

THURSDAY, 7TH MARCH, 1833.

Accounts from the East Coast of the Peninsula mention that a scarcity of Rice prevails at the different states situated on it.—the consequence, probably, of the late Siamese invasion, or of the late failure of the grain crop in Siam. We observe that three vessels have lately proceeded up that coast with large quantities of rice, and other merchantable commodities, for which profitable returns in produce, are expected. We are glad to see that such adventures are made, inasmuch as they tend to open a beneficial direct intercourse with the Malayan States on the coast, and to afford their inhabitants some confidence and encouragement in their commercial pursuits. It is well known that these states might soon be made to abound with the most valuable productions, such as gold-dust, tin, pepper, coffee ivory, &c., if only proper protection were given them against the rapacity of their Siamese oppressors, and if also the occasional avarice and extortion of their own despotic rulers, could be guarded against. The above articles are brought here, even now, in considerable quantities, by native craft, and we are told several new pepper and coffee plantations have lately been opened, principally at *Tringanu*, the present ruler of which place is said to be an intelligent and enterprising man.

If the Dutch continue to harbour the design of subjugating the whole of Sumatra,

(or so much of it as they can) and of cutting off the commercial intercourse which exists between this Settlement & the independent States on the east side of Sumatra, contrary to the Treaty, of 1824,—the Malayan Peninsula, (nominally under the protection of the British) might soon be rendered so productive in the very articles obtained from Sumatra, as to cause the loss, after some time, to be little felt. This is well worthy the consideration of the British Government, as we have every reason to believe that the Dutch seriously entertain such intentions as we mention. It would require but a few firm words of *remonstrance* to prevent the dastardly Siamese from making such another savage invasion as they perpetrated lately on the Peninsula—while the “crooked policy,” which has hitherto actuated the proceedings of the Straits Government in their conduct towards the Malays who are apparently treated with much superciliousness, (when compared with our *noble allies* the Siamese!) should be abandoned for a more liberal and more upright one, attended with a much kinder disposition towards them than has heretofore existed.

To the harsh conduct and cruel oppressions of Europeans in former times, and indeed, in some degree also at later periods; we may trace the cause of the numerous piracies which disgrace the Malay character. Let only proper inducements be held out to them, to become industrious, so that their former confidence may be regained, and stimulated by the example of the numerous Chinese labourers who are settled at the different mines and plantations in the Peninsula, they will prove to be—“a people more sinned against than sinning.”