

the accumulation of filth, surprised as well as disgusted; for although it was reached at every tide by the water, yet there was ample necessity for the use of brooms and shovels. The Chinese, though cleanly in their persons, are far from being so in their general habits, if we may judge from those that I have met in the places we have visited.

On landing, that which impresses a stranger most strongly, is the great variety both of costume and of race. Almost every person that is encountered appears different from his predecessor, so that it is some time before it can be decided which nation predominates; but on reaching the old town, this is no longer doubtful, for the Chinese are soon found to be the most numerous.

The variety of religious sects also soon become evident. All have their places of worship, and enjoy the free exercise of their religion, so that in passing around, the mosque of the Mahomedan, the temple of the Chinese, and the churches of various Christian sects, are met with in their turn.

The number of spoken languages is such as to recall the idea of Babel, and to excite a desire to learn the cause of such a collection of nations. This is partly to be found in the favourable commercial site of Singapore, on the great highway between the Eastern and Western nations, and in the protection afforded to all by its being under a European power, but chiefly in the fact of its being a free port, in every sense of the word. All are allowed to visit it without any question being asked; pirates of any nation may refit here, and no doubt frequently do, without any molestation, so long as they keep the peace.

I was much struck with the apparent absence of either police or military force; but after some inquiry, I was satisfied, by the order and general quiet of the multitude, that there must be a controlling power within reach, and found the policemen under the semblance of Persians, easily distinguishable by their neat and cleanly appearance. They are generally better dressed than the body of the inhabitants, and are to be known by their red and black sashes, and turbaned heads. Without the precincts of the town, a regiment of Sepoys, six hundred strong, and officered by Europeans, is stationed. These are to be seen habited like English soldiers, in close-bodied red coats, than which a more inappropriate dress in such a climate as this can scarcely be imagined.

Before proceeding with the description of Singapore, it will be as well to give some account of its settlement and progress to its present prosperous condition.

It appears that the idea of occupying a position in the Straits of Malacca did not occur to the East India Company until they were