

Hon Sir

Tuesday August 19th 1866
On Board the Thames.

We left False Bay again on Friday last. On Saturday evening & night we experienced a terrible gale. it came on with fury at once, & the men refused to go aloft & take in the sails. we had a complete new suit standing, & they were torn all to pieces, & there they hung in flaps & strips all night keeping up an uproar that was amazing to hear. not a man in the ship had ever seen such a sight before - the captain unhappy & melancholy, estimating the damage to the owner at 1000 £ - I cannot describe the noise they made - as loud as cannon, some like musketry; some smaller strips like waggons whips - the sensation upon going out on deck was as if they were snapping around you on every side & would tear your head off in an instant. We had lost 16 men by desertion at the Cape, & 12 of them our best hands! I could not go to bed as the rest did, but sat up all night watching the mad careering of the storm; at 3 in the morning it blew harder than ever - like one of those nights which we call remarkable high winds - the deck was thunder & howling bounding pitching & rocking, & the sea shewed walls of silver in every direction. - at day break it was still a gale, tho much less violent - & the ship presented a melancholy forlorn appearance - the chief mate comes up to me & says - "Manning, I never saw such a sight before - the captain comes up & makes a similar observation, adding he hoped he never should again - one other ship was in sight; soon after we saw 2 or 3 more; & now we have got together all but 4; where they are gone nobody knows, perhaps drifted on before; perhaps behind - if any two of them came together, those two are at the bottom! but we hope better things - I thought the masts must have gone, they bent like reeds. we are all righted now & have got up new sails - very few but what were rich - I took a glimpse of Nantz & escaped - in fact I never was better in my life - these ships can bear any thing so long as there is sea room - the only danger is from bad management & want of a careful look out. The damage done to the whole fleet must be very great - tis now a deceitful calm - we expect more gales - but not such an other night as that - none of the passengers could close their eyes. I sent you a letter from the Cape; & I sent William one afterwards just before leaving it. Hey for Penang now, we expect to be about 6 or 7 weeks. - The damage on board our ship turned out at last much less than was expected. One of the missing ships is now in sight. the worst sailor in the fleet.

We made the Island of St Pauls on Thursday 11th of September a bitter cold squally morning with loud dry hail. Such cold, as for example would in England deter many a man from going out a shooting, & would make you put the old horse on a little faster. — The whole way from the Cape we had been vexed with storms & miserable weather. Such racking & creaking & cots kicking the beams & tumbling about, & bruising our elbows as we were heavily tired of — without any exaggeration the greatest exercise to the muscles was to sit still. Worse weather was never experienced. Two more ships took the opportunity one night of parting company — we expect to find all five at Penang (alias Pulo Penang alias Prince of Wales' Island) for they are all good sailers & are interested in arriving there soon. The rendezvous was St Pauls, we just looked to see if they were there, & made off immediately to the northward.

St P. & Amsterdam are two Volcanic Islands (they say uninhabited). we had a glimpse of the northernmost thro' the haze. We call it St Pauls, but different navigators nations & charts reverse their names perpetually. The weather grew perceptibly milder in 2 or 40 hours after steering northerly, & is now arrived at boiling; viz 82° F° Fahrenheit. it is still increasing. This is Saturday 27th September. Lat. 8° South. Long. 90° East. in 8 or 10 days more it will be Penang, pine apples, & how does your excellency do, Madame Dundas!

Penang Nov^r 11th 1806 (Tuesday morning)

One month have we been at Penang, & it seems but a day! We came in I think on Tuesday the 14th of October. We sail again tomorrow & we reckon upon 2 months more to Canton. This is the most enchanting Island in views & scenery that the heart can conceive — luxuriance of vegetation — pine apples like cabbages — under the line as if were being 5° north. The 1st sight of the Palm trees & Macintains & other monstrous leaved vegetables I found peculiarly striking, & the effect still continues very strong — then the inhabitants! — most curious. This is an epitome of all India. One part of the town is inhabited by Malays — one by Bengalese one by Malabors — here from

The Coromandel coast - there from Sam & Pegu sea
& every where throngs of Chinese - all their people living
after the fashion of their country - roosting about like hens
in their sheds, huts & wigwams - all colors, all degrees
of nakedness. If the scene could be transplanted to London
for one day; or to Foymore fite! I have seen the religious
rites of $\frac{1}{2}$ India. I have seen the frantic Seamen drag along
the cumbersome gaudy car of their silver deity to the clanging
of brass instruments & rude notes of the hautboy. I have
seen the Hindoo god or Devil trumpeted & drummed & fluted
& his temple being round with the various fruits & productions
of this hot house Island - I have not yet learned the names of the
fruits that the earth bears forth here in such monstrous
abundance. I had a letter to the Governor's lady from
Sidney Smith - Undoubtedly she is gone to Bengal - This was
a sad loss to me, I understand she is a charming woman.
The Governor received me very politely & she has shewed me
all proper attention. I have been also introduced to some
other people of the Island - I had a letter to Capⁿ Grey

the 2^d in Command - but he neglected me - I am
lodging at Low Arames a China-baker's - a very
excellent fellow, & from whom I have picked up some
useful information - The Governor sent for him, & desired
him to instruct me, the 1st day I called in his Excellency & I
have lodged here ever since. I have taken several rides into
the country. I was unwell when I first came, & I have had
a fit or two of remittent fever since but am now perfectly
well; this is the rainy season & certainly not healthy.
Indeed I do not think the Island very healthy tho' they boast
it to be the Montpellier of India. The thermometer has
stood about 84° - but on the top of the hill (2500 feet high
& clothed with Timber to the very top) it was down to 72°. I
have taken a great many observations for my watch, wh^{ch}
has occupied me a great deal. We expected to have staid
some days longer. I have found no time to write a

single line - but hope to write this afternoon
to Davy at least. All the scattered ships are
come in. some suffered very much. I cannot
find that this Island is of any other use to
the company than that of providing for
indigent Scotchmen. 'Tis a strange place
to be supplied with Dutch goods, beef or from

19 Aug 1806

The Rev. Mr. Manning
Dix Norfolk

England



Acc.
in 2
at

the opposite coast, for very little of the island
itself is yet cleared. Chickens 12 for 5 shilling
but beef scarce & bad. I was very near
going over to the King of Quedas coast
the Governor gave me a letter, enclosed in a
yellow silk bag! but I found I had not time

I have seen Chinese plays & siamese plays in open
booths In short this town is like a great fair. God bless you
all. I have soon to hear from you. W.D.S. 7/11