

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF SINGAPORE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE ASIATIC JOURNAL.

SIR: The widow of Sir T. Stamford Raffles, having claimed the *sole and exclusive* merit for her husband of having established the new and thriving settlement of Singapore, I consider myself called upon to endeavour to prove to the world that I had at least a *large share* in forming that establishment, having recommended to Government, as far back as the year 1816, the formation of some new settlement in the Straits of Malacca to the eastward of that town, and laying immediately in the tract of our Indiamen and other ships engaged in the China and eastern trade; and having, when commanding at Malacca (previous to any treaty being forwarded by the Rajah of Johore with the Netherlands government) obtained permission from the Rajah Mudah, or viceroy of Rhio, (executive governor of all the Johore dominions) to survey the Carimon Islands in the Straits, for the express purpose of forming a new settlement, or delivering up Malacca to the Dutch. Sir Stamford Raffles happening to be present at Calcutta when Colonel Bannerman (then governor of Penang) laid the project of forming a new settlement in the Straits of Malacca before the Supreme Government; and Sir Stamford being then about to proceed as one of the commissioners to Acheen, had influence enough with Lord Hastings to get the Supreme Government to appoint him to see the new settlement formed; at the same time he was entrusted with a complimentary letter to me, hoping that circumstances would admit of my accompanying him, in order to assume the government of the new establishment, at least during its infancy. This letter Sir Stamford was himself the bearer of. I met with him at Penang, when so far on my way home, and the question was at that time discussed between us respecting the most advantageous site for the projected settlement. The Carimon Islands appeared to me, from their situation in the direct tract of all ships passing up and down the Straits, to be the most eligible situation. Sir Stamford, on the other hand, thought that the old Malay settlement of Johore, upon the peninsula, would be likely to offer greater advantages. However, the Carimons were the first place we visited; and finding that they did not afford such local advantages as were expected, we proposed going on to view Johore; but I suggested to Sir Stamford, that it might be advisable to stop at Singapore on our way; and having had communication with the Toomoocong, or Malay chief, who had established himself there with four or five hundred followers, and finding the place would suit our purpose better than what we had before seen, I proceeded on the following day to Rhio, for the purpose of endeavouring to obtain permission from the Viceroy to form a new settlement there in place of the Carimon Islands, which, after some difficulty, he so far acceded to as to say that, as far as he was concerned, as governor of the dominions of Johore, he had no kind of objection,

but that he had already been *obliged* to sign treaty with the Dutch, by which he was restricted from granting permission to any European power to have a *footing* within any part of the territory of Johore; but as he had, previous to the said treaty being signed, granted *me permission* to form a settlement upon the Carimon Islands, he left us to the use of our own discretion in establishing ourselves at Singapore. To this place I forthwith returned; and, in conjunction, with Sir Stamford Raffles, concluded and signed a treaty with the native chief then present at Singapore; the British flag was formally hoisted, and the island taken possession of; Sir Stamford sailed the *very next day* on his return to Penang. Having stated these circumstances I leave the public to judge whether Lady Raffles can fairly claim for her husband the *sole and exclusive* merit of having formed the settlement of Singapore, so as to entitle her to style it *his* settlement.

With respect to Malacca, Lady Raffles, gives Sir Stamford credit for having laid the inhabitants under some particular obligation to him, whilst there for the recovery of his health. Now I happened to be in command of Malacca at the period alluded to; and as Sir Stamford was at that time a *guest of mine*, it would, one may conclude, some way or other, have been brought to my knowledge, if such an obligation had actually existed. The truth is, that the Dutch inhabitants forwarded, through *me*, a petition to Government respecting the great hardship of their case, in being ordered to quit Malacca; which petition was recommended by *me* to the most favorable consideration of Government, in my letters of the 6th and 7th February 1806, extracts of which are hereto annexed.

"6th February 1806. The order contained in your letter of the 11th ultimo, directing such of the Dutch inhabitants, as did not wish to proceed to Batavia on their paroles of honour, to hold themselves in readiness to remove at the shortest notice to Prince of Wales's Island or Calcutta, has been communicated to them, and has caused the greatest consternation and dismay throughout the settlement."

"7th February 1806. I now beg you will be pleased to lay before the Board the accompanying petition from such of the Dutch inhabitants as are solicitous of continuing at Malacca, and I take the liberty to recommend their general as well as individual claims to the most favourable consideration of Government; and feel it my indispensable duty to add my best testimony to their peaceable and uniformly regular conduct during the long period they have lived under the protection of the British flag.

(Signed) "WILLIAM FARQUHAR,
"Capt. commanding at Malacca."

"To H. J. PEARSON, Esq.,
"Sec. to Govt. of P. W. Island."

with reference to the destruction of the fortifications at Malacca, I did every thing in my power at the time to prevent that event taking place; but was ultimately obliged to comply, in consequence of the very peremptory orders I received from Government, which were accordingly carried into effect in the year 1807. However, I took upon myself the responsibility of saving the church and government-house, together with the principal public buildings, although, up to the time I left Malacca, I never received the sanction of Government for this measure; so, without assuming more merit than falls to my lot, I may fairly claim my share in having been the humble means of preserving Malacca to this day as a settlement.

During the period Sir Stamford was employed at Malacca, as Lord Minto's agent, he obtained from *me* all the information I was able to collect respecting the state of the island of Java, with its resources, defences, and military forces, which formed a rather voluminous report, regularly signed, by *me*, and transmitted to Lord Minto, together with a general map of the island, through Sir Stamford Raffles. The British force judged sufficient for its conquest was also noticed, and troops actually employed corresponded with what had thus been recommended, within a very few hundred men: to those official documents reference may be had at this day, if thought necessary.

I shall conclude this statement by mentioning, that during the period I was resident at Singapore, the Settlement increased more rapidly in population and commercial importance (under numerous disadvantages) than perhaps ever before took place in any other newly-formed establishment. Numerous Chinese and other inhabitants of Malacca followed me to Singapore; and upon my quitting it, in the latter end of 1823, the number of addresses, accompanied by most honourable testimonials from the inhabitants, were quite sufficient and highly gratifying proofs of their feeling themselves happy under my rule, and the regret they felt at my departure for this country.

I am, Sir, &c.
WM. FARQUHAR, Col. E. I. C.