

The following deposition, lately taken at Malacca before one of the resident Justices of the Peace, has been sent to us for publication, and forms an apt commentary upon the observations made by us in several recent numbers respecting the means taken to induce the native cultivators in that settlement to accept the terms propounded to them by government, in substitution of their right of occupancy on payment of a tenth of the produce of their lands;—

"Be it remembered this 24th day of July, 1838, appears before me, J. H. VELGE, Esqre. one of Her Majesty's Justices of the Peace for the Settlement of Malacca.

"PUASA of Malacca, Cultivator, who maketh oath and states, that on Saturday last, the 21st. instant, this deponent was at Mr. J. B. WESTERHOUT, upon some business, who desired this deponent to call upon him again on Wednesday following for the purpose of signing a lease, when the said Mr. J. B. WESTERHOUT, told this deponent, that who-soever will refuse to sign or take leases for their respective Lands or Paddy-fields that the same will in consequence be taken away from them and that they will moreover be put to work on the roads for the space of one month; the foregoing was stated by the said Mr. J. B. WESTERHOUT to him in the presence of DADAMINA and his wife FAKIA.

"Signed by PUASA with a cross.
Sworn to before me

"J. H. VELGE,

"Justice of the Peace."

The facts thus deposed to constitute we feel persuaded but one example, out of a multitude of others, of the mode of proceeding complained of. But after all, what has been the result, and has the experiment of bullying been found to answer? We suspect not—for although some 230 Malays of the district of *Bali Pajang*, of which the said Mr. J. B. WESTERHOUT was himself formerly the proprietor, and where his personal influence is accordingly still felt, may have subscribed the new leases, the occupants of more than twenty other districts have refused to do so, and express a determination to persevere in their refusal. But it is monstrous that the ignorance or simplicity of any one of the Malacca tenants, possessing as they do rights to the lands under their cultivation as good and as well secured and defined as the rights of the government itself, should thus be taken advantage of to compel a reluctant acquiescence in the new system proposed to be introduced. Many of those who have signed leases, as we have the best authority for stating, were totally unacquainted with their contents, or had at best but a vague and confused idea of their meaning, before signature, as they were in English, and without any explanation in Malay of their contents being appended. We have called the attention of the Commissioner of Lands for the Straits to facts and circumstances of the same kind before now—and several of these facts we ourselves possess the means of proving by the most indisputable evidence in a Court of Justice. What then is the Commissioner doing that he can allow of such proceedings which he himself so strongly disavows, as it might be expected he would do, to be carried on in the name of the government? But let the people of Malacca make their voice heard in a distinct and definite form—let them express their sentiments by Petition either to the Commissioner himself, or to Lord AUCKLAND, and state that they are content to continue the cultivation of their lands under the old system, and have no desire to benefit by the improvements proposed by Government. This is a legitimate course of proceeding, which may serve to open the eyes of

government as to the real state of feeling among the Malays with respect to the proposed change, and there doubtless are those in Malacca who are willing, and know how to point out such a course for the adoption of the Malays.