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Revelation of Empire: The Maxwells and Their Study of Malay Customs[1]

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Abstract. This essay aims to revisit and evaluate the authoritarian British imperial policy and conduct in Northern Perak and Kedah, especially those involving the official duties and the daily interactions of the first Supreme Court Judge of the Straits Settlements and British Adviser to Kedah, namely Sir Peter Benson Maxwell and Sir George William Maxwell respectively. However, despite desires to establish the supremacy of western culture and civilisation, the Maxwells appreciated and valued the Malays and their customs in Perak and Kedah. Hence they aimed at diminishing prejudice to foster togetherness and bring justice to the northern Malays. Information provided by Sir P. B. Maxwell in *Our Malay Conquests* (1878) and G. W. Maxwell's *In Malay Forests* (1907) depicted their "accounts of personal incidents" that help readers understand the Maxwells' political and personal views of the Malays and their fascinating customs reflective of their writings. The Maxwells therefore ridicule the irony of British's "love for justice," orient-occident dichotomy and injustice done to these oriental and their long-established *adat* (customs) that is loosely translated as culture.

Keywords and phrases: P. B. Maxwell, George Maxwell, J. W. Birch, Malay civilisation, Malay custom

Introduction

"Venimus, Vidimus, Vicimus" (We came, we saw, we conquered) – Julius Caesar.

In 1856, Sir Peter Benson (P. B.) Maxwell travelled to Penang to take up his position as Supreme Court Judge where he remained until he retired as the Chief Judge of the Straits Settlements in April 1871. Seven years later, in 1878, P. B. Maxwell wrote a book entitled *Our Malay Conquests*, epitomising a polemic from Julius Caesar's famous quote above. The possessive pronoun "our" in the title adds to the fecundity of imperial pride on the one hand, yet denotes sarcasm on the other. In the words of Dato' Henry S. Barlow, the author of *Swettenham* (1995), P. B. Maxwell "viewed with horror British intervention in Perak in the mid-1870s" (pers. comm. 12 April 2014). However, despite what the title seems to suggest, P. B. Maxwell utilises his understanding of Malay language, his ability to read the *Jawi* script and his high-ranked position as the Chief Judge to

the Court to view Malay society and re-view the imperial policy and its intervention into the Malay States from a critical angle (perhaps influenced by his judicial point of view) during his long sojourn in the east.

Forty four years after Sir P. B. Maxwell published his book, his grandson, Sir George William (G. W.) Maxwell, Chief Secretary to the Federated Malay States, wrote a circular letter dated 18 September 1922, to all his British officials alluding to "the loss of touch between the Europeans and the Asiatics in Malaya" (1).

G. W. Maxwell was prompted to write this letter by his concern over the gap created between British administrative officials and local key personnel such as the Deputy Assistant District Officers, *penghulus*, *kathis* and Chinese *towkays*.

Among his suggestions were: "District Officers and Land Officers should make a point of cultivating the friendship of every Malay Chief and *Penghulu* in the district"; and "we officials should do more to make the acquaintance of the leading Chinese *towkays*" (2). He even suggested that "it had been necessary to call upon Europeans, Eurasians, Malays, and Chinese to make up the two finalist teams; […] and that the more the different nationalities could meet in friendly games, the more they would like and understand one another" (3). G. W. Maxwell went as far as to suggest that "the best way of all is to take him [a Malay Officer] on a jungle expedition" (3). One may consider G. W.'s suggestion here paradoxical since most Malays are supposed to know their "own jungle", like their own backyard, but we have here a colonial officer who made that suggestion to the Malays.

The era during which the two Maxwells above addressed their concerns, and the positions from which both authors wrote their book and circular letter are different, but one thing remains the same—both P. B. Maxwell and G. W. Maxwell were expressing their opinions on the conduct of the British upon matters related to the Malays and their customs. Perhaps this was not new to G. W. Maxwell as his father Sir William Edward Maxwell (1846–1897) was a keen scholar in the field of Malay studies and had been a contributor to the *Journal of Straits Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* since 1876.[2] G. W. Maxwell also introduced the Torrens System to Malaya in 1884. No scholarly work has been done on P. B. Maxwell's *Our Malay Conquests*, but numerous studies have been conducted on G. W. Maxwell, including one academic exercise by Tan Song Chuan entitled "Career of Sir George Maxwell in Malaya, 1891–1926" submitted to the University of Singapore in 1959.

The present study will examine the writings of both Maxwells in regard to their views on the study of Malay customs in the northern region and the conduct of

the British towards such customs. Discussion pertains to the Pangkor Treaty of 1874 and a field work related to the "*Tolak Bala*" ceremony—literally, "chasing away the evil spirit", which shares some similarities (and some marked differences) with "A Fish-drive" in G. W. Maxwell's narrative in his *In Malay Forests*—will also be discussed. This ceremony was still being practised in a district of Baling, Kedah as recently as 1981 (GPS: N 05° 49.092 E 100° 56.092). Specifically, this study will re-evaluate P. B. Maxwell's opinion on British intervention in Perak and the relevant issues related to the abolishment of debt-slavery (or slave-debtors) as part of Malay custom. Some narratives in G. W. Maxwell's *In Malay Forests* which epitomise his suggestion above—"the best way of all is to take him [a Malay Officer] on a jungle expedition"—further reinforced the author's encounters with Malay customs (this is especially true when most of his narratives centre around the inland settings and *kampong* environment where Malay customs are mostly being practised). It was these settings and their interesting customs that prompted G. W. Maxwell to record these encounters in his book; lest he was also beguiled and mesmerised by such an interesting people and culture.

On the opening page of *Our Malay Conquests*, P. B. Maxwell asked the following question: "Why should we not be as sharp-sighted with our own methods of aggrandisement?" He asked this question in response to Mr. Gladstone's remark in the *Nineteenth Century* article that the enlargements of the Empire have "*rarely effected*" (author's emphasis) the national character of England. Such a thorny question, especially in a response to the former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom[3] could only come from someone who is very vocal, brave and bold. This was P. B. Maxwell's stand and attitude when in office[4] and also during his retirement. He seemed to embark on a critical assessment of British policy and the conduct of the British officers in many distant imperial lands and spoke "chiefly on behalf of a weak race, whose voice cannot be heard in this country [England], to obtain redress for some of the injustice done and to prevent similar injustice in future" (2). In the context of his book, *Our Malay Conquests*, among the "injustice(s) done" would be the way that the institution of debt-slavery was handled in the state of Perak, which directly led to the death of the ill-fated first Resident of Perak, Mr. J. W. W Birch. P. B. Maxwell argued that the institution of debt-slavery is… their customary law… [and]… it was a custom indeed, and we had bound ourselves to respect the Malay customs; but it would probably not have been difficult to persuade the Perak chiefs to put an end to it. Their neighbour, the Rajah of Kedah, abolished it some years ago; and his younger brother, the viceroy of Salangore, did the same thing more recently in the last-named country (30).

The manner in which P. B. Maxwell viewed the debt-slavery issue as part of the Malay customs gives us a clearer picture of the character of the man. His training

as a court judge gave him the requisite impartiality on the issue in light of what was available under the present written agreement and in fact the Pangkor Treaty of 1874 had stated nothing on such matters. In his view, the Malays are courteous and reasonable people as the evidence in Kedah and Selangor showed. If a British officer or representative found debt slavery to be immoral and necessary to be eliminated, all he needed to do was to persuade the Sultan and the Malay Chiefs to give up their slaves with a proper compensation provided by the state. In the author's opinion, the fact that it was only in Perak that this became an issue is rather peculiar. The first thing to do would be to question the role of the officer involved, Sir Andrew Clarke, on his handling of the matter. Second, a similar issue could have been taken "out of proportion" or pounced upon as an opportunity to justify British intervention in Perak. While P. B. Maxwell did not specifically mention the author's second point above (though he questioned Sir Andrew's conduct in the matter), the fact that he made mention of the issue being handled wisely in other Malay states implies that he might have believed that the issue of debt slavery had been used deliberately to necessitate British intervention in Perak.

In his speech to the Colonial Minister, Sir Andrew Clarke laid down that "the Resident's duty was simply to teach the native ruler how he should govern, how he should regulate his revenue and administer justice" (27). However, it was this same Governor who sent out the proclamation regarding the collection of revenue of Perak as "a warning to everyone, whether raja or *ryot*, never to attempt to collect any tax or any sort of revenue, without distinct written instructions from the Resident" (26). Obviously, such a contradictory instruction was issued with the full knowledge that no "counter-check" was being done on the part of the Colonial Minister to elicit the actual conduct of Sir Andrew. P. B. Maxwell wrote, "The course of the affairs was not watched by the Minister with all the vigilance" (116). This indicates that to him, Sir Andrew was partly to be blamed. Perhaps, reading or listening to the speech by Sir Andrew Clarke has led his successor, Sir W. Jervois (and other Colonial Ministers) to think that his mission in Perak (in Sir Andrew's words), was simply "to put a final stop to the cruelties and oppressions of the Malays" (116) without having mentioned that the disgruntlement on the part of the Malay rulers had actually been aroused by the proclamation sent out by the latter. Perhaps, it was also not reported at all to the Colonial Minister that to the newly elected Sultan Abdullah, Sir Andrew issued the following reminder: "If, at any time, he (Abdullah) desired to visit Larut or Pinang or other places he should consult our Resident" (26). Abdullah never thought that by signing the Treaty, his personal liberty would also be "controlled" by the Resident! The mind boggles at the fact that by signing the Pangkor Treaty, a native ruler had practically given up his country and his personal freedom to an alien master.

Some aspects of the Treaty infringe upon what the Malays considered to be part of their customary laws—the collection of revenues, for example, was a traditional source of income to the Malay Chiefs as they set up stockades along the rivers that passed through their territories. Obviously, the problems in Perak lay within the interpretation of the Pangkor Treaty of 1874 by Sir Andrew Clarke who paid no heed to the Malay customs despite the fact that the Treaty explicitly mentioned that the Resident's advice should only include the administration of the state, "save matters that involved Malay Customs and religion". The fact that Sir Andrew was the one who had exercised control over the affairs in Perak after the signing of the Pangkor Treaty for *eight months* (author's emphasis) before the appointment of Mr. Birch is not known to many and P. B. Maxwell highlights this in his book. To make matters worse, during this formative year, Sir Andrew Clarke was replaced by Sir W. Jervois as the former had been promoted to a higher office in India. The initial dealings with the three contending Sultans of Perak—Ismail, Abdullah and Yusuf—were now in the hands of the new Governor and Sir W. Jervois was not happy with the Pangkor Treaty that simply "declare[d] Perak British territory and govern[ed] it accordingly" (52). Therefore, in September 1875, Sir W. Jervois proposed to meet Ismail, followed by Abdullah and lastly Yusuf. By an act of simulated treachery, the Resident, Mr. Birch and the new Governor, Sir W. Jervois managed to secure the signatures of the Sultans and thus "the government of Perak had passed into the hands of the British authorities, whose officers would govern in his name (Abdullah)" (55).

The proclamation on debt-slavery came in right after the above "handover" had been sealed. Mr. Birch's actions of going around Perak to put up the notice was like "rubbing salt into the wound" as many of Perak Chiefs were already angry with the British over the issue of revenue collection and the way that their Sultans had been "cheated" in order to secure their signatures. The fact is, according to P. B. Maxwell, "with much ability, energy, and integrity of purpose, Mr. Birch had defects which pre-eminently unfitted him for dealing with Malays, whose language even he did not understand" (115). This fact, of course, is well-known to many but on top of that, P. B. Maxwell adds, "but further, both the Governors were without experience in the East, or in the questions and difficulties which they had to meet in the new field of duties to which they were called" (115). What becomes obvious was that the new Governor and the new Resident were only interested in securing the power to act when dealing with the natives and were blind to local customs or the feelings of the locals.

In addition, the sultans were only apportioned an annuity on their parts and exercised some power over matters related to Malay customs and religion, or in other words, matters that provided no financial returns to the British government. P. B. Maxwell seemed to suggest that the two Governors were also indirectly responsible for Mr. Birch's assassination. It should be noted that within less than

three months after the death of Mr. J. W. W. Birch, his first son Mr. Ernest Birch was graciously permitted by His Majesty's Government to enter the Colonial Office at Downing Street. In 1878, by the time P. B. Maxwell published his book, Mr. Ernest Birch was already in the Straits Settlements Civil Service and later climbed the ladder of success until he became Resident of Perak in 1904/5. In stark contrast to his father who was arrogant and insensitive towards local customs and religion, Sir Ernest Birch (knighted in 1900 after serving North Borneo for a great number of years) was well liked by the locals. On this note, however, the author is surprised that P. B. Maxwell did not mention anything about Mr Ernest's appointment in his book. Perhaps, he was not aware of Mr Ernest's appointment, or perhaps, P. B. Maxwell agreed to such an appointment (especially in the eyes of a fair judge like him) that such acknowledgement was not deemed necessary to be mentioned in his book.

P. B. Maxwell's book calls for England to exercise its "power of self-criticism" and reminds the English that it is this power and the love of justice that help to sustain the national character. Admitting to the public that "much wrong has surely been done" from the "account of the steps by which we have made the territorial conquests of the Malays, and the manner in which we have treated the conquered" would be the best way to gauge whether the national character of England had been compromised or otherwise. P. B. Maxwell ends his book in the following manner which the author will quote verbatim:

> It is one of the most touching and painful facts in history, that from the days of the first Portuguese discoverers to the present time, the natives, whether of India, China, Japan, Java, or the South Sea, received their first European visitors with open arms; and everywhere they met with ruthless treatment in return. We have advanced, no doubt, beyond the conquerors of the 16th and 17th centuries; but even now it seems that the less civilized races of men cannot come into contact with us without enduring suffering and wrong.
>
> Let us not, then, be surprised if they shrink from contact with us. Let us not wonder if native chiefs in and beyond India are not enthusiastic for the aid and advice of a British Resident; or if, as happened only the other day in Thibet, the mere rumour that English explorers are likely to enter their country, creates such terror as to lead to orders being issued to break down all the bridges on the road of such visitors. Will the day never come when we shall teach weaker races that the words of Christianity and Civilization, which are always in our mouths, mean for them something else than conquest and oppression? Shall we never

> earn the name of being a people that had self-respect enough to be just to them, or heart enough to show mercy upon them? (117)

While P. B. Maxwell appeared to advocate a critical assessment of the British policy and the conduct of the British officials, his grandson G. W. Maxwell seemed to promote the appreciation of the Malay customs and the manner to approach the local Malays. G. W. Maxwell, later known as a naturalist, wrote a book entitled *In Malay Forests* (1907) and was responsible for the development of hill stations in Malaya such as Cameron Highlands and Fraser Hill. The fact that he did not become a Malay scholar like his father, W. E. Maxwell or his grandfather, P. B. Maxwell, need not suggest that G. W. Maxwell knew no Malay; in fact the book being studied includes a close study of Malay folklore and many enchanting tales which provide proof of his ability in the language. It is the evidence on the Malay *adat* (customs) from his book upon which this paper is based and it is worth noting the inclusion of stories like "A Deer-drive", "Crocodile Catching", "A Fish-drive" and "A Tiger-drive" which titles are suggestive of the sporting activities that G. W. Maxwell was very fond of. However, for the purpose of the present chapter that concerns the northern Malay customs, only a short story entitled "A Fish-drive" will be analysed as the story takes place in the northern part of Perak. Out of the 16 stories in this collection, many of the stories concerned with other locations in Malaya such as "A Were-tiger" which sets in the state of Pahang. Also, as mentioned earlier, the choice of a short story "A Fish-drive" is also meant to validate a real account on such cultural/religious practice that comes close to the one that is still in the living memory of the villagers in the northern part of Malaysia, specifically in Baling, Kedah.

"A Fish-drive" is narrated by an English observer through the eyes of a local Malay *pawang*, Alang Abdullah. It is an interesting story because it portrays a turn-taking narrative voice, beginning from Alang Abdullah in the form of an authoritative omniscient point of view to the English narrator from time to time, who serves only as a bystander, perhaps watching and sympathising over the inner conflicts faced by Alang Abdullah in the latter's plight to reminisce "the old custom". It is also interesting to note that out of the 16 stories in this compilation; only this story is narrated in this manner, suggesting that G. W. Maxwell was trying his hands on a creative mode in his writing. What is also interesting is that there is an instance of a dramatic irony in this story that the English narrator is not aware of despite his attempt to represent the Malay psyche and a genuine response from the latter. The choice of the narrator taking "a back seat" and observing what is going on in the mind and in the action of Alang Abdullah is indeed interesting as the story progresses.

It is through Alang Abdullah's thoughts and actions that the plot develops to depict dichotomous conflicts between substantial civilisation and primitiveness, God and Allah, and Allah and Supernatural which interests the English narrator. "There is no God but Allah" (107) ironically rejects the idea of Christendom brought by the Western world during colonisation. The act of fasting during the month of Ramadan and attending Friday prayers at the mosque are ironically fascinating to the colonial master. In fact, we hear the narrator's voice at the beginning of the story before Alang Abdullah takes control of the narration to represent his thoughts and memories of pre-colonisation.

The practice of animism which is the embodiment of metaphysical elements is seen as ennoblement to the spirit of the English narrator. This beguilement is depicted in *In Malay Forests* (1907) when the forest is seen to serve as a sanctuary and haven to the Malays. G. W. Maxwell further illustrates the spellbinding precision of the forest and the mysteries that it conceals. It is the place "Batara Kala and Hana Taskun, the great Water Jins, Voice-folk, Earth Jins, Dewas, six heavens and six layers lie between heaven and the world" (108). The forest is evergreen and has great connection with Nature, the universal mother. Hence, the Malays worship the forest for protection and solace despite being staunch Muhammadans.

G. W. Maxwell then says, "he will then discover, what the Malay can never for a minute forget, that he lives his life in midst of a forest which is as much apart from him as it is around him". "*Orang Hutan*—forest men" (107) shows that the forest delineates the Malay heritage and belief system and the process of westernisation has raped such natural customs and beliefs.

As the bulk of the story revolves around the process of evolution and westernisation, we see the emergence of the English narrator's alter ego in the narration. "Schools, railways, and foreign immigration are making the Perak Malays of the present generation a class of men very different from their fathers" (107) and that "the days of slavery, of forced labour and forced contribution, were over" (108), suggests the progress that he and his fellow Europeans have brought about and then succinctly introduces the readers to "an old Alang Abdullah [who] was one of a type that is fast disappearing" (107), to which the old Alang Abdullah replied: "A new custom and an old man" (110).

Hence, the English narrator, questions to what extent the idea of civilisation brought by the British is substantial enough for the process of syncretism among Perak Malays. The English narrator is leading a double life, perhaps a double personality. He is built up of two extremes, one who is compelled to glorify the western ideology and the other who condemns the negativity of the western ideology which results in ethnocide.

The story further travels into Alang Abdullah's reminiscence of the fish-drive—an occasion of gathering fish to one place "during the dry season, when the river was at its lowest… (110), the narrator states that Alang Abdullah "had been in charge of the operations (110), thus giving him the space and authority in co-narrating the story. However, despite the fact that he is the person in charge of the operation, Alang Abdullah has to succumb to the wish of his chief's or "datoh's European guests" (111) that the day originally selected by Alang Abdullah had to be postponed. This has caused disappointment on Alang Abdullah and from time to time muttered to himself "It is not right; it is not right at all" (111). As an observer, the English narrator could only contextualise the above line in relation to Alang Abdullah's anticipation of nature that his choice of date for a fish-drive to take place is an inappropriate one. What the narrator fails to comprehend is that the line "it is not right at all" could be referring to his chief's or datoh's agreement to the date set by the European guests that later translates into a failure of the whole event and this contributes to the element of dramatic irony in the story. This line by Alang Abdullah is being mentioned again later at the very end of the story when the fish-drive is over and this reinforces that the choice of following the date set by the European guests is not right. Perhaps, Alang Abdullah is voicing out his disappointment by talking about the locals having to succumb to the wish of the alien masters, but the English observer interprets the line differently.

The fish-drive as an annual event that "begin[s] some seven or eight miles up-stream, and a rope through which glittering strips of palm-leaf were threaded would be dragged through the water between two boats to scare the fish and send them down-stream" (111). A night before the event begins, Alang Abdullah spent "most of his night in burning censers full of resin, and in making small offerings to the Jins of the Water and of the Forest. He promised them further offerings of rice, and eggs, and limes should the drive yield a good catch of fish, and implored that they would assist him, and save him and his party from harm and mischief" (113). This special offerings to the element of nature is also similar to the "*Tolak Bala*" or literally, "chasing away the evil spirit", a ritual that was practiced in some parts of the northern states of Malaysia. According to one respondent in Kampung Legong, Baling, Kedah, he was, like Alang Abdullah, the person in-charge of the operation when the ceremony was carried out on the riverbanks as recently as 1981.

The fish-drive in the story by G. W. Maxwell, however, has some similarities and also some differences when compared to the "*Tolak Bala*" ritual observed in Baling. As for its similarities, both rituals took place in the river or riverbanks and it involved men in great numbers, at least one man per family. Dry season was a preferred season for the ceremony. The stretch of the rivers in both places was of similar distance, covering some five to seven miles area or within the

populated area of the *kampung* and the ritual began up-stream and ended down-stream. For its differences, as the people in Baling were mostly farmers and jungle gatherers, they did not rely on sources from the river for their protein intakes. Fish could easily be obtained from paddy fields and as jungle gatherers they did not only gather jungle produce but also hunted for animals such as mouse deer for meat. Therefore, there was no need for them to perform the actual fish-drive as suggested in G. W. Maxwell's short story. While the fish-drive in the short story is suggestive of its being sportive and ritual at the same time, the "*Tolak Bala*" was purely a ritual occasion and had no association with being a sportive event at all.

The best part of the fish-drive activity derived from the catching of the fish at or along the pools down-stream. Here, the narrator describes "at the bow of every house-boat stood an Englishman with a casting-net over his shoulder… [and]… as he stands ready and poised in act to cast, he is a magnificent subject for a sculptor" (115–116). The description here which reveals the involvement of an Englishman in this sporting activity reinforces what G. W. Maxwell has suggested in his circular letter that in order to circumvent the loss of touch between the Europeans and the Asiatics in Malaya, the involvement of Englishmen with Malay customs are deemed beneficial to both parties.

The short story itself does not only capture some aspects of the Malay customs but also records a colonial officer's encounters with such an interesting people and custom, of which a European's participation adds to the merriment of the occasion.

G. W. Maxwell desires to foster and cultivate friendship between the locals and the British officers to reduce the socio-political gap between both parties. The story, however, seems to imply that the moment an alien master begins to interfere with the running of a local custom (i.e., suggesting the postponement of the date in the case of the short story under study), the entire event, albeit very sportive in nature, is tantamount to a failure.

The language used in "A Fish-drive" is reflective of the Malay culture and ways of living. Hence, such culture and tradition are conveyed and preserved through the use of Malay vocabulary in the narrative. Words such as *relap*, *sangkut*, *sorak* and *pawang* signal the intervention of the local culture in [an] Englishman's narration and to the readers' surprise these words are not translated or transcreated to suit the western world for comprehension. Sir Maxwell has kept the narrative as original and authentic as it can be to depict the local way of living and the need for the British colonial officers to respect the locals and foster solidarity thus treating them with justice and equality.

To summarise, this essay argues that the Maxwells invested considerable effort during the colonisation period to better understand, hence to sustain, the Malay culture, particularly in regard to local customs and religious practices. The Maxwells' fascination with Malay culture led them to document numerous local practices in great detail, in records which are indeed available and extremely useful for the purpose of enabling the Malay people themselves to revive some of their old, forgotten traditions and thereby to preserve their own cultural heritage. Aimed at understanding the culture and the psyche of the Malay people as part of the colonial enterprise, the usefulness of the Maxwells' written project has inevitably extended into the postcolonial era, to help maintain the local culture, its vocabulary and history.

Notes

1. The original title for this paper was "Sir George Maxwell and Captain Meadows Frost and their study of Northern Malay Customs (*Adat Istiadat*)" but due to lack of information pertaining to Captain Meadows Frost, the author has to limit his discussion to the Maxwell family only, particularly on Sir P. B Maxwell and his grandson, Sir G. W. Maxwell. The shorter and translated version of this chapter has appeared in Abu Talib Ahmad (ed), *Utara Semenanjung Malaysia: Esei-esei warisan* published by Penerbit Universiti Sains Malaysia in 2012. The author would like to take this opportunity to thank his research assistant, Renukadevi Anandan, for some thoughtful discussion and input on this revised version of the paper.
2. For details on Sir William, see J. M. Gullick's "William Maxwell and the Study of Malay Society" (JMRAS Vol. 64, 1991). For that matter, the title of the present study seems to reflect the title of Gullick's article mentioned herein.
3. William Ewart Gladstone (29 December 1809–19 May 1898) was a British Liberal Party statesman and four times Prime Minister of the United Kingdom (1868–74, 1880–85, 1886, 1892–94). Gladstone was not the Prime Minister at the time of the publication of *Our Malay Conquests* in 1878.
4. He wrote the article, "Who shall we hang next?" that created the controversial issue in the west before being transferred to the east.

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