

BOOK REVIEWS

Walter F. Vella, *Siam Under Rama III*. J.J. Augustin Inc., Locust Valley, N.Y., 1957. 180 pages, including appendix, bibliography, index.

Those interested in Siamese history will welcome this thorough and objective study of the period 1824-1851, covering the long reign of Rama III, or Phra Nang Klao. Western readers are more or less familiar with the reigns of King Mongkut, 1851-1868, and King Chulalongkorn, 1868-1910, rulers credited with opening up Siam to European trade, treaty relationships, and technology. Dr. Vella now offers an historical survey, in almost digest form, of the earlier reign which prepared the stage and the actors for the dramatic period that followed.

The author's attempts to focus attention upon the country rather than the ruler are not entirely successful because, at every turn, the King was the political leader and the focus of the nation's cultural life. Rama III, contrary to his detractors, was an able and active administrator, resembling Rama I in this respect. He obtained the throne, not as a usurper, but as the prince most eligible to rule by reason of his age, which was thirty-seven, his ability, and his political and military experience. Unlike his father, he cared little for poetry or the drama. He was, however, deeply religious, and gave much attention to the construction of Buddhist images and temples. The towering *prang* of Wat Arun and the major restoration of Wat Po are monuments to his devotion. Under his patronage temple decoration reached the "height of the afterbloom of Siamese art."

Rama III's reign was one of national consolidation. Forty-two years earlier his grandfather had established the Chakkri dynasty and made Bangkok the nation's capital. Fifteen years before that, following the fall of Ayuthia, the country was in chaos. Consequently there prevailed a compelling urge to rebuild, to restore social and political norms, to conserve classical forms, and to strengthen the

nation's borders. In achieving this the Siamese rounded out an era in which, astonishingly enough, cultural patterns had remained essentially unchanged for four hundred years. After 1850 the modern period began.

In four chapters the author has sorted out the complicated and little-known details of Siam's relationships with the Malay States, Burma, Cambodia, and Laos during the crucial years, 1824-1847. The long military struggle on the eastern marches halted the westward expansion of Annam, made buffer states of Laos and Cambodia, and had a bearing on political decisions in that area in the 1850's.

The chapter, "Relations with the West," is of special interest to English readers. Those critical of Rama III's closed-door policy in 1850 usually have overlooked the factors that determined the Siamese viewpoint. Siam had at that time an almost self-sufficient economy; foreign trade was of little importance to the average villager. China, and Chinese junks had long supplied Siam with silks, porcelains, and nearly everything desired except firearms. In a period when taxes were paid partly in kind, the King depended largely upon trade monopolies, export and import duties, and upon state shipping for revenue in specie. In the 1800's Britain's rapid colonial expansion in the interests of trade, and opium smuggling from British ports in the east, made the Siamese government wary of closer commercial ties. The preceding centuries, moreover, had taught the sad lesson that increased political contacts between governments usually led to increased friction and war. And finally, Rama III entered his last illness at the time when Sir James Brooke was calling for a new commercial treaty.

The Siamese officials justified their position with the contention that the Burney Treaty of 1826 with Britain, and the corresponding Roberts Treaty of 1833 with the United States, were still in force and were quite adequate. Rama III's unwillingness to negotiate in 1850 was not wholly characteristic of his temper. In 1826, Rama III had negotiated the Burney Treaty on terms of equality with

Britain, and this without the compulsion of foreign troops upon his soil. And the King concluded the Roberts Treaty in the record time of twenty-two days. We might ask, by way of comparison, what was the attitude toward the West of Japan, of Korea, and of China in 1826?

Siam under Rama III was sponsored by the University of California and the Association for Asian Studies. It was written slowly, after much research, and under competent guidance. Its chief merit is that it makes accessible to English readers a great deal of historical data formerly recorded only in the Siamese language. The Appendix contains a list in Siamese of documents and of prominent personages referred to by the author. Copious footnotes appear on nearly every page, a source of impatience to the casual reader, perhaps, but a treasure to the serious student.

One might question the author's use of the term "empire" (p.1) as applied to the Siam of that period; it is doubtful whether the King thought of himself as an emperor. The statement, "The government and the king were, in the minds of most of the population, abstractions not clearly imagined and infrequently meditated upon," (p. 24) seems to contradict an earlier statement (p. 16) that, "The court and the capital represented to the people the highest realization of their cultural aims." Most of the men, at least, meditated upon their government at seasons of taxation, corvee, and conscription.

This reviewer's chief criticism, regret rather, is that the treatment of a fascinating historical period in the heart of Southeast Asia is so brief. This is an observation not entirely justified, however, in view of the book's compact style. The wealth of factual material presented indeed exceeds that of many a larger tome.

K.E. Wells

Princesse Marsi Paribatra, *Le romantisme contemporain: essai sur l'inquiétude et l'évasion dans les lettres françaises de 1850 à 1950*. Éditions polyglottes, Paris, 1954.

Princess Marsi rejects the usual definitions, and especially the facile assumption that romanticism is the antithesis, point by point, of classicism; it is no more so, she says, than a dog is the antithesis of a cat: the two things are different. She prefers to describe rather than to define. Whereas classicism seeks a judicious balance between contending forces, romanticism admits the search is hopeless, reality is intolerable, and the only escape is into the imaginary. "In its time," she writes, "classicism was an equilibrium; in more or less the right proportions, classicism combined intelligence with feeling, individualism with the social order, respect for the content of a work of art with due attention to its form Romanticism, on the other hand, is disquiet, jumping from one extreme to the other: from unordered sensibility to unhuman intellectualism, from languid reveries to excited activity, from crotchety egotism to the deification of Society, from a wistfulness for olden times to pure revolt, from a magical idealism to systematic descriptions of filth, from the extraordinary to the banal, from the destruction of all rules of prosody and diction to the cult of form devoid of content. No one of these pairs of opposites is more romantic than another. Romanticism is the rush to an extreme in either direction, the frantic rush to escape."

Most critics assume that the Romantic movement came to an end in the middle of the 19th century, and that it was succeeded by a medley of different schools—Parnassians, decadents, symbolists, naturalists, modernists, dadaists, surrealists, existentialists, etc. A few critics, however, view that medley as an uninterrupted continuation of the Romantic movement of 1750-1850. Princess Marsi's book is a defense of the minority view. She does not assert that romanticism never existed before 1750, nor that every French poet and novelist since then has been 100-per-cent romantic (though Anatole France is about the only one she admits to have

avoided it altogether); it is rather a question of degree. She begins by analyzing the main characteristics of the "first" Romantic period in literature — the period that everyone admits was Romantic (1750–1850) — with its prevailing theme of pessimism and escape. She then shows how this theme has been no less predominant in practically all French literature for the period 1850–1950. The characteristic symbols of sadness of the first Romantic period, such as autumn, the moon, and bells, maintain all their prestige in the second; but alongside them a host of new sad images crop up: "From 1850 on, everything can be sad: wind, evening, water, Sunday, the moon, spring, summer, autumn, winter, seas, forests, castles, cottages, swamps, night, rooms, houses, or Egyptian temples." There is something hallucinating in the eight pages of examples she cites. "If it is tiresome," she says, "to hear the poet proclaim *I am bored, I am lonely, I am sad*, it is no less tiresome to hear him repeating *the moon is bored, the water is lonely, the weather-vane is sad*. Or rather, it is tiresome at first, but soon it becomes amusing. Because of this leitmotiv, certain poems which are otherwise quite good become irresistibly funny; at every page we expect a sobbing fountain or some disconsolate bells."

A statistical proof that contemporary literature is pervaded with pessimism would require the use of an electronic brain fed by a large staff of trained clerks — and it would make dull reading. Princess Marsi prefers an artistic approach; if her proof is necessarily incomplete, it is persuasively presented, and supported by a wide range of excerpts. "It sometimes happens," she writes, "that an historian of ideas, in trying to prove his point, patiently culls from several thousand works a few examples that form an impressive mass when they are taken together, although they really do not loom very large in the literature that contains them. That was not at all the way I gathered the melancholy texts in this chapter. I naturally began by reading, or re-reading, the authors where I expected to find melancholy — Baudelaire, Rodenbach, Sartre, etc., then books with promising titles and indeed I reaped a rich harvest. But then I systematically picked up one or

two books by all the best-known authors of the last hundred years In this way, I believe, I got a representative sampling. It appeared that at least one out of every two books, chosen at random, contained a large display of melancholy. I myself was surprised to find such a *density* of melancholy in contemporary literature; and often, when I had finished a stint of reading, I felt sickened at having to cope with so much spleen, disgust, and life-weariness." "All this spleen," she writes, "this forlornness, this despair in nothingness and infinity, this apathy and moping, find their explanation in the philosophy of Sartre and their highest pitch in his novels: *la Nausée* is perhaps the most moping book ever written."

Few of us, I suppose, can take a sustained interest in the symptoms of a writer's distress, but we may find his routes of escape instructive. These are more numerous than the devices which Arnold Toynbee says have made life tolerable for ordinary people—hard work, love, art, religion, and intoxicants. Among the escapes proposed by French writers are nature, the great city, exoticism, olden times, the future, sensuality, drunkenness, religiosity, politics, occultism, dreams, absurdity, humor, despair, madness, suicide. Princess Marsi describes them clearly and rather mercilessly. She laughs at the sort of artless exoticism that pretends to be well-informed—for example, "India! India! White mountains filled with pagodas and idols, in the midst of woods swarming with tigers and elephants!" (Flaubert); or "Everything is golden in the sacred city of Benares. The gold-clad domes and rosy peaks of the minarets reach up into the golden apotheosis of the sky; the walls, columns and pent-roofs of the shrines are golden" (Lorrain). In quoting such passages the Princess comments: "Although I was born in those wild regions, I swear I have never seen a tiger outside the circus or the zoo. As for gold, alas, a bit of gilt ornament on a pagoda is overshadowed by all too many poverty-stricken streets which could not possibly appeal to even the most decadent tourist." Her discussion

of contemporary literature as "magic" is incisive, and particularly her remarks on occultism as a romantic escape. "Paris today is swarming with people who are enamoured of the Vedas and Yoga, meeting in select groups for respiratory and spiritual exercises. In Bangkok where I was born, in the heart of the mysterious Orient, I had never seen anything like it. It is very picturesque."

Though many flashes of wit make it lively reading, this is a very serious book. The overtones are disturbing, for the author sees romanticism as far more than a literary movement: to her it is a widespread sociological phenomenon, intimately bound up with the economic, social and cultural developments of the West during the last two centuries. If she is right, a dire corollary would seem inescapable: Western society is sick indeed.

Its mental disquiet is an obvious fact, but I doubt whether Western society is quite so decrepit as one might suppose from the evidence of novels and poetry. If their preoccupation with pessimism and escape really reflects an endemic malady, the patient has nevertheless managed to survive it for two hundred years. With such a record of "tolerance" to a disease, it is possible that Western society may be able to pull through a while longer. Poets and novelists may be quite cheerful people in their daily life, reserving their bleaker moods for their craft; *their* real escape is not so much a rush to extremes, it is a rush to get published. The poet who reiterates *I am sad* may be wanting in originality, but at least the poem can go on from there; if he reiterates *I am happy and well-adjusted to my environment*, there is not much more for him to say. Again, ordinary people whose livelihood does not depend on melancholy may find their "escape" in constructive work; wage-earners who take pleasure in their tasks are not unknown. Finally, the huge body of today's technical writing, in at least partial contrast to the romantic category, suggests that mental disquiet does not always lead to escapism, but now and then produces positive solutions.

The Princess does not assert the dire corollary which I have ventured to question, though it does seem to follow from some of her conclusions. It is outside the subject under study, which is literary. The subject is already vast enough, and would have proved unwieldy for a less disciplined mind than Princess Marsi's. She has an enviable command of her material, a sense of order, and a sharp critical faculty. These are the qualities of classicism; her study of romanticism is essentially non-romantic.

Her approach to European studies might well serve as a model for Westerners engaged in the study of one or another phase of Siamese culture. Few of us, I fear, would come anywhere near meeting the standard: one must begin young. Except for a child prodigy in the 12th century, Princess Marsi was the youngest candidate ever to receive a doctorat-es-lettres at the Sorbonne; *le Romantisme contemporain* was her doctoral thesis.

A.B. Griswold

Howard Fast, *The Naked God: The Writer and the Communist Party*. New York, Frederick Praeger, 1957. 197 pages.

Presented to the Siam Society by the Office for Asian Affairs, Congress for Cultural Freedom, 5 Hailey Road, New Delhi 1.

That the Congress for Cultural Freedom should present this book for review is appropriate, for the author's principal theme is that cultural freedom is as impossible in a Communist system as snow in Siam. Mr. Fast, an American writer, speaks with authority, for he was a member of the American Communist Party from 1943 to 1956, when the Krushchev report of Communist atrocities so sickened and revolted him that he left the Party. "For more than a year now," he writes in this memoir, "I have lived with the feeling of a man who has come out of a deep and distorted dream. After long years, I have found myself—my own personal freedom, which I hold the most precious thing a man knows; the right to do as my own conscience dictates; the right to error, blunder, and even prime foolishness; and also the right to dream, hope, and never hold silence when I see wrong and evil done. I know of no substitute for this."

But why, since all these rights were always his as an American citizen, did he ever forfeit them to the Communist Party? The answer, now familiar to us in the thickening annals of ex-Communists, is the shining promise of social justice that Communism pretends to offer and that exercises an irresistible allure on men of certain casts of mind and experience. Mr. Fast was one of these, and he gives a brief explanatory account of his working-class slum boyhood, the struggle for existence during the Depression and its terrible manifestations, his early discovery of the realm of books and all they revealed to him of thought and imagination, and his reading of Shaw and Marx. Socialism seemed to him, and still seems, man's hope. Throughout the 1930's he was on the fringes of the left-wing movement, but he did not commit himself until the Second World War; when the evils of Nazism and Fascism threatened what was dearest to him: civilization, culture, art, literature. "These were my life, my existence," he writes. "I

came to accept the proposition that the truest and most consistent fighters in this anti-Fascist struggle were the Communists.' He joined them, convinced that he was dedicating himself to the redemption of man and to a future of total brotherhood when poverty and injustice would cease to exist.

For thirteen years, as a Communist, he gave all his money, time, and considerable talent to the Party; begged money for it from rich fellow-travellers who, buying their thrills cheap, pursued Communism like pampered women caressing bullfighters; defended the Party from outside attacks; went to jail for it; denounced all reports of Communist savagery as the lies of enemies; suffered slander and shame from fellow-members; clung to his membership in the face of threats and degradation; rewrote his books at the behest of Party troglodytes, denounced other writers for unorthodoxy, and finally, surrendering all artistic integrity, wrote to order without regard to truth. (These pages, which might have been a chapter in Orwell's *1984*, will make writers writhe in empathy.) Then came the Krushchev report, like a stroke of lightning on a darkened waste; all that he and others had suffered was polarized in that enlightenment; the god that he had served was revealed naked and ugly. "We took the noblest dreams and hopes of mankind as our credo; the evil we did was to accept the degradation of our own souls — and because we surrendered in ourselves, in our own Party existence, all the best and most precious gains and liberties of mankind — because we did this, we betrayed mankind, and the Communist Party became a thing of destruction." He left the Party then in an anguish of catharsis.

What had kept him in this servitude? Mr. Fast's analysis of the Communist Party as a religion is the most convincing and detailed in the literature of apostate Communists, all of whom testify to this aspect of its power and corroborate the Toynbee theory that it is a Christian heresy. "Men of good will" — this is a cliché they all use —, magnetized by the hope that the meek will inherit the earth and the last shall be first, at last surrender

themselves to Communism as others are converted to religion or fall in love, a phenomenon of attention in which the critical faculties are suspended in a kind of exaltation. Their spiritual investment is then so vast that any withdrawal threatens bankruptcy. When Mr. Fast joined a cell—he explains that this basic unit of the Party is a kind of community club—he found that it consisted of honest, dedicated, selfless people who worked tirelessly and without pay to fulfill the needs and solve the problems of the laboring classes in their areas. These saintly people, Mr. Fast avers, project their own virtue and integrity into the Party; persecution of that Party, to which they have given all they have, creates in them a sense of righteousness, outrage, and religious fervor hostile to reason—and a kind of inverted corruption begins. The Party, which has succeeded in infusing in millions of minds the idea that it alone is the vehicle of social progress, becomes to them the Temple of God. Criticism is stifled, all opponents are automatically agents of evil, and the mechanism is set whereby any dogma pronounced by the temple priests is accepted as holy writ.

The organization of this priesthood as outlined here is a hierarchy more rigid than Egypt's ever was. (In fact, the reader may be haunted by the feeling that a dispassionate anthropological study of Communism would offer fascinating parallels, though such a project will not be possible for a century or so—provided, of course, that (1) man still exists then and (2) a society exists in which dispassionate research on the subject is possible.) A number of cells is organized into a section, which is led by a paid revolutionary who holds classes, meetings, and lectures where the Party line is expounded like gospel. Above these are the tough, tried professionals—the leaders of the regions and districts, and finally the national secretary, who is dictator and tyrant and who hands down the Party line, resolutions, and decisions. The lower functionaries, who are appointed from on high and thus owe their power to their superiors, impose these dicta on the rank and file in lectures and discussions that deceptively purport to be free but in iron reality

are church services in which the absolute doctrine is revealed. Any opposition from members is destroyed (for every "decision" of a body of members must be unanimous, to demonstrate Party solidarity forever) through the use of two instruments: first, the conviction, propagated by the Party, of the divine wisdom of the top leaders and the holiness of the Party; and, second, the threat of excommunication from the Party. This has a peculiar horror for Communists; it is like being cast out from heaven, driven from the company of the blessed out among the damned in the Inferno. "Perhaps," writes Mr. Fast, "no religion in all history has ever exercised such a power of damnation over its communicants; and perhaps no communicants in all history have accepted so totally the theory of a hellish curse."

This the members, actually as voiceless in Party policy and decisions as church pews, are forced, by pressures inside the Party and out, into strict conformity, Party worship, and self-abasement before the priests. Mr. Fast limns a chilling sketch of these commissars—aloof, humorless, non-committal out of stupidity and cowardice, divorced from the common joys of human life and arctically fierce in the feral struggle for power. They claw their way up the sacerdotal order through ruthlessness, arrogance, contempt, shrewd opportunism, canny ambivalence, and savage expediency. Fear, superstition, and ignorance are cultivated and exploited; every device of magic—incantations, divination, thaumaturgy, taboos—is employed to produce that strange hypnosis of the mind that compels the swallowing of every outrageous convolution of the Party line as sacred food. (The chapter on magic is the most interesting in the book.) The result of this process in a non-Communist country is a fanatic orthodoxy among Party members led and controlled by men so removed from reality as to appear schizoid; in a Communist country the end result is murder, torture, and Stalin. The by-product is the hate and anger that builds up in every honest member against the leaders. Such members doggedly hope for better leaders, but this hope is folly, for the Party, through its

nature and structure, can produce only the kind it does — "power-hungry, dictatorial, inhuman and anti-human." Thus between leaders and the mass of ordinary members is a "merciless situation of stress."

This stress became most apparent to the author in the Party's treatment of its intellectuals. Particularly susceptible to the appeal of a better social order, they embraced Communism with its promise; but when they exercised within the Party that very perception that made them critical of the old injustices, and spoke out their independent thought, they were crushed by contempt, denied freedom of expression, and forced to submit to the arid strictures of the Party line. In Russia they are simply killed; the Communists destroy their writers, and they are correct to do so, for every writer is by nature an enemy of the Party; and Mr. Fast notes with a rather touching wonder that in capitalist America, under the government that he attacked so fiercely as a Communist, he not only continues to stay alive but to write and to fight for the right of practicing that pursuit as he pleases.

An assortment of curious and enlightening observations studs these pages. Psychiatry is forbidden Communists, but there are "secret believers" who stealthily bootleg it. (Another interesting study could be made of secular priesthoods and their subsurface warfare.) Soviet anti-Semitism came as a great shock to the author, a fast defender of oppressed minorities. The portrait of John Gates, editor of *The Daily Worker*, is a tribute to a friend, and the story of Gates' schism from the Party is a study in the nature of Communism.

A shocker, like all ex-Communist memoirs, this book is also sad. Any reader who remembers with admiration and pleasure such early Howard Fast novels as *The Last Frontier* will look with melancholy failure for the old precision and clarity in this heart-broken, sometimes incoherent book with its clichés and sentences that sometimes never come clear. One can believe the author's tortuous statement that "the book grew in the fury of the conflict

and came alive not without an agony that was part of no other writing I had done," and one can believe that the Communist Party does break its writers over a rack. Apparently they cannot serve two masters.

But perhaps the most striking impression one takes from this book is the humanistic, naive, courageous decency of its writer, qualities so old-fashioned that one feels he strayed into the wrong era; he should have joined the Fabian socialists and spent long, intoxicatingly happy evenings with Wells and the Webbs rather than thirteen grim years with priggish fanatics. Here is none of the piercing brilliance of an Arthur Koestler or the weird muck of a Whittaker Chambers, but the earnest, honest passion of a man who, dedicated to an ideal of brotherhood, threw himself wholeheartedly into a pride of lions under the impression that it was a battalion of Christian soldiers. This appalling misjudgment is one of the great errors of our time, embraced by men as nobly motivated as Howard Fast, and more gifted. How can such men have believed the reports of Nazi brutality and rejected the evidence of Soviet atrocities? How could a man who hated Fascism as an enemy of literature submit to a Communist censorship as bigoted and insane as the house organ of a psychiatric ward for religious lunatics? How can his doubts about the disparity of ends and means have flowered so late when that dilemma was a freshman debating team subject in the 1930's? The reason, these ex-Communist writers indicate, lies somewhere in that barely charted region of the mind and heart where logic and judgment are at the command of desire. One of the admittedly most appealing elements to Mr. Fast, for instance, was the sense of belonging to a pure brotherhood, a sense that the early Christians must have had in the corrupt society of Rome. It must have been a sweet and liberating sense, worth much sacrifice, to a man whose bleak and marginal childhood was made even more lonely by his love of books, and whose hard-won adult status as an intellectual admitted him to no charmed circle. He was praised and feted in the Communist world, where writers, like Aztec sacrifices, are deified

before their living hearts are torn out. The Communist promise of equality and fraternity to society's Outsiders makes liberty seem negligible until, within the Party confines, they find they are still Outsiders, stripped now of their chief treasure — freedom of inquiry and expression.

The irony that runs through the whole account is that Mr. Fast, motivated by compassion and the hatred of tyranny, joined the tyrannical enemy of bourgeois ideals. It is no surprise to read that he was always on the brink of expulsion; the wonder is that he survived at all among the lions. It is not even surprising that, being deeply committed through idealism and loyalty, he endured the irony as long as he did, until the Krushchev report — the Communists' own confession of sin — crystallized in his mind all the evidence of betrayal and perversion that he had resolutely refused to face or believe. The final irony is that he then demanded that the American Communist Party dissolve itself; it was, he pointed out, the only honourable course. Honour, an aristocratic Western concept still retained by bourgeois capitalism, is as out of place in Communist deliberations as an Elgin marble in a Byzantine torture chamber; it is a pleasant surprise to know that it was brought up in those councils.

Out of his ordeal, Mr. Fast has brought an emphatic conviction that deserves close attention, bought as it was with experience. He expresses it thus:

No force on earth can destroy the Communist Party, but the application of truth will melt it as rain melts salt.... Only the Russian people can deal with the question of their Communist Party, even as each and every people on earth must deal with the same question; and a Communist Party, any Communist Party, will disappear and destroy its monstrous, monolithic temple structure only when a very significant part of its membership come to understand its functioning nature.

To do this, they must conquer *fear*, for fear of the mysterious and nameless gods of the Party is central to the Party itself....

... No organization based on pseudo-religious cant, cemented with neurotic fear and parading ritualistic magic as a substitute for reason, can endure in this second half of the twentieth century. Only the Western nations can make the Communist Party survive. If they succumb to the madness of bellicosity... and force the issue, or even allow the issue to proceed to another war, then very likely only the fanatical structure of the Communist Party will survive the holocaust as a functioning organization capable of some sort of rule.

We are poised, I think, between acts of wisdom and acts of destruction. If we act wisely, with a new tolerance, a new understanding, and especially a new effort to prove good faith to the people of the East, then it may well be that we will witness the peaceful cooperation of democratic socialism and democratic capitalism in the building of a better world for our children.

Mary Sanford

The Way of the Buddha. Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Government of India. Times of India Press, Bombay, 1957. 330 pages, including notes.

This book, even though it is called *the Way of the Buddha*, appears to me to consist of short quotations from heterogeneous Sanskrit works, many of which are non-Buddhist. Those quoted from Buddhist sources, such as the "Brahmajala Sutra," are of the category of which the Buddha says in that Sutra: "It is in respect only of trifling things, of matters of little value, of mere morality, that an unconverted man, when praising the Tathagata, would speak." The Buddha also says in that Sutra: "There are, brethren, other things, profound, difficult to realize, hard to understand, tranquillizing, sweet, not to be grasped by mere logic, subtle, comprehensible only by the wise. These things the Tathagata, having himself realized them and seen them face to face, hath set forth; and it is of them that they, who would rightly praise the Tathagata in accordance with the truth, should speak." Quotations of this category are unfortunately lacking in this book. Since the pages in this book are not numbered, it is impossible to give it a proper review; for any attempt to refer readers to any particular page would require a lengthy description of it that would take up much space without being able to say anything about the quotation therein. And as very little space is permitted here, only little can be said.

Therefore, I can only recommend that the "Brahmajala Sutra" from the *Sacred Book of the Buddhists*, should be read through; for it provides a criterion by which one may judge whatever is said of the Buddha by people not belonging to the Faith. It reveals also how monotheistic and polytheistic ideas originated, and how these and other speculative views are bound to keep their upholders in the Net of Brahma or the Sangsara from which earnest Buddhists seek deliverance.

However, this book is interesting in that it gives a good photographic rendition of stone relief and sculpture depicting the

life of the Blessed One from Birth to Enlightenment, and from Enlightenment to Parinibbana. All of these were carved in mountain caves in sincere devotion to his memory some centuries after his Parinibbana. From the scenes thus depicted, one observes that the early worshippers of the Blessed One believed in the existence of gods as devine beings endowed with various powers and attributes, but not yet freed from lighter passions and delusion, so that they are kept in the cycle of rebirth or the Sangsara, thus remaining far below the Blessed One.

In depicting, his life his worshippers surrounded him with the gods from Brahma, Siva, Visnu, as well as other lesser deities, as though the gods were his attendants. The Blessed One himself did not deny the existence of gods as deserving reapers of the fruits of their past deeds in accordance with the law of Karma or the Norm — not a divine fiat, but the immutable law of nature.

The Self-Enlightened Buddha discovered the Dharma or the Truth by intuitive insight, and taught it for the benefit of all — gods and men. He had no reason to pray to any god or man because he had transcended them all and attained that blissful and changeless peace called Nibbana which is beyond all gods, neither created nor creating, realizable but not conceived. His language was of course the language of the people, and he used their terminology to draw their attention and finally to explain his meaning to them. Thus he was able to make his profound Doctrine understood. His contemporaries used to speak of him in this way: "Even because of this reason or that, the Blessed One is the Self-Enlightened Arahata, endowed with full knowledge and intuitive wisdom, well-delivered and possessed of a clear insight into the world, unsurpassed as the trainer of men worthy to be trained, the Teacher of gods and men, resplendent in the fullness of enlightenment, the Expounder of Dharma to all mankind."

Therefore, he could not have been the borrower of others' doctrines who developed and incorporated them into one and called it his own, but the teacher of his own discovered Truth now known

as Buddhism, which is free to all. His statues do not portray acts of prayer but of meditation and radiation of loving kindness, compassion, good cheer and equanimity towards all beings.

In keeping with the name of this book, *The Way of the Buddha*, it is well for me to conclude this comment with the words of the Blessed One:

“Sabbapapass akaraṇaṃ
Kusalassupasampada
Sacittapariyodapanam
Etaṃ buddhanasasanam”

“Avoiding all sins, fulfilling virtues, purifying the mind.
These are the teachings of all the Buddhas.”

Let the truth of the teaching, peace and well-being be available to all beings.

Upaliśarn Jumbala

Chula Chakrabongs, H.R.H. Prince, *The Twain Have Met, or An Eastern Prince Came West*. G.T. Foulis & Co. Ltd., London 1956. 288 pages, ill.

Liberal thinkers, whether oriental or occidental, have probably not been very happy about the dictum of Rudyard Kipling that East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet. Prince Chula Chakrabongs therefore deserves our congratulations in thus coming forward to challenge the famous dictum with his autobiography. Numerous evidences in the book indicate a real understanding of both East and West, such as only a keen observer like the author can ever hope to possess. The personal background of the author as presented here shows a careful nurturing according to the best standard of an oriental mentality, followed by a thorough training in the ideals of an English educational system and English life. If heredity can influence character, as I believe it can, then his heredity may be held up as one of the important factors in thus moulding a mentality which has been able to digest the aristocratic heritage of successive generations of Siam's rulers, thus facilitating absorption of all that is noble in the West; after all, the ideals of a gentleman is identical whether in the East or in the West. To give just one or two evidences of his correct evaluation of the East and of his ability to so word it as to be intelligible to the Westerner, let us quote his presentation, on page 71, of the Siamese attitude on the images of the Buddha, where he says:

"The Buddha images are not worshipped separately, being merely works of art which lead our thoughts towards the Enlightened Master who had long passed on, for the Buddhist finds that the image helps his concentration when he pays his respect to the Great Teacher by renewing faith in Him, His Doctrine and the *Sangha* or established order of monks whose daily duty it is to preach the Doctrine to us today. There is nothing more idolatrous in our bowing before a Buddha image than the western practice of saluting the Cenotaph in remembrance of the dead of two world wars."

As for the law of cause and effect, which often puzzles Westerners, the author says a little lower down the same page:

"..... for us flesh is not *sin*, but the source of sorrow, and as we believe in *Karma* or the law of cause and effect, sin therefore does not exist for us as such."

Again, writing about the institution of the white elephant (page 13) he comments:

"They were kept rather as pets and never used for any work, being regarded as appendages to the King's majesty but never worshipped as sacred for themselves."

There can be no better valuation of the white elephant, which is often misunderstood by foreign writers to be held sacred. The fact that there is a tradition that the Buddha's mother dreamt that such an elephant came down from heaven just as she conceived her world-famous son has lent credence to the sanctity of the white elephant; but it really had nothing to do with the type sought for a king's stable.

The work has been called an autobiography by its author, and an autobiography it certainly is. This theme runs right through the book and consists of Prince Chula's antecedents, Prince Chula as a child, Prince Chula's education, Prince Chula's grown-up experiences, Prince Chula's position and life in Siamese and European Court circles and their royalties, Prince Chula's personal interests such as motoring and travel, Prince Chula's love and marriage and the patronage and friendship which he so kindly extended to his cousin the world famous "Bira" of the gold star fame. All this is interspersed with His Royal Highness' impressions of figures and facts of home politics as well as those of the world. His historian's mind has been responsible for a very sane treatment of Siamese history up to the cessation of the so-called absolute monarchy. History thereafter, though there is plenty of it in the book, is too close to modern actualities, and thereby possibly lends itself to unbalanced judgment, even by one who has, like Prince Chula, been

in the places about which he writes, yet who, unruffled by local loyalties or rivalries, has kept himself at a safe distance from their scene of conflict. So much for the general characteristics of the book. A review aiming at the constructive criticism which is usual in these pages should extend beyond mere generalisation.

Despite its unusual prologue, which will not be discussed here, the autobiography is invaluable for its varied fields of interest—history, travel, court etiquette and English country life all finding a treatment which is scholarly, thorough and appealing. But some comment should be made on the author's historical treatment. Readers may be perhaps disappointed with the obvious compromise that "As we ourselves call our country Muang Thai, the term Thailand is surely the closest English translation" (p. 6). One has to admit however that, after all, a compromise is an easy way of getting out of discussions of byzantine values. We cannot get out of the fact that the word *Thai*, often simply *Tai*, when used to distinguish racial units, has been accepted in scientific circles as indicating that earlier race which embraced a wider geographical area than the modern political entity usually known as Siam but which has now been changed officially to Thailand. As for the meaning of the word *Thai* rendered by quoting Bowring, one wonders whether a systematic writer of the calibre of Sir John Bowring would, if he now lived, have accepted this meaning. The word *Thai* (or *Tai*), when associated with the Mandarin *Ta*, meaning "great," has also been thought to indicate the original name of our race. Could it not have acquired the new meaning of "free" somewhat later when it became all important to emphasise our freedom from Khmer yoke?

On page 8, where the Thai Kingdom of Nanchao is discussed, Prince Chula should have taken into consideration the new theory, enunciated last November at the Ninth Pacific Science Congress, Section on Anthropology, that the Kingdom was founded by a Tibeto-Burman race which had ousted the Thai from the valleys of the Yangtse. In mentioning this, I must confess that I have to be convinced by more definite details before I accept the new theory.

The translation on page 10 of the name Sukhothai by "Happy Thai" is an unhappy etymological attempt of Phra Sarasas and is, of course, unacceptable. The name of the town of Sukhothai came into epigraphy towards the end of the XIIIth century in a classical form. No Thai name is known to have existed that is possible of having been indianised into Sukhothai or Sukhodaya. Sukhothai is of course the Thai phonetic form of the Pali Sukhodaya, which is *sukha* + *udaya*, 'the fount of happiness.' While still on page 10, it must be noted that the leader who led that mediaeval Thai migration to Nôṅ-sano and founded Ayudhyā was not named U Thong as is stated in this book. He was really named Pṛacāo U Tōṅ (or U Thong, if you like), which means the King of U Tōṅ; his name has not been authentically recorded.

On page 17, a slip should be corrected. The Minister of the Treasury was Čaophyā Pra-Ķlay in Siamese and not Čaophyā Klay. The form has been retained in foreign records as the *Barcalon*.

On page 23, it would not be historically justifiable to support Pṛa Sarasas' propaganda of vilification of the Chakri dynasty in connection with the mentality of the King of Dhonburi. That the King had lost his reason was a well-known fact, found not only in official documents of the Chakri dynasty of the time, but also revealed in unofficial and independent sources such as the correspondence of contemporary missionaries and traders of foreign nationality that may be found in the *Histoire de la Mission de Siam 1662-1811*, by Adrien Launay, Vol. II, under the headings of *Départ de l'Evêque et des missionnaires* (1780), and *Démission et massacre de Pha Ja Tak*. As the author has pointed out, the way the King met his end was unfortunate, but it was the fault of circumstances, especially, one might add, in view of the imminence of a renewed campaign of conquest by the Burmese. In such a contingency it might have been very awkward if subversive elements were to make use of a deposed monarch, willy-nilly, as their rallying point behind the back of the reigning King leading his forces against the numerically superior enemy from the west.

On page 24 the author's attention should be drawn to the mistaken orthography of the name of Rama I's father. The name in fact has not been established in any of the standard histories. Since no other name has been forthcoming, the one mentioned may be provisionally accepted, coming as it does from no less a scholar than King Mongkut himself who was often Bowring's authority in such matters. Bowring's spelling is, however, faulty. He wrote *Phra Akson Sundon Smiantra*. This really consisted of his rank *Phra*; his title, *Sundon*, in the middle, and finally his office, *Smiantra*, which is to say, 'Keeper of the Seal.' As for the title in the middle, it might have been *Akson Sundorn*, from the similarity of the spelling given; or it might have been *Alakhara Sundorn*, which actually was the title of the holder of that office when Rama I came to the throne; or it might have been, (though it is hardly likely) *Binič Akson* as given in the XVth century legislation of King Boroma Trailokanāth. The name *Surasri* (3 lines farther down) should be *Surasih*, 'the valiant lion' which is prescribed by the laws. The first spelling makes no sense. On page 28 the author is perfectly correct in maintaining that the ballet has never been a religious dance. In support of this contention the following passage from the epilogue of the Rāmakien of Rāma I is appended:

"This royal writing of the Rāmakien has been attempted by His Majesty in accordance with Hindu tradition. The story should not be regarded as of basic value but is merely a part of the King's dedication to the Master's Teachings."

On page 34, in connection with the institution of surnames, it is necessary to correct the statement that "the King set up a department to help him think out the names, whereas my father made them up himself." As a matter of fact, the people who petitioned the King to grant them surnames were overwhelmingly more numerous than those who applied to any one else, with the possible exception of the administrative officials who, because they were in charge of the registration, had to be ready to coin names for those who stated they were unable to adopt any names for themselves.

The department mentioned by the author had long existed as that of the Royal Scribes, whose duties involved Court protocol. It drew up, for instance, official proclamations, the sovereign's formal autograph letters; it invented names and titles for royal bestowal and was generally responsible for all the literary activities of the monarch. King Rama VI was in fact quite adept at coining names, and he apparently took pleasure in doing it, though when thousands of applications for surnames came in during the initial years of the institution of surnames he left the task mostly to the Royal Scribes.

On page 149, certain corrections should be made. The Supreme Council of State never really had a President, having been presided over by the Sovereign himself. None of the two elder princes mentioned as successive presidents of the Supreme Council was really a president. They acted in this capacity only during the King's absence from the capital.

On page 166, it is stated that Prince Wan had been living in retirement till called upon to advise the government of Phya Bahol; the truth was that after his transfer from London he was a professor in Chulalongkorn University.

Among the list of 'books quoted' in this book, one finds a creditable array of authorities for reference. A few, however, hardly deserve the serious attention of a writer of the author's calibre, even though he refutes their statements. *My Country Thailand*, by Phra Sarasas, for instance, which boasts of having reached five editions, can hardly be said to reflect credit on a book which lends it any authority at all. It is mere scurrilous propaganda which has been found beneath the attention of the Siam Society for review in this *Journal*.

Koh Lak, 17th April 1958.

Dhani

Buddhist Remains in India, Indian Council for Cultural Relations, New Delhi, 1956, with route - guides, maps and ill. 141 pages.

The book has been made up of a collection of articles by various authors, of whom Mr. A. Ghosh, Director-General of Archeology, and Dr. A.C. Sen, Secretary of the Institute of Indology in Calcutta, were the largest contributors, though there were others who wrote important material such as the chapter on Taxila by Mme. Mitra. The Editor was Dr. A.C. Sen. It purports to be only a rapid survey of Buddhist remains from the archeological point of view. Monuments given priority treatment are naturally the classic four that are said to have been designated by the Buddha himself as the most sacred. They are Lumbini in modern Nepal, where he was born; Bodh - Gaya in Bihar, where he attained enlightenment; Sarnath, near Vārāṇasī where he delivered his first sermon; and Kusinārā (here called Kusinagara), where he died. They have now been identified with every certainty and are already places of constant pilgrimage. 'Other important places associated with Buddha,' as termed in the book, are Rājagriha so often his residence during many rainy retreats; Nālandā, seat of the later Buddhist university; Vaisālī, also favoured by him as a residence, and later the seat of the second Buddhist Council a century after his death; Srāvastī, the most frequently mentioned of his residences in the Sacred Canon; Sankasya, where he was said to have descended from on high after visiting his mother; Taxilā, seat of a famous university; Sāñchi, which has a famous monument on a picturesque hill; and the rock caves of Bagh, Ajantā, Ellora, etc. Generally speaking, there seems to be more specialisation in the description of the less important monuments, which probably were assigned a place in the book because of their artistic merit, thus appealing to the average visitor who is not particularly bent on a pilgrimage to other than the sacred places. The publication should be a very useful accompaniment to the visitor to Buddhist sites in India. These are of course mostly in the north and the west.

Sen, A.C.: *Asoka's Edicts*, Institute of Indology, 1956, w. preface by S.K. Chatterji, bibliography, ill, 170 pages.

The nature of this volume is stated on the flap of its cover: "While standard works on Asoka's Inscriptions by earlier authorities are either bulky and too much specialised, or too costly, or long out of print, or antiquated in view of later discoveries and researches, the present volume is designed for the general reader, which will at the same time serve as a standard manual for the specialist as well. . . ." As Dr. Chatterji points out in his preface, Asoka's greatness is well proved by the reputation in which he is held all over the Buddhist world, whether in the Sanskrit canon rendered into Tibetan and Chinese or in the Pali of Theravāda Buddhism. He is now recognised by the world as one of the six greatest men in history. The recognition came no doubt from his making use of the imperial sway he had acquired in the interest of peace, as one may gather from reading this book. The Introduction tells us of the Inscriptions' nature, followed by a classification of them according to their contents, extent and the surface where on they are engraved. It proceeds to designate the *locales* of the Inscriptions, using a map; it then discusses the script employed, the Brahmi, which is "the mother of most of the scripts now current in India." Incidentally, it may be mentioned here that our Siamese script also traces its origin to that source. The language of the Inscriptions is said to be Prākṛit, with close affinities to the Māgadhi section of it, not to one of the classical Prākṛit dialects found in literature. Asoka called himself in the Inscriptions "Priyadarśin, the Beloved of the Gods," as well as other names. His family is also discussed; then the Kalinga War which was the cause of his renunciation of warlike activities. A chronology of his Inscriptions is given with long discussions. Then come geographical references in the Inscriptions, names of officials and functionaries, religious communities, the Emperor's idea of the *Dharma*, his administrative policy, the art of his stone-monuments, and finally a valuation of his character. Pages 51-169

give a series of the Edicts, commencing as a rule with notes as to their localities, then the substance with a brief mention of the version, date and individual subject, its translation into English preceding the original text with their Sanskritised forms and philological notes.

It should be added that the Edicts are interesting not only for their moral tone but principally for the historical and geographical information they contain.

Han Lih - wu: *Taiwan today*, Hwa Kuo Publishing Co, Taipei, 3rd edition, 1955, 154 pages.

The scholarly Chinese Ambassador in Bangkok has given us here a general survey of Taiwan, with chapters devoted to its political and social conditions, finance, agriculture, industry, communications and education. An index is attached. Generally speaking, it is a useful summary of administrative items of information, supported by statistics; but it would not be fair to say that the scope of the work is thus limited, for in many places one finds comments which tell us more. Under the subject of finance, for instance, we are told (on page 53) that "Government authorities do not underestimate Taiwan's financial difficulties, which are being faced with courage and determination. Certainly the ten years from 1945 to 1955 were neither easy nor prosperous. . ." Then further on (same page) ". . . our taxes are not too heavy. The financial burden on the people, according to statistics released by the Provincial Government, compares favourably with that in the peak year of Japanese rule in Taiwan." Again, and this may be of direct interest here too, we read: "Taiwan is essentially an agricultural area . . ." (69), but (p.93) "Although Taiwan has its limitations in the development of heavy industries, the foundation for light industries . . . was well laid under the Japanese . . . primarily as a part of their imperial economy." According to the latest statistics the major outputs are gasoline, cement, sugar and cotton cloth.

Bangkok, 19th May 1958.

Dhani

RECENT SIAMESE PUBLICATIONS

Their Majesties' trip to visit the people of the north was the occasion for the publication of a number of handbooks containing general information on the provinces through which they travelled. Some of these books were full of interest, some were merely old publications which had been rebound with appropriate remarks of welcome to the royal visitors. An attempt is made here to review or to give short notices of the more interesting of these publications.

209. At Písnulok there was a volume entitled, *The Story of the Province of Písnulok, its Great Reliquary, its image of the Lord of Victory and wat Čulāmanī*, ตำนานเมืองพิษณุโลกวัดพระศรีมหาธาตุ พระพุทธชินราชและวัดจุฬามณี Prayurawong Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2501, 22 pages, several illustrations.

This little pamphlet, written by Khun Siksākarmāpises, educational inspector of division 7 of the Kingdom, is a mine of such information as would be of use to the average administrator. Its contents, besides texts of speeches on the occasion of the royal visit, and portraits of their Majesties which are given in most of such volumes, consists of a history of the town of Písnulok which was at first in the time of the Khôm (Dvaravati) situated to the south of the modern town around the ruins of wat Čulāmanī. This was probably called Sōṅkwé, 'The town between two streams.' Then arose Písnulok, which was built about the middle of the XIVth century by King Litai of Sukhodaya, who has been accredited also with the unrivalled work of plastic art which has since graced Písnulok and is known by the name of P̄ra Buddha Jinarāj, 'The Lord of Victory.' It is placed in a chapel of its own in the precincts of the monastery of the Great Reliquary. There used to be two other sister images, P̄ra Buddha Jinasih 'The Buddha (who was) a Lion of Victory (among men)' and P̄ra Śāsā, 'The Teacher,' both of which are now in the monastery of Bovoranives in Bangkok. Písnulok survived through the centuries as one of the most important

centres of the Sukhodaya and Ayudhya kingdoms. With the exception of the precincts of the chapel of the Lord of Victory, it was razed to the ground in the Burmese war of 1775; and, although it was rebuilt by sovereigns of the Bangkok regime, it is now only a provincial centre of administration that is but slowly recovering its pristine economic status.

The book goes on to describe the group of shrines surrounding that of the Lord of Victory and the various objects of art to be found there.

Then follows an account of wat Ŭlāmanī to the south on the left bank of the river where there is an inscription that names it as the *locale* of the ordination into the Holy Brotherhood of King Boroma-Trailokanāth in the presence of the Kings of Lānchāy, Chiepmāi and Hoysāwadi. The King took up residence there throughout his monastic term (8 months and 15 days) in 1465. Appended are a few photographs of more recent historical events, with two photographs of wat Ŭlāmanī, and a sketch plan of the royal pavilion built to accomodate the royal visitors on this occasion. A good map is included; and it should be admitted that the book has been got up in excellent taste.

210. At Tāk a compact book of general information was published and presented to their Majesties and members of the royal party; it is entitled, *About Tāk Province*, เรื่องเมืองตาก (Kārchāy Press, Bangkok, 2501, 160 pages, ill.)

The contents of this book are mainly historical, topographical and general. For a reader who is not interested in administrative matters of a more technical type the first two chapters are of interest. Old Tāk, of the Môn in the pre-Thai period, was further north where now the village of Bān Tāk stands, as evidenced by an old *chedi*, built according to local tradition to commemorate the single combat on elephants in the XIIIth century in which Rāmakamhēy, son of the King of Sukhodaya, vanquished the powerful but alien King of Chōd at a juncture when the latter was about to deal a

fatal blow at the King of Sukhodaya. It is of interest to note the fact, so far unrecorded elsewhere, that Chôd, instead of being somewhere near Mêsôd, should really be identified with an extensive group of ruins by the river Mêtün, in the district of Mêramās, which used to be on the highway from Burma to Sukhodaya. Tāk was later moved to the village of Rahênj in the XVth century. The King of Dhonburi, when Governor of Tāk, had his residence at the mango grove on the west bank of the river at Rahênj village. The administrative offices were then removed to the east bank where they now stand. The modern province of Tāk will be best known to future generations by the barrage just commenced at Yanhī which has been named Bhumibol Dam.

211. *The Yanhī Economic Development Project*, โครงการไฟฟ้าพลังน้ำยั้ง typewritten, 29 pages with maps, plans and photographs.

This volume, though technical, is of great general interest. It sums up the intended results of an annual production of 2,230 million units, which would render possible the irrigation of the Kampêjjej plain of 1,500,000 rai, the irrigation of the central plain and a system of water communications from Nakon Sawan to the Bhumibol Dam and thence to Hôd in the province of Chieyngmai. The estimated outlay is 550,000,000 baht; the profit is calculated to be 1,455,000,000 baht, giving a benefit to cost ratio at 2.64.

212. *An Historical Pamphlet on Lampāy*, สมุดประวัติศาสตร์ของจังหวัดลำปาง Aksorasilp Press, Bangkok, B.E. 2501, 48 pages, ill.

This pamphlet is divided into four parts, the first dealing with Lampāy history and geography, where it is noted that Lampāy was a very old city, having been built on the site of ancient ruins of an unknown name. It then took on the name of Khelānga and was also known as Kukutanagara, 'the City of the Cock.' It is known from records that Lampāy was built by Queen Gāmadevi, who came up from Lavapura (Lobpuri, which was then in Dvaravati). This Mon princess was sent up to colonise the north. In the XVIIIth century it took part in the struggle to rid the country of Burmese rule and

was raised to the status of a principedom. The second part of the book deals with the city's ethnological aspect, the third with customs and pastimes, with an extra part on tourism.

Also distributed on this occasion was an even smaller pamphlet, an old publication with a new cover dedicating the book to the royal visit. It was called *The Annal of the Monastery of Dôn Tao*, ตำนานวัดพระแก้วดอนเต้า Lampāṇ, 2nd edition 2501, 14 pages. It deals with the legend of the 'Emerald' Buddha image, carved out of an opaque stone of green hue which had been found in a melon. The image is now gilded all over, and only a part is uncovered, revealing its interior. It was originally the property of this wat; but later it was transferred to the Chapel Royal of the Ruling dynasty known as The Reliquary of Lampāṇ Luay ('Great Lampāṇ' i.e., the old capital) across the river. It is annually brought here for public worship because it is widely venerated.

213. *The Development of the lignite mine of Mē Moh valley, province of Lampāṇ*, การพัฒนาหล่งถ่านลิกไนท์ในลุ่มน้ำแม่เมะจังหวัดลำปาง 27 pages, 8 maps and charts, 4 pages of photographs with an appendix.

This typewritten volume of valuable information deals with a definition of the mineral. Included are a history of lignite survey in Thailand, a description of the nature and the characteristics of lignite of the valley, and a description of the scheme, including the production and disposal of lignite, and the production of electricity therefrom. It will come into use when the Bhumibol dam is completed and operating.

214. *Pra Dhammarājānuvat: An Annal of the Reliquary of Sudeb Peak*, ตำนานพระธาตุยอดสุเทพจังหวัดเชียงใหม่ Prasinhkarb Press, Chiangmai, 2501, 23 pages.

The reverend author points out that this is a 'summary of existing records dealing with the famous Reliquary, told in a mixture of standard Siamese and the northern dialect.' The narration thus conceived runs as follows:

In B.E. 1874, year of the goat, Siṅhalese Buddhism, established by the Mon in their country, was introduced by way of Martaban to Sukhodaya by the Venerable Sumana, who possessed a miraculous relic of the Lord Buddha. Thirty-six years later King Kūnā of Chienmai invited Sumana to his kingdom and established the new cult of Siṅhalese Buddhism of the Theravāda School. The miraculous relic was enshrined within the precincts of wat Bup-phārām. Later on it was discovered that instead of one relic there were two in the same receptacle. The King and the Ven. Sumana were pleased with the auspicious sign, believing that the original relic had spontaneously divided itself. The extra particle was then placed with all due reverence on the back of a royal elephant which was released to roam at will until it should come to rest where the divine will intended the extra relic to be located. The elephant went straight to a nearby mountain, uttered three echoing roars, walked three times round the peak of the mountain and then knelt down in respectful pose on top of it. The King thereupon had a reliquary in the form of a *cedi* built on the peak to house the relic. The elephant descended from the top and died at a spot now known as the White Elephant Shrine. The Reliquary of Sudeb Peak, built in 1471 (Christian era), has been continually honoured and maintained by the sovereigns of Chienmai. It was enlarged by King Mīlāṅketkēw in 1525; a *vihara* in front and another one at the back were built, with the surrounding gallery, in 1545; and the *nāga* staircase was added to it in 1557.

215. *Irrigation in the North*, การชลประทานในภาคเหนือ type-written, 2501, 31 pages, with maps, charts and photos.

Irrigation has been practised in the north since an early period, at least since the time of King Meṅrāi who founded Chienmai. It has now become a national activity and private schemes are still being carried on by individual groups. In this book each of the northern government schemes is described with statistics, maps and charts. Most of these northern provinces, especially Chienmai, can boast of extensive irrigation works and an abundance of water.

216. *A History of Fāṅ and the Plan of Development of Fāṅ Oil*, ประวัติเมืองฝางและแผนพัฒนาการน้ำมัน no name of press given, 2501, 89 pages.

The initial part, as its name implies, deals with the interesting story of Fāṅ's past from the time when Prince P̄rom led the Thai across the Mēkhōṅ to the south, driving away the swarthy Khōm and establishing the first Thai settlement south of that river in 921 (Christian era), naming it Jayaprākār, 'the citadel of victory.' The history of the locality is then told at some detail as it is related to mediaeval and modern Fāṅ, which is now but a district of the province of Chieṅmai. The second part deals with the development of oil-boring work, and is more technical by nature. It is interesting to note that the site of ancient Fāṅ, or Jayaprākār as it was then called, is well within the area of oil-boring, where old mounds and even walls still exist. An image of the Buddha has been recovered in good condition from a depth of only a sōk (50cm.). It seems, however, difficult to judge its age from the picture reproduced in this book. It has been described as 'late Chieṅsén.'

217. Rāyanāg, Police Lt-Col. N.: *The General Condition and History of Chieṅrāi*, สภาพและประวัติศาสตร์ของจังหวัดเชียงใหม่ Ruṅrūaṅdharm Press, Bangkok, 2501, 51 pages w. map & ill.

The author, who is Governor of Chieṅrāi, is to be congratulated on having written one of the best handbooks of the royal tour, in spite of the duties of preparation for the great event, which must have been quite multifarious for him. Under 'general conditions' are included the usual facts and figures of topography, economics, administration, education and culture, public health, etc. We are enabled to gather that the province is now a progressive one in which agriculture dominates other livelihoods. Among the leading products are rice, tobacco and lac, though the last has not been doing well lately. Under the subject of history we have a well-summarised survey of Chieṅrāi's great past, gathered from the old *Annal of Siṅhanavati* and the *Poṅsāwadār Yonok* of the late

Prayā Prajākī. The chronology accepted by the author from the latter is perhaps open to doubt in many instances. The earliest known inhabitants were the Lawa and some aborigines, who were superseded by the Ai-lao from Nakon Pā, in modern China. The latter seem to have penetrated as far south as Kāloṅ in the modern district of Wierj Pāpao in the province of Chienrāi and Čěhom, now a district of Lampāṅ. In the VIth century (Ch. era) the 'swarthy Khôm' from the south drove the Thai out of all these lands and built their northern outpost at Suvarnakōmkam, near where Chien-sên now stands. They also built 'on the upper Kok river' the stronghold of Umongaselā on the ruins of the Thai settlement of Chienlac somewhere near modern Fāṅ. About 773 (Ch. E) a new wave of Thai migration, led by Prince Siḡhanavati, son of the King at Nōṅsē (Talifu in China), crossed the Měkhōṅ and founded a new state, which was called by several names, somewhere near modern Chien-sên, and seemed to have partly ousted the Khôm from that neighbourhood. After a long reign of 52 years he died in 824. The 27th successor of Siḡhanavati lost Chien-sên to the swarthy Khôm from Umongaselā; but dynastic fortune was later retrieved in 1056 by his son P̄rohm (Brahma) who pursued the enemy as far as a spot where Kampēṅṅpejra now stands. It was P̄rohm who rebuilt the enemy stronghold of Umongaselā and renamed it Jaya-prākār 'the citadel of victory.' It is now Fāṅ. Another Thai tribe from Mao, southwest of Nānc̄ao, vanquished P̄rohm's successor in Jayaprākār. The latter, whose name has been given as Jayasiri, fled south and founded a new state which became known as Utōṅ. Two powerful Thai states then ruled in the north, one of which eventually produced the hero Meṅrāi, born in 1238, who was destined to lay the foundation of the Lānnā state of the Yonok branch of the Thai, and to found Chienmai as well as Chienrāi. Lānnā lasted till its conquest by Bureṅnōṅ of Burma in 1558, and remained under Burmese rule till it was liberated by the army of the King of Dhonburi under the command of Čao Prayā Čakri, later King Rama I of Bangkok, in the XIXth century.

218. *A souvenir of the royal visit to the inhabitants of Pré*,
 ที่ระลึกเสด็จพระราชดำเนินเยี่ยมราษฎรแพร่ Prayurawongs Press, Bangkok,
 2501, 71 pages, w. map & ill.

This volume is made up of general information concerning the province's geography, history, ethnology, tourism and administration. It has, like other northern provinces, an extreme hot and cold climate according to the seasons. Its products are rice, teak, tobacco, beans, coconut, cotton, lac, etc., of which teak, tobacco (Virginia variety) and lac are the principal ones. Native tobacco used to be held in great esteem and is known as *yāsōṅ* from the fact that it grows best in the district of Sōṅ. The best *mieṅ* (tea) for chewing also comes from Pré. The province is now served by road, rail and air communications. Its people are Buddhist by creed, and predominantly Shan by race. They are peaceful by disposition. A portion is devoted to history, where it is related that Pré has existed since the XIIth Buddhist century, but "it is understood that the town was built after Chienmai." This would place the foundation of the town some seven or eight centuries after the XIIth Buddhist century. Customs and usages are described in greater detail than the material of other sections. There follow individual descriptions of each of the districts of Pré province. The district of Sōṅ contains an old citadel with treble earthen ramparts. It is stated that here might have been the capital of King Pisnukōrn, father of the heroines of the romance of *Pra Lô*; but, it adds, "This is an old tradition maintained by the country folk and not supported by tangible proofs." One cannot help adding that no tradition is supported by tangible proofs though it often gives a clue to impossible-looking identifications. An interesting chapter is added at the end of the volume, dealing with the Shan revolt which broke out here in 1903.

219. *A souvenir of the royal visit to the inhabitants of Nān*,
 ที่ระลึกเสด็จพระราชดำเนินเยี่ยมราษฎรจังหวัดน่าน Ecclesiastical Dept. Press,
 Bangkok, 2501, 27 pages, ill.

The booklet follows what is probably a common directive from official headquarters. Nān dates back to B.E. 1825 (1282) when Pīnā Bhūkā of Yāy founded the city of Woranakon (Varanagara), the locale of the musical play of the Royal Fine Arts Department that is now running. This Woranakōn was situated about 70 km. to the north of modern Nān. His fifth generation descendant, named Pīnā Kārmūay, son of Pīnā Phānōy, was the founder of old Nān on the other side of the river, where wat Chêhēy now stands. The modern town was transferred thence quite recently, though the chiefs of Nān, especially King Suriyapōngs Pharitadej of the early XXth century, continued to sponsor with munificence the monastery of Chêhēy on the other side of the river.

220. *The Province of Uttaradith*, จังหวัดอุตรดิตถ์ Udom Press, Bangkok, 2501, 32 pages w. map and ill.

After four pages of general information about the province, there are twelve of history; the second half of the book (16 pages) consists of notes concerning personalities which have made Uttara-dith famous. Though one can hardly say that there is anything outstanding here in the scholarly line, the volume is well got up and should form a pleasant souvenir of the royal visit.

Besides books for the royal tour, the following are some that have been published recently:

221. *Sthirakoses: Rôṅ ram tamplēy* ร้องรำทำเพลง Mitthai Press, Bangkok, 2500, 23 pages.

The learned author takes up here a phrase which summed up in times past the sense of entertainment. In his usual lexicographical approach he commences by defining each of the component parts of the phrase. *Rôṅ* is of course utterance, originating doubtless from jubilation or sorrow. *Ram* is a dance, under which heading the author goes on to define the varieties of the dance in practice. *Tamplēy* is playing on instruments, making music in all its varieties. A combination of the three is discussed

by the author, who concludes the brochure with a series of answers to questions on the topic.

222. *Buddha images representing incidents in the Master's life*, พระพุทธประวัติต่างๆ Pračand Press, Bangkok, 2500, 133 pages, ill.

His Majesty, desiring to make a printed record of the images representing incidents of the Master's life as they have been handed down in Siamese art, arranged for the publication of this collection of photographs, some of which were taken by himself or under his personal direction. He further commanded Luaj Boribāl Buribhand and Mr. Kasem Buñsri to write notes in explanation of them. The notes are included in an abridged form. The publication is not a historical dissertation of Buddhist iconography, but merely a pictorial record of such images as are known as the *pra pāṇ*, or images representing successive incidents in the Master's life as handed down in Siam. For the purpose, photographs have been taken of the collection in the Hô Rājakarmānusōrn in the precincts of the Chapel Royal of the Emerald Buddha as well as those of other sources, such as the gallery behind the main chapel of wat Beñčamabōpit.

According to the explanatory notes in the book, these incidents have been recorded in plastic form from an early age in India; they have been continually added to in this country till King Rama III of the Čakri dynasty standardised them in a set of some forty different images. Other images outside the collection represent, for instance, the individual pose for each of the seven weeks directly after the Enlightenment when tradition says the Master was in one attitude for each of the weeks. Included also here are the various attitudes for the use of those born on each of the seven days of the week and which are usually placed on altars in individual homes.

223. Amatyakul, T: Guide to Sukhodaya, นันทิยาสุโขทัย Rujrūaṇḍharm Press, Bangkok, 2497, 99 pages, w. map & ill.

It is pointed out in the preface, signed by the previous Prime Minister, Pibulsongram, that since the institution of a commission has materialised to restore old Sukhodaya, a great deal of its aims have been accomplished and that there is laid before us now the full glory of the old kingdom of Rāmakāmhêṃ the Great, recalling to us the former national spirit of the Thai. Another commission has therefore been appointed with the mandate of writing a history of Sukhodaya and, also, in conjunction with the commission of restoration, to bring out a guidebook of the city. This guidebook is the result of the commission's work.

The book commences with a few words concerning the topography of the modern province of Sukhodaya, giving directions for travelling from the modern to the old city. It then takes up archeological matters in detail. Starting with the new town, the centre of administration, in which there is a museum which came into being through the initiative of Ėra Borānavatthācārya, abbot of wat Rājadhāni in the new town, the author goes on to a second museum in the administration building; he then proceeds to the altar of the Old Dame, whose effigy on a stone slab has been brought from a hillock about 7 km. to the west of old Sukhodaya where it stood in danger of disappearing because of the popular demand for bits of it to serve as charms or as an ingredient for medicinal mixtures. The Old Dame was mentioned in Rāmakāmhêṃ's inscription. The author then takes us to the old city, where he describes to us monuments in successive order as one approaches it from the east till he reaches the treble walls of the old city. In front of each city gate there is a semicircular mound of earth, no doubt meant for fortification purposes such as those to be found in Peking. Between the three walls there are deep ditches, which the author thinks must have served as reservoirs, because aqueducts have been found leading from it to various points within the city. One presumes that the author did not rule out altogether the possibility of their having been constructed primarily for defensive purposes. Within the city there is a big lake, which, one might presume, can

be identified with Rāmakāmhēṇ's mid-city reservoir, storing, in the King's own words, "clear and good water such as can be found in the Khōṇ in the dry season." We are then introduced to the famous stone slab named manaysilā, the 'wish-stone,' which, brought down by King Mongkut to Bangkok, was used as a coronation seat by Rama VI, but which has been relegated since 1926 to a small chapel within the precincts of Chapel Royal of the Emerald Buddha. We then come to the Great Reliquary and the royal palace in the middle of the city, and proceed to various other monuments, such as wat Sri Savai, thought to have been a Brahmin temple in the heyday of Sukhodaya; wat Sijum to the northwest where an edifice takes the place of a *chedi* and is unusual because of the labyrinth within its wall by which one can mount behind the presiding image of the Buddha and on to the top of the wall; wat P̄ra P̄ailuaṇ, believed to have been built on the site of the old citadel of the Khôm prior to the time when the Thai took the city from them, with the kilns of Sankhalok-ware just beyond it; and then wat Čedi Si-hōṇ, believed to have been one monastery with the latter as living quarters. It is remarkable for the ornate stucco moulding which covers the *chedi* and is of great artistic beauty. To the west of the town there is the park and hill called, in the inscription of Rāmakāmhēṇ, the Bihār araṇṇīk, or the 'Rustic Vihāra,' which that monarch dedicated to the great teacher hailing from Nakon Sri Dharmarāj. On this hill is the magnificent standing Buddha that is discernible from a considerable distance.

The guide is well illustrated; it has a map which is, however, too abbreviated; it should have consisted of ground plans of the more important monuments like the Great Reliquary in the middle of the city.

224. Mongkut, H.M. King: *Royal Autographs*, พระราชสาสน์พระบาทสมเด็จพระจอมเกล้าเจ้าอยู่หัว พระราชทานไปยังประเทศต่าง ๆ ภาค ๑. Rujrūaṇḍharm Press, Bangkok, 2501, 157 pages, ill.

This volume was sponsored by the family of the late Prince Sessiri Kridakara on the occasion of the cremation of his remains. According to the preface written in the name of the Fine Arts Department of the Government, the publication was hurriedly made owing to the urgent request for material in connection with King Mongkut, who was grandfather to the deceased. No opportunity could be found therefore to examine the manuscript, even with regard to whether it was ever sent off to its destination, for what exists in the National Library is a mere draft written in folio. As for annotation of any kind, or identification of the doubtless inaccuracies in recording names, no effort has been possible. One cannot help thinking why, generally speaking, when manuscripts have been in its possession for so long a time, the Department in question could not have sifted and examined their material. It is a pity that similar excuses are time and again made for many publications of valuable material by an authoritative agency like the National Library of the Government's Fine Arts Department.

There is of course a biography of the deceased. It is written by Princess Poon Diskul. It follows the progress of his life in the usual way. Her remark at the end is significant. The sons of Prince Nares and Mom Subhāb, of whom the deceased was one, had all been brought up in England, so that they were more conversant with English ways than with their own. Like Englishmen they were restrained outwardly; they had an application for work, but they were capable of fun. That was why they endeared themselves to the younger generation of which the writer of the biography was one. She thought that, with the exception of the four elder sons of King Chulalongkorn, the Princes Kitiyakara, Rabi, Pravitra and Chira, there was no one among old England students but these Kridakara brothers who could shine with conspicuous brilliance.

Their careers were like unto brilliant stars which, however, paled before the light of day and one by one went out with the sole exception of Prince Sithiporn, now a farmer at Bangboed. This impression of Princess Poon is interesting. It may not be understood, especially at a time when most people resent the assuming of a foreign veneer. It reflects, however, a type of mind widely prevalent at certain periods in the past when anything *farang* was an unquestioned ornament. It almost tends to minimise the real and exceptional gifts of the Kridakara family.

King Mongkut has been recognised as a prolific letter writer. The style of the letters published here is very much more protracted than the usual royal autographs, especially those produced nowadays. The collection is mostly made up of expressions of goodwill and courtesy. Taking up, for example, a few of them, letter No. 9 (as numbered in the table of contents), dated the 19th May 1865, acknowledged the receipt from the Emperor Napoleon III of the Grand Cross of an order of chivalry, the name of which is not mentioned but which the editor might have found with ease. King Mongkut reciprocated by sending some decorations, again with no name being given. No. 10 is a memorandum, not a letter, which the King made concerning the presentation of an oil canvas by Napoleon III depicting an audience at the Palace of Fontainebleau given by him and the Empress to a Siamese delegation. It is obvious—and should have been mentioned in a note—that the canvass is now hanging in the central throne-room of Čakri on the side wall to the north. No. 16 mentions a treaty of commerce with France in 1856. No. 22 is a translation of an autographed letter from Queen Victoria, dated the 28th December 1855 from Windsor. Nos. 13 and 32 concern the credentials—but of a consul—who was directly accredited to the King by the British Queen. No. 37 the King wrote to the President of the United States of America sending presents

and offering to send (not *sending* as stated in the caption of the letter made by the editor of the National Library) elephants for breeding, by way of returning the President's courtesy in sending him a sword and a photograph. It should not have been of insurmountable difficulty to find out the name of the President for a date is found within the letter. With regard to his idea of elephants being brought to America the King said:

"In my conversation with the captain of an American man-of-war who came to see me, I learn that there is no elephant in America. . . . Now if couples of young elephants were imported and left in some of the forests in your country where there is sufficient pasturage for them, they would soon multiply. Your people would be able to train them for use as we do here for elephants are strong and hardy and will bear the strain of hard travel."

Bangkok, 14th May 1958.

D.

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