

to a great extent. After sunset, when the air has become somewhat cooled by the refreshing breezes, they sally forth attended by their retainers to take a walk, or proceed to the bazaars to purchase goods, or to sell or to barter away their articles of produce. They then pay visits to their friends, when they are in the habit of having frequent convivial parties, talking over their bargains, smoking cigars, drinking wine and liqueurs, tea, coffee, and chocolate, and indulging in their favourite pipe of opium. At times they are entertained with music, both vocal and instrumental, by their dependants. Of this art they appear to be very fond, and there are many musical instruments among them. A datu, indeed, would be looked upon as uneducated if he could not play on some instrument.

It is considered polite that when refreshments are handed they should be partaken of. Those offered us by the Datu were such as are usual, but every thing was stale. Of fruit they are said to be very fond, and can afford to indulge themselves in any kinds. With all these articles to cloy the appetite, only one set meal a day is taken; though the poorer classes, fishermen and labourers, partake of two.

The government of the Sooloo Archipelago is a kind of oligarchy, and the supreme authority is vested in the Sultan and the Ruma Bechara or trading council. This consists of about twenty chiefs, either datus, or their next in rank, called oranges, who are governors of towns or detached provinces. The influence of the individual chiefs depends chiefly upon the number of their retainers or slaves, and the force they can bring into their service when they require it. These are purchased from the pirates, who bring them to Sooloo and its dependencies for sale. The slaves are employed in a variety of ways, as in trading prahus, in the pearl and biche de mar fisheries, and in the search after the edible birds'-nests.

A few are engaged in agriculture, and those who are at all educated are employed as clerks. These slaves are not denied the right of holding property, which they enjoy during their lives, but at their death it reverts to the master. Some of them are quite rich, and what may appear strange, the slaves of Sooloo are invariably better off than the untitled freemen, who are at all times the prey of the hereditary datu, even of those who hold no official stations. By all accounts these constitute a large proportion of the population, and it being treason for any low-born freeman to injure or maltreat a datu, the latter, who are of a haughty, overbearing, and tyrannical disposition, seldom keep themselves within bounds in their treatment of their inferiors. The consequence is, the lower class of freemen are obliged to put themselves under the protection of some particular datu, which