

TO THE EDITOR OF THE SINGAPORE CHRONICLE.

Sir,

As through the medium of your paper much good has been done and the Mercantile Community informed of what passes in these Straits I shall without any apology aid to fill one of your columns in exposing a nefarious business that has just commenced in the neighbourhood of this place which will put a final end to the little trade which we had left at Malacca.

The enclosed notice was sent to Lingy by a self-made Rajah who was in the English Camp during the late disturbance with the Nanning people, "the famous Seyd Saban," who it must be remembered was also the chief cause of the war for had he not joined the Pinghuloo of Nanning when the first expedition went up it is well known nothing would have happened and Government would have saved above 20 Lacs of Rupees.

People assert that this duty has been allowed to be levied as a remuneration to Seyd Saban but it can hardly be believed that the Government would allow their Merchants to be such great sufferers for a paltry consideration of this nature.

The notice is as follows:—

"Orders from the Eangdepertuan Bessar the Eangdepertuan Moodah the Datto Lellah Waharajah to be respected and is sent to the Orang Kyal Katas to inform him from us that in regard to all Tin that comes from Soongey Ojong and is carried down the Lingy River we require that a tax of 3 dollars a bahar must be paid to us.—For we have done this after having consulted with the Government of Malacca that is to say the Governor of Pulo Penang and the Resident of Malacca. This order is to inform the Merchants of Lingy that whoever exports Tin must pay a duty at Sempang of 3 dollars per Bahar.—Written in the year 1248"

It is well known that the Tin Mines are chiefly worked by Chinese and that the Traders at Lingy and Soongey Ojong could not go on working them if they did not get advances from the Merchants at Malacca. It has been on this system that the trade has flourished so well.

The Malacca Merchants have at this present moment above 10,000 dollars outstanding for which those of Lingy are bound to deliver Tin at a certain rate; therefore this heavy duty falls on the Malacca Merchants as those that have engaged to receive it at Lingy will have to pay the duty and those that may have agreed to receive it at Malacca must either pay the extra 3 dollars or lose their money altogether; for the Malay Merchants at Lingy, declare that they cannot afford to sell it, their profits not amounting to one fourth of the duty, being equal to 1 dollar per Picul or about 10 per Cent. As the profits will not cover the expence of the workmen the Chinese will of necessity abandon the Mines.

It is in the hope that the great men in England and those of the Bengal will make enquiries into this affair that I have made this communication to you.

A MALACCA MERCHANT.
Malacca.