

chiefs have, in fact, nearly depopulated the former, and what they have left undone, the pirates in their incursions on the weakened towns, have, by their cruel deeds of murder and rapine, completed. The part of the peninsula that is tributary to the king of Siam has fared but little better; for his extortions are said to know no bounds. Some accounts state that the Malayan peninsula has once been the seat of civilization, and that various mines have been discovered, by some of the few travellers who have made short excursions from its coast. It is alleged, on the other hand, that both it and Singapore were colonized as late as the twelfth century, by the people of Sumatra; other conjectures, said to have some foundation in the traditions of the natives, state them to have been inhabited previously to that epoch, by a half-savage race, which had the features of the Papuans. Other accounts again, assert, that the aborigines were the Jakongs, or Rayetutans, in the interior, and the Rayetlaut, or fishermen, on the sea-shore.

The Malayan peninsula contains nine petty states, each of which is ruled by a chief, who acknowledges the authority of the king of Johore. The Dutch, however, formerly had through commercial treaties much influence with the chiefs, and with the consent of the king of Johore, elected a Bugis chief, by the name of Dyar Cambodia, over the nine states. This produced a division and contentions: four of them revolted, and invited over a prince of the royal blood from Sumatra, Rajah Malayan, whose party was finally successful, and drove Dyar Cambodia into retirement. Upon this, stipulations were entered into, by which it was agreed that the four chiefs should be assembled by the sovereign to consult on the affairs of state, and that a majority should rule. In return they were to provide for the maintenance of the sovereign, by levying an annual tax on the inhabitants, each house contributing annually one gantam of rice, two cocoa-nuts, and one suku.

On the occasion of all rites, such as marriages, deaths, and circumcisions in the royal family, each district was bound to send three buffaloes, to distribute alms to the poor, and in case of war to furnish its quota of men, arms, and ammunition. Dyar Cambodia sought refuge at the island of Rhio in 1773. Since that time the kingdom has undergone various revolutions, and different sovereigns have held rule, who have finally by their intestine wars almost depopulated the country.

The inhabitants have many singular customs, in some respects not unlike those heretofore described as existing among the Polynesian islanders.

In religion, the Malays of the Peninsula are all Moslems, and are