

Raukuee

Singapore

August 6<sup>th</sup> 84.

My dear Father,

We have now gone so far eastward, that we are beginning to get again under the influence of the west. Here for the first time I notice some indications of American influence, in the fashions of some of the coasting steamers, which are built on the side wheel system, and in other small ways.

The Straits Settlements, or Golden Chersonese, as it is designated on the official seal, constitute a most beautiful & interesting colony, and

2) one that it has always  
been my wish to see,  
especially since having  
had the privilege of hearing  
a very able paper on the  
subject, by Sir Frederic Weld,  
the late Governor, which  
was read before the  
Royal Colonial Institute  
during the past winter.  
Penang & Singapore are  
the principal ports, and  
the only points at which  
we call. The latter, "the  
City of the Lion" is especially  
interesting as a large  
commercial entrepot and  
coaling station, and the  
only well governed city  
in this part of the world.  
The population is the  
same as that of Montreal,  
150,000, and of these 90,000



3/ are Chinese, many of them  
wealthy merchants, who  
seem to think, "that we -  
an eccentric race - were  
created to govern and  
look after them, as a groom  
looks after a horse, whilst  
they were created to get  
rich and enjoy the good  
things of the earth".

The whole of the Malay  
peninsula is now either  
directly or indirectly under  
British Influence, and is  
being rapidly opened up  
and rendered accessible.  
Roads are being made,  
tin mines developed,  
tropical agriculture stim-  
ulated, and extensive  
improvements effected every-  
where. In size it is  
about equal to Gr. Britain,



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it contains at present  
about a million and  
a quarter of people, although  
capable of supporting many  
times the number. On  
account of its good government  
it is attracting emigration  
not only from China & India  
but also from Sumatra &  
other adjacent islands;  
and capital from England,  
Australia & America. The  
trade is already very great  
and is yearly increasing.  
The climate is on the whole  
good. The thermometer ranges  
from  $75^{\circ}$  to  $85^{\circ}$  rarely exceeding  
the latter figure, and the  
nights are cool.

I send you for a "geography  
book" description of the  
place, which may serve  
to refresh your memory.

By now for a little gossip.  
We have had as  
passengers since leaving  
Colombo a dozen, or so  
of Naval men (officers)  
who with 150 bluejackets  
are on their way to Hong-  
Kong to replace some  
time expired men there.  
Some of them are very  
pleasant fellows and  
we have a much more  
lively time of it than  
we had before. Last  
Sunday we had the  
first sermon since leaving  
London from their Chaplain  
a very good fellow, for-  
merly <sup>only</sup> the Captain had taken  
the service. Captain Bradley  
who is in charge of this  
war like force is a chess  
player, and I have had



6) several keen contests  
with him. Their surgeon,  
Wood, an Irishman, is  
without exception the  
most simple, matter of fact  
man I ever came across,  
and leads the life of a  
dog as no one can resist  
the temptation of making  
fun of him. I have often  
noticed, by the way, that  
Irishmen are generally  
deficient in self respect,  
than which I know of no  
greater practical defect in  
a man's character.

The day before yesterday at  
Penang we all went ashore  
and spent a few hours  
very pleasantly in strolling  
about the streets, examining  
the Chinese shops and joss  
houses, tasting the mango-

7/ Steins and other fruits,  
and admiring the graceful  
cocoanut palms, bread-  
fruit trees &c.

I negotiated with a wily  
Chinaman for a splendid  
bunch of bananas, containing  
50 or more as splendid  
specimens as I have seen,  
and was amused when  
our boy assured me that  
I had been outrageously  
swindled and had been  
charged 25 p.c. more than  
they were worth. The price  
he asked was 45 cents.

They have since been hung  
up on the quarter deck,  
pro bono. The coinage  
here by the way is all  
dollars and cents, another  
instance of the influence of the  
Western hemisphere.



Few things I think cause one  
to realize better the extent  
and variety of Her Majesty's  
Empire, than the coins and  
postage stamps; all sorts  
of names, all sorts of  
shapes, colours and values  
but always the artistic  
head, and the talisman-  
ic words, "Victoria"  
Next to the flag, the images  
of a country has in all eyes been  
one of the most patent signs of  
its ruling power, and I should  
be <sup>lo-ath</sup> ~~loath~~ to undervalue its  
influence in maintaining &  
propagating loyal sentiments;  
and after all sentiment  
rules the world.

With loving remembrances  
to all, believe me,

Ever your affectionate Son  
Gambier.