

Elephants as Lumber Shovers a Feature of Burmese Industrial Life



I WATCHED AN ELEPHANT PILING LUMBER

I SAW THEM WASHING THE BEASTS

A ROYAL WHITE ELEPHANT OF SIAM

(Copyright, 1910 by Frank G. Carpenter.)

RESPONDING to the Bee—I have spent the day visiting the sawmills and lumber yards of Rangoon, where the elephants aid in preparing teakwood for ship-ANGON, 1910.—(Special Correspondent.)

Teak is one of the chief exports of Burma. It is so valuable that it is sold by the ton, and it brings in \$7,000,000 or \$8,000,000 a year. The trees are felled in the forests and after cutting are floated down the streams and rivers of Rangoon. Both in the forests and at the ports the handling of the timber is done by elephants. They drag the logs to the streams and arrange the booms; they stack the planks and they carry all sorts of lumber at the direction of their masters. Every sawmill has its elephants and there are some companies which employ several hundred. The average institution, however, can afford but few, for the animals are costly, a green one bringing \$300 and a prize worker often as much as \$2,000.

The elephants come from the forests of Upper Burma. The white elephants are owned by the government, which has an elephant department to catch and care for them. The elephant commissioner keeps track of the wild herds and annually sends out men to hunt them and catch the young bulls. The cow elephants and a certain number of the bulls are turned back into the forests. The bull calves are kept and trained and are finally being retained for the government use.

In hunting the elephants, they are sometimes captured in pits and sometimes led into corrals by means of tame elephants trained for the purpose. The tame beasts mix with the wild ones and lead them into the pens, whereupon the elephant hunters sort out from the wild ones those they wish to keep and turn the others back into the forests. Most of the elephants at Rangoon have come from the government herds.

They not only carry the logs to the streams, but aid in forming the rafts and booms. They wade or swim about, according to the depth of the water, towing the logs this way and that. When the logs come to the ports they break the booms by pushing out the key log. They then take the timbers out of the water and put them on the cars, which carry them to the mills.

In some places the elephants work together, and I am told there are boss elephants which keep the others up to their work and pound them with their trunks when they lag. In some yards each elephant has its own job, one class being used to carry hay for the stables and to mix the bran, molasses and other food which form the daily rations of the beasts in that establishment.

Beasts Which Watch the Clock.

These elephants at Rangoon are particular as to their working hours. They seem to almost watch the clock, for they get restless as the noon hour approaches and stop now and then to wait for the bell. When the whistle sounds and the bell rings at 12 o'clock they will drop whatever they have on their tusks and bolt for the feeding sheds. It is the same at night.

I am told they have to be carefully fed and that each must have his bath twice a day. At one of the yards I saw them washing the beasts. The elephants sat down while buckets of water were thrown over them. After that their masters scrubbed them with rough brushes and curried them, as it were, all over. As the water was dashed upon them they wagged their tails and flapped their ears and grunted in joy.

I asked one of the men if the beasts were hard to handle. He replied: "No, but we must be always on guard, and if they grow angry they make no bones of killing us."

The elephant is touchy, and if anything creeps under the blanket on his back he grows restless and cannot work well. He will tremble like a woman at the sight of a mouse, for fear, perhaps, that the animal may run up his trunk. As I left one of the sawmills I threw a piece of silver to the man on the biggest elephant. He rubbed the beast's head with his heel and thereupon the elephant threw his great trunk high into the air and gave me a royal salute.

In the Lumber Yards.

I wish I could show you some of the huge beasts at work in the yards. They lift great logs on their tusks and stack them in piles. They carry timbers to the saws and lay the planks in order for shipment. Their every action shows reason and they seem to calculate cause and effect. At one sawmill I saw two beasts, each at a log. Each had a Burman, clad in turban and gown, seated upon his head, and he was directed by him. The man used both hand and feet as well as word of mouth to tell the elephant what to do, and in addition a sharp brass hook which he jabbed into him if he did not obey. The logs handled were of great weight. I measured some which were twenty feet long and thick as a cider barrel. Either the elephant or the man would carry two logs at a time the man tied a rope around them and the elephant would pick up the end of the rope with his trunk and place it over his tusks and then, raising his head, walk off with it.

White Elephant.

Burma ranks with Siam as the land of the white elephants. The people here are Buddhists, and they believe that the souls of human beings, when they pass away, go into the bodies of animals. Moreover, they think that the spirits of the good and noble go into the bodies of white animals, and as the elephant is one of the largest of beasts, every white elephant contains the soul of a hero. King Thibaw, the last native ruler of Burma, had a white elephant, and he was treated like a king. When they were over their heads and golden plates on their foreheads. They were bathed daily in scented waters and they drank out of vessels decorated with gold. Each beast had his own attendants, who did nothing but wait upon him, and the man who found a white elephant and brought it to the palace was ennobled, and paid no taxes for the rest of his life. When the British took the country they captured the white elephants, and today if one were to be found he would be given a job at the hauling of logs.

In fact, about the only place where the white elephant has any semblance of royalty left in Siam. The common people there worship him, and the king now and then rides out upon his in great state. The national coat of arms is a picture of this royal beast. It has its place upon the flag and also upon the principal coins. With the awakening of the country and the new movements, however, superstitions are passing away. The better classes think much as we do, and his majesty the king keeps his white elephants only out of sentiment and respect for the beliefs of his

people. He has elephant stables connected with his palaces, and there are several of these so-called white animals in the stables. I visited them during my last stay in Bangkok. They were chained to stone posts and were watched by keepers, who chewed the betel and spat on the ground as they made the elephants perform for me.

These beasts were of an ashy gray color and they looked dirty rather than white. I am told that their color comes from a disease somewhat like leprosy, and that this sometimes causes the animal affected to go crazy. Indeed, a white elephant is



ELEPHANTS IN LUMBER CAMPS UPPER BURMA

usually a rogue elephant, one which should always be watched and never allowed to go loose.

The elephants now in the stables at Bangkok are from the northern part of Siam. All those of the country belong to the king, but the man who can send in a white elephant is still rewarded, and the advent of a new one causes general rejoicing, for it is looked upon as a sign of good luck and prosperity.

Gateway to South Asia.

I write this letter in what is the most up-to-date, booming city of the far east.

Rangoon is the capital of Burma. It is growing faster than Calcutta.

It already stands third among the great ports of the Indian empire, crowding the heels of Bombay, and there are many who prophesy that it will eventually be the biggest city of southern Asia. Lying here at the mouth of the Irrawadi, it forms the only gate to one of the richest valleys of the world, and in time, by railroads already projected, it will be the gateway to western China as well. The city has now a population of 300,000. It runs for miles up and down the river and extends back into the flat alluvial Irrawadi delta. It is backed

by some of the biggest rice lands of the world, and it exports more rice than any other port on earth. The amount to be shipped this year is valued at \$65,000,000, and the river is now filled with great steamers loading for Japan, China, Australia, India, Europe and North and South America. Among them are river boats and barges which have brought rice in from the country, and there are great fleets at the mills loading and unloading their cargoes. Rice is the money crop of the country and it makes the Burmese comparatively rich.

Burma in a Bird's Eye.

But, before I go further, let me give you a birdseye view of this country. You all know its location. Better perhaps than the Bostonian who, when asked where it was, replied:

"Burma? Burma? Of course I know where it is. I have a cousin out there, but he calls it Bermuda."

The Burma from which I am writing is away off here on the opposite side of the world. It lies near the eastern shores of the Bay of Bengal, several hundred miles south of the Himalaya mountains and just across the way from the peninsula of Hindustan. On the north it runs close to Tibet, and on the east it skirts the Chinese province of Yunnan and French Indo-China, with the Siamese states on the south. The country is as long as from Canada to the Mexican gulf and wider than New York to Cleveland. It is bigger than France, Germany or the Spanish peninsula, and it has a population of 10,000,000, of whom 8,000,000 are the best dressed and most lovable people of Asia.

On the Irrawadi.

I came into Burma by the Irrawadi river. The capital, Rangoon, from where I write, lies about twenty miles from the mouth of one of the streams forming the delta. The Irrawadi is one of the greatest of the world's great rivers. It rises somewhere in Tibet and flows a thousand miles through this country before it reaches the sea. It carries down so much silt that the blue waters of the Bay of Bengal are made yellow by it. In coming here we traveled for hours through what looked like pea soup before we caught sight of land, and in the river itself the water was as brown as oatmeal gruel and almost as thick. It left a rich silt in the bath tub of the steamer and gave the atmosphere a yellowish tint under the tropical sun. The deposit is so great that the shore creeps on into the sea several inches a year. Immense sand bars are created and pilots have to direct the steamers this way and that. The dredges are always kept working and the government is now contemplating building a series of jetties like those we have at New Orleans. These will confine the waters in a narrow channel and the force of the river will scour the course clean.

Coming up to Rangoon the stream is often several miles wide and the shores at the mouth so far apart that as we hugged the north bank we could hardly see the land on the south. We passed Syriam, where the Burma Oil company has its enormous refinery, and then steamed up toward the city which, with its lumber yards, rice mills and shipping, looked more like one of the great ports of Europe than Asia. Long before the town came in sight we could see the tall spire of the Golden Pagoda, and as we steamed closer another shaft of gold came into view. It was that of the Soule Pagoda, a Burmese monument which rises high out of the business blocks in the very heart of the city. Our ship came right up to the wharves and we stepped out into one of the queerest crowds to be found in all Asia.

This city is more cosmopolitan than Calcutta, Cairo or Constantinople. It is East Indian rather than Burmese, and it

has people of every nation and of almost every tribe of the Asiatic continent. It has 30,000 Chinese, a large number of Malays, 5,000 Europeans and more than 100,000 Indians from all parts of Hindustan. The people are of all colors, black, white, yellow and brown, and they wear all sorts of costumes. The East Indian coolies are naked, except for a cloth around the waist and a red or white turban. Their black skins shine like jet under the tropical sun. Many of the Chinese are rich, and they are clad in silk or fine cotton, while the Burmese strut about in silk-shirts of the most delicate colors, their heads covered with gorgeous silk turbans. They wear jackets of silk or fine cotton, and move about like human butterflies here and there through the crowd. In addition, there are tall-haired, long-coated Parsees from Bombay, worshippers of fire, who are devoted to banking and trading, and lean, skinny black Chetties, money lenders from Madras, who wear only a sheet of cotton wrapped around their bare persons. There are Indian boys in gold and silver thread, cotton jackets and waist cloths; Hindoo women with rings in their noses, and Burmese girls clad in cotton or silk, with plugs in their ears. The costumes are so many I cannot describe them.

On the Streets.

The traffic about the wharves and through the city is carried on by strange animals, and in strange vehicles. The passenger cab is the gharry, a yellow or black box hauled by an Indian pony and driven by a Hindoo or Burman. The heavy freight is dragged over the roads in carts by the humped cattle of Hindustan, and great loads of goods are pushed and pulled along by half-naked men. The men work as hard as the animals, and the white sweat stands out upon their foreheads. They are also in charge of the heavy freight in the gharry, a cart drawn by a pair of oxen, and pulled along by half-naked men. The heavy freight is dragged over the roads in carts by the humped cattle of Hindustan, and great loads of goods are pushed and pulled along by half-naked men. The men work as hard as the animals, and the white sweat stands out upon their foreheads. They are also in charge of the heavy freight in the gharry, a cart drawn by a pair of oxen, and pulled along by half-naked men.

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Showing Lazy Papio How to Behave

PAPILLION CREEK will soon be out of a job. It is time, for several centuries that vagabond stream has been loitering about in a leisurely way about its drainage basin when it chose, but for the most part allowing it to lie about certain lazy men, Papillon creek is a graceful genius of indolence, a symphony in somnolence, as it strays aimlessly about always procrastinating about that little job of carrying the water to the Missouri which nature imposed when the creek was geologically put in commission.

Unfortunately for that ambitious, sluggish little streamlet, the farmer folk of eastern Nebraska care little for the cultivation of scenery at the expense of allowing some thousands of rich acres to lie unproductive and worse than useless. So certain very businesslike and technical engineers with funny little instruments of tripods were set to work to diagnose the trouble with the Big and Little Papillon creeks. "Incurable," was their verdict.

Whereas the farmer folk determined the discharge of the vagabond creek with as little consideration for their long service as they would a hired man. The same engineers were set about the work of designing a made-to-order creek to do the work in a real efficient way. With that order executed the Big Papillon and the Little Papillon, or Papio as tradition has seen fit to dub it with a diminutive, will become but certain way, meaningless lines on the old maps. Seventeen miles of canals will do the work.

The Papillon Drainage District, a flourishing little, indeed, spells the finish of the loitering streamlets. Farmer folk have banded together and at an assessed cost of so much per acre affected, will pay for the digging of the big ditches which are to reclaim a tract of 18,000 acres of the richest land in Nebraska. A sum of approximately \$200,000 is to be expended in the drainage district within the little more than a year which remain yet before its completion on May 1, 1911. This means



BIG DREDGE BARGE FOR THE PAPHILLION DRAINAGE CANAL

Heroes in Civil Life

MEN can well pause a moment in their busy round of affairs to contemplate the deed of a fellow mortal when he serves his country or his neighbors. We need not face the cannon's mouth or the bayonet's point to earn praise. Deeds worthy of performance without thought of reward, without knowledge that the facts would become known, without an applauding throng to spur one on, are the kind that show heroism is not a lost trait.

When on February 23 the lighthouse-keeper at Green Lake, Conn., rowed ashore, telling his assistant to remain in charge until his return, the young man thought little of the solitude. He was faithful to his duty, and for a day or two did not greatly concern himself about the absence of his chief. But at the end of a week when he had been keeping vigil night and day, for the fog along the coast had made it necessary to keep the gasolene engines running to sound the fog horn, in addition to keeping the lights burning at night, the assistant was so ex-

hausted that with difficulty he dragged himself about. But he held to his post, and after nine days, when his food supply was exhausted, relief came.

His predicament became known through the fact that his chief had forged a check and left the vicinity. This led to an investigation and the uncovering of the vigil keeper. Such monotony as he experienced often drives lighthouse keepers insane. He was not alone fighting against death by starvation, but he was keeping the lights burning and the fog horn sounding the warning blast. It was a case of human endurance, and the man of determination won.

Such heroism as his is the kind that counts. He did not look for the plaudits of the world. His thoughts were only of his duty. He had no concern about advancement, and the pay is not sufficient to make a man strive as this man did. He did his duty. The opportunity does not come to every man to show such traits, but every man should be encouraged to act as worthy an example if occasion requires.—Washington Herald.

Restored Life to a Baby

OXIGEN artificial respiration, was taken to the hospital on February 18. It had been suffering from an ailment which the outside physicians had been unable to diagnose or to cure. Drs. Liebowitz and Cohen examined the patient and said it was suffering from stomach trouble. A sedative was administered. The case was watched closely. On Thursday night the baby went into convulsions. Its body became blue and its pulse dropped to practically nothing. Red and black spots appeared on the skin.

Hot and cold water plunges were used. There was no response. Oxygen then was given, but without effect. The face stiffened and the eyes turned upward. Mirror and other tests for breath were applied. They showed no traces of the child's breath. There was a warm area on the shoulders and the chest, and that inspired the doctors with hope. Finally they succeeded in bringing the child back to consciousness.

From that time on until early yesterday the baby was racked by a series of convulsions, with a particularly severe one at 2 o'clock. That time even the doctors thought life extinct. They continued, however, to force oxygen into baby's lungs and to resort to artificial respiration.

It was not until fifteen minutes afterward that the heart, lungs, respiratory organs and the pulse began to assert themselves.—New York Press.

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