

THE
LONDON ENCYCLOPÆDIA,
OR
UNIVERSAL DICTIONARY
OF
SCIENCE, ART, LITERATURE, AND PRACTICAL MECHANICS,
COMPRISING A
POPULAR VIEW OF THE PRESENT STATE OF KNOWLEDGE.

ILLUSTRATED BY
NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS, A GENERAL ATLAS,
AND APPROPRIATE DIAGRAMS.

Sic oportet ad librum, presertim miscellanei generis, legendum accedere lectorem, ut solet ad convivium conviva civilis. Convivator annititur omnibus satisfacere; et tamen si quid apponitur, quod hujus aut illius palato non respondeat, et hic et ille urbane dissimulant, et alia fercula probant, ne quid contristent convivatorem. *Erasmus.*

A reader should sit down to a book, especially of the miscellaneous kind, as a well-behaved visitor does to a banquet. The master of the feast exerts himself to satisfy his guests; but if, after all his care and pains, something should appear on the table that does not suit this or that person's taste, they politely pass it over without notice, and commend other dishes, that they may not distress a kind host. *Translation.*

BY THE ORIGINAL EDITOR OF THE ENCYCLOPÆDIA METROPOLITANA,
ASSISTED BY EMINENT PROFESSIONAL AND OTHER GENTLEMEN.

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1829.

MALACCA, or MALAYA, a considerable country of India, beyond the Ganges, south-east of Siam, is 200 leagues long and forty in its greatest breadth. Its absolute limits are not, however, strictly defined; the narrow tract that separates the bay of Bengal from the gulf of Siam, called the isthmus of Kraw, is its connecting point in that country. The interior is occupied by mountains, covered with impenetrable forests, and apparently almost uninhabited; the highest summit is that named Mount Ophir, south-east of Malacca. These mountains contain tin mines, and give rise to numerous rivers, most of which are navigable by small vessels, and some of them for vessels of burden. The coasts seem to be divided into seven petty sovereignties, of which Queda, Pera, Salangore, are on the west; Johore at the east extremity; and Pahang, Tringano, and Patany on the east. The first place on the west coast is Bangri in 9° ; it has a considerable native trade, but is seldom visited by Europeans.

Queda, or Qualla Batrang, one of the chief trading places of the peninsula, is in 6° N. Its river's mouth is crossed by a mud bank with twelve feet water at spring tides, but vessels of 300 tons can ascend it. The banks of the river are swampy, and covered with jungle towards its mouth. Seven miles up it is a brick fort and village, named Allestar, the residence of the rajah. It contains about 300 houses, inhabited by Chinese, Malays, and Chulias. Chinese are indeed found established in almost all the principal Malay towns. Its trade has greatly declined since the establishment of Prince of Wales's Island. Provisions, particularly bullocks and poultry, with fruit and vegetables, are abundant here.

Qualla Moorba, six leagues south of Queda, is a large, deep, and rapid river, with a great

sand-bank before it; it descends from mountains abounding in tin. Pry River succeeds, and has a Malay town at its entrance, which, together with a district eighteen miles up the river, and three miles in breadth, was ceded in 1800 by the rajah of Queda to the East India Company, and is dependent on Prince of Wales's Island.

MALACCA, the chief town of the peninsula, is situated on the small river Crysorant, which can only be entered by the Malay proas. The fort or citadel of St. Paul, built by the Portuguese, is on an elevation on the left bank of the river, and contains all the government buildings, and a garrison of 500 troops. The town on the opposite side of the river (which is crossed by a bridge of several arches) is surrounded by entrenchments, to protect it from the Malays: it contains about 100 Europeans, 250 half caste, 5000 Chinese, 6000 Malays, and 600 Chulias. The road is entirely open, and large ships are obliged to anchor three miles from the town, from the shoalness of the water closer in. The country a little way inland is hilly; and to the east of the town rises the lofty mountain of Ledang, also called Queen's Mountain, and Ophir. The land near the shore is low, and thickly covered with wood, which it might be supposed would render the town unhealthy; on the contrary, however, it is one of the most healthy places of India, in no part of which are there more instances of longevity. Malacca was formerly a great trading place for tin, but which is now carried to Prince of Wales's Island. It is, however, an excellent place for ships to touch at, provisions being in great abundance, and fruits in an unparalleled profusion and variety. Amongst them is the delicious mangustine, of which this seems to be the western limit.

Johore River is near the extremity of the Malay peninsula; it is of considerable size, with two channels in, formed by the large island of Singapore. The town where the rajah resides is twenty miles up the river, and is a considerable Malay native trading place, but seldom visited by Europeans.

Point Romania, Ojong Tanah of the Malays, is the south-east point of the peninsula, and is a low point with a hummock, named Mount Barbucet, west of it. Off it is a cluster of rocky islets, and on the west side of the point is Romania River, with but two or three feet at its narrow entrance at low water.

Point Romania is also the east limit of the strait of Singapore, which forms the communication between the strait of Malacca and the China Sea. This extremity of the peninsula is uninhabited and covered with wood, the retreat of wild elephants, buffaloes, deer, hogs, monkeys, peacocks, &c. The rivers are full of alligators and guanas, and the rocks covered with oysters. In the middle of the strait of Singapore is Pedro Branco, or the White Rock, named from its being whitened by the dung of sea birds. It is surrounded by sunken rocks.

Malacca has a partial dependence upon Siam. Formerly the Siamese monarchy had its supremacy owned by the whole peninsula; but, since it sunk under the power of the Burmans, all the southern part has shaken off the yoke. The

Malays are well known, and widely diffused throughout all the east. They are said, however, not to have been natives of this country, originally, but to have come from the district of Palembang in Sumatra, on the banks of the river Malaya, and thence to have founded the city of Malacca in 1252. The supreme internal power resides in a rajah, who assumes the title of sultan, and who has under him a number of dattoos or nobles, but the whole system is of a very precarious and particular character. The people are the terror of Asia as pirates. In the pursuit of plunder or conquest, they show themselves daring, vindictive, and insatiable; merciless to enemies and strangers, and capricious to their friends and associates. That which can be construed into an insult drives them to fury; and has often impelled them to deeds of frenzy, known by the name of running amok, peculiar to themselves. He who has resolved upon this, begins by taking a dose of opium, till he is half intoxicated; he then throws loose his long black hair, draws his kris, and rushes into the streets, crying 'kill, kill,' and in fact kills every one that encounters him in his career. But under the British government this practice has generally disappeared. Some writers indeed wholly attribute it to the oppressions of their former conquerors, and assert that the Malays possess higher sentiments of honor, greater fidelity to their word, and upon the whole a more estimable character than the natives of India. 'They are even mild and courteous in their domestic deportment, and, to masters who treat them well, make faithful and attached domestics. Piracy is the irregular habit which is most deeply rooted in their nature; to it their ideas attach no disgrace; on the contrary its successful prosecution is considered as glorious.'

Their language is distinguished for its smoothness and softness, and appears to have a basis of Sanscrit, with a tincture of Arabic. It has become, like the French in Europe, a sort of current dialect over all the sea coasts, and in all mercantile societies of the east.

Besides the Malays, who inhabit the coasts, the peninsula in its interior tracts, maintains another race, conceived to have been its original inhabitants, who seem to be a variety of the Papuas or oriental negroes. They have the woolly hair, jet black skin, thick lip, and flat nose, of the African, and are called by the Malays Samangs. Those established in the lower districts, plant a little rice, and exchange the resin, bees' wax, and honey of their forests for clothes and food. The Samaugs of the mountains, on the contrary, are said to be complete savages, who have no fixed abodes. They subsist entirely by hunting and plunder. Malacca also contains colonies from several of the neighbouring countries and islands.