

No doubt the self-evident want of understanding of two races so different in character, religion and tradition, must be taken into account when judging any shortcomings on either side which originating in the slaughter of the isolated Dutch forces and constant mutinies, ended in a complete submission of the monopolized islands and almost wholesale massacre of the Bandanese in 1622.

Whatever we may have to say in these matters and wherever our sympathies lie, there is this testimony which speaks clearly in favor of the Dutch rulers that when in later years the political fall of Holland caused the nation to neglect the Indian Archipelago, the natives complain-

blindness of those who, pretending to govern India on sound commercial principles, do not even see that the miserable monopoly was the cause of endless war and should in the end drain Indian resources.

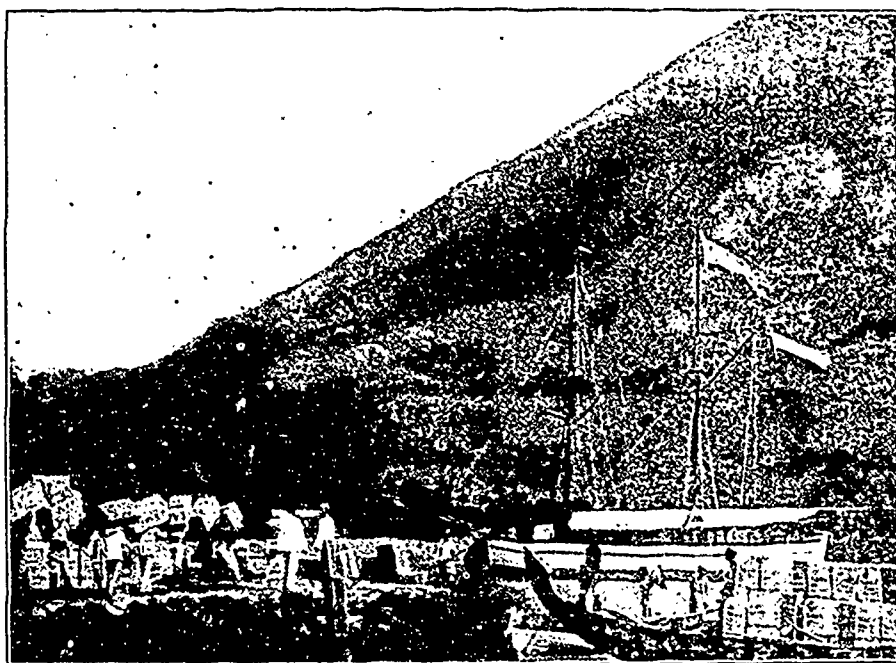
As unwise as the man in the fable who killed the goose with the golden eggs to get all the profit at once, the rulers of India, alarmed at the number of trees "that bear gold," rashly cut down so many that they drove the people away and wealth with them.

By restricting the cultivation of nutmegs and mace to Banda Neira, Lonthoir and Ay the monopoly caused a great deal of injury to the Moluccan Archipelago.

excessive punishment inflicted upon the offenders.

Besides the regular loss caused by smuggling, there was another which very often swallowed the profit for years, viz, the *volcanic eruptions* alternating with storms or parching drought, causing heavy loss of full bearing trees, whilst moreover the scarcity of hands in years of abundant crops is met with in nearly each of the volumes, which deal with this part of the company's arduous administration.

If we could separate the Moluccan administration from the complex of the company's extensive household reaching south as far as Australia, and eastward as far as Japan, including the stations at the



Island of Banda

ed about their being left to themselves and protested for fear of being wholly abandoned by those whom they had learned to consider their regular masters.

When in 1796 the Spice Islands became English for the first time (they were brought under the English flag for another short period once more in 1810), the natives still continued to consider themselves as subjects of the Dutch and they hoisted even then the Dutch flag on all festive occasions.*

This single fact appeals to every impartial critic. It exonerates neither the rash acts of cruelty nor the merciless despotism exercised by the Corquerors, but it goes far towards excusing them.

What we needs must blame looking back over so many years is the general

By compelling all the produce—nutmegs and mace—to come to Europe, it crippled the trade, which had ever found its natural outlet in Asia. Severe control and constant vigilance of course could do something to maintain the monopoly in the days of the company's utmost glory, but it is easily understood that against the unnatural law, smuggling was ever on the alert for an opportunity to detract the much-cherished spices from the company's stores either with or without the connivance of the company's own officials.

Though estimates differ it is not at all inadmissible that over one-fifth † of the yearly Banda produce of nutmegs and mace was diverted by smuggling in Indian waters, and such notwithstanding the † La Perouse Crawford.

Cape, in Ceylon and on the Coast of Malabar, a deficit would be shown by many years that were considered extremely profitable by the shareholders in former days.

Leaving aside the years of enormous profit in the Indian trade, which may be reckoned to have lasted till 1693, there remains a period of more than one century when the returns hardly cover the expenses, nay even entail a loss, and we may safely state that the Moluccas were a good deal the cause of the disastrous end of a management, commenced under the auspices of inexhaustible wealth.

With a staff of a good many more than 19,000 Europeans in India (1770) of which nearly 3,300 were in the Moluccas, the company's administration must no doubt

* George Windsor Earl.