The Belfast News-Letter
Tuesday, November 17, 1863

THE LITTLE WAR.

[FROM THE MORNING POST.]

AT the close of the last session of Parliament there were laid before its members papers connected with the bombardment of Tringana, a fort and place of residence belonging to a rajah—nominally tributary to Siam, but often before in direct relation with the local Government of Singapore. The bombardment arose out of circumstances connected with the succession to a chiefship, at the extreme Southern end of the peninsula, which was tributary to the Malay Prince from whom we obtained Singapore. We had arbitrated the dispute, and awarded the petty chiefship to the elder brother. The younger, who claimed a portion of the territory, as intended to be given to him by his father, was dissatisfied, and attempted to assert his right by arms. Then, taking refuge in Tringana, he began to collect followers, and prepare another expedition. The Tringana chief was warned to give him up or to send him away, and complaint was at the same time made to Siam. The nuisance, however, was not removed, and, in despair of having it otherwise remedied, an officer of the Singapore Government was sent in a ship-of-war to Tringana to insist on immediate redress; failing to obtain it, the ship bombarded the fort, and caused it to be evacuated. This independent action for mischief is an incident common with the feudatories, and even public officers, of all the great States and Empires of the East, and it has often happened there that we have been compelled to seek atonement, and to inflict punishment upon chiefs and local authorities, instead of following the course, universal in Europe, of holding the general Government answerable for all that is done in any part of a large kingdom. We have just now followed this course in Japan, and the bombardment of the fort and place of residence of the Prince of Satsuma must be looked upon as an ordinary and necessary expedient of the policy we are compelled to observe with these Asiatic nations. It is by no means a new thing in our dealings with sovereignties contiguous to Japan. For instance, in our first quarrels with China, we acted against the Governor of Canton, whose measures were the offence of which we complained, and we hoped by that means to obtain the redress we sought. We have now concluded