

We now learned the reason why the Sultan could not be seen: it was Friday, the Mahomedan Sabbath, and he had been at the mosque from an early hour. Lieutenant Budd had been detained, because it was not known when he would finish his prayers; and the ceremonies of the day were more important than usual, on account of its peculiar sanctity in their calendar.

Word had been sent off to the ship that the Sultan was ready to receive me, but the messenger passed us while on our way to the shore. After we had been seated for a while, the Datu asked if we were ready to accompany him to see the Sultan; but intimated that no one but Captain Hudson and myself could be permitted to lay eyes on him. Being informed that we were, he at once, and in our presence, slipped on his silken trousers, and a new jacket, covered with bell-buttons; put on his slippers, strapped himself round with a long silken net sash, into which he stuck his kris, and, with umbrella in hand, said he was ready. He now led the way out of his house, leaving the motley group behind, and we took the path to the interior of the town, towards the Sultan's. The Datu and I walked hand in hand, on a roadway about ten feet wide, with a small stream running on each side. Captain Hudson and the interpreter came next, and a guard of six trusty slaves brought up the rear.

When we reached the outskirts of the town, about half a mile from the Datu's, we came to the Sultan's residence, where he was prepared to receive us in state. His house is constructed in the same manner as that of the Datu, but is of larger dimensions, and the piles are rather higher. Instead of steps, we found a ladder, rudely constructed of bamboo, and very crazy. This was so steep that it was necessary to use the hands in mounting it. I understood that the ladder was always removed in the night, for the sake of security. We entered at once into the presence-chamber, where the whole divan, if such it may be called, sat in arm-chairs, occupying the half of a large round table, covered with a white cotton cloth. On the opposite side of the table, seats were placed for us. On our approach, the Sultan and all his council rose, and motioned us to our seats. When we had taken them, the part of the room behind us was literally crammed with well-armed men. A few minutes were passed in silence, during which time we had an opportunity of looking at each other, and around the hall in which we were seated. The latter was of very common workmanship, and exhibited no signs of oriental magnificence. Overhead hung a printed cotton cloth, forming a kind of tester, which covered about half of the apartment. In other places the roof and rafters were visible. A part of the house was roughly