

opened the door for Mrs. Leonowens upon the most exciting and far-radiating scenes in the whole drama of her life. She had to work to educate her two children, a girl of four years of age and a boy of two. After an unsuccessful attempt, by the aid of other resident officers' wives, to maintain a school at Singapore for English children, which did not pay, she accepted the offer of a post as English governess to the court of Siam, arriving at Bangkok with her boy on March 15th, 1862. The little girl had been sent to school in England.

His Majesty Somdetch P'hra Paramendr Mongkut, under whose august if somewhat blighting shadow she was doomed to the hard task of keeping her soul alive for seven strenuous years, first entered upon the scene for her in the vehicle of a very characteristic letter. It is worth giving in full, being one of the best examples, among other things, of that English style on which the monarch, not without reason, decidedly fancied himself. The punctuation, here and elsewhere when I quote him, is all his royal own.

" English Era 1862 26 February
Grand Royal Palace, Bangkok.

" To Mrs. Leonowens,

" Madam: We are in good pleasure and satisfaction in heart that you are in willingness to undertake the education of our beloved royal children. And we hope that in doing your education on us and on our children (whom English call inhabitants of benighted land) you will do your best endeavours for knowledge of English language science and literature and not for conversion to Christianity; as the followers of Buddha are mostly aware of the powerfulness of truth and virtue as well as the followers of Christ, and are desirous to have facility of English language and literature more than new religions."

That is to say, if one may dare to open it out in the language of Somdetch's inmost heart: "Bleat not overmuch white woolly ewe lamb! The royal elephant of Siam hath a much more capacious brain-pan than thy tiny curds-and-cream simplicity of convolutions could stretch to fill. Thou hast achieved a nice little new-laid egg of faith, chicken of the western spring, and found religion? Cackle not too