



Brahmin Saint Brandon recognised in it the mouth of Hell, congenial to the Rakshasas of the adjacent group ? ”

In the above, Colonel Yule was misled by the general idea that Narcondam was a volcanic cone, and had been an active volcano. His note is, however, of importance as showing that the Andamans were on a trade route, and therefore a convenient rendezvous for pirates who wished to prey on the trade ; also, that the existence of the aborigines and their hostility to all comers was even then well-known.

Friar Odoric passed the Andamans in about 1322, and mixes up all the tales of the Andamanese, Nicobarese, and the cannibal Battas of Sumatra, calling the people dog-faced, cannibals, also traders, etc. ; he did not touch at the islands.

It is probable that the ferocious cannibalism of the Battas of Sumatra was then known, and the Andamanese being so hostile to all strangers, and having the custom in certain parts of burning the bodies of their dead enemies, they were called cannibals too.

Nicolo Conti (*circa* 1440) mentions the Andaman Islands. He calls them “ Andamania,” which he explains to mean the “ Island of Gold,” and gives their circumference at 800 miles. He speaks of a lake with peculiar virtues existing on the islands, says the inhabitants are cannibals, and adds that no travellers touch here unless driven to do so by bad weather ; for, when taken, they are torn to pieces and devoured by these cruel savages.

No gold has yet been found on the Andamans, nor is there any reason to suppose that it will be found. No such lake exists, though the story has found credence in our own time, because the Andamanese speak of lakes in the interior. These, being investigated, are found to be the smallest swampy pools.

With reference to the tale in Harris’s Voyages, and the statement of Nicolo Conti, Dr. J. Anderson observes :

“ This myth expired very slowly, and existed down to the end of the 17th century. Dr. Careri’s (*Giro del Mondo*, t. III, page 290) notice of it is among the last, but he gives the English the credit of having originated it, but when, he does not say.



"The story related by him was, that an English ship having been driven to take shelter from a storm, not at the Andamans, but at the Nicobars, to the south of them, a native, who had taken some fresh water on board the ship, spilt some on the anchor, the iron of which was turned into gold wherever the water had touched it. The crew after they had learnt from the native that the water came from a well in the island, killed him !

"This report of the gold-producing quality of the water, Gemilli Careri says, he had been told on high authority, had led the Dutch to appropriate the Nicobars towards the end of the 17th century."

Such legends led to Dr. Helfer's unfortunate expedition to the Andamans in 1839.

Cesare Federici, in 1569, mentions the ferocity of the Andamanese, and the following extract is given from Hamilton's account of the East Indies. (Pinkerton's Vol. VIII, pages 430, 431.)

"The Islands opposite to the coast of Tenasserim are the Andamans. They lie about eighty leagues off, and are surrounded by many dangerous banks and rocks; they are all inhabited with cannibals, who are so fearless, that they will swim off to a boat if she approach near the shore, and attack her with their wooden weapons, notwithstanding the superiority of numbers in the boat, and the advantages of missive arms of iron, steel, and fire.

"I knew one Fergusson, who commanded a ship from Fort St. George, bound from Malacca to Bengal in company with another ship, going too near one of the Andaman Islands, was driven, by the force of a strong current, on some rocks, and the ship lost. The other ship was driven through a channel between two of the same islands, and was not able to assist the shipwrecked men, but neither Fergusson nor any of his people were ever more heard of, which gave ground to conjecture that they were all devoured by those savage cannibals.

"I saw one of the natives of those islands at Atcheen, in anno 1694. He was then about forty years of age. The Andamaners had a yearly custom to come to the Nicobar Islands, with a great number of small praws, and kill or take prisoners as many of the poor Nicobarians as



they could overcome. The Nicobarians again joined their forces, and gave the cannibals battle, when they met with them, and one time defeated them, and gave no quarter to the Andamaners. This man above mentioned, when a boy of ten or twelve years of age, accompanied his father in the wars, and was taken prisoner, and his youth recommending him to mercy, they saved his life, and made him a slave. After he continued so three or four years, he was carried to Atcheen to be sold for cloth, knives, and tobacco, which are the commodities most wanting on the Nicobars. The Atcheeners being Moham-medans, this boy's patron bred him up in that religion, and some years after, his master dying gave him his freedom; he having a great desire to see his native country, took a prau, and the months of December, January, and February, being fair weather, and the sea smooth, he ventured to the sea, in order to go to his own country, from the Islands of Gomas and Pulleywey, which lie near Atcheen. Here the southernmost of the Nicobars may be seen, and so one island may be seen from another from the southernmost of those to Chetty-Andaman, which is the southernmost of the Andamans, which are distant from Atcheen about an hundred leagues. Arriving among his relations, he was made welcome, with great demonstrations of joy to see him alive, whom they expected to have been long dead.

“Having retained his native language, he gave them an account of his adventures; and, as the Andamaners have no notion of Deity, he acquainted them with the knowledge he had of a God, and would have persuaded his countrymen to learn of him the way to adore God, and to obey his laws, but he could make no converts. When he had stayed a month or two, he took leave to be gone again, which they permitted, on condition that he would return. He brought along with him four or five hundredweight of quicksilver, and he said that some of the Andaman Islands abound in that commodity. He had made several voyages thither before I saw him, and always brought some quicksilver along with him. Some Mohammedan Fakirs would fain have accompanied him in his voyages, but he would never suffer them, because, he said, he could not engage for their safety among his countrymen. When I saw him he was in company with a Seid, whom



I carried a passenger to Surat, and from whom I had this account of his adventures."

The origin for such an extraordinary fable it is difficult to give. As we know well, the Andamanese are not, and never have been, cannibals, and their canoes and habits, as well as their intellects, are such as to put any idea of such voyaging out of the question. No man could cross the Ten Degree Channel with a load of quicksilver, in an Andamanese canoe, except by the merest chance. From my personal experience with "travelled" Andamanese I am aware that, given the necessary ideas, they are quite capable of inventing such a fable; but from the fact that Mr. Man assures me that the tradition still exists on the Car Nicobar, that raids were made there by the Andamanese, who are fairly accurately described, I should suppose that Malay pirates with Andamanese slaves on board have raided, and enslaved, the Nicobarese also.

The story would seem to have filtered through several people, and the quicksilver part, and travelling from Atcheen, can only refer, if it be true at all, to the Nicobars. It appears as if the present was the outcome of many stories mixed together, in which the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, and their very different inhabitants are confused, and the few facts there may be in it, have been overlaid with a great deal of invention.

Colonel Cadell, who was for twelve years Chief Commissioner of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands, characterised the story to me, as "the lying invention of an Arab Sheikh, who did not want the truth known about the slave he had kidnapped."

In 1788-89 the Government of Bengal sought to establish in the Andaman Islands a penal colony associated with a harbour of refuge. Lieutenant Colebrooke of the Bengal Engineers, and Lieutenant Archibald Blair of the Indian Navy, were sent to survey and report. The result of their report was that a Settlement was established by Lieutenant Blair, in September, 1789, on Chatham Island, on the south-east bay of the Great Andaman, now called Port Blair, but then called Port Cornwallis.



To us, who followed in the footsteps of these officers at an interval of over 60 years, and with greatly improved means of communication with India, and far superior appliances for forming a Settlement, it has always been a matter of admiration to notice how carefully their work was done, and how simply and yet how absolutely correctly their notes were recorded. That both officers were men of first class ability, there can be no doubt; and it is to be regretted that so few records of their work in the Andamans can now be found.

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Extracts from Lieutenant Colebrooke's Journal of a voyage to the Andaman Islands (1789-90.)

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20th December, 1789.—We sailed from Diamond Island at about 11 o'clock.

21st December.—At daybreak this morning we found ourselves (in the *Atalanta*) about three leagues to the westward of Preparis Id. At about 11 o'clock the man at the masthead discovered the Cocos Ids. ahead. In the evening we had passed the Cocos, and were in sight of Narcondam, about 20 leagues, E. S. E.

22nd December.—In the morning we saw the Saddle Mountain upon the Great Andaman Id. We steered south during the whole day and passed the cluster of Ids. called Archipelago, on the East side of the Great Island. They are all covered with wood, and some are surrounded by rocky cliffs. About 6 P.M. we weathered the southernmost of these islands and bore away West by South for Port Cornwallis; \* but night coming on, the Captain thought it best to lay to for the night, and not to run into a strange harbour in the dark.

23rd December.—About four in the morning we made sail and entered the Harbour called Port Cornwallis at about 8 o'clock. Here we found the *Perseverance* and *Ariel* at anchor; likewise the *Ranger* and *Viper*, which last vessel had overtaken us and run in during the night.

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\* This, it must be remembered, is the modern Port Blair.



24th December.—Captain D——and myself went up the Harbour in a boat to the distance of about 3 miles. We saw upon a rocky point about twenty or thirty of the natives: they appeared to be quite naked and besmeared with mud.

25th December.—Went on shore upon Chatham Id. to take views. This is a very small Id. near the entrance of the Harbour where Mr. Blair, the Marine Surveyor, has lately erected a small house with wood and canvas. He has already cleared away a great deal of the wood on the Id., and planted a small garden.

26th December.—Went in company with Commodore Cornwallis up the Harbour. We had in the barge one of the natives, who some time ago had been taken in a skirmish by the people of the *Viper*. He had the mark of a pistol ball which had gone through his nose, and put out one of his eyes. He appeared to be very cheerful, and quite reconciled to his captivity. It appears that when the *Ranger* and *Viper* Brigs first entered this Harbour the natives were extremely hostile: they attacked the boats which went ashore for water, and even ventured to approach the vessels and discharged their arrows at them. One of the crew had an arrow shot through his shoulder, and probably some would have lost their lives, had not the timely discharge of two or three muskets put a stop to their attack. In one of these skirmishes a native was unfortunately killed, upon which the rest ran off, making the most doleful lamentations.

We sailed up to the furthest extremity of the Harbour about five or six miles and entered a creek which had the appearance of a river; but when we had rowed up about two miles through mangroves and thickets, and not finding the water in the least sweeter, we concluded that it was only a salt creek, which probably terminated a little further. The shores on each side were lined with mangroves, except in two or three places, where the ground was high and covered with trees.

We went ashore to look at a hut which appeared to be inhabited, but we found it deserted. It was a most wretched little shed, built of sticks and leaves. We found in it some bones, which appeared to be those of a wild hog, suspended to the roof by strings. The ground about the hut was strewed with the shells of oysters, mussels, cockles,



and other shell-fish. In returning down the creek, we discovered one of the natives in a tree. The instant he perceived us he ran down with as much agility as a monkey, making a great noise, and calling to two others who were below. One of them we took to be a woman, by her voice, as we could not see her. The Commodore threw ashore two or three cocoa-nuts as a token of friendship, but the boat being very near the shore they did not venture at first to pick them up. We rowed away a little, and one of them came slowly towards the cocoa-nuts till, being near enough, he snatched them up eagerly and ran off. It appears that cocoa-nuts do not grow here, at least we have not yet discovered any. These which were given to the natives were brought by the *Ranger* from the Nicobars. We dined on our return upon a small hill which had been called Mount Pleasant. It commands an extensive view of the harbour and the country around. In the afternoon we returned towards the ship, but seeing one of the natives on shore we stopped a few minutes to hold a conference with him. He was a man of the middle size and tolerably well shaped. His wool was rubbed with a kind of red earth, and the rest of his body smeared with mud. He wore round his neck and left arm a kind of ornament which looked like a fringe of dried grass. He appeared very cautious of approaching us; probably, for fear of being seized; however, he allowed Mr. K ——— to draw near him, and readily exchanged his bow and arrows for a knife which was presented to him. He had under his arm a small basket into which he deposited everything that was given to him. We gave him some handfulls of biscuit and, on rowing away, we saw him sit down on the rock and eat of it with great avidity.

27th December.—This morning the *Ranger* Snow sailed for Bengal. She was sent with despatches by Commodore Cornwallis to the Governor-General of Bengal. A native who had been on board of this vessel about three weeks, and who appeared to be perfectly reconciled and pleased with his new mode of living, was left on board of our ship. At the same time the Commodore gave orders that if he wished to go on shore and return to his countrymen an opportunity should be given him to desert; he was accordingly put into a boat and sent ashore. There happened to be at this time a few of the natives



in sight, and we desired him to go and join them. He seemed to be actuated by a sudden impulse of joy at seeing them. He sprung out of the boat and flung down his hat and ran towards them. They did not immediately recognise him for one of their countrymen, as he had been clothed on board the *Ranger* with a jacket and trousers. He soon disencumbered himself from his clothes, and returned to that state of nature which he had from his infancy been accustomed to. They immediately seemed to congratulate him upon his safe escape, and they all together ran into the woods.

28th December.—Nothing material occurred this morning. In the afternoon the Commodore, etc., rowed toward the rocky point, and held a conference with the same native whom we visited on the 26th. He was sitting upon the rocks with a fire, at which he had been roasting some shell-fish. He was attended by a woman and girl, both perfectly naked and their skins daubed with mud.

29th December.—This morning the natives showed an inclination to be very hostile and mischievous. The Commodore had an interview with several of them in a little Bay on the Eastern side of the Harbour. They appeared at first perfectly good-humoured. Presently a man armed with a bow came down from the wood apparently very much enraged; he made a great noise and harangued them, as if to spur them on to an attack. He discharged an arrow himself, and his example was immediately followed by all the rest; above fifty arrows flew over the boat and one went through the awning. Our people fired a musket over their heads. Luckily no person in the boat was hurt, and the Commodore, not wishing to take advantage of the superior efficacy of our muskets, prevented our men from firing at them and rowed away. Some people from the *Ariel* were also attacked near their watering place, and seeing themselves closely pressed, were obliged to discharge two or three muskets, by which one of the natives was killed on the spot. We dined upon Mount Pleasant and rowed towards the rocky point after dinner. Here we found about twenty of the natives assembled. Some drew back into the woods with their bows and arrows, others picked up stones as if to annoy us. They showed by their actions a great inclination to be troublesome; but seeing



two muskets ready to fire they remained quiet, and we returned to the ships."

On the 31st December Lieutenant Colebrooke visited the Nicobar Islands, returning to Port Cornwallis on the 21st February, 1790.

He notes of the Cinque Islands that they are high and rocky, covered with trees and brush-wood, do not appear to be inhabited, and some of them appear to be hardly accessible.

On the 19th March, 1790, he sailed up the islands, visiting Shoal Bay, Oyster Bay, where he notes the quantity of good oysters, and Port Meadows. He calls this a most capacious and noble harbour.

"The shores of it are mostly lined with mangroves, and the land is much lower than the country about Port Cornwallis, and might probably be much sooner brought to a state of cultivation. At the mouth of this Bay is a very pleasant looking Id., and the channel on each side seems to be perfectly navigable. We saw a canoe with four or five of the natives cross over from the small island to the main, and in the afternoon we found upon the former a hut, which appeared to have been recently deserted.

23rd March.—This morning we made a survey of the Harbour, by taking bearings and angles in different directions and calculating distances by sound from the report of guns and muskets. We rowed out in our small boat to a rocky point at the Northern Entrance of the Harbour. Here we stayed about an hour to make our observations and take views. We saw three canoes with about twenty of the natives coming round a point to the Northward, probably with an intention to attack us. This induced us to abandon the rock, and we got into our boat. We fired two muskets in the air for a signal of sound. This appeared to alarm the natives, for they began rowing back immediately. Great numbers of sharks were swimming about, which appeared to be very ravenous. (On the 24th March, the Middle Strait was examined.)

26th March.—This morning we stood over to the Ids. called Archipelago, about seven or eight miles to the Eastward of the main Id. We had been informed that there was a tolerable Harbour among them. About 11 o'clock we got into this supposed harbour, but found that it was totally unfit for the purpose. We saw here two



or three canoes with some Caffres. They were busy in fishing and did not appear to take much notice of us. However, in passing a rocky point, we saw distinctly with our glasses some of the natives hid among the stones with their bows and arrows. One of them had advanced into the water, and was calling out to us as loud as he could. Their intension was probably to allure some of us on shore, and to attack us suddenly if we landed.

(27th March.—He rowed up the passage inside Colebrooke Island,\* and saw several of the natives' huts, and near to one there were some cocoa-nut trees.

28th March.—He went into the Bay between Guitar\* and Passage Islands and anchored.)

29th March.—We saw two huts, and some of the natives sitting under them. Also a canoe with three men, who appeared to be very much alarmed at the sight of the vessels and were paddling away as hard as they could.

30th March.—We moved this morning to the northern part of the Bay. A party was sent ashore to look for a watering place. They found at last a small well which had been dug by the natives, but the water was a little brackish, which prevented our filling the casks. We saw some huts and one of their canoes. In the former were found several skulls and jaw bones of wild hogs, some of which were painted in a chequered manner with red. They were strung together with slips of rattan and suspended to the roof. In the canoe were two small paddles shaped like spades. While the party was on shore looking for water the natives were observed from on board the *Ranger* watching their motions and probably meditating an attack, but our party was sufficiently strong to encounter a great number of them, having six men armed with muskets and bayonets. There were several pathways leading through the woods.

31st March.—About 11 o'clock we stood out of the Bay with the sea-breeze. We sailed up the coast about eight miles, and anchored in the afternoon within half a mile of the shore. Captain K—— and

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\* These names were not known then.



Mr. M—— took an airing in the boat and saw a great number of the natives. They shot about a dozen arrows at the boat, but not one flew near enough to do any mischief. A couple of muskets fired over their heads induced them to retreat into the woods. The arrows were picked up from the surface of the water and brought on board. We found some of them headed with fish bones, which was what we had never observed before.

(The party then proceeded to Stewart's Sound, arriving there on the 2nd April. They saw a large shark, which they judged to be near 25 feet in length and above four feet in breadth over the shoulders. He was spotted like a leopard.)

3rd April.—We cruized about the Bay to examine it. A boat belonging to the *Ranger* being left upon the spot where the vessel had anchored, was attacked by some of the natives in their canoes. They came suddenly out from behind the mangroves and discharged a great number of arrows, some of which went through the boat's sail. There were only two lascars in the boat, and they had no fire-arms; so that they were obliged to retreat as fast as they could with the loss of their grapnel and twenty fathoms of rope. One of the arrows which dropped in the boat measured five feet six inches.

4th April.—A canoe with two men came off this morning from the shore. They showed at first an inclination to come on board. We bore down to get near them, but when we had got within two hundred yards of them they would approach no nearer, but kept talking to us in a loud and angry tone. We heard the voices of some people on shore, among whom we could distinguish some women, who were calling out to them as if apprehensive of their getting into danger and wishing them to return.

We threw overboard two empty bottles which they picked up from the water when they had drifted astern to some distance. Finding that we could not induce them to come nearer, Mr. W—— with three or four men went after them in our boat to endeavour to bring them to a conference, but in vain. They paddled off as hard as they could, nor could our boats get near them. While our boat was in pursuit of them, we observed their motions from the vessel with our telescopes.



They at first appeared to be alarmed, but soon showed signs of resolution and coolness. The foremost man put down his paddle and very deliberately baled out the water. He then took up his bow and arrows from the bottom of the canoe and laid them down by him. The other now and then stopped paddling to look behind him. He made signs to our people to come on, and at last clapped his hand to his posteriors, probably as a mark of contempt. In the afternoon Captain K—— and Mr. W—— went out in the boat; they saw one of the natives upon the beach, who called out and made signs to them to come near, but it was only with an intention of leading them into a snare, for the boat had no sooner approached within fifty paces of him than Captain K—— perceived a number of men laying in ambush under the mangroves. When they found themselves detected they rushed out and sent a shower of arrows at the boat, some of which flew over it. Two muskets were fired over their heads, which made them retreat, and our people picked up about thirty of their arrows from the water. They were all headed with fish bones and some were six feet long.\*

On the 6th April they passed close under Saddle Mountain, estimated to be not less than 2,500 feet in height. Lieutenant Blair went ashore and saw some of the natives, who fled at his approach.

On the 7th April they discovered the present Port Cornwallis. Lieutenant Blair, with the *Ranger* and *Viper*, went in to survey and examine it. Lieutenant Colebrooke proceeded to Bengal.)

The following points in the above Journal call for note :—

The usual hostile attacks by the aborigines commenced as soon as Lieutenant Blair arrived, and were stopped in each instance by a discharge of fire-arms with fatal effect. There can be no doubt that, before this, these savages knew and dreaded fire-arms.

It was observed that no cocoa-nut palms grew in the Harbour, and the nuts were accordingly used as presents to the aborigines, in the hope of establishing friendly relations with them.

The description of the savage met with on the 6th December, 1789, proves him to have been what is now known as a "Jàrawa," and

\* Shorter arrows are now commonly used in the North Andaman.



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this is substantiated by Lieutenant Colebrooke's subsequent account written in 1794. (This is inserted and commented on later.)

The *Snow Ranger*. It may not be generally known that a "Snow" was a craft frequently met with in the 17th and 18th centuries, and was a brig, which had her Boom Mainsail set on a trysail mast, instead of, as in the present way, on the mast itself.

Lieutenant Colebrooke does not seem to have noticed the differences between the aborigines he came in contact with in Port Cornwallis and the others, belonging to other tribes, whom he met with farther North. The gesture of contempt, mentioned in the Diary for the 4th of April, is peculiar to the North Andaman Group of Tribes. It will be observed that a few isolated cocoa-nut palms then existed at the Andamanese villages.

In 1794 Lieutenant R. H. Colebrooke published in the Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal the following monograph on the Andamanese, which is of the highest importance, being the first really careful and trustworthy account we have of these people.

On the Andaman Islands. By Lieutenant R. H. Colebrooke, 1794.

"The Andaman Islands are situated on the eastern side of the Bay of Bengal,\* extending from North Latitude  $10^{\circ} 32'$  to  $13^{\circ} 40'$ . Their Longitude is from  $92^{\circ} 6'$  to  $91^{\circ} 59'$  East of Greenwich. The Great Andaman, or that portion of the land hitherto so called, is about one hundred and forty-five British miles in length, but not more than twenty in the broadest parts. Its coasts are indented by several deep

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\* It is perhaps a wonder that islands so extensive, and lying in the track of so many ships should have been, till of late years, so little known; that while the countries by which they are almost encircled, have been increasing in population and wealth, having been from time immemorial in a state of tolerable civilization, these islands should have remained in a state of nature, and their inhabitants plunged in the grossest ignorance and barbarity. The wild appearance of the country, and the untractable and ferocious disposition of the natives, have been the causes, probably, which have deterred navigators from frequenting them; and they have justly dreaded a shipwreck at the Andamans more than the danger of foundering in the ocean; for although it is highly probable that in the course of time many vessels have been wrecked upon their coasts, an instance does not occur of any of the crews being saved, or of a single person returning to give any account of such a disaster.

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bays, affording excellent harbours, and it is intersected by many vast inlets and creeks, one of which has been found to run quite through, and is navigable for small vessels. The Little Andaman is the more southerly of the two, and lies within thirty leagues of the island Car Nicobar.

Its length is 28 miles by 17 in breadth, being more compact, but does not afford any harbour, although tolerable anchorage is found near its shores. The former is surrounded by a great number of smaller islands.

The shores of the main island, and indeed of all the rest, are in some parts rocky, and in a few places are lined with a smooth and sandy beach, where boats may easily land. The interior shores of the bays and creeks are almost invariably lined with mangroves, prickly fern, and a species of wild rattan; while the inland parts are covered with a variety of tall trees, darkened by the intermixture of creepers, parasite plants, and underwood; which form altogether a vast and almost impervious forest, spreading over the whole country. The smaller islands are equally covered with wood; they mostly contain hills of a moderate height; but the main island is distinguished by a mountain of prodigious bulk, called from its shape the Saddle Peak; it is visible in clear weather at the distance of twenty-five leagues, being nearly two thousand four hundred feet in perpendicular height. There are no rivers of any size upon these islands, but a number of small rills pour down from the mountains, affording good water, and exhibiting in their descent over the rocks a variety of little cascades, which are overshadowed by the superincumbent woods.

The soil is various in different part of these islands;\* consisting of black rich mould, white and dark coloured clays, light sandy soil, clay mixed with pebbles of different colours, red and yellow earth; but the black mould is most common. Some white cliffs are met with

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\* I am indebted to Major Kyd and Captain Archibald Blair for many of the subsequent remarks. The latter was employed by Government in surveying these islands, and has the credit of having furnished the first complete and correct chart of the Andamans.



along the shores, which appear to have been originally clay, with a mixture of sand, hardened by time into the consistence of stone, but might be cut, and would probably answer for building.

Near the southern extremity of the great island, where it is mountainous and rocky, some indications of minerals have appeared, particularly of tin. There is also a kind of freestone, containing a yellow shining spar, resembling gold-dust. Some of the hills bordering the coasts exhibit blue schistous strata at their bases, with the breccia, or pudding stone; and some specimens of red ochre have been found, not unlike cinnabar.

The extensive forests with which these islands are over-run produce a variety of trees fit for building, and many other purposes. The most common are the *poon*, dammer, and oil trees; red wood, ebony, cotton-tree, and *buddaum* or almond-tree, *soumdry*, *chingry*, and *bindy*, Alexandrian laurel, poplar, and a tree resembling the satin-wood; bamboos, and plaas, with which the natives make their bows; cutch, affording the extract called *Terra Japonica*; the Meliori, or Nicobar bread-fruit; aloes, ground rattans, and a variety of shrubs.

A few fruit trees have been found in a wild state; but it is remarkable that cocoa-nuts, so common in other tropical countries, are here almost unknown. Many of the trees afford timbers and planks fit for the construction of ships, and others might answer for masts. A tree grows here to an enormous size, one having been found to measure thirty feet in circumference, producing a very rich dye, that might be of use in manufactures.

The only quadrupeds yet discovered in these islands are wild hogs, monkeys, and rats. Guanas and various reptiles abound; among the latter is the green snake, very venomous; centipedes of ten inches long, and scorpions.

A variety of birds are seen in the woods; the most common are pigeons, crows, paroquets, kingfishers, curlews, fish-hawks, and owls. A species of humming bird, whose notes are not unlike the cuckoo, is frequently heard in the night.



The principal caverns and and recesses, composing part of the coast, give shelter to the birds that build edible nests; an article of commerce in the China market, where they are sold at a very high price. It has been thought that these nests are formed from a glutinous matter exuding from the sides of the caverns where these birds, during their nidification, resort. It is not known whether they emigrate; but the period of their incubation takes place in December, and continues till May. Not more than two white spotless eggs have been found in their nests; but they have been further supposed to breed monthly.

The harbours and inlets from the sea are plentifully stocked with a variety of fish; such as mullets, soles, pomfret, rock-fish, skate, gurnards, sardines, roeballs, sable, shad, aloose, cockup, grobers, seer-fish, old wives, yellow tails, snappers, devil-fish, cat-fish, prawns, shrimps, cray-fish, and many others, and a species resembling the whale, and sharks of an enormous size, are met with. A variety of shell-fish are found on the reefs, and in some places oysters of an excellent quality. Of the many madrepores, corallines, zoophytes, and shells, none have been yet discovered but such as are found elsewhere.

The Andaman Islands are inhabited by a race of men the least civilized, perhaps, in the world; being nearer to a state of nature than any people we read of. Their colour is of the darkest hue, their stature in general small, and their aspect uncouth. Their limbs are ill-formed and slender, their bellies prominent, and, like the Africans, they have woolly heads,\* thick lips, and flat noses.

They go quite naked, the women wearing only at times a kind

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\* In this respect they differ from all the various tribes inhabiting the continent of Asia, or its islands. A story is somewhere told of a ship full of African slaves, of both sexes, having been cast away at the Andamans; and that having put to death their masters and the ship's crew, they spread themselves over, and peopled the country. This story does not appear to have been well authenticated, nor have I ever met with the particular author who relates it. They have been asserted by some to be cannibals, and by others (*vide* Captain Hamilton's Voyage, and all the Geographical Dictionaries) to be a harmless and inoffensive people, living chiefly on rice and vegetables. That they are cannibals has never been fully proved, although from their cruel and sanguinary disposition, great voracity, and cunning modes of lying in ambush, there is reason to



of tassel, or fringe, round the middle ; which is intended merely for ornament, as they do not betray any signs of bashfulness when seen without it.

The men are cunning, crafty and revengeful ; and frequently express their aversion to strangers in a loud and threatening tone of voice, exhibiting various signs of defiance, and expressing their contempt by the most indecent gestures. At other times they appear quiet and docile, with the most insidious intent. They will affect to enter into a friendly conference, when, after receiving with a show of humility whatever articles may be presented to them, they set up a shout, and discharge their arrows at the donors. On the appearance of a vessel or boat, they frequently lie in ambush among the trees, and send one of their gang, who is generally the oldest among them, to the water's edge, to endeavour by friendly signs to allure the strangers on shore. Should the crew venture to land without arms, they instantly rush out from their lurking places, and attack them. In these skirmishes they display much resolution, and will sometimes plunge into the water to seize the boat ; and they have been known even to discharge their arrows while in the act of swimming. Their mode of life is degrading to human nature, and, like brutes, their

suspect, that in attacking strangers they are frequently impelled by hunger, as they invariably put to death the unfortunate victims who fall under their hands. No positive instance, however, has been known of their eating the flesh of their enemies ; although the bodies of some, whom they have killed, have been found mangled and torn. It would be difficult to account for their unremitting hostility to strangers, without ascribing this as the cause, unless the story of their origin, as above-mentioned, should be true ; in which case they might probably retain a tradition of having once been in a state of slavery. This in some degree would account for the rancour and enmity they shew ; and they would naturally wage perpetual war with those whom they might suspect were come to invade their country, or enslave them again.

It would appear that these islands were known to the ancients (see Major Rennel's Memoirs, introduction, page XXXIX ). They are mentioned, I believe, by Marco Polo ; and in the ancient accounts of India and China, by two Mahomedan travellers, who went to those parts in the ninth century (translated from the Arabic by Eusebius Renaudot ) may be seen the following curious account :— " Beyond these two islands ( Nejabalus, probably Nicobars ) lies the sea of Andaman ; the people on this coast eat human flesh quite raw ; their complexion is black, their hair frizzled, their countenance and eyes frightful, their feet are very large and almost a cubit in length, and they go quite naked. They have no embarkations ; if they had, they would devour all the passengers they could lay hands on," etc.



whole time is spent in search of food. They have yet made no attempts to cultivate their lands, but live entirely upon what they can pick up, or kill. In the morning they rub their skins with mud, and wallow in it like buffaloes, to prevent the annoyance of insects, and daub their woolly heads with red ochre, or cinnabar. Thus attired, they walk forth to their different occupations. The women bear the greatest part of the drudgery in collecting food, repairing to the reefs at the recess of the tide, to pick up shell-fish, while the men are hunting in the woods, or wading in the water to shoot fish with their bows and arrows. They are very dexterous at this extraordinary mode of fishing; which they practise also at night, by the light of a torch. In their excursions through the woods, a wild hog sometimes rewards their toil, and affords them a more ample repast. They broil their meat or fish over a kind of grid, made of bamboos; but use no salt, or any other seasoning.

The Andamaners display at times much colloquial vivacity, and are fond of singing and dancing; in which amusements the women equally participate. Their language is rather smooth than guttural; and their melodies are in the nature of recitative and chorus, not unpleasing. In dancing, they may be said to have improved on the strange republican dance asserted by Voltaire to have been exhibited in England: "*On dansant à la ronde, chacun donne des coups de pieds à son voisin, et en reçoit autant.*" The Andamaners likewise dance in a ring, each alternately kicking and slapping his own breech, *ad libitum*. Their salutation is performed by lifting up a leg and smacking with their hand the lower part of the thigh.

Their dwellings are the most wretched hovels imaginable. An Andaman hut may be considered the rudest and most imperfect attempt of the human race to procure shelter from the weather; and answers to the idea given by Vitruvius, of the buildings erected by the earliest inhabitants of the earth. Three or four sticks are planted in the ground, and fastened together at the top, in the form of a cone, over which a kind of thatch is formed with the branches and leaves of trees. An opening is left on one side, just large enough to



creep into ; and the ground beneath is strewed with dried leaves, upon which they lie. In these huts are frequently found the skulls of wild hogs, suspended to the roofs.

Their canoes are hollowed out of the trunks of trees by means of fire and instruments of stone, having no iron in use amongst them, except such utensils as they have procured from the Europeans and sailors who have lately visited these islands ; or from the wrecks of vessels formerly stranded on their coasts. They use also rafts made of bamboos to transport themselves across their harbours, or from one island to another. Their arms have already been mentioned in part ; I need only add that their bows are remarkably long, and of an uncommon form ; their arrows are headed with fish bones, or the tusks of wild hogs ; sometimes merely with a sharp bit of wood, hardened in the fire ; but these are sufficiently destructive. They use also a kind of shield ; and one or two other weapons have been seen amongst them. Of their implements for fishing and other purposes, little can be said. Hand nets of different sizes are used in catching the small fry ; and a kind of wicker-basket, which they carry on their backs, serves to deposit whatever articles of food they can pick up. A few specimens of pottery-ware have been seen in these islands.

The climate of the Andaman Islands is rather milder than in Bengal. The prevailing winds are the south-west and north-east monsoons, the former commencing in May, and bringing in the rains ; which continue to fall with equal, if not greater, violence till November. At this time the north-east winds begin to blow, accompanied likewise by showers, but giving place to fair and pleasant weather during the rest of the year. These winds vary but little, and are interrupted only at times by the land and sea-breezes. The tides are regular, the floods setting in from the west and rising eight feet at the springs, with little variation in different parts. On the North-east coast it is high water at the full and change of the moon at 8° 33'. The variation of the needle is 2° 3' 30" easterly.



## SPECIMEN OF THE ANDAMAN LANGUAGE.

Andaman Island, or native country.	Mincopie.
Ant . . . . .	Ahooda.
Ant, white, in its winged state .	Doughay. J.
Arrow . . . . .	Buttohie. J.
Arm . . . . .	Pilie. J.
Bat . . . . .	Vilvila. B.
Bamboo . . . . .	Otallie. J.
Bangle . . . . .	Alai.
Basket . . . . .	Teregay.
Black . . . . .	Cheegheooga.
Blood . . . . .	Cochengohee. J.
Bead . . . . .	Tahee. J.
To Beat . . . . .	Ingo taheya. J.
Belly . . . . .	Napoy. J.
To Bind . . . . .	Totoba oto goley toha. B.
Bird . . . . .	Lohay. J.
To Bite . . . . .	Moepaka. B.
Boat . . . . .	Locay.
Boar . . . . .	Stohee.
Bow . . . . .	Tongie.
Bow-string . . . . .	Geetahie.
Breast . . . . .	Cah. J.
Bone . . . . .	Geetongay. J.
Charcoal . . . . .	Wehee.
Chin . . . . .	Pitang. J.
Cold . . . . .	Choma.
Cocoa-nut . . . . .	Bollatee.
Cotton cloth . . . . .	Pangapee.
To Cough . . . . .	Ingotahey. J.
Crow . . . . .	Nohay. J.
To Cut . . . . .	Hojecha.
Door . . . . .	Tang. B.



To Drink . . . . .	Meengohee. J.
Earth . . . . .	Totongnangee. J.
Ear . . . . .	Quaka. J.
To Eat . . . . .	Ingelholiah. J.
Elbow . . . . .	Mohalajabay. J.
Eye . . . . .	Jabay. J.
Finger . . . . .	Momay. J.
Fire . . . . .	Mona.
Fish . . . . .	Nabohee.
Fish-hook . . . . .	Atabea. B.
Flesh . . . . .	Woohee.
Foot . . . . .	Gooke. J.
Friend . . . . .	Padoo.
Frog . . . . .	Etolay. J.
Goat . . . . .	Kokee.
To Go . . . . .	Oosseema.
Grass . . . . .	Tohobee.
Hair . . . . .	Ottee. J.
Hand . . . . .	Gonie. or Monie. J.
Head . . . . .	Tabay. J.
Honey . . . . .	Lorkay. J.
Hot . . . . .	Hooloo. B.
House . . . . .	Beday. J.
Jack Fruit . . . . .	Abay.
Jackal . . . . .	Omay. J.
Iron, or any metal . . . . .	Dohie. J.
Kiss . . . . .	Itolie. J.
Knee . . . . .	Ingolay. J.
To Laugh . . . . .	Onkeomai. J.
Leaf of a Tree . . . . .	Tongolie. B.
Leg . . . . .	Chigie.
Man . . . . .	Camolan.



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Moon . . . . .	Tabie.
Mosquito . . . . .	Hohenangee.
Mouth . . . . .	Morna.
Nail . . . . .	Mobejedanga. J.
Neck . . . . .	Tohie. J.
Net . . . . .	Botolee. J.
Nose . . . . .	Mellee.
Paddle or Oar . . . . .	Mecal.
Pain . . . . .	Allooda.
Palm . . . . .	Dolai.
Paper . . . . .	Pangpoy.
Pike . . . . .	Woohalay.
To Pinch . . . . .	Ingee Genecha. J.
Plantain-tree . . . . .	Cholellee. J.
Pot . . . . .	Bootchoochie. B.
To Pull . . . . .	Totobati Gehooa.
Rain . . . . .	Oye.
Red . . . . .	Gheallop.
Road . . . . .	Echolle. J.
To Run . . . . .	Gohabela. J.
To Scratch . . . . .	Inkahey aha. J.
Seed . . . . .	Kheetongay.
Sheep * . . . . .	Neena.
Smoke . . . . .	Boleenee.
To Sing . . . . .	Gokobay. J.
To Sit down . . . . .	Gongtohee.
Shadow . . . . .	Tangtohee.
To Sleep . . . . .	Comoha. J.
To Sneeze . . . . .	Oh-cheka. J.
To Spit . . . . .	Inkahoangy.
To Swim . . . . .	Quaah. J.

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\* It may appear surprising that they should have names for animals—that are not found in their islands. This circumstance may tend to confirm the story of their origin.



To Swallow . . . . .	Beebay.
Sky . . . . .	Madamo.
Star . . . . .	Chelobay. J.
Stone . . . . .	Woolay.
Sun . . . . .	Ahay.
To Take up . . . . .	Catoha.
Thigh . . . . .	Poye.
Teeth . . . . .	Mahoy.
Tongue . . . . .	Talie. J.
Thunder and lightning . . . . .	<del>Maccey</del> Maccee.
To Wash . . . . .	Inga doha.
Wasp . . . . .	Bohomakee.
To Walk . . . . .	Boony-jaca.
Water . . . . .	Migway.
To Weep . . . . .	Oana-wannah. J.
Wind . . . . .	Tomjamay.
Wood . . . . .	Tanghee. J.

(The notes to the above narrative are equally Colebrooke's with the body of it.)

With regard to this narrative, the following comments are offered : By " prickly pear " on the banks of the creeks, Colebrooke probably meant the species of Phoenix.

The " gold-dust " he noticed was probably iron pyrites, and the specimens of " red ochre," are red ochre, and not " cinnabar."

*Forests.*—By Red-wood, Padouk is understood. The ebony of commerce does not exist on the Andamans, nor do Alexandrian laurel, or poplar. Aloes also are not indigenous, otherwise the description of the jungle is a very good one.

*Fauna.*—Monkeys do not exist on the Andamans. The green snake is probably the *Trimeresurus*. The humming-bird with a note like a cuckoo has not been met with, two birds being here confounded.

*Aborigines.*—Colebrooke has evident doubts as to their alleged



cannibalism, but is loth to break with former traditions. The idea of the Andamanese being the offspring of ship-wrecked slaves he also receives with caution, but gives reasons for believing it.

The account shows that Blair was acquainted with two tribes in the South Andaman, as can be discerned from the vocabulary given and the description of their habits, etc. These two have apparently been supposed to be one, but the vocabulary and many of the habits refer only to the Jàrawa Tribe of the South Andaman, while the indecent gestures of contempt belong to the North Andaman Group of Tribes, and the fishing by night probably to the Áka-Béa-da Tribe of the South Andaman. The Áka-Béa-da keep their spare meat on a bamboo platform, but no Andamanese broils meat on a bamboo grid.

The dance described is that of the Öngé Group of Tribes.

The Áka-Béa-da use canoes, the Jàrawas generally use rafts. So far as I can learn (for the Andamanese have no recollection of the Settlement in 1790), it would appear that at that time the Jàrawas occupied the South side of the Harbour, and the Áka-Béa-da the North side. There were occasional individual friendly relations between the members of these two tribes, but they were then, as now, generally hostile. It is curious that the tribe most friendly disposed towards the Settlement in 1790 should have been the Tribe of Jàrawas with whom we have, in the present Settlement, entirely failed to establish friendly relations.

The "long bows" mentioned may be the very long and clumsy bows of the Jàrawa tribe, or the peculiarly shaped Áka-Béa-da bow. Colebrooke probably saw both. The tusks of wild hogs were not used for arrow heads.

What Colebrooke (and many others) takes for a "shield" is the "dancing board" of the South Andaman Group of Tribes. The Jàrawas have not got this.

*Vocabulary.*—The first word of this is "Mincopie" said to signify "The Andaman Islands," and hence the name "Mincopie" given generally to the Andamanese. Colebrooke's paper was little known, and the name remained as a puzzle to those who have had to do with the Andamanese since the formation of the present Settle-



ment in 1858, as the word was unknown to any of the tribes with whom we had friendly relations.

I append a list of words of the Öngé Group of Tribes which, allowing for difference of spelling, correspond with the words in Colebrooke's Vocabulary :

Arrow.	Bártói.
Arm.	Önibílé.
Bamboo	Äüdálé.
Breast.	Gágé.
Bone.	Íchin-dángé.
Chin.	Íbi-dángé.
Drink, to	Ínjóbé.
Earth.	Tutánó.
Ear.	Íkwágé.
Eat, to	Öniló kwálébé.
Eye.	Öníjéböi.
Finger.	Mómé.
Foot.	Mugé.
Hair.	Äüdé.
Hand.	Mómé.
House.	Bédai.
Iron adze.	Döi-í.
Nail, of the finger.	Móbé-dungé.
Pinch, to.	Öni-giníbé.
Plantain-tree.	Yóläülé.
Pot.	Búchu.
Road.	Íchélé.
Run, to.	Áhá-bélábé.
Sing, to.	Gügábábé.
Sleep, to.	Ömokábé. Ömohán.
Sneeze, to.	Échíbé.
Spit, to.	Öná-kwángé.



Swim, to.	Kwáné.
Star. (Moon.)	Chílömé.
Sun.	Éké.
Teeth.	Mákwé.
Water.	Íngé.
Weep, to.	Wánábé.
Canoe of Wood.	Dángé.

*Note.*—"Laugh" "Onkeomai," resembles a Jàrawa word for an indecent expression, which may have been what the person questioned was laughing at.

"Camolan" as a word for "Man" cannot be traced, but it seems to me that it may be a Jàrawa attempt to pronounce "Come along," a sentence the captives must have frequently heard.

Some of the words appear to me to have been obtained from the Áka-Béa-da tribe, and I have therefore marked against the words, as I identify them, J, for Jàrawa, and B. for Áka-Béa-da.

Some words I recognise as Jàrawa, but they have now entirely different meanings from those given, and this may be owing to misunderstandings on both sides. Thus the word for "moon" is given as "star."

I do not think this is in the least owing to the language having altered during the last hundred years, and I propose, when analysing the Vocabularies compiled during the first six years of the existence of the present penal Settlement (1858-64), to show how ludicrously misleading some of these misunderstandings are. Colebrooke evidently obtained his information at second-hand, and the persons from whom he obtained it could not have been long enough on friendly terms with the aborigines of any one tribe to have compiled a trustworthy vocabulary. The remarkable point about Colebrooke's paper is that it should contain so much that is reliable and correct.

The Andamanese are an intensely conservative people, and do not change their customs quickly, even under outside example and influence.

They are, however, not very ready to explain these customs, or to



enlighten strangers regarding their mode of life (partly from fear of ridicule); and, as I am well aware, will, out of sheer love of mischief, deliberately give incorrect information, or, as will be pointed out in subsequent comments on the Vocabularies, give abusive answers or indecent words to persons wishing to learn something of their language.

Much of our present information has been collected by a careful watching of their actions (coupled of course with a knowledge of their language), when they were not aware they were being so watched.

Nothing was easier than for the earlier observers, who did not know the language, to fall into error. Even in the present day educated men have spent years in the Andamans, and have left the Islands with very inaccurate ideas regarding the aborigines.

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## CHAPTER IV.

Lieutenant Blair's notes—Barren Island—Establishment of the Settlement—Extracts from the *Calcutta Gazette*—Change of the Settlement from the South to the North Andaman—Sickness—Abandonment of the Settlement—Major Kyd's Reports on the Andamanese—Voyage de Gaul Schouten aux Indes Orientales—Ritchie's Survey of the Andaman Islands—Extract from the *Calcutta Monthly Register*—Major Symes' account of the Andamanese—Notes on the account.

THE following brief account of our operations in the Andamans from 1789-96 has been obtained from Lieutenant Blair's notes.

On his arrival in the Islands he first examined the harbours, and comments on them with his usual accuracy and trustworthiness. He minutely surveyed Port Andaman and approved of it. He examined Port Campbell, but thought it would be difficult of access in the South-West monsoon. He noted that MacPherson's Straits was a good shelter with a bad anchorage, and above all approved of the present Port Blair. In September, 1789, he took possession of this Harbour, called it Port Cornwallis after the Governor-General, and a little colony was speedily formed. With his assistant, Lieutenant Wales, he appears to have divided his time between the surveying of the Andaman Islands and the establishment of this Settlement in Port Cornwallis.

His account of the Volcano of Barren Island, as he saw it on the 24th March, 1789, is interesting. He writes:—

"I left that coast March the 21st, and landed on Barren Island on the 24th. The Volcano was in a violent state of eruption, bursting out immense volumes of smoke, and frequently showers of red hot stones. Some were of a size to weigh three or four tons, and had been thrown some hundred yards past the foot of the cone. There were two or three eruptions while we were close to it: several of the red hot stones rolled down the sides of the cone and bounded a considerable way beyond us. The base of the cone is the lowest part of the island, and very little higher than the level of the



sea. It arises with an acclivity of  $32^{\circ}17'$  to the height of 1,800 feet nearly, which is also the elevation of the other parts of the island.

"From the present figure it may be conjectured that the Volcano first broke out near the centre of the Island, or rather towards the north-west; and in a long process of time, by discharging, consuming, and undermining, has brought it to the present very extraordinary form, of which a very correct drawing by Lieutenant Wales will impress a distant idea.

"Those parts of the island that are distant from the Volcano are thinly covered with withered shrubs and blasted trees. It is situated in Latitude  $12^{\circ}15'$  North, and fifteen leagues East of the northernmost island of the Archipelago, and may be seen at the distance of twelve leagues in clear weather. A quarter of a mile from the shore there is no ground with 150 fathoms of line."

The drawing of the volcano by Wales represents it as at present, with the addition of the smoke. If Blair was as correct as usual in his figures, the volcano was 650 feet higher then than it is now.

Lieutenant Blair fixed on Chatham Island as his head-quarters in Port Cornwallis, and by August, 1790, had cleared the greater portion of it, and planted it with vegetables and fruit trees. The higher parts of the Island were sown with grass.

Provisions were imported from Penang and Calcutta. One hundred and nineteen working men were housed, store-houses and a hospital were built, and there was little sickness. Lieutenant Blair seems to have at once attempted to open a trade in Andaman timbers, and some specimens were sent to Calcutta. Padouk was even then specially noticed, but only because, from its colour, it was thought it would yield a good dye.

A jungle road was cut in a southerly direction from the top of Phoenix Bay to the head of the bay next to it (probably Navy Bay), and this was intended to serve as a line of demarcation for the natives, while the clearing of the peninsula to the West of it (now called Haddo), was proceeded with, this having been selected on



account of its situation, soil, and being well watered, as the best place for immediate cultivation and improvement.

In December, 1790, the ship's guns, which had been placed in a redoubt on Chatham Island, as a protection against the Andamanese, had to be removed and replaced on board the *Ranger*, it being necessary to despatch that vessel to Penang to reinforce that Settlement, which was threatened by the neighbouring Malay tribes. The power of the Andamanese was now, however, justly estimated, and artillery as a defence against them was not required. A wharf was then constructed at Chatham, and completed in February, 1791, in time to facilitate the landing of 500 tons of naval stores, imported at that time for the use of His Majesty's ships, the whole of which, (*Perseverance*, *Vestal*, *Ariel*, *Atalanta*, and *Crown*), employed in the Bay of Bengal, now paid constant visits to the Andamans. Though recommended by Lieutenant Blair before, it was not until 1791 that those settlers who had visited Calcutta on their private affairs were allowed to take their families to the new colony.

Although from the fact that Lieutenant Blair was ignorant that he had more than one tribe of savages to deal with in the Harbour, and that the two tribes there were mutually hostile and ignorant of each other's languages, it is difficult to ascertain from his notes exactly what did pass, it would appear that he, very soon after his arrival, established friendly relations with the Jàrawa tribe who occupied the Southern half of the Harbour. The Áka-Béa-da, who occupied the Northern half, do not seem to have troubled him at first, though they did so later. He attributes their ferocity to the ill-treatment they had received from the Malays, about whom, and their slaving of the Andamanese, he seemed to have some information. Later on, owing to the attacks of the Áka-Béa-da, whom he confounded with the Jàrawas, he seems to have changed his opinion regarding the aborigines (to whom he was at first favourably inclined), and disliked and distrusted them.

That the Andamanese were cunning and crafty, and also treacherous, seems to have been known, but Lieutenant Blair notes : "Several of the natives have been carried off to gratify unwar-



rantable curiosity, and others have been entrapped and sold for slaves."

By the end of 1790 the Aka-Béa-da seem to have been giving a great deal of trouble, both from their open animosity and their treachery, and Lieutenant Blair mentions that a number of the aborigines had collected for an attack on the Settlement, which was frustrated by his seizing three of their large canoes which they had left unguarded. The existence of these canoes shows the tribe to have been the Aka-Béa-da, though I have some doubt as to the correct interpretation of their intentions by people who were totally ignorant of their language. These savages do not always mean all that they seem to mean.

The following occurrence is also related.

Sir R. Strachan, the Captain of His Majesty's Ship *Vestal*, had accompanied Lieutenant Blair on his visit to a portion of the Harbour at some distance from the Settlement, when they were joined by two young natives, who voluntarily accompanied them back to Chatham Island. "Their youth and apparent innocence," says Lieutenant Blair, "prevented my entertaining the least unfavourable suspicion of them," but they decamped during the night, and took away with them one of the boats, fragments of which were found some days afterwards at the place from whence the youths first came.

These youths *may* have come in with a preconcerted plan to steal, though it is difficult to understand how they could have been aware that Lieutenant Blair was going up the unfrequented parts of the Harbour on that particular day, but it seems equally likely that they intended to be friendly, but were frightened at something during the night and bolted. The Andamanese are very easily scared, and are timid and distrustful of strangers, particularly if too much attention is paid to them. They would of course take a boat in order to get away from the island, and it is not recorded that they took anything else. As will be shown later on, neither European sailors nor the ordinary Natives of India are the best and safest kind of guards to put over the Andamanese. In 1791 Lieutenant Blair notes that the Settlement was healthy and the aborigines no longer continued their



annoyances, but occasionally visited Chatham Island for the purpose of begging for some scraps of iron or a little food.

In March, 1792, he reports: "The Settlement had been so healthy as to suffer no injury from the absence of the surgeon, who had been to Calcutta on leave, and the natives have been perfectly inoffensive for a long time, and are becoming every day more familiar—they seem now convinced that our intentions towards them are pacific."

On one occasion, when the *Ranger* was about to proceed to the Southern Nicobar, one of the natives was induced to go in the vessel, and he was allowed to bring back as many cocoa-nuts as he pleased.

The Settlement in the Southern Port Cornwallis appears to have been a great success, both from a sanitary and from a political point of view, and Lieutenant Blair behaved with a judicious firmness and ability which might well have been imitated in the earlier days of the present Settlement. Hissick and death-rate were low, the colony was flourishing, and he established, with the least possible trouble and bloodshed, friendly relations with the aborigines. His whole administration in the Andamans points to his being a man of first-rate ability and exceptional gifts.

The Government were, however, unable to let well alone, and a change was made in 1792, from which dates the downfall of the colony.

On the 13th April, 1790, Lieutenant Blair reported that North-East Harbour (now known as Port Cornwallis) was "deserving the attention of the Governor-General." In November of the same year this new harbour was visited by Commodore Cornwallis, who formed a very favourable opinion of it, and directed Lieutenant Blair to make a particular survey of it.

This was executed during March, 1791, and on receipt of it the Commodore thus wrote to his brother the Governor-General:—

"I think North-East Harbour vastly superior for a fleet of Men-of-war to Port Cornwallis; the latter, I consider, too confined and liable to accidents, as well as being more subject—from being surrounded with high hills—to sudden and violent squalls. They are alike in respect to fresh water, the runs being occasioned by the rains, and in regard to defence. The Island is not near a gunshot from the