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JUEX DAMNATUR CUM NOCENS ABSOLVITUR.  
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interests of humanity;—and are too sincerely happy in the reflection, that they may not have been unavailing, to leave such considerations out of view. We belong not to the number of those, who can feel no indignation at injustice, unless committed by our enemies;—nor pity for public misfortunes, unless suffered by Africans, or Spainards. But the interests of the Polish people are, however important, only a subordinate part of the present question. The restoration of European independence, is the object of every Statesman's anxious hopes;—the revival of sound and consistent principle alone, can effect it;—and this cannot be thought possible, by any reflecting mind, without the complete reestablishment of Poland as an independent State.

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ART. IV. *Exposé Statistique du Tunkin, de la Cochinchine, du Camboge, du Tsiampa, du Laoo, du Lac-Tho.* Par M. M—N. Sur la relation de M. de la Bissachere, Missionnaire dans le Tunkin. 2 tom. 8vo. Londres, 1811.

*Tracts, Political, Geographical, and Commercial, in the Dominions of Ava, and the North-western parts of Hindostan.* By WILLIAM FRANCKLIN, Major in the service of the Hon. East India Company; and author of a Tour to Persia, the History of Shah Aulum, and the Memoirs of George Thomas, &c. 8vo. London, 1811.

*The History of Sumatra, containing an Account of the Government, Laws, Customs, and Manners of the Native Inhabitants: With a Description of the Natural Productions, and a Relation of the ancient Political State of that Island.* By WILLIAM MARSDEN, F. R. S. The Third Edition; with Corrections, Additions, and Plates. 4to. London, 1811.

THE knowledge which we have hitherto attained respecting the nations who inhabit the Eastern Peninsula of India, is very imperfect. But the subject is in itself so interesting, and has become so important, in its relations to our commercial interests in the East, that it seems necessary to present a general outline of those countries, and of the habits and dispositions, and arts and policy, of the several tribes by which they are possessed. This is the more necessary, as the notices which we have respecting them are scattered through so great a multitude of volumes, that even in well informed circles, few are found who

pretend to much acquaintance with the subject; and of those who do make such pretensions, the notions are obscure and contradictory. To say the truth, we find no small difficulty in extracting a plain, intelligible, and consistent account, from the narrations of travellers into those regions. The greater part, unfortunately, have been ambitious of the character of philosophers and historians, rather than of the merit of recording plainly what fell under their own observation. They have attempted to delineate the general state and condition of the people; unconscious, as it would seem, of the extreme difficulty of reading the human character, or painting the manners of nations. And, while their views are often false, because they are drawn from an observation too much confined to show them the whole extent of the subject, one finds in their writings prejudices and antipathies which distort the truth. Much time and patience, with some critical skill, are required to ascertain the value of each report, to confront, to compare, to reconcile, to retain the genuine account and reject that which is not satisfactorily proved.

We have brought together, and placed at the head of this article, the titles of the most recent publications on this subject, and shall endeavour to state, as clearly as possible, the result of the scattered notices which we have been able to collect.

The inhabitants of what is called the Peninsula beyond the Ganges, or of the region which extends from the Bay of Bengal to China, and the Chinese sea, may be distinguished into three divisions; those who possess the Eastern part, those who possess the Western, and those who hold the Southern extremity. The people who inhabit the eastern part show a great affinity with the Chinese, whom in point of locality they approach: The people on the western side, agree in many important particulars with the Hindus: And the southern extremity is possessed by the Malays, who are pretty strongly distinguished from both races. Of the books which we have announced, that on Tonquin, and the countries connected with it, relates to the people on the eastern, or Chinese side; the Tracts concerning Ava to those on the western; and the work of Marsden furnishes the best information we have on the subject of the Malays: Of the Tracts of Francklin, a considerable portion relates to the people in the north-western parts of Hindustan; and of the History of Sumatra, the most considerable portion, of course, belongs exclusively to that island. It is no farther, however, than as they afford information on the subject of the Eastern Peninsula, that they are here to be understood as falling under our consideration.

set to ourselves on the present occasion. On the Malays, the only part of our subject which yet remains, a minute elucidation will not be required. Neither the territory which they occupy, nor the commodities which they produce, nor the qualities which they display, render them of much importance as a nation of the peninsula, with which alone our attention is at present engaged. The best information, also, which we possess of this people, is contained in our own language,—and in a book which, having reached a third edition, may be supposed to have left few of our readers unacquainted with the little that we know of the Malays.

They inhabit that part of the southern extremity of the eastern peninsula, which lies opposite to the island of Sumatra. From that island, it seems, the peninsula first received them. There is something remarkable, and as yet totally unexplained in their history. They are found possessing the coasts of a great proportion of the eastern islands.—But from what country they originally sprung, or to what causes their dispersion is to be ascribed, remains among the secrets of Oriental history.

They appear to us to be inferior in civilization to the other nations of the peninsula; and, except in the arts of navigation, to which their situation particularly called them, they are behind in every useful acquirement.

Their government seems to be one of the rudest to which that name can well be applied. Its authority is far from complete; and to a certain extent, and that not very inconsiderable, the people may be considered as living without government. The king is little more obeyed by the chiefs, and the chiefs by the people, than according to their good-will. Violent acts of immediate power are committed, both by the king and the chiefs. But there is no regular system of obedience. The reason which Mr Marsden assigns, is quite sufficient;—that the poverty of the king and the chiefs, is inadequate to the maintenance of a military force, by which the authority of either can be regularly maintained.

Agriculture is in the lowest state of the art. The plough, which is little more than a piece of wood drawn by a buffalo, is very partially used; the hoe sufficing in many places, and the burning of the standing trees in others, to prepare the soil for the seed.

The art which is celebrated as having been carried to the greatest perfection among the Malays, is that of their gold and silver filagree. It is the minuteness of the parts, and the delicacy of finger required for the manipulation, for which this manufacture is justly admired; and Mr Marsden remarks the usual

rudeness of implement, and dexterity of use, which distinguish the arts of an uncultivated people. They manufacture silk and cotton cloths for their own consumption. 'Some of their work,' says Mr Marsden, 'is very fine, and the patterns prettily fancied.' But no branch of industry appears to be pursued among them to any considerable extent.

In literature, it would appear that the Malays have rather made a greater progress than in government and the arts. Their language is celebrated for its softness and melody. Its most numerous class of writers, of course, are the poets; but Dr Leyden seems not to hold them in great account. Historical narratives, he says, abound; 'occasionally,' he doubts not, 'embellished by fiction.' He also affirms, that 'the juridical customs, or traditions of the Malays, have been collected into codes.' And the most ancient of their legal regulations, he thinks, have been derived from the Javanese. 'Malayan literature,' says Mr Marsden, 'consists chiefly of transcripts and versions of the Koran; commentaries on the Mussulman law; and historic tales, both in prose and verse, resembling in some respect our old romances. Many of these are original compositions; and others are translations of the popular tales current in Arabia, Persia, India, and the neighbouring island of Java.' The cultivation of the sciences they appear not to have begun. 'Tens of thousands are the highest class of numbers the Malay language has a name for.'

One of the most remarkable peculiarities in the description of the Malays is their religion. It is the Mussulman; derived immediately from connexion with the Arabs. It is sufficiently known, that during the thirteenth century, to which the conversion of the Malays is assigned, the Arabs were a maritime people, and conducted a trade of considerable extent with the islands and continents of the East. By what means they recommended their religion to the Malays is yet buried in obscurity. But they founded the city of Malacca about the year 1260; when it appears not that any thing deserving the name of a city was yet possessed by the Malays.

The introduction of the Mussulman religion was also the introduction of the Mussulman law, the Koran being the divine standard of both. As the Koran, however, is sufficiently vague, and still more so the laws or customary customs of the Malays, a worse amalgamation might easily be made. The Malays, too, embraced the religion of the prophet with a kind of laxity, retaining a large proportion of their ancient feelings and ideas; and it is not the purest and most rigid Mohamedism which they profess. Their laws, accordingly, are a mixture of their own

customs with the regulations which the Mohamedan doctors have pretended to draw from the sacred text. Of the form of their tribunals, or the modes of procedure, we have as yet received no information.

The moral character of the Malays is painted in the most unfavourable colours. 'They retain a strong share of pride, (says Mr Marsden), but not of that laudable kind which restrains men from the commission of mean and fraudulent actions. They possess much low cunning, and plausible duplicity, and know how to dissemble the strongest passions and most inveterate antipathy, till the opportunity of gratifying their resentment offers. Veracity, gratitude and integrity, are not to be found in the list of their virtues: and their minds are almost strangers to the sentiments of honour and infamy. They are jealous and vindictive. Their courage is desultory, the effect of a momentary enthusiasm, which enables them to perform deeds of incredible desperation; but they are strangers to steady magnanimity and cool resolution in battle. The Malay may be compared to the animals of his country, the buffalo and the tyger. In his domestic state, he is indolent, stubborn, and voluptuous as the former;—in his adventurous life, he is insidious, blood-thirsty, and rapacious as the latter.'

The Malays appear to inhabit coasts only. The interior of the country is mountainous, and covered with forests, in which a people roam, who as yet are altogether unknown. In point of climate, their country seems to resemble Sumatra. The temperature, though high, is equal and mild; but the prevalence of woods, and of moist exhalations, renders the situation unwholesome. The space which is occupied by the Malays is naturally fertile, and abounds with many of the finest of the vegetable productions. But it is cultivated to no advantage. The Arabians first, the Portuguese next, and lastly the Dutch, held the city of Malacca, but rather as a convenient station, than for the sake of any trade which they were able to carry on with the country.

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ART. V. *Quelques Détails sur le Général Moreau et ses derniers Moments, suivis d'une courte Notice Biographique.* Par PAUL DE SUININE, chargé de l'accompagner sur le Continent. pp. 144. Londres, Longman. 1814.

**T**HIS is indeed a meagre production upon such a subject. But, unsatisfactory as it is, the interest of that subject carries us through, and prevents us from being quite overcome by Mr Suinine's total incompetency to do it justice. Although,