

putting a rope through a hole which is made in their nostrils, little boys were always employed, who could stroke and handle them with impunity, at times when the men durst not approach them.

We were now conducted to the town, which consists of between twenty and thirty houses, built close together.

By means of my money, and pointing at different objects in sight, I had no difficulty in making a man, who seemed to be the principal person of the company to which we were introduced, comprehend the main business of our errand; and I as readily understood from him that the chief or captain was absent, but would soon return; and that, without his consent, no purchases of any kind could be made.

Having at last procured a supply of buffaloes and some fat hogs, on the 28th of January 1780, we unmoored; and, as soon as we were clear of the harbour, steered south south-west.

On the 2d of February, at eight in the morning, we tried for soundings, continuing to do the same every hour, till we had passed the Straights of Sunda, and found the bottom with twenty-three fathoms of line.

On the 5th we approached the coast of Sumatra. The country is covered with wood down to the water's edge, and the shores are so low, that the sea overflows the land, and washes the trunks of the trees. To this flat and marshy situation of the shore, we may attribute those thick fogs and vapours which we perceived every morning, not without dread and horror, hanging over the island, till they were dispersed by the rays of the sun. The shores of Banca, which are opposite, are much bolder; and the country inland rises to a moderate

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