

*THE END OF THE MALAYAN WAR.*

THE flight of the leaders of the insurrection in Perak may be accepted as a proof that the Malays are neither a match in the field for the British troops nor sufficiently confident in their own fighting power to prolong an uncertain guerrilla war. The firm though cautious movement of the troops under General Colborne's command up the Perak river, and the simultaneous pressure from the north of the force operating under Brigadier Ross on the side of Laroot, have completed the work that was well commenced by the capture of the stockade near the scene of Mr. Birch's murder in November last. The admirable organization of the offensive operations on that occasion, including the skilful employment of rockets and shells, struck a deep sense of apprehension into the Malay mind. The stockades, it was found, though easily defensible against an ordinary assault, and not altogether incapable of resisting common small field-guns, were raked so fiercely by the shells and rockets that their defenders quickly lost all confidence in the protection of their bamboos. After the successful storming of the stockades in the neighbourhood of Passir Sala, the Malays, as it appears, retreated rapidly, though not precipitately, before our troops and gunboats, and offered no further resistance as long as the advancing force kept the line of the river. But when the Sultan Ismail and his prompter in disaffection, the Maharajah Lelah, fled from their strong position at Blanja, almost on the central point of the arc described by the Perak river, the chances of war assumed a more doubtful aspect. It was feared that in the dense jungle into which our soldiers had to plunge, the Malays might be able to offer a serious resistance, or, at any rate, to inflict heavy losses on our small army. But, as it turned out, the Malays were too completely cowed to take advantage of the natural features of the country, and after a feeble stand at Kintah, which General Colborne reported on the 24th inst. to be "taken without loss," the whole of the insurrection suddenly collapsed. Mr. Birch's murderers are still in arms, it is said, but they are flying in despair through the jungle, and they no more constitute a formidable rebellion than Nana Sahib and Tantia Topce did after he decisive defeat of the Sepoy Mutiny.

The most curious feature in the history of this little war is the strange electricity of sympathy which appears to link together the whole Malay population of the Peninsula. Though Salangore, the State which lies between Perak and our province of Malacca, has been tranquil during the recent disturbances, the feelings of the Malays are known to be hostile to the British Power, and an outbreak of this hostility might at any moment have occurred. Such an outbreak, in fact, happened in the little protected territory of Sunjie Ujong, on the southern frontier of Salangore. There is a standing quarrel between the chiefs of this petty State and those of the neighbouring State of Rambow. In the autumn of 1874 the Attorney-General of the Straits Settlements explained in the Legislative Council at Singapore what had been done by Sir Andrew Clarke to suppress disorders in this quarter.

Sunjie Ujong (he said) is a very prosperous tin-mining district. There is a river there which serves the Sunjie Ujong tin mines, and, in its lower course, passes by Rambow. The chiefs of Rambow, who have always had a filibustering character, contend that, as the river passes their territory, they have a right to impose a duty on the trade passing up and down. This has been going on for years, and disputes frequently arise on account of the tin being stopped on this river. The chiefs have put up stockades, and have claimed duty on account of their position on the river. Several times our Government has been called upon to interfere from complaints by the merchants of Malacca, and very frequently by the Chamber of Commerce of this Settlement, and in all cases it has turned out that the difficulties to the trade have been from men putting stockades on this river and demanding duty without authority.

This state of things lasted with little change down to the arrival of Sir Andrew Clarke and the abandonment of the non-intervention policy. A succession quarrel arose in Rambow and a dispute between the chiefs of Sunjie Ujong and Tunku dia Oodin of Klang. "This," the Attorney-General said, "complicated affairs very much in Sunjie Ujong; the tin trade was again stopped, and Tunku dia Oodin's allies, the Rambow men, put up stockades which remained till his Excellency went up there in May last, and they were pulled down. That was the first interference in the Lingie, and it has been followed up in this river—a most important one from its nearness to Malacca—with the same effect as elsewhere; there has been perfect peace since the interference." No sooner, however, had the news of Ismail's resistance to the British arms reached the southern Provinces than there followed an invasion of Sunjie Ujong by Malays, presumably from Rambow, and stockades were erected from which the invaders had to be dislodged. Fortunately, a considerable force, chiefly composed of Ghoorkas, had been collected in and near Malacca, and on the 7th of December the stockade was attacked by a detachment of the 10th Regiment and the Ghoorkas. It is stated that the stockade contained 400 Malays, who made a determined resistance, but the position was carried at the point of the bayonet. The British loss is given at thirteen killed and ten wounded, and the loss of the Malays at twenty-one killed and a considerable number wounded. This success, though it removed the immediate apprehensions of the people of Malacca, could not be regarded as satisfactory, for the Malays could afford to lose ten men to every one of ours. The enemy immediately fortified themselves in stockades by a mountain-pass behind Sunjie Ujong, where they were attacked on the 22nd of December, as a Colonial Office despatch informs us, by 450 men, consisting of nearly 300 Ghoorkas, with detachments of artillery, 10th Regiment, blue jackets, and irregulars. One hundred and seventy Ghoorkas, blue jackets, and artillery started on the 19th under Colonel Hill and Commander Stirling, made a long and arduous flank march for three days through dense jungle, and turned the position; while the remainder, under Colonel Clay, leaving on the 21st, advanced through jungle in front. Only one Ghoorka was killed, and one wounded. Complete success with so little loss is greatly due to the

gallantry and judgment of Captain Channer, of the Ghoorkas, who surprised and took a stockade flanking the position. This success brings the southern resistance abruptly to an end, and a rumour of it finally struck terror into the insurgents in Perak. The flight of the Maharajah Lelah into Siamese territory proves that the game of open resistance is for the present played out. The Sultan Ismail, who has also deserted his adherents since the capture of Kintah, has taken refuge, it is said, in Pahang, on the eastern coast of the Peninsula, which was described some fifteen months ago to be "in a state requiring attention, as trade has decreased and the country is fast becoming depopulated." Possibly intervention may follow here also, unless, as is probable, Ismail should be surrendered by the Pahang chiefs.