in general circulation. Their value is sixteen times their weight in silver.

The land-tax is fixed at ten per cent., the first person who clears land being entitled to hold it. The tax on garden produce and on fruit trees is higher, but is fixed at intervals of some fifteen years, or at the beginning of a reign. There is a *corvée* of four months in the year, to which all classes except the nobles and the priesthood are theoretically liable, but it may be commuted for a poll-tax of from 6 to 18 tikals, payable either directly in money to Government or to the feudal superior, for all except the nobility are thus depend­ent on a superior ; in the provinces it is payable in kind through the governor. A smaller amount, 1 1/2 tikals, is payable by masters for their slaves. But there are some considerate exceptions, viz., persons over sixty or under eighteen years of age, or who have three sons paying the tax, and cases of incurable illness. If a special demand for labour be made there is exemption from poll-tax for that year. The Chinese only pay 4 1/4 tikals triennially, and Euro­peans are exempted. There is a tax on houses, on amusements (theatricals, dancers, &c.), and on fishing-boats, nets, and other tackle. There is a royalty on tin, and the sale of opium and of alcohol is a Government monopoly, farmed to Chinese. Three per cent. is levied by treaty on British and other foreign imports, export duties on a great number of raw articles, and inland or transit dues on certain tropical products. The revenue from all these sources is estimated at 80,000 catties (£800,000).

The head of the administration is the king, with five ministers,— viz., of war, foreign affairs, northern provinces, agriculture, justice, —and some thirty councillors. The office known to Europeans as 'second king” (Siamese, *wang-na,* lit., “front palace”) is difficult to define, as the share taken in government by him depends very much on his individual character. He has a palace and an official establishment, and a few soldiers at his orders. The country is divided into forty-one provinces, excluding the Laos and Malay states, and the Cambodian provinces. The provinces are of different grades, and their governors have very different degrees of authority. Speaking generally, they have cognizance of all civil cases,—though there is an appeal to the capital (which generally reaches its destina­tion, as the governor’s council act as spies),—and of minor criminal cases. The graver crimes, as murder and dacoity, involving a question of life or death committed in Siam proper, are referred to a special department in the capital. Villages are governed by a head-man *(kamnan, amp'hon,* or *nakhon),* sometimes with a small salary, chosen usually in accordance with the popular wish, and dependent on the provincial capital. The Siamese mandarins in the Lao provinces do not oppress overmuch, nor do the native chiefs, since their power depends on their popularity. Besides the lower grades there are always four principal officials, the *ehao,* lord or king, the *uparat, rachavangsa,* and *rachabutr* (the first title of Chinese, the others of Indian origin). These are hereditary in one or two families, any disputed succession being referred to Bangkok. The Siamese law is recognized, but the national “customs” are much regarded, and in ordinary cases followed. Civil and criminal pro­cesses alike end usually in a fine. Besides the capitation tax, there is a duty on rice, and each state pays tribute to Bangkok. The tie between Bangkok and the Malay states is slighter, being con­fined usually to interference in cases of disputed succession, and to a triennial tribute of a gold or silver tree or flower. The rules of procedure in Siam are very strict, but theoretically there is no hereditary rank.

The laws of Siam are ancient, though not very full or complete, a great part having been lost at the sack of Ayuthia in 1753. Generally speaking, they are referable to an Indian origin, especi­ally as regards religious, moral, and ceremonial ordinances ; the civil and criminal codes bear the impress of Chinese influence. There are several digests of the law, some centuries old, under sys­tematic headings, *e.g.,* of the civil law, real and personal property, inheritance, ranks, evidence and ordeal, marriage, education, parental authority, slavery, money, weights and measures, contracts, and of the penal code, crimes, punishments, police, prisons. The king is absolute, but claims no absolute rights over the land. Great attention is paid to precedents. Among the peculiarities of the system are the employment of ordeal—by diving or chewing rice, &c.—in the absence of witnesses, and the rejection of the evidence of certain classes, viz., drunkards, gamblers, virgins, executioners, beggars, persons who cannot read, and bad characters. When a crime is committed the family and even neighbours of the accused can be held responsible for his appearance. The property of in­testates goes to the king, of an intestate priest to his monastery ; but the neglect of the heir to perform funeral rites renders his claim to property invalid,—a curious relic of Hindu feeling. Another trace of this may be found in the hereditary professions, though their doctrinal significance as castes has disappeared. The laws have many curious and not inequitable provisions about slavery (see below), *e.g.,* if a temporary (debtor) slave has undergone punish­ment or suffering for his master, his debt shall be remitted wholly or in part ; but, if he is a slave absolutely, his master is not legally liable. And there are well-defined rules as to non-fulfilment of

contract with a slave, his maintenance during famine, injury by accidents, employment as a substitute in war, &c. Slaves who are allowed to become priests or nuns are free.

All men are liable to serve in war ; but only from 4000 to 5000, taken from classes specially at the disposal of the war department, are regularly trained under European officers. The capital and sur­rounding forts are garrisoned, and there is a body of palace guards. The fleet consists of some twenty men-of-war and armed steamers and 500 junks.

The population is estimated by the Siamese Government at 6,000,000 for Siam proper, 3,000,000 Siamese Laos, and 1,000,000 Malays ; others estimate it variously at from 6,000,000 to 8,000,000. There are besides perhaps from 1,500,000 to 2,000,000 Chinese. In lower Siam the population is clustered along the rivers and canals ; in the diversified hill and plain country to the north it is distributed more generally. In character the Siamese are mild, patient, and submissive to authority. They are hospitable to strangers and to the poor ; quarrels, violent crimes, and suicide are rare. But they are idle and apathetic ; much time is devoted to amusements, as festivals and processions, boat races, games, cock and dog fighting, and even combats between fish. The position of women is good, although girls can be sold as wives. The Chinese population are energetic and industrious, but very independent, and sometimes give trouble, so that their increasing numbers and organization through their secret societies are a source of anxiety. The Siamese are of medium height, well formed, with olive complexion, darker than Chinese, but fairer and handsomer than Malays, eyes well shaped, nose slightly flattened, lips a little prominent, the face wide across the cheek bones, top of forehead pointed and chin short, thus giving the face a lozenge shape, beard scanty and with hairs pulled out, hair of head coarse and black. But intermarriage during many ages with Peguans, Laos, and Cambodians (though in many cases they and their descendants keep themselves apart), as well as of slaves from the aboriginal races, has produced much variety of type. Besides the Karens, who are the remnant of a more widely extended people, and who are found on the borders of Siam and Burmah and throughout the mountains of north and west Siam, the Lawas in the same region, and the Khongs, a settled people inland from the north-eastern angle of the Gulf of Siam, many other tribes of the earlier inhabitants are found occupying the whole of the forest region on both sides of the Me-kong, and known to their different neighbours by various names, all probably mean­ing simply “man,” or “savage,” as Kha, Moi, Pnom, Lolo. These eastern tribes more or less resemble each other. They are shy and timid, some having no chiefs or social organization, and these are preyed on or hunted down as slaves by their more civil­ized fellows in combination with the Laos. One division of these tribes, the Kouis (the name recalls the savage “ Gueos ” of the Portuguese), amalgamates readily with the Laos and in some pro­vinces forms the bulk of the population. They live by cultivating rice, by collecting honey, beeswax, and resin, or by the chase. Their women are absolutely free before marriage, but adultery is punished with death. They worship ancestral and other spirits and can hardly be called Buddhists. Yet with a few exceptions these earlier peoples are by no means inferior in appearance to the Thai or Siamese, but often the contrary ; some ethnologists assign them a Caucasian origin, and identify them with the brown Polynesian race.

Slavery is general, but consists mainly of bondage for debt, a ; debtor being able to sell himself, wife, or children, or nephews or nieces,—their freedom being recoverable on payment of the debt. But the present enlightened ruler has set his face against the practice, and decreed its abolition, except in the Laos provinces and in the eastern states. The market is further recruited, first by the sale of offenders, who have the option between death and slavery, and secondly by slave-hunting raids, made in combination with the Anamites, on the villages of the wilder aborigines. These are dis­posed of on the spot or else to dealers from Cambodia or Siam proper.

Bangkok (*q.v.)* was established as the capital in 1782 after the sack of Ayuthia by the Burmese. Its population was estimated at about 300,000 in 1886. Ayuthia, now called Krung-krao, the famous capital founded in 1351 and half destroyed by the Burmese in 1767, was a generation ago the second city of the kingdom. It is still im­portant as the entrepôt of the trade of south Laos. Many junks and fishermen come up from Bangkok. The modern town is chiefly on the water. In its most prosperous days in the 16th century it was three leagues in circumference, and contained distinct quarters for foreigners of different nationalities—Chinese, Peguans, Malays, Malabars, Japanese, and Portuguese. Prominent among its great buildings is the pyramidal structure called the Golden Mount, some 400 feet high, surmounted by a dome and spire ; but most of them are now crumbling away into great broken masses of sculp­tured masonry, statues, and spires, half buried under the vegetation of the tropics. Chantaburi, near the Cambodian frontier, the second port of the kingdom, is noted for its shipbuilding and fisheries, and has an active export trade from the south-eastern provinces. There are considerable Chinese and Burmese elements in the popula