

resentful ears. Thirdly, his task must become difficult in proportion as the personality of the chief European advisers is unsatisfactory. As it is, the conditions for the exercise of a wholesome influence from our side are, in these three respects, satisfied at the present moment with unusual completeness. My predecessor gave close and successful attention to the consolidation of good relations between Siam and her British neighbours; these are at present excellent and give promise of useful constructive work for the future. Again, any feeling the Siamese may have had that we were slow to treat them with the same liberality as other great Powers has been dispelled by the conclusion of the new treaties with His Majesty's Government. To have obtained these treaties is a source of great satisfaction to the Siamese Government, and I am favourably impressed by the spirit in which they are entering on the new dispensation; they feel that we have, in a way, put them on their honour, and they profess, I think sincerely, a determination to work the treaties with every consideration for our interests; that at any rate was the burden of the King's conversation with me when I presented my letters of credence, and Prince Traidos (the Minister for Foreign Affairs) is prodigal of similar assurances. What these professions will be worth in practice remains to be seen, but the British community here are not at all uneasy. Finally, the personality of the three chief foreign advisers is at the moment all that could be desired. The high qualities of Sir Edward Cook, the financial adviser, are well known to you, Sir, from my predecessor's reports. The judicial adviser, Mr. F. M. Buszard, is a judge of high integrity and impartiality whom the Siamese trust and respect. The adviser in foreign affairs, Mr. R. B. Stevens, is, like his predecessor, Dr. Sayre, a United States citizen, a lawyer and of New England stock; as vice-chairman of the United States Shipping Board during the war he got on well, I believe, with his British colleagues, and he impresses me as a straightforward and conscientious person, independent-minded, and unlikely to lend himself to intrigue. In view of the need for close personal relations between this Legation and the occupants of these posts, I am fortunate in arriving at a time when they are held by three men who command my confidence and whose society is agreeable.

7. But no one can be here for even a few weeks without realising that our influence in Siam depends in the last resort on another more general factor. Given our leading trade position and the backwardness of the country, the Siamese can hardly fail to look mainly to us for advice and guidance for some time to come, unless our reputation for reliability and disinterestedness were to be impaired. And this despatch would be incomplete if I were to refrain from mentioning what are perhaps the two most outstanding impressions produced by a month's residence at this post, namely, that our prestige here stands high, and that this is due to the respectable character of the British community, to the labour of my predecessors and, above all, to the high standard of personal and professional qualifications maintained by the officers of the Siamese Consular Service. I constantly hear both from Siamese and from foreigners expressions of admiration (in the latter case not untinged with envy) for the work and the character of these officers, and these tributes are, so far as my experience goes, fully deserved. That the high standard of this service is the backbone of our position in Siam must be apparent to the most casual observer, and it is important that its present excellence should not be allowed to deteriorate from shortage of staff or from any other cause.

I have, &c.

S. P. WATERLOW.