, is the proper country of Kamboja. North of it lies the kingdom of Lao.

From Athien to Tung-yai on the sea-coast, the people are said to be called Kom. I suspect this to be a mistake, and that Kom is only another name for the Kambojans.

Kamboja is called by the natives Namvuam, and in Sanscrit, or Bali, Maha Notkorlorot Kamer, and by the Cochin Chinese Komen.

In the tenth century they were a powerful people. Dong-nai, Phan-ran, and Siam being then tributary to them; but shortly after this they began to decline, and Siam threw off their yoke, and became an independent kingdom.

The Tonquinese and Cochin Chinese are the same people and speak the same language. In ancient times, the King of Tonquin appointed a Governor-General to the northern provinces, extending to Quin-hone, whose residence was at Hué. This person, the ancestor of the present race of kings, rebelled,—dethroned, and decapitated the King of Tonquin, seizing his kingdom.

The victorious usurper was acknowledged by the Chinese, to whom he declared himself nominally tributary, according to custom. In time, he and his successors conquered from the Kambojans the provinces of Quin-hone, Nhatrang, Phan-ran, and Phu-yen, known to the Chinese by the general appellation of Champa. These countries were inhabited by the race Loi, who professed the Hindu religion, and are now confined to the mountains by the oppression of the Cochin Chinese.

More recently, the Cochin Chinese conquered the province of Dong-nai, and planted colonies of their countrymen at Que-douc, Sa-dek, Mitho, Camao, Saigun, Doun-tain, and many other places.

The country from Sa-dek to Athien has recently been converted into a Cochin Chinese province, by the appellation of Ya-din-tain.

The present King of Kamboja, whose name is Luang-hang-tek, resides at a new city, called Kalompé, which at present contains no more than five thousand inhabitants. The old city, Pong-luang, is fifteen miles distant from it.

The original inhabitants of Dong-nai, called Moi, as well as those of Champa, called Loi, were driven into the mountains by the oppression of the Cochin Chinese.

When the father of the present King of Kamboja died, he was an infant of six years of age. When he grew up, he had quarrels with two of his brothers, who fled to Siam; while fearing the effect of their intrigues at that Court, he sought refuge at Ya-din-tain. Tai-kun, the present Governor, marched to his assistance with thirty thousand men. He met the Siamese army on their way to take possession of Calompé. A conference took place, and a peace was concluded, by which it was agreed that Kamboja, as heretofore, should remain tributary to Cochin China; and the rich province of Bantaibang remain with the Siamese, the great lake of that name being the boundary between them. The Kambojans are greatly oppressed by the Cochin Chinese. The King can do nothing without the consent of the Governor-General at Saigun.

(SAIGUN.)—The fort of Yadin-tain was built by M. Olivia. In form it is a quadrangle, of one-fifth of a Burman league to a side. It has eight gates, two on each side, which are of masonry, but the ramparts are of earth. It has a ditch and a hornwork, and two canals are cut from the river which reach near to it: by these, which are full at flood, there is a communication with the river, affording facility for conveying goods and provisions. I estimate the population of Yadin-tain, Saigun, and Bawghue at sixty thousand inhabitants, one-fifth of which are Chinese.

This is the residence of the Chinese merchants, where there are Chinese goods always for sale, and where are collected the articles of exportation for the Chinese market. The place is intersected with many canals communicating with the main river, and boats come up and

unload cargoes at the merchants' doors. From hence there is a communication by water with the great river of Kamboja.

(Dong-nai.)—Dong-nai was the old capital of the province when the Kambojans were in possession of the country. It was then a place of considerable size and trade, but is at present in a very decayed state. The Cochin Chinese, when they conquered the country, removed the seat of government to Saigun, which was more conveniently situated for shipping, and they called the new city and province Ya-din-tain.

(Canal of Hatian.)—About 1820, a canal was commenced from Que-douc, on the western shore of the great river, to Athien, on the coast of the Gulf of Siam. Twenty thousand Cochin Chinese and ten thousand Kambojans were employed upon this work: it is from two to three fathoms deep. The workmen were paid at the rate of six quans per month, and it cost the Government four hundred thousand quans. No provision was made for supplying the workmen with water, so that ten thousand of them perished from thirst, hard labour, or disease. The object of this great undertaking, was to open an easy intercourse with Kamboja and Siam, by which the boats and war-galleys might convey troops without the necessity of undertaking the precarious voyage round the Cape of Kamboja.

(Elephants.)—Every Kambojan chief formerly made a trade of breeding elephants, which are sold by them to the Cochin Chinese and Siamese. Good ones fetched from fifty to one hundred quans. They are very plentiful in the upper country, at Pontai and Lao, but the present Cochin Chinese Government allows but ten quans for each elephant, which has put a stop to rearing them.

(Malays.)—There are a number of Malays settled on the eastern coast of the Gulf of Siam; these are emigrants from Tringano and Patani.

(Christians.)—I was informed by Father Francis, a Neapolitan missionary residing at Saigun, that at Che-guam, between the fort of Ya-din-tain and the town of Saigun, where he himself resided, there are twelve hundred Christians. In the province of Ya-din-tain there are in all about twenty-five thousand Christians, and a hundred churches. The pastors are three European and ten native missionaries.

During the lifetime of the late King and of the Bishop of Adran, the Christian religion was much respected. It is still openly professed in the lower part of the kingdom, where the Christians have the protection and encouragement of the Governor-General Tai-kun. They are, however, every where so poor and miserable that they have little time to attend to their religious duties. At a place called Lang, is the tomb of the Bishop of Adran. Fifty families were assigned by the late King to watch it, who are still exempted from all other duty on this account.

(Buddhist Religion.)—Between Yadin-tain and Saigun is a temple of Buddha, containing one image of that deity seven feet high, and three others of four feet each, in a sitting posture. I held conversation with the Bonzes attached to this temple, who seemed to be very ignorant; for they could tell nothing of the propagation of their religion in Cochin China, but that it had come from the western country. Behind the temple is another building, containing the names of deceased Bonzes: this was held in great veneration.

APPENDIX B.

INSTRUCTIONS

TO JOHN CRAWFURD, ESQ. AGENT TO THE GOVERNOR-GENERAL, ON A MISSION TO THE EASTWARD.

POLITICAL DEPARTMENT.

Sir,

Your appointment as Agent to the Governor-General, to proceed on a Mission to Siam and Cochin China, has been already notified to you in my letter of the 1st instant; and I am now commanded, by the Most Noble the Governor-General in Council, to furnish you with the necessary instructions for your guidance.

2.—You are aware, that in the earlier period of the Indian commerce of the European nations, the trade of Siam and Cochin China constituted no unimportant branch of it; and that during their struggle for superiority among themselves in India, and those contests with the native powers which led to the establishment of territorial possessions, the commerce with those two countries was overlooked or neglected; so that, during the first half of the last century, that trade became extremely inconsiderable, and during the last seventy years may be looked upon as having altogether ceased.

3.—From the most authentic information in the possession of this Government, there is every reason to believe that the industry and civilization, together with the geographical position and natural fertility of soil which characterise the kingdoms of Siam and Cochin China, are such as to render it extremely desirable, under the present stagnation of trade, to negotiate with the Sovereigns of those countries the renewal of a commercial intercourse with Great Britain and her Indian dominions. The subject, indeed, of cultivating a more intimate connexion with Siam has been repeatedly brought to the notice of the Supreme Government by the Government of Penang, and towards the end of last year, a proposition from that Government to depute an Agent to Siam received the sanction of his Lordship in Council. That sanction has, however, only been partially acted on, and the design may now be conveniently superseded by the Mission which his Excellency in Council has resolved to commit to your charge.

4.—I now proceed to state to you some general Rules and Observations for the guidance of your conduct in the execution of the important duty in which you are about to engage.

5.—It is not unknown to you, that among the various states of farther Asia, beyond the peninsula of Malacca, a very general fear and distrust of Europeans, highly detrimental to the interests of commerce, is predominant; resulting, it is too much to be feared, from the violence, imprudence, and disregard of national rights, which occasionally characterised the conduct of all the European nations in the earlier periods of their intercourse. The first object

of your attention will be to endeavour to remove every unfavourable impression which may exist as to the views, or principles, of the Honourable Company and the British nation, in seeking a renewed connexion solely for purposes of trade.

6.—The Governor-General in Council does not contemplate, in the first instance, the practicability of establishing our commercial relations with the countries in question upon a permanent and beneficial footing, by the absolute removal of those restrictions which national jealousy and ancient prejudices at present oppose to the progress of external commerce. His Lordship in Council entertains hopes, however, that well-timed and judicious representations on your part to the Rulers of these countries, may have, in a great measure, the effect of disarming their apprehensions, removing their antipathies, and, by so doing, laying the foundation of a friendly intercourse, which may prepare the way for the establishment of a commercial relation, commensurate in extent with the apparent resources and population of those extensive regions, and our known capacity to supply their wants.

7.—After the first establishment of a friendly intercourse with the nations in question, his Excellency in Council conceives that the trade with them will require little assistance in the way of diplomatic agency; and that its prosperity and extension will mainly depend upon the degree of freedom with which it may be conducted on both sides, and the experience of the mutual advantages it may confer. Upon this principle, you will carefully refrain from demanding or hinting at any of those adventitious aids or privileges upon which the earlier traders of Europe were accustomed to found their expectations of commercial benefit; such as the establishment of forts and factories, exemption from municipal jurisdiction and customary imposts, monopoly of favourite articles of produce, and exclusion of rival European nations. Upon a dispassionate review of our commercial transactions in former times, his Excellency in Council is disposed mainly to attribute to the effect of the unpopular privileges so obtained, and to the indiscreet exercise of them, of which so many examples are recorded in the history of that period, the subsequent extinction of our commerce, as well as that of other European nations, or its arbitrary restriction, with all the considerable and independent countries of farther Asia.

8.—Independently of the obstacles which jealousy of the European character opposes to the establishment of a commercial intercourse, we have to contend with another difficulty common to all the nations which bear any mark of the Chinese stamp of civilization,—real or pretended contempt of foreign traffic in general. Under the influence of this feeling towards the traders who may resort to their ports, they impose on them various vexatious restrictions. For example, the Sovereign, in particular cases, claims and exercises the right of preemption, and retains in his own hands a monopoly of certain articles most in demand, while the exportation of some of the native productions of the country is altogether prohibited. Your attention will of course be directed to the means which, in your judgment, will be most conducive to the remedy of this serious obstacle to the freedom of commerce, and by employing such arguments and representations as are most applicable to the character of the people, and least likely to offend their national pride or excite their jealousy.

9.—Adverting to the state of civilization and the peculiar character of the people to whom you are deputed, his Excellency in Council sees less causes to apprehend obstruction to an improved commercial intercourse from the avowed magnitude of the imposts on external trade, than from the vexatious mode in which they are levied. His Lordship in Council considers the levying of duties in kind, the rude examination of a cargo in detail by the native officers, the depredations to which it is thence liable, and the irregular exactions of the revenue officers, to be such serious impediments to the operations of commerce, that a still higher rate of impost, levied in a less exceptionable manner, would be greatly preferred. If urged with prudence, it is not at all improbable that the native Governments may be induced, as well from the apparent as the solid advantages of such an arrangement, to accede to it. With this view, his Lordship in Council would suggest the advantages of establishing, in lieu of all others, one simple impost in the form of a duty upon tonnage or measurement—a mode of proceeding which, it is believed, is not inconsistent with the established usages of those countries. Any trifling inequality which might arise in practice from the adoption of this principle, would be much more than compensated by the exemption from vexatious interference which it would secure.

10.—In conformity with the principles now laid down, adapted to the people among whom you are to appear, and the relative situation of the British Government in India, in regard to them, you will be furnished with letters to the Kings of Siam and Cochin China, in the terms of the English drafts which accompany these Instructions.

11.—With regard to the practical details which may arise out of the principles above stated, and which must be, in a great measure, contingent upon the knowledge you obtain in the progress of your mission, his Lordship in Council relies on your judgment and experience, and necessarily commits the conduct of them to your discretion, to be regulated according to circumstances.

12.—Although Government is not inclined to contract formal treaties, lest the native Powers to whom you are now deputed should capriciously imagine their independence or their prerogatives compromised by such engagements; yet, his Excellency in Council is sensible of the great advantage which would result from obtaining from the Cochin Chinese or Siamese Government official and authentic records of such concessions as they might be induced to make to the freedom and security of commerce, either in the form of letters from the Sovereigns to the Governor-General, or from their Ministers to yourself, in the character of an edict addressed to their subjects.

13.—As his Lordship in Council conceives that, after the first establishment of a friendly intercourse with Siam and Cochin China, the extension and improvement of our amicable relations with these states will be greatly promoted by the maintenance of epistolary communication, you will see the propriety of encouraging a correspondence respectively on the part of the Sovereigns with the head of this Government, and on that of his Ministers with the subordinate Governments of India, especially with the Government of Prince of Wales's Island, and the Chief of the settlement of Singapore. This will have the salutary effect of impressing the native Governments with a conviction that our traders

resorting to their ports have the constant protection of their own Government, while it will not be accompanied by any of the inconveniences that may result from an attempt to exercise a more direct control.

14.—The Governor-General in Council calculates on your being able to proceed from hence, at the very latest, by the 1st of November. It is to be hoped you will reach Siam, which will be the first object of your attention, about the middle of December; touching at Prince of Wales's Island and Singapore for necessary information and assistance. If, as Government has reason to hope, your reception by the Court of Siam be friendly, it is not proposed to limit your residence there to any specific period, but to leave it to your own discretion; keeping in mind the advantage which may result from remaining for such a time as will afford you an opportunity of attaining a competent knowledge of the character of the Court, the manners of the people, and the resources of the country.

15.—After accomplishing the objects of the Mission, as far as Siam is concerned, it will be necessary for you to return to Singapore or Prince of Wales's Island, and there await the favourable monsoon, to prosecute your mission to Cochin China. In your voyage from Siam to the Straits of Malacca, an opportunity will be afforded you of examining, and reporting upon, the condition and resources of the tributary and petty States upon the shores of the Gulf of Siam; but you will be careful to satisfy yourself, in the first place, that your holding communication with these chiefs will not excite the jealousy of the Siamese Government, nor give cause of complaint to the Dutch, that we are interfering with the settlements which they may have formed in that quarter.

16.—The Governor-General in Council contemplates the probability of your reaching Cochin China in the month of May, with the commencement of the westerly monsoon.

17.—In your intercourse with a Court so jealous of strangers, and so reluctant to enter into any intimate intercourse with the nations of Europe as that of Cochin China, much care and circumspection will be necessary. Should the Mission be so far countenanced that you are called to the Court, you will endeavour to prolong your stay at the capital, that you may thus be afforded an opportunity of acquiring an acquaintance with the genius and habits of the Cochin Chinese Court, and of availing yourself of such favourable occasions as may from time to time occur, for disarming the jealousies of the Cochin Chinese, and for inclining them to cultivate a more intimate connexion with our nation. His Lordship in Council is not unaware, that, in the endeavour to attain the objects of your mission at Cochin China, you will have to contend with the previously established, and possibly adverse influence of other European nations at that Court. It will be your especial duty, however, as far as practicable, to make yourself acquainted with the views and policy of those nations, and the footing on which they stand with the native Government; also avoiding, however, any appearances that may countenance the erroneous belief, that your mission is directed towards objects of a political nature.

18.—Looking to a successful reception of your mission at Cochin China, it is supposed that you may be detained in that country until the beginning of July. At this period it will be impracticable, or difficult, to return to the westward against an adverse monsoon by a direct passage.

19.—Your easiest route will therefore be by the established Eastern passage, which, without inconvenient loss of time, will enable you to touch at Manilla, the Soóloo group of Islands, the independent portion of the Spice Islands, with such other countries by the way as are not under the control of other European nations. These countries are all imperfectly known, and a knowledge of their social condition and commercial resources is intimately connected with the great object which the Government have in view by your mission—the extension of the commercial relations of the nation in general, and more particularly of its Asiatic possessions. It is not the wish of the Governor-General in Council, however, that you should enter into any negotiation with the rulers of those countries. The expediency of any extension of the views of Government in that direction will be matter for future consideration; and it is probable that the deliberations of his Lordship in Council may be materially influenced by the information which you will obtain. After thus completing the objects of your mission in the manner above pointed out, you will return to Singapore and Penang; and unless you should, at either of these places, find instructions of a different tenour awaiting you, you will be pleased to proceed directly to Bengal.

20.—Having thus sketched out the general objects of your mission to Siam and Cochin China, it is necessary to revert to the views and objects of the Government of Penang, in suggesting at various times the deputation of an Agent to Siam, as stated in the third paragraph of the letter.

21.—In the year 1813-14, an application was received by the Government of Prince of Wales's Island from the King of Queda, for the friendly interference of the British Government in his favour with his superior, the King of Siam. On that occasion, the Government of Prince of Wales's Island referred the question to the consideration of the Supreme Government, when it was determined that, whatever might be the claim which the King of Queda might be thought to possess to the attention and regard of the British Government, our mediation for the adjustment of the differences subsisting between Siam and that country might lead us into an embarrassing participation in the interests and concerns of one or both States; and the Government of Penang was accordingly instructed to limit its proceedings to opening a communication with the King of Siam, and addressing a letter to him, framed in conformity with the views and principles which were distinctly laid down for its guidance. The subject was resumed in the year 1818, when the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island recorded a Minute, taking a full view of the former proceedings regarding the King of Queda, and another tributary of Siam, the Chief of Pera, and stating his deliberate opinion of the great political and commercial advantages which the Government of Penang would derive from cultivating a more intimate connexion with Siam. Copies of the whole correspondence which passed between this Government and the Government of Prince of Wales's Island on the occasions above adverted to, and also of a later correspondence in the year 1820, which led to his Lordship in Council sanctioning the deputation by that Government of an Agent to Siam for purely commercial objects, are now inclosed for your information.

22.—Although the Governor-General in Council is solicitous to avoid mixing any

thing of a political nature with your negotiations at Siam, it seems desirable that you should be in possession of the grounds on which the Governor of Penang has felt an anxiety for the security of the States of Queda and Pera; and that you should be prepared to avail yourself of any favourable opportunity of accomplishing the wishes of the Governor in Council by a friendly and unostentatious representation to the Court of Siam. His Lordship in Council relies entirely on your discretion for acting on this suggestion, or abstaining from any advertence to the subject, according to the experience you will obtain of the general disposition of the Siamese Government, and the chances of an overture of this nature meeting with a favourable reception. Your visit to Penang will enable you to learn from the Honourable the Governor in Council the actual state of the relations between Siam and its dependencies in the Malayan Peninsula, and to ascertain more precisely the views and objects of the Governor of Penang with regard to those States.

23.—You will be provided with letters to the Honourable the Governor of Prince of Wales's Island, and also to the Resident of Singapore, who will be requested to afford you any information or assistance in promoting and facilitating the success of your mission.

24.—You are apprised that the ship John Adam has been taken up for the accommodation of yourself and suite, and will be at your entire disposal; the commander being instructed to consider himself subject to your orders in every matter, saving what may be connected with the immediate navigation of the vessel.

25.—His Lordship in Council proposes to appoint Captain Dangerfield, of the Bombay establishment, to be your assistant, with a monthly allowance of six hundred rupees. With a view to provide against the contingency of your illness, or other casualty exposing to injury the special service entrusted to your care, Captain Dangerfield will be authorized, in such event, to assume charge of the Mission, and act upon the instructions contained in this letter.

26.—A party of thirty Sepoys, under the command of a native officer, will be attached to the Mission. Lieutenant Rutherford of the 14th Native Infantry, will be ordered to do duty with the escort.

27.—You will be furnished with a small supply of instruments for surveying, to be used in the event of circumstances being favourable for such operations. His Lordship in Council is satisfied that you will carefully avoid any use of them which can tend in the slightest degree to excite the jealousy of the Governments to which you are accredited. A medical officer will also be attached to the Mission, and it will be the endeavour of Government to select for this duty a gentleman qualified by scientific attainments to avail himself of any opportunity that may offer of extending our knowledge of the natural history of the countries which you will visit.

28.—In conclusion, I am directed to desire that you will report to me, for the information of his Excellency in Council, the progress of the Mission from time to time; and that, in addition to an ample diary of your proceedings, you will be prepared, on the termination of the duty now assigned to you, which it is calculated will not exceed a twelvemonth from this date, and your return to Bengal, to submit a full and digested account of the transactions

and negotiations in which you have been engaged, and of the information on all points connected with the objects of the Mission, which you may have been enabled to collect during the period of your employment.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your most obedient, humble servant,

Council Chamber,
29th September, 1821.

GEO. SWINTON,
Secretary to the Government.

APPENDIX C.

His Excellency the Most Noble the Marquis of Hastings, Earl of Rawdon, &c. &c. &c. Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Hanoverian Order of Guelph, one of his Britannic Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, a General of his Forces, Governor-General of the British Possessions in India, and Commander-in-Chief of the Troops of his Majesty and the Honourable the East India Company:

TO HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF SIAM.

In token of the esteem and respect of the English nation for your Majesty, I send into your presence my Envoy, with an earnest desire to promote the friendship and intercourse which has of late so happily recommenced between the English and Siamese nations.

The nations of Europe, after many years of war, are at peace with each other; and Hindostan, which for ages had been the prey of war, of anarchy, and of disorder, is now in a state of universal peace and tranquillity.

The influence and authority of the British nation extends from Ceylon to the mountains which border upon China, and from the confines of Ava to those of Persia, over ninety millions of subjects, and we desire not to increase it.

While tranquillity reigns within, we are at peace and friendship with all the neighbouring nations; with the Kings of Eastern and Western Persia, with the Princes of Arabia, with the Turkish Sultan, and with the Emperor of China. With their subjects our merchants conduct an extensive commerce. With mutual advantage to both sides, and with freedom and security, their traders frequent our ports, and ours resort to theirs. Commerce, while it enriches the subjects of a state, tends to make them better known to each other, and becomes, at the same time, a bond of friendship between their rulers.

The great King of England, separated from his Indian dominions by the distance of half the globe, is too far away to govern them directly himself, and has delegated to me his authority. I anxiously desire the happiness and prosperity of the people thus entrusted to

my care, and solicit for them the advantage of an intercourse and friendship with so great a monarch as your Majesty. I therefore invite the resort of your Majesty's subjects to our ports and harbours for the purposes of trade; and I entreat your Majesty's protection for all the subjects of Great Britain, European or Indian, who, in like manner, may visit your Majesty's dominions for the purposes of commerce.

I desire from your Majesty neither port, settlement, fort, nor factories; neither do I claim that our merchants resorting to your Majesty's country should be exempted from the authority of its laws. But if any regulation of your Majesty's Government touching foreign commerce should be found to bear hard upon our merchants, and thereby prove an obstacle to the extension of their trade with your Majesty's dominions, I shall trust to your Majesty's wisdom and friendly disposition to have them modified or removed.

Mr. Crawfurd, the Envoy whom I have chosen to represent me in your Majesty's presence, is well acquainted with my wishes, and in conference with your Majesty's Council will be able to make such an arrangement as will conduce to the wealth and prosperity of the Siamese and English nations. Mr. Crawfurd was my representative for several years at the Court of the Sultan of Java, and I have selected him on the present occasion to repair to your Majesty's presence, because he is well acquainted with the manners and customs of the nations to the Eastward, from his long intercourse with them. He enjoys my confidence, and whatever arrangements he may conclude with your Majesty's Government will receive my sanction and approbation.

Mr. Crawfurd will offer your Majesty certain gifts in my name.

APPENDIX D.

His Excellency the Most Noble the Marquis of Hastings, Earl of Rawdon, &c. &c. &c. Knight of the Most Noble Order of the Garter, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Honourable Military Order of the Bath, Knight Grand Cross of the Royal Hanoverian Order of Guelph, one of his Britannic Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council, a General of his Forces, Governor-General of the British Possessions in India, and Commander-in-Chief of the Troops of his Majesty and the Honourable the East India Company:

TO HIS IMPERIAL MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF ANAM, KAMBOJA, AND LAOS, &c. &c. &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR IMPERIAL MAJESTY,

The Most Noble the Governor-General of India has received with deep concern the accounts of the death of your Majesty's illustrious father and predecessor, and sends his Envoy into your presence to condole with you upon so great a misfortune, and at the same time to congratulate your Majesty on your accession to the throne of Anam.

The English are at peace and friendship with the nations of Europe and the East; and

Hindostan, which had not for centuries known the blessings of repose, is in peace and tranquillity. The authority and influence of the British nation extends from Ceylon to the mountains which border upon China, and from the country of the Burmans to that of the Persians.

My powerful and august Sovereign, at too great a distance to govern these vast regions, has delegated to me his authority, and I am, in consequence, charged with the government of a country equal in extent to the greatest empires of the East. Anxious for the prosperity of the people entrusted to my care, I solicit for them the friendship of your Majesty and your people.

Both the Western and Eastern subjects of Great Britain conduct a peaceful and beneficial commerce with the Persians, the Arabians, the Turks, and the subjects of the Emperor of China. I entreat for them a renewal of the commerce which the English in ancient times conducted with the subjects of your Majesty's ancestors, upon such terms and conditions as your Majesty is wont to grant to the Chinese and other foreign nations.

Should it be agreeable to your Imperial pleasure, and consonant to the laws of your empire, that your merchants should, like the Chinese, the Siamese, the Persians, and Arabians, visit our ports and harbours, they will receive the most friendly welcome and protection.

The English desire neither lands, forts, nor factories within your Majesty's dominions, and they solely rely upon your Majesty's wisdom for that protection which will enable them to conduct a trade beneficial to themselves and to your Majesty's subjects.

My Envoy, Mr. Crawfurd, will make himself acquainted with your Majesty's pleasure touching all these matters, and, I trust, will be able to make such an arrangement with your Majesty's Council, as will lay the foundation of a lasting friendship between the Cochin Chinese and English nations. He has been chosen by me upon this occasion, because he has represented me before at the Courts of the Princes to the Eastward, and has been long accustomed to the manners and habits of the people of that quarter. Whatever arrangements he may conclude with your Majesty's Government will be sanctioned by me.

He will present your Majesty, in token of my esteem and respect, with certain gifts.

I have only farther to assure your Majesty of my profound respect and esteem.

APPENDIX E.

MATERIALS OF THE MAP.

The maps for the present work were compiled and engraved by Mr. John Walker, a gentleman who has long and successfully cultivated the field of Asiatic geography. If I may presume to offer an opinion, he has on the present occasion skilfully availed himself of the scanty materials which were placed in his hands. Of these the following is a short account:—

The Province of Martaban is delineated from a survey by Captain Grant, of the Indian

Surveyor-General's department. The country between the Martaban river and Tavoy is taken from a survey by Captain John Lowe, who travelled over it. From Tavoy to Mergui is from a map furnished by Mr. Maingay, the officer in civil charge of our recent acquisitions to the south of the Martaban river; and from Mergui to Junk Ceylon is taken from a sketch by Captain Burney, who visited this part of the coast. Penang and its neighbourhood are delineated from an actual survey by Mr. Fletcher. Singapore and the adjacent islands are taken from surveys by Captain Franklin and Lieutenant Jackson. The Malayan Peninsula throughout is delineated from the accurate nautical charts of Captain Horsburgh. From the Cape of Patani to the point of Kwi is taken from a Mohammedan mariner, a native of Siam, possessed of considerable intelligence—who was acquainted with the use of maps and the quarter-staff, and could even take an altitude of the sun with our quadrants; no mean proficiency in an Indian.

The head of the Gulf of Siam and its eastern shore, down to Kangkao or Hatian, are from the same authority; many points being determined, and the whole arranged and adjusted by Captain John Brown, the commander of the John Adam.

The interior of Siam is laid down from a map prepared for me by my friend Captain Taylor, who drew his materials from the Siamese authority already mentioned—from La Loubère, and Dr. Francis Buchannan Hamilton. From Kangkao to the great river of Kamboja, is taken from an eye-sketch of Mr. Dyot. The coast of Cochin China, as far as the Bay of Turan, together with the mouths of the Kamboja and Saigun rivers, are taken from the actual surveys of M. Dyot, corrected by Captain D. Ross. The river of Tonquin is delineated from a sketch in the collection of Mr. Dalrymple.

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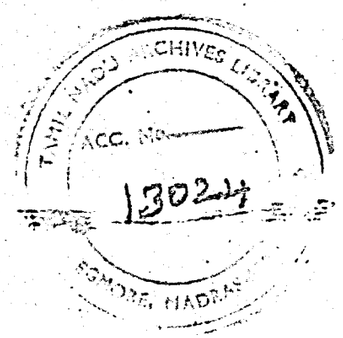
THE END.



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VOCABULARIES.

[To be placed at the end of the volume]

ENGLISH.	THAI, OR SIAMESE.	LAO.	MON, OR PEGU.	KAMBOJA.*	KOMEN.	PALI.	KA.	CHONG.	MALAY OF CHAMPA.	ANNAM.
Sky	Fa, Mek	Fa	Ta ka	Kor	Mek	Nopadun	Krem	Pleng	Langi	Troì.
Star	Dao	Dao	Nong	Pa-kai	Paka	Dara	Patua	Sum	Bintang	Sao.
Sun	Trowan, P'hra-atid, Ded	P'hra-atid	Mun-tangwe	Tangai	Tangai	Rawi, Suryo	Tangai	Tangi	Naharai	Mât troì.
Moon	Dian, P'hra-chan	P'hra-chand	Mun-katok	Ke	Ke	Chandsa	Kot	Kang	Bulan	Mat trăn.
East	Trowan-ok, Burapa		Kam-ok	Ikut		Burpa				Dong.
West	Trowan-tok		Palat	Ilait		Pachim				Tây.
North	Utra		Mokya	Echung		Udon				Bắc.
South	Salatan		Palang-kya	Tabong		Taksin				Nam.
Earth	Din, Torni									
Island	Ko	Ko	Ko	Ko	Ka	Tawip		Kok	Gunong	Cù lao.
Mountain	Fukao	Pa	Tu	Pnom		Banpet, Nagiri	Manam	Nong		Núi.
Stone	Hin	Sela	Kamok	Tamo	Tama	Sila	Tamoe	Tamok	Batao	Dá.
Water	Nam	Pa-natai	Dat	Tak	Tag	Apo, Wari	Dak	Tak	Aya	Nu'ớc.
Rain	Fon	Fon	Prue	Pleang	Pleng		Mea	Koma	Ujan	Mu'a.
River	Me-nam	Ka-se	Bukbi	Tanle	Prek	Nati	Dak-tani	Talle	Sungai	Sông.
Sea	Tal-le	Maha-samut	Tal-le	Sarmot	Sarmot	Samuto			Laut	Biển.
Fire	Fai	Pa-pung	Kam-et	Plung	Plung	Pawako, Agni	Un	Pleu	Apoi	Lu'a.
Man	Pu-chai	Pu-sai	Kru	Pros	Pros	Burut	Kloe	Sam-long	Lakai	Ngu'oì ta, Dìn ông.
Woman	Pu-ying	Pu-ying	Preao	Sarai	Sarai	Piruka, Nari, Satri	Katri	Sham-Run	Komai	Do'n Bà.
Father	Po, Bid-da	Bid-da	Apa	Apuk	Ta	Bidda	Bap	Kuny	Pak	Cha.
Mother	Me, Manda	Ma-da	Mi	Madai	Me	Manda, Mata	Mai	Muny	Meh	Ma'.
Man (Gen.)	Kon, Burut, Ma-nut	Ma-nut	Bani	Manus	Manus			Rum	Orang	Nga'oi.
Head	Hoa, Sirsa	Hoa	Kadap	Kabal	Kabal	Sira, Sisa	Tuwi	Tos	Akoh	Dâu.
Eye	Noeta, P'hra-ned	Pa-ned	Mot	Panek	Panek	Nayana, Netra	Mat	Mat	Mata	Mâb'.
Mouth	Pak, P'hra-od	Ot	Pan	Mat	Mat	Ota, Mukya	Boar	Raneng	Chabui	Mi'êng.
Tiger	Sua	Sua	Kla	Kla	Kla	Piyako	Dea	Rowai	Rimao	Hum'.
Hog	Mu, Sukon	Mu	Klut	Cheruk	Charuk	Sukra	Chur	Charuk	Baboi	Peo.
Buffalo	Kwai, Karbu	Kwai	Priang	Karbu	Karbai	Mahingsa	Karpu	Kapao	Kubao	Trâu.
Dog	Ma, Sunak	Ma	Kla	Chake	Chake	Suna, Sa, Roka	Cho	Cho	Anjing	Cho'.
Elephant	Chang, Ko-che-san	Sang	Chen	Tamrai	Tamrai	Hatsadi, Kacha, Hati	Ruai	Kanai	Lamun	Voi.
Fish	Pla	Ka	Ka	Trau	Trai	Matcha	Tre	Mel	Ikan	Ca'.
Gold	Tong-kam	Wang	To	Meas	Mias	Kanchana, Sona, Hirna	Jiang	Tongkam	Mus	Vang'.
Silver	Ngen	Wang-ngon	Son	Prak	Prah	Heranya, Rachatta		Ngun	Preak	Ba.
Copper	Tong-deng	Tong-mo	Lui	Span	Sapan	Tapak	Kong	Tong-deng	Tambaga	Thău.
Tin	Dibuk	Tak-wa-kyap	Pako	Samno	Samana	Dibuka	Trak	Tam-rak	Tima	Thiếc'.
Iron	Lek	Lek	Pasoe	Dek	Dek	Aya	Mam	Rohong	Basai	Sắt.
Cloth	Pa	Pa	Yat	Sampot	Samput		Chanap	Tar	Kan	Hàng gâ.
Cotton	Fai	Dhai	To	Rahae	Kahae	Kapas'a	Mi	Ta	Kapah	Bông.
Silk	Mai	Mon	Sut	Sot	Sot	Kosiya		Preh	Stro	To.
Indigo	Kram		Mae			Patanka				Cham'.
Pepper	Prik-thai	Prik-thai	Prek-kami	Marit	Martis	Marichi		Marit	Lada	Tiêu.
Sugar Cane	Oe	Oe	Bao	Ampao	Ampao	Ukcha	Katao	Sabu	Tabao	Miá.
Rice	Kao	Kao	Ha	Angko	Angka	Ihi Tanya	Pch	Ruko	Bra	Luá.
Plough	Kan-tai	Kat	Toe	Phal	Sare	Nangkahla, Kahsi	Ingao		Tanggala	Kây'.
Weave (to)	Tohuk	Tam-pa	Totut	Mingchu	Taban	Tantawaya	Tatan	Tohuk	Tanun	Dệt.
Boat	Rua	Rua	Kleng	Tuk	Tup		Duak	Dok	Ge	Ge.
War	Rop-suk	Leokan	Tak-wa-nan	Cha bang	Chabang	Yutang	Ju	Yoksa	Musu	Giac.
Peace	Suk-samran		Mip			Krasem				Thóy bu'ôn.
Bow	Chanu	Tanu	Tanga-krang		Sana	Tanu, Kalayu	Tongak	Tao	Panah	Gi'an', ou ná.
Arrow	Lok-son	Luk-pun	Kon-tanga			Saro	Tong			Tên.
Sword	Karbi, Dap	Ngao	Sang	Dao	Dao	Kaka	Tao		Padang	Guöm.
King	P'hra-maha-karsat	P'hra	Ka la-te	Sadat	Nak-sadat	Racha, Katiya	Krak	Praya	Po	Vua.
Slave	Ka			Kannyom		Tasa	Kato	Kayom		Moi.
Subject	Prai					Utyana				
City	Krung, Muang	Muang	Deng	Sarok	Sro	Buri, Nakra		Muang	Nangrai	Thanh.
Money	Ngon					Upaka, rahna, Upapoka				Tiền'.
Religion	Satsna		Satsna	Sasna		Satsna				Dao.
Few	Nidnung	Lek-lek	Nyi	Toat	Mantet	Tokang, Atyang	Keke	Mugit	Sadikit	Ib'.
Many	Mak	Lai	Sot	Charon	Charan	Aneka	Mak	Kep	Banyak	Nhiều'.
Great	Yai, To	To	Nuk	Tom	To	Mahanta	Riak	Tak	Prong	Lo'n.
Little	Lek, Noi	Lek	Dot	Toat	Lek	Tanuka	Ke-ke	Mugit	Asit	Nho'.
Sweet	Wan	Wan	Dat	Paem	Im	Matura	Ngam	Ngam	Manis	Ngot.
Bitter	Kom	Kom	Katang	Lawing	Mao	Ditika	Reng-reng		Pahit	Đắng.
Good	Di	Tah	Kah	Lao	La-a	Panita	Chah	Cheo	Elok	Tôt'.
Bad	Choa, Rae	Toe	Hukah	Akrak	Akrak	Hina		Koek	Jahat	Xâu'.
Be	Mi	Yu, Yang	Neng-mong	Mian	Mian	Ato, Ata	Wik	In	Mandao	
Was	Le-o	Bolabuan	Toi	Ruachai	Haihai	Siti	Chahe	Tayo	Naoya	
Will	Cha	Ao	Ket	Salain		Patna	Ngam	Chopchai	Boat	Se'.
Do	Tam, Kartam	Het-wia	Klon	Tu	Chang	Kariya, Kicha, Kama, Katta	Bam	To	Buat	Lam'.
Give	Hai	O-pai-tud	Ke	Oe	Harchok	Tana	Am	Us	Naweh	Cho.
I	Ka, Ka-p'hra-chao, Di-chan		Oe	Any	Chah	Atuma, Ata	Ae	Eng	Alun	Toi.
Thou	Mung, Su	Mung	Pi	Wanu	Engtao	Ahangku, Tuwang	Sai	Bo	Kaoya	Mây.
He	Man		De	Mung						
Self	Eng									
Who?	Kai, Pudai		Nya-korao	Nana	Tuna	Kowe		Aibi	Siapa	Ai.
All	Tangain	Tangwot	Pe-et	Tanges	Tanggasmo	Seppo	Ted		Amubeh	Het.
From	Te-nan		Ateh							Cùng.
With	Kap			Samo	Tao	Sating				Trên.
Above	Bun	Sung	Atu	Kapos	Ila	Burimo	Unte	Paling	Adai	Du'vi.
Below	Tae, Lang	Lang	Amo	Klom	Kom	Atto	Tubate	Pata	Taggo	Gần.
Near	Klai	Nit-diao	Chak	Chit	Chit	Sandike	Tap	Kat	Pala	Xa.
Far	Klai	Klai	Hue	Chngai	Changai	Ture	Changei	Met	Maya	Đây.
Here	Ti-ni	Ti-ni	Anok	Naognai		Ita		Pakai-fare	Nao	Đó.
There	Ti-non	Ti-non	Ateh	Trainok		Weta		Yakteo		Một.
One	Nung	Nung	Mue	Moe	Moe	Eko	Moe	Moe	Satu	Hai.
Two	Song	Song	Ba	Pir	Pir	Towe, Twi	Bar	Bar	Dua	Ba.
Three	Sam	Sam	Pai	Bai	Bai	Trini	Peh	Peh	Klao	Bốn.
Four	Si	Si	Pol	Buan	Bun	Chatu, Chatowa	Puan	Pon	Pak	Năm.
Five	Ha	Ha	Pasun	Pram	Pram	Pancha	Chang	Pram	Limo	Sáu.
Six	Hok	Hok	Karao	Pram-moe	Pramoe	Cha	Trao	Kadong	Num	Bảy.
Seven	Chet	Chet	Kabok	Pram-pil	Pram-pil	Sata	Pah	Kanul	Tuju	Tam'.
Eight	Pet	Pet	Kacham	Pram-bai	Pram-bai	Ata	Tam	Kati	Dalapan	Chin'.
Nine	Kao	Kao	Kachit	Pram-buan	Pram-bun	Nowa	Chin	Kasar	Samilan	Mu'ói.
Ten	Sib	Sib	Choh	Dap	Dap	Tatsa	Chit	Rai	Plu	Mu'ói một
Eleven	Sib-et	Sib-et	Choh-mue	Mat-an-dap	Matan, Dap	Isa	Chit moe	Ra-moe	Plu-sa	Hai mu'ói.
Twenty	Yi-sib	Sao	Ba-cho	Ma-pai	Mapai	Wisa	Bar chit	Bar-se	Dua-Plu	Hai mu'ói mot.
Twenty-one	Yi-sib-et	Sao-et	Ba-cho-mue				Bar chit moe			Mot trăm.
Hundred	Roi	Hoe	Klom	Roa	Roe	Sata	Dam	Chus	Ratu	Ngăn.
Thousand	Pan	Pan	Ngin	Pan	Mapun	Sahâtsa	Halik	Ban	Rilao	Muôn.
10 Thousand	Men	Muan	Lak	Muan			Rin	Muan	Laksa	Mu'ói muôn.
100 Thousand	Sen	Sen	Ket	Kot			Tambing	San		Trăm maôn.
Million	Kod			Len						
10 Millions	Lan									

* Of the Kambojan there appear to be two dialects, which I have designated by the native and the popular name, namely, Komen and Kamboja.

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