

"PEARL OF ASIA."

SIAM, THE LAND OF THE WHITE ELEPHANT.

Its Ruler, People, Territory, Army and Navy Strength and General Conditions—Famous Buddhist Temples.



SIAM, the land of the white elephant, the pearl of Asia, occupies an extensive territory of very irregular outline in southeastern Asia. Its area is about 250,000 square miles, its population about 10,000,000. In extreme length it extends from four degrees in the Malay peninsula Chiengsen, twenty degrees, twenty-two minutes north, on the river

Mekong, or a distance of nearly 1100 miles. Its greatest breadth is about 750 miles. It is bounded on the south by the British Malay States, occupying the lower end of the Malay peninsula, the Gulf of Siam, French Cambodia and Cochin China. On the west and north it is bounded by Burma, except that lower Siam touches the Bay of Bengal, and on the east the boundary is Tonquin and Annam, French possessions.

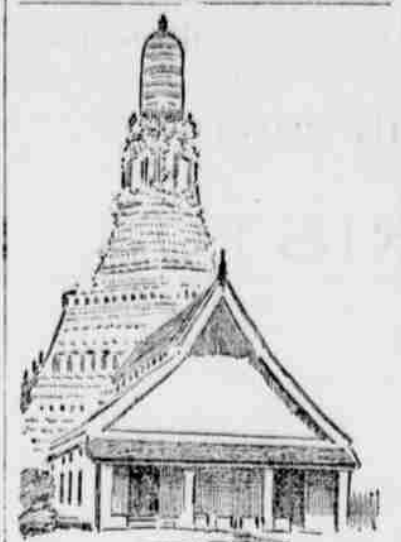
It is in this quarter that the trouble arose which threatened an East Indian war and, perhaps, the peace of Europe. Annam is a narrow strip of territory

Siam has figured largely in legend and poetry. Marco Polo visited it. Tales in which there is a strange blending of the improbable and the true have been told about it. It is only within comparatively recent times that accurate information has been obtained concerning this far-away country. Authentic Siamese history begins with 1350, when Ayuthia, now a cluster of ruins seventy miles north of Bangkok, was the capital. The period from 1659 to 1888 was made illustrious by the career of Constance Falcon, a Greek of Cephalonia, who attained the dignity of Prime Minister. He induced the King to send an embassy to Louis XIV. Ayuthia remained the capital until 1768, when, after a siege of two years, it was taken and burned by the Burmese. These in their turn were driven out by Phya Tak, the son of a Chinese by a Siamese mother. He made Bangkok the capital and afterward ascended the throne. The present dynasty was founded in 1782.

The present ruler is King Chulalongkorn I., of whom and of the form of whose Government Carter H. Harrison in his book, "A Race With the Sun," thus speaks: "The King owns everything and, in a certain sense, everybody. He is lord of all he surveys, and yet is himself the veriest slave of the groveling superstitions and vile customs of his people—superstitions and customs which must be a source of intense disgust to so intelligent a man as King Chulalongkorn evidently is, yet which he could not escape, except at the risk of losing his throne.

"Absolute monarch, his will a law to every man in the realm, his proclamations gainsaid by no one, yet he himself is absolutely governed by custom and the opinions of his nobles, even to the daily routine of his life. With

the American. They are not neatly kept, and the visitor picks his way through rubbish heaps to the temple entrances. Here come the people in swarms to pray and to listen to the monotonous chants of crochets of lazy priests. The lower part of the edifice contains the images of Buddha, and all around the pagoda are buildings devoted to the service of the priesthood. The most famous temple in all



THE MOST FAMOUS TEMPLE IN SIAM.

Siam is the Wat Cheng, opposite the royal palace. It lifts its sacred spire 200 feet from the ground, and every inch of its irregular surface is covered with glazed and colored ornamentation, while little bells hang from every possible projection, and every zephyr sets them tinkling.

Another famous temple contains the mammoth sleeping Buddha. The reclining statue is eighty-seven feet long. The most interesting temple in Bangkok is the temple of the Emerald God within the royal enclosure, devoted to the use of the King's family. It is most ornate, is filled with the rarest specimens of Oriental and European art, and crowning all, is the little emerald Buddha, only a foot high, a solid mass of diamonds, sapphires and other gems. Several far loftier temples in Bangkok cost \$100,000 apiece, but the private temple of the King, surpassing them all in magnificence, cost \$1,000,000.

Buddha priests in yellow garbs are seen everywhere in Bangkok. They are not permitted to work, and many young fellows enter the priesthood simply because they are thus sure of an easy, pampered existence. On the ground beside this old fellow you see the bowl with which he saunters out in the morning to collect his daily bread, or rather rice, and leaning against the tree is his large umbrella. When a woman lades a few spoonfuls of rice into his bowl he hides his face behind a fan, for fear the lady's charms may interrupt his contemplation of holy things.

Bangkok is lighted by electricity and has a system of electric street railways. Great strides in education have been made in the last few years. The Government is a monarchy, the reigning monarch having the right to nominate his successor from among his sons. Legislative power is vested in the King in conjunction with a council of ministers, most of whom are his half brothers.

Siam's military force consists of a standing army of 12,000 men, and the people generally are liable to be called out as required, but there is no armed militia. Every male inhabitant over twenty-one years old is obliged to serve three months a year. There are, however, a good many exemptions from this rule. These include members of the priesthood, the Chinese settlers who pay a commutation tax, slaves, public functionaries, the fathers of three sons liable to service, and those who purchase exemption by a fine of from \$3 to \$4 a month or by furnishing a slave or some other person not subject to conscription as a substitute. The Government possesses upward of 80,000 stand of arms, beside a considerable stock of cannon. The army is largely officered by Europeans and has been very largely increased of late years, both in efficiency and equipment.

The naval equipment consists of two screw steamers of 2000 tons and eight guns each, several gunboats, officered chiefly by Englishmen and Danes, and some sea-going yachts. One cruiser of 2500 tons is being built. There are forts with heavy guns at the mouth of the Bangkok River. There is a bar at the mouth of the river, however, which effectually prevents the entrance of vessels drawing more than thirteen feet of water.

The National revenues amount to about \$10,000,000 a year, of which the land tax produces \$1,435,000; tax on spirits, \$500,000; tax on fruit trees, \$325,000; opium, \$600,000; gambling, \$500,000; customs, \$715,000; tin mines, \$350,000; edible bird's nests, \$135,000, and fisheries, \$135,000. All the taxes, with the exception of the customs duties, are farmed. There is no public debt, and power has only lately been given to the Hong Kong and Shanghai bank's local branch to issue a limited amount of paper money.

There is comparatively little industry in the country, mainly due to the state of serfdom in which the population is kept by the local governors. Throughout the whole country the natives are liable to forced labor for from one to three months each year. The consequence is that the land, rich in many parts, is badly cultivated. Not more than one-twentieth of the available land in the delta of the Menam is cultivated. The dense forests of upper Siam make teak existing an important industry. Gold exists in some of the rivers, and for the working of it concessions have been granted to British and French companies. Gem mining

is carried on in various districts on the western side of the Malay peninsula, where tin and coal are also known to exist.

Domestic slavery is in gradual abolition. Such slavery as exists is entirely debt slavery. The present King, by an edict, decreed that no person born after his accession to the throne can be held as a slave beyond the age of twenty-one. Chinese coolies do most of both the skilled and unskilled labor in the south, especially in the mills and mines. In the north forest work is confined almost entirely to the Burmese, Karens and Khamsus.

Nearly the whole of the trade is in the hands of foreigners. In late years many Chinese, not subject, like the natives, to forced labor, have settled in the country. The foreign trade centers in Bangkok. In 1891 the exports from Bangkok amounted to about \$8,000,000, the imports to about \$7,000,000. Teakwood and rice comprise a large part of the exports. Machinery, iron, hardware and cotton goods comprise a large part of the imports.

Railway building began seven or eight years ago. There is one completed railroad from Bangkok to Paknam, fourteen miles, and another one in construction from Bangkok to Ban Mai, on the Patiew River, and another one from Bangkok to Korat, 165 miles through a very rich and developed rice growing plateau. Another railroad has been surveyed across the mountains connecting Bangkok with the Burmese cities. Telegraph lines aggregating 1780 miles are in operation. There is a postal service in Bangkok, and in 1885 Siam joined the International Postal Union.

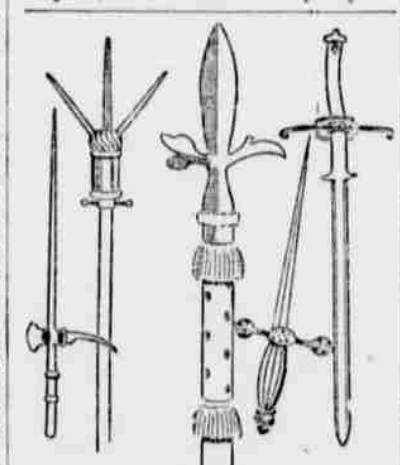
Along the entire southern and eastern frontier of Siam is territory either absolutely annexed to France, acknowledging a French protectorate, or in which French influence predominates. French intervention in the affairs of Annam began in 1787, and was terminated by a treaty in 1831, establishing a French protectorate. Annam maintains an army of 23,230 soldiers, of whom about half are natives. Cambodia recognized the French protectorate in 1863. France has 300 soldiers here. In Cochin China France has 1830 French soldiers and requires a contribution of 5,000,000 francs toward the military expenditures of Annam and Tonquin.

Tonquin, with a population of 8,000,000, of whom 400,000 are Roman Catholics, was annexed to France in 1884. In 1889 there were 11,475 French troops here, besides 6500 native soldiers.

Old War Weapons at the Fair.

Different from the other "side shows" located on Midway Plaisance—though among the latter are some of surpassing interest—the German village, in a certain sense and to a certain extent, forms part of the German official exhibit at the World's Fair. For in two of the buildings that compose this so-called village are housed thousands of objects of priceless value, which in their aggregate may fittingly be described as a museum of inestimable worth and of unparalleled completeness.

The most wonderful, and by far the costliest, exhibit, is that of armor, weapons, knives and all the parapher-



nia of chivalry. That in itself is valued at \$700,000, and there are single pieces in it that are worth from \$5000 to \$10,000 each. This particular collection, filling three large and high halls up to the ceiling, is the most perfect and complete of its kind in the world, and to every person of education, to every artist and litterateur, to every student, and to every lover of history, archeology and ethnology, this collection will appeal with particular force. It has been arranged with consummate skill, partly in large cases of solid walnut, having glass doors, so that a day's study may be pursued with the greatest ease and individual profit.—Chicago Herald.

The Woes of a Widow.



"Why weepst thou, dear mamma?" "Alas, my son! in this alligator valley, left here by the thoughtless tourist, I have discovered the last relic of your lamented father."—Judge.

English farmers who have any grass to sell are masters of the situation. At a recent grass sale in Flintshire, one meadow of fourteen acres brought \$400; another of eleven acres \$365; several six-acre fields \$245 each, and others from \$20 to \$25 each.

FOR FARM AND GARDEN.

SCARECROWS.

Scarecrows should have long sleeves of some light material, and the "bones" should stop at the elbows. The lower sleeve will then wave in the wind. It takes a crow longer to acquire a feeling of security in the presence of a gentleman who is constantly waving his arms.—[New York World.]

GROWING MILLET.

A good crop of millet may be grown from a late seeding, but often extra care will be needed to procure a good stand. It will sometimes be slow to germinate, especially if the sowing be followed by a heavy rain, and thus by scalding sun. Then the soil is apt to crust, and as no air can penetrate it the germs will perish. Even if the seeds sprout the crust is so hard that the little plantlets cannot penetrate it. If such a crust forms after sowing it will be best to harrow the field with a light, sharp implement. The millet hay should be cut before the seed forms, or else the feeding value concentrates in the grain, and the straw becomes hard, woody, and unpalatable.—[Chicago Times.]

CLEANLINESS IN THE DAIRY.

Cleanliness is absolutely necessary in the dairy business—alike for milk, butter and cheese. Much attention is needed to maintain the cleanliness of the milk receptacles, such as pails, pans, cans, and churns. In the first place, there should be a sufficient supply of pans, that those emptied and washed in the morning need not be used until evening of the next day. After washing, they should be placed in the sunlight until used. On cloudy days they can be thoroughly dried about the stove. If put together when they are wet, and allowed to thus remain for several hours, they cannot dry, and when separated at night they will give off a disagreeable odor, and warm milk placed in them is certain to be contaminated. All tin dairy utensils should be first washed in boiling water, then thoroughly rinsed in cold water and turned bottom side up to drain and dry until again used. All vessels about the dairy should be cleaned as soon as emptied. The shelves, benches and racks upon which the pans are set should be washed with soap and water every time they are cleared.—[New York World.]

CHICKEN CHOLERA A RARE DISEASE.

The so-called chicken cholera is a disease seldom found to attack flocks, although it has been supposed to be always present in some sections. That it is a disease and that it is occasionally met with is true; but as nearly all ailments of poultry are attributed to cholera, the supposition that it prevails extensively is due to lack of knowledge of the disease rather than to the fact of its being present. We have spent many years in the investigation of cholera, and only four times in over a hundred instances have we met with it. Last season we were called upon to visit a farm where the fowls were dying rapidly, and all attempts at a cure had failed. Investigation showed that every square inch of the poultry house, the cattle sheds, woodpile, and every place accessible to the hens were covered with lice, the bodies of the hens literally swarming with the pests. Roup is often denominated cholera, and indigestion, due to overfeeding, is also mistaken for cholera. In the summer season, should the hens become droopy, the best thing to do is to look for lice. Cholera kills in a few hours. Roup, indigestion and other ailments may allow the hen to linger for a week or more before death, but cholera may be known by its fatal work in a few hours' time.—[Mirror and Farmer.]

ROOTS FOR FEED.

The cheapest winter feed for swine is roots. They may not have so much nutriment in themselves, but they cause the hog to get more out of his other feed, just as good clover pasture causes the hog to get more out of grain. Turnips and rutabagas may be grown on the land from which early potatoes or sweet corn has been removed, or a piece of clover sod may be broken up after the hay is harvested.

Don't lean over the fence to pour the slop in the pigs' trough. The fighting pigs will cause you to spill a good part of the slop, and resting your weight, supported by the rail, is not healthful exercise. Pass a trough through the pen into the other trough. And if you nail a board over the first trough the pigs cannot stop it with their noses and waste the slop when it is poured in.

The old-fashioned way is to dip the buckets in the slop barrel, then lift

them out with a hard, high lift, all dripping and overflowing with the greasy stuff, and to carry them. Of course the man that does that gets greasy, dirty clothes. The new way is to set the barrel upon blocks and dish out a place for the bucket to sit, and then put a big faucet in the barrel. This way there is no hard lifting, no buckets greasy on the outside, no drip or overflow.

A little pains to sun scald the troughs if they get sour under cover will pay. If it be damp and cloudy scald them out with boiling water and feed a few handfuls of powdered charcoal to correct acidity of the hogs' stomachs.—[Farm Journal.]

RAISING FLOWER SEEDS.

When plants are grown for seed, a few of the first flowers should always be removed. This is particularly necessary to the propagation of double flowers, as the first blossoms are usually semi-double, and will give seeds that will, in their turn, produce plants with single flowers. Double flowers are the result of high cultivation, and it is only by such that good seed can be obtained. Consequently, have the stock seed bed as rich as possible, and when the flowers are in their greatest perfection, remove all buds except the few that are partly opened, and at the same time nip the seeds of the branches, in order that new buds can form, which will, usually, cause the flowers already opened, and those opening, to yield seed which they would not otherwise do. When a plant produces a flower which is considered perfect, take off all the other flowers from the plant, and carefully protect this from all harm. In most species a single capsule will contain all the seed necessary for next crop. The bed in which plants are grown for stock seed, is the very soul of the garden, possessing no attractions for any but the happy owner, who sees in its sure promise of reward, in the splendor of his garden in future years. This is a work that can be made profitable as well as pleasant. There is not a seedsman in the country who would not be glad to secure stocks of any variety of flowers or vegetables that have been greatly improved by careful selection and cultivation.—[American Agriculturist.]

FARM AND GARDEN NOTES.

Sell whenever you can get a fair price.

Plenty of road work makes muscles and endurance.

There are 23 distinct breeds of sheep in Great Britain.

Be very careful of your horses when they become overheated.

Good drainage is necessary to the successful raising of grain.

The quality of the manure depends upon the food of the stock.

A strong constitution is as desirable in a horse as in a human being.

Select your best mares and breed them to the best horses you can get.

Have a good bull in your herd if you want cows for milk and butter.

Too much care cannot be exercised in keeping cream or butter from all odors.

Teach the colt the use of the halter while very young, both to lead and to stand tied.

Choose the dairy salt with care, for on it depends the appearance and keeping qualities of your product.

If the pastures are eaten very close at the beginning of the season, they are not apt to give a good growth later on.

It is said that sheep are excellent for keeping down the grass in the apiary. The bees rarely trouble them and the combination is a profitable one.

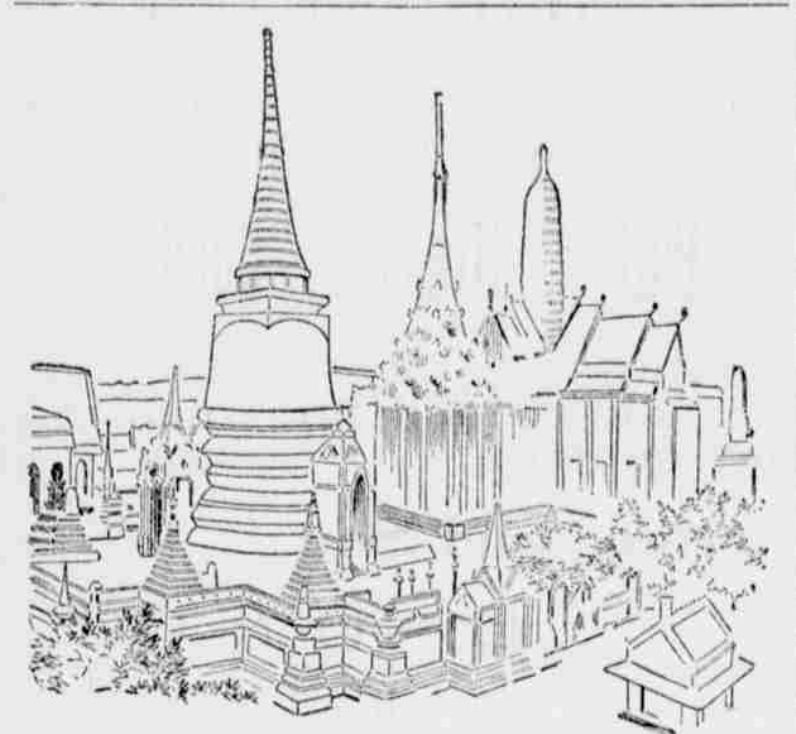
If you have dogs or cats about the place have water where they can get at it handily these days. Many a dog is driven mad because of lack of water to drink. Fact.

It is said that the secret of the success of the British farming is the combination of sheep and turnips. The turnips make the sheep and the sheep make the wheat.

The breeder who aims to secure quality, beauty, style, size and good road gait, as well as speed, will find a profit in the business provided he works intelligently.

The quince is a gross feeder. No other fruit requires so much manure or such thorough cultivation. It is because it is neglected that no better results are secured.

Don't make poor butter. It is not wanted. Oleomargarine is preferred and is often cheaper. Good butter at a fair price will drive oleomargarine out of the market quicker than congress "regulations."



TEMPLE OF THE EMERALD GOD IN THE PALACE GROUNDS AT BANGKOK.

between Siam and the Pacific Ocean. The boundary line between Siam and Annam, according to the maps, and as it actually existed until the French put forth their present claims, was a range of hills running parallel with the sea coast and forming the watershed between the sea coast and the valley of the Mekong River. The extensive tracts of country between the river and these hills, like much of Siam, is largely jungle and waste, and like all of Siam is without roads or means of traversing it. Siam's hold on this territory has always been weak, and France has long desired

tastes and aspirations natural to a man of culture, and ambitions growing out of his royal position and his evident desire for his country's prosperity, he is utterly powerless to do the half he would for his people, because he is locked up in his palace and can see the people's needs only through the eyes of others and can hear only the voice of flattery, or, what is yet worse, the voice of self-seeking and too often dishonest ambition.

The King ascended the throne when he was fifteen years old and is now forty. He has a multitude of wives, according to the custom of the country, and upward of thirty children. Though he has so many wives only one ranks as Queen.

The population of Siam is a very mixed one. Only about a third of it consists of pure Siamese. There are about 1,000,000 Chinese, most of whom, strange as it may seem, are subjects of Holland. The remainder of the population is made up of mixed races—Burmese, Indians, Malays, and Cambodians.

The Siamese are essentially peaceful and indolent. They are social, vain, and fond of bright dresses and jewelry, and are inveterate gamblers. The dress, both for men and women, is a cloth called "panoong," about two feet wide, wrapped around the waist, with one corner drawn up and caught in a girdle at the waist. This makes a sort of flowing trouser falling to the knees.

Well-to-do-people wear, in addition, a white jacket, shoes, and stockings. The women are distinguished by a gaudy scarf thrown across the body.

Bangkok, the capital and largest city, has a population variously estimated from 300,000 to 700,000. So peaceably disposed are the people that Colonel David B. Sikes, for many years United States Consul there, says the murders did not average one a year. Bangkok is situated on both banks of the Menam River. Aside from the pagodas, temples and Government buildings nearly all structures are of bamboo, with thatched roofs. Many of these float on pontoons or bundles of bamboo in the river, or in the canals, which form an intricate network of waterways about the city.

The religion of the people is Buddhism. Nearly all men of the upper classes enter the priesthood for a short time, and by custom no one can ascend the throne who has not been a mendicant priest.

The temples are very striking objects seen from afar, and some of them are beautiful, but generally, as is the case with most things Oriental, distance lends enchantment to the view. Upon near inspection it is found that there is a great deal of tinsel about them, and their gaudy, cheap ornamentation does not favorably impress



THE KING OF SIAM IN STATE ATTIRE.

her Indo-Chinese possessions to extend to the east bank of the Mekong. It is this territory, then, 100 to 150 miles wide, between the Mekong and the coast range of hills, which has been the casus belli.

England is interested in the question because the disputed territory touches her Burmese possessions on the north; because of her hereditary hatred of the French, and because of her jealousy of territorial acquisition in the east by any other Nation. Russia, as the ally of France in Europe and the rival of England in Asia, has a double motive for taking the part of France.