

HANDBOOKS PREPARED UNDER THE DIRECTION OF THE
HISTORICAL SECTION OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE.—No. 74

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SIAM

BY

JOSIAH CROSBY, C.I.E., O.B.E.,
His Majesty's Consul-General at Bangkok

LONDON:

PUBLISHED BY H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE.

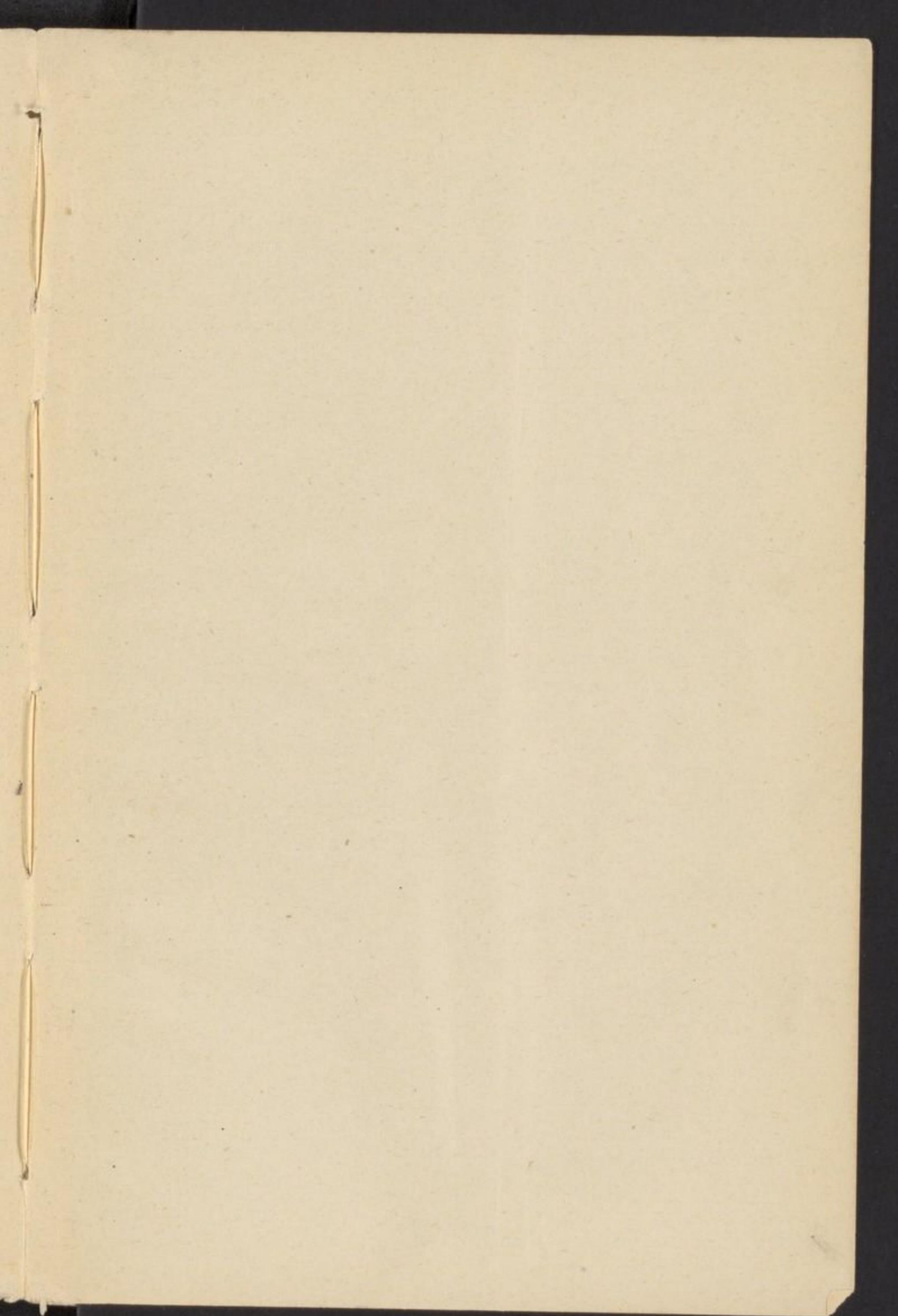
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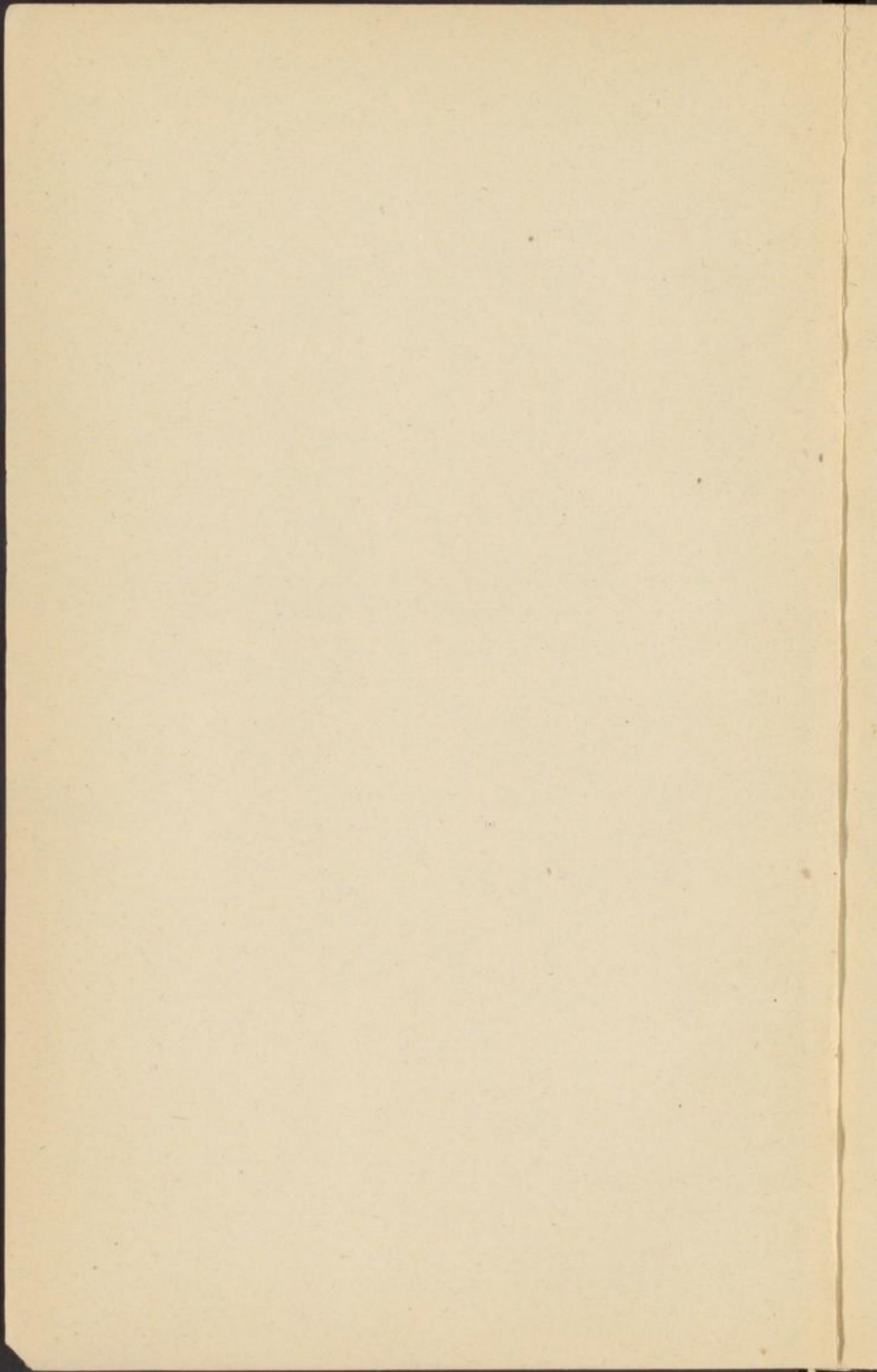


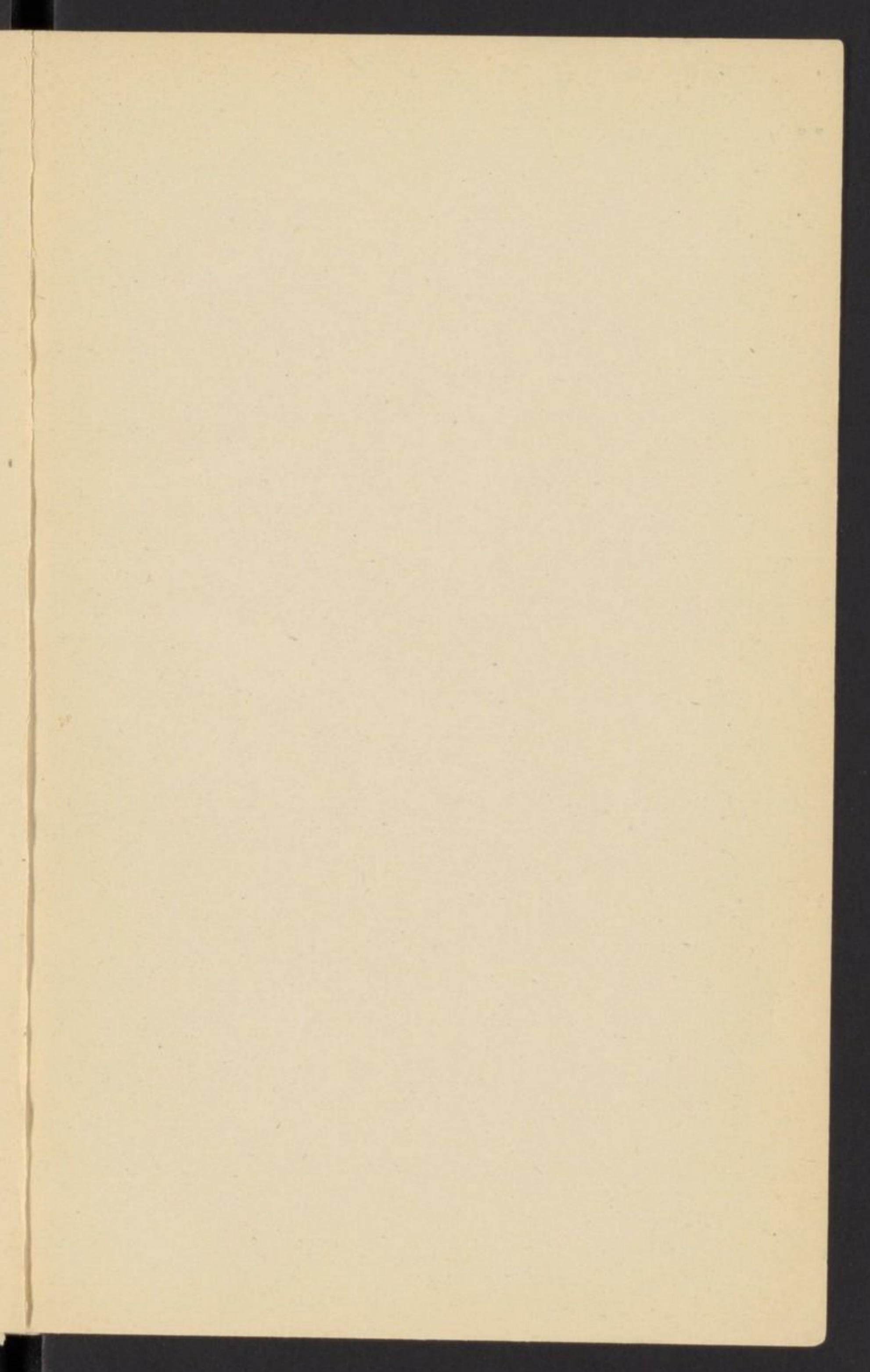


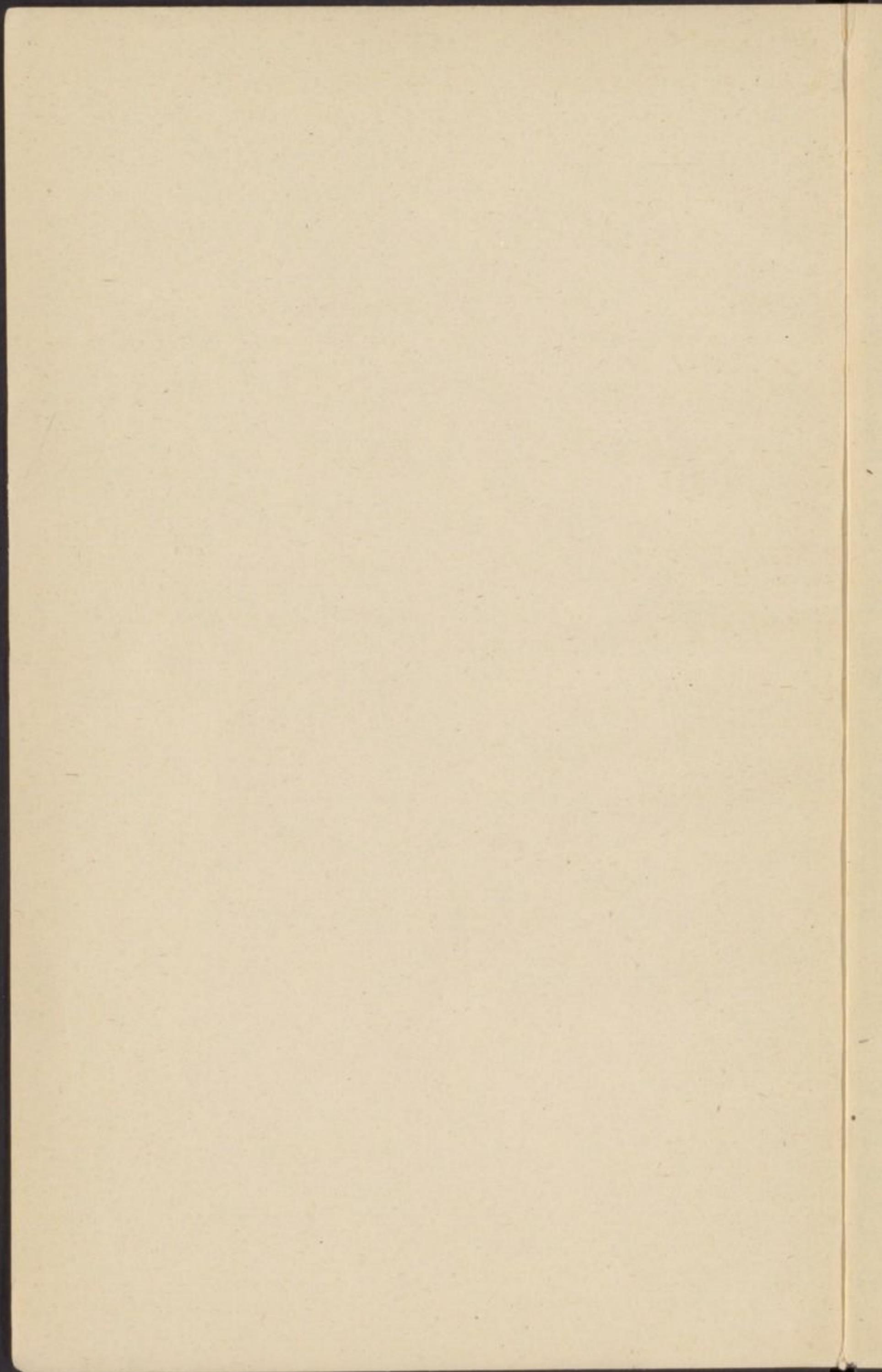
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Editorial Note.

IN the spring of 1917 the Foreign Office, in connection with the preparation which they were making for the work of the Peace Conference, established a special section whose duty it should be to provide the British Delegates to the Peace Conference with information in the most convenient form—geographical, economic, historical, social, religious and political—respecting the different countries, districts, islands, &c., with which they might have to deal. In addition, volumes were prepared on certain general subjects, mostly of an historical nature, concerning which it appeared that a special study would be useful.

The historical information was compiled by trained writers on historical subjects, who (in most cases) gave their services without any remuneration. For the geographical sections valuable assistance was given by the Intelligence Division (Naval Staff) of the Admiralty; and for the economic sections, by the War Trade Intelligence Department, which had been established by the Foreign Office. Of the maps accompanying the series, some were prepared by the above-mentioned department of the Admiralty, but the bulk of them were the work of the Geographical Section of the General Staff (Military Intelligence Division) of the War Office.

Now that the Conference has nearly completed its task, the Foreign Office, in response to numerous enquiries and requests, has decided to issue the books for public use, believing that they will be useful to students of history, politics, economics and foreign affairs, to publicists generally and to business men and travellers. It is hardly necessary to say that some of the subjects dealt with in the series have not in fact come under discussion at the Peace Conference; but, as the books treating of them contain valuable information, it has been thought advisable to include them.

It must be understood that, although the series of volumes was prepared under the authority, and is now issued with the sanction, of the Foreign Office, that Office is not to be regarded as guaranteeing the accuracy of every statement which they contain or as identifying itself with all the opinions expressed in the several volumes; the books were not prepared in the Foreign Office itself, but are in the nature of information provided for the Foreign Office and the British Delegation.

The books are now published, with a few exceptions, substantially as they were issued for the use of the Delegates. No attempt has been made to bring them up to date, for, in the first place, such a process would have entailed a great loss of time and a prohibitive expense; and, in the second, the political and other conditions of a great part of Europe and of the Nearer and Middle East are still unsettled and in such a state of flux that any attempt to describe them would have been incorrect or misleading. The books are therefore to be taken as describing, in general, *ante-bellum* conditions, though in a few cases, where it seemed specially desirable, the account has been brought down to a later date.

G. W. PROTHERO,

General Editor and formerly

Director of the Historical Section.

January 1920.

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I. POLITICAL HISTORY

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

- 1350 Foundation of Ayuthia, the former capital.
 1767 Destruction of Ayuthia by the Burmese.
 1768 Foundation of Bangkok, the present capital.
 1782 Accession to the throne of the first monarch of the present reigning dynasty.
 1855 Treaty of Friendship and Commerce concluded with Great Britain.
 1893 Difficulties with France, culminating in the blockade of Bangkok by the French and the abandonment by the Siamese of their claims to territory situated on the left bank of the River Mekong.
 1907 Treaty concluded with France, which receives territorial concessions in the Mekong region, but surrenders in part the exterritorial rights which French nationals had hitherto enjoyed in Siam.
 1909 Treaty concluded with Great Britain; exterritorial rights of British subjects in Siam surrendered; Siam transfers to Great Britain her suzerain rights over the Malay States of Kelantan, Tringganu, Kedah, and Perlis.
 1910 Death of King Chulalongkorn and accession to the throne of the present monarch, King Vajiravudh (officially styled King Rama VI).
 1917 Siam declares war upon Germany and Austria-Hungary.

i. *General Outline prior to 1855.*—The authentic history of Siam may be said to commence with the foundation, in A.D. 1350, by King Ramathibodi I of the former capital, Ayuthia (situated on the River Menam some distance to the north of Bangkok). Internal revolutions, leading at times to changes in the ruling dynasty, and constant wars either with Burma on the west or with Cambodia on the east, go far to make up the annals of the country throughout the era during which Ayuthia was the seat of government. The extent of the Siamese dominions (or at least of the territory over which Siam could claim suzerain rights), though varying with the altering fortunes of war, was

at this epoch considerably greater than it is to-day, and at one time stretched as far south as the Straits of Malacca. Tavoy and Tenasserim (now incorporated in British Burma) were formerly in almost uninterrupted possession of the Siamese, whilst a period so recent as the last quarter of a century has witnessed the cession by Siam to France of provinces previously ruled by her in the region of the Mekong River, and to Great Britain of her suzerainty over certain of the States in the southern portion of the Malay Peninsula.

The Portuguese (early in the sixteenth century) and the Dutch (a century later) were the first European peoples to come into direct contact with Siam. Relations between Siam and the British East India Company began in the seventeenth century, British factories being for a time established at Ayuthia and at Patani (on the eastern coast of the Malay Peninsula). But these relations never prospered, and the Dutch seem at that period to have been virtual masters of the external trade of the kingdom. Of historical interest is the arrival, in the year 1685, of an embassy under the Chevalier de Chaumont, which was despatched to the King of Siam by King Louis XIV of France, in the hope that the former potentate would be converted to Christianity by the efforts of French Jesuit missionaries, whose activities had then already extended to the Far East. The attempt at conversion failed, although a treaty was signed according general facilities to the missionaries in the prosecution of their labours. The influence of France in Siam was soon afterwards still further advanced by the engagement of a number of French troops to serve as garrisons for the forts at Bangkok and at Mergui (then a Siamese possession). This last step, however, proved to be a disastrous one. Becoming suspicious of French designs, certain notables at Court instigated a revolution; the reigning dynasty was overthrown; and the French soldiery were deported to Pondicherry.

In the year 1767 Siam was overtaken by the greatest disaster in her history. A Burmese army invaded and

overran the country; Ayuthia was stormed and burnt; and the reigning monarch, who was obliged to seek refuge in flight, perished miserably. An energetic military leader named Phya Tak Sin subsequently rallied around him a band of followers, and, after the withdrawal of the main body of the Burmese forces, succeeded in re-establishing the independence of Siam and in making himself king of a united people. Phya Tak Sin set up his government at Bangkok in 1768. He subsequently became insane, and was put to death, the crown being assumed in 1782 by one of his generals, an official who till then had held the title of Chao Phya Chakkri, and who came to be known later as King Phra Budda Yot Fa Chulalok. This monarch was the founder of the "Chakkri" dynasty, the members of which have continued to occupy the throne of Siam up to the present day.

In 1826 a treaty with Siam was negotiated by Captain H. Burney, acting on behalf of the Governor-General of British India. This instrument granted a measure of trading facilities to British subjects; it was also important as regulating various questions affecting Siam's relations with some of the States situated in Malaya.

The reign of the fourth monarch of the Chakkri dynasty (King Mongkut, 1851-1868) marks a turning-point in the annals of Siam by reason of the conclusion, in 1855, of the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Great Britain, which first really threw the land open to foreign commerce and enterprise. Prior to that date, trade between the Siamese and the subjects of the various Western Powers had been conducted on restricted and precarious lines; foreign merchants had been admitted into the country, but their operations had been hampered by difficulties and disabilities of the most disheartening kind.

ii. *General Outline of History subsequent to 1855.*— In virtue of the treaty between Great Britain and Siam, negotiated by Sir John Bowring in 1855, and ratified in the following year, British nationals

acquired the right to trade freely in all seaports, subject to the payment of clearly defined import and export duties; they further acquired the right to reside and to purchase land in the vicinity of the capital (journeys into the interior, however, were allowed only under passports issued by the Siamese authorities); finally, the Siamese Government consented to the appointment of a British Consul at Bangkok, and to the exercise by him of extra-territorial jurisdiction over all British subjects in the country.

The French, who had already established themselves in Cochin China, followed the example of Great Britain by negotiating, in 1856, a Treaty of Friendship and Commerce with Siam. Most of the other civilized Powers adopted the same course, treaties (all more or less identical with that with Great Britain in their general tenor) being concluded by them as follows:—

The United States of America, 1856, Denmark, 1858, Portugal, 1859, the Netherlands, 1860, Germany (the States of the German Customs and Commercial Union and the Grand Duchies of Mecklenburg-Schwerin and Mecklenburg-Strelitz), 1862, Sweden and Norway, 1868, Belgium, 1868, Italy, 1868, Austria-Hungary, 1869, Spain, 1870, Japan, 1898, Russia (Declaration), 1899.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the results accruing from the earlier among the above treaties and from the consequent gradual penetration of Siam by foreign influences. Siam's advance along the path of western progress virtually began during the period immediately succeeding the year 1855. A community of foreign merchants then grew up in the capital; western ideas and methods forced themselves upon the attention of the Siamese; foreign consulates—mostly developed later into legations—were at hand to ensure respect for the new treaties and to represent the healthy factor of independent criticism in regard to the administration of government. It is much to the credit of King Mongkut that he should

have realised the futility and danger of resisting the march of events, and that he should have shown himself so ready to accept the inevitable by entering betimes into relations with the Western Powers.

Equally sagacious was the policy of King Mongkut's successor, the late King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910), who wisely resolved to meet the new western tendencies half-way and to seek foreign aid in reshaping the State in accordance with modern requirements. Hence the presence to-day of foreign officials and advisers in most of the Government Departments; hence also in large degree the remarkable progress which Siam has achieved of late years—a progress which now entitles her to claim a place among the civilized peoples of the world. Some of the many useful measures effected during King Chulalongkorn's long reign were the distribution of the work of government among Ministries devised upon the European plan, the construction of railways north and south of the metropolis, the reconstitution of the Army and Navy, the establishment on a sound basis of a national system of finance, and the reorganization of the Courts of Justice. The enactment of legislation adapted to modern needs has been continuous throughout the reigns both of King Chulalongkorn and of his son, the present King. A Penal Code was promulgated in 1908, and Civil Codes and Codes of Procedure are in course of preparation under the auspices of a Commission composed of French and Siamese jurists. The greatest single reform adopted by Chulalongkorn was, perhaps, the total abolition of slavery throughout his realm, an event which took place early in his reign. Of great importance also was the work of consolidation and centralization performed under his rule by Prince Damrong, a former Minister of the Interior, who was instrumental in bringing the outlying provinces of the kingdom under the complete and effective control of the Government at Bangkok. In 1883 a treaty was negotiated with Great Britain, whereby the right to establish a British consular officer

at Chiengmai (in Northern Siam) was conceded; British subjects in the north of the country were at the same time removed from the jurisdiction of the distant consular tribunal at Bangkok and placed under that of an International Court composed of Siamese judges, sitting at Chiengmai; the resident British consular officer was, however, empowered to be present at the trial by this new tribunal of all cases affecting British subjects. The arrangement thus concluded was significant as denoting the first step in the process of gradual abandonment by some of the foreign Treaty Powers of their extritorial privileges in Siam. Similar Agreements, recognizing the jurisdiction of the International Court in Northern Siam, were concluded with France (Convention of February 13, 1904), with Denmark in 1905, and with Italy in the same year.

King Chulalongkorn's reign is memorable on account of the unhappy dispute with France in 1893, to which reference is made below (p. 10). Fortunately the King was able, before his death, to see the difficulties which had arisen with the French Republic set at rest by the Franco-Siamese Treaty of 1907. This Agreement stipulated for extensive territorial concessions on the part of Siam, in return for which the French Government consented, subject to certain conditions and safeguards, to surrender throughout the whole extent of the kingdom the extritorial privileges which had hitherto been enjoyed by its Asiatic subjects and *protégés*. Siam thus took a further step towards the removal of the disabilities imposed by the presence within her borders of a section of the population exempt from the jurisdiction of her own tribunals and dependent upon that of alien Consular Courts.

In 1909 a treaty on analogous lines was concluded with Great Britain. The progress made by Siam in the administration of justice, the example already set by the French, and the necessity for finding a solution to certain urgent territorial problems had, indeed, rendered this measure all but inevitable. In virtue of the

instrument of 1909 the suzerain rights of Siam in the southern portion of the Malay Peninsula were transferred to Great Britain, who on her part made a general surrender of her extraterritorial jurisdiction over her nationals (both European and Asiatic), stipulating, however, for a number of safeguards, the most important of which consisted in the presence upon the bench in the Siamese courts of a European legal adviser in all cases where a British subject was in the position of a defendant or accused person. British subjects were also rendered liable to all taxes and services which might be imposed by law on Siamese subjects, but they became entitled to enjoy throughout the whole of the country the rights and privileges possessed by the latter, notably the right of acquiring landed property in any part of the country and the rights of unrestricted residence and travel.¹

In 1913 Denmark concluded with Siam a treaty closely resembling the Anglo-Siamese Agreement of 1909. Though she surrendered thereby her system of extraterritorial jurisdiction, Denmark received no concessions of a special or material nature in return.

The events of 1893 and the conclusion of the treaties with France and Great Britain of 1907 and 1909 respectively, were the chief occurrences in the domain of foreign policy which marked the reign of King Chulalongkorn. That monarch died in 1910, and was succeeded by his son, King Vajiravudh, who has recently adopted the official style and title of King Rama VI. The present monarch, who received his education in England, is thoroughly imbued with western ideas, and is continuing the enlightened policy of his father. From the outset of the European war the King viewed with strong disapproval the methods of warfare pursued by Germany, and he protested formally against the inauguration of the unrestricted submarine campaign.

¹ In practice, the exercise of these last-named privileges had previously, to a certain extent, been allowed to British subjects, although without the formal sanction of treaty.

The King finally decided to declare the existence of a state of war with both Germany and Austria-Hungary as from midnight of July 22, 1917. Within a very few hours of the time specified the internment of all male enemy subjects resident in Siam was effected; trading with the enemy was forbidden; arrangements were made for the liquidation of enemy businesses; enemy vessels lying in the river at Bangkok were seized; and a decree was promulgated denaturalising such former enemy subjects as had come to acquire Siamese nationality by the process of naturalisation. By these prompt and vigorous means a dangerous centre of German intrigue in the Far East was eliminated, and success was definitely assured to the efforts made by the Allies to destroy the local commerce of the enemy. Through her action in entering the war upon the side of the Allies, the close ties which bind Siam to Great Britain and France, her neighbours upon the west and east, have been further strengthened.

iii. *Relations with Great Britain and France.*—No statement of conditions in Siam would be complete, and no understanding of that country's future line of development possible, without some account of her peculiar relations with Great Britain and France.

As Siam's geographical situation necessarily links up her interests with those of France and Great Britain, by whose territories she is completely encircled upon her landward frontiers, the two Powers named have for the last half-century inevitably exercised a considerable influence upon her foreign policy.

Siam's relations with Great Britain have been consistently friendly and have never been seriously troubled. A bone of contention had, however, existed from early days in the question of the extent to which the rights of Siam were to be recognized in the southern half of the Malay Peninsula. The possibility of further dispute in this connection was removed by the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of 1909, under which Siam transferred to the British Crown her suzerain rights over the

States of Kelantan, Tringganu, Kedah, Perlis, and adjacent islands. Siam had exercised a more or less nominal authority over these States, which till then had remained practically independent, and were still in a backward stage of development. The task of bringing about the needed reforms in their methods of government seemed logically to devolve upon Great Britain, in view of her ascendancy elsewhere in Malaya. As has been seen, Siam, on her side, obtained from Great Britain the abandonment of the system of exterritorial jurisdiction—a concession which, regard being had to the number of British nationals and to the magnitude of British commercial interests, was of great importance to her. At the time of signing the treaty the Siamese Government, by means of an exchange of diplomatic notes, gave to the British Government the assurance that they would not cede or lease, directly or indirectly, to any foreign Government any territory situated in the Monthon (provincial circle) of Rajaburi, or in any of the islands adjacent to the said territory; also that within the limits above mentioned a right to establish or lease any coaling station, to build or own any construction or repairing docks, or to occupy exclusively any harbours the occupation of which would be likely to be prejudicial to British interests from a strategic point of view, should not be granted to any foreign Government or company.¹ At the same time, an Agreement was made between the Siamese Government and the Government of the Federated Malay States, whereby the latter undertook to advance to the former, at the rate of 4 per cent. per annum, the sum of £4,000,000 for the purpose of constructing and working a railway in the Siamese dominions of the Malay Peninsula. Good progress has already been

¹ See correspondence annexed to the text of the Anglo-Siamese Treaty of 1909 in the following British State Paper: "Siam No. 1 (1909). Despatch from His Majesty's Minister in Siam, forwarding a Treaty between Great Britain and Siam, signed at Bangkok March 10, 1909, together with an Explanatory Memorandum. [Cd. 4646.]"

made with this line, which will ultimately link up Bangkok and Singapore.¹

As regards relations between Siam and France, the Siamese frontiers before 1893 included territory lying upon the left (or eastern) bank of the Mekong River, which had in the past formed the subject of contention between Siam on the one hand and Annam or Cambodia on the other. France had now assumed a protectorate over both the latter countries, and was disposed to argue that these trans-Mekong possessions of Siam belonged historically to Annam and Cambodia, and should be restored to them. Collisions occurred between French and Siamese troops in the neighbourhood of the disputed zone; and the garrisons of the Siamese trans-Mekong military posts were obliged at last to fall back across the river. Siamese offers to refer the questions at issue to arbitration were not entertained; sundry outrages upon the persons and property of French nationals were alleged to have been perpetrated by the Siamese authorities; and, by way of reprisal, the French fleet proceeded to occupy some of the islands in the Gulf of Siam. In July 1893 two French gunboats, contrary to the wishes of the Siamese Government, forced the passage of the River Menam (upon which Bangkok stands). Two successive ultimatums were delivered by France to Siam; the French Minister quitted the capital; and a blockade of Bangkok and the adjacent waters was instituted, and lasted from July 26 to August 2. The terms of the second French ultimatum were accepted by Siam, the blockade was raised, and a treaty between the two Powers was signed on October 3, 1893. Siam renounced all claim to territory on the left bank of the Mekong; she agreed to maintain no fortified posts or military establishments within her provinces of Battambang and Siemrap, or at any point within a radius of 25 kilometres from the right bank of the Mekong; she con-

¹ In 1913 a further loan to Siam of £750,000 was negotiated between the same two Governments, in order that railway connection might be effected also between Bangkok and Penang.

sented further to a military occupation by the French of the port of Chantaboon until such time as the provisions of the Treaty of Peace should have been executed and the pacification of the districts which had been in dispute effected.

Franco-Siamese relations, although thus embittered in 1893, improved slowly in course of time; and in 1904 a fresh Convention was signed, whereby the French agreed to evacuate Chantaboon (to which they still clung), and to place their nationals in Northern Siam under the jurisdiction of the International Court. In return for these concessions Siam abandoned territory in the south-east, and renounced her claim to such portions of the State of Luang Prabang as were situated on the right bank of the Mekong River. She also undertook that, in the Siamese portion of the basin of the Mekong, she would come to an understanding with the French Government before proceeding to the construction of ports, canals, or railways, in the event of such enterprises not being carried out exclusively with a Siamese personnel and with Siamese capital.

In 1907, by the treaty already referred to, Siam ceded to France the territories of Battambang, Siemrap, and Sisophon (adjoining the frontier of Cambodia), but received back those of Dan-Sai and Kratt (in the south-east), which she had previously given up under the Franco-Siamese treaty of 1904. This final readjustment of territorial claims inaugurated a new era of friendliness in the official relations of the Siamese and French Governments, which has been greatly to the advantage of both parties.

So early as 1889 the British and French authorities had considered the desirability of devising a plan for the neutralisation of Siam, with a view to the establishment of a permanent barrier between their respective possessions in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula. The occurrences of 1893 emphasized still further the need for arriving at some such understanding. On January 15, 1896, a declaration was accordingly signed in London, by

which the Governments of Great Britain and France guaranteed the integrity of the basins of the River Menam and adjacent streams (the most valuable part of Siam), by engaging that neither of them would, without the consent of the other, advance its armed forces into that area, except in so far as it might do so for any purpose which might be required for the maintenance of Siam's independence. The contracting parties further engaged not to acquire within the region so guaranteed any special privilege or advantage which should not be enjoyed by, or equally open to, both of them. A supplementary declaration between Great Britain and France was signed in London on April 8, 1904, stipulating that Siamese territory lying to the west of the basin of the Menam River should be considered as falling within the British sphere of influence, while a French sphere of influence was recognized in the case of the possessions of Siam situated to the east of that region. The contracting parties expressly disclaimed all idea of annexing any Siamese territory or of committing any act which might contravene the provisions of existing treaties; but, with this reservation, they agreed that, so far as either of them was concerned, the two Governments should each respectively have liberty of action in its sphere of influence as defined.

The idea was entertained at one time of creating a special buffer-state to separate British and French possessions where they adjoin one another for a short distance in the region of the Upper Mekong to the north of the Siamese boundary. A protocol was even signed at Paris in November 1893, agreeing to the appointment for this purpose of technical agents of the two countries, who should proceed to an enquiry upon the spot. The plan, however, did not materialise, and the buffer-state was never set up.

II. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONDITIONS

(1) RELIGIOUS

The religion of the country is Buddhism, that faith being professed in its purer form as followed also in Burma and Ceylon. All Buddhist religious establishments in Siam are under the control of the State. The greatest toleration prevails, sectarian factions and rivalries being practically unknown. Christian missionaries are allowed to prosecute unhindered their work among the people, and, indeed, as regards their educational and medical labours, often with the assistance of the Government. The Roman Catholic Church is represented by the French fathers of the "Société des Missions étrangères," Protestantism mainly by the members of the American Presbyterian Mission.

Polygamy is not forbidden under the Buddhist system; it is, however, now becoming usual with the younger and better-educated generation of Siamese for men to content themselves with one wife.

(2) POLITICAL

Form, Character, and Methods of Government.—Siam is governed on the principle of an absolute monarchy. Succession to the throne, while always confined to members of the Royal Family, was not until recently hereditary in the sense of the Crown being, whenever possible, transmitted from father to son, and of the line of succession being determined beforehand. The hereditary system was first inaugurated by Chulalongkorn, who during his own lifetime designated one of his sons as his prospective successor. The present monarch is unmarried; in the event of his death without issue it has been decided that the Crown shall pass

in order of seniority, to his brothers by the same mother (the late King had offspring by more than one Queen). The Prince of Bisnulok (Prince Chakrabongs) is at present, in virtue of this ruling, the Heir-Presumptive to the Throne of Siam.

While all power is vested ultimately in the King, the actual work of administration is shared (subject to any commands which he may choose to issue) by the following Ministers of State:—Foreign Affairs, War, Marine, Interior, Finance, Justice, Local Government and Police, Communications, Public Instruction, Agriculture, Privy Seal, and Royal Household.

The above Ministers form a Cabinet Council, which meets only upon such occasions as the King may summon it for purposes of consultation. A Legislative Council, composed of various princes and notables, was created by Royal decree in 1895, but it seldom exercises any functions.

Bangkok, the capital city, is placed under the charge of the Ministry of Local Government. The remainder of the country is divided up into seventeen provincial circles, at the head of each of which stands an official designated "Viceroy" or "Lord-Lieutenant," as the case may be; these officers derive their functions direct from the King, though much of their business is conducted through the medium of the Ministry of the Interior.

A political franchise does not exist in Siam, and there are no electoral assemblies to take a consultative or deliberative part in the management of the national affairs. Efforts are, however, being made to create something in the nature of municipal councils in certain of the provincial towns.

Social Conditions.—At the head of the Siamese social system stands an upper class or aristocracy made up of the numerous members of the Royal Family and of the higher officers of the Administration. Siam has properly no middle class, the nearest approach to such being found in the large body of smaller Government officials which interposes itself between the aristocracy

and the great mass of the working population. The latter is engaged for the most part in agricultural pursuits, mainly in the cultivation of rice fields. The operations of commerce are conducted almost wholly by foreigners (Europeans, Chinese, Indians, and Burmese or Shans). The Chinese compose the bulk of the shopkeeping class; they form, too, the artisan and labouring elements in the larger towns. The natives of Siamese race seem to have little aptitude for trade, and are disinclined to engage in any of the more menial kinds of toil. Hence the presence of a very large admixture of Chinese in the population and a steady stream of immigration from China. Indispensable as the Chinese undoubtedly are to the industrial and economic life of the country, it is urged against them that they are unduly tenacious of their racial associations and habits, and that they do not conform readily enough to the conditions which obtain in the land of their adoption. The necessity for absorbing and assimilating this powerful foreign element forms, perhaps, the chief, if not the only serious, social problem which confronts the Siamese. Labour questions, as we understand them in the West, cannot at present be said to exist; and extreme poverty is unknown in a country where Nature has shown herself to be so bountiful as in the case of Siam.

(3) NAVAL AND MILITARY ORGANIZATION

Liability to military service is enforceable by law upon every able-bodied male between the ages of 18 and 40, with certain specified exceptions, which include all foreign nationals. The standing army is composed of four army corps, comprising ten divisions in all. The arms and equipment of the troops are modern. An aviation school has been established under the Ministry of War, which has also under its control a musketry school, a general staff school, and other kindred institutions. The King of Siam has himself organized, outside the army, a body of adult scouts known by the name of

the corps of "Wild Tigers." Recruits for this body are found among Government officials all over the country; the members wear a distinctive uniform, and undergo military training in their spare hours. The last yearly Budget estimates of the Ministry of Finance included expenditure on account of the Ministry of War amounting to about £1,040,000.

The navy of Siam is a small one. For all practical purposes it consists of two torpedo boat destroyers and four torpedo boats (all built in Japan), and four steel gunboats, the largest of which has a displacement of 700 tons. A dock is established at the Naval Arsenal in the capital, where there is also a naval academy for the training of cadets. Wireless stations in charge of the Ministry of Marine have been established at Bangkok and at Singora, a port situated on the western shore of the Gulf of Siam. The last Budget estimates made provision for the expenditure of a sum of £340,000 upon Siamese naval requirements.

A small cruiser, of which the completion has been delayed by the war, is building in England for Siam, and another in Russia. Under the auspices of the Royal Navy League, money is being collected to pay for another small cruiser. The subscriptions had reached nearly 2½ million ticals (£193,750) at the end of January 1918. Naval training is partly British, but of recent years has been mainly Danish.

(4) PUBLIC EDUCATION

A sum of, approximately, only £134,000 was included on account of public education in the Budget estimates for the current financial year (1917-18). The majority of the schools, though under the control of the Department of Education, are managed by the local authorities, and supported, so far as possible, by voluntary contributions. Institutions of this kind (of which there are nearly 4,000) consist almost entirely of primary schools. Of schools established and maintained by the Department there were in the year 1915-16 some 394,

made up as follows:—Primary, 269; secondary, 105; special (technical and professional), 20. In 1913-14 the total number of scholars attending both Government and non-Government schools was between 122,000 and 123,000. Thanks to the educational facilities which it has always been customary to offer to youth in many Buddhist religious establishments, a nucleus—however primitive—has existed from the first in the shape of monastery schools around which to build up an educational system.

A small staff of English inspectors and masters assists in the work of instruction in the Government schools of the capital. A beginning has been made in the matter of female education. The nucleus of a university has been set up in Bangkok by the opening of a higher college, but higher education is likely to be handicapped by the circumstance that the Siamese language is very largely destitute of the technical vocabulary necessary for the purpose. Education in Siam has not yet been made compulsory. The latest census returns show that out of the total population of the kingdom (with the important exception, however, of the metropolitan province of Bangkok) less than 15 per cent. of persons were literate. A large proportion of the younger and wealthier generation of Siamese have received their education in Europe or America.

APPENDIX

Treaties and Agreements

The following Treaties and Agreements concluded by Siam are still wholly or partly in force, and affect the existing condition of affairs:—

Treaty with Great Britain of April 18, 1855 (and Supplementary Agreement of May 13, 1856).

Treaty with France of August 15, 1856.

Treaty with United States of America of May 29, 1856.

Treaty with Denmark of May 21, 1858.

Treaty with Portugal of February 10, 1859.

Treaty with the Netherlands of December 17, 1860.

Treaty with the German States of February 7, 1862 (abrogated by state of war).

Treaty with Sweden and Norway of May 18, 1868.

Treaty with Belgium of August 29, 1868.

Treaty with Italy of October 3, 1868.

Treaty with Austria-Hungary of May 7, 1869 (abrogated by state of war).

Treaty with Spain of February 23, 1870.

Treaty with Japan of February 25, 1898.

Treaty with Russia (Declaration) of June 23, 1899.

The above are Treaties of Friendship and Commerce upon which the extraterritorial system, the import tariff, &c., are based.

The following further Treaties concluded by Siam should equally be cited:—

With Great Britain

- (1) Treaty of September 3, 1883 (establishing an International Court in Northern Siam).
- (2) Treaty of March 10, 1909 (abandonment of extraterritorial jurisdiction; transfer to Great Britain of suzerain rights of Siam in southern portion of Malay Peninsula).
- 3) Agreement between Governments of the Federated Malay States and of Siam concluded on March 10, 1909. (Former engages to lend to latter a sum of £4,000,000 for purposes of railway construction in Siamese dominions of Malay Peninsula.)

With France

- (1) Treaty of Peace of October 3, 1893. (Followed on the events of 1893; abandonment of claims to territory by Siam on left bank of River Mekong.)
- (2) Convention of February 13, 1904. (Cession of further territory in Mekong region by Siam; assurances by latter as to her action in basin of Mekong River.)
- (3) Treaty of March 23, 1907. (Partial abandonment of exterritorial jurisdiction by France; further cession of territory by Siam.)

With Denmark

Treaty of March 15, 1913. (Abandonment of exterritorial jurisdiction.)

The following agreements respecting Siam have been concluded between Great Britain and France:—

- (1) Declaration of January 15, 1896 (guaranteeing independence of Menam Valley, &c.).
- (2) Declaration of April 8, 1904 (defining spheres of influence).

AUTHORITIES

British State Papers:—

- (1) Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Siam.—Siam No. 1 (1894). [C.-7395.]
- (2) Despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, enclosing a copy of the Declaration between Great Britain and France of January 15, 1896, for the settlement of Siamese and other questions.—France No. 2 (1896). [C.-7976.]
- (3) Despatch to His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, forwarding Agreements between Great Britain and France of April 8, 1904.—France No. 1 (1904). [Cd. 1952.]
- (4) Despatch from His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris, transmitting the Treaty between France and Siam, signed at Bangkok, March 23, 1907.—France No. 1 (1907). [Cd. 3578.]
- (5) Despatch from His Majesty's Minister in Siam, forwarding a Treaty between Great Britain and Siam, signed at Bangkok, March 10, 1909, together with an Explanatory Memorandum (with map).—Siam No. 1 (1909). [Cd. 4646.]

*The text of the Railway Loan Agreement concluded on March 10, 1909, between the Governments of the Federated Malay States and of Siam was published in the Selangor Government *Gazette* of July 30, 1909.

For the texts of all Siam's Treaties with the Foreign Powers see *British and Foreign State Papers*.

Siamese Government Publications:—

- (1) *Statistical Year Book of the Kingdom of Siam* (English edition); one volume; Bangkok; published annually by the Department of Commerce and Statistics, Ministry of Finance.
- (2) *Annual Reports of the Financial Adviser on the Budgets of the Kingdom of Siam*; one volume; Bangkok; published yearly by the Ministry of Finance.

A useful work of historical and general reference is the following:—

Graham, W. A. *Siam: a Handbook of Practical, Commercial, and Political Information*. London, 1912.

Much valuable information on historical and general subjects is contained in the issues for 1914 and previous years of the *Directory for Bangkok and Siam*, published by the *Bangkok Times Press*, London.

Similar particulars are also to be found in the yearly issues of the *Siam Directory*, published annually by the *Siam Observer* newspaper, Bangkok.

APPENDIX

The following is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the Board of Directors of the Bank of the City of New York, since the year 1800, and who have since that time held the same offices.

PEACE HANDBOOKS.

The following is a complete list of the Handbooks prepared under the General Editorship of Sir George W. Prothero, late Director of the Historical Section of the Foreign Office.

Net Prices are given of all Volumes which have been published to date. Volumes X-XXV will be issued shortly.

*Books marked thus * contain sections on Geography and Economics as well as on History. Those marked thus § contain Geography and History only.*

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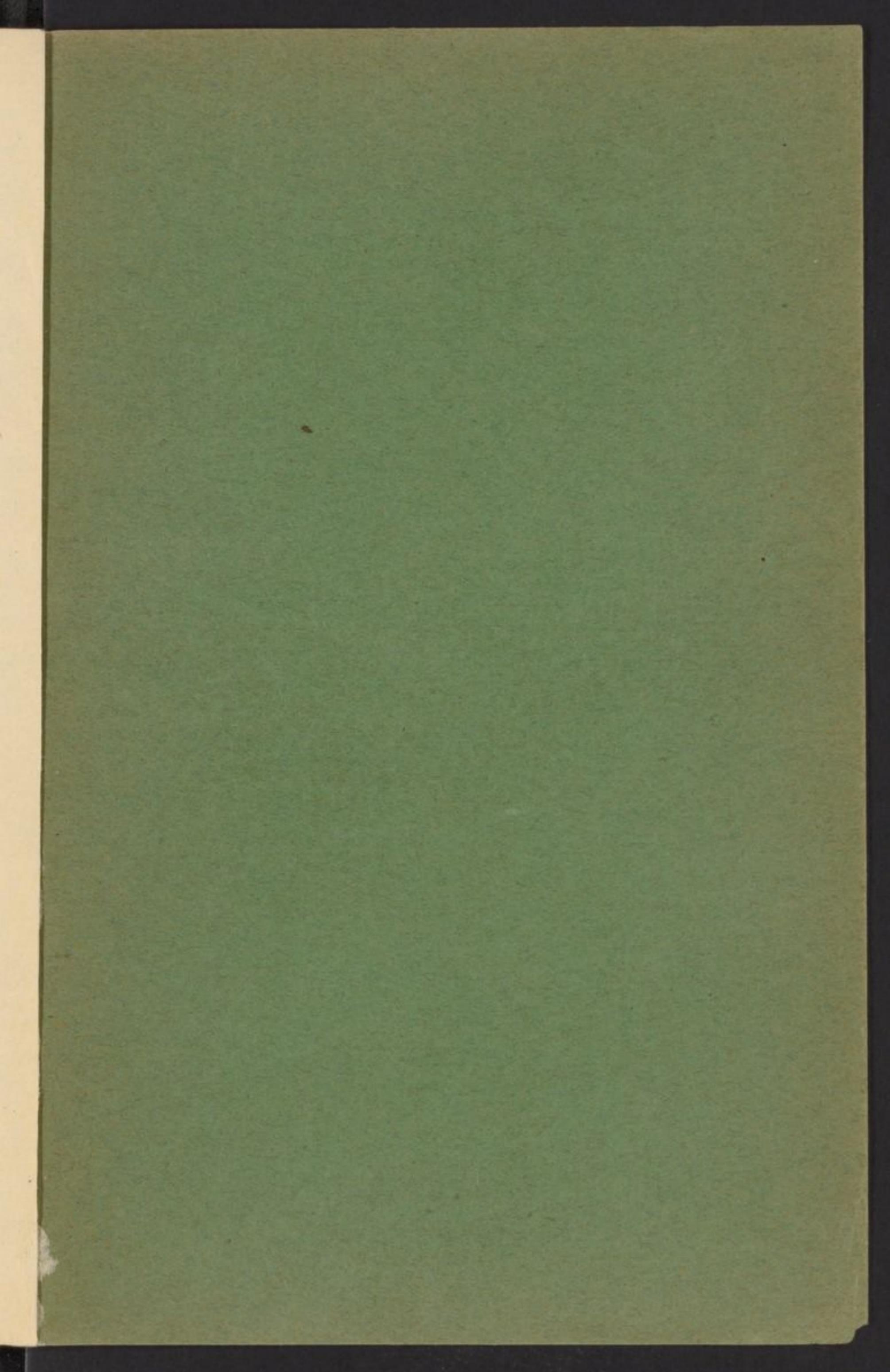
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