

Northern Messenger

VOLUME XXXIII, No. 19.

MONTREAL AND NEW YORK MAY 13, 1898.

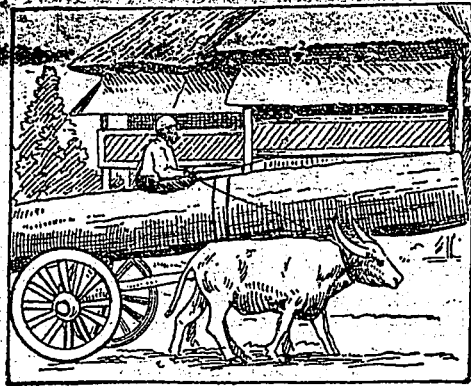
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From Siam.

(By the Rev. W. F. Shields, in 'Presbyterian Banner'.)

Many are interested in the industries of a country remote from their own. Siam is America's antipode, and the industries of this country, from the capital city to the borders of China are not without interest. A chief industry throughout the kingdom is the production of rice. Vast quantities of rice are raised in lower Siam for exportation. Many vessels leave Bangkok annually laden with this product for the various ports of the world. Machinery has been invented for hulling the rice, and the visitor to Bangkok will not only see the smoke of these mills, but also in many places large numbers of natives pounding the hull off the rice according to the primitive custom of the country. In the northern part of the kingdom, among the Laos, rice is raised for food only. The distance to the seaport is so great that rice could be taken there only at great expense. No greater misfortune could befall this people than a rice famine, for thereby much suffering would be entailed, as there is absolutely nothing here that can supply its place as food.

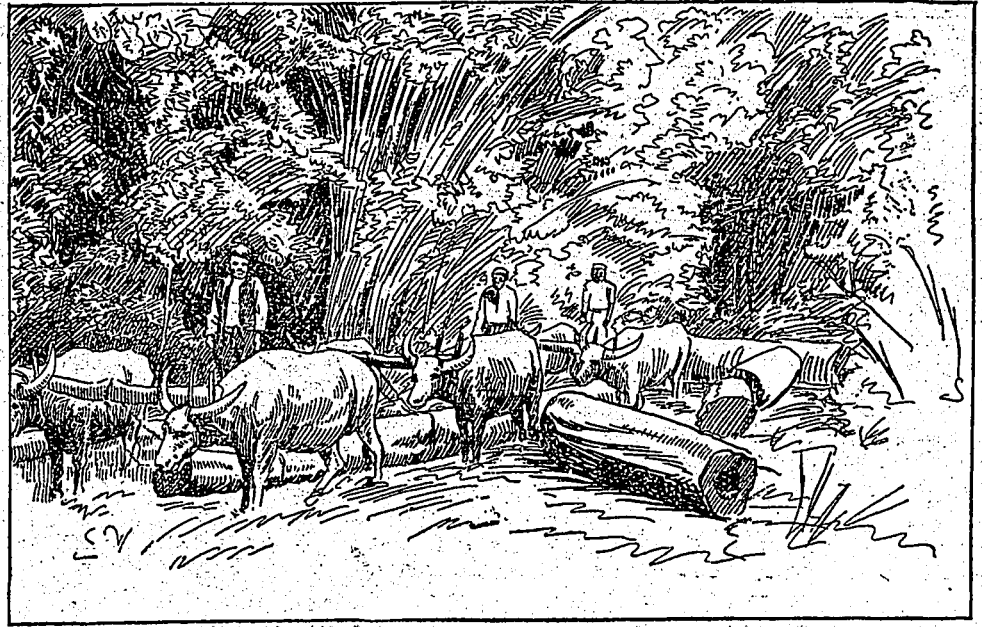
A prominent industry is the rearing of herds of cattle and buffalo. The cattle are



THE BUFFALO CARTING LOGS.

useful to carry the produce of the interior to the navigable rivers, and in turn merchandise and produce back into the interior. Large numbers are sometimes bought and driven to Maulmein for beef, and many are shipped from Bangkok to Singapore for the same purpose. The water buffalo is used to plough the rice fields and drag wood. He is a very useful and indispensable animal. No native is allowed to kill an animal for food, as that would be breaking the chief command of Buddha. When any animal dies of old age or disease, it is immediately devoured by the people, skin, meat, entrails, bones and all.

The most noted industry of the country is the teak trade. There are many different kinds of timber in the country, but teak is the only kind that is extensively worked. All over this country, stretching up into Burmah, are immense teak forests. The Siamese government is now wisely taking steps to perpetuate these forests by requiring that for every tree felled, a number of young trees be planted, and that all trees felled must be of a certain size. In every important centre here you will find the European representing one or more of the many companies that are engaged in the teak trade. Sometimes

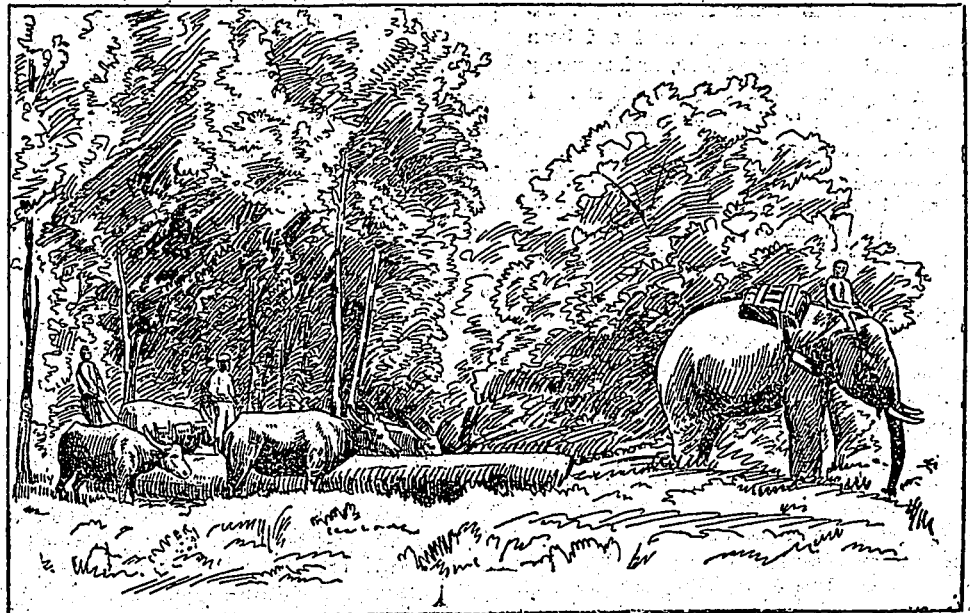


THE BUFFALOES DRAGGING LOGS.

you find the Chinaman representing much capital pressing for supremacy in this trade side by side with the strongest European companies. Vast sums are expended, and great fortunes are made out of the teak. This timber is many years in reaching maturity, ranging from eight to one hundred and twenty years. When seasoned, this lumber works more easily than pine, and is used for many purposes. It takes on a most beautiful finish, and is hence used for furniture and elegant interior work. One of the uses to which it is extensively put is ship-building. It has great elasticity, and resists the climate with great persistency. When green it is heavier than water, but when seasoned, it is much lighter and will float.

The trees are girdled on the mountain side, and let stand until they die and season, then they are felled and dragged down into the mountain ravines, there to await the heavy rains, when they are worked down the

ravines by the elephants to the larger streams, thence to the main water arteries leading to Bangkok. In these large streams they are formed into rafts, in which they are taken to the sea port. Sometimes a mountain ravine is simply filled with teak logs, as seen in the illustration, and it is the elephant's business to work them down the stream, and if you look closely you will see him there for work. But when the logs have reached the lower ground, and must be dragged some distance to reach the desired stream, then the task is more difficult, but the ingenuity of the native and the power of the elephant are equal to the emergency. A road is made by cutting small trees and laying them at right angles to the direction the log is to be dragged, and then with one or more elephants the largest log is dragged with ease. When you see these noble beasts at work, they awaken within you an admiration, and demonstrate the wisdom of God, in



ELEPHANT AIDED BY WATER BUFFALO.

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