

**The Pall Mall Gazette (London),
Wednesday, November 10, 1875**

THE OUTBREAK AT PERAK.

The *Times* remarks that as yet little is known of the outbreak at Perak, except that it has cost us the life of Mr. Birch and an unsatisfactory conflict between a mere handful of British troops and the Malays. It is fortunate, however, that the supreme power in those regions is in the hands of an energetic and prudent Governor, Sir William Drummond Jervois, and not less that forces probably adequate to any operations that are likely to be needed are accessible. Meantime it is evident that the extent of the danger now threatening our possessions on the Straits of Malacca depends upon the nature of the animosity which the Malays have shown towards the English. It may be no more than an ebullition of their ferocious and treacherous nature. It is possible that they were merely intoxicated with the "blood frenzy" by the murder, for lucre or revenge, of Mr. Birch, and that their rage burst out in armed defiance of British power. If this be so, it will soon exhaust itself, and a few stern, steady blows will bring the Malays to a sense of their folly. But, on the other hand, it is possible that the Mahommedans of the Malay Peninsula may have caught, as we know their kinsmen in Sumatra did, the flame of the Mussulman revival. If such be the character of the outbreak at Perak, it may give us not a little trouble.

The *Daily Telegraph* regrets to see that our new "little war" is developing itself apace in the Straits of Malacca. Of course, the question that will be asked on all sides is whether the proceedings just reported on the part of the British authorities at the Straits have been wise. Little glory, it is to be feared, can be achieved in fighting a set of piratical miscreants in a small Malay State, so insignificant that its boundaries are hardly marked in our best atlases. But nowadays we fight from a sense of duty rather than from a vain appetite for glory, and we are morally bound to avenge the murder of Mr. Birch, and uphold the authority of the Sultan Abdullah, whom we seated on the throne of Perak, becoming at the same time, security, as it were, for the orderly government of his anarchical kingdom. It is too late now to go back in our dealings with these States.