

Monday May, 5th. We left Malacca at 9 in the evening, in the same prau as before, accompanied by Mr. Nairne, the Assistant Resident. The wind and tide were favorable so that we had a good run to the mouth of the River, and entered it about sunrise with a flowing tide the following morning. From the entrance, 5 or 6 miles upward, or, about two thirds of the distance to Lingy, this river is wide—perhaps twice the breadth of the Thames at London and pretty straight in its course but afterwards narrows and winds about very much.

We got up to Lingy about 10 o'clock, and were agreeably surprised with the bustling commercial-like appearance of this little Malay port. Ten or a dozen good sized praus crowded the river, which we found no easy matter to pass, in order to get to the landing place. These were waiting for the tin which is brought down in small boats from Soongy hujong, and taken forward by them to Malacca or Singapore.

The country is cleared to a considerable extent and tolerably cultivated. The soil seems moderately fertile; various kinds of fruit trees, particularly the cocoa nut, are scattered profusely over its surface, and thrive well. The village is probably a good size, though, from its straggling, dispersed, state, like most other Malay villages, it is difficult to ascertain the precise magnitude. From a rough guess, we should imagine the whole population may be rated at two or three hundred souls.

We had half an hour's walk to the house of the Pangulu, escorted by his brother, who came up to us soon after landing. The Chief was sitting in his verandah surrounded, as is usually the case, with a crowd of idle dependants: there was also a respectable and well dressed Arablman, or chief priest of Islam, and two young Hadgees with him. Having so good an opportunity of distributing our Malay books, they were immediately opened out and exhibited to the whole company. After being informed of their nature the Pangulu readily and cheerfully received a Malay Bible, and recommended them to his people, with an admonition to read them and think upon their contents. The Imam, though courteous, was rather distant and shy at first. He read an Arabic New Testament which was put into his hands, but finding the name of Jesus, returned it with a contemptuous sneer. After a little conversation his spirit moderated, and he was much pleased with a psalter given to him. He soon became more friendly, and began to read and explain some of the books to the Malays, which gathered round him. Finally we observed him with delight going away with the Arabic New Testament which he had refused a short while before, and another in Malay, under each arm.

When our intention to proceed into the interior was known to the Pangulu he used every endeavor to dissuade us from our purpose. He gave a most fearful and appalling description of the roads, representing them as next to impassable. Finding us unmoved, and resolved to brave the difficulties and perils of the road, he pressed us urgently, at least, to stay all night, and set forward in the morning, and was actually making preparations for our lodging with him, ordering a large table to be brought out for the dinner, and mats to be spread on the floor of the verandah for sleeping upon. From this overstrained politeness, and superabundant flow of hospitable feeling, we began to suspect the Chief was actuated by other motives than those of compassion, and real anxiety for our welfare, and were confirmed in our suspicions on his telling us plainly we had chosen a bad time for taking this journey, the country being then in a disturbed state. The Pangulu of Soongy hujong, (whither we were bound) had recently died, and there were two persons claiming to be his successor, one the Son-in-law, the other a Nephew, of the deceased. The body of the people were divided into two parties, each espousing the cause of its favourite, and were already beginning to assume a hostile front towards one another. However we were still undismayed, and confiding in the righteousness of our cause resolved to advance boldly, (16 in all), and the critical period we had chosen, it was natural enough for those, in whose breasts jealousy, and suspicion, are thought to be seldom dormant, to imagine we had some political objects in view, but it was consoling to our own bosoms to reflect that we were not come as the emissaries of war, but as the

servants and ambassadors of Him who is emphatically called "the Prince of peace;" our design was not to foment strife and rebellion, but to promote harmony and peace among the people.

We left Lingy about 3 o'clock in the afternoon, having first made an equitable distribution of the whole baggage amongst the men; each bearing two small bundles at the ends of a bamboo across his shoulders. From the singular and varied equipment of our party we had rather a grotesque appearance. Our line of march was headed by Mr. Nairne, who lead us on vigorously at a great rate; Mr. H. and myself brought up the rear. The road was at first good, while passing through clear, cultivated, ground, but we soon entered an extensive jungle, of which we had heard so much, and found the difficulties of it had not been overrated. The road became exceedingly bad, slippery, and full of mud, so that we were frequently up to the ankles in it. We got through this tedious, dreary jungle about sun set, and joyfully hailed the little village of Cundor, where we proposed lodging all night. On coming to the house of the Pangulu we were told he was from home; the few domestics that came out were afraid to receive us into the house. Meanwhile however we got some cocoanuts, which were refreshing to us, and bathed, and washed our cloaths, in a neighbouring stream. The brother of the pangulu came and took us into the house, and shortly after the chief himself made his appearance and gave us a hospitable reception. He laid down mats for us in the verandah, where we lodged comfortably during the night. Our arrival evidently excited a great sensation in the village; a crowd assembled in the verandah, curious to see the "orang putih" or white people, for we were told that a white person was a rarity which few had ever seen. All the old men, or Elders of the village came to pay their respects to us when each took his seat according to seniority, or relative dignity, the Pangulu being next to us.

He was a loquacious, inquisitive, old man, and extremely anxious to know the object of our journey, whence we came, and the rank of each. At first he took all three to be Rajahs and on our disclaiming that high dignity he was still confident that one at least must be a Rajah, and at length fixed on Mr. Nairne. Our visitors staid late and kept up the conversation much longer than we wished, being wearied with travelling and anxious for rest.

We mustered early in the morning and set forward on our journey by sunrise. After leaving the village of Cundor the country assumes an interesting appearance, and opens an extensive and varied prospect to the eye of the traveller, who, if like ourselves he has been previously shut up in deep narrow winding valleys, or traversing the dark shady jungle, will have a lively relish for its beauties. Before him are a succession of gently undulating hills, cleared of jungle and apparently affording good pasturage for cattle, and here and there on the sides a sprinkling of brushwood, or clumps of trees, equally pleasing to the eye and grateful for their shade. Below, lies an extensive valley or plain narrowing as he advances, and laid out in sawas, or paddy grounds. Beyond this, on the right, the long dark range of the Rumbé hills towering above all their neighbours, gives an air of boldness, and grandeur, to the whole scene. The country may be said to be well cultivated when we consider that it is solely the work of Malays.

The Pangulu told us there were 100 persons in Cundor. This number if referring exclusively to the village seemed excessive; from our own observation we supposed half that number might be nearer the truth, and probably in this estimate he included the population of the whole district which bears the same name with the village; and before leaving the vale of Cundor (several miles in extent) we met with a few Malay cottages, each beautifully situated on the slope of a hill, with a small plot of paddy ground just below it; these might probably supply the remaining moiety of the whole population.

Our path was in general good, running at the foot, or along the side, of a hill, but occasionally we had to descend and cross the sawas, which, in proportion to their extent, are the most disagreeable part of the whole journey to the traveller. However carefully he picks his way, he is almost sure to be up to the knees in mud before he gets through them. Ditches and dirty

streams are now and then a small grievance to him, if he happens not to be already wet and well plastered with mud.

As to bridges they are quite out of the question with the Malays, except occasionally where the stream is wide and deep, and he can conveniently throw tree or two across, which to him answers every useful purpose. Of course we were a little surprised at seeing in one place, what appeared at a distance, a small but neat made bridge, lying across a deep stream, but it proved on nearer inspection to be a tree hewn and hollowed out, forming a conduit for conveying water from one side of the river to the other answering equally well to the Malay for a bridge and a sluice to irrigate his paddy fields.

In the latter part of our journey this morning we had an hour's walk through the jungle. The road was steep and rugged, winding along the craggy sides of some hills, and much obstructed by ferns and creepers, in some parts so tangled, and matted, as to envelope us completely, so that occasionally we had to walk, or rather creep, under a grassy canopy. In other places our way was frequently impeded by fallen trees and sometimes totally intercepted. The Malays never think of removing them and clearing the path, but are quite contented if they can by any means get over them; and when the way is absolutely blocked up they will rather take twice the trouble in forcing a circuitous path than cut the tree and remove it out of the way. Occasionally fallen trees are a great advantage to the Traveller, we found them not unfrequently forming excellent bridges across a stream or swamp. In this part of our journey we came to a deep, narrow ravine, where a huge tree had fallen and fortunately stretched itself directly across, forming a good natural bridge.

About 10 o'clock we again emerged from the Jungle into the open country, and beheld with pleasure a fine valley before us. Immediately beneath was a beautiful, extensive plain, and in the middle of it lay the respectable village of Jemampong, almost shrouded in the dense foliage of fruit trees. Nearer to us, in front of the village, was a large tank or reservoir of water. On descending into the plain we were so much delighted with its shady and sequestered situation, and the beauty of the surrounding scenery, that we resolved to pitch our tent there rather than enter the village. Our appearance while thus scattered over, what might be called, the "village green," was somewhat ludicrous, and reminded me forcibly of a gypsy encampment at home. Some of our party were kindling fires to boil the rice, others washing our clothes and spreading them out in the sun, others reposing in the shade, while we ourselves were bathing or washing in the stream that runs from the tank. It was not long before a group of the villagers were gathered round us, standing gazing, and wondering, what we were. After a while the head man was apprized of our coming, and came out and gave us a friendly invitation to his house. We accompanied him home and sat down with him in the verandah. Our provisions not being quite ready he ordered a dish of rice with other little dainties to be set before us, amongst the rest a small dish of fried locusts which some of our party seemed to relish. This afforded a vivid illustration of several passages in the Sacred Scriptures respecting the use of locusts for food, which the mere English reader can but feebly comprehend. As usual, there was a crowded verandah; men, women, and children, stood gazing upon us with fixed attention, for, as in most other places, we were objects of curiosity, few amongst them having ever seen an "Orang putih." Amongst the whole group none seemed more amused with us or manifested greater curiosity and good humour, than an old grey headed woman. A cheerful inquisitive spirit continually played in her countenance, while observing us conversing or eating. Most of them had never seen bread and had no name for it; the common term rotih, so familiar to Malays in all European settlements was to them quite unknown. On presenting the Pangulu with part of a loaf, he and several others eat it with apparent relish.

The Pangulu, who was also the Imam or priest of the village, is a plain, frank, generous hearted man, & though like most others inquisitive about our rank, the cause of our Journey, &c. yet in return just as ready and cheerful to communicate any information we wished. Indeed with the exception of the Pangulu of Lingy we every where met with simple, unsuspecting, open hearted spirit, which often surprized us, and were treated by the chiefs with the most liberal hospitality. Frequently we were reminded of the simple manners and hospitable spirit of the patriarchal times. It is probable the Malays are greatly wronged, through ignorance, in attributing to them (as is often done) a selfish, morose, cruel, and jealous, spirit. Allowing this to have some measure of truth when applied to those who have more immediate intercourse with Europeans, we imagine the character given above is not applicable (with some slight qualification) to the Malays dwelling in the interior.

The Pangulu cheerfully received a Malay Testament after he was aware of the nature of its contents: several others also, who could read, took tracts.

In parting with our Host he requested us to call upon him on our return, & make his house our home, with which we cheerfully acquiesced. We set forward about 1 o'clock in high spirits, delighted with the prospect before us—An open expansive and well cultivated vale stretching out several miles, on either side flanked by a ridge of gently sloping hills, partially covered with wood, especially towards the summits, and just above our heads on the right the dark crested range of the Rumbo hills cast a lowering aspect upon us.

The curiosity of the natives seemed to be much awakened on our passing through this part of the country, men, women and children came out of their houses and stood by the way side gazing upon us as we marched along, usually paying some passing compliment or making a few friendly inquiries, as whence we came, whither going, what was our business.

After proceeding on our way a couple of miles, we heard three guns fired in succession somewhere in the heights above on the right; some of our party imagined the Pangulu of Rumbo had heard of our arrival, and jealous of our intrusion into the country used this stratagem to alarm and deter us from proceeding; however we still went on undismayed. A little way further we met a Malay coming down with two muskets upon his shoulders; this might not improbably be another part of the *ruse de guerre*, if indeed we were right in our conjectures, but as we met with no opposition in any part of our future journey, our suspicions on this occasion might be wholly unfounded. This firing might only be a triple salute in honor of young prince we had just seen on his way home.

After traversing a while the right side of the valley we crossed a broad swampy sawa and afterwards had a pleasant walk down the other side. The aspect of the country is beautiful and picturesque, the sides of the hills partially clothed with trees and shrubs, now and then thrown by nature, with a sort of careless elegance, into groves and lawns. Had there been cattle or sheep browsing above us, or deer reposing under the shade of the trees, to give spirit and life to the scene, imagination might have fancied herself looking upon some lovely landscape in our native country. Here and there we passed a respectable Malay dwelling (or farm house) surrounded by a tall, and close, pagger for protection against wild beasts, which lurk in the covert of the neighbouring jungles.

Ah! when shall the whole of this large peninsula present the same lovely features as those we have just been contemplating. The eye looks with delight on these smiling fertile vales, but on taking a more ample view how sickening the contrast. On all sides scarcely any thing meets the eye but a vast waste of dreary inhospitable Jungle, shrouding almost the whole country in the length and the breadth of it. These few cultivated patches afford a pleasing specimen of what the whole country would become if properly cleared. There is perhaps too much sameness of a smooth waving outline perhaps running through the whole peninsula, and less diversity of scenery than a fastidious taste requires, yet taken in the whole, few countries would surpass it in loveliness and so eminently combine the "utile dulci." If destitute of those romantic and bolder features which characterize the rugged mountains and glens in Scotland, and Wales, it may perhaps rival them in the softer and milder beauties of hills and dales.

The eye that has surveyed with rapture the vales of Clwydd and Llangollen, in Wales, or that of Loch Lomond in Scotland, will not lose all its fire when contemplating some of the sequestered and fruitful valleys of the Malay peninsula. Such scenes of rural beauty are indeed rare, and only specks upon the whole surface of the country, yet let us not despair of one day seeing the veil completely removed, and all the hidden beauties of its face fully disclosed. Let the moral wilderness first be diligently cultivated, and the precious seed of divine truth sown in the hearts of the people, and then the culture of the natural wilderness will follow as a necessary consequence. Our own ancestors, the ancient Britons, were once as rude and superstitious as the Malays, and of a more ferocious spirit, and Britain was then sterile and overrun with vast forests, but when the light and blessings of Christianity visited the shores of our native isle, peace, order and industry followed in train, and the land soon became lovely and fruitful. And a brighter day is already dawning upon this dreary benighted country; let the friends of truth only be steadfast and diligent in following up those labours of love they have so auspiciously begun, and a rich blessing from above will sooner or later make them abundantly fruitful. NLB