

An old Bishop of BEAUVAIS, having a taste for fighting, but being by his profession forbidden to shed blood, hit upon the ingenious plan of dashing out his enemies' brains with a ponderous mace. The Bishop of LABUAN has improved upon this invention, and devotes himself to the truly Christian labour of "picking off" his foes with a breech-loading rifle. The statement looks incredible; but it is undoubtedly true, for we have it, as it were under the Bishop's own hand and seal. The other day there appeared in the *Times* a long letter signed "F. T. LABUAN," reciting the writer's recent experiences with the Malay pirates who are said to infest the Bornean Archipelago. In this document, which is written with all the gusto of a newspaper correspondent describing an American battle, the BISHOP relates a story which really makes the blood of the reader run cold with horror and disgust. On the 15th of May, the Bishop of LABUAN and Mr. J. BROOKE, brother of Sir JAMES BROOKE, of Sarawak fame, went on an expedition to Bintulu, "a territory which the Sultan of BRUNAI has handed over to the Sarawak Government." While there they heard from Mr. HELMS (who seems to be a sort of governor or factor to the BROOKE family) that six Illanun vessels were lying off Muka, threatening the town, and plundering the shore boats of that country. Mr. BROOKE and the BISHOP instantly set off in two steamers for the scene of action. The steamers were armed with cannon, and the crews were supplied with muskets, the BISHOP himself being the fortunate possessor of a TERRY breech-loading rifle, which seems to be regarded by him much in the light of a pastoral staff, and which he uses after the pattern of that bright exemplar the pugnacious Bishop of BEAUVAIS. After cruising about for a day or two without any result, the two steamers fell in with three large prahus, or native war boats. The Borneans who were with them were asked whether these boats were pirates. They promptly replied in the affirmative. On this information alone, without the least personal knowledge, but acting simply on the word of half-a-dozen savages, Mr. BROOKE and his episcopal coadjutor gave chase to the prahus. The latter rowed frantically towards the shore, in the hope of escaping. One of them succeeded in the attempt, and got into shallow water, where the gun-boats could not follow her. Another finding escape hopeless, showed fight, and fired her "lelahs" or small guns at the leading steamer, but without doing much mischief. "Then," writes the BISHOP, "we opened all the guns we got to bear, and kept on at full power until we ran into her, struck her midships, our stem running right over her, and then backed off again." Having thus finished one boat the steamer gave chase to the third. Again we quote the BISHOP:—"When we came up with her she was fast slipping into shore, and we ran into less than two fathoms of water with a rocky bottom under us before we could strike her, which we did too far forward to sink her, but she was disabled by the collision, and sheered round alongside of us but did not fight at all." A large number of "pirates" and of slaves whom they had captured, were taken off these sinking prahus. Most of the people were frightfully wounded, some by the English fire, and others by the blows of the Illanunes. "My hands (again says the BISHOP) were soon full of work with the wounded, friends and foes alike, arresting hemorrhage, extracting balls, and closing frightful sword or chopper wounds, such perhaps, as are hardly ever seen in civilised warfare." It is a charming picture—a Christian Bishop safely ensconced in a steamboat, running down a set of half-naked savages, shooting them, pounding them with cannon shot, and then taking credit for binding up the wounds which he had himself helped to inflict.

But this is only the first act of the tragedy. Three other prahus had gone out to sea. They were followed, and oars being able to do very little against steam, were soon overtaken. Naturally enough, they made no further attempt to fly; but with the courage of desperation, drew themselves up in a rude order of battle, and prepared to sell their lives as dearly as they could. One man was killed on board one of the steamers and two others were wounded; but this seems to have been the full extent of the damage, for a kind of breastwork of planks had been put up which protected the English and their followers, while the Illanunes were exposed to the deadly fire of the rifles without the slightest protection. But rifle firing was too slow to satisfy Mr. BROOKE and the Bishop of LABUAN. "Our plan of action (says Bishop MACDOUGALL) was to silence the brass guns of the prahus with our rifles, to shake them at their oars with grape and round shot, until we could run into them without their being strong enough to board us." This "plan" which had

proved so successful with the first batch of Illanun boats was tried with equal effect upon the second batch. "One of the vessels was cut right in two; the steamer went straight on without backing, and she sank the other, one-half on either side of us. The pirates fought to the last, and then would not surrender, but jumped into the sea with their arms." Out of six vessels, each with a crew of from forty to fifty men, the steamers captured only thirty-two. One of these, a boy, was the brother of a chief, and this lad says the BISHOP,—relapsing into piety when the work of slaughter was over—"I shall educate and try to make a Christian of him!" "Very few of the pirates (he adds) live to tell the tale; some captives assured us that in the boat they were in there were only two out of the forty fighting men who had not been killed or wounded by our fire, when we gave them the stem and cut her down." So much for the general account of the slaughter. Now for the BISHOP's own particular share in it. He modestly refrains from saying too much about himself; but he evidently took a full share of the business throughout, and towards the close of his letter he contrives to let us see something of what he actually did, in the following passage, which, as proceeding from the pen of a Christian Bishop we sincerely hope cannot be matched in the annals of any section of the Church:—

"We have all great cause to be most thankful to the Rajah Mudah for the very gallant, and yet wise and cautious, way in which he planned and carried out the attack, and also to Captain Hewat and his officers for the cool and steady manner in which the ship was handled, and everything done in the right time and place. Our Midshipman and Sarawak foremen showed the influence of their good training, and the example set them by their European leaders. Not a man flinched from his work, and, although never in action before, they showed the coolness and steadiness of veterans. We could not have had more than thirty-five rifles and muskets and smooth-bore guns among us—less, perhaps, than each of the pirate boats carried; notwithstanding which, our fire was so steady and galling that we very much kept down the fire of their lelahs, and so thinned their men as to put the idea of boarding us out of their heads. In short, our weapons, though few, were good and well served, and in justice to the maker, I must mention that my double-barrelled Terry's breech-loader, made by Reilly, New Oxford Street, proved itself a most deadly weapon for its true shooting, and certainly and rapidly of fire. It never missed fire once in eighty rounds, and was then so little fouled that I believe it would have fired eighty more with like effect without wanting to be cleaned. When we ran down the last pirate all our ammunition for the 9-pounders was expended, and our own caps and cartridges for the small arms had nearly come to an end, so that if we had had more prahus to deal with we should have been in a sorry plight, and had to trust to our stem and hot-water hose to do the work. But the whole affair was most providentially ordered in our not meeting the six boats together, when their fire might have been too much for us; and then in their departing from their usual plan of rushing at us *en masse* to board, and by their separating and giving us the opportunity of running them down one after the other. We are, indeed, all most thankful to our Heavenly Father who thus ordered things for us, and made us His instruments to punish these bloodthirsty foes of the human race."

The words we have printed in italic seem to us to be the very height of profanity. It almost exceeds belief that a Christian clergyman, and that clergyman a missionary Bishop, should have the audacity publicly to thank God for having enabled him to share in the work of slaughtering two or three hundred of the heathen whom he was sent out to convert! Granted that the Illanunes are pirates, was it Bishop MACDOUGALL's function to chase them in armed steam boats, shoot them from behind safe cover with a long-range rifle, to pour upon them scalding water from the ship's boilers, and finally to run their vessels down, cut them in two, and sink them, regardless of the horrible death this dealt out indiscriminately to the pirates and their captives? Is this the kind of Bishop whom PAUL would approve? Is this the sort of missionary enterprise for which the Christian public of England subscribe their money and offer up their prayers? Granted that the destruction of these pirates might have been an act of justice, the Bishop of LABUAN had no right to enrol himself amongst the executioners, or to handle his rifle with savage delight, which is positively revolting, or to write and publish an account of the transaction in terms which show that it met with his heartiest approval. The Bishop concludes his epistle with a fervent appeal to the English Government to lend him and his coadjutors assistance to continue this work of slaughter.

"If the English Government will now act with and assist us, we shall soon clear the Sarawak and Labuan waters of these pests. Assisted by the experience and knowledge of our natives, the work would be done surely and effectually; but, single-handed, the Sarawak Government, notwithstanding all it has done, cannot carry it out. We want means; if England or Englishmen will give us that, we shall gladly do the work, and feel that we are delivering our fellow men, and doing our duty to God, who has commanded us to free the captive and deliver the oppressed. While at the same time we shall be averting a danger which is ever threatening us at our own doors, and has so long crippled the energies and resources of this country."

The only possible excuse for such an appeal is that it must have been written before the frenzy of blood had passed away. It seems to be quite time for the English Government to do something in respect to these proceedings in the Eastern seas. We do not know by what right private Englishmen go into a foreign country, make treaties, and levy war on their own account. If British interests require protection the measures taken with that object should be dictated and controlled by the recognised national authorities. It is something monstrous that private adventurers should be permitted to commit acts which bring discredit on the English name; and it is lamentable as well as monstrous that a Christian minister should become a foremost actor in the work of destruction, to say nothing of his being its eager and laudatory chronicler.