

Java is in perfection just after the rains, during the months of April and May, when the whole country, from the smoking craters of the interior to the swamps of the seacoast, is clothed with a vegetation so luxuriant that the ruddy colour of the volcanic soil is only visible where a recent landslip has occurred. In plain and valley every square yard of soil, except the village burial-ground, is cultivated and irrigated; magnificent crops of sugar-cane, rice, and indigo form a sea of verdure, out of which rise like islands numberless groves of bamboos, cocoanut palms, and fruit-trees. Concealed in these groves are the *dessas*, or native villages, and under their shade is usually cultivated the coffee, which "pays the rent." Some of the lower ranges have been denuded of trees, and display a certain amount of open pasture, but as a rule the mountains are covered with virgin forest, except where clearings have been made for plantations of tea, coffee, or cinchona. High above this fair scene a faint white cloud may be seen curling upwards from the apex of a lofty cone, indicating the volcanic energy that now slumbers beneath, but has broken out violently even within the last few years, and may do so again at any moment.

It may be asked whether the geological condition of Java is not a symbol of its political state, and whether a fair surface does not cover hidden fires in the hearts of the Javanese people. It may be so, but not even a faint white cloud is visible to warn the stranger that such hidden fires exist. Everything externally is tranquil, and in the absence of all means of coercion, tranquillity may be accepted as a fair evidence of contentment. The productiveness of the country appears to keep pace with the increasing population. The wants of the masses in all tropical countries are few and simple, and in Java these are amply supplied. Besides, the Javanese are a gentle and submissive race, unaccustomed to the use of firearms, and could never be formidable as insurgents in a military sense. Without pretending to investigate the inward desires or aspirations of the Javanese, and judging solely from external facts, I believe that the Dutch sovereignty is about as popular and as secure as the rule of a few aliens over a great subject population can ever be made, and that the country flourishes under it as well as a subject country can ever be expected to do.

On the approach of a superior, it is incumbent on all natives to remove their hats, to dismount if on horseback, and if on foot to sit down upon the ground; those who wish to be par-