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THE BRITISH COLONIES CONSIDERED AS MILITARY POSTS.

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILKIE.

[Continued from No. 149, page 454.]

Le trident de Neptune
Est le sceptre du monde.—LA HARPE.

CEYLON—(*continued.*)

THE most ancient name of this island, among the aborigines, is Laka; still preserved in the old writings, which trace back the history of Ceylon for nearly six centuries B.C. The truth of some of these records is in great measure confirmed by the still existing ruins of pagodas, embankments, tanks, and canals.

About 500 years B.C. an emigration of Singhs, or Rajpoots, is supposed to have taken place, being driven from their country on account of professing the faith of Buddha. This is among the first instances of expatriation on account of religious persecution. The name of Singhala was thus derived; from whence our word Ceylon, or, more approximately, from the inhabitants, Cingalese. Taprobane was its well-known classical name, familiar with the Greeks and Romans, by whom it is often alluded to. In the reign of the Emperor Claudius, one of his tax-collectors, or farmers of the revenue, looking after the tolls of the Red Sea, was blown off his cruising-ground in a gale, and was only able to bring up at Taprobane.

The collector of dues, and his *galley's* company, were hospitably received and well treated. In recompense, the least they thought they could do would be to *spin a few yarns*, for the entertainment of their hosts. As a modern Frenchman might be supposed to do in speaking of Paris, these Romans dilated on the wonders of the Eternal City, until they succeeded effectually in "astonishing the natives," including his Cingalese Majesty; who was so amazed at all he heard that he resolved to send a deputation of four of his trusty subjects to visit the *alta mœnia Romæ*, and report thereon. These curiosity ambassadors accordingly embarked with their new friends, and journeyed to Rome, *viâ* the Red Sea.

There appears no record of what they did when they got there; but, in all probability, they were exhibited before that many-footed monster, S. P. Q. R., after the same fashion as the Australian Omai, Prince Blucher, their Sandwich Majesties, the Hetman Platoff, and the Princess Caraboo, were in England. When they became stale as *lions* in the eyes of the *delicatuli*, or Roman cockneys, "they were taken from thence to the place from whence they came," but not "hanged by the neck until they were dead," &c.

Lanka is the Sanscrit name of Ceylon, as Serandib is the Arabic, under which it figures in many Eastern romances. There may yet turn up, in the researches of some antiquarian, a record of Sinbad the sailor having taken in fresh provisions and water at Trincomalee.

The ancient histories of Ceylon relate that a sovereign and his son,

with names as long as themselves, reigned over the southern peninsula of India and great part of Ceylon, 4400 years since, and that they constructed the great water-reservoirs and other buildings, the remains of which are still extant. In the sixth century the King of Ceylon fitted out a fleet of 500 ships, to avenge himself of his enemies, his island being at that time the great mercantile emporium of the East.

In the thirteenth century, when Europe was taken up with scholastic discussions and theological disputes, Ceylon was visited by the celebrated Marco Polo. The accounts he transmitted home were looked on for a long time as fables; but experience has since proved that, apart from his speculations, the greatest portion of the narrative of his travels is founded on truth.

Coming to more recent events, when the Portuguese first visited the island, in 1505, they found it a prey to intestine wars between the natives, the people of Malabar and the Arabs. The Kandian King called on the Portuguese Admiral for his assistance. It was readily granted, for a *consideration*, which in the first instance consisted of a tribute of cinnamon; but, having gained a footing, the Portuguese, in 1518, commenced the fortification of Colombo and Galle, and in a short time took possession of the whole of the sea-coast, forcing the King of the Kandians, with his subjects, to restrict themselves to the interior parts of the island. This mode of packing up the natives in the mountains would have been considered, in modern times, a strong and sufficient *casus belli*.

One of the first objects of the Portuguese, after gaining possession, was what is called the conversion of the heathen; which they set about in a wholesale sort of fashion, that left all the efforts of modern missionaries in the shade. In a report of their proceedings, to be laid before the Holy See, they boasted of having, in a very few days, made 100,000 converts to Christianity; which appears to have been accomplished by throwing water in their faces. To effect this they must have worked by relief-gangs through the twenty-four hours, as they do in expediting the work on the modern railroads. They left behind them, however, stronger proofs of their Catholic zeal, as there still remain on the island 314 Roman Catholic chapels, dedicated to all manner of saints. The largest of these is capable of containing 3000, and the smallest from thirty to forty devotees.

By the way of inculcating their doctrines, they were generally at war with the natives, and, to secure themselves, they fortified Colombo, Galle, and one or two other posts. In these alternate pastimes of making war and converts affairs continued under the sway of the Portuguese for nearly a whole century, when a Dutch fleet made its appearance in the harbour of Trincomalee. I have already pointed out the causes that placed the Netherlands in hostility with the Spanish peninsula, and in what way the operations of the war were so much confined to the Eastern seas.

The Kandians, very glad of any chance of shaking off the yoke of the Portuguese, joined their forces to those of the lately-arrived Europeans in 1632. After a series of sanguinary contests, and a struggle that lasted for twenty-four years, the Portuguese were finally expelled. The Kandians, however, having discovered that they had only exchanged King Log for King Crane, soon commenced hostilities with their new

friend, Mynheer; which continued, at intervals, during the 140 years that the Dutch were in possession.

The struggles for supremacy in this island bear some resemblance to those in the early history of our own, as recorded in the words of the song—

> The Romans in England they once held sway,
> And the Saxons after them led the way;
> They tugg'd with the Danes till an overthrow
> They both of them got by the Norman bow.

The Kandians were like "the hare with many friends." In 1795 we appeared on the scene to take their part, and soon succeeded in expelling "Little breeches*." But, like our predecessors, we equally inherited the enmity of the natives; and the abortive means we used in the first instance, rather served to increase the feeling, which is now happily dying away.

In Major Forbes's account of the capture of the colony, in 1795, he says, that the Dutch made no resistance, not even in Colombo, which was fortified. This militates with an account I had from a friend, who was present at the operations; but, at the same time, I do not wish to build anything on this hearsay evidence, particularly as the history I received bore some marks of the wonderful. I may, however, venture to relate an anecdote, without being pledged for the truth—*si non è vero, è ben trovato*—it was this:—When Colombo was invested, the Dutch bethought them of a gun that had long been lying dismounted on the ramparts; nobody could tell from whence it came, but it was formed of bars of iron, welded and hooped together, with a double breeching. This curious piece of ordnance they mounted on a carriage, and placed in the principal battery. It was none of your *pop-guns*, or even of such trifling dimensions as "the one small 6-pounder which the American gentleman took over with him to Navy Island on board the Caroline." No; this was a great big gun, carrying a stone shot as large as that which, issuing from one of the guns of the Dardanelles, made such havoc among the glass and crockery of the ward-room mess of the Windsor Castle.

The story went, that the man in our lines who was on the look-out, and to give notice of "shot," "shell," &c., when this great gun was fired, called out, "Shot—shell—mortar—and all, by G—d!"

Notice has been already taken in the early part of these papers, of the great inconvenience that has occasionally arisen in granting as part of the capitulation of captured colonies, the right to be governed by their own laws, however these may be at variance with our own; there is a strong instance of this in Ceylon. Whether it is part of the Dutch colonial law, or that they derived it from the Portuguese, or that it is founded on the customs or laws of the natives, there is no title of primogeniture, but the property must be divided equally among the descendants. Curious that we should give sanction to such a custom, and still more so that we should extend it to the continent of India. If I am rightly informed, by what is called the "final settlement," arranged by Marquis Cornwallis, the Zemindaries, which went originally

* This *sobriquet* for our amphibious friends across the water was derived from the battle of Camperdown. One of the sailors in Lord Duncan's fleet, at every broadside fired by his Dutch opponent, sang out, "Well done, Little Breeches."

by descent to the eldest son, are now divided among the children equally; and what makes it still more curious is, that the Zemindar was not only a landholder, but a magistrate.

In a volume which I published two years since, descriptive of Paris in 1815, I endeavoured to point out many of the inconveniences attending the abolition of primogeniture, which I conceive can be only acted on, and that but for a time, in such an extensive country as North America, but in a limited territory it must lead ultimately to general pauperism, and give a warlike tendency to the mass of the people.

I have just reason to think that this is one of the chief causes acting at this moment in France, which have made the war-cry so popular; and that its effects, though smothered in embers for the moment, will break out one day in a flame which again may involve all Europe in war; while the restless disposition of the French gets full credit for this propensity, the tendency of this, one of the most prominent of their institutions, and leading directly to the result, is lost sight of.

If any one would wish to see how this system acts after a long course of years, let him look at Ceylon, particularly in the Maritime provinces, that were so long under the sway of the Dutch; who, if they were not the authors of this law, or custom, at least gave it very great developement and support. I had said, on the occasion I allude to, that this sort of sub-division *ad infinitum*, would not leave a man space enough at last to be buried in; it has come to that point, or rather beyond it in Ceylon; for instance, the landed property of a man, too small to bear any marks of boundaries, is expressed by seven-eighths of a seer of rice, four-fifths of a cocoa-tree, or the like parts of any productive fruit tree.

It would appear, under the operation of this law or custom, that the smaller a man's property is, short of nil; the more tenacious he is of it, and consequently numberless lawsuits on these fractional portions arise, when the property contested does not exceed in value a few pence. We have taken off the people of Ceylon the tax of compulsory labour, under which they suffered up to the year 1832; and we have given them the trial by jury, for which, by the way, they were not ripe. Then why should we let this baneful custom continue, which reduces by degrees the whole population to a state of pauperism, and the worst species of poverty, attended with the pride of being a proprietor, which prevents a man from exerting his industry, until he is driven to the last extremity? This mode of inheritance must be an effectual bar to the immigration of English colonists, and may prevent for many years the whole of the resources of the island being called into activity; at present a large portion of it is overrun with jungle or forests, the resort of wild beasts, noxious reptiles, and insects.

The conquest of Ceylon in 1796, was effected by a force detached from Madras under the command of Colonel Stewart, and, strictly speaking, was limited to the possession of the sea-coast; the Government of the East India Company did not however give satisfaction to the Cingalese, owing to the employment of Indians from the continent, in the collection of revenue and other fiscal duties. In 1798, the authority was transferred to the Crown, and the late Lord Guilford appointed Governor; in the same year, the Kandian King Raja Singha, who had afforded us assistance in expelling the Dutch, died without issue.

Pelame Talawe, the chief minister, managed to raise to the throne a

nephew of one of the queens, with the intention of using his authority in the first instance for the furtherance of his own designs, and finally of putting down the royal puppet, and assuming the place himself. I should pause here to point out the impolicy of appointing a civil governor to a colony under circumstances in any way similar. There could not be a more amiable or excellent person than the late Lord Guilford; few men of his time combined so many qualities to form a finished scholar and gentleman; but he was here thrown into a position altogether unsuited to his habits and tastes. His open and candid feelings were placed in hostility with the practised cunning and duplicity of the first Adikar (the Cingalese grand vizier); and as it generally happens in the first instance, roguery prevailed, with such signal success, indeed, that the Adikar had the audacity to make proposals to our Government, based on his own particular views of personal ambition. In place of breaking off all communication at once with the person who could offer such perfidious counsels, an underhand course of policy was followed, tempting the minor king to throw himself into our power, and leave the Adikar at Kandy to administer the government.

General Macdowal was intrusted with a mission to this effect. They certainly must have given credit to the young king for being a consummate fool, to have listened to such a proposition; it was rejected with disdain. After a shuffling and hollow course of negotiations spread over a space of more than four years, recourse was had at last to arms, in which the governor being still more ill at ease, a successive course of blunders took place, first in the arrangement of the plan of attack and developement, and then in its execution, which ended in the massacre of a detachment, with the disgrace and discredit of our arms and character. The whole history of this disastrous campaign is so very painful to go over, that I shall condense it as much as possible, and only bring out those points prominently, that may serve as lessons for military men, who may be again placed in circumstances, in any way analogous to those which I shall endeavour to describe.

The long-protracted negotiations, which by half savage nations are always considered a proof of weakness, were at length partially closed. On the last day of Jan. 1803, a division of the army marched from Colombo, under Gen. Macdowal, while Col. Barbut was advancing from Trincomalee with a large detachment. These divisions assembled on the banks of the Mahawelliganga river; and the next day, the 21st February, entered Kandy. We had, as usual in such cases, set up a rival king, delighting in the soft name of Mootoo Samy, the brother of one of the queens of the defunct monarch. A detachment was sent to Trincomalee to bring up this hero to the capital; yet, nearly at the same moment, a conference was held between Gen. Macdowal and the Adikar, in which it was agreed, that the king *de facto* was to be made a prisoner. The Adikar invested by us with all power, and our new friend and protegé was to be put on the shelf, with a pension of nearly 3000*l.* a-year, to be paid to him by a rascal, who would have cut his throat a dozen times, before he gave him a shilling. Commensurate with all these diplomatic blunders and fatuity, were the military arrangements. The troops having become sickly, were for the most part removed to the Maritime provinces. Gen. Macdowal was attacked with fever, and sent down to Colombo; Col. Barbut followed his example, but died; and the command in

Kandy was left to Major Davie; he had with him about 1000 Europeans and Malays, beside the sick in hospital; and here he was, left to his own resources, which were small enough. In the heart of a hostile country, without any defensive post that could be depended on, separated by a great space from succour or help from the coast, no intermediate posts of communication or means of procuring supplies, and hedged in by savage enemies recovered from their panic, and headed by their king —these together, formed no flattering position; at the same time to an officer of zeal, courage, and conduct, a most brilliant field of distinction was thus offered; and it speaks in the strongest terms against the arrangements of the military branch of the government, that such a one was not selected, in place of a man utterly destitute of all the qualities of a soldier.

Without securing anything like a defensive position, which in almost every situation is to be found in the resources of a man at all conversant with his profession, Major Davie permitted his enemy to close round him, choose his ground, and pick off our men. This unequal contest lasted for six or seven hours, when the Major called out *peccavi*, and held out a flag of truce! The capitulation allowed our troops to retire to Trincomalee, leaving the sick and wounded to the tender mercies of the Kandians, acting under the sanguinary directions of their young King, who resembled more a tiger than a man. When the troops under Major Davie arrived at the ferry on the Mahawilliganga, they found the river swollen, and no means of transport across. Some of the officers of the detachment, guessing at the true nature of the case, urged Davie to employ the men in the formation of a raft to carry the detachment over; but, in place of taking the hint, he, with a fatuity in perfect keeping with all the rest of his conduct, sent to the Kandian Chiefs for a supply of boats,—the very men who had already removed all means within their power out of his reach,—and there he stood on the grass knoll that overhung the river, surrounded with his followers, dejected but not disheartened, waiting for the result of his application, which, as every one guessed, proved of no avail. Seeing this result,—that he was surrounded by a collection of half savages, ready to pounce upon him, and that the retreat to Trincomalee was cut off,—would it not have occurred to any man, with the feeling and experience of a soldier, that there was another road open to him—that to Colombo? He had only to make a dash at the unconnected and undisciplined mob before him, still under alarm at the power of European arms, and have marched his detachment in a compact mass, with a front and rear guard. There could have been no doubt that he would have gained the British head-quarters, with trifling loss. But what did this craven-hearted man do? He agreed to surrender, and give up the arms of his followers. He was invited, with one or two officers, to meet the Kandian Chiefs at some distance from his position. In their absence, the troops were informed that the officers had passed the river higher up, to avoid the flood, and they were desired to follow them. Having deposited their arms, they were marched off by twos and threes; and, when out of sight of their comrades, were stabbed, or otherwise put to death, and thrown down the ravine. Capt. Humphries and an assistant-surgeon rolled down during the confusion, and concealed themselves for

some days, but were at last taken, and confined as prisoners in Kandy. The surgeon subsequently escaped, but Capt. Humphreys, as well as Capt. Rumley, who had been entrapped at the same time with Davie, were cut off by sickness: so that the Major was nearly the only survivor. At the same time that this transaction was in progress, the whole of the one hundred and fifty men left sick in the hospital of Kandy—of whom one hundred and twenty belonged to the 19th Regiment—were murdered in cold blood, and thrown into a pit. These were the unfortunate people who had been left to the honour and humanity of the Kandian savages. Amongst the victims of the ravine was a corporal of the 19th Regiment, of the name of Barnsley, who had been cut down with a sabre wound across the neck, and stunned by a blow on the head from a club. He recovered his senses as the night closed in; and, although suffering intense pain, he disengaged himself from the mass of dead and dying, and crawling down to the edge of the river, succeeded in swimming across,—gained a post of ours, about eighteen miles from Kandy,—and, finally, succeeded in reaching Trincomalee. The measure of the Commandant's weakness and cowardice would seem to be full; but there wanted one thing to complete the climax,—the betrayal of the pseudo-king Mootoo Samy, who had been brought forward by us as the competitor to the throne, and who was under our protection. He was basely given up to his inveterate enemy. When about to meet the fate that he well knew awaited him, he turned round, and thus addressed those who abandoned him,—"Is it possible that the triumphant arms of England can have so fallen, as to fear the menaces of such cowards as the Kandians?" Had Davie possessed the twentieth part of the honour of a soldier or a man, he must have felt the iron enter his soul in listening to this reproach! He lived on, despised and unnoticed by the Kandians, whose dress and manners he assumed. The date of his death is rather uncertain; but it was believed that he existed until 1816,—at least, when Kandy was captured in 1815, search was made for him, under the impression that he was still alive. I can recollect perfectly, that, a short time subsequent to his capture, there was a report that his tongue had been cut out by the Kandians. This probably was a fiction of his own, to lighten the load of obloquy, by enlisting some pity on his behalf.

This catastrophe, so painful even to reflect on, has been already often related by persons more competent to the task; but I have been led to the recapitulation for two or three reasons. A sketch of the colonial history would have been incomplete without it: by the relation, a beacon is held out to all military men placed in a position bearing any resemblance: and, lastly, to show the disadvantage of having a civilian the governor of a colony, under such peculiar circumstances. A military governor, of even common resources and information, would have either withdrawn entirely a sickly garrison, situated as that of Kandy was, or he would have connected it with head-quarters by a chain of fortified posts, and kept open his communications; but, above all things he would not have entrusted the charge of such a post to an officer, without previously knowing whether he was able to defend it under all contingencies.

In our progress in caligraphy we all recollect that, in working our

way through the alphabet, and arriving at the letter M, we have laid before us the sententious copy, "Many men have many minds." To prove the truth of the writing-master's apothegm, and as some relief to the heart-sickening detail I have just gone through, let us take a look to see how other officers conducted themselves under circumstances of difficulty.

At the time of the disastrous events at Kandy, Ensign Grant, of the Malay corps, commanded at an unhealthy post in the Seven Korles. His detachment consisted of fourteen European convalescents, and twenty-two invalid Malays. He was surrounded by some thousands of Kandians, flushed with their late undeserved success. They offered him the same treacherous protection they had given to Davie, if he would surrender; but this gallant young officer refused their propositions,—made all arrangements for defence of his post, part of which consisted of a breast-work, formed with bags of rice,—and maintained himself for ten days in this trying situation, until he received a reinforcement from Columbo. After the fall of Kandy, the natives pressed on our maritime provinces in several directions, but were uniformly repulsed.

Notwithstanding these checks, the Kandian King collected the whole force of the country, and marched directly on Colombo. On his way he attacked the field-work of Hangwelli, only eighteen miles from that place, which was defended by Capt. Pollock of the 51st Regiment, with one hundred men. From this small force that officer ventured to detach thirty men, under Lieut. Mercer of the same regiment, who, marching unobserved through the jungle, gained the flank of the Kandians at the moment they were checked in their front. An immediate panic took place: the Kandians, headed by their King, fled in the utmost confusion, leaving the paths covered with dead and dying.

I have already noticed the total want of arrangement and cohesion in the military arrangements of that unfortunate time, when insulated detachments were either forced to trust to their own resources for defence, or were pushed forward unsupported, and without anything practical in view.

A remarkable instance of this kind took place in the following year. Capt. Johnson was ordered to proceed with his detachment from Batticale to the frontier, where he was to be joined by another party. United, they were to push on to Kandy. The orders of the second detachment were revoked; but Capt. Johnson was either forgotten or left to his own discretion. As his instructions had not been cancelled, he marched on, expecting every day to be joined by a reinforcement. After overcoming all the difficulties of the country, he arrived at Kandy, gained possession, and found himself insulated in the heart of a hostile country, with a detachment which, at the outset, did not exceed three hundred men. Did he despair, and give himself up to his surrounding enemies? By no means. He determined at once to fight his way to Trincomalee, which was now the nearest post. He had to pass over the ground covered with the bones of his brother-soldiers sacrificed the preceding year. He crossed the river which stopped Major Davie, and worked his way through forests for 130 miles, amidst a host of savage enemies in ambush: he gained his object, by reaching

Trincomalee, with the loss of only two officers and forty-eight men. To appreciate fully the merit of this officer, it must be borne in mind that he had only his own resources to depend on—commissaries were not invented in those days, and even had they been, one of that brotherhood would have been of no use; therefore, the soldiers had to forage for themselves: they had to gain their way through jungle nearly impenetrable—to lie out, with the sky for a great-coat—were exposed to the action of malaria, abounding in such districts—tormented with mosquitoes, ants, and a plague, peculiar to Ceylon, the land leeches, which, in some moist situations, are in incredible numbers on the leaves of the shrubs. They are less in length than the medicinal leech, but can draw themselves into such extreme tenuity, as to pass between the stitches of the stocking; they are active, and so insatiable of blood, that they will fasten on the hand that snatches them from any other part of the body. These, it is easy to imagine, cannot be pleasant customers to the wearied and exhausted soldier: plucking the insect away aggravates the wound, and increases the loss of blood. A little spirits, salt, or lemon-juice, take them off at once, and so would gunpowder, if a man could venture to waste his ammunition, or be aware of the remedy.

I could name many similar acts of courage and good conduct among the various detachments of that campaign, but those I have mentioned, contrasted with that of Davie, will be sufficient to establish a military maxim—that, although the idea of surrender should at all times be the last to enter into the head of an officer, yet it should be absolutely struck out of his vocabulary when opposed to savage enemies. With coolness, courage, and a few resources, well-disciplined troops may be freed from almost any embarrassment; but, should the final result appear inevitable, it is surely more satisfactory to soldiers to die with arms in their hands, and taking satisfaction of their enemies, than to be led aside, and stuck like pigs, although it should be under the shade of the most beautiful rhododendron or mimosa tree that ever grew within the tropics.

The unsatisfactory state of affairs in Ceylon, owing to our having only possession of the sea-coast of the island, continued for several years, under the administrations of two Governors following Lord Guilford. In 1812, Sir Robert Brownrigg succeeded to the government. In the same year, the King of Kandy put to death his prime minister, and subsequently indulged in such acts of cruelty and despotism, as to rank him amongst the greatest tyrants of all times. In 1814, he seized on ten native merchants, living under our jurisdiction on the coast, who had ventured into the Kandian territory in pursuit of their trade: they were made prisoners, and dreadfully mutilated. This was "too bad;" our troops were put in motion; and their movement on this occasion formed a pleasant contrast to the manœuvres of 1803. To secure the means of feeding the troops, they were marched by divisions on separate routes. They arrived in Kandy without opposition, in good health, and without the loss of a man: the king ran away, was afterwards betrayed by his own people, and given up to us as a prisoner; he was removed to Colombo—from thence to Madras—and died of dropsy in the fort of Vellore in 1832. It was a curious coincidence that, in the same year, we should have been busy in oversetting and making

prisoners two monarchs—Napoleon, in the west, and, in the east, Sri Wikrema Raja Singha. I have hitherto forborne mentioning his name, out of consideration for the loose teeth of those who have the enviable task of reading out to invalid relations; but it is only a fair specimen of the lingo of the country. The Cingalese not only trade in elephants' teeth, pearls, and cinnamon, but they deal also largely in *sesquipedalia verba*, of which I can only give one specimen.

In Major Forbes's Eleven Years in Ceylon, which contains much information on various topics, and to which I feel indebted for several facts, the author gives the following account of a visit to the most ancient of the capitals of Ceylon:—"The distance to Anuràdhapoora, although only eighty miles, occupied us three days. We slept at Koombakalawia, Madawatchy, and Neelicolom; and rested, during the heat of the days, at Hierapitia, Kattapittia-weva, and Epanella. The rock of Ununugalla, near Hierapitia, Yakdessagalla (which is seen from Kurunaigalla), and Galgiriakande, were the most prominent features on those ridges of hills. Near Koombakalawia are situated the remains of Yapahoo." It would require eleven years in Ceylon to read this passage "trippingly on the tongue."

The Regent Street of this ancient capital was	Chandrawakka Wydia.
Its Piccadilly - - - - -	Rajamaha Wydia.
Its Oxford Street - - - -	Hingurawak Wydia.
Its Bond Street - - - - -	Mahawelli Wydia.

An Irish pedagogue, teaching the young idea to construe a Latin passage, when he came to the word *urbs*, thus explained it—"*Urbs*, a capital city—large town—metropòlis—*Ballymore*." Had he added Anuràdhapoora, he would have given a specimen of a mouth-filling metropòlis, sufficient to satisfy any master or pupil. Although the Cingalese have had several monarchs of syllabic proportions equal to those of the capital, yet the man for their money would have been a magnate of the Indian continent, born, unfortunately, many centuries too late, and whose death was thus announced in the Obituary of the Asiatic Journal of February, 1835:—"Died, of fever, his Highness Kumur-ood-dowla, Shums ool-moolk, Syed Jamaul-ood-deen, Mahomed Khan Bahadoor, Munsoor Jung, Nawab of Dacca, aged about forty."

It would appear that all idle and imaginative people delight in very long names. We may take as instances the ancient and modern Greeks, the Persians, Indians, Cingalese, the Indians of North America, the Spaniards, Italians, and Irish. The Egyptians were the most industrious of the ancient nations of the East, and probably their language, which was symbolic, consisted chiefly, like that of the Chinese, of monosyllables. With the activity of Western Europe, language became abbreviated, of which we have a notable example in the English tongue. With the exception of the names compounded of the Saxon words Wick, Ham, and Hampton, those taken from the mouths of rivers, and the various derivations from the Latin *Castra*, we have no names of places in England of three syllables; even those which have the last source of derivation are sadly mutilated and cut down: Glos'ter, Wor'ster, have no traces of their origin; Winchester is still worse used, by being compressed into Winton. This clipping process is a great puzzle to strangers. There is a story told of a person from the country who

went to call on a noble Lord at his residence in Piccadilly; at the door, he met a gentleman coming out, whom he asked if he knew whether Lord Chol-mon-del-ly was at home. "I really don't know," was the reply, "you had better inquire of some of his pe-ople."

Like all people who carry their records far back, there are sundry legends among the Cingalese of floods and encroachments of the sea. The latest, and one of the greatest, was about 500 years B.C., when it is supposed that a portion of the islands, or land, that connected Ceylon with the coast of Coromandel, disappeared; the space being now occupied by the shoal called Adam's Bridge, in the Gulf of Manar. Perhaps one of the best proofs of this connexion having existed is to be found in the race of elephants, which exists in no other island in the world. Although this animal, for the comfort of its skin, delights to roll or wallow in water, yet no instance has been known of them taking their trunk to sea: the conclusion is, that they have either come originally by land, or across narrow and shallow passages between islands. It would appear that these animals have somewhat degenerated by their insularity: they have not the magnitude or grandeur of those of Siam, nor the activity of the African elephant. I have seen it stated that a man, on foot, has escaped from one of these animals in Ceylon: in the upper districts of the Cape of Good Hope a person would feel very uncomfortable, if unarmed, to meet one of these creatures in a wild state, unless he had under him a horse, and that "a good one to go." Persons who live in the country, in England, are aware that if a flock of sheep get accidentally into a garden they turn out very bad horticulturists; but what are they to a drove of elephants?—they pull down and destroy young cocoa-nut trees, and other palms, for the sake of the fruit. In certain districts that they frequent, they poach such great holes in the soil during the rainy season, that they become, when dry, regular *trous de loup*, and are very dangerous to ride across. In fact, these animals in Ceylon may be called enormous flap-eared vermin—very legitimate and proper objects to the huntsman, although he has not much to boast of in value when he brings his game to bag: very few of them are what are called tuskers (have any *ivories*), and their carcase is worthless: the sooner the whole race is extirpated, the better for the prosperity of Ceylon.

I have purposely abstained from treating of that portion of the population called peelers (not Irish, but cinnamon peelers), and the still more interesting class that go down among the fishes to pick up pearl oysters, with their attendant genii, the shark-charmers; still, I have so much encroached on space, that I must defer the continuance of the more recent history of Ceylon, and the consideration of its value as a military post, to a future occasion.

THE BRITISH COLONIES CONSIDERED AS MILITARY POSTS.

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILKIE.

[Continued from page 54.]

Le trident de Neptune
Est le sceptre du monde.—LA HARPE.

CEYLON (*concluded.*)—PULO PENANG—MALACCA—SINGAPORE.

OF all the attributes of government, there is none that requires such delicate handling as concession, more particularly when applied to savage or semi-barbarous tribes and nations, who in general have little other idea of authority than what is accompanied with terror and brute force. It is a confession humiliating to humanity, but no less true, that the safest course to be pursued towards the governed under these circumstances, is that of severity, tempered only by a strict adherence to justice. When any act of concession is thought requisite, in the progress of these people towards civilization, it should be granted in the most sparing manner, and "bit by bit." Measures of conciliation, if hastily granted, and in any way beyond the expectation of the recipients, are sure to be looked on by them as the effects of fear, and encroached on accordingly. The truth of this position has been amply proved in the recent history of Ceylon. In place of bringing the whole island at once under British jurisdiction, the Cingalese were allowed to continue under the government of their own laws, administered by their chiefs. These, whose only idea of law or justice was confined to the indulgence of their own caprices, no sooner found that a limit was put to their power, over the lives and properties of those under their charge, and that by a foreign authority, which they had not yet learned to respect, than they immediately formed a cabal, into which entered not only those who had been our enemies, but even the chiefs who had assisted us in the capture of the late king. The consequence was, that a rebellion broke out in October, 1817, which extended over all the interior of the island. To give colour to the insurrection, they proclaimed a puppet king, who had been a Buddhist priest, and was supposed to be a natural son of one of the late royal family. Mr. Wilson, a civil servant, who had proceeded to the forest of Welasse, to inquire into a murder committed there, was shot to death by arrows. In the course of six months nearly all the districts of Ceylon were in active rebellion, or ready to join the revolt, when a dispute between two of the chiefs, one of whom was chief Adikar, and subsequent divisions among other chiefs, broke up the conspiracy. One of these (Madugalla) seized on the impostor king, and placed him in the stocks. This event tended naturally to dissolve the rebellion: the most active of the chiefs were secured, two were executed, and two banished to the Isle of France. The influence of the chiefs was suppressed, and their authority superseded by civilians and British officers, who were empowered to collect the revenue and administer justice; the inferior Kandian head-

men being no longer appointed by the chiefs, but deriving their authority direct from our government. Had these measures been resorted to in the first instance, they would in all probability have saved the lives of 10,000 Cingalese, said to have perished, and those of 1000 British soldiers, who, Dr. Davy estimates, fell on this occasion.

The claims of British soldiers, serving for the largest portion of their lives in distant and unhealthy lands, on the honour and generosity of the nation, have of late been forcibly brought before public notice, with, I fear, little effect. This may be added as a striking instance:—Here we see our troops engaged in a desultory warfare against savage enemies, for a period exceeding nine months; following up in detachments their active foes, through districts where the routes were impeded by the effects of redundant vegetation; exposed by day to the heat of a tropical sun, and the unwholesome dews of night, often without food, and always without lodging; destroying in their progress 10,000 of their opponents, and losing the tenth of that number themselves, less by the swords of the enemies, than by the unhealthy nature of the country, and the privations they underwent. Has a single branch of laurel dropped on the graves of those brave men, or has the slightest reward recompensed the survivors for the hardships they have undergone? Well may they, in common with many of their profession, exclaim, *Ingrata patria!*

Let us contrast the conduct of our neighbours. The desultory warfare of the French in North Africa with the Arab tribes, resembles in many of its features, what I have just described. With these advantages in favour of France, her troops have an open country to manœuvre in, and a climate, which though warm, is more congenial to European constitutions than that of Ceylon. When they take the field, they are accompanied by their commissariat and camp equipage; and in place of being 10,000 miles from their native land, they are within three days' sail of it. In all their affairs of posts, in their attack on Constantine, and their expeditions called *razias*, every person in the French army who distinguished himself, from the commandant to the private soldier, has received the decoration of the Legion of Honour, and many have had promotion beside; while not the slightest ray of glory has beamed on our poor fellows, nor even a record of their services.

The beadles and headboroughs of this our country, who have prided themselves on the ancient rural punishment, which they thought was peculiar to Old England, will no doubt be surprised to hear of a *soi-disant* king being, like Hudibras' squire, put into the stocks. The Ceylon machine did not prove to be a tight fit, for his ex-majesty contrived to escape from his durance, and took refuge in the province of Navaria Kalawia, where nobody who was obliged to pronounce the word, would have attempted to follow him. I have abstained, as much as possible, from repeating the jaw-breaking names of the Kandian chiefs; but it would scarcely be fair to leave out that of a prince, even if he did come from the wrong side of the blanket. This hero enjoyed the patronymic of Durra Sawmy, which sounds something like what a Scotch lass might say to an enterprising lover, "Dinna, Sawny." In this case it would have been good advice. This prince of the stocks, in imitation of some northern lairds, took the name of Wilbawe, from the place where he was born, and had held a few acres of land. He

remained several years undiscovered in the retreat he had chosen, although he was at one time called on by a party to assist in hunting for *himself;* but the reward for his apprehension still remaining unrecalled, he was betrayed by a brother priest in his hiding-place, and afterwards banished to Mauritius.

The natives of Ceylon, I should have stated, were in all time subject in turns to compulsory labour; not only on public roads and buildings, but in the less safe recreation of elephant hunting. When Sir Edward Barnes, who succeeded General Brownrigg, took the government of the colony, he applied this thousand-man-power to open the communications, form carriage roads, and construct bridges through the island. He was succeeded by Sir Robert Wilmot Horton. I have already given an opinion on civil governors in colonies situated like Ceylon, as well as the danger of over concession. This idea is strengthened by what occurred under the government of this gentleman. Sir Robert was the bearer of the king's order in council for abolishing compulsory labour in Ceylon; in other words, for emancipating the people from a cruel state of slavery, represented by forced labour, and raising them at once to perfect freedom. This was pretty well as a beginning in the way of concession; but it was soon followed up by a charter, admitting all persons to every situation. Three Cingalese were introduced into the legislative council; and further, the trial by jury in criminal cases was established. Now, without entertaining the least prejudice about the colour of a man's skin, the policy yet may be doubted of bringing into a legislative body persons totally unacquainted with the institution, and whose experience had never gone beyond a small circle in a country district. With respect to trial by jury, what idea can half-civilised people form of its nature or uses? In England it is looked on as the great protection of our liberties, standing between any stretch of authority by the government and the people; but in its application to common cases in law, every one knows, that verdicts are often brought in contrary to direct evidence, and even frequently at variance with reason and common sense; therefore, there cannot be much surprise when its mode of working in Ceylon is made known. The measures taken by the government had effectually abridged the power and control of the chiefs, who seeing their influence at an end, entered into a conspiracy to destroy the European power. The outline of the plan was said to have been, to have invited all the superior officers and civilians, to a great fête to be given by the chiefs near Kandy, to have drugged their wine, and then made away with them. The soldiers at the different posts and garrisons were to have arrack served out to them, medicined in the same manner, and the whole of them were to have been cut off at one "fell swoop." Although this project was both absurd and impracticable, yet no doubt exists, that many of the chiefs had fully entered into it. Several of them and some priests, were taken up on information, and brought to trial, when one of the first experiments was made of the trial by jury. To the court generally, and the public, there was not the smallest moral doubt of the guilt of the parties; and six Englishmen on the jury were of the same opinion. But the majority of seven, who were Cingalese, were for acquittal, and it was carried. It does not appear by what law or authority a Cingalese jury is swelled to a baker's dozen; but in all probability the result would have been the same if confined to twelve, as

the long odds would have been in favour of the natives in the starving process.

Civil governors are so intent in carrying into execution the orders they bring from home, and in working out their own theories on government, that the military defences of a colony are considered very secondary objects, and are allowed to fall into dilapidation, which I understand was the case at the period to which I allude. Our French neighbours will be able to tell by-and-bye, whether fortifications are expensive articles of luxury; they will find out, that not only is the outlay great in the first instance, but that repairs will require every year fresh money to be voted. If works of that kind require constant supervision and attention in temperate climates, how much more are they in want of them within the tropics, where the sun and rain, acting with their fullest force, while they raise the productions of nature to their most luxuriant extent, degrade the works of man. The slightest chasm or defect in masonry, if allowed to stand unrepaired, becomes a lodgment for one of the thousand seeds carried about by birds, or wafted by winds; this in a few months springs up into a shrub, gradually displacing every thing that stands in the way. Of this effect I can scarcely give a better example than in quoting an account of the great road or chaussée leading from Vera Cruz to Mexico, which was equal in beauty, and greater in extent than the celebrated one of the Simplon. "It was composed of a pavement thirty feet in width, formed of regular cut blocks of basalt; and in crossing ravines was carried over a causeway of compact masonry. This work, by its solidity, seemed constructed to defy the ravages of time; but in the war of independence, it was broken up in the steepest places to cut off the supplies of the Spaniards from the sea. Since then, the country being in a state of anarchy, no one gave themselves any trouble about the road. The powerful effect of tropical vegetation has materially added to the degradation of this splendid work; here and there, trees have sprung up in the middle of the chaussée; and the muleteers who frequent the road, never had the idea of cutting them down when young, but let them grow on." One other reason acts against the appointment of a civil governor to a colony under similar circumstances; it depends merely upon externals, but is not without its weight. All semi-barbarous people have a great love for pomp and show; in this point the Orientals are pre-eminent. The magnificent palaces and splendid mausoleums of Delhi,—the grand displays of regal pomp and pageantry, reconciled the people more than any thing else to the tyranny and exactions of the Mogul empire;—while the splendour and richness of the household of Haroun Alraschid, form the basis of most of the Arabian tales. What a contrast to all this finery, the residence and person of a civil governor! Except on particular occasions, he never wears any uniform or distinctive mark, and goes about in plain clothes, either with his secretary, in similar guise, or with some member of his own family. Would it be possible to make a native believe, that there was as much knowledge and authority lodged under these *mufties*, as within the cocked hat and red coat of a general officer well mounted, and surrounded by a glittering staff? I may be allowed to give an example. When the late Lord Donoughmore, then General Hutchinson, commanded the army in Egypt, Sir David Baird, with his division, arrived there from India by the Red Sea;—the former was one

of the quietest and least ostentatious men possible, and went about for his own comfort often in the plainest attire, that accorded best with his person, which was in no way striking or handsome. Sir David, on the contrary, was always in uniform, generally on horseback, and possessed at least a striking and soldierlike figure. He was surrounded by aides-de-camp and other staff officers. The mixed population of Alexandria, who speak a sort of indifferent Italian, or *Lingua Franca*, called him *il grande*, while poor General Hutchinson was set down as *il meschino* (the pitiful).

In speaking of the causes that might one day lead to Ceylon becoming the citadel of India, I hope I have not exceeded the truth. Indeed, I should wish to bring further proof of what I stated; first, as to the means of communication, the absence of canals, the badness of the roads, and the total want of public means of conveyance; it will be sufficient to say, that the ancient and venerable method of travelling by *dawk* still continues—human beings performing the duty of post horses. And with respect to the protection afforded to the persons and property of the natives by a police, it will be sufficient to state, that, for one hundred years, a system of wholesale assassination has been going on over the continent of India, either without the cognizance or notice of the Government, until the affair was taken up by Lord William Bentinck. If the confessions of a Thug are true—which I see no reason to doubt—one of this diabolic brotherhood appears to have choked with his own hand nine hundred persons, and it is impossible to guess how many thousands have perished in this way. It is needless to give other instances to show that the welfare or happiness of the Indian population form no part of the system of government; and as they owe us small gratitude, no service from them will be due should we ever require their aid. I hope the contingency may not happen, but however distant, it is still within the bounds of probability; in that case, the great value of Ceylon will appear most prominently. Were the whole of the Europeans residing on the continent of India embarked on board ships, there would be room for them within the harbour of Trincomalee—which Lord Nelson (no bad judge) proclaimed to be the finest in the world. The beauty of the scenery, which from many points of view resembles that of a magnificent inland lake, cannot be described by words; it would require the panoramic pencil of Barker to do it justice. The least picturesque objects are the forts: they are three in number—Fort Trincomalee, situated on a peninsula jutting out into the sea; Fort Frederick, on a neck of land separating Dutch and Back Bays; Fort Ostenburgh, three miles distant from the latter, is built at the extremity of a ridge of hills that partly form the limits of the inner harbour; it is nearly insulated, and immediately protects the dockyard, which is close to it. If the forts are not remarkable for external beauty, the barracks they contain are still farther removed from it: they are clumsy and awkward-looking buildings, badly contrived, and, as medical men have described them, seem to have been built for the reception and entertainment of contagion.

The great value of Trincomalee—which is, indeed, beyond all price—is its position and capability as a naval station. Before the capture of Ceylon, we had no anchorage for ships of war east of Bombay, except the open and rolling roads of Madras, which were not always secure,

and where the communication with the shore was carried on through a double line of breakers, to the great inconvenience and delay of the service. Now, the station of the Admiral is in a harbour, or harbours, land-locked, with safe anchorage everywhere, except in one spot, called York Shoal, well known and easily avoided, with free and easy communication, in smooth water, with the dockyard, and with all facilities of procuring wood, water, and other supplies. Although the society of Trincomalee is limited, compared with that of Colombo, it offers resources; and the officers of the ships have abundant means of filling up their leisure hours. If they are botanists, zoologists, or fond of any other branches of natural history, they can here indulge their taste; they may have salt and fresh water fishing; and, in the way of shooting, everything "from a snipe to an elephant." Then, the superior means afforded in time of war, with an Admiral's flag flying at Trincomalee, a couple of frigates in the Bay of Bengal, one at anchor in Colombo Roads, or cruizing to windward during the south-west monsoon; one or two ships in south latitude in the track of the outward bound, a frigate at Penang and one at Sincapore, with a couple of steamers (which have been appropriately called the cavalry of the Navy) either at Galle, or carrying orders and intelligence to the different ships.

When cruizing in these halcyon seas, people have little else to do than keep a look-out; and should any fever or epidemic appear in a ship, she has only to run to the southward to get into another climate. Many an honest civil servant of the Company has had his health re-established by a trip of this kind on board a man of war. The distance to the tropic of Capricorn looks considerable on the map, but it is soon run over with a steady leading wind; indeed, the facility is so great that there used to be a standing joke in the Navy last war, that when all were agreed, the Captain, the Luffs, and the Mids, to join in the chorus—

Arise the burthen of their song,
This day a *pig* must die,

(a fry was substituted for the heigho chevy)—the ship ran away to the southward to allow them to pickle their pork.

On leaving Trincomalee, and descending to the southern coast, we come to Point de Galle, where there is a fort, not in good condition, and a very good second-class harbour: this was one of the points first fortified by the Portuguese. The town (or pettah) is small, containing only a few thousand inhabitants. At Cottara there is a mud fort, which was, at the time I have alluded to, falling into ruin. This place is about half way between Galle and Colombo; fifteen miles from the latter. Colombo is the seat of government and the commercial capital: it is supposed to contain nearly 60,000 inhabitants. It is built on a regular plan, divided into four quarters by two principal streets, crossing each other at right angles. The fort is situated on a peninsula; two-thirds of the works are washed by the sea; it is of an irregular form of seven sides, fortified with bastions, four of which are to seaward; the other three are defended by a broad and deep ditch and glacis, covered by a fresh-water lake, and communicating with the town by two narrow and well-guarded causeways. This fort had also fallen into dilapidation. The harbour is confined, and only adapted to merchantmen, but there is good anchorage in Colombo Roads in ten fathoms.

Jaffnapatam, which is at the northern extremity of Ceylon, possesses the most regular fortification in the island, in a strong, well-constructed fort, which, however, is partially in decay, and has not more than ten guns mounted. The town is quite European, and contains many excellent streets and houses, inhabited by the descendants of the Portuguese and Dutch colonists. At the other side of the fort is the native town, containing 8000 or 10,000 inhabitants, Malabars. Between all the stations are small forts or batteries, in which are quartered an officer and a few men of the Ceylon Rifle Corps, to give assistance to the civil power. There is, also, a fort on a small scale at Kandy. Independent of all these defences, the face of the country is a succession of military positions, capable of making a protracted defence.

The natives of Ceylon are inferior to the sepoys as soldiers, but with some pains they may rise higher in the scale; as well as the mass of native inhabitants, whose attachment to our cause it is most requisite to secure: owing to the want of this, the island passed from the hands of the Portuguese and Dutch; and, had any foreign enemy appeared on the coast in 1803, or during the insurrection of 1817, our hold on the island would have been very slippery. Since then, we have conferred on the inhabitants the greatest boon within the gift of man; and if their minds are expanded by education and uniform good treatment, we may look with confidence to secure their adherence to our cause and government: backed by this, Ceylon will be impregnable. As a means of civilization, the already excellent roads should be extended in every direction.

Notwithstanding its vicinity to the equator, Ceylon is, perhaps, the most healthy of our colonies within the tropics. I have already alluded to the means possessed by the squadron on the station of changing climate; the troops on shore have the same advantage, without having to go so far to look for it. The plain of Nuwarra-ellia is only thirty miles distant from Kandy: it was first visited by Dr. Davy in 1819; it is about eight miles in circumference, and being elevated about 6000 feet above the level of the sea, enjoys an European climate. "Sure, it must be a nice place—the praties grows there!" and not only potatoes, but all the culinary vegetables of England may be raised. The thermometer never exceeds 73°, and seldom falls lower than 38° or 40°, although occasionally, in January, ice has been found as thick as half-a-crown. Sir Edward Barnes took advantage of these favourable circumstances, and made it a convalescent station, building at the same time a country-house for himself. It is easy to conceive the value of this position connected with the health of the troops: men recovering from the fevers prevalent on the coast, and those suffering under all the variety of hepatic disorders incidental to a tropical climate, are removed at once into a more temperate and congenial air, possessing the coolness, without the rough blasts, of England. The wonder only is how such an advantage should so long have been overlooked; the same remark applies to the Neilgherry and Mahableshar hills of the Madras and Bombay presidencies.

I have dwelt much longer than I intended on this account of Ceylon, and fear that I have been guilty of repetitions, but must take as excuse the interest of the theme; a portion of which, it is hoped, may be imparted to the reader, in considering that, since the cession of Java,

this is the finest insular colony we possess. As a military post, Ceylon has the advantage over that island: it must also be recollected that this is the only colony in the Indian seas, under the sway of the British crown, of which it is no exaggeration to say that it is one of the brightest jewels. The resources of the island, above ground, have been scarcely developed, and its mineral riches only guessed at: few of our settlements offer such a field for enterprise: it is only a wonder that the tide of emigration has never set in this direction; it must be from the absurd law or custom about the division of property, to which I have already alluded. But that should not be considered an insuperable barrier; there must be means to get rid of such a nightmare on the prosperity of the island. Two great objects of the emigrant offer themselves at once—abundance of food and supply of labour. The ground once cleared, all difficulties are over; and, in many situations, spring, summer, and autumn are all exhibited in one spot, with the additional advantage that a man may choose his own climate: on the eastern side of the island it is dry, on the west moist; and every gradation, from heat to cold, may be gained by ascending the endless ranges of hills.

Pulo Penang.

Drawing a straight line from Trincomalee for about eighteen degrees of east longitude will bring us to this island, situated at the north end and entrance of the Straits of Malacca, and at a short distance from the peninsula of that name. I have chosen the native name, as derived from the areka palm, which abounds on the island, in preference to the English, "Prince of Wales's Island," because it is original, is more euphonic, and an objection stands to the latter designation, that the article is scarce. We certainly look forward with hope to see the title revived amongst us, but for a long time it has been in abeyance.

The East India Company has a much better claim than the King of Spain to the motto "In utrumque felix:" what they have not seized by conquest, they have obtained by gift; in the last category stands Penang. The history of the island is short and very sweet: for ages it had remained uncultivated and uninhabited, and belonged to the King of Quedah, whose abode was on the Malay peninsula. In 1785, the master of an India country ship came to anchor here, to look out for some *notions* and to take in water. While the latter operation was going on, he thought it civil to land in the peninsula, and pay his respects to his Majesty of Quedah. While making his bow at the levee, or durbar, the Princess of Quedah contrived to have a peep at the Englishman; "she sighed and looked, and sighed again:" it was a palpable case of love at first sight. In place of devouring her sorrow or joy, she at once let her papa into the nature of her emotions; and he, honest man, different from Lambro, or any other savage, Turk or Greek, looked with an eye of pity on the passion of his child, and at once consented to the match. As he did not understand what is called diplomacy, he came to the point at once with the English sailor—offering to him the hand of his daughter, and, as dowry, the wooded island where his ship was at anchor.

The jolly skipper, whose name was Light, thought that a princess and an island would be no bad investment: he closed with the offer, and the affair was all arranged—whether *selon les règles*, I cannot pretend to

say. Finding, probably, that the charge of a young wife, and having to clear an island of wood, in lat. 5° north, rather onerous, the bridegroom resolved to hand the latter over to his masters, the East India Company, which he did, no doubt, for a con-si-de-ra-tion. This transfer was assented to by the King of Quedah, who further agreed, in 1800, to cede to the Company a strip of land on the Malay shore, opposite to the island, extending from the south bank of the Qualla Mudda river to the north of the Krian, in length thirty-five miles, and of the average breadth of four; the Company paying, in the first instance, 6000 dollars a year for possession of the island. This was increased to 10,000 when they received the grant along shore, which has been called the Wellesley Province. Inducements were held out to settlers from various parts to occupy and clear the Island, and they now exceed in number 60,000. The population is what the French would call *une Macedoine*—a little of all sorts—Achinese, Arabs, Armenians, Bengalese, Battas, Burmese, Chinese, Chalcas, Caffres, native Christians, Malays, Bugis, and Parsees, with the Europeans and sepoys; there are, also, 1300 convicts from the Presidencies, whose task both here and at Sincapore is in clearing away the wood and jungle. When that is effected the soil is rich, yielding all the productions of the tropics: amongst the indigenous plants, is that species of solid cane, white and jointed, well known as walking-sticks; they are called in the island, Penang lawyers: if our own lawyers could bring their pleadings to as rapid a conclusion as these forensic sprigs of the East, there would be little occasion for adding any more *vices* to the Chancellor's court.

The strait which separates the island from the main is about two miles in breadth; across which it is said that some of the wild animals of the Malay peninsula swim, when they want to change the air or water. I have heard a very wonderful story of a battle between an alligator and a tiger that was trying his *talons* at swimming. A range of mountains, called Tanjong, throw down a fork that reaches into this inlet or strait, and on its extremity is built the capital, called Georgetown, and the fort that covers and defends the anchorage, which is good and safe at all seasons. The weather, even at the changes of the monsoons, is generally fine and clear, the winds never high, and the situation altogether one of the most healthy in any part of India. The Strait of Malacca, formed by the Malay peninsula and Sumatra, resembles a funnel that narrows as it leads to the south-east. At its entrance stands this island, as if placed there to guard the passage: a frigate and sloop of war would, during hostilities, be amply sufficient for that purpose, as well as to look after the pirates that occasionally infest these seas.

Pulo Penang has been for some time one of the principal entrepôts for opium, of which large quantities are imported. Nothing can be a prettier pretence for a national quarrel (*casus belli*) than the use and abuse of this poisonous drug. It has been already the cause of burying many of our poor fellows among the rice-fields of Chusan, and has latterly offered the means of cooking Chinese soldiers *en papillotte*, roasting them in their own jackets stuffed with cotton, matchlock sauce, and a *soufflé* of gunpowder.

Malacca.

This settlement, on the peninsula between Penang and Sincapore, has followed the fate of most of the colonies in the East. Taken from the Malays by the Portuguese, in 1511. They in turn driven out by the Dutch, in 1640. In 1795 it was taken by us, and restored at the peace of Amiens. Again taken by the English in 1807, and returned once more to the Dutch in 1815. Finally, it has been ceded to us, in compensation for having given up some settlements we had formed in Sumatra. The riches of Malacca consist in the tin mines in its immediate neighbourhood. It has but small value as a military post, only in so far as possessing an excellent and safe anchorage, and being able to afford ample supplies of stock and fresh provisions to ships. It was the rendezvous for the expedition against Java, and during the stay of the fleet the sailors and troops, with all their followers, amounting to more than 30,000, were furnished daily with every variety of provisions.

Sincapore.

They speak of the mushroom growth of the cities in the heart of the North American forests; here we have a large town sprung out of the water, as Paddy would say, "in less than no time at all." The abilities of Sir Stamford Raffles were well appreciated, both at Mauritius and Batavia, of which settlements he had been Governor. Well aware of the great extent, and the many ramifications of British commerce in the Eastern Archipelago, Sir Stamford saw clearly that after the cession of Java an entrepôt would be absolutely required for that purpose; he cast his view abroad, and it was not long before he fixed the eye of a statesman and soldier on this island, then nearly uninhabited, and half covered with water. The result has justified all his views. The first arrangement connected with the occupation of the island took place in 1818; formal possession was taken in 1820. In 1825 the sovereignty was confirmed to Great Britain, by a convention with the King of Holland; and a treaty was formed with the Rajah of Jehore, whose territory, the southern extremity of the peninsula of Malacca, is only separated from Sincapore by a strait, in some places not more than half a mile in width. To this latter personage a yearly sum, exceeding 20,000 dollars, is paid as *ground-rent*. When possession was taken the whole population of the island did not exceed 150 Malay *mermen*, (half pirate half fisherman,)—at present it does not fall short of 26,000; which, in twenty-three years, is what brother Jonathan would call "going a-head." Such are the attractions of a well-chosen free port and commercial entrepôt. All the mercantile productions of the world have already changed hands at Sincapore; with these I have no immediate concern, but I may observe, for the comfort of all the old ladies and teetotallers, that had our relations with Canton entirely ceased, owing to the laudanum quarrel, there would have been no scarcity of the herb "that enlivens, but does not intoxicate," as the Chinese junks would have brought an ample supply to Sincapore, very little enhanced in price. By the way, the Chinese know nothing about drinking tea; it is made in open cups, with the leaves floating about; it is weak, washy, and bitter, bearing no sort of comparison with the strong decoction of congou used by

our washerwomen, "red as blood, with a fine flavour of tobacco;" nor can they ever feel the full force of the assurance pronounced by British gossips, "that there is a nice dish in the pot." With these drawbacks on Chinese tea, it wants the useful and ornamental appliances of sugar and cream. Beside the persons connected with the trade of the Chinese junks, there is a resident population of that people exceeding 9000 in number; the best and most useful class of colonists—whom I should like to see introduced into all our intertropical settlements, including the West Indies. The most remarkable thing about the island is its salubrity, when its situation is taken into account. A very large portion of it is nothing but a succession of fresh water swamps or salt marshes; in so much that, in the suburbs inhabited by the Chinese and Malays, their bamboo huts are elevated on posts, so that they may be said to sleep on stilts. The British merchants, who have built handsome houses to the east of the harbour, have raised them on embankments, from three to four feet high, to keep their feet dry. It is to be recollected that this stagnant water, combined with putrescent vegetables, is under the action of a tropical sun; and where the thermometer never falls below 70°, there must be some other reason, besides its insular position, that prevents these acting on the health of the people. At Batavia, where the same causes exist, the place is called the grave of Europeans; and a still stronger case is in Chusan, which is in 32° of north latitude, and the irrigation of the rice-fields is by artificial means, yet how seriously the health of our troops has been affected there, by diseases springing from the causes already enumerated.

If Sincapore has so suddenly sprung up in commercial grandeur, as to be second only to Bombay in that respect, it is no less remarkable as a military post. Surrounded with small islets, it is separated from a group, the principal of which are Bentang and Calaot, that form the strait of Sincapore. Further eastward are two rows or groups of islands, lying between the peninsula of Malacca and the great island of Borneo, which narrow the passage into the China Sea. I have compared the straits of Malacca to a funnel, having Pulo Penang at its mouth or entrance; at the other extremity, and where it may be said to pour its waters into the China Sea, stands Sincapore, as a sentinel watching the passage of the strait; in fact, ships going to the eastward must pass almost within hail, unless they take the more circuitous route of the straits of Sunda and Gaspar, or the Caramatta passage; even then, in hauling to the northward, they must come within *ken* of our garrison. The only way to avoid passing Sincapore, is by the very roundabout and intricate navigation of the straits of Macassar, and threading the way through the islets and shoals lying north of Borneo.

Sincapore was the rendezvous of the ships on the recent Chusan expedition; and it is not too much to say that it has greater influence on the navigation of the China Sea than Gibraltar has on the entrance of the Mediterranean, or Malta on that of the Levant. A frigate and a steamer would generally be sufficient in time of war for all purposes, as at present there is no port eastward of the Cape where an enemy's squadron could assemble, except Bourbon, and that is far from being a secure position, as I have already shown. Should a large force find its way into the eastern seas, our squadron might be reinforced, to any amount, from Trincomalee. From Sincapore we could pounce with

facility on any of the circumjacent islands, and its influence as a military post is already felt by the Siamese, Cochin Chinese, and Malays of the peninsula. In time of peace two or three war steamers might be very advantageously employed on this station, with the double purpose of survey and protection of trade. There has not been, as well as I can recollect, any scientific survey of these endless groups of islands, rocks, and shoals; for want of this, at an early period, we had to suffer the loss of H.M.S. Alceste, in the strait of Gaspar, or St. Clement; an event, from the interest thrown on the description, that is still fresh in recollection. When employed on this duty, they might at the same time keep a close eye on the movements of the Malay pirates: for which purpose one of the iron steamers, drawing little water, would be the most useful.

The Archipelago of Eastern Islands offers a splendid field for the practice of those whom Byron calls sea-attorneys; which respectable profession is almost entirely monopolized by the Malays; who, if they gain their action, are sure to bring in a large bill of costs, levied *a main forte*. These lawyers of the ocean have a great respect and sympathy for those in distress; as may be seen by their conduct in the wreck of Sir Murray Maxwell's ship, already alluded to.

The description of the Malay proas is sufficiently familiar; they are long boats, constructed purposely for rowing, and pull from twenty to thirty oars. They also carry a lateen sail, but are crank under canvas, and cannot "carry on her" through squalls, or in a fresh gale. In their own calm latitudes they are formidable customers to any vessels either taken by surprise or insufficiently armed. In light winds and smooth water they easily pull away from the pursuit of any ship of war, and our boats have no chance of overtaking them. They have now at last met with their masters. No shoal or flock of flying fish can be more intimidated by the approach of a dolphin or bonito, than those gentry of the proas would be at the sight of such a marine monster as a war steamer of light draught of water; all their tricks and subterfuges to escape would be of no avail against such a relentless pursuer. Half their panic would arise out of their ignorance of the power that was brought to act against them.

It is not too much to say that a great portion of the success attending the Burmese campaigns was due to the *prestige* of the steam-vessel we had on the Iriwaddy river. The Burmese war-boats are, perhaps, the finest craft of the kind in existence; they pull many of them 100 double-banked oars, and could for a time beat the steamer: but the muscles and sinews of men could not hold out against the perseverance of the boiling kettle, and they gave up in despair, as they could not comprehend how this perpetual motion was obtained, and, being gross idolaters themselves, they imagined that the floating machine with the chimney was nothing less than the deity of the English, who had come to help them in person. So strong was this conviction, that, after the peace was all arranged it was with the utmost difficulty that two of the Burmese chiefs could be persuaded to go off from the shore to inspect the steamer, that was just then coming to anchor; they got alongside at the moment the spare steam was let off, when the unusual noise so frightened them that no persuasion could induce them to mount on deck; they were sure the god of the English was displeased with their presence.

The power of steam has already performed wonders in adding to the convenience and comfort of civilized man; it is fair, then, to speculate that it may become an element in reclaiming barbarians. The first lesson to the savage and the school-boy is to make them fully aware that they are under mastery and control; the remainder comes easily. Teach the Malay pirates that neither the swiftness of their proas, nor all their wiles and cunning, are of avail against an irresistible power, they will soon abandon the more than precarious chances of the sea, and betake themselves to the cultivation of the soil of the different islands now lying waste. The injuries and barbarities perpetrated by these marauders are beyond the power of record, as they never leave anybody to tell tales if they can help it. There can be little doubt that the greatest portion of losses of ships in these seas may be attributed to these pirates; many vessels on their voyage to Australia, or on return, have not been heard of, or ever will, unless by some portion of their cargo or armament being found amongst those people; of which there is an example in the loss of La Peyrouse and his people, whose fate has been only ascertained by finding on an island some relics of the French expedition. In like manner, had it not been for the steady conduct and discipline on board the Alceste, when she was wrecked on a sunken rock in the straits of Gaspar, we should never have had any intelligence of the fate of her ship's company, except what would have been derived from finding accidentally some marks of the broad arrow, or other tokens.

The ships most obnoxious to these attacks are the sperm whalers, which, although well manned, are often, by the absence of boats in pursuit of whales, left nearly defenceless; and their cruizing ground, between Timor and New Guinea, is within the very beat of the pirates. The best defence against these plunderers is in well-managed artillery. A couple of long guns for distant shot, and two more of large calibre, carronades or Paixhans' guns; that will throw a hatful of musket balls among the thieves. Once they get within the muzzles of the guns there is but little chance, as no position is more difficult of defence than the deck of a ship against superior numbers. The best precaution, perhaps, would be to have a boarding-net fore and aft, having strong iron wire within the strands of rope that form the meshes of the net, to have it overhead like an awning, and triced up to the masts and large standing rigging by chains. With plenty of pikes and blunderbusses on deck, you might work invaders well; the only danger then would be of their attempting to fire the ship, when they found they could not carry her. These whalers run another risk: from motives of economy they will not go to our regular harbours to procure wood and water, because they are charged harbour dues; they therefore endeavour to supply their wants amongst the islands themselves, at very great risk of having their operations put a sudden stop to. A recent instance of this kind has taken place in the case of the ship Pilot, which, fearing the Malays about Timor, and avoiding Sincapore or Penang, went to the Nicobar Islands to supply their wants; where they acted with much less caution than if they had been in the Liverpool docks; leaving the ship without sufficient guard, because the natives had hitherto been peaceably inclined. The consequence was, the murder of the greater part of the crew and the plunder of the ship. These islands lie to the north of the straits of

Malacca, and have often been visited by our ships without molestation; but here the laxity of the guard kept, and the carelessness of part of the crew, going ashore unarmed, were temptations too great for the savage, with the metallic plunder spread before his eyes.

In describing the Malay pirates, it is requisite to guard the reader from the impression that the whole of that people follow the disreputable trade; it is only the fragment of some of the tribes that are so engaged. The Malays were once a powerful nation, or collection of tribes, and, as far as numbers go, they are so still. Sumatra and Java were the cradles of the race, which threw out its branches amongst all the islands of the East. There is little doubt that it formed also the basis of the population of the Polynesian Archipelago, and may have even touched the shores of South America on the Pacific. In the beginning of the thirteenth century a migration took place from Palembang, in Sumatra, to the peninsula of Malacca, which has given the general name of Malays to the race, although they were not the aborigines.

Under their kings, or rajahs, in Sumatra and Java, the Malays were people of some account in the East. They possessed a written language, subject to grammatical rules; and several works in it are to be found in the libraries of those who make researches in Oriental literature. The most prominent of these are—The Crown of the Sultans, by Bokhary of Djohor; The Great Chronicle of the Kings of Java; and the poem of Kini Tambouhan. When the Portuguese arrived in the East, they took advantage of the jealousy between the rajahs. *Divide et impera* was their device. They set them against each other, and a long succession of petty wars took place. Some of the different tribes were thus sold into slavery; another portion emigrated; considerable numbers remained in their respective islands and the peninsula; while the worst part of the population, containing all the restless spirits, betook themselves to the "dark blue waters," to gain a living by blood.

The Malays are to be found all over the coasts of India, and the islands, as plentiful as the Jews in Europe. Not one of our maritime settlements, from the Cape to Sincapore, that has not a portion of them as settlers, where they generally follow the trade of higglers or hucksters, dealers in eggs and poultry, with all the smaller supplies sought by ships. They have occasionally been employed as soldiers in our service, and have proved faithful,—of which there was a striking example at Ceylon, which I had forgotten to notice. A portion of a Malay corps in our service formed part of Major Davie's unfortunate detachment: they were offered to be taken into the Kandian service, but both officers and men preferred suffering death to breaking their engagements with our Government. Their services might often be brought to account, were it not for the fear of the vindictive and revengeful spirit,—a characteristic of the people, that might make them dangerous persons, mixed with other troops. It is said that neither time nor distance can mollify these passions, and that they carry on their revenge with a refinement of cunning unknown in the colder regions of the North. Illustrative of this, I may be allowed to relate an instance from memory, taken from Barrow's account of the Cape of Good Hope.

A Dutch merchant had purchased, as slaves, a Malay boy and girl;

the former he had taught the trade of a cabinet-maker, and the girl became expert at her needle. They both turned out so profitable, that their master, who had reaped the benefit of their labour for many years, in a fit of generosity promised the man his liberty at a certain period, which at the appointed time he failed to fulfil, or at least postponed indefinitely. The man waited patiently for two years under these broken promises; but, on the third, finding himself still as far off as ever from his object, he went up stairs and deliberately killed the girl, his fellow-slave, making no attempt to escape. When questioned in prison as to the cause of this strange act, he said, that he had long harboured revenge against his miserly master, and that this was the way he carried it into effect. If he had killed the old man himself, he would have only suffered a momentary pain; but, as now his favourite female slave was dead, and that he himself would be hung, it would deprive the old miser of the two best sources of his wealth, make him live in constant repentance of having broken his word, and, finally kill him by degrees.

Before closing these remarks on the Malay race, I would call the attention of the reader to what has lately passed in the peninsula of Malacca. It will be recollected that, a few pages back, I gave some account of the way in which the Island of Pulo Penang came into our possession,—by the gift of the King of Quedah, in the first instance to his son-in-law, and the subsequent transfer of the right to the East India Company.

It would appear that the descendants of this generous old man have had the presumption still to consider themselves as independent princes, and in that light have opposed certain encroachments on their territory by the neighbouring Siamese. This act of independence has excited the jealousy and anger of our Eastern authorities. They have put a *veto* on the proceedings of the Prince of Quedah; and, because he did not choose to bow to their authority, they procured his arrest. On his remonstrance against the proceedings, and demanding an investigation, they condescended to comply with his request; and, on the 3rd of November, 1840, Prince Juanku Mahomed Saad, and his brother, with some of their followers, were brought before the High Court of Judicature in Penang, on a charge of *piracy*,—that is, for wishing to sustain the independence of their country. The jury before whom the case was tried brought in a verdict of not guilty, without leaving the court. The whole of the prisoners were discharged except Juanka Mahomed Saad, who is to be detained at pleasure, the Recorder assuring him, for his satisfaction, that he should not be associated with common felons. Will the people of this country believe, that a judge, in the court, should at the same time tell the person who has just had the verdict of not guilty pronounced in his favour, that he was to remain a prisoner for life? It must be recollected that this Prince, thus incarcerated during the pleasure of the East India Company's agents, is the grandson of the very King from whom they derived their authority in Pulo Penang!

Hume conceives that "the numerous armies mentioned by historians in those times consisted chiefly of ragamuffins, who followed the camp and lived by plunder. Soldiers," says he, "were then enlisted only for a short time: they lived idle all the rest of the year, and commonly all the rest of their lives; one successful campaign, by pay and plunder and the ransom of prisoners, was supposed to be a small fortune to a man, which was a great allurement to enter the service."

By the measure of commuting military service for money a revenue was acquired, which was employed in hiring native born subjects to serve as soldiers. For this purpose the King usually covenanted with influential persons to serve him with a specific number of followers, in terms of an indenture or contract, during each enterprise. It was usual for the King to advance a sum of money to the contractor, under the title of "imprest money," a term derived from the French word *prêt*, a loan,—the sum advanced being considered as lent, to enable the men to provide the requisite equipment and necessaries for the field.

An expedient sometimes practised to procure troops for foreign service was to pardon criminals, on condition of their serving in the King's army abroad, and finding security to answer any prosecution if called upon at their return. Some of the King's justices were occasionally empowered to issue these pardons, and to receive the obligations of the criminals, after which they were allowed a small time to prepare for their voyage; they were then assembled by writs issued to the sheriffs of the different counties, directing them to cause it to be cried throughout their districts that all such as had charters of pardon should repair towards certain seaports, to enter into the pay and service of the King; and, if they did not appear at the respective places, and assemble by a stated time, they incurred the penalty of losing their charters of pardon.—(Grose, *Military Antiquities.*)

[To be continued.]

THE BRITISH COLONIES CONSIDERED AS MILITARY POSTS.

BY LIEUTENANT-COLONEL WILKIE.

[Continued from page 218.]

Le trident de Neptune
Est le sceptre du monde.—LA HARPE.

JAVA—HONG KONG.

IT has been the fashion among a certain class of politicians, grumblers by profession, to find fault with every arrangement in peace or war; and to let no occasion go by without railing at the folly or imbecility of the Government or its servants. The cession of Java was one of those things that especially moved their bile; and language was ransacked to find words sufficiently strong to point out the extent of the sacrifice,—those persons entirely forgetting how the circumstances had altered since the time of its capture. At that period (1811) Napoleon was in the full career of aggrandizement; and Holland, the parent state of the colony of Java, had already been annexed to the French Empire, so

that, even by name, it could no longer be considered as a Dutch colony. On the other hand, when the power of the French Colossus was shaken, and fell to pieces, Holland was again placed amongst the family of nations, and raised to a higher position than she had ever previously enjoyed, the restoration of Java forming no small item in the retributive account. Circumstances have since arisen further to diminish the regret we might feel at the cession of Java: Holland has been since stripped of the moiety of the goodly kingdom with which she was endowed at the Peace of Paris. It is of little use to go over the grounds that led to this dislocation: it is sufficient to show that it has been a dead loss to the Dutch. There is another consideration: the present King of Holland received his education in England, and *faisoit ses premieres armes* in our ranks: he partook of the toils and glory of the Peninsula, and commanded a division of our army at Waterloo. We have since rather ungenerously, I must think, aided and abetted in driving his father out of the citadel of Antwerp; and, therefore, should not grudge the occupation of Java. It is certainly with no feeling of that kind that I take this island into my notices, but only, in finding myself so near to its shores, to pay a passing tribute of respect to the gallant and kind-hearted commander of the expedition under whose orders I once had the honour of serving, as well as to the brave men who assisted at the capture of this colony. The European troops destined for the enterprise were four squadrons of the 22nd Light Dragoons; the 14th, 59th, and 69th Regiments of Infantry, with horse and foot artillery, from Madras; and the 78th and 89th Regiments, and some battalions of Native Volunteers, from Bengal. The whole force was assembled, as already noticed, in Malacca Roads. Indeed, the conception of the plan, and the whole arrangements, reflect great honour on Lord Minto, the Governor-General, who accompanied the expedition. The chief command of the army was with Sir Samuel Achmuty, having under him Major-General Wetherall. The naval force was commanded by Admiral Stopford, of recent Syrian celebrity, having, as his second, Commodore Broughton.

Napoleon had been so well pleased with Van Jansen's defence of the Cape, and the advantageous terms he had obtained, that he gave him the command in Batavia, in succession to General Daendels, a man of ability, who had already taken all precautionary means for the defence of the island. He had under his command an army of 10,000 men, Europeans and natives, well supplied with artillery and all warlike stores, intrenched in a formidable position formed by the bifurcation of the river Socatra with an artificial water-course called Sloken. Both these were unfordable. The base of this triangle, and by which it could be approached, was shut up by a deep trench, strongly palisadoed, covered by seven redoubts and numerous minor batteries, with the fort of Cornelis in the centre, which served as a sort of citadel, and overlooked all the works as well as the approaches. This well-chosen military post was about seven or eight miles from Batavia; and here Van Jansen awaited his enemy.

On the 4th of August, 1811, our troops were landed at a small village twelve miles to the east of Batavia, without opposition. From thence it was the intention of Sir Samuel to have marched directly to Waltevrede and Cornelis, thus turning Batavia, and leaving it on his right,

as it was understood that the direct approach to the capital along shore was strong and well defended; but, on sending out some *feelers*, this was found not to be the case, as the only impediment thrown in the way was by breaking down the bridge over the Anjol.

The Commander-in-Chief having arrived on the banks of this river on the 6th, and, observing a large fire in Batavia, he ordered the advance, under Colonel Gillespie, to be passed over in boats, and to push on for the town, which was effected, and the detachment made a lodgment in the suburbs. On the 8th a temporary bridge was completed, when the first of our columns passing over, the burghers came forward and surrendered their city. This was a great point gained, as the town was thus saved from destruction, and convenient means afforded of communication with the fleet, for procuring all requisite supplies of stores, artillery, and ammunition.

After the fall of Batavia, the advanced guard, under Colonel Gillespie, moved on the cantonment of Waltevrede, which he found abandoned; but a position had been taken up in its rear, and two miles in front of the works of Cornelis, defended by an *abbatis* and 3000 of the best troops of the enemy. This post was carried by the bayonet; and a division that came to its support was also repulsed by the advancing column of British. The grenadiers of the 78th and 89th charged and captured the enemy's artillery in this affair.

Our troops were now in front of the main position, which was in every way formidable, situated, as I have said, in an angle between two unfordable rivers, having, however, communication with the country on either flank by bridges. That on their right, over the Sloken, was covered by a redoubt, which served as a tête de pont; and the one on the left, across the Socatra, was protected by a division at Camporg Maylayo, on the opposite or western side of the river. The commander of our troops saw at once that to attack such a post, defended by nearly 10,000 men, in the regular method, by approaches, would be an operation requiring much time, and beyond the strength under his command, in which it might be feared that every day might produce an inroad on the health of the troops, exposed to the burning sun of that climate. He therefore came to the determination "to take the bull by the horns."

As a preliminary measure, to shake the strength of the position, twenty 18-pounders, with eight mortars and howitzers, were placed in battery, and kept up an incessant fire, which, in a short time, produced a satisfactory effect, having damaged some of the works and dismounted a few guns; thus taking off, in some manner, the fiery edge of the defence.

The assault was made at daylight of the 26th August. Col. Gillespie, having with him the infantry of the advance guard, and the grenadiers of the Line, supported by Col. Gibbs, with the 59th Regiment, and 4th battalion of Bengal volunteers, found his way through a close and intricate country, until he gained the detached redoubt, which, as already mentioned, stood on the opposite side of the Sloken, and somewhat in advance in echellon of the main position. This was carried with the greatest gallantry, and with such rapidity, that our troops followed the fugitives across the bridge, and thus gained access to the

chain of redoubts forming the main position: they immediately attacked the most advanced of these, called No. 4, which was in like manner carried. Here the divisions of the column separated, Col. Gibbs with the 59th, and part of the 78th, leaned to their right, and carried another redoubt, called No. 1. They had scarcely obtained possession, when the magazine blew up and destroyed many of our officers and men who were crowded on the ramparts. Thus, the right half of the enemy's position was in our hands. On their extreme left, the division that was posted beyond the great river at Camporg Maylayo, was attacked by Major Tule, with two troops of cavalry, the horse artillery, with four guns, two companies of the 69th Regiment, and the flank companies of the reserve. This movement was also successful; the enemy were defeated, and many of them killed; they retreated over the bridge, which they set on fire, and stopped the pursuit. The attack on the redoubt on the enemy's left flank, within the position, was made by Lieut.-Col. M'Leod, at the head of six companies of the 69th; this was also carried in gallant style, but that brave officer fell at the moment of victory.

The front of the position being now open, all the troops of reserve rushed on to the attack. Meanwhile, Colonel Gillespie had followed up his success on the left, and being joined by a portion of the 59th Regiment, directed his movements against the enemy's park of artillery, which, after a sharp defence, was carried, as well as the lines in front of Fort Cornelis and the fort itself. In proportion to the original strength of the position was the helpless state of the troops that occupied it, once their defences in front were carried; the bridge that gave them communication with the country on one flank was in our possession, and the other burned down; so that they were penned up in a *cul de sac* formed by the junction of the two rivers, and had no other resource than surrender. Nearly 5000 were taken prisoners—a few only escaping by swimming across the river, among whom was General Jansens, who retired with a few cavalry to Buitenzorg. Our loss during this attack amounted to 795 officers and men killed and wounded. In storming the lines of Cornelis, we may, I think, challenge all military history, ancient and modern, to show a more brilliant specimen of an *attaque d'emblée*, effected in broad day, and under the debilitating effects of a tropical sun. It shows, in the strongest light, what our troops are capable of when properly directed and ably led; indeed, their enemy was among the first to do them ample justice. In Van Jansen's despatch to the French Emperor, he detailed all the precautionary measures of defence, spoke of his own troops in favourable terms, but concluded by saying that all these means had proved of no avail, when opposed to the discipline and bravery of British soldiers. The regiments employed on this brilliant service bear deservedly the badge of "Java" on their colours. The thanks of both Houses were given to both services employed on the expedition; but, in common with other occasions, and to the reproach of our executive government, no ray of royal favour was allowed to descend to the lower portion of the army, —the men that did the work!

General Jansens, in imitation of his previous tactics at the Cape, retired, first to the fort of Cheribon, then to Samarang, and, finally, to Sourabaya; from each of these he was successively driven, and finally

capitulated. At the same time the small adjacent island of Madura, then occupied by a French garrison, surrendered; and left us no enemy within the limits of the Eastern seas.

Before taking a farewell of this portion of the Indian seas, I should wish to correct and amend the statement made in the last paper, as to the acquisition of the island of Pulo Penang. I had said that the island was given to Capt. Light as a dowry with the daughter of the King of Quedah, and was ceded by him to the East India Company for a consideration; this was true *in limine*. But I have since learned, that Capt. Light had no voice in either yielding up the island, or in arranging the compensation that was given to him; the cession was compulsory, contrary to his wishes and intentions, which were to settle on the island which he had acquired. But he was forced to give up what he was fairly entitled to call his property; and the Company fixed the remuneration, which was not one-tenth of the value of the island: true, they allowed him to occupy a small portion of it, under the stipulation that it was to be given up whenever required, for the public service. And in a very short time Capt. Light was dispossessed to make room for the construction of a barrack, and no compensation made him; so that all he received for what might be called a principality, and one of the finest islands in the Indian seas, was the sum of 30,000*l.* or thereabout, not one-tenth of its value. How the descendant of the King of Quedah has been served, I have already shown.

Hong Kong.

Le jour insuivant entrasmes en l'isle de Cassade, vraye idée du Fontainebleau: car la terre y est si maigre que les os (ce sont rocz) luy percent la peau.

Rabelais.

In quitting the shores of Java, it will hardly be expected that I should take more than casual notice of the Banda islands and Amboyna, which we restored to the Dutch. Their mercantile value has extremely diminished since the monopoly of spice has been broken up, and that we have got the different kinds growing in almost all our Eastern possessions; being situated in the remote and little frequented sea of Banda, their value as military posts may be said to be at zero. I may therefore ask the reader to retrace the Line with me, without the fear of being shaved by Neptune's barber; and having regained Singapore, take a fresh departure for the China sea, to visit our new acquisition, ceded by the late treaty. If there is nothing new under the sun, it is at least a novelty in the arts, to have a British colony with Chinese custom-house officers. It is yet too early to pronounce on the value of such an arrangement, until it is understood in all its bearings. If paying the duties at Hong Kong will exempt merchandise from all other charges, on arriving at Canton, there can be no doubt that it will be a great and decided advantage; but if the trade is to be embarrassed and delayed by further taxation and charges on going up the river, then Hong Kong will be only a depôt for smuggling opium, as far as its mercantile value is concerned, and we shall be in a worse position than ever as to fair trade.

It seems rather an awkward compliment to give us the possession of an island in a group, with the disreputable name of Ladrone. Of these *thieves'* islands, Hong Kong is the most northerly, and Asses' Ears—the island so called—forms the southern boundary: they are scattered about in great numbers at the mouth of the estuary that leads to Canton. The Portuguese have superseded the Chinese names in several instances, which we have adopted; for example, the designation of these islands; the Pescadores islands, in the Straits of Formosa, with the name of that island itself; the Tigris river and its *embouchure* Bocca Tigris; for what reason it would be difficult to guess, has the name of the Syrian river been transferred to that at Canton; there is no more similarity between them than "the river at Monmouth and the one at Macedon." It is curious that we who are so fond of monosyllables ourselves, should prefer the lengthened names of the Portuguese, to the short and sweet Chinese. One of the most familiar distinctions in China we call mandarin, which is not Chinese, but taken from the Portuguese verb *mandare*, to command.

The treaty concluded between Capt. Elliot and Keshen has naturally produced a good deal of controversy; those persons who were much interested in the opium affair, and who looked with sanguine eyes for a full indemnification for their losses, were naturally disappointed when they found that the money to be paid by the Chinese would not amount to half the value of the drug destroyed; that it was to be spread over a period of six years, and then very doubtful how much of it would ever reach the hands of those who suffered by the confiscation. This naturally led them to look with a jaundiced eye on all the details of the treaty, and they have consequently described the island as a barren and desolate spot, unfitted for all purposes, and only given to us because it was worse than useless to the Chinese, being the haunt of pirates and smugglers. On the other hand, those who were satisfied with Capt. Elliot's arrangements, describe the island as everything that we could desire; between such conflicting accounts it is not easy to decide: the testimony of an impartial person must in such a case be very desirable. This, I think, has been found in the description given by a French artist, who has been recently in China on professional pursuits. M. Borget is a draughtsman of some celebrity; and two of his paintings taken from Chinese scenes, will appear in the exhibition of the Louvre this year. As there can be no reason for doubting his testimony, or considering it biassed, I hope it will not be thought an intrusion on the time of the reader, if I make a few extracts to throw a little light on a recently-acquired colony about which so little is known.

"Hong Kong is distant from Macao about forty-five miles, and one hundred and twenty south-east of Canton. It is separated from the main land by a strait, which, in many places, is not three-quarters of a mile in breadth. The island is about eight miles in length, and two and a half to three miles in its greatest breadth, where the hills slope down into projecting points in the sea, forming several small bays. The island is very hilly, or may be called mountainous, with very little wood. The hills are covered in many places with projecting masses of granite, the intervals giving shelter and nourishment to herbage, which in the autumn is set fire to by the Chinese, and presents a curious spectacle when seen from the sea at night. On the eastern side of the island,

which faces the continent, are several small and confined valleys, which are cultivated with that care and minute attention of which the Chinese alone are capable. The principal of these valleys is directly opposite to the city of Cow-Loon, which stands on the continent. Returning from this city, where I had been to make some sketches, I took boat. On approaching the island, I observed a light blue smoke rising from a clump of trees, which I had not previously noticed. I directed my boatman to the point; and, notwithstanding all his representations to the contrary, delivered in a mixed jargon of Chinese, Portuguese, and English, I landed. Having directed the man to wait for me at a short distance along shore, I proceeded in search of the object that had caught my attention. My way at first lay through some rice fields, divided from each other by dikes, which served at the same time as aqueducts. In some muddy ponds several buffaloes were wallowing, watched by children. Others of these animals were fastened up,—luckily, perhaps, for me, as several of them gave savage looks, moved their tails violently to and fro, stamping with their feet.

"In this country, so obstinately repulsive to the stranger, he finds everything hostile, even to the animals. It is not unusual for a buffalo —quite inoffensive towards the Chinese—to discover an European, even in the dress of the country, and attack him furiously. Having passed a small rivulet by a bridge formed of the trunk of a tree, I entered a narrow path, which led amongst some old forest trees and magnificent clumps of bamboos, covered to their summits with creeping plants: this brought me to what might be called the village green or square, from whence ran three streets in parallel lines: they were not above a yard in width, each of them containing about twenty houses, all constructed on the same model; at the other end of these streets, was a larger one parallel with the square, which was well paved and wider than the others, and terminated in a house larger, handsomer, and more ornamented than the rest. It was no doubt the residence of the mandarin or headman, into which, unfortunately, I could not gain admittance. During my walk through the streets, I was followed by a crowd of idlers, that increased every moment; all those who were busy within doors, came running out to look at the stranger, (Fanqui, corruption of Feringi, by which Europeans are designated all over Asia,) they all pressed forward, and some were troublesome: they touched my cane, my clothes, my pencils and portfolio; but if there was in all the countenances a keen expression of curiosity, there was no appearance of anything hostile. On the contrary, they all wished me to enter their houses. I went into one, and drank some small cups of tea without sugar, and smoked some excellent tobacco from a long pipe, which my host—a venerable Chinese with a white beard, presented to me with very evident signs of pleasure. Returning to the village square already noticed, I observed at one of its extremities a Chinese altar, on which were several flowers and vases: in these were burning small red candles. At this altar, the inhabitants of the village offered up their prayers, consulted their destiny, and made their offerings. It was screened by a number of beautiful old trees, covered with magnificent red flowers. As I had never seen any trees of this description, I made a sign to have some of the flowers, which was promptly complied with by some children, who climbed up and procured them. On returning to my boat, I ascended a narrow path,

which led me to a hill of some elevation, from whence I could see the remaining part of the valley. At my feet were some well-watered and verdant rice fields; on the left, some pretty small houses, half hidden in clumps of trees, and a small wood, planted apparently with regularity; on the right were precipitous rocks; and in the distance, in front, the bay, and the picturesque mountains of Cow-Loon.

"This branch of the valley has only a narrow opening to the beach, the gorge being shut up by an enormous mass of detached rock, which the Chinese have put to good account. They have hollowed the summit into a tank or reservoir, and have conducted the water from the adjoining promontory into it by the means of large hollow bamboos, and from thence again, by means of others of these gigantic canes, distributed the water in the lower part of the valley, which, without that aid, would have been sterile and desolate.

"This valley is certainly the most populous, picturesque, and best-wooded portion of the island. No doubt, in a few years, by the side of the blue roofs, turned up at their extremities, and covered with dolphins and dragons, will be seen to rise the *comfortable* villas of the English. It is not here, however, that their first establishments will be formed, because it is too far removed from the principal bay, which is situated on the west side of the island, unquestionably the most sterile, naked, and dull-looking portion of the island; but the bay itself is one of the largest and most magnificent in China. It can contain an infinite number of ships, with excellent anchorage, and shelter from the north-east wind, and the violent typhoons that, during the south-west monsoon, do such mischief along these shores. During my stay at Hong Kong there was one of these, which we scarcely felt."

The writer does not explain how, with the anchorage open to the south-west, these typhoons are scarcely felt: it is probably from the shelter afforded by the surrounding islands, that break the force of the wind and sea. It would be worth while, however, to ascertain that point clearly before we get up any expensive establishments there.

Apropos of typhoons, I may be excused giving an anecdote: it is very old, and has often been repeated, but it may still have some attraction for the rising generation, as showing how a *lark* was conducted eighty years ago; and that the theory of Colonel Reid as to a hurricane, or typhoon, being a gigantic whirlwind, was anticipated by a jolly tar at the close of the Seven Years' War. At that period, it may be recollected that a very rich Spanish register-ship was taken by the Hermione and carried into Plymouth. The treasure with which she was laden was paraded through the streets of London on its way to the Bank, on the day that George the Fourth was born. The sailors of the frigate, on that occasion, shared each five hundred pounds, which they were allowed to get rid of at their *discretion*. Two of the messes set out in different vehicles for Totness, with the exception of one man, who was so busy in cheating a Jew, in the purchase of a gold-headed cane, that he could not start with his comrades. Having, as he thought, *done* Moses, he went to a hatter's, bought a Captain's cocked hat—a regular iron-bound scraper—and having secured his purchases, he ordered two chaises; to one of these he inducted his hat and cane, sending it on in front, he himself following in the second. On arriving, he found his comrades in the kitchen of the inn frying silver watches

on spinach, and the whole party passed the evening in like rational amusements. Two of the ship's company had taken their departure from Plymouth at the same time, but on different routes: they were several days away, and when they met again, neither of them was very sober; in truth, they had been either in total or semi-drunkenness from the time they started; no wonder, therefore, that one hardly knew the other, who was disguised in a large red wig.

"Hilloa! Bob, my boy, is that you? Have you been in trouble, that it has turned your hair?"

"No, not a bit—it came nat'ral, bathing in the Red Sea! And where have you been cruising, Bill?"

"I have been in the moon."

"How the d—l did you get there?"

"Why, we was caught in a typhoon in the China seas that hoisted the ship clean out of the water, and kept lifting her till she stuck her topgallant-mast in the moon."

"My eyes! but that was a rum go. How did you get down again?"

"I greased my trousers, and slid down by a rainbow."

Independent of the anchorage, this western bay possesses an advantage of the highest order, particularly in a warm climate—a cascade of pure and excellent water tumbles on the shores, where water-casks or tanks can be filled with facility and rapidity. This would be enough of itself to fix the position of our establishments, independent of everything else. It will be, however, a job of some labour and expense.

The shores of the bay are shelving and shallow; very well for a Falstaff to fall in, but inconvenient for the landing of boats: the remedy, however, is at hand; like Rabelais' island, described in the motto, the bones of the land are sticking through the skin, in the form of detached masses of rock, many of which look as if hewn out purposely for the construction of piers, or any other buildings. There are, beside, in the bay, opposite to Cow Loon, and close at hand, very magnificent stone quarries, only separated from the great bay by a long tongue of land. On this were erected the huts of some Chinese ship-carpenters, who found employment there in repairing the boats of the English and American vessels employed in smuggling opium. During the recent dispute, these huts were destroyed by the Mandarins, and the people expelled, as a punishment for the assistance they had given the barbarians: during the continuation of the trade, this narrow peninsula served as a place of meeting, and sort of exchange, to the masters of the ships.

The anchorage of Hong Kong had been only used by those employed in the contraband trade since they were driven away from Cape Sing Moon, nine miles to the northward of Macao, where the Chinese have lately established batteries. It will depend much on the stipulations of the treaty, and still more on their fulfilment, whether this island will be a possession of any value as a commercial acquisition. Even taking it in a favourable point of view under this head, it seems a trifling result for all the expense, trouble, and loss of life, that have attended our armament in the China Sea. As to the contribution of six millions of dollars that are promised, what sort of guarantee have we that they will be paid? There have been proofs abundant of the shuffling tricks of Chinese negociators: the probability is, that these annual dollars will be moonshine, and that it will require a fresh expedition to enforce the

payment. Seeing the sort of opponents we had at Chusan, the whole force should have been pushed on to Pekin, have taken a position within cannon-shot of the capital, and threatened its demolition, unless the destruction of the opium was made good and the expenses of the expedition covered: we should have had the money, as Dennis Brulgruddery says, "down on the counter," and "no mistake." We shall have at a future day to take some measure of that kind, under perhaps less favourable circumstances—"Ad præsens ova, cras pullis sunt meliora." Our present bargain seems an indifferent one, but we must make the best use we can of it: putting the mercantile value out of the question, let us look at the island in a military point of view.

I have shown, in the preceding papers, the way in which we have invested, by our military posts, the continents of Europe and Africa: the Asiatic line of contravallation, which commences in the west at Aden, will be completed, for all useful purposes, in the south-east, by the occupation of Hong Kong. With a squadron stationed here, we may be said to command the whole commerce of China, and to keep an eye at once over the Philippine Islands, the eastern groups of the Loochoo Islands and those of Japan; while, combined with Sincapore, the entire navigation of the China Sea is put under observation and control. Although the acquisition of a place which we could have taken possession of in ten minutes seems no great result for the expense and trouble of our armament, yet there is the advantage that, being ceded by treaty, what we may choose to do there will not give any umbrage to the Celestials. We may make undisturbed all the arrangements for creating a military post of high value, and concentrating there the means of carrying on operations at a future time. The shuffling tricks by which the Chinese have baffled our late demonstration against them, show very clearly that we must again, at no distant period, have recourse to the *ultima ratio:* we must teach them not only a moral but a physical lesson before we can make them understand how we deserve the name of barbarians. Yet, in carrying on hostilities against this unwarlike race, there must be a certain feeling of compunction in the breast of every military man, when fighting against people almost incapable of resistance; and their ignorance of our European custom of making prisoners of war, renders it imperative to give no quarter, which makes the affair little better than slaughtering sheep. There is another consideration—the poor people of the country, who must in all warlike operations be sufferers, have not the least idea of the cause that brings hostilities to their doors; they have no antipathies to indulge in against foreign nations, but are the mere passive serfs of the most unbroken and apparently everlasting despotism that the world has ever witnessed: how very painful, then, it must be to inflict injury on such a non-resisting race! The Christian missionaries who have gone to that country to convert the people from idolatry ought all to have been Quakers. That class of the population called soldiers seem to be of nearly the same way of thinking: any courage they do possess appears entirely of the passive order, and to be produced, as in the case of the Bogue forts, by the appliance of opium-smoking. It seems, therefore, very short-sighted policy in the Brother of the Sun and Moon to stop the supplies of the only stimulant that will induce his troops to stand to become "food for powder," which they have been, in the fullest sense. It is

not, perhaps, too much to speculate that any European army of 20,000 men, of all arms, that could retain their health and discipline, and were abundantly supplied with ammunition for "killing off," might march from one end of China to the other.

It may appear paradoxical, and by no means flattering to humanity, but not less true, that in proportion to the advancement of nations in the science of war has been their progress in the useful and even ornamental arts of life: this could be proved by numberless instances from ancient and modern history; and it may be said, without any vanity, to be a fact highly complimentary to the profession of arms. If we apply this test of civilization to the Chinese, they are indeed what they call us, "barbarians"—scarcely a savage tribe on the face of the globe that would not show "better fight." This, together with the nature of their institutions, and restricted symbolic language, would seem to doom them to a state of eternal mediocrity.

It is not easy to form a conjecture of what nature or to what extent our military establishments will be carried: the simplest thing that ever was imagined, in the shape of a fort or blockhouse, would be sufficient to keep the Chinese at a distance; but in case of European war, some more precautions must be taken. In all probability, the peninsula that forms the south-eastern boundary of Tytam—the name of the large bay already alluded to—will be the site of any dockyard or arsenal, covered at its extremity by a fort, which will also command the anchorage. The stream of water which falls into the head of the bay, perhaps the most valuable thing in the territory, will naturally draw a population round it, and form the nucleus of the future village or town; this may be also protected by a fort: the garrison, formed in the first instance by Marines, will ultimately be drawn from our unfortunate peace establishment, which, in course of a little time, will be all absorbed in colonies. Experience of former times ought to be brought to bear in the choice of a situation for a barrack, to avoid making the discovery, after it is built, of its being placed in an unhealthy spot: although a Dutchman or Chinaman can waddle unmolested amidst stagnant pools of water, not so an Englishman, who sucks up malaria like a sponge. We have seen that the water employed for the irrrigation of the rice-fields in Chusan, acted on by a powerful sun, has been the occasion of great sickness and mortality among our troops; and the probability is, that the same causes acting at Hong Kong would produce the same effects, considering, also, that it is in a more southerly latitude, and, of course, warmer. This is an object worthy of consideration in so distant a colony, where the value of every soldier's life is so much enhanced.

I understand that the western portion of the island, on which, probably, our establishments would be fixed, for reasons before mentioned, is bare and devoid of vegetation, and that the culture of rice takes place in the valleys or ravines on the east side of the island; there, however, it might be required to establish some military post, in which case it would be better to put down the growth of rice altogether, and encourage some other species of cultivation, less injurious to the health of our countrymen. This might be done with the less difficulty, as the population will, in the course of a short time, receive a large reinforcement of British subjects, who will discover some more wholesome means of employing the ground, and with the greater facility, as rice, the food of

the Chinese, can be imported from India, or China itself, as cheap as it can be grown.

It may be said that I have imagined an evil that may not probably occur; in answer, prevention is better than remedy. If we can judge by experience, the want of due consideration about a healthy station for the location of troops in our colonies has been attended with the loss of many hundred lives. We have the immediate experience of Chusan before our eyes, where there appeared nothing to indicate the least degree of insalubrity, and yet the exertions of the troops, had they been required, would have been paralyzed in the very first instance by the effects of disease, which could not have been possibly foreseen. This cause, most probably, combined with other reasons, for granting terms to the Chinese which seem at the first glance too favourable, considering the national insult we have received; but of this we have not yet the means of forming an accurate judgment. Most probably, in making the cession of Hong Kong, with the appendage of native custom-house officers, the Chinese Government has thought to put us in the same position as the Portuguese at Macao; but, if I mistake not, they will meet with a very different set of customers, and their *douaniers* may get *chucked* into the sea some fine day. They have been entirely spoiled by the long acquiescence with their arrogance that took place during the whole time of the monopoly of the East India Company, and the perfect subserviency of their Lusitanian lessees. The abortive embassy of Lord Macartney may have also, in some measure, given them a degrading idea of European manners; not from any want of respectability in the Envoy or his suite, but from the sort of humiliation that arose from sending an ambassador to a court that did not reciprocate the measure. His Lordship broke off the negociation because he thought it a degradation of our King for his representative to go through the ceremony of the *tow chow;* but his Majesty's dignity had already been compromised in the very outset, and Lord Macartney knocking his head three times against the door-sill, or door-post, would only have been a specimen of the *bathos* in the art of making bows at Court.

In the remarks on Ceylon I had observed that, in dealing with half-civilized nations, we should proceed in the first instance with the strong hand, and dictate our own terms, without ever flinching from them, when at all practicable or possible. Chicanery and trick used to form a large ingredient in European diplomacy; and even last year we had a sample of double-dealing not a thousand miles from our own shores. But, generally speaking, in negociation with nations, as with individuals, honesty has been found the best policy, and has been carried out in most of the transactions between civilized states; but among semi-barbarous people fraud and deceit are the very essence of diplomacy, and if once you enter into *palaver* with them you are sure to come off second best,—it is like dealing with a Yankee pedlar or a horse-*chaunter:* their most consummate statesmen and negociators are those who are the best cheats and deceivers. There seem pretty strong symptoms that in the late transactions our Plenipo—has been *done;* but I hope it will be a hint not lost on our future negociators; when again we take the Chinaman by the ear we do not let it go until he has given proper satisfaction; and, if we hold a congress for settling the

terms, that its place of meeting shall be on the quarter-deck of a British man-of-war. Independent of its value as a military post, or commercial entrepôt, it may be hoped that Hong Kong will enable us to form a more correct idea of the Chinese character, and give some insight into the manners, customs, and domestic economy of that hitherto impenetrable nation. Since the time of Marco Polo we have had very little information that goes beyond him. The missionaries have been too much occupied with their vocation, and the sleepy Portuguese of Macao have never attempted to clear up the mystery. The first glimpse we have had of the domestic manners of the Chinese is the charming description, by Captain Basil Hall, of his visit to the Loo Choo Islands. Chusan has opened the door a little wider; for, although the inhabitants abandoned their dwellings, they left sufficient tokens of their *façon de vivre*, and of their domestic economy, to form a judgment. The city or town of Ting Haï might be compared to a Pompeii of the living—nothing wanting in the picture but inhabitants. The furniture, fittings, and ornaments of the houses furnish strong evidence of the comfort, and even elegance, of the interior life of the Chinese; but we have yet to learn if the manners and usages of the people are in consonance with their habitations.

I had written thus far when the news arrived that all the arrangements that had been entered into between our Envoy and the Chinese Commissioner have fallen to the ground, and, consequently, that it is more than doubtful whether I shall have any more authority for treating of this island as a British colony, beyond the simple fact that it has been formally taken possession of as such; and may yet serve as a rendezvous for our armaments in this ill-omened war with the Chinese. It was commenced on very doubtful grounds, and has been so managed in its progress that all the gallant efforts of our sailors and soldiers have been rendered nugatory; we are precisely now where we might have been twelve months ago—at the British factory above Whampoa—after sacrificing the lives of so many brave fellows in muddy rice-fields of Chusan, without any single benefit. Even now, what are we to get by having the command of Canton? Another treaty!!!

Independent of the loss of lives, and enormous expense, will not our character in the East, notwithstanding the bravery of our forces, suffer in the opinion of the people? We have been *choused* out of Chusan, the Walcheren of China, and withdrawn the troops and ships, without the shadow of a security that any treaty entered into would be fulfilled. Will not this retirement of our forces from such a commanding position be loudly trumpeted forth by the Chinese as a defeat? Will it not have its effect on the Burmese, the Nepaulese, and even as far to the west as Affghannistan? We may talk of beating the Chinese without the slightest difficulty,—where are the fruits? We have retreated, and are defeated; if not by force of arms, at least by cunning and chicanery, which comes to the same thing. Well may the Celestials call us white-haired barbarians, that have allowed themselves to be so grossly cheated and *bamboozled!*

This is not half the evil: by the most extraordinary fatuity, a large part of the Indian army that was recalled from Chusan were sent back to India, without once inquiring if their services might be required in the Tigris. They had got to Sincapore, and were detained there, where

it is said that they have mutinied, and refused to return to China. Let this example but be followed up in one or two instances, and we may bid adieu to our Indian Empire, and the Bogue forts into the bargain. Have we any means at Sincapore for punishing this resistance? Commodore Bremer is gone to Calcutta for reinforcements; will he get them of native troops, if they hear of this affair? If not, who is to support the position in the *ci-devant* British Factory at Canton? It will be said, British troops: where are they to be found? With our limited *peace* establishment,—which I have on every occasion stated is inadequate to preserve peace at home and furnish reliefs to our garrisons,—we are engaged in a doubtful and distant war in Central Asia, and are involved in a dispute about the confiscation of a filthy contraband drug, with a nation of three hundred millions of inhabitants. If our soldiers that could be spared for the work were to shoot from morning to night for months, they could make no sensible impression on such a mass. They would be rather conferring a moral benefit on the country, by thinning the population, and saving them from child-murder.

Most likely his Celestial Majesty cares very little what we do with Canton; nor does there seem to be any possible benefit to be derived from its occupation, unless to levy a contribution for the expenses of the war. As to an indemnity for the opium gentlemen, it will go, with great ease, like other dreams of the same sort, into Elizabeth Martin's eye! "They may wish they may get it." In place of taking advantage of the first panic, and making the population rescue their city from destruction, we have begun another treaty with a people evidently destitute of all national faith, where the caprice of the sovereign is the sole regulator of all transactions with foreigners.

I hope the foregoing remarks will not be attributed to party spirit. They have been drawn forth by that feeling of disappointment and regret which every naval and military man must feel, in seeing our warlike resources misapplied and rendered of no avail. I sincerely hope that the melancholy view I have taken of our affairs in that quarter will not be fulfilled; and certain I am, that all that zeal and energy can perform on the part of the forces led into action will be brought into play; but they cannot perform miracles. The longer a war of this nature is protracted, the worse it will be for us. We may plunder and put to death thousands and ten thousands of the unoffending inhabitants, and yet be no nearer the mark. Is there any guarantee or security that, if our troops were carrying on operations on the continent of China, they would not be liable to the diseases that filled the hospitals at Chusan, and that our soldiers might not either perish ingloriously by disease, or be exhibited, like wild beasts shut up in cages, when taken prisoners in their sick-beds? The only *modus operandi* against a nation so situated is by a *coup de main* on the seat of government. We have let the most brilliant opportunity of that kind that was ever offered slip through our hands. Shall we ever again have the game so full in our favour? At all events it must be tried: the *prestige* of our name must be kept up in the East, or the whole of the fabric, founded on an insecure basis, will tumble to the ground.
