

MALAYAN PENINSULA.

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1.—*Johole and its former Dependencies of Jompole Gominchi.* By Lieut. NEWBOLD, A. D. D. to Brigr. General WILSON, C. B.

Johole. Of *Johole*, the third of the four *Menangkabaw* states, still less is known than of *Rumboue* and *Sungie Ujong*.

An Englishman of the name of GRAY, (whose information is to be taken, however, with caution,) is said to have been the only European who has penetrated into the interior of this state. He passed through part of it in 1827, on his return to *Malacca* from *Pahang*, whither he had performed a journey overland, across the peninsula, to barter opium for the gold dust of the latter place.

His route lay through *Naning*, part of *Rumboue*, *Srimendanti*, *Jompole*, *Ulu Seruting*, *Ulu Braugh*, and *Ulu Pahang*. The journey was performed in 14 days.

From *Tabu*, in *Naning*, to *Jompole*, he was four days passing over mount *Lanjut*, to the villages of *Gadang* and *Tanjong*; over mounts *Miko*, *Pabi*, and *Pating Pahat*, through the villages of *Passir*, *Jano*, and *Pila*, in *Srimendanti*; and from *Pila* to *Jompole*, "one day's walk."

Mr. GRAY describes the country he passed through, to have been in a state of high cultivation, particularly at *Miko*, and in the vales of *Pating Pahat*, *Jano*, and *Passir*.

He observes that the *paddy* at *Miko* is preferable to that of *Malacca*, and that it is supposed by the people that the ground there is better for cultivation, one *gantang* of seed never producing less than a hundred-fold.

The produce of mount *Miko* is sapan wood, dammer, and canes of the species termed *Pinang-lawyers* in abundance. *Jompole*, he conjectures, to be about 90 miles distant from *Malacca*. *Pahang* is estimated at 300 miles distance from *Jompole*. From *Jompole* to *Pahang* the journey is by boat down the river *Seruting* to the large lake of *Braugh*, called *Tassek Braugh*; which is said by Mr. GRAY to be nearly fifty miles in circumference, and is formed by the flow of water from the neighbouring mountains.

If this account be correct, the lake *Braugh* exceeds in dimensions the recently discovered inland lakes in *Sumatra*.

The natives, however, have described this lake to me to be of much less extent; narrow but long. Its communication with the *Pahang* river, which empties into the *China* sea, is by a river called the *Braugh*.

Regarding the navigation of these rivers, Mr. GRAY observes: "In some parts of the *Seruting* and *Braugh*, a brig might go up, and in other parts, nothing but a small boat; on account of the water being above the fallen trees, so that the boat must be lifted before it can proceed, on account of the overflowing banks of the river."

The *Pahang* river, from the place where it receives the waters of the *Braugh*, down to the town of *Pahang*, is wide and deep. These streams are deepest in the months of November, December, and January.

From the month of March to that of August, Mr. GRAY was informed, that it is impossible to proceed from the *Seruting* river to *Pahang*, on account of the paucity of water. The general depth of these rivers, in January, he ascertained to be between 40 and 60 feet; but on his return in February, he found their depth diminished by one-half.

There are a few villages on the banks of these rivers, but for the most part they are covered with lofty forests, tenanted by the rhinoceros, tapir, tiger, elephant, and scarcely more civilized *Jacobs*.

Mr. GRAY met with great kindness and hospitality from the inhabitants of the different states through which he passed. He fell, however, a sacrifice to his exertions, dying of jungle fever, contracted during the journey, twenty-five days after his return to *Malacca*.

Boundaries.—*Johole* is bounded on the north by *Ulu Pahang* and part of *Rumboue*; to the south by part of *Naning* and *Muar* or *Segamet*; to the east by *Segamet*, and to the west by *Srimendanti* and part of *Rumboue*. The boundaries with *Malacca* are from *Bakit Puitas* to *Batang Malacca*, and from *Batang Malacca* by *Bangkong Chondong* to Mount *Ophir*.

With *Segamet* and *Muar*, its boundaries are *Murboue sa ratala* (the hundred *Murboue* trees) and *Bangkong Chondong*; with *Rumboue*, *Bakit Pabi*; and with *Srimendanti*, *Bakit Pita*.

Population &c.—The population of *Johole* is estimated at 2,080 inhabitants. The principal villages are *Nuri*, *Londong*, *Tuey*, *Taman*, and *Bennong*.

Johole is governed by a *Panghulu* and *Ampat Suku*. The former, like his brother chief of *Sungie Ujong*, is elected by the *Sukus*, and by the *Batin dua bias*, or twelve heads of the *Jacobs*.

The name of the present *Panghulu* is *ABU BEKR*, or *BANCHITA*, and his title *Johan Lela Percasseh*; he resides at *Nuri*, is an intelligent looking person; plain, simple, and collected in manner, and much respected by his people.

The tribes are those of *Badoanda*, *Sa Melongan*, *Tiga Battu*; and *Munkal*.

Srimendanti and *Jompole*, were formerly considered dependencies of *Johole*, but now assert their independence, as also does *Gominchi*. The *Panghulu*, *LES-SYE*, of the latter place died lately, and his brother *MAHAMMED KARI* succeeded him. *Pondok Passir*, a small state under the influence of *Srimendanti*, was also a dependency of *Johole*, and is ruled by a petty *Panghulu* of its own.

Besides the usual rights of revenue, the *Panghulu* of *Johole* levies ten per cent. on the produce of the tin mines, together with a tax on the gold of *Gominchi*, which will be shortly alluded to.

Trade.—The trade of *Johole* consists chiefly in gold dust; 20 catties of which are said to be produced annually. Tin, about .00 piculs. Fruits, rattans, jaggery, and fowls are brought in considerable quantities down to *Malacca*.

Jompole.—*Jompole* was anciently a dependency of *Johole*, but is now nominally governed by *Raja AL-LANG*, a son of the third *Menangkabawee* prince, *Raja HAM*. The *Panghulu* and *Ampat Suku* exercise almost independent sway.

The name of the present *Panghulu* is *HASSAIN*; the tribes are those of *Badoanda*, *Sa Melongan*, *Auak Malacca*, and *Tiga Battu*.

Jompole is in the high road of the *Pahang* traders travelling across the peninsula to *Malacca*; it is situated on a small river of the same name, which flows into the *Muar* river, [one of the largest streams on the western coast of the peninsula,] by which it has communication with the Straits of *Malacca*. By the rivers *Seruting* and *Braugh*, an easy intercourse from November or October to February is kept up with *Pahang* and the eastern coast. The *Raja* here levies a duty on the opium, tobacco, cloths, iron utensils, salt, &c. passing through *Jompole* to *Pahang*, as well as on the gold dust and silk cloths of *Pahang* returning to *Malacca*.

Jompole produces a considerable quantity of tin, sapan wood, rice, dammer, rattans, and a little gold, which is sent down the *Muar* river to *Malacca* (eight days), and also to *Pahang*.

The population of *Jompole* is estimated at 2,000; it is divided into three *Mukims*; viz, those of *Limbanjon*, *Turuntong*, and *Qualia Leaney*.

Gold.—The following account of the gold mines at *Chimendros*, with the exception of the part relative to the assaying of the metal, which is from personal observation, is almost entirely drawn from native information.

Bakit Chimendros is a hill situated in *Gominchi*, a territory subject to the *Panghulu* of *Johole* and bordering on the eastern frontier of *Naning*. It is covered and surrounded by an uninhabited forest of great extent, intersected by numerous rivulets, which derive their source from the hill.

Veins of quartzose rock run over it at various depths (generally from 12 to 20 feet) below the surface, forming the matrix in which the gold is found in small broken streaks.

The rock is enclosed in a bed of a sort of white clay, indurated more or less, termed *Nopal*.

The method pursued by Chinese and Malays for separating the metal from its matrix resembles that adopted by the Hungarian miners, with this exception, that the process of amalgamation is not practised by the former for this purpose. The *Kling* assayers of gold, however, avail themselves of it in their vocation, as will presently appear.

The Malay miners, as soon as the precise spot and minute have been determined by their diviners, *Pawang*, or other charlatans supposed to be skilled in discovering the hidden treasure of the earth, commence clearing the ground of trees, brushwood, &c. and then proceed to remove the roots and vegetable soil by means of *Bilions* and *Chonkoles*, (the Malay an adze and spade,) until the bed of *Nopal* is laid bare. These implements are now put aside, and a heavy sort of iron crow-bar, (*Perjong*) is had recourse to.

The first layer of *Nopal* is soft and whitish; the second has a reddish tint. The last is a black incrustation resembling brick in hardness, and hence called

* *Bangkong Chondong* is a large tree, growing in the forest that separates *Assahan* from *Mount Ophir*. The tree was still in existence when I visited *Mount Ophir* in 1833.

† A specimen of this rock, in which a small portion of gold is imbedded, or rather disseminated, has been forwarded to the Society.

by the natives *Tambiker Quali*; this is commonly two fingers' breadth, in thickness, and being removed, discovers the white vein of rock, the matrix of the gold, and termed the *Beling*. It is generally between three and four feet in diameter: underneath lies a bed of whitish earth, below which gold is never found.

The next process is that of breaking up the *Beling*, for which purpose the *Perjong* is employed. From the extreme hardness of the rock this is a very laborious and tedious task. The coarse pieces are then pounded in a sort of large mortar cut from the quartz rock. The pulverized stone is then passed through sieves (*Kisye*) of rattan, and carried in small baskets to a running stream, where the smaller stony particles are washed away, while the gold dust, with the grosser pieces, sink to the bottom of the conical vessel in which it is subjected to the action of the stream.

The refuse is picked out, and the gold dust again carefully washed and collected in a coconut shell or leaf of the *Pallas* tree, and conveyed to the *Bonggal*, where it is dried by means of a red-hot piece of charcoal being repeatedly passed over its surface. After the adherent finer particles of the sand have been removed, it is weighed into quantities, generally of one *tael* each, which are carefully folded up in small pieces of cloth.

These packets constitute the *Bunkals* of commerce. In *Sumatra*, according to *MARSDEN*, the parcels or *Bulses*, in which the gold is packed up, are formed of the intaglium that covers the heart of the buffaloe.

The *Bunkals* are, as in *Sumatra*, frequently used as currency instead of coin.

The weights for gold formerly used as *Chimendros* and *Taon* (a piece about half a day's journey thence) are as follows:

- 2 small *sagas* (*Saga kechil*)—1 large *saga* (*saga besar*)
- 8 *Saga besar*,—1 *Maian*.
- 16 *Maian*s,—1 *Tael* or *Bunkal*.
- 20 *Taels*,—1 *Cattie*.

The *Saga* is a sort of small scarlet pea with a black spot, the *Abrus Maculatus*.

Besides *Chimendros* and *Taon*, I have not heard of any place on the peninsula where gold is obtained from the solid rock. On *Sumatra* it is frequently found in this state.

The gold dust at *Pahang* and *Jellye* is procured in the same manner as that in the mines at the foot of *Mount Ophir*, already described in a paper published in this Journal; (*vol. ii. page 497.*)

The mines at *Reccan* are estimated to produce annually about 20 catties of gold dust.

The *Panghulu* of *Gominchi* first levied a tenth on the produce of these mines, but in consequence of large quantities of gold dust being secretly carried off, before the tenth had been levied, he substituted a sort of poll-tax, amounting to a *maian* of gold, from each person working at the mines.

The *Panghulu* of *Johole* is in the habit of sending five or six buffaloes a year to the mines, receiving for every head of cattle two *taels* of gold.

These heavy drawbacks have caused the mines to become unprofitable to the speculators, and almost deserted. The former of these imposts, I believe, could readily be endured; but the latter *ad libitum* sort of exaction destroys all hope of reasonable profit.

The following is an estimate of the various degrees of purity of gold dust, produce of the peninsula. It will be necessary to premise, that *mitu*, is a term denoting the degrees of fineness for gold, of which there are 10, as fixed by the native assayers. Gold of 10 *mitu* is equal therefore to gold of 24 carats: gold not reaching eight *mitu* is called *mas muda*, or young gold; and gold from eight to 10 *mitu*, *mas tua*, or old gold.

Gold of <i>Reccan</i> ,	9½ <i>mitu</i>
Mount <i>Ophir</i> ,	9¼ "
<i>Chimendros</i> ,	9½ "
<i>Taon</i> ,	9½ "
<i>Pahang</i> ,	9½ "
<i>Jellye</i> ,	9½ "
<i>Tringann</i> ,	9½ "
<i>Calantan</i> ,	9½ "

From *Calantan* gold of 10 *mitu* is sometimes obtained.

The assayers of gold are generally *Chuliahs* or *Klings*, who acquire by constant practice the power of determining to the fraction of a *mitu* the purity of any specimen of gold dust brought from the eastward. As they would be perhaps liable to imposition were this the only trial they subjected the metal to, they have recourse to the *Batu uji* or touchstone. This is a roughish black stone, apparently basalt, brought from continental India, and generally set in a small frame of bronze or brass.

The assaying needles are generally from 20 to 24 in number, ranged on a string, and alloyed in known proportions of copper and silver, marked on the surface, from three to 9½ *mitu*. The needle and gold to be assayed are rubbed on the touchstone in parallel streaks, in the usual manner; a lump of the adhesive wax called *Lilin katulut* is then applied to the surface of the touch-stone, which brings off the two thin laminae of gold.

The difference between the two being more visible on the wax (which is coloured black for this purpose with a fine charcoal made from the plantain leaf) than on the stone. This is the reason the native assayers give for the removal of the streaks of gold from the stone to the wax, though to me no difference was perceptible: possibly the following may afford another clue to the practise of the natives in this particular.

In this wax the impressions of the gold, which would be lost on the stone, go on accumulating; a ball of it, which my native informant had used for the last 30 years, he supposed to contain above two *taels* of gold.

The metal is separated from the wax by means of heat applied gradually, in such proportions as barely to cause the wax to pass off in the form of smoke: the residuum is then subjected to the process of amalgamation. Half of the gold thus obtained is dedicated in alms to the poor, or on religious offerings, at the shrine of some favorite Saint or *Wali*; generally to that of *MIRAN Sahib* at *Nagore*.

The calculation of a Malay, long employed in the mines at *Chimendros*, makes the average quantity of gold produced from 40 lbs. of the pulverized stone, 24 grains of pure metal. Lumps of virgin gold, weighing from five to six *taels*, have been found in the alluvial soil here and at *Taon*. In *Jellye*, a mass weighing upwards of a *cattie* has been discovered which *REAMUUA* mentions as having been shewn to the Royal Academy at Paris, weighing 448 oz. *HELMS* affirms that when one of the highest mountains of *Paraguay* fell down, about 50 years ago, there were discovered in it pieces of gold weighing from two to fifty pounds each.

* At *Malacca* 10 *Saga besar* or 4 *Kupongs* are equal to one *Maian*.

† The natives are, I believe, totally ignorant of the assay by cupellation and acids.