

R. 4/12.89.

E. No 1338

89.

The Istana

Johore Bahru

N. Singapore

1. 11. 89

My dear Professor,

I have written to you five times but cannot get a reply. You either not answering or my failing to obtain a reply to my second letter of April 3rd cost me 200 dollars. It may possibly be the fault of the post office clerks, who, on enquiry I find have a trick of stealing the letters for the stamps & register this. I have detailed in those letters my proceedings & now briefly recapitulate them. After making a few necessary calls on powerful residents, who could help me on my way I engaged 8 men 6 Malays & my own two Ghoorkhas, whom I have had for the last 12 years & sent them up toward the line of exploration to establish depôts of food & stores, ascertain means of travel & make presents & friends with the head men. Three of these have been killed by the Kris on the Sibilo river in Melantan, but it was their own fault. One Malay returned & told me they were quadding with the women, as usual. The Ghoorkhas I sent into Patani very far north. They have just returned & report all ready & satisfactory. Meanwhile I have been making a thorough research into the Orang Asli of Johore, Pahang & Temenggaman on the East & the Mantras of the West. (Nepi Sembilan, coast & interior with the Orang Laut of the Islands on both sides Thanks to the Governor & the two Pustans, Uncle & nephew, of Johore & Pahang, with whom I am in great favour. It has cost very little & has been well repaid in results. Now I am back in Johore to get fresh supplies & in a fortnight or so I start for the real work of my arrangement viz life in the thick jungle among the original Orang Asli of the remote centre. & I'm not coming out until

I have got all I want unless fever knocks me
over for a while. I've good arranged for 12 months
ahead. Now all this costs money & I've borrowed
on my income ahead, as much as I can
as I must have sufficient for contingencies
without depending wholly on receipt of collection.
There is a balance of the £200 you advanced
yet to draw and I wrote to you lately asking you
to send it to Penang consul but ^{nothing} he nor I have
heard anything of it. Will you be good enough to
write him without delay, authorizing the credit
and I can get it when I've expended what I now
have of yours. I've been very careful & economical & I
have a good part of the £150 still, but the expensive
time is only just beginning & be as careful as one
will. dollars melt here very rapidly & there ^{will be} a long
delay in getting returns from things sent you. After
this letter you will not hear from me for some time
I expect as I cannot travel 80 or 90 miles out &
back on foot in such country as this to post a letter
could you not arrange with someone on the
Continent to buy tigers or elephants skeletons
I get, or could get, a number, & any means of paying
expenses will help to make a more rapid return
of your advance. I've been doing a little trade in
tiger skins & weapons (Malay) as I've been going
about & without diverting many dollars on a side
issue, have some 400 dollars worth of a collection
here for transmission to you, comprising one of all the
arms ^{from the original} used by the Malays, the various hunting
spears and the orang blue cumpitans. of the latter
I have 10, not bored out of the solid like the
Borneo ones but cut or scooped out in halves
bound together with rotan & plastered over with
dammar. I've seen three (so called) tribes here
actually make them & have an illustrative
cumpitan, in course of manufacture, to show
the stages, also similar exhibits as to the preparation
of the darts, as complete in detail as could be
required and the composition of the poison.
This, though it varies in different parts, is

materially the same. "Ipoo" or "Upas" sap. but
the fangs of 3 kinds of snakes the head of the
huge centipede the tail of the huge scorpion
found here, & the hairs of a caterpillar. I
want you to identify from the specimens,
and the entrails of a grub (reminding me
the Ngwa of Central Africa, but not as far as
have experimented) of any particular virulence,
are all used to mix with it. I've got all
stools so far & complete illustrations
the orang Ulu who speak the Jakun
language also, know of the bored solid
sumpitan & its manufacture, but prefer
use either the slight reed or the
halved one. The tool they describe & made
to chew one is, ^{for the solid sumpitan} a square piece of iron stone
or bone with four facets or angles to give
the cutting edges. This is set in a long handle
& fastened horizontally to two small trees
& the sumpitan is held against the
point & turned round by the hands
taking perhaps 10 days to bore, but I have
not yet got among the nomadic tribes
who actually make & use this kind, hope
to do so this next trip. Their dead the
orang Ulu leave where he dies & go off
to another place & the pigs & monitor lizards
soon scatter the bones, so I've come difficulty in
getting skeletons. I have taught them to wrap them
in bark & rotan & hang in high trees so I hope
to get ^{some} before long, as I promised presents for them
It's an awful country for travelling, swamp &
thick rotan jungle alternately, & cannot get thing
carried, but I've not had an hours illness yet
only loss of blood from the leeches & mosquitoes
As to the tribes. Orang Gargassi I've not yet
investigated, but Orang Udai, Huli, Jakun, Utan
and Haget are one & the same. You must make
fresh names, as these are so loosely applied
& mean so little, not even describing the men
of any given locality. When I have seen
them all I'll give you a careful review



(NB Sakai merely means a wild man. both orang Ulu & Liar
equal of each other as Sakai. the first using the word
Sakee & the latter S'Kee)

for your criticism. At most the names
mentioned are or were only family ones of
the same men. orang Utan being now
entirely without any distinctive meaning
save as between the Mahomedan Malay
and the non Mahomedan of the interior.
Sakun is only a Malay nickname for
an uncultivated fellow & Ulu only the
dwellers at the heads of the rivers from
whom the Malays get rotans & jungle
produce in exchange for cloth, tobacco
& iron. For purposes of present writing
by orang Ulu I mean to Non-Mahomedan
(straight or slightly wavy haired) nomad. of only
slightly darker skin than the Malay & by
orang Liar the very dark ~~savage~~ with short
close curled or frizzed hair the only really wild
man of the peninsula for orang Ulu is only
semi savage even when not in contact with
the Malay. However I've not yet got all the information
I want on this interesting ~~study~~ subject & will after
careful digestion of notes. speak more confidently
later on. If I'm as successful as I hope to be I'll
have to run over to Germany & have a discussion
with you or members. I may be able to send a
man in to Penang for letters & it is so cheering to
get a letter from the world left behind that I
hope you can find time to send me a few lines.
I send this to you for both yourself & Prof. Virchow
with my heartiest good wishes. A pleasant
Christmas to you both. mine will be spent in
the jungle but I'll keep a flask especially to drink
Raes Ael to you there. Letters to Penang German
Consul. Singapore German Consul or the Sultan
of Johore's palace, the Istana. Johore Bahru, will always
reach me sooner or later. I got the magic lantern &
found it very useful. Thanks.

Yours very truly
H. C. Vaughan - Stevens