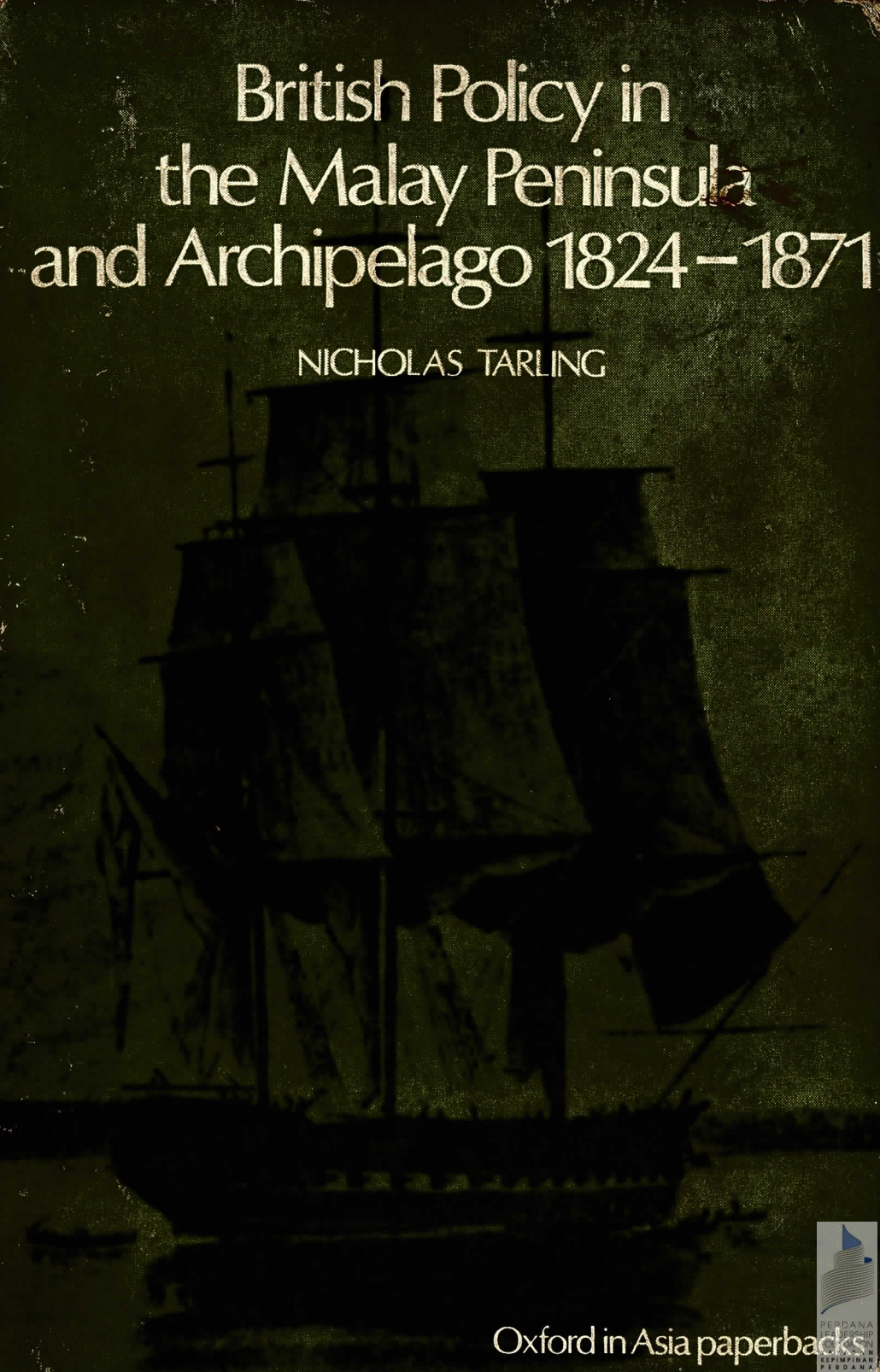
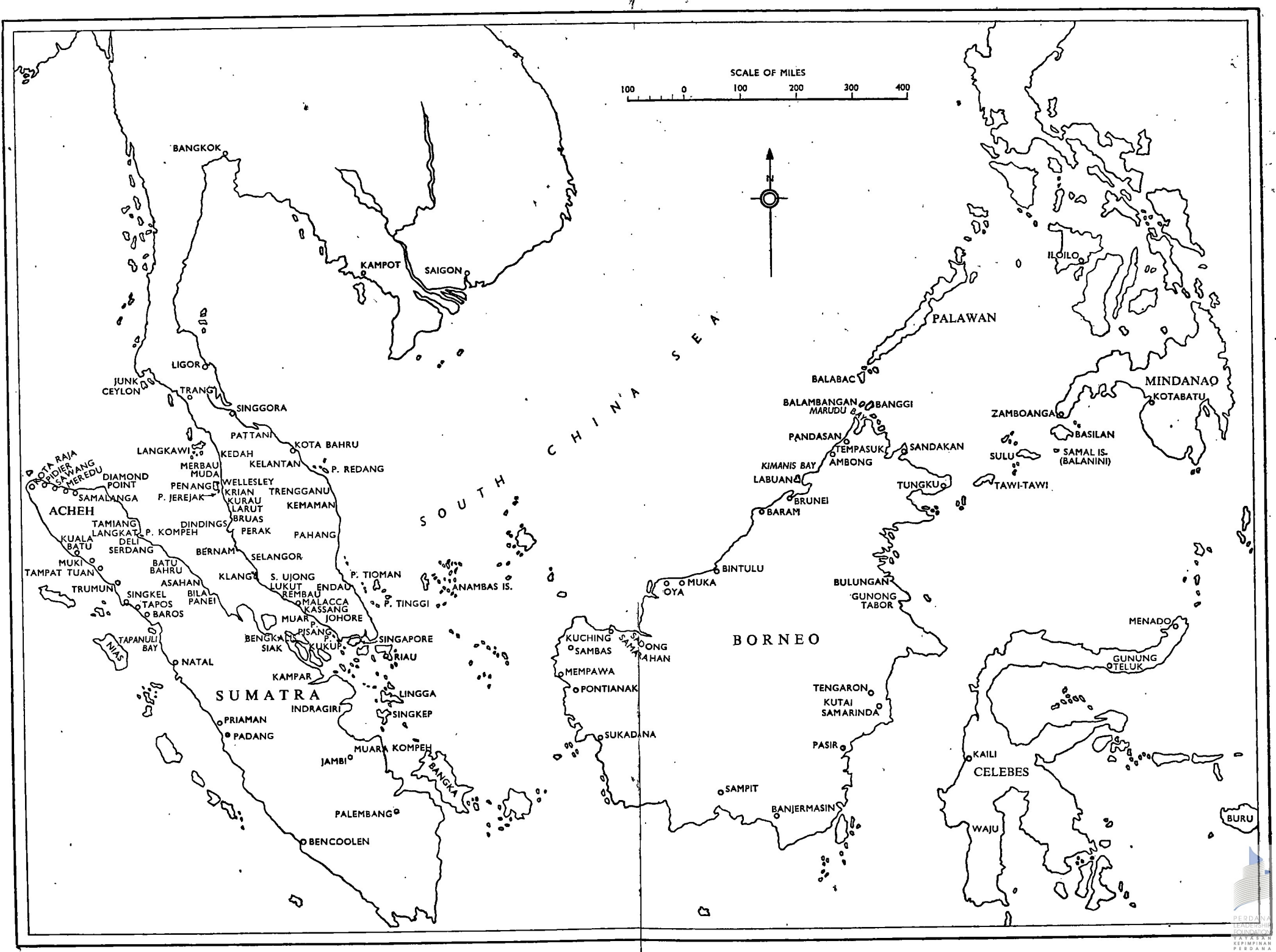
British Policy in the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago 1824–1871

NICHOLAS TARLING



Oxford in Asia paperbacks


SCALE OF MILES
100 0 100 200 300 400
N
SOUTH CHINA SEA
BANGKOK
KAMPOT
SAIGON
LIGOR
TRANG
JUNK CEYLON
SINGGORA
PATTANI
KOTA BAHRU
LANGKAWI
KEDAH
KELANTAN
P. REDANG
MERBAU MUDA
PENANG
WELLESLEY
KRIAN
KURAU
LARUT
BRUAS
TRENGGANU
KEMAMAN
P. JEREJAK
SAMALANGA
DIAMOND POINT
KOTA RAJA
PIDIER
SAWANG
MEREDU
ACHEH
TAMIANG
LANGKAT
P. KOMPEH
DINDINGS
PERAK
PAHANG
KUALA BATU
DELI SERDANG
BERNAM
SELANGOR
MUKI
TAMPAT TUAN
BATU BAHRU
KLANG
S. UJONG
LUKUT
REMBAU
ENDAU
P. TIOMAN
ANAMBAS IS.
P. TINGGI
TRUMUN
ASAHAN
BILA
PANEI
SINGKEL
TAPOS
BAROS
MALACCA
KASSANG
JOHORE
MUAR
P. PISANG
P. KUKUP
SINGAPORE
BENGKALIS
SIAK
RIAU
TAPANULI BAY
NIAS
NATAL
KAMPAR
SUMATRA
INDRAGIRI
LINGGA
SINGKEP
PRIAMAN
PADANG
JAMBI
MUARA KOMPEH
BANGKA
PALEMBANG
BENCOOLEN
PALAWAN
BALABAC
BALAMBANGAN
MARUDU BAY
BANGGI
PANDASAN
TEMPASUK
SANDAKAN
KIMANIS BAY
AMBONG
LABUAN
BRUNEI
BARAM
TUNGKU
SULU
TAWI-TAWI
ILOILO
MINDANAO
KOTABATU
ZAMBOANGA
BASILAN
SAMAL IS. (BALANINI)
BINTULU
MUKA
OYA
BULUNGAN
GUNONG TABOR
KUCHING
SAMBAS
SAMARAHAN
SIBUONG
MEMPAWA
PONTIANAK
SUKADANA
BORNEO
TENGARON
KUTAI
SAMARINDA
PASIR
SAMPIT
BANJERMASIN
MENADO
GUNUNG TELUK
KAILI
CELEBES
WAJU
BURU


PERDANA
LEADERSHIP
FOUNDATION
YAYASAN
KEPIMPINAN
PERDANA

OXFORD IN ASIA
HISTORICAL REPRINTS
General Editor: JOHN BASTIN

BRITISH POLICY IN THE MALAY PENINSULA AND ARCHIPELAGO, 1824-1871

#13431
ⓓ# 6924

BRITISH POLICY IN THE MALAY PENINSULA AND ARCHIPELAGO 1824-1871

NICHOLAS TARLING

OXFORD
IN ASIA
Historical
Reprints

KUALA LUMPUR SINGAPORE
OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS
LONDON NEW YORK
1969

Oxford University Press, Ely House, London W.1.
GLASGOW NEW YORK TORONTO MELBOURNE WELLINGTON
CAPE TOWN SALISBURY IBADAN NAIROBI LUSAKA ADDIS ABABA
BOMBAY CALCUTTA MADRAS KARACHI LAHORE DACCA
KUALA LUMPUR SINGAPORE HONG KONG TOKYO
Bangunan Loke Yew, Kuala Lumpur

Reprinted by permission of the Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society

Printed in Singapore by Printers and Converters (Pte.) Ltd.

CONTENTS

ENDPAPER MAPS

Front The Malay Peninsula, Sumatra and Borneo.

Back Java, Celebes and the Moluccas.

To My Mother

PREFACE

This work attempts to describe and analyse, through the interpretation of British documentary evidence, the development of British policy in the Malay world between 1824 and 1871. Though these are the dates of two treaties with the Netherlands, it is not a history of Anglo-Dutch relations in the East Indies. It is a history rather of British policy towards the various political forces in the region, native as well as European, as conceived and conducted by the authorities concerned in Britain, India, the Straits Settlements and beyond. So far as the author is aware, the Foreign Office and Colonial Office documents at the Public Record Office, and the East India Company and India Office records at the Commonwealth Relations Office, have not before been used for a similar purpose.

One feature of the work is a discussion of Foreign Office policy in the area, as affected by commercial interests and by strategic considerations. The discussion emphasizes the close connexion between this policy and the varying fortunes of Sir James Brooke of Sarawak. But the earlier history of his *raj* which has already formed the subject of several biographical and other published works has otherwise been considered only briefly in this work. His personality is not described therefore in the fullness with which these works depict it. But the judgments offered therein may be modified by the attempted reconsideration of his career in its relation to British foreign policy.

An element of impersonality surrounds many of the other Eastern officials at this period, both in this and other works, while their private papers, if they still exist, remain concealed. In the case of the Calcutta and Simla Secretaries, whose names appear so frequently in the notes to this study, the deficiency is not seriously felt, so far as concerns the Malay world, their interest in which was much less intense than their interest in the Continent of India. The gap is more serious in the case of the Straits officials, particularly of the Governors, whose notable achievements the present work attempts to indicate. Lack of any new material, together with pressure of space, has led moreover to the exclusion of any detailed treatment of their policy towards the states of the present Negri Sembilan. But these lacunae will perhaps not invalidate the author's general conclusions: he believes, indeed, that the discovery of new material will confirm rather than confute them.

Originally this work was in the form of a thesis approved for the Ph.D. degree at Cambridge University in 1956. The author gratefully thanks the Master and Fellows of Christ's College for enabling him to carry out the required research. He has also to thank the staff of the Round Room at the Public Record Office, particularly Mr Timings, and of the India Office Library, particularly Mr Burton, for making many volumes of manuscripts available with a minimum of delay and fuss. Jardine, Matheson & Company readily consented to the examination of the East Indies correspondence of their firm, preserved with many similar series at the Cambridge University Library. Advice and guidance have been willingly given by, among others, Dr Victor Purcell, the author's supervisor, Dr T. G. P. Spear, Dr W. Linehan, P. J. Bee, Prof. D. G. E. Hall and Dr C. D.

Cowan of the School of Oriental and African Studies, Dr John Bastin, now of the Australian National University, Dr G. Irwin, C. A. Gibson-Hill, H. E. Wortley and Dr H. R. C. Wright. Thanks are also due to many others in Cambridge and St Albans who have generally patiently borne with and frequently actively encouraged the author during the preparation of this work.

Brisbane,
July 1957.

PREFACE TO SECOND EDITION

In this new edition, I have been able to add an index and some maps and to correct a few slips. There has been no major re-writing, and the reader should consult works published since 1957, and also C.M. Turnbull's as yet unpublished London Ph.D. thesis, *The Movement to remove the Straits Settlements from the Control of India, culminating in the transfer to the Colonial Office in 1867*. Some of the topics dealt with in the present volume are more fully covered in my own more recent works, *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry in the Malay World, 1780-1824* (Brisbane, London and New York, 1962), and *Piracy and Politics in the Malay World* (Melbourne and Singapore, 1963).

Sadly since 1957 we have lost some of those thanked in my first preface, including Victor Purcell, who was a long-suffering and understanding supervisor, and Carl Gibson-Hill, whose editing enriched the volume when it first appeared.

Auckland, October 1967

ABBREVIATIONS USED IN THE NOTES

The following abbreviations are used in referring to series of documents or printed works. In parentheses is given an indication of the section of the Bibliography in which full details of them may be found.

B.C.	... ...	Board's Collections (A.1)
B.S.F.	... ...	Board's Drafts of Secret Letters and Dispatches to India, all Presidencies, First Series (A.6)
C.O.	... ...	Colonial Office (B).
C.P.D.	... ...	Collections to Political Dispatches to India (A.7).
D.R.A.	... ...	Dutch Records A (A.4).
E.S.L.	... ...	Enclosures to Secret Letters Received from Bengal and India (A.6).
F.O.	... ...	Foreign Office (C).
H.R.A.	... ...	Historical Records of Australia (H).
Ind. Stbl.	... ...	Staatsblad van Nederlandsch Indie (G).
J.F.R.	... ...	Java Factory Records (A.3).
J.I.A.	... ...	*The Journal of the Indian Archipelago and Eastern Asia* (Logan's Journal) (G).
J.M.	... ...	Jardine Matheson Archives (D).
Pol....	... ...	Political Dispatches to India (A.7).
P.P.	... ...	Parliamentary Papers, House of Commons (F).
S.R.F.	... ...	Secret Letters Received from Bengal, First Series (A.6).
S.R.S.	... ...	Secret Letters Received from Bengal, Second Series (A.6).
S.S.F.R.	... ...	Straits Settlements Factory Records (A.2).

In referring to East India Company documents, the following abbreviations have been used to indicate the Government and Department concerned:

Bgl. (Bengal); Ind. (India); Fin. (Financial); For. (Foreign); Gen. (General); Jud. (Judicial); Leg. (Legislative); Mar. (Marine); Pol. (Political); Pub. (Public); Rev. (Revenue); Sec. (Secret); Sep. (Separate); Terr. (Territorial).

Other abbreviations used include:

App. (Appendix); ch. (chapter); col. (column); Coll. (Collection); Dft. (Draft); G.-G. (Governor General); G.-G.-in-Co. (Governor-General-in-Council); Gov.-in-Co. (Governor-in-Council); K.B. (Koninklijk Besluit, i.e. Royal Decree); Mem. (Memorandum); n.d. (no date); N.H.M. (Nederlandsche Handel-Maatschappij); no. (number); N.S. (New Series); para. (paragraph); s.d. (same date); vol. (volume).


PERDANA
LEADERSHIP
FOUNDATION
YAYASAN
KEPIMPINAN
PERDANA

INTRODUCTION

British predominance in southern and eastern Asia was established in the second half of the eighteenth century. It rested upon her conquests in India, and upon her command of the trade of China, always a principal object of European commercial ambition in the Far East. Up to 1833, the most important part of her trade — that direct between Canton and Great Britain — was monopolized by the East India Company, although private 'country' traders carried to China Indian and Archipelagan produce to finance its tea purchases. Politically the chief aim in this period was the avoidance of conflict with the Chinese authorities which might break up these arrangements. The charter of 1833 destroyed the monopoly, and the anxiety of powerful textile manufacturing interests at home to extend the trade led to the first China war, concluded in 1842 with the annexation of Hongkong and the opening of five ports under the treaty of Nanking. But the Government at home remained anxious to avoid extensive conflict with the Empire. One reason, particularly in the prosperous 1850's, was the widespread belief that it was undesirable further to extend imperial commitments, to make China 'another India'. Increasingly, however, the Government were concerned to maintain the integrity of China because other major powers were advancing threateningly towards it, France from Indo-China, Russia across Asia, and the United States across the Pacific.

The political interests of Great Britain in the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago from the later eighteenth century were largely determined by the nature of her interests in India and China, her anxiety to defend an empire on the one hand, and to protect a trade-route on the other. These considerations were well expressed in the strategic reasons for the foundation of Penang in 1786, the Company's only settlement in the area, save for her antique and unprofitable factory at Bencoolen on the west coast of Sumatra. The strategic importance of Penang derived both from its position in relation to the Bay of Bengal, which in the Seven Years War and the American War had been exposed to hostile French naval operations from the south-east during the north-east monsoon; and from its position at the entrance of the Straits of Malacca, through which passed the important trade in Indian opium which largely financed the purchase of tea in China.[1]

The settlement at Penang had been influenced by another political consideration. British policy in that area was affected by the proximity to

[1] The object was 'a commercial emporium, but above all a naval station on the eastern side of the Bay of Bengal'. Crawfurd, *Dictionary*, p. 331. See also Purcell, *Early Penang*, pp. 4-6; Mills, *British Malaya*, pp. 19-21; Cowan, *Early Penang and the Rise of Singapore*, pp. 3-4; Parkinson, *War in the Eastern Seas*, p. 12.

China of Siam, which had claims over various Malay states on the Peninsula, and which was much afraid of the extension of British conquest into the Indo-Chinese world. The concern to avoid conflict with a country on the confines of China influenced the British Government against activity on the Peninsula. The new settlement was thus placed upon an island; and it was established at a time when Siam was still recovering from a series of desolating Burmese invasions.

Penang was also believed to lie beyond the range of conflict with the Dutch, whose settlement at Malacca retained connections with Perak and Selangor to the north and with the Johore kingdom to the south. The Dutch empire represented the remains of an earlier dominion over the southerly routes to China. At the time of the settlement of Penang, their trade to China, like that with other parts of the world, had greatly declined. Their Moluccan spice monopolies, once of primary importance, had also decreased in value. The centre of their empire was now Java, where they were expanding the cultivation of colonial products, such as coffee and sugar, principally for European markets. But with most of the native princes of the Peninsula and Archipelago the Dutch had treaties or contracts, providing frequently for the recognition of their political supremacy, but generally for their monopoly of the most valuable products of the states. There had, however, been much relaxation in the control exercised over the native trade from the principal Dutch settlements, such as Malacca, Palembang and Padang in Sumatra, Banjermasin in Borneo, Macassar in Celebes, and Banda, Amboyna and Ternate in the Moluccas.

In relation to this Dutch power, British policy was affected by considerations of European, as well as of Eastern, strategy. The British Government had long recognized the importance of the continued existence of a friendly Dutch state in Europe for the protection of England against a major continental power.[2] The friendship of the Dutch would not be secure if it appeared that Great Britain wished to deprive them of the remains of their empire overseas. But if the French secured bases within the Dutch empire, they would have new bridgeheads upon the continent of India and Ceylon, and from the Archipelago they could threaten the British settlements across the Bay of Bengal and destroy the important trade to China. If the Dutch were to retain their empire, the French must be excluded from it. This appeared possible so long as the anglophile Stadhouder and his party predominated in the Netherlands. The menace in the situation became obvious in the War of American Independence, when Britain declared war on the Dutch in order to prevent their joining the League of Armed Neutrality, a proceeding which facilitated the rise of the 'Patriot' party, opposed to the Stadhouder and therefore pro-French, and now able to denounce the friends of Great Britain. Several Dutch colonies were conquered by the English Company in the course of the war, for fear the French would be able to use them to attack India, and this only confirmed the ascendancy of the Patriots and of pro-French policies in the Netherlands. The situation was not altered by the partial return of these conquests in the peace treaty, and the establishment of Penang was thus a

[2] Renier, *Great Britain and the Establishment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands*, pp. 8-10.

measure designed to protect British interests in a period of uncertainty vis-a-vis the Dutch. Not till the Patriots were overthrown by the Prussian intervention of 1787 did the restoration of Anglo-Dutch relations in both Europe and the East seem a possibility. A European alliance was in fact secured the following year. But the two powers could not reach that friendly agreement on overseas interests that would confirm the alliance. The British Government wanted to add to the security in the East provided by Dutch friendship by acquiring a naval base in Ceylon and a post on the route to China, such as the island of Riau. To this even the anglophile Dutch would not assent; and thus the British, by asking for too much, obtained nothing.[3]

The French were not unwelcome in Holland when they invaded it late in 1794, and the Patriots set up the Batavian Republic. In the East the British in 1795 occupied Malacca and the Dutch possessions on the west coast of Sumatra. The taking of the Moluccas followed in 1796, in which year the conquest of Ceylon was completed. In the peace treaty of Amiens (1802), arrangements were included for the restoration of these conquests, except for Ceylon, to the Batavian Republic. But the renewal of war halted the execution of the treaty so far as Malacca was concerned. The Moluccas were re-taken in 1810, and Java and other Dutch possessions were occupied in 1811 and 1812.

To the British Foreign Secretary, Castlereagh, the defeat of France was the signal for the strengthening of Holland as a barrier against further revolutionary outbreaks. To the United Provinces were added the Belgic Provinces of the Habsburgs, and the Stadhouder became King. To a Holland thus strengthened its colonies might be safely returned, and the alliance with Britain thus confirmed, though the Cape, taken in 1806, and Ceylon, retained in 1803, remained in British hands. Such a settlement was readily accepted by the Dutch in the Convention of 1814: Britain's acquisition of the Cape and Ceylon could be set against the evidences of her friendship in the rest of these proceedings. No provision was made, moreover, for the settlement in the Straits of Malacca demanded by Britain, and refused by Holland, before the war. But that demand had not merely a strategic, but also a commercial, origin. It was disappointment at the failure in the Convention to provide for British commercial interests in the Archipelago — voiced above all by Raffles, the former Lieutenant Governor of Java, and from 1818 Lieutenant Governor of Bencoolen — that led to disputes with the restored Dutch. A memorandum was prepared at the India Board — through which the Government controlled East India Company policy — in which the nature of the pre-war proposals was discussed.[4] There followed further negotiations between the two powers in London in 1820 and in 1823 and 1824. These concluded with the important treaty of March 17th, 1824.

Before the negotiations were under way, indeed, Raffles had, without due authority, secured the cession from native chiefs of Johore of a factory on Singapore Island. In the sixth article of the treaty the powers agreed

[3] Tarling, *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry in the Malay World, 1780-1824*, Brisbane, 1962, chaps. 1 & 2.

[4] Jones's Mem. on Semangka Bay of Oct. 1818. *J.F.R. 64.*

that in future no settlement should be made without authority from the respective Governments at home. But the anxiety of the Dutch to obtain security for their empire had led to other provisions in the treaty which provided particularly well for Britain's strategic interests. Singapore was retained, although no British settlement was to be established on the Karimun Islands, 'or on the islands of Batam, Bentan, Lingga, or any other islands south of the Straits of Singapore, nor any treaty concluded by British authority with the chiefs of those islands' (article 12). Malacca was transferred to the British, and the Dutch undertook to make no treaties or settlements on the 'Peninsula of Malacca' (article 10). This secured the route through the Straits of Malacca. At the same time the British surrendered Bencoolen and their other possessions in Sumatra, and undertook not to form settlements or conclude treaties there (article 9). The Dutch, on the other hand, surrendered under article 8 the remainder of their possessions on the Continent of India. These provisions seemed to combine security in India with contentment in the Netherlands. The general political arrangements over the Archipelago were in keeping. There Raffles had revealed the ramshackle nature of Dutch power which, he thought, offered the British wide commercial opportunities. But it was realized in London that the weakness of Dutch power would invite the intervention of other major maritime countries in areas flanking the route to China. So the treaty provided that, under commercial obligations, the Dutch should not only hold Java, but extend their authority in the outer islands.

A review of the political considerations affecting British interests in the Malay world from the late eighteenth century is not complete without a reference to the position regarding northern Borneo and the Sulu Archipelago. This was affected by the claims of the Spanish authorities in the Philippines over the territories of the Sultan of Sulu. The area had in the second half of the eighteenth century been important to Great Britain as offering a new approach to China, possibly linked with the development of Australia, and as far as possible outside the Dutch sphere of influence. But the considerations that affected British policy towards a weakened Holland and her possessions affected also that towards Spain and the decaying Spanish empire. France as well as Britain was interested in their future. France must not be allowed to establish a dominant influence in the mother-country, important in European strategy, or in the colonies, important in Eastern strategy. Any attempt to provide for British interests in the East by challenging Spanish claims would tend to throw both mother-country and colonies into French hands.[5]

Manila was taken in the Seven Years War, when Spain was allied to France, and Dalrymple, a servant of the Madras Government, secured from the Sultan of Sulu a cession of the Sulu claims in Palawan and North Borneo, including the island of Balambangan. In the 1770's, planning to develop trade with China with the produce of *Terra Australis* and the Molucca Archipelago, the Company attempted to establish a settlement on Balambangan. But apart from native hostility and commercial failure, the protests of Spain rendered continued occupation undesirable, for it

[5] Harlow, *The Founding of the Second British Empire*, 1, pp. 18-20, 27.

was possible that the French would make capital out of the dispute.[6] A further attempt was indeed made to settle at Balambangan in 1803. But this was at the time of the treaty of Amiens, when the Moluccas had been made over to the Batavian Republic, while Spain and her colonies were quite at the disposal of France.[7] In the years immediately following the Napoleonic war that ensued, the authorities in London displayed no interest in the area. It appeared likely that the restored Dutch authorities would establish an influence there. But either Spanish or Dutch control was no doubt politically acceptable to Great Britain, so long as no major power gained a foothold.

Such were the political and strategic considerations that affected British policy in the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago up to the treaty of 1824. To a certain extent these coincided with more local commercial interests. Above all, the acquisition of Penang in 1786, of Singapore in 1819, and of Malacca in 1824, stimulated the development of British trade in South-East Asia. It was the trade with the native states of the Peninsula and Archipelago that the 'Straits Settlements', as they were later called, were primarily designed to expand. It is true, indeed, that they provided important openings for trade with Siam and Indo-China through the resort thence of native vessels, bringing sugar, salt, rice and gamboge.[8] The junks that came from China were a welcome extension of the commerce with that empire, particularly before the northern ports were opened to foreign merchants. But the Settlements were important chiefly as depots for British trade with the Malay states, through the voyages of Chinese, Indians and Europeans, or the visits of native traders, Malays, Arabs and Bugis, in their praus. Penang, for instance, was described as

> an emporium, at which is concentrated, for the convenience of the distant and general trader, the scattered traffic of numerous petty and barbarous tribes, separately trifling, but when thus united, of real importance.[9]

The Settlements in this way distributed in the Peninsula and Archipelago the produce of Britain, chiefly textiles and metals, and of India, chiefly opium and to a decreasing extent Indian piece-goods, and collected the returns for the markets of Europe and India, and for dispatch to China, where they were traded for tea. But the junks brought down raw silk, cassia, alum, coarse earthenware, and so on, also distributed in the Archipelago in return for jungle and marine produce for which an age-old demand existed in China.[10]

Malay vessels from north and west Borneo and from Sulu brought to Singapore pepper, the fine rotans of Banjermasin, camphor, gold dust,

[6] Harlow, pp. 34-5, 78, 80, 85-8, 91.

[7] The settlement was withdrawn when the war was renewed because reoccupation of the Dutch possessions was envisaged. It appeared 'impossible that it could be maintained without fortifications and a respectable force for their defence, which could ill be spared, under the probable circumstance of our again taking possession of the islands belonging to the Dutch'. Court to Madras Govt., Pol., August 15th, 1804, enclosed in Jocelyn to Addington, May 12th, 1846. *F.O. 37/264.*

[8] *Asiatic Journal*, January 1832, Register, pp. 22, 23.

[9] Crawfurd, *Embassy to Siam and Cochin-China*, 1, p. 36.

[10] For Chinese junk traffic, see *Asiatic Journal*, April 1832, Register, pp. 185-6.

diamonds, edible birds' nests, mother-of-pearl, antimony, sago and benzoin. To Penang and Singapore from Sumatra came pepper, benzoin, camphor, dragon's blood, beeswax, dammar, sago, betel, coffee and rotans. Gold, pepper and tin were brought from the east coast of the Peninsula, and tin from the west coast.

The distant parts of the Archipelago were moreover linked to Singapore by the extensive operations of the Bugis. This people, particularly the Waju tribe, had reacted to the establishment of Dutch power in Celebes in the seventeenth century, designed to protect the Moluccan monopoly, by making themselves the great traders between the distant eastern parts of the Archipelago and the ports to the west on the important China routes, of which Singapore was now the nearest and most attractive. They possessed a series of settlements stretching eastward from the Straits, at Pontianak in south-west Borneo, at Kutai in east Borneo, on Bali, Lombok and Sumbawa, at Kaili and Macassar in Celebes. Arriving at Singapore with the southerly monsoon in October and November, they brought coffee from Menado, rice from Bali and Lombok, sapanwood from Sumbawa, beeswax and sandalwood from Sumba. At the entrepôts for trade with New Guinea, on the Aroe Islands, at Ceram, Goram and Ceram-Laut, they collected gold-dust and birds-of-paradise for the markets in the Straits. From the fisheries of the Moluccas and of the North Australian coasts, they brought pearls, mother-of-pearl, tortoiseshell and trepang.[11]

Most of the Malay states with which the trade of the Settlements was thus carried on were communities established at the mouth of rivers, whose chiefs levied exactions on the trade between the tribes of the interior and the visiting merchant, or themselves organized that trade to foreign ports. Opportunities for commercial dispute were manifold, especially as traders might advance money for future harvests, or make arrangements for the monopoly of the trade of a whole river to the exclusion of competition. Many such disputes were described in the Settlements as piracies. Quarrels between or within such states might often affect foreign trade, for the enemy or revolutionary party might attempt to plunder it or cut it off. This again would be 'piracy', rather than interference with neutral trade.

Besides these petty states there were also Malay 'empires'. One Malay state, under the guidance of a notable warrior-chief, gained authority over lesser states, forced their trade to pay taxes, or to come to a central port. The establishment of such a system and its maintenance might be qualified, as in the case of the empires of Acheh and Brunei, as piracy, rather than marine warfare or revenue collection. The continued attacks by Sulu pirates upon the Philippines, which afforded the Spanish Government a reason for intervention in Sulu, represented the continuance of a struggle for the empire of the islands which had been joined in the sixteenth cen-

[11] For the trade in general, see, for instance, Newbold, 1, pp. 352-7; Crawfurd, *Dictionary*, *passim*; Buckley, 1, p. 324; Phipps, Appendix, p. 131. There is also interesting material in the *Asiatic Journal* and in Moor's *Notices*, chiefly reprinted from the *Singapore Chronicle*. For Bugis trade, see *Asiatic Journal*, August 1825, text, pp. 151-3, and August 1831, Register, p. 212. See also *J.I.A.*, 6, pp. 689-90; Crawfurd, *History*, 3, pp. 149-51. For Sumatra trade, see *Asiatic Journal*, December 1826, text, pp. 637-9, and Moor, pp. 97-100. For Borneo trade, see *Asiatic Journal*, May 1830, Register, pp. 19-21, and Moor, pp. 13-14; also Crawfurd, *Embassy*, 2, p. 367. For east coast trade, see *Asiatic Journal*, March 1830, Register, pp. 147-8.

tury. But perhaps the collapse of an 'imperial' system was the cause of the most genuine piracy. For, as in the case of Johore, the decline of an empire would leave at its centres an aristocracy and its followers, that, deprived of imperial revenues, resorted to piratical means of subsistence, roaming the seas in hordes and attacking traders indiscriminately, supported here and there by their own fortified settlements, or by chiefs, terrorized or welcoming the chance of ready cash,[12] or calling upon them for help in war or revolution.[13]

Some of these activities might properly be described as piracy, some not. But the merchants of the Straits had an interest in drawing the net as widely as possible. Into piracies ships of the Royal Navy or the Company's Marine might properly be sent to inquire: a civilized government was bound to suppress piracy; and the suppression of piracy clearly had political implications, affecting the mutual relations of petty states and their connection with outside traders.

The trade of the Settlements comprehended numerous transactions with petty Rajas and monopolists in the native states, and there were many disputes and much imputation of piracy. The expansion of trade through these channels indeed could only increase the incidence of petty outrage, aristocratic exaction, and imperial tax-collection. The resort of native traders to the Settlements likewise gave new opportunities to the piratical hordes. Raffles wrote in 1823 that 'piratical attacks upon European vessels have become comparatively rare. They continue, however, extremely frequent on native vessels, and afford serious obstacles to that intercourse by which the productions of the neighbouring nations are collected' at Singapore.[14] Presgrave, assistant Resident at Singapore, wrote in 1828 that piracy would increase.

> ... with the increase of that traffic on which it subsists, or rather ... its successful practice will in the course of a short time so damp the spirit and check the enterprise of the native traders that this valuable branch of our commerce will soon languish and become extinct.[15]

In all sorts of cases of piracy, more or less genuine, the intervention of British authority was called for by the mercantile interests of the Settlements, particularly because of the political implications involved. For the merchants were anxious to ensure the breakdown of larger and more exacting forms of native government, and to secure the countenance of naval forces for their transactions in the petty states. Their interest was in the maintenance of an entrepôt system, bolstered by the acquisition of exclusive influence in the native states. Article 5 of the treaty of 1824

[12] Sir Edward Owen, the Naval Commander-in-Chief who visited the Straits in the early 1830's, remarked that piratical 'predilections' found 'their source in the warlike habits of the numerous petty chieftains ... and are fostered by the perpetual changes to which these have been subjected in the breaking down of larger government.' Owen to Ibbetson, October 24th, 1830. *B.C. 52586*, p. 119.

[13] The Secretary at Penang wrote in the 1820's: 'The pirates of these seas are of very much the same description as the Pindaris on the Continent of India, always ready to hire themselves to any belligerent that may require their services.' Anderson to Prince, November 27th, 1827. *S.S.F.R. 142* (November 29th, 1827); *B.C. 51423**, p. 193.

[14] Raffles to Crawfurd, June 7th, 1823. Buckley, *Anecdotal History*, 1, p. 119. Also in *J.I.A.*, 7, pp. 337-42.

[15] Presgrave to Murchison, December 5th, 1828. *B.C. 69433*, p. 59.

provided for the co-operation of Britain and Holland against piracy. But the stipulations of that treaty providing on strategic grounds for Dutch extension over the native states of the Archipelago were a particular threat to these Straits commercial interests. Dutch advance, even on liberal terms as specified in the treaty, would threaten their entrepôt traffic: the Dutch would open new and rival ports in the native states and attract (or perhaps force) native traders to visit them. In this way Britain's strategic interests did not coincide with her local commercial interests. On the Peninsula, similarly, the prospect of Siamese extension was viewed in the Settlements with alarm: yet the political interests of Britain were opposed to challenging that advance.

In Java the situation was different. In that island, after its conquest in 1811 for strategic reasons, British merchant houses had been able to establish themselves for the first time. Thus, after the restoration to the Dutch in 1816, Java was to a great extent placed outside the field of operations of the Straits merchants, not only through the re-establishment of Dutch rivals, but through the existence there of British commercial interests. These were closely connected with the powerful textile interests at home. Particularly because the end of the war opened a period of recession for British trade which lasted till the late 1840's, the commercial regulations which the Dutch established proved of the utmost significance. Reference must now be made therefore to the commercial stipulations of the treaty of 1824.

Earlier negotiations affected the Government's treatment of commercial as of political questions in that treaty. So far as commercial considerations had weighed, the earlier plan had been that Britain, in return for a guarantee not to infringe the Moluccan monopoly and for some concessions in Continental commerce, should secure Riau as a means of attracting the trade of the native states, Penang's value in this respect being largely neutralized by the Dutch possession of Malacca. There had been no hope of any regular share in the trade of Java.

In 1818 the India Board's commercial proposals had included the transfer of Riau and the exchange of Malacca for British possessions on the west coast of Sumatra, and a Dutch undertaking not to

> ... prevent the inhabitants of the Eastern Islands from resorting to Prince of Wales's Island or any other British port in that vicinity for the purpose of exchanging their produce (with the exception of spices) for the opium, piece-goods, and other articles, the growth or manufacture of the British dominions.

The British, on the other hand, were, 'as proposed in 1787', to refrain from any share in the spice trade and to admit no spices into British possessions or into Britain except in Dutch bottoms; no trade was to be 'carried on in British vessels with the several islands of the Archipelago, nor any British settlement formed in those parts'; and the Dutch would trade with British India 'upon the footing of the most favoured nations, or even of British subjects'.[16]

Meanwhile Raffles, believing that there could be no future for British commerce in Java when it was restored to the illiberal Dutch, had been

[16] As Note 4.

concentrating upon developing British influence in the outer islands. Finally in 1819 he founded his new settlement on Singapore island, designed to develop a trade with Sumatra and Borneo.[17] It would, Raffles declared, divert Malacca's trade with the south and east, as Malacca had obstructed Penang's.[18] The Company would be able to maintain the freedom of the port which he established by supporting the administration with Indian revenues.[19]

In the treaty of 1824, by which, despite the efforts of the Dutch, Singapore was retained, and Malacca 'and its dependencies' acquired, there were also further guarantees for British trade with the native states over which the Dutch should extend their authority and with Java itself. The Moluccan monopoly on the other hand was recognized and some Indian commercial concessions were made. Such provisions seemed amply satisfactory to British negotiators who had considered the bases of the earlier discussions. In fact they satisfied neither the merchants of the Straits Settlements nor the British merchants in Java. The former disapproved of the negotiators' adoption of the old plan of developing a commerce with the native states from entrepôts in the Straits, because they modified it by a politic treatment of Dutch political claims. The Java merchants, on the other hand, found that the provisions of the treaty of 1824 afforded inadequate protection for their trade; for the negotiators had believed that the future lay with the trade of the outer islands.

The restrictive system which the Dutch were thus able to establish in Java after 1824 in attempts, first to please the Belgian manufacturers, and then, after the revolution of 1830, to revive the decayed economy of the northern Netherlands, prompted protests from the British merchants there. These were supported by manufacturing interests at home, which during these difficult decades became ready to challenge not only foreign restrictions but also domestic vested interests, such as those of the shipowners. The Foreign Office, now guided not by the India Board but by the Board of Trade, began prolonged discussions with the Dutch. The dispute over the commercial part of the treaty ultimately affected in some degree its territorial dispositions.

Indeed the history of British policy in the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago after 1824 is as a whole the study of the reaction between local commercial considerations and broad strategic policies dictated by wider imperial interests. The nature of this reaction varied from time to time and from area to area; it varied with the governmental mechanism and the personalities involved.

For instance, in the case of the Peninsula, the general Government policy, adopted for strategic reasons, continued to be one of restraint and non-intervention for fear of conflict with Siam. This was particularly so after the first Burma War when the Company acquired in Tenasserim

[17] Raffles to Dart, April 14th, 1819, and Raffles to Inglis, June 12th, 1819. Sophia Raffles, *Memoir*, pp. 308, 384-401.

[18] Boulger, *Raffles*, p. 271. He was careful to point out that it would be valuable for the collection of marine and jungle produce for the China trade. Raffles to Dr. Raffles, July 17th, 1820. Boulger, pp. 31-2. See also the pamphlet by Raffles's friend, Assey, *On the Trade to China*.

[19] Raffles to Lansdowne, April 15th, 1820. *Asiatic Journal*, July 1823, text, pp. 27-8.

This work attempts to describe and analyse, through the interpretation of British documentary evidence, the development of British policy in the Malay world between 1824 and 1871. Though these are the dates of two treaties with the Netherlands, it is not a history of Anglo-Dutch relations in the East Indies. It is a history rather of British policy towards the various forces in the region, defined, as it was, in a number of centres of decision-making.

The work is in three main sections. The first deals with the British connexion with the Malay peninsula, and seeks to show that the period cannot be characterized by the phrase 'non-intervention'. The second deals with Java and the archipelago, and the third with the Borneo-Sulu region. A theme of these sections is the effect of Dutch commercial policies on the British attitude towards the extension of the Netherlands empire and towards the Brooke venture. British concern over the activities of other colonial powers is a theme common to all three sections.

This book originally appeared as a whole number of the *Journal of the Malayan Branch Royal Asiatic Society* dated 1957. In this new edition, a number of minor errors have been corrected, and an index and maps have been added.

Nicholas Tarling is at present Professor of History at the University of Auckland. He is the author of a number of papers and books on South-East Asian history, including *Anglo-Dutch Rivalry in the Malay World, 1780-1824* (Cambridge and Queensland University Presses, 1962), in some sense an introduction to the present volume.

Oxford in Asia paperbacks