

with a narrow neck and bell-shaped mouth, than which it is difficult to conceive one more calculated to empty itself rapidly, while the position is one of very close proximity to the sea, the source of rain-clouds. With these qualifications for filling and rapidly emptying itself, with steep and densely-wooded mountains encircling it, the Mahanuddy Basin is pre-eminently calculated to produce what are actually met with, namely, floods ranging extremely high, but of very brief duration.

VI.—*A Visit to the Ruined Cities and Buildings of Cambodia.*

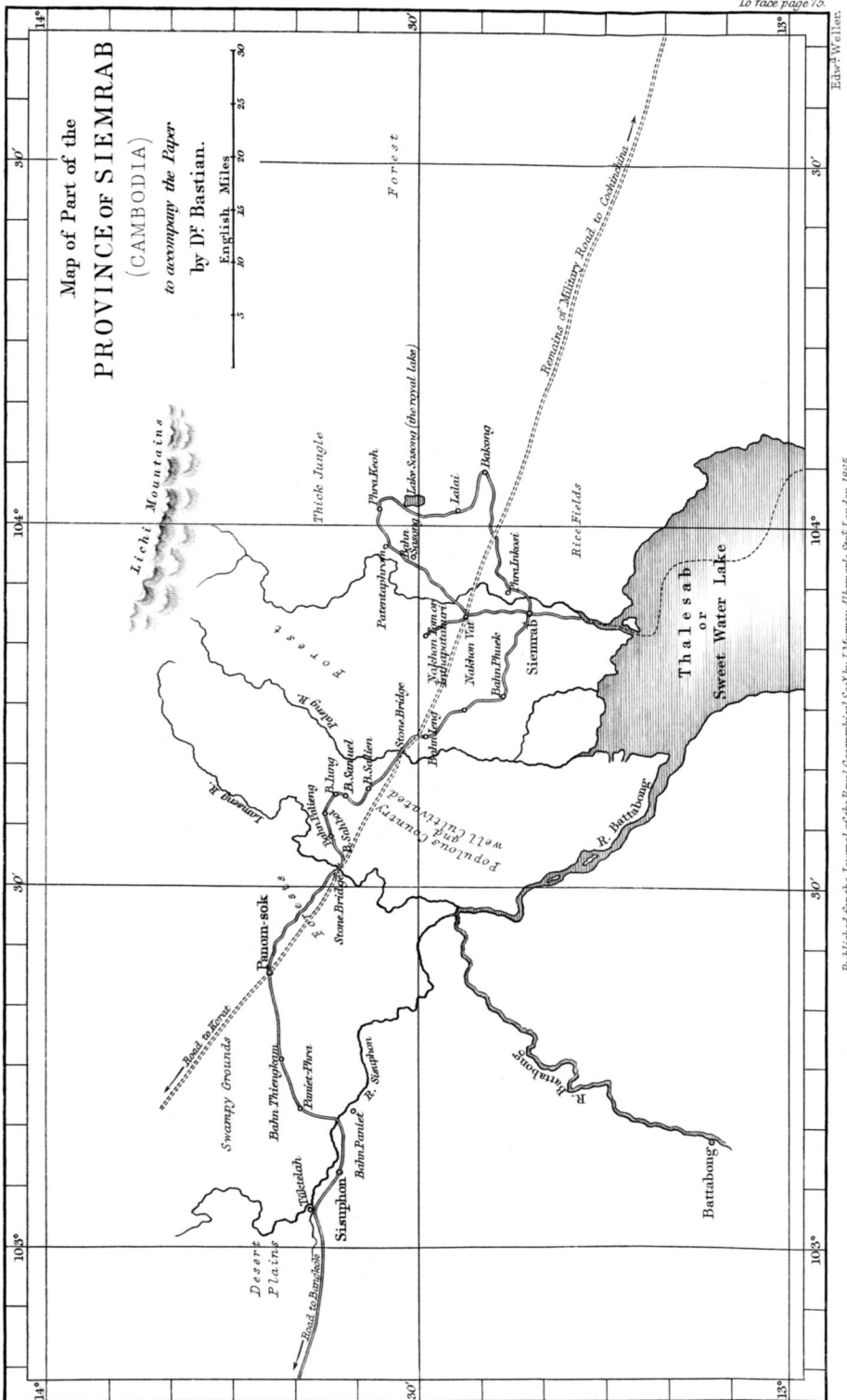
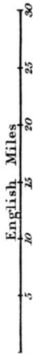
By Dr. A. BASTIAN.

Read, February 13, 1865.

THE principal ruins of Cambodia are concentrated in the province of Siemrab, although they are not confined to it, but scattered over a wide extent of the neighbouring country.

Coming from Bangkok, I left the road to Battabong at Tasavai or Sisuphon, and taking a north-easterly direction, arrived at Panom Sok, where the remains of an old palace can be traced. The ground there is low and swampy, and flooded during three months in every year. The whole country between Siam and Cambodia is an inclined plain, falling off to the sea from the Khao Donrek or highlands of Korat, which constitute the first platform of the terraces that ascend to the mountain-chains of Laos, and thence to the Himalaya. The Khao Donrek, or the "mountain which bears on the shoulder," *i. e.* the Atlas, encloses in its domains the Dong Phaya Fai (the jungle of the Lord of Fire), and gives rise to most of the tributary streams flowing to the Pachim River. Two days to the east of Kabin the watershed, between the Gulf of Siam and the outlets of the Mekhong, is passed, and the intervening space, before the basin of the Thalesab drains the valley of Cambodia, is converted into a lake every year during the rainy season. From August to November all voyages are made in boats; during the rest of the year the water becomes dry land, and the traveller, who then traverses these regions on a buffalo-cart or on elephants, may still see the boats, which had been afloat in the months of the rainy season and which await its return, lying about in forests and plains, where he, in March and April, suffers greatly from want of water. When I passed there in the month of December the two seasons were still contending for the mastery, and I found to my dismay the truth of what a Siamese nobleman had warned me of before my departure, namely, that the ground would not yet be dry enough for carts nor wet enough for boats. Often when toiling

Map of Part of the
PROVINCE OF SIEMRAB
 (CAMBODIA)
 to accompany the Paper
 by Dr Bastian.



through these marshy swamps I looked wistfully up to a ridge which, at an elevation of 6 or 8 feet, ran high and dry through the low land, sometimes stretching along one side of the road, sometimes crossing it at right angles, to plunge into the depths of the forest and then to appear again, as if to mock our slow progress and invite us to bestride it and follow its course. This elevated ridge was the remains of the old highway of the Khamen-boran (ancient Cambodians), who built the stone monuments; and it can be traced, as the natives told me, from the neighbourhood of Nophburi (a large city of Siam, now nearly deserted) straight up to Nakhon Vat, from which place it continues to the centre of Cochin China, and none of the people I met with had seen its terminus.

Following the serpentine lines of the Indian path, I was put in mind of my wanderings in Peru, where the traveller, winding his way over a broken and intersected ground, climbing hills on one side to descend them on the other, and wading rocky streams brawling down precipitous valleys, sees above his head the remnants of the ancient road of the Incas, which leads along the level of the high plateau in a straight line to Cuzco, the capital. Chasms are spanned by magnificent stone bridges in Peru, and although the difficulties to be overcome in the lowlands of Cambodia cannot be compared with the wild and grand nature of the Andes, the stone bridges which these ancient Cambodians built over comparatively insignificant streams rival in the boldness of their conception and even surpass the Peruvian bridges, and seem to prove that their builders must have been a people accustomed to struggle with the obstacles of mountainous countries. Dwellers in the lowlands would scarcely have thought of raising such immense works to escape the water, which they rather seek for as their favourite means of conveyance.

The first indication of what I should have to witness in this mysterious land of ruins, met my view on the evening of the day on which we had left Panom-Sok. We were encamped in a clearing of the forest, near the banks of a small stream, called Lam-Seng by the Siamese, or Sthüing-Sen by the Cambodians, when the guide (given me by the Governor of Panom-Sok) asked if I should like to see the Taphan-hin (the stone bridge). I followed the path indicated, and at a place where the thick foliage of the forest pressed darkly round the foaming water of the stream, which falls there in cascades over a ledge of rocks, I saw stretched across it a colossal structure, 400 feet long and 50 feet broad, which, overgrown with grasses and weeds, was supported by thirty arched pillars built of huge stones. In traversing the countries of Ultra-India, in the vast ruins of Pegu and Ava, or in the ancient capitals of Siam, the only witnesses one meets to tell of the past are brick-

buildings, decayed and crumbling to pieces ; but here I stood before a work built of stone, still uninjured and apparently almost as firm and strong as on the day of its first being placed there.

The bridge of the Lam-Seng is built of freestone, except the inferior layers of the pillars, for which a hard conglomerate is used wherever they are exposed to the action of the water. They are placed on a ledge of rocks which there lies across the river, and are riveted firmly in this natural foundation. The stones forming the pillars are of oblong shape and are laid in lines, with the broad side (6 or 8 feet) towards the river. The pillars stand in pairs, arching in opposite directions. At the basis the distance is about 6 feet ; but the stones project gradually towards the top, inclining in an arch, which is thus closed after the manner of that of Mycenæ. The body of the bridge is formed by large stone beams, 14 feet or more in length, which stretch in several layers one above the other. The upper ones are placed alternately on the edges of the lower ones, and thus their very weight contributes to keep the arch steady. There was formerly a balustrade, which lined the bridge on both sides ; but it is now mostly thrown down, these ornamental parts of the massive structure being the only ones on which the wanton destroyers could wreak their vengeance. It was composed of a series of long quarry-stones, on the edges of which Caryatidean pillars (representing Phaya Nakh, or the king of the subterranean serpents) supported another slab, with an excavation all along its rim, to receive in it a semi-convex stone, ornamented with arabesque sculptures. On the left bank of the river the staircase of a Ghaut leads down to the water, at a place where a temple is said formerly to have stood, and under a shed in a neighbouring part of the forest I found a collection of Brahminical idols, including four-handed Vishnu and Ganesa, with his elephant head, which had been placed there by their worshippers. In examining the San-Chao in Cambodia, which, like the Nat-houses in Birna and the Dewalas in Ceylon, in most cases adjoin a Buddhistic monastery, I have frequently found broken fragments of these and similar statues, together with offerings that have been laid before them. The Lam-Seng, at the time I saw it, had high and steep banks ; but it is filled to the brim (according to native account) in the rainy season, when, the rocks which now form the rapids being covered, the stream runs smoothly along. Another stone bridge, called Taphan-theph (the celestial bridge), is said to exist a little farther up the river.

The next morning we passed over the bridge, with the roaring water below ; but as soon as the natives reached the other side they again left the direction of the old causeway, to grope their way through narrow and muddy paths in the jungle. The afternoon of the same day we arrived at the ruins of another bridge over the Paleng River, which, according to popular tradition, was left un-

finished by the architects because the country was invaded by the enemy, who destroyed Nakhon Vat. This bridge is likewise of stone, and has, even in its imperfect state, outlived many centuries; whereas the wooden bridges along the military road, built lately by the Siamese general, Chao-Khun Bodin, from Pachim to Battabong, are even now, after hardly thirty years existence, out of repair or totally broken down.

The plan of the bridge over the Paleng is the same as that of the one previously described, the vaults being formed by layers of stone, projecting 4 to 6 inches beyond those beneath. The people told me of three other stone bridges, somewhere in the neighbourhood; but I did not see them on my way, as I found myself two days after in Siemrab, the government town of the province of the same name, and from thence started for the temple of Nakhon Vat, two hours distant.

The first impression this monument makes is overwhelming. It is Ellora's Kailasa, taken out of its dark cave and placed high in air, and the sculptures rival in their elegant and animated style the best of those at Mahabalipuram. The chasteness of the design recalls the classical style of Greece; but an examination of the details shows it to be mixed up with Indian extravagances, like the architecture of the Kashmirian temples.

As I am informed that the temple has been lately described in the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, and as my notes are not as yet properly arranged, I shall confine myself to a few remarks upon the delineations on the walls of the outer corridor which encases the peristyles of the interior temple.

The sculptures are in high-relief, and the figures carved out of the walls are of about half the size of life, more or less. They shine, as if polished, on account of the frequent cleaning previous to their being overlaid with colours and gold leaf—an operation formerly repeated at every festive day in the year. In three passages of the corridor the subjects represented are taken from the *Ramayana*, an epic well known in translations throughout Birma and Siam, although differing in many particulars from the Sanscrit original. One sees Rama on Garuda, and Laksman on Hanuman, leading on their warriors against Rawana, with ten heads, and therefore called Thossakan. The bridge through the sea is built by the monkeys, and Rawana supplicates for the assistance of the Maha-Rüsi (chief of hermits), who sits with his trident in the posture of Siva. Thossarath (Dasaratha), Rama's father, challenges his enemy; Rawana fights the sun, &c. &c. All these subjects, here sculptured on stone, one may see painted in gaudy colours and more fantastic shapes in the royal Vats of Bangkok; but in Nakhon Vat are also met with the fabulous productions of Raxasi, Koxasi, many-headed serpents, monsters, angels, four or eight

handed deities, &c. &c. These are wanting, however, in a battle-scene of the adjoining verandah, which is taken from ordinary human life. In the battle called that of Phra-Phirut, the kings advance against each other on chariots, and many an animated contest, is depicted. One scene appears to belong to the Mahabharata, representing Bhima as placed on a litter of arrows by the Pandus; another seems to be the duel between Phaya Katong and Lakernana.

In the following compartment the whole length of the wall (240 feet) is occupied by the struggle between Thevadas and Yaksas for the Naga snake; the former, who are aided by Hanuman, dragging on the tail, the latter the head. In the middle stands Vishnu upon Kurma Raja, the world-supporting turtle. The same subject, a favourite one with the artists, I have seen repeated in several other places, chiefly as an ornamental sculpture for porticoes. At the Vat Phra-Inkosi, near Siemrab, Khinet comes to the scene, riding on a rat, and the snake only being carried points to a division of labour, as in the Manek Maya of Java, where the portage of the mountain and that of the snake-god are related as distinct events. At Vat Ek (near Battabong) the snake-god winds his folds round Mount Meru, or Mandara; and in a mythological history of Cambodia, which I translated in Bangkok, the same fact is alluded to.

The most interesting sculptures at Nakhon Vat are in two compartments, called by the natives respectively the procession and the three stages (heaven, earth, and hell). On the first, the king, Pathummasurivong, is seen returning from the foundation of the city, surrounded by his court and his wives, who are borne in litters. He is carried on in a long procession of his warriors (on foot or on horseback), each chief heading his followers on elephants. I counted above one thousand figures (or at least heads) in this single apartment. What gives a peculiar interest to this section is the fact that the artist has represented the different nationalities in all their distinctive characteristic features, from the flat-nosed savage in the tasseled garb of the Pnom and the short-haired Lao to the straight-nosed Rajaput, with sword and shield, and the bearded Moor, giving a catalogue of nationalities, like another column of Trajan, in the predominant physical conformation of each race. On the whole, there is such a prevalence of Hellenic cast in the features and profiles, as well as in the elegant attitudes of the horsemen, that one might suppose Xenocrates of old, after finishing his labours in Bombay, had made an excursion to the East. The Chinese Hiowen-thsang compared the straight noses of the Ceylonese to the beak of a bird, and the Cambodians are not less surprised at the prominent lineaments displayed in these sculptures, and so decidedly different from the flattened noses in

which they themselves, for the most part, rejoice. In the compartment called the three stages the natives believe they see the representation of heaven, earth, and hell; but I have reason to doubt this explanation. The lower stage, it is true, represents, on one half the world of Pretas, and on the other the different hells; but the two upper stages appear to give the history of the manner in which savage tribes were civilised by colonising foreigners, and must have reference to the foundation of these ancient monuments, the far-advanced outposts on the wild mountain-forests, which are visible from the windows when walking through the majestic colonnades. Those who refused the new religion offered to them were precipitated into hell, pictured below; whereas the re-born converts entered the palaces which appear on the upper stage, immediately above it, the middle one not being continued. Particulars of these instructive pictures I shall have to defer till the publication of the drawings illustrating them, which were executed by a native painter whom I had taken with me.

One subject which frequently recurs in these sculptures shows the head-dress of the rude barbarians being changed by the king, who adds flowers and ornaments. Females in a richly-adorned head-dress, called *Thephakanja*, or *Chao Savan* (dwellers in heaven), are sculptured (nearly in life size) on every part of the building. Forming the retinue of the deified kings, they correspond to the *Widadaris* of Javanese mythology; but they are designated by the Cambodians of to-day, in grateful remembrance of benefits received, as the benevolent or kind-hearted ladies. The varieties of the head-dress are manifold, but that which occurs most frequently towers up in three high points. The name of *Ketsamalea*, the father of King *Pathummasurivong* (of the race of the sun-born lotus), means, when translated, "the head adorned with garlands;" and the flowers used for these garlands are mostly the *Champa*-flower, the symbol of the kingdom of *Champa*, or *Cham*.

There are a great many inscriptions scattered all over the buildings at *Nakhon Vat*. Some of them are modern, written with Cambodian letters, and in the language now spoken by the people. Their purport is to describe the offerings made, and give the names of the worshippers. The other inscriptions are written in a character which likewise, for the most part, resembles the *Pali* (and therefore the Cambodian) letters, but in a more antiquated form, approaching that of the *Kawi* inscriptions, and sometimes deviating considerably. The language differs from the vernacular Cambodian, as well as from the *Pali*, and is not understood now. When the ruins were rediscovered in 1570 the inscriptions were already, as *De Mancanedo* remarks, unintelligible to the Cambodians. With the help of some priests in *Udong*, I have, however, succeeded in deciphering some names, and I am still busy with

them. The modern inscriptions every literate Cambodian can read. In one of the galleries a square tablet of black marble has been let into the wall, bearing an inscription, which my guides told me contained the history of the building. I had it copied, and as it was written in the common Cambodian, intermixed with some obsolete expressions, I had it read to me and translated, but found it only to contain a long description of offerings made by different donors, interspersed with some interesting allusion to mythological objects. The date was 1623 (probably of the Mahasakkharat).

The central of the five towers of the inner circle (in the temple at Nakhon Vat) forms an octagon with four larger and four smaller sides. On each of the four larger sides, opening out in gates, which face the four horizontal points, stands a large figure of Buddha, overlooking from its high position the surrounding country. This open exposure of the statues is the very counterpart to their concealment in vaulted cells at Pagan (where the statue in the Ananda temple is to be illuminated by artificial light from above), and in the rock-cut basilicas of the Dëkkhan. This combination of four Buddhas occurs frequently in Cambodia, and is there called Phra-Muk-buen (Phra-si-na in Siamese), or the Lord with four faces, although not only the faces but the whole bodies are four-fold, and Chatur-Baya (four-shouldered) would be more appropriate. If sculptured on the wall, three faces only can become visible; but if standing free, a fourth face is added to the Trimurti. A four-faced deity is worked out in gigantic proportions on the large gate of Nakhon Luang, and there called Phrohñ (Brahma), signifying the protection given by the all-seeing god, which was afterwards transferred by the Buddhists to the four Pala. As this direction to the four points of the horizon naturally forms a cross, the Siamese call a crossing "phrahñ;" and the Prasat (prasada), the distinguishing feature of these exotic stone monuments of Cambodia, forms always a cross, with the corridors dissecting each other at right angles. The cross is the distinctive character for the doctors of reason in the pristine Buddhism of Kasyapa. The corridors are roofed with blocks of stones, projecting over each other, so as to form an arch. Narrower arches are formed by the hollow of the covering stone, resting on two stones, in the form of a wedge. The blocks of stones are fitted together without cement, but leave scarcely a trace of their joinings; and the same is to be observed of some contemporaneous brick buildings, which are found (at other places) intermixed with the other stone ruins.

The edifices at Nakhon Vat were, as their name (city of monasteries) signifies, a temple built for the reception of the learned Patriarch Buddhaghosa, who brought the holy books of the Trai-Pidok from Langka (Ceylon). The residence of the kings at that time was the far-famed Inthapataburi, which is now, in its ruins,

called Nakhon Luang (royal city) by the Siamese, or Nakhon Tom (large city) according to the Cambodians, both languages having adopted the Pali word Nakhara. Its foundation is referred to a Prince of Romah or Ruma; but the story is too long to insert here.

Connected with the temple of Nakon Vat is the establishment of a number of villages inhabited by a people called Samre, on the neighbouring Khao (mountain) Lichi. Whenever some work is to be performed in the temple, the abbot sends a message to the mountains ($1\frac{1}{2}$ day distant), and the required number of labourers has to be sent by the head man. The nomination of the abbots, who were placed there after the rediscovery of the temple in the year 1570, is now in the hands of the governor of Siemrab. The custom to endow a temple with slaves was prevalent over the whole continent. There were pagoda-slaves connected with the Schwey-Dagon in Rangoon, and there are still slaves belonging to several pagodas in Birma Proper. In the latter country they were, however, mostly supplied by prisoners of war, Arracanese, Kassay, Peguans, &c. &c.; whereas the Samre belong to the aboriginal stock of the population, inhabiting most of the hills around the lake, and thence to Kampot.

Leaving the platform of the temple, which is fortified by broad moats and a stone wall, a two hours' ride through the forest brings us to the ruins of Inthapataburi, the ancient capital of Cambodia, now known under the name of Nakhon Luang, or Nakhon Tom. The ruins are very extensive, and from them were taken the stones which furnished the material to build the fort of Siemrab. The outermost of the three walls encloses a wide area, which, according to the natives, it would take a whole day, from sunrise to sunset, to circumambulate. The second wall was the fortification of the city proper; and then follows the central wall, the adamantine one (Kampeng Keoh), which contained the palace and the royal buildings, now to be traced in their ruins only. This system of three fortifications one within another, is a standing one in Ultra-India, but has recently been repeated by the Birnese in building their new capital. One enters the wall of Nakhon Tom, which is built with square blocks of iron conglomerate, through a massive structure, forming the gate, the upper part of which is worked at the four sides into a face of Phrohm. The Chinese traveller of 1295 mentions a five-faced Buddha, of stone, placed above the gates of the Cambodian capital. The space inside the wall is mostly overgrown with jungle, but here and there are some spots cleared for the planting of rice, or a bamboo hut is perched on heaps of rubbish, under which the stone and brick buildings of the old capital are buried. Large images of Buddha, of modern make, are put on some old foundations; but in the temple dedi-

cated to the protecting deity of the town, we find an ancient figure of the elephant-headed Ganesa.

In Siam every town has a larger or smaller chapel for the honour and the preservation of the Lak Myang (the town pillar), an injury to which would bring destruction on the citizens. The tree is still pointed out at Nakhon Tom, under which the leader of the emigration buried the golden umbrella (the emblem of royalty), and by this artifice got possession of the country, which had been before occupied by the Djam. The palace was situated on an eminence, and a staircase leads up to what remains of the second story. The corridors are in the same style as those in Nakhon Vat, but lower, and of a more rude workmanship, wanting the high finish and the elegance which distinguishes every part of the former. The figures also of men and animals which are sculptured on some of the walls, show a more primitive style of execution, bolder, but less graceful, and are probably older than those in Nakhon Vat. One of the finest specimens still preserved of these bygone times is the statue of the last king, Phaya Khi-ruen, or Phrabat Songkaya, who reigned in Nakhon Luang, and was afflicted with leprosy, for having deserted the snake-worship of his ancestors. A great number of stone inscriptions in the ancient characters, called Akson Mihng, are found at Nakhon Luang, on pillars and on the walls.

After having passed to the other side of the river of Siemrab, we encounter in the forest the ruins of two other places which present the same combination of a royal and priestly residence as the towns of Nakhon Luang and Nakhon Vat. The royal city bears the name of Paten-Taphroh (the citadel of Ta-Phroh), and the priestly one is called Prasat-Keoh (the gem-tower). The ancient kings removed to this place after the destruction of Nakhon Luang, and there still exists a long chain of traditions which connect the first and second period of Cambodian history. Distinct indications are given by the names themselves. The last king of Nakhon Luang lost his reign because he had erected the four-faced figure of Phroh to keep off the snake-god, who till then had been the protector of the country, and the first king of the new capital is called the Ta-Phroh (ancestor or grandfather Phroh). This statue still stands in one of the corridors in a mutilated state, but sufficiently well preserved to show that the hair has been tied up in a knot at the top of the head, after the Brahminical fashion. One of the principal ornaments on roofs and balconies is the vigorous figure of Kruth (Garuda), the inveterate enemy of the Nagas, tearing a viper in his hands. The outer wall of Paten-Taphroh is only a mound of earth, but the two inner circles are built of stone. A line of passages and doorways leads up to the palace, composed of an intricate labyrinth of low and narrow corridors, enclosing small

courts, and running out in turrets at the ends between a convolute of chambers in different sizes, and filled with clusters of pilasters. Most of the columns are richly ornamented, and on each of the portals is sculptured a scene referring to some event in Hindu mythology. The whole pillar is often a mass of sculpture from base to capital. The style of architecture is less colossal than that of Nakhon Luang, but the ornamental part approaches in elegance the masterpieces which embellish Nakhon Vat, and, as in this latter place, the honeysuckle border everywhere decorates the columns by which the pointed arch is supported. The columns are clothed with arabesques, which have been carved out of the stone, and mostly enclose in their curvatures the representation of a Rûsi, a Thevada, or a Thephanon (a figure frequently mistaken for a Buddha). The palace at Paten-Taphrohms was surmounted by thirty-five towers, some of which are still standing, but most of them lie in ruins. The stones are not so much hewn, as really polished, and they fit together without mortar. The spires on the roof stand in groups of five, forming a Pancha-Prasada, like the ancient buildings ascribed by the Malays to their Hindu princes.

Prasat-Keoh, the adjoining temple-monastery of Paten-Taphrohms, stands on a broad flat hill, to the summit of which lead several flights of steps under covered passages. The forest has here reclaimed its own, and destroyed the work of human hands. So densely has the luxuriant jungle shot up in this formerly cultivated place, that for every step forward a path has to be cleared by a cutlass. The plan of the building is that of a cross. Four turrets, with gates at the four points of the horizon, surround a fifth one; and each of these turrets opens again in four gates, placed at right angles. The temples, as well as the broad terraces on which they stand, are composed of large stones, which, although consisting for the most part of hard slate, are as neatly fitted together as the soft greystone of Nakhon Vat. Ornaments are very sparingly used, and sculptures of men or animals entirely wanting. The temple is said to have contained the famous image of a single emerald, or more likely of jadestone, like the present one, called Phra-Keoh, about which a great number of wild legends are current in Siam and Cambodia, originating, perhaps, in the remembrance of the wonderful jasper image of Ceylon, which was carried by the priestly sculptor, Nanteh, overland to China, in the fifth century, and carefully preserved. The arrival of Nantha, Anon, or Ananda, plays still an important part in the traditions of the Cambodians, who distinguish him very well from Gautama's favourite disciple of the same name. The original of the Phra-Keoh was, perhaps, the jasper image of Ceylon,

still by Fa-Hian, which had already attracted the attention of the Chinese in the first century.

In the neighbourhood of Phra-Keoh is an artificial lake, called Sasong (the royal lake), which was built by the kings of Paten-Taphroh for their recreation, and surrounded by pleasure-houses. It is now covered with lotus and aquatic plants, but still supplies the villages scattered through the forest with water, as there is no other near. It must have been a work of immense labour, and fills the beholder with doubtful wonder when he compares these witnesses of former centuries with the present state of the country. The whole population of Cambodia of to-day would scarcely be able to raise one of these gigantic structures which abound in ruins. The Birmanese lake of Oungbinleh comes in no way near to that of Sasong, which may, perhaps, be placed by the side of the Ceylonese works of irrigation. The lake of Sasong is of oblong shape, about 2000 feet broad, and 4000 feet long, and surrounded by a high embankment of solid masonry. Some of the blocks are 14 to 16 feet long, and highly finished. In convenient places square platforms were built, overhanging the water, with broad flights of steps leading down to it; and on such places the huge masses of stones laid on each other are embellished by delicate chisellings, bearing the figures of serpents, eagles, lions (in their fabulous shapes, as Naga, Kruth, Sinto) on the ends. In the middle of the lake is a small island, with the remains of a former palace upon it. Of all the figures used for ornaments, that which recurs most frequently is that of the Naga; and the Chinese officer who visited Cambodia in 1295, describes already "the pillars of the stone bridges adorned with serpents, each of which had nine heads."

Returning to Siemrab, on the left hand of the river, I passed two other remains of antiquity, Lailan and Bakong, both of them now converted into convents; that is to say, the priests have built their low and tottering cells between these splendid ruins, which they were not able to repair. At Lailan a large square platform is supported by three terraces of cut stones, ascending one above the other, on the highest point of an inclined plain, which stretches away from these to low grounds on the bushy horizon. In the height of the rainy season these are covered with water; and on this lake boat-races and boat-fights were annually held, as tradition says, the kings of Inthapataburi looking on from the terrace of Lailan. A similar contrivance existed at Amarapooa, in Birma. The stones of which the terraces of Lailan are composed are huge blocks, symmetrically cut, and joined together with great accuracy. A broad flight of steps, guarded by lions, leads up from the side on one abutment. Upon the platform stand in

two lines four Prasat, built up with bricks upon the freestone, which forms the fundament and the lower stage. The bricks are exceedingly hard, and made in a manner not understood now by the people of the country. They are polished, and laid upon each other in so neat a manner that no traces of mortar can be discovered. The folds of the stone gates are covered with intricate carvings of reticulated ornaments, great care being bestowed on even the minutest portions of the design, and, in the niches adjoining, statues of warriors stand sentinels. The surface of the stone which forms the portal is in every case elaborately sculptured, to present one scene or other of mythological import. The most magnificent inscriptions I have ever seen cover the door-posts from top to bottom, in a nearly perfect state of preservation. The letters are three-quarters of an inch large, and cut half an inch deep into the hard stone. Another stone inscription is found on both sides of a flat stone set upright.

The most interesting feature at Bakong, at one hour's distance from Lailan, is a high hill, built up artificially upon a natural basis, in the style of the Mexican Teocalli. It rises in terraced lines, and bears the remains of a square altar upon its level platform, where a wide view opens out over the surrounding country. The foot of the truncated pyramid is surrounded by ten Prasats, most of them with pedestals inside, on which the statues of the gods were formerly placed. These are wanting now, but some of them are heaped up in an idol-house close by. Mutilated figures of elephants, lions, and dragons stand on the steps, and the stone gates are embellished with ornamental designs of arabesques, in the same way as at Lailan. In the carvings of the portal-stone, the central place is always occupied by a Gorgon-head, or the face of a Rakhsaka, called, on account of this peculiar form, Rhea by the Siamese and Cambodian artists. This is sometimes identified with Rahu, or, according to Cambodian *savans*, with Rembu Chulung, whose head, when cut off by Vishnu's Chakr, had already imbibed the immortalizing liquor. It resembles somewhat the hideous mask on the calendar stone at Mexico, and in the sculptures at Palenque. Bakong was built for the reception of the Phra-Kho (the Holy ox, or the Lord-ox), which, associated with Phra-Keoh (the Holy Gem, or the Lord of the Gem), is continually alluded to in Cambodian history. As the Chinese in the middle ages, after Brahminical rites had been introduced by the Tamulians, remarked of the kings in Ceylon, that they looked with equal reverence on the ox and on the images of Buddha, so it was with the kings of Cambodia, and even now-a-days the form of Siva's bull lies on the sacred hill of Udong, at the feet of the temple of Gautama, whose symbol was the ox. In the 'Syara Malaya' it is said that the people never ate the cow nor

killed it. The Buddhistic priests, to conceal the fact that the ox had been worshipped, are accustomed to say that it was used as a library, and kept in reverence on account of the holy books placed in its belly. I found no inscription at Bakong.

Of the ruins which I visited after having navigated the Thalesab, in the province of Battabong, I will only mention those of Vat Ek, which consist of a monastery, rising on a square platform formed by stone terraces above the swampy grounds surrounding it; Banon, which forms a fortified temple on the top of a steep hill amongst wild and romantic scenery; and Basek, which was formerly a royal residence, with considerable remains of walls, palaces, temples, lakes, houses, and streets, all built or paved with stone, and in some places repaired with bricks. Sometimes, to strengthen the structure, beams of a hard kind of iron-wood (chiefly at Vat Ek) are fixed into the masonry, but in such a way as only to become visible after the outer stones have fallen down by some accident. The Cambodians who accompanied me thought that some of the great slabs were not natural, but manufactured on the spot; and I remember to have seen such an opinion proffered about some ancient temples in Assam, as, for instance, the stone pillars at Dhernalpoor. Of the immense rocks which enter into the construction at Nakhon-Vat, tradition says that they had first been soft, and by some process hardened after being placed there. The guides point to the traces of the fingers which the gods, when they removed them, left on the stones, taking for such the large holes which originally served to insert the fastenings of the lead or other metals with which the building was roofed, or for the machinery to hoist them up. According to the Chinese account in the 13th century, the palace of the Cambodian king was partly tiled with lead, and partly covered with yellow bricks.

Inscriptions are only found in Basek and Vat Ek, not in Banon; but the ornamental sculptures on portals, gates, and columns are equally exquisite on the three places. Banon was formerly, as it is said, the seat of Brahminical rites, and there are now families of Brahmins settled in Cambodia, as well as in Siam and Birma, chiefly as astrologers in the royal service. They have an alphabet of their own, copies of which I have procured, but the letters bear little resemblance to those of the inscriptions. Amongst the statues frequently occurs that of a mace-bearer, in the form of the popular hero Ko-tabong, whose mace (tabong) disappeared (bat) at Battabong, written wrongly Phra-Tambong by the Siamese.

The natives enumerated many other towns which, according to their account, contain ancient ruins in bricks and stones, and it appears that they are spread over the whole valley of the Mekhong, as far as Laos, but as their relative position could only be understood on an accurate map, I limit the catalogue to two communica-