

The history of the Library of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (SBRAS) 1877- 1923.

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The history of the Library of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (SBRAS) 1877-1923.

Abstract : Traces the history of Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society Library which was founded along with the society in 1877. The Library contained a wealth of knowledge pertaining to Malaysia and its surrounding regions, consisting of Malay manuscripts, books, maps, pamphlets, photographs and journals. However, the Library met its tragic end in 1923 whereby its entire collection was transferred on permanent loan to the Raffles Library, Singapore.

Keywords : Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society Library, library history, library collection

The history of the Library of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (SBRAS) 1877-1923.

Introduction

The Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (SBRAS), together with *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (JSBRAS)*, are well-known in this part of the world because of their roles in the dissemination of knowledge pertaining to Malaysia and its surrounding region since the third quarter of the 19th century. Another unknown aspect of this learned society, is the wealth of materials contained in its Library which grew up along with the society since its inception. It is intended to trace the history of this library with regards to its collection and the running of the library since its establishment. To do so, annual reports and treasurer reports published in *JSBRAS* and *JMBRAS* between 1878-1924, published catalogue of the library collection and other sources are referred to.

The Founding of the Straits Asiatic Society

The Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (MBRAS), which had its inception as a learned society and is devoted to the increase and diffusion of knowledge concerning Malaysia, the State of Brunei Darul Salam and other neighboring territories was founded in 1877. Today, this learned Society is still very active and well-known not only in Malaysia but also all over the world as manifested through its international membership covering more than thirty

countries. The humble beginning of such a distinguished and learned society can be traced back to Monday, November 4th, 1877. On that very day one hundred and twenty-two years ago, a meeting was held in the Raffles Library, Singapore. Ten well-known British colonial officials holding various important posts in the Straits Settlement attended this historic meeting. Among them were G. F. Hose (the Venerable Archdeacon, later Bishop), C. J. Irving (the Resident Councillor, Malacca), W. E. Maxwell (later became the Colonial Secretary), A. M. Skinner (the Colonial Treasurer), W. A. Pickering (the Protector of Chinese), N. B. Dennys (Magistrate), D. F. A. Hervey (Magistrate). F. Maxwell and J. D. Vaughan. These very persons recognised the need of a society where they could meet and hold discussions to promote a greater interest in the study of “Malaya” by publishing a Journal and carrying out other scholarly activities. In this meeting a resolution calling for the establishment of a society to collect and record scientific information about the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago was proposed by Mr. Skinner and seconded by Mr. Irving (Proceedings of SBRAS 4th November 1877). As a result of that eventful meeting in the Raffles Library, Singapore, the birth and destiny of “The Straits Asiatic Society”, the forefather of the present learned Society, MBRAS was conceived.

The President, Archdeacon Hose in his inaugural address reiterated that the primary object of the Society is “ to investigate subjects connected with the Straits of Malacca and the neighboring countries”. To put it simply, the geographical coverage as envisaged by Hose would be from “the Peninsula of

Malacca, as far North as the Tenasserim Provinces, and the great Indian Archipelago, that wonderful chain of Equatorial Islands stretching from Sumatra on the west to New Guinea of the East which he referred to as Malaya". He hoped that with "the establishment of such a society, members or contributors to the Society would be encouraged to seek knowledge for its own sake, not merely for the purpose of applying it to their own personal and material benefits, but in order to contribute something to the common stock". He added "since what is now known of South Eastern Asia appeared rather small and hence lacking in all aspects, the Society could play a very meaningful role". Therefore, the Society was set up to diminish this shortness of knowledge about the hinterland of "Malaya". In referring to the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago as Malaya, Hose clarified his use of the term being that " the Malay language was to a great extent the lingua franca between the inhabitants of different races" (Hose, 1878). In short, in the words of Makepeace, Honorary Secretary SBRAS (1917-1919), the Society served the "utilitarian purpose of gathering more knowledge pertaining to the Malay Peninsula and Archipelago through the investigation, recording and diffusion of knowledge among its members and other earnest inquirers and workers" (Makepeace, 1918).

Affiliation with Royal Asiatic Society

To make the Society eminent, at the very same meeting, it was also proposed and seconded that the Society would "seek affiliation with the Royal Asiatic Society in London with the view of being incorporated as the Straits

Branch of the Society". On May 6th, 1878, the President communicated to the Meeting that the Royal Asiatic Society had agreed to the affiliation sought by the Society. Therefore, in the meeting, it was resolved that the full name of the Society be changed to "The Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society" to formalize its link with the Royal Asiatic Society. (Proceedings of SBRAS 6th May 1878). However it must be made clear here that even though the Society is affiliated to the Royal Asiatic Society from the very beginning, it is "a wholly independent body which manages its own affairs and is totally responsible for its own finances and editorial policy. Its only link with the Royal Asiatic Society is its permission to the Society's members to use its library and to attend its monthly meeting when in London". (Speech of President MBRAS, 1977).

Change of Name from SBRAS to MBRAS

From 1878 to 1922, "the Society published its Journal continuously, held various meetings where papers were read, produced many publications and tried to build a library and to exchange its publications with those of other similar societies elsewhere". The activities of the Society were always held in the Raffles Museum and Library building in Singapore which is often referred to as the Society's rooms (Gullick, 1995). The society's name was to remain unchanged for the next 45 years until in 1923, when the society was renamed "The Malayan Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society" (Malayan Branch). This change in name was undertaken wholly to indicate the increased sphere of British political interests and influence in the Malay Peninsula, which had extended beyond the Straits

Settlement since 1874. Moreover, the SBRAS had grown in terms of membership and its field of work had since covered a wider area than the Straits Settlement of 1826. Many years later, on May 27th, 1961, Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra al-Haj, Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya, put forward his idea for a Greater Malaysia comprising Malaya, Singapore, Brunei, Sabah and Sarawak. However, Malaysia only came into existence on September 16th, 1963 comprising the whole of Malay Peninsula, Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak. In keeping with the tradition of the Society and as a result of the establishment of Malaysia in 1963, it was only appropriate that the name of the Society be again changed to the “Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society” (MBRAS) from Malayan Branch. With this change of name, it was hoped that MBRAS would be able to increase its field of work to cover a wider area and to increase materials for publication and yet greater activities in furthering the Society’s aims (Annual Report MBRAS 1963). In 1982, an amendment to the Rules of the Society was carried out to incorporate the name “Persatuan Asia Diraja, Bahagian Malaysia” being the Malay name equivalent to the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society to portrait its Malaysian image and identity (Annual Report MBRAS 1983).

Objectives of the Society’s Library

Rule 2 (c) of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society envisaged “The formation of a library of books bearing on the objects of the Society”. This brought about the establishment of the Society’s Library in 1877 until it was discontinued in 1923. There is no doubt that this was a major contribution of the

Society: the library was founded to house “a small and very special collection of books which are the best authorities upon Malaya and its surrounding neighbors, and which will be guides to students and help to collectors. ... as complete a collection as possible of the books that have been written in the Malay and kindred languages. ... many M. S. communications of the Society, such as notices of short journeys, which though not of sufficient importance to be printed, yet deserve to be carefully preserved for reference.” (Hose,1878). Of these collections, the most precious were the handwritten Malay manuscripts, which had been in the keeping of native owners and in the hands of appreciative European collectors. The President of the Society in his address in 1879 voiced concern about the manuscripts with these words “These precious Malay manuscripts which are scattered everywhere are in danger of white ants, of fire, and of careless servants and hence needed to be preserved (President’s Address, 13th January, 1879). In other words, the establishment of the Society’s library, allowed the Society not only to disseminate information but also to preserve the precious handwritten Malay manuscripts. Therefore, the roles played especially by the Library for keeping copies and taking extra precautions to preserve such important and fragile documents should be appreciated. The members of the Society were indeed very fortunate to have at their disposition such a precious collection in the library.

Administration of the Library

Founded in late 1877, the Society and its library had no permanent building to call its own. From the very beginning, the Chairman of the Committee of Management of the Raffles Institution, the Hon. J. Douglas had permitted the Society to use the rooms in the Library and Museum as the venue for its meetings and scholarly activities (Proceedings of SBRAS, 21st January, 1878). With the permission and readiness of the Raffles Museum to allow the Society to make use and accommodate itself, the Society had no difficulty in carrying out its activities, namely its many meetings and getting space for the library. Hence, the Society's Library began functioning in a room in the Raffles' Library and Museum from 1878 until early 1887 (Annual Report SBRAS 1878). In the first few years of its existence, the library needed little space as progress in its collection was still slow and yet to pick up in momentum. Nevertheless, over the years through exchange and donation by other learned associations and societies and private persons, the collection started to grow. By the end of 1887, the Library was moved to a new location as the New Raffles Museum had shifted to its new base. Again, the Raffles Museum continued to offer rooms to the Society for its meeting and library to accommodate its bookshelves and reading room. The move was dutifully performed with the help of Copley who arranged the library (Annual Report SBRAS 1887). On the whole, in all its years of existence, the Society's library always occupied rooms provided by the Raffles Museum (Gullick, 1995).

In the beginning, the running of the Library was entrusted to the Council's members who were responsible for the upkeep and day-to-day affairs of the Library, with the help of a clerk who was in charge of the Society's rooms including the library under the supervision of the Council. Among the duties performed by the Council's members were first, to administer the library's affairs, and secondly to select and purchase books, maps and manuscripts for the Library. A clerk was necessary because at that time, it was almost impossible to obtain the service of a qualified librarian. In early 1909, a proposal to employ a clerk at a salary of 25 dollars a month to assist the Librarian as to the running of the library was passed (Minutes of the AGM, 10th February, 1909).

In 1909, the post of Honorary Librarian was added to the list of officers as a result of the reorganization of the Library. Its first appointed Honorary Librarian was Mr. Walter Makepeace who held the post between 1909–1912. He was much later appointed to the post of Society's Hon. Secretary in 1918. From then on, the Society elected a member to take up the post of Honorary Librarian to take charge of the library. A. C. Baker 1913, Dr. R. Van Beuningen Van Helsdingen 1914-1915 and 1920, C. Bazell 1916 and 1918-1919, Dr. R. Hanitsch 1917 and J. Johnston 1921-1922 held the post of the Hon. Librarian. However, from 1923, the day-to-day affairs of the Library were assigned to the Hon. Secretary until the post was abolished as the Library lost its identity (Gullick, 1995).

Collection of the Library

In the first year of the Society's existence only slight progress was made towards the formation of the Library, and none whatever towards the collection of Malay Books and MSS. One precious collection of the library was a MSS offered to the Society by the President himself. This is the much-valued copy of the *Hikayat Abdullah* donated to the Library in 1879. However, the Library's collection managed to grow at a steady rate, by means of gifts, loans for copying, purchases and exchanges of publications with other learned societies and associations, both local or foreign. By 1879, a complete set of the *Records of the Indian Geographical Survey* (12 vols.) were furnished by India. At the same time, three rare publications regarding the Malay and Javanese languages were received from the President of the *Ecole des Langues Vivantes*. On the whole, by 1879, the collection was gradually increased to 135 volumes (Annual Report SBRAS 1879). The Council also attempted to contact foreign consuls, scientific associations and learned societies to obtain their proceedings and by exchanging publications. By June 1882, the Society exchanged publications with 24 scientific societies from various countries namely, England, China, Japan, Ceylon, India, France, Germany, Austria, Nederlands Indies and Finland. In 1882, due to the growth of the collection, the Council expressed its indebtedness to Dr. E. Bieber, Vice-President of the Society who had catalogued the library's collection and also tried to obtain missing copies (Annual Report SBRAS 1882). On the other hand, the Council also appointed certain agents to help complete its library collection. They were Messrs. Koehler of Leipzig, for Germany, Messrs. Trubner for

London, England and Messrs. Ernest Leroux & Co. for Paris, France. In 1884, a catalogue pertaining to the Library's collection was published together with the Annual Report SBRAS 1884 (Annual Report SBRAS 1883). This catalogue of books and collection of the library showed that by January 1884, the library had a total of 187 titles of which 96 were in foreign languages namely French, Dutch, German, Austrian, and Italian. Most of these collections comprised journals and books of various subjects namely language, literature, geography, botany and zoology.

As the collection grew, the need arose to take proper care of the collection. In 1885, G. Copley a member of the Society took over charge of the books and papers presented from time to time to the Library. He got them bound, labeled and catalogued (Annual Report SBRAS 1885). In 1890, the library was sorted and rearranged. Efforts were also made to prepare a fresh catalogue pertaining to the library's collection (Annual Report SBRAS 1890). In 1893, the Library received a large number of pamphlets, journals and books through exchange and donation by societies and private persons. A bookcase was purchased and the collection was partly catalogued (Annual Report SBRAS 1893). However, it is to be noted that since the inception of the library, the Society could not afford large-scale acquisition of books due to insufficient funds. A check on the SBRAS Treasurer's Reports 1878-1923 indicates small sums being used for the acquisition of new books for the library. For example, only \$14.14 was spent on books in 1916, \$25.00 in 1917 and \$20.00 in 1918.

Therefore, the library collection grew as a result of the donations by members or private individuals and through exchange with other learned societies. However, its book collection comprises books mostly written and donated by members of the Society. These included: *An introduction to Indonesian languages* by R. Brandstetter and translated by C. O. Bladgen, *An English-Malay dictionary* by W. G. Shellabear, *Malay Magic* by W. W. Skeat, *British Malaya* by Frank Swettenham, *Papers on Malay Subjects* by the F. M. S. Govt., *Malay Beliefs* by R. J. Wilkinson and *An English-Malay Dictionary* by R. Winstedt. Apart from that, other Malay texts held by the Library were *Kitab Gemala Hikmat*, *Pelayaran Abdullah*, *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, *Hikayat Abdullah*, *Hikayat Awang Sulong Merah Muda*, *Cherita Jenaka*, *Hikayat Malim Dewa*, *Hikayat Malim Deman*, *Sejarah Melayu*, *Hikayat Raja Muda*, *Hikayat Anggun Che' Tunggal*, *Pantun Melayu*, and *Hikayat Pelandok* (Annual Report SBRAS 1916). It was found that at times, the Society also spent money for copying of Malay manuscripts, for example in 1905, \$55.00 was spent on copying Malay manuscripts (Annual Report SBRAS 1905) while in 1919, some \$20.00 was again spent on Malay manuscripts for library (Annual Report SBRAS 1919). Thus over the years the Library built up a good collection of Malay manuscripts and texts. To accommodate its growing collection of books and journals, bookcases were bought from time to time. For example in 1897 a bookcase was purchased for \$35.00, in 1903 three bookcases for \$85.00 each, in 1907 a bookcase for \$95.00. Finally in 1914 \$198.50 was spent on bookcases. In 1915, a pair of pigeonhole almairahs was constructed for

the library to hold unbound periodicals as the collection of periodical was growing at a steady rate (Annual Report SBRAS 1915).

By the year 1905, 61 English and foreign societies and institutions were in its Exchange List. To cope with this increase, it was decided to provide clerical assistance to complete the Library's catalogue (Annual Report SBRAS 1904). Further on, in 1908, another up-to-date catalogue was prepared at a cost of 200 dollars to give members a better picture of its entire collection of books, pamphlets and journals (Annual Report SBRAS 1908). The library catalogue was finally printed in 1909 at a cost of \$81.75. In 1914, the Society obtained the services of Reverend A. M. Amery, a clergyman to set the books on the Library's shelves in order and to write to societies on its exchange list to complete the series of their journals. A small honorarium was given in appreciation of the work performed (Annual Report SBRAS 1914). In 1913 a decision was made by the Council to have a photographic collection illustrative of Malaya, its natural history, ethnology, scenery and buildings and to make an appeal to members and others to help in this undertaking (Annual Report SBRAS 1913). In 1917, Makepeace in his address at the Annual General Meeting, again brought up the subject of "forming a collection of photographic records in the library (Makepeace, 1918). However, it could not be verified whether the library developed such a collection. By 1921, the Society's library had 76 institutions and societies from various countries in its Exchange List, which contributed around 248 publications to its collection. These countries included Canada, United States of America, Ceylon,

Table 1
Expenditure on bookbinding 1894-1923

Year	Expenditure on bookbinding
1894	\$129.90
1895	\$31.80
1897	\$50.10
1898	\$29.30
1899	\$215.57
1900	\$72.00
1902	\$56.05
1903	\$315.25*
1904	\$30.45
1905	\$55.00
1907	\$23.00
1908	\$405.50
1909	\$32.50
1910	\$93.75
1911	\$24.00
1912	\$79.55
1913	\$29.25
1914	\$23.00
1915	\$85.05
1916	\$101.45
1917	\$113.50
1919	\$163.95
1921	\$73.00
1922	\$150.50
1923	\$58.00

(Source: SBRAS Treasurer's Report 1894-1923)

*includes mounting of maps

India, Burma, Java, Siam, Indochina, Philippine Islands, China, Japan, Australia, Belgium, Finland, France, Great Britain, Holland, Sweden and Switzerland. Apart from that, donations of publications were received from North America (Canada and United States of America, South America (Argentina, Brazil), Asia (Java and Japan), Africa (Egypt), and Europe (Germany, Great Britain and Ireland, Holland and Italy)(Annual Report SBRAS 1921). In 1923, the number of publications received from foreign institutions and societies increased to 352 from a total of 81

institutions and societies. In 1923, the Society's Library had 87 foreign institutions and societies on its Exchange List which contributed about 525 publications per year to the Library's collection (Annual Report MBRAS 1923). Therefore, over the years, the Library managed to collect a good number of reference and reading materials for its members. The Society also spent some money on bookbinding especially in binding the number of journals. Table 1 shows the amount spent over the years.

As a result of the constant growth of the Library's collection, comprising mainly books, pamphlets, maps and journals, it required much more shelving space and most of its shelves were already overcrowded and taxed greatly by the increasing number of publications received annually. Therefore, at times rearrangement of bookcases and furniture took place, enabling more shelf room to be secured to last for a number years. Apart from that, the Council felt that because of space scarcity it had "to eliminate certain publications to enable portions of the Library more easily available to those who appreciate these publications". With this pressing problem at hand, the Council in 1920 had to offer "certain botanical journals (Missouri Garden Bulletin, University of California Records, etc.) on indefinite loan to the Director of the Botanic Gardens, Singapore; certain geological journals (Canadian Geological Survey, Geological Survey of India, etc.) to the F. M. S. Geological Department; and certain Museum journals (those published by the Smithsonian Institution, New York Museum, Indian Museum, Colombo Museum, etc.) to the Director, Raffles

Museum, Singapore which were gratefully accepted” (Annual Report SBRAS 1920). It was also hoped to publish an up-to-date catalogue of the Library collection so that member can borrow them on application through the Society’s Librarian (Annual Report SBRAS 1920). In 1921 in continuation of its policy to eliminate certain publications further geological, museum and botanical journals were again issued on indefinite loan to the Government Geologist (Batu Gajah), the Director Raffles Museum (Singapore) and the Director of Gardens (Singapore) (Annual Report SBRAS 1921). These indefinite loans saved a lot of shelf-room and facilitated the rearrangement of the Library’s materials by the Hon. Librarian. Moreover, the Council felt that the Library was not being used fully owing to the fact that so many members resided away from Singapore (Annual Report MBRAS 1923). At the same time, the Society’s Exchange List had been revised yearly where certain institutions and societies were added and others removed as a step towards better administration of its collection. However, it is sad to say, despite its steady growth of collection through gifts, purchase and exchange, the library was discontinued, and its entire collection was transferred on permanent loan to the Raffles Library in 1923. The main reasons behind this unfortunate episode were its “unmanageable size of collection, the little use of the library by members of the Society and the better care and attention given to them by the larger library, Raffles Library”. Moreover, these books and journals would be readily made available to the Society’s members at any time by the Raffles Library (Annual Report MBRAS 1923).

Conclusion

The Library of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society was indeed one of the very first library set up by a learned society in British Malaya. According to Plumbe (1964), the earliest known library founded in this part of the world is in 1820 in Penang. By the time, the entire collection of the Library was transferred to the Raffles Library, it was already 47 years old. Undeniably a library of that age must have developed a substantial collection of special interest items especially of Malaysiana materials. Apart from such books, the Library had a collection of maps, pamphlets, and Malay manuscripts. Not forgetting of course, its journal holdings, which the Library obtained through exchange and donation from various learned institutions all over the world. The number of institutions and societies on its Exchange List grew from 24 in 1881 to 87 in 1923 when the Library was discontinued. The journals in the collection were not only found in the English language but also in other languages, such as Dutch, French, and German.

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APPENDIX 1
EXCHANGE LIST OF SBRAS
WITH OTHER SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES, 1881.
(SOURCE : *Journal of the Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 9
(1882):XVII-XVIII)

LIST OF
SCIENTIFIC SOCIETIES
WITH WHICH
THE STRAITS BRANCH
OF THE
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
EXCHANGES
PUBLICATIONS.

1. Royal Geographical Society, London.
2. Royal Asiatic Society, London.
3. North China Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
4. Asiatic Society of Japan.
5. Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.
6. The Geological Survey Office, Calcutta.
7. La Société de Géographie, Paris.
8. La Société de Géographie Commerciale de Paris.
9. La Société de Géographie de Marseille.
10. La Société Académique Indo-Chinoise de Paris.
11. Reale Societa Geografica Italiana.
12. Instituto Geografico Guido Cora, Torino.
13. Gesellschaft für Erdkunde, Berlin.
14. Geographische Gesellschaft in Hamburg.
15. Geographische Gesellschaft in Bremen.
16. Museum für Völkerkunde, Leipzig.
17. Oberhessische Gesellschaft für Natur und Heilkunde, Giessen.
18. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Natur und Völkerkunde Ostasiens, Yokohama.
19. Orientalische Museum, Wien.
20. Bataviaasch Genootschap van Kunsten en Wetenschappen, Batavia.
21. Indisch Landbouw Genootschap, Samarang.
22. Het Koninklyk Instituut van taal-land-en Volkenkunde van Ned. Indie.
23. Nederlandsch-Indische Maatschappij van Nyverbud en Landbouw, Batavia.
24. La Société des Sciences de Finlande, Helsingfors.

APPENDIX 2
 FIRST PAGE OF CATALOGUE OF BOOKS, &C., IN THE LIBRARY OF
 THE STRAITS BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY
 (JANUARY, 1884).
 (SOURCE : JSBRAS 12 (1883):XXI.)

CATALOGUE
 OF
 BOOKS, &c., IN THE LIBRARY
 OF THE
 STRAITS BRANCH
 OF THE
 ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY.
 (JANUARY, 1884.)

- o—o—o—
- ABDULLAH—Hikayat Abdullah.
- Annales de l'Extreme Orient. Nos. 55 and 58 to 65 of 1883. (Nos. 56 and 57 missing.)
- Asiatic Society of Japan—Rules of the.
- Attempt to solve the Problem of the first Landing Place of Columbus in the New World. Methods and Results. Washington, 1882.
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- Bataviansch Catalogus der Ethnologische Afdeeling van het Museum. Batavia, 1877.
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- Bataviaasch Chineesch-Hollandsch Woordenboek van het Emoi Dialekt door J. J. C. FRANCKEN en C. F. M. DE GRIJS. Batavia, 1882.
- Bataviaasch Eerste vervolg Catalogus der Bibliotheek en Catalogus der Maleische, Javaansche en Kawi Handschriften. Batavia, 1872.

APPENDIX 3
E-MAIL FROM AZIZAH SIDEK TO THE AUTHOR
REGARDING THE LIBRARY COLLECTION OF SBRAS 1877-1923
IN NATIONAL REFERENCE LIBRARY, SINGAPORE

From: azizah@nlb.gov.sg
To: wstiew@hotmail.com
Subject: Library collection of Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic
Society 1877-1923
Date: Fri, 5 Feb 1999 18:22:42 +0800

Dear Mr Tiew

I refer to your email to Mr Saleh Haliru on 29 Jan. According to the Annual Report on the Raffles Museum and Library for the year 1923 "The Raffles Library and the Library of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society, have always been associated with each other as they have been housed under the same roof and they each have as one of their objects collection of literature relating to this part of the world. In order to further co-ordinate the aims of the two bodies the Society agreed to hand over their collection of books to Raffles Library "on permanent loan". This proposal was accepted and from the works of both libraries will be arranged and catalogued one collection relating to the East, and to Malaysia in particular".

Although these items have been catalogued, I regret to inform you that we are unable to trace the list from our catalogue. I hope the explanation is satisfactory.

Regards
Azizah Sidek
Manager
Reference Information Service
National Reference Library