

It has been considered desirable, with a view to completing the local information regarding Phuket, to republish from the "Bangkok Calendar" for 1871 of the Rev. Dr. D. B. Bradley, an article which first appeared in the "Bangkok Advertiser" 1870. The article was most likely written by Dr. Bradley himself, who took a holiday trip to that place in 1870. It is reprinted as it appears in the Calendar:—

### POKET.

*For the Bangkok Advertiser.*

A visit to Poket the principal town on the island of Junk-ceylon.

The island of Junk-ceylon lays on the eastern shore of the Bay of Bengal. It runs nearly due North and South, being about 23 miles long and 8 broad. The southern part of the island is well bordered by high hills, the Northern more flat and swampy and therefore better adapted for the growth of paddy, of which more anon.

The island was, some few years ago divided into two provinces, and called *Salang* and *Poket*. Before this division the island consisted of only one province call *Salang*, the principle inhabitants of which were Malays, with only a few Siamese, and they cultivated rice and caught fish sufficient for their own consumption. Exports were unknown.

The present governor of the island was then *P'ra Palat*. He was sent to Poket when it was only a fishing village, and being an enterprising sort of a man, he determined to see what treasures were concealed beneath the soil, and was so far successful as to find something which he thought would in a few years amply repay the outlay which he might make.

The Chinese soon flocked in numbers to Poket, and *P'ra Palat* furnished them with funds to commence work, and the place

prospered and grew apace, when he was appointed governor; and now, what was then a paddy field, is covered with brick houses and a numerous population.

The immigration continued to increase, and now there are about 25,000 Chinese in Poket. They are divided into different factions and are continually at variance with each other. These men, during the S. W. monsoon, find plenty of employment at the Tin mines but during the N. E. monsoon numbers of them are idle, being out of employment owing to the scarcity of water for washing.

Tongka Bay is the port of Poket. A good road leads to the town, which is  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles distant from the Harbour Master's office, and that is about two miles from the junk anchorage.

Tongka Bay, lays in  $7^{\circ} 51' 25$  N. Lat.  $98^{\circ} 20' 22$  E. Long. Rise and fall of Tide, at Springs 12 feet. Best anchorage and deepest water about 3 miles from the mouth of the river. Bar 2 fathoms at low water.

There is a passage between the islands of Pulo Kapul Bazar and Pulo Kapul Katchee. By keeping close to Pula Kapul Katchee you will have four and five fathoms water into the anchorage.

The Chinese are mostly employed at the Tin mines, and the cultivation of the fields is neglected, notwithstanding that the soil is rich and good and well adapted for sugar, coffee and spices. Herein they have committed a great error, for when the Tin mines are exhausted, and they cannot last for ever, the population will be reduced to poverty and misery. Instead of all the Chinamen being employed at the Tin mines, were a portion of them to devote themselves to the cultivation of the country, a source would be opened up from which as greater amount of wealth would be derived than what has been obtained from the Tin mines.

During the N. E. monsoon most of the people are out of employment. Now if a certain quantity of land was allotted to each man, for a given number of years, and during his idle time, if need be, he was compelled to cultivate it, the amount of produce from that land would well pay him for his labor. At the expiration of

the time for which he held the land, he might be able to pay the government for the land, which could be sold to him at a reasonable price but subject to a small yearly tax.

The population is sufficient for working the Tin mines and also for the cultivation and for the land, consist of, Chinese 25,000, British, Malays. 200. Siamese, 300, Siamo-Malays 200, Total. 25,700. These occupy about one half of the island.

It is true the province of Tongka abounds richly with Tin. But why this province should be rent by factions when there is room enough and to spare for 25,000 in Salang, is beyond my comprehension, when Tin, Gold, precious stones and silver have been found here. But to occupy this, capital is required.

The climate is fine and healthy. Thermometer from 82° to 86° during the day, and from 75° to 78° in the nights, which are generally very cool and pleasant. Some days certainly are very hot, but I think on the whole cooler than Bangkok. Most of the houses have been built by the Rajah. The revenues are farmed out the same as in Bangkok. Gambling predominates much more than in Bangkok, and is the principle cause of so much trouble in the island.

There are about 60,000 piculs of Tin exported yearly, and an unknown quantity on private account. I can safely say that this is one of the richest islands Siam possesses, and if governed after the fashion of our English colonies, and by a governor receiving an adequate salary, it would yield an immense revenue to the Siamese government, true it would require two men-of-war to protect the trade, and a land force of 1,500 men but there would then be no danger of riots occurring among the Chinese.

I cannot close my remarks on this island without mentioning her sister ones lying more to the eastward. Across from Tongka Bay the high land of Pulo Panjang is visible. This is an extensive island with few inhabitants, and these chiefly Siamo-Malays. I did not learn accurately what the resources of it are, but it appears well adapted for cultivation. To the Southeastward of this island Pulo Lantar looms up. This island is reported to be rich and well adapted for the growth of sugar cane. Here the inhabitants are also Siamo-Malays.

The province of Lukon runs down to the sea shore between these two islands, and has a river running up it, of which I did not ascertain the proper name. Up this river there is a rich coal country, in fact the natives use this coal for daily cooking purposes. Surely Siam possessing such a coal district has no reason to purchase foreign coals, when she might not only supply herself, but also her neighbours with good burning coals from this district.

IMPORTS.					
Memo. of articles imported into the port of Poket, Junkceylon, from May 1st 1869 to May 30th 1870.			Sugar Candy	260	Piculs
Rice	2509	Koyans	Iron	30	do
Salt	214	do	Garlic	115	do
Opium	109½	Chests	Onions	720	do
China Tobacco	996	Boxes	Sugar cane molasses	100	Jars
Vermicilla	560	do	China salted vegetables	98	do
Crackers	127	do	Eu. mixed piece goods	922	Corges
Tea	254	Boxes	Slandaang	130	do
Joss Sticks	27	do	Malay Sarongs	25	do
Sundries	310	do	Iron hoes	210	do
Cocoanut Oil	2052	Piculs	Grey Shirtings	72	do
White Sugar	644	do	Iron ware	10	do
Brown do.	2115	do	Acheen S. trowsers	15	do
Hog's lard	1023	do	China do	228	do
Salt fish	5096	do	Roofing Tiles	35000	In No.
Salt prawns	115	do	Flooring do	2000	do
Macaronie	125	do	Marantee planks	1654	do
Katchang Oil	122	do	Acheen Mats	860	do
Tallow Candles	248	do	China Hats	500	do
China peas	742	do	Tubs	800	do
English Candles	10	do	Common cups	30000	do
Wheat Flour	36	do	China paper	404	Bales
			Joss do	11	do
			Java Tobacco	9	Baskets
			Dollars	\$66170	
			Gold	50	Bangkols