

excite much astonishment that Singapore has grown up so rapidly in the face of older and longer-established marts, which it bids fair to surpass, both in wealth and importance.

The taxes on property at Singapore are by no means heavy. They are in part levied upon houses and carriages; the former pay an annual tax of eight per cent. on an assessed value; but as this valuation is very low, the tax is not heavy. In the country, the rate is only four per cent. These receipts are published annually, in conformity with a law passed since 1839. The enactment of this law was brought about by the force of public opinion, and the influence of the taxpayers, which have compelled the Indian government thus to make known their financial secrets. The whole amount of tax raised is \$25,829.

Another act was passed about the same time for the abolition of slavery, under an understanding with the holders of slaves that they should be manumitted by a certain time. This time arrived only a few months prior to our arrival, but the owners showed little or no disposition to carry their agreement into effect. A notice from Governor Bonham was indeed published, calling upon them to comply, but such is the force with which they apparently cling to slave-holding, that I was told that many of those who were most forward in their protestation in favour of abolition, still retain those belonging to them, and that many persons are yet actually sold. These will no doubt be held in bondage until some active measures are taken by the Straits Government to put a stop to the traffic.

We saw some of the Negritos who are held as slaves: their stature is quite dwarfish when compared with the surrounding crowd. Their complexion is not darker than that of the Hindoos, and entirely different from the hue of the pure negro; but they far surpassed him in ugliness. According to an intelligent gentleman's authority, they are brought from Papua, and are usually spoken of as being brought by the Bugis, in the same vessels that bring birds of paradise for sale. Further inquiry satisfied me that they are captured on the west end of New Guinea, which coast the biche de mar fishers are in the habit of visiting. Besides being distinguishable by their small size, they may be known by their downcast looks, as they are seen passing among the crowd of this great Babel without appearing to be of it.

Among other sources of revenue is the vending of opium: the shops are licensed by the government, and the revenue is said to exceed eight thousand dollars from this source alone.

These opium shops are among the most extraordinary sights in Singapore; it is inconceivable with what avidity the smokers seek