

THE  
**ASIATIC JOURNAL**

AND

**MONTHLY REGISTER**

FOR

**British India and its Dependencies :**

CONTAINING

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Review of New Publications.

Debates at the East-India House.

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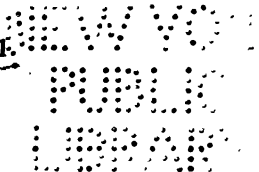
India Exchanges and Company's Secu-  
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Daily Prices of Stocks, &c. &c. &c.



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## REVIEW OF BOOKS.

*Malayan Miscellanies*. Vol. I. Printed and published at the Sumatran Mission Press. Bencoolen: 1820.

HAVING just received a copy of the first volume of the "Malayan Miscellanies," published at Bencoolen, under the patronage of the Hon. Sir T. S. Raffles (of which a very small number has hitherto arrived in this country), we lose no time in furnishing our readers with a notice of the truly valuable matter contained in it.

The following is the table of contents:

- No. 1. Descriptions of Malayan Plants, by William Jack, No. 1.
2. Notes on Bali.
3. Annals of Achin, translated from the original MS.
4. Short Account of the Battas.
5. Descriptions of Malayan Plants, by W. Jack, No. 2.
6. Annotations and Remarks, with a view to illustrate the probable origin of the Dayaks, the Malays, &c.
7. Short Account of the Islands of Timor, Rotti, Savu, Solor, &c.
8. Sketch of Borneo, or Pulo Kalamantin, by J. Hunt.
9. Notices on Zoological subjects, by Messrs. Diard and Devaucel.
10. Some particulars relative to Sulo in the Archipelago of Felicia, by J. Hunt.
11. Proceedings of the Native School Institution.
12. Meteorological Table, extracted from a Register kept at Bencoolen during the years 1818 and 1819.
13. Poem in the Malay Language, descriptive of the journey of the Lieut. Governor to Menangcabow in 1818.

Our readers will perceive that we have already enriched the miscellaneous department of our journal with a portion of the sixth article: this we shall complete in our next number; and shall afterwards follow it up, from time to time, with such other selections as are likely to afford the most general interest. On the present occasion,

therefore, we shall not discuss the merits of the several papers contained in the volume, either separately or collectively, but content ourselves with making a few general observations, which the perusal of this interesting work has suggested to our minds.

Upwards of two centuries have now elapsed since our countrymen first obtained a footing amongst the nations of the east; and it is worthy of observation, that although the Indian Archipelago naturally attracted their first regard, as the richest storehouse for commercial enterprise, the British colonies, which are now existing in that interesting portion of the world, are comparatively in their infancy. The arduous and protracted struggle we were forced to maintain with our rivals the French, upon the continent of India, diverted our attention, during a considerable portion of the last century, from every object of inferior moment. In the mean while the Dutch consolidated their power, and succeeded in excluding us almost entirely from participating in the trade of the Eastern Islands.

The Dutch therefore had now become the sole patrons of every thing relating to general improvement, and historical and scientific research; consequently, the information we possess respecting countries the most exuberant in natural productions, and the most inviting to the views of the philosopher, is lamentably scanty. We believe that we may affirm, with the strictest justice, that, previously to the last few years, nearly the whole of our intelligence respecting the Eastern Islands was to be found in the journals of early navigators. The genius of Sir William Jones, in a degree, indeed, could pierce the mist, and speculate, on some points, from the most imperfect data,

with an accuracy which is truly astonishing: but, to speak in general terms, the short-sighted policy of our neighbours imposed a bar against all inquiry; and where civilization was gradually advancing, invariably adopted measures which could not fail of depressing to the utmost the natural elasticity of human exertion.

We appeal to every candid reader whether the British can be accused of having adopted, at any period of their history, a system of monopoly so rigidly exclusive as that which will be found explained in the following articles, which we have copied from treaties concluded by the Dutch at different periods with the Native powers.

Extract of a Treaty concluded in 1667, between the Dutch Admiral Cornelis Speelman and the King of Maccassar.

Art. 7. A free-trade in Celebes, and principally in the kingdom of Maccassar, shall be secured solely to the Hon. Dutch Company, excluding therefrom every foreign European nation, and all Asiatic or other nations, be they Moors, Javanese, Malays, Aichins, Siams, or others, without exception; and the said Hon. Company shall alone bring and import here, for market or sale, any clothes, merchandize, or ware from Coromandel, Surat, Persia, Bengal, and China. Should there be at any time any of the above articles introduced in transgression to this, all such merchandize, so imported, shall be confiscated to the profit of the Hon. Dutch Company, and the transgressors be moreover punished according to circumstances. The common sort of Javanese cloth is, however, not comprehended in the exclusion.

Art. 9. The High Maccassar Government, and their subjects, shall not hereafter navigate to any foreign ports, except to those of Balie, Java, Jacatra, Bantam, Gambi, Palimbang, Johor, and Borneo; for which purpose it is at the same time stipulated, that they shall be bound, whenever they intend to navigate to any of the above ports, to take out a pass from the residing Dutch Commandant; and that all and every one who shall be found at sea, or at any of the above ports, or elsewhere, without being provided with such a pass, shall be considered as enemies of the Hon. Dutch Company, and shall be captured, and their ships confiscated. The same High Powers, or their subjects, shall send no vessels to Beema, Salor, or Timor, &c., nor to the east points of Lassem, in Celebes, being the east side of the strait of Salyer. The same prohibition extends with regard to the north and east side of Borneo, along the coast of Celebes towards Minado, or

the islands thereabout; and the transgressors of this prohibition shall forfeit their lives and goods, according to circumstances.

Extract of a Treaty between the Dutch Government of Fort Rotterdam, at Maccassar, and the King of Goa, concluded on the 16th October 1781.

Art. 8. That they (the subjects of the King of Goa) shall not trade, correspond, or enter into alliance with any nation, either European or indigenous, without the previous knowledge and consent of the Hon. Company.

Such being the system which controlled for ages the energies of millions, can it be thought extraordinary that towns should have gone to decay, that cultivation should have generally ceased, and every thing gradually tended to its original state of barbarism? Had these lamentable changes been brought about by inundations of Huns or Tartars, the reflection would have been less distressing: but civilized Europe is alone responsible for the evils we here deplore.

One of the most valuable articles in the first volume of the "Malayan Miscellanies," is the "Sketch of Borneo," communicated by J. Hunt, Esq. Amongst the numerous melancholy pictures which it lays before us, there is one so exceedingly apposite to our present purpose that we shall present it at full length.

When the Portuguese first visited Borneo in 1520, the whole island was in a most flourishing state. The numbers of Chinese that had settled on her shores were immense; the products of their industry, and an extensive commerce with China in junka, gave her land and cities a far different aspect from their dreary appearance at this day; and their princes and courts exhibited a splendor, and displayed a magnificence long since vanished.

Pigofetta says, there were twenty-five thousand houses in the city of Borneo proper, and that it was rich and populous. Much later accounts describe the numbers of Chinese and Japanese junka frequenting her ports as great; but in 1809 there were not three thousand houses in the whole city, nor six thousand Chinese throughout that kingdom, and not a junk that had visited it for years. But the ports of Borneo have not dwindled away more than Acheen, Johore, Malacca, Bantam, Ternate, &c. All these places likewise cut a splendid figure in the eyes of our first navigators, and have since equally shared a proportionate obscurity.

Were the causes required which have eclipsed the prosperity of Borneo, and the other great emporiums of eastern trade that once existed, it might be readily answered, a decay of commerce. They have suffered the same vicissitudes as Tyre, Sidon, or Alexandria; and like Carthage, for ages the emporium of the wealth and commerce of the world, which now exhibits on its scite a piratical race of descendants in the modern Tunisians, and their neighbours the Algerines; the commercial ports of Borneo have become a nest of banditti, and the original inhabitants of both, from similar causes, the decay of commerce, have degenerated to the modern pirates of the present day.

In exact proportion as the intercourse of the Europeans with China has increased, in precise ratio has the decrease of their direct trade in junks become apparent. The Portuguese first, and subsequently the Dutch, mistress of the eastern seas, exacted by treaties and otherways the Malay produce at their own rates, and were consequently enabled to undersell the junks in China. But these powers went further: by settling at ports on Borneo, or by their *guardas de costas*, they compelled the ports of Borneo to send their produce, calculated for the China market, to Malacca and Batavia, which at length completely cut up the direct trade, by means of the Chinese junks.

The loss of their direct intercourse with China affected their prosperity in a variety of ways. First, by this circuitous direction of their trade, the gruff goods; as rattans, sago, cassia, pepper, ebony, wax, &c., became too expensive to fetch the value of this double carriage and the attendant charges, and in course of time were neglected: the loss of these extensive branches of industry must have thrown numbers out of employment. But the loss of the direct intercourse with China had more fatal effects: it prevented large bodies of annual emigrants from China settling upon her shores; it deprived them of an opportunity of visiting the Bornean ports, and exercising their mechanical arts and productive industry, and thus keeping up the prosperity of the country in the tillage of the ground, as well as in the commerce of her ports. The old Chinese settlers by degrees deserted these shores, and to fill up the chasms in their revenues by so fatal a change, the Rajahs have been tempted to turn their views to predatory habits, and have permitted their lands to run to jungle, by dragging their wretched labourers from rustic employments to maritime and piratical enterprises.

These piracies are carried on to an extent that will scarcely be credited by persons who are not well-informed respecting occurrences in this quarter. That British vessels should be con-

tinually attacked, and occasionally captured by the crews of Malay prows, appears, on the first view, so utterly inconsistent with the acknowledged fact of our naval pre-eminence, that a reference to facts, and an appeal to authority, become requisite. The following extract from the essay we have just quoted will be read with interest.

The principal piratical ports that still exist, besides those of Lingin, Rhio, and Billiton, are: first, Pangeran Annam at Sambas; 2d, Port Borneo proper, and four hundred prows at Tampasuk, both under the Rajah of Borneo proper; 3d, the Pasir pirates; 4th, the Sulo pirates; 5th, the Illinois pirates on the Isle of Magindanao. I shall, from memory, cite such few of their depredations as I recollect.

"In 1774," says Forrest, "the British were expelled from their infant settlement of Balambangan, by an insurrection of the Sulos, who, finding the garrison weak and sickly, unprepared and off their guard, murdered and plundered them, and set fire to their settlement: this was in return for having released their Sultan from prison, and re-established him on the musnud of his ancestors. In 1800, Capt. Pavin and a boat's crew were cruelly murdered in the palace of the Sultan of Sulo, whilst the commander was drinking a cup of chocolate; they fired upon the ship *Ruby*, but did not succeed in capturing her. In 1810, they plundered the wreck of the ship *Harrier* of a valuable cargo: several of her crew are still in slavery at Bagayan Sulo. In 1788, the ship *May*, of Calcutta, 450 tons burden, Capt. Dixon, was cut off at Borneo proper: they were invited up to the town with the ship, and whilst at dinner, the Sultan and his people fell upon them, and murdered Capt. Dixon, three officers, and ten Europeans; the lascars were retained in slavery, the valuable cargo plundered, and the ship burnt. In 1803, the ship *Susanna*, of Calcutta, Capt. Drysdale, was cut off near Pontiana by the Sambas and Borneo pirates: the Europeans were all massacred, and the vessel taken. In 1769, Capt. Sadler, with his boat's crew, was murdered by the Sambas pirates off *Monpava*, having a prodigious quantity of gold-dust: they did not succeed in cutting off the ship. In 1806, Mr. Hopkins and crew, of the *Commerce*, were murdered by the pirates of Borneo Proper: the ship was plundered by them, and the *Sambas* pirates. In 1810, Capt. Ross was cut off. In 1811, Capt. Graves was cut off by the *Pasir* pirates, with a rich cargo. In 1812, the enormities of Pangeran Annam have

out-herded Herod: these are too recent to require recapitulation. Independent of his depredations on the Coromandel, the Portuguese ship, &c., nine Europeans of the Hecate have been seized and made slaves: two have been since murdered, two have escaped, and five are ham-strung and otherwise maimed. Mrs. Ross and her son are still in slavery there.

The Tampasuk pirates, belonging to the Rajah of Borneo Proper, aiding and abetting Pangeran Annam against the English, are Datu Akop, Datu Aragut, and Datu Jumbarang, with ten large men of war prows: there is also there the Rajah Endut, a Siak chief.

Since the period of 1812 (the date of this essay), numerous have been the accounts of depredations upon British shipping; and only a few months ago, intelligence was received of the port of Prince of Wales' Island being so closely watched that no small vessel could leave it with safety. The native traders must doubtless be greatly checked by the general prevalence of this piratical system; but it is worthy of remark, that, notwithstanding its baneful influence, the new settlement of Singapore appears to have become an emporium, in the course of a very few years, to Chinese, Malays, Arabs, Siamese, &c. &c. We trust, therefore, that a new stimulus is at length given to human energy in the Eastern Archipelago; that knowledge, both human and divine, will henceforth be rapidly communicated; and that myriads of wretched outcasts will shortly be made conscious of the general objects for which they were created, and be led to recognize, in the noblest sense of the expression, the highest destinies of man.

The essay from which we have so amply quoted, was written at a period, in the course of the late war, when the British authority had superseded the Dutch in the Indian Archipelago; and the writer, in the true spirit of a Briton, occasionally breaks forth into a strain of eloquent enthusiasm on the happy results he consequently anticipates. Since that time, the colonies in these quarters have again reverted to the Dutch. We confess that we have no particular predilection for the

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Government of Batavia: their anxiety to dispossess us of the island of Singapore occasioned us no surprise; it was likewise of a piece with their ordinary policy, that an application was made to the British Government for the recall of Sir T. S. Raffles. It is, however, but justice to admit, that they are more liberal in their general views than they were formerly; and we likewise entertain a hope that they will ultimately entirely discard that grinding and oppressive system, which has degraded to the rank of savage brutes multitudes of human beings, who equally with ourselves possess aspiring minds, and souls of immortal mould.

In his government of Fort Marlborough, Sir T. S. Raffles is exerting his utmost efforts to encourage agriculture and promote colonization. In the former, he has already succeeded to a great extent. His progress in the latter must necessarily be more gradual; but we feel assured that the two objects will shortly act and react upon each other. The Chinese are the most active agents throughout the Eastern Islands; like the Jews, they are always to be found wherever there is any opening for prosperity. It has been the fashion, in former periods, to reward their industrious habits by a general massacre; but the times for such enormities, we trust, are gone for ever. The commencement of a brighter day, even now, is making glad these darkened realms; the isles which are farthest off are beholding the dawn of truth; and we trust that the era is not far distant, when every corner will become enlightened, and hearts, which are at present dead, even to the ties of mutual interest, will be quickened by the breath of social life, and the glow of Christian love.

We are credibly informed, that the second volume of the "Malayan Miscellanies" promises to be most valuable; and that it will contain, amongst other articles of considerable interest, an account of several tours or journeys into the interior of Sumatra.