

Daily News (London, England),
Monday, February 11, 1850

MALAYAN VERSUS DYAK PIRACY.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE DAILY NEWS.

SIR,—Your correspondent, "An Inquirer," is not quite correct in his account of the adventure of the Victor sloop-of-war, in 1808. The facts are these:— Captain George Bell was cruising among the islands of the Eastern Archipelago, rather in search of French, Dutch, and Spanish cruisers and privateers than Malay pirates. He had, however, detained two Malay armed prahus on suspicion of piracy. Their crews were brought on board the Victor, and being disarmed, they were ordered to the fore part of the ship, their weapons being huddled carelessly and without protection on the quarter-deck. In the meanwhile a fire broke out on board the Victor, and the Malays taking advantage of the confusion, rushed aft, secured their arms, and run a-muck. They were mastered by the crew, chiefly by the intrepidity and firmness of Captain Bell himself, and every man without an exception put to the sword whether they were or were not pirates, is a point that of course was never ascertained.

Your correspondent is quite correct of course in saying that piracy prevails in the Archipelago, and just and rational in concluding that piracy by Malays and such like, who employed cannons and matchlocks before ever they saw an European face; and the allegation of piracy by savages who have no fire arms, and invariably run away at the very first shot, are surely two very different things. To charge a savage tribe as being dangerous rovers, who are palpably in want of all efficient means of assault, seems to me to be about as irrational and foolish, as to insist that a snake without poison fangs is equally dangerous with a true cobra di capella.—I am, &c.,

London, Feb. 9, 1850.

"SINENSIS."
