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REPORT ON THE POPULATION, &c. OF THE TOWN AND SUBURBS OF MARLBOROUGH, IN THE ISLAND OF SUMATRA.

(*From the "Proceedings of the Agricultural Society established in Sumatra* 1820." *Vol.* I.)*

To the Hon. Sir T. S. Raffles, Lieut. Governor, &c.

HONOURABLE SIR: We have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication, under date the 3d July last, and to enclose for your information the various Tables required, No. 1 to 10 inclusive, together with the General Census.

No pains or labour have been spared to secure to these documents an accuracy, both in generals and details, commensurate with the importance of the subject they are intended to illustrate, and we hold ourselves pledged to the utmost fidelity and precision in the compilation of them.

The pressure of official avocations does not admit of our entering so amply into the subject as we could wish. It is proposed, therefore, merely to give a summary outline of the most prominent and characteristic features in the history of each individual tribe, and thence to deduce such inferences as may lead to a just and rational conclusion of the present state of society among them. Little need be said of the Europeans and their descendants, or of foreigners; and the history of the native chiefs and bugguese officers will necessarily be comprized in that of the Malayan tribes.

The population of *Europeans and their descendants* consists of the Hon. Company's civil and military servants, with their families, and of such persons as are employed in the public offices under Government.

Exclusive of these, there are a few who have no emolument from the State, and who depend upon their industry for their success, in the commercial and agricultural speculations in which they are engaged.

It is principally owing to the enterprizing spirit and persevering industry of the Europeans and their descendants, that the primeval forests of Sumatra have been reclaimed from their native wildness, and converted into spacious plantations of the most promising and highly cultivated spice trees, rivalling in luxuriance of appearance and quality of produce the trees in their native clime, and securing to Great Britain a participation in this lucrative branch of traffic. The capital vested in these plantations is very great, in consequence of the high price of labour and rice; and they have been the means, not only of affording support to many who would otherwise have been bereft of it, but of creating a spirit of emulation and industry among the people.

Having the success of their spice speculation principally in view, and not sufficient capital for ulterior agricultural pursuits, the Europeans and their descendants have neglected other objects of cultivation, with the exception of one gentleman who engaged in a coffee plantation, but failed, from an improper choice of soil and injudicious management. The domestic establishments of the old settlers consist chiefly of Neas people and Malays, but new comers generally employ natives of Bengal.

The *Foreigners* consist of Portuguese, Dutch, French and Germans, many of whom have no visible means of livelihood. Those who have, are chiefly employed in the lower and more humble occupations of life, as inferior overseers of plantations or of working parties. Notwithstanding, however, the inertness of their lives, and their want of occupation, they are on the whole peaceable subjects, and do not give much trouble to the police.

The *Chinese* are an industrious and hard-working people, but extremely jealous and envious of any success or pre-eminence of another of their tribe. They set a high price upon their labour, which is an obstacle to the general employment of them; but their perseverance and physical strength adapt them well for agricultural labours, and particularly for bringing new lands into tillage. Their disposition, in point of activity, may well be contrasted with that of the Malayan tribes which surround them. They are more attached to commercial than agricultural pursuits, and follow the latter only in cases of an overflowing capital, or diminished trade. Their habits and natural bias involve them in speculations, which end either in total ruin or in a comfortable independency. This speculative propensity is their prevailing character, and is sufficiently ostensible in

* Published in Bencoolen.

their general predilection for games of chance.

A few of them smoke opium, although they are averse from acknowledging it to Europeans. They import stock, oil, gambier, and various trifling articles from Padang, and such commodities from Java as are suited to this market. They also rear hogs, and are very successful in the cultivation of various vegetables, and sugar-cane, which they can always dispose of to good account. Of those who are engaged in trade, but few have capital or credit to any extent; formerly they had both, from the prevailing practice among the European merchants of selling their goods by wholesale to a Hong, or company, consisting of three or four respectable traders in the bazar; and these again retailed their purchases at a profit to the Malayan merchants. Ten of the original settlers remain, and these came first to Batavia and Bali in junks, whence they arrived at Fort Marlborough, and settled as retail traders in the bazar. Soon after the arrival of the Commissioner, a contract was entered into with the Captain of a Portuguese ship to invite and transport to the settlement as many handicraftsmen and others as his vessel could accommodate, for whom he was to receive a suitable freight payable by the Government on their arrival. Upwards of three hundred accordingly arrived from Macao, many of whom were employed by the Company as artificers, and others by individuals as cultivators of the soil, on paying the amount of their passage-money to the Government, and giving them adequate wages. Numbers fell victims to the course of their probation; others, labouring under the pressure of want and disappointment, emigrated to other countries; and out of a party of nineteen that had reached Moosee in progress to Palembang, with the view of bettering their fortunes, eighteen were cut off by the natives, under the expectation of acquiring booty, and only one returned to tell the tale. Of this importation only about fifty now remain.

The Chinese not engaged in commerce, are employed as carpenters, gardeners, bricklayers, blacksmiths, shoemakers, bakers, barbers, painters, glaziers, fishermen, and day labourers. A few have recently embarked in spice planting and mixed cultivation, and from their knowledge of manures and habitual industry, bid fair to become successful.

They are governed by a captain and lieutenant, who sit on the bench, and have a voice with the chiefs of the country in the administration of justice. These settle all trifling disputes among them, which are not of sufficient importance for cognizance by the Pangeran's court. From their gross manner of living, they are subject to severe attacks of disease, to the violence of which they frequently fall victims. They intermarry with each other, and are very expensive in their marriage festivals. They celebrate their new year with a good deal of shew and pomp, and deprecate the wrath of the evil demon by an annual sacrifice of a hog and a goat, under the idea that he has the power of clouding all their future prospects. In every house there is the representation of a tutelar saint, on each side of which they burn candles of red wax every evening, and a little benjamin. The Chinese temple is called Topaiking, in which are placed one large and four smaller images, carved out of wood and gilt. Of these, the largest sits in the middle of two of the smaller images, and the other two are placed in front. This they light up twice a month, at change and full of the moon, and burn benjamin, the incense called garoo, and sandal-wood. They have no regular priests, but the charge of the Topaiking is committed to eleven of the most respectable men among them, elected annually. The expenses of this establishment are defrayed by voluntary contributions, and the surplus is lent out to individuals on usurious interest. All oaths are administered at the Topaiking, and the ceremony observed on this occasion is the decapitation of a fowl.

Mendicity is very rare amongst them. Their women are prolific, but of late years the population has decreased in consequence of emigration to more favoured spots, owing to the want of employment and depressed state of trade.

The *Free Bengalees* are either runaway lascars from ships, or persons who have arrived from India in the capacity of servants, or convicts who have served out their allotted time. By far the greatest proportion consists of Mussulmans. Here however they relax considerably in the religious observances required by their respective persuasions.

They are industrious, and some of them have amassed a little property, and live comfortably. Many of them are employed as domestic servants. Some of them follow the occupations of bricklayers, carpenters, washermen, tailors, and butchers. Others keep buffaloes and carts, which they employ in transporting baggage, materials for building, firewood and charcoal from the country, &c. A few are employed in the spice plantations. One of them, who at one time held an ostensible employ under the Government, is the proprietor of a very thriving spice plantation. They intermarry with women of their own cast, and also with the natives of the country, by whom they get families: but many of them have recently returned to Bengal, or emigrated to other countries.

The *Neas* inhabitants came originally from Pulo Neas as slaves, and such as are free have been emancipated from time to time by their masters for their good conduct. About forty years ago upwards of fifty of them were imported by Diong Moodah, thirty-five of whom he manumitted at his death; and these were the first free Neas people in the place.

They are very expert in carpentry and house-building, and most of them earn their livelihood in this way. They are fair in their complexions, and a stout, well made, good looking set of people, though small in stature.

Many of their women are handsome, and they are generally prolific, so that population is on the increase with them. Licentiousness and dissipation are not among their vices, and murders among them are very rare. They are not addicted to gambling or smoking opium. Many of them are employed as domestics, and they are in general passionate in their dispositions, though not vindictive, as has been imputed to them. They are dexterous in cupping, which the operator performs by making several scarifications on the spot fixed upon for the operation, with a small knife, so as to draw blood, and upon this he places the large aperture of the horn of a buffaloe, and exhausts the air by suction with his mouth applied to the smaller opening. A spot of ground is allotted for their accommodation in the vicinity of the Settlement, and they are placed under the immediate superintendance of a chief, called Pungooloo, who adjusts all trivial disputes among them, and has a seat on the bench. They have no religion, but universally cut the foreskin at the age of eight or ten years, and most of those that have been born in Sumatra embrace Mahomedanism. Their ceremony of giving evidence on oath is accompanied by the discharge of a musket. They are industrious, but poor, being entirely dependent for their subsistence on their daily labour and their stock of hogs, which they rear for their own use as well as for sale. They also plant yams, arum esculentum, and other edible vegetables. Their houses are well constructed, and considerably elevated from the ground; and the walls, instead of being perpendicular, are made to slant outwards, from the bottom upwards, in which respect they differ from the common architecture of the country. They marry by semando, and the antaran for a virgin is from fifty to a hundred dollars, and for a widow twenty-five dollars. The marriage by joojoor is not known among them. They are on the whole a healthy race of men, and many of them attain a respectable old age. Some of their customs bear a close affinity to those of the rude condition of uncivilized life. When a person is taken seriously ill, the Dukoon, or medical attendant, beats the gong with great vehemence from the top of the house, invoking the sun by day, and the moon by night, for their favourable interposition with the good spirit in behalf of the patient. This ceremony occupies from one to seven days, during which time no one in the house is permitted to eat salt or pepper, and the members of the family encircle their necks with wreaths of cocoanut leaves, and offer up sacrifices of fowls and hogs. Their language is very guttural and harsh, but not of difficult acquisition. Many words of it resemble those of similar import in the language of the Battas and Lampoons, and it would appear that they have one and the same origin.

The first importation of *Bengal convicts* took place in 1797, consisting of about one hundred persons, since which period several additions have been made to them from time to time. They are employed on the public roads, spice plantations, salt-works, and wharf, and in the capacity of syces and grass-cutters, and of coolies and compounders at the hospital and dis-

penury; a few of them are handicraftsmen. Occasionally they commit depredations on the more peaceful inhabitants, and require a vigilant superintendence. They have made frequent attempts to escape from the Settlement, in some of which they have been successful; and it is said that there are several of these runaways now at Palembang. On two occasions they have been apprehended and brought back by the country people, on consideration of receiving a remuneration. The monthly sum of three hundred rupees has been recently appropriated for the encouragement of deserving convicts, and a promised melioration of their condition in the event of good conduct has also been held out to them; which, with the punishment that has been awarded to some recovered runaways, will, it is to be hoped, prevent desertion in future. Some stimulus appeared evidently to be wanting, to induce a greater degree of willingness and exertion in the execution of their duties. They are well lodged and clothed; receive one rupee per mensem, and a liberal allowance of rice, salt, tobacco, and ghee, or a compensation in money for it; but it is very common with them to sell a great portion of their rice, and to live on the remainder, and by their wits, in the best way they can. The gourdans generally receive one dollar per mensem as fixed pay, and some of them more. They are industrious and active enough in their own private pursuits, and many of them have amassed small sums of money by keeping cows and retailing milk, and by lending money on usurious interest. They frequently intermarry with the natives of the place, or with Coffree women, but have few children. Several have been invalided, and receive a pension from the Company. There are several parties among them that are constantly aiming at outwitting each other, and on these occasions they spare no pains to effect their purpose; so that their declarations are to be received with the greatest possible circumspection. They frequently return to their native country after their period of transportation, often much richer than they came, whilst others prefer remaining on the Island. It would be very desirable if their lines could be surrounded with a secure pallisade, or a broad deep ditch with a drawbridge thrown across it, so as to prevent them from proceeding on their predatory excursions at night.

The *Coffrees* came originally from Africa and Madagascar, upwards of sixty years ago, but not above forty-five of the original importation now remain. They were imported by the Company as slaves, and were all emancipated by the Hon. the Lieutenant-Governor shortly after his arrival in 1818. Many of the women who have children to provide for, prefer working for the Company on the same terms as during their slavery, to the precarious employment of private individuals. The race has degenerated much, from intermixture with the natives, but the descendants of the original importation are tall and very athletic, and retain all the muscularity and strength of their sires.

They worship idols of wood or stone, but those who have been born and bred on the Island affect to be Mahomedans. A few of them have slaves of their own, and raise hogs for sale, and cultivate vegetables; but they are generally very poor, and naturally lazy, improvident, and headstrong; so much so, that it is with difficulty they can find employment with private individuals. They hardly seem sensible of the benefits of emancipation, and are much given to intoxication; indeed they teach their children from their early infancy to imbibe spirits. They are on the whole a bad race of people, and practise all the vices of their own country, in addition to those of the Malays. The secret administration of poisons is very common with them, and many of them have fallen victims to this practice. Their women are prolific, but two-thirds of their children die in early infancy, from neglect and want of care, on which account population with them is much on the decrease. During the conspiracy of Raja Mooda, in 1780, they were embodied into a militia corps, and were of some service. They are placed under a Datu, who attends at the court-house on days allotted for business, but has no seat on the bench.

The *Malayan* population is mixed, consisting of Buggueses, Javanese, Atchenese, and settlers from the interior of Padang and Menangkabaw and their descendants, who are a race altogether distinct from the people in the interior or aborigines of the country. Four Datus were originally placed over these tribes,

named Datu Permadkau, Datu Agamplaman, Datu Sumpei Melalo, and Datu Bundar Supulu; the jurisdiction of the latter extended from Ayer aji South, to Padang North, with the interior including Menangkabaw, and the tega-blas cotto: hence is derived the origin of the four present Datus of Bencoolen. The increase and ramification of the population, however, gave rise of necessity to the election of one Datu to each bazar, but these being of modern date are not regarded with the same respect as the Datus of Bencoolen. The arrival of the family of the Diongs forms an important epoch in the history of the Coast, but the exact date of that event cannot now be traced. It appears that in consequence of a family quarrel, Diong Maroopa, a Bugguese chieftain, and the great grandfather of the present Diong, abandoned his country, and embarked with his family and retinue, consisting of seventy persons, in a prow, with the view of settling at Bencoolen; but having met with tempestuous weather, was driven past the port, and wrecked on Indrapore Point, where he landed, and met with a cordial reception from the Sultan, to whom he was of great use in reducing his refractory subjects to obedience. The same spirit of insubordination prevailed at Bencoolen, the inhabitants of which were without control or government, in consequence of incessant disagreements and jealousies among the chiefs, who, hearing that the English were at Bantam, invited them to form a Settlement at Bencoolen. It appearing that the chiefs of the country had little control or sway over their subjects; and the extent and result of the services of Diong Maroopah at Indrapura having reached Bencoolen, he was accordingly invited to settle there, with the consent of the Pangerans of Soongye Lamowe and Sillebar; but being disinclined to accept of the invitation, he deputed his son Diong Mabeelah, famed for his prowess and valorous deeds, to proceed thither. Upon his arrival, he had a participation with the chiefs in the management of the country; but being without followers, he dispatched letters to his native country, inviting such of his countrymen to join him as were willing to follow his fortunes; in consequence of which, one hundred and twelve Bugguesses arrived at Bencoolen, who were embodied into a military corps, of which the Diong was created Captain. This laid the foundation of the present power and consequence of the Diong's family. Diong Mabeela was succeeded, on his death, by his son Diong Maculeh, an oppressive, cruel and tyrannical prince; and on his demise, his son Diong Maroopah was raised to the dignity, who in his turn transmitted the family honours to the present Diong Mabeelah, a chieftain of great consequence among the natives, and the head of all foreigners and strangers in the place. Diong Mabeelah the first, formed a matrimonial alliance with the family of Raja Brahim, and his son Diong Maculeh married the eldest daughter of the Pangeran Mumco, Raja of Soongye Lamowe, on which connection the family of the Diongs found their claim to the Pangeranship. The natives from the interior of Padang, or Orang Darat, are by far the most numerous part of the population. They are chiefly merchants settled in the bazars, who after amassing a little money, return to their own country to spend it, and are succeeded by other adventurers. It is calculated that a considerable part of the current coin of the place finds an exit by this channel. Others intermarry with the natives, and become naturalized. The people in the bazars are retail dealers, goldsmiths, carpenters, blacksmiths, coolies, fishermen, and sailors belonging to native boats. A few are employed in the domestic establishments of Europeans. As carpenters they are much inferior to the Neas people. They may be styled easy in their circumstances; for although very few of them are rich, still fewer are in absolute penury, probably from their wants being few. There is hardly a trait in their character that can awaken sentiments of respect or admiration. They are passionately addicted to cock-fighting and opium smoking; are cowardly, but desperate under the influence of provocation; proud, mean, corrupt, treacherous, deceitful, and prone to lying; filthy in their persons, devoid of honesty, obsequious to those in power, but insolent to their inferiors; tenacious of their old institutions, suspicious of strangers, and very vindictive even on the slightest pretexts. They are moreover indolent and lazy, greatly averse to hard manual labour, such as cultivating the soil, and skilful in the preparation of

poisons, which give to the victims of their malice a sudden or lingering death.

The Pangeran's court, in which Diong Mabeelah and the Datus of the bazars have seats, dispenses the local laws and institutions; but they have, besides, the undang laut, literally maritime law, which is applicable chiefly to foreigners, though now greatly in disuse. They marry by semundo; the antaran varies according to the rank and circumstances of the parties, from fifty to twenty dollars: widows are generally to be had on cheaper terms, but the lowest price is ten dollars. They have also what is termed semundo bair ootang, by which the man becomes answerable for the then existing debts of the woman. Separation is claimable by him from the woman or her relations, provided he has discharged it, subject however to a deduction of ten dollars for the use of her person. If he has not cleared off her debts, his responsibility on that score ceases with the act of separation. By the semundo marriage, the man becomes a member of the family of the woman, who are responsible for his acts. Divorces are very frequent, and are obtained without difficulty. Polygamy is tolerated, provided the number of wives does not exceed four; but on taking a second wife, the husband must pay a sum called pemaduan to his first wife, which is equal to the antaran, and is regulated thereby. The girls may marry at the age of twelve, and the lads at that of fourteen or fifteen. The women, where there are no slaves in the family, work in the sawahs, and perform all domestic drudgery: they rarely have above five or six children, and seldom succeed in rearing more than half of these. They cease bearing about the age of forty-five or fifty. Infecundity is stated to be of frequent occurrence among them, though this may perhaps more properly be ascribed to the males. Concubinage is common where the circumstances of the man admit of it; it is reckoned no disgrace, and the progeny by such connection is on an equal footing with that by marriage. They seldom attain a greater age than sixty or seventy years, and in some seasons the number of deaths exceeds that of births. There has been little increase or decrease of population during the last five years. Until lately the natives had no exports, but now they annually export to the northward and Pulo Pinang, a small quantity of cloves and nutmegs in the shell, both of them being the produce of the plantations in the vicinity. It is this want of an export which enhances the prices of all commodities from the West of India, because the vessels bringing them must necessarily return empty. The imports consist chiefly of cloths, rice and salt, by the Bugguese and Bali traders, in return for which they take opium, English printed cottons, some particular descriptions of Bengal and Madras piece-goods, iron, steel, and dollars. From Batavia are imported salendangs, handkerchiefs, tobacco, sugar, and a variety of other articles. From Bengal, opium, taffaties, coarse cloths, chintzes and white cloths. From the Coast of Coromandel, salt, and blue and white piece-goods and chintzes. From Europe, iron, steel, aurora cloth, beads, brass, wire, cutlery, and printed cottons; and from the Northern Ports on the Coast, gambier, salt fish, oil, salted eggs, poultry, salted fish-roes, timber and planks. There is little or no intercourse with Bombay, and the inland trade is so limited and precarious, that it is not worth mentioning. Chinese commodities generally reach the Settlement through the channel of Batavia. The Eastern trade has fallen off greatly: formerly about forty or fifty Eastern prows used to visit this port for the purposes of trade, but they do not now exceed one-third of that number.

The Malayan population universally profess Mahomedanism, with a mixture of their own ancient rites and institutions, but are not so bigotted as the Muselmans of the Continent of India. They read the Koran in the Arabic character, but very few of them understand its tenets. Their priests are a crafty, designing and insidious race, who live on the vitals of the community, and have the generic appellation of mallims. They consist of two imaums or chief priests, four khatibs, four bilals, puckehs and hadjies. Of these, the former marry, bury, and engage in the work of proselytism. They hold their offices during the pleasure of the people, from which they may be removed on the proof of just and reasonable grounds of objection, and the khatibs and bilals are eligible to the performance of their duties. The puckehs are the literati of the country, and occasionally assist the priesthood in

the discharge of their functions. The badjies are such as have performed the pilgrimage to Mecca, and affect much sanctity of character. The priests are all of the same sect of Mahomedans, and are maintained by alms and voluntary donations, on occasions of marriages and burials. They also receive certain advantages from the produce of the land and other sources: thus one-tenth of the produce of the paddy is given to them, provided the quantity exceeds sixty baskets; one buffaloe or goat out of a head of forty; and from the more timid and superstitious part of the community, they receive one soocoo in every ten dollars. They are required scrupulously to observe the regular periods set apart for prayer, which are five during the twenty-four hours; and of these, three happen in the night watches.

On Sumatra *Slaves* form the chief part of the riches of the wealthy families; and however inconsonant with the true principles of Christianity and universal philanthropy, or questionable in its right, this degraded state of humanity may appear to the moralist, it is one of those necessary evils which local circumstances have rendered it expedient to tolerate, under certain restrictions, whilst the nature of the country Government has its present form and essence. Here good free servants cannot be hired; their wages are very exorbitant, and they seldom continue longer than a few months in the same employ, by which time they have saved as much money as will enable them to live at their ease, and without working for some time. They generally take their departure without even giving warning, and at the very time they have begun to become useful in a family. From their great aversion to hard manual labour, too, the free natives will not engage with planters in the cultivation of the soil, if they can earn a living in any other way. Hence the best and most extensive spice plantations have been, and continue to be, cultivated almost entirely by slaves, and but for this species of labour, Sumatra would not now have to boast of one-fourth of the present extent of that cultivation. Those who have Europeans, or their descendants for their masters, are much better off than the lower orders of the free people; for they are well fed, clothed, housed, have an allowance of pocket money, are moderately worked, and corrected only when faulty, and then with lenity. Instances no doubt do sometimes occur in native families, where they are harshly and cruelly treated, and have hard work and a scanty allowance of food: but, to the credit of the men, this severity usually proceeds from the mistress of the family; on the whole, their condition is comfortable, and they are generally kindly treated by their native masters, with whom they participate in all their comforts, and are treated as a part of the family, except in families of the first rank, where a line of distinction becomes necessary. Their evidence is not taken in court in any case. A master cannot chastise his slave beyond the bounds of moderation; he may beat him with a rattan, but is not allowed to tie him up to be punished. In cases of an exercise of undue severity truly proven, or of the master refusing to clothe and diet his slave sufficiently, the Pangeran's court will interfere, and sanction an exchange of masters, if the slave should wish it; and if a master should kill his slave, the same judgment would be awarded him as if he had killed a free man. Thus they are protected by the laws of the land, and can sue in court. The natives often send out their slaves to work as labourers, in which case they generally receive one-half the profits of their labour, and the slaves the other half. In this way many of them accumulate property, which they are by indulgence suffered to enjoy, but at their death it goes to their master. The majority of slaves consists of Neas people; some of them are also Ooloo or country people, Chinese, and natives of Bali. Formerly they were imported from the islands to the northward, particularly Pulo Neas, and also from the eastward by the Bugguese adventurers. It is stated that from three hundred to one thousand slaves are annually exported from Bali, to prevent the evil effects of a redundant population; and the Chinese generally give the preference to these people, from their superior strength and capability of performing hard labour, though they are considered to be vindictive. The trade in slaves was, however, abolished at the English Settlements on this Coast many years ago, and the prohibition against the importation of them

has since been rigidly enforced. To this act the Pangeran's court gave their sanction indirectly, as from a stretch of Asiatic politeness, they almost universally give their seeming assent to all propositions made by the Government for the welfare of the country, whether they intend to give their co-operation or not.

Next to slaves, *Mengheering debtors* constitute an essential part of the property of the natives. This is only a modification of slavery, and indeed the chief differences between them are, that a mengheering debtor can always liberate himself by paying off his debt, and cannot be punished by his creditor. He does not forfeit his personal rights and privileges, any further than by devoting the whole of his labour to his creditor, no portion of which goes to the liquidation of his debt; however, with Europeans, it frequently happens that a certain value is put upon his labour, and a part of it, called ansuran, set off against the debt by monthly instalments. The evidence of a mengheering debtor is not received for or against his creditor, and if he fail in payment of his debt, after receiving three formal notices to that effect, he is liable to pass into slavery.

During the administration of the Commissioner, a very humane regulation was passed in court, restricting a mengheering debtor from enthralling his progeny, which has had a very salutary effect. The above observations relative to the general conduct of masters to their slaves will also apply to the case of mengheering debtors.

From these hastily framed outlines of the distinctive manners and customs of the various nations included in our census, it will readily appear, that although much has been effected within the last two years for this portion of Sumatra, a great deal still remains to be done. With the exception of the Chinese, free Bengalees, and Neas inhabitants, there is very little industry among the people, and that little is chiefly to be found among the trading classes. The operations of commerce are better suited to their dispositions than those of agriculture, partly from the less degree of bodily exertion attending the former, but especially from the creating and fostering a spirit of commercial enterprize in former years, to the prejudice of husbandry.

It is to be hoped, however, that the spirit of industry is merely dormant, not extinct, and that the measures now in progress by you, Honourable Sir, for the general improvement of the country and melioration of the state of society, will revive it with an energy proportionate to its collapse.

Among these, ranks pre-eminent the general cultivation of rice, as tending to direct a bias in favour of agricultural pursuits, in a way best adapted to the genius of the population; and, next to it, we may place the institution of a native school, under your patronage and auspices, the success attending which has outstripped our most sanguine expectations, and incontestibly demonstrates, that the youth of these districts possess the germ of genius, which requires only to be duly cultured, for the development of its latent capabilities.

From what has been stated of the low scale of national industry, it would be in vain to look for wealth among the natives; with few exceptions, they are very indigent: yet few, if any of them, are in a state of abject poverty, in consequence of their having few necessities or wants to supply, and the general exercise of hospitality among them.

We should greatly exceed the limits we have assigned to ourselves, were we to plunge into the mazy labyrinth of philosophical discussion on the state of society, as applicable to these people, or to analyse the tests proposed by the most intelligent historians for defining the state of civilisation of the various nations of the globe. It is by their progress in agriculture, and the culture of the peaceful arts that adorn and civilise society, that nations emerge from rudeness to refinement. A striking contrast in this latter principle is observable between the inhabitants of the Sea-coast and the aborigines of the interior, deducible no doubt from the intercourse of the former with Europeans and foreigners of various descriptions; and we presume that we do not err widely in ranking them in the same scale with the natives of Abyssinia.

In conclusion, one ulterior object is wanted to enhance the happiness and prosperity of the people, and that is, the introduction of an efficient system of Judicature. Whilst the laws are dispensed by

men stigmatised with venality and corruption, fettered by deadly superstition or deeply-rivetted prejudices, our prospective speculations of melioration will be fleeting and nugatory. Should however the native dynasty cease to exercise this prerogative, and the dispensation of the laws be vested in the British administration, we may speedily look forward to a rapid and progressive amendment in the condition of the country, and in the moral and political character of its population.

We have the honour to be,
Honourable Sir,
Your most obedient Servants,
W. R. JENNINGS,
J. LUMSDAINE,
E. PRESGRAVE.

Fort Marlborough, Sept. 11, 1820.

BIOGRAPHICAL MEMOIR OF LIEUTENANT-COLONEL GEORGE HICKSON FAGAN.

THE subject of this Memoir, soon after his arrival in India in 1798, tendered his services as a volunteer to the Coromandel Coast, and served during the whole of the Mysore war of 1799, in command of a grenadier company. At the close of that memorable war, he lost his left arm in endeavouring to render a voluntary personal service, which procured him at the moment the honourable notice, and subsequently the substantial favour of the Governor-General, Marquis Wellesley, in his appointment as Assistant Secretary to the Military Board in 1802, till which time he continued to do duty with his corps. In that situation his services were highly approved. In every beneficial arrangement connected with the equipment, the supply, the subsistence, the movement, and the general efficiency of the army, he participated much more than his ostensible situation required, and received more than once the written acknowledgments of the public officers, who bore the largest and most responsible share in those arrangements, as well as in the laborious revision of the whole of the Military Establishments under this Presidency, which took place during Lord Wellesley's administration. In June 1806, the additional situation of Secretary to the Board of Superintendance for improving the breed of cavalry horses, was conferred on him; and in this situation, though the abolition of that establishment had been determined on by Sir G. Barlow, soon after he became Governor-General, Capt. Fagan was the means of preserving it to the public, by the information he afforded, and the views he gave of that Institution, and of the advantages that were, and the still greater ones that might be derived from it.

Both the preceding situations he continued to fill until March 1808, when General Hewett, the Commander-in-chief, and President of the Military Board, unsolicited, and unexpectedly on the part of Capt. Fagan, appointed him Deputy Adjutant-General of the Bengal Army, with the official rank of Major, and the same time acting Adjutant-General during the absence of Col. Worsley at the Cape of Good Hope. This high situation, conferred on him at the early age of twenty-nine, he continued to fill till 1809, when, in consequence of Col. Worsley's return to his duty, he was fixed as deputy Adjutant-General with the Field Army, commanded by the late Major-General St. Leger. He continued attached to it till December 1811, when, on the demise of the then Adjutant-General Col. Ball, he was appointed to succeed that officer with the official rank of Lieut. Colonel, although but a captain in his corps. This appointment was confirmed by the Hon. Court of Directors, in consideration (as they expressly stated) of Capt. Fagan's great merits, his having lost an arm on service, and officiated before in the same high situation; but they prescribed it as a rule, that no officer should in future be made either Adjutant-General or Quarter Master General who was not a Major, either in his regiment, or through the operation of his Majesty's brevet.

On the occasion of promulgating this regulation of the Hon. Court's to the Army, the Government issued the following General Orders (dated September 3, 1814), expressive of their satisfaction at the exception thus made by the Hon. Court in favour of Lieut. Colonel Fagan:

"His Excellency the Hon. the Vice-President in Council most cordially par-