

Hon^d Sir

Macao TM 11/11/46 1508

The Surat will sail from Canton in a few days, but is thought unlikely to reach England soon; some say she runs a great chance of being taken. So tis a lottery whether you receive this letter in its due order, or even at all: but tis a Lottery I am determined to put into, tho with but a few lines. — My Trip to Cochin-China was totally unsuccessful; We went too late, & single & single! No time to manage matters on shore, & other unlucky circumstances; so I was forced to accompany the Vessels on their Paracel-exploring cruise!!! A greivous bore, to say no worse of it. — We found the Paracel in all their hideous deformity — breakers — sandbanks — coral rocks &c. — Turtles, shell fish, wailing seabirds

so unused to men that they would not rise from their
nests. Fishermen from Hainan visit these places
for the sake of Turtle, Piche de mer, & other sea-
productions.

What is very curious, the
first object we saw on the very first Islet we
came to (that was before we put into Taron)
was a large China Vessel wrecked; & a surpri-
zingly numerous crew in great distress on the shore.
We saved them all; they amounted to 561 souls.

Their Gratitude was unspeakable. Our ships were
noisomely crowded with them; we made for Taron directly,
where we landed them all. Their original Crew,
on leaving Amoy, (a port to the Eastward of Canton in the
next province) amounted, they say, to about 700;
partly poor passengers, going out to seek a lively hood at
Batavia, or other European Settlements. Some had been
drowned; some had gone off in their boat. I was afraid
at first we were going to leave them, before we had had
any communication with them; we did not then know

that they were in absolute distress - without food or water -
and the weather was roughish - no approaching the reefy spot
with safety, & we had found no anchorage ground. We wore off
for the night without speaking them. — "They are not wrecked?
They have only brought their shallow vessel to anchorage between
the reefs? I think we may leave them? they are not in
distress?" To these & the like insinuations my answers
were in the tone of strong displeasure, & I thought fit to become
quite sulky till the proper determination was made.

I don't mention this to praise myself, nor to insinuate that
the Captain would have left them but for me, (unless by
error of judgement - for he is not at all a bad man but
the contrary as times go, tho' very odd.) but only as a specimen
of his way & character, by which you may
easily understand why with such a man
I did not succeed in any thing that
required judgement & management.

I saw a little of the Villages on the Coast
of Cochinchina, but that was not my object -
I lost my time. I can hardly bear even now to
think of it with patience. We returned here in
the beginning of July - I study doubly hard, to make
up ^{for} my lost time. The veiled Mysteries of the Chinese
language gradually open upon my view - I am contented
with my progress. I have discovered the nature of the tones.
I can speak. I can read. I am sure of being able to
pursue the study of Chinese books in Europe.

turn over

Rough copy

Hon^d Sir

The Surat will sail from Canton in a few days but is thought unlikely to reach England soon. Some say she runs a great chance of being taken.

So tis a lottery whether you receive this letter in its due order, or even at all; but tis a lottery I am determined to put into the hat with but a few lines. My trip to Cochinchina

was totally unsuccessful. We went too late; Dringale, Dringale! No time

to manage matters on shore, so ^{nothing was accomplished} I was forced to accompany the ^{reflect} ~~deux~~ on their paracel-exploring ~~trip~~ ^{cruise}!!!

a great number of sea birds, so much so that they
were found the paracels. in all their hidden
deformity, crickets, sand banks, coral
rocks &c. Turtles, shell fish, water
sea birds, so much so that they
would ~~not~~ rise from their nests. fishermen
from Haynan visit these places for the
sake of turtle, birds & other ^{valuable} sea products.

What is very curious the first object we
saw on the very first Islet we came to
(that was before we put into Taron) was
a large China Vessel wrecked; & a
surprisingly numerous crew in great distress
on the shore. We saved them all; they
amounted to 561 souls. Their gratitude
was unspeakable. Our ships were
noisomely crowded with them; we made

for Terni directly; where we landed
them all. Their original crew, ^{on average} they say ^{on average} amounts
to about 700. ^{now} partly ^{now} going out to seek
a livelihood at Patania or other European settlements.
Some had been drawn, some had gone off in their
boats. I was afraid at first we were going to
leave them. ~~From~~ before we had had any com-
munication with them ^{we} ~~for~~ ^{they} did not know for
certain ^{that} they were in ~~of~~ absolute distress. without
food or water. The weather was roughish; on
approaching the reefy spot with softly ^{we had found}
average ground. We were off for the night when
speaking them — "they can not wait! they have
^{only} brought their boats & shallow vessels to anchor
between the reefs? I think we may leave them?
They are not in distress?" To them, ^{at the time} ~~in connection~~
my answers ^{were} ~~was~~ ⁱⁿ tone of strong displeasure. & I thought
fit to be even quite sulky, till they the proper

Intermission was made. I don't mention
this to praise myself, nor to intimate that the
Captain would ~~not~~ have left them but for me.
only by error of judge ~~ment~~. for his not at all a bad man.
but only as a specimen of his way of behavior
by which you may ^{easily} understand why with such a man
~~you will not succeed in anything that requires~~
~~judgment & management.~~ I saw a little of the
villages on the Coast of Cochinchina, but that
was not my object. I had my time - I can
hardly bear now to think of it with patience.
I returned here ^{in the} beginning of July. I study
daily hard to make up lost time - The
veiled ~~withdrawing~~ mystery of the Chinese
Language gradually open upon my ^{view}. I am
convinced with my progress. I have discovered
the nature of the tones I can speak. Of
^{I am sure} I am sure of being able to pursue the
study of Chinese books in Europe. I have
received letters from Tony (two came in July)
to be by the ^{very} first some occasion & the wife probably
receive the letters before you see this. I am quite well. W. D. L. for
T. D.