

I witnessed the ceremony. I remarked that they had set up in the middle of the palace yard a great seat of state, covered with silk stuffs. The bride arrived, coming from the inner apartments of the palace on foot, and with her face exposed, so that the whole company could see her, gentle and simple alike. However it is not their usual custom to appear in public unveiled in this way; it is only done in the marriage ceremony.<sup>1</sup> The bride proceeded to the seat of state, the minstrels male and female going before her, playing and singing. Then came the bridegroom on a caparisoned elephant, which carried on its back a sort of throne, surmounted by a canopy like an umbrella. The bridegroom wore a crown on his head; right and left of him were about a hundred young men, of royal and noble blood, clothed in white, mounted on caparisoned horses, and wearing on their heads caps adorned with gold and gems. They were of the same age as the bridegroom, and all beardless.

From the time when the bridegroom entered, pieces of gold and silver were scattered among the people. The sultan was seated aloft where he could see all that passed. His son got down from the elephant, went to kiss his father's foot, and then mounted on the seat of state beside his bride. They then brought pawn and betel-nut; the bridegroom took them in his hand and put them into the bride's mouth, and she did the same by him. Next he put a pawn-leaf first into his own mouth and then into hers, and she did in like manner.<sup>2</sup> They then put a veil over the bride, and removed the

<sup>1</sup> I suspect this apologetic assertion is not founded in fact. The Mahomedan proselytizers among the Malays and Indo-Chinese races have never been able to introduce the habitual use of the veil, and the custom of female seclusion. At Amrapura, in 1855, the Mahomedan soldiers of our Indian escort were greatly shocked at the absence of these proprieties among the Burmese professors of their faith; and at the court of the Sultan of Java, in 1860, I had the honour of shaking hands with more than half a dozen comely and veiless ladies, the wives and daughters of His Majesty. I was told that at times they even honoured a ball at the Dutch Residency with their presence.

<sup>2</sup> This is a genuine Malay custom, marking the highest degree of inti-