

LOSS of the VISCOUNT MELBOURNE.

We regret to learn that the Viscount Melbourne has been totally lost on her passage to China. The particulars of this melancholy affair have not reached us beyond the loss of the vessel's loss, and a statement that the whole crew took to the boats, which had all but one reached land, and in that one, for which great fears were entertained, was concerned to say, Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, was to join the 37th Native Infantry in China. A Malay prahu had boarded one of the boats and fired into her, wounding one European, and plundered the poor people.

We are indebted to the *Madras Athenaeum* for the following additional particulars from the *Singapore Free Press*, of which we have not yet ourselves received a copy:—

"LOSS OF THE VISCOUNT MELBOURNE.—We regret that it falls to our lot to announce the loss of the Viscount Melbourne, Captain M'Kenzie, on the 5th inst. at the Luconia Shoal, in the China sea. She took her departure from this for Macao on the 25th ultimo, with the following passengers on board—viz., Mrs. Dare and two children, Lieut.-Colonel Campbell, 37th Regiment Madras Native Infantry, and — Scott, Esq., of Calcutta. On the 5th inst., at 4 30 a.m., during a calm, breakers were detected on the lee beam close to the vessel, when she sounded her alarms, and let go both bower anchors, which, however, would not hold, and the ship struck abait and swung broadside to the reef, from which it was found impossible to get her off; and nothing remained to be done but to get the boats out. This was accomplished with some difficulty, and before they left the ship she had begun, with the flow of the tide, to strike very heavily abait, threatening destruction to all the after part of the vessel, although, in consequence of the anchors holding forward, she was comparatively safe in that part. Having put provisions and water on board, they left the vessel in five boats; the captain, Mrs. Dare and children, Mr. Scott, and 23 of the crew went in the launch; in the first cutter, the chief and third officers, with Lieutenant-Colonel Campbell, three European seamen, and seven lascars; in the second cutter, the second mate and nine of the crew; in the third cutter, 22 of the lascars; and in the jolly boat, the fourth officer and 10 of the crew—in all 77 hands. Having left the vessel, the boats steered towards the coast of Borneo, with the intention of making Boreno Proper, and on the 7th came in sight of the land on the coast, but finding that the strength of the current would prevent their reaching the capital, Captain M'Kenzie directed them to steer for Sambas; the 22 lascars in the third cutter, however, being apparently determined to shift for themselves, went off at once towards the shore. On the same day they also parted company with the second cutter, the chief officer having said that he would run in to look at the land and return by sun-set; but apparently met with some obstacle, as he did not afterwards join them. On the 10th, a Malay prahu came alongside of the launch, the nakodah of which was permitted to come on board, and endeavoured to persuade them to go on shore—but this invitation being declined, he went again on board of his own prahu, and getting alongside the jolly boat, which was astern, boarded her and plundered the men in her of every thing they had. She was doubtless a pirate, and Captain M'Kenzie supposes he was only prevented from attacking

M'Kenzie supposes he was only prevented from attacking and plundering the launch by seeing that they were well supplied with fire-arms on board. As it was, the prahu fired several shots at the launch, one of which wounded a European seaman in the head. Finding the jolly boat the cause of detention, the people were taken out of her and divided between the launch and second cutter, the boat herself being turned adrift. On the following night the second cutter parted company with the launch, and seeing no traces of her at daylight, although she had hoove to and fired muskets during the night, the second officer determined to steer in his boat for Singapore. He arrived here early in the morning of Monday last; and Captain M'Kenzie having also adopted the same determination, after parting company with the second cutter his boat arrived about twelve hours after, having been thirteen days from the ship. They had all suffered much from exposure, and in particular Mrs. Dare, one of whose children was at the breast, and whose situation for such a period in an open boat was necessarily painful in the extreme.

No further accounts having been received of the first cutter, and having had experience of the dangers those on board of her are exposed to on the coast of Borneo, the local authorities have very properly chartered the Royalist to proceed to that coast in quest of her. The Royalist is herself well armed, and some Gokudauze and sepoys having been shipped on board of her, she will be in a condition not only to protect herself against pirates, but to operate effectually against them. Captain M'Kenzie says that the first cutter was an excellent boat, very well equipped, and in every respect in an efficient state, and well provided with arms, besides those belonging to Colonel Campbell. It is not improbable that being prevented from joining her consorts by contrary currents she may have steered for Sambas; but there is too much room for apprehension on that coast to rely on any such probability, and we are happy to find that the local authorities have lost no time in despatching a vessel for her relief.

We ought not to conclude this notice without mentioning that Commodore Kearney, in the absence of any of Her Majesty's cruisers, very handsomely proffered the services of the two American ships of war here under his command, to make inquiries in the course of their voyage to China, along the Borneo coast, for the missing boat, an offer which has been acknowledged, we have no doubt, by the local authorities in becoming terms, although the despatch of the Royalist renders it unnecessary to avail of it.—*Madras S. Gazette*, Feb. 18.

THE MARYLEBONE VESTRIES BILL.—Yesterday a public meeting of the rate-payers of the parish of St. Marylebone took place in the workhouse-yard, for the purpose of taking into consideration the bill now before Parliament having for its object an alteration of the local laws which the parish is at present governed, and to devise means for opposing it at every stage. Lord Nugent occupied the chair, and was supported by the borough members, and a great number of the vestrymen and directors of the parish. The chairman having briefly stated the object of the meeting, several gentlemen spoke against the measure, contending that it was only introduced for the purpose of getting the "Old Select" again into power, and to trample on the rights and liberties of the rate-payers. They considered the bill the best clauses of Sir J. Hobhouse's Act would be repealed, and all the power of choosing vestrymen would be vested in a few of the aristocracy of the parish. Their position had done some good, for the promoters of the bill had withdrawn the clause which was to raise the qualification. Resolutions having been passed in favour of the measure, a vote of thanks was given to the chairman, and the meeting broke up.