

## The Pall Mall Gazette (London), Friday, November 12, 1875

---

An interesting letter appears in to-day's *Times* from "A Straits Resident" which confirms the belief that the Malay outbreak has originated in a complication of civil quarrels, and has no religious significance whatever. The Government in the Malay States, though nominally in the hands of one Sovereign, is really divided between a number of quasi-feudal chiefs who are perpetually encroaching or being encroached on by their neighbours; and to the quarrels arising from this cause are to be added those which grow out of the vague rules of succession obtaining in the Malay States, where the death of a Sovereign is usually the signal for a fight for the vacant throne. A difficulty of another and still more serious kind occurs in connection with the Chinese population in the Settlements engaged in the working of the tin mines. The Mantri of Perak granted a concession to work the tin mines of Larut to a rich Penang Chinaman, but, "unable to resist the temptation of immediate profit, he sold the mines again to a second applicant, and soon had two rival clans of Chinese fighting tooth and nail in his territory." On the death of the Sultan of Perak two rival rajahs, Ismail and Abdullah, claimed the succession, the former of whom was backed by the Mantri, one-half of the Malay chiefs, and one of the contending parties of Chinese miners, the latter by the other party of miners, and the other half of the chiefs. Sir Andrew Clarke, on arriving as Governor in the Straits in November, 1873, took the side of Abdullah, and established him as Sultan, Ismail retiring to the jungle with several other chiefs and carrying with him the regalia. Polite requests were made to him to restore them, but he declined, and no attempt was made to enforce the demand. This, according to the writer, was the "fatal mistake" which led to the present outbreak—in itself only the renewal of the war between Ismail and Abdullah.

---