

There is good reason to hope that our latest "little war" will soon be over. The first reports of the murder of the British Resident at Perak naturally caused some anxiety, as it was impossible to say to what extent the Malay population were responsible for the outrage. But all the subsequent intelligence goes to show that the area of disaffection is exceedingly limited. Of the native chiefs who exercise a sort of petty sovereignty in the Peninsula, only one, the Rajah LELA, is believed to be really hostile to us. The others, according to Governor Sir WILLIAM JERVOIS, remain unshaken in their loyalty. The troops at the disposal of the Governor, with the reinforcements daily expected, will enable decisive measures to be at once taken against the Rajah; but it is just as well to recognise clearly how his disloyalty has originated. The chieftainship, or Sultanship, as it is called, of these native states, is not hereditary, and a war of succession is by no means an uncommon occurrence. For a long time we wisely declined to interfere in any of these native quarrels, though they often proved a great nuisance to the inhabitants of the Straits Settlements. Towards the end of 1873, Sir ANDREW CLARK went out as Governor, and, in the words of a "States Resident" in the *Times*, "at once seized the situation and the remedy." A war of succession was at that time in progress, and the new Governor threw in his influence on one side, of course in the interests of peace. The Sultan ALI, of Perak, had recognised the Rajah ABDULLAH as his successor; but it is a native custom for the Sultan-elect to attend the funeral of his predecessor. This formality, very foolishly it would seem, was neglected by ABDULLAH, whereupon the Rajah ISMAIL, the next in rank, was chosen Sultan at a meeting of native chiefs. It was after this that Sir ANDREW CLARK intervened, and we cannot say that recent events have demonstrated the wisdom of the course he then pursued. It was in consequence of the measures he devised that British Residents were stationed at Perak, Larut, and other districts; and though inspired by the best intentions, we see one of its effects in the murder of Mr. BIRCH. The Rajah LELA, who has now set our authority at defiance, was one of the chiefs who supported ISMAIL's claims to the Sultanship. It is, however, to be said on behalf of Sir ANDREW CLARK that a policy of non-intervention was yearly growing more and more difficult to maintain. One of the items of intelligence from Penang is a statement to the effect that the Chinese residents in the Settlements have offered us 2000 men to fight the Malays. The fact is, the Chinese, profiting by our protection, are flocking into the Peninsula like locusts—one estimate puts the immigration at as high a figure as 2000 a year; and it is impossible to prevent the Celestials from spreading into Malay territory. They are industrious, thrifty fellows, well disposed to live at peace with their neighbours; but the savage disposition of the Malays leads to frequent embroilments. Such is the present position of affairs in the Peninsula. Less than two years ago, Mr. DISRAELI, it may be remembered, charged Mr. GLADSTONE'S Government with allowing the Dutch to have too much of their way in the Straits of Malacca. Long before this the Dutch must have wished themselves well out of the Peninsula; and though we do not regard the punishment of a Perak chief as at all a tough job, we cannot help regretting that circumstances have compelled us to interfere with the internal affairs of such very troublesome people.

Admiral Ryder has lost no time in starting from Shanghai for Singapore. Yesterday was the day named for sailing, but he managed to get away on Friday. With the *Audacious*, *Modeste*, *Egeria*, *Ringdove*, *Thistle*, and *Fly*, at Singapore, and the *Philomel* at Penang, the Straits Division of the station will be strong enough for any emergency, but there is every reason to hope that the outbreak was but a flash in the pan.

The *Vestal* arrived at the Cape on the 14th of October, en route for the East Indies station, and reported "all well."