

The Aberdeen Journal  
Wednesday, November 17, 1875

P E R A K.

THE *Morning Advertiser* says:—Fortunately for us, we have in Sir William Jervois, the Governor and Commander in Chief of the Settlements, which include, by the way, not only the Malayan Peninsula, but also the Prince of Wales's Island, Malacca, and other dependencies, an energetic soldier, who possesses considerable experience of colonial affairs, gathered in Canada and at the Cape of Good Hope, where he took part in the Kaffir war of 1846-47. Colonel Jervois, who has just exchanged the appointment of Deputy Director of Works at the War Office for the Governorship of the Straits, may, therefore, be depended upon as an officer perfectly competent to cope with such a difficulty as he is thus early called upon to deal with, and we feel sure that the interests of the Empire will be well cared for in his hands. At the same time, we cannot deny that, unless our troops on the spot are powerful enough to inflict an immediate and energetic blow—and of this we have grave doubts—the war may become a very serious affair indeed. The body of soldiers in this part of our dominions is a very small one; for we have of late years pursued the questionable policy of reducing the garrisons in our colonies and dependencies to the very lowest ebb. Thus for some years past we have held the valuable port of Singapore, and the whole of the peninsula and islands around, with a force not exceeding a thousand men, supplemented by a few Sepoy soldiers. A single line regiment—the 10th—and a battery of artillery comprise, with a native guard, the whole of the troops at the disposal of the Governor, and with these he has to keep in subjection a Malay population of 300,000 souls. Of course, there are men-of-war continually in the waters of the Straits, and the aid both of the China and East Indian fleets may be invoked at any time by telegraph from Singapore, but weeks would obviously elapse before any number of vessels could be assembled. It is, we fear, more to the unprotected condition of our colonies than to any other reason that disturbances of this kind are to be ascribed, the circumstance of our rule being scarcely more than nominal, inviting, no doubt, an attack against the handful of soldiers which represent British sovereignty. It is, in some instances, nothing less than a temptation to place a slender garrison of a few soldiers in the midst of a native population among whom there is never a lack of political agitators.

---

THE MALAY PENINSULA.—Immediate orders have been given for the composite sloop *Egeria*, 14 guns, the screw corvette *Modeste*, 14 guns, and the double screw gun vessel *Ringdove*, 3 guns, to join the gun vessels *Thistle* and *Fly* at Singapore, and that Admiral Ryder, the commander-in-chief on the China station, will follow in his flag ship *Audacious*, 14 guns. A naval force of 6 vessels, mounting 43 guns, and having on board more than 1000 officers and men, of whom 150 are marines, will thus be assembled at Singapore, available for any emergency that may arise.