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# SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE

*SETTLEMENT,*

PRODUCE, AND COMMERCE,

OF

Prince of Wales Island,

IN

24/306

THE STRAITS OF MALACCA,

BY

SIR GEORGE LEITH, Bart.

*Major 17th Foot, and late Lieutenant Governor.*

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London:

Printed for J. BOOTH, Duke-street, Portland-place,

*By J. BARFIELD, Wardour-Street, Soho.*

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1805.



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*Political  
Tract  
27*

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

THE MOST NOBLE

THE MARQUIS WELLESLEY, K.P.

GOVERNOR AND CAPTAIN GENERAL

OF ALL

THE BRITISH POSSESSIONS IN INDIA,

&c. &c. &c.

THE FOLLOWING PAGES

ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED,

BY HIS LORDSHIP'S

MOST GRATEFUL

MOST DEVOTED,

HUMBLE SERVANT,

THE AUTHOR.

1875  
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SHORT ACCOUNT, &c.

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**P** RINCE of Wales Island is now so well known as a Commercial Port, and its importance, in other respects, is so generally acknowledged, that a short account of its Settlement, Productions, and Commerce, will not, it is imagined, prove uninteresting. It is not intended to enter much into detail respecting the benefits to be derived from the possession of this valuable Island: yet, it is presumed, that by shewing what has

been accomplished there, under many disadvantages, it will sufficiently appear what it is capable of, under more favourable circumstances.

### SETTLEMENT.

The supreme Government of Bengal judging it necessary to establish a Commercial Port in the Straits of Malacca, considered Acheen as a proper place for this purpose. Accordingly, towards the end of the year 1784, they sent Mr. Kinloch to propose the measure to the King of Acheen, who not deeming the terms held out sufficiently advantageous, did not think proper to comply with them. A fruitless negociation, which continued fifteen months, terminated in Mr. Kinloch's being obliged to relinquish the business and return to Bengal. About this period, Mr. Light mentioned Pulo Penang



to the Supreme Government, as a place well suited in every respect to their views ; at the same time informing them, that the King of Queddah, to whom the Island belonged, had offered to bestow it in perpetuity on the Honourable Company, on condition of their paying him the Sum of Six Thousand Spanish Dollars, as an indemnification of the loss he might sustain in his revenues, from the trade to Queddah being diverted into another channel.

The Supreme Government having approved of the situation of the Island, and of the terms on which it was to be obtained, were pleased to nominate Mr. Light, to superintend its first settlement, and to make such arrangements as were necessary with the King of Queddah. Mr. Light was extremely well qualified, by his perfect knowledge of the language,

laws, and customs of the Malays, to discharge the trust reposed in him. He was also well known, and much respected by the principle men in the neighbouring countries, which he had long frequented as a Merchant; and what, at that period, was of still greater consequence, he possessed much personal influence with the King of Queddah.

A small detachment was formed in Calcutta, and placed under the general control of Mr. Light, who sailed from Bengal in July, and arrived at Pulo Penang early in August, 1786. At this period, the Island was so entirely covered with large lofty trees, that some time was required to clear a spot, on which a Tent could be pitched and a Flagstaff erected. This being done, the Island was taken possession of, with the usual forms, and the British Colours hoisted on the 12th of Au-



gust, and in honour of His Royal Highness from thence called

**“ Prince of Wales Island,”**

To form a proper judgment of the difficulties the first Settlers had to struggle against, before they could procure a habitation fit to shelter themselves against the changes of the climate, it is necessary to have been in a similar situation. The means they possessed were very limited and inadequate to the work they had to perform, which was extremely laborious, as it consisted in filling up large ravines, and draining swamps, as well as in clearing an immense forest: But however formidable these obstacles appeared, they were gradually overcome by the zealous perseverance of Mr. Light, and those under his command. In a much shorter time than could have been expected, the

appearance of things was entirely changed: a town, called GEORGE TOWN, was marked out, and the fame of the Settlement having been rapidly spread in the surrounding countries, numerous adventurers flocked to it; some with an intention of remaining, others merely with a view of traffic; these finding a ready sale for their goods, and meeting with the merchandize they required in return, the commerce of the Port rapidly increased. Population, of course, soon followed: within the year there were upwards of sixty Chinese Families living in the town, whither these industrious people daily continued to remove from the adjacent countries, where they had previously settled. Roads leading into the country were traced out; Paddy was planted, and the interior soon after assumed the cheerful appearance of cultivation. This, at first, was certainly neither of much importance, nor very ex-

tensive; it was, however, followed in a short time, by exertions of a more permanent and valuable nature; the Settlement continued in a progressive state of improvement, both with regard to its population, and cultivation, till the year 1791, when the jealousy of the King of Queddah had nearly effected its ruin: he said, he found his revenues were considerably diminished, in consequence of the Prows resorting to this Port in place of Queddah, as formerly; and he, therefore, required an addition of Four Thousand Dollars to his annual stipened, in order to compensate his loss. Mr. Light not deeming himself authorised to comply with this demand, the King immediately began to make preparations for seizing on the Island: For this purpose he assembled a large Force, under different pretences. Early intimation of his real designs having been communicated to Mr. Light, ap-

plication was immediately made to Bengal for a re-inforcement, which arrived most opportunely, when the forces intended for the attack were all assembled on the opposite shore, at the town of Prya, where the Malays had constructed a fort. The distance of this place from GEORGE TOWN, was only two miles. Mr. Light finding all his efforts ineffectual to induce the King of Queddah to listen to any terms of accommodation, very prudently determined not to wait for the attack, but to drive them away from the post they had occupied. He accordingly attacked the fort on the 12th of April, and made another attack on the Prows assembled in Prya River, on the 16th. Our troops were successful in both attacks; in the first, the Fort was taken by assault; in the latter, most of the Prows were entirely destroyed.



This spirited conduct induced the King of Queddah to disavow all hostile intentions, and inclined him to enter into a treaty, which was afterwards confirmed by the Supreme Government. By this treaty it was stipulated, that the King of Queddah should receive Six Thousand Dollars per annum, Mr. Light promising, at the same time, to recommend to the Supreme Government to grant the additional Four Thousand Dollars, previously applied for. This being acceded to by the Supreme Government, it has, from that period, been regularly paid. The principal articles of the treaty, provided for the importation of provisions into the Island; the mutual delivery of all slaves, debtors, and murderers; and the exclusion of all other European Nations from settling in any part of this country.

The Governor General in Council, in

the year 1792, determining to form an establishment on the Andamans, intimated to Mr. Light, the probability of the Settlement at PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND being withdrawn. This intelligence was a severe and serious blow to the flattering hopes the inhabitants had entertained respecting the future prosperity of the Island. Many of them had expended large sums in buildings and cultivation, and all were more or less engaged in commercial pursuits. Relying, however, on the known munificence of the Bengal Government, their exertions fortunately continued unabated. In less than two years, their fears were entirely removed, by the withdrawing of the proposed Settlement at the Andamans, neither the climate nor situation proving so favorable, as was at first expected: The artificers and convicts were sent to PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND.

On the 21st. of October, 1794, Mr. Light died. He, however, had the satisfaction to see, before his death, the Settlement in a more flourishing state than his most sanguine hopes could have led him to expect, in so short a period of time.

Mr. Manington, the first Civil Assistant succeeded him as Superintendant ; he was obliged in a few months, owing to the bad state of his health, to resign, and proceed to Bengal, where he died.

Major Mac Donald was appointed his successor, and took charge in April, 1796, at a moment, when the Island was threatened with total destruction, by a squadron of six large French frigates, fitted out at the Mauritius for the express purpose of plundering and destroying the Settlement. They were fortunately en-

countered by the Victorious and Arrogant, 74 gun ships, and so roughly treated, as to be obliged to bear up for Batavia, and relinquish all thoughts of their intended enterprise; Major Mac Donald, in the mean time, had exerted himself to put the place in the best state of defence his means permitted.

An expedition against Manilla having been determined on, a considerable body of troops were assembled and embarked, by order of the supreme Government, at Bengal and Madras, in August, 1797. The expedition was directed to rendezvous, at PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND. The division of the army from Bengal, arrived on the 24th of August, and was joined in a few days by part of the division from Madras. The Europeans of this portion of the Expedition, including the Navy and Indiamen, amounted



to upwards of Five Thousand Men. There was also a considerable body of Native Troops. This great Armament, during a month they remained in harbour, were abundantly and daily supplied with fresh meat and vegetables; a more satisfactory proof of the improvement and resources of this Settlement, in the short period of eleven years from its formation, could not well be adduced. It is, however, but a just tribute to the memory of a brave, active, and intelligent Officer to State, that this ample supply was provided by the vigilant and prudent arrangements, previously made by Major Mac Donald, who, on every occasion, where the public service was concerned, manifested great zeal, integrity, and ability, as well as an anxious desire, at all times, to promote the prosperity of the Island. He died at Madras,

in May, 1799, after a few days illness, much and sincerely regretted.

In February, 1800, Sir George Leith, was nominated Lieutenant Governor of this Island, and its dependencies; and on the 20th of April following, arrived there and took charge of the Government.

### SITUATION.

PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND is situated in the Straits of Malacca, the N. E. point is in  $5^{\circ} 25''$  N. L.  $100^{\circ} 19''$  E. L.

It is separated from the Queddah shore, on the Malay Peninsula, by a narrow strait; and is so happily placed, and so well defended by the countries which surround it, that a gale of wind has never been felt there. Sumatra is to the South-

ward and Westward, the large mountainous Islands, called the Laddas, and the high land of Queddah, to the Northward; the mountains which run through the Malay Peninsula effectually protect it on the East. Violent squalls are occasionally experienced, but they rarely continue for more than an hour.

### CLIMATE.

It unquestionably enjoys the finest climate in India; the seasons are not marked with such precision as in other parts of Asia: (indeed no one year can be said to resemble another) but this very irregularity probably contributes much to the pleasantness of the climate. The driest, and consequently the hottest weather, is generally experienced in January and February. Thunder storms are common throughout the year. In the month of

March they are often very severe, and attended with heavy falls of rain; hailstones have been seen on the hills, but very seldom. With the exception of the two months already mentioned, the Island is rarely few days together without rain, which produces a constant verdure: and these frequent showers cool the air, and moderate the heat, which would otherwise be intense. The heaviest rains fall about November and December, when they frequently continue twenty-four hours without intermission. Dry seasons seldom occur, but instances have been known when no rain has fallen for near five months. Although the days are frequently very hot, the nights are generally cool and pleasant, as there are not more than ten nights in a year which can be considered as oppressive; a comfort not experienced in any other part of India.



In speaking of the climate of this Island, it is necessary particularly to notice that experienced on Flagstaff-Hill, nearly the highest on the Island; it is estimated to be about 2500 feet above the level of the sea. The best time for a residence on the hill is during the dry season, when the plains are parched, dusty, and disagreeable; at this period, especially, the air on the hill is clear, keen, and bracing, free from damp and fog, which at other seasons occasionally render a residence on the hill unpleasant. The thermometer never rises above  $78^{\circ}$ , seldom more than  $74^{\circ}$ ; and falls as low as  $66^{\circ}$ ; while on the plain, it ranges from  $76^{\circ}$  to  $90^{\circ}$ . The distance from the town to the foot of the hills is five miles; from thence to the Flag Staff, three more, owing to the circuitous rout it is necessary to follow; a new road has lately been made, broad and perfectly safe for horses and palanquins: a man on

foot, with a load, comes from the town in little more than three hours. On the hill there is a Bungalow for the Lieutenant Governor; and on one close to it, another Bungalow, for the accommodation of convalescents. An European is always stationed on the hill, for the purpose of giving notice of all vessels which approach the Island. The view from the hill is uncommonly grand and extensive; the Lad-das to the N. W. and Pulo Dinding to the Southward, each seventy miles distant, are perfectly visible in clear weather.

In April, 1799, a shock of an earthquake was felt, the only one ever known till August, 1802; when on the 25th, between one and two P. M. there was another smart shock: it continued about a minute and a half, running from East to West: no damage was done in either.

## FORM AND SURFACE.

The Island is an irregular four-sided figure, computed to contain nearly 160 square miles; the North side being the longest, and the South the shortest. Much of the North, and nearly the whole of the East and South sides, are in a state of cultivation. On the West, there is a considerable Bay, but too much exposed, during the whole of the S. W. monsoon, to render it convenient for ships to lay there. Through the centre of the Island, from North to South, is a range of lofty hills, which decrease in magnitude as they approach the Southward. On the East side, the country is in general low, as it is on the North, but rises gradually as you advance into the interior. The utmost extent of what may be considered level ground, from the sea to the moun-

tains, is about four miles in a direct line; this is to be understood of what is already cleared. The great Western Bay will, when cleared, certainly yield as great, if not a greater extent of level ground. Seventy Malays have been recently sent thither, for the purpose of clearing the woods, and planting Paddy, Whenever a small force can be spared as a guard against the Pirates, who at present occasionally infest the Bay, there is no doubt but numbers of people will settle there, from whence communications can easily be opened to the other parts of the Island; great advantages will arise to the Settlement in general, from this extensive part being brought into a state fit for cultivation, which nothing has hitherto prevented, but the real danger attending the undertaking.



## SOIL.

The soil is various, generally light, black mould, mixed with gravel, clay, and in many parts sandy. The whole Island having been for ages covered with an immense forest, there was every where a fine vegetable mould, formed by the decayed leaves, as the woods were cleared, and the surface exposed to the weather; this, in a considerable degree, disappeared, particularly upon the point which is now entirely sand. The forming of a garden is here attended with much labour, as the manure soon sinks through; a fine soft grass fortunately grows, which relieves the eye, that otherwise would suffer from the strong light of the sun. This soil is confined entirely to the Point, for, as you advance into the country, it becomes fit for every kind of

cultivation. Excellent Water is procured by sinking wells on the Point, notwithstanding the soil is composed of sand and sea-shell. One Well in particular supplied nearly all the inhabitants with Water; as this was situated in the upper part of the Town, much inconvenience was experienced by those Inhabitants who lived in the lower part; to remedy which, the Lieutenant Governor gave directions to sink a large Well in a central part of the Town.

### GEORGE TOWN.

GEORGE TOWN is extensive, bounded to the North and East by the sea; on the South, by an inlet of the sea, improperly called the Prangin River; and on the West, by the high road. The Streets, which cross each other at right angles, are spacious and airy; but having been at first merely lined out, without being either raised or drained, they were frequent-

ly impassable after hard rain, and at all times were dirty and filled with stagnant water. This serious inconvenience is now removed, as the principal Streets are properly raised and drained, and the remainder are now finishing. The Town has in consequence improved much in appearance and cleanliness, and it is reasonable to suppose will also be more healthy. Immediately in front of Beach-Street, which extends along the whole of the East side of the Town, there is a very extensive mud bank, dry at low water, which was equally offensive to the sight and smell; this was divided into small lots, and directed by the Lieutenant Governor to be sold by the Committee appointed to superintend the making of the streets, upon condition of the purchasers enclosing their respective portions by a stone wall, filling up the interval, and building houses there. This regulation has considera-

bly diminished the former nuisance, and at the same time furnished funds for the making and draining the streets. These alterations commenced in January, 1801, since when, the value of property has increased at least twenty-five per cent. Brick buildings are now common, and the Cajan Houses, of which GEORGE TOWN was originally built, are disappearing very fast. There are not any Public Buildings in the Town; the following are those more immediately required: a Church, for which there is reserved a very fine spot of ground in the upper part of the Town; a Government House, Custom House, Public Offices, Court-House, Hospital, and Jail\*.

\* Since the above was written, the Lieutenant Governor purchased a large strong airy commodious building for a Jail, and made contracts for two Bungalows, one to serve for all the Public Offices, the other for the Court of the Judge and Magistrate.



## ROADS AND BRIDGES.

The Public Roads have recently undergone a thorough repair, and at the same time were considerably widened; they extend for many miles round the Town, and will, by degrees, be carried through all the cultivated parts of the Island. An avenue of trees has lately been planted on those immediately in the vicinity of GEORGE TOWN, which will be continued by degrees over all of them.

In the year 1800, there were nothing but Wooden Bridges on the Island, which were constantly liable to injury, and frequently carried away by the violent and rapid rising of the Rivers: there are now four very substantial brick and mortar Bridges completed, and another just commenced; the foundations are composed

of Stone. These were constructed by the Company's Artificers, and the Bengal Convicts, who are also employed in making and repairing the Public Roads. The Bricks used in the Bridges, and other Public Works, are entirely made by the Convicts, under the Inspection of an European Brickmaker.

### MARKETS.

The Markets are well supplied with Fish of various kinds, and of excellent quality, Poultry of all kinds, Pork, Grain of every description, and a great variety of fine Vegetables and Fruits. Beef and Veal are not of a good quality; Sheep are imported from Bengal and the Coast; Goat Mutton can be procured from the Malay Peninsula, and Sumatra; when of a proper age, the meat is very good. Milk, Butter, and Bread, are very dear, the two former not in very great plenty.

## THE FORT.

On the North East angle of the Point stands the Fort, which having been extremely ill built originally, is now falling to pieces. Large sums of money have been thrown away upon it, without its ever being finished. On the West face there never has been any Rampart; there is no Parapet except on the Four Bastions at the Angles: a few rounds from the guns now mounted, would soon crumble the walls to dust; the ditch is narrow and fordable in every part. The Fort is not only incapable of defence, from its size and construction, but from its situation: two or three 74 gun ships could anchor within pistol-shot, and from their tops drive away the men from their guns. No Fort of any strength can be erected on the site of the present one, without de-

stroying one half of the Town, in order to form any thing like a Glacis. Whenever the subject of Fortifications for the Island shall be taken into consideration, it is presumed, a totally different mode from the present one must be adopted. In the Fort are barracks for the European Artillery, the Arsenal, Magazine, and Military Store-houses, all of which are upon a very small and inadequate scale; the Magazine in particular is both too confined, and too much exposed.

#### THE SEA.

The Sea, for some time past, has been making very alarming encroachments on the North face of the Fort, and along the Esplanade, and for upwards of a mile in that direction. The best mode of preventing its further progress appears to be, by throwing out Stone Piers, at regular



distances, and connecting them about the centre, by a wall of sufficient strength to resist the surf, and enable the sand to accumulate. This will certainly be a work of great labour, and some expence; but this, or some other mode of stopping this alarming encroachment, is become indispensably requisite, to prevent the Town from being in time washed away.

### THE HARBOUR.

The Harbour is formed by the narrow strait which divides the North side of the Island from the Queddah shore. It is very capacious, and every where affords good anchorage for the largest ships. At first, the Harbour appears much exposed to the North West, where it is entirely open to the sea, which would certainly roll in with great violence, were it not prevented by an extensive flat at the en-

trance of the Harbour: this flat extends from the Queddah shore to the Island, and is nearly two miles in breadth, but upon which, there is never less than four fathoms at low-water spring tides; thus the Harbour may be considered as a spacious bason, capable of containing the largest fleets with perfect ease and safety: the principal entrance is from the North West. There is also a very fine Channel to the Southward, with sufficient water for a 74-gun ship, and through which many of the large China ships have sailed. This Channel, which was first discovered by Sir Home Popham, is of the greatest importance to the trade of the Island. To the above advantages, is to be added, the very important one of its easy access at all seasons of the year.

Every one acquainted with the Bay of Bengal, knows the tempestuous weather

which prevails there during the S. W. monsoon, the season of active naval operations. A ship disabled, either in action, or by bad weather, could not fetch Trincomalie, and could not venture to go into Balasore Roads: whereas she could, with great ease, fetch PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND, from any part of the Coast, or the head of the Bay, in twelve or fourteen days, and need not fear entering the Harbour in a disabled state, as there are neither open nor concealed dangers. In August, 1797, when the Manilla expedition sailed from Bengal, in a heavy gale of wind, the Heroine Frigate struck on a sand, on leaving the River, and lost her rudder. Notwithstanding she was in this crippled state, she arrived before the fleet, though they had a good passage of fourteen days. The passage from PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND, to the Coast or Bengal, is certain at all

seasons, thereby possessing a decided and great superiority, as a naval port, over Bombay.

### INNER HARBOUR.

Notwithstanding the excellence of the Harbour now described, this place could never be expected to become a Naval Port, if it did not possess the advantage of an excellent Inner Harbour, formed by the Eastern end of this Island, and the Island Jerajah. Here ships may receive every kind of repair that can be performed, without going into Dock.

### PULO JERAJAH.

The North end of Pulo Jerajah, is about five miles from the Point; is three long, and extends nearly to the South end



of the Island. It is hilly, covered with fine Timber, and abounding with small streams of excellent Water. There are a number of spots, on which the different Buildings required for a Marine Arsenal, could easily be erected. Careening Wharfs can be constructed with the utmost facility,\* there being five fathom water close to the rocks: It is capable of being defended against any force. Pulo Jerajah is extremely well adapted for a Naval Hospital, as the situation is high, open, and healthy. There are two entrances to the Inner Harbour: one from the Northward, through a narrow and

\* "As there is in this Harbour Six or Seven feet water close to the Rocks, it is peculiarly well adapted for heaving down wharfs." Capt. Macalister's Account of Prince of Wales Island. Page 29.

It would be peculiarly ill adapted for constructing Careening Wharfs were there only Six or Seven feet Water; the fact is, there are Five Fathoms close to the Rocks, and it is this depth of Water, which renders it so well calculated for this purpose.



intricate channel, seldom used by large ships; the other is by the common Southern channel, from whence ships can, if necessary, be easily warped into the Inner Harbour. It was the decided opinion of many intelligent professional men, that Docks could be constructed here, capable of receiving any Frigate, but they entertained a doubt of the practicability of making them large enough to admit line of Battle Ships. To determine this point, is certainly a matter of great importance, and it would, therefore, be desirable to have a person duly qualified, sent to the Island, in order to examine it, and report its capability in respect to the purposes above mentioned. The Tide rises nearly nine feet.

## TIMBER.

A great variety of Timber, fit for every purpose of Ship Building, is found on PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND, the neighbouring Shores, and Islands, belonging to the Honourable Company. PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND possesses one very important advantage over every other place, in India, in our possession, being able to furnish Masts of any dimensions. In the course of the late War, 74 gun ships were provided with lower masts of one piece. On Pulo Dinding, seventy miles to the Southward, crooked timber of any size can be procured.

A ship of 800 tons burthen, was lately launched there, built by Captain John Elliot, of Timber either found on the Island, or on the opposite shore; the keel

is formed of one piece, and measures One Hundred and Ten Feet.\*

\* "Though the Marine yard at Prince of Wales Island may be said to be still in its Infancy, yet Ships of twelve hundred Tons have been built there, many have down, sheathed, and coppered, and repairs of every kind executed with promptitude and complete satisfaction." Captain Macalister's Account, &c. Page 55.

In a Work dedicated to the Court of Directors (the merits of which is not here intended to enter upon, further than to observe that near nine-tenths of it, is a Copy verbatim from Colonel Kyd's Report) and published at a moment, when they were about to establish a Naval Port at Prince of Wales Island, any observation, which may be supposed to have influenced in the slightest degree their opinion, by shewing what had already been done in regard to Building Ships of large dimensions, becomes of great importance. It is here said that "*Ships of Twelve Hundred Tons have been Built, on the Island.*" This places the exertions of the Merchants and the Resources of the Island, in a very conspicuous point of view, and merely wants confirmation to render it an unanswerable argument. *Can it however be ascertained when, or by whom, One Ship of Twelve Hundred Tons was Built on the Island? Or even if another Ship of the same dimensions as Captain Elliott's, was ever constructed there? The Answer must be in the Negative.*

The following is a list of the names and qualities of some of the different sorts of Timber found on PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND: viz.

*Madong*, 1st sort.—Planks and Beams for Ships and Houses, durable.

*Ditto*, 2nd ditto.—Ditto. Ditto.

*Ditto*, 3d ditto.—Plank for sheathing Ships, and Floors for Houses.

*Penagra*, 1st sort.—For Ships, Frames and Blocks, different sizes, crooked; durable.

*Ditto*, 2nd ditto.—Ditto, crooked.

*Poone*. Red.—Yards and Topmasts; great length.



*Ditto. Grey.*—*Ditto. ditto. ditto.*

*Mangrove. Red.*—Posts for Houses.

Beams 30 to 50 feet long; very durable

*Mangrove. White.*—Not so durable as the Red.

*Dammerlaut, 1st sort.*—Keels for Ships, and Beams for Houses; great length and size; durable.

*Ditto, 2nd sort.*—*Ditto. Ditto.*

*Bintang Ore.*—The best wood for Masts, of which H. M. S. Suffolk's lower Masts were made each of one Stick.

*Red Wood.*—Proper for Furniture.



*Murboo.*—The best wood to the Eastward for Ships and Houses.

*CayooBattoo, or Stone Wood.*—Beams for Houses; durable.

*Chingal. White.*—Beams for Ships.

*Lampoon. White.*—Lathing for Houses.

*Ditto. Yellow.*—Flooring for ditto.

The Teak Tree has been planted in the Island, and thrives remarkably well, but it will never be worth while to make large plantations of it, as amidst such a variety and abundance of useful Trees, above enumerated, it could only be considered in an ornamental light.

## WATER.

There are few places, if any, more abundantly supplied with Water than PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND; numerous Streams of the finest Water flowing from the hills in every direction. Three or four of these Streams, after traversing a great space, unite and form the Penang River, which is the most considerable in the Island, and discharges itself into the Sea, about a mile to the Southward of the Town. All Ships are supplied with Water from this River; but many inconveniencies, and much delay, unavoidably arise from this circumstance; the boats employed to bring Water, being obliged to go into the River at flood Tide, and wait till half ebb before they can begin to fill the Water; they must then remain

for the flood to carry them out, when they are frequently obliged to continue at anchor till the ebb makes, not being able to stem the flood. As the men employed in the Water Boats are very careless, frequent complaints are made of the quality of the Water, owing to the Casks being filled too soon. To remedy these serious inconveniencies, to expedite the departure of Ships (particularly Men of War, who are often pressed for time) and to add, in some degree, to the Revenue, by taking the watering of Ships entirely into the hands of Government, it is proposed to bring one of the small Streams down to the Town, either by Pipes, or an Aqueduct, to form a large Reservoir, near the present Hospital; and from thence, convey the Water, by Pipes, to a Pier Head, where the Boats may come and have their Casks filled, without trouble or delay; the Town could also easily be furnished with Water,

if required, by Pipes from the Reservoir. The advantages which would be procured by bringing one of the Streams down to the Town, are too obvious to need being insisted on: whatever expence might occur by constructing the necessary Works, would soon be repaid by the Shipping; and the ease with which they would then be supplied with this essential article, would induce many Commanders to take in Water, who otherwise would not do so.

### INHABITANTS.

From the appearance of many places in the interior of the Island, and the number of Tombs which were discovered, soon after the Settlement was formed, the tradition of its being formerly inhabited, seems entitled to credit. It is asserted, that there were once near Three Thousand People resident on it, who chiefly sub-



sisted by Piracy, but in consequence of their violent conduct, they were expelled by one of the former Kings of Queddah. However this may be, it is certain there were only a few miserable Fishermen on the Island when it was taken possession of by the Bengal Government. Its present Inhabitants are composed of various Nations; amongst whom are counted, the British, Dutch, Portuguese, Armenians, Arabs, Parsees, Chinese, Chooliahs, Malays, Buggesses, Burmahs, Siamise, Javenese, &c. &c. &c.

There is not, probably, any part of the world, where, in so small a space, so many different people are assembled together, or so great a variety of languages spoken. Passing over some of the above enumerated classes of Inhabitants, it may be necessary to say a few words of the remainder.

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## CHINESE.

The Chinese form one of the most numerous and useful classes of the Inhabitants, they may be estimated to amount to between 5 and 6000. The better sort of them possess valuable Estates, in Lands and Houses, and were the first Planters of Pepper. The lower order exercise the different trades of Carpenters, Smiths, Shoemakers, &c. &c. they are Labourers and Fishermen, and supply the Markets with all sorts of Vegetables. The wages they receive are certainly very high, but they are laborious good Workmen; and as they are expensive in their mode of living, the greatest part of the money they receive is spent on the Island. Every Chinaman makes it an invariable rule to send a certain portion of his earnings annually to his Friends

and relations in China; these people are addicted to Gaming and smoaking Opium, and are immoderately fond of seeing Plays acted, after the manner of their country; though the audiences, on these occasions, are extremely numerous, the utmost order, silence, and regularity is observed. Their Plays frequently require two or three days for the representation, and embrace a period of many years. These Performances are very noisy, the termination of each Scene and Act being marked by the firing of numerous Crackers; and the sounds of their music, the most discordant. To every person but themselves, these Plays, after half an hour, become tiresome in the greatest degree. During their Holidays, which continue a month, no consideration will induce a Chinaman to work; in this period, the savings of a year are frequently dissipated in a few hours. They are, in general, a quiet industrious People, and

have proved a most valuable acquisition to this Settlement; indeed, without them, it would have little or no cultivation. They are great speculators, to which spirit many have fallen a victim; others have been utterly ruined, by the usurious practices of some Europeans, who, taking advantage of their ignorance, induced them to sign Bonds, the meaning of which, they could not understand. Hence, in too many instances, they were only made sensible of their folly, by being driven from their Houses and Lands, (which last they had been induced to cultivate by the specious advantages held forth to them) by finding, but too late, that the fruits of their industry and labour were become the property of another, while their Wives, Children, and themselves, were once more to seek for a Habitation.

## CHOOLIAHS.

The Chooliahs come from the Coast of Coromondel; many of them are Merchants, fixed Inhabitants, and possess Property to a very large amount; the greatest portion, however, of the Chooliahs, reside on the Island only for a few months; when having disposed of their Goods, and purchased a fresh Cargo, they return to the Coast. The Coolies and Boatmen, are Chooliahs; these two descriptions of People remain, One, Two, or Three Years, according to circumstances, and then return to the Coast. The Chooliahs are dispersed over all the Malay Peninsula, and are entrusted by the different Rajahs with the chief management of their affairs; they are a quiet useful People.



## MALAYS.

The proportion of Malay Inhabitants is fortunately very small, they are an indolent, vindictive, and treacherous People, and generally speaking, seem fit for little else but cutting down Trees, at which, they are very expert. They are incapable of any labour beyond the cultivation of Paddy. When they procure a small quantity of Rice, and some Opium, no inducement, so long as those articles last, is sufficiently powerful to make them do any Work. But though so rude and uncivilized a race, some of them are most excellent Goldsmiths, and work in Fillingree, in a very beautiful manner.

## BUGGESSES.

The Buggesses come from Borneo, and the Celebes; though commonly considered as Malays, their Language is perfectly distinct, and indeed, in every particular, they appear a different People; they are Bold, Independent, and Enterprising; make good Soldiers, and if treated with kindness, are attached and faithful. They have a small Town on the Penang River; their numbers have lately increased; many of their Prows come here annually, and exchange their Gold Dust, and Cloths, for Iron, Opium, &c.

## BURMAHS.

The Burmahs are not numerous; they live in a small Town by themselves, and subsist chiefly by fishing.

## PARSEES.

The Parsees come from Bombay and Surat; some of the higher sort are great Merchants, the lower order are chiefly Shipwrights, and are esteemed excellent Workmen. They are a remarkable quiet well-behaved People; it is much to be wished that their numbers were augmented, which will certainly be the case, if the Shipping of this Port increases.

The above enumerated are the principal classes of our Inhabitants who are not Christians; the remainder are composed of Bengalees, Achenese, Javanese, &c. &c.

In the year 1797, an account was taken of the Inhabitants, then resident on the Island, exclusive of Europeans and the Garrison, when the number was found

to be Six Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirty Seven, (6937). In the year 1801-2, the Lieutenant Governor ordered another account to be taken, by which it appeared that there were 723 Persons who possessed Landed Property, and whose Wives, Children, Relations, Friends, Servants, and Slaves, amounted to 9587, of which number, 1222 only, were Slaves; the total amounts to 10,310. But this enumeration of the Inhabitants, though made with every degree of care and attention, cannot, on account of the difficulties opposed to such an operation, by the peculiar habits of the People, be considered as positively accurate. It being certain, however, that the error does not lie in having over-rated the Inhabitants, we may safely venture to estimate the Population of the Island at 12,000, every Person included; a larger Population than has perhaps been known in any Settle-



ment, in so short a period from its foundation.\*

## PRODUCTIONS.

PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND produces every thing which is common to the neighbouring Countries, and many things which are only found at a great distance; among the former are, Pepper, Beetle-nut, Beetle-leaf, Cocoa-nut, Coffee, Sugar, Cotton, Paddy, Ginger, Yams, Sweet Potatoes; a

\* “ The Inhabitants of PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND  
“ for the time it has been settled are very numerous. *By*  
“ *the last Computation Men, Women, and Children,*  
“ *were reckoned at 30,000. Of these Twelve Thousand*  
“ *are Chinese*”. Captain Macalister’s Account, &c.  
Page 22.

At what period, by whose order, or by whom “ *the last Computation above mentioned*” was made, will, it is presumed, be extremely difficult to ascertain; unless indeed it has Reference to a vague loose Report made in the Year 1793, to the Supreme Government, when it was supposed the Settlement would be withdrawn.

It is sufficient, merely, to point out the extreme inaccuracy of this Enumeration of the Inhabitants, to render it’s Authority, of no Consequence.

great variety of Vegetables; and many different sorts of Fruits, as the Mangos-teen, Rambos-teen, Pine Apple, Guava, Orange, Citron, Pomegranate, &c. &c.

The exotics are the Clove, Nutmeg, Cinnamon, Pimento, Kyapootee, Colalava, and a number of other Plants from the Molluccas and Eastern Isles, which have been introduced within these few years, and thrive in the most luxuriant manner. The Gamootee, of which the Black Coir Rope is made, is a native of the Island.

By an account of the Cultivation of the Island, taken in 1801, it appears there were,

Pepper Vines, under Three Years

Old - - - - - 733,349

Ditto Ditto, from Three to Six

Years, and upwards - - 583,230

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1,316,579

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Beetle-nut Trees	-	-	-	-	-	342,110
Cocoa-nut ditto	-	-	-	-	-	32,306

### MINES.

There are Tin Mines on the Island, but they have never been worked, as this article can always be procured cheaper from the different countries in the vicinity of the Island, than it could be obtained were the Mines worked at the expence and risk of Government. A small quantity of the Ore has been analyzed, and found to be of an excellent quality.

### CEDED DISTRICT.

The country of Queddah on which PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND formerly depended, is situated on the North Side of

the Strait which divides the Island from the Continent, and forms one side of the Harbour, of which we consequently could never be said to have had possession. The disadvantage of such a position, had already in some degree been experienced, and might at a future period be still more seriously felt. To obtain possession, therefore, of a Tract of Land on the Continent that should embrace the whole extent of the Island, was on many accounts very desirable, and might be considered in some measure, as indispensably requisite to the future security of the Settlement. Independant, however, of the expediency of obtaining intire possession of the Harbour, there were other considerations which rendered the acquisition valuable and important.

The Town of Prya, is situated about two



Miles from GEORGE TOWN, at the mouth of a River of the same name; this place had always been a receptacle for Vagrants of every description, who came over in the night to Rob and Plunder, and were safe in their retreat, before they could possibly be apprehended. It was at this place, the Force assembled, for the attack of the Island, in the year 1791; at which time, the King of Queddah formed the design of building a Fort there. It had since been frequently reported to be still his intention to bring this object into effect, and it was in his power to do so whenever he pleased; though it is not to be supposed he could ever have erected any work which would not easily have been taken: Still, however, having a Fort within, so short a distance of our Settlement, must, in many respects, have proved disadvantageous to us.

This tract of country had also been the means of diminishing the value of our Opium, and Arrack Farms, by which the Revenue sustained a great loss; considerable quantities of Opium, for smoaking, being prepared there, which, with Arrack made on the spot, were smuggled over. There was also another very important consideration, which shewed the necessity of acquiring some territory on the Continent; our supplies of Rice had hitherto been imported from Queddah, it was therefore in the power of the King, at any time, to prevent the Exportation, which, if only delayed a few weeks, would reduce the Settlement to the utmost distress: any internal commotion, in the country, a scarcity, or the caprice of a Malay, would prove equally fatal to us. By acquiring a tract of Land on the Continent, we should be put in complete possession of the Harbour, and thereby for ever preclude

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all other powers from settling there; the nest of Pirates, Vagrants, and Smugglers, at Prya, would be rooted out; our Revenue would be improved; and we should have the satisfaction of knowing, that in a short time we might reasonably expect to be independant of all countries for our supplies of Rice; besides having a sufficient quantity of Grazing Ground for rearing Cattle. No considerable supply of either Paddy or Cattle, can ever be expected from the Island, as the value of Land is so high, and the price of labour so great, that no man will ever appropriate any part of his land to Pasture or Paddy Fields, which can possibly be turned to any other purpose of a more profitable nature; very little Paddy is consequently cultivated, and no Cattle reared on the Island. The former is merely for the use of Slaves, who perform the labour.

These considerations induced the Lieutenant Governor, soon after his arrival in April 1800, to endeavour to acquire the Cession of a Tract of Land on the Continent, from the King of Queddah. This, after much trouble was fortunately accomplished, in the month of June following, when a District, Eighteen Miles in length, and Three in breadth, was ceded to the Honourable Company in perpetuity. At the same time a new Treaty was formed with the King on the basis of the old one: by which it had been stipulated that he should receive Six Thousand Dollars annually, exclusive of an additional Four Thousand, subsequently authorized to be paid to him by the Supreme Government. In the present Treaty, it was agreed that the annual Payment should be Ten Thousand Dollars; the same sum that in fact had been paid since the year 1791, but in a less objectionable form; the other principal

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articles of the Treaty, (which was in due time ratified by the Supreme Government) consisted in the cession in perpetuity of the Island, and the above district; the exclusion of all other European Powers, as Settlers from the Queddah Dominions; the free importation of all kinds of provisions; and the mutual delivery of all Murderers and Slaves.

The immediate advantages arising from the acquisition were, the obtaining of the entire command of the Harbour, which before we never possessed; the reducing of the People of Prya into some degree of order; and a considerable increase in the value of the Opium, and Arrack Farms. A number of people have already settled on the opposite shore, in the ceded District, and begun the cultivation of Paddy; more are daily resorting thither. It may therefore be reasonably hoped,

that all the beneficial consequences, expected to arise from this acquisition, will, at no distant period, be amply felt

### LAWS.

The total want of an efficient code of Civil and Criminal Laws, has long been severely felt at this Settlement. In the great variety of people who compose its Population, it must be supposed, that numbers will readily embrace the opportunity here unfortunately presented to them, of practising the most nefarious acts, when they are sensible no power exists to coerce or restrain them. This observation applies particularly to all those who are not included under the general, but indefinite expression of Natives, as no European can be imprisoned for debt, nor even sued for it; while on the other hand, he has the power of recovering any money

which may be due to him from any Native: that is, every man who is not considered as an European; and the consequences naturally to be expected from such a state of things, have been but too often experienced. No difficulty has ever occurred in settling, even by the present defective Regulations, every dispute of a civil nature, wherein Natives only were concerned, or where they were only Defendants; but then there is no redress for them against the many usurious and shameful practises which some Europeans are but too ready to employ; nor can one European recover against another in the Court established here, even upon the clearest and most undisputed plea.

The want of a Criminal Code has been also a serious evil to the Community at large; many persons are now, and have been for a long time confined in Jail,

charged with Capital Crimes, without the means of bringing them to Trial. Most of these above alluded to, are confined for murder, and a very large majority of them, upon their own confession; and the rest have been confined upon such strong presumptive evidence, as rendered it impossible to liberate them; and enormities have been repeatedly committed which are too shocking to mention; and there is too much reason to fear that these will frequently be renewed, unless due means are provided for the punishment of such crimes in the manner they deserve; and that as soon after their commission as a due attention to Justice will admit.

Inprisonment for any length of time, however dreadful the idea is to an European, is by no means considered by the Natives of Asia in general, in the

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same light, and least of all perhaps by a Malay, who, while he is fed, and permitted to sleep undisturbed, cares very little for the loss of his liberty. Most of the Murderers are Malays.

The Lieutenant Governor was ordered in his Instructions, to frame a Code of Laws for the future Government of the Island; He accordingly transmitted a draft of some Regulations, for the better administration of Justice in Civil Causes, and in Criminal ones, where compensation could be made by damages. The subject of Criminal Law relating to Capital Offences, was not entered upon. The great and important political events, and the variety of pressing business which constantly occupy the attention of the Supreme Government, have hitherto prevented these Regulations from being promulgated. The Code was drawn up

with every possible degree of care and attention, and with the most anxious solicitude, to offer a remedy for the many evils which now exist.

In making Regulations for the interior Government of PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND, the most particular attention should be paid to its situation; to the People who compose its population; their Habits, Manners, Customs, and Prejudices, should be consulted; every thing which relates to their Religious Ceremonies; domestic disputes, and recovery of debts among each other to a certain amount, ought to be left to themselves, but under fixed and well defined Rules and Regulations, which should be made as public as possible, to prevent a deviation from them. The great division of the Natives, as at present, should each have a Captain, who becomes more imme-

diately responsible for their conduct: the beneficial effects of such an Establishment are too well known to require to be particularly enumerated.

Various reasons could be adduced to point out the absolute necessity of placing the entire management of the Police, under the immediate care and directions of the Lieutenant Governor: nor should the Judge and Magistrate have any thing to do with it, except merely as a Justice of the Peace; if a contrary system is adopted, the utmost confusion, and most disagreeable consequences, will inevitably ensue.

## CHURCH.

There never has been either a Clergyman or Church at PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND. It is not necessary to dwell upon the many serious evils which must naturally result from this cause.

## REVENUE.

The first Revenue raised on this Island, was in the year 1789-90; it was, of course, very trifling, and arose from the Farms of Opium, Arrack, and Gaming, which were the only sources of Revenue, with the exception of a small Tax on Shops, to defray part of the expence of the Police, till the year 1800, when Two Additional Farms were created, viz. the Tobacco and Beetle-leaf, and Attaps Farms. In the year 1801-2, a Duty of Two per Cent. on



the Importation of Tin, Pepper, and Beetle-nut, was laid on. This Duty was farmed for One Year, at the expiration of which, it was discontinued, as it was supposed, to give the Farmer an undue influence in the Market, to the prejudice of other Merchants; in its place was substituted an Export Duty, which was also extended to other articles, and in order to remedy an inconvenience which was found to arise from levying the Duties *ad valorem*, fixed Rates were established upon each Article subject to the Export Duty. With a view, at the same time, to render the levying of the Duty as little troublesome as possible to the Merchants, it was settled, that each might Ship off Goods, under certain Rules, from his own Wharf.

On this Island, Export Duties are certainly much less liable to objection than Import Duties, as all Imports are made in

small quantities, and almost every day in the year, whereas Exports are always in large quantities, and generally speaking, at particular seasons.

As it will, no doubt, be found necessary to extend the Customs to every Article of Export, it appears advisable, that they should be managed by Government, through a regular Custom House. By this mode, the amount collected, after defraying all charges of collection, will probably not be so great, as if the whole Customs were farmed; but on the other hand, all complaints of individual influence will be removed; a more accurate account of the Trade be obtained than possibly can be expected from the returns a Renter of the Farm will give in; all speculation in the purchase of the Farm will be removed; and the Merchants will never experience that troublesome and

vexatious interference, to which a rash speculator might feel himself forced to resort.

The Expence of the Island has not yet been very great; but as neither the Civil, (in which is included the Church and Law Establishments) nor Military Establishments, can be considered as complete, an increase in the expenditure will, of course, become necessary. The Revenue now yielded by the Island, all circumstances considered, is certainly much greater than could have been expected in so short a period; but large as it is, it by no means defrays the expence of the present Establishment; and though there is every reason to hope that the different Farms will increase in value, with the Population of the Island, we must not expect that the Receipts arising from the Farms and Customs, will ever meet the Expenditure,

There are, however, other sources from whence a considerable Revenue may be derived. The Sale of Marine Stores will always be a certain branch of Revenue, if confined exclusively to the Honourable Company. This is also necessary for the purpose of preventing a competition, and the Markets from being overstocked; otherwise what should prove a source of Revenue to the Government, and an advantage to the community at large, will be confined entirely to the latter. The certainty of being amply supplied with Marine Stores, and at fixed Prices, would be attended with great advantage to every person who trades in this Port, as they would be thus enabled to repair their Ships and Vessels at moderate rates; nor is it to be doubted that the knowledge of this circumstance would induce many Commanders of Ships to touch here for repairs, who otherwise would not. No



more than 25 per cent. should be put on the invoice price of the Marine Stores; this would enable the Merchant to purchase such parts of them as were adapted for the Eastern Trade, and to dispose of them at a reasonable profit. If the Sale of Marine Stores be not confined exclusively to the Honourable Company, it will not be advisable to send them out in future.

There is every reason to believe, that considerable advantage would be derived from making Contracts in China, for Beetle-nut, Tin, Cutch, &c. to be sent on the Madras and China Ships; the Contracts to be made by the Supracargoes in China; the difference between the price paid at PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND, and the Contract, after deducting all charges, to be carried to the credit of the Island, This would also prove, at the same time,

an advantageous remittance to China. Between 70 and 80,000 péculs of Beetle-nut are supposed to be annually imported into China. Any portion of the above quantity could be easily procured on the Island.

If we should be able, from the abovementioned resources, to defray the expences of the Island, it is presumed nothing more could be expected for some years; and when it is considered that it is only Eighteen Years since this Settlement was first formed, it should be a matter of exultation, that it already contributes so much as it does towards its support.

The following statement will shew the gross amount of the Revenues and Disbursements of the Island from 1789-90; the former arose solely until 1800-1 from the Farms on Opium, Arrack, and Gaming.

YEARS.	REVENUE.		DISBURSEMENTS.	
	<i>Dollars.</i>	<i>Pice.</i>	<i>Dollars.</i>	<i>Pice.</i>
1789-90	2,500		78,884	62
1790-1	4,100		96,274	70
1791-2	11,235		108,290	34
1792-3	24,473		104,797	49
1793-4	21,600		148,569	46½
1794-5	14,188		113,879	37
1795-6	19,612	20	115,379	79½
1796-7	28,000		192,598	56
1797-8	27,133	33	168,896	28
1798-9	30,000		141,029	92¾
1799-1800	29,520		135,379	83
1800-1	53,155		184,469	32
1801-2	74,160		174,133	73
1802-3	74,280		176,000	
1803-4	75,000	Estimated.	180,000	Estima.

	Arrack, Opium, and Gaming Farms.	Beetle- leaf and Tobacco.	Attaps.	Tax on Pepper Vines, Cocoa- nuts, and Beetle- nut Trees.	Import Duty on Tin, Pepper and Beetle- nut.	Export duties on Pepper, Cutch, Beetle- nut, Tin, Rattans, and Stich Lac.	Total.
1800-1	59,750	2,280	1,125	10,000			53,155
1801-2	55,440	4,800	1,560		12,360		74,160
1802-3	55,440	4,800	1,560			12,480	74,280
1803-4	55,400	4,800	1,560			12,360	74,120

To the former Statement of the Revenue, must be added the following: a trifling Duty on Goods imported from China amounting to 1800 Dollars per annum, the Duties arising from Anchorage, which amount to 3000 Dollars per annum, and 800 Dollars per annum, arising from a Shop Tax; this last is appropriated to defray the expence of the Police Establishment. This makes the Revenue amount to nearly 80,000 Dollars per annum.



It is to be observed, that in the year 1800-1, considerable arrears were due to the King of Queddah; in consequence of which, in that year he received 20,000, instead of 10,000 Dollars.

### COMMERCE.

The principal, if not the only view in forming this Settlement, appears to have been the acquiring a Port in the Straits of Malacca, for commercial purposes; and there certainly is not in any part of India a place so well adapted to this end as PRINCE OF WALES ISLAND; at the same time it undoubtedly enjoys great advantages as a Naval Port. Hitherto the productions of the Island have constituted but a small portion of the extensive Commerce which has flourished here for some years; but although this portion has, as yet, been inconsiderable, there is the

most satisfactory and pleasing evidence that it is daily increasing. The numerous, extensive, and highly cultivated Plantations of Pepper, and Beetle-nut, which are every where rising into view, will, in a short time, afford large Cargoes of those articles, without the trouble and expence of Importation. It is computed that there will be upwards of Fifteen Thousand Peculs of Pepper produced on the Island this year; (1803-4) and that in the course of Three or Four Years more, the Plantations will yield more than Twenty Thousand Peculs. Coffee also promises to become a valuable commodity; this Berry has been imported from different quarters, and they all thrive very well, and produce fine flavoured Coffee. The Sugar Cane grows with uncommon luxuriance; but as the price of labour is very high, the expence attending the making of Sugar, will prevent a very extensive cultivation of the Cane.

The Spice Plantations, in which there are many Thousand Clove and Nutmeg Trees, are so flourishing, that the Island may reasonably hope, in a few years, to be able to furnish a valuable cargo of Cloves, Nutmegs, and Mace; with their essential Oils, and also the so much esteemed Kyapootee Oil.\*

\* *“ It is evident, from the present luxuriant appearance of the Nutmeg and Clove Trees, that they might be improved into a great acquisition to the wealth of the Nation. Government has been at a very great expence in bringing those valuable plants from Banda and Amboyna. But the Interest of the Company with some of those who have hitherto had the management of their plants, was only a secondary Consideration. I hope, however, that now a new system will be adopted, and that the produce of these Gardens will soon indemnify the Company for the great expence it has been at. Captain Macalister’s Account, &c. Page 12. ”*

A more unjust and unfounded Reflection cannot be imagined, than the one conveyed in this Paragraph, on the conduct and Character of those Gentlemen who for years have had the management of the Company’s Spice Plantations at Prince of Wales Island. To accuse any Man of making the Interest of his Employers

However the productions of the Island may increase in various articles, the principal source of wealth must arise from its being considered as the best and greatest Port of Exchange in India. Ships and

*“only a Secondary Consideration,”* is to suppose him devoid of the principles of honor and honesty: to which in the present instance must be added the most egregious folly, as no one possible advantage could be derived, from the total failure of the Company's Plantations to any Individual concerned in their Management: or indeed to any person; as the Profit, which may be expected to arise from the Sale of the spices when prepared for use, would be entirely absorbed, if every Individual should be reduced to the necessity of Erecting the Buildings required for the purpose: whereas on the other hand, if the Company's Plantations thrive, such arrangements may be made, for the drying &c. of the Spices, with the Government, as to prove a mutual advantage to the Individual and the Company. But the strongest argument which can be adduced to prove that every care and attention was bestowed on the Spice Plantations (which could be required till the period arrived of their producing Fruit) must be derived from the testimony which the writer of the Reflection himself bears to the *“Luxuriant appearance of the Nutmeg and Clove Trees.”*



Vessels come here from every quarter, and can exchange the Commodities they bring, for those which are required as a return Cargo. This affords the Merchant the very important advantage of a quick return of his Capital.

As there is not a Custom House on the Island, it is not possible to form an accurate idea of the extent of the General Imports and Exports. In the year 1801-2, an Import Duty of Two per cent. *ad valorem*, was laid on Tin, Pepper, and Beetle-nut; from the Return given in by the Renter of this Duty, it appeared that the following quantities of these articles were imported, viz.

	<i>China Peculs. Catties.</i>		<i>Amt. of the Duty.</i>	
			S. D.	P.
Pepper -	29,468	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	5,251	97 $\frac{1}{2}$
Tin - -	14,136	86	3,982	64 $\frac{1}{2}$
Beetle-nut	45,819	90 $\frac{1}{2}$	3,842	16
			<hr/>	
			Sp. Ds.	13,076 78
				<hr/>

The following Statement will shew at one view, the different places which supply the Trade of this Port with the Articles of Import and Export.

### IMPORTS.

*From Bengal.*—Opium, Grain, Iron, Steel, Marine Stores; Piece Goods, which consist chiefly of Hummums, Gurrahs, Bafties, Cossas, Tanjabs, Mamoodies, Chintzs, Kurwahs, Taffatees, and Bandanoes.

*Coast of Coromandel.* — Salt, Tobacco, Punjum Cloths, Kaal-blue Cloths, Handkerchiefs, Coir Rope, and Yarns; Chintzs; and a small quantity of Fine Goods.

*Bombay and Malabar Coast.* — Cotton, Salt, a few Piece Goods, Red

Wood, Sandal Wood, Shark Fins,  
Fish Mote, Putchuck, Myrrh,  
Surat Piece Goods, Oil, &c.

*W. Coast Sumatra.*—Pepper, Benjamin,  
Camphire, Gold Dust.

*Acheen and Pedier.*—Gold Dust; Beetle-  
nut, White and Red, Cut and  
Chickney; Pepper, Rice, and  
Acheen Cloths.

*Diamond Point.*—Rattans, Sago, Brim-  
stone, and Gold Dust.

*East Coast.*—Tin, Pepper, Java Arrack,  
Sugar, Oil, Rice, Tobacco, &c.

*Junk Ceylon.*—Tin, Birds Nests, Beache  
de Mer, Sepuh, and Elephants  
Teeth.

*Tringano.*—Pepper, and Gold worked Cloths.

*Bornco.*—Gold Dust, Sago, and Blackwood.

*Moluccas.*—Spices.

*China.*—Tea, Sugar, Lutestrings, Velvets, Paper, Umbrellas, China Ware of all kinds; Quicksilver, Nankeens, Tutenague, Sweetmeats, Pickles, and every Article required by the Chinese Inhabitants; Raw Silk, Copper Ware, China Camphire, China Root, Allum, &c. &c.

## EXPORTS.

*Sumatra. E. and W. Coasts.*—All the various Piece Goods from Bengal, the Coast, and Bombay; Cotton



Opium, Iron and Tobacco.

*Junk Ceylon.*—Piece Goods, and Opium.

*Tringano, Java, Borneo, Celebes, and Moluccas.*—Iron, Steel, Opium, Bengal Piece Goods, Blue Cloth; Europe Coarse Red, Blue, and Green Cloths, and Coarse Cutlery.

*China.*—Opium, Cottons, Rattans, Beetle-nut, Pepper, Birds Nests, Sandal Wood, Shark Fins, Sumatra Camphire, Tin, Beache de Mer, Cutch, and Sepuh.

*Bengal Coast and Bombay.*—Pepper, Tin, Beetle-nut, Cut and Chickney; Rattans, Camphire, Gold Dust, &c.

In addition to the quantity of Pepper at present annually exported from this Port,

almost any number of Tons could be procured for the London Market, should it ever be deemed advisable to send it home on account of the Honourable Company, and we may safely venture to assert, that the Pepper will be of as fine a quality as any ever procured; and the Pepper produced on the Island is considered cleaner than that of the surrounding Countries: and in general, in equal measures, it is heavier.

In the year, 1802, a Thousand Tons of Pepper of 20cwt. were sent from the Island to Europe, without having the smallest effect on the surrounding Markets. That, and indeed a much larger quantity, could easily be procured, without any risk of raising the price, viz. 50l. Sterl. per Ton of 20cwt.

Innumerable indeed are the advantages

which would accrue to this Settlement, were the Exportation of Pepper produced on the Island, direct to the London Market on the Honourable Company's Ships, once established; nor would these advantages be confined to the Settlement alone, as considerable benefit, it is confidently presumed would also arise to the Honourable Company from this branch of Commerce. The experiment at least appears worth the trial; all the expences attending it, will be apparent at one view, and even if the flattering expectations which are now entertained should not be fully realized, still there is no prospect of risk, or loss, attending the measure. To the Pepper, the product of the Island, many other articles might be added, if required, as Rheubarb, Gallinal Root, Turmeric, Cochineal, &c. &c.

One of the most convincing proofs

which can be adduced of the flourishing state of the Commerce of this rising Settlement, will be found in the following Table, shewing the number of Ships, with their Tonnage, which have entered into and cleared out from this Port, within the last four years, and as a considerable portion of the Trade of the Island is carried on by Prows, an account of them is also subjoined.

## ARRIVALS.

	<i>Colours.</i>	<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>
1799	English - - - -	95	25,640
	Amer. Portug. Danes	37	8,299
	Asiatic - - - -	36	5,432
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		168	39,371
		<hr/>	<hr/>
1800	English - - - -	111	31,097
	Amer. Portug. Danes	31	8,025
	Asiatic - - - -	51	5,785
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		193	44,907
		<hr/>	<hr/>



	<i>Colours.</i>	<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>
1801	English - - - -	160	38,880
	Amer. Portug. Danes	33	7,549
	Asiatic - - - -	72	7,399
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		265	53,828
		<hr/>	<hr/>
1802	English - - - -	142	44,356
	Portug. Danes -	15	4,810
	Asiatic - - - -	84	7,654
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		241	56,820
		<hr/>	<hr/>

## DEPARTURES.

1799	English - - - -	101	27,372
	Amer. Portug. Danes	39	8,802
	Asiatic - - - -	37	5,703
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		177	41,877
		<hr/>	<hr/>
1800	English - - - -	116	29,988
	Amer. Portug. Danes	30	8,270
	Asiatic - - - -	45	6,071
		<hr/>	<hr/>
		191	44,329
		<hr/>	<hr/>

	<i>Colours.</i>		<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>
1801	English	- - - -	156	36,613
	Amer. Portug. Danes		28	7,030
	Asiatic	- - - -	73	6,447
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			257	50,090
			<hr/>	<hr/>
1802	English	- - - -	133	41,120
	Portug. Danish	- - - -	21	5,259
	Asiatic	- - - -	80	6,082
			<hr/>	<hr/>
			234	52,461
			<hr/>	<hr/>

## TOTAL.

		<i>Ships.</i>	<i>Tons.</i>
Arrivals	- - -	867	194,926
Departures	- - -	859	188,757
		<hr/>	<hr/>

## PROWS.

ARRIVALS.

DEPARTURES.

Years.	Prows.	Coyans.	Prows.	Coyans.
1799	1836	2884 $\frac{3}{4}$	1615	2727
1800	1980	3091 $\frac{1}{2}$	1519	2589
1801	2565	3995 $\frac{1}{2}$	1848	3053 $\frac{1}{2}$
1802	3328	4588 $\frac{1}{2}$	2752	3696
Total	9709	14,560 $\frac{1}{4}$	7734	12,065 $\frac{1}{2}$

A Coyan is equal to 40 Peculs, or nearly 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  Tons.

## DEFENCE.

It is not necessary here to enter minutely into this subject, which certainly deserves a more serious and attentive Consideration than it has hitherto obtained. The maintaining a respectable Force at Prince of Wales Island, will, no doubt be attended with a Heavy expence: on the other hand, the Security to be derived from the adoption of such a measure, will more than

Counterbalance this objection, which becomes very trifling, when put in competition with the very existence of this most valuable Settlement. The largest Force which has yet been allotted for its Defence is the present one; and this is hardly equal to perform the common Duties of the Island.

#### MARINE.

A small Marine Force to be considered as part of the Establishment of the Island, would be extremely useful; a Ship of about 250 Tons measurement well manned and armed with Carronades is much wanted. The Expence attending this vessel would be considerably diminished, by her being employed to bring down the Annual supply of Military Stores, Rice, &c. required for the Island from Bengal. A few Prows, each armed with



a 12 Pdr. Carronade, are also required, for the purpose of repelling the Pirates who infest all the Straits of Malacca, and frequently cut off the Island Supplies from Queddah. No other description of Vessel is so well adapted for this purpose as Prows, since the Pirates, whenever pursued, immediately run into shoal water, where common Boats cannot follow them.

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