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AND FINANCE.

FRANCE.

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1886
ON THE
TRADE OF SAIGON AND COCHIN CHINA.

REFERENCE TO PREVIOUS REPORT [C. 4657] Commercial No. 6, 1886.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty,
MARCH, 1887.

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No. 90.

Reference to previous Report [C. 4657], Commercial No. 6, 1886.

FRANCE.

SAIGON.

*Report by Consul Tremlett upon the Trade, Commerce, and Navigation of
Saigon and Cochin-China for the Year 1886.*

THE year just ended has been a most unfavourable one for European merchants, there having been no transactions for Europe, but few for the Philippines, and none for Java; even Chinese traders have not found the season profitable, although they have done the bulk of the year's business, and have had matters pretty much their own way as usual. The prediction of a short crop was not fulfilled, but, although grain was plentiful enough, prices were high, as will be seen hereafter.

As will appear from the following statement, the export of rice Exports. amounted to 7,895,800 piculs, equal to 470,000 tons, being 492,560 piculs, or 30,000 tons, more than the export of 1885. The average price of "cargo" was 1 dol. 80 c. per picul, equal to 5s. per cwt., and the total value sums up as under:—

	Quantity.	Price per Picul.	Value.	
			Currency.	Sterling.
			Dollars.	£
Cargo	Piculs.	Dol. c.	Dollars.	£
White	4,647,027	1 80	8,364,649	1,364,108
Paddy	113,748	2 50	284,370	47,385
	3,135,025	1 50	4,702,638	783,756
Total	7,895,800	..	13,351,657	2,215,249

STATEMENT of Export of Rice, 1886.

Country.	Port.	Quantity.	Total.
		Piculs.	Piculs.
China	Hong-kong	7,325,700	7,409,000
"	Swatow	50,200	
"	Amoy	19,800	
"	Hoihow	13,300	
Annam	Haiphong.. .. .	7,960	16,460
"	Touron	8,500	
Philippines	Manila	274,100	441,900
"	Iloilo	182,800	
"	Cebu	35,000	
Straits	Singapore.. .. .	..	28,000
Europe	Marseilles.. .. .	..	200
Grand total .. .. .	.. .. .	..	7,895,760

Nearly the whole of the crop went to China, the demand for which quarter kept prices high throughout the year.

Other articles of export are trifling compared with that of grain, and statistics should rebut the interested statements that the colony is capable of producing everything to an unlimited extent. During 1886 were shipped—

Articles.	Quantity.	Remarks.
	Piculs.	
Fish	166,388	From Cambodia.
Isinglass	68	" "
Hides	10,407	
Coprah	29,314	
Cotton	5,797	From Cambodia.
Pepper	2,133	But probably 10,000 piculs went to Singapore from the Gulf of Siam ports.
Cardamoms	10	
Cocoa-nut oil	327	
Silk	1,470	
Salt	70,290	

The export duty upon rice and paddy is now 75 c. per picul, and, at the Government exchange of 420, it amounts to about 18 dollar cents, against 15 paid during late years.

Exchange;
banking.

The continued depression of sterling has been the most notable feature of the year; the official dollar rate declined to 3 fr. 85 c. The deliberations of the Chamber of Commerce upon the dollar question, and its suggestions for a remedy to the existing state of things, amounted to nothing. The Government established the budget in francs; in consequence, the franc is the unit of value, the base of duties, taxes, and income of all kinds. The local dollar, the Mexican dollar, and their equivalents will be received at the Treasury at the official rate fixed by the governor in Privy Council, on the 25th of each month, for the month following.

The Colonial Council have voted to impose a stamp duty.

Shipping and
navigation.

By the following statement it will be seen that 371 vessels, of 435,446 tons, cleared from this port, of which 202 vessels, of 234,213 tons, were British. Classed according to nationalities, they appear as under:—

Nationalities.	Steam.		Sailing.		Total.	
	Number of Vessels.	Tons.	Number of Vessels.	Tons.	Number of Vessels.	Tons.
American	4	3,892	2	2,255	6	6,147
Austrian .. .. .	...	...	1	839	1	839
British	200	233,581	2	632	202	234,213
Danish	3	2,304	...	...	3	2,304
Dutch	30	42,364	...	...	30	42,364
French	27	45,939	1	685	28	46,624
German	91	93,856	...	...	91	93,856
Norwegian	6	6,989	...	...	6	6,989
Siamese .. .. .	...	...	1	154	1	154
Spanish	3	1,956	...	...	3	1,956
	364	430,981	7	4,565	371	435,446
Messageries Mari- times	120	173,524	...	...	120	173,524
Total	484	604,405	7	4,565	491	608,970

STATEMENT of British Shipping Entered.

Class.	Number.	Tonnage.	Crews.
Steam	200	230,680	7,325
Sail	4	3,718	73
Total	204	234,398	7,398

Freights have been very low during the year, having ranged from— Freights.

	Cents.
To Singapore	5 to 8
Hong-kong	6 15
Manila	15 20
Amoy	18

The period allowed for the production of documents establishing the right to a return of tonnage dues to shipping discharged in Europe is fixed at six months for steamers and nine months for sailing vessels.

Tonnage dues have hitherto been 19 c. per ton register; they are now put at 1 fr. per ton. At the present rate of 4 fr. 20 c. to the dollar, they amount to 24 dollar cents per ton—an increase of about 25 per cent.

The number of pilots in future is to be at least 19, and not more than 25.

The buoys and chains for the new moorings for merchant vessels arrived in June, but they have not yet been placed in position.

On account of cholera prevailing during the summer at sundry ports on the coast of Japan, all vessels from that country, China, or Manila were required to bring a bill of health, viséd by a French consul.

The British s.s. "Ferntower" sailed from Saigon on the 26th August, and two men who were picked up off the wreckage state that she foundered in the typhoon of the 29th of that month. Casualties.

The Dutch s.s. "Celebes" encountered the same typhoon on her voyage from Heng to this port—had decks swept, cabin gutted, boats lost, &c.

The Siamese barque "Ban Lee" was wrecked on the coast of Annam, to the southward of Quinhon, about the same date.

The dry dock is progressing rapidly toward completion.

The rate of interest having sensibly diminished during the past 10 years, and the guarantee of the colony relieving the Banque de l'Indo-Chine of all risk, the said bank is restricted to 11 per cent. interest upon loans to agriculturists, of which 11 per cent. 1 per cent. is returned to the Treasury. The term of a loan is extended from four to eight months. General.

On the 20th June all Chinese clubs at Cholon were suppressed and their guarantees returned, the Government choosing to consider them as gambling-houses. The English Chinese club had been open only one month.

Troubles having broken out at Beich-thuan (the nearest Annamese province), European and native troops were sent there at various times during the latter half of the year.

From the 1st January, 1887, all supplies and material required for

the services of the colony must be exclusively of French production, except those that have not their counterparts of French origin.

It has been decreed (in France) that "entrepreneurs" are not eligible as members of the Colonial Council, but a fair average are still there.

From 1892 no native who cannot speak French can be eligible as a member of the Colonial Council; until then Annamites must elect Frenchmen.

Two cases of seizure for opium smuggling occurred early in the year. The British s.s. "Lenna" and the German s.s. "Decima" were seized, and condemned to pay—the former 8,000*l.* and the latter 4,000*l.* The value of the opium seized was 400*l.* and 200*l.* respectively. The cases have been fully reported to the Foreign Office, and are now under discussion at home.

Through trains have been run on the Saigon-Mytho Railway since June.

IMMIGRANTS.

Chinese ..	..	..	..	..	..	21,121
Indians ..	..	..	..	..	..	276
Malays	86

EMIGRANTS.

Chinese	9,910
Indians	211
Malays	72

Saigon, January 27, 1887.

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