

SIAM SOCIETY.

Annual Report, 1909.



During the year 1909, The Siam Society has still continued in a prosperous condition, and although the number of papers read before the members of the Society has not been large, still a very fair number have been contributed to the Journal. Regarding the papers read, however, quality has made up for quantity, as Dr. Bradley's paper on the Sukhothai Inscription, without doubt, must rank as one of the most valuable and interesting communications ever read before the Society. It is to be hoped that during the coming year, the members will come forward more than they have done in the past year.

The Council has the following papers in preparation for 1910 :—

1. A translation of Van Vliet's account of Siam in the 17th century, from the original Dutch.
2. A contribution from Dr. Frankfurter on the Attitudes of the Buddha, which will be illustrated by 34 plates. It is expected that this paper will be of great interest to all those who are interested in the images of the Buddha, as they will then be enabled to understand the significance of the various attitudes.
3. A continuation of the paper by Nai Thien on the early relations between Siam and Burma.

During the past year, the Society has had to deplore the loss by death of the Rev. Bishop Vey, one of the Society's oldest Honorary Members, whose name will not easily pass out of remembrance, not only on account of his valuable contribution to our knowledge of Siamese grammar and learning, but more especially on account of the deep respect and veneration in which the deceased Prelate was held by the whole community of Bangkok.

The following letter of condolence was sent on behalf of the Siam Society to the Rev. E. A. Colombet :—

Siam Society.

11th March, 1909.

Reverend and Dear Sir,

The loss which your community has sustained by the mournful death of His Grace, Monseigneur Vey, has found a sympathetic echo also in the Council of the Siam Society, which considered it a signal honour that the deceased prelate formed, since its commencement, one of their body as an honorary member.

They will always cherish the memory of the deceased scholar, and they wish to be allowed to express to you, Reverend Sir, their deep-felt condolence at the loss of the Bishop, whose never flagging energy found for many years scope for the exercise of good and lasting deeds in Siam.

We have the honour to be,

Reverend and Dear Sir,

Your most obedient servants,

B. O. CARTWRIGHT,
Hon. Secretary.

O. FRANKFURTER,
President,

To Rev. E. A. COLOMBET,
Pro Vicar Apostolic.
Bangkok.

The following is a copy of the reply received :—

Vicariat Apostolique de Siam, Bangkok
le 23 mars 1909.

A Monsieur O. Frankfurter
Président de la Siam Society

Monsieur le Président,

Ayant pris le temps nécessaire pour communiquer aux Revds. Pères de la Mission la teneur de votre très honorés du 11 courant, je me fais un devoir aujourd'hui, Monsieur le Président, de vous en accuser réception et de vous dire combien nous avons tous été profondément touchés du haut témoignage d'estime et de respect que votre noble société a bien voulu accorder aussi à la mémoire de notre tant regretté et vénéré évêque Mgr. Vey. C'est un nouvel honneur que vous daignez ajouter à celui dont vous voulûtes bien l'honorer déjà de son vivant en gratifiant sa grandeur du titre si honorable de membre honoraire de votre Société.

Un tel acte de bienveillance et de déférence de votre part, Monsieur le Président, nous demontre bien hautement l'esprit dont est animée votre illustre Société, laquelle se plait à reconnaître et à saluer le mérite et la vertu partout où ils se trouvent.

En mon nom donc et au nom de tous les membres de la Mission, Catholique je suis heureux de vous exprimer bien profondément, Monsieur le Président, les sentiments de la plus vive reconnaissance qui nous animent envers la Siam Society et tous nous formons les vœux les plus sincères pour sa prospérité et la prospérité de tous ses membres.

En remplissant ce devoir je vous prie de vouloir bien agréer, Monsieur le Président, l'expression, la plus sincère, de mon profond respect.

E. COLOMBET

Sup. de la Mission Cath.

The Rev. Father Colombet has most kindly contributed a sketch of the life and work of the late Bishop, which will be found in the Journal.

The Society has also to lament the decease of the Rev. S. J. Smith, the oldest member of the foreign community in Bangkok, who did excellent work in first making known the vernacular literature of Siam, and who, up to almost the end of his life, devoted much energy to the compilation of an English-Siamese dictionary, which will ever remain as a monument of his erudition.

The Membership of the Society now stands at 108 ordinary members 8 of whom have been elected during the year 1909. The Secretary begs to report the resignation or departure of 8 members during 1909. The Society has also to regret the departure from Bangkok of Mr. Homan van der Heide, a vice-president of the Society, who was one of its most active members. But, though departed from Bangkok, Mr. van der Heide still retains his interest in the welfare of the Society. A dinner to Mr. van der Heide was given by the Council on the eve of his departure for Batavia, at which the following speeches were made:—

In proposing the health of the guest of the evening, the President said:—

“The duty which is incumbent on me this evening, I consider a light and pleasant one. We have come together to do honour to Mr. J. Homan van der Heide, and the only regret I must express, and which

I believe is shared by all of you, is that this festive gathering takes place on the occasion of leave taking. For I hold it we had all hoped that Mr. J. Homan van der Heide would remain for many years to come as one of us. Alas! the Gods willed it otherwise. Mr. J. Homan van der Heide is leaving us after a stay of only six years in this country to return to Java where other, perhaps more congenial, duties will give him scope for his energy.

“However that may be, during the time he was ours Mr. Homan van der Heide has shown how many tasks remain still to be solved, and I need only refer to his General Report on Irrigation and Drainage in the Lower Menam Valley, which will remain of permanent value, in which quite apart from the solution of practical questions which he approached he showed how much remains to be done. Bound by his profession to find solutions of the problem how the forces of nature may be tamed by the agency of man and made serviceable to him and by what laws they are governed, Mr. Homan van der Heide in the paper which he contributed to our Society showed how the economic development of Siam was due to laws by which all our acts are guided. We had hoped that for many years to come we would in the deliberations of our Council benefit by his advice, that we would get from him further papers in studies he has made his own, but now we must this evening bid him good-bye, in the company of his friends who in joining us on this festive occasion show their appreciation of his sterling qualities. I take it that they will be pleased to hear that Mr. Homan van der Heide has accepted the position of Honorary Member of our Society, subject of course to the assent of a General Meeting. So we have this consolation that Mr. Homan van der Heide will not forget Siam and our Society in which he spent six years of his fruitful life. In bidding him farewell and drinking as is the fashion to the welfare and health of himself, Mrs. Homan van der Heide and his family I may be allowed to close with the words of an old German folkslied :—

“ Wenn Freunde auseinander gehen,
So sagen sie auf Wiedersehen.”

The toast was pledged very cordially, and in reply Mr. van der Heide thanked the Council for their kindness and Dr. Yai, Mr. Nieuwenhuis and Mr. Mackay for being kind enough to accept the invitation to be present. The proceedings of the Society had always greatly interested him, and the Council meetings, at which he had been present so many times, had also always been of great interest to him, and

in fact very often of great amusement to him. He hoped the Siam Society, of which they had made him an Honorary Member, would long continue to flourish, and that Dr. Frankfurter would for a very long time continue to be its President.

Dr. Highet proposed the health of the other guests.

The Netherlands Minister replied, and proposed the health of the President.

It is proposed by the Council that at the Annual General Meeting the following should be elected Honorary Members :—

1. Mr. van der Heide, to be Hon. Member for Batavia, as owing to the lamented death of the late Dr. Brandes the Society has no representative in the Dutch East Indies.

2. Dr. C. B. Bradley, as the Council would like to confer a mark of their appreciation on one who has done such good work for the Society and on one who has been connected so intimately with Siam from his youth up.

The Society has continued to exchange publications with various other learned Societies as in former years, and has been much gratified by the appreciation shown of its doings by the older Oriental Societies.

Accounts of the Siam Society for the year 1909.

Cr.**Dr.**

	Ticals.	cts.		Ticals.	cts.
By Balance from 1908	1,082	75	To Printing, Stationery and Postage.	1,775	27
„ Sale of Journal ...	369	11			
„ Subscriptions ...	1,380	„			
„ Interest ...	12	79	„ Balance on 31st December, 1909.	1,069	38
Tes.	2,844	65	Tes.	2,844	65

RONALD W. GIBLIN,

Hon. Treasurer.

Siam Society

Bangkok, 9th February, 1910.

Annual General Meeting.

The annual General meeting of the Society was held on Wednesday February 23rd, 1910, the President in the chair.

Mr. Carter proposed, and Mr. Giblin seconded, that the Annual Report be adopted as it stood. Carried.

Mr. Sewell proposed, and Mr. Bock seconded, that the Accounts be accepted. Carried.

Nai Thian proposed, and Mr. Mundie seconded, that Mr. Homan van der Heide and Dr. Bradley be elected Honorary Members of the Society. Carried.

Mr. Bock proposed, and Mr. Sewell seconded, that such Members of the old Council as remained should be re-elected to their various offices. Carried.

Dr. Frankfurter proposed, and Mr. Carter seconded, that Mr. P. Petithuguenin be elected a Vice-President of the Society. Carried.

Mr. Carter proposed, and Mr. Mundie seconded, that Mr. Sewell be elected to serve on the Council. Carried.

Mr. Cartwright proposed, and Mr. Bock seconded, that Mr. K. Döhring be also elected to serve on the Council. Carried.

A hearty vote of thanks was proposed by Mr. Carter and seconded by Mr. Beckett to the President for his able management of the Society's affairs during the past year. Carried.

The meeting was then concluded.

Bangkok, February 23rd, 1910.

B. O. CARTWRIGHT,

Hon. Secretary.

O. FRANKFURTER, PH. D.

President.