

dom of Menangkabu, are Agum, Datar, Lebban, Allang Panjang, Peia Kumboo, Kapunahan, Ramba, Tunnosei Kanto, Ujong Batu, Batu gajah Dedap, Karikan, Kuban, Leantan, and Tandong. Our authority for these names is Anderson; who says that, according to the fabulous Malayan annals, Sang Sapurba, a descendant of Alexander the Great, was the first king of Menangkabu.

Siak was once an extensive and powerful kingdom. To Mr. Anderson, who visited the country in 1823, the following sketch of its modern history was communicated. In the reign of sultan Abdul Jalil Mohammed Shaw, the seat of government was at Buantan. The king's two sons, Buang and Alum, were of a quarrelsome disposition, and mutual jealousy and dislike was the consequence. After a serious dispute with his younger brother, whose part the king was disposed to espouse, Buang fled from the country and became a daring pirate. Having collected many adherents, he proceeded to Malacca, then in the hands of the Dutch, and in concert with that government projected a scheme for taking Siak. The plan was successful; Alum fled, and, the king being old and infirm, Buang seized the reigns of government; and, in consideration of the assistance rendered to him by the Dutch, he allowed them to establish a factory at Pulo Guntong. About eight years after this he set out on a piratical expedition. A few months afterwards he returned, and anchored his fleet, consisting of twenty-five large vessels, close to the Dutch factory at Guntong. The unsuspecting Dutch received Buang, and four of his chiefs, with the greatest attention. While sitting beside the Dutch resident, the commandant of the garrison, the pirate king, rajah Buang, drew his kris and stabbed him to the heart; a few other officers in the room were murdered with equal dispatch. This was the work of a moment; and the crews of the vessels, at a given signal, rushed sword in hand amongst the people of the garrison, and about 180 Dutchmen perished in the general massacre. This event took place in the year 1150 of the Hegira, which makes it upwards of ninety years since the Dutch occupied the settlement. And to the present time the state of the country continues to be unsettled. Vessels from Java, Borneo, and Celebes used to resort to it in great numbers, and carried on an extensive commerce. The population of the kingdom, though still very large, has greatly decreased; and the trade has been almost annihilated by the *Rinchis*, the chiefs of a religious sect, who a few years ago extended themselves into the interior of Siak from Menangkabu. These chiefs "are most rigorous in preventing the consumption of opium; and punish with death all who are detected in this indulgence. They prohibit colored cloth of any description from being worn, and allow only pure white. Serree, tobacco, and betel, articles in such general use in all the Malay countries, and considered so essential to their comfort, are not permitted. Every man is obliged to shave his head, and to wear a little skull-cap. No man is permitted to converse with another's wife, and the women are obliged to cover their faces with a white cloth, having only two small holes for their eyes."

Jambi was visited in 1820 by lieutenant S. C. Crooke of Penang; from his journal we gather the following particulars:—The country is flat; and towards the sea it is low, swampy, and subject to inundation. The land rising in an inclined plane from the sea towards the great central chain of mountains which divide the island lengthwise, is probably of an alluvial formation. At Jambi (town), its surface is about twenty feet above the level of the river in the dry season. It is composed of a rich vegetable mould, covering a bed of clay, mixed with fine sand; under which, at the depth of eleven or twelve feet, there is a stratum of peat, four feet in thickness, containing trunks of trees of various dimensions, the bark undecayed, and the fibres of the wood retaining much of their natural color, strength, and elasticity. The substratum is a fine light colored clay, slightly mixed with decayed vegetable matter. The banks presents a section of successive layers of sand and clay; neither stone nor gravel were found in the soil, though pebbles of quartz and fragments of ironstone, washed down the river from the interior, have been deposited on the sandy banks. The climate at the town of Jambi is considered healthy and agreeable. During Mr. Crooke's residence there, which was in July, the mean of the thermometer hanging in a close and hot cabin, was at sunrise from 76° to 77°; at the hottest time in the day, generally from two to three o'clock, 86°; and at 8 p. m. 79° of Fahrenheit.

The people have no regular forms of law, police, or government in any of its modifications; but the sultan is nominally supreme, and arbitrary. Ignorant and weak, however, in reality, his authority is slighted or usurped by every ambitious chieftain; and the kingdom is throughout in a state of confusion and misrule. The lower classes of the people are generally below the middle size in stature: they are ignorant, poor, and indolent; but do not appear to possess that character of vindictive treachery so commonly ascribed to the Malays. Their arms are the kris, spear, and more rarely fire arms of a heavy and clumsy make: these are said to be manufactured in Sumatra.

Of Palembang and Lampong we have very little information that can interest our readers. The capture of Palembang in 1812, by colonel Gillespie, was a most gallant achievement. The expedition reached the city on the 25th of April, and took possession of the place while the Malays were exulting in the destruction of the Dutch garrison. When Gillespie gained possession of the fort, the palace, and batteries, the horrors of the scene were dreadful. With only seventeen British grenadiers, and a few officers and seamen, sufficient to man a barge and a gig, the colonel landed at eight o'clock at night; and, undismayed in the face of numerous bodies of armed men, he marched through a multitude of Arabs and treacherous Malays, whose missile weapons, steeped in poison, glimmered by the light of torches. Huge battlements, with immense gates, leading from one area to another, presented the frightful spectacle of human blood still reeking and flowing on the pavement. The massive gates closed upon the rear, and the blood stained courtyards through which the party were conducted, appeared as if they were the passage to a

slaughter house. The palace exhibited a melancholy picture of devastation and cruelty. In every direction spectacles of woe caught the sight, and were rendered peculiarly awful by the glare of the surrounding conflagration, accompanied by vivid flashes of lightning and loud peals of thunder.

We intended to add in this place some brief notices of the mountains, lakes, rivers, coasts, and harbors, as well as of the animal, vegetable, and mineral productions of Sumatra; but our limits forbid; and we turn, therefore, to take a view of the inhabitants of the island. Of the Malays, it is not necessary to speak; but the *Orang Puti*, or Padries, must not be passed over without some notice. They are said to resemble the Wahabees of the desert. They are Mohammedans; and have proved themselves most unrelenting and tyrannical. In 1822, sir Stamford described them as rapidly gaining ground throughout the northern parts of Sumatra. "It is the practice of the people," says the writer just named, "when they are attacked, to place the women and children in front: and in the last onset by the Dutch, it is reported that not less than one hundred and twenty women, each with a child in her arms, were sacrificed, the women standing firm."

The Battaks deserve particular attention. Our best authorities on this point are sir Stamford Raffles and Mr. Amberson. In February, 1820, sir Stamford, in a letter to the duchess of Somerset, gave the following account of this singular people: "I have just left Tappanooly, situated in the very heart of the Battak country, abounding in camphor and benjamin, and full of interest for the naturalist and philosopher. If you have looked into Mr. Marsden's history of Sumatra, you will recollect that the Battaks are cannibals. Now do not be surprised at what I shall tell you concerning them, for I tell the truth, and nothing but the truth. To prepare you a little, I must premise that the Battaks are an extensive and populous nation of Sumatra, occupying the whole of that part of the island lying between Acheen and Menangkabu, reaching to both the shores. The coast is but thinly inhabited, but in the interior the people are said to be as thick as the leaves of the forest; perhaps the whole nation may amount to between one and two millions of souls. They have a regular government, deliberative assemblies, and are great orators; nearly the whole of them write, and they possess a language and written character peculiar to themselves. In their language and terms, as well as in some of their laws and usages, the influence of Hindooism may be traced; but they have also a religion peculiar to themselves; they acknowledge the one and only great God, under the title of *Di-bata Assi Assi (?)*, and they have a trinity of great gods, supposed to have been created by him. They are warlike, extremely fair and honorable in all their dealings, and most deliberate in all their proceedings. Their country is highly cultivated, and crimes are few.

"The evidence adduced by Mr. Marsden must have removed all doubt from every unprejudiced mind, that, notwithstanding all this in their favor, the Battaks are strictly cannibals; but he has not gone half far enough. He seems to consider that it is only in cases of prison-

ers taken in war, or in extreme cases of adultery, that the practice of man-eating is resorted to, and then that it is only in a fit of revenge. He tells us that, not satisfied with cutting off pieces and eating them raw, instances have been known where some of the people have run up to the victim, and actually torn the flesh from the bones with their teeth. He also tells us that one of our residents found the remains of an English soldier, who had been only half eaten, and afterwards discovered his fingers sticking on a fork, laid by, but first taken warm from the fire; but I had rather refer your grace to the book; and if you have not got it, pray send for it, and read all that is said about the Battaks."

"In a small pamphlet lately addressed to the Court of Directors, respecting the coast, an instance still more horrible than anything related by Mr. Marsden is introduced; and as this pamphlet was written by a high authority, and the fact is not disputed, there can be no question as to its correctness. It is nearly as follows: 'A few years ago, a man had been found guilty of a very common crime, and was sentenced to be eaten according to the law of the land; this took place close to Tappanooly; the resident was invited to attend; he declined, but his assistant and a native officer were present. As soon as they reached the spot, they found a large assemblage of people, and the criminal tied to a tree, with his hands extended. The minister of justice, who was himself a chief of some rank, then came forward with a large knife in his hand, which he brandished as he approached the victim. He was followed by a man carrying a dish, in which was a preparation or condiment, composed of limes, chillies, and salt, called *sambal*. He then called aloud for the injured husband, and demanded what part he chose; he replied, the right ear, which was immediately cut off with one stroke, and delivered to the party, who turning round to the man behind, deliberately dipped it into the *sambal*, and devoured it; the rest of the party then fell upon the body, each taking and eating the part most to his liking. After they had cut off a considerable part of the flesh, one man stabbed him to the heart; but this was rather out of compliment to the foreign visitors, as it is by no means the custom to give the *coupe de grace*.'

It was with a knowledge of all these facts, that sir S. visited Tappanooly, with the determination to satisfy his mind most fully in everything concerning cannibalism. Accordingly he caused the most intelligent chiefs of that place to be assembled, and in the presence of witnesses, Mr. Prince and Dr. Jack, obtained the following information, of the truth of which neither of the gentlemen had the least doubt. It is the universal and standing law of the Battaks, that death by eating shall be inflicted in the following cases: 1st, for adultery; 2d, for midnight robbery; 3d, in wars of importance, that is to say, in one district against another, the prisoners are sacrificed; 4th, for intermarrying in the same tribe, which is forbidden from the circumstance of their having ancestors in common; and 5th, for a treacherous attack on a house, village, or person.