THE

JOURNAL

OF THE

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

OF

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

VOLUME THE FOURTH.

LONDON:
JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

M.DCCC.XXXVII.

ART. XXII.—*History of Tennasserim, by* Captain JAMES LOW, *Madras Army*, M.R.A.S., &c. &c.

(*Continued from page* 108.)

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MILITARY RESOURCES OF THE SIAMESE, PARTICULARLY CONSIDERED, WITH REFERENCE TO FORMER TIMES AND THE PRESENT PERIOD.

IT has been uniformly acknowledged by those travellers who have visited Siam, that scarcely any correct knowledge can be gained of its institutions and resources, beyond what may be gathered within a very confined range of personal observation.

It is the aim of the court, and the duty, if not the inclination, of the people, consequent on their state of political degradation and slavery, to involve a stranger in a constant delusion regarding all that concerns them and their country. And while they distort or magnify such pieces of intelligence as their interest prompts them to communicate, they carefully block up every avenue to truth, which they wish to keep concealed.

Such being the case, and the British political relations with Siam still continuing in a very restricted state, the remark of an eminent Oriental geographer may be here very aptly applied, that "we must be content to receive our information in the form in which it can most conveniently be collected."[1]

In the present instance information has principally been obtained from personal observation and direct intercourse with the natives of the countries alluded to. Several of the Siamese having been suspected by the court of giving me intelligence of a nature which it is considered treason to reveal, were outlawed; which shows that they were considered by it to be capable of making disclosures.

The Thai race lays claim to a higher degree of political address, and to superior sagacity in the conduct of warlike operations, than they are willing to allow to their neighbours. Perhaps these points may be conceded in their favour; and particularly as regards the Burmans, who, from being of a more impetuous character, are less disposed to adopt disingenuous practices: and whose uniform success during a long course of encroachment on the states in their

[1] Major Rennel.

vicinity, had rendered it less requisite for them to disguise their sentiments. In so far as respects letters, the Siamese deserve the first rank, in a comparison betwixt them and the Burmans, Peguans, Laos, and Cambojans.

The Burmans claim the pre-eminence in the field: and it may be perhaps assumed, that were equal numbers of them and of the Siamese to be opposed, other advantages being equal, the former would prove the strongest. On the other hand it may be instanced, in proof of the Siamese not being much inferior to the Burmans, and not at all so to the Laos and Cambojans, in the quantity of the *materiel* used in their common modes of warfare, or in the tact and resolution requisite to employ it with effect, that they have always extricated themselves from difficulties, and have often been the attacking party on these several nations. We know likewise that the large force which was, about the year 1810, sent against Junkceylon, was nearly annihilated by the Siamese.

It would not be a fair way of proceeding, were a comparison to be drawn betwixt the military character and resources of the Siamese, and those of any European nation. The object in an investigation of this kind ought to be to assign to the people, with reference to these two particulars, their proper station in the chain of warlike nations. And if facts should induce us to allot to them a very inferior link in it, we ought, at the same time, to make due allowances for those habits of mind which have been formed, fostered, and regulated by unvarying civil institutions.

The courage of a perfect savage often differs not more from that exhibited by a half civilized people, than the courage of this last generally does from the intrepidity of the European or Arab, or even the bravery of the races in the north and west of Asia.

On a broad view it would seem, that as an approach is made from the western confines of Cochin-China towards the Ganges, the warlike energies of the various intermediate tribes are upon an ascending scale. China, the fosterer in this section of the East of arts and luxuries, owes her safety to her geographical position, rather than to her numbers; for on her western frontier lies Cochin-China, the nursery of a less refined yet bolder race, while on her N. E. stretch the islands of Japan, the rugged coasts and mountains of which seem to have stamped still more warlike features on the singular and industrious race they contain, yet curb any disposition they may have to trouble their neighbours.

The native historian of Aurengzebe's conquests aims at impressing his readers with a very high idea of the bravery of the Assamese.

However politically weak, their personal courage is probably still superior to that of the Burmans. The Laos races have occasionally resisted both Burmans and Siamese, and owe their present state of vassalage to both of these powers, but particularly to the Siamese, to their disunion and paucity of numbers only. It may be remarked that the deficiency which is observable amongst all these nations in order, steady courage, military discipline, and union, is in some measure compensated by the rigour of their laws, their excessive self-importance, and the implicit faith they almost universally repose in all sorts of talismans, auguries, and invisible influences. These last, it will be confessed, are certain to inspire even timid minds with a confidence which may support them in battle against an equal enemy, and insure victory over any inferior one. The force of such belief has been exemplified not long since in contests with the Ashantees on the Gold Coast.

It may now be worth while to attend shortly to the military condition of the Siamese in former times, as described by several authors.

Loubère held the Siamese military character in great contempt, and fell into the frequent error of rating it by an European standard. Writers also, as before alluded to, on the wars of the Peguans, the Burmans, and Siamese, represented them in a very despicable light. The Siamese have not been tried as yet, by the British, but were they to be so, we cannot safely pronounce that their character for war has not been undervalued by travellers of the present day also.

Loubère remained a few months in Siam, and afterwards compiled an account from information given to him by Europeans settled there, of whose views and whose sources of knowledge he must have been in a great measure ignorant. At the same time his "Historical Account of Siam" contains much accurate information. He observes, "the sight of a naked sword is sufficient to put an hundred Siamese to flight; there is only required the assured tone of an European who wears a sword by his side or a cane in his hand, to make them forget the most positive orders of their superiors." The next is a sweeping charge, which proves that he judged without reflection or proof. "I say that every one born in the Indies is without courage, although he be born of European parents." He then, in support of such extravagant assumptions, goes on to state, that a "Cyprian, a foreigner by birth, who served in the Siamese army, went alone into the enemy's camp and took their general captive!" a story which might have passed in a romantic age, but is too improbable for history. His general cha-

racter of them is more happy, but it equally belongs to any people who are politically enslaved—"they are proud with those who deal quietly with them, humble to those who treat them with rigour, and subtle and variable like all those who suspect their own weakness."

It is too true that their rulers have no regard for justice, while the governed, having already drained the cup of oppression to the dregs, seek refuge and consolation in a well enough defined social private compact, which is not so tangible to tyranny as their property.

It happened rather unfortunately for Loubère's postulates, that they were proved to have been mere assumptions only one year subsequent to his leaving Siam, and, as generally happens in such cases, the proofs were more glaring, and seemed more discreditable to those in whose persons they were exhibited, in the exact degree that their opposites had been insisted on.

The facts alluded to, and which are perhaps so well known that they might have been here omitted, are related by Kempfer in his well-known "History of Japan," and are briefly these: Constantin Faulkon, a Greek, and who had been a cockswain in the English service, contrived by his ability and his success in the matters assigned to him by the Siamese court, to reach within the space of nine years the pinnacle of credit and authority. He it was who had persuaded the king to send an embassy to France, which produced two in return, the last being M. de la Loubère's. General des Fargues occupied Bankok with 1400 French soldiers; Faulkon now thought he might safely upset the government, and place the reigning king's son-in-law, and a creature of the French and himself, on the throne. The general was invited up to Ayutthiya to witness the ceremony which was to give to his nation the supremacy over Siam. But before his arrival Faulkon had been beheaded, a pretty fair specimen of Siamese promptitude, and measures had been taken to prevent the defection from spreading.

The general was glad to escape by leaving his two sons and twelve men as hostages in the hands of the Siamese. Notwithstanding that the latter held such strong pledges for his non-interference in the affairs of the country, he imprudently, and it may be added, with reference to the hostages, inhumanly, committed various acts of hostility against the Siamese. A vessel which he sent to acquaint the French commanders of several Siamese vessels with his situation, was attacked and taken after a desperate fight.

The Siamese then began to construct works to prevent the egress of the general, and eventually he found himself and his regiment of

Europeans, albeit they had naked swords in their hands, under the necessity of making certain humiliating concessions imposed on them by the Siamese at the price of his and their freedom.

The French have never in this quarter recovered the blow.

But if Loubère despised and underrated the character and resources of the Siamese, Kempfer[1] unaccountably struck into the opposite extreme of unmerited and unqualified panegyric, affirming that "the kingdom of Siam is the most powerful, and its court the most magnificent, of all the black nations of Asia." The calm current of truth will as usual be found betwixt the more vehement ripplings on either side of it; yet such an assertion might lead us to suspect some exaggeration in his valuable account of the Japanese.

It would serve no useful purpose were the whole of Loubère's invective to be here noticed and commented on.[2]

The relations which had until within the last four years existed between the British Government and the Court of Siam, may be stated to have been purely commercial, and it was not until the usurpation of the Keddah government by the Phraya of Ligor, by order of the court, that the British found the slight boundary of a river,[3] one hundred yards broad, alone divided their territory from that under Siamese domination.

The breaking out of the Burman war, which promised to bring the British troops into play throughout the whole of Tennasserim, and thereby to place them in contiguity with a long line of Siamese frontier, together with the expediency of probing the feelings of the Siamese, and if possible of getting these directed into a channel favourable for the co-operation of the Siamese army with the British one, seem to have induced the Supreme Government to approve of

[1] Kempfer's Japan.

[2] "The king has horse-guards composed of men from Meen (perhaps meaning Míng-mon) and Laos, as numerous as the king pleases. 2ndly. A foreign guard of 130 gentlemen, *i. e.*, two companies of Moors, natives, or originally descended from the Mogul States, of an excellent mien, but accounted cowards. 3dly. Twenty Chinese Tartars armed with bows and arrows, and formidable for their courage; and lastly, two companies of twenty-five men each, Peguans of the true India, called Rasbonts, or Raggibonts (Rajpoots), whose courage is very famous, though only the effect of opium.

"The Siamese are ignorant of the art of war, abhor blood, only war on their enemies, because these are more cowardly than themselves; have no forts deserving the name, no standing army, no artillery, and their infantry are naked. They use elephants, never come to close quarters, and are afraid to become over courageous. They are weaker by sea than by land."

[3] Tuda river, on the coast of Keddah, opposite to Penang.

certain embassies being sent to Siam. These were subsequent to Mr. Crawfurd's mission, which happened long before the war broke out, and which was of a commercial nature chiefly.

The first,[1] which was despatched in May, 1824, to the Rájá or Phraya of Ligor, failed entirely in its object, namely, of inducing that chief to afford the assistance of a fleet of boats for the Rangoon expedition. The causes of the failure were simply the late period at which it was sent, after war had actually commenced, the cautious, haughty, and dilatory temper of the Phraya, and his inability to act without direct instructions from the capital. The embassy was, however, detained three months in his country, and some local information was thereby acquired.

The next embassy was despatched from Prince of Wales Island, under Lieutenant-Colonel Snow, of the Madras army, and a second[2] furnished with duplicate powers, in case such might have been required. Its general object was nearly the same as that of the preceding one, to obtain the co-operation of the Siamese in the war, and in any desirable shape in which their pride, ambition, or avarice might instigate them to act. It was intended that on Tavoy and Mergui falling into the hands of the British, the mission should proceed overland to the capital of Siam, a journey of about twenty-five days.

This embassy which promised, at least, to develope, in the speediest manner localities might be supposed to permit, the sentiments and purposes of the Siamese regarding the war, and to assure them at the same time of the real intent with which that war had been entered on, was arrested at Tavoy by an order conveyed through the political agent in Ava, and was dissolved. The second member of the mission, however, was enabled to penetrate, in conformity with separate instructions, by two several routes, to the Siamese frontier, by which some information respecting these tracts was obtained.

A third speedily followed, under the direction of Captain (now Major) Henry Burney, of the Bengal army, who went to Siam by sea, and of course arrived in the capital at a period when the vacillating court had made up its mind on the points which the two previous embassies had brought before it.

In so far, therefore, as the pugnacious propensities of the Siamese were to be worked on, the mission neither did, nor could, produce any sensible effect in aid of our arms. But a treaty was concluded

[1] Under the author of this account.

[2] The author of this account.

betwixt the Governor-General of India and the Siamese Court. Just before this took place, the infraction by the Siamese Governor of the Lower Provinces of a preliminary treaty entered into by him with the British, was the cause of another embassy being sent from Prince of Wales Island to the Malayan petty state of Perak. It would appear that the Siamese, following up the ambitious policy which had urged them to invade, and annex to their territory the country of our ally, the Rájá of Keddah, had now sent an influential party, backed by armed men, into the Perak state, and that having here usurped the rájá's authority, they contemplated the extension of their power over the whole remaining parts of the peninsula (not perhaps excluding from their ultimate prospects the province of Malacca). The embassy[1] proceeded in the H. C. B. cruizer Antelope, and a gun-brig, up the Perak river. The Siamese did not deem themselves strong enough to dispute the passage, but evacuated the country, and protracted negotiations during nearly a month enabled the political agent to destroy the Siamese influence in that country, to restore the chief to his rightful state of independence, and to free all those who were interested in the prosperity of the peninsula from their apprehensions of the effects of Siamese aggression, which is always marked by reckless devastation, cruelty, and barbarities of every kind.

But if the Siamese Court veiled the shrine of its political god at Bankok, the steps of the devotees were apparent enough on the frontiers of the Martaban province, nor was it difficult to discern that the Devatta was ambition, and that so long as there remained a prospect of gaining by his instrumentality the envied post of Martaban, it was a matter of indifference to them which party were victorious. The high-flown adulation with which the Siamese generals besprinkled the Commander-in-Chief of the British forces in Ava, was intended as a fence and cover to their paltry shifting, and to procure for them a ready access to the person and opinions of that chief; and both objects were gained and kept during a period sufficiently long for their purposes.

Any person who will allow humanity, confined by just political views, to guide and aid him in his retrospect, must assuredly rejoice that the British arms did prove alone strong enough for the arduous task assigned them; at the same time it must be admitted that the nature of the war at its commencement was such as to render, apparently, Siamese co-operation highly desirable, or at the least their neutrality.

[1] Under the writer of this account, who commanded also the party of troops.

Before the British entered into the contest with Ava, the Siamese and the Burmans were constantly at war.

Where enemies come to a mutual understanding to confront each other as rarely as possible, the arts of stockading, mining, and trenching, are of primary importance. We accordingly find that both the Siamese and Burmans are well advanced in these arts, considering their state of civilization.

The Siamese are, indeed, so attached to these modes of carrying on a war, that several of their most celebrated historical romances hinge entirely on them. In the work termed Mahosat, the Siamese leaning to defensive warfare is particularly obvious. It is probable that this work has reference to some system of more westerly origin, since many of the incidents it records have seemingly been taken from the Thotsa Chatta, or Bali chronology of the ten Avatar princes, in whom the Siamese Buddha became successively incarnate.[1]

In the Bali work termed Milinda Raja, under the head Aníka, the following order for war is specified:—Hattha Aníka, the elephant column. On each elephant are four armed men; eight armed men follow on foot, being two for each leg of the animal. Four elephants thus attended compose a party, which is commanded by an officer. Next Assa Aníka, a horse and armed rider, eight foot soldiers attend him, and all these with their attendants form a squad, or band. Rattha Aníka, a war-chariot with one inside rider, dragged by horses which are driven by a soldier sitting in front of the charioteer; two soldiers run along with each wheel, and four chariots are a band. Patí Aníka, a foot soldier; four compose a party, and four parties, or sixteen men, are a band, who are under an officer.

The Siamese can scarcely be said to have any well-fortified places; those at Bankok, the capital, and at the mouth of the Menam river leading to it, have been often described, and it may safely be affirmed with respect to them, that they would prove but feeble obstacles to an attack on the city by one or two well-manned European ships of war. Their very best defences would little avail them, even at a distance from the river, if spiritedly attacked by infantry and some small guns.

The true Siamese, and, indeed, Indo-Chinese fort, is the stockade, and it is believed that this race produces as expert stockaders as the

[1] Mahosat was prime-minister to King Thau Withí, whose object it was to carry off the daughter of another prince, whose name was Chalaní. This latter prince was guided in his operations by the advice of his prime-minister Takíwat. The war is carried on principally underground, by mining and countermining. Thau Withí gains the day.

Burman nation does. They have been rivals in the art ever since they contended for supremacy.

There are, however, several brick fortifications or walls, and walled towns, in different parts of Siam and in the neighbouring countries of Laos and Camboja. These defences may be of service here, since the natives have little knowledge of the methods of breaching a place, but would prove stumbling-blocks in their way had they ever to contend with practised troops. Their walls are for the most part of a square or oblong shape, with round or square demibastions at intervals, and have sometimes double ditches outside.

Mode of Attack.

The Siamese rarely attack a fortified place until they have blockaded it to the utmost of their means. They then make approaches by trenching and throwing an occasional shot, rocket, or combustible ball, into the enemy's work. If they find the enemy to waver, they spring a mine perhaps, or try to surprise them. An open attack is rarely persisted in, if any determined opposition is shown. Their chief aim is to outflank an enemy.

Fire Arms.

The Siamese, inferior as they are to the Chinese in the arts of civilized life, have yet the advantage of them in the use of fire-arms. They are also a muscular people, although the average of their stature is only about 5 feet 4 inches at the highest; Mr. Crawfurd gives it at 5 feet 3 inches. This last is the average of the people of Lower Siam under the Ligorean, as measured by me:

	Ft.	In.		Ft.	In.
1st Man	5	3	5th Man	5	6
2nd	5	4	6th	5	4½
3rd	5	4½	7th	5	0
4th	5	5	8th	5	3

This observation is made from a comparison of what has been seen by me amongst the Siamese, and what has been written respecting the Chinese by natives of China and by Europeans. The Siamese do not despise the arts of foreigners, and have had the good sense to avail themselves of them in their war department.

The indigenous population of the whole of Siam (*i. e.*, exclusive of Chinese and other foreigners) may be rated at 1,700,000 souls as a maximum. But I will here take it at 1,500,000 souls. The male Chinese amount, it is said, to 205,000 at least.

To this number of Siamese, all the males not specially exempted,

betwixt the ages of fifteen and sixty years on urgent occasions, and between twenty-one and sixty in ordinary times, bear the king's seal impressed on their arms, a little above the wrist; no male subject can escape the infliction of this mark of servitude unless he be a priest[1] or public servant; or unless by his either purchasing his exemption, or securing it by taking shelter under some man of rank or office. Of the first class the numbers are few; of the latter there is a considerable body, but its real amount it would be very difficult to discover; I incline to place it at 10,000.

Reflecting on this conscriptive system, one might be led to suppose that Siam could bring a very respectable numerical force into the field; but this conclusion ought not to be hastily drawn.

According to the principles usually recognised by writers on population, and allowing one man for each house, there ought to be in the above rated population of 1,500,000 souls, a body of 300,000 men perfectly capable of bearing arms, or whose ages lie betwixt twenty and forty-five.

But it has never perhaps yet happened, that the total available male population of any country has assembled *en masse*, and an inspection of the map of Siam will at once show the impracticability of such a congregating there.

The total want of anything like attachment to the government in its people, the dispersed state of the provinces, the difficulty of collecting and supplying with provisions troops scattered over so wide a surface, and the inability of the government efficiently to arm the whole, must all operate against the rapid accumulation of a large army, while they would render speedy the dissolution of a moderate one. That Siam labours under a paucity of inhabitants compared with the extent of her soil, is proved sufficiently by the restrictions imposed on the emigration of her people, particularly women. The Chinese Government, it may be said, imposes similar restrictions on its subjects; but its bigotry to everything ancient urges it to continue the restriction after the cause in which it originated has totally disappeared, namely, a redundant population.

There is a vast difference betwixt a force thus assembled for defensive purposes, and one destined for foreign service.

Although Upper Siam might afford a levy *en masse* of 100,000 men, and the lower provinces on each side of the Gulf 20,000 each,

[1] Priests make nearly one per cent. in the population of some provinces. The settlers, or descendants of settlers, are about 10,000 Peguers, as many Laos and Cambojans, and some Cochinchinese; also about 500 natives of India, and a few native Christians.

yet it appears extremely doubtful if the Court of Bankok could assemble an army of 20,000 perfectly efficient and well-armed Siamese for aggressive purposes on its neighbours; it might, perhaps, get together 50,000 men of every description. During the Burman war with the British, the Siamese had a mercenary force of, it was said, 10,000 men, chiefly composed of Peguans. When Siam was last attacked in the quarter of Salang, or Junkceylon (which happened about 1810), by a Burman army of 35,000 men (according to the Siamese), a force was despatched from Bankok, which joined another under the Rájá of Ligor, and then a third under the Bindakara of Keddah, who became the Laksamana, or general-in-chief. This combined army consisted of 27,000 troops, agreeably to information which was given to me by a Siamese priest who accompanied the Bankok force; and by other natives who witnessed the progress of the war. The Burmans had been, it seems, three months in possession before they were driven out.

Of this force 3000 Siamese were left to garrison a town on the west coast of the Gulf of Siam.

The result is well known; the Burmans were signally defeated, and driven back with the loss of the greatest part of their army.

The Bankok force had, according to the same authorities, 1000 swivels, some on elephants, and about one-third of the men had muskets.

The following order was observed during the march:—

1. The advanced guard, called Súa pa, "tigers of the woods,' and méo san, "watchful cats," being in all 300 men. The advance sometimes preceded the main body by several days when the enemy was at a distance.

2. The main body, preceded by artillery.

3. The "Pík Khwa," right wing.

4. The "Pík Sai," left wing.

The commander-in-chief's body guard consisted of 300 men clothed in red cloth, with muskets and swords; 300 men dressed in blue cloth, with swords and muskets.

Every party of ten men had a servant, who brought provisions from the baggage.

A gun was fired at an early hour. The army having marched until about eight o'clock halted for breakfast, then having proceeded till mid-day, made a second halt. Two hours after this it again set out, and halted for the night at about four or five o'clock P.M.

The day's march was averaged at 800 sens, about twenty miles.

During the night fires were lighted around the camp, and patrols

and sentries arranged, and no intercourse was permitted betwixt different parts of the camp on pain of death.

The army had no cover but what the forest and their clothes afforded.

The night was divided into four watches, and at the relief of each the gong was beaten.

The *materiel* was conveyed on elephants, and in chests and bags.

Siam seemed once aware of the bad policy of keeping mercenary troops; for the Japanese guards were disbanded. Why the Peguans are now preferred it were hard to say, unless they are found more submissive and tractable.

The Chinese are never employed as troops; were they, indeed, of a warlike disposition, Siam might have good reason to dread them.

WEAPONS.

The armoury at Bankok is by all accounts well filled, and from what has been personally observed by me amongst the Ligorian's troops, it should seem that they are better armed than even the Burmans are. There are several reasons for this; the port of Bankok is open to ships from every nation, and good prices are paid for the muskets they bring; and the towns are well supplied with Chinese blacksmiths, who not only repair but manufacture arms.

Lead is not, perhaps, so plentifully got in Siam as it is in Ava. It does not appear from any accounts we possess that lead is found in Lower Siam; it exists sparingly in the central parts, and, according to Mr. Crawfurd, more plentifully on the northern frontier, where 2000 peculs are annually obtained. In Ava, and especially in the frontier Shán province of Thaumpé, extensive mines of it are worked. Instead of lead the Siamese frequently employ tin for musket-balls, or a mixture of it and lead.

GUNPOWDER.

Their powder is either imported or manufactured in the country. What they make has a very coarse grain, like Burman powder, and is deficient in strength. The sulphur is generally imported, although it might be got perhaps in the country.

The saltpetre is chiefly made from the lixiviate formed by saturating the dung of bats or vampires in water and evaporating. This is found in large quantities in the caves which abound in the hilly districts, especially in Ligor and Dalung. In a cave under the singular rock called Sagat láng, which forms the west side of the Kra

kla rapid on the Martaban or San Luen river, the soil of bats was found by me to be a foot deep at the least.

The charcoal used in making the powder is carefully prepared from two kinds of woods, the Pankaré, which is light, and the Wai mai thán, a species of cane, the fibre of which only is used.

The ingredients having been well pounded and mixed, are formed into a mass with the help of water and the juice of the Khá (or *Maranta galanga* of Linn.), or of the *Alpinia galanga*. The mixture is put over a fire, and when the evaporation has proceeded nearly to dryness, the residuum is exposed to the sun and well dried. It is then pounded and spread out on mats, and a grain is formed by sprinkling a diluted ardent spirit over it. The gunpowder is preserved in large earthen glazed China jars, well closed by wooden covers, and lined with clay.

Their cannon-balls are of iron, but stone, and even wooden ones, are used occasionally.

POLICY OF ALLOWING THE SIAMESE AND OTHER INDO-CHINESE TO PURCHASE FIRE-ARMS AT BRITISH PORTS.

It has been questioned whether it consists with British policy that the Siamese and other people should be permitted to supply themselves with fire-arms from the ports in the Straits of Malacca.

Were the Siamese on a footing in point of courage with nations more civilized and better inured to war, it might be easily shown that they would be still, with this permission, much more formidable with their national weapons in their hands, than if they should employ, as they now do, the musket without the bayonet attached, in the way the Burmans use it. But as the Siamese, Burmans, and other Indo-Chinese nations, fall greatly below the European standard in discipline and valour, it is quite obvious that without fire-arms they must prove weak and puny adversaries when opposed to European skill and courage.

Their national arms they could not use with any degree of effect, since it is plain that they never would come to close quarters with enemies so superior. On the other hand it is equally clear, and has indeed been confirmed by the experience of the Burman war, that the adoption of the musket must give to these nations in time of war, and in peculiar situations, a manifest degree of superiority over Europeans. While the former are fighting defensively, every step in advance upon them is gained with the loss of men. When they lie behind a rampart or in a trench, that superiority will be measured by the time required to reach them, and that time will gene-

rally be sufficient to render each advantage a dearly bought one. But should it be on such grounds politic to interdict the sale of fire-arms to these nations, the prohibition would be in a measure futile, since American and other ships will always be ready to supply their wants. It is true that the Siamese prefer English muskets to those of other nations, but they will be glad to take any kind if such are debarred them.

The question, then, will be, whether, for the sake of opening this source of trade to our merchants, we may safely run the risk of adding to the confidence and strength of the people just alluded to, by affording them more destructive arms than they can procure elsewhere.

The Siamese national arms are the sword, spear, and bow.

They have adopted the following:

1. Pun yai, or cannon.

Each gun has from twenty to forty men attached to it, to drag and work it.

2. Charong; field-pieces, with twenty men attached.

3. Pun láng chááng; a swivel which is carried on an elephant.

4. Pun khá nok yang, is a short piece which one or two men can carry. When it is to be fired, it is supported on a sort of tripod of wood. It is either a wall or a field-piece, and is of the same description as that which the Burmans used with such good effect during their war with the British. This arm is capable of improvement, and from its portable nature might be rendered very serviceable in the hands of British soldiers obliged to fight in jungles.

Pun Sak chai,

Punnok Khúm; "quail's-bill piece," are small pieces of ordnance.

The Háám Len is a wall-piece, and is also used like the pun khá nok yang in the field.

Pun K'hap síula are the infantry muskets. The powder is kept in joints of bamboo or in horns, and the balls in bags tied round the waist; the bags have a top of horn. Mr. Crawfurd, in his "Mission to Siam," observes, that the Siamese got about 30,000 stand of arms from the Americans.

The large gunpowder bamboo is slung over the right shoulder, but the belt does not cross the body. They also carry small bamboos filled with combustible matter to set villages on fire.

Khap chút is a matchlock, the match being fixed in the place which the flint would otherwise occupy.

Pun langmáá, the pistol.

Kháng praí is a blunderbuss. This arm is fabricated in Siam and in the Straits of Malacca by the Chinese. The outside of the barrel looks well, but the inner surface is very rough. They have also large brass pieces, mortar-shaped, for throwing grape to short distances.

T'hanú, the cross-bow, is about five feet long; it is passed through a stock about three or four feet long, tipped with hard wood, or iron. The leaf of a palm supplies the place of a feather to the arrow. The bow-string is drawn to the notch by the united exertion of the feet and arms, and the arrow is shot off by a trigger. These last are often poisoned by the tribes who occupy the wilder parts of the country, and who, it may be remarked, alone use the bow and arrow in battle.

The poison is the ايپوه ipoh, or upas of the Malays, or toxicaria of Marsden. The tree which yields it has no peculiar noxious influence on those who shelter under it, as was formerly believed. It grows plentifully in the peninsula of Malacca, and its juice, prepared by boiling, is employed by most of the savage tribes of the forest to poison their arrows. The poison to have full effect must be used fresh. A poisoned arrow procured by me from one of these tribes, was, after having been kept several months, found to have no effect on a dog which was wounded by it.

The Kayú rungas of the Malays, a red-wooded tree, is much dreaded by the Malayan wood-cutters. One of them, after having cut down a tree of this description, has been observed by me to be afflicted with painful swellings of the face and body. Sleeping under it is hurtful.

Hák sat is a spear about seven feet long, and is cast by the foot.

Hák is a plain spear.

K'houm is a sort of lance or javelin, seven or eight feet long, sometimes longer. It is seized at the upper end, the fore-finger resting on the top; and although light, flies with sufficient force for thirty to forty yards to kill an enemy. The Burmans used the same weapon in the last war, but the British troops were too rapid in their attacks to suffer much from them.

Trí is a trident-shaped missile.

Dap is the long curved sword, from eighteen to forty inches long; a dart is lodged on each side of it to cast at an enemy before coming to close quarters. Some of these swords require both hands to wield them.

Kapi is a long sabre, and has been got from foreigners.

Ngao is a sort of curved knife or sword, of eighteen inches long, having a handle of about six feet in length.

Kasún is the common single bow.

Lok faí, "child of fire," is a combustible ball, which is thrown from a gun to set fire to a town. It is not dangerous in any other point of view, as it does not explode.

Phló is a small fire-ball, which is sent out of a bamboo, on the principle of a rocket, for signals.

Tro-ut is the Siamese rocket.

The Siamese seem to be inferior to the Burmans, as these last are to the Chinese, in the knowledge of pyrotechny. The Burmans made little or no use of their boasted rockets during the late war; but Congreve's gave them a lesson. The Siamese use fire-rafts on their rivers when attacked, and they stockade these also as far as they can. In 1825 they pretended to be, or really were, so apprehensive of a visit from the British troops, that they attempted to throw a chain across the river Ménam to prevent ships from reaching the capital. This attempt, which would have been useless before any European enemy, was not carried on.

Lo is a round shield.

Dang, an oblong one; they are either formed of wood or of buffalo's hide.

Khwak kachap sínngaam, are crows' feet, made of bamboo sharpened, and then hardened by fire, or of iron, and so constructed that on being cast on the ground one spike remains nearly upright. These are carried in bags, and during a retreat are strewed in the path and amongst grass to impede pursuit.

They also, like the Burmans and Malays, use spikes of bamboo similarly prepared, from six inches long and upwards, for the same purpose, and also as a defence to a town or stockade. These are generally concealed in grass and weeds, and inflict very bad wounds, penetrating even the thick sole of a leather shoe, as many soldiers who fought in the Ava campaign can testify.

The Siamese have knives and daggers, but do not often use them, unless to despatch a prisoner where quarter is refused.

The Siamese mining and trenching implements differ a little from those of the Burmans; each soldier is provided with a set when they are likely to be required. Every man takes care of himself when a trench is to be made, but a general line is preserved, and in an hour's time a Siamese army can be put completely out of sight and beyond the chance of injury from musketry and cannon.

Even mortar practice must be very correct to tell on them with effect when so situated.

ORGANIZATION OF AN ARMY.

The organization of a Siamese army and its accessories come next to be considered.

Some account of these has been given in the description of the army which marched from Bankok to drive out the Burmans from Junkceylon. But a more general account may be required by the curious on such subjects.

A Siamese force having been assembled by the usual means of a forced conscription, and the securing of the relatives of conscripts as pledges for their fidelity, it is divided into three lines, each consisting of three divisions. The first line consists of the Naa, or (advanced) centre; the Pík khwa, or right wing; and Pík sai, the left wing. The Nún, or second line, is also similarly divided, as is the Lang, or third line, which forms the reserve.

The Commander-in-Chief is chosen from amongst the great officers of the state, without any minute inquiry as to his capacity for the office.

As bravery is not here the over-frequent growth of the soil, the Court perhaps judges rightly in often preferring the greatest boaster for this high office, since he thereby lays himself by his voluntary pledge more open to punishment for misconduct. Inordinate pretension, too, suits the genius of this Court.

The Commander-in-Chief is generally a Phraya, or officer of the first class. He is compelled to take a binding oath, which will be found at the end of this chapter. The officers next in rank to him are taken up from the Lo-ang. They are commonly six in number:

1. Lo-ang Phí Chai Sena.
2. Lo-ang Awút.
3. Lo-ang Satha ru-ang det.
4. Lo-ang Wíset Kra sattra.
5. Lo-ang Song Rícha.
6. Lo-ang Kla P'honlarop.

These six take the oath.

Next are the Mun, who command each 200 men. They are selected from the class so called, and they are required to take the oath. The Phan command small parties, and being of inferior rank not take an oath. But, as in civil offices, the following order ıay be also followed:—

1. Chaau Phraya.
2. Phraya.
3. Phra.
4. Lo-ang.
5. Khún.
6. Phan.
7. Nai.
8. Phrai, or common soldiers.

The exclusive military titles given to the chiefs in command are:

1st. Khun Phon . . .	Commander-in-Chief.
2nd. P'hayakk'ha Naam . .	Tiger General.
3rd. Síng'ha Naam . . .	Lion General.
4th. Nagha Naam . . .	Snake General.
5th. Khrúttha Naam . . .	Garuda General.
6th. Khotcha Naam . . .	Lion General.
(There are four kinds of Lions)	
7th. Sunnakk'ha Naam . .	Dog General.

The last title may serve to remind us of the Canicularians of Curdistan, and in Libanus, and of the frequent worship of the dog in former ages.

To illustrate more fully the institutions of this curious people, I have translated from a Siamese manuscript the description of the thirteen different military dispositions practised by them. That these are ever very closely followed, or that the numbers of the troops given correspond with facts, cannot be proved, and need not be supposed. It is probable that the system may have in some measure been suggested to them by persons versed in the Bali language. There is one reason for my thus showing these fanciful evolutions, and it deserves notice. It is this, that throughout the whole of them there is not one single allusion to naval warfare; the fact is singular, since, although the Siamese are not much attached to a seafaring life, yet their maritime situation has often compelled them to contend with their enemies on the sea, and it sufficiently points out their origin to have been far removed to the northward of the Indian Ocean. A Siamese Phra Chaukhú, or priest, informed me that they have a Bali work relating to warfare, termed Chattú Rongkha.

A Siamese general rarely exposes his person; he occupies a position in the rear of the centre line with his body-guard and band of music. He wears the mo-ak, or high and peaked gilt cap.

DRESS.

The Siamese national military dress is red, but the government is too penurious, and too little impressed with a knowledge of the advantages derived from uniformity, to give its troops respectable clothing. It is only a select body which is honoured with a red or blue uniform. It follows that a Siamese army, like a Burman one, exhibits a motley assemblage of fanciful dresses, and of persons naked from the waist upwards. The Siamese prefer this last state, for they are seldom seen with the upper part of the body clothed except in cool weather. The rájá or governor of Ligor himself sits in the Salaa or Durbar, without being clothed higher than just described. The true national head-dress is a crop; the hair is longer in front than behind, and is brushed up in a way which gives them a wild appearance. It is the best mode of wearing the hair for war, especially in a retreat, for the Chinese and others who wear their hair long are liable to be caught more easily by an enemy.

Fighting men have generally a peculiarly shaped cap or turban, stamped with cabalistical sentences from the sacred Bali. All ranks are attached to charms, which they believe perfectly secure them against wounds. Such a charm may consist of a deer's horn, a precious stone, a bit of wood, a gold ring, or other things over which incantations have been repeated, by priests or other persons qualified for the purpose.

The Siamese are acquainted with the use of coats of mail, but, unless on some grand attack of a fortified place, they do not attach importance to their use. Besides, as mail is of little or no service to foot soldiers, and the Siamese have no cavalry,[1] the use of it must be confined to the men on elephants.

STATE OF DISCIPLINE.—EFFICIENCY.—SUPPLIES.

As the Siamese have no body of indigenous troops deserving the name of a standing army, that discipline which alone renders men formidable in the field is with them at a very low ebb. Whatever degree of expertness a Siamese soldier may exhibit in the use of his arms, is generally the result of his own exertions, for he receives no training, (although he may have just left his plough,) until he goes into action. In their villages and in their houses they practise the ram dap, or sword dance, much in the Burman manner, and have fencing matches (pang pat). In these last the left hand is

[1] They have a few small horses.—Mr. Crawfurd's embassy.

armed either with a shield or a sword; the sword held in the left hand is for defence, the other for attack. Some of their positions are good, but they transgress the rules of science by striking so low as to expose the upper half of their bodies to an adversary. The long shield covers the body from the head to the knee, and is worn to ward off a cut on the left side. The Siamese will never thrust at a shield, since they are framed often of tough buffalo or rhinoceros hide, in which a sword would stick.

They seldom fire in a standing position, but in one somewhat approaching to that used by European sharpshooters; and their whole musket exercise consists in loading and firing in the manner each individual finds most convenient for himself.

They are, however, pretty good marksmen; they practise at a mark about the size of a crown-piece, and at a proper distance.

Siamese troops generally appeared to me to have a slovenly stooping gait, which may in part be owing to the habit of constantly crouching to power in every shape. The Siamese do not use oil and unguents like the natives of India to render their limbs supple, but they are an active race when in the field, and capable of enduring much fatigue.

PAY, RATIONS, AND SUPPLIES.

The soldier does not receive regular pay at any time, and in general does not get any pay or remuneration excepting bare provisions. Even these last he seldom receives until he has actually joined the army. In a book of rules it is provided that each man shall have a vest, a handkerchief for the head, and a sum of about ten rupees. The chiefs ought to have gold brocade dresses and money, but it is doubted if these regulations are acted on. Provisions or rations consist of rice, which having been boiled is dried in the sun; it is then packed in long bags, and each soldier, after the Burman fashion, wears one round his body until its contents are expended, also salt dried fish, chillies, and other small supplies. Every soldier on a regular march carries as many days' provisions as he can, and a bamboo of water; he is afterwards supplied from the stores conveyed on elephants; one man is allowed to every ten to assist them in cooking, bringing provisions, &c. As no Siamese force is accompanied by such a large number of elephants as would be required to convey provisions for any considerable length of time, the government always takes care to form depôts of grain at all the most important stations in the country; and it is, as amongst the Burmans, a rule, never swerved from it is believed, that every

province in the kingdom, and every subject state, shall provide grain to meet contingencies. For this purpose a tithe of the crop is yearly stored up in granaries.

The king takes the richest plunder of a campaign, but private plunder is also permitted.

CAMPAIGNS.—SLAVERY.

The Siamese make it a rule never to give quarter in battle, unless to officers of high rank. Prisoners taken after an engagement are carried into slavery. The sole object in the predatory incursions formerly made by the Siamese and Burmans into the outer provinces of each other's countries, was to carry off the inhabitants and convert them into slaves. The Burmans got back many of their countrymen at the intercession of the British authorities, but the Siamese are too politic a nation to allow a treaty to shackle them, except where the obligation is calculated to operate in their favour. They have accordingly helped themselves out of the unfortunate country of Keddah to a supply of persons of both sexes, and of all ages, excepting the infirm, in order to fill up the void space left by the removal of the Burmans and Peguans, taking credit all the while for having lent a favourable ear to the solicitations of the British.

MARCHES.—OMENS.

The marches of a Siamese army are regulated by the ma-hon, or astrologers, who form a numerous class, depending for subsistence on the offerings of credulity. If a snake should cross the road from right to left, it is a bad omen; if the reverse, it is good. But these astrologers have regular tables by which they calculate their fortunate days, and some of which depend on the peculiar positions of the planets. A preparation over a fire with shoots of the wild lime, and the wood of the tree called dudor by Malays, is fired along with ball at an enemy, and is supposed to paralyze his efforts. When going into battle, the Siamese often tie the long handles of their swords to the fore-arm, and repeat backwards the following Bali passage:—"Eití píso Bakhawa arahang Samasam Phúttho wícha charana sam paunosúkkhato lokawíthú anúttaro búrítsa thammassa rathí satha thewa manúts-anang Phúttho Bhakkhawatí."

It would be difficult to state the number of elephants which accompanies any given number of men. It depends entirely on the nature of the service to be performed. To each elephant are allotted twenty men, one sits on the neck, two in or on the howdah, who direct a swivel. To each foot of the animal there are four men

appointed, and they carry such arms as are given to them. Female elephants are mixed with the males to keep them in subjection. The elephants of Siam are large and well-trained. Lower Siam and the peninsula of Malacca abound with fine ones. The people from the Coromandel coast frequently export them; they take them on board at a port within the Hon. Company's territory, on the bank of the Pry river, lying opposite to Penang.

In marching, the centre of each line is some distance in advance of the wings, but not so far as to prevent them mutually assisting. The first line often precedes the others by two or three days' march. If the line thus advanced sustains a defeat, the rear ones generally retreat. About the period when Junkceylon was retaken, a Siamese force invaded Tavoy; it consisted, according to the Siamese, of 10,000 men. The advance of about 3000 having been beaten, the general fled or returned. At this rate we should only reckon in an army of 100,000 men, 33,000 who could be depended on.

They march at any hour, as the case may be, setting out before sun-rise; they halt an hour or two for breakfast, resume the march till about mid-day, then halt for rest, and finish the day's march about 4 P.M. They keep regular watches at night, and post numerous sentries, so that the Indo-Chinese armies are not so liable as Indian ones to be surprised at night. Fires are kept burning all round the camp, and patrols, when an enemy is near, are sent in every direction. A day's march is about twenty miles on an average.

The van of an army is preceded, and in some degree screened from the brunt of the onset, by a sort of forlorn hope, consisting of gaol prisoners and persons in disgrace with their superiors or the Court, and who have all the promise of pardon should they behave well and survive. This body are not denied such artificial or natural defences as they can make or find, such as bags of sand, rocks and banks, &c. The head-quarters are in the centre, as before observed.

When the troops reach within musket range of the enemy, the ranks are single and about twenty feet asunder. They alternately advance, stoop and fire, taking advantage the while of every natural shelter the place may afford. When they attack a fortified place they first endeavour to completely invest it; their guns fire occasionally, the miners and working parties keep constantly digging approaches, and when they have got close to the enemy they perhaps try to explode a mine, or, if they fancy him to be alarmed and ready to fly, they venture an escalade.

SIEGES.

The siege of the Laos fortified town of Che-ung-mai, about twenty-eight years ago, lasted, the natives say, nearly two years, when it was relieved by the arrival of a Siamese force. If they have no time to dig trenches, each man bearing a musket is provided with a spearman, and one or more persons carrying sand-bags, or temporary defences of plank.

INFLUENCE OF BUDDHISM.

The most singular feature in the Siamese military system is the injunction given to the commanders and soldiers "not to kill," but to fire short of the enemy, that they may escape the denunciation pronounced by their great religious lawgiver, Buddha, against the shedders of blood human and bestial.[1]

With this jesuitical salvo for his conscience, the king of Siam dismisses his generals to the war, knowing full well, however, that the dread of his displeasure, should they prove unsuccessful, will be sufficient to impel them to try and assure themselves of his approbation, by disobeying his orders. The fact is, that the remote dread which the Siamese soldier feels at the prospect of naraka, or hell, is conquered by the stronger fear of being slain by the enemy before his eyes, and he therefore kills him if he can. To suppose that a Siamese soldier, barbarous and unsparing as he is when excited by revenge and hatred, should calmly fire short of, or above, his enemy, were to give him credit for a degree of courage and magnanimity at variance with every fact yet brought to light.

It is true that the benign tenets of genuine Buddhism might have been expected to have operated as powerful checks on the sanguinary dispositions of its later followers, and that the countenance it is calculated to afford to the peaceful arts of life, might have enhanced their value, and insured their ultimate triumph. But none of these results have followed its introduction amongst the Indo-Chinese nations in the degree proportionate to what they ought to have shown themselves. Buddhism would appear to have reached the Siamese at the period when they had but lately branched off from the Lau or Laos nation; and when they possessed all the keen curiosity, the dread of preternatural influences, and sensitiveness to external impressions, joined to the gloomy implacability,

[1] Mr. Crawfurd, in his instructive account of Siam, notices, that those nations which have adopted Buddhism have not been famed for prowess. If such be the case, this injunction may have been one cause.

which are the characteristics of barbarism. Buddhism, therefore, grappled with their senses and fixed their fears; but, divested of its external attractions, it was too abstracted and exclusive to operate as the complete subverter of former principles of action or the framer of new.

The very naraka or hell, which the Burmans and Siamese dread or feign to dread so much, has only furnished them with demoniac cruelties and tortures to inflict on their enemies or others. Extremes too closely approach each other; and if a high state of civilization in Europe be consistent or coexistent with the infliction of torture, well may the Indo-Chinese nations claim exemption from severe censure on this head for centuries to come.

DESERTERS.—MILITARY PUNISHMENTS.

Should a Siamese soldier attempt to desert, he is instantly cut down or reserved for a worse punishment, and his whole family are thereby exposed to the penalty of death for his offence. Decapitation is the most common mode of executing culprits, but the will of the court, or of the commander in the field, determines the nature of the infliction. Sometimes they split open the offender's stomach with a large knife, in the same way as Mrs. Judson has described the Burman punishment, or they sew up his mouth so that he is only able to subsist on liquids, a punishment found amongst the Malays of Keddah.

Other punishments are inhumation up to the neck, and exposure to the sun in this horrid sand-bath for a specific period, or until death ensues; melted lead or other metal poured down the throat, or a cocoa-nut driven into the mouth. This last punishment is adverted to by M. de la Loubere, in his historical account of Siam. He relates that one of the Siamese ambassadors to the court of France in his time, imprudently said on his return, that the stables of King Louis were more elegant than the imperial prasaat (palace) at Bankok, for which assertion he was executed, by having a cocoa-nut driven into his mouth. There have been instances (but the punishment is not military, and is confined chiefly to the committers of sacrilege) of persons having been roasted to death in iron cages. Impaling, as amongst the Burmans, is not an unfrequent punishment; strangulation and the bastinado are common; thumb-screwing, and violent compression of the temples, drowning in sacks, and casting from rocks, are also practised. Sometimes the unfortunate wretch has his limbs tied to the bent-down branches of two contiguous trees,

and these are then allowed to rebound, carrying the dissevered members with them. They brand with a hot iron, or scoop out the eyes, or starve to death, or lop off limbs, or scalp, or cast adrift offenders in leaky boats. Ought civilized nations to treat with such a people on an equal footing?

ARDENT SPIRITS.

Although the use of ardent spirits is interdicted by the code of Buddha, yet this does not prevent the Siamese soldier from indulging in them when he can. Arrack is given also to elephants before an engagement. Opium, although prohibited to be used in Siam under severe penalties, is nevertheless indulged in.

TRACES OF HUMAN SACRIFICES HAVING ONCE OBTAINED.

Some faint traces appear to be still extant in Siam, of that nefarious spirit which formed the basis of most of the religions or superstitions of the old world, as it yet does of the dark creeds of several barbarous nations, and which demands the immolation of human victims at the shrine of the deity. But that such sacrifices actually formed a part of Siamese superstitions previous to the introduction of Buddhism, cannot perhaps be now proved.

Their soldiers of the present day confess that it is their custom to taste or touch with their mouths the blood on a sword which has just been used in slaying an enemy, by which act they declare that they believe themselves to be invested with the courage of the person slain, and that they will be preserved from the malice of hobgoblins and from madness. This custom is parallel with one which prevails or prevailed amongst several of the savage races of America, where the heart of an enemy was devoured in order that the person banquetting thus horribly might be inspired with his courage.

STANDARDS, OR THONG AND STANDARD BEARER.

The Siamese have five principal Thong-rap or standards, those of the centre and wings, of the advance, and the rear-guard. They are generally made of silk, and their colour is red. The devices are often embroidered.

The standard or colour-maker is either a chaukù (or priest), or one of the laity of reputed sanctity, But priests only accompany the army to perform their proper duties; they are then termed mahon. Siam contains, it is believed, about 50,000 priests. In both cases the individual must undergo certain modes of purification to

propitiate the Devattas. The ceremonies consist in placing lighted waxen tapers, dressed food, confections, and fruits, on the floor, and in ablutions and recitations of Bali passages of celebrated efficacy.

The K'hon-thu-thong, or standard-bearers, are men of some consideration, but not necessarily of very superior rank. They ought to be of a pure mind, and their external man ought to be secured from wounds by potent amulets and charms. These have partly been already noticed. They do not, in the manner of Burmans, tattoo charms on their bodies, or thrust plates of gold or silver impressed with cabalistic marks under the epidermis, but they use charmed juices of trees and oils, termed waan, which are either swallowed or rubbed on different parts of the body, during which operations they repeat invocations. Slips of metal, termed watrut phítsamáan, containing powerful spells, according to their belief, are also hung round the neck, and mongkon, or slips of paper, or o cloth, with other spells written upon them, are worn on the head They also wear charmed clothes, on which Bali sentences have been impressed.

When a Siamese soldier is momentarily expecting to be engaged with the enemy, he makes for the time being a compact with himself, by which he renounces his most besetting sins until a certain period shall have elapsed. But they rarely renounce the indulgence of ardent spirits, and therefore pray to the Devattas to forgive them, on the score that such a stimulus is requisite.

The Siamese, like the Burmans, often plant their standards in exposed situations, and surrounded by mock figures, in order to attract and distract the attention and the fire of the enemy. While this stratagem prevails, which it is apt to do in the absence of telescopes, they are busied intrenching themselves, or carrying on some other operation.

DEVICES ON STANDARDS.

The heraldry of Europe has evidently derived its origin from the East; it was, like that of the latter, intimately associated with religion and superstition. Maurice observes, that by the same hardy race, the descendants of the Tartar tribes which tenanted the north of Asia, armorial bearings were introduced into Europe, which were originally nothing more than hieroglyphical symbols, mostly of a religious allusion, that distinguished the banners of the potentates of Asia. The eagle belongs to the ensign of Vishnu; the bull to that of Siva, and the falcon to that of Rama. The sun rising behind a recumbent lion, blazed on the ancient ensign of the Tartar, and the

eagle of the sun on that of the Persians. The hansa, or famous goose,[1] one of the minor incarnations of Buddha, is yet the chief emblem on Burman banners. The Russians, no doubt, had their standard from the eastern nations; it is the type of Garuda. The Islamites took the crescent, a fit emblem either of a rising or of a declining empire, and of their primeval worship. Garuda, who is a great favourite with the Siamese, is yet not represented on their ensigns, although he waved his sable wings of old over the war-flag of the Hindu Vasu Deva, and of Pún deríke in Kashe; and although he is otherwise the eagle of the preserving Vishnu, the great enemy of snakes, whose prince, Raja Naga, lives in the nether regions in Badan.[2] But here in his stead we find the ape general, who was an emblem on the war-flag of Arjún. The leng, or horned alligator, or Sanskrit makara, the type of capricorn, sprawls on the Chinese standard; the great dragon or snake, symbolical of the horizon, of the Cneph, or agatho dæmon, or good spirit of the Egyptians, and one of the forms in which Buddha became incarnate, rolls his huge volume on the Malayan flag.

THE OATH TAKEN BY OFFICERS OF THE GOVERNMENT APPOINTED TO THE WAR DEPARTMENT, OR AS COMMANDERS OF TROOPS.

Previous to the oath being administered, a large jar filled with nam ongkhan, or holy water, is placed before the person swearing; five wax candles are lighted, lignum aloes and other fragrant woods are burned, and five branches of lotus and other flowers, and also perfumes, are duly arranged.

The Sathak'hom, or person who holds the office of adjurator, accompanied by four Phraam, or Brahmans, attends. Martial weapons which have been dipped in the holy or consecrated water already alluded to, are also produced. The individual makes three several obeisances to the candles and flowers, and repeats the Bali creed, beginning, "Namo thatsa," &c., and then the invocation of spirits of earth and air, beginning thus: "Sakhe kame charupe," &c. He then repeats the oath after the Sathak'hom. It is as nearly as possible in the same terms as the judicial oath, a copy of which was transmitted by me to the Royal Asiatic Society, appended to a dissertation on Siamese law.

"I, his Majesty's devoted slave, placing the sublime feet on the crown of my head, viz., on the head of the slave of the exalted

[1] Are not this goose and Leda's swan twin brothers?
[2] Asiatic Researches.

Phra Thínang chakkra phat ítsara ai sawan, who governs with justice and according to pure Bali ordinances, who is defender of the pure and holy P'hra Satsana [or the Buddhist faith], who regulates his public conduct by the Institutes of the renowned Baromma-krasat of old, whose fame is bright and unsullied as the diamond orb of day, and whose actions are the refulgent beams by which a dark world was illumed, and under whose beneficent rule the arts of peace were cultivated, and science flourished. I, slave of Phra Phút thí chau [here one of the titles of Buddha is obliquely bestowed on the king], solicit that I may be here permitted to take the binding oath of allegiance to his sacred majesty, the sappha awut thang po-ang, or arms and panoply of war; and the holy water being before me, and further, being conscious that I act as if in the presence of Phra Phút thí chau [Buddha], of Phra Dhamachau [the Bali or sacred word, here in a manner personified], and also of Phra Songkha chau [the holy ministers of religion]; and likewise in the presence of the emerald image of Buddha, which was fashioned by the hands of the cloud-borne Indra, when he condescended to visit the earth; and also having before me, and deeply impressed on my mind, the fear of the Devattas, and a sense of their glorious presence, and that they see me and hear me; in presence also of the spirits both good and evil of the four several degrees, and of Krung Phalí, who was driven from the earth by Buddha; of Nang Phra Thárani, the goddess of earth; of Uma Bhakk'hawadí, the Rak'hsa princess, who is everywhere present; of Wíchathán, the famed physician of old, who discovered the mercurial elixir, conferring immortality, and found out the virgin-bearing tree;[1] also of Khún thán, and of Subanna and Nagha Raja; in presencc of this exalted assemblage of divinities and spirits of distinguished mortals, I do swear that I will neither think, speak or act, in any way which shall not prove my fidelity to his Majesty. If I prove false, may this holy water be converted into the water of destruction, and may I be annihilated by it, under this shape, or under the shape of the red water of hell, or the water of stupefaction. May these weapons of war slay me, may the hatsúní, or lash of the sky, cut me in two, if I become a traitor to the lord of the red rice [Chau khau déng, alluding to the yearly festival which is held from the morning of the 14th to the evening of the 16th day of the fourth month, and is termed Wan trút lé wan Songkhraan (Sonkranti) Sam wan, on which three days the king distributes

[1] The Siamese represent this tree with virgins on it growing out of the flowers.

coarse rice boiled to all his subjects present]. May the Devattas [genii Loci], Phra Su-a mu-ang, and Phra Song mú-ang, and Phra thau an mírít, who may be distinguished in the Songkhraan [or Sonkranti, in the fifth month, when the sun enters Aries], also Tong pí, and Phí sat, and P,hot and P,hrai, utterly destroy me. Should his sacred Majesty take the field, then if I shall prove a coward or traitor, may the sword of the enemy reach my heart, or may Phra Yakha [a Rakhsa] seize me; or may Phlai and Phlang [male and female elephants], or buffaloes or rhinoceroses all mad with rage, tread on and gore me, or may snakes or alligators, or huge fishes, prove my destruction; or let Mangkan [or horned alligators], Nguuk [or Mermen], P,hrai nam, [evil water spirits,] devour me. Should I traitorously countenance any of the king's enemies, may I be tortured to death, so that blood shall spout from my mouth, ears, and nose; then let my head be cut off, and my sinning soul be precipitated into the hell Lokanta, there to feed on filth, and suffer during the space of one hundred thousand infernal years, during which should one or more Buddhas appear on earth for the regeneration of mankind, may I be found in hell beyond the pale of their mercy!"