

PERAK MUSEUM

Revised by

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The Perak State Museum, which owes its inception to the late Sir Hugh Low, G.C.M.G., third British Resident of Perak, was started in 1883 in a building of very modest proportions, which has been added to with the growth of the collections until, at the present date, it covers a very considerable area. The latest addition, comprising a two-storied block 80 feet by 40 feet, for the local ethnographical exhibits, was completed in 1902.

The scope of the Museum is the illustration, with some attempt at completeness, of the zoology, geology, mineralogy and ethnography of the Malay Peninsula from the Isthmus of Kra to Singapore, though as yet no great advance has been made in the formation of collections from the more purely Siamese portion of this area, the Museum being primarily Malayan. In the case of ethnography—in which the Museum specializes—it has not been considered desirable that the productions of people of Malayan stock now resident in, but not indigenous to, the Peninsula should be rigidly excluded, as this would rule out some of the most beautiful objects of Malayan craftsmanship found in the country; but the zoological collections are strictly confined to the limits above referred to.

On the opposite side and down the centre of the hall is arranged a very complete series of the mammals of the Peninsula, from the apes and monkeys to the rodents and edentates. Many of the larger animals in this division are some of the finest examples of the taxidermist's art extant, amongst which may be specially mentioned a *Arû* monkey, a tiger, and the mountain goats or *kambing gerun*, the adult of which was the first ever obtained in the Malay States by an European, having been shot by Sir Frank Swettenham as it was crossing a landslip below "The Cottage" on the Larut Hills. Other fine pieces of work are a tapir from the Matang District and a two-horned rhinoceros from near Sitiawan on the Dindings border. A nearly complete set of the squirrels of the Peninsula is also shown, from a species smaller than a house rat to one as big as a cat in size, which does great damage in the durian orchards at the fruiting season.

Among the carnivores a specimen of the clouded tiger or *rimau dahan* is noteworthy for its extreme rarity in the Malay Peninsula, though it is said to be of fairly common occurrence in Borneo and parts of Sumatra.

The exhibited bats include several examples of the Malay *kêhuang* or flying fox, the largest of the order, having a spread of wing, in full-grown specimens, of nearly five feet. The scaly anteater or *tenggiling*, the one animal of which, according to Malay folk-tales, the lordly elephant stands in terror, is also on view in several characteristic attitudes. It is met with in numbers in the flatter parts of the country, and is