in their designs, which are grotesque and out of nature. The handles of their knives are the chief subjects of this art ; and these are in general curiously ornamented with the head and beak of a bird, or with the folded arms of a human being. In the interior, according to the observation of Sir Stamford Raffles, manufactures are more advanced. Me- nangcabow has always been famed for the manufacture of its kris blades. In its vicinity iron has been worked from time immemorial ; and an extensive manufactory of coarse pottery, near the banks of the lake, supplies not only Pa- dang, but Bencoolen, with that useful article. The Suma­trans are entire strangers to the art of painting and draw­ing. In cane and basket work they are particularly neat and expert, as well as in mats ; of which some kinds are much prized for their extreme fineness, and for the beauty and taste of the borders with which they are ornamented. They excel also in the manufacture of silk and cotton cloths of varied colours, chiefly for domestic use. These are worn in all parts of the country by the natives, and especially by the women. Some of their work is very fine, and the pat­terns prettily fancied. Their apparatus for weaving is, how­ever, of the rudest description, and renders their progress tedious. The women are expert at embroidery, the gold and silver thread for which is procured from China, as well as their needles. Gunpowder is manufactured in various parts of the island, chiefly among the people of Menang- cabow, the Battas, and Achenese, among whom, as they are frequently at war, it is an article in great request. It is not, however, well made, being imperfectly granulated, and often hastily prepared for immediate use. Different kinds of earthenware are manufactured in the island. The manu­facture of filagree is here carried to the greatest perfection. There is no manufacture in any part of the world that has been more justly admired and celebrated than the fine gold and silver filagree of Sumatra ; but this is not the work of the Sumatran artisan ; it is a manufacture of the Malays, the original and ancient inhabitants, to whose superior taste and industry many of the monuments of art which remain are ascribed. This manufacture is in universal use in the country ; and its fineness and beauty form a singular con­trast to the coarseness of the tools which are employed in the workmanship, and which are rudely and inartificially formed by the goldsmith from any old iron that he can pick up. A piece of iron hoop as a wire-drawing instru­ment, an old hammer-head stuck in a block as an anvil, and two old nails tied together as a pair of compasses, are the chief instruments. They have no bellows, but blow the fire with their mouths through a reed. They are very in­expert at polishing the plain parts, but in other respects no­thing can exceed the extraordinary delicacy of the Malay work. They are extremely expert in manufacturing fish­ing-nets, and springes for catching birds.@@1

The proficiency of the Sumatrans in science is very li­mited. Their numeration table does not extend beyond tens of thousands. Their utmost attainment in arithmetic is to multiply and divide several places of figures. Of geo­graphy they have no idea whatever. They know not that the country they inhabit is an island, nor have they any general name for it. Habit renders them expert in travel­ling through woods, where they perform journeys of weeks or months without seeing a dwelling. In the pathless woods they make marks on the trees for the future guidance of themselves and others. They have no notion of astronomy ; and the Malays, as well as the Arabs and other Mahomme- dans, fix the length of the year at 354 days, or twelve lunar months of twenty-nine and a half days. They mark the time of the day by the position of the sun in die heavens ; which is sufficiently exact for all practical purposes so near the equator, where the sun ascends and descends almost per­pendicularly, and rises and sets at all seasons of the year within a few minutes of six o’clock. They are entirely destitute of either history or chronology, the memory of all past events being only preserved by tradition. Their literary compositions, says Sir Stamford Raffles, seldom go farther back than the introduction of Mahommedanism, ex­cept to give some romantic tale, from which little or no­thing can be gathered. But he adds, “ it was my good for­tune to discover in Java the vestiges of a former high state of literature and the arts, in poems, in the ruins of temples, in sculptured images, in ancient inscriptions.” This active and philosophical inquirer into the ancient state of these eastern countries discovered also monuments in Sumatra, inscribed with characters which corroborated all his views concerning their ancient civilization. The people are fond of music, and have many instruments, which are mostly bor­rowed from the Chinese and other eastern nations. Their musical instruments are chiefly of the noisy kind ; and they have no science, though they have a few simple tunes. In Sumatra the art of medicine is at an equally low ebb with the sciences. It consists in the application of a few simples, and chiefly in certain charms. Every old man or woman is a physician ; and they are rewarded in proportion to their success, though they generally contrive to procure payment in advance for the charms which they dispose of to their patients. They either administer juices inwardly, or they apply outwardly the juices of certain trees, or, chopping their leaves small, they apply them as poultices. They have no knowledge of anatomy, nor do they practise phlebotomy. The inhabitants are assailed with leprosy under various forms. It is sometimes a disease of the skin ; but there is another form of the disease, under which the flesh mortifies and falls off the bones ; and the disorder being deemed in­fectious, the patient is driven into the woods, where victuals are left for him from time to time by his relatives. The small-pox makes terrible ravages in the island, and the in­habitants have a great dread of this loathsome and fatal disease. Among the other great benefits, the enlightened Sir Stamford Raffles introduced among them the vaccine inoculation, which they expressed the utmost willingness to receive. Insanity they imagine to be a possession by the evil spirit ; and their mode of exorcism is to enclose the unfortunate victim in a hut, to which they set fire about his ears, suffering him to make his escape through the flames in the best manner he can. This, along with other barbar­ous practices, marks the little progress which they have made in knowledge or moral improvement.

The Malay language, which is understood to be the ori­ginal language in the peninsula of Malacca, has extended itself through all these Asiatic islands, and has become the common tongue in this part of the globe, being spoken everywhere along the coasts of Sumatra. It also prevails in the inland country of Menangcabow, and is understood in almost every part of the island. From the smoothness and sweetness of its sound, it has been called the Italian of the east. Their writing is in the Arabic character, very little corrupted ; owing to which, and the adoption of the Mahommedan religion, a great number of Arabic words are incorporated with the Malay. Various other languages are spoken in Sumatra besides the Malay, which all, how­ever, bear a manifest affinity to each other, and spring from the same root; and this common language is spread over all the islands in the Eastern Seas, more or less corrupted in different places, but still retaining the same stock of no­dical words. Marsden has remarked, that in the most dis­tant places, “ as the Philippines and Madagascar, the de­viation of the words is scarcely more than is observed in

@@@1 Marsden's Sumatra, p. 41, &c.