Among the articles produced in smaller quantities, but which are still valuable for Indian or European cargoes, are agil-wood, a perfumed or scented wood, benjamin, ivory, and stick lac. lron, formed into cooking utensils, forms an extensive article of export from Siam. There are four American ships come annually for cargoes of sugar, for which they pay in dollars.

Siam carries on a considerable trade with the British set­tlement of Singapore. This trade is chiefly managed by the Chinese, either natives from China, or their descendants settled in Siam, the Siamese being an indolent race, devoid of the spirit of industry or of enterprise. The vessels and cargoes belong invariably to the Chinese. The principal articles which they import, are British piece goods, or goods of Indian manufacture, such as Bengal muslins, chintz, gurrahs, and sannahs ; gold dust, bees’ wax, gambier, rat­tans, tea, sago, sea-weed, cowries, and coarse paper, likewise constitute articles of import. In addition to those articles, cotton twist is much in demand. Amongst the imports into Siam, opium is one of the most important, about two hundred and fifty chests of this article being annually consumed. It is brought chiefly in junks, from Penang and Singapore; and though a contraband article, for a length of time met with a safe and speedy sale, the very persons appointed to enforce the prohibition being the principal dealers. But since the laws have been so rigidly enforced against the im∣x>rtation of opium into Canton, and the whole stock seized by the Chinese autho­rities, the dealers of it being besides threatened with death, and the British resident, Elliot, seized and imprisoned, the same severities have been enforced against the trade in Siam. The laws are equally strict against the importation of the drug, a severe fine being the penalty, which, if the offen ler cannot pay, as is commonly the case, his goods are confiscated; and if the sum raised be still insufficient, he is condemned, with his whole family, to perpetual slavery. In June 1839 several unfortunate Chinese sailors were accord­ingly seized with opium on board, from Singapore, and were cast into prison, where they were treated with great severity.

No impediment is offered to the admission of European ships into the Siamese ports ; nor are the imposts heavy. The port charges for a ship of three hundred and fifty tons do not amount to more than 1200 dollars, and the duties on im­ports are generally eight per cent., though many articles are free. Sugar pays 3s. 2d. per cwt. The real impedimcnts to commerce, consist in the privileges of the king, who is, pro­perly speaking, the only merchant in the kingdom, as he claims the right of pre-emption in the market, from which he de­rives a large profit. His agents are hard to deal with. They regard foreign trade merely as a source of dishonest profit; and European vessels are only admitted to give an oppor­tunity for extortion. It was to procure the abolition of those oppressive monopolies that Mr. Crawfurd’s embassy was sent to Siam in 1822. But he tailed entirely to attain this object.

The Menan, by which ships enter, discharges itself into the Gulf of Siam ; but it has a bar at its mouth, to cross which, the aid of a pilot is required. The southerly mon­soons is the best season for ships to visit Siam, and the northerly for returning to Hindustan, through the straits of Malacca. Bankok, situated on the river near the bay, is the chief place of trade. It is capable of making little de­fence against a European force ; it is indeed, in a military point of view, quite defenceless ; nor is there any fortification at the mouth of the river, or all the way up to the capital. A fleet of prows constitutes the whole naval defence of the kingdom of Siam, the bar of the river affording a defence against vessels of war.

The sovereign of this country exercises, as in other eastern kingdoms, absolute sway. He has no hereditary nobility of any kind, nor any popular assembly to controul his supreme will. The whole male population are liable to military con­scription. Their names are enrolled in a register, and they are bound to perform military service for six months in the year ; they receive no pay, carry their own provisions, and are only provided with arms and accoutrements. The country is divided into districts, and a chief is placed over each, under whose colours they march to battle. They have made no progress in the science of war, and possess neither discipline nor courage. Like the Burmese, they trust to fortifications of stockades of trees, and posts encircled by a ditch. But the real defence of the country consists in the natural obstacles of jungles, morasses, and the branches of rivers by which it is everywhere intersected. They march without order, nor do they take any precau­tions against a surprise. They seldom stand more than one discharge, which is sure to frighten one or other of the par­ties engaged, when they quit the field in disorder. Their chief dependance is on their elephants, which, when they are fright­ened or wounded, become equally formidable to friends and foes. There is nothing like a standing army. A body of guards, composed chiefly of foreigners, who are attached to the person of the sovereign, is the only force which is not disbanded. They are chiefly Tartars, with a corps of Mohars, who frequently display a desperate courage, how­ever, said to be owing to the stimulus of opium. A small part of the taxes is levied in money, the greater part of the revenue being received in kind.

The rules followed in the administration of justice, are rude and barbarous. The tribunals are composed of three members ; but the president alone decides. By the laws of Siam, children are clothed for the first time, at the age of four or five ; and they are never afterwards uncovered for chastisement. Parents may sell their children. But they never resort to this proceeding except from absolute want. It is not true, as has been reported, that they sell their daughters, if offended with them, for courtezans. The duties between a pupil and his teacher are reckoned next in importance to those of parent and child. Their system of education resembles that of the Burmese. Priests are not allowed to become teachers of the female sex. The principal object of their education is to enable them to superintend their husbands’ affairs. Marriage is consid­ered merely as a civil contract, and the priests are not called upon to assist in it. Polygamy is admitted, but is only practised by the higher classes; and even they con­sider the first wife only as mistress of the house, whilst all the rest are little better than slaves. In general, the lot of the females is severe in this country, the heaviest part of the labour falling upon them ; nor are they allowed to eat with their husbands, nor even to sail in the same boat; they attend no public amusements, but spend their time almost entirely at home. In every intricate case, the ordeal is resorted to as the easiest solution of all difficulties. The ac­cused is required, as a satisfactory purgation of his inno­cence, to walk over red hot iron, or burning coals. Another ordeal is by water, when the person who remains longest beneath is declared innocent. Pills that cause vomiting are also employed ; and he on whom they first take effect is adjudged guilty. But in some cases, the accused are sub­jected to the perilous test of being thrown to tigers, which in their fury, will, it is supposed, make the proper distinc­tion between the innocent and the guilty. The punish­ments, as in all barbarous countries, are shocking by their severity. Sacrilege is punished by fixing the head of the offender to the hearth, where it is consumed by a slow fire. A stake is thrust through the body of assassins, in such a manner as to cause exquisite pain. Noblemen are some­times subjected to degrading punishments, being condemn­ed to cut grass for the elephants; some are subjected to the pillory; others are allowed to languish in prisons in the most miserable state, or they are seen wandering about the city, chained seven and seven together, begging their bread from