


BRITISH BORNEO:
SKETCHES OF
BRUNAI, SARAWAK, LABUAN
AND
NORTH BORNEO.

CHAPTER I.

N 1670 CHARLES II granted to the Hudson's Bay Company a Charter of Incorporation, His Majesty delegating to the Company actual sovereignty over a very large portion of British North America, and assigning to them the exclusive monopoly of trade and mining in the territory. Writing in 1869, Mr. WILLIAM FORSYTH, Q.C., says:—"I have endeavoured to give an account of the constitution and history of the *last* of the great proprietary companies of England, to whom a kind of delegated authority was granted by the Crown. It was by some of these that distant Colonies were founded, and one, the most powerful of them all, established our Empire in the East and held the sceptre of the Great Mogul. But they have passed away

—-—-fuit Ilium et ingens
Gloria Teucrorum—

and the Hudson's Bay Company will be no exception to the rule. It may continue to exist as a Trading Company, but as a Territorial Power it must make up its mind to fold its (buffalo) robes round it and die with dignity." Prophesying is hazardous work. In November, 1881, two hundred and

eleven years after the Hudson's Bay Charter, and twelve years after the date of Mr. FORSYTH'S article, Queen VICTORIA granted a Charter of Incorporation to the British North Borneo Company, which, by confirming the grants and concesssions acquired from the Sultans of Brunai and Sulu, constitutes the Company the sovereign ruler over a territory of 31,000 square miles, and, as the permission to trade, included in the Charter, has not been taken advantage of, the British North Borneo Company now does actually exist "as a Territorial Power" and not "as a Trading Company."

Not only this, but the example has been followed by Prince BISMARCK, and German Companies, on similar lines, have been incorporated by their Government on both coasts of Africa and in the Pacific; and another British Company, to operate on the Niger River Districts, came into existence by Royal Charter in July, 1886.

It used to be by no means an unusual thing to find an educated person ignorant not only of Borneo's position on the map, but almost of the very existence of the island which, regarding Australia as a continent, and yielding to the claims recently set up by New Guinea, is the second largest island in the world, within whose limits could be comfortably packed England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland, with a sea of dense jungle around them, as WALLACE has pointed out. Every school-board child now, however, knows better than this.

Though Friar ODORIC is said to have visited it about 1322, and LUDOVICO BERTHEMA, of Bologna, between 1503 and 1507, the existence of this great island, variously estimated to be from 263,000 to 300,000 square miles in extent, did not become generally known to Europeans until, in 1518, the Portuguese LORENZO DE GOMEZ touched at the city of Brunai. He was followed in 1521 by the Spanish expedition, which under the leadership of the celebrated Portuguese circumnavigator MAGELLAN, had discovered the Philippines, where, on the island of Mactan, their leader was killed in April, 1520. An account of the voyage was written by PIGAFETTA, an Italian volunteer in the expedition, who accompanied the fleet to Brunai after MAGELLAN'S death, and published a glowing

account of its wealth and the brilliancy of its Court, with its royally caparisoned elephants, a report which it is very difficult to reconcile with the present squalid condition of the existing "Venice of Hovels," as it has been styled from its palaces and houses being all built in, or rather over, the river to which it owes its name.

The Spaniards found at Brunai Chinese manufactures and Chinese trading junks, and were so impressed with the importance of the place that they gave the name of Borneo—a corruption of the native name Brunai—to the whole island, though the inhabitants themselves know no such general title for their country.

In some works, Pulau Kalamantan, which would signify *wild mangoes island*, is given as the native name for Borneo, but it is quite unknown, at any rate throughout North Borneo, and the island is by no means distinguished by any profusion of wild mangoes.*

In 1573, a Spanish Embassy to Brunai met with no very favourable reception, and three years later an expedition from Manila attacked the place and, deposing a usurping Sultan, re-instated his brother on the throne, who, to shew his gratitude, declared his kingdom tributary to Spain.

The Portuguese Governor of the Moluccas, in 1526, claimed the honour of being the first discoverer of Borneo, and this nation appears to have carried on trade with some parts of the island till they were driven out of their Colonies by the Dutch in 1609. But neither the Portuguese nor the Spaniards seem to have made any decided attempt to gain a footing in Borneo, and it is not until the early part of the 17th century that we find the two great rivals in the eastern seas—the English and the Dutch East India Trading Companies—turning their attention to the island. The first Dutchman to visit Borneo was OLIVER VAN NOORT, who anchored at Brunai in December, 1600, but though the Sultan was friendly, the natives made an attempt to seize his ship, and he sailed the following month, having come to the conclusion that the city was a nest of rogues.

* The explanation *Sago Island* has been given, *lamantah* being the native term for the raw sago sold to the factories.

The first English connection with Borneo was in 1609, when trade was opened with Sukadana, diamonds being said to form the principal portion of it.

The East India Company, in 1702, established a Factory at Banjarmassin, on the South Coast, but were expelled by the natives in 1706. Their rivals, the Dutch, also established Trading Stations on the South and South-West Coasts.

In 1761, the East India Company concluded a treaty with the Sultan of Sulu, and in the following year an English Fleet, under Admiral DRAKE and Sir WILLIAM DRAPER captured Manila, the capital of the Spanish Colony of the Philippines. They found in confinement there a Sultan of Sulu who, in gratitude for his release, ceded to the Company, on the 12th September, 1762, the island of Balambangan, and in January of the following year Mr. DALRYMPLE was deputed to take possession of it and hoist the British flag. Towards the close of 1763, the Sultan of Sulu added to his cession the northern portion of Borneo and the southern half of Palawan, together with all the intermediate islands. Against all these cessions the Spanish entered their protest, as they claimed the suzerainty over the Sulu Archipelago and the Sulu Dependencies in Borneo and the islands. This claim the Spaniards always persisted in, until, on the 7th March, 1885, a Protocol was entered into by England and Germany and Spain, whereby Spanish supremacy over the Sulu Archipelago was recognised on condition of their abandoning all claim to the portions of Northern Borneo which are now included in the British North Borneo Company's concessions.

In November, 1768, the Court of Directors in London, with the approval of Her Majesty's Ministers, who promised to afford protection to the new Colony, issued orders to the authorities at Bombay for the establishment of a settlement at Balambangan with the intention of diverting to it the China trade, of drawing to it the produce of the adjoining countries, and of opening a port for the introduction of spices, etc. by the Bugis, and for the sale of Indian commodities. The actual date of the foundation of the settlement is not known, but Mr. F. C. DANVERS states that in 1771 the Court ordered that

the Government should be vested in "a chief and two other persons of Council," and that the earliest proceedings extant are dated Sulu, 1773, and relate to a broil in the streets between Mr. ALCOCK, the second in the Council, and the Surgeon of the *Britannia*.

This was a somewhat unpropitious commencement, and in 1774 the Court are found writing to Madras, to which Balambangan was subordinate, complaining of the "imprudent management and profuse conduct" of the Chief and Council.

In February, 1775, Sulu pirates surprised the stockade, and drove out the settlers, capturing booty valued at about a million dollars. The Company's officials then proceeded to the island of Labuan, now a British Crown Colony, and established a factory, which was maintained but for a short time, at Brunai itself. In 1803 Balambangan was again occupied, but as no commercial advantage accrued, it was abandoned in the following year, and so ended all attempts on the part of the East India Company to establish a Colony in Borneo.

While at Balambangan, the officers, in 1774, entered into negotiations with the Sultan of Brunai, and, on undertaking to protect him against Sulu and Mindanau pirates, acquired the exclusive trade in all the pepper grown in his country.

The settlement of Singapore, the present capital of the Straits Settlements, by Sir STAMFORD RAFFLES, under the orders of the East India Company in 1819, again drew attention to Borneo, for that judiciously selected and free port soon attracted to itself the trade of the Celebes, Borneo and the surrounding countries, which was brought to it by numerous fleets of small native boats. These fleets were constantly harassed and attacked and their crews carried off into slavery by the Balinini, Illanun, and Dyak pirates infesting the Borneo and Celebes coasts, and the interference of the British Cruisers was urgently called for and at length granted, and was followed, in the natural course of events, by political intervention, resulting in the brilliant and exciting episode whereby the modern successor of the olden heroes—Sir JAMES BROOKE—obtained for his family, in 1840, the kingdom of Sarawak, on the west coast of the island,

which he in time purged of its two plague spots—head-hunting on shore, and piracy and slave-dealing afloat—and left to his heir, who has worthily taken up and carried on his work, the unique inheritance of a settled Eastern Kingdom, inhabited by the once dreaded head-hunting Dyaks and piratical Mahomedan Malays, the government of whom now rests absolutely in the hands of its one paternally despotic white ruler, or Rája. Sarawak, although not yet formally proclaimed a British Protectorate,* may thus be deemed the first permanent British possession in Borneo. Sir JAMES BROOKE was also employed by the British Government to conclude, on 27th May, 1847, a treaty with the Sultan of Brunai, whereby the cession to us of the small island of Labuan, which had been occupied as a British Colony in December, 1846, was confirmed, and the Sultan engaged that no territorial cession of any portion of his country should ever be made to any Foreign Power without the sanction of Great Britain.

These proceedings naturally excited some little feeling of jealousy in our Colonial neighbours—the Dutch—who ineffectually protested against a British subject becoming the ruler of Sarawak, as a breach of the tenor of the treaty of London of 1824, and they took steps to define more accurately the boundaries of their own dependencies in such other parts of Borneo as were still open to them. What we now call British North Borneo, they appear at that time to have regarded as outside the sphere of their influence, recognising the Spanish claim to it through their suzerainty, already alluded to, over the Sulu Sultan.

With this exception, and that of the Brunai Sultanate, already secured by the British Treaty, and Sarawak, now the property of the BROOKE family, the Dutch have acquired a nominal suzerainty over the whole of the rest of Borneo, by treaties with the independent rulers—an area comprising about two-thirds of the whole island, probably not a tenth part of which is under their actual direct administrative control.

* A British Protectorate was established over North Borneo on the 12th May, over Sarawak on the 14th June, and over Brunai on the 17th September, 1888. *Vide Appendix.*

They appear to have been so pre-occupied with the affairs of their important Colony of Java and its dependencies, and the prolonged, exhausting and ruinously expensive war with the Achinese in Sumatra, that beyond posting Government Residents at some of the more important points, they have hitherto done nothing to attract European capital and enterprise to Borneo, but it would now seem that the example set by the British Company in the North is having its effect, and I hear of a Tobacco Planting Company and of a Coal Company being formed to operate on the East Coast of Dutch Borneo.

The Spanish claim to North Borneo was a purely theoretical one, and not only their claim, but that also of the Sulus through whom they claimed, was vigorously disputed by the Sultans of Brunai, who denied that, as asserted by the Sulus, any portion of Borneo had been ceded to them by a former Sultan of Brunai, who had by their help defeated rival claimants and been seated on the throne. The Sulus, on their side, would own no allegiance to the Spaniards, with whom they had been more or less at war for almost three centuries, and their actual hold over any portion of North Borneo was of the slightest. Matters were in this position when Mr. ALFRED DENT, now Sir ALFRED DENT, K.C.M.G., fitted out an expedition, and in December, 1877, and January, 1878, obtained from the Sultans of Brunai and Sulu, in the manner hereafter detailed, the sovereign control over the North portion of Borneo, from the Kimanis river on the West to the Siboku river on the East, concessions which were confirmed by Her Majesty's Royal Charter in November, 1881.

I have now traced, in brief outline, the political history of Borneo from the time when the country first became generally known to Europeans—in 1518—down to its final division between Great Britain and the Netherlands in 1881.

If we can accept the statements of the earlier writers, Borneo was in its most prosperous stage before it became subjected to European influences, after which, owing to the mistaken and monopolising policy of the Commercial Companies then holding sway in the East, the trade and agriculture of this and other islands of the Malay Archipelago received a

blow from which at any rate that of Borneo is only now recovering. By the terms of its Charter, the British North Borneo Company is prohibited from creating trade monopolies, and of its own accord it has decided not to engage itself in trading transactions at all, and as RÁJA BROOKE'S Government is similar to that of a British Crown Colony, and the Dutch Government no longer encourage monopolies, there is good ground for believing that the wrong done is being righted, and that a brighter page than ever is now being opened for Borneo and its natives.

Before finishing with this part of the subject, I may mention that the United States Government had entered into a treaty with the Sultan of Brunai, in almost exactly the same words as the English one, including the clause prohibiting cessions of territory without the consent of the other party to the treaty, and, in 1878, Commodore SCHUFELDT was ordered by his Government to visit Borneo and report on the cessions obtained by Mr. DENT. I was Acting British Consul-General at the time, and before leaving the Commodore informed me emphatically that he could discover no American interests in Borneo, "neither white nor black."

The native population of Borneo is given in books of reference as between 1,750,000 and 2,500,000. The aborigines are of the Malay race, which itself is a variety of the Mongolian and indeed, when inspecting prisoners, I have often been puzzled to distinguish the Chinese from the Malay, they being dressed alike and the distinctive *pig-tail* having been shaved off the former as part of the prison discipline.

These Mongolian Malays from High Asia, who presumably migrated to the Archipelago *viá* the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra, must, however, have found Borneo and other of the islands partially occupied by a Caucasian race, as amongst the aborigines are still found individuals of distinctive Caucasian type, as has been pointed out to be the case with the Buludupih tribe of British North Borneo, by Dr. MONTANO, whom I had the pleasure of meeting in Borneo in 1878-9. To these the name of pre-Malays has been given, but Professor KEANE, to whom I beg to acknowledge my indebtedness on

these points, prefers the title of Indonesians. The scientific descriptions of a typical Malay is as follows:—"Stature little over five feet, complexion olive yellow, head brachy-cephalous or round, cheek-bones prominent, eyes black and slightly oblique, nose small but not flat, nostrils dilated, hands small and delicate, legs thin and weak, hair black, coarse and lank, beard absent or scant;" but these Indonesians to whom belong most of the indigenous inhabitants of Celebes, are taller and have fairer or light brown complexions and regular features, connecting them with the brown Polynesians of the Eastern Pacific "who may be regarded as their descendants," and Professor KEANE accounts for their presence by assuming "a remote migration of the Caucasian race to South-Eastern Asia, of which evidences are not lacking in Camboja and elsewhere, and a further onward movement, first to the Archipelago and then East to the Pacific." It is needless to say that the aborigines themselves have the haziest and most unscientific notion of their own origin, as the following account, gravely related to me by a party of Buludupih, will exemplify:—

"The Origin of the Buludupih Race.

In past ages a Chinese* settler had taken to wife a daughter of the aborigines, by whom he had a female child. Her parents lived in a hilly district (*Bulud*=hill), covered with a large forest tree, known by the name of *opih*. One day a jungle fire occurred, and after it was over, the child jumped down from the house (native houses are raised on piles off the ground), and went up to look at a half burnt *opih* log, and suddenly disappeared and was never seen again. But the parents heard the voice of a spirit issue from the log, announcing that it had taken the child to wife and that, in course of time, the bereaved parents would find an infant in the jungle, whom they were to consider as the offspring of the marriage,

* The Buludupih inhabit the China or Kina-batangan river, and Sir HUGH Low, in a note to his history of the Sultans of Brunai, in a number of the Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, says that it is probable that in former days the Chinese had a Settlement or Factory at that river, as some versions of the native history of Brunai expressly state that the Chinese wife of one of the earliest Sultans was brought thence.

and who would become the father of a new race. The prophecy of the spirit was in due time fulfilled."

It somewhat militates against the correctness of this history that the Buludupihs are distinguished by the absence of Mongolian features.

The general appellation given to the aborigines by the modern Malays—to whom reference will be made later on—is *Dyak*, and they are divided into numerous tribes, speaking very different dialects of the Malayo-Polynesian stock, and known by distinctive names, the origin of which is generally obscure, at least in British North Borneo, where these names are *not*, as a rule, derived from those of the rivers on which they dwell.

The following are the names of some of the principal North Borneo aboriginal tribes:—Kadaians, Dusuns, Ida'ans, Bisaias, Buludupihs, Eraans, Subans, Sun-Dyaks, Muruts, Tagaas. Of these, the Kadaians, Buludupihs, Eraans and one large section of the Bisaias have embraced the religion of Mahomet; the others are Pagans, with no set form of religion, no idols, but believing in spirits and in a future life, which they localise on the top of the great mountain of Kina-balu. These Pagans are a simple and more natural, less self-conscious, people than their Mahomedan brethren, who are ahead of them in point of civilization, but are more reserved, more proud and altogether less "jolly," and appear, with their religion, to have acquired also some of the characteristics of the modern or true Malays. A Pagan can sit, or rather squat, with you and tell you legends, or, perhaps, on an occasion join in a glass of grog, whereas the Mahomedan, especially the true Malay, looks upon the Englishman as little removed from a "Kafir"—an uncircumcised Philistine—who through ignorance constantly offends in minor points of etiquette, who eats pig and drinks strong drink, is ignorant of the dignity of repose, and whose accidental physical and political superiority in the present world will be more than compensated for by the very inferior and uncomfortable position he will attain in the next. The aborigines inhabit the interior parts of North Borneo, and all along the coast is found a fringe of true Malays, talk-

ing modern Malay and using the Arabic written character, whereas the aborigines possess not even the rudiments of an alphabet and, consequently, no literature at all.

How is the presence in Borneo of this more highly civilized product of the Malay race, differing so profoundly in language and manners from their kinsmen—the aborigines—to be accounted for? Professor KEANE once more comes to our assistance, and solves the question by suggesting that the Mongolian Malays from High Asia who settled in Sumatra, attained there a real national development in comparatively recent times, and after their conversion to Mahomedanism by the Arabs, from whom, as well as from the Bhuddist missionaries who preceded them, they acquired arts and an elementary civilization, spread to Borneo and other parts of Malaysia and quickly asserted their superiority over the less advanced portion of their race already settled there. This theory fits in well with the native account of the distribution of the Malay race, which makes Menangkabau, in Southern Sumatra, the centre whence they spread over the Malayan islands and peninsula.

The Professor further points out, that in prehistoric times the Malay and Indonesian stock spread westwards to Madagascar and eastwards to the Philippines and Formosa, Micronesia and Polynesia. "This astonishing expansion of the Malaysian people throughout the Oceanic area is sufficiently attested by the diffusion of common (Malayo-Polynesian) speech from Madagascar to Easter Island and from Hawaii to New Zealand."

CHAPTER II.

The headquarters of the true Malay in Northern Borneo is the City of Brunai, on the river of that name, on the North-West Coast of the island, where resides the Court of the only nominally independent Sultan now remaining in the Archipelago.*

The Brunai river is probably the former mouth of the Limbang, and is now more a salt water inlet than a river. Con-

* He has since been "protected"—see ante page 6, note.

trary, perhaps, to the general idea, an ordinary eastern river, at any rate until the limit of navigability for European craft is attained, is not, as a rule, a thing of beauty by any means.

The typical Malay river debouches through flat, fever-haunted swampy country, where, for miles, nothing meets the eye but the monotonous dark green of the level, interminable mangrove forest, with its fantastic, interlacing roots, whose function it appears to be to extend seaward, year by year, its dismal kingdom of black fetid mud, and to veil from the rude eye of the intruder the tropical charms of the country at its back. After some miles of this cheerless scenery, and at a point where the fresh water begins to mingle with the salt, the handsome and useful *nipa* palm, with leaves twenty to thirty feet in length, which supply the native with the material for the walls and roof of his house, the wrapper for his cigarette, the sugar for his breakfast table, the salt for his daily needs and the strong drink to gladden his heart on his feast days, becomes intermixed with the mangrove and finally takes its place—a pleasing change, but still monotonous, as it is so dense that, itself growing in the water, it quite shuts out all view of the bank and surrounding country.

One of the first signs of the fresh river water, is the occurrence on the bank of the graceful *nibong* palm, with its straight, slender, round stem, twenty to thirty feet in height, surmounted with a plume of green leaves. This palm, cut into lengths and requiring no further preparation, is universally employed by the Malay for the posts and beams of his house, always raised several feet above the level of the ground, or of the water, as the case may be, and, split up into lathes of the requisite size, forms the frame-work of the walls and roof, and constitutes the flooring throughout. With the pithy centre removed, the *nibong* forms an efficient aqueduct, in the absence of bambu, and its young, growing shoot affords a cabbage, or salad, second only to that furnished by the coconut, which will next come into view, together with the betel (*Areca*) nut palm, if the river visited is an inhabited one; but if uninhabited, the traveller will find nothing but thick, almost impenetrable jungle, with mighty trees shooting up one hun-

dred to a hundred and fifty feet without a branch, in their endeavour to get their share of the sun-light, and supporting on their trunks and branches enormous creepers, rattans, graceful ferns and lovely orchids and other luxuriant epiphytal growths. Such is the typical North Borneo river, to which, however, the Brunai is a solitary exception. The mouth of the Brunai river is approached between pretty verdant islets, and after passing through a narrow and tortuous passage, formed naturally by sandbanks and artificially by a barrier of stones, bare at low water, laid down in former days to keep out the restless European, you find your vessel, which to cross the bar should not draw more than thirteen or fourteen feet, in deep water between green, grassy, hilly, picturesque banks, with scarcely a sign of the abominable mangrove, or even of the *nipa*, which, however, to specially mark the contrast formed by this stream, are both to be found in abundance in the *upper* portion of the river, which the steamer cannot enter. After passing a small village or two, the first object which used to attract attention was the brick ruins of a Roman Catholic Church, which had been erected here by the late Father CUARTERON, a Spanish Missionary of the Society of the Propaganda Fide, who, originally a jovial sea captain, had the good fortune to light upon a wrecked treasure ship in the Eastern seas, and, feeling presumably unwonted twinges of conscience, decided to devote the greater part of his wealth to the Church, in which he took orders, eventually attaining the rank of Prefect Apostolic. His Mission, unfortunately, was a complete failure, but though his assistants were withdrawn, he stuck to his post to the last and, no doubt, did a certain amount of good in liberating, from time to time, Spanish subjects he found in slavery on the Borneo Coast.

Had the poor fellow settled in the interior, amongst the Pagans, he might, by his patience and the example of his good life, have made some converts, but amongst the Mahomedans of the coast it was labour in vain. The bricks of his Brunai Church have since been sold to form the foundation of a steam sawmill.

Turning a sharp corner, the British Consulate is reached,

where presides, and flies with pride the Union Jack, Her Majesty's Consular Agent, Mr. or Inche MAHOMET, with his three wives and thirteen children. He is a native of Malacca and a clever, zealous, courteous and hospitable official, well versed in the political history of Brunai since the advent of Sir JAMES BROOKE.

The British is the only Consulate now established at Brunai, but once the stars and stripes proudly waved over the Consulate of an unpaid American Consul. There was little scope at Brunai for a white man in pursuit of the fleeting dollar, and one day the Consulate was burnt to the ground, and a heavy claim for compensation for this alleged act of incendiarism was sent in to the Sultan. His Highness disputed the claim, and an American man-of-war was despatched to make enquiries on the spot. In the end, the compensation claimed was not enforced, and Mr. MOSES, the Consul, was not subsequently, I think, appointed to any other diplomatic or consular post by the President of the Republic. A little further on are the palaces, shops and houses of the city of Brunai, all, with the exception of a few brick shops belonging to Chinamen, built over the water in a reach where the river broadens out, and a vessel can steam up the High Street and anchor abreast of the Royal Palace. When PIGAFETTA visited the port in 1521, he estimated the number of houses at 25,000, which, at the low average of six to a house, would give Brunai a population of 150,000 people, many of whom were Chinese, cultivating pepper gardens, traces of which can still be seen on the now deserted hills. Sir SPENCER ST. JOHN, formerly H. B. M. Consul-General in Borneo, and who put the population at 25,000 at the lowest in 1863, asserts that fifteen is a fair average to assign to a Brunai house, which would make the population in PIGAFETTA'S time 375,000. From his enquiries he found that the highest number was seventy, in the Sultan's palace, and the lowest seven, in a fisherman's small hut. PIGAFETTA, however, probably alluded to families, *fires* I think is the word he makes use of, and more than one family is often found occupying a Brunai house. The present population perhaps does not number

more than 12,000 or 15,000 natives, and about eighty Chinese and a few Kling shop-keepers, as natives of India are here styled. Writing in 1845, Sir JAMES BROOKE, then the Queen's first Commissioner to Brunai, says with reference to this Sultanate:—"Here the experiment may be fairly tried, on the smallest possible scale of expense, whether a beneficial European influence may not re-animate a falling State and at the same time extend our commerce. * * * If this tendency to decay and extinction be inevitable, if this approximation of European policy to native Government should be unable to arrest the fall of the Bornean dynasty, yet we shall retrieve a people already habituated to European habits and manners, industrious interior races; and if it become necessary, a Colony gradually formed and ready to our hand in a rich and fertile country," and elsewhere he admits that the regeneration of the Borneo Malays through themselves was a hobby of his. The experiment has been tried and, so far as concerns the re-animation of the Malay Government of Brunai, the verdict must be "a complete failure." The English are a practical race, and self-interest is the guide of nations in their intercourse with one another; it was not to be supposed that they would go out of their way to teach the degenerate Brunai aristocracy how to govern in accordance with modern ideas; indeed, the Treaty we made with them, by prohibiting, for instance, their levying customs duties, or royalties, on the export of such jungle products as gutta percha and India rubber, in the collection of which the trees yielding them are entirely destroyed, and by practically suggesting to them the policy, or rather the impolicy, of imposing the heavy duty of \$1 per registered ton on all European Shipping entering their ports, whether in cargo or in ballast, scarcely tended to stave off their collapse, and the Borneans must have formed their own conclusions from the fact that when they gave up portions of their territory to the BROOKES and to the British North Borneo Company, the British Government no longer called for the observance of these provisions of the Treaty in the ceded districts. The English have got all they wanted from Brunai, but I think it can scarcely be said that they have

done very much for it in return. I remember that the late Sultan thought it an inexplicable thing that we could not assist him to recover a debt due to him by one of the British Coal Companies which tried their luck in Borneo. Moreover, even the cession to their good and noble friend Sir JAMES BROOKE of the Brunai Province of Sarawak has been itself also, to a certain extent, a factor in their Government's decay, that State, under the rule of the Rája—CHARLES BROOKE—having attained its present prosperous condition at the expense of Brunai and by gradually absorbing its territory.

Between British North Borneo, on the one side, and Sarawak, on the other, the sea-board of Brunai, which, when we first appeared on the scene, extended from Cape Datu to Marudu Bay—some 700 miles—is now reduced to 125 or 130 miles, and, besides the river on which it is built, Brunai retains but two others of any importance, both of which are in rebellion of a more or less vigorous character, and the whole State of Brunai is so sick that its case is now under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

Thus ends in collapse the history of the last independent Malay Government. Excepting only Johor (which is prosperous owing to its being under the wing of Singapore, which fact gives confidence to European and Chinese capitalists and Chinese labourers, and to its good fortune in having a wise and just ruler in its Sultan, who owes his elevation to British influences), all the Malay Governments throughout the Malay Archipelago and in the Malay Peninsula are now subject either to the English, the Dutch, the Spanish or the Portuguese. This decadence is not due to any want of vitality in the race, for under European rule the Malay increases his numbers, as witness the dense population of Java and the rapidly growing Malay population of the Straits Settlements.

That the Malay does so flourish in contact with the European and the Chinese is no doubt to some extent due to his attachment to the Mahomedan faith, which as a tee-total religion is, so far, the most suitable one for a tropical race; it has also to be remembered that he inhabits tropical countries, where the white man cannot perform out-door labour

and appears only as a Government Official, a merchant or a planter.

But the decay of the Brunai aristocracy was probably inevitable. Take the life of a young noble. He is the son of one of perhaps thirty women in his father's harem, his mother is entirely without education, can neither read nor write, is never allowed to appear in public or have any influence in public affairs, indeed scarcely ever leaves her house, and one of her principal excitements, perhaps, is the carrying on of an intrigue, an excitement enhanced by the fact that discovery means certain death to herself and her lover.

Brunai being a water town, the youngster has little or no chance of a run and game ashore, and any exercise he takes is confined to *being* paddled up and down the river in a canoe, for to paddle himself would be deemed much too degrading—a Brunai noble should never put his hand to any honest physical work—even for his own recreation. I once imported a Rob Roy canoe from England and amused myself by making long paddling excursions, and I would also sometimes, to relieve the monotony of a journey in a native boat, take a spell at the paddle with the men, and I was gravely warned by a native friend that by such action I was seriously compromising myself and lowering my position in the eyes of the higher class of natives. At an early age the young noble becomes an object of servile adulation to the numerous retainers and slaves, both male and female, and is by them initiated in vicious practices and, while still a boy, acquires from them some of the knowledge of a fast man of the world. As a rule he receives no sort of school education. He neither rides nor joins in the chase and, since the advent of Europeans, there have been no wars to brace his nerves, or call out any of the higher qualities of mind or body which may be latent in him; nor is there any standing army or navy in which he might receive a beneficial training. No political career, in the sense we attach to the term, is open to him, and he has no feelings of patriotism whatever. That an aristocracy thus nurtured should degenerate can cause no surprise. The general term for the nobles amongst the Brunais is *Pangeran*, and their numbers may be

guessed when it is understood that every son and daughter of every many-wived noble is also a Pangeran.

Some of these unfortunate noblemen have nothing wherewith to support their position, and in very recent times I have actually seen a needy Pangeran, in a British Colony where he could not live by oppression or theft, driven to work in a coal mine or drive a buffalo cart.

With the ordinary freeborn citizen of Brunai life opens under better auspices. The children are left much to themselves and are merry, precocious, naked little imps, able to look out for themselves at a very much earlier age than is the case with European infants, and it is wonderful to see quite little babies clambering up the rickety stairs leading from the river to the house, or crawling unheeded on the tottering verandahs. Almost before they can walk they can swim, and they have been known to share their mother's cigarettes while still in arms. All day long they amuse themselves in miniature canoes, rolling over and over in the water, regardless of crocodiles. Happy children! they have no school and no clothes—one might, perhaps, exclaim happy parents, too! Malays are very kind and indulgent to their children and I do not think I have seen or heard of a case of the application of the parental hand to any part of the infant person. As soon as he is strong enough, say eight or nine years of age, the young Malay, according to the *kampung*, or division of the town, in which his lot has been cast, joins in his father's trade and becomes a fisherman, a trader, or a worker in brass or in iron as the case may be. The girls have an equally free and easy time while young, their only garments being a silver fig leaf, fastened to a chain or girdle round the waist. As they grow up they help their mothers in their household duties, or by selling their goods in the daily floating market; they marry young and are, as a rule, kindly treated by their husbands. Although Mahomedans, they can go about freely and unveiled, a privilege denied to their sisters of the higher classes. The greatest misfortune for such a girl is, perhaps, the possession of a pretty face and figure, which may result in her being honoured with the attentions of a noble, in whose harem she

may be secluded for the rest of her life, and, as her charms wane her supply of both food and clothing is reduced to the lowest limit.

By the treaty with Great Britain traffic in slaves is put down, that is, Borneo is no longer the mart where, as in former days, the pirates can bring in their captives for sale; but the slaves already in the place have not been liberated, and a slave's children are slaves, so that domestic slavery, as it is termed, exists on a very considerable scale in Brunai. Slaves were acquired in the old days by purchase from pirates and, on any pretext, from the Pagan tribes of Borneo. For instance, if a feudal chief of an outlying river was in want of some cash, nothing was easier than for him to convict a man, who was the father of several children, of some imaginary offence, or neglect of duty, and his children, girls and boys, would be seized and carried off to Brunai as slaves. A favourite method was that of "forced trade." The chief would send a large quantity of trade goods to a Pagan village and leave them there to be sold at one hundred per cent. or more above their proper value, all legitimate trade being prohibited meanwhile, and if the money or barter goods were not forthcoming when demanded, the deficiency would be made up in slaves. This kind of oppression was very rife in the neighbourhood of the capital when I first became acquainted with Borneo in 1871, but the power of the chiefs has been much curtailed of late, owing to the extensive cessions of territory to Sarawak and the British North Borneo Company, and their hold on the rivers left to them has become very precarious, since the warlike Kyans passed under Rája BROOKE'S sway. This tribe, once the most powerful in Borneo, was always ready at the Sultan's call to raid on any tribe who had incurred his displeasure and revelled in the easy acquisition of fresh heads, over which to hold the triumphal dance. The Brunai Malays are not a warlike race, and the Rájás find that, without the Kyans, they are as a tiger with its teeth drawn and its claws pared, and the Pagan tribes have not been slow to make the discovery for themselves. Those on the Limbang river have been in open rebellion for the last three or four years

and are crying out to be taken under the protection of the Queen, or, failing that, then under the "Kompani," as the British North Borneo Company's Government like that of the East India Company in days gone by, is styled, or under Sarawak.

The condition of the domestic slaves is not a particularly hard one unless, in the case of a girl, she is compelled to join the harem, when she becomes technically free, but really only changes one sort of servitude for another and more degrading one. With this exception, the slaves live on friendly terms with their masters' families, and the propinquity of a British Colony—Labuan—has tended to ameliorate their condition, as an ill-used slave can generally find means to escape thither and, so long as he remains there, he is a free man.

The scientific description of a typical Malay has already been given, and it answers well on almost all points for the Brunai specimen, except that the nose, as well as being small, is, in European eyes, deficient as to "bridge," and the legs cannot be described as weak, indeed the Brunai Malay, male and female, is a somewhat fleshy animal. In temperament, the Malay is described as "taciturn, undemonstrative, little given to outward manifestations of joy or sorrow, courteous towards each other, kind to their women and children. Not elated by good or depressed by bad fortune, but capable of excesses when roused. Under the influence of religious excitement, losses at gambling, jealousy or other domestic troubles they are liable to *amok* or run-a-muck, an expression which appears to have passed into the English language." With strangers, the Brunai Malay is doubtless taciturn, but I have heard Brunai ladies among themselves, while enjoying their betel-nut, rival any old English gossips over their cup of tea, and on an expedition the men will sometimes keep up a conversation long into the night till begged to desist. Courtesy seems to be innate in every Malay of whatever rank, both in their intercourse with one another and with strangers. The meeting at Court of two Brunai nobles who, perhaps, entertain feelings of the greatest hatred towards each other, is an interesting study, and the display of mutual courtesy unrivalled.

I need scarcely say that horseplay and practical joking are unknown, contradiction is rarely resorted to and "chaff" is only known in its mildest form. The lowest Malay will never pass in front of you if it can be avoided, nor hand anything to another across you. Unless in case of necessity, a Malay will not arouse his friend from slumber, and then only in the gentlest manner possible. It is bad manners to point at all, but, if it is absolutely necessary to do so, the forefinger is never employed, but the person or object is indicated, in a sort of shamefaced way, with the thumb. It is impolite to bare a weapon in public, and Europeans often show their ignorance of native etiquette by asking a Malay visitor to let them examine the blade of the *kris* he is wearing. It is not considered polite to enquire after the welfare of the female members of a Brunai gentleman's household. For a Malay to uncover his head in your presence would be an impertinence, but a guttural noise in his throat after lunching with you is a polite way of expressing pleased satisfaction with the excellence of the repast. This latter piece of etiquette has probably been adopted from the Chinese. The low social position assigned to women by Brunai Malays, as by nearly all Mahomedan races, is of course a partial set-off to the general courtesy that characterises them. The average intelligence of what may be called the working class Malay is almost as far superior to that, say, of the British country bumpkin as are his manners. Mr. H. O. FORBES says in his "Naturalist in the Eastern Archipelago" that he was struck with the natives' acute observation in natural history and the accuracy with which they could give the names, habits and uses of animals and plants in the jungle, and the traveller cannot but admire the general handiness and adaptability to changed circumstances and customs and quickness of understanding of the Malay coolies whom he engages to accompany him.

Cannot one imagine the stolid surprise and complete obfuscation of the English peasant if an intelligent Malay traveller were to be suddenly set down in his district, making enquiries as to the, to him, novel forms of plants and animals and asking for minute information as to the manners and customs of

the new people amongst whom he found himself, and, generally, seeking for information as the reasons for this and for that?

Their religion sits somewhat lightly on the Brunai Malays; the Mahomedan Mosque in the capital was always in a very dirty and neglected state, though prayers were said there daily, and I have never seen a Borneo Malay under the influence of religious excitement.

Gambling prevails, doubtless, and so does cock-fighting, but neither is the absorbing passion which it seems, from travellers' accounts, to be with Malays elsewhere.

When visiting the Spanish settlements in Sulu and Balabac, I was surprised to find regular officially licensed cock-fighting pits, with a special seat for the Spanish Governor, who was expected to be present on high days and holidays. I have never come across a regular cockpit in Brunai, or in any part of northern Borneo.

The *amoks* that I have been cognisant of have, consequently, not been due to either religious excitement, or to losses at gambling, but, in nearly every case, to jealousy and domestic trouble, and their occurrence almost entirely confined to the British Colony of Labuan where, of course, the Mahomedan pains and penalties for female delinquencies could not be enforced. I remember one poor fellow whom I pitied very much. He had good reason to be jealous of his wife and, in our courts, could not get the redress he sought. He explained to me that a mist seemed to gather before his eyes and that he became utterly unconscious of what he was doing—his will was quite out of his control. Some half dozen people—children, men and women—were killed, or desperately wounded before he was overpowered. He acknowledged his guilt, and suffered death at the hands of the hangman with quiet dignity. Many tragical incidents in the otherwise uneventful history of Labuan may be traced to the manner in which marriages are contracted amongst the Borneo Malays. Marriages of mere love are almost unknown; they are generally a matter of bargain between the girls' parents and the expectant bridegroom, or his parents, and, practically, everything depends on

the amount of the dowry or *brihan*—literally “gift”—which the swain can pay to the former. In their own country there exist certain safeguards which prevent any abuse of this system, but it was found that under the English law a clever parent could manage to dispose of his daughter's hand several times over, so that really the plot of Mrs. CAMPBELL PRAED'S somewhat unpleasant play “Arianne” was anticipated in the little colony of Labuan. I was once called upon, as Coroner, to inquire into the deaths of a young man and his handsome young wife, who were discovered lying dead, side by side, on the floor of their house. The woman was found to be fearfully cut about; the man had but one wound, in his abdomen, penetrating the bowels. There was only one weapon by which the double murder could have been committed, a knife with a six inch blade, and circumstances seemed to point to the probability that the woman had first stabbed the man, who had then wrenched the knife from her grasp and hacked her to death. The man was not quite dead when found and he accused the dead woman of stabbing him. It was found, that they had not long been married and that, apparently with the girl's consent, her father had been negotiating for her marriage with another. The father himself was subsequently the first man murdered in British North Borneo after the assumption of the Government by the Company, and his murderer was the first victim of the law in the new Colony. Altogether a tragical story.

Many years ago another *amok*, which was near being tragical, had an almost comical termination. The then Colonial Treasurer was an entertaining Irishman of rather mature age. Walking down to his office one day he found in the road a Malay hacking at his wife and another man. Home rule not being then in fashion with the Irish, the Treasurer, armed only with his sun umbrella, attempted to interfere, when the *amoker* turned furiously on him and the Irish official, who was of spare build, took to his heels and made good his escape, the chase, though a serious matter to him, causing irrepressible mirth to onlookers. The man was never captured, and his victims, though disfigured, recovered. I remem-

ber being struck by the contemptuous reply of Sir HUGH LOW's Chinese servant when he warned him to be on his guard, as there was an *amoker* at large, and alluded to Mr. C.'s narrow escape—it was to the effect that the Treasurer was foolish to interfere in other people's concerns. This unwillingness to busy oneself in others' affairs, which sometimes has the appearance of callousness, is characteristic of Malays and Chinese.

The readers of a book of travels are somewhat under a disadvantage in forming their opinion of a country, in that incidents are focussed for them by those of the same nature being grouped together. I do not wish it to be thought that murders and *amoks* are at all common occurrences in Northern Borneo, indeed they are very few and far between, and criminal acts of all kinds are remarkably infrequent, that is, of course, if we regard head-hunting as an amusement sanctioned by usage, especially as, in the parts under native government, there is a total absence of any kind of police force, while every man carries arms, and houses with palm leaf walls and innocent of locks, bolts and bars, offer unusual temptations to the burglariously inclined. My wife and I nearly always slept without a watchman and with the doors and windows unclosed, the servants' offices being detached from the house, and we have never had any of our property stolen except by a "boy."

Brunai is governed by a Sultan styled Iang-di-pertuan, "he who rules," and four principal Ministers of State, "Wazirs"—the Pangeran Bandahara, the Pangeran di Gadong, the Pangeran Pamancha and the Pangeran Temenggong. These Ministers are generally men of the royal blood, and fly distinctive flags at their residences, that of the Bandahara being white, of the di Gadong, green, and of the Temenggong, red. The flags are remarkably simple and inexpensive, but quite distinctive, each consisting of a square bit of bunting or cloth of the requisite colour, with the exception of the Temenggong's, which is cut in the shape of a burgee. The Sultan's flag is a plain piece of yellow bunting, yellow being the Brunei royal colour, and no man, except the

Sovereign, is permitted to exhibit that colour in any portion of his dress. It shows how little importance attaches to the female sex that a lady, even a slave, can sport yellow in her dress, or any colour she chooses. Theoretically the duties of the Bandahara are those of a Home Secretary; the di Gadong is Keeper of the Seal and Chancellor of the Exchequer; the Pamancha's functions I am rather uncertain about, as the post has remained unfilled for many years past, but they would seem to partake of those of a Home Secretary; and the Temenggong is the War Minister and Military and Naval Commander-in-chief, and appears also to hear and decide criminal and civil cases in the city of Brunai. These appointments are made by the Sultan, and for life, but it will be understood that, in such a rough and ready system of government as that of Brunai, the actual influence of each Minister depends entirely on his own character and that of the Sultan. Sometimes one Minister will practically usurp the functions of some, or, perhaps, all the others, leaving them only their titles and revenues, while often, on a vacancy occurring, the Sultan does not make a fresh appointment, but himself appropriates the revenue of the office leaving the duties to take care of themselves.

To look after trade and commerce there is, in theory, an inferior Minister, the Pangeran Shabander.

There is another class of Ministers—*Mantri*—who are selected by the Sultan from among the people, and are chosen for their intelligence and for the influence and following they have amongst the citizens. They possess very considerable political power, their opinions being asked on important matters. Such are the two Juwatans and the Orang Kaya di Gadong, who may be looked upon as the principal officers of the Sultan and the Wazirs.

The State officials are paid by the revenues of certain districts which are assigned, as will be seen below, to the different offices.

The Mahomedan Malays, it has already been explained, were an invading and conquering race in Borneo, and their chiefs would seem to have divided the country, or, rather, the

inhabitants, amongst themselves, in much the same way as England was parcelled out among the followers of WILLIAM THE CONQUEROR. The people of all the rivers* and of the interior, up to the limits where the Brunai Malays can enforce their authority, own as their feudal lord and pay taxes to either the Sultan, in his unofficial capacity, or to one of the nobles, or else they are attached to the office of Sultan or one of the great Ministers of State, and, again theoretically speaking, all the districts in the Sultanate are known, from the fact of the people on them belonging to a noble, or to the reigning Sultan for the time being, or to one of the Ministers of State, as either:—

1. Ka-rájahan—belonging to the Sultan or Rája.
- or 2. Kouripan—belonging to certain public officials during their term of office.
- or 3. Pusaka or Tulin—belonging to the Sultan or any of the nobles in their unofficial capacity.

The crown and the feudal chiefs did not assert any claim to the land; there are, for instance, no “crown lands,” and, in the case of land not owned or occupied, any native could settle upon and cultivate it without payment of any rent or land tax, either to the Sultan or to the feudal chief of the district; consequently, land was comparatively little regarded, and what the feudal chief claimed was the people and not the land, so much so that, as pointed out by Mr. P. LEYS in a Consular report, in the case of the people removing from one river to another, they did not become the followers of the chief who owned the population amongst whom they settled, but remained subject to their former lord, who had the right of following them and collecting from them his taxes as before. It is only of quite recent years, imitating the example of the English in Labuan, where all the land was assumed to be the property of the Sovereign and leased to individuals for a term of years, that the nobles have, in some instances, put forward a claim to ownership of the land on which their followers

* Owing to the absence of roads and the consequent importance of rivers as means of getting about, nearly all districts in Borneo are named after their principal river.

chose to settle, and have endeavoured to pose as semi-independent princes. These feudal chiefs tax, or used to tax, their followers in proportion to their inability to resist their lords' demands. A poll tax, usually at the rate of \$2 for married men and \$1 for bachelors, is a form of taxation to which, in the absence of any land tax, no objection is made, but the chiefs had also the power of levying special taxes at their own sweet will, when they found their expenditure in excess of their income, and advantage was taken of any delay in payment of taxes, or of any breach of the peace, or act of theft occurring in a district, to impose excessive fines on the delinquents, all of which if paid went to the chief; and if the fine could not be paid, the defaulter's children might be seized and eventually sold into slavery. The system of "forced trade" I have alluded to when speaking on the subject of domestic slavery. The chiefs were all absentees and, while drawing everything they could out of their districts, did nothing for their wretched followers. The taxes were collected by their messengers and slaves, unscrupulous men who were paid by what they could get out of the people in excess of what they were bidden to demand, and who, while engaged in levying the contributions, lived at free quarters on the people, who naturally did their best to expedite their departure. Petty cases of dispute were settled by headmen appointed by the chief and termed *orang kaya*, literally "rich men." These *orang kayas* were often selected from their possessing some little property and being at the same time subservient to the chief. In many cases, it seemed to me, that they were chosen for their superior stupidity and pliability. I have made use of the past tense throughout my description of these feudal chiefs as, happily, for reasons already given, the "good old times" are rapidly passing away.

The laws of Brunai are, in theory, those inculcated by the Korán and there are one or two officials who have some slight knowledge of Mahomedan law. Owing to the cheap facilities offered by the numerous steamers at Singapore, there are many Hajis—that is, persons who have made the pilgrimage to Mecca—amongst the Brunais and the Kadaaans, amongst

the latter more especially, but of course a visit to Mecca does not necessarily imply that the pilgrim has obtained any actual knowledge of the holy book, which some of them can decipher, the Malays having adopted the Arabic alphabet, but without, however, understanding the meaning of the Arabic words of which it consists. A friend of mine, son of the principal exponent of Mahomedan law in the capital, and who became naturalised as a British subject, had studied law in Constantinople.

There is no gaol in Brunai, and fines are found to be a more profitable mode of punishment than incarceration, the judge generally pocketing the fine, and when it does become necessary to keep an offender in detention, it is done by placing his feet in the stocks, which are set up on the public staging or landing before the reception room of the Sultan, or of one of his chief Ministers, and the wretched man may be kept there for months.

The punishment for theft, sanctioned by the Korán, is by cutting off the right hand, but this barbarous, though effective, penalty has been discountenanced by the English. On one occasion, however, when acting as H. B. M. Consul-General, I received my information too late to interfere. I had been on a visit to the late Sultan in a British gunboat, and anchored off the palace. During the evening, just before dinner, notwithstanding the watch kept on deck, some natives came alongside and managed to hook out through the ports my gold watch and chain from off the Captain's table, and the first Lieutenant's revolver from his cabin. During our interview next morning with the Sultan, I twitted him on the skill and daring of Brunai thieves, who could perpetrate a theft from a friendly war-ship before the windows of the Royal palace. The Sultan said nothing, but was evidently much annoyed, and a few weeks afterwards the revolver and the remains of my watch and chain were sent to me at Labuan, with a letter saying that three thieves had been punished by having had their hands chopped off. I subsequently heard that two of the unfortunate men had died from the effects of this cruel punishment.

On another occasion, some Brunai thieves skilfully dismounted and carried off two brass signal guns from the poop of a merchant steamer at anchor in the river, eluding the vigilance of the quarter-master, while the skipper and some of the officers were asleep on the skylight close by. The guns were subsequently recovered.

Execution is either by means of the bow string or the *kris*.

I had once the unpleasant duty of having to witness the execution by the bow string of a man named MAIDIN, as it was feared that, being the son of a favourite officer of the Sultan, the execution might be a sham one. This man, with others, had raided a small settlement of Chinese traders from Labuan on the Borneo coast, killing several of the shop-keepers and looting the settlement. So weak was the central government, and so little importance did they attach to the murder of a few Chinese, that, notwithstanding the efforts of the British Consul, MAIDIN remained at liberty for nearly two years after the commission of the crime.

The execution took place at night. The murderer was bound, with his hands behind his back, in a large canoe, and a noose of rope was placed round his neck. Two men stood behind him; a short stick was inserted in the noose and twisted round and round by the two executioners, thereby causing the rope to compress the windpipe. MAIDIN'S struggles were soon over.

In the case of common people the *kris* is used, the executioner standing behind the criminal and pressing the *kris* downwards, through the shoulder, into the heart. This mode of execution has been retained by the European rulers of Sarawak. In British North Borneo the English mode by hanging has been adopted.

Formerly, when ancient customs were more strictly observed, any person using insulting expressions in talking of members of the Royal family was punished by having his tongue slit, and I was once shewn by the Temenggong, in whose official keeping it was, the somewhat cumbrous pair of scissors wherewith this punishment was inflicted, but I have never heard of its having been used during the last twenty years,

although opportunities could not have been wanting.

I was once horrified by being informed by an observant British Naval Officer, who had been to Brunai on duty, that he had been disgusted by noticing, notwithstanding our long connection with Brunai and supposed influence with the Sultan, so barbarous a mode of execution as that of keeping the criminal exposed, without food, day and night, on a stage on high posts in the river. I had never heard of this process, and soon discovered that my friend had mistaken men fishing, for criminals undergoing execution. Two men perch themselves up on posts, some distance apart, and let down by ropes a net into the river. Waiting patiently—and Brunais can sit still contentedly doing nothing for hours—they remain motionless until a shoal of fish passes over the net, when it is partially raised and the fish taken out by a third man, and the operation repeated.

I do not think my naval friend ever published his Brunai reminiscences.

I have already said there is no police force in Brunai; an official makes use of his own slaves to carry out his orders, where an European would call in the police. Neither is there any army and navy, but the theory is that the Sultan and Ministers can call on the Brunai people to follow them to war, but as they give neither pay nor sufficient food their call is not numerously responded to.

Every Brunai man has his own arms, spear, kris and buckler, supplemented by an old English "Tower" musket, or rifle, or by one of Chinese manufacture with an imitation of the Tower mark. The *parang*, or chopper, or cutlass, is always carried by a Malay, being used for all kinds of work, agricultural and other, and is also a useful weapon of offence or defence.

Brunai is celebrated for its brass cannon foundries and still produces handsome pieces of considerable size. PIGAFETTA describes cannon as being frequently discharged at Brunai during his visit there in 1521. Brass guns were formerly part of the currency in Brunai and, even now, you often hear the price of an article given as so many pikuls (a pikul=

133 $\frac{1}{3}$ lbs), or catties (a catty=1 $\frac{1}{3}$ lbs) of brass gun. The brass for the guns is chiefly furnished by the Chinese cash, which is current in the town.

In former days, in addition to brass guns, pieces of grey shirting (*belachu*) and of Nankin (*kain asap*) and small bits of iron were legal tender, and I have seen a specimen of a Brunei copper coinage one Sultan tried to introduce, but it was found to be so easily imitated by his subjects that it was withdrawn from circulation. At the present day silver dollars, Straits Settlements small silver pieces, and the copper coinage of Singapore, Sarawak and British North Borneo all pass current, the copper, however, unfortunately predominating. Recently the Sultan obtained \$10,000 of a copper coin of his own from Birmingham, but the traders and the Governments of Singapore and Labuan appear to have discountenanced its use, and he probably will not try a second shipment.

The profit on the circulation of copper coinage, which is only a token, is of course considerable, and the British North Borneo Company obtained a substantial addition to its revenue from the large amount of its coin circulated in Brunai. When the Sultan first mooted the idea of obtaining his own coin from England, one of the Company's officers expostulated feelingly with him, and I was told by an onlooker that the contrast of the expressions of the countenances of the immobile Malay and of the mobile European was most amusing. All that the Sultan replied to the objections of the officer was "It does not signify, Sir, my coin can circulate in your country and yours can circulate in mine," knowing well all the time the profit the Company was making.

The inhabitants of the city of Brunai are very lightly taxed, and there is no direct taxation. As above explained, there is no land tax, nor ground rent, and every man builds his own house and is his own landlord. The right of retailing the following articles is "farmed" out to the highest bidder by the Government, and their price consequently enhanced to the consumer:—Opium (but only a few of the nobles use the drug), foreign tobacco, curry stuff, wines and spirits (not used by the natives), salt, gambier (used for chewing with the

betel or *areca* nut), tea (little used by the natives) and earth-nut and coco-nut oil. There are no Municipal rates and taxes, the tidal river acting as a self cleansing street and sewer at the same time; neither are there any demands from a Poor Law Board.

On the other hand, there being no Army, Navy, Police, nor public buildings to keep up, the expenses of Government are wonderfully light also.

Other Government receipts, in addition to the above, are rent of Chinese house-boats or rather shop-boats, pawn-broking and gambling licenses, a "farm" of the export of hides, royalties on sago and gutta percha, tonnage dues on European vessels visiting the port, and others. The salaries and expenses of the Government Departments are defrayed from the revenues of the rivers, or districts attached to them.

Considerable annual payments are now made by Sarawak and British North Borneo for the territorial cessions obtained by them. The annual contribution by Sarawak is about \$16,000, and by the British North Borneo \$11,800. These sums are apportioned amongst the Sultan and nobles who had interests in the ceded districts. I may say here that the payment by British North Borneo to the Sultan of the State, under the arrangement made by Mr. DENT already referred to, is one of \$5,000 per annum.

An annual payment is also made by Mr. W. C. COWIE for the sole right* of working coal in the Sultanate, which he holds for a period of several years. Coal occurs throughout the island of Borneo, and its existence has long been known. It is worked on a small scale in Sarawak and in some portions of Dutch Borneo, and the unsuccessful attempts to develop the coal resources of the Colony of Labuan will be referred to later on.

In the Brunai Sultanate, with which we are at present concerned, coal occurs abundantly in the Brunai river and elsewhere, but it is only at present worked by Mr. COWIE and his partners at Muara, at the mouth of the Brunai river—

* This right was transferred by Mr. COWIE to Rája BROOKE in 1883.

Muara, indeed, signifying in Malay a river's mouth. The Revd. J. E. TENNISON-WOOD, well known in Australia as an authority on geological questions, thus describes the Muara coalfields:—"About twenty miles to the South-west of Labuan is the mouth of the Brunai river. Here the rocks are of quite a different character, and much older. There are sandstones, shales, and grits, with ferruginous joints. The beds are inclined at angles of 25 to 45 degrees. They are often altered into a kind of chert. At Muara there is an outcrop of coal seams twenty, twenty-five and twenty-six feet thick. The coal is of excellent quality, quite bitumenised, and not brittle. The beds are being worked by private enterprise. I saw no fossils, but the beds and the coal reminded me much of the older Australian coals along the Hunter river. The mines are of great value. They are rented for a few thousand dollars by two enterprising Scotchmen, from the Sultan of Brunai. The same sovereign would part with the place altogether for little or nothing. Why not have our coaling station there? Or what if Germany, France or Russia should purchase the same from the independent Sultan of Brunai?" As if to give point to the concluding remarks, a Russian man-of-war visited Muara and Brunai early in 1887, and shewed considerable interest in the coal mines. *

CHAPTER III.

The fairest way, perhaps, of giving my readers an idea of what Brunai was and what it is, will be by quoting first from the description of the Italian PIGAFETTA, who was there in 1521, and then from that of my friend the late Mr. STAIR ELPHINSTONE DALRYMPLE, who visited the city with me in 1884. PIGAFETTA'S description I extract from CRAWFORD'S *Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands*.

"When," says he, "we reached the city, we had to wait two hours in the *prahu* (boat or barge) until there had arrived two elephants, caparisoned in silk-cloth, and twelve men, each

* The British Protectorate has obviated the danger.

furnished with a porcelain vase, covered with silk, to receive and to cover our presents. We mounted the elephants, the twelve men going before, carrying the presents. We thus proceeded to the house of the Governor, who gave us a supper of many dishes. Next day we were left at our leisure until twelve o'clock, when we proceeded to the King's palace. We were mounted, as before, on elephants, the men bearing the gifts going before us. From the Governor's house to the palace the streets were full of people armed with swords, lances and targets; the King had so ordered it. Still mounted on the elephants we entered the court of the palace. We then dismounted, ascended a stair, accompanied by the Governor and some chiefs and entered a great hall full of courtiers. Here we were seated on carpets, the presents being placed near to us. At the end of the great hall, but raised above it, there was one of less extent hung with silken cloth, in which were two curtains, on raising which, there appeared two windows, which lighted the hall. Here, as a guard to the King, there were three hundred men with naked rapiers in hand resting on their thighs. At the farther end of this smaller hall, there was a great window with a brocade curtain before it, on raising which, we saw the King seated at a table masticating betel, and a little boy, his son, beside him. Behind him women only were to be seen. A chieftain then informed us, that we must not address the King directly, but that if we had anything to say, we must say it to him, and he would communicate it to a courtier of higher rank than himself within the lesser hall. This person, in his turn, would explain our wishes to the Governor's brother, and he, speaking through a tube in an aperture of the wall would communicate our sentiments to a courtier near the King, who would make them known to his Majesty. Meanwhile, we were instructed to make three obeisances to the King with the joined hands over the head, and raising, first one foot and then the other, and then kissing the hands. This is the royal salutation. * * * All the persons present in the palace had their loins covered with gold embroidered cloth and silk, wore poiniards with golden hilts, orna-

mented with pearls and precious stones, and had many rings on their fingers.

* * * * *

We remounted the elephants and returned to the house of the Governor. * * * After this there came to the house of the Governor ten men, with as many large wooden trays, in each of which were ten or twelve porcelain saucers with the flesh of various animals, that is, of calves, capons, pullets, pea-fowls and others, and various kinds of fish, so that of meat alone there were thirty or two-and-thirty dishes. We supped on the ground on mats of palm-leaf. At each mouthful we drank a porcelain cupful, the size of an egg, of a distilled liquor made from rice. We ate also rice and sweetmeats, using spoons of gold, shaped like our own. In the place where we passed the two nights, there were always burning two torches of white wax, placed on tall chandeliers of silver, and two oil lamps of four wicks each, while two men watched to look after them. Next morning we came on the same elephants to the sea side, where forthwith there were ready for us two *prahus*, in which we were reconducted to the ships." Of the town itself he says:—"The city is entirely built in the salt water, the King's house and those of some chieftains excepted. It contains 25,000 *fires*, or families. The houses are all of wood and stand on strong piles to keep them high from the ground. When the flood tide makes, the women, in boats, go through the city selling necessaries. In front of the King's palace there is a rampart constructed of large bricks, with barbicans in the manner of a fortress, on which are mounted fifty-six brass and six iron cannon." With the exception of the statement concerning the number of families, Mr. CRAWFORD considers PIGAFETTA'S account contains abundant internal evidence of intelligence and truthfulness. I may be allowed to point out that, seeing only the King's house and those of some of the nobles were on *terra firma*, there could have been little use for elephants in the city and probably the two elephants PIGAFETTA mentions were the only ones there, kept for State purposes. It is a curious fact that though in its fauna Borneo

much resembles Sumatra, yet, while elephants abound in the latter island, none are to be found in Borneo, except in a restricted area on the North-East Coast, in the territories of the North Borneo Company. It would appear, too, that the tenets of the Mahomedan religion were not strictly observed in those days. Now, no Brunai noble would think of offering you spirits, nor would ladies on any account be permitted to appear in public, especially if Europeans were among the audience. The consumption of spirits seems to have been on a very liberal scale, and it is not surprising to find PIGAFETTA remarking further on that some of the Spaniards became intoxicated. Spoons, whether of gold or other material, have long since been discarded by all respectable Brunais, only Pagans make use of such things, the Mahomedans employ the fingers which Allah has given them. The description of the women holding their market in boats stands good of to-day, but the wooden houses, instead of being on "strong piles," now stand on rickety, round *nibong* palm posts. The description of the obeisance to the King is scarcely exaggerated, except that it is now performed squatting cross-legged—*silā*—the respectful attitude indoors, from the Sanskrit *çîl*, to meditate, to worship (for an inferior never stands in the presence of his superior), and has been dispensed with in the case of Europeans, who shake hands. Though the nobles have now comparatively little power, they address each other and are addressed by the commonalty in the most respectful tone, words derived from the Sanskrit being often employed in addressing superiors, or equals if both are of high rank, such as *Ba-ginda*, *Duli Paduka*, *Ianda*, and in addressing a superior the speaker only alludes to himself as a slave, *Amba*, *Sahaya*. I have already referred to the prohibition of the use of yellow by others than the Royal family, and may add that it is a grave offence for a person of ordinary rank to pass the palace steps with his umbrella up, and it is forbidden to him to sit in the after part of his boat or canoe, that place being reserved for nobles. At an audience with the Sultan, or with one of the Wazirs, considerable ceremony is still observed. Whatever the time of the day, a thick bees' wax candle, about three

feet long is lighted and placed on the floor alongside the European visitor, if he is a person of any rank, and it is etiquette for him to carry the candle away with him at the conclusion of his visit, especially if at night. It was a severe test of the courteous decorum of the Malay nobles when on one occasion, a young officer, who accompanied me, not only spilt his cup of coffee over his bright new uniform, but, when impressively bidding adieu to H. H. the Sultan, stood for some time unconsciously astride over my lighted candle. Not a muscle of the faces of the nobles moved, but the Europeans were scarcely so successful in maintaining their gravity.

Mr. DALRYMPLE'S description of Brunai, furnished to the *Field* in August, 1884, is as follows:—"On a broad river, sweeping round in an imposing curve from the South-Eastward, with abrupt ranges of sandstone hills, for the most part cleared of forest, hemming it in on either side, and a glimpse of lofty blue mountains towering skywards far away to the North-East, is a long straggling collection of *atap* (thatch made of leaves of *nibong* palm) and *kajang* (mats of ditto) houses, or rather huts, built on piles over the water, and forming a gigantic crescent on either bank of the broad, curving stream. This is the city of Brunai, the capital of the Yang di Pertuan, the Sultan of Brunai, *atat* one hundred or more, and now in his dotage: the abode of some 15,000 Malays, whose language is as different from the Singapore Malay as Cornish is from Cockney English, and the coign of vantage from which a set of effete and corrupt *Pangerans* extended oppressive rule over the coasts of North-West Borneo, from Sampanmangiu Point to the Sarawak River in days gone by, ere British enterprise stepped in, swept the Sulu and Illanun pirates from the sea, and opened the rivers to commercial enterprise.

Standing on the summit of one of the above-mentioned hills, a fine bird's eye view is obtained of the city below. The ramshackle houses are all built in irregular blocks or clusters, but present on either side a regular frontage to the broad river, and following its sweeping curve, form two imposing crescent, divided by a fine water-way. Behind these main

crescents are various other blocks and clusters of buildings, built higgledy piggledy and without plan of any sort. On the true left bank are some Chinese shops built of brick, and on the opposite bank a brick house of superior pretensions and a waving banner proclaiming the abode of the Chinese Consular Agent of the British North Borneo Company. * * *

A heterogeneous collection of buildings on the right side of the upper part of the city forms the *palace* (save the mark!) of the Sultan himself. A little further down a large, straggling, but substantial plank building, with a corrugated iron roof, marks the abode of the Pangeran Temenggong, a son of the former Sultan and the heir apparent to the throne of Brunai. Two steam launches are lying opposite at anchor, one the property of the Sultan, the other belonging to the heir apparent. * * * *

"The public reception room of the Sultan's palace is a long apartment with wooden pillars running along either side, and supporting a raised roof. Beyond these on either side, are lateral compartments. At the far end, in the centre of a kind of alcove, is the Sultan's throne. The floors are covered with matting. * * * *

Although the glories of Brunai have departed, and it is only the shadow of what it was when PIGAFETTA visited it, a certain amount of state is still kept up on occasions. A boat comes sweeping down the river crowded with Malays, a white flag waving from its stern, seven paddles flashing on either side, and an array of white umbrellas midships. *It is* the Pangeran di Gadong coming in state to pay a ceremonial visit. As it sweeps alongside, the Pangeran is seen sitting on a gorgeous carpet, surrounded by his officials. One holds an umbrella over his head, while another holds aloft the *tongkat kraidan*, a long gilded staff, surmounted by a plume of yellow horse hair, which hangs down round it. The most striking point in the attire of the Pangeran and his Officers is the beauty of the *krises* with which they are armed, the handles being of carved ivory ornamented with gold, and the sheaths of beautifully polished wood, resembling satin wood. Cigars and coffee are produced, and a *bichara* ensues. A

Quakers' meeting is no bad metaphor to describe a Malay *bichara*. The Pangerans sit round in a circle smoking solemnly for some time, until a question is put to them, to which a brief reply is given, followed by another prolonged pause.

In this way the business on which they have come is gradually approached.

Their manners are as polished as their faces are immobile, and the way to a Malay's heart lies through his pocket.

To the outsider, Brunai is a city of hideous old women, for such alone are met with in the thronged market place where some hundreds of market boats jostle each other, while their inmates shriek and haggle over their bargains, or during a water promenade while threading the labyrinths of this Oriental Venice; but if acquainted with its intricacies, or if paying a ceremonial visit to any of the leading Pangerans, many a glimpse may be had of some fair skinned beauty peeping through some handy crevice in the *kajang* wall, or, in the latter case, a crowd of light-skinned, dark-eyed houris may be seen looking with all their might out of a window in the harem behind, from which they are privileged to peep into the hall of audience.

The present population of Brunai cannot exceed 12,000 to 15,000 souls, a great number having succumbed to the terrible epidemic of cholera a year ago. The exports consist of sago, gutta percha, camphor, india-rubber, edible birds' nests, gum dammar, etc., and what money there is in the city is almost entirely in the hands of the Chinese traders. * * *

In the old days, when it enjoyed a numerous Chinese population, the surrounding hills were covered with pepper plantations, and there was a large junk trade with China. At present Brunai lives on her exports of jungle produce and sago, furnished by a noble river—the Limbang, whose valley lies but a short distance to the Eastward. One great advantage the city enjoys is a copious supply of pure water, drawn from springs at the base of the hills below the town on the left bank of the river. * * *

“Such is a slight sketch of Brunai of the Brunais. If the Pangerans are corrupt, the lower classes are not, but are law-

abiding, though not industrious. And the day may yet come when their city may lift her head up again, and be to North Borneo what Singapore is to the straits of Malacca."

This description gives a capital idea of modern Brunai, and I would only observe that, from the colour of his flag and umbrellas the nobleman who paid the state visit must have been the Bandahara and not the Di Gadong.

The aged Sultan to whom Mr. DALRYMPLE refers was the late Sultan MUMIM, who, though not in the direct line, was raised to the throne, on the death of the Sultan OMAR ALI SAIFUDIN, to whom he had been Prime Minister, by the influence of the English, towards whom he had always acted as a loyal friend. He was popularly supposed to be over a hundred years old when he died and, though said to have had some fifty wives and concubines, he was childless. He died on the 29th May, 1885, having previously, on the advice of Sir C. C. LEES, then British Consul-General, declared his Temenggong, the son of OMAR ALI SAIFUDIN to be his successor. The Temenggong accended the throne, without any opposition, with the title of Sultan, but found a kingdom distracted by rebellion in the provinces and reduced to less than a fourth of its size when the treaty was made with Great Britain in 1847.

I have said that there is no ground rent in Borneo, and that every one builds his own house and is his own landlord, but I should add that he builds his house in the *kampung*, or parish, to which, according to his occupation, he belongs and into which the city is divided. For instance, on entering the city, the first *kampung* on the left is an important one in a town where fish is the principal article of animal food. It is the *kampung* of the men who catch fish by means of bambu fishing stakes, or traps, described hereafter, and supply the largest quantity of that article to the market; it is known as the *Kampung Pablat*.

Next to it is the *Kampung Perambat*, from the casting net which its inhabitants use in fishing. Another parish is called *Membakut* and its houses are built on firm ground, being principally the shops of Chinese and Klings. The last *kam-*

pong on this side is that of *Burong Pingé*, formerly a very important one, where dwelt the principal and richest Malay traders. It is now much reduced in size, European steamers and Chinese enterprise having altered entirely the character of the trade from the time when the old Brunai *nakodahs* (master or owner of a trading boat) would cruise leisurely up and down the coast, waiting for months at a time in a river while trade was being brought in. The workers in brass, the jewellers, the makers of gold brocade, of mats, of brass guns, the oil manufacturers, and the rice cleaners, all have their own *kampongs*, and are jealous of the honour of each member of their corporation. The Sultan and nearly all the chief nobles have their houses on the true left bank of the river, *i.e.*, on the right bank ascending.

The fishing interest is an important one, and various methods are employed to capture the supply for the market.

The *kélong* is a weir composed of nets made of split bambu, fastened in an upright position, side by side, to posts fixed into the bed of the stream, or into the sand in the shallow water of a harbour. There are two long rows of these posts with attached nets, one much longer than the other which gradually converge in the deeper water, where a simple trap is constructed with a narrow entrance. The fish passing up or down stream, meeting with the obstruction, follow up the walls of the *kélong* and eventually enter the trap, whence they are removed at low water. These *kélong*, or fishing stakes as they are termed, are a well known sight to all travellers entering Malay ports and rivers. All sorts of fish are caught in this way, and alligators of some size are occasionally secured in them.

The *rambat* is a circular casting net, loaded with leaden or iron weights at the circumference, and with a spread sometimes of thirty feet. Great skill, acquired by long practice, is shewn by the fisherman in throwing this net over a shoal of fish which he has sighted, in such a manner that all the outer edge touches the water simultaneously; the weights then cause the edges of the circumference to sink and gradually close together, encompassing the fish, and the net is drawn

up by a rope attached to its centre, the other end of which the fisherman had retained in his hand. The skill of the thrower is further enhanced by the fact that he, as a rule, balances himself in the bow of a small "dug-out," or canoe, in which a European could scarcely keep his footing at all. The *rambat* can also be thrown from the bank, or the beach, and is used in fresh and salt water. Only small fish and prawns are caught in this way. Prawns are also caught in small *kélongs* with very fine split bambu nets, but a method is also employed in the Brunai river which I have not heard of elsewhere. A specially prepared canoe is made use of, the gunwale on one side being cut away and its place taken up by a flat ledge, projecting over the water. The fisherman sits paddling in the stern, keeping the ledged side towards the bank and leaning over so as to cause the said ledge to be almost level with the water.

From the same side there projects a long bambu, with wooden teeth on its under side, like a comb, fastened to the stern, but projecting outwards, forwards and slightly upwards, the teeth increasing in length towards its far end, and as they sweep the surface of the water the startled prawns, shut in by the bank on one side, in their efforts to avoid the teeth of the comb, jump into the canoe in large quantities.

I have described the method of using the dip net, or *serambau*, on page 42. Many kinds of nets are in use, one—the *pukat*—being similar to our seine or drag net.

The hook and line are also used, especially for deep sea fishing, and fish of large size are thus caught.

A favourite occasional amusement is *tuba* fishing. The *tuba* is a plant the juice of which has strong narcotic properties. Bundles of the roots are collected and put into the bottom of the canoes, and when the fishing ground is reached, generally a bend in a river, or the mouth of a stream which is barred at low tide, water is poured over the *tuba* and the juice expressed by beating it with short sticks. The fluid, thus charged with the narcotic poison, is then baled out of the canoes into the stream and the surface is quickly covered by all sorts of fish in all stages of intoxication, the smaller ones

even succumbing altogether to the poison.

The large fish are secured by spearing, amid much excitement, the eager sportsmen often overbalancing themselves and falling headlong into the water to the great amusement of the more lucky ones. I remember reading an account of a dignified representative of Her Majesty once joining in the sport and displaying a pair of heels in this way to his admiring subjects. The *tuba* does not affect the flesh of the fish, which is brought to the table without any special preparation.

The principal export from Brunai is sago flour. The sago palm is known to the natives under the name of *rumbiah*, the pith, after its first preliminary washing, is called *laman-tah* (i.e., raw), and after its preparation for export by the Chinese, *sagu*. The botanical name is *Metroxylon*, *M. Lævis* being that of the variety the trunk of which is unprotected, and *M. Rumphii* that of the kind which is armed with long and strong spikes, serving to ward off the attacks of the wild pigs from the young palm.

This palm is indigenous in the Malayan Archipelago and grows to the height of twenty to forty feet, in swampy land along the banks of rivers not far from the sea, but out of the reach of tidal influences. A plantation once started goes "on for ever," with scarcely any care or attention from the proprietor, as the palm propagates itself by numerous off-shoots, which take the place of the parent tree when it is cut down for the purpose of being converted into food, or when it dies, which, unlike most other palms, it does after it has once flowered and seeded, i.e., after it has attained the age of ten or fifteen years.

It can also be propagated from the seed, but these are often unproductive.

If required for food purposes, the sago palm must be cut down at its base before it begins to flower, as afterwards the pith or *farina* becomes dried up and useless. The trunk is then stripped of its leaves and, if it is intended to work it up at its owner's house, it is cut into convenient lengths and floated down the river; if the pith is to be extracted on the spot the trunk is split in two, longitudinally, and is found to

contain a mass of starchy pith, kept together by filaments of woody fibre, and when this is worked out by means of bambu hatchets nothing but a thin rind, the outer bark, is left. To separate the starch from the woody fibre, the pith is placed on a mat in a frame work over a trough by the river side; the sago washer then mounts up and, pouring fresh water over the pith, commences vigorously dancing about on it with his bare feet, the result being that the starch becomes dissolved in the water and runs off with it into the trough below, while the woody fibre remains on the mat and is thrown away, or, if the washer is not a Mahomedan, used for fattening pigs. The starch thus obtained is not yet quite pure, and under the name of *lamantah* is sold to Chinese and undergoes a further process of washing, this time by hand, in large, solid, wooden troughs and tubs. When sufficiently purified, it is sun-dried and, as a fine white flour, is packed in gunny bags for the Singapore market. At Singapore, some of this flour—a very small proportion—is converted into the pearl sago of the shops, but the greater portion is sent on direct to Europe, where it is used for sizing cloth, in the manufacture of beer, for confectionery, &c.

It will be seen that the sago palm thus affords food and also employment to a considerable number of both natives and Chinese and, requiring little or no trouble in cultivation, it is a perfect gift of the gods to the natives in the districts where it occurs. It is a curious fact that, though abounding in Sarawak, in the districts near Brunai and in the southern parts of British North Borneo on the West Coast, it seems to stop short suddenly at the Putatan River, near Gaya Bay, and is not found indigenous in the North nor on the North-East. Some time ago I sent a quantity of young shoots to a Chief living on the Labuk River, near Sandakan, on the East Coast, but have not yet heard whether they have proved a success.

A nasty sour smell is inseparable from a sago factory, but the health of the coolies, who live in the factory, does not appear to be affected by it.

The Brunais and natives of sago districts consume a considerable quantity of sago flour, which is boiled into a thick,

tasteless paste, called *boyat* and eaten by being twisted into a large ball round a stick and inserted into the mouth—an ungraceful operation. Tamarind, or some very acid sauce is used to impart to it some flavour. Sago is of course cheaper than rice, but the latter is, as a rule, much preferred by the native, and is found more nutritious and *lasting*. LOGAN, in the *Journal of the Indian Archipelago*, calculates that three sago palms yield more nutritive matter than an acre of wheat, and six trees more than an acre of potatoes. The plantain and banana also flourish, under cultivation, in Borneo, and Mr. BURBIDGE, in his preface to the *Gardens of the Sun*, points out that it fruits all the year round and that its produce is to that of wheat as 133 : 1, and to that of the potato as 44 : 1. What a Paradise! some of my readers will exclaim. There can be no want here! I am sure the figures and calculations above quoted are absolutely correct, but I have certainly seen want and poverty in Borneo, and these tropical countries are not quite the earthly paradises which some old writers would have us believe. For our poor British “unemployed,” at any rate, I fear Borneo can never be a refuge, as the sun would there be more fatal than the deadly cold here, and the race could not be kept up without visits to colder climates. But if sago and bananas are so plentiful and so nourishing, as we are taught by the experts, it does seem somewhat remarkable, in this age of invention, that some means cannot be devised of bringing together the prolific food stores of the East and the starving thousands of the West.

Both before, during and after the day's work, the Malays, man and woman, boy and girl, solace and refresh themselves with tobacco and with the areca-nut, or the *betel* nut as, for some unexplained reason, it is called in English books, though *betel* is the name of the pepper leaf in which the areca-nut is wrapped and with which it is masticated.

A good deal of the tobacco now used in Brunai is imported from Java or Palembang (Sumatra), but a considerable portion is grown in the hilly districts on the West Coast of North Borneo, in the vicinity of Gaya Bay, by the Muruts. It is unfermented and sun-dried, but has not at all a bad flavour

and is sometimes used by European pipe smokers. The Brunai Malays and the natives generally, as a rule, smoke the tobacco in the form of cigarettes, the place of paper being taken by the fine inner leaf of the *nipa* palm, properly prepared by drying. The Court cigarettes are monstrous things, fully eight inches long sometimes, and deftly fashioned by the fingers of the ladies of the harem.

Some of the inland natives, who are unable to procure *nipa* leaf (*dahun kirei*), use roughly made wooden pipes, and the leaf of the maize plant is also occasionally substituted for the *nipa*. It is a common practice with persons of both sexes to insert a "quid" of tobacco in their cheek, or between the upper lip and the gum. This latter practice does not add to the appearance of a race not overburdened with facial charms. The tobacco is allowed to remain in position for a long time, but it is not chewed. The custom of areca-nut chewing has been so often described that I will only remind the reader that the nut is the produce of a graceful and slender palm, which flourishes under cultivation in all Malayan countries and is called by Malays *pinang*. It is of about the size of a nutmeg and, for chewing, is cut into pieces of convenient size and made into a neat little packet with the green leaf of the aromatic betel pepper plant, and with the addition of a little gambier (the inspissated juice of the leaves of the *uncaria gambir*) and of fine lime, prepared by burning sea shells. Thus prepared, the bolus has an undoubtedly stimulating effect on the nerves and promotes the flow of saliva. I have known fresh vigour put into an almost utterly exhausted boat's crew by their partaking of this stimulant.

It tinges the saliva and the lips bright red, but, contrary to a very commonly received opinion, has no effect of making the teeth black. This blackening of the teeth is produced by rubbing in burnt coco-nut shell, pounded up with oil, the dental enamel being sometimes first filed off. Toothache and decayed teeth are almost unknown amongst the natives, but whether this is in some measure due to the chewing of the areca-nut I am unable to say.

It used to be a disagreeable, but not unusual sight, to see

the old Sultan at an audience remove the areca-nut he had been masticating and hand it to a small boy, who placed it in his mouth and kept it there until the aged monarch again required it.

The clothing of the Brunai Malays is simple and suitable to the climate. The one garment common to men, women and children is the *sarong*, which in its general signification means a sheath or covering, *e.g.*, the sheath of a sword is a *sarong*, and the envelope enclosing a letter is likewise its *sarong*. The *sarong* or sheath of the Brunai human being is a piece of cotton cloth, of Tartan pattern, sewn down the side and resembling an ordinary skirt, or petticoat, except that it is not pleated or attached to a band at the waist and is, therefore, the same width all the way down. It is worn as a petticoat, being fastened at the waist sometimes by a belt or girdle, but more often the upper part is merely twisted into its own folds. Both men and women frequently wear nothing but this garment, the men being naked from the waist up, but the women generally concealing the breasts by fastening the *sarong* high up under the arms; but for full dress the women wear in addition a short sleeved jacket of dark blue cotton cloth, reaching to the waist, the tight sleeves being ornamented with a row of half-a-dozen jingling buttons, of gold if possible, and a round hat of plaited *pandan* (screw-pine) leaves, or of *ni-pa* leaf completes the Brunai woman's costume. No stockings, slippers, or shoes are worn. Ladies of rank and wealth substitute silk and gold brocade for the cotton material used by their poorer sisters and, in lieu of a hat, cover their head and the greater part of the face with a *selendang*, or long scarf of gold brocade. They occasionally also wear slippers. The gold brocade is a specialty of Brunai manufacture and is very handsome, the gold thread being woven in tasteful patterns on a ground of yellow, green, red or dark blue silk. The materials are obtained from China. The cotton *sarongs* are also woven in Brunai of European cotton twist, but inferior and cheap imitations are now imported from Switzerland and Manchester. In addition to the *sarong*, the Brunai man, when fully dressed, wears a pair of loose cotton trowsers, tied round

the waist, and in this case the *sarong* is so folded as to reach only half way down to the knee, instead of to the ankle, as ordinarily.

A short sleeved cotton jacket, generally white, covers his body and his head dress is a small coloured kerchief called *dastar*, the Persian word for turban.

The nobles wear silks instead of cottons and with them a small but handsome *kris*, stuck into the *sarong*, is *de rigueur* for full dress. A gold or silver betel-nut box might almost be considered as part of the full dress, as they are never without one on state occasions, it being carried by an attendant.

The women are fond of jewellery, and there are some clever gold and silversmiths in the city, whose designs appear to be imitated from the Javanese. Rings, earrings, broaches to fasten the jacket at the neck, elaborate hairpins, massive silver or gold belts, with large gold buckles, and bracelets of gold or silver are the usual articles possessed by a lady of position.

The characteristic earring is quite a specialty of Brunai art, and is of the size and nearly the shape of a very large champagne cork, necessitating a huge hole being made for its reception in the lobes of the ear. It is made hollow, of gold or silver, or of light wood gilt, or sometimes only painted, or even quite plain, and is stuck, lengthwise, through the hole in the ear, the ends projecting on either side. When the ladies are not in full dress, this hole occasionally affords a convenient receptacle for the cigarette, or any other small article not in use for the time being.

The men never wear any jewellery, except, perhaps, one silver ring, which is supposed to have come from the holy city—Mecca.

The Malay *kris* is too well known to need description here. It is a dagger or poignard with a blade varying in length from six inches to two feet. This blade is not invariably wavy, or serpentine, as often supposed, but is sometimes quite straight. It is always sharp on both edges and is fashioned from iron imported from Singapore, by Brunai artificers. Great

taste is displayed in the handle, which is often of delicately carved ivory and gold, and just below the attachment of the handle, the blade is broadened out, forming a hilt, the under edge of which is generally fancifully carved. Age adds greatly to the value of the *kris* and the history of many is handed down. The highest price I know of being given for a Brunai *kris* was \$100, paid by the present Sultan for one he presented to the British North Borneo Company on his accession to the throne, but I have heard of higher prices being asked. Very handsomely grained and highly polished wood is used for the sheath and the two pieces forming it are frequently so skilfully joined as to have the appearance of being in one. Though naturally a stabbing weapon, the Malays of Brunai generally use it for cutting, and after an *amok* the blade employed is often found bent out of all shape.

The *parang* is simply an ordinary cutlass, with a blade two feet in length. As we generally carry a pocket knife about with us, so the Brunai Malay always wears his *parang*, or has it near at hand, using it for every purpose where cutting is required, from paring his nails to cutting the posts of which his house is built, or weeding his patch of rice land.

With this and his *bliong* he performs all his carpentry work; from felling the enormous timber tree in the jungle to the construction of his house and boat. The *bliong* is indeed a most useful implement and can perform wonders in the hands of a Malay. It is in the shape of a small adze, but according to the way it is fitted into the handle it can be used either as an axe or adze. The Malays with this instrument can make planks and posts as smooth as a European carpenter is able to do with his plane.

The *parang ilang* is a fighting weapon, with a peculiarity in the shape of the blade which, Dr. TAYLOR informs me, is not known to occur in the weapons of any other country, and consists in the surface of the near side being flat, as in an ordinary blade, while that of the off side is distinctly convex. This necessitates rather careful handling in the case of a novice, as the convexity is liable to cause the blade to glance off any hard substance and inflict a wound on its wielder.

This weapon is manufactured in Brunai, but is the proper arm of the Kyans and, now, also of the Sarawak Dyaks, who are closely allied to them and who, in this as in other matters, such as the curious perforation of a part of their person, which has been described by several writers, are following their example. The Kyans were once the most formidable Sub-Malay tribe in Northern Borneo and have been alluded to in preceding pages. On the West coast, their headquarters is the Baram River, which has recently been added to Sarawak, but they stretch right across to the East Coast and Dutch territory.

There are many kinds of canoes, from the simple dug-out, with scarcely any free-board, to the *pakerangan*, a boat the construction of which is confined to only two rivers in North Borneo. It is built up of planks fastened together by wooden pegs, carvel fashion, on a small keel, or *lunas*. It is sharp at both ends, has very good lines, is a good sea boat and well adapted for crossing river bars. It is not made in Brunai itself, but is bought from the makers up the coast and invariably used by the Brunai fishermen, who are the best and most powerful paddlers to be found anywhere. The trading boats—*prahus* or *tongkangs*—are clumsy, badly fastened craft, not often exceeding 30 tons burthen, and modelled on the Chinese junk, generally two-masted, the foremast raking forward, and furnished with rattan rigging and large lug sails. This forward rake, I believe, was not unusual, in former days, in European craft, and is said to aid in tacking. The natives now, however, are getting into the way of building and rigging their boats in humble imitation of the Europeans. The *prahus* are generally furnished with long sweeps, useful when the wind falls and in ascending winding rivers, when the breeze cannot be depended on. The canoes are propelled and steered by single-bladed paddles. They also generally carry a small sail, often made of the remnants of different gaily coloured garments, and a fleet of little craft with their gaudy sails is a pleasing sight on a fresh, bright morning. At the sports held by the Europeans on New Year's Day, the Queen's Birthday and other festivals, native

canoe races are always included and are contested with the keenest possible excitement by the competitors. A Brunai Malay takes to the water and to his tiny canoe almost before he is able to walk. Use has with him become second nature and, really, I have known some Brunai men paddle all day long, chatting and singing and chewing betel-nut, as though they felt it no exertion whatever.

In the larger canoes one sees the first step towards a fixed rudder and tiller, a modified form of paddle being fixed securely to one *side* of the stern, in such a way that the blade can be turned so as either to have its edges fore and aft, or its sides presented at a greater or less angle to the water, according to the direction in which it is desired to steer the boat.

I was much interested, in going over the Pitt-Rivers collection, at the Oxford University Museum, to find that in the model of a Viking boat the steering gear is arranged in almost exactly the same manner as that of the modern Malay canoe; and indeed, the lines generally of the two boats are somewhat alike.

To the European novice, paddling is severe work, more laborious than rowing; but then a Brunai man is always in "training," more or less; he is a teetotaller and very temperate in eating and drinking; indeed the amount of fluid they take is, considering the climate, wonderfully small. They scarcely drink during meals, and afterwards, as a rule, only wash their mouths out, instead of taking a long draught like the European.

Mr. DALRYMPLE is right in saying that a State visit is like a Quakers' meeting. Seldom is any important business more than broached on such an occasion; the details of difficult negotiations are generally discussed and arranged by means of confidential agents, who often find it to their pecuniary advantage to prolong matters to the limit of their employer's patience. The Brunai Malays are very nice, polite fellows to have to deal with, but they have not the slightest conception of the value of time, and the expression *nanti dahulu* (wait a bit) is as often in their mouths as that of *malua* (by-and-by) is by Miss GORDON CUMMING said to be in those of the Fijians.

A lady friend of mine, who found a difficulty in acquiring Malay, pronounced *nanti dahulu*, or *nanti dulu* as generally spoken, "nanty doodle," and suggested that "the nanty doodles" could be a good name for "the Brunai Malays."

As writing is a somewhat rare accomplishment, state documents are not signed but sealed—"chopped" it is called—and much importance is accordingly attached to the official seals or *chops*, which are large circular metal stamps, and the *chop* is affixed by oiling the stamps, blacking it over the flame of a candle and pressing it on the document to be sealed. The *chop* bears, in Arabic characters, the name, style and title of the Official using it. The Sultan's Chop is the Great Seal of State and is distinguished by being the only one of which the circumference can be quite round and unbroken; the edges of those of the Wazirs are always notched.

By the aboriginal tribes of Borneo, the Brunai people are always spoken of as *Orang Abai*, or Abai men, but though I have often enquired both of the aborigines and of the Brunais themselves, I have not been able to obtain any explanation of the term, nor of its derivation.

As already stated, the religion of the Brunais is Mahomedanism; but they do not observe its precepts and forms with any very great strictness, nor are they proselytisers, so that comparatively few of the surrounding pagans have embraced the religion of their conquerors.

Many of their old superstitions still influence them, as, in the early days of Christianity, the belief in the old heathen gods and goddesses were found underlying the superstructure of the new faith and tinging its ritual and forms of worship. There still flourishes and survives, influencing to the present day the life of the Brunais, the old Spirit worship and a real belief in the power of evil spirits (*hantus*) to cause ill-luck, sickness and death, to counteract which spells, charms and prayers are made use of, together with propitiatory offerings. Most of them wear some charm to ward off sickness, and others to shield them from death in battle. If you are travelling in the jungle and desire to quench your thirst at a brook, your Brunai follower will first lay his *parang*, or cutlass in the bed

of the stream, with its point towards the source, so that the Spirit of the brook shall be powerless to harm you.

In caves and on small islands you frequently find platforms and little models of houses and boats—propitiatory offerings to *hantus*. In times of general sickness a large model of a boat is sometimes made and decked with flags and launched out to sea in the hope that the evil spirit who has brought the epidemic may take his departure therein. At Labuan it was difficult to prevail on a Malay messenger to pass after sunset by the gaol, where executions took place, or by the churchyard, for fear of the ghosts haunting those localities.

Javanese element, and Hindu work in gold has been discovered buried in the island of Pappan, situated between Labuan and Brunai. Mr. INCHE MAHOMET, H. B. M.'s Consular Agent in Brunai, was good enough to procure for me a native history of Brunai, called the *Telselah Besar*, or principal history. This history states that the first Mahomedan Sovereign of Brunai was Sultan MAHOMET and that, before his conversion and investiture by the Sultan of Johor, his kingdom had been tributary to the State of Majapahit, on the fall of which kingdom the Brunai Government transferred its allegiance to Johor. Majapahit* was the last Javanese kingdom professing Hinduism, and from its overthrow dates the triumph of Mahomedanism in Java. This occurred in A.D. 1478, which, if the chronicle can be trusted, must have been about the period of the commencement of the Mahomedan period in Brunai. Inclusive of this Sultan MAHOMET and of the late Sultan MUMIM, who died in May, 1885, twenty-three Mahomedan Sultans have reigned in Brunai and, allowing eighteen years for an average reign, this brings us within a few years of the date assigned to the overthrow of the kingdom of Majapahit, and bears testimony to the reliability of the chronicle. I will quote the first few paragraphs of the *Telselah*, as they will give the reader an idea of a Brunai history and also because they allude to the connection of the Chinese with Borneo and afford a fanciful explanation of the origin of the name of the mountain of

* CRAWFURD's Dictionary—Indian Islands—*Majapait*.

Kinabalu, in British North Borneo, which is 13,700 feet in height:—" This is the genealogy of all the Rájas who have " occupied the royal throne of the Government of Brunai, the " abode of peace, from generation to generation, who inherited " the royal drum and the bell, the tokens from the country of " Johore, *kamal almakam*, and who also possessed the royal " drum from Menangkabau, namely, from the country of Saguntang.

" This was the commencement of the kingdom of Brunai and " of the introduction of the Mahomedan religion and of the " Code of Laws of the prophet, the beloved of God, in the " country of Brunai—that is to say (in the reign of) His Highness Sultan MAHOMET. But before His Majesty's time the " country of Brunai was still infidel, and a dependency of " Majapahit. On the death of the Batara of Majapahit and of " the PATIH GAJA MEDAH the kingdom of Majapahit fell, and " Brunai ceased to pay tribute, which used to consist of one " jar of the juice of the young betel-nut every year.

" In the time of the Sultan BAHTRI of the kingdom of Johor, " Tuan ALAK BETATAR and PATIH BERBAHI were summoned " to Johor, and the former was appointed Sultan MAHOMET " by the Sultan of Johor, who conferred on him the royal " drum and assigned him five provinces, namely, Kaluka, Seribas, Sadong, Samarahan and Sarawak. PATIH BERBAI was " given the title of Bandhara Sri Maharaja. After a stay of " some little time in Johor, His Highness the Sultan MAHOMET " returned to Brunai; but His Highness had no male issue and " only one daughter. At that time also the Emperor of China " ordered two of his ministers to obtain possession of the precious stone of the dragon of the mountain Kinabalu. " Numbers of Chinese were devoured by the dragon and still " possession was not obtained of the stone. For this reason " they gave the mountain the name of Kinabalu (*Kina* = " Chinese; *balu* = widow).

" The name of one of the Chinese Ministers was ONG " KANG and of another ONG SUM PING, and the latter had " recourse to a stratagem. He made a box with glass " sides and placed a large lighted candle therein, and

“when the dragon went forth to feed, ONG SUM PING
“seized the precious stone and put the lamp in its place and
“the dragon mistook it for the precious stone. Having now
“obtained possession of the precious stone all the junks set
“sail for China, and when they had got a long way off from
“Kinabalu, ONG KANG asked ONG SUM PING for the stone,
“and thereupon a quarrel ensued between them. ONG KANG
“continued to press his demand for the precious stone, and
“ONG SUM PING became out of humour and sullen and refused
“to return to China and made his way back to Brunai. On
“arriving there, he espoused the Princess, the daughter of
“Sultan MAHOMET, and he obtained the title of Sultan
“AHAMAT.

“The Sultan AHAMAT had one daughter, who was remark-
“ably beautiful. It came to pass that a Sheriff named ALLI,
“a descendant of AMIR HASSAN (*one of the grandchildren*
“*of the prophet*) came from the country of Taif to Brunai.
“Hearing of the fame of the beauty of the Sultan’s daughter,
“he became enamoured of her and the Sultan accepted him
“as his son-in-law and the Government of Brunai was hand-
“ed over to him by His Highness and he was styled Sultan
“BERKAT. He enforced the Code of Laws of the beloved
“of God and erected a mosque in Brunai, and, moreover,
“ordered the Chinese population to make a stone fort.”

The connection of the Chinese with Brunai was an important event in Borneo history and it was certainly to them that the flourishing condition of the capital when visited by PIGAFETTA in 1521 was due. They were the sole planters of the pepper gardens, the monopoly of the trade in the produce of which the East India Company negotiated for in 1774, when the crop was reported to the Company to have been 4,000 pikuls, equal to about 240 tons, valued on the spot at 17¼ Spanish dollars per pikul. The Company’s Agent expressly reported that the Chinese were the only pepper planters, that the aborigines did not plant it, and that the produce was disposed of to Chinese junks, which visited the port and which he trusted would, when the exclusive trade in this article was in the hands of the Company, be diverted

from Brunai to Balambangan.

The station at this latter island, as already mentioned, was abandoned in 1775, and the English trade with Brunai appears soon afterwards to have come to an end.

From extracts from the Journal of the Batavia Society of Arts and Sciences published in *The British North Borneo Herald* of the 1st October, 1886, the first mention of Brunai in Chinese history appears to be in the year 669, when the King of Polo, which is stated to be another name for Bunlai (corruption of "Brunai"), sent an envoy to Pekin, who came to Court with the envoy of Siam. Again, in the year 1406, another Brunai envoy was appointed, who took with him a tribute of the products of the country, and the chronicle goes on to say that it is reported "that the present King is a man from Fukien, who followed CHENG HO when he went to this country and who settled there."

This account was written in 1618 and alludes to the Chinese shipping then frequenting Brunai. It is by some supposed that the northern portion of Borneo was the destination of the unsuccessful expedition which KUBLAI KHAN sent out in the year 1292.

Towards the close of the eighteenth century a Government seems to have arisen in Brunai which knew not ONG SUM PING and, in 1809, Mr. HUNT reported that Chinese junks had ceased visiting Brunai and, owing no doubt to the rapacious and piratical character of the native Government, the pepper gardens were gradually deserted and the Chinese left the country. A few of the natives had, however, acquired the art of pepper cultivation, especially the Dusuns of Pappar, Kimanis and Bundu and when the Colony of Labuan was founded, 1846, there was still a small trade in pepper with those rivers. The Brunai Rájas, however, received their revenues and taxes in this commodity and their exorbitant demands gradually led to the abandonment of its cultivation.

These rivers have since passed under the Government of the British North Borneo Company, and in Bundu, owing partly to the security now afforded to life and property and partly to the very high price which pepper at present realizes

on account of the Dutch blockade of Achin—Achin having been of late years the principal pepper-growing country—the natives are again turning their attention to this article. I may remark here that the people of Bundu claim and shew evidence of Chinese descent, and even set up in their houses the little altar and joss which one is accustomed to see in Chinamen's shops. The Brunai Malays call the Chinese *Orang Kina* and evidence of their connection with Borneo is seen in such names as *Kina-batangan*, a river near Sandakan on the north-east coast, *Kina-balu*, the mountain above referred to, and *Kina-benua*, a district in Labuan. They have also left their mark in the very superior mode of cultivation and irrigation of rice fields on some rivers on the north-west coast as compared with the primitive mode practised in other parts of Northern Borneo. It is now the object of the Governments of Sarawak and of British North Borneo to attract Chinese to their respective countries by all the means in their power. This has, to a considerable extent, been successfully achieved by the present Rája BROOKE, and a large area of his territory is now under pepper cultivation with a very marked influence on the public revenues. This subject will be again alluded to when I come to speak of British North Borneo.

It would appear that Brunai was once or twice attacked by the Spaniards, the last occasion being in 1645.* It has also had the honour in more recent times, of receiving the attentions of a British naval expedition, which was brought about in this wise. Sir JAMES, then Mr. BROOKE, had first visited Sarawak in 1839 and found the district in rebellion against its ruler, a Brunai Rája named MUDA HASSIM, who, being a friend to the English, received Mr. BROOKE with cordiality. Mr. BROOKE returned to Sarawak in the following year and this time assisted MUDA HASSIM to put down the rebellion and finally, on the 24th September, 1841, the Malay Rája

* Captain RODNEY MUNDY, R. N., states that in 1846 he captured at Brunai ten large Spanish brass guns, the longest being 14 feet 6 inches, cast in the time of CHARLES III of Spain and the most beautiful specimens of workmanship he had ever seen. CHARLES III reigned between 1759 and 1788.

retired from his position as Governor in favour of the Englishman.

The agreement to so transfer the Government was not signed without the application of a little pressure, for we find the following account of it in Mr. BROOKE'S Journal, edited by Captain RODNEY MUNDY, R. N., in two volumes, and published by JOHN MURRAY in 1848:—"October 1st, 1841. Events of great importance have occurred during the last month. I will shortly narrate them. The advent of the *Royalist* and *Swift* and a second visit from the *Diana* on her return from Brunei with the shipwrecked crew of the *Sultana*, strengthened my position, as it gave evidence that the Singapore authorities were on the alert, and otherwise did good to my cause by creating an impression amongst the natives of my power and influence with the Governor of the Straits Settlements. Now, then, was my time for pushing measures to extremity against my subtle enemy the arch-intriguer MAKOTA." This Chief was a Malay hostile to English interest. "I had previously made several strong remonstrances, and urged for an answer to a letter I had addressed to MUDA HASSIM, in which I had recapitulated in detail the whole particulars of our agreement, concluding by a positive demand either to allow me to retrace my steps by repayment of the sums which he had induced me to expend, or to confer upon me the grant of the Government of the country according to his repeated promises; and I ended by stating that if he would not do either one or the other I *must find means to right myself*. Thus did I, for the first time since my arrival in the land, present anything in the shape of a menace before the Rája, my former remonstrances only going so far as to threaten to take away my own person and vessels from the river." Mr. BROOKE'S demand for an investigation into MAKOTA'S conduct was politely shelved and Mr. BROOKE deemed "the moment for action had now arrived. My conscience told me that I was bound no longer to submit to such injustice, and I was resolved to test the strength of our respective parties. Repairing on board the yacht, I mustered my people, explain-

"ed my intentions and mode of operation, and having loaded
 "the vessel's guns with grape and canister, and brought her
 "broadside to bear, I proceeded on shore with a detachment
 "fully armed, and taking up a position at the entrance of the
 "Rája's palace, demanded and obtained an immediate audience.
 "In a few words I pointed out the villany of MAKOTA, his
 "tyranny and oppression of all classes, and my determination
 "to attack him by force, and drive him from the country. I
 "explained to the Rája that several Chiefs and a large body of
 "Siniawan Dyaks were ready to assist me, and the only course
 "left to prevent bloodshed was immediately to proclaim me
 "Governor of the country. This unmistakeable demonstration
 "had the desired effect * * * * * None
 "joined the party of MAKOTA, and his paid followers were not
 "more than twenty in number.

"Under the guns of the *Royalist*, and with a small body of
 "men to protect me personally, and the great majority of all
 "classes with me, it is not surprising that the negotiation pro-
 "ceeded rapidly to a favourable issue. The document was
 "quickly drawn up, sealed, signed, and delivered; and on the
 "24th of September, 1841, I was declared Rája and Governor
 "of Sarawak amidst the roar of cannon, and a general display
 "of flags and banners from the shore and boats on the river."

This is a somewhat lengthy quotation, but the language
 is so graphic and so honest that I need make no apologies for
 introducing it and, indeed, it is the fairest way of exhibiting
 Mr. BROOKE'S objects and reasons and is, moreover, interest-
 ing as shewing under what circumstances and conditions the
 first permanent English settlement was formed in Borneo.

Mr. BROOKE concludes his account of his accession to the
 Government in words that remind us of another unselfish
 and modest hero—General GORDON. He says:—"Difficulty
 "followed upon difficulty; the dread of pecuniary failure, the
 "doubt of receiving support or assistance; this and much
 "more presents itself to my mind. But I have tied myself to
 "the stake. I have heaped faggots around me. I stand
 "upon a cask of gunpowder, and if others bring the torch I
 "shall not shrink. I feel within me the firm, unchangeable

“ conviction of doing right which nothing can shake. I see
“ the benefits I am conferring. The oppressed, the wretched,
“ the outlawed have found in me their only protector. They
“ now hope and trust; and they shall not be disappointed while
“ I have life to uphold them. God has so far used me as a
“ humble instrument of his hidden Providence; and whatever
“ be the result, whatever my fate, I know the example will
“ not be thrown away. I know it tends to a good end in His
“ own time. He can open a path for me through all difficulties,
“ raise me up friends who will share with me in the task,
“ awaken the energies of the great and powerful, so that
“ they may protect this unhappy people. I trust it may be so:
“ but if God wills otherwise; if the time be not yet arrived; if it
“ be the Almighty’s will that the flickering taper shall be
“ extinguished ere it be replaced by a steady beacon, I submit,
“ in the firm and humble assurance that His ways are better
“ than my ways, and that the term of my life is better in His
“ hands than in my own.” On the 1st August, 1842, this
cession of Sarawak to Mr. BROOKE was confirmed by His
Highness Sultan OMAR ALI SAIFUDIN, under the Great Seal.
MUDA HASSIM was the uncle of the Sultan, who was a sover-
eign of weak, vacillating disposition, at one time guided by
the advice of his uncle, who was the leader of the “English
party,” and expressing his desire for the Queen’s assistance
to put down piracy and disorder and offering, in return, to
cede to the British the island of Labuan; at another following
his own natural inclinations and siding altogether with the
party of disorder, who were resolved to maintain affairs as
they were in the “good old times,” knowing that when the
reign of law and order should be established their day and
their power and ability to aggrandize and enrich themselves at
the expense of the aborigines and the common people would
come to an end. There is no doubt that Mr. BROOKE him-
self considered it would be for the good of the country that
MUDA HASSIM should be raised to the throne and the Sultan
certainly entertained a not altogether ill-founded dread that it was
intended to depose him in the latter’s favour, the more so as
a large majority of the Brunai people were known to be in his

interest. In the early part of 1845 MUDA HASSIM appears to have been in favour with the Sultan, and was publicly announced as successor to the throne with the title of *Sultan Muda* (muda=young, the usual Malay title for the heir apparent to the Crown), and the document recognising the appointment of Mr. BROOKE as the Queen's Confidential Agent in Borneo was written in the name of the Sultan and of MUDA HASSIM conjointly, and concludes by saying that the two writers express the hope that through the Queen's assistance they will be enabled to *settle the Government of Borneo*. In April, 1846, however, Mr. BROOKE received the startling intelligence that in the December, or January previous, the Sultan had ordered the murder of his uncle MUDA HASSIM and of several of the Ràja's brothers and nobles of his party, in all some thirteen Ràjas and many of their followers. MUDA HASSIM, finding resistance useless, retreated to his boat and ignited a cask of powder, but the explosion not killing him, he blew his brains out with a pistol. His brother, Pangeran BUDRUDIN, one of the most enlightened nobles in Brunai, likewise terminated his existence by an explosion of gunpowder. Representations being made to Sir THOMAS COCHRANE, the Admiral in command of the station, he proceeded in person to Borneo with a squadron of eight vessels, including two steamers. The Sultan, foreseeing the punishment that was inevitable, erected some well-placed batteries to defend his town. Only the two steamers and one sailing vessel of war, together with boats from the other vessels and a force of six hundred men were able to ascend the river and, such was the rotten state of the kingdom of Borneo Proper and so unwarlike the disposition of its degenerate people that after firing a few shots, whereby two of the British force were killed and a few wounded, the batteries were deserted, the Sultan and his followers fled to the jungle, and the capital remained at the Admiral's disposition. Captain RODNEY MUNDY, accompanied by Mr. BROOKE, with a force of five hundred men was despatched in pursuit of His Highness, but it is needless to add that, though the difficulties of marching through a trackless country under a tropical downpour of

rain were pluckily surmounted, it was found impossible to come up with the Royal fugitive. Negotiations were subsequently entered into with the Prime Minister, Pangeran MUMIM, an intelligent noble, who afterwards became Sultan, and on the 19th July, 1846, the batteries were razed to the ground and the Admiral issued a Proclamation to the effect that hostilities would cease if the Sultan would return and govern lawfully, suppress piracy and respect his engagements with the British Government ; but that if he persisted in his evil courses the squadron would return and burn down the capital. The same day Admiral COCHRANE and his squadron steamed away. It is perhaps superfluous to add that this was the first and the last time that the Brunai Government attempted to try conclusions with the British, and in the following year a formal treaty was concluded to which reference will be made hereafter.

(To be continued.)



Treacher, W. H. 1889. "BRITISH BORNEO: SKETCHES OF BRUNAI, SARAWAK, LABUAN AND NORTH BORNEO." *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 20, 13–74.

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