

THE FARMERS OF SIAM.

RAISING RICE AND PEPPER IS THEIR PRINCIPAL OCCUPATION. All the Land is Owned by the King—Flooded Farms—Methods of Irrigation—Primitive Implements.

Siam, says Frank S. Carpenter in the American Agriculturist, is a great wedge at the lower end of the vast peninsula of Indo-China. It is bounded on the sides and at the top by the French possessions of Tonquin and the English principality of Burmah. These two nations are casting their covetous eyes upon it. It is a land of some mountains and many valleys. The mighty Menam River flows from north to south through it, and the valley of this is one of the richest agricultural regions of the world. Forty miles from its mouth lies Bangkok, a town of about 700,000 people, 600,000 of whom live in floating houses fastened to piles along the banks of the river. These floating houses are found all along the valley of the Menam, and they line the rivers of the interior. During the rainy season a vast part of the country is flooded, and the farmers go from one part of it to another in boats. Many farmers live in floating-houses, and when their estates lie along the banks of the river they can float from one end of their little plantations to the other by simply loosening the bands which bind their houses to the piles. The country has a system of land laws, and though the King really owns every foot of it, and could confiscate estates if he would, the farmers have a certain right of tenure to their lands, and as long as they pay their taxes they can buy and sell them and will them to their children just as they do in other countries. The taxes constitute the King's rents, and these are very high. All land is taxed at ten per cent. of its value. The crops are taxed, and in fact everything that the farmers own must pay a high rate of taxation. The biggest tax, however, is that of labor. The big Farmer-King has the right to call upon every one of his subjects for three months of hard labor during the year. He delegates this right to the governors of his provinces and the heads of villages, and the result is that often when the farmers should be harvesting their own crops they have to turn in and harvest those of the King. The women, consequently, have to do the greater part of the work, and the men are little better than slaves. This three months may be increased, as the necessities of the King demand.

The Siamese farmers, like those of all other Eastern countries, huddle together in little villages and they go out from these to work their fields which surround the towns. The fields are unfenced, and cattle are herded all the year round. Cattle thieves and crop thieves are numerous, and it is only by eternal vigilance that the farmers are able to save their crops. The principal Siamese crop is rice, and rice constitutes the food of the people. There is no better country in the world for raising it than Siam. The lowlands are easily irrigated and the rainy season lasts from May until October. The climate is tropical and the winters are like our summers. Everything grows almost spontaneously, and two crops a year are not uncommon. The rice fields are laid off in lots of about one-third of an acre, each surrounded by an embankment of earth about a foot and a half high for the purpose of holding water when the land is prepared for planting. The rice is first sprouted in little patches, and when it is a foot high it is pulled up, tied into bunches and taken to these little fields, which are then covered with about six inches of water. It is there transplanted, the men, women and children bending over and thrusting the stalks deep into the soft mud under the water. A good workman can set out about a third of an acre a day, and the planting season is any time between June and October. The harvest time comes along about Christmas, and in many parts of the country these rich fields are artificially irrigated.

The irrigation of Siam increases every year, and it is chiefly the work of the Chinese settlers. These Chinese have introduced their methods of irrigation, and there are others which have been in use from time immemorial. The ordinary methods are much the same as those of Eastern countries. Two women or girls dip up water in a basket, pitched within and without to prevent its leaking. They stand on the highest bank above the canal and give the basket a swing by four strings which they have attached to it. They pull these strings as it dips into the water and lift from six to eight gallons to the higher level where it runs off into the fields. The system of having small buckets around a great wheel, which is turned by a man or a woman walking up it like the dog on the churn, is also in use and in some places the old-fashioned well-sweep is used. Labor is very cheap. Farm hands get from \$1 to \$1.50 a week and board themselves, and there is a great deal of debt labor.

The farming implements of Siam are of the rudest description. The cultivation of the whole country is done with a plow that an American farmer would not use. It consists of a crooked stick with one handle, and it has a plowshare of cast iron about as big as a man's hand. This plowshare has a little hole in one end of it in which one end of the crooked stick is put, and the whole outfit costs about \$1.25. It cuts a furrow of about two inches deep and five inches wide, and it is drawn by an ox or buffalo which is attached to it by a yoke and rope harness. When two oxen are used the plow has a sort of tongue which is fastened to the yoke on the necks of the team and in both cases the animals are driven not by lines but by a sort of rope halter fastened to a hole in the nose of the ox. The harrow is equally rude. It consists of a long rake with wooden teeth attached to a bamboo tongue which is fastened to the ox's yoke. It has an oval handle which the woman or man holds, and upon which she bears down in order to break the clods and drive the teeth in deeper.

One of the most profitable crops is the pepper crop, and Siam exports about \$200,000 worth of black pepper every year. The pepper plantations are largely managed by Chinese. The berries grow in racemes, like currants, from a climbing vine trained like a hop vine upon trees or tree stumps which have been cut off high up from the ground, and good-bearing vines will yield two good crops a year. Very little cultivation is needed. Cuttings of the vines about eighteen inches long are buried at the root of the tree, and as they grow the vines are trained toward the trunk. On dry soils it is necessary to water the plants every other day during the dry season, for the first three years, and at

the age of four or five years the plants begin to bear. They continue to bear from seven to fourteen years, and I am told that the crop is a most profitable one. The principal crop is harvested in December and January, and the other becomes ripe about July or August. The harvest commences as soon as the berries begin to turn red and they are collected at this time and dried for the market. A good average yield for a plant is two pounds of pepper per annum.

SELECT SIFTINGS.

A Bowers museum advertises the "biggest dwarf" in the world. To salute with the left hand is a deadly insult to Mohammedans in the East. Until 1776 cotton spinning was performed by the hand spinning-wheel. Germany manufactures over \$10,000,000 worth of children's toys every year. Lewis Ledger, of New York city, on a wicker recently ate thirty hard-boiled eggs in fifteen minutes. The proportion of married couples who live to celebrate their golden wedding is under one in a thousand. The old Craddock fort on Ship street, East Medford, Mass., is the oldest house in America. It was begun in 1634. A New York broker has just paid \$15,000 for a half interest in a salmon stream that flows into the Restigouche, in Canada. The presence of a well developed apple growing on the grapevine at Portsmouth, Ohio, is ascribed to skillful grafting. A sparrow at Colestown, Penn., built a nest in the running gear of a farmer's wagon, and makes a trip to market every week. In the maw of a cow killed near Darien, Ga., a few days ago, was found a pound of six penny nails and a five cent piece.

With the present rate of increase as a basis, it is estimated that a century hence this country will have a population of 94,921,686. Napoleon III. got his title, the third, for the second never reigned, by a compositor mistaking the exclamation points—"111" for the Roman numerals III. A marine on duty at the Brooklyn (N. Y.) navy yard, is unable to speak above a whisper, in consequence of having habitually eaten gunpowder for years. The reason why fire crackers are always covered with red paper is that red is the festive color in China, and that firecrackers are used chiefly on festive occasions.

The oldest man in Great Britain is Hugh MacLeod, a Scotch crofter, who was born on the 24th of November, 1783. He lives in County Ross, and is still healthy and vigorous. The boundary line between the United States and Canada is distinctly marked from Lake Michigan to the Pacific by cairns, pillars of iron, earth mounds and timber clearings. Prince Herbert Bismarck cherishes carefully the wreck of a watch which he carried during the Franco-Prussian war and which stopped a bullet that otherwise might have ended his life. The great exhibition held in London, England, in 1851, was attended by 6,039,195 persons and left a profit of \$1,066,925. It remained open from the 1st of May to the 11th of October. The Pacific coast has not a complete monopoly of big trees. There is a cypress tree at Enterprise, Fla., that is over ten feet in diameter and has a trunk reaching up forty feet to the first branch. Few people know of the origin of the name Bismarck. The castle of the Chancellor's ancestors received its name from the "marca," or boundary line, formed by the River Biese. Biese-Marca became Bismarck. A queer white and red robin astonishes the fishermen at Quonochontaug, R. I. It has built its nest in a shaggy scrap of pasture near the thundering ocean breakwater. The bird's body is of a snowy white, even to the tip of its tail, except its breast, which is of a rosy red.

The food of a "Zoo" hippopotamus is estimated to be about two hundred pounds a day in weight, and consists chiefly of hay, grass and roots. The daily provender of a giraffe weighs about fifty pounds. The lions and tigers obtain about eight or nine pounds of meat a day. For fifteen years a Portland (Me.) business man has received from the florist's every other morning a fresh bunch of flowers—roses, heliotrope, forget-me-nots and the like, and placed it directly in front of him upon his desk. By thus looking upon the bright side of life he has undoubtedly added to his happiness. Paper Car Wheels. Paper car wheels are made from common straw boards or "straw lumber," as it is generally called. These boards are square when they come from the mill. At the car wheel factory these are cut into circular disks by a large knife which swings on a radial arm over a table upon which the straw board sheets are spread. A small circular hole is cut in the center for the iron hub, for you must understand that this paper wheel is not all paper, by any means. Pressure is next applied and in the following manner: Sheets to the number of ten or a dozen are pasted together; when enough of these discs have been prepared to fill a powerful hydraulic press and subjected to a pressure of many thousand pounds to the square inch. When removed from the press these discs are hung on poles in a steam drying room for about a week. Thicker discs are next formed by pasting together two or three of these already finished and dried. Placing these together in a press as before the same process is repeated until a block four inches thick has been produced. The blocks are next turned upon a lathe in the same manner as iron or wood, after which the steel tire is fitted; this is also done by hydraulic pressure, requiring about 250 tons. The forcing of the hub into the hole in the center requires a pressure of twenty-five foot tons. The wheel, which is now so hard that it can only be scratched by a diamond; is next painted and laid away to season, after which it is ready for use. At last reports they were worth about \$67 each, and are said to last three times as long as the iron wheel of the common pattern. The paper car wheel as above described is known as the E. M. Allen patent, and first came into the market in 1874.—American Rural Home.

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Soon the horse became quite composed, whereupon the man, again grasping the strap with his right hand, urged him toward the train as before. With many stops and moans of inquiry the horse permitted himself to be led again toward the locomotive, when, when he was about the same direction from it as the other time, burst forth into a second hissing, quite as loud as was the first. Again was repeated the scene already described, but the horse did not drag the man so far as before, nor did he require so long a time in which to be quieted. The steam shut off again, and the man and horse once more approached the train, which now moved away from the station. The last glimpse of them showed the horse watching the now accustomed terror at the man by his side still grasping the head of the leading line and stroking the horse's neck—a beautiful and expressive illustration of the power over an intelligent animal of man's courage, kindness and patience.—New England Farmer.

THE FARM AND GARDEN.

ENEMIES OF THE POTATO. One could almost say that man is one of the worst enemies of the potato, if we may judge from the manner in which he sometimes neglects one of his best vegetable friends. While it requires a warm, rich soil, he gives it a water-soaked lay bed, and when the feeble plants come to the surface no encouragement is given them to struggle against the weeds that threaten to choke out the last spark of life. Many insects prey upon the narcotic herbage of the potato, the most destructive of which is the Colorado beetle. But with this well under subjection by a fully understood plan of applying London purple or Paris green, there remains now only to develop the methods of overcoming the blights and rots, the worst of which is the so-called wet rot. This is due to the growth of a low form of vegetation closely related to the mildew of the grape. It first appears on the leaves as frosty patches, and from there it grows down the stems, and finally its slender threads reach the tubers, causing them to rot. From the fact that the leaves are first attacked, and the rot works down the stems to the tubers, it is evident that prematurely the tubers should be dug at once. Let the potatoes dry thoroughly in the field after digging, and store only in the sound ones in a dry place with a good circulation of air. Avoid a damp, poorly ventilated room. The vines and all decayed tubers left in the field should be burned. As preventive measures at planting time it may be suggested that a second crop should not be grown where the previous crop failed from the rot. The seed should be free from the trouble, and therefore only sound potatoes are suitable for planting. Early varieties, planted early, are most apt to escape, for the rot does not get started usually until midsummer. Experience has demonstrated that it is best to hill the potatoes somewhat at the plowing, as the germs of the disease fall from the leaves and are washed down to the tubers with the rains.—American Agriculturist.

FARM AND GARDEN NOTES.

The best feed fruit tree is the last one attacked by insects. It is cheaper to haul than to drive the fat hogs to the railway station. Frost is blamed for killing many an orchard tree that is starved to death. It is economy to dispense with fences as much as possible, and it is convenient. The roads of a neighborhood are a strong indication of the character of its inhabitants. There is nothing so easy to grow in this world as weeds, and nothing else so profitless. The farm may not yield big profits, but is there any other calling so sure to gain a man a living? The secrets of large yields always and everywhere are rich soil, good seed and thorough tillage. Clover and oat straw fed together furnish more nutriment, pound for pound, than timothy hay. A trotting match between the cows and the dog may be interesting, but it does not make butter. You are under no obligation to loan to the person that does not promptly return articles in good order. Save up all the manure you can and spread it on your land next fall and plow it under lightly. We want to get rid of scrub land and scrub farming, as well as of scrub stock. Grade up all along the line! Mr. W. H. Gilbert, a New York dairy expert, says "the man who takes care of the cows makes the butter." A score of farmers fail because they try to do something other than farming, where one fails by sticking to farming. If your horses shrink from you, when you enter their stalls, do some detective work on your hired help, or yourself. Shelter your wagons, plows and other implements from the sun as well as from the rain. One is about as destructive as the other. Get a stencil and put your name on your larger farming implements, sacks, etc. Get a die, and stamp your name on smaller implements. Reset and repair your fences during the interval between laying by and harvesting the crops. Make the fence straighter, build it up higher and be sure to stop all the big cracks. It is a curious fact that some men would rather make five dollars by trading horses than twenty-five dollars by housing farming implements. A cow that has to get her living by gnawing the parched pasture, under an August sun, without other feed, is not likely to make a great show at the fair. It is said that a mixture of two parts by weight of cottonseed meal to one of good hard wood ashes make almost a perfect fertilizer for general crops. Try it. One of the very finest fertilizers for melons is old bones, gathered up and reduced by placing them in alternate layers with ashes the previous year to using them. Prepare your land for fall turnip patches. Break it up deep and thoroughly and harrow well. Be sure the ground is well manured. An old cowpen is one of the best places about the farm for a turnip patch. The price of the cow does not indicate her value as a producer. Gilt edged butter is something that depends on how it is made. The cow gives the milk, but upon the management of the milk, cream and butter depend the quality. An Emblem Recovered After 600 Years. Brasenose College, Oxford, England, has just regained possession of the quaint bronze knocker from which it derived its name, after being alienated from its ancient home nearly six centuries. When Oxford scholars migrated to Stamford in 1334, in consequence of a feud which then distracted the university, they took this knocker with them, and it has ever since remained on the door of a house there in which they settled, and which was sold to the corporation of Stamford early in the seventeenth century. This house, which several times changed hands, was sold, again the other day, and was purchased by Brasenose College, which probably was modeled during the twelfth century. It represents a lion's face with a ring through the mouth, and it is very curiously embellished.—St. Louis Star-Bulletin.

Sarah Bonhardt, the great French tragedienne, had the owner of 120 birds, and she had a large black dog.

NEWS AND NOTES FOR WOMEN.

"Cigs" is a new shade of brown. Beach tan is now the fashionable color. Archery is again the most popular pastime. The ends of velvet bows are now cut square. Flannel dresses are the most worn by young girls. Women are eligible to school offices in sixteen States. Jenny Lind's grave is covered with fresh flowers every day. Princess Mary of Teck is one of the prettiest girls in England. Turkish women eat rose leaves with butter to secure plumpness. Queen Victoria, of England, is in favor of Sunday music for the people. Nearly 153 women are buying and selling real estate in Superior, Wis. Miss Grace McDonough, of California, is a pretty girl with \$3,000,000. The Archduchess Valerie's wedding dress had a train fourteen feet long. The ladies of Chicago will receive and entertain the Federation of Women's Clubs in 1889. The Misses Emily and Georgiana Hill have started a school of journalism in London, England. Clara Morris, the emotional actress, is a great lover of birds, and has a regular aviary at her home. The very English girls along the Hudson and about the bay wear white duck yachting suits. Rosa Bonheur claims that she has painted her best pictures since she attained the age of fifty. Deep gardenies, well boned after the peasant bodice, are put on the new tolls of white and figured silk. Sweet-pea blossoms, white and colored, real and artificial, are the popular decorative flowers of the moment. Gold bracelets made of satin gold and fastened with small padlocks are very fashionable and equally expensive. One of the prettiest dress patterns for all round wear is a black India silk flowered with pink and green posies. The "robe" dress is shown in hand-worked trimmings and hand-painted velvet for the cuffs, collar and bralettes. Mrs. Theodore Irving, the founder of the order of King's Daughters, is the widow of a nephew of Washington Irving. A new impetus is given the cape, which appears in all styles of creamy lace net, and also in crimine and lamb's fur. The favorite flower of the Princess of Wales is the Alexandrian orchid, which was named for her soon after she went to England. Miss Juliet Corson is obliged to sit in an invalid chair while she directs and adjusts her methods of cooking before her classes. The most stylish sleeve is the full bishop, made with a loose slip wristlet six inch wide and banded just above the elbow with a two-inch ribbon. A young woman in Florida has just tied in untold agony from the results of a bite of an insect which was concealed in a bunch of flowers she wore at her neck. Beautiful white toilets for receptions and dinners are made of the finest and richest of China and India silk scattered over with tiny white silk buds, leaves or spray sprays. A fancy is shown for velvet bands on white and fannel dresses. Generally a Grecian or scroll pattern is worked on the black ribbon velvet with metal or white cord. A bill making women eligible to the office of notary public has passed the Dakota Legislature, and Mrs. C. S. Thorp, of Britton, has received the first commission. The board of education in Columbus, Ohio, has decided that hereafter there shall be no difference in the salaries paid to men and women who are teachers in public schools. Fine Irish point lace, in pure white or a pale beige tint, is made use of for bonnets, for evening drives, and is also much used on sailor and garden-party hats of Neapolitan braid. As many as three or five rows of tiny buttons are seen on bodices, and they are also plentifully on cuffs, collars and coat tails. These coat-tail busques will be the thing for all fall suits. The first colored graduate from the Department of Music of the University of Pennsylvania is Miss Ida E. Power. She is an accomplished violinist and has written several short sonatas.

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Servian Military Drums.

A curious thing connected with the Servian army is the manner in which nearly all the regiments carry the big drum. Instead of being slung in front of the man who plays it this instrument is put upon a small two-wheeled cart drawn by a large dog, the latter being so trained that he keeps his place even through the longest marches. The drummer walks behind the cart and performs on the instrument as it goes along. Each regiment has two or three drums, but scarcely any of the regiments have a band.—London Tit-Bits.

You needn't have to take our word for the good quality of Dobbins's Electric Soap. Just get one bar of your grocer, let it tell you its story next morning, and be governed by that, good or bad. Remember Dobbins's Electric. SAN SALVADOR is the smallest of the five Central American Republics. W. H. Griffin, Jackson, Mich., writes: "Suffered with Catarrh for fifteen years. Hall's Catarrh Cure cured me." Sold by Druggists, etc. MAIZE is hardly known as an article of food in France. It must be hot. When an article has stood the test of public trial and approval for forty years, like Dr. Tubb's Venetian Lintment, there can be no doubt about its possessing real merit. Convince yourselves of the fact if you have not already done so. A single trial will be sufficient to render you the knowledge that it is superior to anything else in the world for pains and aches of all descriptions. For internal use, an external use being warranted perfectly harmless to health, to that of accompanying each bottle as well as directions for use.

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ONE ENJOYS Both the method and results when Syrup of Figs is taken; it is pleasant and refreshing to the taste, and acts gently yet promptly on the Kidneys, Liver and Bowels, cleanses the system effectually, dispels colds, headaches and fevers and cures habitual constipation. Syrup of Figs is the only remedy of its kind ever produced, pleasing to the taste and acceptable to the stomach, prompt in its action and truly beneficial in its effects, prepared only from the most healthy and agreeable substances, its many excellent qualities commend it to all and have made it the most popular remedy known. Syrup of Figs is for sale in 50c and \$1 bottles by all leading druggists. Any reliable druggist who may not have it on hand will procure it promptly for any