

The Malays are now nominally in a state of freedom, and certainly are so, as far as regards their personal treatment; but in most other points they are considered as slaves. From their discontented state, from the repeated removals from islet to islet, and perhaps also from a little mismanagement, things are not very prosperous. The island has no domestic quadruped, excepting the pig, and the main vegetable production is the cocoanut. The whole prosperity of the place depends on this tree: the only exports being oil from the nut, and the nuts themselves, which are taken to Singapore and Mauritius, where they are chiefly used, when grated, in making curries. On the cocoanut, also, the pigs, which are loaded with fat, almost entirely subsist, as do the ducks and poultry. Even a huge land-crab is furnished by nature with the means to open and feed on this most useful production.

The ring-formed reef of the lagoon-island is surmounted in the greater part of its length by linear islets. On the northern or leeward side, there is an opening through which vessels can pass to the anchorage within. On entering, the scene was very curious and rather pretty; its beauty, however, entirely depended on the brilliancy of the surrounding colors. The shallow, clear, and still water of the lagoon, resting in its greater part on white sand, is, when illumined by a vertical sun, of the most vivid green. This brilliant expanse, several miles in width, is on all sides divided, either by a line of snow-white breakers from the dark heaving waters of the ocean, or from the blue vault of heaven by the strips of land, crowned by the level tops of the cocoanut trees. As a white cloud here and there affords a pleasing contrast with the azure sky, so in the lagoon bands of living coral darken the emerald green water.

The next morning after anchoring I went on shore on Direction Island. The strip of dry land is only a few hundred yards in width; on the lagoon side there is a white calcareous beach, the radiation from which under this sultry climate was very oppressive; and, on the outer coast, a solid