

THE  
**ASIATIC JOURNAL**

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FOR  
**British India and its Dependencies :**

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tra was still in possession of the Sultan.

—*Rumbay Paper.*

Every day discovers something new to corroborate the assertion that this island once possessed a large and varied population. In the soil on which the town stands foundations of former buildings are constantly dug up, and on the hill at the back of the town are many remains of religious edifices; a new road is in progress round the hill, which affords a pleasant drive and some delightful scenery. The inhabitants already amount to 5,000, half of whom are Chinese or other descendants, chiefly from Bintang and Rhio. Many Bugees prows are now lying here; and if a large commercial house were established, Penang and Malacca would soon dwindle into insignificance; a large depot is however already formed for Malay produce, such as tins, rattans, beetlenut, pepper, &c. which can be purchased far cheaper than at Penang or Malacca.

Major Farquhar has a bungalow erected on a small island, near which ships pass on their usual route through the straits; and here we again repeat is the best site in the world for a European colony, and where it could be established with the least possible expense to the mother country.—*Madras Govt. Gaz. Jan. 27.*

It is said, that in digging under the walls of the very ancient fort of Singapore, the engineer has discovered several brass Chinese coins. The legend on one of these, and on only one, is extremely perfect, or at least sufficiently so as to make out that it is about 700 years old.—*Penang Gaz.*

## MALACCA.

### BIRTH.

Nov. 16.—The lady of the Rev. W. H. Medhurst, missionary, of a daughter.

## SUMATRA.

### BENCOOLEN.

#### Political—Official.

The supreme govt. in Bengal has ordered a local corps to be raised for Bencoolen.—See page 86.

#### Unofficial.

The custom duties at Fort Marlborough have been abolished; and a moderate port duty sufficient to meet the expenses of pilotage and other branches relating to shipping, is now levied, in lieu of all other charges of the port of Bencoolen heretofore exacted. It is stated, also, that an application has been made to Bengal that the import duties hitherto levied at Fort Marlborough indiscriminately may be removed, as far

as the produce of that coast may be affected. The pepper monopoly has likewise been done away; and it is said to be intended to improve the establishment at Tappanooly, so as to make it a general resort of the traders to the northward.—*Madras Govt. Gaz. Nov. 11.*

### DEATHS.

In August last, at Saloomah, a dependancy on Fort Marlborough, Mr. Frederick Garling, of the Bencoolen Civil Service (formerly of Penang). He was precipitated from his buggy in consequence of a part of the harness having broken, which rendered the horse unmanageable; and he survived the accident only a few hours. This was the gentleman who was employed by the local government at Bencoolen to proceed on the mission for the rescue of the crew of the Union from the island of Engano.

### ACHEEN.

The accounts from Acheen, where the Union put in for wood and water, do not prove favourable. The king was encamped at the mouth of the river, himself and followers in a most wretched sickly state. The epidemic still continued with much violence on the coast, and the daily average of its victims is computed at about sixty; but it is stated that in the interior the number is far greater.—*Penang, Jun. 15.*

### PADANG.

The Dutch having commenced their monopoly of salt, had become rigorous in preventing its manufacture, except for their own purposes, and in the course of their proceedings had destroyed the salt pans of the natives at Priaman and Toogacotta. The Malays at the latter place became highly incensed, and wished to engage the others to co-operate with them in attacking the Dutch. Fear, perhaps, restrained the people of Priaman from joining in open hostilities, and on their refusal the people of Toogacotta turned part of their anger against them, and burned their village. On this the Dutch sent a force of 300 men, European and native troops, to Toogacotta, about 55 miles from Padang, and ravaged the place and neighbourhood, destroying every thing in their way, even to the very trees, and slaughtering about 400 of the natives. At first a stout resistance was made against the invaders, from the 20th to 26th November; but after a fort, in which the natives placed great dependence, had fallen, and a cannon shot had taken off their chief, they ceased to resist with any vigour, and quickly dispersed themselves in the neighbouring woods.—*Bengal Hurk. Jan. 29.*

## PALEMBANG.

## Unofficial.

*Relations of the Dutch with the Sultan.*—The first two of the following notices are derived from the Penang Gazette, of the dates specified.

*Penang, Dec. 25.*—Affairs at Palembang have assumed a serious aspect.—Formerly the Dutch had a fort and factory there, but no territory; the original object of the establishment, as is stated, being only to procure tin; but a participation was afterwards obtained, it seems, in the customs and trade of the port, to the great loss and annoyance of the Sultan. Such was the feeling towards the Dutch, that no sooner was Java taken, than the Sultan had all of that nation residing at the place barbarously murdered. An expedition was in consequence fitted out from Java under the lamented Gillespie; the Sultan fled to the interior, was deposed, and his brother raised to the throne—a military force remaining at Palembang after the expedition quitted it. In consequence, as is stated, of some unauthorised negotiations by an officer on the spot, the old Sultan came from the interior in 1814, and was replaced on the throne, he agreeing to pay the sum of 200,000 dollars. This arrangement was highly disapproved of by the English government of Batavia, and the money ordered to be refunded, if already received. The old Sultan was allowed to return quietly to the interior, and his brother was reinstated. Such was the state of Palembang when Java was restored to the king of the Netherlands. It is said to have been the anxious wish of both Sultans, that the Dutch should not again obtain a footing at Palembang—they however resumed their influence there; and important occurrences have since taken place—the Sultan placed on the throne by the English government of Java, has been deposed, and hurried off to Batavia as a prisoner, and the old Sultan reinstated. The resumption of the throne appears to have been attended with considerable expense, as the Sultan is stated to have no part of his treasure left, and to be burthened with a heavy debt to the Dutch. The demand for payment of this debt was attempted to be enforced; the people, highly exasperated, rallied round their sovereign, and drove the Dutch to their ships—sacrificing to their vengeance all the followers who were left on shore. The expedition which has been prepared at Batavia is said to consist of 1500 men. Meantime the Sultan, as appears from Bencoolen, has not been idle; every preparation is stated to have been made to receive the Dutch. Great consternation had for some time prevailed among the

people of Palembang, in consequence of a report, industriously circulated, that the English were to take an active part against them; their minds however have been set at ease upon this point, and they feel very confident of success.—The Sultan, who was hurried off to Batavia, is said to be with the expedition.

Accounts have reached the presidency of the failure of the expedition, with an immense loss on the part of the Dutch. The Sultan's people behaved with the most determined courage, repelling their assailants at all points, and making a dreadful slaughter, while immense rafts of timber on fire were floated down upon the shipping with destructive effect.

*Penang, Jan. 1.*—By the Dauntless we have received accounts on which we can depend, that the expedition fitted out from Batavia on a grand scale for the reduction of Palembang had arrived in the river, and made an attack on the batteries and defences of the Sultan on the 21st Oct. last, but had been beaten off with an immense loss; our information states of 1,000 Europeans. We have in our possession a plan of the attack. The following is a list of the Dutch vessels employed:

Line of battle ship, *Wilhelmina*; frigate, *Arinus Marinus*; corvettes, *Ajar*, *Betsey*, *Prince Blucher*, *Waterbrak*, *Eudrughot*; brig, *Irene*; schooner, *Emma*; two gun-boats; five prows and junks with howitzers. The force which the Malays had to oppose to these consisted of three strong batteries on the banks of the river and one on the island of *Gombera*, one large floating battery, and one ship battery; strong piles were driven across the main stream; several immense rafts of timber on fire were also floated down the smaller channel upon the shipping with destructive effect.

We are also informed that some disturbance having taken place on the island of *Banca*, the Dutch resident who went out to quell them had been made prisoner by the insurgents, who afterwards cut off his head, and sent it in a basket as a present to the Sultan of Palembang.

Resistance had also been made against the Dutch authority at *Rhio*, and when the *Dauntless* left *Mulacca*, it was supposed that they would be obliged to quit *Bintang* altogether.

The following particulars are taken from a *Calcutta* paper:

The island which stopped the progress of the invading force had been so skillfully fortified that the ablest of the Dutch officers were struck with astonishment when they approached it, and foresaw the failure that would attend their exertions. While the deepest channel on one side

was so thickly platted across with stakes as to prevent the passage of any vessel, the shallow channel on the other side was kept open for the purpose of allowing a descent to the floats covered with combustibles which were directed against the Dutch ships. The fire from the island on the assailants was tremendous, and such as no ship could have long withstood. It was remarked by the Dutch officers that the Malays were surprisingly cool, and that not a shot was uselessly expended. The consequence was that the Dutch ships were completely riddled, and the soldiers, who were indeed full of spirit and eager to engage the enemy, were killed in great numbers between decks without being at all able to land. One hundred and eighty shot went through the *Wilhelmina*, eighty of them abaft the mizen mast.

The Dutch are aware that the resistance of the Malays at Palembang has been organised and guided by some Europeans, who have deserted from their own service, the chief person being a Frenchman who served with great credit as an engineer under Buona-parte, and subsequently embarked for Batavia as a non-commissioned officer in one of the Dutch regiments. Having only gone to Java in quest of adventure, he took an early opportunity of deserting, and has thus turned his abilities against his former employers. Another French officer is mentioned as being similarly circumstanced at Palembang.

The Dutch admiral on his return compared the island by which they had been repulsed to a second Gibraltar. Before the *Auspicious* left Banca, the Dutch ship of war *Galatea*, from Batavia, had relieved the *Wilhelmina*, in which the Admiral and Mr. Muntinghe were to proceed to Batavia, as a court of inquiry was to be held upon their conduct.—*Bengal Hurkuru*.

*Ditch Account.*—The following is an abstract of the report published in the *Batavia Courant* of the 13th and 20th of November.—On arriving at the Palembang river the expedition met with obstacles which could not be removed without the greatest difficulty; and, therefore, the admiral thought it advisable to delay the operations till next season, and proceeded to station the expedition at the mouth of the Soensang. This purpose he effected on the 4th of November.

The bar of the Palembang river was found impassable, excepting at the period of the spring tides. On the 20th of October all the ships passed the narrows of Sala Nama, and appeared before Gombora, where the enemy had collected his force. The sultan had formed batteries on both sides of the river; they were composed of trees, well secured together, and of a considerable height. In addition

to these formidable defences large piles had been driven across the river, so that no vessel could possibly pass between them. The Dutch ships, however, opened a cannonade on the 21st at noon, at the distance of half a musket shot, and continued firing until four o'clock, when a breeze springing up they were compelled to fall back; and the admiral, seeing no prospect of success from a renewal of the conflict, withdrew to the Soensang.

The ships of war will remain to blockade the river, and the troops that can be spared are to be conveyed back to Java for refreshment. The frigate *Wilhelmina* and the *Endragt* have received great damage in their hulls and rigging from the cannonading of the enemy. The loss in men is not considerable.

#### CHINA.

CANTON.—BRITISH FACTORY.—*Civil Service.*—Oct. 28.—Sir T. Metcalfe has taken his passage home in the *Lowther Castle*, and is succeeded by Mr. Urmston.

*Attempted innovation in the mode of selling Tea.*—Letters from Canton, dated the 14th January, state that there had been some delay in lading the ships of the season, in consequence of the merchants who bring the tea down to Canton wishing to sell by sample only, without landing the article in bulk at Canton. The select committee, however, refused to purchase except upon the old terms; and being unanimous, the tea-merchants, after holding out two months, were compelled to give up the point, and the ships would receive their cargoes and be dispatched as fast as they were ready.

#### RELATIONS WITH THE EX-ANGLO AMERICANS.

*Canton, Nov. 27.*—The first American frigate (the *Congress*) that has visited China is now lying in the mouth of the river. The Chinese, who are averse to every thing that is new, have been making many objections to the entry of the *Congress*. They have at last, very reluctantly, permitted her to purchase provisions here, but she is ordered to sail immediately afterwards. But the intention of the American is, when fully supplied, to claim the same privileges which are allowed to a British frigate.

Extract of another letter, dated 20th Dec. 1819.

“The *Congress* frigate is here, and her arrival has excited the fears of the Chinese, who constantly keep armed vessels to watch her. They have more than once ordered Capt. Henley to depart; he, however, did not think proper to obey, and they do not possess sufficient power to enforce the mandate, and all intercourse with the natives is prohibited; the only method of obtaining provision