

A TRIP INTO  
THE MALAY PENINSULA

AND A VISIT TO  
THE CAVES OF SUNGIE BATU IN SELANGOR.

BY

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# A TRIP INTO THE MALAY PENINSULA

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Malay Peninsula—Straits Settlements—Important Colony but little known, Singapore—Penang—Malacca—The Native States of the Peninsula—Variety of Races—Beauties of Tropical Scenery—Perpetual Verdure—Trip through the Native States—Visit to the Tin Mines of Qualla Lumpur and the Caves of Sungie Batu—Sport: Crocodile Shooting, Tigers—Singapore the "Clapham Junction" of the East, &c., &c., &c.

"COME—— old fellow, what do you say to a run up into the Native States?" said my friend R—— of the Royal "Incidentals," one day as I walked up the verandah steps of the comfortable little mess-house in Fort Canning, Singapore, occupied jointly by detachments of the Royal "Dragons," "Blazers," and "Incidentals."

"I should like to very much," said I, "but——"

"But what?" said R—— with a doubting shake of the head. "You don't mean to say you have any work to do?"

"Work! I should rather think so. Despatches, accounts, letters, periodical returns, &c., &c.; besides, who is to act for me while I am away?"

"Bedad, an' if it comes to that, oi'm your man."

The last remark came from a figure (reclining upon a bamboo arm-chair behind us), whose face was hidden by a newspaper, the dropping of which disclosed the smiling

that would take six or seven persons holding each other's hands to reach round, and towering up to enormous heights, covered in many cases with beautiful orchids and creeping plants, and interspersed with tree and running ferns, beautiful flowers, such as the hybiscus, tulip-tree, flamboyant, &c., &c. In crossing one valley we passed a small deserted clearing and a few native shanties.

The latter had had a visit but a short time before from a herd of elephants, for we saw their tracks in all directions—and where they had torn down the thatch of the shanties and thrown it about all over the place.

At length we saw houses in the distance, and came into the main street of a straggling kind of village, decorated with all sorts of Chinese banners and streamers in honour of Sir Frederick Weld, whom we met riding out accompanied by the Resident and some of his friends.

The Resident told us to go to his son's bungalow, where we were as kindly received as at the other place we had breakfasted at in the morning. The house was full and there was no room for us; however, one took my friend, and I joined two others in occupying a Chinaman's house which was quickly prepared for us.

Dining at the Residency in the evening, we heard that the Governor had had some good sport in the morning with wild pig and jungle-fowl, and we were told that we were to turn out at daylight, when ponies would be in waiting, to ride through the forest to see some wonderful limestone caves lately discovered some nine or ten miles off. Some were to go straight to the caves, while those who were of a shooting turn were to try their hand at the "Saludan" or wild cattle—Sambur deer or boar—to be found in the neighbourhood.

The morning broke magnificently, and we started a regular cavalcade, with a perfect retinue of natives, carrying guns, food, &c., &c. A part of the road over, we

parted into pairs. The Resident's son-in-law (a plucky fellow, and first-rate sportsman) and I went together, and having got a Malay and a Sakei (the latter a kind of half-wild man, whose tribe live in a nest which they build in the forks of trees) to act as guides, and track for us. We crossed tracks of elephants and rhinoceros, and came close to some wild cattle, but they were very wily brutes, and made off at the slightest noise. It was a sight to see the two natives creeping along with their naked feet more like a couple of cats than human beings. They drew our attention to broken twigs and torn leaves here and there, where the cattle had been feeding, but we were not fortunate enough to come up with them. At one place we had just waded a stream and got into some very thick brushwood and undergrowth, when we noticed a kind of musky odour and heard a noise like the purring of a gigantic cat. The two natives were greatly excited and at length came back to us and seemed preparing to climb up a tree saying "*Rimau, Tuan, Rimau ;*" (tiger, sir, tiger.) My friend held up his hand to them to be quiet, and beckoned me to follow him, which I did, following his example and cocking my rifle. The bush was very thick and we were peering in every direction, when we heard a noise as of something moving off, and the two men came up to us and said, he (whatever it was) had moved on. Later on in the day, I accused my friend of playing a practical joke on me, and stuffing me up with a tiger story when none was there. He then told me, that, on the contrary, but a short distance from this very spot he had some fortnight before come upon the dead body of a Chinaman whose neck had been broken by a tiger. I must heartily confess I had had excitement enough, and was not sorry when our guides brought us to a little path leading to the caves I have spoken of. We had some two or three miles further to walk, and then all of a sudden came to the base of a

of 139,000 and twenty-five nationalities were noted in the census. Some of you have probably been to Gibraltar. That, with its varied population of Moors, Greeks, Spaniards, and representatives of the other countries of the Mediterranean and rest of Europe, is a pretty cosmopolitan place, but Singapore beats it hollow.

As regards nationalities, it includes Malays, Hindoos, Sikhs, Arabs, Javanese, Cinghalese, Klings, Siamese, Hokiens, Cantonese, Hailans, and other Chinese tribes, besides representatives of most European nations.

The question you would probably and very naturally ask is, How is it possible to carry on business in such a tower of Babel?

Well, fortunately there is at hand a very easy and musical language, the Malay—a knowledge of which is soon and readily acquired, and by means of which all business transactions can easily be conducted.

It is a curious sight to pay a visit to the Raffles school—a large establishment supported by the Government. In one small class of boys I have seen little pigtailed Chinese, dark-faced Malays and Eurasians, mixed with several nationalities of Europeans, all as busy at their lessons as at any school at home.

To one fond of natural history, botany, zoology, entomology, &c., &c., Singapore and the neighbouring peninsula teems with interest.

The seas are full of fish of great variety; specimens of corals, too, of the greatest beauty are found on all the shores.

Of Mammalia—elephants are plentiful, especially in Perak and Selangor, often doing great damage to the paddy fields and gardens. Then there is the tapir, rhinoceros, bear, jackal, otter, panther, wild cattle, the tiger (the latter a pest for which the Government offers £10 for every one killed); then there are deer from the splendid