

COMMERCIAL REPORTS

FROM

HER MAJESTY'S CONSULS

IN

CHINA, JAPAN, AND SIAM.

1865-66.

*Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.
August 1867.*

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1867.

SIAM.

No. 17.

Consul Knox to Lord Stanley.—(Received April 29.)

My Lord,

Bangkok, March 13, 1867.

I HAVE the honour to transmit herewith my Trade Report for the year 1866, together with the usual Shipping and Trade Returns in duplicate.

I have, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS GEORGE KNOX.

Inclosure in No. 17.

Report of the Foreign Trade at the Port of Bangkok, in the Kingdom of Siam, for the year 1866.

THE Returns annexed to this Report are as follows:—

1. Return of British Shipping at the Port of Bangkok during the Year 1866.
2. Return of British and Foreign Shipping at the Port at Bangkok during the Year 1866.
3. Return of Foreign Shipping engaged in the Direct and Indirect Trade at the Port of Bangkok during the year 1866.
4. Return of Exports in Square-rigged Vessels from the Port of Bangkok during 1866.
5. Return of Imports into the Port of Bangkok during the year ending December 31, 1866.

The above Returns, like those of preceding years, have been principally compiled from information furnished by the Siamese Customs authorities. They, however, represent but imperfectly the actual trade of the port. The duties on the products of Siam are let out to revenue farmers, whose agents are the collectors. The lessee retains his right to collect the duties during the period agreed upon, generally two years, and the farm is then sold again to the highest bidder. As a rule, these farms are held by distinct companies or individuals. These companies or individuals, with very few exceptions, are also traders and shipowners; commonly, also, the largest exporters of the product on which they have a right to levy duty; this right they have obtained, as before-mentioned, by the payment to the Government of a lump sum yearly. What may be called the Central Customs authority is merely the reporter of the different farmers; and his duties consist principally in allowing vessels to commence discharging, and in granting port clearances.

In the former case the import farmer puts his own men on board to look after the value of the cargo imported; imports into Siam pay an *ad valorem* duty of 3 per cent., and collects the duty himself.

But the import farmer is himself the owner of a steamer which makes bi-monthly passages between here and Singapore. He is also the opium

farmer, and a large importer of foreign goods. Now, as this farmer naturally wishes to retain both the import and opium farms in his own hands, and to make a large profit out of it, it is his interest, therefore, to make out his Returns to be as small as possible. The Government having no Custom-house officer of their own have no means of ascertaining what the imports really are; and the farmer's interest being to make them as low as possible, I have no hesitation in stating that the amount laid down in the Tables is very much below the value of the articles imported into Bangkok.

The same is the case with the exports; the farmer, say of gum benjamin, exports as much of it as he can, while he makes out his Returns as low as possible.

Imports.

The value of the import trade for 1866 is estimated at 789,866*l.*, as against 519,795*l.* in 1865, and 1,167,677*l.* in 1864.

The export trade in rice has hitherto ruled the imports, and will probably continue to do so, and I have therefore no remarks to offer with regard to them, the more so as the articles show neither increase nor decrease in their relative proportions.

Exports.

The exports for 1866 are valued at 925,818*l.*, against 529,276*l.* in 1865, and 1,314,922*l.* in 1864. The crop of rice housed in 1864 was considerably above the average, and the great demand in China insured its sale. Want of rain in 1865 caused that year's crop to be very scanty, and thus injuriously affected the trade of that year. It also unfortunately happened that news of the failure of the rice crop, and of the prohibition which was consequently placed by the Siamese Government on its exportation, did not reach China till a large number of vessels had been already chartered for Bangkok, the charterers therefore suffered very severely, and lost confidence in the place. The crop of 1866, though above the average in quantity, was inferior in quality; hence, as those who had suffered in 1865 kept out of the trade, the export in 1866, though considerably beyond that of the preceding year, yet fell far short of what had been anticipated.

The present crop is the largest which Siam has ever gathered in, and is excellent in quality; there has, however, been but small demand for it as yet. Prices in China do not leave a sufficient profit on its exportation, and as the large amount of capital, which had for some years past been forcing the trade of these countries, has for the present been withdrawn, the growers of rice in Siam will have to content themselves with lower prices than they have for the last four years been obtaining; this they can fortunately well afford to do, as their profits have been extraordinary, and leave a large margin for reduction. When prices have come down I expect to see a steady trade to China, which will be much more favourable to legitimate business than the sudden rushes which have hitherto taken place.

Sugar.—The present crop is excellent; and the heavy duties having now been taken off, the Chinese and others have resumed the cultivation of the cane, and native mills are springing up in all directions.

There are many inquiries for European crushing-machines, and I understand that orders have been given for several; the Chinese manufacturers in this country seem still to prefer their own process for boiling and clarifying juice.

Teak.—The amount of timber brought down this year is larger than has been the case for a long time past. Prices have fallen, but owing to the state of the English markets there is scarcely any demand at present.

(Signed) THOMAS GEORGE KNOX,
Consul.

British Consulate, Bangkok, March 13, 1867.

(No. 1.)—RETURN of British Shipping at the Port of Bangkok, during the Year 1866.

Direct Trade in British Vessels from and to Great Britain and British Colonies.

ENTERED.										CLEARED.									
Whence Arrived.	Number of Vessels.			Total Tonnage.			Total Number of Crews.	Invoice Value of Cargoes.	Whither Bound.	Number of Vessels.			Total Tonnage.			Total Number of Crews.	Invoice Value of Cargoes.		
	With Cargoes.	In Ballast.	Total.	With Cargo.	In Ballast.	Total.				With Cargo.	In Ballast.	Total.							
Great Britain	...	1	...	289	...	289	10	17,708	Great Britain	...	1	...	258	...	258	16	8,463		
Hong Kong	...	11	28	5,476	11,825	17,301	697	29,583	Hong Kong	...	42	...	16,660	...	16,660	653	169,946		
Singapore	...	20	2	6,855	624	6,379	359	28,673	Singapore	...	13	2	5,193	455	5,648	260	21,621		
									Bombay	...	11	...	1,832	...	1,832	136	26,763		
		32	30	62	11,560	23,969	1,096	75,964			67	2	69	21,943	455	22,398	1,074	231,703	

Indirect Carrying Trade in British Vessels from and to other Countries.

Chinese Ports ...	...	5	5	...	1,464	1,464	57	...	Chinese ports ...	5	...	5	2,425	...	2,425	83	17,608
Cape St. James ...	...	1	1	...	425	425	12	...	Batavia ...	1	...	1	248	...	248	16	1,356
Siamese coast ...	1	...	1	130	...	130	10	36	Siamese coast ...	1	...	1	301	...	301	29	50
	1	6	7	130	1,889	2,019	79	36		7	...	7	2,974	...	2,974	119	19,014
	33	36	69	11,690	14,295	25,985	1,175	76,000		74	2	76	24,917	455	25,372	1,193	243,807

British Consulate, Bangkok, March 13, 1867.

(Signed)

THOMAS GEORGE KNOX, Consul.

BANGKOK.

(No. 2).—RETURN of British and Foreign Shipping at the Port of Bangkok, during the Year 1866.

ENTERED.											CLEARED.										
Nationality of Vessels.	With Cargoes.			In Ballast.			Total.			Invoice Value of Cargoes.	Nationality of Vessels.	With Cargoes.			In Ballast.			Total.			Invoice Value of Cargoes.
	Vessels.	Tons.	Crews.	Vessels.	Tons.	Crews.	Vessels.	Tons.	Crews.			Vessels.	Tons.	Crews.	Vessels.	Tons.	Crews.	Vessels.	Tons.	Crews.	
British ...	33	11,690	520	36	14,296	625	69	25,988	1,175	76,060	British ...	74	24,917	1,177	2	455	16	76	25,372	1,193	218,567
French ...	1	320	13	4	1,263	57	5	1,583	70	6,000	French ...	3	1,616	69	1	232	13	6	1,838	82	18,810
American ...	3	1,040	33	4	3,200	70	7	4,240	103	8,161	Am ...	8	4,383	115	...	...	8	4,383	115	32,697
Dutch ...	9	2,631	140	9	5,797	155	18	6,431	232	8,116	Dutch ...	16	5,151	326	...	...	15	5,494	339	48,212
Prussian ...	...	...	...	13	4,413	179	13	4,413	179	...	Prussian ...	17	5,802	236	...	...	17	5,802	236	48,299
Russian ...	...	...	...	1	240	10	1	240	10	...	Russian ...	1	240	10	...	...	1	240	10	2,292
Hanseatic ...	17	7,349	205	23	8,136	289	40	15,815	465	11,171	Hanseatic ...	38	14,639	464	...	...	38	14,659	464	113,815
Hanoverian ...	...	...	...	4	1,504	48	4	1,504	48	...	Hanoverian ...	6	1,650	64	...	...	6	1,650	64	14,883
Swedish ...	...	...	...	3	1,049	40	3	1,049	40	...	Swedish ...	3	1,049	40	...	...	3	1,049	40	9,118
Danish ...	1	166	10	2	566	19	3	722	29	845	Danish ...	2	362	18	1	360	11	3	722	29	6,616
Belgian ...	1	294	11	...	...	...	1	294	11	80	Belgian ...	1	294	10	...	...	1	294	10	2,550
Siamese ...	115	45,193	(?)	...	326	(?)	116	45,519	(?)	679,044	Siamese ...	115	42,539	(?)	1	251	(?)	113	45,090	(?)	301,318
Junks ...	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)	...	Junks ...	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)	(?)	...
...	281	107,168	...	789,423	286	106,533	...	927,309	...

British Consulate, Bangkok, January 31, 1867.

(Signed)

THOMAS GEORGE KNOX, Consul.

(No. 8.)—RETURN of Foreign Shipping engaged in the Direct and Indirect Trade at the Port of Bangkok during the year 1866.

Nationality of Vessels.	ENTERED.						CLEARED.					
	Direct Trade.		Indirect Trade.		Total.		Direct Trade.		Indirect Trade.		Total.	
	Vessels.	Tons.	Vessels.	Tons.	Vessels.	Tons.	Vessels.	Tons.	Vessels.	Tons.	Vessels.	Tons.
French	1	225	4	1,358	5	1,583	..	..	6	1,838	6	1,838
American .. .. .	..	..	7	4,240	7	4,240	..	..	8	4,383	8	4,383
Dutch	4	1,269	14	5,162	18	6,431	6	1,250	9	4,204	15	5,454
Hanseatic .. .. .	..	..	40	15,485	40	15,485	..	..	38	14,659	38	14,659
Prussian .. .. .	..	..	13	4,413	13	4,413	..	..	17	5,802	17	5,802
Russian .. .. .	..	..	1	240	1	240	..	..	1	240	1	240
Hanoverian .. .. .	..	..	4	1,204	4	1,204	..	..	5	1,630	5	1,630
Swedish .. .. .	..	..	3	1,049	3	1,049	..	..	3	1,049	3	1,049
Danish .. .. .	..	..	3	722	3	722	..	..	3	722	3	722
Belgian .. .. .	..	..	1	294	1	294	..	..	1	294	1	294
Siamese	116	45,519	..	..	116	45,519	113	45,090	..	..	113	45,090
Total	121	47,013	90	34,167	211	81,180	119	46,340	91	34,821	210	81,161

BANGKOK.

British Consulate, Bangkok, March 13, 1867.

(Signed) THOMAS GEORGE KNOX, Consul.

RETURN of Imports into the Port of Bangkok during the year ending December 31, 1866.

Description of Goods.	Pieces, Corges, Bales.	From Singapore.		From Hong Kong.		From China.		From Europe.		Total Quantity.	Value in Mexican Dollars.	Value in Sterling.
		Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.			
			Dollars.		Dollars.		Dollars.		Dollars.		Dollars.	£
White shirtings .	Pieces	55,547	189,105	593	2,966	12	30	..	..	56,152	192,101	40,021
Grey	"	131,935	373,490	5,939	25,427	..	..	..	..	137,874	398,322	82,983
Figured	"	18,267	62,381	..	..	..	..	..	..	18,267	62,381	15,491
Coloured	"	5,611	21,301	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,611	21,301	4,437
Turkey red cloth ..	"	5,878	14,454	..	..	..	..	..	..	5,878	14,454	3,012
Long cloth. . .	"	11,165	43,452	..	..	..	..	..	..	11,165	43,452	9,052
Prints and chints ..	"	11,633	23,074	..	..	..	..	..	..	11,633	23,074	4,807
Mada pollams ..	"	14,208	20,660	..	..	..	..	..	..	14,208	20,660	4,304
Canvas	Bolts	1,189	8,166	120	960	30	300	260	1,610	1,599	11,036	2,299
Cambrics	Pieces	11,738	17,062	..	..	..	..	..	..	11,738	17,062	3,554
Muslins and jaconets ..	"	4,961	7,026	..	..	..	..	..	..	4,961	7,206	1,483
Ghows	Corges	41,571	316,521	..	..	..	..	..	..	41,571	316,521	65,942
Miscellaneous piece goods ..	Pieces	75,879	99,926	4,663	9,608	2,600	5,200	..	..	83,142	114,734	23,903
Woollen goods ..	"	2,659	39,140	10	38	..	..	..	..	2,669	39,178	8,162
Red twist	Bales	362	51,359	..	..	..	..	..	..	362	51,359	10,699
White twist	"	428	65,189	33	4,495	..	..	..	..	461	69,684	14,517
Coloured twist ..	"	415	44,798	..	..	..	..	..	..	415	44,798	9,333
Hardware	Packages	475	17,535	258	7,204	135	4,640	6	119	874	29,498	6,145
Iron	Piculs	4,318	11,141	357	875	..	..	1,780	4,800	6,455	16,816	3,504
Steel	Kegs	836	2,572	..	..	..	..	..	..	836	2,572	536
Muskets	Corges	1,073	38,779	..	..	..	..	..	..	1,073	38,779	8,079
Glassware	Cases	1,439	26,590	199	3,654	..	..	29	431	1,667	30,675	6,390
Copper and metal sheathing ..	Piculs	281	11,410	254	7,055	..	..	1,373	36,000	1,908	54,465	11,437
Crockery ware	Cases	94	3,500	261	5,000	3,088	14,529	27	820	3,470	23,849	4,968
Brass and copper ware ..	Cases	103	5,561	2,175	102,718	207	2,822	..	..	2,485	111,101	23,146
Jewellery	Packages	70	55,836	2	3,764	..	..	..	..	72	59,600	12,416
Ship chandlery ..	"	3,312	29,694	86	1,560	..	..	495	17,270	3,893	48,524	10,109

Return of Imports, &c.—*continued.*

Description of Goods.	Pieces, Corges, Bales.	From Singapore.		From Hong Kong.		From China.		From Europe.		Total Quantity.	Value in Mexica Dollars.	Value in Sterling.
		Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.	Quantity.	Value.			
Biscuits	Cases	77	Dollars. 2,090	..	..	..	..	50	Dollars. 507	127	Dollars. 2,597	£ 541
Liquors	Barrels	24,019	51,075	229	1,018	..	..	1,120	4,367	25,368	56,460	11,762
China goods	Cases		47,641	..	322,587	..	146,022	..	..	..	516,250	107,552
Fancy „ .. ..	..	185	19,665	6	1,403	..	..	21	596	212	21,664	4,513
Silk chowls	Pieces	1,365	3,805	24,217	97,097	..	..	..	..	25,582	100,002	21,021
Crapes .. ..	..	..	..	2,823	39,220	20	276	..	..	2,843	38,496	8,288
Silk piece goods .. ..	..	1,475	11,619	31,927	201,962	1,333	7,261	..	..	34,735	220,842	46,008
Gold thread	Cases	13	2,535	73	5,622	59	2,589	..	..	145	10,746	2,238
Sundries .. ..	..	..	280,781	..	24,072	..	..	..	16,933	..	330,786	68,914
Mexican dollars .. ..	..	..	8,000	..	62,404	..	..	..	..	..	70,404	14,667
Gold leaf .. ..	..	..	..	..	70,362	..	6,650	..	..	..	77,012	16,044
Machinery .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	100,000	20,833
Mat bags .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	2,000,000	60,000	12,500
Mats .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	209,000	14,000	3,916
Opium	Boxes	370	240,500	18	11,700	..	..	..	..	388	252,200	52,541
Coal	Tons	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,746	37,460	7,804
Total .. ..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	3,791,358	789,866

British Consulate, Bangkok, March 13, 1867.

(Signed)

THOMAS GEORGE KNOX, Consul.

BANGKOK.

RETURN of Exports in Square-rigged Vessels, from the Port of Bangkok, during 1866.

Description of Produce.	Singapore.	Batavia.	Hong Kong.	China.	India.	Europe.	Total Quantity.	Value in pounds sterling.
								£
Rice Piculs . .	160,254	1,720	1,233,346	76,570	5,928	..	1,468,082	519,945
Paddy " . .	2,401	..	39,052	3,300	..	30	44,783	11,195
Sugar " . .	12,735	..	38,741	..	7,822	414	59,712	119,424
Sapan wood " . .	11,709	1,611	63,347	9,557	305	2,900	88,629	30,466
Peas " . .	2,405	..	4,087	100	..	..	6,592	3,296
Silk " . .	555	..	..	..	4	..	699	27,960
Pepper " . .	2,333	..	20,059	3,018	..	..	25,410	30,174
Tin " . .	158	..	1,469	..	..	..	1,627	6,815
Teal-seed " . .	2,284	26	21,955	1,133	..	..	25,398	17,461
Hemp " . .	235	46	1,831	..	..	..	2,112	4,488
Hides " . .	1,739	..	2,645	94	..	..	4,478	5,317
Horns " . .	1,199	..	196	73	..	..	1,468	2,503
Salt " . .	4,017	26,590	..	..	..	..	30,607	15,303
Salt fish " . .	10,146	95,115	1,992	2,374	..	..	109,627	47,962
Mussels " . .	102	..	7,657	2,478	..	..	4,237	9,003
Teak timber Logs . .	434	..	234	..	26	..	694	2,679
„ planks " . .	2,089	166	4,549	320	2,768	27	9,899	12,368
Rosewood Piculs . .	..	..	20,768	2,192	..	..	22,960	22,960
Gum Benjamin " . .	259	..	..	..	..	10	269	6,053
Ivory " . .	85	..	304	..	..	..	1154	4,322
Cotton " . .	17	..	310	..	..	..	327	1,145
Luckrabau seed . . . . . " . .	..	..	618	..	..	..	618	1,314
Cardamoms . . . . . " . .	..	..	164	6	..	..	170	8,500
Gamboge " . .	41	..	14	..	..	..	55	515
Stick lac " . .	1,349	..	2,588	..	64	170	4,171	7,560
Mangrove bark . . . . . " . .	..	..	2,588	1,000	..	..	3,588	465
Ebony . . . . . " . .	..	..	3,465	..	..	..	3,465	1,000
Indigo " . .	600	..	..	..	..	..	600	375
Sundries—iron pans . . . . . " . .	..	..	..	..	..	..	6,000	5,250
								925,818

British Consulate, Bangkok, March 13, 1867.

(Signed)

THOMAS GEORGE KNOX, Consul.