

INTERESTING NARRATIVE OF A VOYAGE TO PULO-
PENANG, OR PRINCE OF WALES'S ISLAND.

[NEVER BEFORE PUBLISHED.]

The following narrative (taken almost *verbatim* from Captain Lockerby, of the ship *Lindsays*, now in the port of Liverpool) will be found highly interesting, not only to the merchant, but to the general reader: to the former, as it explains the voyage which the ship made to the Malay Islands, without infringement of the charter of the East India Company; to the latter, as it details some particulars of the fine island of Singapore, where a thriving settlement has recently been made by Sir T. S. Raffles. Some interesting accounts relative to the burial-place of the Ex-Emperor Napoleon will also be found.

Captain Lockerby sailed in the *Lindsays* from London in May, 1820, with a full cargo of British goods, for Gibraltar. Without discharging, he thence proceeded to Madeira, and thence to Buenos Ayres; and then to Pulo-Penang, in the Straits of Malacca. There he discharged part of his cargo, and sailed to the new settlement of Singapore, which was established about three years ago by Sir T. Stamford Raffles. There he remained for three weeks; discharged the whole of his outward cargo, and purchased sugar of an excellent quality, brought from the Gulph of Siam by Chinese junks.

Singapore is a beautiful island in the straits of that name, in the entrance of the Chinese Sea, and a few leagues from the southern extremity of Asia. Singapore (the capital) is divided into three separate towns; namely, Malay-town, containing about 10,000 inhabitant Malays; Chinese-town, about 7000 Chinese; and English town, which yet contains but few Europeans, among whom are about five respectable English merchants. English town is laid out in beautiful squares, and spacious streets crossing each other at right angles; and is agreeably decorated with trees. The site of the mansion of the resident Governor is on a rising ground behind the town, and commands an extensive and delightful view of the whole of the straits and of the numerous and beautiful islands that surround the new settlement. Colonel Farquhar (formerly Governor of Malacca) is Governor here; a gentleman well calculated for the office, from his experimental knowledge of the manners and character of the Malays; who, it may be here remarked, appear to be partial to the British Government, and inimical to the Dutch.

The climate of Singapore, although warm, is extremely salubrious; and appears to be so little subject to the diseases so fatal to Europeans in most tropical climates, that only two of these had died, since the formation of the settlement, a period of three years. The markets are well supplied with fish and poultry; and dried and salted provisions are plentifully imported in the Chinese junks from Siam. Tropical fruits and roots are also abundant.

The trade of the Island is very considerable, and is fast increasing. During the last year, it had been triple that of Prince of Wales's Island. Capt. Lockerby is of opinion, that, from its advantageous situation and excellent harbour, it will eventually draw the trade from that island entirely. There is also a considerable trade with Batavia. The intercourse, through means of Chinese junks, is immense. During Capt. Lockerby's stay, upwards of twenty of these vessels, of from two to three hundred tons burthen, loaded with sugar (great quantities of which are sent to Batavia) arrived daily. Sugar is generally sold at half a dollar less per picul, than at Pulo-Penang. The intercourse of Malay grows is also surprising; hundreds of them going out and in daily, exchanging their produce for European manufactures.

This settlement is a most valuable acquisition to the English; for which they are indebted to the discernment and energetic plans of Sir T. S. Raffles, who is well acquainted with the British interests in that part of the globe. The situation excels all others, in point of commanding the immense trade of the whole of the numerous and fruitful islands in those seas, as well as of the eastern coast of Sumatra; and will eventually turn the tide of commerce from the Dutch in that island, where they have hitherto pursued a most lucrative traffic in gold dust, of which that island is productive. The Dutch evidently feel the effects of the new settlement already; and it is understood, that, from the falling off of the trade in Sumatra, they are about to abandon their establishment at Malacca. From this interesting island, Captain Lockerby returned through the Straits of Malacca, and called at Pulo-Penang. Here he received on board a quantity of piece-goods, opium, and specie, and sailed for the west coast of the island of Sumatra. He traded

along that coast, from Atchen-head, at the northern extremity of the island, to Bencoolen, a distance of about 700 miles; calling at not fewer than fifty native ports for spices, with which he loaded his vessel in bulk. Captain Lockerby's crew consisted of only fifteen men, and he went on shore often with but half that number, but on no occasion received any insult, or experienced any hostility, from the natives, whom he found to be honest and friendly in their dealings. Had they been otherwise, they might have taken possession of his ship at any time, as he had frequently upwards of 100 of them on board at a time, all armed with their creeses,* or poisoned knives. Captain L. also called at the Dutch settlement of Padang, on that coast; but here he was not received in so friendly a manner as he expected; the settlers were not inclined to traffic with him. At different native ports he found several American vessels, all of them nearly loaded with pepper, and destined, as he understood, for European markets. The navigation of that coast is extremely dangerous: Captain L. was obliged to tow his long-boat all day; and, at night, sent her ahead of the ship, with lights, to pilot her through the reefs. It was generally inclining to calm through the day, with a favourable land breeze at night. In the native port of Analaboo, the *Lindsays* met with an accident by which the vessel was in great danger of being wrecked, and her crew left destitute among the Malays. A tremendous gale of wind, accompanied with a heavy sea, set in; the ship pitching, fore-castle under water. Captain L. had one of the recently invented patent chain-cables out. The pauls of the windlass upset, and the cable ran out to the end, which was, fortunately, clenched round the mast. This, with the stopper on deck, and the sheet-anchor being let go, brought the ship up when within a few yards of the breakers. This was the only time Captain L. had occasion to use his rope cable during the whole voyage, having always found the chain sufficient.

At Bencoolen, Sir T. S. Raffles put on board a few boxes of spices to fill up, and the *Lindsays* sailed for Europe. Captain L. called at the Isle of France, and at St. Helena: he relates a circumstance which occurred at the latter, which cannot fail to be interesting.

Urged by a curiosity common to all strangers, Captain Lockerby visited the tomb of Bonaparte, and also the new house which had been fitted up for his reception. The spot where the tomb stands is only accessible by ticket. The grave had been dug under a large willow-tree, which (probably from being undermined at the roots) was in a complete state of decay. The tomb was covered with slab-stones (apparently from England) which had been taken up from the kitchen-floor of the new house. It was raised round with green paling; and a sentinel walked round it, night and day, to prevent approach within the railing. There was no inscription upon the tomb. The ground surrounding it, it was understood, was to be laid out as gardens, for the accommodation of those who came to visit the grave of the departed Emperor.

While Captain Lockerby was ruminating on the narrow spot, that contained all that remained of him who had awed a world, he observed some ladies, who, on their way from India to England in the *Moirs*, had landed, and were urged by similar curiosity to visit the tomb. They had brought refreshments with them, and sat on the grass. One of them approached the well (which it is well known was a favourite with Bonaparte) and drew some water, which they drank. Whether the water tasted uncommonly sweet after that to which they had been so long accustomed on shipboard, or that they conceived the Emperor had, in his rocky prison, relinquished the garb and "high imaginings" of the monarch and assumed the manners and frugality of the anchorite, Captain L. is unable to decide; but, on drinking a draught, one of these ladies seriously observed, "How happy Bonaparte must have been to have such delicious water to drink!" Captain L. could not help smiling at the philosophy of the

female, who could find in a glass of pure water an antidote for the loss of health, and liberty, and power, and domestic affection. The ladies filled their empty bottles at the well, observing, that they would carry some of the crystal beverage to England. Captain L. followed their example, and brought a bottle of it to Liverpool.

Most of the principal inhabitants of St. Helena had procured a little of the hair of Bonaparte; and Captain L. got from a respectable merchant there (Mr. O'Connor) a few of these relics. The Emperor had but little hair on his head at the time of his death; so that this was regarded, even in the island, as a very valuable present. Mr. O'Connor reported to Captain L. a conversation he had had with Madame Bertrand. That lady stated that, soon before the death of Bonaparte, she asked him, in the course of an interview, "Under whose protection he wished to leave his son?" "I will leave my son under the protection of the French Army," was the reply. Captain L. had visited St. Helena twice during the imprisonment of Bonaparte; first in the *Triton* of Liverpool, with despatches for the Governor; and, secondly, in the *Christopher* of this port also, and likewise with despatches. On the first occasion he was permitted to see Bonaparte walking in his garden: on the second, he declined seeing strangers. The whole of the servants attached to the household had left the island. Captain L. remarks, that previous to the restrictions on shipping, in consequence of the imprisonment of Bonaparte, the native inhabitants subsisted chiefly by the raising of stock and vegetables, for the supply of the ships on their way to India. They were rendered very destitute for some time after the restriction, but eventually supplied the troops, and the household of Bonaparte. In this way they again became comfortable; and at Bonaparte's death a deep regret was visible amongst those people.

Captain L. also called at the Island of Ascension, to procure some turtle, but found none, it not being the proper season. He found there a garrison of a lieutenant and 25 men (a Sloop-of-War's ship's company.) The place was garrisoned, as a precautionary measure, during the detention of Bonaparte, lest it should afford a harbour for vessels of other nations, that might seek to attack St. Helena. In consequence of the death of Bonaparte, these islanders were extremely anxious to be relieved. (Should measures for their release not already have been taken, we hope this will meet the eye of the proper authority.) Captain L. is of opinion, that should Government continue to maintain a garrison at Ascension (which is otherwise uninhabited) it might be serviceable, as a place to refit or repair the Government African cruizers, the anchorage being good (little inferior to that of St. Helena) and the island being as attainable from the African coast.

Captain L. proceeded to Gibraltar, and having there discharged the whole of his cargo, returned to England in ballast. He arrived at Liverpool on the 16th instant, after a successful voyage of 22 months. Throughout this long period, the *Lindsays* lost not a man; and the same officers and crew returned to Gibraltar in good health. While at Singapore, it is worthy of remark, that the crew procured some fish (much resembling the sword fish, and about 18 inches long) of which, every man who ate was immediately seized with violent vomiting for several hours. They all, however, recovered in about twelve hours afterwards, with no other effects than weakness. Captain L. is of opinion, that this species of fish is poisonous, and ought to be guarded against.

* Captain L. states that the preparation of these fatal weapons is generally supposed, by foreigners, to be a secret, and that they are prepared only in one part of the island. This is a mistake; the instrument is merely a piece of sharpened iron or steel, generally double-edged, and sometimes waved in the edges, in serpentine form, rubbed over with the juice of the lime, and dried in the sun. The wound is fatal, unless the flesh be immediately cut out.

+ May not this have some affinity to the last words of the Emperor, "*Mais plus-une arroye*," &c.

* It is not perhaps generally known that these people are by no means immersed in savage barbarity. Their language is established; they are possessed of books and writings, and pride themselves in tracing their origin from record and tradition back to a remote period of 4000 years.