

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RELATING TO THE

AFFAIRS OF CERTAIN NATIVE STATES

IN THE

MALAY PENINSULA,

IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD OF

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

(In further continuation of Command Paper [C. 1320] of August 1875.)

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command of Her Majesty.



LONDON:
PRINTED BY GEORGE EDWARD EYRE AND WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
PRINTERS TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.
FOR HER MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

1876.

[C. 1503.] Price 4d.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE

RELATING TO THE

AFFAIRS OF CERTAIN NATIVE STATES

IN THE

MALAY PENINSULA

IN THE KINGDOM OF

THE STRAITS SETTLEMENTS

(In further confirmation of Command Paper [C. 1820] of March 1875)

Approved to both Houses of Parliament by Command of both Houses



LONDON:

PRINTED BY GEORGE EDWARD SWEET AND ALLEN, STATIONERS

PRINTED TO THE ORDER OF THE QUEEN'S PRINTER

FOR THE YEAR 1875

1875

[C. 1820] 1875

CORRESPONDENCE.

No. 1.

GOVERNOR SIR W. JERVOIS, K.C.M.G., C.B., to the EARL OF CARNARVON.
(Received March 13th.)

MY LORD,

Government House, Singapore, February 10, 1876.

IN Despatch No. 218, of the 10th December 1875,* your Lordship, whilst asking for explanations, expresses strong opinions on some points connected with the course of action which I considered it necessary to adopt with reference to the affairs of the State of Perak, as communicated in my Despatch No. 291, dated 16th October last.†

2. In expressing the opinion which your Lordship had then formed on the subject, your Lordship states that I made a serious departure from the policy which had been sanctioned by Her Majesty's Government, and which, until your Lordship received the news of the murder of Mr. Birch, you still fully believed to be in force in Perak, as well as in other neighbouring states. Your Lordship also remarks that, upon that change of policy, disastrous consequences ensued, and that it was the signal for resistance and attack. Your Lordship proceeds to bring to my notice some extracts from Despatches, with a view of showing that the policy of Her Majesty's Government was to appoint British Officers as Residents, whose duty it would be solely to advise the native rulers in matters relating to the government of their respective states.

3. In order that a fair judgment may be formed as to the nature of the change which I made with respect to the administration of affairs in Perak, I beg that your Lordship will refer, firstly, to the Pangkore Treaty itself, and to the injunctions laid down by your Lordship with reference thereto (on both of which I shall have to remark hereafter); and, secondly, will permit me to draw therefrom the deductions which, under the circumstances which I shall detail, it seems to me, necessarily follow, as to the course of action which it was imperative to adopt in order to give effect to the engagements contained in the treaty, and to your Lordship's strongly expressed injunction,‡ that the Sultan and Chiefs of Perak were to be informed that Her Majesty's Government would look to the exact fulfilment of their pledges, and would hold responsible those who violate the engagement which they had solemnly agreed upon.

The extracts which your Lordship quotes from Despatches addressed to me in July last, more than 18 months after the Pangkore Engagement was entered into, and two months after Sir A. Clarke had left the Government, could not, I considered (see my Despatch No. 298, of 21st October last),§ be held to enjoin me to take the retrograde step of reversing the course of action which, under that engagement, and under your Lordship's strict injunctions, had been adopted by my predecessor.

4. I believe that I can show your Lordship that the policy as pursued since the date of the Pangkore Treaty has been really not at all what your Lordship seems to have considered it to have been, and that your Lordship is under a misapprehension as to the line of action which you have approved, and does not do justice to that which you now condemn. The step which I have taken appears to your Lordship to be a great one in advance, because your Lordship has believed that a policy of advice only was in operation, whereas, in fact, from the commencement of British intervention, the government of the Malayan States, to which British Residents have been accredited, has been, in greater or less degree, exercised by those officers themselves.

5. Even if it were ever contemplated by this Government that the Residents should confine their attention to merely giving advice, it has been found from the very commencement that such a course has been impossible.

6. There has been really no ruler, neither in Perak, Salangore, or Sungie Ujong, in each of which States we have had Residents, who has ever had the power to carry out the advice of the Resident.

7. The power of the recognised ruler has been more or less nominal, and any of the petty Chiefs and usurpers of local power could set his authority at defiance with impunity.

True, the Resident, as a matter of course, always would have advised the ruler that it was his duty to preserve peace and order in his State, to maintain a pure dispensation

* No. 73 of Confidential Paper, "Eastern, No. 17." 39513.

† No. 48 of same Paper.

‡ No. 52 of same Paper.

of justice, regardless of the rank of criminals, to place the collection of revenue on a satisfactory footing, and generally to secure good administration. The rulers, however, would have been powerless, even had they been willing to carry out this advice, and the very fact of their attempting to do so would have raised up enemies amongst the Chiefs, whose unjustifiable practices have been denounced, and amongst robber bands, whose source of livelihood depends upon the mal-administration of the country.

8. Under these circumstances the Resident has not only had to give advice, but also to render active assistance and take the control of public affairs.

He has had to organize an armed force, to take into his own hands the collection of the revenues, to listen to all complaints made, to punish evil-doers, to repress armed gangs of robbers and murderers, to apprehend criminals, and to see that justice was done.

9. When I arrived here in May last I found that each Resident was practically administering the government of the state to which he was accredited, and I certainly always considered that this was understood to be the case in the Colonial Office, as it certainly was by everyone out here, from the very commencement of the Residential system.

10. These remarks apply to all the States to which Residents had been accredited, and, in the case of Perak, the necessity for this course was considerably enhanced by the anarchy in the country caused by Ismail's claims, which led to a division of parties, and by the weak obstinate behaviour of Sultan Abdullah, to whom a British Resident had been appointed. I will discuss hereafter this question of the division of parties, and in what manner it affected the position of the Resident.

11. I would now beg to point out to your Lordship that, in addition to the general considerations which, as I have shown in paragraphs 6, 7, 8, rendered the Residential system, as a system of mere advice, if such were ever contemplated, a practical impossibility, that the very terms of the Pangkore Treaty contained the elements of control, and that a system of virtual administration in Perak, either covertly or openly, was but the logical sequence of the terms of the Treaty, especially when regarded in connexion with those considerations before alluded to.

12. Upon turning to the treaty, we find that all revenues were to be collected in the name of the Sultan, but that the collection and control of such revenues and the general administration of the country were to be regulated under the advice of the Resident, and it is stated in the treaty itself that this advice "must be acted upon" by the Sultan.

Such an engagement, to which the Sultan and Chiefs of Perak were held bound, virtually threw the government of the country into the hands of the Resident, and committed Her Majesty's Government to this policy.

13. I may remark that this was pointed out to your Lordship at the time, in the House of Lords, by Lord Stanley of Alderley, when he said that he "felt it to be his duty to warn Her Majesty's Government against giving its sanction to the plans of the Straits Government, by which it would not only be entering into equivocal and entangling engagements, but embarking in a course which must inevitably lead to the invasion and conquest of the whole of the Malay Peninsula. * * * The object was, in reality, to impose upon the Sultan of Perak two British Officials, to be called Resident and Assistant Resident, to be paid out of the Perak revenues, and with powers which would make them the virtual rulers of the country."

Now, I would beg to observe that although your Lordship, when replying, reminded Lord Stanley that the Residents had not been imposed upon the Sultan, but that they "had been appointed at the distinct request and entreaty of the Rajahs to whose courts they had been sent," your Lordship did not contradict the very grave assertion, made by him, that the engagements entered into would make the Residents "the virtual rulers of the country."

14. That it was early recognised by my predecessor that a system of mere advice was impossible, is shown by the following extract from the instructions issued to Mr. Birch on the 26th October 1874, prior to his taking up the duties of Resident, from which your Lordship will observe that the power therein conferred upon him is not at all compatible with such system.

"The subject of the future revenue relations of Perak remains. His Excellency, in the absence of any reliable information on this important matter, is not now prepared to give you any distinct instructions, further than to allow the existing system to go on when not of such an irregular character as to require immediate alteration; but *you will use your best exertions to put down, by force if necessary, all unlawful exactions of whatever nature, so as to secure that whatever revenue is collected shall be for the State alone, and that freebooters, leviers of black mail, and Chiefs pretending authority to levy duties may be hindered in their extortions, and all revenue collected may be paid into the general treasury of the country.*"

15. Nor were such instructions confined to the Resident accredited to Perak. I find that, in the case of Salangore also, Mr. Davidson received such instructions as virtually authorised him to administer the affairs of that State. The following extracts bear upon this point:—

“His Excellency desires that you will proceed at once to Klang, where you will establish yourself, at first making such arrangement for your personal accommodation as the nature of the case will admit of, and proceeding, as soon as possible, to organise a Resident’s guard and police of such force as you may think proper. His Excellency desires that *you* will at once publish notices far and wide * * * recalling all fugitives, promising them protection, and taking special steps for having such of them as possessed property restored to the possession of that property, and providing them all with waste land to cultivate, if they wish to cultivate. The system of collecting revenue on imports * * * should occupy your early attention.

“You will send in a regular monthly report of progress, and a monthly statement showing the revenue and expenses of the country, *which you will take under your special charge*, being assisted by such officers, clerks, &c. as may be sanctioned by his Excellency, on your representation after arrival at Klang. A steam launch will be provided for you at once, to enable you to visit the several places of trade and population in Salangore, and his Excellency desires that you will take an early opportunity of seeing the Sultan of Salangore at Langat, and *that you will enter upon such relations with his Highness* as will enable you, in gaining his confidence, to be of real service in securing the peace and prosperity of his country.”

16. Your Lordship will observe that these instructions are so couched that the Resident became the agent of the Governor rather than the adviser of the Sultan and Viceroy; in fact, I may say the latter position was never taken up, and that the entire control of the affairs of this State of Salangore has been concentrated in the Resident.

17. Upon referring to paragraph 10 of your Lordship’s Despatch, under acknowledgment, your Lordship states that you have always understood “that the British officers “confined themselves to advising and assisting the native authorities,” and that, until the receipt of the intelligence of Mr. Birch’s death, your Lordship fully believed that such a system was “in force in Perak as well as in the neighbouring territories.”

With all deference, I think that your Lordship has misconceived the position of affairs, for both from Despatches and Reports (especially the latter) which were forwarded to your Lordship, before my arrival in the Colony, it appears to me to be clearly shown that the position which the Resident assumed towards the States, was not merely that of an adviser. I will confine the following remarks to the State of Perak.

18. In Sir A. Clarke’s Despatch to your Lordship, dated December 30th, 1874,* he points out that Mr. Birch was “in every way, eminently qualified for undertaking the “task of initiating all the practical measures essential for the future administration of a “semi-civilized country.” He further states, that Mr. Birch possessed “in a remarkable degree, untiring physical energy and endurance, powers of infinite value to one “whose duties will necessarily entail upon him constant exposure to climate and “weather.”

Assuming that it was the duty of the Resident practically to take upon himself the administration of the affairs of the country, such qualifications were doubtless invaluable for the work which had to be done, and which has been more or less done, in all the States to which Residents have been appointed, but they are not the qualifications for which an officer would be selected if he were only intended to be a passive adviser.

19. But, it is to Mr. Birch’s Report on Perak, dated 2nd April, and forwarded to your Lordship with Despatch No. 121, of 26th April 1875,† that I would beg especially to call your Lordship’s attention, as showing that, in his position as Resident and nominal adviser, Mr. Birch really performed all those duties which, in paragraph 8 of this Despatch, I have stated must be performed by a Resident when the ruler is powerless, even if willing, to carry out the advice tendered to him.

From paragraphs 2 and 74, your Lordship will observe that, after having made the acquaintance of the Sultan, Mr. Birch was travelling, in various parts of Perak, for some five months.

In paragraph 11 there is no mention of any advice tendered to the Sultan, but a hope is expressed that, when the Sultan has a new house, that he would give up opium smoking and think for himself.

In paragraphs 16, 17, and 18 he mentions that the complaints of illegal fining and oppression, which came before *him* (Mr. Birch), were on the decrease.

* No. 74 of Command Paper [C. 1,111], July 1874. † No. 26 of Command Paper [C. 1,320] of August 1875.

In paragraphs 19 and 20, he mentions that *he* had reorganised the system of collecting the imports and exports, and that it was now under the supervision of one of his officers who kept the accounts.

In paragraph 27 he states that *he* had submitted a scale of duties to the Governor, who had approved of the same.

In paragraphs 30 and 31 he states that *he* hopes to have a short code of laws ready for the Datus, and that the Datus and Sultans in many cases referred the ryots to *him*, for the settlement of complaints.

In paragraph 40 he states that *he* is unable to deal with the appointments of Punghulus and Datus until he had become personally acquainted with the topography of the country.

In paragraphs 62, 72, and 73 he states that *he* intended or proposed to have police stations at various points.

Finally, in paragraph 90, he states that *the British Administration* in Laroot has been very successful.

20. Now, my Lord, I would beg to observe that although this Report admits of no doubt that the Resident (backed by the terms of the Pangkore engagement which, as I have stated in paragraph 12, virtually threw the Government of the country into his hands) had assumed powers far beyond that of an adviser and counsellor. Your Lordship, in acknowledging the receipt of the Report (No. 120 of 15th July), states that you had read it with much interest, and that you trusted that peace and prosperity will be still further developed.

21. I certainly always considered, as I have stated in paragraph 9, that the Colonial Office understood that the relation of the Resident to the ruler was far beyond that of a mere adviser, and I was strengthened in that belief by the apparent acquiescence of your Lordship in Reports such as that to which I have referred. When, therefore, I arrived here and found, as I have stated in paragraph 9, that each Resident was practically administering the Government of the State to which he was accredited, I considered that I should only be carrying out the views of the Colonial Office in supporting such system, and endeavouring, if possible, to bring it to a successful issue. I would beg to point out to your Lordship that this system was not introduced by me, but that I found it in operation, and, as I have explained, I considered it, under the circumstances of the case, a logical consequence of our intervention.

22. Soon after my arrival here, I recognised that the success of the system as it existed was, amongst other conditions, dependent upon the amenability of the ruler. When the Resident and the central authority acted in harmony, and when the views of the former were cordially supported by the latter, comparative success accrued. But when their mutual relations were distinguished by disunion and discord, rather than by harmony and unanimity, and when the central authority would not submit to be strengthened by the moral and material force which the Resident could bring to bear, failure, either total or partial, was the inevitable result.

23. Now, I beg your Lordship to observe that, on my arrival here, I found that the success of the residential system in the States of Salangore and Perak presented a very marked contrast. In both these States, as well as in that of Sungie Ujong, the Residents had the conduct of affairs in their own hands, but different results had ensued, for the reason that the relations between the Resident and the ruler were marked respectively by the opposite features which the system is capable of presenting, and which I have explained in the previous paragraph.

24. In Salangore, as your Lordship justly remarks, in paragraph 15 of your Lordship's Despatch under acknowledgment, comparative success had attended this system.

This is to be accounted for by the fact that Tunku Kudin, Viceroy of Salangore, recognising that his position as ruler of a Malay State is that which I have described the position of such rulers to be generally (in paragraph 7), has trusted implicitly in Mr. Davidson, the Resident, and has, together with the Sultan, who is also amenable, immediately ratified any measures proposed by Mr. Davidson, knowing that such measures were for the good of the country. Mr. Davidson has felt himself obliged to take all the duties of the administration of the country, as stated in paragraph 8, into his hands, but, in this also, Tunku Kudin gives him all the assistance he can, and co-operates with him to the utmost of his ability.

25. But I would, however, observe that this condition of affairs in Salangore does not possess the elements of permanency. In the event of anything happening to the central native authority, there is a possibility that his successor would not submit to be guided by the decisions of the Resident. In that case a state of things would ensue somewhat similar to that which I found existing in Perak.

And here I may remark that Mr. Davidson has had considerable difficulties to contend with in Salangore, and that he has been successful in putting down and preventing disturbances by the cordial support he has received from the Viceroy whilst acting in his name.

26. I have previously stated that the necessity for a British Resident adopting a course of control was considerably enhanced in Perak by the division of parties in that State, and by the fact that the Treaty of Pangkore itself contained the elements of control, insomuch that the Sultan was bound thereby to act upon the Resident's advice in matters concerning the general administration of the country and the collection of revenue, and, indeed, in all matters, except such as referred to Malay religion and custom.

A proclamation had been issued, in consequence of your Lordship's Despatch of the 4th September, holding inviolable the engagements which the Sultan and Chiefs had made at Pangkore. However, notwithstanding these engagements, to which Sultan Abdullah had solemnly agreed, and for the keeping of which he was held responsible by Her Majesty's Government, I found (as I reported in Despatch No. 291 of 16th October last),* that he was thwarting the Resident, and that, in consequence, the conduct of public business was rendered well nigh impossible.

In fact, the relations between Abdullah and the Resident were marked by disunion and discord. The situation was rendered still more difficult by the position which was assumed by Ex-Sultan Ismail in the matter.

27. Under the Pangkore Treaty Ismail was dethroned and Abdullah was recognised as Sultan. A Resident was attached to the "court" of Abdullah, and an Assistant Resident was appointed for Laroot. Ismail, who was not present at Pangkore, did not assent to the arrangement, and not unnaturally so. Rightly or wrongly, he had been elected Sultan by a certain number of Chiefs, and, in virtue of such election, held the regalia of the country in his possession. He was acknowledged as Sultan throughout the greater part of the country, extending from Passir Sala, on the Perak River, upwards.

28. Although Abdullah, therefore, the nominal ruler of the lower portion of the river, was the rightful heir to the throne according to the principles of Perak succession, and although we recognised him as such at Pangkore, it by no means followed that the deposed Ismail would acquiesce in the terms of an engagement which would deprive him of the important power which he possessed in the Upper Country, especially as that engagement was entered into by his rival, Abdullah, and by Chiefs, many of whom had previously installed him (Ismail) as Sultan. In my opinion it seems unreasonable to suppose that Ismail would have surrendered his power under such an engagement, in which he had not even been consulted, yet I am given to understand that the idea was entertained at Pangkore.

Your Lordship will observe from letter to Ismail, page 157 of Blue Book, that it was assumed that he would at once peaceably surrender the regalia. It appears also from paragraph 111 of Enclosure 7, Despatch No. 43, dated 24th February 1874,† that the new Sultan was to send to Ismail for the regalia, and that the Governor promised to attend the ceremony of coronation, and thus certify to the people of Perak and the surrounding States that the kingdom of Perak was finally and peaceably settled under Sultan Abdullah.

29. To my mind it admits of no argument that such an engagement could scarcely have failed to have exasperated Ismail. It appears to me that, with the obstinacy and dogged determination which recent events have proved he possesses, added to his sense of wounded dignity, he would have at once decided not to yield the important position which he held in the upper country as long as he could avoid doing so. He must have regarded Abdullah, as well as those Chiefs who supported him, with very bitter feelings. He must also have looked upon the Resident—the agent of the British Government who had supplanted him in favour of his rival, Abdullah—with peculiar animosity (especially when that Resident was governing the whole country in Abdullah's name), and must have been anxious for an opportunity to gratify his wounded pride.

30. But, even supposing that Ismail had no personal feeling in the matter, the position of the Resident in Perak was a most peculiar one. It would be as well to review the situation under the most favourable circumstances, and presume that Abdullah was as amenable to the counsels of the Resident as is Tunku Kudin in Salangore and Datu Klana in Sungie Ujong.

31. Even in that case, the residential system, as carried on in those States, and as described in paragraph 24, could not have succeeded in Perak, as it did in Salangore and Sungie Ujong, because Abdullah did not fill in Perak a similar position to that of the two rulers to whom I have referred, and who are regarded, each in their respective States,

* No. 48 of Confidential Paper, "Eastern, No. 17."

† No. 52 of Command Paper [C. 1,111] of July, 1874.

as a central authority, in whose name the Resident can carry on the administration of the country.

32. When Mr. Birch, who was appointed Resident with Abdullah, some 10 months after the Pangkore engagement had been entered upon, arrived in Perak, he found that Ismail, during this interval, had had time to strengthen his position, and that there were practically two Sultans in Perak, each supported by a particular division of the country, as stated in paragraph 27, and that great jealousy existed between the people of the Ulu (up country), and those of the Hilir (down country), Ismail, whose party outnumbered that of Abdullah, had never acknowledged Abdullah as Sultan, nor the engagement as a treaty by which he was bound, or even in which he was concerned. He also still retained possession of the regalia, and, by so doing, secured the allegiance of a great many subjects, who regarded such possession as symbolic of sovereignty, and without which, in the eyes of the Malays, complete regal power could not be assumed.

33. Besides this dual head, Mr. Birch also found that, from the weakness of the ruling powers, the minor Chiefs were more powerful in this state, than in any other part of the peninsula, and that, although owning nominal allegiance to one or other of the two Sultans, they were practically independent in their several districts, that they oppressed the ryots (many of whom were slave-debtors) residing therein, and that they levied black mail and illegal taxes on all who happened to pass through their particular district.

34. Thus, my Lord, you will observe that, instead of having one central authority in Perak, in whose name and through whose amenability all orders could be given and requisite reforms effected, two Sultans, each antagonistic to the other, divided this central authority between them, the Sultan, as recognised by us under the Pangkore Treaty, being the weaker of the two and powerless to act. Besides this dual head, a number of semi-independent Chiefs, over whom neither Sultan possessed any practical control, and who had thus to be dealt with directly, completed a division of authority which rendered the conduct of public business nearly impossible. I would here beg to remark that your Lordship, in your Despatch of the 25th May last,* to which you call my attention in paragraph 11 of the Despatch under acknowledgment, appears to infer that there was a central authority in Perak, whereas, as I have just demonstrated, there was really no such authority through whom our influence could be exerted, either in respect to the abolition of debt slavery, which forms the subject of the despatch in question, or indeed, to any other matter.

35. Such was the condition of affairs in which Mr. Birch found the State of Perak, in November 1874, when he arrived to carry out a system which, as stated in paragraph 12, committed us to the control of the country.

One of the first duties of Mr. Birch was to impress upon the Sultan and Chiefs that the treaty would be carried out in its entirety, and that those who violated it would be held responsible for so doing.

I find that injunctions on this point were issued to Mr. Birch on appointment in the following terms:—

“You will explain clearly to all with whom you come into contact in Perak, that the terms of the engagement have been approved by Her Majesty’s Government in England, and will be strictly enforced.

“On this subject a number of copies of a proclamation, recently issued here in English and Malay, giving the effect of a Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, are sent to you for distribution where you think they will be useful, and you will clearly explain the meaning and effect of the language used by Lord Carnarvon in that Despatch, so that there may be no misunderstanding on this subject.”

36. I have hitherto presumed that Abdullah was perfectly amenable to the counsels of the Resident, so that, under the virtual control exercised by the latter, the district over which Abdullah held sway was progressing favourably. In that case there still remained for the Resident three important duties to perform:—

(1.) To induce Ismail to agree to the terms of the Pangkore engagement, and to surrender the regalia to Abdullah, who had been elected in his stead. Also to induce those Chiefs who had not already signed the engagement to do so, in order that the whole state of Perak might come under the dominion of Abdullah, and be brought to the same condition, and by the same means, as that portion of the country which was already held by him.

(2.) To put an end to unlawful exactions, and to hinder freebooters, leviers of black-mail, and Chiefs pretending authority, from indulging in their extortions, so that all the revenue could be paid into the general treasury of the State (see paragraph 14).

* No. 24 of Command Paper [C. 1,320], August 1875.

(3.) To be especially careful that your Lordship's injunctions were firmly carried out, and that the Chiefs who had signed the engagement were strictly held to the terms they solemnly agreed upon; to investigate any violation thereof; and to warn them of the consequences of such violation.

37. As regards the first point, Ismail, impelled, doubtless, by motives and feelings such as I have stated in paragraph 29, and recognising that his position was even stronger than it was at the time of the Pangkore engagement, received Mr. Birch as the agent of the British Government attached to Abdullah. An apparent civility, a well-disguised courtesy of manner, and a pretended acquiescence, concealed a strength of purpose, a feeling of injury, and a stern resolution not to part with that which he had acquired. As intractable as he was civil, as obstinate as he was courteous, and as firm as he was seemingly acquiescent, he could not be induced by any persuasion or argument to adopt the decisions of the British Government, nor to yield the high position which he occupied. His very ignorance and dependence upon his counsellors rendered him even still more difficult to deal with.

38. Notwithstanding, however, that the resistance made by Ismail was strictly passive in its nature, Mr. Birch found that, in the large district in which Ismail was acknowledged, he was unable, in his capacity as Resident, to initiate reforms and to effect changes in the name of a Sultan who was not recognized therein as such, but who was rather regarded with jealousy and dislike. Nor could he do so in the name of the Ex-Sultan, for he would then have confirmed the position to which Ismail was aspiring, and would have acted in opposition to the general purpose of the Pangkore engagement, and to the expressed injunctions of Her Majesty's Government. Nevertheless, he had his duties as Resident to perform in this district; to repress disorder, and to bring about a more settled state of things; and this he had to endeavour to do without augmenting the jealousy which existed between the two parties.

39. It must, moreover, be borne in mind that, in endeavouring to effect these objects, he found that the Chiefs, although owning nominal allegiance to one or other of the two Sultans, who divided the head authority between them, were semi-independent, and had to be dealt with directly. Had the ruling power been a strong one, or had the Resident been able to act in the name of one central authority, there is no doubt but that this semi-independence would have disappeared.

40. By taking up the position assigned to him by his instructions, Mr. Birch was enabled to do much towards carrying out the second duty ((2) paragraph 36) which as Resident he had to perform, and, to his credit, I may say that in the twelve months during which he held the post of Resident illegal extortion and exaction and the levying of black mail greatly diminished. Now, although the ryots could not fail to recognise the protection which they gained from the presence of a British Officer, and in the course adopted by him in putting down extortion and black mail, a relief from a burden against which they dared not complain, the Chiefs, on the other hand, doubtless regarded such proceedings as encroachments on the power which they had exercised.

It is not to be wondered at that they were loath to surrender their power, and that Mr. Birch, in virtue of the instructions issued to him (paragraph 14), was often obliged on failure of persuasion, to have recourse to threats of force. Nor is it to be wondered at, that, in consequence, Mr. Birch was regarded by some of the Chiefs, whose power he had curbed, with ill-feeling and distrust.

41. And to none of these Chiefs did the new order of things prove probably more distasteful than to the Maharaja Lela. He had not been concerned in the Pangkore treaty, and holding as head of the "Eight,"* a most important position in the State, he doubtless felt annoyed and slighted that other Chiefs had entered into this engagement without consulting him. For 10 months, however, British intervention, confined as it was to Laroot, was not brought to bear upon him. Impelled, doubtless, by feelings of annoyance and pique, he had, during this time, the opportunity of cementing a friendship with Ismail, although, in February 1872, he had been one of the Chiefs who addressed a letter to the Governor, urging the claims of Abdullah to the throne.

42. I have twice mentioned that Ismail's position was stronger in November 1874 than it was at the time of the Pangkore engagement. This is mainly due to the fact that no step was taken to establish Abdullah in his position, nor to strengthen that position by the presence of a Resident for some 10 months. Had the Pangkore engagement been immediately acted upon, and had Abdullah then received the moral support of a Resident, perhaps many subsequent difficulties would never have arisen, whilst, as it was, the delay which ensued detracted from the solemn importance with which the engagement should

* See page 129 Blue Book, Native States Affairs.

have been regarded by the Chiefs who had contracted it. During this interval, the Bandahara, the Tumonggong, and the Mantri, neither of whom had been very warm supporters of Abdullah, practically abandoned the cause of Abdullah and espoused that of Ismail, whilst the Datu Sagor wavered between the two Sultans.

Raja Muda Yusuf who, until 1874, had never even met Ismail, whilst declaring himself to be the rightful Sultan, repudiated Abdullah and associated himself with Ismail. There remained, therefore, but the Laxamana, the Shahbandar, and the Rajah Makola as supporters of Abdullah.

43. Such was the position of the Chiefs, as regards the nominal allegiance which they owed to the two heads, who, together, constituted the central authority.

I may remark that such allegiance did not necessitate active support, in fact, during recent events, Rajah Muda Yusuf has actively supported us, and the Bandahara, the Tumonggong, and the Mantri have afforded us assistance in more or less degree.

44. Ismail's position was still more strengthened by the declared allegiance of the Maharaja Lela. Living as the latter did at Passir Sala, the point of division of the upper and lower districts, he was the first to feel the presence and power of the Resident, when British intervention was brought to bear in Perak. He also, doubtless, felt some contempt for the position of Abdullah, supported as he was but by three Chiefs, each of whom were inferior in rank to himself. He probably regarded Mr. Birch as an intruder and as an agent of Abdullah, and, no doubt, he viewed the abolition of illegal taxes and black mail, as practised at Passir Sala, with exasperated feelings.

Exasperation gave rise to insolence, and Mr. Birch, who from the Residency at Bandar Bahru, could always keep a watch over his actions, experienced greater trouble and obstruction from him than from any other Chief in Perak. I shall allude again to this point when considering your Lordship's observation that my proceedings in Perak were the "signal for resistance and attack."

45. In paragraph 40, I have stated that Mr. Birch was, in a considerable measure, successful in putting down illegal extortion and exaction in Perak, and that he was, in consequence, regarded with ill-feeling and distrust by the Chiefs whose power he had curbed. But any resistance to his proceedings was, as a rule, similar to that offered by Ismail, in his relations with the Resident, viz., passive. This was probably due more to the jealousy which existed between the several Chiefs and their followers, and the almost impossibility of their uniting for a common object, rather than to any individual feeling in the matter.

Arrangements had not been perfected for indemnifying the principal Chiefs and rulers for loss of power and profit, and many of them, no doubt feared that British intervention, which brought gain to the ryots, meant loss to them. At the same time, they probably did not individually feel themselves in a position openly to oppose the reformatory measures effected by the Resident.

46. It is to be observed that the Resident could only carry out the measures necessary for the good government of the country in the name of Abdullah, and with his consent and approval. Now, as I have mentioned in paragraph 32, Abdullah was not recognised as Sultan in the Ulu, and any measures introduced therein in his name had naturally the effect of increasing the jealousy between the two parties and of encountering opposition from Ex-Sultan Ismail and his Chiefs. Mr. Birch was naturally anxious to carry out such measures in the Ulu, as is shown by some of the extracts from his report to which I have alluded in paragraph 19, but at the same time, it would have been a task of great difficulty, and one in which the name of Abdullah would have had to be used as sparingly as possible.

47. Thus, even had Abdullah, as hitherto presumed, been perfectly amenable to the counsels of the Resident, your Lordship will observe that the division of parties in the State of Perak, was fatal to the successful working of the Residential system, as carried on in the States of Salangore and Sungie Ujong, in each of which there is a central authority, in whose name the Residents can practically carry on the administration of affairs. In Perak, such action was rendered impossible by the absence of this necessary central authority one division of the country and that the most considerable one, recognising neither the Sultan as elected at Pangkore, nor his authority to sanction the introduction of the reforms and changes necessary for the improvement of the country and the welfare of its inhabitants.

48. And here I would observe that the failure of the Residential system in Perak, so far as it arose from the division of parties, was quite independent of any action or general line of conduct of either the Resident or of Abdullah, but that it arose purely from the fact of there *being* this division of parties, with their mutual jealousy, distrust, and antagonism.

This disturbing element was peculiar to the State of Perak, and it is, therefore, I submit, unfair to make a comparison of the working of the Residential system in this State with the working of the system in Salangore and Sungie Ujong, where success has been due to the amenability of the central authority, as previously explained (paragraph 24).

49. In the paragraph to which I have just referred, I have endeavoured to explain to your Lordship, in general terms, that when the relations of the Resident and the Ruler were not distinguished by perfect harmony, failure, either total or partial, was certain to ensue. In order to show the fatal effects of the division of central authority in Perak, I have presumed that the Sultan, as elected at Pangkore, was amenable to the decisions of the Resident; but upon descending from hypothesis to facts, your Lordship will recognise that this second disturbing element of want of harmony between the Resident and the Ruler, combined with that of the division of parties, was certain to bring about a complete collapse of the Residential system in Perak.

Extremely difficult as it would have been to have brought this system to a successful issue in this State, even had Abdullah been perfectly amenable, the difficulty became an impossibility when Abdullah adopted a position antagonistic to the counsels of the Resident.

50. The difficulty of conducting public business was not, therefore, confined to the Ulu; it was well nigh impossible to effect progress or to establish reforms, even in the Hilir, on account of the duplicity and folly of Abdullah, who, instead of uniting with the Resident for the public good, took every opportunity to thwart him in his endeavours. The schemes matured by Mr. Birch for the improvement of the country, and to which I have referred in paragraph 46, required Abdullah's signature, or "chop," in order that the Resident might be vested with the necessary powers for carrying them into effect. But Abdullah, with the intractability which has distinguished him throughout, would not ratify these schemes, but postponed doing so, upon the most frivolous excuses, and showed a general desire to break all the engagements into which he had entered at Pangkore.

51. These and many other matters, which I found existing in Perak on my arrival here, in May last, I reported to your Lordship in detail in my previous Despatch, No. 291, of the 16th October last.*

In my Despatch No. 298, of 21st October,† transmitted by the same mail as the Despatch to which I have just referred, I stated the difference that existed in the working of the residential system in the States of Salangore and Sungie Ujong, as distinguished from Perak, and I based my Despatch No. 291, 16th October, upon the unsatisfactory condition of affairs which I found existing in Perak, and therein stated the measures which I had adopted with a view of obviating the difficulties experienced in carrying out the residential system in that State.

52. As mentioned in paragraph 9, I certainly thought that the relations which existed between Resident and Ruler in the States to which the residential system had been applied were understood at the Colonial Office, and met with general approval. It was not until I received your Lordship's Despatch No. 218, of 10th December,‡ that I perceived that your Lordship had misconceived the position which the Residents have occupied, and have been obliged to occupy, in the Native States of the Malayan Peninsula. I have, therefore, endeavoured to make your Lordship acquainted with these relations, and with the difficulties by which the working of the Residential system in Perak was surrounded.

53. And here I beg leave to take exception to your Lordship's remark in paragraph 2 of your Lordship's Despatch under acknowledgment, that the policy, as inaugurated in 1874 in the Malay States, was of "the nature of an experiment."

My Lord, British intervention once entered upon, there could, I submit, be no withdrawal until, yielding in course of time to British influence, these States, like that of Johore, possessed a Government founded on just and enlightened principles. As the leading European nation in these waters and in the East generally, I conceive we could not experiment with these States. Adjacent as they are to our own Settlements, the interests of civilization and the safety of our own possessions demanded that we should release them from the anarchy and confusion into which they had fallen, and restore order and good government. But we could not possibly intervene for this purpose only to retire upon the appearance of any difficulty. I submit that such a course would be unjust to the States, dangerous to our own Settlements, and prejudicial to our interests in this part of the world. We could not leave to their fate those who had been induced to give us their support in introducing a new order of things, nor abandon the country to a state of confusion which, after our withdrawal, would become more distracted than

* No. 48 of Confidential Paper, "Eastern, No. 17."† No. 52 of same Paper. ‡ No. 73 of same Paper.

before we undertook the settlement of affairs, without incurring, throughout the East, a charge of injustice and vacillation ; the result, moreover, being that we should only have again to undertake the settlement of affairs in the States, but with the difficulties and expense of intervention enormously increased.

54. And, as regards the State of Perak, I did not for a moment imagine that it could ever be contemplated on our part to break the Pangkore Treaty, and to ourselves refuse to carry out engagements which Her Majesty's Government decided should be strictly fulfilled by the Sultan and Chiefs of that State. I conceived that in affairs of this solemn character (paragraph 8 of your Lordship's Despatch of September 4th, 1874*) we were equally bound by our engagements as they, and that there was no withdrawal from the position we had assumed in relation to Perak. I well understood that Residents and Assistant Residents at the so-called "Native Courts" held their appointments provisionally, and that, so far, they were being tried experimentally, but, as regards the policy itself being of "the nature of an experiment," I submit that, taking the facts into consideration, this expression can only mean that, if the system as introduced did not succeed recourse must be had to some other plan to secure the object in view.

55. I venture to say, my Lord, that the proper course for any one who desired loyally to carry out the engagements which Her Majesty's Government desired should be held inviolate was to endeavour, as far as possible, to put into working order the system they had approved. Upon reviewing the question with the additional acquaintance of facts which, as stated in paragraph 52, I have endeavoured to bring to your Lordship's notice, your Lordship will readily perceive that there were considerations which weighed with me when adopting the course I did in Perak other than those which I have fully discussed in my Despatch No. 291 of the 16th October last, to which I must beg your Lordship to give further consideration.

56. Upon my arrival here, I made it my duty to investigate Native States affairs, and I soon perceived that in Perak there was a dead lock, and that I should have to cope with a double difficulty before any progress could be effected, viz., the want of amenability in the Ruler, and the absence of a central authority, both of which conflicting causes I have demonstrated to be fatal to the success of the residential system.

So serious were these difficulties, that when I viewed them in connexion with the other circumstances, enumerated in paragraph 26 of the Despatch just referred to (and to which your Lordship alludes in paragraph 16 of your Lordship's Despatch under acknowledgement), I can only repeat that I at first inclined to the opinion that the best course to adopt would be to declare Perak British territory and govern it accordingly, though such a step, of course, could not have been taken without the authority of Her Majesty's Government.

57. I believed that this step would have removed the jealousies which existed between Ismail and Abdullah and their respective adherents ; that the former would prefer the Government of the country being in the hands of the British, whilst the latter having broken through all his engagements, and powerless in himself, could have made no opposition ; and that such a step would meet with favour from the Ryots who would be benefited by the change, especially from the Chinese who would have sure protection for life and property, and upon the immigration of whom the country depends for further development.

58. But I was anxious, if possible, not to reverse the policy as approved by Her Majesty's Government, but rather to endeavour to bring it to a successful issue, by overcoming the difficulties with which its working was surrounded. To do so, two points required to be kept in view, both of which had to be satisfied, namely ; firstly to endeavour to conciliate Ismail and his party, and thus to unite the present divided authority ; and secondly, to adopt such a plan as would prevent the measures proposed by the Resident from being rendered of no effect, on account of the intractability of Abdullah.

59. It was after much consideration, therefore, that I thought I should be able to secure this double end, by adopting the course which I proposed, instead of that of annexation, and I still think that this course of administering the affairs of the country in the name of the Sultan, with the assistance of a Malay Council, was, at the time, the wisest one which could have been adopted. I was prepared to deal liberally with those whose pecuniary interests would be affected by the change, and I considered that by getting the Chiefs on both sides to accept seats in the Council I should be able to bring them together on friendly terms, and, by giving them a share in the Government of the country, break down the jealousy which existed from the idea that Abdullah only was consulted by the Resident.

* Not printed.

60. Had this course been carried out it would have conferred upon the Resident or Commissioner (the change of name was really not a matter of much consequence) powers similar to those exercised with such good effect by Mr. Davidson and Captain Murray in Salangore and Sungie Ujong (paragraph 31), modified, however, by his first having to consult with the leading men in the country on any important subject, and by his having to obtain the assent of the Governor in any action proposed to be taken in opposition to the feelings of the Council. Thus, my Lord, the powers secured to the Resident or Commissioner by the course which I adopted were less authoritative than those exercised by the Residents in Salangore and Sungie Ujong.

61. With regard to the opinion expressed by your Lordship in paragraph 14 of Despatch No. 218, that this course was an entire reversal of existing policy, I do not think, now that your Lordship has been made acquainted with the relations which exist between our Residents and the Malay rulers in Malay States, that your Lordship will continue of this opinion, but will recognise that the step was taken by me with a view to making the policy, as approved of by Her Majesty's Government, workable in Perak. Finding that British intervention had committed us to the policy inaugurated in 1874, and to take an active interest in the Native States, and looking at the strict injunctions of Her Majesty's Government, that the Sultan and Chiefs of Perak were to be held bound by their engagements, I certainly thought that I should earn the thanks of Her Majesty's Government by removing the dead lock which existed in Perak, especially when I was able to do so by a comparatively slight modification of the system which had met with their approval.

62. Your Lordship refers, in paragraph 12 of the Despatch under reply, to your Despatch of 15th July last* as defining the extent of the policy as approved of by Her Majesty's Government. When I regarded the circumstances attending our intervention, the introduction of a system which necessitated the power of control, the irretrievable step that was taken by the introduction of that system, the binding nature of the Pangkore engagement, and the precise and definite injunctions issued in consequence thereof, I could not suppose that the course which had been adopted from the very commencement (several months before the date of that Despatch) could be reversed by the apparent withdrawal which the Despatch in question might be construed to convey. It would have been dangerous to have shown symptoms of vacillation, which would have been taken for weakness, and especially in those States where the system was being successfully conducted. Moreover, as I have just mentioned and previously demonstrated, the course which had been adopted had been one of necessity, and had not the Residents directed the government of the States to which they had been appointed, their position would have become untenable, and their presence with the Native Rulers neither advantageous nor consistent with the respect with which the Malays regard the officers of the British Government (see Despatch No. 298, dated 21st October, in reply to your Lordship's Despatch under discussion).

The same remarks refer to your Lordship's Despatch of the 27th July last,† alluded to in paragraph 13 of the Despatch under reply.

63. Instead of altering the working of the system which I found necessarily in force, and which had met with comparative success in Salangore and Sungie Ujong, I rather considered it to be an imperative duty to endeavour to remove the dual conflicting element in Perak and to bring the system in that State to a similar successful issue. This was the more necessary as, by the folly of Abdullah, the obstinacy and intractability of Ismail, the jealousies of parties, and the consequent inability of the Resident to improve the condition of the country or people, Perak was fast becoming a source of anxiety even to its Chiefs. In September, therefore, as fully stated in my Despatch No. 291, I put the case before the Rajahs and Chiefs of Perak, with the result that Rajah Muda Yusuf, the heir apparent to the Sultanship, and one of Ismail's principal supporters, together with Rajah Dris, of blood royal, and next in order for the Bandaharaship, stated, in writing, their conviction that unless the British Government would further assist them Perak affairs could never be put on a satisfactory footing. After instancing some of the obstacles to a settled state of affairs, such as the fact of there being two Sultans, the improper levying of taxes and fines, and the total absence of justice, they begged me, as Her Majesty's representative, to take over the country.

64. Abdullah, to whom I spoke fully on the subject (paragraph 24, Despatch No. 291), thinking, no doubt, how best to consult his own interests, and having seen the document above referred to, sent me a similar one, coupled with a request that he might remain Sultan, and in a separate letter he expressed contrition for the past and promised amendment for the future. Abdullah also handed to Mr. Birch two notifications for publica-

* No. 35 of Command Paper [C. 1320], of August 1875.

† No. 37 of same Paper.

tion, giving the Resident power to act in his name, without obtaining a separate chop or seal for each separate document which the Resident, in the interests of the country and in the ordinary course of business, might have to execute. Thus, one great conflicting element, which was experienced in carrying out the residential system in Perak, was overcome by this voluntary act of Abdullah, who conferred powers on the Resident or commissioner very similar to those possessed by the residents in Salangpore and Sungie Ujong, who have never had any difficulty in obtaining the chops and seals of the rulers, and in their names respectively, have thus been able to administer the government of those States.

65. The second conflicting element was met by the establishment of the Malay Council. The nucleus of this council was formed by the action of Sultan Abdullah, Rajah Muda Yusuf, and Rajah Dris, and it remained but to invite, and I did invite, Ex-Sultan Ismail and the Rajah Bandahara to complete the council of the "Waris-Nugri," or princes of the blood royal, who would be consulted by the Residents or other British officers on all important state affairs.

66. By adopting this course, I considered that the difficulties which had brought about in Perak a collapse of the residential system would be met, and that with but a comparatively small step in advance, as explained in paragraph 60.

Sultan Abdullah's offer to confer more power on the Resident was accepted, and the fact that the Sultan and Chiefs had, for certain reasons, given certain powers to the British officers in Perak was set forth in the proclamation issued by me. It may be that, in stating my action in the matter, I considered it less in connexion with the residential system as a whole, and as practised where successful, than as an important change for the State of Perak, and that by laying therefore, under weight on its introduction, I inadvertently gave your Lordship a wrong impression on the subject.

67. In paragraph 17 your Lordship infers that the course which I adopted, of governing the country in the name of the Sultan was not practically likely to succeed. Your Lordship will, however, observe, as I have explained, that this course is virtually that which exists in those states where the residential system has been more or less successful.

Hence, there is no logical reason why it should not have met with a similar success in Perak. The establishment of a Malay Council, to assist the Resident in important State affairs, was calculated to remove the jealousies which existed, and to give the members an interest in the Government which they had never before enjoyed. The example set by the Brookes in Sarawak and the course adopted by the Maharajah of Johore, in both of which States the ruler is assisted by a council, showed it to be a perfectly feasible scheme.

68. In the same paragraph your Lordship infers also that this course does not differ from annexation. I beg to refer your Lordship to paragraph 61 of this Despatch, where I explain that this course is not a reversal of the policy approved by Her Majesty's Government; when governing in the name of the Sultan, the revenues of the country are paid into an independent Treasury and applied entirely to public purposes in the State. Again, this course may be either temporary or permanent; permanent, if, upon further experience, we found that it was desirable to maintain it, in order to preserve peace and good government; temporary, if, in the course of events, we found any Chief, like the Maharajah of Johore, who had the necessary strength of character, and who could and would undertake the government of the state, when it would be easy to hand over the government to him. The difference between the plan I proposed and that of the Pangkore Treaty was this:—the one provided for a Commissioner to act in the name of the Sultan, the other for a Resident whose advice *must be* taken and acted upon by the Sultan. If the course adopted by me amounted to annexation, I submit that the Pangkore Treaty practically amounted to annexation too.

69. When I wrote my Despatch No. 291 I considered that if your Lordship disapproved of the step taken by me, that we could revert to the old order of things, strongly as I condemned it, as inapplicable to the circumstances of Perak. Your Lordship calls my attention to this point in paragraph 17 of No. 218. I am still of opinion that had the recent disturbances in Perak not broken out we could, if desired, have receded to the old position. I do not think that we could possibly do so now. I could not foresee the murder of Mr. Birch, nor the events which have followed since in rapid succession.

To abandon the present position would now be construed as weakness, and would have the worst possible effect on the Malay Peninsula, and, as I submit, for the reasons mentioned in my Despatch of the 3rd December last, prejudicial to our interests in the East. I will presently allude further to this point.

70. Your Lordship expresses a very strong opinion that I had no authority for acting as I did, and that I had no ground for supposing that Her Majesty's Government would approve of the course which I adopted.

On this point I beg to call your Lordship's attention to the following facts.

71. My predecessor, having been requested by Lord Kimberley to consider whether it would be advisable to appoint a British Officer to reside in any of the Malay States, not only engaged to place a Resident in Perak and an Assistant Resident in Laroot, but, in opposition to the views expressed by Lord Kimberley, who stated that Her Majesty's Government had no desire to interfere in the internal affairs of the Malay States, intervened in a very decided manner in the internal affairs of Perak. He collected together a majority of the Chiefs of that State and entered into a Treaty, by which one Sultan was deposed and another set up, and that Treaty, moreover, provided that the government of the country should practically be placed in the hands of the Resident. The Treaty, if confirmed, really committed the British Government to a decided policy of intervention in the internal affairs of Perak. It may be said that the Laroot difficulty rendered prompt action necessary, and so indeed it did, but there was certainly not so much reason for immediate action in the case of the Sultan of Perak, or for the practical assumption of the government of that State by a British Officer, as there was for the step I took, with a view of removing difficulties, which, increased in proportion to the time they were permitted to remain, in the working of the system which I found in existence in Perak. I submit that the steps taken by my predecessor, without authority, in January 1874, were infinitely more vital and important than the step which I took in October 1875.

72. My Lord, I do not advert to this action of my predecessor for the purpose of casting blame upon him, for I felt, as he did, that in dealing with Malay Chiefs, it is necessary to settle with them promptly. What I wish to point out to your Lordship is that the vastly important measures, which were undertaken, without any authority from Her Majesty's Government, in January 1874, met with your Lordship's unqualified approval, and that in Despatch to Sir A. Clarke, No. 64, of the 29th May 1874,* your Lordship did not "delay the assurance that Her Majesty's Government appreciated the ability and energy he had shown," and on September 4th, 1874, your Lordship commended him for the ability, zeal, and tact which he had displayed in bringing about the successful result which had been obtained.

73. Moreover, in replying to Lord Stanley of Alderley, in the House of Lords, on the 19th May 1874, your Lordship expressed an opinion that it could not be said, at the worst, that Sir A. Clarke had very far exceeded his duty as an English Governor.

74. Your Lordship did not then state, as in paragraph 22 of the Despatch under reply, that the "powers and responsibilities, as the Governor of the Straits Settlements cannot be held to apply to the relations of Her Majesty's Government with the Malay States, in the same manner and degree as to the internal affairs of the Colony." Nor do I find, in your Lordship's Despatches, any mention of those observations, on the subject of acting without authority and without specific instruction, which your Lordship states, in paragraph 23, it would have been equally your duty to have made to me under any circumstances. I only find that most vital and important steps were taken by my predecessor without authority; that those steps met with your Lordship's unqualified approval; and that Her Majesty's Government ratified these proceedings, by holding the Chiefs personally responsible for the engagements which they had made.

75. These injunctions had been broken through, and the step which I took was but with a view to making the policy, which had been approved of, workable, and the engagements, which had been infringed, respected. Such a step was, as I have shown, comparatively but a small one, and was but carrying out, in a modified form, the policy previously approved and commended. I considered it, moreover, a duty which I had to perform to give effect to that policy, and I believed that I should secure the thanks of Her Majesty's Government by thus relieving the system, as approved of by them, from the dead lock by which it was marked in Perak. Seeing that the first important step of intervention with its attendant engagement, which had been taken without instructions, had met with your Lordship's approval, and that "it was impossible to carry on negotiations with Abdullah and the Chiefs, unless I spoke and acted as if charged with full authority" (paragraph 35, No. 291, dated 16th October 1875). I did not hesitate to assume the responsibility of taking this step, which was necessary for the due fulfilment of that to which we were solemnly engaged. I could not but suppose that your Lordship would give me your full support in endeavouring to bring the system, as found to be workable in other Native States, to a successful issue in Perak. As stated in paragraph 35 of my Despatch, No. 291, "I took upon myself to do what, under the circumstances, I considered your Lordship would wish to have done," and I hoped that your Lordship would have given full consideration to the statements made in that Despatch, and that those statements would have convinced your Lordship of the necessity of the action taken by me.

* No. 59 of Command Paper [C. 1111], July 1874.

76. As to consulting your Lordship by telegraph, which your Lordship suggests in paragraph 21, it was my obvious duty to have done, I can only say that I considered well whether I should telegraph, and I deliberately determined not to do so. A long despatch on the subject has apparently failed to convey a distinct view of the reasons for my action, and I considered at the time that it would have been impossible within the limits of telegraphic communication to have entered fully into the question.

Considering the step which I contemplated taking as being absolutely necessary, and one which would be sure to meet with your Lordships' approval, upon your being made fully acquainted with the facts of the case, I deemed it the best course to act without delay. Regarding the matter firstly as a duty, and secondly as a means of bringing the system, as approved of by your Lordship, to a workable shape, I felt certain that I was not stepping far beyond the bounds of my instructions as Governor, and I had reason to believe that my action would meet with your Lordship's unqualified approbation.

77. I now pass on to consider the statement that the course which I adopted was the "signal for resistance and attack."

With regard to the view expressed by your Lordship, that the murder of Mr. Birch and other disastrous consequences ensued upon the modification of policy which I adopted, such an inference cannot justly be drawn from the facts which have come to my knowledge. It was unfortunate for the success and the due appreciation of the policy, as modified by me, that Mr. Birch's murder should have followed so soon after the change had been publicly announced, but it by no means follows that even if there had been no such modification of policy Mr. Birch would not have been murdered, when he exposed himself, in the way he did, at Passir Sala.

78. Your Lordship will observe that I felt that the view might be entertained that my action resulted in Mr. Birch's murder when, in paragraph 11 of Despatch No. 327 of 16th November 1875,* and in paragraphs 3-10 of Despatch No. 335 of 2nd December 1875,† I pointed out reasons for the conclusion that such an inference would be unjust and inconsistent with a due appreciation of the facts of the case. I am more than ever convinced, and recent events appear to me to demonstrate, that the consequences to which your Lordship refers were caused by dislike on the part of the Chiefs to our intervention in any shape in the affairs of the State of Perak. A similar dislike of our intervention has shown itself in some of the States about Malacca, and culminated, as your Lordship is aware, in active hostility.

It cannot possibly be held that the attack upon Sungie Ujong was caused by the step I took in Perak, for there is no connexion or sympathy whatever between that State and the small States of Sri Menanti, Ulu Moar, and Jumpole, which are about 150 miles from Perak, and are separated from Perak by the State of Salangore.

There seems to be abundant reason to believe that, even previous to the modification of policy which I adopted in Perak, some of the Chiefs there were considering whether they could not unite to get rid of the interference of the Resident.

79. In one of the letters found in the boat of Haji Alli (*see* paragraph 7 of my Despatch 334 of 2nd December last),‡ purporting to be written by Haji Mohamed Ahlee to Rajah Haji Yahyah (a grandson of Ismail), there is this passage—"Your slave begs to inform your Highness, regarding the arrangement of what we are going to do, is that your Highness must come down quickly, and your slave hopes that the money your Highness must bring with him without delay, for Rajah Abdullah has given his power to Mr. Birch and Captain Kim Ching. Also I beg to inform your Highness that in my opinion, that is, if your Highness is late, it is almost impossible to carry out the arrangements of what we are going to do."

No date is given to this letter, but as Mr. Kim Ching (who had obtained a concession from Abdullah, previous to our interference in Perak) had been in Perak, having interviews with Abdullah, about the end of July last, it would seem from internal evidence to have been written about the month of August.

80. In another letter found in Haji Alli's possession, purporting to come from two Chinamen, and addressed to Tunku Panghina Besar Abdo Galul (Rajah Ngah, one of Ismail's chief fighting men) dated 18 Rajab 1292 *August* 1875, they state:—"A trustworthy man, from our friend Haji Mohamed Saleh, came and brought us a certifying letter from our friend to receive money from us; we are much surprised to hear it, without any cause to receive this money, what is our friend going to do with this money? If we are not sure on what business this money is for, how can we send the money, for our money is put out. If there is a way that we can make more profit than we can do now, then we can remove the money; if we are not sure of the

* No. 82 of Confidential Paper, "Eastern, No. 17."

† No. 101 of same Paper.

‡ No. 100 of same Paper.

" business, we dare not remove the money from Penang so many thousands, this is what we inform our friend."

81. In another letter purporting to be written by Haji Ali to Rajah Yahyah, the following occurs :—

" Your slave informs you that, regarding the arrangement of what we are going to do, is do not be late about it ; come down quickly with the money, you must get them and come down as soon as possible.

" About Haji Mohamed Saleh, he has gone to Penang. Now Mr. Birch has had the power given by Rajah Abdullah, this is what your slave informs your Highness, do not your Highness trust the money which is sent for by Haji Mahomed Saleh, your Highness knows better. Do not your Highness fail of what your slave informs.

" Your slave hopes to God and his messenger that you will come down as soon as possible."

There is no date given to this letter, but from the reference made to Haji Mohamed Saleh, who was in Penang about the end of July or beginning of August, it would seem to have been written about the same time, viz., August 1875.

82. Another paper was found in Haji Ali's boat. This was a draft letter apparently coming from several people, whose names are not mentioned, to Mr. Birch. A translation of this by Mr. Swettenham is enclosed.

This paper is undated, but, as will be gathered therefrom, would seem to have been written shortly after Mr. Birch first went to reside in Perak, consequent on the Pangkore engagement.

83. From another paper found in Haji Ali's possession it would appear that he had made an agreement with Tunku Panghina Besar Abdo Galul (Rajah Ngah) and Haji Mohamed Yassim for mutual support and assistance in the strongest terms, and, in pursuance of their arrangement it would appear that while the Panghina Besar resided with Ismail, and Haji Mohamed Yassim with Abdullah, Haji Ali went from one to the other, and was constantly at the Residency with Mr. Birch. This document throws light upon Haji Ali's position, and will account for his possession of the papers referred to.

84. Since I last wrote, Mr. Swettenham has taken down a statement made by Syed Masahore who joined Mr. Swettenham immediately upon the commencement of hostilities, and has been employed in our service since, copy of which I enclose. From this statement it will be observed that, about 21st September, Maharajah Lela was engaged in placing a stockade round his house (in Major Dunlop's Report, the stockade he found round Maharajah Lela's house will be found fully described), and that on that day he held the conversations therein reported, and produced the paper which, if it contained the chops therein mentioned, must have been written some time previously.

If there is any truth in this statement, then it would appear that long before any action was taken by me preparation for resistance was made.

85. I left Perak on 16th September. The letter of Rajah Yusuf and Rajah Dris, before referred to, was dated the 19th September. Abdullah's letter was dated 1st October. The Proclamation was sent to Perak on the 23rd October, and the first copy was posted at the Residency, on the 26th. The dates are important, as from the statement last referred to, the Maharajah Lela was building his stockade on the 21st September, and had then the paper with the chops referred to.

86. Between the 28th October and 4th November, copies were given to Rajahs Ismail, Yusuf, and Usman (the Bandahara), and posted at Blanja, Senggang, Sayung, Qualla Kangsa, and Kota Lama, up the river by Mr. Swettenham, and the bearers were nowhere molested in any way.

Mr. Birch had also distributed the Proclamations without molestation from the mouth of the Perak River up to Passir Sala.

87. The statement of Syed Masahore is to some considerable extent borne out by statement of reports already forwarded to your Lordship and if true, as in the main I believe it to be, I think I am justified in drawing this deduction that the attack on Mr. Birch, at that time at Passir Sala, was unpremeditated ; that the Maharajah Lela was exasperated and prepared to protect his follower who stabbed Arshad, and that he himself relied for assistance upon the leading men of Perak. Apart from the statement, it appears from the draft letter found in his house, and which there can be no doubt now was intended for Ismail, Ismail himself having acknowledged the Maharajah Lela as one of his great men, that he fully relied upon Ismail's assistance with men and money.

88. I think I may also safely draw this deduction, that, even had no proclamation been issued, Mr. Birch could not have exposed himself at Passir Sala with safety, and it is quite possible that had Mr. Birch not been murdered at Passir Sala, an attack might have been made upon the Residency, which might have been only too successful, and led

to a much greater loss of life than any we have yet had to deplore, and to a combination and confederacy which would probably have caused an obstinate war and still greater loss of life.

89. True, I erred, in common with all concerned, in supposing we could have intervened in the affairs of Perak without a display of military force. I now see that if the advice of the Resident was to be acted upon and the Sultan and Chiefs held strictly bound to the engagements which they had made, military force must, sooner or later, in greater or less degree, have become necessary to support the position which had been assumed.

90. When the proclamations which had been issued by Abdullah and by me were of be posted in Perak it was considered whether it was advisable to station a small body of troops there, to give material support to the Resident, in case any refractory Chief opposed this scheme for bringing the system to a workable footing. It was then decided that the Resident's Sikh Guard would be sufficient to meet with such a contingency.

It was in reference to this question of sending a small body of troops that Mr. Birch telegraphed to me that all was well, and that the proclamations had been posted without incident all the way down the river.

91. I trust that your Lordship will consider that I have now fully replied to your Lordship's Despatch under acknowledgment. I trust that the explanations which I have supplied will be satisfactory to your Lordship and to Her Majesty's Government, but I would beg most respectfully to submit that it would have been more consistent with justice had your Lordship refrained from expressing strong opinions upon my proceedings until after my explanations had been received.

92. It remains for me now to consider briefly what, in my opinion, should be the policy to be pursued, in respect of this State of Perak. Doubtless, Her Majesty's Government have come to a decision on this point, but I shall not be fulfilling my duty if I did not acquaint your Lordship with my views on the subject at the present time.

93. In paragraph 69 of this Despatch I have stated that I now consider it impossible to recede from the policy which has been adopted in Perak. The effect of such a step would be to induce the people in all the protected territories, as well as in our own settlements, to imagine that, if they wanted to get rid of us, all that they would have to do would be to kill one of our officers and resist our troops, when we should immediately withdraw, after inflicting some punishment on those upon whom we could lay our hands. The Chiefs and those who have been implicated in the murder of our Resident and in the subsequent outrages must be captured or prevented from returning to the country, and this could not be effected if we receded from the position we occupy. If we did so, again, all those natives who have been friendly to us and affording us assistance during the outbreak, or at least have maintained a neutral attitude, would probably be murdered, and anarchy and civil war would once more ensue.

94. The only question, as it seems to me, with regard to Perak is, whether we should adhere to the policy of governing by a British Officer in the name of the Sultan, or whether we should annex the country as a portion of Her Majesty's Dominions. As stated in paragraphs 25 and 26 of my Despatch No. 335 of the 2nd December,* I am of opinion that, under present circumstances, complete annexation will now be the course to adopt. The other alternative is, I still think, workable, but, instead of a purely Malay council, I should propose a mixed council, consisting of such British officers, Malays and Chinese, as may from time to time be thought desirable.

95. Recent events, however, have so altered and strengthened our position that I believe we could take over and govern the country with a comparatively small establishment, and with perfect facility. We can indemnify the Chiefs who would be entitled to such consideration at our hands, and thus get rid of the conflicting interests with which we should have to deal if we allowed the chiefs to retain their power. We could modify the Malay laws and customs, and still keep them in harmony with their religious ideas. A great opportunity would be presented for abolishing upon equitable principles the existing system of debt-slavery, and we should also not only secure the repayment of the advances of money made by the Government of the Straits Settlements, but hold a material guarantee for such portion of the expenditure as may be fairly charged against the State of Perak, that has been incurred in consequence of the outrage that has been committed upon our Representative.

96. I know well all that can be urged that we should take no further responsibilities upon ourselves, in respect to acquiring new territory, and that even where our subjects have been wronged that they have only themselves to thank, for going into a country where its rulers are unable or unwilling to afford them protection. I know that it has

* No. 101 of Confidential Paper, "Eastern, No. 17."

also been urged that our army is not to be kept for the purpose of preserving peace in semi-civilized or barbarous States but that the responsibility must rest on the constituted authorities.

97. If these Malayan States were not immediately upon our borders, if the preservation of the peace within those States were not of vital importance to the interests of our own Settlements and to the maintenance of peace and good order therein, if we had assumed no responsibility connected therewith, I might, with perfect consistency with the views I hold, advise your Lordship that the proper course to pursue would be a policy of non-interference. But, intimately connected as we are with them, that policy has never been pursued, and there has always been in a greater or less degree an intimate relationship between ourselves and the States in the neighbourhood of these Settlements.

98. Looking at the close relationship which we have been obliged to assume in respect to these States, especially since we have actively intervened in their affairs, I submit that the true policy to adopt, not only with regard to Perak but also with respect to the other States in our neighbourhood and under our protection, is to look forward to the time when the annexation of some of them will probably become a necessity. That period should be postponed as long as possible, but we should be prepared to assume the responsibility whenever it becomes absolutely necessary to do so in order to secure peace and good government.

99. Upon considering the progress of recent events in Perak, and the arguments stated in paragraph 95 of this Despatch, I have arrived at the conclusion that the time has come when it would be advisable to declare Perak a portion of Her Majesty's Dominions. We already occupy the country, and the people are rapidly returning to their homes. When, moreover, we have opened up communications from the sea coast to the Perak River and to Kinta, and when a well organised and disciplined police force has been raised and taken the place of the military force now in occupation, I should, with the aid of a small body of troops for an emergency, have no fear about carrying on the Government or of a rising against us. The police force should of course be well officered and provided with a sufficient number of reliable non-commissioned officers.

100. It may be said that the occupation of Perak would be attended with expense without any adequate return, and that it would therefore be unwise to occupy it. Doubtless Perak is now covered with jungle, but its present aspect is no criterion of its powers of production.

Laroot, at present the most thickly populated portion of the State, already yields a revenue of \$20,000 a month, the import and export farms at the mouth of the Perak River were recently let for \$7,000 a month, so that, without any scheme of taxation, except royalty on minerals and taxes on the imports and exports, Perak even now raises a revenue of over \$300,000 per annum. This will be sufficient to cover any allowances to Chiefs that may be determined upon, and the cost of the necessary establishments, and still leave a balance for opening up roads and communications and for the payment of interest on debt.

101. There is every prospect that the revenue would considerably increase if the country became a British possession. I am assured by influential and wealthy Chinamen that, if Perak were under British rule, swarms of industrious Chinese would flock in, and these, with the Chinese and British capital which would soon be invested in the State, would completely change the face of the country. Province Wellesley was once a jungle, it is now covered with fine plantations, employing many thousands of Indian, Chinese, and other Coolies. The agricultural and mineral wealth of Perak is very great, and with the certain introduction of immigration and Coolie labour, the Malays would soon be outnumbered and all difficulties respecting them would cease.

102. I trust that nothing I have written in this Despatch will lead your Lordship to believe that I do not entertain the highest respect for the views which your Lordship has expressed. I have felt it my duty, however, to explain that many of the conclusions, apparently arrived at by your Lordship, have been based on an imperfect acquaintance with facts, and without realizing the difficulties of the position in which I have been placed.

If, in doing so, I have appeared at all to step beyond proper bounds, I trust your Lordship will take into account the fact, that your Lordship has expressed very strong opinions, for the special purpose of eliciting explanations from me with respect to the course which I felt it my duty to adopt in the matter now under consideration.

I have, &c.

(Signed) WM. F. DRUMMOND JERVOIS.

The Right Hon. the Earl of Carnarvon,

&c.

&c.

&c.

Colonial Office.

Enclosure 1 in No. 1.

LETTER found in HAJI ALLI'S Boat at Durian Sabatang.

(This is a draft letter apparently coming from several people, whose names are not mentioned, to Mr. Birch, late Resident of Perak. No date.)

WE inquire about our friend's having got a "Kuasa" (written authority) over this country of Perak, to become Resident and govern Perak, collecting all the taxes of the country. From whom did our friend get that "Kuasa"? Our friend must let us know clearly. If our friend got it from Raja Abdullah, we will in no way accept a single clause of it, for Raja Abdullah is not the only "Waris" (blood royal) of the country of Perak; there are many other "Waris" better than he.

Our friend must first examine all the "Waris," whether they like it or not, and they may know what our friend intends to do, in order that our friend may not give orders which shall oppress all the "Waris" to whom the country of Perak belongs. Moreover, we inform the gentlemen in Penang and Singapore and other places that the kingdom for which they have made a Raja is in the hands of us all, the "Waris" of the country of Perak; and that, as regards Raja Abdullah whom they installed, we will in no way, any of us, accept him, for it is against (or perhaps "he is outside the pale of") Malay laws and customs. Moreover, the "Kuasa" which you have received from Raja Abdullah, we will none of us accept it. If you wish to use force to us, even then we will not accept it, but if it is only that you want the country of Perak, we will in no way resist you, for we none of us wish to fight with you, having no power to do so. Therefore you must show us plainly what is our fault towards you.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

ABOUT six or seven days after the Governor had gone down the River Perak (*i.e.*, about the 21st September 1875), I went of my own accord to Passir Sala. I was then living in a boat with Sultan Abdullah's people and the Sultan himself, just below Campong Gaja.

I met the Maharaja Lela. He asked me to go into his house, and I went. Workmen were then making a strong embankment and stockade round his house. The Maharaja Lela said it was a fence, but I did not believe that; he only said it in fun. I went into his house and had a long talk with him.

I said, "What about Perak Datu?" He said, "How do you mean?" I said, "Well, there are differences amongst the Chiefs, especially in the Hilir." He replied, "Yes, but I am different from the others." I said, "Of course I know you are different; perhaps the Sultan (Abdullah) and the others will follow Mr. Birch." He said, "I don't care what they do, I'll never obey him; I don't care for Sultan Abdullah, but I'll follow Sultan Ismail. If they try and turn me out of this place, I'll fight." I said, "I suppose that's the reason you made that garden fence." "Oh no," he said, and laughed.

I said, "If you really will act, surely I'll be with you, but under you." He said, "Oh, that's not right; you are a Raja, and used to command." I said, "Perhaps in Salangor, if there was no one else to speak, I might have some power; but here in Perak I have none; I am in your hands." "Yes," he said, "that's right." I said to him, "You say you are different to the other Chiefs; how?" He said, "I'll tell you why," and he went and fetched a written paper, opened, and showed it to me, and said, "You see, with this paper I am strong, with these seals to support me; I don't care to join the other Chiefs, who want to follow Mr. Birch." He showed me the paper; it was written in Malay, and had four chops on it. Three of them I am certain of; they were Raja Ismail's, the Mantri's, the Maharaja Lela's; the other was either the chop of the Laxanana or the Panghina Kinta. In the paper it was stated that they four had made a solemn agreement that we will settle matters in Perak, and that we will stand by each other in any event, whether bad should come of it or good. Then the Maharaja Lela told me that they had agreed that Raja Ismail should come with all his people down the river to Lambole or Passir Sala, and invite Abdullah to go up and meet him, and that whether he came or not they should all on the 10th of the month Shawal, the month after the Fast, go down to the Residency and say to Mr. Birch, "Do you want to be Resident of Perak? Because if you do, you must be under the Sultan, not above him, and that Sultan must be Ismail. If he agreed, well and good; if he made any objection, that the flagstaff should be cut down, and then Mr. Birch and every one at the Residency be murdered." I said, "That will be a big affair." He replied, "Yes, and that is why we are getting a number of men for it." Then I went away.

The next day we all went down to Passir Panjang.

Some days after Mr. Birch sent for me, and I went to the Residency, you were up in the Ulu I said, "I hear you talk of punishing Passir Sala. The two worst villages are Kota Lama in the Hulu, Passir Salak in the Hilir, you have not known me long and you don't trust me, but if ever you want to go and do anything there, let me go with you," He said "What, do you think any of these Perak people have pluck enough to touch me?" I said "No, but one can't tell, they might get mad or furious," he said "I am an old man, if I die what does it matter, why do you take this care for me?" I replied "I have had your money and eaten your rice that is why." Afterwards I told Arshad the interpreter to take care of his master.

Some days before this conversation with Mr. Birch, Sultan Abdullah in whose suite I was at Passir Panjang, said to me, "I am going down to the Residency to see Mr. Birch if he says anything that is not right we must fight," I said "Very well," and we went down, but I was surprised to see that Sultan Abdullah took only three small boats with him, not at all as if he intended to fight, so when we reached the Residency I refused to go on shore, he came and pressed me saying, I did not trust him, but I would not go and after he had been on shore we returned.

Another day just before the Governor came to Perak, I was at Batarabit, where I had gone to see the Sultan, waiting for him I sat in his audience hall where there were seated a number of men, amongst them I remember the Datu Sagor. I abused them for their cowardice saying, no other Malays would boast so much and do so little as they did, I spoke generally not particularizing anything to see what they would say.

The Toh Sagor replied to me, "Ah Tunku it is all different now, we are divided, but formerly we were all one together, and a paper was written and it was determined that we should go to the Residency, and I was to cut down the Flagstaff whilst the others 'amoked,' but nothing came of it," I had not time to ask why nothing was done as the Sultan came in.

Mr. Swettenham asks—"Why after seeing the Maharaja Lela, did you not tell Mr. Birch all you had heard?" Syed Masher—"I knew Mr. Birch very little, I was wrong, but I know you well, and yet I never could make up my mind to tell you before this, I did not know what you might think of it."

Written at Syed Masher's dictation, then retranslated into Malay and read to him by me, after which he affixed his chop in my presence.

January 22, 1876.

(Signed) FRANK A. SWETTENHAM.

True statement of Tunku Syed Masher.

Witness my chop.

Chop of
Tunku Syed
Masher.

No. 2.

The EARL OF CARNARVON to GOVERNOR SIR W. JERVOIS, K.C.M.G., C.B.
(No. 127.)

SIR,

Downing Street, May 20, 1876.

IN my Despatch No. 218 of the 10th of December, while inviting explanations from you on various points which seemed to me to require them, I intimated that I would defer pronouncing any final decision on the course of action which you took with respect to the affairs of Perak in October last.

2. I am now in receipt of your reply, being your Despatch No. 62 of the 10th of February last. I could have wished on all grounds to avoid the necessity of further pursuing the question of your conduct in relation to these transactions; but it seems to me that I can hardly allow much of this last communication from you to remain unanswered. I will make no comment on the general tone and language of your despatch, which in an unusual manner reflects on the justice and fairness of my decision, because I am quite content that it should be judged by the plain facts of the case, and because I desire to leave every possible freedom of expression to an officer who, however mistakenly, conceives himself to have been subjected to undeserved censure. I shall simply allude, as briefly as the subject admits, to some of the principal points in your despatch which, if unanswered, would be perhaps open to misconception.

3. The matters treated of in this correspondence may be conveniently divided under three heads:—

(A.) The condition of affairs in Perak from the time of the Pangkore Treaty in January 1874 up to October 1875.

(B.) The nature of the action taken by you at the latter date.

(C.) The future policy of the British Government with reference to Perak and the Malay Peninsula.

4. The representations made by you under these three heads may be thus summarized:—

(A.) That there were practically two Sultans in Perak, of whom the one not recognized by our Government, Ismail, was acknowledged throughout the greater part of the country, while the other, Abdullah, was the weaker of the two and powerless to act; that there were besides a number of powerful minor chiefs, practically independent in their districts; that owing to the absence of an efficient central authority and the impracticable character of Abdullah, it would have been impossible in any case for the Resident accredited to him to confine himself to advising and assisting; but that the Residents in Perak, as well as in Salangore and Sungie Ujong, have practically been Administrators of the Government; and that this was contemplated by, and was the logical sequence of, the Pangkore Treaty, as had been understood at the Colonial Office.

(B.) That the action taken by you with respect to the Proclamations issued in October was but a slight modification of the policy already approved and commended, and that it was not to this change of policy that Mr. Birch's murder and other recent events could be attributed.

(C.) That though the alternative policy of governing by a British Officer in the name of the Sultan, assisted by a Council, is still capable of being worked, in your opinion complete annexation is the best course to adopt.

5. I will proceed at once to state in general terms the reasons for which it is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to assent to your explanations of past transactions, alluding incidentally to various arguments and expressions used by you which require more special notice. The future policy to be pursued I shall reserve for separate treatment hereafter.

6. In commenting upon your present description of the state of affairs in Perak, and the position which it was intended the Resident should there occupy, it will be necessary to revert at some length to the information supplied by your predecessor and yourself during the period now under review.

7. My predecessor, Lord Kimberley, in his Despatch of the 20th of September 1873, had given Sir Andrew Clarke, who was then proceeding to assume the government of the colony, special instructions as to the policy to be observed towards the native states; and in desiring him to consider the advisability of appointing British officers to reside in any of those states, he expressly added that such appointments could only be made with the full consent of the native government.

8. Sir A. Clarke, in his Despatch of 26th January 1874, giving an account of his proceedings at the Dindings, and the conclusion of the Pangkore engagement, enclosed a letter which had been addressed to him by Sultan Abdullah requesting him, in the name of himself and his great men, to send "a man of sufficient abilities to live in Perak, and show us a good system of government for our dominions," and he stated that he had found Abdullah, who was the rightful heir to the throne, a man of considerable intelligence, and possessing perfect confidence that he would be able to maintain his position if he were once placed in Perak as its legitimate ruler; that all the chiefs except the Mantri of Laroot (who had previously set up a claim to be independent, which, however, he was then induced to abandon) and his party, were prepared at once to receive him as their sovereign, and that it was these considerations that led him to propose the fourteen articles of the engagement which after a full discussion were finally accepted and ratified.

Of Ismail (who had been informally declared Sultan and possessed the regalia) he said little more than that he was a very aged man, and he observed that though he was not present himself, the chiefs who were present had sufficient authority to act as they did in the full recognition of Abdullah as Sultan. He deferred entering fully into the policy which he proposed should be pursued as regards the duties of the Residents, but in a separate Despatch of the same date explaining the very critical position of affairs in Laroot, which had induced him to go beyond his instructions and at once place a British officer in that district, he spoke of Captain Speedy as possessing the confidence of the chiefs of the Malay Government, and said that he would assist that government in destroying stockades, disarming the Chinese factions, and restoring peace.

9. In his subsequent Despatch of the 24th of February Sir A. Clarke forwarded additional information as to the past history and present state of Perak, and explained more fully his views with reference to the question of the appointment of Residents. In that despatch he stated that he had been unofficially informed that Ismail had expressed his adherence to the engagement of the other Chiefs, and, with special reference to Lord Kimberley's stipulation as to the consent of the native government being a necessary

condition of the appointment of Residents, he had no hesitation in saying that "the proposal met with the fullest concurrence from the native chiefs;" a statement which, I may here remark, it is obviously impossible to reconcile with the conviction you now entertain (par. 78) that the recent outbreak was "caused by dislike on the part of the Chiefs to our intervention in any shape in the affairs of the State of Perak."

The views which your predecessor then entertained as to the nature of the position to be assumed by the Residents, may be gathered from the following extracts from the same Despatch: "This proposal of appointing British officers to reside in the Malay States is not a new one; it was first proposed to appoint them for the purpose of assisting the legitimate rulers of the country, with a view to teaching them the great and yet simple principles of good government, of showing them the most feasible or practical methods of opening up their countries," &c. &c.

"The Malays, like every other rude Eastern nation, require to be treated much more like children and to be taught, and this especially in the matters of improvement," &c.

"Such teaching can only be effected by an officer living on the spot, whose time should be devoted to carefully studying the wants and capabilities of each State, the character of the Sultan and his Chiefs, and to making himself personally acquainted with every portion of the country, and thus fitting himself for the post of counsellor when the time for opening up the country arrives."

"This watching the collection of the revenue and controlling its expenditure will form no insignificant part of a Resident's duties, and as far as bringing about a good system of Government is concerned, will be about the most important portion of them."

"To check squeezing, and to induce the Sultan to select proper men for the collection, will be the Resident's special care."

All this clearly indicates that the true functions of the Resident were to be those of an influential adviser, and not, as you now suppose, a direct administrator of the district.

10. In another Despatch of the same date Sir A. Clarke forwarded Minutes by members of his Executive Council, on the general subject of the policy to be pursued towards the native States, which are material as showing the objects which they contemplated would be obtained by the appointment of Residents.

Major McNair gave as his opinion "that a closer influence must be brought to bear on the Native States. That he was in favour of a Resident Officer being nominated to dwell in their country, as it was by daily intercourse that the European could acquire and maintain their confidence." "Many of the Malay Chiefs," he continues, "have represented to me that what they want is an officer who would reside near them to give them confidence and support, who would teach them to collect and spend their revenue, to administer a better form of justice, and to maintain order."

Mr. Willans, an old and experienced officer of the local Government, wrote—"From a long experience of the natives, I am satisfied they are amenable to reason, and will follow the advice of any European they respect, and I believe if Residents were appointed they would be readily received, and if properly chosen be looked up to, and exert a great and beneficial influence; they would argue with the Chiefs in a pleasant not domineering way, and point out to them the advantages of the European system," &c. &c.

Mr. Braddell wrote "Such is the influence of the British Government in the neighbouring Malay States that the mere fact of the residence in any State of a representative of the Great Government would of itself give stability to the rule of its Chiefs and establish order in the country." "Their duties would at first be not merely to advise the Chiefs, but to show them practically what they have to do in the way of ruling the country." "It only requires that the wishes of Government should be made known to the native rulers to secure implicit obedience." "The end can I believe be gained by Government without involving itself in responsibilities."

Mr. Birch recorded his entire assent in Mr. Braddell's views.

Mr. C. J. Irving, who alone of Sir A. Clarke's Council dissented from the proposed policy of appointing permanent Residents, after describing the Malays generally, added, "Given such a people, and put down among them an European officer whose sole duty it would be to be giving good advice, &c.;" and, further, "If the policy of Her Majesty's Government were to keep pushing our influence in those countries, and becoming virtually the governing power, the appointment of permanent Residents would probably be a step in the right direction. But this I understand from the Secretary of State's Despatch is not the course that is designed."

11. The above extracts are amply sufficient to show that the essence of the scheme of appointing Residents as originally proposed was that the native Chiefs were willing and desirous to receive British officers who would advise and assist them in the

Government of the country. It was no doubt expected that such an officer would exercise very great influence in the country, but, seeing that the Chiefs are continually spoken of as quite ready to carry out whatever measures of reform or improvement were pointed out to them, and seeing that the appointment of Officers in Perak for this purpose had originated in a voluntary compact and had not been accepted under compulsion, the position which a Resident was to occupy would be very different from that of a Controller, still less would it be equivalent to that of an administrator of a government as you now describe them to have been.

12. The nature of the advice to be given by an officer in such a position would obviously be determined by considerations of a practical and local nature, such as the extent of the authority of the recognized ruler, the position of the petty Chiefs, and the characteristic habits of the people, and therefore it appears to me beside the point to argue, as you apparently do in the fifth, sixth, and seventh paragraphs of your Despatch under reply that because the Government was weak it was therefore impossible for the Resident to confine his attention to giving advice.

13. You cite indeed the provision in the Pangkore Treaty that the advice "was to be acted upon" in justification of your view that the engagement contained in it "the element of control;" but, bearing in mind the assumed readiness of the Sultan to accept advice, it is impossible to consider that particular provision, except in connexion with the circumstances under which the engagement was entered into, and I am by no means prepared to admit the correctness of your statement that the Pangkore engagement virtually threw the government of the country into the hands of the Resident. It is at all events beyond question that you are under a complete misapprehension in maintaining as you have done that it was fully understood at the Colonial Office that the system pursued towards these Native States, though nominally one of advice, was really one of direct or actual government.

14. It was on the contrary after full consideration of the Despatches from which I have quoted, and in the belief that they had before them a complete and accurate account of the position of affairs in Perak, and of the proposed residential system, that Her Majesty's Government gave a general approval to the action of Sir Andrew Clarke, and eventually assented to his provisionally stationing Residents with the Chiefs in the districts of Salangore, Perak, and Sungie Ujong.

15. The Despatches above mentioned were received in this Department on the 30th of March 1874; my approval of his proceedings was conveyed to Sir A. Clarke in the Despatch of the 29th of May, which was supplemented by a telegram of the 1st June giving a conditional authority to proceed with the appointment of Residents; so that whatever were the reasons for the delay in the appointment of a Resident at Perak which you allude to in the 42nd paragraph of your Despatch, (and I doubt not that your predecessor could give a satisfactory explanation on the point,) the subject was disposed of, so far as this Department was concerned, without any unnecessary loss of time.

16. The next information which I received from Sir A. Clarke bearing on the present question is that contained in his Despatch of the 16th of June 1874 reporting a visit of Mr. Birch to several of the Native States. The following extracts relate to Perak. "Mr. Birch and his party proceeded down the river by boat to Blanja where the ex-Sultan Ismail dwells. The ex-Sultan was absent at one of his mines, but returned as soon as he heard of the arrival of the Colonial Secretary, and several interviews took place at which he professed perfect readiness to give over the regalia to Sultan Abdullah, if the latter will only come to receive them. This, it is rumoured, Sultan Abdullah hesitates at present to do, feeling probably that their newly established relations are not sufficiently cordial to induce him to seek for the present a closer intimacy, but I do not anticipate that I shall find any difficulty when I have eventually to deal with the question. At Blanja Mr. Birch was not received very cordially, this village having become the refuge of several freebooting chiefs, who, driven from other States thought that in the probable grievances of the ex-Sultan they saw a chance of future difficulties by which they could benefit.

"The party then proceeded to Batarabit where the Sultan Abdullah accorded them most hospitable reception."

Sir A. Clarke continues as follows: "For the appointment of a British Resident the Sultan Abdullah is most anxious, and in this desire he is supported by his principal Chiefs. At present every Chief has a 'squeezing' place on the river where he levies black mail from passing boats, and no sort of real government exists. The Sultan and his Chiefs honestly wish to remedy this state of affairs, but they do not know how to set about any reform, and having no confidence in themselves or in each other, they require a guiding hand to lead them.

“ The results of this tour may be considered to be satisfactory. The greatest courtesy and kindness were exhibited by the Chiefs and inhabitants of all the villages except Blanja.” “ The whole country traversed was at peace, and there is reason to anticipate that the appointment of British Residents will foster the feeling of security that now prevails.”

17. In his Despatch of the 4th of November, enclosing the proclamation issued under the authority of my Despatch of 4th September 1874 relative to the Pangkore engagement, Sir A. Clarke did not furnish any fresh information as to the state of affairs in Perak.

But in his speech to the Legislative Council, which he forwarded by the same mail, he spoke of “ the moderate, and I may say fair, success which I have reason to believe has attended our interference in Perak ;” and after describing at some length the past history of the troubles in Perak, and the policy of Sir H. Ord, and having explained “ that it was necessary to determine and to recognise who was the true bonâ fide and legitimate ruler of the whole country,” he continued, with reference to the engagement of Pangkore, “ I was enabled to come to a just and satisfactory decision, and to place in the supreme Government of that country a man who, whether fitted for it or not, is to my mind the legitimate ruler. So far that decision has been hitherto satisfactory, and with regard to the displaced ruler, the Chief who had been temporarily elected, I am confident in my own mind, and all the evidence proves it, that that was only a temporary sovereignty which had been given to Ismail. But I am only dealing with results, and though 8 or 10 months have passed since that, and there has been naturally an amount of soreness among the people whose head man had been actually sovereign, there has been no outbreak, and I am inclined to hope that with a little watchfulness on our part, the people of Perak will cheerfully accept the sovereignty of Abdullah, and especially if his rule is assisted by the advice and assistance of an English officer.” He then described the improvements which had already taken place in Larut and Perak subsequently on his intervention, and added, “ This is a general sketch of the condition of affairs there, and although Ismail and Abdullah have not yet come together I hope and believe that they will, and that beyond the intrigues of a few disappointed petty Rajahs, who are interested in keeping the sore alive, there is no ground for anxiety or for not thinking that in that large native state we have now established a condition of things which will bear favourably and well upon our own interests here.”

18. The next communications which I received from Sir A. Clarke relating to Perak matters were his Despatches of the 23rd and 24th December, in which he reported that he had sent Mr. Birch on two missions, one having reference to riots at the Salama Mines, which threatened to be serious, and the other to the settlement of the Krean boundary question. In the first he says, that on the arrival of Mr. Birch, accompanied by a small escort of police, and Captain Speedy with his own native guard, “ The pirates, although they vaunted up to the last moment that they would fight, escaped into the jungle, where they were hotly pursued by the native police, and sixty were captured and forwarded to the Sultan of Perak for punishment ;” and that Mr. Birch, after a few days, having seen that the country was tranquil, and that the miners had returned to their work, was enabled to return to Penang.

In the second he says “ I am glad to be able to inform your Lordship that Mr. Birch’s mission has been successful, and that I have received a communication from him reporting that acting as the Representative of this Government he had held a most satisfactory interview with the ex-Sultan Ismail, who had agreed to sign the engagement of Pangkore above referred to, but wished that the Sultan Abdullah should meet him first.” He then describes the preparations which were being made for the meeting between the two Princes, which was arranged to take place in a few days, and was to be attended by all the Chiefs of Perak, except two of no importance, and concluded “ I have little doubt that the reconciliation now effected between the Ruler and ex-Ruler of Perak will prevent any further complications in that State.”

19. And it was with an allusion to the success which had attended these missions that Sir A. Clarke announced about this date (30th December 1874) that after long and anxious consideration he had nominated Mr. Birch to be Resident at Perak. Nor is there anything in his Despatches of this date to show that the nature of the position to be occupied by the Residents was other than that which had been entertained ten months before.

20. You quote at some length in your present Despatch the instructions issued to Mr. Birch and to Mr. Davidson, prior to their assumption of the duties of Resident. But these instructions were never sent home and have consequently never been under my eye. They may possibly give a somewhat different complexion to the Residential Schemes proposed by Sir Andrew Clarke in the Despatches to which I have already referred, but as, whatever may be the cause, complete copies have never been furnished to this

Department, I am not in a position to criticise with any advantage the extracts you now bring to my notice ; and it is obviously impossible to draw any inference as to the effect they might have produced on my mind or that of any other Secretary of State in the same position.

21. It was at this period that you were appointed to succeed Sir A. Clarke in the government of the Straits Settlements, and on your departure you were furnished with my Despatch of the 8th of April, announcing my decision "not to confirm the appointments made by him until you had an opportunity of considering the whole subject," with an allusion to the peculiar nature of the duties to be discharged, and the special qualifications required. You were informed that the appointments were to be treated as "temporary, and of an experimental character," and it was thus open to you, should you see occasion, to point out to Her Majesty's Government any difficulties that had arisen in the working of the Residential system not foreseen by your predecessor, or any want of success attendant on his selection of individuals.

22. During the interval between your departure and assumption of the Government Sir Andrew Clarke forwarded to this Department several reports made by the officers acting as Residents. That of Mr. Birch was enclosed in his Despatch of the 26th of April, and with reference to it your predecessor said "Mr. Birch appears already to have secured considerable ascendancy over many of the chiefs of Perak, and has been courteously received by all, but in a country which has been for so many years mis-governed by petty Rajahs progress must necessarily be slow. Mr. Birch hardly describes Perak as being in so flourishing a condition as some previous Despatches might perhaps lead me to suppose ; but I observe that he mentions the jealousies of the Chiefs amongst themselves, which alone had prevented a reconciliation between Abdullah and Ismail, as disappearing, and that the future of Perak might safely be looked upon as a prosperous one. He adds that under his influence there had been already decided improvement in respect to the oppression that had been practised by the more troublesome Rajahs, and that he had visited Ismail and the other Chiefs, and had everywhere been treated with respect.

23. I have referred at length to these Despatches, (and they contain all the information which Her Majesty's Government had before them on the subject,) to show that their general tenour was to the effect that though difficulties had arisen such as might have been expected, still these were in course of being surmounted, and that the system of acting on the Native Chiefs by advice was working well, and promised to be ultimately successful.

The general aspect of affairs in Perak as thus presented differs materially from the entirely new and complicated political situation now sketched in paragraphs 26 to 39 of your Despatch. I find but little evidence of "relations between Abdullah and the Resident marked by disunion and discord," or of a second Sultan acknowledged throughout the greater part of the country, or of difficulties arising from the personal character of the ruler necessarily precluding success.

The Maharajah Lela's name occurs incidentally on various occasions, but I nowhere find him occupying that peculiar and obstructive position attributed to him in the 44th paragraph of your present Despatch.

There is nothing in all this correspondence tending to show that Her Majesty's Government would in any circumstances have sanctioned a forcible intervention in the affairs of these States. On the contrary I should have thought it sufficiently obvious that they would be averse to a policy under which it was likely to arise ; but, assuming the situation of Perak to have been as critical as you now represent it, and assuming that it was contemplated that the Residents were to control the Government of the country, it is clear that a resort to force would sooner or later have been inevitable, and that it must be inexpedient if not actually fatal to place such officers in isolated positions, and to leave them without proper support.

24. I may here allude to the 19th paragraph of your Despatch, in which you quote various extracts from Mr. Birch's report of 2nd April 1875 as showing the position which in your opinion he occupied. In emphasizing the word "he" as you do, you appear to me to be giving it a meaning which the context does not bear. Mr. Birch, who expresses his hope that "this Report will show how I have employed my time during the five months I have been at Perak," in rendering an account of his proceedings to the superior officer from whom his authority was derived would naturally give prominence to his own doings and the influence which he had himself been enabled to exercise for the benefit of Perak, and his expressions cannot be construed as if they were intended to define the exact relations between the Sultan and himself, which would be well known to the person he addressed.

25. It was, however, precisely because this and other reports received about this time, when the Residential system had been in operation for a few months, were not free from indications of a liability to danger arising out of an assumption by the Residents of duties in excess of their position as counsellors, that I expressly cautioned you, in the three Despatches of 25th May, 15th July, and 27th July quoted in my Despatch of 10th December, as to the great care which was requisite with respect to the nature of the advice to be given and the possible assumption of a right to direct the policy of the Chiefs.

As I have already shown, the scheme at first proposed by your predecessor was a system of acting by advice, and there was therefore nothing to induce Her Majesty's Government to lay down any express instructions against undue interference until the occasion had shown that additional precautions were necessary to guard against the growth of this tendency. But granting that on your assumption of the Government you did not rightly apprehend the views and intentions of Her Majesty's Government, the Despatches to which I have just referred at all events clearly showed that the policy which had been approved was not one involving the actual Government of these States, and I am compelled therefore to consider unsatisfactory the statement in the 52nd paragraph of your present Despatch, that until you were in receipt of mine of the 10th December you had not perceived the alleged misconception on the subject.

26. You assumed the Government of the Straits Settlements on the 10th of May 1875, and the only Despatches which I received from you between that date and those of the 16th October bearing upon the affairs of Perak, were (1) that of the 8th of July, relative to the Krian boundary question, a delicate matter; as to which, far from intimating that any serious difficulties had arisen with Abdullah, you implied that the course you proposed would remove a possible source of dissatisfaction; and (2) your Despatch of the 18th of September reporting your visit to the Perak Chiefs and promising to furnish full information in a general report on the affairs of the Native States.

It is clear, however, from the enclosures to your Despatch of the 16th of October (*e.g.*, Mr. Birch's letter of 13th May), that you were very early in possession of information tending to show the unsatisfactory working of the Residential system, at least in the case of Abdullah; and it would have been well if you had put Her Majesty's Government in possession of the facts, together with any inference which, with your necessarily large means of acquiring local knowledge, you might draw on so important a question.

27. And here I think it right to point out, that even in your Despatch of the 16th of October, there are expressions which are not altogether consistent with portions of that which I am now considering. You then wrote of the Residential system generally "The position of a Resident at the Court of a Malay State is in many respects a peculiar one. If his advice be followed, he is in a position to be of great benefit to the State"

* * * * *

"When, however, as has been the case in Perak, his advice is for the most part not followed, his powers of usefulness must obviously be very restricted."

These remarks could hardly prepare me for a state of affairs now described as follows, "From the commencement of British intervention the Government of the Malayan Straits to which British Residents have been accredited has been in greater or less degree exercised by those officers themselves." "There has been really no ruler, neither in Perak, Salangore, or Sungie Ujong who has ever had the power to carry out the advice of the Resident. Under these circumstances the Resident has not only had to give advice, but also to render active assistance, and take the control of public affairs."

Again, your description of Ismail in the former Despatch as "without an idea of his own," "completely in the hands of the Mantri and other minor chiefs," "unable to read or write," and probably not alive to the contents of a letter he had addressed to you, hardly corresponds with that of the somewhat remarkable character thus graphically delineated in the 37th paragraph of your present Despatch, "An apparent civility, a well-disguised courtesy of manner, and a pretended acquiescence concealed a strength of purpose, a feeling of injury, and a stern resolution not to part with that which he had acquired. As intractable as he was civil, as obstinate as he was courteous, and as firm as he was seemingly acquiescent, he could not be induced by any persuasion or argument," &c.

28. Before concluding this portion of my subject, I cannot omit to notice the 13th paragraph of your Despatch in which you allude to a speech made by me in the House of Lords as a further proof that it was understood in the Colonial Office from the com-

mencement of the Residential system that the Residents were practically the administrators of the Government. Without expressing any opinion as to the propriety of criticisms founded in this way on the report of a parliamentary debate, I may observe that, even assuming the report to be complete and accurate, it is neither reasonable nor customary to rest an important argument on the mere omission on the part of a minister to contradict a particular assertion of another speaker when replying to a speech into which a great number and variety of details were introduced.

I find, however, on referring to the debate (which I would remind you occurred on the 19th May 1874, previous to the date on which I authorised Sir A. Clarke conditionally to proceed with the appointment of Residents, and some months before Residents were actually accredited either to the Sultan of Perak or of Salangore), that there are other portions besides those quoted by you which are material as showing the ideas which I then entertained as to the future position of the Residents. Thus, with reference to the observations of Lord Stanley of Alderley, "If it were merely desired to assist the States of Salangore and Perak to maintain order and improve their government, it would have been as easy to do so without committing this country to the possibility of war and annexation by sending to those States a British official of some experience to act under their authority," and that "it would be preferable to appoint officials with the title of consuls," I am reported to have said that I did not object to the title of "Residents," and that I thought that if they confined themselves to their proper and legitimate duties they would be of the highest service both to the country and the Rajahs; and it was at this point that I called special attention to the fact that these Residents were to be sent at the distinct request and entreaty of the Rajahs themselves.

29. Leaving this point, however, I ought to notice the 18th, 20th, and 21st paragraphs of your Despatch. In the first you quote Sir A. Clarke's description of Mr. Birch's qualification for the office of Resident. I cannot admit that the question of the nature of the office to be assumed is affected by the fact that Mr. Birch possessed in an eminent degree qualities which would be equally valuable to a ruler as to the adviser of a ruler in a country like Perak. In the 20th and 21st paragraphs you refer to my "apparent acquiescence" in the reports of the Residents, which you find in my expressions that "I had read them with interest and trusted that peace and prosperity might be further developed." I own here to some surprise. The language which you quote in evidence of my opinion on so grave and important a matter is little more than an ordinary acknowledgment; but it was immediately followed by two other paragraphs which you omit to notice, reminding you that the appointments had not been confirmed, and that the character of all advice required to be carefully considered, and it is obvious that these passages preclude the inference you draw.

30. Having shown in the previous portion of this Despatch that the Residential scheme as approved by Her Majesty's Government was very far from being what you have supposed, it is of course impossible for me to admit that the system you introduced when the proclamations were issued, providing for the government of Perak in the name of the Sultan by British Commissioners responsible to you, was merely a slight modification of the existing system as already approved. An essential difference of policy has indeed been admitted in the colony, for I find in the report of the debate in the Legislative Council of the Straits Settlements of 5th November last, which you have transmitted to me, it was then said that, unfortunately, events had proved the policy which 12 months since was considered the best that could possibly be adopted, to be barren of results, because its strength consisted only in what might be called moral force. It had been found impossible to carry out that principle, and it must give place to the more vigorous policy which His Excellency had now entered upon, and of which the speaker had no doubt the result would be greater, at the same time that moral force must give place to physical force.

I have, however, said enough as to the incorrectness of your present contention; and it remains for me to point out the objections to which Her Majesty's Government consider that your policy would in any case have been open, and the reasons which compel me, having regard to the disastrous consequences that ensued on its adoption, to convey to you their disapproval of it.

31. It is hardly possible to maintain that the system you proposed to introduce was adopted with the full assent of the Native Chiefs. You do indeed in your Despatch of 16th October say that you had been informed that "some of the Chiefs, anxious for a better system, and desirous of putting an end to the divided state of Perak, wished the British

“ Government to take the country altogether under their control,” and that you found that this representation was quite correct in the case of Yusuf; but I find that when you made this suggestion to Ismail and to Abdullah, they both, so far from readily assenting, put you off in the first instance by asking to consult other Chiefs before giving a definite reply; and though Abdullah subsequently wrote you a letter expressing concurrence in the arrangement, it was after you had distinctly threatened him in the letter of 27th September with the following ultimatum: “ Now we propose to our friend that officers of the British Government shall govern the country in the name of our friend. If our friend agrees to this, our friend will still be recognized as Sultan and receive a large allowance, but if our friend does not agree to this, we cannot help our friend, and our friend will be no longer Sultan.”

In another place you state “ I determined, if the Sultan could be induced to agree, to adopt the policy of governing Perak by means of British officers in his name;” and I cannot but conclude that, with a view to getting a nominal assent to a system which deprived the Chiefs of the last semblance of power, and was naturally repulsive to them, you exercised a pressure which was obviously inexpedient unless it was to be supported by something more than moral force, and which could not have been justified unless you had been previously instructed that Her Majesty’s Government would sanction a forcible intervention.

In the 89th paragraph of your present Despatch you admit that you “ erred in common with all concerned in supposing you could have intervened in the affairs of Perak without a display of force, and that a military force must, sooner or later in greater or less degree have become necessary to support the position which had been assumed;” but a careful perusal of your description of the general aspect of affairs in Perak, with its divided sovereignty, and the powerful semi-independent Chiefs such as the Maharajah Lela, clearly shows that the result might have been earlier anticipated, and consequently that the precautions which you took against resistance as mentioned in the 90th paragraph of your Despatch were altogether inadequate.

32. But a further objection that I have to take to the policy you decided on adopting arises from the fact that it could only have been possible to recede from it with extreme difficulty.

You say “ This course may be temporary if in the course of events we found any Chief like the Maharajah of Johore who had the necessary strength of character, and who could and would undertake the government of the State, when it would be easy to hand over the government to him;” but I do not find that there was any reasonable probability of such an event occurring, and to point to possible results in the event of certain improbable contingencies is not a sufficient justification of a doubtful policy. On the other hand it is quite certain that grave responsibilities must be incurred from the moment that a country is professedly governed by British Commissioners. Supposing British capital and Chinese labour to have been thereby attracted to Perak, powerful interests would certainly have protested in the event of the British Government subsequently determining as you contemplated to withdraw from those responsibilities.

33. It is, moreover, impossible for me to concur in the view expressed in the 77th and following paragraphs of your Despatch as to the absence of connexion between the adoption of your policy and the occurrence of Mr. Birch’s death and the consequent events. Whether or no there was such an amount of dissaffection that some struggle was ultimately inevitable I cannot, with the facts before me, pretend to say, but the evidence you bring forward to show that in any case an outbreak was to be anticipated appears to me far from conclusive. The erection of a stockade in a Malay country is not of such rare occurrence that I can accept your deduction from this and other similar evidence that even if no proclamation had been issued, “ An attack might have been made upon the Residency which might have led to a combination and confederacy which would probably have caused an obstinate war and still greater loss of life.” But if it was clear that discontent existed in various quarters it seems strange that you should have entered upon so serious a policy as that involved in the issue of the Proclamation except after adopting full and well considered precautions.

After a complete review of all the circumstances of the case, I can come to no other conclusion than that the existing discontent, which probably had its origin in the assumption by the Residents of an authority in excess of that which had been contemplated by Her Majesty Government when the Pangkore engagement was approved, was materially increased by the mode in which you induced the Perak Chiefs to give an involuntary assent to a system which deprived them of their privileges and powers;

while the issue of the proclamation in an ill-advised manner at an isolated place would seem to have been the more immediate provocation of the outrage from which the present crisis has arisen.

34. And here it may be as well to allude to the argument which in several places in your recent despatches you have drawn from the warning which I instructed you to convey to the Chiefs who entered into the Perak engagement that H. M. Government would look to the exact fulfilment of the pledges voluntarily given and would hold responsible those who violated their solemn engagements. This was simply a message to be delivered by you to the Chiefs, and cannot be construed as giving you authority to modify the system which had been contemplated in the treaty, in the event of that system not being successful, still less as giving you an extraordinary discretion to enforce certain provisions of the engagement in a mode which, as I have already pointed out to you, necessarily involved the support of [the Resident by material force, and was consequently diametrically opposed to the policy which had been approved by Her Majesty's Government.

35. If the system introduced by your predecessor had in your opinion failed, "from causes fatal to its successful working" as the 47th and 56th paragraphs of your present Despatch would imply, your first duty was clearly to consult Her Majesty's Government explaining fully the state of affairs as they presented themselves to you, before deciding on the immediate adoption of another system designed to meet the same object; and I cannot but remark in passing, with reference to the 66th paragraph of your Despatch, that, if the Residential system had collapsed, it is not easy to perceive how you could have brought yourself to believe that "a comparatively small step in advance" or "a slight modification of the system" would be likely to remove "the dead-lock" you have described.

36. In justification of your decision to carry this policy into immediate effect, you in the main urge your own belief that the course of action would meet with unqualified approbation.

In the third paragraph of your Despatch you speak of the course of action "which it was imperative to adopt," and you appear to assume, as you do also in the 53rd and 54th paragraphs, that the course you adopted was the only alternative to an abandonment of the position that had been occupied by the British Government since the ratification of the Pangkore engagement. I cannot admit that this dilemma was a necessary one. On the one hand Her Majesty's Government were not free lightly to recede upon the appearance of difficulty from their endeavours to terminate the anarchy which had long prevailed; on the other hand, if a change of policy had become necessary, the nature of that policy could only be finally determined by them, and a decision on the point ought not to have been anticipated by the Government of the Straits Settlements.

37. But you acted on the assumption that your proceedings would meet with my approval, and you justify this in the 71st and 72nd paragraphs by a comparison of the action of Sir A. Clarke in January 1874, with your own in October last. I do not perceive, however, that the circumstances of the two cases are similar. In the former case the serious disorders in Laroot had reached a point requiring immediate action, and the plea of urgency could fairly be brought forward. My predecessor, in view of those disorders and the injury to trade and British interests consequent on the prevailing anarchy, had previously instructed Sir A. Clarke to consider what steps could be taken to restore peace, admitting that it was incumbent on Her Majesty's Government to employ their influence to this end; and with the exception of Captain Speedy's appointment to Laroot, Sir A. Clarke took no other immediate action consequent on the treaty until after the subject had been fully brought before Her Majesty's Government.

Nor did Sir A. Clarke pretend to speak and act "as if charged with full authority," for he expressly states in the Despatch reporting his proceedings, "I trust your Lordship will understand that by so giving my assent I have in no way bound Her Majesty's Government to any particular course, and that it is perfectly possible now to withdraw from the position I have temporarily assumed." In so acting he no doubt incurred a serious responsibility, and because I gave him a qualified approval in the unusual circumstances of the case it by no means follows that I can approve a complete change of policy, made without authority, not conceived with due regard to the necessity it involved of providing against resistance, and disastrous in its consequences.

38. Assuming, however, all and everything that you have urged in justification of the course which you adopted, assuming further the imperative need of immediate action, it was absolutely incumbent on you to communicate with me in the ordinary manner. The telegraph was available, and the difficult position in which you have placed both

yourself and Her Majesty's Government is in fact directly due to your omission to consult me in that manner, for which I do not find in your Despatch any other justification than that contained in the 76th paragraph, where you state that you deliberately determined not to do so as you felt it impossible to enter with sufficient fulness into the question, and so to convey a distinct view of the reasons for your action. This explanation I need only remark is of itself sufficient to show that you were conscious of the complicated position of affairs, of the absence of complete information on the subject in this Department, and of the magnitude of the change which you were making; and these considerations alone should have been sufficient to induce you, in the absence of any urgent grounds for immediate action, to submit your proposals for approval instead of relying upon your own judgment.

39. With reference to the question of the future policy which ought to govern the relation of Her Majesty's Government towards Perak I purpose to address you in a separate Despatch; and I will now add only the expression of the sincere reluctance and pain with which I have felt myself constrained to express an unfavourable opinion of some part of your proceedings.

It is not my object to convey censure, and, indeed, I have already highly approved the conspicuous ability and determination with which you acted subsequently to the outbreak of these disorders. I am glad to take this opportunity of repeating my appreciation of your conduct during this period, but I am confident that your long experience as a distinguished servant of the Crown will make you fully aware, on reflection, that an officer representing Her Majesty in a distant dependency must be most careful to assure himself that the Government to which he is responsible not only understands but approves any important administrative or political changes which he may contemplate; that he is not at liberty of his own motion to initiate such measures; and that the necessity for obtaining a distinct assurance of approval is so great as to outweigh any advantage which might appear to him likely to ensue from more immediate action. I am equally confident that I can rely as fully upon your cordial and unreserved co-operation in that policy which will be announced to you as if it had not unfortunately been my duty to disapprove of some of your recent acts and opinions.

Governor Sir W. Jervois,
K.C.M.G., C.B.

I have, &c.

(Signed) CARNARVON.

Printed by GEORGE E. EYRE and WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
Printers to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty.
For Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

E.C.M.G. C.B.