

A
SYSTEM
OF
GEOGRAPHY,

ON A NEW AND EASY PLAN,

FROM THE LATEST AND BEST AUTHORITIES;

INCLUDING ALSO

THE ELEMENTS OF ASTRONOMY,

AN ACCOUNT OF THE SOLAR SYSTEM,

A VARIETY OF PROBLEMS TO BE SOLVED BY THE TERRESTRIAL
AND CELESTIAL GLOBES,

AND

A PRONOUNCING VOCABULARY,

IN THE FORM OF A GAZETTEER,

CONTAINING

ALL THE NAMES OF PLACES WHICH OCCUR IN THE WORK.

For the Use of Schools and Private Students.

BY THOMAS EWING,

*Author of Principles of Elocution, Rhetorical Exercises, the English Learner,
and a New General Atlas.*

SEVENTEENTH EDITION,

REVISED AND ENLARGED.



EDINBURGH:

OLIVER & BOYD, TWEEDDALE COURT.

LONDON: SIMPKIN, MARSHALL, & CO.,

MDCCCXLVIII.

[Price, bound and lettered, 4s. 6d. ; or with Nine Maps, 6s. 6d.]

THE Malay peninsula, forming the most southerly portion of continental Asia, is a long narrow tract of about 750 miles, with a varying breadth of from 60 to 170, and is traversed throughout its whole length by a chain of lofty mountains. The northern parts, as far as 5° N. lat., belong to the kingdom of Siam, and are chiefly inhabited by Siamese; but the southern portion, or Malaya Proper, inhabited by the Malays, is divided into a number of petty states. The inland mountains are inhabited by an aboriginal negro race, in the lowest state of barbarism.

The Portuguese are regarded as the discoverers of Malacca in 1509. The Dutch became masters of the town in 1640; in 1795, it was taken from them by the English, but restored at the peace of Amiens. It was finally ceded to the British government in 1824. In the island at the southern extremity of the peninsula, the British have founded the port of Singapore, which is rising into a flourishing settlement. They have another at Pulo Penang, or Prince of Wales' Island, on the W. coast.

The precise origin of the Malay race is unknown, though some have regarded them as of Mongolian descent. They are restless, fond of navigation, war, plunder, emigrations, desperate enterprises, and adventures. They are almost universally pirates, and their rapacious and remorseless disposition has rendered them the terror of the eastern seas. The religion is a corruption of Mahometanism. Their language is peculiarly soft, and is as common in the Indies as the French is in Europe, being very easily acquired, because it has no inflection either in nouns or verbs.

The inland part of the peninsula seems to remain full of extensive aboriginal forests. It affords few commodities for trade, except tin and elephants' teeth; but there are a great many excellent fruits and roots. The pine-apples are the best in the world; and the cocoa-nuts have shells that will hold an English quart. There is but little corn, and sheep and bullocks are scarce; but pork, poultry, and fish are very plentiful. Besides the tiger and elephant, the country produces bears, bisons, musk-deer, civet-cats, numerous monkeys, with crocodiles, alligators, and several kinds of formidable serpents.

To the N. W. of Malacca are the *Andaman* and *Nicobar Islands*. The Great Andaman is about 140 miles in length, by more than 20 in its greatest breadth, and is very fertile. The people perfectly resemble negroes, and are in a state of barbarism. A British settlement was formed here in 1783, and some convicts were sent to it from Bengal; but in 1796 it was abandoned. On Barren Isle is a violent volcano, which emits showers of red-hot stones; and the whole island has a singular and volcanic appearance.

The Nicobars are three; the largest being about five leagues in circumference. The traffic is in cocoa-nuts, of which a hundred are given for a yard of blue cloth.