

"NARRATIVE OF THE LATE NANNING
EXPEDITION, &c."

Our readers will observe that some of our preceding columns are occupied with copious extracts from the above Narrative which we have already noticed, in part, on a late occasion. With the exception of the details of the military operations of the troops sent on this Expedition from the day they left Malacca to the date of their return, we have given almost every paragraph worthy of notice, commencing our extracts from where we left off in our 45th No.

In our former notice of this subject we traced to their original sources, with some truth, we trust, the hitherto secret causes of the determined opposition shewn in this civil war by the Panghooloo of Nanning and his adherents and associates, viz: the great unpopularity of the system adopted by Government in rigorously enforcing a tenth of all the productions of the land;—the endeavour to introduce this system at Nanning, contrary to long-established exemptions; the attempt to deprive the Chief of his authority by offering him a petty pension which he indignantly refused, and then, under very feeble pretences denouncing him as a rebellious and obstinate subject, and involving him in hasty and unsought hostilities, in which, however, he has contrived, contrary to all expectation, and much to his future injury we suspect, to obtain some temporary advantages over British arms.

It appears from the Narrative itself, (page 4) the writer of which must have obtained his information from no common source, that the original ground of complaint against the Panghooloo was his resisting the demands of Mr. FULLERTON, who imagined that "the improved cultivation of the country rendered the levying of the tax (a tenth of the produce) an easy matter, without distressing the inhabitants." An expedition was even prepared to enforce this newly assumed right, but which was subsequently withdrawn, until reference was made to superior authority. "*Nil de mortuis nisi verum*," is an ancient Latin maxim, and truth obliges us to say that we must condemn in unqualified terms many of Mr. FULLERTON's measures as savouring too much of oppression and want of due regard for justice—of this, we shall merely say, the Nanning affair is but one example.

The delay occasioned by such undecision and such reference, according to the Narrative, induced the Panghooloo to become presumptuous; hence, we find it stated that he seized on the lands of a less powerful neighbour, & ejected him on the pretext that the ground belonged from time immemorial to the Panghooloos of Nanning. We will not attempt to justify this act, but as almost all men can find some excuse, however specious, for their bad actions, we will presume the Panghooloo imagined he was doing no more than his neighbours in claiming possession of lands which might have been unjustly and violently taken from his predecessors by some rapacious & unjust Malacca ruler of the last century. This is not the only instance of an endeavour to recover ancient possessions—we find mention is made of a similar attempt by the Rajah of Muar, and we know, that about 3 years ago, troops were obliged to proceed to another quarter of the territory to protect it from the encroachments of a neighbouring chief who claimed similar right to certain lands over which the Company now exercises by purchase, a disputed authority.

The requisition sent to the Panghooloo on the subject of the seizure, it is said, "met with a haughty and peremptory refusal; and the due authority of the Court of Directors having been already received to dispossess the Chief-tain on the original ground of complaint," a Proclamation "was addressed to the inhabitants of Nanning setting forth the refractory behaviour of their leader, and declaring that no evil was intended towards such of his subjects as remained neutral during the approaching contest."

Inviting and persuasive as this Document was, and though widely circulated, it seems to have had but little effect either on the inhabitants of Nanning or the powerful and secret combination with which the Panghooloo surrounded himself, and we cannot bring forward a greater proof of the unpopularity of the measures adopted against the Panghooloo than the fact that even the spies, and other persons in the employ of Government, proved false "without exception," and that "our own subjects armed against us"—From Rumbow to Muar the Malays joined common cause, and even the native inhabitants of the town were not backward in affording aid, though secretly.

Those who knew Malacca in former years sigh over the happy and quiet times when no disturbance was ever dreamt of, or a popular commotion supposed likely to occur. To such, the causes of the present general dissatisfaction are too well known—and to all enquiries on the subject the same answer is invariably given—the CHUKER, the CHUKER, and the petty oppressions of its subordinate myrmdons, who FATTEN while the Government is sustaining a heavy loss, annually, and is earning, as its sorry portion, odium and disgrace amongst all classes of its subjects!

Without wasting more time in following the writer of the Narrative through all the subjects, he has introduced, and in pointing out several peccadilloes & vain schemes of which we could convict him, & without debating further on the results likely to follow the renewal of hostilities, we shall conclude by asserting that, allowing Nanning to fall under the entire sway of Malacca, (which it must do, if a well organised force, properly supported, be sent up,) the possession of it will cost more trouble and more expense than all Malacca is worth. So long as the obnoxious system exists, (which would not be so much felt were the people more able to pay it) the whole country will continue dissatisfied; but modify & make it more tolerable for the people, and remove those from office who have made themselves most obnoxious by their exactions & we will venture to insure that peace and good-will shall be speedily restored, & those of the Malacca natives who adhere to the Panghooloo's cause, merely for its justness, will soon lend their aid in apprehending the Panghooloo if he should continue to be refractory.