SIR STAMFORD RAFFLES AND
THE SPICE ISLANDS.

THE continent of Asia, as may be observed on looking at a map, terminates on the south in three peninsulæ projected into the Indian Ocean — one being Arabia, the second Hindostan or India, and the third Siam; this last being longer and narrower than the others, and ending in a projection called Malaya, near the extremity of which is the settlement of Malacca. Carrying our eye across the Indian Ocean, we observe that off the southern point of Malaya there are numerous islands of larger and smaller dimensions; the sea for hundreds

of miles is studded with them, and group after group stretches across the ocean almost to the northern shores of Australia. As these islands lie in an easterly direction from India, they are

sometimes styled the *Eastern Archipelago*, and at other times the *Spice Islands*, because their chief produce, or at least articles of export, are pepper, cloves, nutmegs, ginger, and other spices. The principal of these fine islands are Sumatra, Java, Borneo, Celebes, Timor, and the Moluccas—the latter being more strictly called the Spice Islands by geographers; but all are equally entitled to be classed under this distinctive appellation. To the north of Borneo, in the Chinese Sea, lies an additional group of islands, the Philippines; but of these it is here unnecessary to speak.

Travellers who have visited the Spice Islands describe some of them as a kind of earthly paradise. Lying under the equinoctial line, their climate is excessively hot, but they are daily fanned by sea breezes, which temper their heated atmosphere; from their mountains flow streams of pure water; their valleys are green and picturesque; and the luxuriance of their vegetation is beyond anything that the natives of northern Europe can imagine. In their thick groves swarm parrots and other birds of the gayest plumage; monkeys of various species are seen skipping from rock to rock, or darting in and out among the bushes; and wild beasts and snakes live in their thickets and jungles. The native inhabitants, whose wants are easily supplied, spend the greater part of their time in the open air, cultivating their fields, or reclining under awnings, or beneath the more delicious shade of the nutmeg trees.

Inhabited chiefly by an aboriginal Malay race, some of the islands are still under the government of native chiefs or sultans; but most of them have been, in whole or part, appropriated by European powers. The Portuguese, being the first navigators who reached this part of the world by sailing round the Cape of Good Hope, acquired large possessions not only in India but in the Eastern Archipelago; but towards the end of the sixteenth century, the Dutch, animated by a vigorous spirit of commercial enterprise, dispossessed the Portuguese, and gained the ascendency in Java and other islands, finally reducing them to the condition of Dutch colonies—a change of masters which we shall immediately see brought no advantage to the unfortunate natives. The object of the Dutch in getting possession of these remote Asiatic islands was to procure spices, wherewith to supply the general market of Europe; and as this was long an exceedingly profitable trade, no pains were spared to keep the Spice Islands as a kind of preserve for the special benefit of Holland.

We have two reasons for introducing these islands and their history to our readers—the first is, to show how selfishness in trade, like selfishness in everything else, is weakness and loss, and how benevolence is power and gain; the second is, to point out, by way of example, how much may be done to remedy the greatest grievances, and produce national happiness, by the efforts of one enlightened and generously-disposed mind. In the

performance of this task, we shall have occasion to notice biographically one of the few great statesmen whom England has within the last half century had the good fortune to produce—Thomas Stamford Raffles.

JAVA.

For convenience we begin with an account of Java, one of the largest and finest of the Spice Islands. Java is separated from Borneo on the north by a channel called the Java Sea, and on the north-west from Sumatra by the Straits of Sunda. The island is upwards of 650 miles long, and from 60 to 130 miles broad; its whole area being about equal to that of England. Its surface is beautifully diversified with hill and valley; its soil is of the richest possible nature, and yields in abundance coffee, sugar, rice, pepper, nutmegs, and ginger.

Java appears to have been peopled by a branch of the Malay race about the commencement of the Christian era. From that period to the fifteenth century, the Javanese increased in consequence and opulence, and acquired a civilisation scarcely inferior to that of the Hindoos or the Chinese; evidences of which exist in the traditions of the natives, in their literature, and in numerous architectural remains scattered over the island. Mahommedanism latterly found its way into Java, and became mingled with the doctrines and ceremonies of Buddhism and Hindooism, which had hitherto been the religions of the people. The Portuguese settled in the island in 1511; the English also established themselves in it in 1602; but ultimately the Dutch dispossessed both, and became the only European power. They continued to enjoy this sway undisturbed till the year 1811, a period of two hundred years.

Any one who visited the island in 1811, would have found it generally in a more barbarous condition than it was five hundred years before. It was divided into three sections:—1. The Dutch possessions, properly so called, meaning that part in which the Dutch power was absolute; 2. The kingdom of the Susuhúnan, or hereditary Javanese emperor; and, 3. The territories of the Sultan, another native prince. The last two sections, however, were not really independent—they were subordinate or tributary to the Dutch. At this period the entire population amounted to about five millions, consisting of Dutch, Javanese, foreigners, and slaves.

The Dutch inhabited principally the provinces of Jacatra and Bantam in the west, and the northern line of coast as far as the small island of Madura. Here they had built numerous towns and villages, the two largest being the city of Batavia, the population of which at one time exceeded 160,000, and the city of Surabaya, with a population of about 80,000. Firmly fixed in their possessions, and supported by a military and naval force, the Dutch seem to have had but one object in view,

and that was to monopolise the whole trade, internal and external, of Java and that of the adjacent islands owning their authority. In Europe, no people had struggled so heroically for civil and religious liberty as the Dutch; in India, no people acted with greater selfishness and tyranny. Their whole policy was a violation of justice and decency. Determined to monopolise the whole East India trade, they were guilty of an immense amount of bloodshed in their efforts to eradicate every semblance of a colony in their neighbourhood belonging to any other nation, and likely therefore to deprive them of a share of the spice-trade. Not only so, but in order to derive a greater profit from the sale of the nutmegs and cloves which they exported from the Moluccas, they hired the natives to extirpate the plants in all the islands of the group except Banda and Amboyna, the two of whose permanent possession they were most secure. The same miserable and blighting spirit of monopoly presided over their government of Java. In a part of the Dutch section of the island, the province of Jacatra, in which the city of Batavia is situated, the Dutch authorities governed the population directly and immediately; in the rest of the section, namely, the province of Bantam and the line of territory along the northern coast to the Straits of Madura, they employed native Javanese chiefs as their subordinate governors, with various titles. In both, the system of government was nearly alike. In the Dutch portion, the people were compelled to sell the whole produce of their lands to government at a fixed price; in the other, the native regents of the various districts, besides paying a large tribute on their own account, were obliged to collect the whole produce of their districts, and hand it over as before to the authorities at a fixed price. Thus, over all the Dutch possessions in Java, the government had a monopoly of the produce, including the food of the population. Receiving the grain, the coffee, and the pepper from the growers at very low prices, they stored them up, and then sold them back again to the people themselves at an exceedingly high charge, reserving the surplus quantity for exportation. Thus, a person was obliged to sell to the government the pepper which he had produced at twopence a pound, and then to purchase back part of it for his own use at a shilling a pound. These arrangements were felt as a sore grievance by the poor cultivators of the soil, especially in those portions of the island which were nominally under a native regent; for there, in addition to the demands of the Dutch government, they had to submit to the exactions of a subordinate. The king of Bantam, for example, handed over every year to the Dutch government the produce of his province, amounting to nearly six millions of pounds of pepper, at twopence a pound; but instead of paying his subjects so much as twopence a pound for it, he paid them say only three-halfpence a pound, reserving the additional halfpenny to pay the cost of collection, and to constitute a revenue for

himself. A system of finance more confused, wasteful, and unenlightened, cannot be conceived; and a similar spirit of tyranny and monopoly characterised all the other branches of government procedure.

The native Javanese were spread all over the island, part of them, as has been said, inhabiting the Dutch territory, and living under the Dutch government, the rest inhabiting the comparatively independent territories ruled over by the two native sovereigns, the susuhúnan or emperor, and the sultan. These two sovereigns were not, like the king of Bantam, or the regents of other districts in the Dutch possessions, mere revenue officers of the Dutch; on the contrary, they enjoyed a despotic dignity within their own kingdoms, and the only formal token of their connexion with the Dutch was their consenting annually to sell to them a certain quantity of their produce at a fixed price. This distinction, however, did not produce any great difference in habits or character between the Javanese of the interior and the Javanese of the Dutch provinces, so that the same description will suit both. The Javanese are described as a people generally shorter in stature than the Europeans, but robust and well made, with a round face, high forehead, small dark eyes like those of the Tartars, prominent cheekbones, scarcely any beard, and lank black hair. The general expression of the countenance is placid and thoughtful; the complexion is rather of a yellow than of a copper hue, the standard of beauty in this respect being a gold colour. The Javanese are sagacious and docile, generally listless in their appearance, but susceptible of all kinds of impressions, and capable of being roused to the wildest displays of passion. They possess a literature consisting principally of native songs and romances, and translations from the Sanscrit and Arabic. The language is exceedingly simple in its structure, and remarkably rich in synonymous words; and the Javanese written character is said to be one of the most beautiful known. The natives have also a rude kind of drama; and they delight in games of chance. The only kind of manufacture for which the people are celebrated is working in gold. They show, however, considerable skill in ship-building, and in agriculture they are eminently proficient, every Javanese regarding the soil as the grand source of prosperity and wealth, not only to the province as a whole, but to himself individually.

Of foreign settlers in the island, there were, and continue to be, about 200,000, consisting of Hindoos, Arabs, and Chinese. The Chinese, forming the larger proportion, are an active money-making class, carrying on various profitable branches of trade, and often contriving to enrich themselves by renting and sub-letting land at greatly increased rates. They, however, do not settle permanently; after a residence of a few years, they return to their own country with the small fortunes they have acquired.

The remaining class of the population of Java is that of slaves, of whom, in 1811, there were about 30,000, the importation of these unfortunate beings having been at the rate of a few thousands annually. These slaves were brought from various islands in the great East Indian Archipelago, the greater number, however, from the small island of Poulo Nyas, on the coast of Sumatra, and the large island of Celebes, adjacent to Borneo. The slaves consist partly of debtors and criminals, surrendered by the laws of their respective islands, but in a far greater degree of persons who have been kidnapped and carried away. The Nyas slaves are highly valued throughout the East; and as many as 1500 used to be exported from that small island every year, a large proportion of whom were carried to Batavia. In this short voyage, it was calculated that one-fourth generally died; and in such dread do the natives of Nyas hold slavery, that instances are known in which, when a party of kidnappers had surrounded a house, the father, rather than surrender, has killed himself and his children. The most ingenious and industrious of the slaves in Java, however, are those from the island of Celebes, known by the name of Bugghese or Macassars. These Macassars are a brave and civilised race, the wreck of a people once nearly as powerful in the Archipelago as the Javanese. They have a literature of their own, and one of the amusements of the Batavian ladies is to hear their Macassar slaves recite their native ballads and romances. One of the occupations in which the Chinese employ their Macassar slaves, is in the collection of those Chinese dainties, the edible birds' nests, which are more abundant in Java than anywhere else.

We have thus presented a general sketch of Java and its condition previous to the year 1811, much, however, being applicable to the island in the present day: a new turn took place in its affairs in the above year; but before describing the changes which were effected, it will be necessary to say a few words respecting the person by whom they were suggested and carried into execution.

Thomas Stamford Raffles was born at sea, off the coast of Jamaica, on the 5th of July 1781. His father was a captain in the West India trade. Returning with his mother to England, he was placed in a boarding-school at Hammersmith, where he remained till he was fourteen years of age; and this was all the formal education he ever received. At the age of fourteen, this comparatively friendless youth entered the East India House in the capacity of an extra clerk; and shortly afterwards, by his zeal and good behaviour, obtained a permanent situation in this great establishment, so celebrated for having reared and employed in its service a vast number of men eminent for their abilities. While employed in the India House, Mr Raffles zealously devoted himself to the acquisition of various kinds of knowledge, which he afterwards turned to good account: in particular, it was at

this time that he first gave proofs of the facility with which he could learn different languages. In 1805 the court of directors resolved to found a new settlement at Penang, or Prince of Wales Island, off the coast of Malacca, conceiving that it would be an advantageous trading post; and at this time Mr Raffles's qualifications were so well known, that he was appointed assistant secretary to the establishment. During the voyage out, he acquired the Malay language so perfectly, as to be able to enter at once on the important duties of his office; and the chief secretary, Mr Pearson, falling ill, the entire labour of arranging the forms of the new government, as well as of compiling all public documents, devolved on him. Such an accumulation of work was too severe for his constitution; and in 1808 he was obliged to pay a visit to the Malacca mainland, for the purpose of recruiting his shattered health. It was during this visit to Malacca that Mr Raffles first enjoyed the opportunity of observing and joining with the varied population congregated from all parts of the Archipelago, and from the distant countries of Asia; from Java, Amboyna, Celebes, the Moluccas, Borneo, Papua, Cochin China, China Proper, &c. With many he conversed personally, with others through the medium of interpreters. To this early habit, which he always retained, of associating with the natives, and admitting them to intimate and social intercourse, may be attributed the extraordinary influence which he obtained over them, and the respect with which they always received his advice and opinions. It was at this period also that Mr Raffles formed an acquaintanceship with Mr Marsden and the enthusiastic and lamented Leyden; and in company with these two Orientalists, commenced his elaborate researches into the history, the laws, and the literature of the Hindoo and Malay races. We find him also displaying that zeal for the advancement of the natural sciences, especially zoology, for which he was all his life distinguished, and which has earned him a high rank among naturalists, as well as among statesmen and Oriental scholars.

Lord Minto, at the time governor-general of India, had conceived so favourable an opinion of Mr Raffles, that he became anxious to discover a field worthy of his abilities. On the occasion of a visit he made to Calcutta in 1809, his lordship spoke of the advantages to be derived from taking possession of the Moluccas, or smaller Spice Islands, whereupon Mr Raffles at once drew his attention to Java, as much preferable. The idea was instantly caught at by his lordship, and plans for its capture were forthwith devised.

The scheme hinted at by Mr Raffles marked the comprehensiveness of his character. It was to capture Java, and render it a British possession. Nor was such a project considered any violation of justice. In 1806 the French had overrun Holland, and in 1810 added it, as well as its chief foreign possessions, to the

empire of France. Java, therefore, was now no longer a Dutch but a French colony. As England was at war with France, it was considered by Lord Minto and Mr Raffles that there could not be a more splendid achievement than to wrest so fine an island from Napoleon, and add it to the British crown. Indeed the conquest of Java seemed a matter of necessity; for its possession would give the French almost the sovereignty of the Malayan Archipelago, and enable them materially to affect the prosperity of our eastern trade, and the stability of our eastern possessions. In short, the invasion of Java was resolved upon. But the enterprise was one not to be attempted rashly; in the meantime, therefore, the design was kept a profound secret, and Mr Raffles was despatched to prepare the way for the expedition, taking up his residence at Malacca with the title of "agent to the governor-general, with the Malay states."

Having, after much careful investigation, learned which would form the safest and most practicable route to Java, Mr Raffles communicated all proper information to Lord Minto, who immediately proceeded with a powerful naval force on the expedition. The fleet, consisting of upwards of ninety sail, left Malacca on the 18th of June 1811, and after a voyage of six weeks, anchored off Batavia. In the course of a month, the British troops effected the conquest of the island; and on the 16th of September Lord Minto issued a proclamation announcing the general features of its future government as a British territory. In his letter to the government in England, Lord Minto announced the capture of Java in the following terms:—"An empire which for two centuries has contributed greatly to the power, prosperity, and grandeur of one of the principal and most respected states in Europe, has been thus wrested from the short occupation of the French government, added to the dominion of the British crown, and converted from a seat of hostile machination and commercial competition, into an augmentation of British power and prosperity."

In thus annexing Java to our East Indian possessions, Lord Minto took a bolder step than the court of directors of the East India Company was disposed altogether to sanction at first. When he had announced to them his intention to attack Java, the scheme met their decided approbation; but instead of agreeing with Lord Minto in his desire to convert Java into a British possession, all that they meditated was the expulsion of the Dutch from the island, and its restoration to the native Javanese. This they thought would be sufficient; and to one not acquainted with the condition of the various islands in the Archipelago, their intention may appear very reasonable and philanthropic. But Lord Minto saw that the mere expulsion of the Dutch from the island would be unavailing unless some strong and benevolent power were to come after them, and take charge of a country which they had so wretchedly misgoverned. To leave

the Javanese to govern themselves, would be to throw back the island into hopeless war and confusion. Possessed of all those qualities which would constitute them good and obedient subjects, it was not to be expected that the Javanese, after submitting to Dutch rule for 200 years, could have preserved any notions of their own ancient government, much less that they could set up a new one. Accordingly, Lord Minto determined to annex the island to the British territory, and give it some experience of rational government. In so doing, he was incurring the responsibility of exceeding his instructions; but as Lady Raffles, in the biography of her husband, nobly says, "No man is fit for high station anywhere who is not prepared to risk even more than fame or fortune at the call of judgment and conscience."

Lord Minto immediately appointed Mr Raffles lieutenant-governor of Java and its dependencies; and after a stay of six weeks in the island, returned to Bengal, leaving the new governor to commence his arduous duties. The only event that could cast a shade of sorrow over the important occasion was the death of Dr Leyden, who had accompanied the expedition to Java, and who soon fell a victim to his thirst for knowledge.

"It would be endless," says Lady Raffles, "to notice the difficulties and obstacles which occurred in the establishment of a pure and upright administration in Java. Not only was the whole system previously pursued by the Dutch to be subverted, but an entire new one substituted, as pure and liberal as the old one was vicious and contracted; and this was to be accomplished and carried into effect by the very persons who had so long fattened on the vices of the former policy." Nor were the difficulties of Mr Raffles such only as resulted from the state of the island, the government of which he had undertaken. There was a disheartening circumstance, apart from the condition of the island itself, under which most men would have either refrained from doing anything, or at least acted listlessly and carelessly—the prospect of the British possession of Java being only of short continuance. Nevertheless, Mr Raffles determined that in the meanwhile nothing should prevent him from doing his duty, and he did it nobly.

Mr Raffles's first step was to cause to be prepared a complete body of statistics relating to all the affairs of the island; and obtaining this, he commenced his scheme of reform. His proposed alterations were of two kinds; first, a reform of the general spirit of the government; and, second, a reform of the actual institutions of the country, wherever it appeared necessary.

The general spirit of the Dutch government, as has been shown, was that of utter selfishness—it was the government of a band of robbers. Java was retained for the single purpose of yielding a revenue, without the slightest regard to the comfort or prosperity of the people. The guiding principle of the government introduced by Mr Raffles was diametrically opposite—it

was *the general good of the whole population.* In conformity with the proclamation of Lord Minto before his departure from the island, he exhorted the people "to consider their new connexion with England as founded on the principles of mutual advantage, and to be conducted in a spirit of kindness and affection." He studied the feelings and the prejudices of all classes of society, entering into the most cordial and familiar intercourse with persons of intelligence and influence, whether they were Dutch or native Javanese, and in every possible way tried to produce a feeling that he had no other object in view as governor than the happiness and prosperity of the inhabitants. He permitted the poorest Javanese to have free access to his presence; and whatever measure he adopted, or regulation he found it necessary to pass, he took care to have it widely published, and even to have the reasons on which it was founded made known, thus addressing as much as possible the natural good sense of the natives. One resolution which he adopted at his first entrance into office delighted and gratified the Javanese as much as it surprised the Dutch. In travelling through the island, which it was necessary for him to do frequently, and to great distances, he would not carry arms, nor suffer himself to be attended by any escort, and he enjoined his staff to do the same. At first, such had been the false reports spread by the Dutch relative to the character and habits of the Javanese, that this resolution of the governor was considered foolhardy and Quixotic; but at length the wisdom of such a policy became evident. Not a single act of violence occurred in consequence of this display of confidence; on the contrary, the natives regarded it as a compliment, and anticipated the highest things from a governor who put such trust in their quietness and honesty. "Whilst driving along," says a visitor to Java at this time, "in an open carriage at the rate of nine miles an hour through the gorgeous forests of that delicious climate, we could scarcely believe that we were quite at the mercy of the Malays and other tribes, falsely proverbial for treachery and ferocity." Mr Raffles always entertained a high opinion of the character of the natives of Java, and believed that, if properly treated, there was not a more docile or more easily governed people on the face of the earth.

To detail all the changes which Mr Raffles introduced into the administration of Java during the five years of his residence in the island, would be a needless task. It will be sufficient to notice the three principal alterations—his reform of the revenue system, his establishment of a better system of police and public justice, and his abolition of the slave trade.

Our readers are already aware of the nature of the system of internal management which the Dutch pursued. Almost the whole territory was farmed out to native regents or officers, who, besides paying a small rent or recognition money to the Dutch authorities, handed over to them annually the whole produce of

their respective districts at a fixed government price. By disposing of this produce, either by exporting it or by selling it back again to the Javanese themselves, the Dutch raised a revenue; and in this monopoly, therefore, consisted the sole advantage derived by them from the possession of Java. The Dutch themselves had begun to be ashamed of this system of colonial government, and had made some attempts to introduce a better; but none of these attempts succeeded, and it was reserved for Mr Raffles to confer on Java the boon of a well-devised government. The following is his own brief and distinct account of the reform which he effected. "The whole system of native management has been exploded, and the mass of the population are now no longer dependent on a regent or other chieftain, but look up direct to the European power which protects them. In the first place, the lands are let, generally speaking, to the heads of villages, as this description of people appear to me to be the resident superintending farmers of the estate. In so extensive a population, there will naturally require to be some deviations in different districts, but the plan of village rents will generally prevail. After the experience of one year, leases for three years will be granted; and at the conclusion of that period, the leases may either be made for seven or for ten years, or the land granted to the actual possessors in perpetuity. You will thus see that I have had the happiness to release several millions of my fellow-creatures from a state of bondage and arbitrary oppression. The revenue of government, instead of being wrung by the grasping hand of an unfeeling farmer from the savings of industry, will now come into the treasuries of government direct, and be proportioned to the actual capability of the country."

It is necessary to explain this system adopted by Mr Raffles a little more fully. In the first place, the regents or native officers who had been intermediate between the government and the mass of the native population, and who had shamefully ground down the latter in order to make large profits from their situations, were completely laid aside, receiving an allotment of lands, or a sum of money, as a suitable compensation for the loss of their lucrative office. The lands thus placed at the disposal of the government were let at a fair rent to a number of small proprietors, who were generally the heads of villages. To give an idea of who these heads of villages were, we may quote Mr Raffles's own description of a Javanese village. "The cottages of the Javanese are never insulated, but formed into villages whose population extends from 50 to 200 or 300 inhabitants; each has its garden; and this spot of ground surrounding his simple habitation the cottager regards as his peculiar patrimony, and cultivates with peculiar care. He labours to plant and to rear in it those vegetables that may be most useful to his family, and those shrubs and trees which may at once yield him their fruit and their shade. The cottages, or the

assemblage of huts that compose the village, become thus completely screened from the rays of a scorching sun, and are so buried amid the foliage of a luxuriant vegetation, that at a small distance no appearance of a human dwelling can be discovered; and the residence of a numerous society appears only a verdant grave, or a clump of evergreens. Every village forms a community in itself, each having its officers, its priest, and its temple." It was generally, then, to the native heads of such villages, distinguished by the various titles of Petingi, Bakal, or Surah, that the lands were let out by government according to the system introduced by Mr Raffles. In some cases, however, and particularly in those districts where the Chinese had planted themselves most thickly, it was necessary to depart from this regulation, and let the land to others. The land was let on short leases. It was indeed proposed to sell the lands entirely, so as to constitute the heads of villages into permanent landlords instead of government tenants; but Lord Minto seems to have disapproved of this plan of permanent sale, and therefore that of short leases alone was practised. The amount of rent was fixed as equitably as possible by a reference to the circumstances of each particular case, two-fifths of the average annual rice produce of the soil being about the usual rate. This rent being duly paid, the heads of villages or other government tenants were at liberty to dispose of the produce of their respective farms to the best advantage, and at any price they could obtain in the market, the government laying no claim to any exclusive right of purchase. In order, however, to encourage the growth of coffee, which Mr Raffles anticipated might become an important article of export in the course of a few years, government engaged to receive any surplus quantity of that commodity from the growers at a reasonable and fixed rate, when a higher price could not be obtained for it in the market; thus at least securing the coffee growers against loss. Under the old system, besides claiming a monopoly of the produce, the government had a right of vassalage or feudal service over the native regents, and, through them, over the mass of the people; that is, the government had a right to make the natives labour, without wages, on roads and other public works. This feudal exaction, one of the most intolerable that can be imagined, and one under which France groaned before the Revolution, Mr Raffles at once abolished. If the heads of villages paid their rent regularly, they were considered as having discharged all their obligations to government; and whatever labour government might require, it was to pay for at the ordinary market rate of wages.

A change like this could not fail at once to create a hearty spirit of contentment and industry. "All is altered now," we may imagine one of these heads of villages or government tenants saying; "I have no longer to sell all my rice, my coffee, and my pepper, to a greedy government for a wretched pittance, hardly

enough to remunerate me for my toil. All that I have to do is to pay my rent to government; and then I have all my rice, my coffee, and my pepper to do as I please with. All that I raise above what pays my rent and other expenses is clear profit." In order to provide farther against the practice of any extortion by these government tenants upon their inferiors or sub-tenants (which, however, was not likely to happen, the greater part of the government tenants, namely, the heads of villages, having a natural bond connecting them in feeling and interest with their inferiors), a superintendence was exercised by government over the mode in which the lands were sub-let to the minor tenants. Thus, down to the lowest ranks of society the beneficial influence of the change of system extended; and every man began to feel that the fruits of his industry and energy would not, as formerly, be swallowed up by the insatiable maw of government, but would be really and truly his own.

It was necessary, however, not merely to allow the natives to be the sole and exclusive proprietors of the produce of their industry, but also to open up the channels of commerce, so that they might bring that produce to a profitable market. It would have been of no use for government to have given up its claim to a monopoly of the produce, and at the same time to have kept up those restrictions which would have prevented the growers from finding any other market for it, so that they would have been obliged to come to government and say, "Rather than have our rice rot on our hands, we will give you it at your own price," thus actually restoring the monopoly. Accordingly, as a part of the system of Mr Raffles, all the tolls and internal imposts of the island, which operated as checks to internal traffic, were abolished; all the ports of the island, without exception, were thrown open; almost all the export duties were abrogated; the import duties were reduced to the lowest possible point; and no description of goods was excluded from the island. Free trade, in short, in a sense almost as wide as it is possible to understand it, was realised; the only cost incurred in the transmission of goods from one part of the island to another, or from the island itself to other parts of the Malayan Archipelago, being the cost of carriage. This change must have been agreeable to all classes of the community, except perhaps to the Chinese, who had been the great farmers of taxes under the old system, and who were of course obliged now to betake themselves to some other course of industry.

Mr Raffles effected as important a change in the department of justice as he had in the department of revenue. Under the Dutch government, the natives had been subject to laws utterly averse from their natural feelings and superstitions, and with which also they were totally unacquainted. The Dutch laws were doubtless good, but, as applied without modification to the native Javanese, they gave rise to the most tyrannical and unjust

decisions, especially as the juries consisted exclusively of Europeans. Mr Raffles reversed all this. "By means of the numberless inquiries he had instituted all over the island," says a writer who speaks from local knowledge, "and particularly by his own personal investigations, he discovered that the Javanese possessed, from time immemorial, amongst themselves, a system of police as well as of jurisprudence, which, if not precisely squaring in all points with our notions of such things, it was fair to infer were more or less suited to the peculiar circumstances of the island. Strangely enough, the Dutch were ignorant of the existence of many of these native institutions, though some of them were never entirely extinguished during the two centuries of their administration. Mr Raffles, however, at once saw how important it would be to enlist the prejudices and established habits of the natives in his cause, and, by giving the sanction of his authority to local usages which the natives were already in possession of, to attach, as it were, as many ready-made wheels to the machinery of his government." While, however, he introduced into his administration as many of the native Javanese forms as possible, he did not do so indiscriminately; but wherever he found any native custom or regulation which was inconsistent with his own notions of justice, he changed or modified it so as to make it suit. The deposed Javanese rajahs or regents he turned to good account, by availing himself of their services in the department of police; and the dignity which he thus assigned to them, together with the lands and money which they received in lieu of their regencies, was considered by most of them as more than a compensation for what they had lost. By a very simple expedient, Mr Raffles provided for the prompt administration of justice in the island. "One member of each of the courts of justice was appointed a judge of circuit, to be present in each of the residencies at least once in every three months, and as much oftener as was found necessary. The formalities of the Roman law employed by the Dutch were avoided. A native jury, consisting of an intelligent foreman and four others, decided upon the facts; the law was then taken down and expounded by the native law officers; and the sentence, with the opinion of the judge of circuit upon the application of the Dutch and colonial law in the cases, was forwarded for the modification of the lieutenant-governor." At the same time the utmost pains were taken to acquaint the natives with the details of the system. The regulations were translated into the Malayan and all the other languages spoken in Java, and published as widely as possible.

The third great reform accomplished by Mr Raffles was the abolition of the slave trade, and its attendant practice, piracy. Unfortunately, we have but very scanty information on this point: it would appear, indeed, that, in abolishing the iniquitous traffic in slaves, Mr Raffles did not meet with so much difficulty

as might have been expected. The following notice on the subject occurs in Lady Raffles's life of her husband:—"Mr Raffles was anxious to diffuse the blessings of freedom throughout the whole of the varied populations under his charge; and as the British parliament had at this time passed an act which declared the slave trade to be felony, he established it as a colonial law; and it continues in force to this day, since it cannot be repealed without express authority from the mother country. The leading inhabitants possessing slaves concurred with him in his efforts to abolish this dreadful evil throughout the Dutch possessions; and the whole of the slaves in the island were registered according to the forms of the West India islands, with the view of giving them their liberty. The Bengal authorities, however, refused their sanction; because, as they alleged, it had not been determined whether the government of Java was to be permanently administered by the king of Great Britain or by the East India Company."

The highest testimony to the merits of the changes of which we have just given an account is the fact, that while all classes of society were contented with the administration of Mr Raffles, and the native Javanese adored his name, the revenue derived by the government itself was *eight times as large as it had been under the Dutch.* The highest revenue ever raised by the Dutch in Java was four millions of rupees, or half a million of pounds sterling in a year; whereas before Mr Raffles left Java, the revenue amounted to thirty millions of rupees, or nearly four millions of pounds sterling.

Unfortunately, this course of reform, which was renovating the island of Java, and raising it to prosperity greater than it had ever experienced before, was arrested by an event which the governor had from the first anticipated. Looking forward to the restoration of the island to the Dutch, Mr Raffles thus expressed himself in a letter to Lord Minto, dated July 2, 1814. "If I were to believe," says he, "that the Javanese were ever again to be ruled on the former principles of government, I should indeed quit Java with a heavy heart; but a brighter prospect is, I hope, before them. Holland is not only re-established, but, I hope, renovated: her prince has been educated in the best of all schools—adversity; and I will hope the people of Java will be as happy, if not happier, under the Dutch as under the English. Mr Muntinghe has often reminded me, that when conversing with your lordship on the judicial regulations, you observed it was not certain whether England would retain permanent possessions in Java; *but in the meantime let us do as much good as we can.* This we have done, and whatever change may take place, the recollection can never be unpleasing."

In the beginning of 1816, Mr Raffles, after five years' residence in Java, was relieved of the government, and Mr Tindal came

out to succeed him. The intelligence of his departure caused demonstrations of lively regret by the natives as well as Europeans. On the morning of his embarkation, the roads of Batavia were filled with boats, crowded with people of various nations, all anxious to pay the last tribute of respect within their power to one whose services they so highly appreciated. On reaching the vessel, he found the decks filled with offerings of every description—fruit, flowers, poultry, whatever they thought would promote his comfort on the voyage. When the order was given to weigh anchor, there was a universal scene of distress; the people felt that they were losing for ever the great man who had so nobly regenerated their country, and been their common benefactor.

The new governor of Java had scarcely time to enter on his duties; for, on the fall of Napoleon, the congress of European powers, by a single stroke of the pen, restored Java to the Dutch.* Had the times been less exciting, it is probable that, before surrendering Java to its former owners, some precautions would have been adopted relative to the government and trade of the island. No such precautions were adopted. Java was unconditionally restored. In one day all the splendid reforms of Mr Raffles were laid in ruins. Delivered up to the Dutch authorities, they remorselessly went back to the old order of things—a rigorous and grasping monopoly in trade, and a tyranny which recognised no principle of humanity or justice. What were the feelings of the rapidly-improving Javanese in being thus delivered up to their old oppressors, may be more easily conjectured than described. They gave a sullen submission, and "the island," observes a writer in 1830, "has been nearly one scene of rebellion and bloodshed ever since it was given to the Dutch."

SUMATRA.

After a prosperous voyage, Mr Raffles reached London on the 16th of July 1816, and one of his first acts after arrival was to address the court of directors of the East India Company, claiming an inquiry into his conduct during the period of his administration in Java. He was particularly anxious that this inquiry should be made, because he had reason to know that the court did not entirely approve of all that he had done; and he had hoped that now that he was present in Leadenhall Street to defend his measures, he would be able to represent them to the court in a more favourable light. The

* It does not appear that the French had taken possession of the smaller Spice Islands, which remained nominally under the Dutch, and retained the Dutch flag, although for a number of years there was in reality no Dutch nation. On the restoration of Java, therefore, the possession of these islands, which had been unmolested by any European power, was peacefully resumed.

particular cause of difference between him and the court of directors was as follows:—While in Java, he found it necessary to keep up a considerable military force, and also to discharge certain debts incurred by the old government; and for these purposes money was required. As, however, the island itself could not at first supply as much as was needed, he was obliged to make repeated drafts on the company's treasury in Bengal. As these drafts were made at a time when the Bengal treasury was low, and required to be replenished from London, the court of directors began to entertain a bad opinion of Java, and to contemplate its abandonment. These, among other circumstances, had led to the recall of Mr Raffles. Now, however, he hoped to vindicate his conduct to the satisfaction of the court, and to make it clear that Java, instead of being a burden to the company, would have been a valuable acquisition; and it was with this view that he petitioned the court of directors for a revision of his administration. The court, however, saw it expedient to pronounce no decision, farther than to express its conviction that the measures adopted by Mr Raffles had "sprung from motives perfectly correct and laudable."

In order to meet the growing demand for information about Java, Mr Raffles rapidly prepared and published a history of the island, which was published in May 1817, and which is a monument of his abilities and the extent of his knowledge. In the same year Mr Raffles married a second time, his first wife having died a short time before he left Java. About the same time also he received from the prince-regent the honour of knighthood. It is a proof of the strong and affectionate interest he took in Java, that in this same year he paid a visit to the continent, for the express purpose of having an interview with the king of Holland respecting the future government of the island. The result of this interview is thus communicated by Sir Stamford himself in a letter to his friend Mr Marsden. "I met with very great attention in the Netherlands, and had the honour to dine with the king last Monday: they were very communicative regarding their eastern colonies; but I regret to say, that notwithstanding the king himself and his leading minister seem to mean well, they have too great a hankering after profit, and *immediate* profit, for any liberal system to thrive under them. The king, while he admitted all the advantages likely to arise from cultivation, and assured me that the system introduced under my administration should be continued, maintained that it was essential to confine the trade, and to make such regulations as would secure it and its profits exclusively to the mother country. I had an opportunity of expressing my sentiments to him very freely, and as he took them in good part, I am in hopes they may have some weight."

The title of Lieutenant-Governor of Bencoolen, in the island of Sumatra, having been conferred on Sir Stamford by the court of

directors, "as a peculiar mark of the favourable sentiments which the court entertained of his merits and services," he once more set sail for the East Indies, there to renew, although in a different spot, his career of active benevolence. He arrived at Bencoolen on the 22d of March 1818.

Sumatra belongs to the same group of islands as Java, from which it is separated at its south-eastern extremity by a narrow strait. Sumatra, however, is considerably the larger, being more than 900 miles long, and varying from 140 to 210 miles in breadth, having thus an area larger than England, Scotland, and Ireland together. But though larger, Sumatra is not so important an island as Java. "From the hand of God," says Sir Stamford Raffles in a letter written after he had formed an acquaintance with the island, "Sumatra has received perhaps higher advantages and capabilities than Java; but no two countries form a more decided contrast in the use which has been made of them by man. While Sumatra remains in a great part covered with its primeval forests, and exhibiting but scattered traces of human industry, Java has become the granary and the garden of the East. In the former we find man inactive, sullen, and partaking of the gloom of the forests, while in the latter he is active and cheerful." One-half of the large island of Sumatra is flat and level; the other is mountainous; and the products of these two parts are of course different, although the principal products of the island may be said to be rice, tobacco, hemp, coffee, sago, camphor, various spices, and innumerable kinds of fruit. From no other country are such large quantities of pepper exported.

Sumatra, like Java, is peopled by a branch of the Malay race; the inhabitants, however, receive various names, according to the districts which they occupy, and present some differences of language, manners, and physiognomy. In some parts of the island the natives exhibit considerable evidences of civilisation; but upon the whole, the Sumatrans are far inferior people to the Javanese. The political condition of Sumatra is much the same as that of Java; that is, it is subject partly to the Dutch, partly to independent native princes. Instead, however, of there being only two independent native states, as in Java, in Sumatra there are five such, namely, the kingdoms of Acheen, Siack, Indragiri, Iambie, and Battas, situated in the northern half of the island. The rest of the island, that is, the southern half, constitutes the Dutch colony, and is governed for the most part by native regents of the different districts under the Dutch authorities.

In 1818, the only part of Sumatra which was not included in the Dutch colony, or in the native territories above mentioned, was Bencoolen, a small district in the south-west of the island, extending from the coast a number of miles into the interior, and belonging to Great Britain; and it was of this district that Sir Stamford Raffles was appointed governor. The British settlement of Bencoolen, or Fort Marlborough, was founded in

1685 by the orders of the East India Company, who conceived it would be an advantageous post in the pepper trade. It never, however, answered their expectations. Whether owing to its natural want of capabilities, or to the mismanagement of those who successively took charge of it, or to both of these causes, Bencoolen proved a very unprofitable settlement. The cost of maintaining the establishment amounted to little less than £100,000 a-year, while all the return it made was a few tons of pepper. In 1801, the establishment was reduced, and an attempt made to introduce a more economical system of management under the direction of the British resident, Mr Parr; but the change was so injudiciously effected, that a great part of the population was thrown out of employment, and the natives became so infuriated as to attack the government-house, and murder Mr Parr. Severe measures of retaliation were adopted by the British, and the consequence was, that the whole district was laid waste; the trees, gardens, and houses being destroyed, and the cattle almost exterminated. "This," writes Sir Stamford Raffles a few days after his arrival at Bencoolen, "is, without exception, the most wretched place I ever beheld. I cannot convey to you an adequate idea of the state of ruin and dilapidation which surrounds me. What with natural impediments, bad government, and the awful visitations of Providence which we have recently experienced in the shape of repeated earthquakes, we have scarcely a dwelling in which to lay our heads, or wherewithal to satisfy the cravings of nature. The roads are impassable; the highways in the town overrun with rank grass; the government-house a den of ravenous dogs and polecats. The natives say that Bencoolen is now a dead land. In truth, I could never have conceived anything half so bad." Not discouraged with this dismal prospect, the writer proceeds— "We will try and make the place better; and if I am well supported from home, the west coast may yet be turned to account. You must, however, be prepared for the abolition of slavery, the emancipation of the country people from the forced cultivation of pepper, the discontinuing of the gaming and cock-fighting farms, and a thousand other practices equally disgraceful and repugnant to the British character and government. A complete and thorough reform is indispensable, and reductions must be made throughout."

Paltry as was the appointment of Sir Stamford to the governorship of Bencoolen in comparison with that of Java, his situation was not by any means unimportant, for it imposed on him the superintendence of the adjoining seas. Along with Java, the Dutch had recovered the entire sovereignty of the Malayan Archipelago, of which during the alienation of Java they had been deprived. There was every probability, therefore, that they would renew their old illiberal policy in that quarter of the world, using the power which they possessed over the natives of the

various islands to prevent them from maintaining an intercourse with the ships of other nations; and, in particular, it was expected that they would renew their attempts to injure the trade of the British in these remote seas. The only stations which the English retained in that quarter of the world were Penang, off the western coast of Malacca, and Bencoolen, in Sumatra. Of course, then, these two settlements derived a peculiar importance from such a consideration, being, as it were, watch-towers from which the English could observe the movements of the Dutch. Bencoolen especially was regarded as a valuable station in this point of view; and among the instructions furnished to Sir Stamford Raffles by the court of directors, before leaving England, was one to the following effect:—"It is highly desirable that the court of directors should receive early and constant information of the proceedings of the Dutch and other European nations, as well as of the Americans, in the Eastern Archipelago. The court therefore desire that you will direct your attention to the object of regularly obtaining such information, and that you will transmit the same to them by every convenient opportunity, accompanied by such observations as may occur to you, whether of a political or commercial nature."

Besides, therefore, his particular duties as governor of Bencoolen, Sir Stamford had to cast his eye over the whole Archipelago, from the Bay of Bengal as far east as New Guinea, and conceive himself charged with the superintendence of the British interests in these seas. Let us first attend to his proceedings in Bencoolen, and more generally in the island of Sumatra.

In some respects, the spirit in which Sir Stamford commenced his reforms at Bencoolen was the same as that which had presided over his administration in Java. "He devoted," says Lady Raffles, "his whole time on his first arrival to the examination of the records of the settlement, the state of the country and people in its immediate neighbourhood, and endeavoured to collect the European inhabitants and the native chiefs around him, that he might become personally acquainted with their habits and manners. The same system of excluding the natives from the society of Europeans had been pursued in this settlement as in most other parts of India. Sir Stamford at once broke down this barrier, and opened his house to the higher class of natives on all occasions. During the whole period of his residence in Sumatra, he had some of them present during the hours of social intercourse. The result of this it is needless to dwell upon. The chiefs and people considered him as their best friend and adviser, yielded to his opinion upon all occasions, and harmony and good-will prevailed throughout the settlement." Yet Sir Stamford found it necessary to pursue a policy in Sumatra in many respects totally different from that which he had pursued in Java. "I have found in the Sumatrans," he says, "a very different people from the inhabitants of Java: they are, perhaps, a

thousand years behind them in civilisation, and consequently require a very different kind of government. In Java, I advocated the doctrine of the liberty of the subject and the individual rights of man—here I am an advocate for despotism. The strong arm of power is necessary to bring men together, and to concentrate them in societies, and there is a certain stage in which despotic authority seems the only means of promoting civilisation. Sumatra is in a great measure peopled by innumerable petty tribes, subject to no general government, having little or no intercourse with each other, and man still remains inactive, sullen, and partaking of the gloom which pervades the forests by which he is surrounded. No European power seems to think it worth its while to subdue the country by conquest, which would be the shortest and best way of civilising it; and therefore all that can be done is to raise the importance of the chiefs, and to assist in promoting the advance of feudal authority. This once established, and government being once firmly introduced, let the people be enlightened, and the energies which will then be called forth in regaining a portion of their liberties will be the best pledge of their future character as a nation." What a healthy, practical mind we see manifested in such sentiments as these. He found it necessary in Java to abolish all remains of feudal power, and accordingly he abolished them; in Sumatra, on the other hand, he found it necessary to strengthen the feudal tie, and accordingly he strengthened it. A less practical man would have persisted in applying to Sumatra the system which he had found to work well in Java, without any regard to the difference of the two countries.

One of Sir Stamford's first acts in Bencoolen was to abolish slavery. "There were at this time in Bencoolen," says Lady Raffles, "upwards of two hundred African slaves, most of them born in the settlement, who were the children of slaves originally purchased by the East India Company: they were considered indispensable for the duties of the place, and it was asserted that they were happier than free men. They were employed in loading and unloading the company's ships, and other hard work. No care having been taken of their morals, many of them were dissolute and depraved, and the children in a state of nature, vice, and wretchedness." These two hundred negroes Sir Stamford immediately set at liberty. Assembling them all before a meeting of the native chiefs, he explained the views of the British government with regard to the abolition generally, and granted to each negro, man and woman, a certificate declaring him or her to be for ever free, and at liberty to labour for wages like other free persons. The negro children were at the same time assembled at the government-house; and as a considerable degree of prejudice existed against them, Lady Raffles selected one of them, "a little bright-eyed girl eight years old, whom she put under the charge of a European nurse. She proved a most docile, affec-

tionate little attendant; and Lady Raffles, on leaving Sumatra, had the pleasure of giving her a dower on her marriage."

Another class of unfortunate persons who attracted Sir Stamford's benevolent notice were the convicts—criminals who, since the year 1797, had been transported from Bengal to Bencoolen. These amounted to about five hundred in all at the period of Sir Stamford's arrival in Bencoolen. Sir Stamford thought that something might be done for this unfortunate class of men. "It is desirable," he said, in communicating his designs to the court of directors, "that some discrimination should be exercised in favour of those who show the disposition to redeem their character. I would suggest the propriety of the chief authority being vested with a discretionary power of freeing such men as conduct themselves well from the obligations of service, and permitting them to settle in the place, and resume the privileges of citizenship. It rarely happens that any of those transported have any desire to leave the country: they form connexions in the place, and find so many inducements to remain, that to be sent away is considered by most a severe punishment. I propose to divide them into three classes—the first class to be allowed to give evidence in court, and permitted to settle on lands secured to them and their children; but no one to be admitted to this class until he has been resident in Bencoolen three years: the second class to be employed in ordinary labour: the third class, or men of abandoned and profligate character, to be kept to the harder kinds of labour, and confined at night. In cases of particular good conduct, a prospect may be held out of emancipating deserving convicts from further obligation of services on condition of their supporting themselves, and not quitting the settlement." These measures were afterwards carried into effect, and with great success: a large body of persons, till now degraded, soon became useful labourers and happy members of society.

These changes Sir Stamford was able to effect directly by the exercise of his own authority as lieutenant-governor. Certain other important reforms which he effected at the same time, and which concerned the native Sumatrans more particularly, he was able to accomplish only by means of the native chiefs. Having gained their confidence by his kindness, he had no difficulty in obtaining their co-operation. All former treaties between the British president in Bencoolen and the native chiefs were annulled, and a new agreement entered into, whereby authority was given to the company to administer the affairs of the settlement according to justice and good policy. The cultivation of pepper, which had hitherto been compulsory on the natives, was now declared optional: they were to be at liberty to cultivate either pepper or any other kind of produce which they might prefer, and which their lands might be capable of growing; Sir Stamford having too strong a faith in the principle of demand and supply, to entertain any doubt that a proper quantity of

pepper would continue to be cultivated even after liberty had been given to cultivate anything else. Sir Stamford also abolished all the gambling establishments in Bencoolen, from which hitherto the government had derived a considerable revenue. One of the most remarkable characteristics of the Sumatrans, as of all the other Malays, is their love for gaming; and in Bencoolen the propensity had grown so strong, as to occupy half the time of the natives, deteriorate their character, and diminish the prosperity of the settlement. The abolition by Sir Stamford Raffles of all public gaming-houses, accompanied as it judiciously was by the abolition of the compulsory cultivation of pepper, produced an immediate and sensible effect: the time which the Sumatrans formerly consumed in gaming of various kinds, they now applied to better purpose, feeling that their industry was at their own disposal. Since the murder of Mr Parr, the native inhabitants had been subjected to various marks of disgrace, such as being prohibited from wearing the crees and other weapons in the town of Marlborough; but all these regulations were rescinded by Sir Stamford, as having nothing but an injurious effect. At the same time he dismissed the body-guard which used to attend the person of the British resident at Bencoolen, and greatly reduced the military force. The natives were highly gratified by these tokens of confidence, and did their best to show that the confidence was not misplaced.

After a short residence at Bencoolen, during which he was engaged in effecting the above-mentioned reforms, Sir Stamford set out on an excursion into the interior of the island, with a view to extend his acquaintance with the Sumatrans, their customs, religions, and character, as well as to gratify his enthusiasm as a naturalist. The route which he attempted was considered impracticable; but he succeeded in penetrating the island, crossing the mountains, and reaching Palembang on the opposite coast. He also penetrated northward, cultivating the acquaintance of the natives wherever he went, and acquiring an immense store of new and valuable information. The description he has given of these journeys imparts a striking idea of his adventurous spirit and love of scientific pursuit. Ascending mountains, crossing rivers, and penetrating forests, the party were often startled by the approach of elephants and other unwelcome visitors. On one occasion, in passing through a forest, they were much annoyed with leeches, which got into their boots and covered their legs with blood. The most important botanic discovery made throughout the journey was that of the *Rafflesia*, perhaps the largest and most magnificent flower in the world. It measured across, from the extremity of the petals, rather more than a yard; the nectarium was nine inches wide, and as deep, and was estimated to contain a gallon and a half of water; the weight of the whole was fifteen pounds. In alluding to this magnificent plant, Sir Stamford observes in a letter to a friend in England, "There

is nothing more striking in the Malayan forests than the grandeur of the vegetation. The magnitude of the flowers, creepers, and trees, contrasts strangely with the stunted, and, I had almost said, pigmy vegetation of England. Compared with our fruit trees, your largest oak is a mere dwarf. Here we have creepers and vines entwining larger trees, and hanging suspended for more than a hundred feet, in girth not less than a man's body, and many much thicker; the trees seldom under 100, and generally 160 to 200 feet in height."

In most of his excursions, Sir Stamford was accompanied by Lady Raffles, who entered warmly into his pursuits, and delighted in exploring the romantic coasts of the Spice Islands. "It is impossible," observes this accomplished lady in one of her letters, "to conceive an idea of the pleasure of sailing through this beautiful and unparalleled Archipelago, in which every attraction of nature is combined. The smoothness of the sea, the lightness of the atmosphere, the constant succession of the most picturesque lake scenery; islands of every shape and size clustered together; mountains of the most fanciful forms crowned with verdure to their summit; rich and luxuriant vegetation extending to the very edge of the water; little native boats with only one person in them, continually darting out from the deep shade which concealed them, looking like so many cockle-shells wafted about by the wind. Altogether it is a scene of enchantment deserving a poet's pen to describe its beauties."

Returning from these excursions, Sir Stamford occupied his time in the improvement of Bencoolen, the consolidation of his government, and the pursuit of science; the latter object being aided by a regular establishment of naturalists and draughtsmen. Most unfortunately, here, as elsewhere, he was exposed to much annoyance from the Dutch, who lost no opportunity of thwarting his policy. "Prepared as I was," he writes, "for the jealousy and assumption of the Dutch commissioners in the East, I have found myself surprised by the unreserved avowal they have made of their principles, their steady determination to lower the British character in the eyes of the natives, and the measures they have already adopted towards the annihilation of our commerce, and of our intercourse with the native traders throughout the Malayan Archipelago. Not satisfied with shutting the eastern ports against our shipping, and prohibiting the natives from commercial intercourse with the English, they have despatched commissioners to every spot in the Archipelago where it is probable we might attempt to form settlements, or where the independence of the native chiefs affords anything like a free port to our shipping." In these circumstances, Sir Stamford was exceedingly anxious that some new settlement should be established in a more convenient situation than either Penang or Bencoolen, in which new settlement some accredited British authority might be at hand to afford protection to the British

shipping and trade. He thought that the most advantageous situation for such an establishment would be the Straits of Sunda, if it were practicable to found one there. And it is interesting to find that, in fixing on such a situation, he is affectionately reverting to the island which of all others was dearest to his recollection—Java. "It is impossible," he says, "not to foresee that unless the Dutch adopt a very different policy from that which they are now pursuing, Java must eventually either become independent of European authority, or on some future occasion of hostilities again fall under the dominion of the English. The seeds of independence have been too generally sown, and the principles of the British administration too deeply rooted, to be eradicated by a despotic order. In such an event, calculating on the bare possibility of its occurrence in fifty or a hundred years hence, we shall feel the advantage of the measures I have now suggested."

Full of these ideas, Sir Stamford Raffles determined to proceed to Bengal, to have a personal conference with Lord Moira, now Marquis of Hastings, governor-general of India. When he arrived at Calcutta, such was the effect of almost his first interview with the marquis, and so high had his character risen since his retirement from the government of Java, that although the marquis had previously condemned his policy, he now became his sincere friend, and acknowledged his past services in very flattering terms. Although Sir Stamford did not succeed in gaining over the governor and the council to the full extent of his views, he roused them to the necessity of doing something to resist the Dutch in the Archipelago. "All he asked," he said, "was permission to anchor a line-of-battle ship, and hoist the English flag, at the mouth either of the Straits of Malacca or of Sunda, and the trade of England would be secured, the monopoly of the Dutch broken." The Straits of Sunda, we have seen, was the position he would have preferred; but as there were insurmountable objections to it, Sincapore was conclusively fixed upon as the site of the projected settlement.

Sir Stamford was intrusted with the difficult and delicate duty of founding the new settlement. Attempts were made at Penang to dissuade him from undertaking so arduous a task. Determined, however, to accomplish the duty intrusted to him, he proceeded in person down the Straits of Malacca, and in ten days after leaving Penang, that is, on the 29th of February 1819, the British flag was waving in the breeze at Sincapore.

SINCAPORE.

Sincapore, or, as it is sometimes written, Singapore, is an island measuring twenty-seven miles in length by eleven in breadth, situated off the extreme point of the peninsula of Siam or Malacca. Its climate is healthy, and its interior is generally laid out in plantations and gardens. The value of the

island consists in its commanding the Straits of Malacca—the great channel of trade and communication between India, China, and the Spice Islands. A more splendid geographical position could not have been chosen for a mercantile city and depôt. The passage between it and China can be made by a trading vessel in six days; and the same time, in the favourable monsoon, will suffice for the passage between it and Batavia, Borneo, or Penang. The following is Sir Stamford's opinion of it, after a residence of nearly three months. "I am happy to inform you that everything is going on well here. It bids fair to be the next port to Calcutta. You may take my word for it, this is by far the most important station in the East; and as far as naval superiority and commercial interests are concerned, of much higher value than whole continents of territory."

After residing for a short time at Sincapore, and seeing the foundations of the colony fairly laid, Sir Stamford returned to Bencoolen, in Sumatra, to which we shall follow him. Eager in his desires for improvement, he had on his first arrival in Bencoolen, in 1818, planted a garden in a spot which was bare and desolate. On now reaching the same scene, all was magnificent vegetation, and he found his house embosomed in rich foliage. The casuarina trees had grown to the height of thirty or forty feet; and as the carriage approached the house, it drove through a shrubbery of nutmeg, clove, cocoa, and cassia trees. Of all these, the nutmeg is the most beautiful; it spreads its branches in a wide circle, bearing fruit in profusion, and the fruit itself is the loveliest in the world; the shell or outside covering is of a rich cream colour, resembling a peach; when this bursts, the dark nut appears encircled and chequered with mace of the brightest crimson, which, when contrasted with the deep emerald green of the leaves, forms a picture most grateful to the eye. But, what was of more consequence, society was improving and flourishing as well as vegetation, eleven months having been sufficient to make the change in it visible too. Sir Stamford, however, was not a man to rest satisfied with a few reforms at the outset: he was possessed with the true reforming and philanthropic spirit: he felt uneasy in the presence of whatever was wrong, and gave himself no rest till he had rectified it. Some of his farther schemes and intentions are detailed in a letter to Mr Wilberforce written at this period. Convinced, however, of the necessity of having a thorough knowledge of the dispositions of any people for whose good one proposes to legislate, he had appointed a committee to inquire into the state of society in Sumatra, into the root and origin of all those strange practices which he intended to abolish. One of his schemes for the civilisation of the Sumatrans was the foundation of national schools, and in this he had so far succeeded; another, and one of gigantic importance, was the foundation of a Malayan university, a native college—1st, for the education of

the higher classes of natives of the whole Malayan Archipelago; 2d, for the instruction of the company's servants in the native languages; and 3d, for the general interests and advancement of Oriental literature. The site proper for such an institution appeared to be Sincapore; and accordingly Sir Stamford drew up an elaborate minute on the subject, which he sent to the Marquis of Hastings. We wish we could quote some passages from this noble document; but we can afford room only for the concluding sentences, which breathe a spirit of true statesmanlike philanthropy. "If commerce brings wealth to our shores, it is the spirit of literature and philanthropy which teaches us how to employ it for the noblest purposes. It is this that has made Britain go forth among the nations, strong in her native might, to dispense blessings to all around her. If the time shall come when her empire shall have passed away, these monuments of her virtue shall endure when her triumphs are but an empty name. Let it still be the boast of Britain to write her name in characters of light; let her not be remembered as the tempest whose course was desolation, but as the gale of spring reviving the slumbering seeds of mind, and calling them to life from the winter of ignorance and oppression. Let the sun of Britain arise on these islands, not to wither and scorch them in its fierceness, but like that of her own genial skies, whose mild and benignant influence is hailed and blessed by all who feel its beams."

In the end of 1819, Sir Stamford paid another visit to Calcutta. His views had by this time taken shape; and his object was to suggest the consolidation of the various British settlements in the Archipelago—Penang, Bencoolen, Sincapore, with any others which might yet be added—into one government, subordinate to the supreme government of India. The accomplishment of such a scheme, and the appointment of Sir Stamford Raffles to be governor under the Marquis of Hastings, would in all probability have been measures of infinite advantage; but the feeling of the home authorities was adverse to the proposal. Sir Stamford therefore returned to Sumatra. No sooner, however, was his philanthropy disappointed of one object than it fastened on another. The island of Poulo Nyas has been already mentioned in the course of this tract as a place supplying slaves to Java. The island is within sight of Sumatra, and contained in 1820 a population of 230,000 souls, on a surface of 1500 square miles. Without having had any communication with civilised nations, the inhabitants of Nyas had made considerable advances in the arts of civilised life. Sir Stamford's benevolent eye had singled out this island for one of his wise experiments, and his efforts succeeded in inducing the native chiefs unreservedly to become subjects of Great Britain. Immediately directing his energies to the suppression of the slave trade, he succeeded in convincing the chiefs of its iniquity and inexpediency, and thus in almost entirely abolishing it—a measure which, however, was labour spent in vain; for

shortly afterwards, Sumatra coming entirely into the possession of the Dutch, the slave traffic with Poulo Nyas was resumed.

Sir Stamford and Lady Raffles began now to look forward to a return to England. The health of both required it: three of their children suddenly fell victims to the climate, and they were anxious to adopt every precaution to preserve their only remaining daughter. Besides, the establishment at Sincapore was now the great object of Sir Stamford's thoughts—his "political child," as he called it; and he thought it probable that he should be more able to promote its interest in London than at Calcutta. He determined, however, before leaving the East Indies, to spend a few months at Sincapore.

Arriving there on the 10th of October 1822, he found the information he had received of its growing prosperity more than realised. "All is life and activity," he writes to the Duchess of Somerset; "and it would be difficult to name a place on the face of the globe with brighter prospects or more present satisfaction. In little more than three years, it has risen from an insignificant fishing village to a large prosperous town, containing at least 10,000 inhabitants of all nations, actively engaged in commercial pursuits, which afford to each and all a handsome livelihood and abundant profit. Land is rapidly rising in value; and instead of the present number of inhabitants, we have reason to expect that we shall have at least ten times as many more before many years have passed. This may be considered the simple but almost magical result of *the perfect freedom of trade* which it has been my good fortune to establish." A few months later, he writes Mr Marsden to the same effect; and among other details, he gives the following estimate of the trade of Sincapore for 1822, as compared with that of the two old ports, Penang and Malacca:—

IMPORTS.

Sincapore.	Penang.	Malacca.
14,885,999 dollars.	6,437,042 dollars.	1,266,090 dollars.

EXPORTS.

Sincapore.	Penang.	Malacca.
13,872,010 dollars.	5,586,707 dollars.	7,918,163 dollars.

From this period, the trade of Sincapore has progressively increased, and the most sanguine expectations of its founder as a free port have been amply realised. In 1836 the population was about 30,000, a large proportion being Chinese traders; and in that year 539 ships, of the aggregate burden of 166,053 tons, entered the port.

During his visit in 1822, Sir Stamford did much to promote this prosperity, which, founded in justice and humanity, may be said to be placed on an imperishable basis. Writing from Sincapore in June 1823, he says—"My time is engaged in remodelling and laying out my new city, and in establishing

institutions and laws for its future constitution—a pleasant duty enough in England, where you have books, hard heads, and lawyers to refer to; but here by no means easy, where all must depend on my own judgment and foresight. Nevertheless, I hope that though Sincapore may not be the first capital established in the nineteenth century, it will not disgrace the brightest period of it." The noble feeling which influenced him in all this is thus expressed by himself. "I should have but ill fulfilled the high trust reposed in me, if, after having congregated so large a portion of my fellow-creatures, I had left them without something like law and regulation for their security and comfort."

It is impossible within our narrow limits to describe even briefly the constitution which Sir Stamford gave to the important city which he had founded—a constitution which was the most perfect production of his mind, the condensation, as it were, of all his past experience. The constitution breathed a spirit of liberality throughout. It was expressly provided that Sincapore should now and for ever be a free port to all nations; that all races, all religions, all colours, should be equal in the eye of the law; and that such a thing as slavery should have no existence there. But Sir Stamford descended to the minutest details; the establishment, for instance, of standard weights and measures, and local as well as general matters of police. The benevolent will not peruse without feelings of delight the following extract from the "Laws and Regulations" laid down by Sir Stamford for the administration of Sincapore:—

"By the constitution of England, the absolute rights of the subject are defined as follows:—1st, The right of personal security, which consists in a person's legal uninterrupted enjoyment of his life, his limbs, his body, his health, and his reputation. 2d, The right of personal liberty, which consists in the power of locomotion, of changing situation, or removing one's person to whatever place one's own inclination may direct, without imprisonment or restraint, unless by due course of law. 3d, The right of property, which consists in the use, enjoyment, and disposal of all acquisitions, without any control or diminution, save only by the laws of the land.

There seems no reason for denying corresponding rights to all classes of people residing under the protection of the British flag at Sincapore, the laws of the land being such as are or may be enacted under the provisions of Regulation No. III. of 1823, dated the 20th of January last, with such others of a more general nature as may be directed by a higher authority, or which may necessarily accrue under the provisions of the legislature, and the political circumstances of the settlement, as a dependency on great Britain. Admitting these rights to exist, it follows that all acts by which they are invaded are wrongs; that is to say, crimes or injuries.

In the enactment of laws for securing these rights, legal obligation must never supersede or take the place of, or be inconsistent with, or more or less onerous than, moral obligation. The English practice of teaching prisoners to plead not guilty, that they may thus have a chance of escaping from punishment, is inconsistent with this, and consequently objectionable. It is indeed right and proper that the court should inform itself of all the circumstances of a crime from witnesses, as well as from the declaration of the prisoner himself. Denial is, in fact, an aggravation of a crime, according to every idea of common sense; it disarms punishment of one of its most beneficial objects, by casting a shade of doubt over its justice.

The sanctity of oaths should also be more upheld than in English courts. This may be done by never administering them except as a last resort. If they are not frequently administered, not only will their sanctity be more regarded, and in this way their breach be less proportionately frequent, but of necessity much more *absolutely* uncommon, and consequently much more certainly visited with due punishment. Truth, however, must be required, under pain of punishment, in all cases of evidence given before a court of justice.

The imprisonment of an unfortunate debtor at the pleasure of his creditor, by which the services of the individual are lost to all parties, seems objectionable in this settlement; and it is considered that the rights of property may be sufficiently protected by giving to the creditor a right to the value of the debtor's services for a limited period, in no case exceeding five years, and that the debtor should only be liable to imprisonment in case of fraud, and as far as may be necessary for the security of his person, in the event of his not being able to find bail during the process of the court, and for the performance of the decree after judgment may be passed.

It is well known that the Malay race are sensibly alive to shame, and that in many cases they would prefer death to ignominy. This is a high and honourable feeling, and ought to be cherished. Let great care be taken to avoid all punishments which are unnecessarily degrading. Both the Malays and Chinese are a reasoning people, and though each may reason in a way peculiar to itself, and different in some respects from our own way of reasoning, this germ of civilisation should not be checked. Let no man be punished without a reason assigned. Let the principles of British law be applied not only with mildness, and a patriarchal kindness and indulgent consideration for prejudices of each tribe, as far as substantial justice will allow, but also with reference to their reasoning powers, however weak, and that moral principle which, however often disregarded, still exists in the consciences of men.

Let native institutions, as far as regards religious observances, marriage, and inheritance, be respected when the same

may not be inconsistent with justice and humanity, or injurious to the peace and morals of society.

Let all men be considered equal in the eye of the law. Let no man be banished the country without a trial by his peers, or by due course of law.

Let no man be deprived of his liberty without a cause, and no man be detained in confinement beyond forty-eight hours, without a right to demand a hearing and trial according to due course of law.

Let the public have a voice through the magistracy, by which their sentiments may at all times be freely expressed."

It was not without considerable opposition that Sir Stamford succeeded in establishing Sincapore on such a liberal basis. "I have been opposed throughout," he writes, "in establishing the *freedom* of the port, and anything like a liberal mode of management, and not only by the Penang government, but also in Bengal. The Bengal merchants, or rather one or two of them whom I could name, would have preferred the old system, by which they might have monopolised the early resources of the place, and thus checked its progress to importance."

Returning to Bencoolen in the middle of the year 1823, Sir Stamford set sail for England on the 2d of February 1824. On the evening after leaving the harbour, and when the ship was about fifty miles from land, the crew were roused by the cry of fire. They had just time to lower the boats and escape—Sir Stamford half-dressed, Lady Raffles and the children taken out of bed with neither shoes nor stockings, and only a blanket round them—when the ship burst out into one mass of flame. After a hard night's rowing they reached Bencoolen, and were once more in the home they had left but a few hours before. Almost the only loser by this calamity was Sir Stamford; but to him the loss was beyond all repair. The whole of his drawings, all his collections in botany and zoology, all his written descriptions and papers, every document and memorandum he possessed, fell a prey to the flames. Yet such was his perseverance, that on the morning after his loss he set about doing all he could to lessen it, recommencing an elaborate map of Sumatra, and despatching men into the forests for specimens of plants and animals.

On the 8th of April Sir Stamford again set sail, and in a few months he landed at Plymouth. For nearly two years his time was occupied in furthering at home those objects to which he had devoted himself abroad. It was only indirectly, indeed, that he could exert any influence over the island of Sumatra; for in 1824 Bencoolen was given up to the Dutch in exchange for Malacca, so that the whole island of Sumatra, as well as Java and the smaller Spice Islands, was now in their possession. In the progress of Sincapore, however, he took especial interest; and to the last, his scheme of a great educational institution for all the Malays of the Archipelago was near his heart. His health,

however, had suffered severely from his long and arduous services in the East, and being taken suddenly ill, he died on the 5th of July 1826, in the forty-fifth year of his age.

CONCLUSION.

Thus died at a comparatively early age one of the greatest modern statesmen, a man not more remarkable for his benevolence of disposition, than his comprehensive abilities and sound practical views. Hampered in all his magnificent designs by events over which he could exercise no control, prevented from adding a new and flourishing empire to Britain, we have yet seen how much he accomplished with the means at his disposal, what tyrannic barbarisms he quelled, what a measure of civilisation and human happiness he achieved. His successful institution of new and vigorous states of society in Java, Bencoolen, and Sincapore, with the whole apparatus of enlightened laws and municipal establishments, must ever be considered one of the grandest facts in British colonial history—grand from its very contrast with the narrow-minded policy usually pursued with relation to our distant possessions and settlements—and marks alike the profoundness of his judgment, and the dauntless integrity of his character.

While lamenting that so many of the arrangements of this great man were subsequently and remorselessly overthrown, their success for a period of five years was of considerable value, in showing how social disorders consequent on a long period of misrule may be safely and satisfactorily remedied. His uncompromising abolition of slavery in Java alone was an act of signal triumph, suggestive of what might elsewhere be effected, if undertaken with a right good will and in a right way. Unlike men pledged by their prophetic fears and declamations to prove that emancipation would be a forerunner of universal ruin, Sir Stamford Raffles approached the subject with an all-abounding faith in the power of *justice*, *kindness*, and *conciliation*; and the result—joy, peace, industry, in place of misery, discontent, and idleness—evinced the truthfulness of his calculations. With the like soundness of conception did he sweep away the barren monopolies of centuries, liberate commerce, and establish, by indisputable evidence, that freedom of trade is not only the most just and rational, but that it is also the most expedient for all parties—blessing not less the receivers than the givers. Whether, therefore, as the governor of a colony, a law-giver, a financier, and a man of taste and science, Sir Stamford Raffles may be said to have been rarely surpassed, and as rarely equalled. How incomparably more glorious his achievements than those which the proudest warrior can boast—how much more worthy will his name be held in remembrance than that of the destroyer of nations, surrounded by all the honours which kings and courts can bestow!