a year of 354 days, and to make up the deficiency they intercalate seven or eight months in nineteen years, and add besides an occa­sional day to the seventh month. The years are denoted by a cycle of twelve names (of animals) taken in decades, so that every sixtieth year the year of a given name returns to the same place in the decade. The system resembles the Indian cycle of sixty years, but it is derived from China, where it dates from 2637 b.c. Two eras are in use, the Putta Sakarat or Buddhist, used in reli­gious matters, which commences 543 b.c., and the civil era or Chula Sakarat (i.e., little era), said to commemorate the establish­ment of Buddhism in 638 a. D. The ancient Aryan inscriptions usually employ the Saka (Salivahana) era, dating from 79 a.d.

*History.—*The name “Siam” has been usually derived from a Malay word, *sajam,* “brown”; but this is mere conjecture. They and the Shane both call themselves Thai (Shan *Tat), he.,* “free,” and the Peguans call them Shan or Shian, which seems to be a translation of “Thai” and an allied word, as are perhaps Ahom = Assam, and Sam (Assamese for Shan). The obsolete Siamese word is Siem and the Chinese Sien-lo,—the Sien being, according to them, a tribe which came from the north about 1341 and united with the Lo- hoh, who had previously occupied the shores of the gulf, and were probably Shans. The Siamese call the Shans *Thai-nyai,* “Great Thai,” perhaps as having preceded them, and themselves *Thai-noi* or “Little Thai.” They are probably therefore closely related, though this is disputed by De Rosny and others; but the inferior physique of the Siamese may be explained as due to intercourse with Malays and other southern races and to their more enervating climate. Meanwhile for many centuries before the southward move above referred to the entire south as well as south-east of the Indo-Chinese peninsula was Cambodian. The town of Lapong is said to have been founded in 575, and the half-mythical king, Phra Ruang, to have freed the Siamese from the Cambodian yoke and founded Sang- kalok, on the upper waters of the Mc-nam, in the following century. Buddhism is said to have been introduced in his time, but Indian influences had penetrated the country both from the north and from the south long before this. Other Lao towns were built about the 7th century, and during the following centuries this branch of the race gradually advanced southwards, driving the Karens, Lawas, and other tribes into the hills, and encroaching on what had hitherto been Cambodian territory. Their southward progress may indeed almost be traced by their successive capitals, several of which are clustered on the Me-nam within a short distance of each other, viz., Phitsalok, Sukkothai, and Sangkalok on the eastern branch, Nakhon Savan at the junction, and Kamphong-pet, the immediate precursor of Ayuthia, on the western branch. A Sukkothai inscrip­tion of about 1284 states that the dominions of King Rama Kamheng extended across the country from the Me-kong to Pechaburi, and thence down the Gulf of Siam to Ligor ; and the Malay annals say that the Siamese had penetrated to the extremity of the peninsula before the first Malay colony from Menangkabu founded Singapore,

*i.e*., about 1160. The ancestors of the Siamese were then on the western brauch of the Me-nam, and in 1351, under the famous Phaya Uthong (afterwards styled Phra Rama Thibodi, and prob­ably of a Shan family) moved down from Kamphong-pet, where they had been for five generations, to Chaliang ; and, being driven thence, it is said, by a pestilence, they established themselves at Ayuthia. This king’s sway extended to Moulmain, Tavoy, Tenasserim, and the whole Malacca peninsula (where among the traders from the West Siam was known as Sornau, *i.e.,* Shahr-i-nau or Newtown, probably in allusion to Ayuthia,—Yule’s *Marco Polo,* ii. 260), and was felt even in Java. This is corroborated by Javan records, which describe a “Cambodian” invasion about 1340 ; but Cambodia was itself invaded about this time by the Siamese, who took Angkor and held it for a time, carrying off 90,000 captives. The great southward expansion here recorded, whether of one or of two allied Thai tribes, confirms in a remarkable way the Chinese statement above mentioned, and was probably a consequence or a part of the great contemporaneous activity of the more northern Shan kingdom of Mau. The wars with Cambodia continued with varying success for some 400 years, but Cambodia gradually lost ground and was finally shorn of several provinces, her sovereign falling entirely under Siamese influence. This, however, latterly became displeasing to the French, now in Cochin China, and Siam has been obliged to recognize the protectorate forced on Cambodia by that power. Vigorous attacks were also made during this period on the Lao states to the north-west and north-east, followed by vast deportation of the people, and Siamese supremacy was pretty firmly established in Chieng-mai and its dependencies by the end of the 18th century, and over the great eastern capitals, Luang Prabang and Vien-chang, about 1828. During the 15th and 16th centuries Siam was frequently invaded by the Burmese and Peguans, who, attracted probably by the great wealth of Ayuthia, besieged it more than once without success, the defenders being aided by Portuguese mercenaries, till about 1555, when the city was taken and Siam reduced to dependence. From this condition, however, it was raised a few years later by the great conqueror and national hero Phra Naret, who after subduing Laos and Cambodia invaded

Pegu, which was utterly overthrown in the next century by his successors. But after the civil wars of the 18th century the Burmese, having previously taken Chieng-mai, which appealed to Siam for help, entered Tenasserim and took Mergui and Tavoy in 1764, and then advancing simultaneously from the north and the west captured and destroyed Ayuthia after a two years’ siege (1767).

The intercourse between France and Siam began about 1580 under Phra Narain, who, by the advice of his minister, the Cephalonian adventurer Constantine Phaulcon, sent an embassy to Louis XIV. When the return mission arrived, the eagerness of the ambassador for the king’s conversion to Christianity, added to the intrigues of Phaulcon with the Jesuits with the supposed intention of establish­ing a French supremacy, led to the death of Phaulcon, the persecu­tion of the Christians, and the cessation of all intercourse with France. An interesting episode was the active intercourse, chiefly commercial, between the Siamese and Japanese Governments from 1592 to 1632. Many Japanese settled in Siam, where they were much employed. They were dreaded as soldiers, and as individuals commanded a position resembling that of Europeans in most Eastern countries. The jealousy of their increasing influence at last led to a massacre, and to the expulsion or absorption of the survivors. Japan was soon after this, in 1636, closed to foreigners ; but trade with Siam was carried on at all events down to 1745 through Dutch and Chinese and occasional English traders. In 1752 an embassy came from Ceylon, desiring to renew the ancient friendship and to discuss religious matters. During recent agitations of the Buddhist priests against Christianity in Ceylon they received much active sympathy from Siam. After the fall of Ayuthia a great general, Phaya Takh Sin, collected the remains of the army and restored the fortunes of the kingdom, establishing his capital at Bangkok ; but, becoming insane, he was put to death, and was succeeded by another successful general, Phaya Chakkri, who founded the present dynasty. Under him Tenasserim was invaded and Tavoy held for the last time by the Siamese in 1792, though in 1825, taking advan­tage of the Burmese difficulty with England, they bombarded some of the towns on that coast. The supremacy of China is indicated by occasional missions sent, as on the founding of a new dynasty, to Peking, to bring back a seal and a calendar. But the Siamese now repudiate this supremacy, and have sent neither mission nor tribute for thirty years, and yet their trading vessels are admitted to the Chinese free ports, like those of any other friendly power. The late sovereign, Phra Paramendr Maha Mong- kut, was a very accomplished man, an enlightened reformer, and devoted to science ; his death indeed was caused by fatigue and exposure while observing an eclipse. Many of his prede­cessors, too, were men of different fibre from the ordinary Oriental sovereign. Chao Dua, the adversary of Phaulcon, went about seek­ing pugilistic encounters. He is reported to have been a cruel tyrant and debauchee and a keen sportsman ; but the offence given to his subjects in the latter character and the evil reports of the persecuted French missionaries may have unduly blackened his reputation.

Of European nations the Portuguese first established intercourse with Siam. This was in 1511, after the conquest of Malacca by D’Albuquerque, and the intimacy lasted over a century, the tra­dition of their greatness having hardly yet died out. They were supplanted gradually in the 17th century by the Dutch, whose intercourse also lasted for a similar period ; but they have left no traces of their presence as the Portuguese always did in these countries to a greater extent than any other people. English traders were in Siam very early in the 17th century ; there was a friendly interchange of letters between James I. and the king of Siam, who had some Englishmen in his service, and, when the ships visited “Sia” (which was “as great a city as London”) or the queen of Patani, they were hospitably received and accorded privileges,— the important items of export being, as now, tin, varnish, deer­skins, and “ precious drugs.” Later on, the East India Company’s servants, jealous at the employment of Englishmen not in their service, attacked the Siamese, which led to a massacre of the English at Mergui in 1687 ; and the factory at Ayuthia was abandoned in 1688. A similar attack is said to have been made in 1719 by the governor of Madras. After this the trade was neglected. Penang, a dependency of Quedah, was occupied in 1786, and in the 19th century the stagnation of trade led to the missions of Crawford (1822), Burney (1826), and Sir J. Brooke (1850); but they were not very cordially received, and effected little. Sir J. Bowring’s treaty in 1856, however, put matters on a different footing, and Europeans can now reside in Siam, buy or rent houses, and lease land. The export and import duties are also fixed, and there is a vice-consular court at Chieng-mai, with appeal to the consular court at Bangkok, held from time to time by a judge from Singapore, with which place there are extradition arrangements. Of late years the north-eastern provinces have been harassed by invasions of the Lu and Ho, peoples of Chinese extraction, their incursions extend­ing down the Me-kong as far as Nong-kai.

Besides works referred to at the end of article Shans, the chief authorities are La Loubère, *Description du Royaume de Siam,* 1714 (the best of the old