

**A VINDICATION OF HIS CHARACTER AND
PROCEEDINGS: IN REPLY TO THE
STATEMENTS PRIVATELY
PRINTED AND CIRCULATED BY JOSEPH
HUME, ESQ. M. P. ADDRESSED TO
HENRY DRUMMOND, ESQ. M. P.**

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A Vindication of His Character and Proceedings: In Reply to the Statements Privately Printed and circulated by Joseph Hume, esq. M. P. addressed to Henry Drummond, esq. M. P. by Sir James Brooke

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SIR JAMES BROOKE

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JOSEPH HUME, ESQ. M.P.

ADDRESSED TO HENRY DRUMMOND, ESQ. M.P.

BY
SIR JAMES BROOKE, K.C.B.
RAJAH OF SARAWAK.

"For they intended mischief against thee: and imagined such a
device as they are not able to perform."—PSALM XXI.

LONDON:
JAMES RIDGWAY, 169, PICCADILLY.
1853.

A VINDICATION,

ETC. ETC.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SIR,

Mr. Hume has printed a pamphlet, containing a repetition of all the charges, which for several years he has preferred against me; and, although I had resolved no further to notice what this gentleman might either say or do, I have, on reflection, changed my mind, in the hope that my present labour may tend to my future ease; and that it may afford to all those, who really desire to make themselves acquainted with the subject, an easy reference to the documents connected with it.

It is however necessary, in the first place, to explain the circumstances under which this discussion arose, and whence it has since been protracted to an interminable length, and a perplexing entanglement to the cursory inquirer.

In 1848, I was encouraged by the public approbation, by memorials from the principal commercial associations in the kingdom, and by the express

sanction of the Government of the country, to undertake a decisive course of policy for the suppression of Piracy.

In 1849, in pursuance of this duty, the punishment of the Serebas pirates,—a measure both previously and subsequently approved by her Majesty's Ministers—was successfully accomplished. Mr. Hume then, for the first time, stepped forward as my public accuser in Parliament. Ample time was afforded him to collect all the evidence on the subject which could be procured ; and no effort was spared to render it of a sufficiently condemnatory character, to justify a demand for inquiry. Mr. Hume's motions were fully and solemnly discussed, in 1850 and 1851, and on both occasions they were rejected by nearly unanimous majorities, conclusively demonstrating the sense of the House of Commons and of the country.

It appears to me, a grievous injury, inflicted on an individual and on the public interest, to repeat the same charges with the same absence of testimony ; and, in order to prove the injustice of the course pursued by Mr. Hume, I need only recapitulate the accusations which session after session, and year after year, he has heaped upon me. The first grave charge which Mr. Hume advanced, was to the effect, that *I had massacred innocent people, falsely asserting them to be Pirates*. This charge, having for a time been dismissed, he endeavoured to prove that I was a merchant, whilst engaged in

the public service. He next asserted that an unnecessary loss of life had been inflicted in the action of July 1849—he afterwards cavilled at the title by which I hold Sarawak—he has accused me of cold-blooded murders—he has denounced me for neglect of public duty—for abuse of official power—for impeding the progress of commercial enterprise, and for establishing a trading monopoly—and added to this frightful category of crime and of misdemeanour, he seeks to convict me “out of my own mouth” of bad motives, ambitious designs, violence, tyranny, falsehood, injustice, and petty larceny.

Never probably before has a civilized man been so unfortunate as to have charged upon him, at one and the same time, so varied a list of offences; and yet a repetition of these charges, is to be found in the pamphlet, *privately printed, and privately circulated, with letters of recommendation*, from Mr. Hume, addressed to exalted personages, whose ill opinion would most injure me, and best advance the object at which he aims.

I will leave it with impartial persons to decide, whether such a course can be reconciled to the principles of justice, to the maxims of English law, or to the sense of English fair play; and I shall content myself with the remark, that in my opinion, Mr. Hume impedes his own success, and prevents the possibility of a fair inquiry, by the indiscriminating extravagance of his assertions,

and by the virulence with which he urges them against me. It is true, that he has with a clumsy solemnity, staked his public reputation, on the purity of his motives ; but in doing so, he has overlooked what others cannot fail to perceive : namely, the *deep personal interest he must have in establishing the charges he has preferred ; for if I be innocent, then Mr. Hume is guilty*—guilty of the serious offence of repeating accusations, alike the most grave and the most trivial, against his fellowman, upon evidence which has been twice weighed by Parliament, and twice rejected.

I am desirous, however, of avoiding Mr. Hume's acrimony of expression. I am not unwilling to give him credit, for being ignorant of the real motives which actuate him ; and I am inclined to plead in his favour, *that pertinacity of will*, which is too often the misfortune, and not the fault, of advanced age.

I propose referring in the notes to the sources for procuring complete information, on the various subjects under discussion ; and in refutation of the first charge of the massacre of innocent people, I shall content myself with an array of the positive testimonies, to establish the piratical character of the Sarebas community, and the specific acts of piracy committed by it.*

* Papers presented to the House of Commons relating to Piracy ; Foreign Office, 5th Feb., April, 11th June, 15th

1. Mahomed Kassim—Piracy thirty years ago.
2. Mr. Windsor Earl, 1836.
3. Monsieur Cornet de Groot, 1839—Secretary-General to the Netherland Colonial Minister.
4. Sir James Brooke, 1839, 1840.
5. Captain Keppel, 1843, 1844.
6. The Rajah Muda Hassim, 1843, 1844.
7. Mr. Church, 1843—Resident Councillor of Singapore.
8. Tay Song Que—Commander of a Chinese vessel.
9. Colonel Butterworth, 1844 — Governor of Singapore.
10. Dawich } Commanders of Prahus from the
11. Mahdout } N.W. coast of Borneo.
12. Admiral Sir Thomas Cochrane.
13. The Sultan of Borneo } Subsequently to the
14. The Pangeron Makota } action of 1849.
15. Mr. Louis Jackson—Civil Service of Bengal, 1849.

August.—Notices Historiques sur les Pirateries, 1816 to 1845—Presented to both Houses of Parliament, July 1851—Additional Papers respecting the operations against the Pirates, presented to both Houses, 1851—Borneo Piracy: Further Correspondence, presented to the House of Commons, 30th June, 1852—In continuation of Papers presented 23rd March, 1852—Colonial Office: No. 378, 6th June, 1851—Admiralty: presented to the House of Commons, 11th Feb. No. 53; 15th April, No. 239—Vide Note signed D. B. Woolsey, 1851; 15th November; 16th November, 1852—Hansard's Reports, 10th July, 1851—Edinburgh Review, July, 1852—"Visit to the Indian Archipelago," by Captain the Hon. Henry Keppel, R.N. Chap. 9 to 14.

16. Mr. Urban Vigors, 1852.
17. Siup—captured after the action.
18. Abang Bit } Sarebas Men.
19. Abang Buyong }
20. Asin—A Chinese formerly of Sambas.*
21. The decision of the Court of Admiralty in Singapore.†

To this list, I may add, that in 1850 I received the approval of her Majesty's Ministers, with instructions from Lord Palmerston, to repeat the same measure when it should again become necessary.‡

I need scarcely tell Mr. Hume, that *a fact cannot be more than proved*, and if this fact be not established, there has not been, nor can there ever be, an established fact in the world.

On the second charge, of the unnecessary sacrifice of life, I reply :

That there is no testimony whatever in support of it ; as Mr. Urban Vigors, who was formerly asserted to be an evidence in its favour, has now stated as follows : " No man (writes this gentleman), can entertain a greater horror of unnecessary bloodshed than I do ; and yet, I do not for

* The Parliamentary Papers will furnish more depositions than are here noticed.

† If the decision of a Court of Justice on a simple matter of fact is not conclusive, where is the safety of the subject ? where the right of property to be insured ?

‡ Parliamentary Papers : F. O. Moved for, but not yet presented to the House of Commons, 1853.