A HISTORY OF MALAYA

By F. J. Moorhead, M.A.

A HISTORY OF MALAYA
AND HER NEIGHBOURS

Volume One

A HISTORY OF MALAYA

VOLUME TWO

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PREFACE

THIS book continues the history of Malaya from the capture of Malacca by the Dutch in 1641 to August 31, 1957, when Malaya achieved her independence, and took her place as a new State in the world. It will be observed that in the present volume, much less space has been given to the history of her neighbours than was the case in the first book. There it was a question of trying to observe Malaya's emergence from the welter of surrounding petty states by emphasising her shadowy outline against the background of those states. But in the modern period, thanks to the much more abundant sources, it is possible to trace Malaya's development into an entity in her own right: and an attempt to give a more detailed survey of the history of her neighbours would have unduly extended the size of this book. Nevertheless, I have tried, where possible, to indicate some of the occasions when Malaya's neighbours affected her development.

I acknowledge with gratitude my indebtedness to the works of Sir Richard Winstedt, Professor D. G. E. Hall, W. Linehan, C. D. Cowan, L. A. Mills, J. M. Gullick, S. W. Jones, N. Ginsburg and C. F. Roberts Jr., and other scholars. For a select list of their works, the reader is referred to the bibliography.

Finally, I thank my wife for her continued encouragement and for her assistance with the maps and in proof-reading.

F. J. MOORHEAD

Aughton
August 1963

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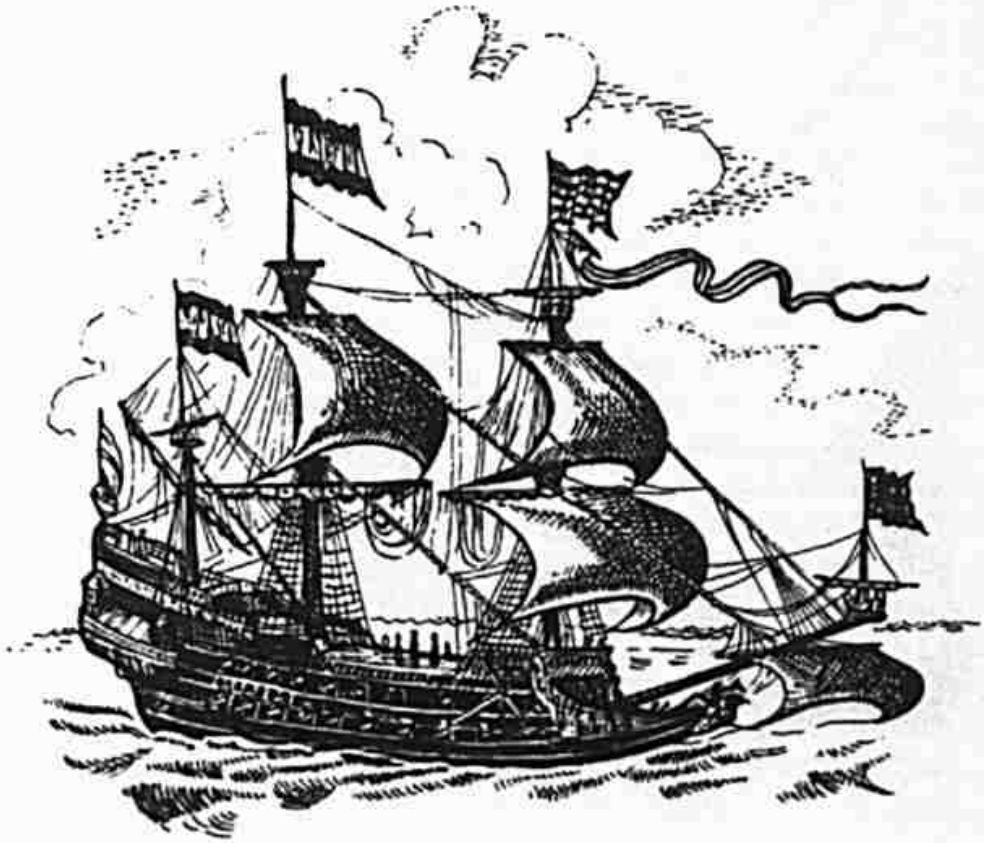
THE defeat of the Portuguese fleet in 1606 by the Dutch had secured for the latter that command of the sea which is an essential condition for any power which aims at dominating South-East Asia; and the next thirty years witnessed that slow decline of Portuguese power brought on by the inexorable strangulation of a blockade. In the early seventeenth century, however, it was by no means clear which power in South-East Asia would become paramount.

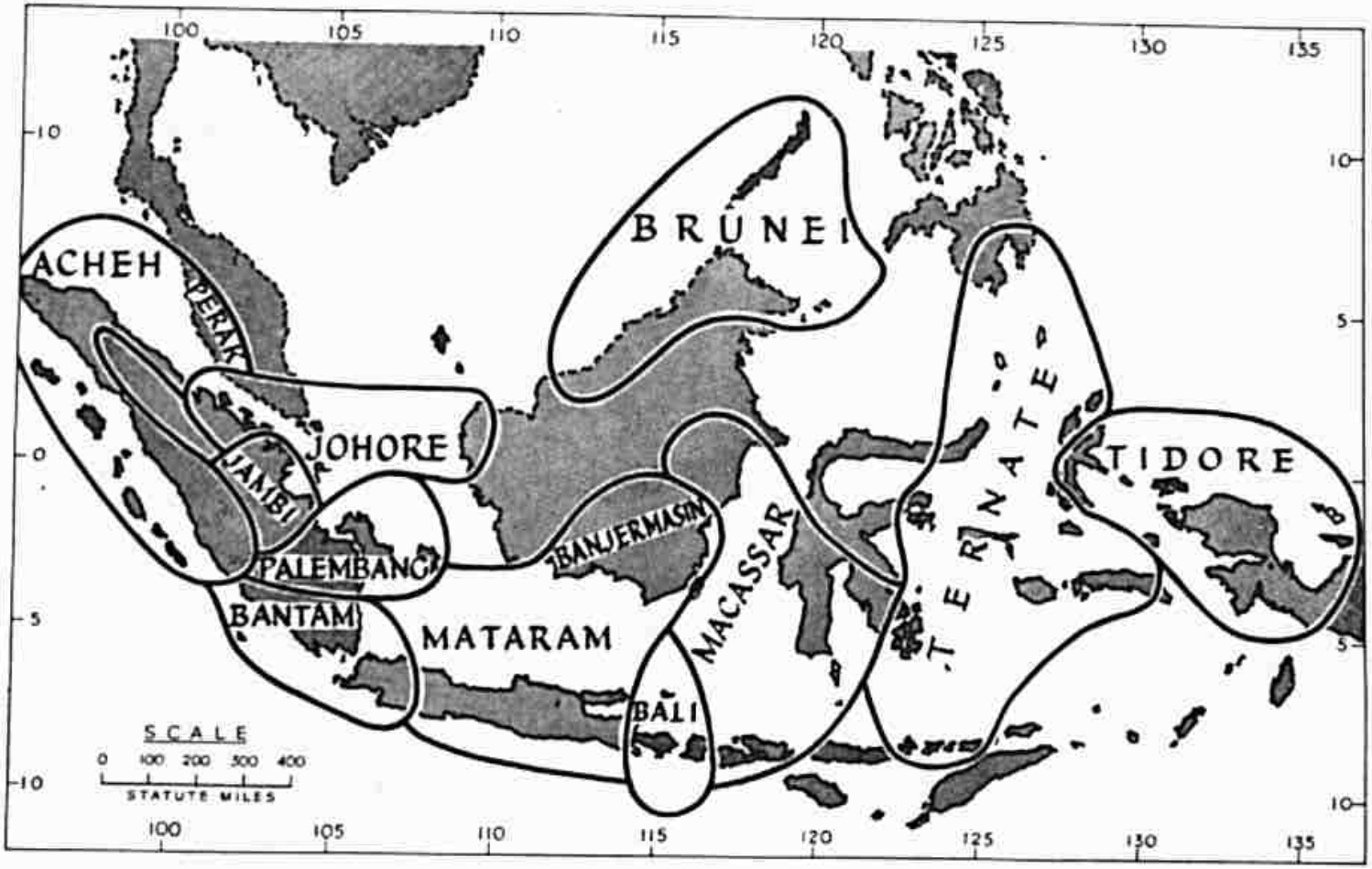
1. *Acheh*

In the western part of the archipelago there were several native powers which seemed to have a reasonable chance of success. First, there was Acheh[1] on the north-east coast of

[1] See Vol. 1, pp. 239–41.



Dutch East India man-of-war, *c.* 1506



The chief states of the Archipelago during the seventeenth century

Sumatra which under the ruthless and able rule of Iskandar Muda (1607–36) had expanded her power along the eastern part of Sumatra almost as far as Jambi, and which also controlled a great part of the western coast. These conquests gave her a share of the pepper trade, and this, combined with the tin monopoly accruing to her from her domination of the Peninsular Malay states, made her very wealthy, and so capable of maintaining a strong fleet and a large army. Her position at the northern end of the Straits, within easy reach of India, induced ships of all nations to crowd her ports, and she seemed likely to succeed to beleaguered Malacca's position as the great emporium of the Straits. Not everyone welcomed this prospect. The pepper ports, Jambi and Palembang, and many of the Javanese ports on the northern seaboard were apprehensive that they would soon share the fate of the Peninsular Malay states.

2. *Bantam and Mataram*

In Java there were two powers which seemed to have good prospects of playing a decisive part in the coming struggle for mastery. The first of these was Bantam, in the west, which controlled the Sunda Strait and the Lampoeng districts of southern Sumatra. Its fleet made it quite formidable as a sea-power, and it had a flourishing pepper trade with China. Its neighbour, Mataram, however, commanded greater prestige. Under the rule of Sutavijaya Senopati (*c.* 1582–1601) this area, virtually deserted in the middle of the sixteenth century, had become the centre of a powerful state extending from Cheribon in the west to the borders of Balembangan in the east. Many of the northern ports were next brought under its control. Demak was captured in 1604; Tuban in 1609; Japara in 1616. This new empire aimed at resurrecting the legendary glories of Majapahit. The Muslim Sultan, Agung, claiming descent from the Hindu-Buddhist King Hayam Wuruk, aimed at no less than the complete unification of Java under his control. Bantam therefore had much to fear from him, and Bantam, like all Mataram's contemporary powers, including the European, was much impressed by its potentialities for greatness.

In reality, Bantam did not need to be so fearful. Mataram was not a sea-power, and she allowed her ports to decay. "I

am no merchant like the Sultans of Bantam and Surabaya," Sultan Agung told the Dutch, and the unending wars he and his successors fought to achieve the unification of Java weakened the states, and left the way open for the rise of Batavia.

3. *Macassar*

The fact that Java's seaports, which for so long had been emporia between the Straits and the Moluccas, were now in decline led to the rise of another state in the eastern part of the archipelago, namely, Macassar. The Kingdom of Gowa was situated on the southern part of Celebes. Under determined rulers it had extended its power over east Borneo and the Lesser Sunda Islands, and soon its port, Macassar, much nearer to the Moluccas than the ports of Java, became a centre of the spice trade to which ships of all nations, including English, Danish and Portuguese, flocked in increasing numbers. Though the Dutch soon quarrelled with Macassar, they were faced with too many other troubles to try conclusions with her at this time; to their chagrin, Macassar became a rendezvous for their enemies and rivals. She was potentially one of the greatest powers in the east of the archipelago.

4. *The Moluccas*

In the Moluccas the Dutch had gained a legal foundation for their authority. In 1605 they had persuaded the Amboinese to accept the overlordship of the Netherlands States General, and in 1607 the Sultan of Ternate had followed suit. Ternate,[1] after its protracted struggle with the Portuguese during the sixteenth century, was no longer powerful. The Dutch were therefore in a very strong position in the east, though they did not have things all their own way by any means. The Spaniards were in control of the Philippines; they had gained possession of the deserted fortress of Tidore (which had for long been Ternate's bitterest enemy) in 1606; and for many years war dragged on between the two powers, in which the Dutch sustained at times serious naval defeats. They clung however to their conquests with extraordinary tenacity, and in the end were able to secure an almost complete monopoly in the Moluccas.

[1] Vol. 1, pp. 200 et seq.

5. *Conclusion*

As we survey the political situation in the archipelago in the early years of the seventeenth century, it would seem that the power in the west most likely to succeed the moribund Portuguese would be Acheh, which had succeeded Malacca as the leading Islamic power in Malaysia. In the east, the Dutch had most chance of success. Up to 1619, however, it was not obvious to contemporaries that the Dutch were going to be supreme throughout Malaysia. That was to cost them many years of hard fighting. Their immediate task was to get rid of the English, who were not destined to be a very formidable obstacle.

PART THREE

MALAYA (1600–1874)

CHAPTER I

THE RISE OF THE DUTCH POWER IN INDONESIA (1600–84)

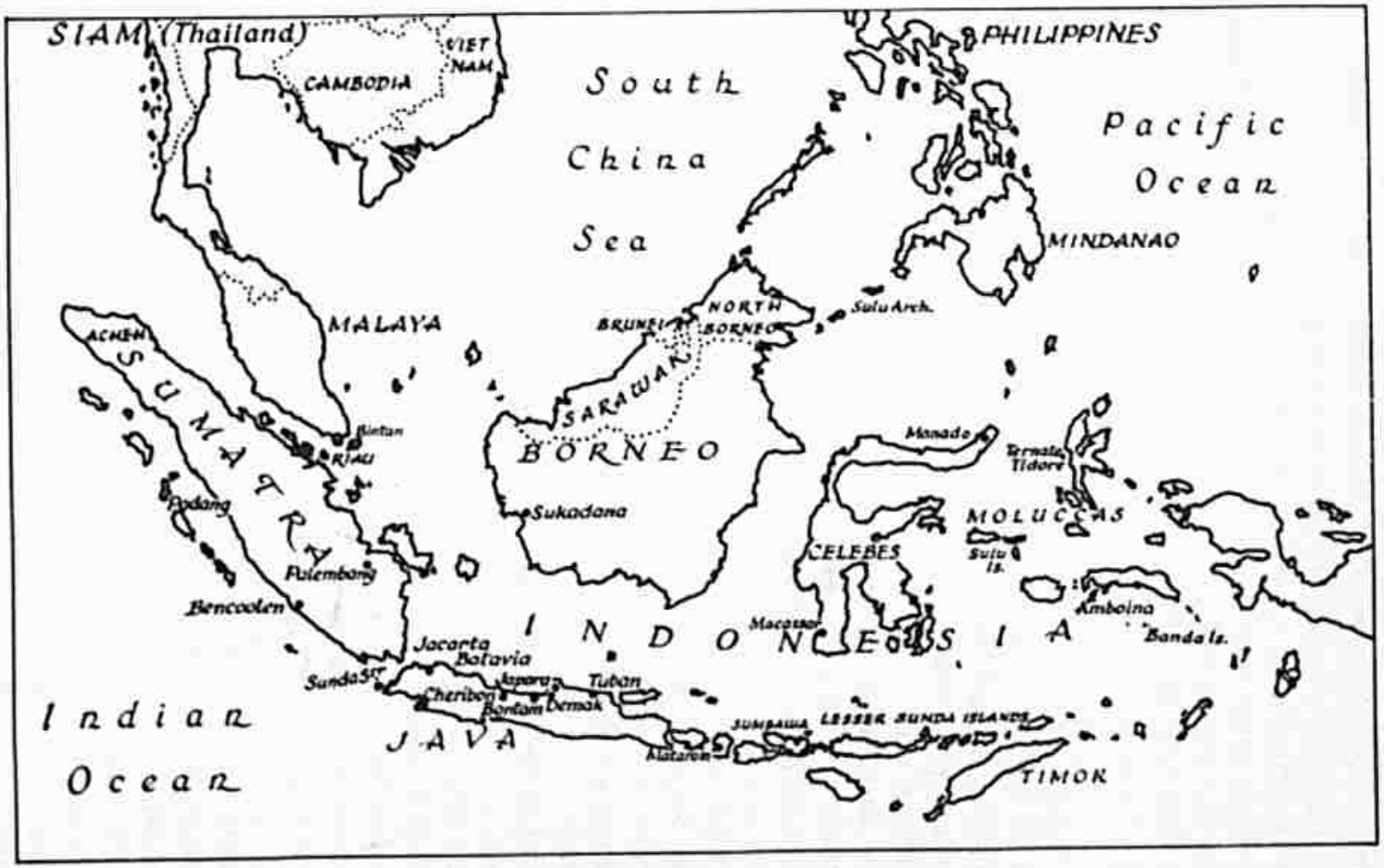
I

The Elimination of the English

6. *Aims of the Dutch*

The main aim of the Dutch was to secure a monopoly of spices in South-East Asia, particularly the finer spices which could be procured only in the Moluccas and the Banda Islands. Pepper, which could be obtained at one of the Sumatran ports or at Bantam, fetched only 1s. 11d. per lb. in London, even if it were the best quality, whereas cloves, even in the roughest state, could bring in nearly 7s. per lb. These were in tremendous demand in both Europe and Asia alike, and to the Dutch a monopoly in these goods would mean they could state their own price and make vast profits. For this reason they were prepared to spend great sums on fleets, forts, and factories, and the need to recoup this outlay of capital made them more grimly determined to win the prize they had chosen for themselves.

Meanwhile, wherever they went, the English followed. It infuriated the Dutch to see their rivals benefit from their operations, the expenses of which these rivals refused to share. The Dutch therefore followed a simple plan of exclusion. Posing as the defenders of the native states against the Portuguese and other enemies, they made treaties with the rulers, by which, in return for a guarantee of protection, the rulers gave them the sole right to purchase cloves and nutmegs. These contracts in Dutch eyes (though not in those of the rulers) were legally binding, and they insisted on their being scrupulously observed. It was not so easy for them to establish such contracts



South-East Asia

in the west, with Bantam and Acheh for instance, whose Sultans were themselves experienced traders and who enriched themselves by playing off one European nation against another, exacting higher prices from these competitors who tried to outbid each other. Thus the Dutch had to look resentfully on while the rulers of these ports, who had allowed them to establish factories, also allowed the English, following in their footsteps, to do the same.

7. *English aims*

The English, frustrated by the Portuguese in their attempts to establish trade with India, were anxious for a share of the coveted spice trade and deeply resented the Dutch policy of exclusion. They felt the Dutch were under an obligation to them because of the help they had given the United Provinces in their war against Spain, and forgetful that the Dutch were now a nation in their own right, they tended to look upon them as an inferior people. To the Dutch claims of monopoly they retorted that they had a natural right to trade freely with other nations, and they at one time urged the union of the two companies (1613), "the surest course for both to live together in good amity and to be masters over the Portuguese in these islands".

Unlike the Dutch, however, the English had no settled plan of action. The English East India Company thought only in terms of separate Voyages, and for a long time even the accounts of each Voyage were kept distinct. Too often the good of the Company and the general interest were sacrificed to the private quarrels of individual captains. This lack of a far-sighted and vigorous policy, the meagre resources of the Company, and the lack of support by the Government in England made the chances of the Company's obtaining a share of South-East Asian trade very slight indeed. The rival Dutch Company had precisely these advantages and their ultimate success against the English was certain.

For a time the Dutch showed a comparatively friendly front to their rivals, but after 1609 their attitude became much more hostile. Attempts were made in Europe to reach a solution of their differences in 1613 and 1615, but these failed, as they were bound to do. John Jourdain, the ablest of the English

captains, a man "of a good courage", fearless, shrewd and energetic, saw only too clearly that the English were fighting a battle against time, and tried to establish or preserve as many factories as possible before it was too late. He had a redoubtable opponent in Jan Pieterszoon Coen, first President of the factory at Bantam from 1613, unscrupulous and able, whose ambitious dreams of Dutch power in the East would not permit of any obstruction by the English.

8. *English factories*

Bantam was the most important, as it was one of the earliest, of the English factories. Its great export trade in pepper with China and the neighbouring islands and its nearness to the Sunda Strait made it a more profitable centre for the sale and purchase of goods than Acheh. The English had suffered much, as had the Dutch also, from the oppression of the Sultan, and when the Dutch moved their headquarters 50 miles east to Jacarta, the English, after some delay, followed their example in 1617. In 1618 they opened a factory in Japara, then of considerable importance as the chief port of Mataram.

In Sumatra the English met with uniformly bad luck. Lancaster in 1602 had obtained permission to buy pepper at the ports of Tiku and Priamam on the west coast, but the hostility of the Dutch in Acheh and the rapacity of the Sultan and his officials made trading extremely difficult. Even more unhappy was the fate of the factory at Indragiri, established from Patani in 1616. The factor Christopher Sacker was murdered by the Sultan's people, and though "a reconciliation was effected" the factory did not prosper. The most satisfactory post was in Jambi, which was established in spite of Dutch opposition; this continued to supply the English market with pepper until 1679, when it was destroyed by the Malays. Bencoolen was founded in 1685 and this port then became the headquarters of the English trade.

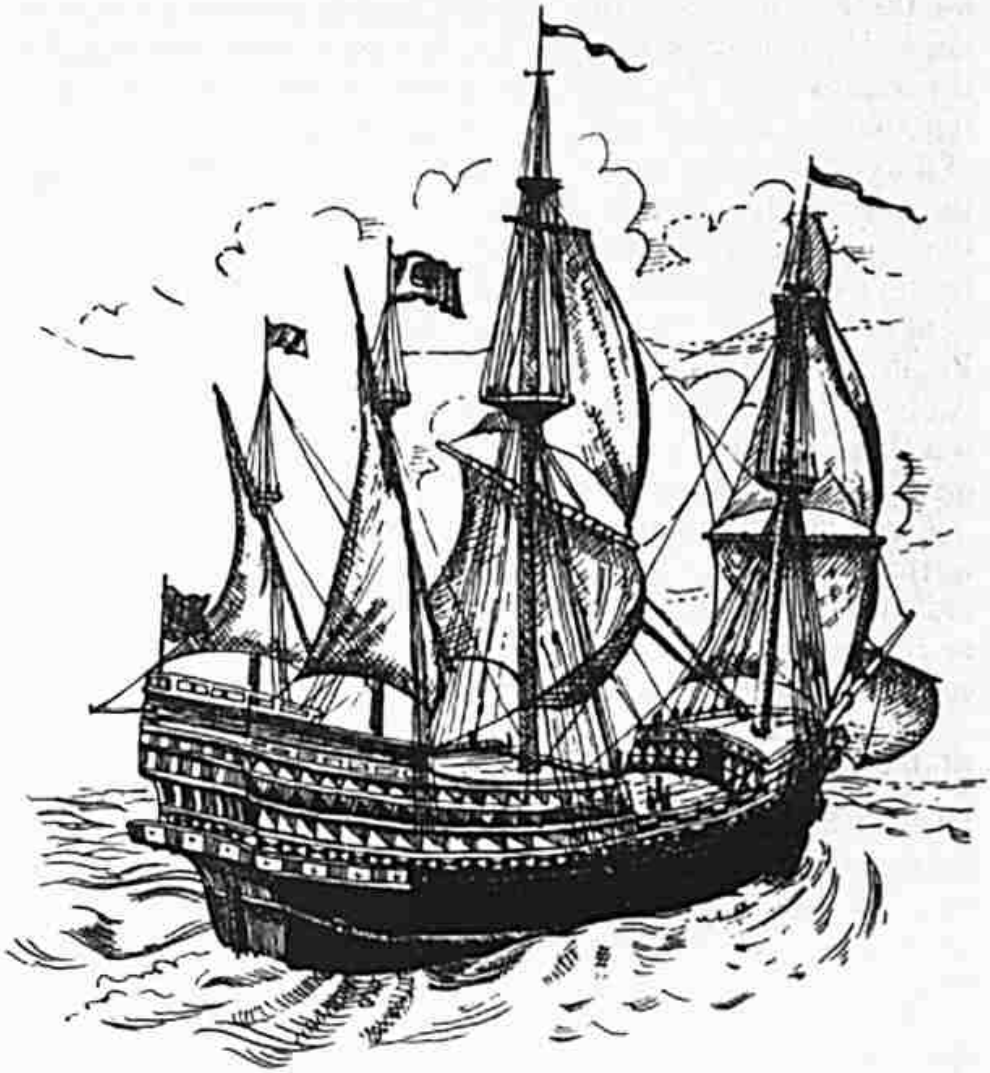
In the Peninsula a factory had been opened in Patani in 1612 in the hope of making it an entrepôt for the silk trade with China and Japan. Chinese merchants brought their silk to Siamese ports, but the bulk of it was bought up by the Dutch at Singora. The English factors then turned their attention to the skin trade with the Far East, but this also proved illusory.

The Queen "exacted high customs dues and her chiefs exorbitant presents", and she preferred to lend money to Dutch and English at interest rather than to buy cloth. When Jourdain visited it in 1617 the factory was bankrupt.

In Borneo the English, hearing that the Dutch had established a good trade in gold and diamonds at Sukadana, started a factory there in 1611–12. This and another factory founded later at Sambas were abandoned owing to Dyak hostility. A similar factory at Banjermassin (1615) also proved a failure. In the Celebes, Jourdain established a factory at Macassar in 1613; the conquest of the Bandas by the Dutch, though it diminished its trade, made it more important as the free port for "smuggled cloves".

The signal success which the English gained by their acquisition of the islands of Wai and Run in the Bandas (1616) and the obvious preference of the rulers for English trade caused Coen to realise that they must be driven out once and for all. In 1618 he was appointed Governor-General of the Indies. There was much hostility in the Moluccas to the Dutch. At Japara in Java their factory was destroyed; in Bantam quarrels between Dutch and English became more frequent; and it was here that they reached a crisis. In retaliation for the seizure of a Dutch ship by the English, Coen burnt down their factory at Jacarta, and this was followed by a naval battle between the rival fleets. Outnumbered by the enemy, Coen ordered the garrison at Jacarta to hold out till the last and sailed away to Amboina for reinforcements. The Dutch garrison were saved by dissensions amongst their opponents. The English could not take the fort for fear of losing their factory at Bantam, because they knew the Sultan of that state wished to seize Jacarta for himself. As a result, the garrison found no one willing to accept its surrender, and when Coen returned in May 1619 with strong reinforcements, he himself took possession of the town. This place had been renamed Batavia by the garrison and it was to become the heart and centre of the Dutch power in the East and the true successor to Malacca.

Coen now blockaded Bantam and went in pursuit of the English fleet which had imprudently dispersed. He had no difficulty in defeating them. As for Jourdain, his old enemy, he followed him to Patani and with his superior force compelled



English armed trading ship, *c.* 1613

him to surrender. After the battle Jourdain was shot by a Dutch seaman. Coen professed much consternation at this mistake but privately rewarded the marksman with a present of one hundred pieces of eight.

The founding of Batavia and the defeat of the English fleet in 1619 mark the real end of these early English pretensions to trade with South-East Asia. King James I of England made one last attempt to gain by diplomacy what he could not gain by war. He made a treaty with the Dutch Company providing for joint military action against the Portuguese and Spaniards in the East and thus apparently obtained a partnership in trade

for the English Company. Coen's resources were eight times larger than those of the English; he contemptuously accepted the conditions of the treaty, but made his expeditions so expensive that the English simply could not afford to pay their share of the cost of them. As a result, the treaty, as he intended, came to nothing. By 1623 the English, finding nothing but obstruction and repeated slights, decided to close down their factories in the East, but before these orders reached Amboina, an incident occurred which embittered relations between Dutch and English for many years to come. This was the "Massacre of Amboina" (1623). Eight Englishmen, after being tortured together with nine Japanese and one Portuguese, were executed on a charge of having attempted to seize the fortress of Amboina.

From one point of view the "Massacre" was an event of world importance, for it finally convinced the English of the futility of their attempts to compete with the Dutch and led them to concentrate their attention on trade with India, which in course of time they found to be far more valuable.

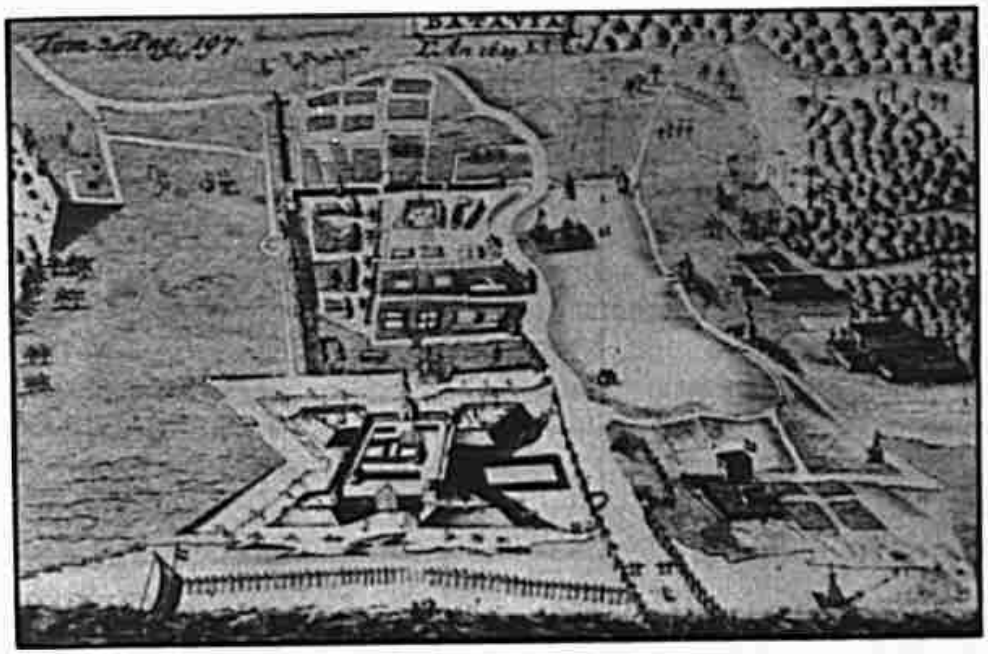
The Dutch had now no serious European competitor in Malaysia, and they proceeded to undertake the task of building up their empire there.

II

The Dutch and Malaysia (1600–84)

The story of the rise to power of the Dutch in Malaysia falls into three distinct stages. The first, from 1600 to 1619, ends with the foundation of Batavia. The second runs from 1619 to 1650. During this period the Dutch East India Company not only succeeded in holding the balance between Bantam and Mataram in Java, but also managed to gain the command of the sea and to extend its influence from Southern India and Ceylon to Formosa and Nagasaki in Japan. The third stage, from 1650 to 1680, sees the downfall of the Indonesian states.

We have already seen how Batavia was founded by the Dutch in 1619 and how, as a result of the vision and determination of Coen, the British were driven out of eastern waters, and how from that time they concentrated on building up their trade in India. From 1619 onwards the Dutch had several formidable problems to face. Perhaps the most important of



Batavia, 1629

these was in Java. It is true that they were already conducting the blockade of Malacca and that this took up much of their available power at sea, but in Java proper they had only a very small foothold in Batavia. Now the two great powers in Java were Bantam on the west and Mataram to the east of Batavia. Bantam very much resented the loss of Jacarta (now Batavia) and also the fact that the Dutch had removed their factory from Bantam and thus diminished the revenue of that country.

So Bantam decided to attack the Dutch in 1622, but this did not succeed, and the Dutch retaliated by blockading Bantam for the following six years (1622–8). Indeed, for the Dutch, life was very difficult in Java. They had a most precarious foothold in Batavia, and on either side they were threatened by a great and powerful enemy. These enemies could either attack her individually or combine against her. If either of these attacks had succeeded, then it is almost certain that Dutch hopes for supremacy in South-East Asia would have been seriously jeopardised, if not put an end to altogether. So it was essential for the Dutch to keep their foothold in Batavia.

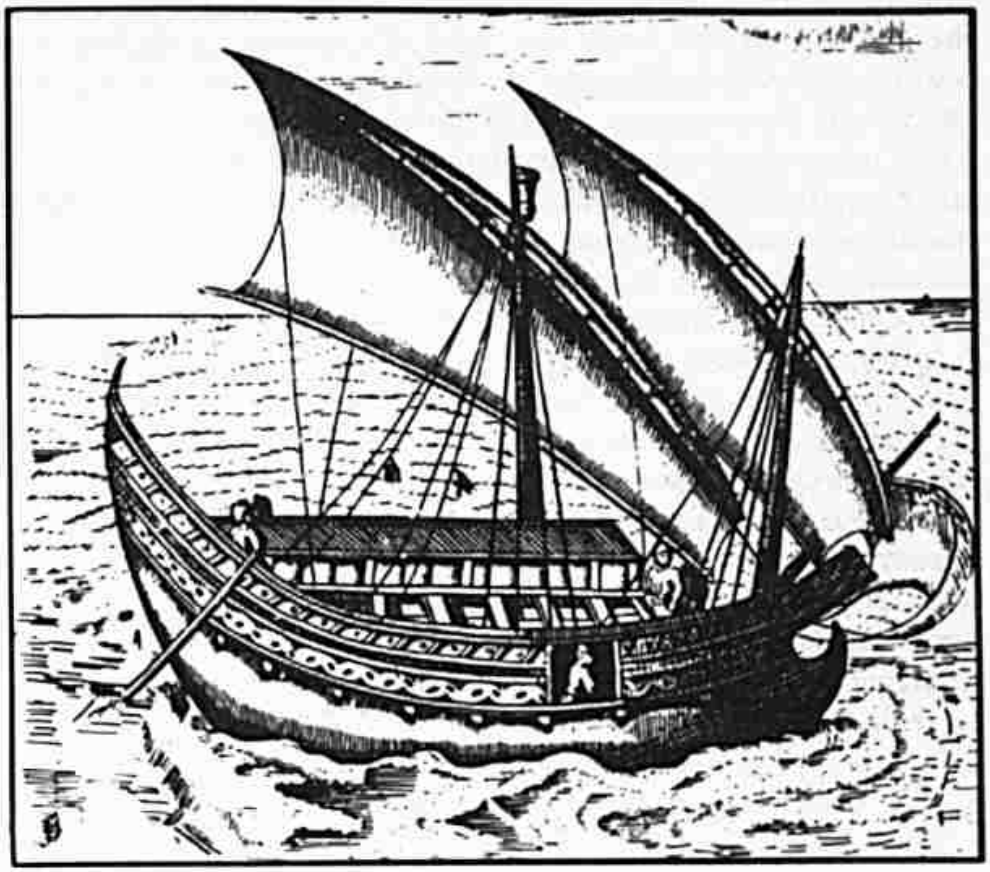
The attack of Bantam having been for the time being overcome, the Dutch had now to fear an attack from Mataram.

The Sultan, Agung, was determined to spread his rule over the whole of Java, including Bantam itself. By 1625 he had extended his territories to Madura and Surabaya, and he now declared himself to be the "Susuhunan", i.e. "he to whom everyone is subject". He was anxious for the sake of prestige that the Dutch should acknowledge his authoritiy. He was not particularly concerned with preventing the Dutch from trading, and he did not mind them winning Jacarta from Bantam. We have already seen that Mataram was aspiring to revive the glories of ancient Majapahit. Sultan Agung knew his history, or at all events Prapanca's version of it, and he no doubt believed the old story of the ancient grandeur of Majapahit[1] and the story that it was the very first power in South-East Asia to extend its dominion over the whole of Indonesia. Only Bantam and the Dutch were there, it seemed, to prevent him from realising this dream.

The Dutch, however, refused to acknowledge him as their overlord, still wishful to uphold the balance between the two states. But it was obvious both to Bantam and the Dutch that the power of Mataram was getting much stronger. Therefore the Dutch made a treaty with Bantam in 1628, by which they withdrew their blockade and agreed to reopen their factory in Bantam. This had scarcely been arranged when Mataram launched a very serious attack in 1628 and again in 1629. Following the classical Javanese strategy, they tried to divert the river from the city and thus compel the city to surrender. Their plans, however, went astray, and when the Dutch, who had, of course, command of the sea, sent the Mataram transports, carrying much-needed supplies of rice for their army, to the bottom, then the siege was bound to fail. The army of Mataram was compelled to retreat, and after five weeks they were starving. "A miserable voyage home they had of it," says a Dutch report, and the retreating army suffered very heavy losses and great hardships.

At the time it was not apparent to everybody that this defeat of Mataram was in fact a very heavy blow to their power, and that in fact it spelt the beginning of the end of Mataram as a great state. To most contemporary observers she still seemed the most formidable power in Java. Borneo, Palembang, the

[1] See Vol. 1, Chapter IX.



Javanese trading vessel

British and the Dutch themselves all sent embassies to Mataram to try to conciliate her. In spite, however, of this victory, the Dutch were still in a very uneasy position. Bantamese ships sailed freely to the Moluccas and thus broke her monopoly of trade in spices. So also did traders from the northern ports of Mataram, and it was not till 1639 that the Dutch were able to persuade Bantam to trade no longer with the Moluccas.

Indeed, it is from about this time that it became clear to all that the Dutch were now becoming the outstanding power in the archipelago. The year 1641 saw at long last the capitulation of the Portuguese fortress of Malacca,[1] which had a great effect on Holland's fortunes. In the first place it finally removed her only other serious European rival from South-East Asian waters. It therefore freed the Dutch from the need to

[1] See Vol. 1, pp. 233–5.

provide blockading fleets to prevent supplies from reaching the enemy. At the same time Malacca became a Dutch emporium, and this consequently strengthened Dutch control over the Straits. Furthermore it was a blow to the power of Mataram, for it not only deprived her of the possible aid of the Portuguese against Holland, but it also deprived her of a very good market for her rice exports. Moreover, Acheh now found herself ringed round by a series of Dutch fortresses, and the Malay states now came directly under the eye of this new task-master. A further factor favourable to Holland was that Sultan Agung, who had failed to bring about a combination of Palembang, the British and Bantam against the Dutch, died in 1645 and was succeeded by Amangkurat I, who was much less dangerous and much more friendly to the Dutch. He had a number of enemies to contend with in Mataram, and so he made a treaty with the Dutch by which he agreed that no more of his ships would henceforth trade with the Moluccas. The Dutch had therefore got rid of all the competition of Bantam and Mataram in their chosen monopoly area, the Moluccas.

9. *The strong position of the Dutch in 1650*

If we take a bird's-eye view of the position of the Dutch in 1650, we can easily see that by that year Holland was already in a far stronger position than any of her competitors in the archipelago. Though as a trading empire (which did not want territories, but simply ports) she had full sovereignty only in Batavia, nevertheless she was also the overlord of Ternate and the many islands over which Ternate had formerly ruled. With many of these the Dutch had signed individual treaties, by which they gained monopoly rights. They also had unrestricted authority over Malacca, which was now a desolate place that had lost most of its trade to Batavia. This gave them control of the Straits. In the wider sphere, by their conquest of some ports on the Malabar coast they had gained for themselves a share in the cloth trade in India. They had also conquered Formosa and made an arrangement with Japan by which they were the only foreign power which was not excluded from Japanese waters by the Treaty of Exclusion of 1636. Thus they were able also to trade with Nagasaki (in copper). They had also founded a relay station for their ships which was to

become the future Cape Town. The small Malay states were helpless; the English had been driven out.

Thus by the middle of the century it looked as if Coen's ideals had been realised. The Company dealt with Persia for its silks, China for its sugar, far-away Japan for copper. The ideas of Coen regarding the inter-Asiatic trade of the Company seemed as if they were going to be fulfilled. In short, the Dutch had command of the sea, and were now unquestionably the paramount power, deriving very considerable profits from their trade. Batavia now had all the prestige which once had accrued to Malacca. It became the great entrepôt for South-East Asia. Yet the shareholders were always complaining that the profits were not as large as they should have been, and indeed the secret account books of the Company were quite different from those published in Holland. Most of the dividends were, it was claimed, ploughed back to finance new ventures in the Indies, which could not otherwise have been carried out. The new methods of the Company, however, proved in the long run to be successful.

Coen's idea of starting Dutch colonies in South-East Asia did

Batavia, 1706

not meet with much success; and in fact those colonists who did venture to try their fortunes there complained bitterly that they were more harshly treated than the Asians and Chinese merchants in general.

10. *Stage 3, 1650–89*

In the eastern part of the archipelago the Dutch had pursued a ruthless policy. They had curtailed the production of spices, and converted many plantations (even in places outside their sphere of influence) to the cultivation of rice and areca nuts. In the not very fertile islands these crops did not prosper, and the inhabitants were compelled to import rice from the Company at the latter's price. It is probable that the ordinary people themselves did not suffer much additional hardship from this change, as all the profits from the sale of cloves, in the production of which they had hitherto spent their lives, had already gone to their rulers. The Sultan himself received a pension from the Dutch. In the long run, however, the Dutch policy spelt economic ruin for the Moluccas.

11. *Macassar*

There was left in the eastern part of the archipelago only one power which could seriously challenge the Dutch. This was Macassar. By 1601 Macassar had become one of the main markets for spices and to a large extent had replaced Ternate in that position. In 1601 the Dutch had established a factory there, but when their treaty expired in 1619 Macassar did not renew it, and from that time a certain hostility developed between the two powers. By 1614 the kingdom of Gowa, of which Macassar was the capital, had become an outstanding power. Manado, Boelang, Beni, Talaja, Sumbawa and part of east Borneo came within its sphere of influence. Many of the islands also, which had formerly acknowledged the supremacy of Ternate, had come under the influence of Gowa. The Dutch, however, because of their treaty with the Sultan of Ternate, claimed authority over the whole of the eastern archipelago, and so sooner or later a struggle was bound to arise between the two powers. Macassar looked to Portuguese, English, Danish and Chinese traders for support, and indeed these traders flocked to Macassar in ever-increasing numbers to

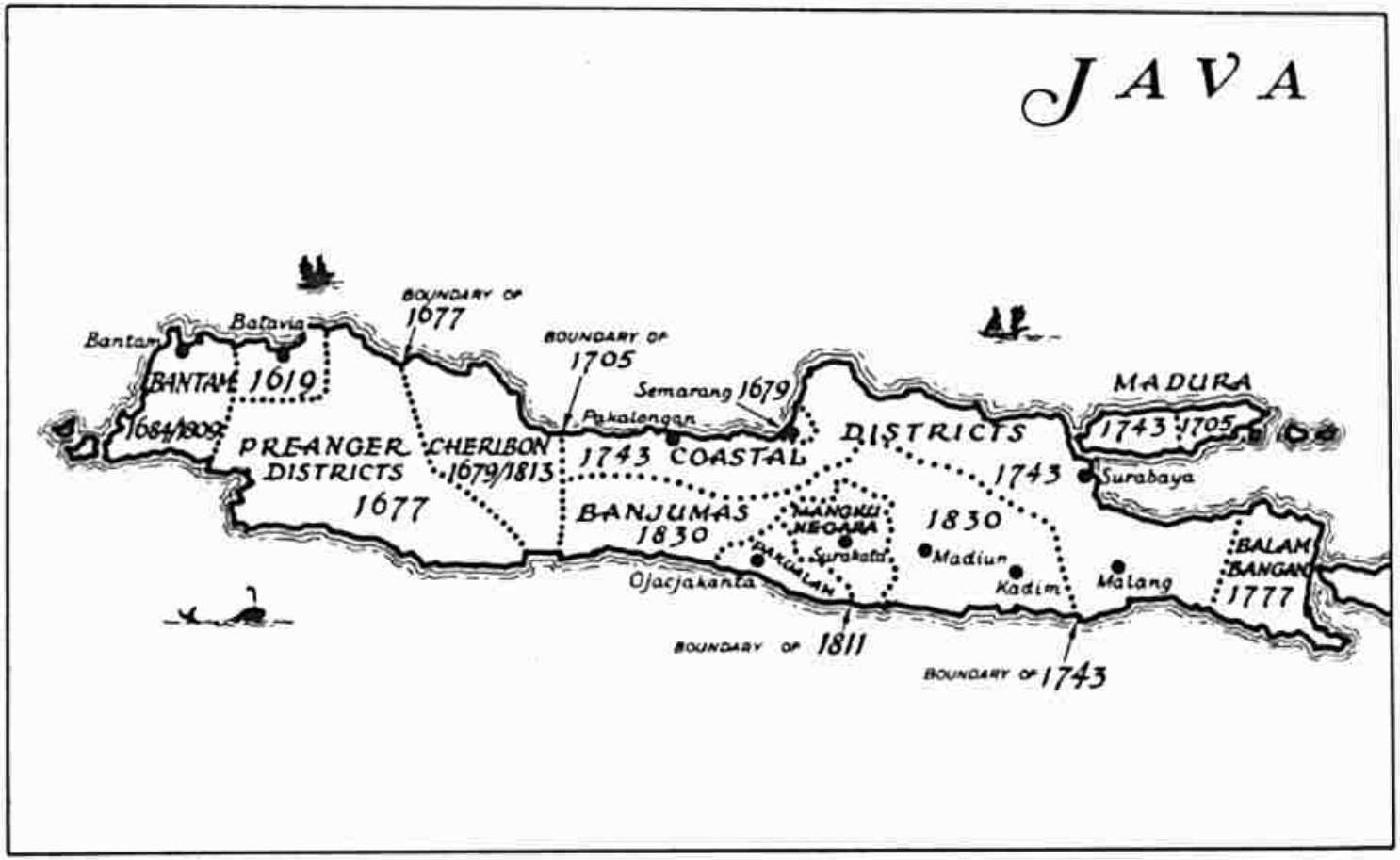
escape the heavy duties levied at either Malacca or Batavia. On two occasions—1638 and 1650—it looked as if war would break out, but neither side was anxious to risk a showdown. During 1651–61, the Dutch were involved in a war in Europe, and though they gained great successes in Ceylon and India, they were not anxious, during this time, to undertake additional military commitments in the archipelago. For her part, Macassar continued to build up her resources. She built fortifications and a fleet of warships, and welcomed as before the European rivals of the Dutch to her harbour. It was even rumoured that the British had promised a squadron if Macassar would declare war on the Dutch.

By 1668, the Dutch felt that they were in a position to get rid of their vexatious rival. In 1667 they had occupied Tidore (Ternate's ancient enemy) which the Spaniards had vacated because of attacks on the Philippines by Chinese pirates. They had command of the sea and were not troubled by the prospect of any Indonesian coalition against them. Indeed, one of the reasons for their previous successes had been the suicidal rivalry between the states and the internal discords which led rival claimants to call on the Dutch for aid.

In 1666 the new Governor-General appointed Cornelius Speelman to undertake the campaign. With a fleet of 21 ships he laid siege to Macassar. In this he was helped by the Raja of Boni, Macassar's enemy. The siege lasted for four months and then the ruler of Macassar, Hassan Udin, capitulated and accepted the treaty of Bongaya (1668). Hostilities broke out again, however, almost immediately, but the Dutch soon once more defeated their enemy. They occupied the capital and built the fortress of "Rotterdam", which ensured the permanent submission of Macassar.

12. *The Bongaya Contract, 1668*

The Bongaya Contract marked the end of this bulwark of Indonesian independence in the east of the archipelago where the Dutch were now paramount. The Company secured a monopoly of the trade in Macassar and insisted that all non-Dutch traders should be compelled to leave the city. All the territory which had belonged to Macassar now fell under the Dutch or was given by them to their vassals: for example, the



Dutch expansion in Java

northern and eastern coasts of Celebes were given to Ternate. Sumbawa, liberated from Macassar, accepted the overlordship of the Dutch.

Nevertheless, the results of the Bongaya Contract were by no means favourable to the Dutch in the long run. To begin with, many exiles fled from Macassar to Mataram and caused great troubles in that state from which the Dutch also suffered. Moreover, the Bugis merchants, no longer able to trade lawfully, now took to piracy on a big scale. They began to terrorise the Riau archipelago and the west coast of Borneo and made landings on both sides of the Sunda Strait. There they established strong pirate colonies which continued long after to defy the Dutch. In particular, from their settlements in Riau they played during the eighteenth century a dominating part in the history of Malaya.

13. *The Javanese States lose their independence*

Mataram had caused a good deal of enmity amongst the Indonesian princes because of its attempt to impose an absolute and undivided monarchy in Java. These princes, led by the Prince of Madura, revolted against the Susuhunan, or Emperor of Mataram, in 1674, and seized part of Madura and the port of Surabaya. In these operations, they were helped by the refugees from Macassar. The rebels were encouraged by the difficulties of the Dutch in Europe, where in 1672 the French and English had overrun a large part of the Netherlands and there were widespread rumours that a Dutch defeat was imminent. But their eclipse was only temporary and when the ruler of Mataram, Amangkurat I, asked for their help against the rebels, they eagerly agreed. In the ensuing war, which was very confused, Amangkurat I died, and the Dutch took advantage of the weakness of his successor's position to impose severe terms as the price of their continued co-operation. First, they demanded a part of Preanger and Krawang, and thus stretched their territory to the southern part of Java; next, they claimed the port of Semarang and its neighbourhood; then they insisted that all the ports east of Batavia along the north coast should be mortgaged as security for the war expenses; and finally they demanded the monopoly of the import of Indian opium and Persian manufactures. By 1678, the

Dutch had defeated Trunajaya, prince of Madura, who was claiming to be the prince of Kadiri, and the war came to an end. In 1680 the Dutch placed their nominee on the throne, so that now they were in effect the masters of the whole of east and central Java.

They then turned their attention to Bantam. Now Bantam was becoming a considerable sea-power. Its ports were visited by Europeans, especially the English and the Danes, and also by Chinese, Indians and Arabs. Its ships visited Macao, Bengal and Persia. When it demanded a share of the tin trade of the Malay Peninsula and of the nutmeg trade of Amboina, the Dutch haughtily refused. In 1680 the Sultan Abulfata declared war against them; but as a result of a palace revolution engineered by his son in 1681 the Sultan was driven from the throne; his son made peace with the Dutch. This, however, led to a revolt in Bantam, which the Dutch helped the rebel son to suppress. They then in 1682 made a treaty with Bantam by which the latter agreed to expel all foreigners. As a result of this, the English were expelled from their last foothold in Java and in 1685 they founded Fort Marlborough in Bencoolen on the west coast of Sumatra. At the same time Bantam gave to the Dutch the monopolies they demanded—the export of pepper and the import of all manufactures into Bantam and its dependency, Lampoeng in southern Sumatra. In 1684 Bantam also gave up all claim to Cheribon. So by that year the Dutch had become the chief power over the whole of Java.

14. *The Dutch and Sumatra*

In Sumatra, Acheh had from the beginning of the century been the chief rival of the Dutch. Under the rule of Mahkota Alam (1607–36) she had become very powerful, and from 1631 she had held political and commercial supremacy over a great part of the island. As suzerain of Perak, she also controlled that state's trade in tin. After 1641, however, her power began to decline. In that year, Iskandar Thani, Mahkota's successor, died; and he was succeeded by his Queen who had neither the inclination nor the power to challenge the growing might of the Dutch. These, now the masters of Malacca, sought to obtain the monopoly of trade, especially in tin, on the west coast of the Peninsula. They made several treaties with the Achinese

to secure these rights; but finding that these proved abortive, they blockaded Acheh in 1659, and compelled her to grant them a monopoly in all her ports, in addition to half the annual output of tin from Perak.

At the same time they posed as the defenders of the smaller states against the tyranny of Achch. Thus in 1663 they made the Treaty of Paidan (Painan) with Indrapura, Tiku, and Padang, which promised monopoly rights in trade as long as the Dutch guaranteed them complete protection from Acheh. Thus by 1669, when Perak and Deli had gained their independence, Acheh was reduced to her own boundaries and for the next two centuries was no longer a dangerous or important power, but she showed her resentment of the Dutch by not allowing any of their ships to enter her ports. In 1664 the Dutch established a port in Padang, the port of the Menangkabau, but this proved more of a liability than an asset, and when in 1685 Bencoolen was founded by the British, much of their trade was diverted there.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the Dutch had become the main power in the archipelago. Though their chief interests, as time went on, centred more and more on Java, their control over Malacca (whose interests as a trade centre they deliberately subordinated to those of Batavia) and their ambition to monopolise the trade of the Peninsula, inevitably involved them in the political affairs of the Peninsular Malay states. This involvement continued until 1824.

CHAPTER TWO

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PENINSULAR MALAY STATES TO 1641

For the first fifteen centuries of the Christian era Malaya did not have an independent existence, and even after it had been united under the rule of the Malacca Sultanate its component states bore little resemblance to those which bear their names today. Kelantan and Trengganu were little more than names; Negri Sembilan did not exist; Johore and indeed the southern part of Malaya did not become important until after the Portuguese conquest of 1511; Pahang, described by Eredia as the second Malay state after Patani, was much larger than it is today; Kedah and Perak were small and comparatively insignificant apart from their production of tin. No one knew, or cared to define precisely, the boundaries separating one state from another; they were essentially river states whose rulers were chiefly concerned with levying tolls on the cargoes of the boats that plied past their strongholds. The population was small and confined chiefly to the coasts and river-banks of the west and north-east coasts. Malacca alone of all the Malay states was powerful, and its power was based primarily on the extraordinary wealth which it accumulated as the greatest centre of trade between China and India, and on the prestige which attended its success against Siam and its friendship with China.

When Mahmud was driven from Malacca in 1511, his one aim was to recapture that city from the Portuguese. The prestige which surrounded him as a descendant of Parameswara was sufficient to attract settlers to the new court he set up in Johore. To the Malays, he was their rightful leader, and his unswerving hostility to the Portuguese confirmed him in that position. His successors, though not unwilling to make treaties with Malacca, especially when confronted by their even more hated enemy, Acheh, never gave up hope of recovering their former capital, but in the meantime they also kept a very jealous eye on the Peninsular Malay states, which, in spite of fallen fortunes, they still regarded as subject to them. On their side, some of these

states showed a tendency to ignore the claims of Johore. Thus, on one occasion, Perak seemed as if she were about to usurp Malacca's former position as the leading Malay state, and this brought a very sharp rebuke from Johore. It was, however, Pahang that incurred her bitterest enmity, and so it was that down to 1641, in addition to the attacks of outside enemies like the Portuguese, Dutch and Acheh, Malaya was, especially in the first part of the seventeenth century, distracted also by civil wars. Johore, however, by siding with the Dutch, preserved her character as the leading opponent of the Portuguese, and in 1641 she was still regarded as the paramount power among the Malay states.

We shall now make a short survey of the Peninsular states, tracing briefly their history, often unfortunate and sometimes calamitous, down to the fall of Portuguese Malacca in 1641 and the triumph of the Dutch.

I

PAHANG[1]

Pahang, according to Eredia, flourished long before the founding of Malacca. We know that it was a province of Sri Vijaya, and so important was it that (as we learn from the Javanese records) its name was regarded as synonymous with the Malay Peninsula. After the fall of Sri Vijaya, it was overrun by the Siamese, who, however, do not seem to have occupied the country but contented themselves with exacting tribute and establishing a few settlements. It was via the territory of her vassal Pahang that Siam launched her first abortive attack against Malacca in 1445 and it is instructive to note that Malacca Malays referred to the inhabitants of Pahang generally as "Siamese",[2] without troubling to specify any other races

[1] The word "Pahang" is derived from the Khmer word for tin. The mines of Sungai Lembing were worked in prehistoric times and this fact may account for its name. The word has been spelt differently at different times. The following variations appear in the writings of Arab and European writers: "PAM, PAN, PAAM, PAON, PHAAN, PAHAM, PAKAN, PAHAUN, PHAUNG, PAHANG" (Linehan).

[2] The Siamese occupation is still recalled by names like PARIT SIAM, TAMBAK SIAM, LUBANG SIAM, S. LEGO (i.e. LIGOR) CHINI (the Siamese word for gibbon) (Linehan).

in that state. After Malacca had defeated the Siamese fleet at Batu Pahat, Mansur Shah conquered Pahang, captured its ruler and married his daughter. It is said that Islam had already reached Pahang even before Malacca was converted to that faith. At all events, it now became the state religion, though the common people still adhered to their own beliefs inspired by Mahayanist Buddhism and Tantrism and they still continued to offer, down to the beginning of the seventeenth century, human sacrifices to Kali, the Hindu goddess of death.

In the sixteenth century, Pahang's boundaries extended from Trengganu as far south as Sedili Besar in present-day Johore, and on the west they bordered Rembau and Selangor. "Its port,"[1] says Eredia, "is much frequented by merchants because of the gold from its auriferous mines; it contains the best and largest mines in the whole Peninsula." Tin, of course, had also been mined for centuries; iron-mining was known, and rice had been cultivated in the padi fields long before its conquest by Malacca. The capital of the state was Pekan, which as late as the beginning of the seventeenth century stretched along the banks of the Pahang and Pahang Tua rivers as far as Tanjong Langgar and was divided into two parts. The first was Pekan Lama ("Old Pekan") which (according to Matelief who visited it in 1607) was reserved by the Malay nobles for their own dwellings; the other was Pekan Baharu ("New Pekan") which by the early seventeenth century had grown up on the site previously known as "Kampong China".

15. *Pahang and the Malacca Sultanate*

The first sultan of Pahang after its conquest by Malacca was the eldest son of Mansur, Muhammad, who, it will be recalled, slew Tun Perak's son in a football game, and (as a result of the Bendahara's insistence) thereby forfeited his claim to succeed to the throne of Malacca. Mansur, to avoid a difficult situation, sent him to Pahang in 1470, where he replaced the viceroy who had been in charge of that state since its conquest ten years before. It was not to be expected that Muhammad would be pleased with his new appointment, since this meant exile from,

[1] Probably Kuantan, the only safe port during the N.E. monsoon, and in addition situated near the Sungai Lembing tin mines.

and loss of title to, the most powerful of all the Malay states, and from this time there arose between Pahang and Malacca a bitterness which subsequent events only helped to deepen. Muhammad's Bendahara was Tun Hamzah, a member of the great Malacca Bendahara family, which thus obtained a footing in the new vassal state by securing the appointment of its own nominee to this most important office. When in 1475 Muhammad died, he was succeeded by his brother Ahmad, who, following the custom of Malacca, married the Bendahara's daughter.

Like his predecessor, Ahmad was a disappointed man, because he too had been passed over as the successor of his father, Mansur of Malacca, in favour of his younger brother, 'Ala'u'd-din. Ahmad never forgave 'Ala'u'd-din for what he considered to be an injustice, though, as we know, it was the "king-maker" Tun Perak who had secured 'Ala'u'd-din's succession to the Sultanate. At one time, if we may believe the *Hikayat Hang Tuah*,[1] it looked as if war might break out between the two brothers. In 1478, the ruler of Trengganu, so the story goes, went to Malacca to pay homage to the Sultan. This did not please Ahmad at all, because he thought that it was from him that Trengganu should have sought protection. He accordingly sent emissaries to Trengganu, on the return of its ruler, to murder him, hoping by this means to indicate his superiority over Malacca. When 'Ala'u'd-din heard of this, he was with difficulty restrained from declaring war at once, but in the end he was persuaded to send Hang Tuah to Pahang to exact reprisals. The latter slew a near relative of the Bendahara of Pahang in the presence of Sultan Ahmad in retaliation for the murder of the Trengganu ruler, and as Ahmad did not dare to put Hang Tuah to death, it was thus made apparent to all that the moral superiority of Malacca had been clearly vindicated. 'Ala'u'd-din followed up this moral victory by appointing his own nominee to the vacant rulership of Trengganu.

In 1488 'Ala'u'd-din was murdered—poisoned, rumour had it, by Ahmad of Pahang and his own brother-in-law, the ruler of Indragiri. This rumour did not help to improve matters between the two states. A few years later, Mahmud of Malacca

[1] An account of legendary adventures written in the sixteenth century.

also quarrelled with Ahmad. The *Malay Annals* tells us that the former, hearing of the great beauty of Ahmad's daughter, Tun Tejah, whom Ahmad wished to marry to the Sultan of Trengganu, sent Hang Nadim to persuade the lady to flee from Pahang and marry Malacca's Sultan. Tun Tejah, considering that this was the better match, agreed to the plan, and the fugitives fled to the mouth of the Pahang river where a ship was waiting to convey them to Malacca. Ahmad, furious at this insult, pursued them; but his daughter and her escort made good their escape, and Ahmad had to return to his capital humiliated. His people were so angry at his failure to avenge the slight that Mahmud had put upon him that they compelled the unfortunate Sultan to resign his throne (1494). For the next seventeen years Pahang had to suffer a divided government.

16. *Pahang (1494–1511)*

From 1494 to 1511–12, Pahang had two rulers: one, Mansur, the son of the deposed Sultan Ahmad; the other, Abdul Jamil, also a brother-in-law of Mahmud of Malacca. Such a division of the country could hardly make for peaceful government, but the fact that Malacca went to the aid of Pahang in 1500 when it was attacked by a Siamese army from Ligor, and helped to drive out the invaders, led to a temporary cessation of the perpetual squabbles between the two states. When Malacca was conquered by the Portuguese in 1511, it was to Pahang that Mahmud fled, and there he stayed for a year before going southwards to found a new state at Bintang. The Portuguese conquest gave Siam an opportunity to reassert her authority over Pahang. Tomé Pires describes its port as "belonging to lords of the land of Siam" and states that it was "ruled over by the Siamese Viceroy at Ligor". He says elsewhere that "it is in the land of Siam" but adds that "Pahang against Siam" had become a Malay saying. That Siam claimed a vague suzerainty over Pahang during the sixteenth century appears from the statement in Camoen's poem, *The Lusiads* (1572) to the effect that Patani and Pahang and "other states" were subject to Siam.

17. *Pahang*[1] *and the Portuguese*

Siamese claims of overlordship do not, however, seem to have worried Pahang unduly. In 1511–12 Abdul Jamil died, and his rival Mansur became the sole ruler. Relations between Pahang and Bintang once more became strained, and the former for a time made friends with the Portuguese and agreed to pay tribute to them "more from hatred to the King of Bintang than from love to the Portuguese". But Pahang's policy towards the Portuguese, like that of Johore, was never consistent. In 1522 she quarrelled with her former ally, and, after an attack by de Souza in that year, went to the aid of Johore. In 1547 on the occasion of the "miracle of the Achens" we find a Pahang fleet, in company with fleets from Kedah and Johore, lying before Malacca waiting for the outcome of the battle. In 1551 Pahang helped Johore when the latter laid siege to Malacca in that year. In 1607, forgetful of the oath of fealty she had made to the Portuguese king in the previous year, she made a treaty with the Dutch by which she agreed to help them against the Portuguese and allow a Dutch factory to be established in Pahang with Abraham van den Broek as its first factor.

These acts of hostility to Portugal were, however, intermittent. Much more than the Portuguese, Pahang feared Acheh and Johore, and it was in fact from these two that she suffered the most devastating attacks. Indeed she was by no means unaware that it was far more in her own interests to favour, rather than oppose, Malacca. As the sixteenth century wore on and the Portuguese fleets found themselves more and more hard pressed in the Straits, the Penarekan route running from the Muar river and then by portage across to the Serting, Bera and Pahang rivers became very important as an alternative route to the long and dangerous voyage round the Peninsula. Goods from the Far East were landed in Pahang and then conducted safely overland to Malacca, and both these states profited by this arrangement. Moreover, about the middle of the century, industrious settlers from Menangkabau[2] had begun to move from the hinterland of Malacca,

[1] See Linehan, W., "History of Pahang", JRASMB, XXV, 1936.
[2] See below, p. 42.

via the Penarekan, towards Pahang, and had formed small communities along the route which began to exploit the gold of the Jelai, and gather "jungle produce" for sale in the markets of Malacca. Doubtless Pahang, which was a river state, levied toll on all the produce which travelled up and down the Penarekan route, for, as we know, her western boundaries extended to Rembau and Selangor. The economic interests of Pahang therefore to a large extent coincided with those of Malacca, and that is one reason why we find her frequently siding with the latter against her enemies during the first half of the seventeenth century; why, for example, in 1629 Baretto de Resende could describe Pahang as a port very friendly to Portugal where her ships could trade without hindrance; why in this same year a Pahang fleet helped Portugal against Acheh; and why in 1634 the Dutch contemplated sacking Pahang because she continued to harbour Portuguese vessels.

This queer inconsistency in the policy of Pahang towards Malacca (an inconsistency which was common to all the Malay states at that time) is to be explained, first, by her old hatred for Johore, secondly by her fear of Acheh, and thirdly by the instability of her rulers, particularly during the first half of the seventeenth century. The old quarrel with Johore once more found bitter expression in 1612 when the ruler of that state "overran the suburbs of Pahang, burning all before him and likewise Campon Sina [Pekan Baharu] which caused great death in Pahang." A Chinese record written in 1613 states that as a result of this attack no less than one-half of the people had been killed. This blow may account for the insulting treatment meted out to the stricken state in 1612 by the Queen of Patani. She ordered the Sultan Abdul Ghafur of Pahang (who had married her sister) to visit her, and when he did so, "he was made a laughing-stock to the Patanese; but the Queen of Pahang would not leave her husband, but returned with him."

Far worse things were to befall this unfortunate state. In 1614 the second son of the Sultan, a man of bad disposition, murdered his father and brother and seized the throne for himself. Under his cruel rule Pahang fell on evil days. "He is in the habit," says a Chinese record, "of buying from Bajau pirates the slaves they have caught, and all the countries there-

about suffer greatly from this. . . . The pirates belong to Bruni [Brunei]. . . . When one of them (i.e. the slaves) does not obey his master, he is killed and employed for the sacrifices. The price of a slave is about three pieces of gold." Once more Pahang fell out with the Portuguese, and the latter made a treaty with Johore in 1615 by which they agreed to escort the son of Johore's Sultan to Pahang to take possession of that state. While this strife was going on, a far worse blow added to Pahang's misery. Johore's treaty with Malacca brought on her the wrath of the redoubtable Mahkota Alam of Acheh, but he not only conquered Johore but laid waste Pahang as well. Mahkota Alam, however, was not content with merely ravaging the country; he transported 10,000 of the people to Acheh. The reason for this we learn from the Dutch *Dagh Register*. The whole territory of Acheh, it shows, was almost depopulated by wars, executions and oppression. The King endeavoured to repeople the country by his conquests; having ravaged Johore, Pahang, Kedah, Perak and Deli he transported the inhabitants from those places to Acheh to the number of 22,000. But no maintenance was given them, and they died of hunger in the streets. It will be noted that nearly one-half of these unfortunates came from Pahang alone. Among them was Ahmad, a younger brother of Abdul Ghafur, whom the Dutchman van den Broek saw "running in the train of the Sultan of Acheh like a common person".

Despairingly, Pahang again made an alliance with Portugal —whose own fortunes were now declining—but this earned them not only the renewed enmity of Acheh, but that of the Dutch as well. In 1635 the wretched state was once more ravaged by the army of Mahkota Alam, but he died in 1636, and it looked as if happier times were in store for her. He was succeeded as ruler of Acheh by that Ahmad who had been captured in 1617, and he at once made peace with Pahang, making a treaty with the Dutch against the Portuguese. But Johore now saw her long-awaited opportunity to make her control over Pahang complete. Abdul Jalil of Johore, who had been cheated of his conquest in 1615 by the first Achinese invasion, attacked Pahang in 1638, whereupon Ahmad of Acheh in disgust broke off his treaty with the Dutch and refused to join in the final attack on Malacca in 1641. He died soon after,

and Johore, secure in the friendship of the Dutch, took over completely the rule of Pahang.

By 1641 Pahang was in a desperate condition. For fifty years she had suffered from the misrule of her princes, the devastating attacks of Acheh and Johore, and the fitful hostility of the Portuguese and Dutch. Thousands of her people had been killed or transported to die in the streets of Acheh, or carried into slavery by the pirates who menaced her coasts. Nor was there much chance of an improvement in her economic position. The Penarekan route which had profited her well during Portuguese times now fell into insignificance because the Dutch, with their command of the sea, found it unnecessary. In the same way the flourishing trade of the Menangkabau settlers was severely damaged by the Dutch victory, for because of this, the decline of Malacca set in, and that city was no longer the profitable market it had been in Portuguese times. Pahang in 1641 was an insignificant state—a mere haunt of pirates.

II
KEDAH

From the third century A.D. onwards, Kedah developed into an important centre for ships trading between India and the Far East, and by the eighth century she had achieved a position of considerable power as the northern capital of Sri Vijaya. During the ninth and early tenth centuries she became one of the most famous ports of South-East Asia and a rendezvous where Arab, Indian and Chinese ships met to exchange the products of their countries. She seems, however, to have lost this position after Canton was reopened to trade from the west, and her fortunes gradually declined with those of Sri Vijaya. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries she lost ground to the north-eastern ports of Sumatra, particularly Pedir and Pasai, and after the Siamese advance of 1292 she became, in common with the other states of the Peninsula, a dependency of that country.

Though for centuries Arab merchants had visited her shores, she does not seem to have accepted Islam as her religion until the year 1474.

We have seen how during the first half of the fifteenth century

Malacca was preserved from conquest from Siam only by the intervention of China, and how during the second half of that century she adopted an anti-Siamese policy compelling the other Peninsular states to acknowledge her overlordship. Kedah did not accept Malacca's suzerainty until 1500, just after Malacca had driven out from Pahang the last Siamese invading army from Ligor, but in that year, recognising the prestige of Malacca, she sent an embassy to Sultan Mahmud asking for a royal band. This was a symbol of Malay sovereignty, and the request signified Kedah's wish to be regarded as a subject state of the Malacca Sultanate.

The Siamese looked with an ill grace on the expansion of the Malacca Empire which had robbed them of their dependencies in the Malay Peninsula. Hence it was, says Tomé Pires, writing in 1511–12, that "the Siamese have not traded in Malacca for twenty-two years. They had a difference because the kings of Malacca owed allegiance to the kings of Siam, because they say that Malacca belongs to the land of Siam . . . and that twenty-two years ago this king lost Malacca, which rose up against this subjection. . . . They also say that it [i.e. the difference] is about the tin districts[1] which are on the Kedah side, and which were originally under Kedah, and were taken over by Malacca; and they quarrelled for all these reasons, and they say that the chief reason was the revolt against subjection." It would appear that, after 1511, Siam hastened to reassert her dominion over Kedah. Both Pires and Barbosa declare that Kedah was a tributary of Siam, and the former says that Tenasserim, Trang and Kedah were ruled over by the Siamese viceroy at Sukhotai. This domination of Kedah by Siam, though suspended over long periods, was never forgotten by the latter. Though possibly the Portuguese controlled Kedah for a time, and Acheh ruthlessly conquered it in 1619, yet Siam in 1634 had sufficient authority over it to order reinforcements from Kedah to join her army in an attack on her rebellious vassal, Patani. In 1669 Bowrey tells us, "The king of Quoda is tributary to him of Syam, although the tribute he payeth be but inconsiderable in itself, being no more than annually a gold flower."

[1] "Selangor, Bernam, Perak, all of which are places of tin," says Pires, "belong to the Kingdom of Kedah."

18. *Trade*

Pires says (1512), "It is a very small kingdom[1] with few people and few houses. It is up a river. The kingdom of Kedah is almost bounded on one side by Trang and on the other by the end of the kingdom of Malacca and by Bruas." Yet during the Portuguese period it was still important as a port. We learn from Barbosa (1516) that "to the port an infinite number of ships resort trading in all kinds of merchandise. Here come many Moorish ships from all quarters. Here too is grown much pepper, very good and fine which is conveyed to Malacca and thence to China." Pires tells us that "Kedah has rice in quantities, and pepper. A great deal of merchandise from China is used in Kedah . . . it does good trade." It traded with Pedir and Pasai, and of course with Siam. The merchants "go to Siam by the Kedah river" and the overland journey took three or four days. "Once a year a ship called in from Griyerat [Gujerat] for pepper and the tin from Bruas and Selangor." Kedah's pepper indeed was far famed. Camoens, writing in 1571, says that Kedah "was the chief centre for the production of pepper in these parts, though far from the only one", and his verdict is confirmed by Bowrey who, writing in 1669, says, "It affords very considerable quantities of pepper, admirable good, and not without desert accompted the best in India or the South Seas." This pepper was grown on Pulau Lada.

Kedah's other great commodity was of course tin. "At Quedah and Pera is great store of tin and lead to be had who usually truck it for cloth of Surat and Coromandel," says a merchant of the English East India Company, Samuel Bradshaw, in 1610, and a year earlier other English merchants had complained that occasionally such store of tin was sent from "Cadah with other places near Malacca" that the market was glutted and the price fell by 50 per cent.

Kedah's pepper and tin naturally attracted the attention of the Portuguese, as it did that of the Dutch and of Acheh. Matelief, the Dutch admiral, visited the port after his great naval victory of 1606 and in response to a request for assistance against the Portuguese agreed to help. He knew, however,

[1] This is confirmed by Bowrey writing in the middle of the seventeenth century. "This Kingdom," he says, "is none of the greatest . . . and not one fourth part inhabited, more than with wild beasts, near the sea very low swampy ground and full of woods, and up in the country mountainous."

"that the prince had welcomed the Portuguese when they passed his country, and only asked for assistance because Matelief had beaten the Portuguese". Matelief, however, soon took "a poor view of his new ally". "Finding that this little King was deadly afraid of the Portuguese" and that his help would not be of any value, he left "just over a week after his arrival" (27 November 1606).

Kedah, however, was far more afraid of Acheh than she was of the Portuguese, and with good reason. The conquest of 1619, and the removal of the Sultan, Sulaiman Shah, and many of the people to Acheh was a blow which, in the words of the *Dagh Register* of 1625, "ruined her". Acheh now had control of the pepper trade not only of a great part of Sumatra, but of Kedah as well. Her conquest of Perak and Kedah also gave her the monopoly of the tin trade. Kedah's lot was indeed an uneviable one.

The Dutch victory of 1641, however, left in the archipelago only one power of any importance, for Acheh's power was declining. Kedah thought it prudent, therefore, to make an agreement with the Dutch and agreed to sell to them one-half of her annual output of tin. The Dutch stationed an accountant, Jan Hermans, as their agent in Kedah to direct and enlarge the tin trade in Perak, Kedah, Bangir and Junk Ceylon. In 1641, 722 lb. of tin from Kedah were sent to Holland.

III
Perak

According to Malay tradition, Bruas was the first important centre of Malay rule in the state. It is said that the Sungai Dindings was once an estuary of the Perak river, and that on the banks of this estuary a great city was built up, so large that "it took a cat three months to do the circuit of its roofs". This famous city, legend tells us, flourished long before the rise of Malacca, and indeed long before the Malays settled in Palembang. Its first ruler, one story relates, was Nila Kechil Bongsu (one of the four sons[1] of Raja Chulan and Princess Darustan,

[1] The other three were Nila Utama, Nila Pandita and Nila Pendaya who were said to have become the Emperor of Rome and of China, the Sultan of Menangkabau and the Sultan of Singapore and Malacca respectively.

who were supposed to be descended from Alexander the Great) and it was he who gave Singapore the name of the "Lion City" and took possession of Perak after slaying with his magic sword, Chura Si-manjakini, the gigantic serpent that blocked the river at the shoal "Beting Beras Basah". In the course of time, however, the river silted up, and the old kingdom declined. All that remains are a few carved tombstones (which in any case are Achinese) and a prophecy that Bruas will be the last province of Perak to be developed, but it will then outshine all others. The modern village of Pangkalan Bruas is many miles westward of the old site.

We catch a glimpse of Bruas in the reign of Sultan Mahmud about the year 1500. By that time it was insignificant and had to beg the Sultan's assistance against a petty rival village, "Manjong"—"formerly a large country"—which was threatening its existence. In gratitude for the Sultan's help and for the overlordship of "Manjong" which he was given, the Raja of Bruas did homage to Malacca. Soon after, he married his daughter, Putri Siat, to Tun Isap Beraka, the grandson of Malacca's Bendahara, and when, after 1511, he refused to acknowledge Mahmud, Tun Beraka (himself now Bendahara) replaced him and put his own son, Mahmud, in his place. Mahmud, who married a Kedah princess, became the ruler of Selangor, and so once again the Malacca Bendahara family succeeded in advancing its interests.

19. *The first Perak Sultanate (1530–1630)*

The first ruler of Perak is said to have been Mudzafar Shah I, a son of Mahmud I of Malacca, who was at first recognised as the heir to the throne (Raja Muda) but was passed over in favour of his younger brother, Alaedin Riayat Shah II, the son of Mahmud and Tun Mutahir's daughter Fatimah. The following genealogical tree explains the relationships:

A Kelantan Princess = Mahmud = Fatimah

| | |

Tun Trang = Raja Muda Alaedin Riayat Shah II

(Fatimah's daughter by her first marriage) (a member of the Bendahara family)

Though Fatimah's daughter by her first marriage, Tun

Trang, had married the Raja Muda, Fatimah nevertheless agreed to his replacement by her second son. "The Raja Muda was driven out by the Bendahara and all the chiefs," and fled from Johore to Siak and thence to Klang. "A man of 'Manjong'—Situmi by name, who constantly traded from Perak to Klang . . . saw the Raja Muda and took him to Perak where he was enthroned as Sultan Mudzafarshah."[1] Tun Mahmud, Tun Isap Beraka's son, was made first Bendahara of the new state, but he was recalled to Johore by Mahmud, who perhaps was afraid that the new Sultan was trying to restore the old Malacca Sultanate from Perak and thus taking advantage of Mahmud's own misfortunes. The second Sultan Mansur paid homage to Mahmud in Johore, and the latter's fears were set at rest. Soon after Mansur's death the Achinese invaded Perak (1579) and took his wife and children as prisoners to Acheh. Fortune, however, smiled on the exiles, for Mansur's eldest son married the queen of Acheh and thus became sultan of that state. He appointed his younger brother as Sultan of Perak, but in 1585 was murdered, together with Raja Ashem of Johore, by 'Ala'u'd-din Riayat Shah, who now seized the throne of Acheh.

20. *Perak and the Portuguese*

Though Perak from time to time joined with Johore in fighting the Portuguese, she was in fact much more afraid of Acheh. In 1539 she had helped Johore to recapture Aru from the latter and had taken part in the naval action which had virtually destroyed an Achinese fleet. By this action she had incurred, in common with Johore and Siak, the bitter hostility of Acheh, which later led to the conquest of 1579 and the still more devastating one of 1619. Her fear of Acheh led her therefore to side with Portugal over long periods. Pedro Baretto de Resende (1638) says that "the king of Perak was for many years a vassal of His Majesty and paid in tribute a large quantity of tin". The Portuguese had a factory and fortress in the country, and a prosperous trade existed between it and Malacca. Tin, of course, was its principal export. "Perak," says Eredia, "is much frequented, and is the principal port for tin or 'calayn' in large slabs. . . . Here have been discovered in

[1] His first capital was at Lambor Kanan on the Perak river.

the ranges of the mountains within its jurisdiction, such large mines of tin or 'calayn' that every year more than 300 bahars[1] of tin are extracted to supply the factory of Malacca and the trade of the merchants from India." "The greater part of this tin," says B. de Resende, writing in 1638, "formerly came to Malacca, but now not one third part is sent there. . . . The factory possessed by the Captain of Malacca at Perak was one which at one time yielded greater profit than any other. But now it yields nothing", and for this and other reasons the fortress had become so ruinous that in 1633 no one could be found who was willing to accept its command. In the end the Viceroy had to nominate an official to run the factory.

This lament of de Resende's tells its own story. Acheh and the Dutch were also interested in Perak's tin, and both were most anxious to drive out the Portuguese. The Achinese conquest of 1619 ruined Perak as it ruined Kedah and Pahang; and though, in 1635, after the great defeat of Acheh by the Portuguese in 1629, Perak offered to pay tribute, she said she would pay it only if "His Majesty would deliver the country from the king of Achem. . . . He [the ruler] said that the numerous fleets from Achem which throng these seas frequently attack his lands, devastating them and taking the people captive." Nevertheless "he was able to resist our [the Portuguese] fleet when it was sent to chastise him." By this time, in fact, the Dutch blockade and the attacks of Acheh had virtually put an end to the power of Portugal. The capture of Malacca in 1641 and the decline of the Achinese monarchy after that year removed all the obstacles in the way of the Dutch to the capture of the tin trade of Perak, more than two-thirds of which in any case by 1638 they were carrying to India and there selling with great profit. As for Perak, the turbulent events of the past 100 years had reduced it almost to insignificance. "Mahkota Alam after 1619," says Wilkinson, "led ruler after ruler to captivity and death until the direct male line of Mudzafar Shah had completely died out and Perak had become a mere province of his Empire." About the year 1635, the successor of Mahkota Alam sent a certain Raja Sulong, who had married a Perak princess, to rule as his vassal with the title of Mudzafar Shah II. Then began a new period in Perak history.

[1] 1 bahar = 3 pikuls = 400 lb.

IV
The Little States adjoining Malacca

21. *Klang, Selangor, Sungei Ujong, to the mid-sixteenth century*

As states, Selangor and Negri Sembilan are comparatively modern creations. The present reigning dynasty of the former traces its descent from Raja Lumu who was not recognised as Sultan until 1743, whilst the original confederacy of the Negri Sembilan was not formed until the election of Raja Melewar, the founder of the present royal house, in 1773. The southern part of Malaya, as we know, was a comparatively empty land until the founding of Malacca and the later establishment of the Johore Sultanate gave an impetus to its development. During the greater part of the period covered by this history the few inhabitants were Jakun or Besisi, who (like the Saletes who guided Parameswara to Malacca) lived along the rivers and estuaries and gained a livelihood by fishing and piracy, by gathering jungle produce and by a little shifting cultivation in the ladangs or forest clearings. Nevertheless, from time to time (especially after 1403), small settlements are mentioned in the south-west part of Malaya which were in later years to be incorporated into Selangor and Negri Sembilan as we know them today. One of the earliest of these was Klang, and there are grounds for believing that during the first to the third centuries it was a port of some importance, and that it was possibly a dependency of Funan.[1] In the charts supposed to have been used by Cheng-Ho during the course of his seven voyages to "the barbarians of the South" the Klang river, the "South Shoals" at its mouth and the Selangor highlands are mentioned. Sungei Ujong[2] is apparently named in Chau-Ju Kua's list of Sri Vijaya's dependencies in 1225, but there is no evidence of a Malay state in the area until the seventeenth century.

When the Malacca Sultanate was established and the demand for tin and jungle produce became greater, the Malacca Malays

[1] See Vol. 1, p. 47.

[2] This name would appear to be a misnomer as there is no river of that name. In the *Malay Annals* it is called San-Jang Hujong and Seniang Jujong, and in the *Nagara Kertagama* it is referred to as Sang Hyang Hujong="Holy Head". This is generally identified with Cape Rachado (Tanjong Tunan in modern Malay).

began to exploit the interior to some extent and to trade with the Jakuns for these commodities. It is said, for example, that even before he settled in Malacca, Parameswara appointed a Penghulu Mentri in Klang (1398), doubtless with an eye to the tin of that region; and later on in the fifteenth century, after Tun Ali's coup d'état in 1445, this office was given to Tun Perak (who had settled in Klang with his family). By the time of Sultan Ala'uddin Klang had become a fief of the Sultans who appointed its Mandulikas or governors. About the middle of the century Sungei Ujong had become a fief of the Bendaharas, apparently at one time being divided between Tun Perak and Tun Ali, though after 1456 Tun Ali seems to have been given sole control of it. Mansur, who is said to have married a Chinese princess, Hang Li Po, made his half-Chinese son, Paduka Sri China, the raja of Jeram, near Langat. "Even now," says the author of the *Malay Annals*, "a fort exists, and his people at Jeram are very well mannered if one meets them." This may be the first instance we have of Chinese settlement in Malaya, and it is possible that the Chinese followers of the princess gave its name to Kampong China in Malacca at this time. After 1511 Selangor became a fief of the Johore Bendahara, Tun Isap Beraka, who made his grandson ruler of that area. Pires says "it was a bigger place than Klang with more people" and yielded more tin to Malacca.

The Malacca Malays do not seem to have made any settlements in these places but contented themselves with appointing headmen in charge of the Jakuns. These Malays were interested, not in agriculture, but in collecting tin and jungle produce, which were carried down to Malacca by the merchants of that city. As time went on these headmen and their families would become a privileged class, claiming hereditary titles. They lived near the rivers, levying toll on goods travelling up and down these highways of communication on their own behalf and that of their feudal overlords at Malacca.

During the period of the Portuguese occupation the old ties of allegiance between these petty river states and the Sultans of Johore were virtually severed, but the Portuguese did not seek to impose their own administration very far beyond the borders of Malacca. It is true that under their protection settlements were made by the Malays along the Malacca river as far as

Pengkalan Naning (not far from the present Alor Gajah station, and twenty-five miles by river from Malacca). De Barras tells us that there were "gardens, orchards and cultivated lands" along the banks of the river; Eredia tells us (1613) that there were three parishes "in the interior of the country; S. Lazaro, Nossa Senhora de Guadeloupe and Nossa Senhora de Esperança"[1] stretching along the river bank "with 2,000 Christians besides infidel vassals". These native people were "living contentedly on the produce of the lands and fields and raising large herds of cattle and small animals besides geese, ducks and fowls. The greater part of the country is uninhabited and deserted except in the district of Naning which is occupied by the Monancabos [Menangkabau] with their stocks of betre come down from Nany to the Pancalan [i.e. Pengkalan Naning] whence they proceed by boat to the market place at Malacca. It is by the same route past Nany that one proceeds from Malacca to Rombo [Rembau] head of the Malay villages in a territory which belongs to the crown of Jhor [Johore]: Rombo also is peopled by the Monancabos." Apart from these settlements, the Portuguese traded with Klang, Sungei Ujong and possibly Johol, Jempul and Jeram. Klang and Sungei Ujong were comparatively important for their tin fields; Eredia records, for example, that the yearly output from Klang and Penagis (Penjis) was more than 100 bahars. Their population was, however, doubtless small and composed chiefly of aborigines.

22. *The Menangkabau immigration*

The Menangkabau immigration into Naning and Rembau mentioned by Eredia was to have an important effect on Malaya's history, especially in the formation of Negri Sembilan. Who were these Menangkabau settlers and why did they select this part of Malaya for their settlements?

It will be remembered that after the "Sadeng War"[2] in Java (1331–51) a prince called Adityarvarman (1340–75), half-Sumatran and half-Javanese by birth, was given control over Malayu, but that he later moved inland and assumed control

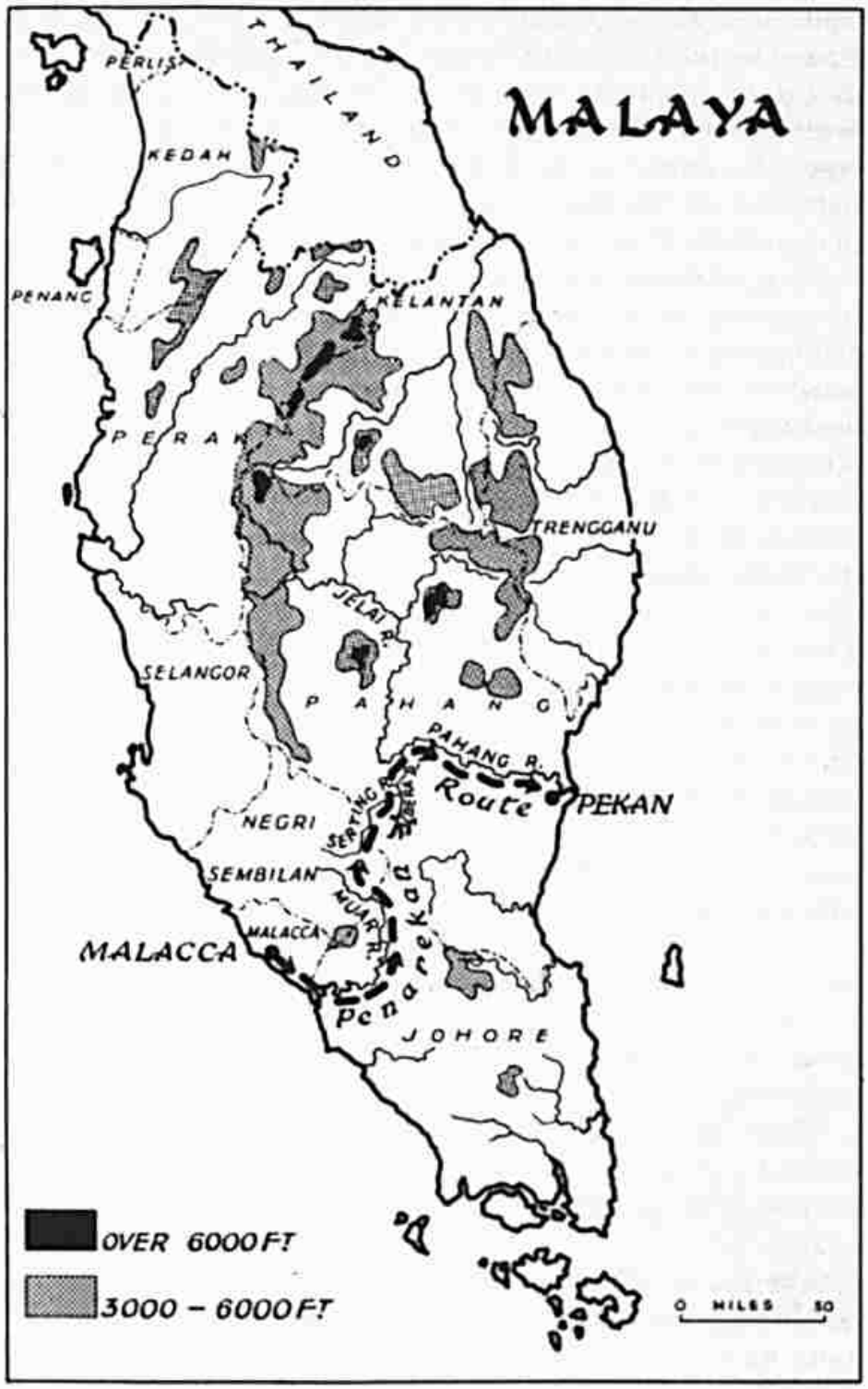
[1] Fr. Cardon suggests that this parish and its chapel were in Bukit Greja, near Melaka Pindah.

[2] Vol. I, p. 111.

over the kingdom of Menangkabau. Of this kingdom we have a brief description by Tomé Pires, written shortly after d'Albuquerque s conquest. He tells us that it was an inland country lying between the ports of Arcat and Jambi on the east and those of Priamam and Baros on the west and that it was from these ports that the gold for which it was famous was exported. It was ruled over by three kings, and though one of these had been recently converted to Islam—"for a short time, almost 15 years"—the majority of the people were Hindus. "No Moor can go to the mines. Only the heathen lords have the gold and from there it is distributed to the kings of Menangkabau." From the first the Menangkabau traded with Portuguese Malacca, exchanging their gold and agricultural produce for the cloths of the Coromandel coast brought thither by the Indian merchants, and presently (mid-sixteenth century) some of them began to settle in the hinterland of Malacca, doubtless with the encouragement of the Portuguese. The latter welcomed them as good agriculturalists who might be expected to supply the city with much-needed food and as Hindus, on whose loyalty they could rely. The first immigrants moved along the Malacca river, passed the last outpost of Malacca at Bukit Greja (with its parish of "Our Lady of Hope") and from Pengkalan Naning went inland through the thick of a dense marsh forest (which in 1586 it took a Portuguese force six days to cross) to Naning. By 1586 there were 2,000 of them at least in this area owning allegiance to Portuguese Malacca. Somewhat later than the Naning immigrants other groups made their way to Rembau and made settlements there, and as this area still more or less vaguely acknowledged the overlordship of the Sultan of Johore, they too accepted his suzerainty.

Now it so happened that Pengkalan Naning was the beginning of the Penarekan route to Pahang. From here the route ran by Ganon, Petai, Rapah, and thence to the headwaters of the Muar river between Jempol and Johol on the Jelai. From there it followed the Serting river and so on to the Bera and Pahang rivers and Kuala Pahang. The Menangkabau settlers accordingly moved along the Penarekan route, and by 1550–60 small groups of them had settled in Pahang. As we have seen,[1] this route became very important during the second half of the

[1] See above, p. 29.



The Penarekan route

sixteenth century, and the new settlers prospered well. "Their trade was almost entirely with Malacca, and the bulk of it passed by the land route to that city." Baretto de Resende tells us (speaking of the settlers in Naning) that "they cultivate extensive land by which they maintain themselves. They especially cultivate the betel. They purchase tin from the inhabitants of the interior and bring it to Malacca." By 1634 many of the Menangkabau had become Muslims.

Meanwhile other Menangkabau had immigrated into Malaya by another route—viz. via the Linggi river (for centuries the chief route in and out of Sungei Ujong). They moved northwards to the locality of Seremban[1] and then on to Pantai, or westwards over the watershed to the Langat basin. By the seventeenth century Rasah had doubtless become a commercial centre, where tin was exchanged for jungle produce.

The advent of the Menangkabau added a new element to the population of Malaya. They brought with them their own clan customs and laws, and their matriarchal system. They were self-sufficing and not usually amenable to the control of central authorities, and they developed a form of government that may almost be described as constitutional. Much of the most constructive political thinking in Malaya was done by the Menangkabau Malays of the little states that were later to become the Negri Sembilan; and their small states contrasted favourably with the predatory states whose rule was almost entirely dictatorial.

23. *The attitude of the Menangkabau to Portuguese and Dutch*

The Menangkabau of Naning were vassals of the Portuguese; those of Rembau and perhaps Sungei Ujong vaguely recognised the suzerainty of Johore; whilst those who lived in their secluded villages along the Penarekan route acknowledged that of Pahang. Naturally they profited greatly by the trade which they conducted with Malacca, but they proved to be a restless people who occasionally forgot their trading interests and rebelled against the Portuguese. Thus in 1586 even the people of Naning rose against Malacca on behalf of the Sultan Ali Jalla Abdul Jalil Shah of Johore (called "Rajale" by the Portuguese historians). "They came down through the hinterland

[1] Seremban itself does not appear in history or tradition before 1874.

setting fire to and destroying gardens, orchards and all cultivated lands along the Malacca river" and seriously imperilled the food supplies to the city. "One hundred Portuguese and some six hundred natives set out on an expedition." After a six days' journey, they reached the village of Enau (on the Alor Gajah-Kendong road) and were met outside it by 2,000 men who had built a fort there. After a fierce fight the fort was captured and the village and neighbouring kampongs laid waste. The Portuguese then went to attack Rembau, but the inhabitants pleaded for mercy and peace, and the campaign ended.

Again, in 1614, the Pahang Menangkabau revolted against the Sultan Abdul Ghafur who asked the Portuguese to help in crushing the rebellion. This they did "as we had great need of this King's help to victual Malacca by land". In 1629 all Menangkabau were forbidden to enter Malacca. It was rumoured that they had sold the fortress to the Achinese for 30,000 cruzados "promising to get into the fortress and kill all

Menangkabau-type house with curved roof

our people, which would not have been difficult as they were allowed to enter and leave it freely".

During the great siege of 1641 a number of them went over to the Dutch side because the Dutch had encouraged Johore to re-establish control over the territories north and west of Malacca so that they could control the trade in tin and jungle produce. Nevertheless many other Menangkabau settlers continued to support the Portuguese and helped to smuggle provisions into the starving fortress, which enabled it to hold out six weeks longer. The Dutch Commander-in-Chief was in fact obliged to warn the people of Muar, Rembau and Naning not to assist the Portuguese, and after 1641 the Dutch were themselves to experience great trouble from these turbulent and independent people.

V

Kelantan and Trengganu

The early history of these two states is shrouded in obscurity. Both are mentioned in Chau-Ju Kua's list of A.D. 1225 among the possessions of Sri Vijaya; both appear in the *Nagara Kertagama*.[1] Doubtless both came under the control—for a time—of Siam when that country overran the Malay Peninsula after the fall of Sri Vijaya; and they doubtless paid homage whenever in subsequent centuries that country fitfully enforced it.

Kelantan, separated from Perak on the west and from Pahang on the south by jungle-clad mountains, was isolated to some extent from the rest of the Peninsula, though there were routes linking her with these states. Her fortunes have tended to be more closely linked with those of Patani on the north-west and like that state she has been peculiarly subject to Siamese attacks. Kelantan was added to the possessions of the Malacca state during the reign of Mahmud and apparently adopted Islam as her religion about the year 1500. Though in Dutch and Portuguese maps about the year 1600 a town "of some importance" is shown at the mouth of the Kelantan river, this town does not appear in maps of the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. We know that in 1603 Siam conquered Patani, and it

[1] Paka and Dungun receive separate mention.

is very probable that Kelantan shared her neighbour's fate, because until about the year 1730 Kelantan was without a ruler, being under the control of local chiefs, some of whom owed allegiance to Siam and some to Trengganu.

24. *Trengganu*

Of this state it is also impossible to say when it first assumed an independent identity. In 1349, we gather from Wang Ta Yuan that its people were, like those of Pahang, accustomed to offer human sacrifices to wooden images, probably representing Kali. That by 1385 there was a state of some sort, ruled over by a Raja Mandulika or Sri Paduka Tuan, is proved by an interesting piece of evidence. This is in the form of an inscription on a stone fragment, discovered about 1897 near Kuala Berang, about twenty-four miles inland from Kuala Trengganu. This inscription is the oldest known Malay text in the Arabic script, and it indicates that in 1386 Islam had been adopted in Trengganu as the state religion, that is, twenty-five years before it was adopted in Malacca.

It was in A.D. 1478 that Trengganu became a vassal state of the Malacca Sultanate, and we have already described how it came about that 'Ala'u'd-din appointed his own nominee in place of the ruler murdered by Ahmad of Pahang. We do not hear of any intervention on the part of Trengganu in the struggle with Portugal until 1587, when her men joined the ten thousand Malays from Johore, Kampar and Indragiri in a vain attempt to prevent the sack of Johore Lama by the Portuguese which took place in that year. During the seventeenth century she seems to have escaped the unhappy struggles which so bitterly afflicted the other Malay states, and in particular did not have to suffer the violent attacks of Acheh with their attendant mass transfers of the defeated population to the capital of that state. Rather did she become a place of refuge to which fugitives from these attacks betook themselves and waited until the advent of better days.

CHAPTER THREE

MALACCA UNDER DUTCH OCCUPATION

To the Portuguese, the news of the fall of Malacca came as a mortal blow. "They say openly," said the Dutch Commissioner Schouten, "now that Malacca is lost, there is no more India for us"; and with this the Dutch conquerors complacently agreed. The Viceroy of Goa suggested desperately to the King of Portugal that a last effort should be made to recapture the port, and, if this did not succeed, that an alternative site for a new Malacca should be sought on the river of "Formosa", now called Sungai Batu Pahat, twelve leagues from Malacca. Neither plan was realised. Some Portuguese tried to explain their defeat away by blaming their commander, saying that he had sold the city to the Dutch for 80,000 cruzados, but that this accusation was baseless is proved by the Dutch themselves who attributed the length of the siege in part to "the excellent valour of Don Diego de Coutinho".

25. *State of Malacca (after the siege)*

Immediately after the siege the Governor-General at Batavia had sent Justus Schouten to visit Malacca and make a report and recommendations concerning it. From this report, which Schouten despatched in September 1641, we can see how complete had been the destruction of the city and how dreadful the sufferings of its inhabitants. From "a position of prominence and a pleasure resort . . . this renowned, strongly fortified, wealthy and prosperous city . . . is surprisingly and totally changed. It has come down to a commonplace existence, and its wealth and commerce are only a memory." Famine and pestilence had wrought pitiful destruction. The wealthy, well-built city, with its cultivated lands and 20,000 inhabitants, was a heap of ruins, with very few inhabitants left. Not a single house or shop was left undamaged in this city which presented an appearance of unrelieved ruin. All the dwelling places on both sides of the river and along its banks had been totally destroyed. Many buildings, some very fine ones, threatened instant collapse; many new houses had already fallen. The

beautiful church towers of St. Paul's were damaged in many places; big gaps were visible in the walls and roof of St. Dominic's Church, the fine Franciscan monastery, and most of the parish churches and chapels (hermitages) were all in ruins. The cathedral of "A Se" had suffered most, the main parts of the building having crumbled away and the rest threatening to follow at any moment. As for the fortress, the Dutch guns had entirely shattered it, the strong square tower being reduced from 120 to 50 feet in height,[1] and the hospitals of Curassa and the Misericordia, and the high towers of St. Dominic's Church were levelled to the ground. All the orchards on both sides of the river had been ruined, and the innumerable beautiful fruit trees had been hacked down. Not one garden, says Schouten, had been left by the Malays who had helped to despoil the city during the anarchy following the siege.

The sufferings of the inhabitants had been so terrible that after the conquest "thousands of them had died of hunger and plague". The plague, he adds, raged right up to the months of June and July, and even the workmen employed by the Dutch to restore the city had suffered "dreadful sickness", and many of them had been carried away by the pestilence. The same fate had been shared by many foreign traders. "Only now," says Schouten (September 1641), "is the plague abating."

Though he was genuinely moved by the horrors of the siege and its aftermath, much of Schouten's indignation was reserved for the indiscriminate and destructive plundering that followed the sack of the city. For this he blamed the Dutch military command, who, thinking only of their own profit and not that of the Company, had immediately declared everything found in the city as booty. The first day of the conquest was spent in almost general plundering "by one and all", and many irregularities took place during the distribution of the spoils. The military chiefs, from Commander Caartekoe and his officers down to the ordinary sailors and soldiers, as well as the members of the Council, "had grabbed everything greedily". Much valuable property had been taken to St. Paul's for safekeeping, but it had been piled up so indiscriminately and so carelessly guarded that it had been stolen, to the Company's

[1] "Report on Malacca", by Governor Balthazar Bort, JMBRAS, Vol. 5. Pt II, 1937.

great loss. Beautiful furniture and priceless vestments had been carelessly thrown away. Goods had been given away to the "wily Moors" at scandalously low prices. Schouten was grieved to report that beautiful diamonds and ruby rings worth 100 reals had been sold for 35, 10 and even 8. Silverware, cloth, fine furniture had been exchanged for flowers, fruit, fish, twenty times less than their real value. Silver-plate had even sometimes been given away for a bunch of bananas. Caartekoe, he said, had moreover allowed the enemy to get away with many valuables. Most ungenerously he quoted as an example the case of the yacht *Bredamme*, which, he said, the Commander had allowed to slip away to Negapatam with 300 Portuguese men, women and children on board, and, it was rumoured, a treasure of 100,000 reals. This aided escape,[1] which reflected the not unchivalrous terms of the capitulation, meant only to Schouten the loss of treasure to the Company.

For these reasons he announced to Batavia that the amount of booty left to the Company was extremely small in comparison with what it should have been.

It will be seen from all this that the storming of Malacca in 1641 was far more disastrous than that which had followed the capture of the city by d'Albuquerque in 1511.[2] The latter had made previous arrangements for the control of the distribution of booty among his troops and had allowed one day only for its collection. His prime object was to preserve Malacca as an entrepôt and re-establish trade as quickly as he could. To the Dutch, however, Malacca was the hated symbol of the power of an enemy they had been seeking to destroy for nearly forty years, and they had no wish to see it rise again as a rival to their own capital of Batavia. Nevertheless, the destruction had been more savage than prudent merchants could have wished, and Schouten lamented the ruthless war which had totally disorganised trade and ruined agriculture as well. He was, moreover, much concerned at the growing discontent among the survivors of the siege, both Portuguese and Malaccans, who lived close to starvation in the bamboo huts they had thrown up along the river and in the suburbs outside the city.

[1] *Bredamme*, in fact, had a most unfortunate voyage, during which many of the refugees aboard her died.

[2] See Vol. 1, p. 168.

Food supplies had to be rationed, but the Bazaar Superintendent, instead of dividing them equitably, sold whole cargoes to a few merchants at exorbitant prices. These in turn charged prices that few could pay. "This evil practice seriously hampered trade."

26. *The Dutch administration*

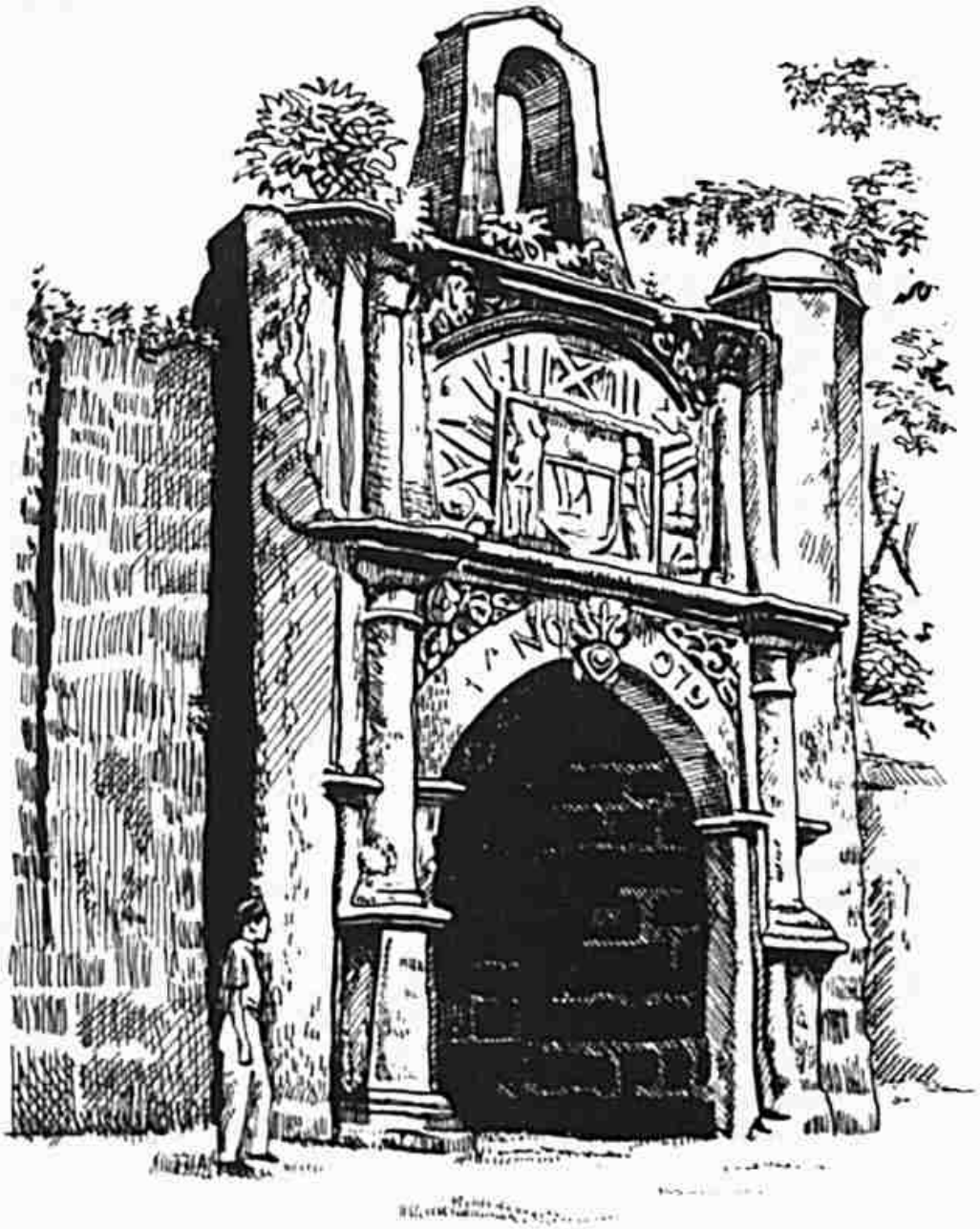
It was clearly essential to establish a proper administration which would enable Malacca to play her new and subordinate role as the chief Dutch guard post in the Straits. Caartekoe, whom the Dutch primarily blamed for Malacca's disorderly state, was replaced by Johann van Twist, who took the title of Vice-Governor. New regulations were enforced; deserters were punished; scattered slaves were rounded up to clean up the town; a hospital for the sick was opened, and all plundering and theft were strictly forbidden. These regulations were carried out by a certain Captain Forsenburgh, and with such thoroughness that he became one of the best-hated men in Malacca. So much so, in fact, that even Schouten (though he declared the hatred was "unreasonable") agreed to his application for removal to another post.

In course of time, Governor Bort tells us, a Council was instituted to assist the Vice-Governor. As its President, the Vice-Governor was authorised, with its approval, to decide on and deal with all matters pertaining to political and military affairs, both criminal and civil. The Council consisted of those servants of the Company who occupied the following important offices: the chief merchants, the second in command and the administrator of trade; the Captain of the Forces; the merchant and shahbandar, the merchant and fiscal; the equipage master, who was responsible for public works; the merchant and head of the pay office. The Council had a Secretary who was also the auctioneer. Besides this Council there were no other boards, except the guardians of the orphans (obviously the successor of the prior and brethren of the Portuguese "Misericordia")[1] and the commissioners for matrimonial affairs.

As the Dutch were interested primarily in trade and not in territorial conquests, they were at this time quite content with their control over what Bort calls "the Territory of Malacca".

[1] Vol. 1, p. 186.

Their jurisdiction extended about eighteen miles on the north side beyond the Linggi river and Cape Rachado to Klang, on the south side as far as Muar (about six miles), and inland up to the village of Rembau. By the time of Bort, 1678, the area was studded with gardens and orchards, planted with various fruit trees, especially mangosteen, durian and cashew. From the first it was a major anxiety of the Dutch to make this terri-



Gateway of Dutch Fort at Malacca

tory self-supporting by the cultivation of rice. The experience of the Portuguese warned them only too clearly that the real weakness of their fortress lay in the danger of famine. Prudence therefore dictated that they should win the confidence of their Menangkabau neighbours "and treat them as the Portuguese had done", but in this they failed completely. The Malays continued to produce only as much rice as was necessary for their own needs,[1] and the Dutch had to import rice from Bengal, Siam and Java.

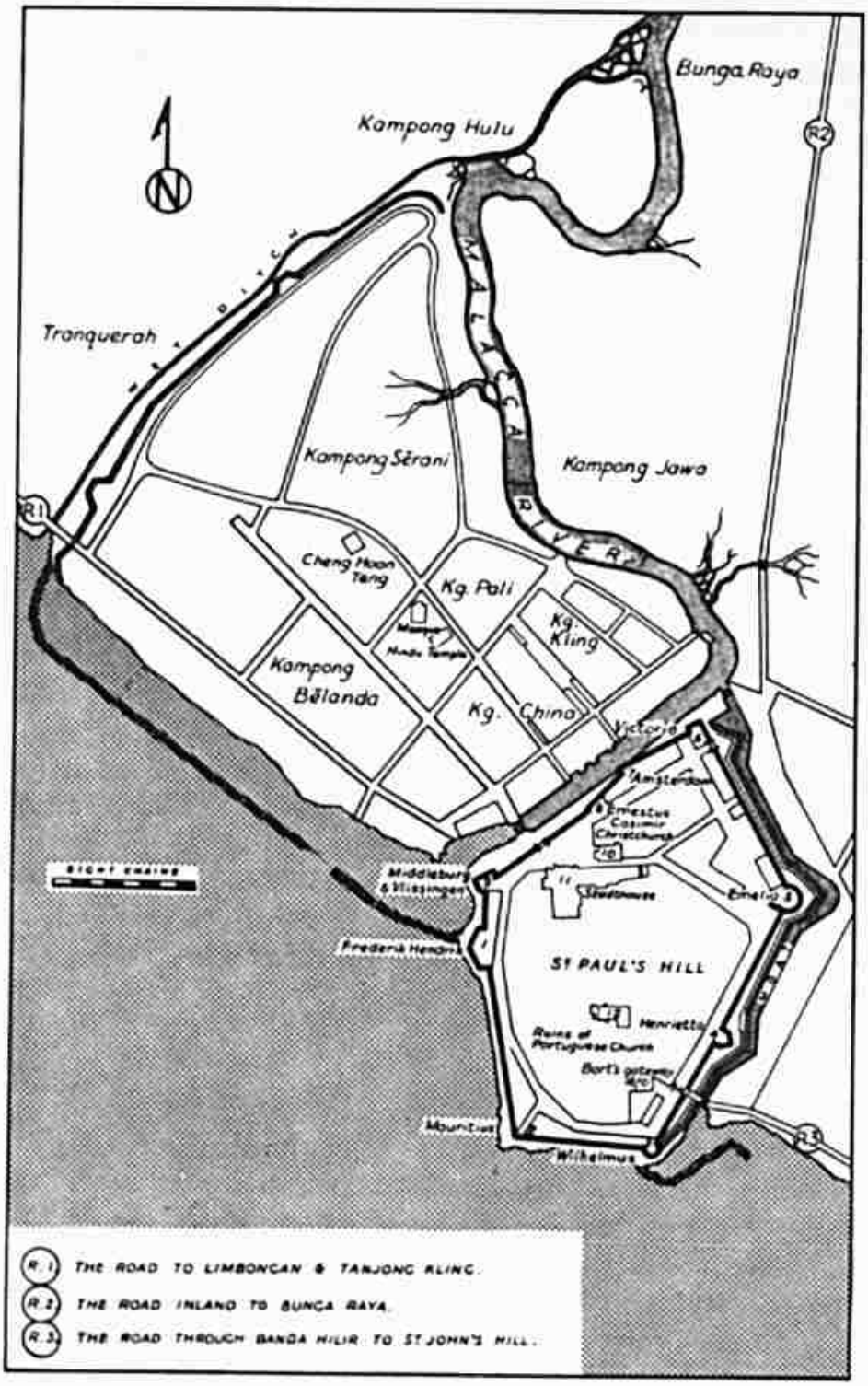
27. *The fortress*

As Malacca was to be their strong post in the Straits, the Dutch lost no time in repairing and strengthening the old Portuguese defences. The bastions, points and angles were given new Dutch names (see map); in 1660, a new "half-bastion", Middleburgh, was made at the mouth of the river close to the bank, and in 1673–4, to make it even more secure, a moat was dug from the river to the sea-shore. So the fortress virtually became an island, with access to or from the shore regulated by two drawbridges. By 1678 Bort was able to boast that the fortress was "very strong", and that in view of the weakness of the Malay states, "only European foes are to be feared in this place". It could not be regarded as impregnable, however, until the old weakness, well recognised by the Portuguese, of the bastions "Victoria" and "Emelia" had been remedied, and until the garrison was regularly manned by five to six hundred soldiers. (In his time there were only 338.)

28. *Malacca's new role*

Schouten's suggestion, therefore, that Malacca should be put on its feet as soon as possible after the siege, was in fact carried out, but at no time did the Dutch intend to allow it to recover its old position as the chief emporium of South-East Asia. Batavia was the centre of their web, the heart of their inter-Asian trading system. In one sense the possession of this port and their control over the Sunda Strait made them almost independent of the Malacca Straits. The key between East

[1] Thus in 1668 they produced only 76 loads of 3,000 lb. each, whereas Malacca needed 200 loads per annum.



Plan of Dutch Fort at Malacca

and West no longer lay in the control of the Red Sea,[1] but in the control of the Cape route, and for the trade with the Moluccas and the Far East the route through the Straits was no longer essential. On the other hand, however, control over the Straits was for them essential to secure the fulfilment of their hoped-for monopoly. It was the Indians they feared most, for their centuries-old experience of trading with South-East Asia had given them an unrivalled knowledge of every creek and inlet along the coast and a subtle skill in trading that no European merchants could rival. "As regards the trade in cloth with the Moors," Bort admitted sadly, "the English and ourselves have no chance. . . . The Moors snap up all the tin in Perak under our very noses, and stuff the country full with their piece goods." These Indian traders for years past had, like all the enemies of the Portuguese, made Acheh one of their chief ports of call, and Acheh, in fact, had to a large extent replaced Malacca as the chief centre of trade. Though, after 1641, Acheh was no longer a dangerous political power, her nearness to India and the fact that she was the suzerain of the tin state, Perak, made her a formidable rival. If therefore the Dutch were to obtain a complete monopoly of all Indian imports of cloth, and at the same time win a complete monopoly of exports of Malayan tin, with power to restrict the export of resin in Batavia's favour, then their control over the Straits must be absolute. This, then, was the task allotted to Malacca, and however much successive governors of that city, anxious to increase their own status and establishment, sought to persuade Batavia to increase Malacca's trade, their Honours never swerved from their policy of "Batavia First".

It must be added that as time went on, Nature herself impeded Malacca's revival, for the silting up of the river made it impossible for any but ships of small draught to approach her.

29. *Monopoly*

With their accustomed energy and determination the Dutch lost no time in putting their policy into practice. They declared at once that all the rights exercised by the Portuguese with regard to tolls and licences and patrolling the Straits "now devolved on us by the right of conquest". For them, this

[1] See Vol. 1, p. 10.

legalised the situation; but they also claimed, somewhat unctuously, that these dues were for the great expenses which the Honourable Company incurred by keeping the Straits safe (Bort).

Their primary aim was to prevent Indian ships from trading directly with ports like Kedah, Perak and Acheh, for this would enable the Company to import Indian cloths, sell them in Malacca at their own prices and pay for these imports by exporting Malayan tin, which the Dutch hoped to buy cheaply and sell dearly. Their sloops therefore steadily patrolled the Straits, stopped all ships and either persuaded them to proceed to Malacca where they could sell their goods to the Company at the Company's own price, or else forbade them to visit the tin ports, Perak, Kedah, Ujong Salang, Singora or Acheh. This policy was doomed to failure, for they had not enough ships at their disposal either to stop all ships or to blockade all the main ports in the Straits. Moreover they soon found that when the "Moors" were prevented from trading they loaded their goods on English or other European ships. Against this device there was nothing to be done; for, said Bort, if they interfered against ships flying the British flag, that would only cause trouble in Europe.

Blockading ports, they found, brought them only temporary benefits. Thus Ujong Salang and Bangarij, both famous for their tin, never satisfactorily carried out their part of the one-sided treaties made with the Dutch, and trade declined very rapidly; these ports were blockaded, with little result. In 1656–9 the Dutch blockaded Acheh and "reduced that Kingdom to such straits that much gold was sent secretly to Malacca, and spent there on cloth". For that brief time they deprived Acheh of its extensive import trade, but in 1660 this trade was allowed once more, partly because of the steady growth of English competition; and "the place in consequence was soon so full of cloth that it was sold much more cheaply than the Dutch were able to sell it."

The dealings with Kedah and Perak well illustrate the Dutch policy and the typical Malay reaction to it. With Kedah they made a treaty in 1641 by which the Sultan agreed to give them half the tin produced in his state and to allow none of his subjects to trade with ships that could not show a Dutch licence.

The Dutch fondly imagined they had killed two birds with one stone: they had, it seemed, secured a legal basis for their own trade, and, by treaty, had made it impossible for the ubiquitous Indians, as well as the vexatious English and Portuguese, to trade there. But the price they offered for tin was well below that offered by their rivals, and the Malays did not scruple to sell their tin to enterprising traders from India who brought in with them vast quantities of cloth in exchange. The Dutch indignantly started a blockade—but with little result; the factory they established (1654–7) did not prosper, and the blockade began again in 1658. Try as they might, they could not get all the tin, nor prevent the cloth from reaching Kedah and from there being transported via the old cross-country routes to Ligor and Patani.[1] The intermittent blockades served only to deepen Malay hostility to the Dutch, and to encourage piracy in the Straits. "The channel," complained Bort in 1678, "is becoming more and more the haunt of rascals and thieves who pretend to be honest traders." So bad did this become that he had to institute a patrol between Kesang in the south and Cape Rachado in the north.

With Perak they fared even worse. That state, though they allowed the Dutch to establish a factory which was soon closed, refused to make the usual treaty in 1641, on the grounds that only Acheh, their suzerain, could authorise them to do so. In 1647 the Dutch, realising Acheh's growing weakness, forbade Indian ships to call there or at any Malay port; and in 1649, as a result they were able to divert 770,000 lb. of Perak tin to Malacca. In 1650 they at last secured a treaty with Perak, and they immediately reopened their factory. The Malays, however, surprised the factory and murdered all its occupants in 1651, and they continued to sell their tin to Acheh and other traders. In consequence the Dutch resorted to their policy of blockade, which for the three years 1656–9 did have the effect of compelling the Achinese to buy cloth from Malacca; but as we have seen, the blockade was lifted in 1660. In 1670 they established a new factory on the island of Pangkor, but though supplies of tin improved somewhat, the hostility of the Malays persisted, and this fort had also to be abandoned in 1690.

[1] See map, Vol. 1, p. 38.

Malacca—with bridge, boat and drawbridge, etc., 1807

The Dutch therefore never succeeded in controlling the ports effectively, nor could they compel all ships to go to Malacca to unload their cargoes and pay dues there. Bort says that though many ships visited that city, "the traffic was mostly in food, clothing and other necessaries; but little in merchandise". Few unloaded their cargoes there, and those few brought, says Barbosa, only "cash merchandise and provisions from Batavia; cloth from the Coromandel; rice and a little cloth and opium from Bengal. . . . Some wines, rosewater and carpets from Persia; some rice, coconut oil, woodwork, kapok from Siam; and some porcelain and food from Japan." Only by allowing Portuguese and Indians from Coromandel to trade there could they attract customers from neighbouring countries. As it was,

the cheap cloth offered for sale in Kedah, Acheh, Junk Ceylon and Tenasserim had already made the Indian traffic "far too great".

It was partly Batavia's fault that Malacca's trade was so meagre. Very few junks from China or Japan called there because of Batavia's orders to this effect; Malacca's plentiful jungle produce could not be acquired easily because of unrest in the Menangkabau hinterland, although the Dutch at first had been so optimistic that they had even tried to enlist the aid of the "Bonnaes" (Orang Benua = people of the country) in collecting eagle-wood and calemkac (a fragrant wood). "Resin could be had from them in great quantity. But they were very much afraid of strangers, because they had been carried off into slavery by the Menangkabau, wherefore now they trusted no one."

As time went on, the Dutch realised that they could not keep these interloping traders out. "If we prevented the Moors from sailing to these places, English, Portuguese, French and Danes, especially the first named, would in time of peace frequent the said places so much more: whereas since the Moors are there, they mostly stay away, knowing that as regards trade in cloth, in competition with them, they like ourselves have no chance."

This did not stop the Company from trying to prevent the sale of pepper and cloves to India (though they allowed them to be exported to Macao, the China Coast, or Manila), or to keep ships from calling at stated ports, e.g. Palembang or Indragiri. The supplies of nutmeg, mace, opium and resin were small. These were reserved for Batavia.

Causes of Malacca's Decline

After the capitulation of 1641 the total population numbered no more than 2,150. Schouten advocated that the 1,603 Portuguese (and half-Portuguese) and the 300 Chinese[1] should be given special parts of the city to live in. By 1678

[1] The Chinese living in the Bazaar on the north of the city were under their own captain Notchin.

the population had increased to 4,884 persons;[1] but one cannot help being struck by the marked decline from the figure of 20,000 given by the Portuguese as the number of the population before 1641. The decline is so marked that some authorities, including Winstedt, have cast doubt upon this figure of 20,000, but this doubt would seem to be misplaced. Schouten himself quotes this figure in his report, and the Dutch, who had been blockading the Straits for many years, and had made a careful study of Malacca as one of their objectives, were not likely to make a mistake where figures were concerned. Moreover, Malacca was the only place in Malaya which could be termed a *city* (there was no urbanisation in Malaya until the nineteenth century) and as such it could, in the great days, scarcely have avoided attracting a large population. Finally, it is by no means rare in South-East Asian history to find flourishing cities reduced to ruin by invasion (compare the fate of Ayuthia after its capture by the Burmese in 1767).

It is, in fact, quite easy to explain Malacca's marked decline in population after 1641. Apart from the heavy mortality during and after the siege, the departure of many Portuguese to Java and India and the deliberate policy of the Dutch in reducing its status, there were two other main factors in its decline. These were the persecution of the Portuguese Catholics by the Dutch and the persistent troubles between the Dutch and their immediate neighbours, the Menangkabau.

I
Religious Persecution

30.

Schouten in 1641 had recognised that the Malacca Roman Catholics were unlikely to be converted to Calvinism, and Bort reports that an attempt to achieve this by sermons in the Portuguese language accomplished little or nothing "and the custom fell into disuse". Schouten accordingly had urged that a policy of religious toleration should be adopted "since our chief aim is to see that Malacca, captured at a great cost of

[1] The population was made up as follows: 494 Dutch; 2,020 Portuguese and half-Portuguese, 716 Chinese; 761 "Moors" and Hindus; 768 Malays; 125 Bugis. These figures included wives, children and slaves.

Ruins of St. Paul's Church, Malacca (today)

material and men, becomes a profitable asset instead of a white elephant to the Company".

For four years or so after 1641 the Catholics were able to practise their religion in comparative peace, though their ruined churches were converted by the Dutch to other uses, and the great church of "Our Lady of the Annunciation" on the hill was taken over by the Dutch at first as a palace for the Governor and later for their own services, and rechristened by them "St. Paul's".[1] At one time it seemed possible that the

[1] This was the name of the Jesuit College (adjoining the church). The church was later used by the Dutch as a burial ground. On 27 December 1730, Fr. C. Lopez wrote to the General of the Jesuits in Lisbon, "Of our Church and College, there is hardly anything left but the pillars. Where our College formerly stood, there is at present a Dutch fortress. On the highest point, there is a place for the flagstaff."

Dutch might even grant them freedom to worship in public (not simply in their own houses or on board a visiting ship), as was the case with the Catholics of Ceylon; but all their hopes were shattered as a result of the expulsion of the Dutch from Brazil by the Portuguese. As a result of this, the Dutch decided to stamp out Catholicism in their dominions.

They were perturbed moreover by the obvious strength of Catholicism in Malacca, and were very much shaken by a report from the Calvinist minister that the Governor, Arnoud de Vlamingh van Outshoorn, was about to be converted to that faith. That he was very tolerant towards it is clear from the letters of a visiting missionary, Fr. Alexandre de Rhodes S.J., who says that the Governor, "a very religious man", allowed the Jesuits to say Mass publicly and to worship in the little chapel of "Our Lady of Guadeloupe" about two leagues from the town where the famous statue of "Our Lady of Tears" was kept. The Governor even promised to help in the recovery of the sacred vessels which had been stolen after the siege. All this was because of his admiration for the "great courage (which I have seen with my own eyes) which the Jesuits showed in Japan during the horrible tortures inflicted upon them because of their Faith." It was to this man that the Batavian Government sent a letter dated 6 December 1645, ordering that all public worship of the Catholic faith in Malacca was to be forbidden, with severe penalties for infraction. Worship could be allowed in private houses or on board ship, but all priests should be obliged to depart on the ships by which they arrived in Malacca. A second letter, dated 22 May 1646, contained even stricter instructions. "Malacca was to be cleared of all half-breeds and other Portuguese adherents who refused to reside there without the practice of their Faith." This "*canaille*" was to be allowed to depart to wherever they pleased. All buildings used as churches were to be pulled down or made into dwelling houses.

As a result of these orders, Vlamingh van Outshoorn duly posted on 12 June 1646 a proclamation which for the first time forbade the practice of the Catholic faith in Malacca. We have here a good example of one of the strange effects of the entry of European powers into the East—viz. that these powers brought with them their own mutual hatreds and jealousies

which they superimposed upon the other disintegrating elements which they found in South-East Asia. Calvinist Dutch had at first deemed it politic to conceal their hatred of the religious faith of their Portuguese subjects in Malacca; but it was not long before the religious strife which had torn Europe apart since the Reformation broke out anew in that city. Vlamingh van Outshoorn, meanwhile, had lost the confidence of his superiors in Batavia. They rebuked him for allowing three Jesuits to sail to that port by the ship *de Vos*, and on the suspicion that he was proposing to become a Catholic they relieved him of his post as Governor and transferred him to the Moluccas as Governor "where they hoped he would not see priests so often" (Fr. A. de Rhodes).

Bort's persecution. It appears from Bort's report, however, that this proclamation had very little effect on the Malacca Catholics. They still clung tenaciously to their religion "in spite of the infliction of the penalties decreed in the aforesaid proclamation". So it was that when Balthazar Bort was made Governor (15 January 1666) he decided to eliminate Catholicism altogether. He was incensed by the fact that a certain Father Fernandus Manuel, who had arrived in Malacca from Macao in March 1665, had built two atap houses, one in the northern suburb by the river and the other at Bangarij, which were used as churches. At Christmas and New Year, Mass was celebrated here "before a great concourse of people". The Dutch, in accordance with the proclamation of 12 June 1646, had broken up the assembly, and, according to Bort, had met with active resistance from Father Fernandus Manuel. Bort was seriously alarmed because the priests "get our inhabitants entirely devoted to them". Consequently he posted a new proclamation, in Dutch and Portuguese, which was far more severe in tone and serious in intention than the previous one.

No priest, travelling from Goa or Macao, "or anywhere, passing here" was to be allowed to land, "except with our express permit and special knowledge". Much less could he settle, or stay in secret, in Malacca. The penalty for infringement of this order was 200 reals; and any lay persons found to have helped him to land were to be fined the same amount. Priests were not to be allowed to say Mass except on board their own

ships, and then only for the ship's crew. Any Malaccan who attended was to be fined 25 reals, and the priest 200. Under no circumstances was a priest, under permit to land, to hold any assembly in secret or public "no matter how small the assembly might be".

No person was allowed either to be baptised or joined in marriage by a priest. Most particularly it was laid down "on pain of unmerciful corporal punishment and the confiscation of all their goods" that nobody was to be baptised or married in accordance with the Catholic rite who had already been baptised by Calvinist ministers or married by the Dutch marriage commissioners. These penalties were to be extended to all who helped or abetted the persons concerned. On the other hand, all marriages celebrated by Catholic priests were to be deemed null and void.

No collections were to be made for the support of these priests and no alms were to be given them. No property was to be left to them or their churches in wills made by the people of Malacca. For this last offence, the penalty was confiscation of all property so disposed of together with a fine of 100 reals. The proclamation sternly ordered all priests living in hiding in Malacca either to leave the city, or to "discover themselves" to the Dutch authorities, within a week of its publication. Finally, informers were to be encouraged to ferret out all breaches of the proclamation by the promise of one-third of the fine imposed on those who broke it. The remaining two-thirds was to be divided equally between the poor of the Dutch Reformed Church and the Company's official.

This proclamation was carried into operation much more severely and with much greater effect than the previous one. Bort himself admitted "some improvement" though he admits that they were not wholly able to "rid Malacca of Romish priests". A number stayed behind even in civilian garb serving their religion, and from time to time priests came ashore from visiting ships to administer the Sacraments to their fellow Catholics.

We are not surprised then to read in Bort's report that "the prohibition of the exercise of the Romish religion has notably reduced the population of this town by reason of the departure of many Portuguese families and their dependants to other

places. They have taken with them a good number of black fishermen and would have carried off the rest if they had not been prevented."

Its effect. In 1669 the Rev. Dr. D. F. Navarette called at Malacca from Manila on his way to Rome. He was not allowed to stay at first, but eventually received permission to land and "went up the river at 8 o'clock at night where most of the Christians lived, to sing the 'Salve' and 'Litany of Our Lady'." He spent twelve days ashore altogether, dispensing the Sacraments and visiting the sick, but "said Mass one day in one house and the next in another. Thus we secured ourselves from a French dominie (minister) who was watching us." He reports that there were about 2,000 Catholics in Malacca; and that "the normal religious needs of the people were served by an Indian clergyman" who was disguised there. The women "were extraordinarily good Christians; and they wished they could get away from that place; but they are so poor, they cannot."

Another visitor, Dr. F. G. Carreri, Doctor of Civil Law in Naples, arrived in Malacca on 10 May 1695 and declared that the Portuguese Catholics were better instructed in matters of faith than any in Europe; the children were especially well instructed; and this because of the continual passing of Jesuit missionaries through this place to China, Hong Kong, Cochin China and other parts. But because of the Dutch persecution, which laid on them heavier taxes than on the Jews and the Muslims, they were forced to exercise their religion in the woods "with much danger". So also Fr. Premare S.J., who landed from the French ship *Amphitrite* in 1698, said that they "were obliged to go far into the interior of the forest to celebrate the Sacred Mysteries". The Rev. Fr. Cardon has put forward the interesting thesis that many Portuguese Catholics fled inland to the foot of Bukit Greja, in the territory of the Menangkabau, who were then at war with the Dutch. The Menangkabau were astonished at seeing so numerous a party of refugees, and one of their elders said it was "Melaka Pindah" (i.e. "the removal of Malacca"). They remembered, however, their old friendship with the Portuguese and allowed the fugitives to settle in the village (known to this day as Melaka Pindah). Here they were safe from their persecutors, and here they built

a stone church which they called the Church of "Our Lady of Hope".

It is clear that this was no mere "mild persecution" as Winstedt would have us believe,[1] but as the eighteenth century with its latitudinarian ideas proceeded, the persecution gradually abated. So in 1778–88 Reynier Bernardus Hoynck van Papendrecht was able to write in a letter to his uncle "that he had never seen a country with greater freedom in the practice of religion; that nobody ever gave him a sour look because he was a Catholic; and that there was a large community of Roman Catholic Portuguese who have their priest and openly hold Divine Service in their own Church." This church was probably the Church of St. Peter built about 1787 on the left bank of the river at Bunga Raya. It was almost certainly at this time that they abandoned for good the old Church of "Our Lady of Hope" which had served them so well during the persecution.

Dutch churches. Bort mentions two churches only which the Dutch possessed for their own worship—the old church on the top of the hill, St. Paul's, where a sermon in Dutch was preached twice each Sunday, and a second down below at the foot of the hill in the south part of the fort. It was formerly a dwelling place, and was turned into a church "in my time", and was called "the New Church". A sermon was preached here once a week. In 1741[2] the Dutch built Christ Church, and after that St. Paul's was used as a burial ground for the notables of the city.

II

Trouble with the Menangkabau

The Menangkabau of Naning, who numbered about 1,000, according to Schouten, had been vassals of Portugal, whilst those of Rembau were vassals of Johore. The Portuguese had appointed a Temenggong to rule the Naning people on their behalf, and he in turn appointed two Agents or Orang Kaya—one in Naning, and the other in Rengek (Linggi)—whose job it

[1] *History of Malaya*, p. 124.
[2] According to Ven. Archdeacon Swindell; 1753 according to Rev. N. D. Bower.

was to inform him of anything of importance that happened in their districts. The Menangkabau of Naning and Rengek, as vassals of Portugal, had been under obligation to assist the Portuguese in time of war "with a certain number of armed men", and in general they fulfilled this obligation, except when it suited their interests not to do so. So in 1641 they assisted the Dutch "mainly for their own advantage, robbing and stealing especially from the slaves of the Portuguese, but also from the native Christians who fled by reason of hunger and were forced to leave the town". Nevertheless they also helped the Portuguese, especially during the last six weeks of the siege, for Antonisoon, the Dutch commander, in September 1640 said that "they must be dealt with very strictly because it was evident that Malacca was deriving great benefit from them".

It is clear in fact that as early as the 17 February 1641 the Dutch were already beginning to find the Menangkabau troublesome. Both Naning and Rembau refused their demand with regard to the return of slaves; and only the Rengek people, who agreed to it, were able to trade with Malacca. The Dutch, in short, saw clearly that the Menangkabau realised their weak position in 1641 and paid no attention either to their promises or their threats. In fact, "they did not show such obedience and respect to their new masters as they did to the Portuguese under pressure". The Dutch therefore sent an expedition "to quell the unrest", and on 15 August 1641 the chiefs of Naning and its dependent villages[1] agreed to a Treaty of 23 Articles by which they became vassals of the Netherlands and the Honourable Company. Article 19 stipulated that any Malacca Christian who wished to stay in Naning could do so, as long as he paid the taxes with the other inhabitants. Article 22 forbade the Naning people to trade directly or indirectly with any foreign nation. They were to bring their goods down the Malacca river only and the use of the river Linggi for traffic with foreign traders was refused to them "on any pretext, on pain of forfeiting life and goods". Alone of all the states on the Peninsula, Naning became a vassal of the Dutch as it had been of the Portuguese. But the Dutch troubles were only beginning. Behind Naning were other little states under Johore's jurisdiction, from whom the Dutch demanded and obtained trading

[1] Melekek, Pereling, Ina, Kemus, Cherana Puteh, Batu Ampar and Sebang.

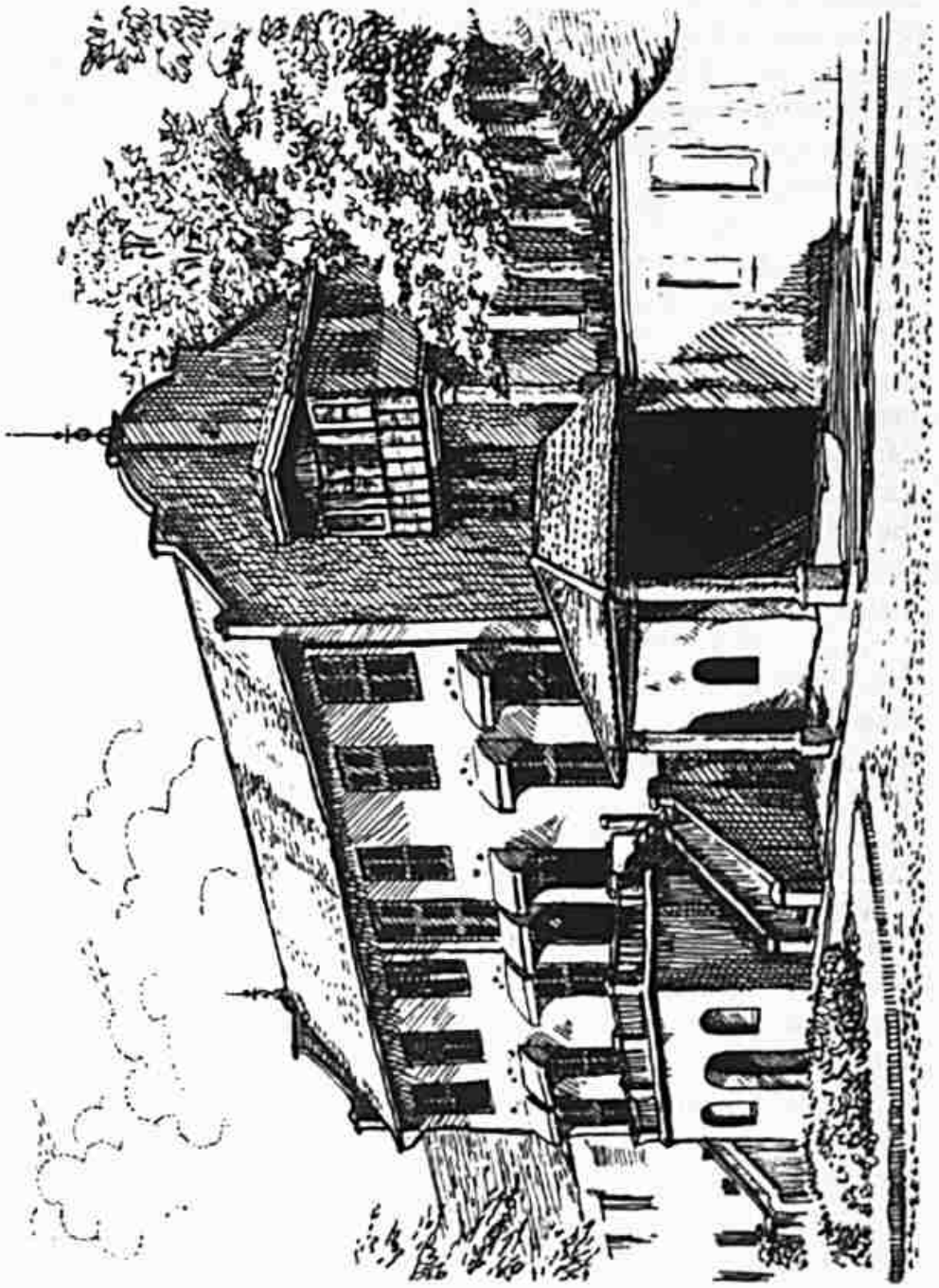
privileges, but their narrow insistence on these lost them the friendship of these little states in spite of their nearness to Malacca's borders.

Nevertheless, the hostility of the Menangkabau of Rembau, Naning and Sungei Ujong towards the Dutch persisted. Schouten had said in 1641 that Rembau and Naning would remain in peace hereafter if they "were treated as the Portuguese treated them". The Dutch were, however, too much concerned with increasing their dividends. In this small affair, as in so many larger ones, they failed to realise that "Magnanimity in politics is not seldom the truest wisdom." They did realise, however, that force alone would not secure them peace on their jungle-girt boundaries, and so they now persuaded their old, if somewhat reluctant, ally, Johore, to reassert her authority over recalcitrant Rembau, Naning and Sungei Ujong and compel them to abandon their policy of hostility. The Sultan accordingly sent his Bendahara, to whom it seems the Menangkabau states paid tribute, to bring them to heel. In this, he had a two-fold object—first, to appoint a chief and customs officer who would carry out his orders and collect revenue, and secondly to encourage friendship with the Dutch.

The Bendahara who undertook this mission was probably Sekudai, a direct descendant of Tun Ali. No doubt the Malays of Rasah and Rahang, then quite flourishing trading and mining centres, and the Malay Penghulu Mentri of Pantai, whom he confirmed in office, and others at Rembau and elsewhere, were glad to obtain recognition from the now powerful Johore state. They had their own reasons for welcoming protection from the ever-increasing number of Menangkabau emigrants from Sumatra.[1] It is very questionable whether Sekudai's visit did any good to the Dutch, however. The Malays of Klang and Sungei Ujong, for example, continued to defy the Dutch blockade at the mouth of the Linggi river, and to sell most of the 400 bahar of tin, which these areas produced yearly, at the free ports of Acheh and Bengkalis.

By the end of 1644 in spite of Johore's help, it was clear that rebellion was about to break out. The Dutch sent a small force

[1] At this time, the Malay ruling families followed the *adat temenggong*, under which political office descended from father to son. During the eighteenth century, however, they adopted the matrilineal *adat perpateh*, which shows how far Menangkabau influence had increased by that time.



Stadthuis in Malacca

under Captain Forsenburgh and Shahbandar Menie to re-establish order. The soldiers were ambushed and massacred. The Governor of Malacca, van Vliet, went to their support, but he was defeated and had to leave behind a chest containing between 13,000 and 14,000 reals. This success so encouraged the Menangkabau that they planned an advance against Malacca itself. "They threatened to murder us in our Council Chamber, and to stop short of no violence against anyone who opposed them." They began to make a "violent raid" on the city and cut off all supplies of food, and as a result the plantations along the riverside were deserted, since no one dared to cultivate gardens in those places. The local population were completely terrorised, and the Menangkabau advanced within musket shot of the fort and destroyed the plantations of Bukit China. The Dutch decided at last in 1645 that this impossible state of affairs should be ended. They despatched a force under the Secretary Jan Truijtman and Lieutenant Hans Kruger to compel the 2,000 Menangkabau of Naning and Rembau to surrender. The expedition failed, and returned after burning Melekek and a few orchards. So in February 1646 the Governor van Outshoorn sent a force of 370 men which reduced Naning to ashes and laid waste rice fields and palm trees. This destruction of their crops persuaded the Menangkabau to ask for a "lasting peace with the Governor and Council of Malacca" in which they accepted all the conditions imposed on them by the Dutch.

After 1647 peace of a kind continued between Menangkabau and Dutch; but the blockade of the Linggi river and the vexatious insistence on treaty rights led to much resentment. It is possible that during these years a kind of nationalist feeling had grown up among the Menangkabau people who were, politically speaking, much in advance of the Peninsular Malays. They were still conscious of belonging to the famous old Kingdom of Central Sumatra, and though they accepted the overlordship of Johore, this was never more than a nominal one. It was their own chiefs whom they really followed, and these in turn looked across the Straits to the Makhdum, one of the four principal states into which the old Menangkabau kingdom had been divided. The Makhdum was primarily responsible for the Menangkabau colonies in the Peninsula, and the more well-

populated these became, the stronger became that tendency to independence which was one of the chief traits of the Menangkabau character. Their resentment towards the Dutch never ceased to grow, fanned as it was by various "incidents". Thus for example in 1664 they complained that the Dutch collector of customs, Maria Silvens, had, in defiance of the treaty of 1641, failed completely to carry out the obligations imposed on him in the matter of storing and levying duty on the betel brought down from Naning. It was however the Jambi War[1] and perhaps rumours of Dutch reverses in the Anglo-Dutch War of 1672–4 which led them to think the time was ripe for throwing off Malay and Dutch control alike. Accordingly, when a warrior purporting to be a Menangkabau prince from Sumatra presented himself before them with an offer to lead them against the Dutch, the people of Naning, Rembau, Klang and Sungei Ujong instantly proclaimed him as their king.

31. *The war with Raja Ibrahim*

The first action of this "king", who styled himself Raja Ibrahim, was to send a letter to the Dutch Governor of Malacca complaining about the Dutch patrol in the Straits. Governor Bort ignored the letter completely, on the grounds that Raja Ibrahim was an impostor; that he was, in fact, a Muslim "priest" who had been driven out by his own people for his turbulence, and later by the Achinese whose support he had vainly tried to enlist. The aged Raja Merah of Naning, who had signed the treaty of 1641, and the other Menangkabau chiefs not only did not share the Dutch misgivings, but enthusiastically agreed to Raja Ibrahim's proposition to lay siege to and conquer Malacca. With 3,700 men Ibrahim advanced as far as Batang Tiga, a hamlet on the sea-shore five miles northwest of the town. The inhabitants of the northern suburbs fled before him with what property they could salvage. Checked there by a breastwork the Dutch had hastily put up, Ibrahim and his men retreated, but from then on they kept up a guerrilla warfare, devastating the surrounding countryside. The Dutch succeeded in recapturing Batang Tiga, and they blockaded the river Linggi to prevent supplies from getting through, but though they were reinforced by 150 men from

[1] See below, p. 76.

Batavia, they did not counter-attack because of their enemy's skill in jungle warfare.

Though the Dutch had little fear of the fortress being captured, they found this jungle warfare with its "robberies, kidnappings and brigandage" very little to their taste. Bort indignantly complained that war had been made on them treacherously without the least cause at a time when they were at peace with the Menangkabau. He was very worried about the effect of it on their "good" inhabitants, fearing that they would take a dislike to this place and would move away, and he was especially afraid that the "industrious Chinese" whom he was especially anxious to attract there ("for this country must have a larger population") would not arrive. He therefore advised his successor that "some day" the Dutch, having by blockade reduced them to famine and distress, should make a punitive expedition against the Menangkabau villages and exterminate them "root and branch". Otherwise they would be continually plagued in this way by these "thieves and murderers".

In 1679 Raja Ibrahim, "the impostor", was assassinated by a Bugis slave and the war ended. Naning and Rembau asked

Malacca, 1706

for peace, and the Dutch were thankful, on 13 February 1680, to make another treaty with them.

In 1695, however, a visitor to Malacca, Doctor Carreri, reported that there was still much unrest in the neighbourhood of Malacca. The dominion of the Dutch, he said, reached but three miles round the city. "This wild people . . . will not easily submit to bear the Holland yoke. . . . They are such mortal enemies to the Dutch they do not only refuse to have any commerce with them but cut them in prices, whensoever it is in their power." From this time on the Dutch, having learned their lesson, seem to have treated their vassal Naning with wiser tolerance. Though they still insisted on appointing and installing chiefs, they interfered as little as possible with the "Naningites", often waiving the rice tithe and allowing them to dispose of their lands in accordance with their immemorial matriarchal customs.

During a great part of the eighteenth century Malaya was distracted by the incursions of the Bugis, and the Dutch were preoccupied with problems in their other territories. Malacca continued to be their fortress, but to a great extent it was isolated from the rest of Malaya; its population remained static, and its trade continued to decline.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE DECLINE OF THE SULTANATE OF JOHORE (1641–1745)

I
To 1699

32. *Favourable prospects, 1641–70*

DURING the years 1641–70 Johore, alone among the Malay states, prospered exceedingly. She had powerful friends, few enemies, an expanding territory and a prosperous trade. Yet all these bright prospects withered away through her own internal dissensions.

Johore had been an ally of the Dutch since 1603, and she had gained considerable prestige as a result of the assistance she had given them in their final attack on Malacca in 1641. She considered that the Dutch—now the greatest power in the archipelago—were under an obligation to her, and the Dutch so far acknowledged the obligation that they treated her with much more courtesy and circumspection than they showed to any other Malay state. All this was not lost on neighbouring states such as Siam, Patani, Acheh and Jambi which hastened to establish friendly relations with Johore.

Her old enemy, Portugal, had been eliminated. Acheh, once an even greater scourge, was no longer a menace after the death of her last warrior king, who was to be succeeded by a series of unwarlike queens. The Sultan, Abdul Jalil Shah, found himself, after his twenty years of wandering, in a position of security of which he had scarcely dared to dream. Determined, like Charles II of England in a somewhat similar position, not to go on his travels again, he built up, with no little ability and skill, his shattered state into a strong and dominating position.

33. *The expansion of Johore*

His ambition was to make Johore as powerful a state as had been the old Malay kingdom of Malacca under the rule of

Sultan Mahmud. It is true that the Dutch would not give up Malacca, Perak was under the domination of Acheh, whilst Kedah, Trengganu and Kelantan owed at least nominal allegiance to Siam, but there was still Pahang, her old enemy, and by 1648 the Sultan was able to style himself "ruler of Johore and Pahang". During the next twenty years he brought the Riau-Lingga Archipelago firmly under his control, and on the eastern seaboard of Sumatra he won back the allegiance of the states of Rokan, Kampar, Indragiri and Siak, together with the island of Bengkalis (1668). Now, though these were only small states, they had a very profitable trade with the hinterland of Menangkabau, particularly in pepper and gold. Tin was found later in Bengkalis and Siak, and Johore began to build up a considerable trade with India and China.

The Dutch naturally did not welcome competition from their ally. In 1641 they renewed the old treaty of 1603 and added a new clause to the effect that all Johore ships sailing west of Malacca had to call into that port to pay dues. But though the Dutch tried on many occasions to assert their monopoly right, Johore was able to a great extent to evade them. For example, the Sultan succeeded in attracting a great number of native and European ships to trade in the island of Bengkalis, and this place became a serious rival to Malacca, until the Dutch eventually limited its trade. Again, though the Dutch gained a monopoly of the newly discovered Siak tin, they found to their dismay that the Johore Shahbandar was covertly shipping a great deal of it to his master's capital. A serious blow to the Dutch was the fact that, though in 1662 they gained a monopoly of the trade of the rich port of Indragiri, by 1669 Johore was strong enough to take over this port and add it to her dominions. In fact, by that year, Johore had become a formidable trading rival to the Dutch who were not able here, any more than in Kedah or Perak, to prevent the Gujerati merchants from flooding the market with their cloths, or the Sumatran traders from bringing in tin, gold and pepper. For a brief moment Johore anticipated the role of Singapore in later days, becoming an entrepôt in the trade with China and exporting in addition to the commodities mentioned above a great variety of articles such as slaves, wax, mats, sago, wooden platters, oil, tin, and jungle produce. All this great trading activity the

Dutch could do little to stop. "The Johorites," reported Bort ruefully in 1678, "are not well disposed towards Malacca, and must rather be regarded as false friends."

34. *The Jambi War, 1670–9*

All these bright prospects, however, were blighted by the Jambi War which broke out in 1670. From this petty struggle date all the misfortunes which were to pursue Johore through the miseries of the eighteenth century down to her partition in the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824. And here it may be convenient, as a guide through the maze of conflicting events which we are about to describe, to list the main reasons for her decline. The first of these was the chronic quarrels between the Johore Malays which divided them into irreconcilable factions; the second was their foolish and suicidal quarrels with neighbouring states such as Jambi and Siak; and the third was the intervention of outside powers such as the Menangkabau, the Bugis and the Dutch, who "fished in these troubled waters" to their own advantage.

It was the first of these causes which led to the Jambi War. By 1660 two factions had made their appearance at the Johore Court at Batu Sawar—the one led by the Bendahara, and the other by the Laksamana. This latter was the ruler of Bintang, a more powerful personality than his rival, and described by Bort (1678) as "an old man of great authority". Now, in 1663 the Sultan Abdul Jalil, then aged about seventy-six, made an agreement whereby a younger brother (Bort says "cousin", possibly his successor Ibrahim) was to have married a daughter of the Pangeran of Jambi. The Laksamana, however, anxious to further his own power, persuaded the Sultan to break this agreement, and to agree to a marriage between the prince and his daughter. Jambi, though a minor power in comparison with Johore, was yet a rich pepper port, and its ruler was naturally very angry at the insult he had received. War broke out, each side claiming successes. In 1673 the Jambinese dealt a very serious blow at Johore. They captured Bengkalis and then took by surprise the Johore capital itself. "On 21st November it was reported that 4 tons of gold, 2,500 prisoners, 100 guns and muskets; 100,000 guilders in gold, including the Bendahara had been captured, although 1,200 prisoners

escaped." The aged Sultan fled to Pahang, and there in November 1677, or perhaps 1678, he died, childless, at the great age of ninety.

Now the loss of the capital was not a very considerable matter, since it was in no sense a town like Malacca and the Malays could easily build elsewhere the wooden palace and dwelling places, as they had done many times before. What was really serious was the great loss of face Johore suffered as the result of her defeat by a state that was no bigger than one of her own subject states in Sumatra. Almost immediately Siak declared her independence of Johore by electing a Menangkabau ruler, and her example strongly influenced the little Menangkabau states adjoining Malacca, who chose Raja Ibrahim as their "King".[1] The consequences of the Siak revolt were to be extremely serious for Johore. During the eighteenth century, it became the base of Menangkabau operations against her.

The Paduka Raja, the Laksamana, on the death of the Sultan, now named his son-in-law, Ibrahim, as Sultan, thus usurping the rights of the Bendahara. He then persuaded Ibrahim to retire with his forces to his own dependency of Bintang,[2] the largest island in the Riau Archipelago. This was an excellent move, for Riau had a strategic position which only Singapore, in later years, was able to surpass. It commanded the southern entrance of the Straits of Malacca as well as of Singapore, and it had a fine harbour. The Laksamana saw too that Bintang was in easier striking distance of his enemy, and from here he could hope to pursue the struggle more effectively.

And now in 1679 Sultan Ibrahim and his chief adviser made the great mistake of calling in an outsider to help them in this petty war. This was the Bugis mercenary soldier Daing Mangika. It will be remembered that after the Treaty of Bongaya[3] Macassar had ceased to be the stronghold of the Bugis, and these hardy adventurers whom Raffles was later to describe as the "best merchants of the eastern isles" now swarmed all over the archipelago, where they were to cause a great deal of trouble to Dutch and Malays alike. Many of them settled in Java and many others along the Linggi river in Malaya, which

[1] See above, p. 71.

[2] Also known as Rhio, Rio, Riau or Riouw after its chief town which is on an adjacent islet.

[3] See above, p. 19.

became their headquarters. In 1678 there were two hundred families of them in Malacca alone. As the event showed, this invitation to a Bugis adventurer to help a Malay ruler in difficulties proved a dangerous precedent.

Nevertheless, Daing Mangika did not prove very helpful to Johore, and it was thanks chiefly to the Laksamana's efforts that the war with Jambi was ended in 1681. Johore and Jambi now combined to attack the latter's old enemy, Palembang, to whose side Mangika had deserted. The two former enemies won, and the Laksamana seized half the spoils for himself. "By May 1681 he was drawing all power into his hands and was ingratiating himself with the nobles, and was grown so bold that he no longer paid proper respect to the Sultan at Riau who was thinking how to get rid of him." The war having successfully ended, the Malays now moved their headquarters to a new capital, Johore Lama, where in 1685 Sultan Ibrahim died, poisoned, it was said, by three of his wives. The Laksamana had now reached the height of his power, for he was the regent, acting on behalf of Ibrahim's infant son. It was probably to consolidate his position that he made a treaty with the Dutch, granting a monopoly of the tin of Siak to them. He could not himself subdue that rebellious state, now ruled over by the Menangkabau Raja Hitam.

His triumph was, however, short-lived. His old rival, the Bendahara, Tun Habib Adbul Majid, whom he thought he had long since silenced, now led a revolt against him, compelling him to flee to that usual haven of Malay refugees, Trengganu. The Bendahara in his turn became regent. His first step was to remove the young Sultan to a new capital at Kota Tinggi, just above the old Makam Tauhid which had been the capital in 1641 before plague made it unsafe.

During these fruitless struggles Johore had lost the commanding position she had had in 1670. By 1678 Bort could write that "the power of Johore is much reduced",[1] and the Dutch had exacted a treaty from the Laksamana as the price of their recognition of his regency. This had not been very successful, so they negotiated a new one-sided treaty with the new regent, from which they made very considerable profit. Not only did

[1] He claimed that the Dutch, at Johore's request, had "taken over" Muar and Rio Formosa "whence our inhabitants derive great advantages in supplies".

they obtain the exclusion of all Muslim or Hindu traders from Johore or Siak, but they also crushed the very flourishing "contraband" trade that had sprung up around Bengkalis among the Asian traders. That they succeeded in this appears from the attempt made by the Sultan in 1691 to obtain a revision of the treaty. The Dutch also tried to prevent vessels from calling at Johore, especially from China, Japan and Manila, and to compel them to trade at Malacca. So Johore was now treated in exactly the same way as the rest of the Malay states.

35. *The murder of Sultan Mahmud, 1699*

In 1695 the young Sultan Mahmud, now twenty years old, began to rule independently. Two years later the old Bendahara died and was succeeded by his son, Abdul Jalil. According to the chronicles the Sultan was one of the worst rulers ever to sit on a Malay throne. They describe him as a monster of cruelty, and indeed this seems to be borne out from other sources. Captain Alexander Hamilton, for instance, who visited Johore at the end of the seventeenth century, relates that he actually saw the Sultan try out a pair of pistols with which he had presented him by shooting "a poor fellow in the street" through the shoulder . . . "to see how far the pistols would carry a bullet". His career, though brief, consisted of a series of crimes, but the Malays, who always showed remarkable loyalty to their sultans whom they considered to have the "white blood" of the old Malacca rulers in their veins, were willing to put up even with this impossible ruler. However, the climax came when the tyrant ordered the wife of one of his lesser nobles, Megat Sri Rama, to be murdered under brutal circumstances. The lady's only crime was that she had tasted a piece of jack-fruit that had been brought into the palace. Megat Sri Rama, crazed with grief, went to see the Bendahara and his brothers, together with the Temenggong and other officials. These officials, who had everything to gain by removing the Sultan from the scene, concocted a plot to destroy him, and appointed Megat Sri Rama as their agent. Winstedt[1] tells the story how the latter slew Mahmud as he was being carried in his litter to the royal mosque but that the dying man hurled his kris at his murderer, who for four years lingered on in great

[1] *History of Malaya*, p. 147.

agony "whilst grass grew in his wound". It is more likely that Megat Sri Rama was cut to pieces by the royal guard.

This reign, and the murder which ended it, must be regarded as among the worst of that series of misfortunes which had dogged Johore since the outbreak of the Jambi War. Mahmud II was the last Malay Sultan of Johore who could claim to be a direct descendant of Parameswara. As he left no heir, his successor inevitably could not claim the undivided loyalty of the Malays, since he could not claim the "white blood" of royalty. Faction fights, already a curse in Malay politics, were bound to grow fiercer, and the office of Sultan was to be the prize contended for, not only by Malays, but by Menangkabau and Bugis freebooters.

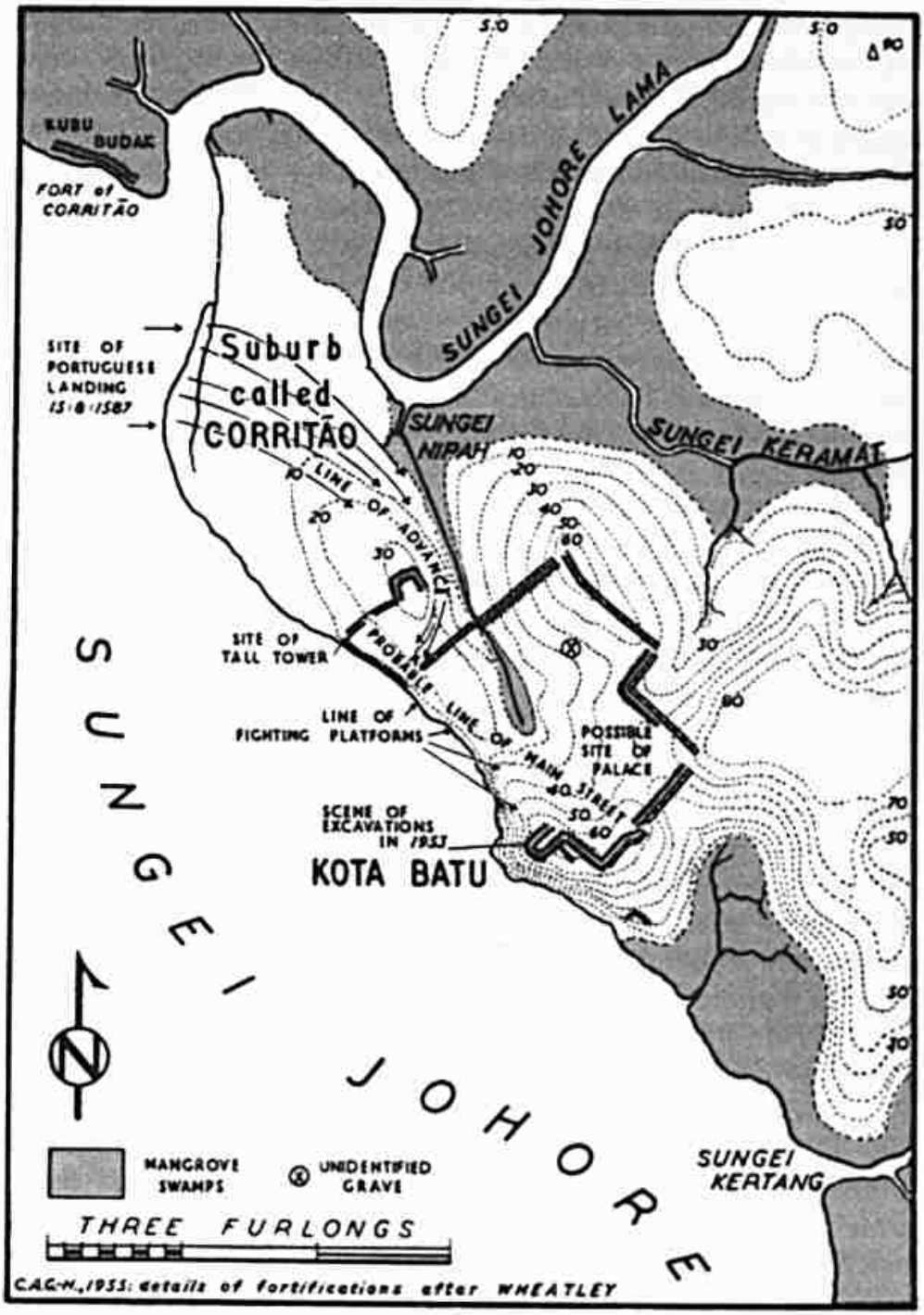
As might be expected, the first faction to profit was that of the Bendahara, but he was regarded as an upstart by the Malays, and his reign, beset by intrigues, ended in misfortune.

II
1699–1722

36. *The rule of the Bendahara Sultan, 1699–1718*

The Raja Muda. Bendahara Sultan Abdul Jalil seems to have had an agreeable personality but little force of character. He was, says Captain A. Hamilton, "a prince of great moderation and justice, and governed well for the eight or nine years that he held the reins of government in his own hands".[1] A Portuguese captain, João de Tavares, says he ruled the kingdom "with decent calm" for about three years. Both authorities agree, however, that he retired into the background in favour of his younger brother, the Raja Muda, perhaps, says Tavares, "because he was a man of good understanding who realised that he would not be safe on the throne and did not wish to experience the unfortunate fate of his predecessor". The Raja Muda, "a clever and intelligent man", expected opposition and took what he considered were appropriate

[1] He goes on to say that the Sultan treated him very kindly and made him a present of the island of "Sincapura"; but he refused the gift on the grounds that it was of "no use to a private person, but a proper place to settle a colony on, lying in the centre of trade and being accommodated with good rivers and safe harbours".



Plan of excavations at Johore Lama

steps to meet it. He engrossed all trade into his own hands, says Hamilton (who did not like him), buying and selling at his own prices and punishing those who dared to speak against his arbitrary dealings. With the riches thus acquired ("their wealth in gold," says Tavares, "seems incredible"), he built up a strong fleet and accumulated over 1,000 pieces of ordnance. Near "the fair-sized town" of Johore Lama, he had a fortress, which though built of wood, was very strong and well protected by guns. It completely dominated the river which at that point was so narrow that ships could only pass in single file.

These defensive preparations were probably designed to meet attacks from rival chiefs within Johore itself, perhaps from the son of the old Laksamana of Jambi fame, who had been a potential claimant for the throne in 1699. At all events a rebellion did break out in 1712, but the desultory struggle which followed suddenly became much more serious with the advent of a new personality, Raja Kechil, who claimed the throne of Johore as the son of the murdered Sultan.

Raja Kechil. This claim, put forward with much circumstantial detail, thoroughly intrigued the Malays. Raja Kechil said that his birth had been concealed by the Laksamana for fear that the Bendahara Sultan would have slain the infant after the murder of the Sultan (his alleged father). He had been sent, he said, whilst still a child, for a time to Muar where the Temenggong adopted him, and later he was sent over to the Menangkabau country where the king adopted him in his turn. After many adventures he eventually arrived at Siak, where his apparently well-authenticated claims so impressed the people that they chose him as their ruler. Presently he seized Bengkalis, a fief of Johore, declaring himself to be its rightful king.

These grandiose claims were supported by slender resources. The rebellion in Johore seemed to offer a favourable opportunity if only he could find some more supporters, and above all some more ships. He therefore asked for help from five celebrated Bugis brothers, all mercenary soldiers, who offered assistance on condition that when he became Sultan he should make the eldest of them Yam Tuan Muda of Johore. But when these warriors sailed to Selangor for reinforcements, Raja Kechil, perhaps unwilling to be under an obligation to such dangerous allies, set sail for Johore with thirty poorly armed

galleys. It seemed to be a rash undertaking, but he counted, in the event rightly, on support from some of the Johore Malays. At the same time he sent an envoy to Malacca, pleading for Dutch support, but the Raja Muda had sent an envoy there also on a similar errand, and the Dutch refused both. The reason, according to Tavares, was, not only that the Malacca forces at this time were very much reduced, but that the Dutch judged astutely that it was better to let the two princes weaken their power by fighting each other.

Tavares tells us that the most dangerous enemy of the Raja Muda, because he was the one he least suspected, was a certain "Datok Bandar", who was a son-in-law of the Bendahara Sultan. This man looked after the "maritime people who manned the fleet", and he secretly advised Raja Kechil boldly to advance in the assurance that he would not be attacked. Raja Kechil did so, and in fact when the seventy galleys of Raja Muda met him, their crews leapt into the water and joined the invader. Not one of the cannon was discharged and the battle was won. The Raja Muda ran amok when he found that all was lost. The treacherous Datok Bandar now tried to seize the throne for himself, but he was defeated by Raja Kechil and compelled to flee. Raja Kechil thereupon took the title of Sultan Abdul Jalil Ramak Shah; the Bendahara Sultan hastened from his retirement to accept him as his overlord and reverted to his old position as Bendahara.

Raja Kechil versus the Bugis, 1718–22. Raja Kechil's position was by no means secure, however. The five Bugis brothers were infuriated at his success, in which he had not allowed them to share. They considered they had been cheated of the key office of Yam Tuan Muda, which would have given them a controlling interest in the fortunes of Johore. At the same time Raja Kechil had to fear the possibility of a reaction in favour of his predecessor, who was deeply humiliated by his demotion to a lower rank. To consolidate his position he now decided to marry one of the daughters of his Bendahara in the hope that the erstwhile Sultan would look more kindly on his new son-in-law. Instead, however, of marrying the elder daughter, Tengku Tengah, to whom he was formally engaged, he married the younger one, Tengku Kamariah, with whom he fell in love when he saw her at a feast. According to the Bugis chronicle

the insult to Tengku Tengah led her to offer her hand in marriage to Daing Parani, the leader of the five Bugis brothers, if only he would get rid of Raja Kechil. Daing Parani agreed, but the plot to murder Raja Kechil failed, and Parani and his kinsmen sailed away to Langat to recruit reinforcements from the Bugis in that area.

This romantic story must simply be understood to mean that the Bugis and the Bendahara Sultan had agreed to make common cause against the Menangkabau usurper. After his allies left for Langat the Bendahara Sultan, accompanied by his daughter Tengku Tengah, fled to Trengganu, where he met Captain Hamilton once again. He informed Hamilton that he had asked the Dutch at Malacca for assistance, but without avail, and he asked Hamilton to inform the Governor on his return to Bombay that he would be glad to live under the protection of the English. With 150 men, he said, he could easily subdue his rebellious subjects.

From Trengganu the Sultan moved to Pahang. Raja Kechil, fearing he might become a centre of further disaffection, sent the Laksamana Sekam to arrest him. The Laksamana and his followers found the old man kneeling at prayer on board a ship lying at anchor in Kuala Pahang. There, having meanwhile received fresh instructions, they cut him down. His daughter Tengku Tengah made a futile attempt to beat off the murderers. She was taken captive, as also was her young brother, Raja Suleiman. The latter, however, escaped and fled to Ulu Pahang where he sought and obtained the protection of his uncle, the Bendahara of Pahang, Tun Abdul Jamal.

Meanwhile Raja Kechil had left Johore Lama for Riau. He had scarcely occupied it when he was driven out by the Bugis fleet. Once again he recaptured it, but the Bugis decoyed him from the island by making a feint attack on Lingga, a Johore dependency. In his absence they retook Riau, and Raja Kechil, in spite of many subsequent attempts, was never able to recapture it.

The Bugis, now in possession of the Johore capital, made a treaty with Suleiman, the younger son of the murdered Bendahara Sultan, by which they agreed to acknowledge him as Sultan if he appointed Daing Merewah as the Yam Tuan Muda—offering, it will be noted, precisely the same conditions

which they had offered to Raja Kechil in 1718. Another of the five brothers, Tun Abbas, was made Bendahara of Riau. Daing Parani married the Sultan's sister and it was agreed that "the Bugis princes and the Sultan of Johore shall treat one another as brothers and the interests of their different Kingdoms shall be regarded as the interests of one and the same Kingdom. In all lands and parts of Johore without exception the Bugis shall have free entry." Suleiman was in no position to refuse these terms, and the first round in the struggle between Bugis and Menangkabau for the control of Johore had definitely been won by the Bugis. Raja Kechil, however, was in no mood to accept his defeat as final, and the struggle now spread to other parts of Malaya. The Malays were no longer masters in their own house and had to stand helplessly by whilst the future of their country was decided between these two alien factions.

III
1722–45

37. *Bugis versus Menangkabau*

The chronic tendency to civil war which we have noted among the Malay chiefs now afforded the two rivals the chance of pursuing their quarrel in different theatres. In 1723 the old Sultan of Kedah died, and the right of the elder brother to succeed him was immediately challenged by the younger one. The elder brother made the fatal mistake of appealing to the Bugis for help, which they agreed to give on condition that they received twelve bahars of dollars for their aid. These terms were agreed to; three bahars were paid there and then, and the remaining nine were promised for a later date.[1] The Bugis thereupon sailed up to Kedah and installed their nominee as Sultan. The younger brother at once invited Raja Kechil to help him. Raja Kechil accepted the invitation, and Kedah thereupon became a battlefield between Menangkabau and Bugis. Between 1724 and 1726 the state was devastated and its trade completely ruined. Once again, though their leader, Daing Parani, had been killed during the fighting, the Bugis

[1] See below, p. 98.

were victorious, and Kedah, potentially rich because of its trade in tin, elephants and Indian cloths, was under their complete control.

A similar struggle between brothers for the throne now took place in Perak. Into this state Menangkabau and Kedah chiefs drifted across the boundary and seized for themselves a number of high offices. Daing Merewah, the Yam Tuan Muda, attacked these enemies overland from Selangor, the main Bugis base on the mainland. The Menangkabau, worsted in this battle, launched a series of raids during the next few years on Selangor itself. In these they were helped by a Bugis renegade, Daing Matekko. In 1742, however, Daing Chelak, who had succeeded his elder brother as Yam Tuan Muda, finally drove out the Menangkabau who had made one more attempt to conquer Perak. So by 1745, when Daing Chelak died, the Bugis effectively controlled the rich tin states on the west coast—Kedah, Perak and Selangor. Their old enemy, Raja Kechil, was dead, the Menangkabau were defeated, and one by one the little states adjoining Malacca were brought under their influence.

IV

38. *Dutch involvements*

At this stage we are bound to ask the question: why, during these years, did the Dutch allow Malaya to be torn apart by these petty wars with their consequent disturbance to commerce in the Straits and to their own trading interests? The answer is to be found partly in their unwillingness to squander their profits on further military adventures and partly in their preoccupation with their dependencies in the rest of the archipelago and particularly in Java. Though they were still deeply committed to their old, outworn policy of commercial monopoly, they were now beginning to see that equally great profits could be made from a settled policy of agriculture. The coffee tree had been established in Java in 1707 and by 1723 the yearly crop amounted to a little less than two million pounds. Though it was economically less important than sugar or pepper at the beginning of the eighteenth century, in the middle years it provided the chief source of income for the Company. Gradually

the Company became a territorial power; but the chief territory was Java.

Sumatra and Borneo. The Dutch had broken Acheh's hold on the pepper trade, and Acheh was in a state of chaos, though still politically independent. The Dutch controlled Padang, the port of the Menangkabau kingdom, as well as the states of Jambi and Palembang. No more than in Malaya were the Dutch interested in territorial expansion. Trade was their chief object, and that is why they took over the islands of Bangka and Billiton when tin was discovered there.

In Borneo the Dutch were much less successful. The Sultanate of Banjermasin in the south-east corner of the island had attracted them as early as 1603 because of the pepper trade, but during the seventeenth century piracy and misrule had made their monopoly a mockery. In the first half of the eighteenth century, however, it became important as the successor of Macassar, which the Dutch had ruined, and attracted British traders from Bencoolen as well as Chinese junks. The Dutch therefore took it over again in 1756. The remaining Sultanates of Sambas, Sukadana and Kutei were so much afflicted by piracy and petty wars that the Dutch left them severely alone. The problem of piracy was so acute that it almost explains the comparative indifference of the Dutch in the western part of the archipelago. Not only the Bugis, but freebooters from Tobela in the north of Halmahera, pirates from New Guinea and above all the dreaded Lanun from the Sulu Islands made trade unsafe for native and even Dutch shipping. The Dutch had neither the ships nor the forces to control this menace, nor had they enough officials to control their expanding territories. So long therefore as they could control the ports they were not interested in the mainland, though such control compelled them to intervene, for example, in Palembang in 1772, where in exchange for suppressing a rebellion they were given a monopoly of Bangka tin.

The Moluccas. In the east of the archipelago, the Dutch took a very much more active interest. Their chief objective was to keep down the production of spices so as to keep the prices high for this commodity. Only the Banda Islands and Amboina were allowed to produce cloves and nutmeg. In every other island the trees were ruthlessly torn up. The islanders had to

buy their food at very high prices from the Company. As a result of this policy the islands were depopulated and reduced to poverty.

Bantam. It was Java, however, which claimed most of the attention of the Company. The Company had been, since 1684, virtually the overlord of this state and made much profit from supplies of pepper, sugar, cotton and indigo from Bantam and its dependency, Lampoeng in southern Sumatra. There was much discontent, however, among the ruling classes, who had lost their chief source of income now that they could no longer levy duties on goods sold to competing European traders. Their seething unrest found expression in a revolt in 1750, which, though directed against the harsh rule of the Sultana Ratu Sarifa, expanded into a rebellion against the Dutch themselves. In this rebellion the English from Bencoolen took part. Batavia itself was threatened. In 1752, however, the Dutch defeated the rebels, acknowledged the lawful heir as Sultan and at the same time reduced Bantam to a state of complete vassaldom.

Mataram. It was in Mataram, however, that the Dutch had to face their most anxious moments during these difficult years. Amangkurat II did not keep the terms of peace imposed on him in 1680, and though the Dutch sent troops in 1686 to enforce the treaty, in the interests of trade they refrained from open war. When the Sultan died in 1703, he was succeeded by his son, Amangkurat III, who flatly refused to confirm the existing contracts. He was thereupon deposed by the Company, and replaced by a nominee of their own (1705) who in return conceded to them the Preanger districts, the port of Semarang and the overlordship of Cheribon. At the same time the new Sultan, Pakubuwono I, agreed that the Company could demand from the Mataram chiefs any amount of rice, free of cost or at a nominal payment. Conditions in Mataram, however, continued to be most unsettled. Pakubuwono and his two successors had to face a series of rebellions, prompted partly by insubordinate princes and partly by the hatred the Javanese felt for their rulers who were so friendly with the Dutch. In October 1740 a very ugly turn was given to the situation by a massacre of the Chinese living in Batavia.

The Chinese massacre. The Chinese had traded in Bantam,

of course, long before the Dutch had arrived there, and after 1618 the Dutch had encouraged them to settle in Batavia and elsewhere, welcoming them as an "industrious diligent and unwarlike people". The Chinese were willing to turn their hands to anything that would give them a living—shop-keeping, banking, money-lending, fishing; they worked on sugar plantations, became artisans or labourers, farmed customs, and extended their activities far inland beyond the reach of the Dutch authorities. At the same time they remained a class apart, clinging tenaciously to their own customs, keeping aloof from Dutch and Javanese alike. By 1720 there were at least 80,000 in the neighbourhood of Batavia, and as a result of the comparative peace of Dutch rule, great numbers of Chinese immigrants continued to arrive in Java. At last the Dutch authorities took alarm. Rumours began to circulate that the Chinese planned to capture Batavia for themselves. In vain did the Dutch try to restrict the immigration movement by a quota system. More Chinese arrived, and failing to find employment, took refuge in the interior, living as brigands and preying on Batavia. The Government at last decided to deport all these bandits to Ceylon or South Africa, but a rumour (quite unfounded) arose that the Chinese were not being taken to these places at all but were being thrown overboard when the ships reached the open sea. The Chinese immediately began to attack Batavia; the Dutch Government lost control of the situation, and the inhabitants of Batavia, most of whom had little regard for the Chinese, fell upon them, massacring at least ten thousand of them.

The infuriated Chinese fled from Batavia and made common cause with those elements in Mataram who now saw an opportunity of driving the Dutch out of the country. The Dutch garrison at Kartasura was wiped out by the Javanese; the Sultan himself proclaimed a Holy War against the Dutch. However, after two years of fighting, in 1743 he was obliged, chiefly for fear of his own subjects, to make peace with them. He surrendered all rights over Japara, Rembang, Surabaya, the island of Madura and all the land to the east of Pasuruan. The Company was given the right to garrison certain key points at the rulers' expense and an option over all produce. In 1746 Tegal and Pekalongan were ceded to the Company in payment

of war debts. This added to Javanese discontent, and another war broke out which ended in 1755 with the partition of Mataram into the two provinces of Surakarta and Jogjakarta.

Thus by 1755 a great part of Java was brought under direct Dutch rule, and the Dutch were now free to give attention to the problems raised by the Bugis in Malaya.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE DUTCH, MALAYS AND BUGIS (1745–1812)

39. *The Malay "War" Party*

By 1745 the Malays had come to resent deeply the humiliating position in which they found themselves, and they began to think seriously of ridding their country of its Bugis masters. The leader of this movement was a young chief of Trengganu, Mansur,[1] who had been made Sultan of Trengganu by Sultan Suleiman when the latter visited that state in 1740. From this time until 1760 Mansur spent much of his time in Riau, the architect of a forlorn resistance movement. It was probably he who suggested to Suleiman that he should come to an understanding with the Dutch, who had now become alarmed at the successes gained in Malaya by the Bugis. A treaty was therefore made, under which Sultan Suleiman ceded Siak to the Dutch (though it was no longer in his power to give away), and he promised at the same time that he would restore the Dutch privileges under the old treaties made in the past if and when Selangor, Klang and Linggi were restored to his rule.

Trouble broke out almost immediately over Siak. In 1746 Raja Kechil died after a long and lingering madness, and Sultan Suleiman naturally supported as his successor Raja Muhammad, the son of the deceased ruler and Suleiman's sister, Kamarieh. In this he persuaded the Dutch to support him, which they did readily because this seemed the easiest way of securing their own control over Siak. Raja Muhammad's half-brother, Raja Alam, claimed the throne for himself, and rose in revolt. Suleiman now requested aid against the rebel from Daing Kemboja, who had been proclaimed Yam Tuan Muda in succession to his uncle, Daing Chelak; with his help, he drove out Raja Alam from Siak. Soon, however, Kemboja found that the Malay faction at Riau were becoming increasingly hostile to the Bugis. Mansur, in fact, was leading a kind of war of nerves against them. Mysterious disturbances,

[1] Mansur was the second Sultan of that state; his father, Zainal Abidin, had been made Sultan in 1725, and on his death had nominated his youngest son Mansur as his heir. During Mansur's minority Trengganu was ruled by her one and only Bendahara, Tun Husain.

of which the Bugis were the object, broke out regularly, and as they always took place at night, Kemboja could not discover their source. Riau at last became too hot to hold him, and he retreated to Linggi.[1] He now transferred his support to Raja Alam, but, not content with that, succeeded in embittering Raja Muhammad against his uncle by telling him that Suleiman was interested only in helping the Dutch to get control of Siak. So it was that when the Sultan sailed to Siak in October 1752, his nephew turned against him and drove him back to Riau. Raja Alam now drove his half-brother out of Siak and made war on the Dutch, whom he refused, in spite of the 1745 treaty, to acknowledge as his overlord. The Dutch were so preoccupied by their troubles in Java that they had done little to implement their part of the treaty of 1745, but by 1755 they had crushed the revolt in Mataram and were able to drive out Raja Alam "the real enemy to trade in Siak". They then concluded a fresh treaty with the Sultan of Johore, who was at that moment paying a visit to Malacca. On this occasion they definitely promised to recover the possessions which had been taken by the Bugis, and in return for this service they were to receive a share in the sale of cloth in Siak, together with a monopoly of the tin trade in the Bugis strongholds of Selangor, Klang and Linggi, as well as in Siak. At the same time, fearing the competition of the English, who were now appearing in some strength in these waters, they stipulated that other European powers were to be excluded from Siak.

This treaty, of course, was bound to lead to war with the Bugis, and in 1756 war actually broke out. In April 1756 the Bugis were burning houses on the outskirts of Malacca, but the Dutch and Trengganu fleets retaliated by attacking Linggi, which they captured in May 1757. The Bugis accordingly agreed to a new treaty with the Dutch by which they promised them the usual monopoly rights in trade, and at the same time agreed to be friendly with Johore. The Dutch had now obtained agreements from the Malays and the Bugis giving them the monopoly of tin in their respective territories and apparently had helped the Sultan to get the better of his insubordinate subjects, but like all their previous treaties with Malays

[1] He left his nephew, Raja Haji, behind. Mansur made an attempt to have the latter kidnapped by a Dutchman, but the plot failed.

and Bugis, this one very quickly proved to be just another scrap of paper. The truth was that the Dutch power was declining, and this latest ineffectual intervention of theirs in the affairs of the Malay Peninsula made their weakness only too apparent to Malays and Bugis alike.

40. *The decline of Dutch power*

The Company had reached the peak of its power during the years 1641–89, but though the eighteenth century had seen a great extension of its territory, it had witnessed also an alarming increase in its weakness. Among the causes of this were the heavy cost in men, material and money of the European wars in which the Netherlands had been engaged, especially those against England and France. Furthermore, they had been fighting an endless series of campaigns against many of the states of South-East Asia, and though they had succeeded in winning a very great part of the trade of the area, yet the heavy expenditure in life and treasure and the great increase in the number of officials required to administer this vast empire proved too much for their resources.

Moreover the policy of monopoly which they so unhesitatingly pursued had for them disastrous consequences. They failed to see that their ruthless policy of cornering all markets, of buying goods cheaply in order to sell them at their own price with consequent gigantic profits, was not only poor business for a trading company but bad statesmanship for the administration of a great empire. "A great society," says Whitehead, "is a society in which men of business think greatly of their functions." The Company, blinkered by its commercial arithmetic, thought little of the wide human and social problems their conquests posed and pursued undeviatingly their petty calculations of loss and gain. They tried to buy goods such as tin and camphor at their own fixed rates of payment, which were much lower than the market price, and complained bitterly when English, French, Danish or Asian merchants obtained the goods by offering fairer prices. They tried to compel the Malays to trade in Malacca or cede by treaty specially favourable commercial terms and were surprised to find them resentfully evading so-called obligations. More than once they found their "get rich quick" policy brought with it results they had not foreseen, and

did not want. So, for instance, in the Moluccas they restricted the cultivation of spices in order to keep up prices, but when world demand made more extensive cultivation profitable, they were unable to persuade the cultivators to replant what they themselves had so ruthlessly destroyed.

Even towards their own servants the Company showed the same niggardly attitude. Many of its officials were badly paid and consequently engaged in private trade, to the great loss of the Company. "Smuggling", as the Dutch termed it, was rife throughout the archipelago, and many of the officials were bribed to take no cognisance of it. At the same time trade was decreasing as the result of the steady increase in piracy which was one of the results of the Dutch conquests. Piracy, of course, had always been prevalent in the Eastern seas, but during the eighteenth century its scale increased when the Malays and others, who in any case did not regard it as dishonourable, found that lawful trade was no longer open to them.

Even in the financial field, in which they might be presumed to be expert, the Dutch failed. As early as 1700 their returns showed a deficit of 12 million guilders. This deficit increased steadily throughout the century until by 1791 it had reached the appalling total of 96 million guilders, which by 1799 had increased to 134 million guilders. In spite of desperate measures to conceal the deficit the unsoundness of the Company's financial position had, by 1760, lost it the commanding lead in international commerce. But even worse than this was the resentment felt for the Dutch by the conquered peoples. Their policy of monopoly had indeed sown dragon's teeth. It might almost have been of the Dutch Company's failure that Burke was thinking when he wrote the words "Great empires and little minds go ill together." To sum up, the Dutch were a small nation, worn out by a long series of wars, who were trying to keep a great empire together by out-of-date commercial methods.

41. *The triumph of the Bugis, 1760*

It is possible now to understand why the treaty between the Dutch and the Bugis proved to be so ineffectual. Daing Kemboja in 1759 had no qualms in sending his nephew Raja Haji to Riau to demand that Sultan Suleiman should allow him to

return as Under-king to Riau, and the Sultan, realising at last that the Dutch could not help him, weakly and reluctantly agreed. Mansur, who had been absent in Trengganu during these negotiations, also accepted the inevitable. From 1760 (when Sultan Suleiman died) until his own death in 1793, Mansur resided in Trengganu and took little further interest (save on one interesting occasion)[1] in Johore politics. By this time the Johore kingdom of the Malays, which had shown such high promise a hundred years earlier, was almost completely disrupted. Selangor and Rembau were still under the control of the Bugis, who also dominated the small inland states occupied by the descendants of Menangkabau immigrants; Pahang was held by Menangkabau, and Siak, so long a thorn in Johore's side, was in 1761 taken over by the Dutch, who somewhat weakly appointed their old enemy Raja Alam as the successor to Raja Muhammad, who had died in 1761.

So it was that in 1760 the Bugis set about gaining complete control of Riau. Sultan Suleiman's heir had died, possibly through poisoning, and Daing Kemboja, in spite of the opposition of the Malay chiefs and in defiance of their own choice, appointed as the next Sultan, Suleiman's infant grandson, Mahmud (born 1760). Kemboja, assisted by his able nephew, Raja Haji, now prepared to consolidate his rule over Riau. Did they perhaps dream, as their actions seem to indicate, of a new Johore empire, controlled by Bugis, which might take the place in Malaya of the moribund Dutch Company? If they did they were to be disappointed, because once again Malaya was soon to be caught up in the orbit of a greater empire, that of Britain.

42. *The rule of Daing Kemboja (1760–77)*

According to a report by P. G. de Bruijn, Governor of Malacca at the time, Daing Kemboja, from the time he became Under-king of Johore and Pahang, began to admit to Riau not only Europeans[2] but also smugglers of tin, pepper and other contraband goods, "though he did so with greater fear of the

[1] See below, p. 102.

[2] In particular, the Bugis bought opium and other goods from the English in exchange for spices. It is said that Kemboja paid for the cost of the Linggi war, demanded by the Dutch in their treaty, by the profits he made out of this clandestine trade (Winstedt).

Company than was shown by his successor, the notorious Raja Haji, who threw open the trade there to all and sundry without the slightest attention to our protests and warnings about the violation of existing treaties between the Company and the Kingdom of Johore". "In this way," he continues, "the Buginese at Johore became so rich and powerful that Raja Haji dared to form a plot to capture the town and fortress of Malacca by surprise, in order to draw the trade and revenues to himself."

De Bruijn was, of course, writing after the Bugis had been driven out from Riau, but he does not disguise his admiration for the spectacular success achieved by the Bugis "with their thirst for trade and profit" in making Riau into so flourishing an entrepôt in so short a time. He lists the main articles of trade during this period as opium, tin, pepper, piece goods and China goods. Twenty thousand pikuls of tin were brought in annually from Bangka,[1] and because of the great demand, "seldom lay longer than six months at Riau" from the time it was imported. Opium[2] and piece goods from Coromandel, Bengal and Surat were brought in by English and Portuguese. "Great numbers" of junks came to trade every year, bringing China goods. Siamese, Malays, Achinese "and other natives frequented Riau to buy opium, piece goods and China goods in exchange for the products of their own lands . . . and these the Riau people bought and sold with much profit." De Bruijn himself advances the reason for the Bugis success. They practised free trade. His report indeed was a last despairing plea to Batavia to remake Malacca into a great emporium, and he advocated that they should imitate the methods of the Bugis.

43. *Malacca*

Complaints about the poorness of Malacca's trade, however, are a constant theme in the reports of Dutch Governors of Malacca during the century. In 1750 Governor W. B. Albinus declared that "numerous competitors" were steadily undermining the cloth trade. Acheh and Kedah sent their own ships to India with tin and pepper and brought back "material most

[1] In 1783 30,000 pikuls were imported.

[2] "The people of Rembau, Selangor and Perak," says de Bruijn, "like the remaining natives, cannot live without opium."

sought after in the Straits, which is hawked about by small vessels and sold on both coasts". The Perak people transported tin along the river and overland to Kedah "where the exchange market for cloth, opium and other cheaper commodities is much better than it is with the Company."

Thomas Schippers, Governor in 1773, face to face with the Bugis competition, has an even gloomier tale to tell. "The sale of goods," he says, "is at present reduced to nothing,[1] with no indication that any improvement may fairly be anticipated in this respect, though trade in the Straits is very busy, and will surely continue to be so." He was deeply concerned at the possibility that the prosperous Bugis would attack Malacca itself. "The Prince Regent of Riau, Cambodia (*sic*) . . . and his son-in-law, Raja Ismail, must be watched very closely in the present circumstances. What the aims of these princes may be certainly remains obscure, but there is no doubt that they seem to be dissembling, and are full of murderous designs." He adds that the people of Rembau and Naning "who are of a murderous and deceitful disposition" must be well watched. The Naning inhabitants especially were "very disloyal and inconstant". He therefore warns his superiors that a strict neutrality should be observed and adds that though the fortifications of Malacca had been repaired, they were in need of the services of a skilled engineer.

44. *Expeditions of Raja Haji*

By 1770 the Bugis position in Riau was so firmly established that Raja Haji, the Dato Klana, decided to reassert his uncle's control over Kedah and Perak as it had been in 1745. In 1770 he swept northward with his fleet, and passing the now useless Dutch fort in the Dindings (much to the consternation of its small garrison), he sailed up the Perak river, where his show of force much impressed the Sultan. The latter agreed to marry his niece to Raja Haji's brother, Raja Lumu, who had made himself the first Sultan of Selangor, taking the name of Salahu'-din. Perhaps one of Raja Haji's objectives was on this occasion to obtain the Sultan's formal recognition of his

[1] Compare the statement by van Papendrecht, a Dutch "Shahbandar" in Malacca, 1778. "The Company's affairs are in a bad and miserable way. It gets terrible blows: its trade is at a standstill, and it is badly in want of funds."

brother's new status. Leaving his brother behind, Raja Haji then went on to Kedah, where he explained to the Sultan that he had simply come to ask for the payment of the nine bahars of dollars which were owing to the Bugis under the agreement of 1724.[1] When the Sultan refused to pay, Raja Haji captured the fortress at Battangan and compelled the Kedah warriors to flee to Alor Star which was then also captured. The Malays, though well armed and equipped with guns, proved to be indifferent fighters; the Sultan had to flee to Perlis for safety.

Kedah, though it had passed through many vicissitudes, was still an important port, exporting elephants, wax, timber and rattans, and the pepper of Pulau Lada and Sumatra in exchange for the opium and cloth of India. The Sultan, fearful of the complete loss of his state and revenue, looked round for allies. He had already applied to the Council of the East India Company at Madras for assistance. When this did not materialise in spite of their friendly protestations, he now decided to apply for the help of a certain English trader, named Francis Light.

45. *Francis Light*

Light had joined the Royal Navy as a midshipman in 1759 but after the Seven Years War, finding himself unemployed, he went to India, where he was given the command of a "country ship"[2] owned by a Madras firm of merchants, Jourdain, Silva and de Souza, who were anxious to open up trade agencies in Acheh and Kedah. He was in Kedah when the embassy from the Sultan reached him. The Sultan offered the seaport of Kedah with a fort lying near it to Light's employers in return for help against the Bugis. Later he offered "the whole coast from this place to Pulau Penang". Light wrote to his employers, "He only awaits your answer to deliver the whole country into your hands." He urged his employers to see the value of the Sultan's concession. "All persons are obliged to stop and deliver their goods at the fortress. The King is the only merchant and without his licence no one can buy. This power he has given entirely to me on your account." The Sultan even supported him against the Chuliahs, or Tamil Muslims, who strongly opposed these concessions, as

[1] See above, p. 85.
[2] A locally owned ship trading under the English East India Company's licence.

also did the nobles who were afraid they might lose their port dues. In spite of Light's enthusiastic persuasions his employers refused the offer. It was not until the Madras Council, on receipt of orders from the East India Company to look for a naval base in Malayan waters, wrote to the firm asking for information, that they sent Light's letters to them. It was then that the Company sent Edward Monckton to Kedah to make further investigations.

Monckton found that the Sultan was in Perlis because his territory had been seized by the Bugis. Though the Sultan was well respected by his subjects, he was old "and cannot live many years. He is now entirely governed by the person who speaks to him last." But he was astute enough to realise that Monckton had received no instructions to offer him what he was seeking —namely, an offensive alliance against the Bugis, and he accordingly dismissed him. "Had the Company no one to send me but this stuttering boy?" he asked. Light was indirectly censured by the Company for the failure of the expedition, and he retired to pursue his own affairs in Junk Ceylon.

46. *Raja Haji as Under-king (1777–84)*

Meanwhile Raja Haji, unperturbed by these fruitless negotiations, continued on his self-appointed task of spreading Bugis power and influence. After his successful campaign in Kedah he sailed to Borneo, where he helped the Sultan of Pontianak against his enemies. While he was there, he heard of the death of Daing Kemboja and of the appointment of the latter's son to the now vacant office of Yam Tuan Muda. Raja Haji was not the man to allow a rival to replace him without a struggle. He instantly set sail for Pahang, where he persuaded the Bendahara Tun Abdul Majid to name him as the Under-king of Riau in accordance with custom. It is to be noted that by this time Pahang had become the province of the Bendahara, and Tun Abdul Majid, installed in that office about 1770, was the first Bendahara of that state of whom we know. As Senior Chief he had the power of installing Sultans and assumed in Pahang all the Sultan's prerogatives including the power of capital punishment. Armed with the Bendahara's approval Raja Haji went south to Riau and compelled his cousin to resign in spite of the fact that the Dutch had already recognised

Raja Ali as Under-king. The Dutch accepted this *fait accompli*, and from 1777 to 1782 they and Raja Haji remained on comparatively friendly terms.

47. *The War of American Independence*

In the meantime a very serious blow befell the Dutch. The American colonies had revolted against the English in 1776, and the Dutch, who for a long time had been engaged in the smuggling trade with them, favoured the colonists and made a commercial treaty with them. Unfortunately for the Dutch a copy of this treaty was seized by an English ship, and England immediately declared war on Holland. In 1781 the Dutch fleet was destroyed in a naval battle off the Dogger Bank. This was a disaster for the Dutch, for the victory gave England command of the sea and made it impossible therefore for the Dutch to send reinforcements and supplies to their colonies. The Dutch colonies in India and Trincomalee in Ceylon were seized, as also was Padang in Sumatra.

So great a blow to their prestige was bound to have repercussions in South-East Asia. Raja Haji saw further possibilities of expanding Bugis power, and he did not have long to wait before he was able to pick a quarrel with the Dutch. It happened that a French captain had seized an East Indiaman, the *Betsy*, in the Johore river with, as he afterwards claimed, the approval of Raja Haji. Though the latter is said to have denied this (perhaps because he did not wish to antagonise the English, whose trade he welcomed) he protested strongly when he heard that the spoils had been divided between the French and their Dutch allies and that none had been assigned to him. When the Dutch ignored his demands for a share, he began with the aid of his brother, Salahu'-din of Selangor, to prey upon shipping in the Straits and to make raids on the outskirts of Malacca.

The Dutch thereupon, in 1783, sent a fleet to blockade Riau, which was defended by Raja Haji himself. In January 1784 the Dutch sent a strong fleet under the command of a civilian, Arnold Lemker, to capture the Bugis capital. In the ensuing battle, however, the Dutch commander's ship was blown up, and the Dutch fleet retreated in confusion, "we being in want of everything, and far too inferior in strength," says van Papendrecht, who was there.

48. *The siege of Malacca, 1784*

Raja Haji now went over to the offensive. Assisted by "all the princes of the Straits" and especially by Selangor, he laid siege to the city. He made a landing in Teluk Ketapang Bay and established a stockade near by from which he made a series of attacks on the outer suburbs of Malacca. In the meantime Sultan Ibrahim of Selangor crossed the Linggi river to Rembau and Pedes where he recruited Menangkabau willing to help against the Dutch. "We were in great embarrassment," says van Papendrecht. "The enemy hemmed us in closely, except on the sea side." Malacca, however, was not to be taken. Peace had been declared in Europe in 1783, and this enabled the Dutch to send a fleet under Admiral van Braam to relieve the city. Van Papendrecht declared that it would not have succeeded in this but for the death, in a fray with the landing party, of Raja Haji "in whom all the natives saw a living saint. No sooner had he fallen than they broke and fled, and we were free of our enemies." Sultan Ibrahim retreated to Selangor.

49. *The Dutch capture Riau*

The Dutch were determined after this to destroy for ever the power of the Bugis. They resented very much the attack on Malacca, launched as it was in the moment of their weakness. They laid siege to Selangor and captured that state, driving the Sultan to seek refuge in Pahang. Then van Braam invaded Riau, whence he drove out the Bugis chieftains. He then made a treaty with Sultan Mahmud whereby he and his chiefs agreed to accept a Dutch Resident, David Ruhde, and to cede the island to the Dutch. The Dutch hoped to rule indirectly with the Sultan's support, as they did in similar circumstances in Java. They demanded their usual commercial privileges—monopoly and the exclusion of other European traders—and stipulated that the Bugis were never in future to reside in the island. This was not displeasing to the Malay chiefs, one of whom, Engku Muda, a grand-nephew of Sultan Suleiman, tried to persuade the Sultan to give him the Bugis title of Under-king—but this the Sultan, from motives of policy, refused to do.

Scarcely had this settlement been agreed to than the Dutch heard that Sultan Ibrahim, supported by the Bendahara of

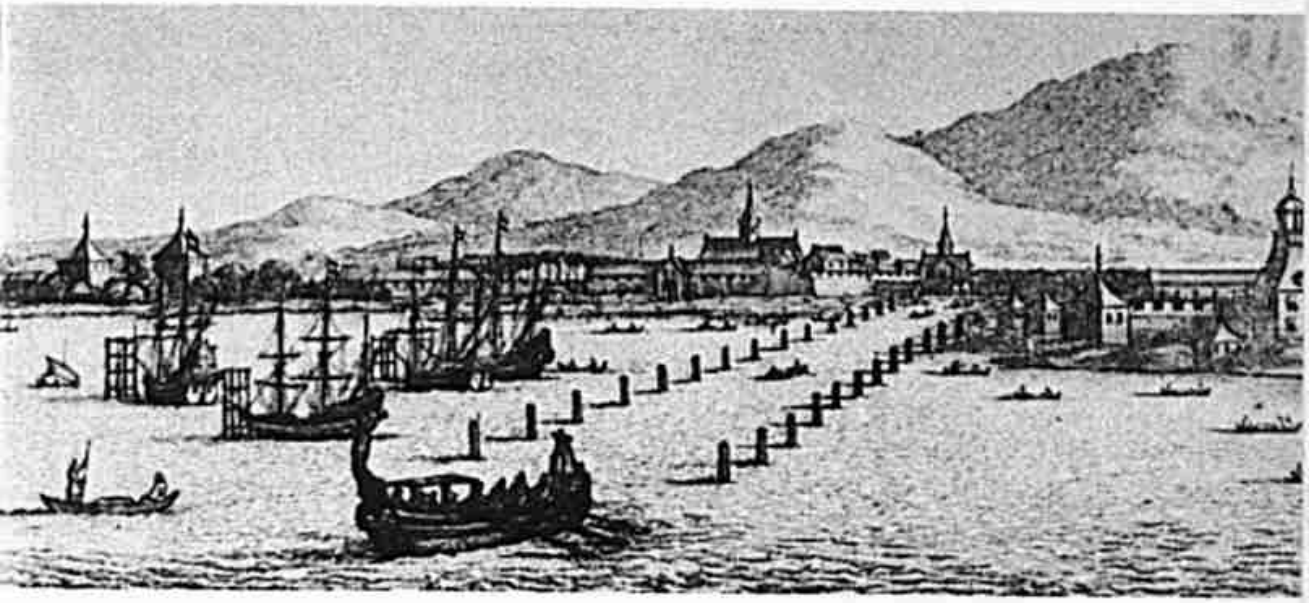
Pahang, had recaptured Selangor, driving out the Dutch garrison. Ibrahim, realising the weakness of his position, tried to obtain the protection of the Governor-General of India, claiming this, as Light tells us, by virtue of the preference the English merchants received from him and his father "above any other nation". No help was forthcoming, however, and Ibrahim was compelled by the Dutch fleet to surrender once more. This time he agreed to give the Dutch a monopoly of the tin of Sungei Ujong and Klang and thenceforth to live in friendship with the Dutch.

Meanwhile the Dutch decided to tighten their control over Riau, and on 7 February they made a treaty whereby the Sultan agreed, reluctantly, to surrender the administration of the island to the Dutch Resident. A great many of his privileges were removed from him, and even his right to award capital punishment was transferred to Malacca. Mahmud looked round despairingly for help and eventually took the fatal decision of inviting the dreaded "Pirates of the Lagoon", the Lanun of Mindanao, to help him. The Lanun overwhelmed the Dutch garrison of 254 men, the Dutch officials barely escaping with their lives. No respecters of persons, the Lanun reduced Riau by fire and sword, and the Sultan himself and his chief officials were compelled to seek safety in flight. Riau was now deserted by all except a few Chinese gambier planters.

The Sultan, however, soon realised the folly of his conduct, and tried to make peace with the Dutch, urging his grand-uncle Mansur of Trengganu and his cousin, Ibrahim of Selangor, to intercede for him. The Dutch turned a deaf ear to his entreaties. He then asked the help of the English, which was also denied him. In a last despairing effort to get rid of the Dutch he organised a confederation of Malay powers—Trengganu, Kedah (which had its own reasons for joining),[1] Rembau, Siak, Lingga, Johore, Indragiri and Siantan—to drive both Dutch and all other Europeans from the Malacca Straits. This coalition was far from successful—the Dutch had no difficulty in warding off an attack on the Dindings, and Light easily repelled the attack on Penang.

Meanwhile the Dutch, alarmed by the recent occupation of Penang by the British, decided to reoccupy the depopulated

[1] See below, p. 110.



Batavia, c. 1665

Jan Pieterszoon Coen

Macassar

Captain Light at the Flagstaff

island of Riau, persuade the Malays to return, and then declare it a free port. It was not easy to induce the Malays to come back, however, and in 1795 the Dutch permitted the former Bugis Under-king Raja Ali to return, on condition that he persuaded the Sultan to do so. But once more events in the great outer world affected Malayan history, for in 1795 the French armies completely overran Holland. Its ruler, the Stadthouder, escaped to England, and in the so-called "Kew Letters" he agreed to allow the English to take over all Dutch dependencies in South-East Asia to prevent the French from getting them. As a result of this the British occupied Malacca, and it was they, in fact, who restored Sultan Mahmud to his throne and at the same time restored the Bugis also.

Sultan Mahmud now found himself in a very difficult position because of the mutual dislike between Malays and Bugis. His relative, Engku Muda, who had arrogated to himself the Bugis title of Under-king, did not take kindly to the restoration of Raja Ali, and he delivered a series of attacks against the latter. At last, in 1801, the Sultan tried to arrange a compromise between the two opposing factions. He therefore offered Engku Muda the office of Temenggong, which his father had filled before him, and at the same time declared his willingness to recognise Raja Ali as Yam Tuan Muda. Raja Ali accepted these terms; Engku Muda refused them. The Sultan thereupon conferred the office of Temenggong on Engku Muda's nephew, Abdur Rahman, who thereupon took up his abode in Singapore. This was the man who negotiated with Raffles in 1819. The Sultan also entrusted the education of his elder son, Tengku Husein, to Engku Muda and the education of his younger son, Tengku Abdur Rahman, to Raja Ali. This arrangement had very important consequences, for, although Husein was widely regarded as the Sultan's heir, the Bugis naturally were bound to advance the claims of their protégé. When, in fact, Suleiman died in 1812, Raja Ali, taking advantage of Husein's temporary absence in Pahang, had his nominee, Abdur Rahman, proclaimed Sultan, and Husein was left without any apparent chance of gaining the throne. This fact provided Raffles in 1819 with a heaven-sent opportunity for legalising his occupation of Singapore, for by recognising Husein as the rightful Sultan he was able to claim that the

treaty of 1819, with Husein's signature on it, was a legal document.

In 1804 the old Sultan of Perak died. Thereupon the Perak chiefs sent an invitation to the Sultan at Riau, offering him their throne. The Bugis who were in power at Riau were annoyed at this offer, and Sultan Ibrahim of Selangor sailed northwards to Perak, seized power there and held it until 1806. Though a new Sultan was appointed in 1806, the Selangor Bugis claimed half the tin, adding to the trouble of that unfortunate state until 1826.

50. *Negri Sembilan*

One consequence of the decline of Bugis power was the reemergence of Menangkabau "nationalism". For the greater part of the century, the Menangkabau were unable to appoint one of their own princes to rule them but instead found themselves virtually under Bugis control. By 1745 Selangor had come under the control of a Bugis Sultan; Klang was ruled by a Bugis Raja Tua; the founder of the families of the underkings of Tampin and Jelebu was a Bugis Raja Adil. The territorial chief of Sungei Ujong was a Bugis, with the title of Klana Putra. In 1757 the Bugis offered the Dutch the monopoly of tin, which they then controlled in Klang, Linggi and the nine shires of Rembau. It was only after the defeat of Raja Haji and the expulsion of the Bugis from Riau by the Dutch that the Menangkabau saw some chance that their aspirations for self-rule would be realised.

In 1773 a certain Raja Melewar appears to have been elected by the four Menangkabau chiefs as Yang di-pertuan Besar. He claimed to be a descendant of the ancient royal house of Menangkabau, of whom Adityarvarman was in the fourteenth century one of the most famous rulers.[1] It would seem that his claims were substantiated and that he proved himself able to pass the searching tests of knowledge of Menangkabau law and customs which the hard-headed Menangkabau electors demanded. Who these were is not known, though Winstedt tentatively suggests that the rulers of Sungei Ujong, Rembau and Johol might have been among them. Melewar established himself at Sri Menanti so as not to be too near the Dutch at

[1] Vol. 1, p. 111.

Malacca (who nevertheless appear to have recognised him), and he carefully avoided all entanglements in Bugis politics. Very soon a number of small settlements gave him their support and allegiance. These probably included Johol, Ulu Muar, Terachi, Gunong Pasir, Jempul and Juas. By 1795, the year of his death, these little settlements had achieved their independence, and they were later to grow into what is now known as the state of Negri Sembilan.

CHAPTER SIX

THE BRITISH SEARCH FOR A PORT IN SOUTH-EAST ASIA

I
Malaya's Great Neighbours

51. *Britain and India*

By the middle of the eighteenth century, Britain had achieved a position of great power. In the West she had established the North American colonies, and in India she was in the process of acquiring a great empire. India indeed was in a state of chaos. The Moghul Empire which had succeeded the Afghans in 1526 had achieved a brief unity under men like Akbar and Aurungzebe, but by the mid-eighteenth century this unity had been completely lost. India was divided into states and principalities (like Oudh, Calicut and especially the Mahratta Confederation which dominated the centre of the peninsula) under rulers who owed but a nominal allegiance to the Emperor. Into this anarchy of conflicting interests the British and French projected their rivalry in Europe, and their respective East India Companies fought each other for the prize, India. The Treaty of Paris (1763) which ended the Seven Years War underlined the fact that Britain had defeated her rivals in the colonial conflict. Everything now favoured Britain's advance as a colonial power.

It became obvious that a mere trading company could not be trusted with the vast responsibilities involved in this increase of power, territory and wealth, and the British Government had to accept an increasing share in those responsibilities. In 1773 a Governor-General and Council were appointed, and later, in 1784, a Board of Control was set up to supervise the conduct of political government in India. The East India Company was now therefore a political as well as a commercial body, ultimately responsible to the British Government. It obviously could not remain indifferent to the lands on the other side of the Bay of Bengal.

52. *Britain and China*

In sharp contrast with India, China during the eighteenth century continued to be great and powerful. The Ming dynasty had collapsed in 1644 before the onslaught of the Manchus, and during this century the two greatest emperors of the Manchus, Kang Hei and Chien Lung, increased China's territory and led a new renaissance of the arts.

After her great commercial expansion under the Ming dynasty, China had adopted a policy of withdrawal from the outside world in which the Western powers were proving so aggressive, rightly believing that she had no need of the products of foreign countries. She was, in fact, self-supporting.

In 1699, however, the English ship *Macclesfield*, after an adventurous voyage to Canton, succeeded in making arrangements for trade between the two countries. After 1700 the Company sent ships each year to Canton and in 1715 founded a factory there. For the next 150 years a trade highly profitable to both countries was carried on in that port. There was in England a great demand for Chinese goods—silk, porcelain and, above all, tea (which by 1780 had become an essential article of the people's diet), but, since in China there was no demand for European goods, these commodities had to be paid for in silver. The drain of silver bullion from the West (which had been one of the causes of the fall of the Roman empire) was stopped only when it was discovered that there was a ready market for opium in China. By 1800 about half the opium grown in British India was sent in "country" ships[1] to Macao, whence it was sold to the mainland, and by this unhappy means the drain of silver from the West was stopped and the reverse process (which was to prove one of the causes of China's decline) took place.

It is obvious that the preservation and development of this trade was a matter of the first importance to the East India Company, first, because of India itself, where the profits of the trade saved the Company from bankruptcy resulting from a maladministration and corruption as bad as that of the Dutch Company, and secondly, because of the home country itself, where profits soared after 1784 when the duty on tea was reduced fr 100 per cent to 12 per cent. The command of

[1] See footnote p. 98.

the sea route between East and West therefore became a vital interest to Britain, and this helps to explain the reason for the foundation of both Penang and Singapore.

53. *The Industrial Revolution*

The amazing development of overseas trade made possible the Industrial Revolution. In the old days when trade depended upon local needs and local markets, there had been little industrialisation, but now a world-wide market had opened up in which there was a great demand for simple articles such as cotton cloths which could be turned out in great quantities by machines.

It was in England that the Industrial Revolution began, and from there it spread to the rest of the world. By England, it was introduced directly into Malaya after 1874. She had gained by her conquests an extensive market; she was rich, and had the necessary capital for investment; she had plenty of coal and iron and was well served by the genius of her inventors. After 1760 she began to send her manufactured goods in ever-increasing quantities to her wide-flung markets and brought back in exchange food and raw materials. Moreover she no longer accepted the monopolistic system of trade. Adam Smith taught in his famous book published in 1776 that the wealth of nations was to be found in free trade, individual enterprise and competition. By the beginning of the nineteenth century Britain was "the workshop of the world", anxious for more and more free markets.

Of all Malaya's great neighbours, it was clear that Britain was the one destined to have the greatest influence on the next stage of her development.

II

The Founding of Penang

54. *The search for a port begins*

There were three main reasons why the British were anxious to gain a port on the eastern side of the Bay of Bengal. The first, as we have just seen, was provided by the needs of the China trade, which demanded a port in that area where ships on the

long voyage between India and China could re-victual and refit. Bencoolen, the one port remaining to them since the loss of Patani in 1618, was too far off the main sea route to be of any use to them, and the Dutch-controlled ports were far from ideal for the purpose and in any case imposed tariffs that were much too high. Moreover, even when the decline of Dutch power in the second half of the century seemed to provide the British with a chance of sharing in the trade of the Straits, the increasing danger from pirates made a port essential to help them to deal with this menace. Light and others pointed out that the Straits trade was far from negligible—did not the opium sold there help to provide silver dollars for the China trade? But at this time there seemed little likelihood of the British gaining control of one or other of the Dutch ports.

The Bay of Bengal was a major theatre of the wars between England and France, for it was there that the rival navies fought each other for the command of the eastern seas. All maritime operations, of course, had to be suspended during the monsoon between October and April, and as during this time anchorages on the east coast of India proved to be very dangerous, alternative ports where the ships could lie until it was safe to renew their battles had to be found. The British usually sailed to Bombay, but the French found that a port on the eastern side of the Bay gave them a remarkable strategic advantage. It is obvious that the power whose fleet could return first after the monsoon to the scene of operations in the Bay would have, for a brief season, uncontested control of the Straits, and as a result, the chance of striking a decisive blow against its enemy. It was this fear of the loss of an empire through the mere chance of the monsoon that induced the British Admiralty to seek for a port on the eastern side of the Bay.

The British now turned their attention to the Straits of Malacca, south of Junk Ceylon, looking for a port somewhere between the Andaman islands and Bintang in the Riau Archipelago (suggested by Light in 1769) and Borneo. The idea of a settlement in the Sunda Strait, though attractive, was dismissed because it was too near Batavia. In 1770 they obtained a lease of the island of Balembangan from the Sultan of the Sulu Islands, but the fortress that they built had a brief and tragic history, being destroyed by the Lanun pirates in 1775.

In any case, from the strategic point of view the port was useless, being too far away from the Bay of Bengal. It was at this moment that the Company in desperation asked for information from private traders sailing to South-East Asia with regard to obtaining a site in Acheh, Kedah or other ports. We have seen already what happened in regard to Kedah,[1] and Acheh proved equally disappointing.

In 1780 Light visited Calcutta and tried to persuade Warren Hastings that Junk Ceylon would prove to be an ideal base, but the Governor-General, though impressed, was too preoccupied with the problems of the American War of Independence to give the project much attention. Hastings was, however, profoundly impressed by the brilliant success in 1782 of the French admiral de Suffren, who, returning after the monsoon to the Bay of Bengal before his opponent Sir Edward Hughes was able to do so, had swept all British commerce from the Bay and even threatened Calcutta itself. Hastings, determined that this sort of thing should not happen again, sent embassies to Acheh and Riau to secure a base. Acheh obstinately refused, as did of course the Dutch, who had now recaptured Riau from the Bugis.[2]

It was at this moment that Light once more put forward the claims of Penang. He pointed out that it was ideally situated in the northern part of the Straits; that even a badly-damaged ship could reach it from the Coromandel coast in ten days; that it would make an excellent port, not only for the China trade, but also for that of the archipelago; and finally that its occupation by the British would prevent the Dutch from re-establishing their complete control of the Straits, with all the dangers this would entail for the China trade. These arguments finally prevailed, an agreement was drawn up with the Sultan, and the British formally accepted Penang on the 11th August 1786 as a base and appointed Light as its first Superintendent.

55. *The cession of Penang*

The Sultan of Kedah, who had made the agreement with Light, had done so with one object in mind. This was to secure the help of the British against a very formidable enemy, not the Bugis of Selangor, as had been the case in 1771 with his father,

[1] See above, p. 102.

[2] See above, pp. 102, 103.

but this time Siam. This country had been overrun by Burma in 1767, but as the result of a strong national revival had succeeded in driving out her inveterate foe from her borders, and now began a policy of expansion. One of her aims was to bring the whole of Malaya under her jurisdiction, and she decided to begin with Kedah. Light, who was a friend of the Sultan, clearly appreciated the situation and shared his alarm. He warned his superiors that the demand for protection was an essential condition of the Sultan's agreement to cede the island, but the Company deliberately ignored this condition. They had no wish to be entangled in local civil wars or (in this case) to be embroiled with Siam. Hence they avoided any reference to military aid to Kedah in the treaty and turned a deaf ear to Light's repeated and embarrassed pleas later that this should be given. Meanwhile the Sultan and the chiefs for a time continued to believe that in case of real necessity help would be forthcoming, but by 1790 they were completely disillusioned. Thus it was that the Sultan in that year joined the federation[1] of Malay princes organised by the Sultan of Johore to drive out the Europeans from the Straits altogether. His attempt to recapture Penang failed, and in 1791 he signed a treaty confirming the cession of the island in return for a pension of 6,000 dollars.

To forestall future attacks on Penang and to ensure its food supplies, the Company asked the Sultan in 1800 to sign a second treaty wherein he ceded not only Penang, but also a strip of territory on the mainland (known henceforth as Province Wellesley) to the Company in perpetuity. His pension was increased to 10,000 dollars a year, and he was assured that Penang would give no asylum to his enemies and that the Company would make itself responsible for guarding the coast against pirates and other enemies. There was no clause in either treaty committing the Company to help Kedah against her enemies.

Nevertheless, by accepting Penang in the first place the Company had made itself morally responsible for the protection of Kedah. Its shameful evasion of this responsibility was to lead to the Siamese invasion of Kedah in 1821, and the strictures of Sir Frank Swettenham who said that "it sullied the

[1] See above, p. 102.

British name and weakened its influence with the Malays for many years" were only too well deserved.

56. *The settlement of Penang*

Light's first task was to attract settlers to the island, and in this he had very considerable success. The settlers included Malays anxious to escape from the exactions of their own rulers in the Peninsula or those of the Dutch; Indians; Burmese, and even people from Celebes and the other islands. Though for some time the Chinese were few in number, Light was able to write in 1794 that "they were the most valuable part of our inhabitants". The work of clearing the jungle was carried out largely by Malays, and roads, buildings, bridges were built by Bengal convicts. In twenty-two years the population had reached one thousand; by 1804 it had reached 12,000; and by 1820, 28,849.

Up to 1797 the British Admiralty were by no means convinced that Penang was the port for which they had sought so long. In that year, however, it was selected as the base from

Penang—early view

which a great naval attack was to be launched on Manila. Though the attack did not take place, the admiral of the fleet and Wellesley (later the Duke of Wellington) spoke of its strategic position in enthusiastic terms, and this no doubt influenced Wellesley's brother, the Governor-General, to look with new favour on the island. In 1805 Penang, which had hitherto been under the control of Bengal, was made into the Fourth Indian Presidency, with a large establishment of officials. Its future seemed assured. But almost immediately the old doubts reasserted themselves. The Company expected that its trade, which had grown from nothing in 1786 to an annual export value of over one and a half million Spanish dollars in 1804, would show still greater increase. They were disappointed when, after a slight increase up to 1810, it remained stationary. The truth was that native traders preferred to call at the Dutch ports in spite of the high tariffs they imposed rather than risk the very real perils of piratical attacks on the long journey to the north of the Straits. Penang's trade was, in fact, confined largely to Burma, part of Sumatra and the west coast of Malaya. Then again, though timber was plentiful on the island, this could not equal Burmese teak for shipbuilding. In any case, though Penang had a fine harbour, it was found impossible to build dockyards there. Moreover, the newly-founded Presidency failed to keep its expenditure down to the level of its revenue. The fact was that the commerce of the island was not big enough to support the heavy superstructure of a Presidency with its numerous officials.

The search for a port would have to begin again.

III

Events Leading to the Foundation of Singapore

57. *Destruction of "A Famosa"*

In 1795 British troops occupied Malacca and took Padang in Sumatra; they secured the surrender of Ternate in 1795 and took Amboina and Banda without opposition in 1796. With the Cape of Good Hope, Trincomalee and Colombo in their possession, the British had now full command of the eastern

seas. In 1811, they captured Java, to "counter Napoleon's designs for the encirclement of India".[1]

The Dutch Governor, Abraham Couperus, at Malacca had obeyed the orders of his prince by handing over the fortress peaceably to Captain Newcombe; for their part the British, apart from installing Captain William Farquhar[2] as Resident, interfered as little as possible with Dutch methods of administration. We have noted already the decline into which Malacca had fallen by the end of the eighteenth century; its population had now dwindled to 1,500. Under British rule with its policy of free trade, however, it began to recover; traders from the east of the archipelago visited the port once more, and soon Malacca was building up a rich trade in spices. All this was not lost on the Penang Government, who saw that Malacca might easily grow into a serious rival. They made representations to Madras that at this rate of progress Britain (as trustee of a French-occupied Holland) would be returning to the Dutch, when the war ended, a really flourishing entrepôt in place of the moribund port they had taken over. The Directors of the Company were so impressed by this argument that they gave orders for the destruction of the fortress; then this undefended settlement would utterly decline when the British withdrew. Accordingly the ramparts, which were still in a "tolerable state of preservation", were destroyed—at the cost of £70,000. Not content with this, the Directors also ordered that the merchants should be induced to leave Malacca for Penang.

58. *Raffles's report*

Lord Minto later described this destruction of the fortress as "a most useless piece of gratuitous mischief". That the complete destruction of Malacca did not take place was due primarily to Raffles. Thomas Stamford Raffles had begun his career as a clerk in the East India Company. In 1805, after ten years at India House, he was offered the post of Assistant Secretary to the new Governor of Penang. His amazing industry, devotion to duty and wide grasp of affairs, together with his knowledge of Malay, soon won him promotion, in 1807, to the post of Secretary. During the autumn of this year

[1] D. G. E. Hall, *A History of South East Asia*, p. 411.
[2] Not to be confused with Robert T. Farquhar.

Raffles fell ill and went to Malacca to recuperate in the "true, vital air", as Minto describes it, of that city.[1]

Raffles was familiar with the glorious history of "A Famosa", and his indignation with the vandal policy of the Company led him to write a closely reasoned report on the condition of Malacca. In this he stated that the inhabitants did not wish to leave their city and that it would be unjust to compel them to do so; that fort or no fort, the prestige of Malacca would attract there a European power or else a Malay prince who would make of it a pirate base; and that the best policy for the British was to keep Malacca until they were compelled to give it up. "Malacca ceded to the British, its rivalship with Penang would cease. . . . With the assistance of Malacca the whole of the Malay Rajahs in the Straits and to the eastward might be rendered not only subservient, but, if necessary, tributary." When the Governor-General, Lord Minto, read this report, he was much impressed and ordered that the work of destruction should cease immediately.

This report had brought Raffles to the notice of the Governor-General. The latter had for some time been planning the annexation of Java, and when he found that Raffles had an extensive knowledge of this island and its problems, he appointed him as Governor-General's agent to the Malay States with the task of preparing the ground for the coming invasion.

59. *Java 1795–1811*

When Holland was overrun by the French in 1795, a National Assembly was set up which declared the formation of the "Batavian Republic" under French protection. Under the new Constitution all the possessions of the Dutch East India Company were taken over by the State, and on 1 January 1800 the Company, which was in any case bankrupt, was dissolved. In its place a Council for Asiatic Affairs was set up whose function was to decide the best form of Government for the eastern dependencies, for though everyone in Holland still maintained that colonies existed for the good of the mother country, the influence of French Revolutionary principles was beginning to

[1] Malacca had a great, but undeserved, reputation for its healthy climate. Compare the fate of van Papendrecht who praised it highly in 1785, but who died soon after from fever.

make itself felt. Some theorists like Dirk van Hogendorp advocated the abolition of "Forced Deliveries and Contingencies" and the replacement of the existing system of "Indirect Rule" in Java (whereby the Dutch delegated the actual business of ruling the country to Regents, who were native princes strictly responsible to them) by the "Direct Rule" practised by the British in India. In 1802 a Committee led by van Nederburgh met to draw up a Charter, but its deliberations (which incidentally advocated the continuance of "Indirect Rule") came to nothing. The Batavian Republic was short-lived, being replaced in 1806 by Louis Bonaparte as King of Holland, and in any case the war completely interrupted communications between Holland and her colonies.

Meanwhile Java during the period 1795 to 1806 had been free from the direct control of Holland, and a free trade sprang up with neutral countries such as Denmark and the United States. In 1806, however, this semi-independence was ended when Louis Bonaparte appointed Herman Willem Daendels to put Java into a state of defence against the British and to carry out certain reforms. He at once introduced the system of "Direct Rule" in such a way that all power was centralised in the government at Batavia; the power and status of the native princes was reduced, and the whole of Java, divided into nine Prefectures, was administered by paid civil servants. To strengthen Java's defences he constructed (with forced labour) harbours, forts, foundries and roads, including a splendid trunk road along the northern coast. Unfortunately for him the blockade of the Javanese coast by the British made it impossible for him to export coffee and cotton, and he was compelled to try various expedients for raising money, including the highly unpopular one with the Javanese of selling land on a large scale to the Chinese. These measures which were carried out in an arbitrary and dictatorial manner earned him the greatest unpopularity with Dutch and Javanese alike, and in 1810 the King recalled him and replaced him by a man of more moderate character, Jan Willem Janssens.

60. *Raffles as Lieutenant-Governor of Java and its Dependencies, 1811–16*

By this time British preparations for the invasion of Java were complete; Raffles had tried to undermine Janssens's

position by sending secret missions to a number of Javanese princes (already deeply antagonised by Daendels's policy) and gaining promises of support from them. When in August 1811, therefore, the British, with 12,000 men, landed near Batavia, they had little difficulty in capturing the city, and within a few weeks compelled Janssens to surrender. Lord Minto, satisfied now that Java would not fall into French hands, appointed Raffles as Lieutenant-Governor of Java and its dependencies Madura, Palembang, Macassar and Timor, and returned to India. The British now controlled the whole of the archipelago.

The Dutch colonies were divided by the British into four main administrative units—Java, Malacca, Bencoolen and the Moluccas. Though he did good work in attempting to suppress piracy and the slave trade in the outer provinces, Raffles's chief concern was with the administration of Java.

Raffles had given much thought to the problem of the people of Malaysia. He had spent five years learning Malay and had delved deeply into Malay and Javanese history. He liked the Malays, believing "that they were fresher from the hand of nature than the Indian", and was genuinely concerned with improving their lot. As a disciple of Wilberforce he was passionately anti-slavery and inclined therefore to abandon his early mercantilist principles in favour of Free Trade; as an Englishman he was anti-Dutch, and it was his earnest hope that Java would never be restored to them after the war but would become the nucleus of a British South-East Asian dependency. In setting about the reorganisation of Java he had the example of British India to guide him and certain reforms suggested by van Hogendorp or others put into practice by Daendels. But in many particulars he differed from both of these. Whilst he admired the efficiency of Daendels "who introduced a much more . . . active, pure and efficient administration than ever existed before", he far surpassed him in his knowledge of the East. Again, for van Hogendorp colonies existed for the good of the mother country; for Raffles, the good of the native inhabitants was a primary concern—and this not merely from humanitarian motives, but also for the reason that unless their welfare was improved, the Javanese could not afford the cheap cottons that England had already begun to mass-produce.

Raffles introduced Direct Government into Java, thereby

continuing Daendels's policy of centralisation. Java was divided into sixteen Residencies, each under a District Officer. Each Residency was divided into Divisions, under Divisional Officers; and each Division was divided into villages, under their headmen. By this chain of command he hoped to bring the villagers into more direct contact with the central government and at the same time to limit the arbitrary power of the native princes who as "District Officers" were now merely civil servants. The most revolutionary feature of this organisation was the important part given to the headman, for Raffles said, "The office of headman had been elective, and his powers were entrusted to him by his fellow villagers." In other words Raffles gave the elected representative of the people a place as an agent of the government.

Raffles declared that all land belonged to the State and that consequently the Javanese were tenants, who should pay rent for their property. For this reason he instituted a land tax and attempted to sweep away the iniquitous system of "Contingencies and Forced Deliveries". He did his best to get rid of slavery and insisted without much effect that compulsory labour should be abolished. By his judicial reforms he emphasised the great principle of equality of all before the Law. In these various ways he did his best to free the Javanese peasants from the feudal system under which they had lived for centuries.

In this short period of five years Raffles introduced so many reforms that it is not to be wondered at that even his friends were confused. His enemies pointed to the undoubted fact that the financial position of the government was desperate, but Raffles was too much of an optimist to recognise that "his administration was," as Wurzburg says, "chaotic". What he needed above all was time and a Government at home sufficiently sympathetic to his innovations to help him in his financial difficulties. Castlereagh's Government, however, was far from sympathetic. They wanted to build up the power of the Netherlands in Europe as a buffer against another possible outbreak of French "Revolutionary madness". Friendship with the Dutch was essential to this policy, and they saw Raffles's vehement protests against the restoration of Holland's eastern dependencies as a most dangerous threat to it. They therefore recalled him in 1816.

Sir Stamford Raffles

Singapore from Mount Wallich, 1856

Yap Ah Loy

In spite of its apparent failure Raffles's rule in Java had far-reaching effects. To try to reform a bankrupt, starving and disrupted country in five years was an impossible task, but the fact that after 1816 the Dutch retained many of his reforms is no small commendation of his rule. It is, however, the ideals that inspired his rule that are important. Not least of his achievements is the fact that he was the first to emphasise that the welfare of a subject people is the first concern of a colonial administration.

IV
The Founding of Singapore

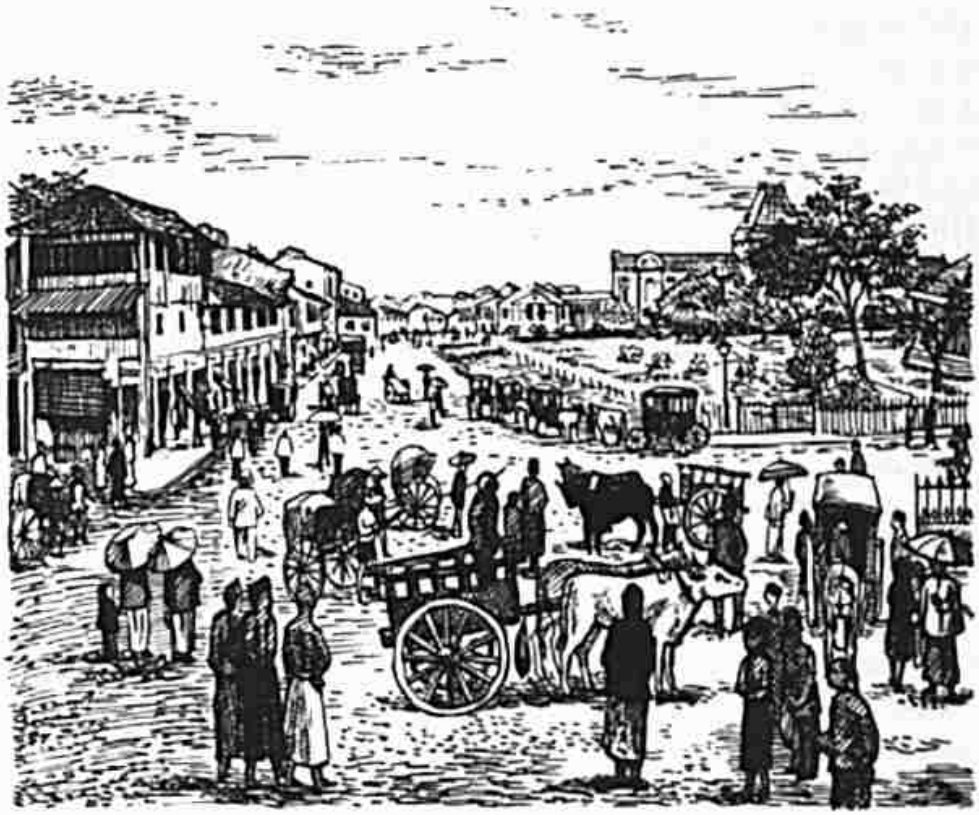
After his recall from Java Raffles went to England on leave. There he wrote his *History of Java*, which earned him golden opinions and a knighthood. He then returned to the East as Resident of Bencoolen, a place which he described in a letter to his friend Marsden as "without exception the most wretched place I have ever beheld". It was in truth one of the worst factories ever established by the East India Company; it had been running at a loss for years; it had no prospects; and its officials were hopeless and disillusioned. Raffles tried with his accustomed energy to transform the place, but even he had to admit that the task was an impossible one. Even here he did not forget his dream of a British Empire of the Islands, and he watched the Dutch return to Malaysia with increasing apprehension.

The Dutch, fearful that their long separation from their colonies would cost them their influence there, hastened to reclaim all their possessions and outposts, informing the Malay princes that the British occupation had been a temporary and insignificant interlude. The British Government, anxious as we have seen to keep on friendly terms with them, adhered to the terms of the Convention of London, 1814, which guaranteed the return of colonies "conquered from Holland since 1803". Though they retained the Cape and Ceylon, they made no objection to the Dutch return to the East Indies, of the importance of which they had at the moment no conception. The Dutch therefore embarked on a thoroughgoing

rebuilding of their empire, rightly arguing that the British would not interfere because of their fear of France. Their chief fear was of Raffles and his schemes, for a reading of his *History* made only too clear to them his strong opposition to Dutch monopoly and his anxiety to extend British influence. They derived some consolation from the fact that the British Government, no less than themselves, regarded Raffles as an *enfant terrible*, as was shown when they expressed their strong displeasure when "he exceeded his instructions" by agreeing to support the pretender to the throne of Palembang.

The Dutch return to Malacca nevertheless worried the officials of Penang very much, for they saw in this a further threat to the indifferent trade of their port. Raffles, fearing that the Dutch were trying to limit British influence to Penang and Bencoolen, argued that "some convenient station . . . in the neighbourhood of Bintang" was essential, as the Dutch "possess the only passes through which ships must sail into the Archipelago—the Straits of Sunda and Malacca. . . . Every day, every hour . . . their influence increases and our difficulties will be proportionately increased." These warnings eventually had their effect on Governor-General Hastings, and in 1818 he not only granted Raffles an interview in Calcutta but even gave him permission to look for a station "commanding the southern entrance of the Straits", explicitly mentioning Riau as the most likely place, and if this had already been taken by the Dutch, Johore as the next best. First, however, he had to secure the friendship of Acheh, and thereby secure control of the northern part of the Straits. But Raffles had to do nothing which might upset the "existing amity" between Holland and England.

Armed with these instructions, Raffles set sail on 7 December 1818 for Penang. In a letter written to his friend Marsden while on board, he wrote, "My attention is principally turned to Johore, and you must not be surprised if my next letter to you is dated from the ancient city of Singapore." Perhaps he was not very surprised to hear from Bannerman, the Governor of Penang, that the Dutch on 26 November had regained control of Riau and renewed their old treaties with the helpless Sultan; nor did he raise any objection when Bannerman, jealous both of Raffles's progress and of the possibility of a new



Singapore street scene, 1900

southern port, dissuaded him from visiting Acheh because of certain important letters he (Bannerman) had sent on this subject to Madras. He ignored Bannerman's arguments that his mission was now pointless and having sent Farquhar (who favoured the Carimons) in advance to make arrangements, if possible, for "securing the eventual command" of Singapore, he lost no time in following him. Early in the morning of 28 January 1819 he and Farquhar landed on Singapore, having previously found from the Temenggong Abdul Rahman that no Dutch had ever been received there.

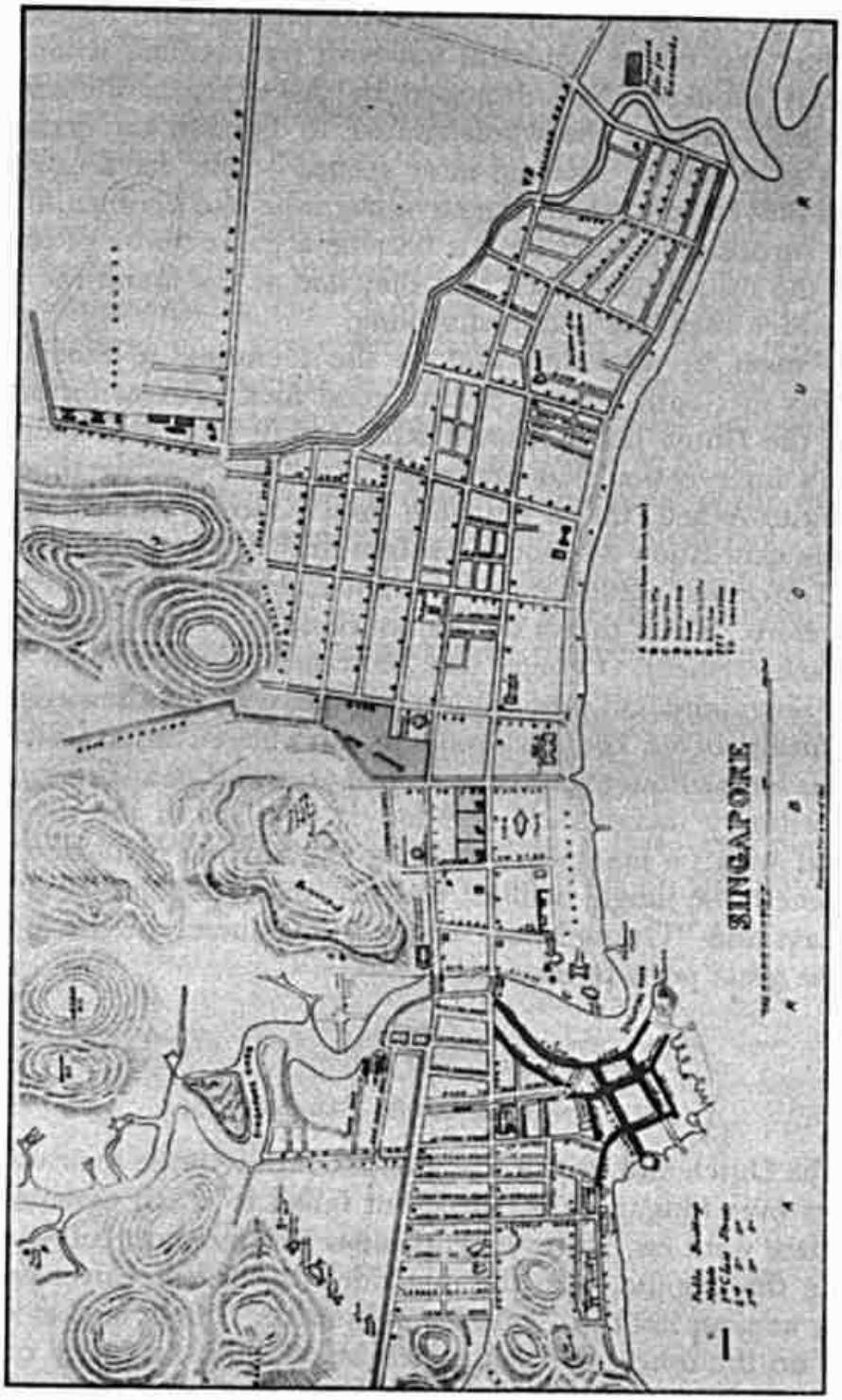
Raffles was well aware of the peculiar situation which obtained with regard to the Sultanate of Johore.[1] He knew the Dutch would never allow their protégé, the Raja Muda of Riau or his nominee, Sultan Abdul Rahman, to agree to a British settlement in any of the Johore dominions, and he decided to make the settlement legally unassailable. First he drew up a preliminary treaty with the actual ruler of Singapore, the

[1] See above, p. 102.

Temenggong, whereby the latter agreed to allow him to establish a factory in return for British protection and a pension of 3,000 dollars a year. Then he sent Farquhar to obtain the Raja Muda's agreement, which, as he expected, was refused; and finally, he played his trump card. He offered to recognise Husein, or Tengku Long, the dispossessed elder son of the dead Sultan Mahmud, as the rightful Sultan of Johore (having previously confirmed that the Temenggong and the Malays generally regarded him as such) on condition that he would conclude a treaty with the British. He argued, rightly, as the event proved, that a treaty signed by the legal ruler of the island (Husein) and the *de facto* ruler (the Temenggong) could not be shaken even by the legal-minded Dutch, whose treaty of 1818 had in any case given them control only over Riau. The treaty was accordingly signed on 6 February 1819, and the Sultan and Temenggong agreed to allow the Company (but no European or American power) to plant factories in Singapore or any other part of the Sultan's dominions. They were in return to receive pensions of 5,000 dollars and 3,000 dollars a year respectively and to be granted protection by the British as long as this did not bind the latter to help the Sultan in any future internal wars.

Having made this treaty and duly installed Farquhar as Resident, Raffles sailed northwards to Acheh, with whom, in accordance with Hastings's instructions, he made a treaty providing for the establishment of a British Resident and the exclusion of all other Europeans. This agreement proved abortive, however, from the start.

Meanwhile the Dutch, as Raffles had foreseen, reacted very violently against the treaty. Had they immediately seized Singapore, as Farquhar feared at one time, then the British Government would probably have accepted the *fait accompli*, and the future of Singapore would have been very different. Instead they relied on legal arguments and Raffles's own unpopularity with the British Government. Husein, they said, was a usurper; he and the Temenggong had been compelled to sign the treaty against their will; their own treaty of 1818 applied not merely to the control of Riau but to the whole of Johore. In their virulent paper war they found an ally in Governor Bannerman of Penang, who wrote a letter to Hastings



Plan of Singapore, 1826

declaring that the Dutch legal rights to Singapore were clear. Hastings, for his part, though far from pleased with Raffles for causing this furore (and still less with Bannerman, whom he sharply rebuked) was impressed by the strength of Raffles's case and referred the whole matter to London for decision. This gave Raffles what he most needed—time; for Singapore soon proved to have all the advantages he had claimed for it; in a surprisingly short time it became a great centre of trade, and the British recognised that they had at last found the port for which they had searched so long.

It must be admitted that in the founding of Singapore Raffles met with a great deal of good luck. It was fortunate that the Dutch had occupied Riau before him; that Bannerman's intervention had prevented him from wasting time by going to Acheh; that a despatch from Hastings cancelling the whole expedition did not reach him until it was too late; that the Dutch had made a mistake in not accepting the lawful ruler of Johore. These things should not blind us to the greatness of his achievement. Others, like Captain Hamilton,[1] had seen that Singapore had possibilities; only he, with his knowledge of the history of old Temasik, had seen, even before he left Calcutta on his momentous expedition, its real potentialities. It required no ordinary imagination and foresight to see in the desolate island with its mangroves fringing the narrow plain and the impenetrable jungle behind; with its sparse population of 500 Malays and "Orang Laut" and a few Chinese, the site of one of the great ports of the world.

V

The Anglo-Dutch Treaty, 1824

The Dutch and British made an attempt to settle their differences over Singapore in 1820, but failed to reach agreement. As time went on, however, both sides became more anxious to settle the dispute. On the one side, the British Government were anxious lest this "collision of interests" might lead to war; and on the other, the Dutch, whilst realising that they could not now dislodge the British from Singapore, were determined to prevent that port from becoming the springboard for further

[1] See above, p. 80.

British advances in the archipelago. These considerations led to the signing of the Anglo-Dutch Treaty in 1824.

By this treaty the Dutch agreed to recognise the British claim to Singapore, ceded Malacca, and agreed not to conclude any treaty with a Malay ruler, or to establish a new base in the Malay Peninsula. They also ceded all their factories (now virtually useless to them) in India. The British, in return for Malacca, ceded Bencoolen and all other settlements of the East India Company in Sumatra; and agreed not to establish any settlements in the Carimon islands, the Riau-Lingga Archipelago, or "any other islands south of the Straits of Singapore", nor to make any treaties with their rulers.

In effect, the treaty established a Dutch sphere of influence in Sumatra, Java and the islands. The Dutch were now free to pursue their political and commercial interests in the archipelago without interference from European competitors. They had scotched Raffles's dream of a South-East Asian Empire. As for the British, they were content with their control over Penang and Singapore and with their consequent control over the Straits and the sea route to China. Yet, whether they wished for this or no, the treaty also put the whole of Malaya under their sphere of influence, and though for the next fifty years they showed themselves unwilling to become embroiled in the troubles affecting the hinterland of Malaya, this treaty made it possible for them after 1874 to become the paramount power in Malaya.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ANARCHY IN THE MALAY STATES (to 1874)

I
External Troubles

The endless wars of the eighteenth century had led to the disintegration of the Johore Sultanate and plunged the other Malay states into confusion. During the nineteenth century, with their traditional leaders helpless and the British refusing rigidly to intervene, the confusion degenerated into anarchy. Externally the states were threatened by the Siamese and an extraordinary increase in piracy. Internally they were torn apart by civil wars between the Malay princes and the bloody struggles consequent upon the unprecedented immigration of the Chinese. It will be convenient in this and the following chapter to study these causes in some detail.

61. *Siamese Aggression*

It did not appear in the early nineteenth century that Siam's policy of expansion in the Malay Peninsula[1] had anything to fear from the East Indian Company, whose oft-repeated orders to its servants emphasised its determination to remain aloof from Malaya's profitless internal rivalries. Not all these servants agreed with this policy, and it is probably true to say with L. A. Mills that Malaya would today have been a part of Siam had it not been for devoted men like Crawfurd, Anderson, Lieutenant Low and Cavanagh, who, very liberally interpreting their instructions and in some cases virtually ignoring them, succeeded in thwarting Siamese ambitions.

The somewhat vague claims of the Siamese in the Malay Peninsula rested first of all on the right of conquest. They had apparently overrun the Peninsula after the fall of Sri Vijaya and in 1403 they claimed that a state as far south as Temasik owed them allegiance. Moreover several European writers report at different times that they exercised a vague sovereignty over Malaya. Among these were Tomé Pires, Duarte Barbosa

[1] See above, p. 111.

and the Englishman Thomas Bowrey who, writing in mid-seventeenth century, said that Perak and other places belonged to "him of Siam". The Siamese further claimed that they had on several occasions ordered the Sultan of Kedah and other rulers[1] to send troops for their armies and supply provisions for their wars, and that, as became vassals, the Sultans had complied with these orders. Finally they pointed to the fact that a number of rulers, including those of Kedah and Trengganu, had sent tribute in the form of the "Bunga Mas", or the three Golden Flowers, every three years to Bangkok.

This last was undoubtedly the weakest of her arguments, for Siam forgot to mention that at the end of the eighteenth century she herself had sent the "Bunga Mas" to China, though of course at that time China exercised no kind of suzerainty over Siam. She sent the "Bunga Mas" for the old reason—to obtain favourable terms of trade by making a polite acknowledgement of Chinese supremacy. None of the Malay Sultans ever admitted that their sending of the "Bunga Mas" to Siam (or to Burma, for that matter) implied that they were vassals of the country. It was nothing more nor less than an insurance against attack and the horrors of a Siamese invasion. In this they seem to have been quite correct. The argument from conquest was equally unreliable. It was simply the case of a stronger power bullying and exploiting her weaker neighbours when she felt strong enough to do so.

Nevertheless the Siamese arguments carried a certain weight with the East India Company, who now began to think that the legality of the treaty of 1800 with the Sultan of Kedah might well be challenged on the ground that the lease of the island could be granted only by Kedah's overlord, Siam. They helped also to salve the Company's conscience over the question of giving military aid to Kedah—would not this be tantamount to helping a rebel against his overlord? When therefore Siam, acting her part as overlord, ordered Kedah in 1818 to attack Perak, the Company did not intervene, and the Sultan accordingly conquered that state. Siam's aim was to divide and rule and so make much easier her next step, which was the conquest of Kedah herself. In 1821 Kedah was overrun by a Siamese army, which committed frightful atrocities against the

[1] Trengganu.

people; thousands of refugees, including the Sultan himself, fled to Province Wellesley. The Siamese even threatened Penang, but a show of force was sufficient to make them retire after the Governor had refused to surrender the Sultan to them. Such a show of force earlier would have prevented the Siamese from attacking Kedah at all, but so bemused was the Company by Siam's claims of overlordship that they reported to the Raja of Ligor an attempt made by the Sultan to drive out the Siamese with the aid of Burma, Selangor and other states. It is doubtful, however, if this venture in fact took place.

For several reasons the Company was anxious to come to terms with Siam. Of these, trade was the most compelling. Since 1817, the Company had traded opium and Indian piece goods for Siamese sugar and tin from her dependencies including Patani and Junk Ceylon, but this trade was hampered by the monopolistic policy of Bangkok, where a group of Muslim merchants of Indian descent, acting like the Co-Hong merchants of China, prevented European merchants from trading with any merchants other than themselves. The Company was also concerned about its title to Penang and the danger to the food supplies of that island in the event of an attack. Therefore in 1821 they sent an embassy to Bangkok, led by John Crawfurd, to discuss with the Siamese these questions and also the possibility of the restoration of the Sultan of Kedah. The mission was a failure. The new terms of trade were rejected, and the Siamese demanded that the Sultan of Kedah be deposed, and that the Company should give Siam's own nominee a pension of 10,000 dollars a year. Crawfurd, of course, refused this demand, and left Bangkok; but his mission was not entirely fruitless. He was able to report a great deal of valuable information about Siam to his superiors, informing them about the internal condition of the country, and disclosing that their overweening arrogance was but a cloak to mask their cowardice and their deep fear and distrust of the British. Force, he said, was the only argument they understood; the fort of Bangkok was so weak that it could be destroyed by a couple of brigantines.

The new Governor of Penang, Robert Fullerton, was not slow to see the implications of this report. Strongly anti-Siamese as he was, he urged the Company, as a matter of

justice, to reinstate the Sultan of Kedah, and also to protect the Malay states against Siamese aggression. The Company, whose object was to keep Kedah as a buffer state between Siam and Penang, did not agree, and it was left to Fullerton himself, acting on his own initiative, to save two other Malay states from another attack.

In 1822 Sultan Ibrahim of Selangor had helped Perak to drive out the Siamese from her borders, and as the price of his support he had installed his nephew Raja Hassan to extract heavy taxes from the Perak merchants. It is probable that the Sultan of Perak would have preferred the exactions of Selangor to the depredations of Siam, but when the Rajah of Ligor ordered him with threats to send a letter begging the Siamese to help him drive out Selangor, he had no choice but to agree. The Siamese, armed with this excuse, prepared an invasion fleet which was to conquer both Perak and Selangor; but Fullerton saved the situation. He sent a few gunboats to patrol the mouth of the Trang river where the Siamese fleet lay, and the Siamese, deceived by this bluff into believing that the Company was prepared to declare war, cancelled the invasion.

In 1825 the Company decided to renew negotiations with Ligor, and sent a mission led by Captain Burney (one of the very few servants of the Company who could speak Siamese) to make a treaty with the Raja of Ligor. As a result, a preliminary treaty was drafted whereby the Siamese agreed not to attack Perak or Selangor if the British did not interfere in Kedah. The British also said that if the Siamese reinstated the Sultan of Kedah the latter would agree to send the Bunga Mas and 4,000 dollars annually to Siam. Almost immediately after this Governor Fullerton sent John Anderson to patch up a truce between Perak and Selangor. In this he had no difficulty; the Sultan of Perak indeed asked him to annex his state and grant him a small pension. Fullerton, of course, could not agree to this, but he arranged an amicable treaty whereby Selangor relinquished its control over Perak and promised never to attack that state again, and both states agreed to accept the Bernam river as the boundary between them. Though the Sultan of Perak expressed willingness to send the Bunga Mas to Siam, Anderson discouraged him from doing so. Ligor, in the meantime, countered this treaty by sending an armed force

to Perak and maintained it there in spite of Fullerton's protests.

The Government of India approved the draft of Burney's preliminary treaty and in 1825 sent him to Bangkok to negotiate a full treaty, but he was not able to overcome the profound distrust of British intentions felt by the Siamese, greatly increased as these were by the recent successes of the British in the Anglo-Burmese war. In despair at reaching any agreement Burney asked them to draft a treaty in Siamese, which they did with such wealth of ambiguity that many of its terms were later found to be capable of three or even four interpretations. This led to considerable dispute as to the treaty's precise meaning in later years.

At first sight it looked as if British aims regarding trade had been achieved, because according to the new treaty the customary duties only were to be levied in the future and British subjects were to be free to buy and sell wherever they pleased. In fact, however, this clause was scarcely ever observed by the Siamese. As regards Perak, Siam made the significant admission that before 1818 she had no right or claim over that state; she acknowledged Perak's independence and agreed not to attack her or Selangor. In the case of Kedah, however, they refused to reinstate the Sultan and insisted that the British must not allow him to stay in Penang or give him any assistance against them.

One of the most interesting terms of the treaty was that relating to Trengganu and Kelantan. Both these states were on the borders of Siam and had similar problems to those of Kedah; both denied that the fact that they sent the Bunga Mas to Siam was anything more than an exchange of civilities. In this most of the Penang officials, including Fullerton, agreed, and in the treaty no reference was made to the sending of the Bunga Mas. It was laid down that British subjects (who were mostly Chinese) were to be allowed to trade with perfect freedom in both states (as a matter of fact their trade was very limited at this time) and that they were not to attack either state under any pretext whatsoever. This clause led to a storm of protest at Penang. Fullerton protested that it implied that Siam was the overlord of these states, but the Government of India supported Burney against him, declaring that the clause

was ambiguous enough to justify intervention if that were necessary.

The greatest failure of the treaty was in regard to Kedah. Though Penang was guaranteed supplies from the mainland, the Siamese were to be allowed to remain in Kedah. They refused to reinstate the Sultan and insisted that the British were not to allow him to stay in Penang or to give him any assistance against them. The Sultan eventually had to leave Penang and went to live in Malacca.

He had by no means given up hope of regaining his throne and in 1831 a very serious revolt broke out under his leadership. With three thousand Malays (mostly from Penang and Province Wellesley) he drove out the Siamese from Kedah. The whole plot had been engineered with the utmost secrecy, and it came as a complete surprise to the Siamese, though many British officials knew about it. They, however, sympathised with the Malays and kept their knowledge to themselves. Governor Ibbetson, on the other hand, believing himself bound by the Burney treaty, blockaded the coast to prevent the Malays from getting supplies, and the rebels were compelled to retire.

In 1836 a similar revolt broke out when the Sultan went to Perak to collect a fleet. Once again Siam invoked the Burney treaty, and the Company dutifully destroyed the Malay fleet and reduced the Sultan's pension to 6,000 dollars a year.[1] In 1838 the British again helped to suppress another revolt, being once more compelled, against their declared policy, to intervene. They were paying dearly for the original dissimulation of the Company when it refused to insert the defence clause in the treaty of 1800. As a result of these continued troubles Kedah's trade was ruined and that of Penang greatly reduced. By now the Company was getting tired of its supposed obligations under the Burney treaty to help Siam against Kedah, and when in 1842 the Sultan, weary of his futile attempts to regain his throne, sent an apology to Siam and a request to be reinstated, Governor Bonham, though not with much hope, sent a letter to support his plea. Fortunately Siam now realised, after twenty years of war, that this rebellious "province" could not

[1] It was not restored to the usual 10,000 dollars till 1841, when the arrears were also paid.

be kept in subjection by armed force, and the opportune death of the Raja of Ligor, Kedah's old enemy, which took place at this time, removed the main obstacle to peace. The Sultan's apology was therefore accepted; he was reinstated on agreeing to send the Bunga Mas. Kedah was now officially a dependency of Siam and remained so until by the Treaty of Bangkok in 1909 Siam abandoned to the British her claims to suzerainty.

Perak. The Siamese continued their attempts to get control of Perak. With the aid of a pro-Siamese faction at the Perak court they planned to drive out the Sultan in favour of his brother, who was prepared to accept their claims. This move, however, was forestalled by Governor Fullerton who sent Captain James Low with a small force to assure the Sultan of his support. Low, indeed, completely abandoning the policy of non-intervention, with no difficulty persuaded the Sultan to expel his rebellious brother and his supporters and concluded a treaty with him (1826) which provided that the Sultan was not to send the Bunga Mas to Siam, and that if he were attacked, the British would go to his assistance. Not content with this, Low then proceeded to the Kurau river where he destroyed the headquarters of a pirate chief, Nakkoda Udin, whose ships had been making attacks on the Perak coast and even on Penang. It transpired that Nakkoda Udin, whom he captured, was a Siamese subject employed by the Raja of Ligor, who protested strongly against the incident. The Government of India were already furious at Low's disregard of their non-intervention policy and immediately suspended him from further political employment. Fullerton, who himself had not escaped censure, was able, however, to prove that Udin had indeed behaved in a piratical manner in Perak territory and that Low's action had saved Perak from being absorbed by Siam. The Supreme Government thereupon reinstated Low, but they refused to recognise the treaty. Curiously enough, although it was never ratified, it was tacitly accepted and in fact provided the legal basis for the intervention of Sir Andrew Clarke in Perak affairs in 1874.

Kelantan, Trengganu and Pahang. The Siamese, thwarted in their attempts to gain control of the western states, now transferred their attention to Kelantan and Trengganu. Though these two states persistently refused to acknowledge Siamese

suzerainty, they were powerless to stem the growing influence of the Siamese.

By 1836 Kelantan "had almost succumbed to the Siamese yoke", and chance now seemed to provide an excellent means of getting rid of the refractory Sultan of Trengganu. This was the appearance as a refugee in the Siamese court of the ex-Sultan of Lingga, who had been expelled by the Dutch. As a descendant of Abdul Rahman of Riau, he claimed to be the lawful ruler of Johore and Pahang, but the Siamese cast him for the role of the new Sultan of Trengganu. Their designs were further favoured by the civil war which broke out in Pahang between the two sons of the Bendahara who had died in 1858, and when Wan Ahmad, the younger brother, fled to Bangkok after his defeat in 1861, the Siamese welcomed him also, seeing now an opportunity of putting him as their nominee on the Pahang throne and securing control over both states at one stroke.

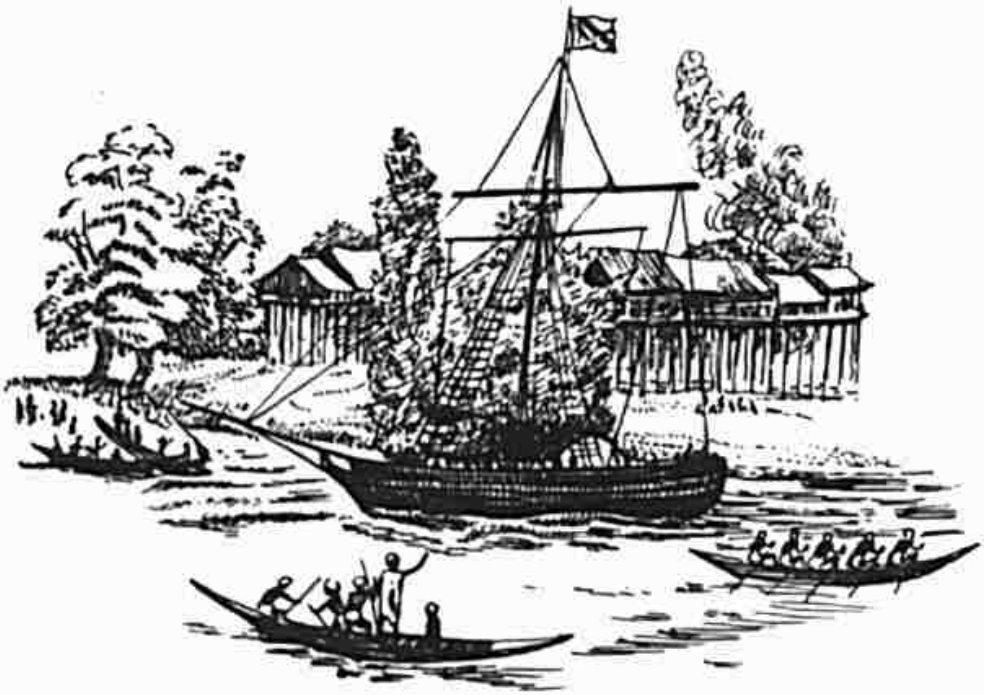
In 1862 the Siamese decided to strike. They sent the two pretenders with a fleet of warships to Trengganu, where they set about carrying out their plans. At this moment Colonel Cavanagh, Governor of the Straits Settlements, who, under pressure from Singapore merchants, had already tried to stop the civil war in Pahang with its resultant dislocation of trade, intervened, and asked the Siamese to withdraw the two claimants. They answered evasively, and in the meantime Wan Ahmad invaded Pahang. Clearly the Siamese were hoping that their nominees would seize both states by a *coup d'état*, while they could protest that it was impossible to withdraw them because of the approaching onset of the monsoon. Cavanagh therefore took decisive action. He sent a gunboat to Trengganu and demanded that the Sultan should not support Wan Ahmad and that the ex-Sultan of Lingga should be handed over. When these terms were refused, the warship bombarded the fort (there were no casualties) and a blockade of the Trengganu coast was started. Eventually, under protest, the Siamese withdrew the ex-Sultan and henceforth made no further attempt to seize Trengganu. They recognised that the Straits Settlements provided too strong an obstacle to their expansion into the Peninsula.

Meanwhile Cavanagh was severely censured for his action;

the whole affair was debated in the House of Commons, and as a result the Straits Government was warned to pursue a strict policy of non-intervention. The civil war in Pahang continued in desultory fashion for some time longer, and when the Sultan died, Wan Ahmad succeeded him in 1863 without any remonstrance by the British, even though chaotic conditions continued to exist.

II
Piracy

Piracy existed in South-East Asia long before the advent of the Europeans, as we know not only from occasional narratives like that of Fa H'sien in the fourth century A.D., but also from the distribution of population, the siting of villages, and the general unfriendliness shown by many islanders to strangers. Its objects were loot and slaves. Slaves, indeed, were specially valuable, not only to propel the pirate praus, but because they could be sold like likestock at very lucrative prices in one of the recognised marts such as Sulu in the Philippines, held at stated



Pirate vessel as described in text

times in stated places. They were also valuable as currency, the price of silk and rice and other goods often being quoted in numbers of slaves.[1] The geography of the area with its mangrove swamps and innumerable creeks gave every opportunity to the pirates in their swift praus to attack without warning and escape with little danger of capture.

According to Heine-Geldern the pirate communities of the Straits must have been descendants of defeated peoples who took to piracy when their land was taken from them, but it is clear that the profession of piracy carried with it no stigma either to noble or fisherman. On the contrary, it was regarded as an honourable calling. Hostility to European powers no doubt helped to give it a respectable character. The Dutch attempts to enforce their monopolies and to compel traders to sell their goods to them at prices below the market price positively encouraged rulers and petty chiefs to turn to piracy to recoup the losses of their declining trade. Finally the chaos into which the Malay states had fallen in the nineteenth century led to a most alarming increase in piracy. No ruler was strong enough, even if he wished, to stop it. "No single island of the Archipelago," says Spenser St. John, writing in 1849, "has been clear from the descents of pirates," and he deplored bitterly "this crying evil and its most unhappy results".

62. *The Pirates*

The most dangerous of the pirates, remarkable alike for their seamanship, their cruelty and their desperate courage, were the Lanun of Mindanao, "the Pirates of the Lagoon"—who had bases in North West Borneo, Celebes, Sulu and Indragiri in Sumatra. Next in importance were the Ilanos or Balanini from the Sulu Sea. Every year they set out in their long, narrow and fast warships, propelled by oar or sail, in fleets of several hundreds; each ship carried between forty and sixty men (some of larger burden with as many as 150), each under the command of its own officers. The expeditions were highly organised. First they sailed to a general rendezvous at Tampussuk in North-West Borneo and thence, having split into squadrons, they sailed all over the archipelago—some round Borneo to Celebes; others to Java; others up the Straits on the "pirates'

[1] According to a report of Raffles's agent to the Sulu Islands in 1816.

wind", past Penang (which as late as 1826 they raided for slaves), as far as Rangoon; others across the Bay of Bengal, attacking ships, harrying the coasts and enslaving the inhabitants of unprotected villages. The populations of whole islands, as for example in the Riau-Lingga Archipelago, were carried off or murdered by them. On the completion of their voyages the Lanun returned to their great slave market in Sulu "where not a day passed without the arrival or departure of at least 12 to 15 praus". To this most important of the slave markets of South-East Asia traders flocked from all parts of the archipelago to buy slaves and booty.

Orosa distinguishes several classes of these Sulu pirates. Some, he says, were directly employed by various Sultans; others were privateers. Of these a number were given a licence to piracy in return for which they handed over 20 per cent of their booty or the price realised for it. Many of the smaller chiefs took shares in their expeditions and received a portion of the profits.

The Malay pirates constituted a third group, by no means as powerful or formidable as the other two, and bitterly hostile to both of them. Their chief market was Pulau Galang—a small-scale Sulu—and they operated in the Carimon Islands, the Riau-Lingga Archipelago and the southern part of the Straits. Many of the Malay sultans, including those of Selangor and Linggi, supported them, and their subordinate chiefs like the Temenggong of Johore in 1819 very often took an active part in their operations. Similarly in Borneo Malay chiefs controlled the piratical expeditions of the Sea Dyaks.

63. *Its Suppression*

This widespread scourge naturally affected the trade of the Straits and, as we have seen, seriously impeded that of Penang in particular. Very soon after its foundation, Singapore became an object of their attention. In a sense the new port actually helped the pirates. So many ships flocked to it that they had no need to go in search of quarry. They had their agents ashore who warned them of the departure of ships, which they then seized almost within sight of land; they waylaid many a Chinese junk as, after its long voyage, it wearily made its way into the harbour. They even attacked ships

lying at anchor there. Their depredations became so great that by 1830 the government seriously feared that Singapore's trade would be destroyed for ever. Severe measures against piracy were obviously called for; but how could British men-of-war cope with the swift small praus of the pirates, who very often, thanks to their oars, could rob and sink a merchant ship and make good their escape while the man-of-war, becalmed, stood helplessly by? Moreover the British, because of their heavy naval commitments elsewhere, could spare few ships for anti-piracy duties in the Straits; and in any case the East India Company, after 1833 no longer a trading Company, was unwilling to "incur expense on the Straits Settlements from which it received no revenue".

However, it was obvious that piracy was adversely affecting the China trade, so the Government of India decided in 1835 to take decisive measures. The *Andromache* was sent out to the Straits, and by disguising herself as a helpless trader she drew the attacks of pirate ships and inflicted much damage on them. Several more ships joined her in 1836; Galang was destroyed, and more pirates were captured. The British were deliberately trying now to destroy the pirates' headquarters. In 1837 they sent out the first steamship, the *Diana*, which destroyed a convoy of six Lanun galleys off the Trengganu coast. The pirates discovered to their dismay that their age-old tactics were of no avail against steam power, and in the next few years piracy notably declined in the Straits. The Spaniards and the Dutch employed similar methods in their respective territories, and the Dutch in particular achieved striking success.

64. *Brooke in Sarawak*

After 1837 there was a marked decline in piracy, but this proved to be temporary. The north-west coast of Borneo still remained as a notorious pirate stronghold, and it was not long before the pirates resumed their activities. It was left to James Brooke to break their power completely.

Brooke sailed to the East in his small schooner, the *Royalist*, with the hope of exploring the archipelago and conducting scientific research. In 1839 he cast anchor in the Sarawak river. Sarawak at that time was part of the kingdom of Brunei, of whose power in the sixteenth century the Portuguese have

left us a clear account, but in 1839, like the Malay states of the Peninsula, it had seriously declined in power and territory. Malay invaders had conquered the comparatively mild Land Dyaks of Sarawak and imposed a most oppressive rule upon them; they owed nominal allegiance to the Sultan of Brunei, but for all practical purposes they ignored him completely. These Malay chiefs, together with a small number of Arabs, whom the Malays in general greatly respected, did not dare to oppress the Sea Dyaks, who were very much more warlike than the Land Dyaks, but instead persuaded them to take up piracy, at which they soon became expert. The Malays and Arabs derived great profit from their activities.

Sir James Brooke

When Brooke arrived, he found Sarawak in rebellion against the weak Sultan of Brunei. Malays and Land Dyaks had forgotten their ancient enmity in their hatred of his oppressive rule. The Sultan's uncle, Muda Hashim, failed to suppress the revolt; and in 1840 he offered Brooke the governorship of Sarawak in return for his help. Brooke, sincerely anxious to stop the ill-treatment of the people and, if possible, to restore the tottering Sultanate of Brunei, agreed. He suppressed the rebellion, and on 24 September 1841 was made Governor of Sarawak. In 1842 the Sultan confirmed the appointment. Brooke ruled over his territory with firmness and justice; order was restored, but he soon found that he could not suppress piracy and restore prosperity on his own; least of all could he, unaided, end the hopeless misrule in Brunei.

He accordingly tried to interest the British Government in that state. He pointed out that Sultan Omar had offered to cede the island of Labuan to Britain; that excellent coal had

recently been found there and in Brunei; that Labuan, 707 miles from Singapore and 1,009 from Hong Kong, would make an excellent coaling station for ships in the China trade. He therefore proposed that the British should accept Labuan and send a Resident to Brunei to advise the Sultan and help him to restore order. The British Government, impressed in spite of themselves, reluctantly accepted Labuan because of its obvious advantages but declined to send a Resident to Brunei.

Meanwhile Brooke's hopes for restoring order to Brunei received a heavy blow when his friend Muda Hashim, who he hoped would become Sultan on his brother's death, was assassinated with all his supporters on Sultan Omar's orders which were inspired by a group of Malay nobles. These had already tried to drive out Brooke in 1843, but the latter, with the help of Captain Keppel of H.M.S. *Dido* had foiled the plot by destroying the strongholds of their piratical supporters, the Sea Dyaks. A new attempt on their part to murder Brooke failed, and, aided by Admiral Cochrane, Brooke returned in triumph to Sarawak, where the Sultan recognised him as ruler of that state and promised henceforth to help in the suppression of piracy. Cochrane then proceeded to destroy the Lanun settlements at Tampassuk and Pandassan. Shortly afterwards, in 1846, as the result of a despatch from Lord Palmerston, Brooke made a treaty with the Sultan whereby the latter ceded Labuan to the British and granted the British commercial rights on a most-favoured-nation basis. He also promised not to alienate any of his territory without the consent of the British Government.

The Dutch, who had had designs on North Borneo themselves, strongly objected to the cession of Labuan on the grounds that it infringed the treaty of 1824. The British were able easily to show that the Dutch rights to the south of the Straits had not been infringed, since Labuan was in a higher degree of latitude than Singapore; and they rejected outright the Dutch suggestion that all islands in which they had a post were *ipso facto* closed to the British.

The destruction of the pirate headquarters at Marudu Bay (1845), Tampassuk and Pandassan had been a severe blow to the pirates, but not a mortal one. Between 1847 and 1849 the Sea Dyaks wrought "appalling destruction", and Brooke

invoked the aid of Admiral Collier, commander of the China squadron, to stamp out this scourge. The admiral sent two warships and two East India Company ships to help him. The squadron ambushed 100 pirate ships returning from an expedition at Batang Maru and completely wiped out the pirate fleet. Though the pirates lost only 800 out of their force of 4,000, they never forgot this lesson; the Sea Dyaks gradually abandoned piracy and eventually became Raja Brooke's most faithful subjects. Singapore was a direct beneficiary of this victory because it was not only freed henceforth from the marauding Sea Dyaks, but it found a new market in Sarawak, where the trade grew from nothing in 1847 to $574,097 in 1860.

Brooke's initiative and determination had been a prime factor in eliminating the pirate menace. His achievements were, however, completely misunderstood in England as a result of malicious attacks in the press, inspired, as it turned out by a former associate, Henry Wise, who misrepresented Brooke as the ruthless oppressor of the mild and inoffensive Sea Dyaks. By 1853 Brooke had completely cleared his name and exposed Wise's fraudulent promotion of a Company known as the Eastern Archipelago Company. Nevertheless this long-drawn-out legal battle nearly had fatal results for Brooke. It led the Chinese secret society in Sarawak to rise in rebellion against him in the belief that he was out of favour with his government. The Chinese burnt the capital, Kuching, and massacred many of its inhabitants, but Brooke restored order with the aid of those very Sea Dyaks whom he had defeated at Batang Maru and who now proved themselves to be his most faithful subjects.

CHAPTER EIGHT

ANARCHY IN THE MALAY STATES (to 1874)—Continued

I
Internal Troubles

The curse of civil war between the rulers of various states afflicted Malaya for three-quarters of the nineteenth century. The rulers as a result were themselves impoverished; their authority was diminished, and they found themselves openly defied by petty chiefs who built stockades near the mouths of rivers, diverting to their own pockets the dues they levied on passing boats carrying merchandise to and from the interior.

65. *Serfdom and Slavery*

In this decomposing feudal society, in which anarchy reigned, the lot of the ordinary Malay was far from happy. "Until Capitalism invaded the very simple native economy," says a Malay author writing about the years before 1874, "the whole Malay population may be said to have been subject to absolute rule and to have been in a state of serfdom. . . . The peasantry or rayats lived to serve and attend to every beck and call of the rulers. Their efforts at anything and everything never went to benefit themselves but always to gratify the ruling classes."[1] The Resident of Pahang writing in 1888 says much the same thing. "The rayat had practically no rights, whether of person or property, not merely in his relations with the Rajah but even in those with his immediate District Chief." The ordinary Malay was in the position of a serf, more or less bound to the land and differing from a slave chiefly in the fact that he was not bought or sold. When the rights of ownership of land were transferred from one lord to another, the rights over the labour of the serfs or peons were transferred with these.

Slavery as distinct from serfdom did in fact exist in Malaya, and had existed there and in South-East Asia from immemorial times. The conquest of one tribe by another normally led to its enslavement, and Sultans (like those of Acheh in the seventeenth

[1] *The Malays in Malaya* by One of Them, Singapore, 1928, p. 15.

century) whose armies had been decimated by war normally recruited new manpower from slaves whom they had captured in battle. Though in South-East Asia slavery never assumed the dreadful proportions it reached in Africa, the increase in piracy led to a corresponding increase in slavery, because slaves were an article of commerce, easily acquired and easily sold. They also provided a currency, because, according to the report Raffles received from the agent he sent to the market at Sulu, the price of goods like rice and silk was frequently equated with the number of slaves they were worth.

But if the ordinary Malay, in accordance with Islamic law, could not as a Muslim be a slave in the accepted sense of the word, his rulers could and did impose slavery on others. Malay and Bugis traders sold many Papuans from New Guinea in Borneo, Celebes and elsewhere; the Jakun were to the end of the nineteenth century harassed by Malays "especially those who have some authority over them". The Malay "Rawa" tribe in Malacca so persecuted the Mantra aborigines that these eventually fled into the jungle to escape them; and the Besisi of Selangor were so frequently enslaved that they lost all idea of independence.

The power of a chief was often reckoned by the number of the slaves he owned, and the jealousy with which he guarded the prestige thus gained is to be measured by the savage punishment which was meted out to the slaves who tried to escape. "Slaves," said Sir Hugh Clifford, "were regarded in much the same light as the kine in the rice swamps, and possessed no rights of any sort."

Forced Labour. Though the Muslim Malays were in general serfs rather than slaves, the distinction between these two states was often not clearly kept.

By ancient custom the Raja had rights over all waste or uncultivated land (*tanah mati*—dead land) which he could grant to anyone he chose. The rayat had to pay one-tenth of the produce of this land, and in addition to perform tasks for his chief when required by the headman to do so. As long as he paid the tenth and did the forced labour, the rayat in theory could not be excluded from his land so long as it was cultivated; no rice lands could be resumed by the raja until three years after exclusion, and no orchard so long as any fruit tree re-

mained. In practice, however, if someone stronger than himself wanted his land, the rayat was in no position to resist. As regards *kerah* ("forced labour"), this was not clearly defined by Malay law; the rayat could be required to give it at his master's whim, or to serve in his master's army, or to attend his lord's retinue when he went to see the Sultan—and all without payment. As Swettenham says: "There was in 1874 a very broad line indeed between the ruling classes and the rayats. The people had no initiative whatsoever: they were there to do what the chiefs told them, no more, no less: they never thought whether anything was right or wrong, advantageous to them or otherwise. It was simply 'What is the Rajah's order?'"

Debt Bondage. No chief or ruler ever hired servants: it simply did not occur to them to pay for the performance of menial services. When, as a result of disease or war, the supply of labour decreased, the ruling class found it convenient to obtain servants by the system of "debt bondage". The peoples of India and China, and not least those of South-East Asia, have always found it fatally easy to fall into debt—no difficult thing in lands where a small loss to an ordinary man could spell complete disaster to himself and his family. All too often he would fall into the hands of usurious moneylenders. Nor was this the fate only of the poor. Many of the Malay chiefs on the west coast borrowed from the wealthy Chinese of Penang, and, finding themselves impoverished, sought to repair their fortunes by squeezing as much as they could out of their own people. Soon many of the latter found themselves in debt to their chiefs, and it was not always clear whether the debt was real or whether it had been incurred as a result of their failure to pay some fancied or invented loan. Not only the debtor but his wife and family were henceforth engaged in working for their creditor until the debt was paid—which rarely happened, for according to J. P. Rodgers when he was listing the evils which were rampant in Pahang in 1888, "even their most remote descendants were condemned to hopeless bondage".

Life for these "slaves" was intolerable. If they tried to escape, they were killed, and their fate aroused no comment. It was in the interest of all the creditors—and these included all those who had any status in the community—to maintain

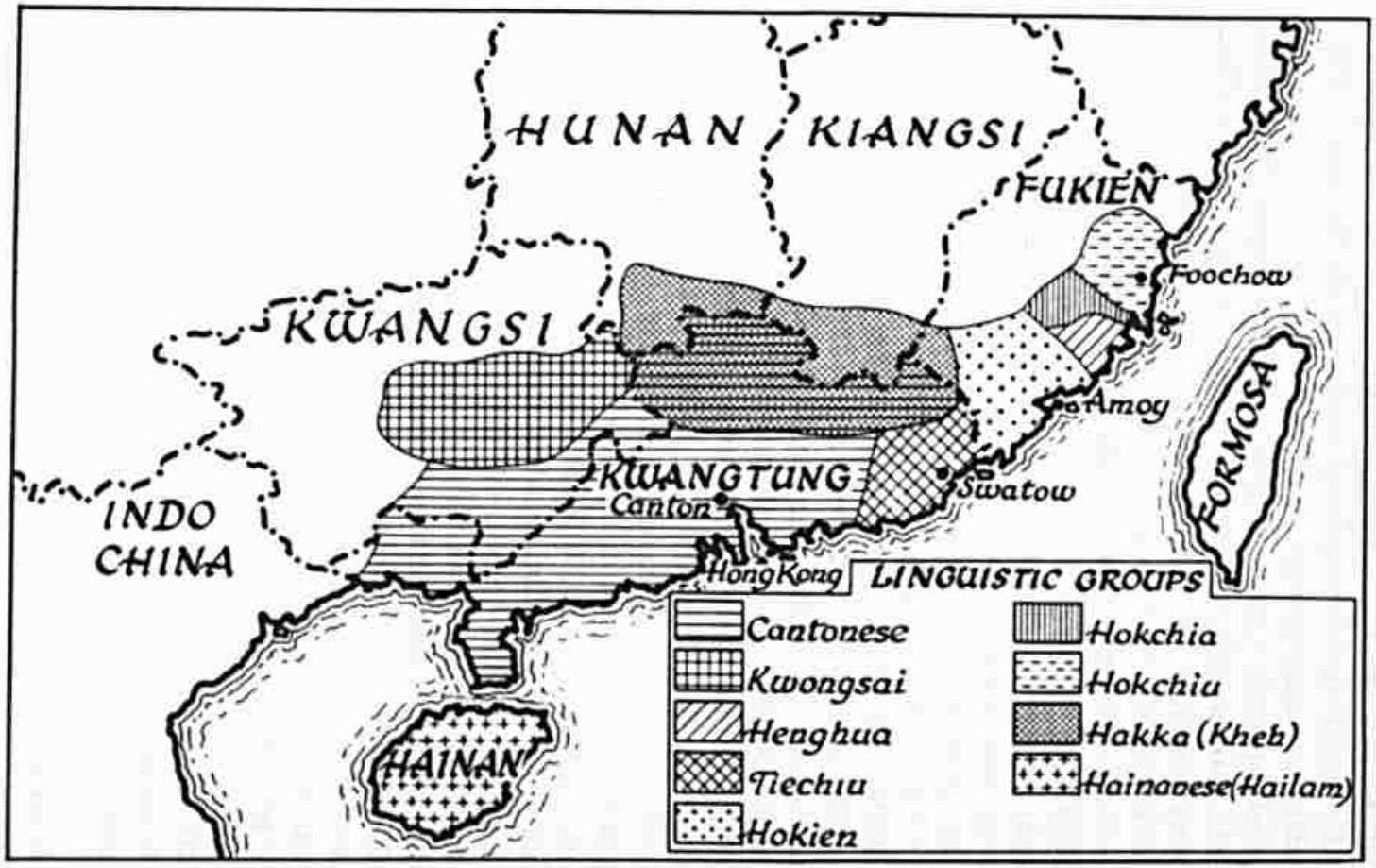
the system. Nevertheless it was to escape these intolerable conditions that many Malays fled to Penang or Singapore.

The anarchical state into which the Peninsula had fallen by 1835 is well summed up by Newbold, who, though writing specifically of Muar, applies his conclusions to the whole of Malaya. The population of Muar, he points out, was reduced to 2,400 "through the misgovernment and apathy of the feudal sovereign, owing to which perpetual broils exist among the petty chiefs, causing insecurity of persons and property, and eventually driving out of the country all the cultivating and trading classes of the community. The honest peasant, in many instances, is compelled from sheer necessity to turn robber, and the coasts, instead of being crowded with fishermen, swarm with pirates."

He might have added how the general uncertainty of life was added to by the incidence of disease—by malaria, that ancient scourge of South-East Asia, hookworm and yaws, cholera and plague. Yet in this existence, which to us appears so "nasty, brutish, and short", most Malays continued to show towards their rulers a remarkable and unswerving loyalty.

II
Chinese Immigration

Chinese had visited South-East Asia, the "Nan Yang" or "Southern Ocean lands", for many centuries in search of trade and wealth. In Malaya, as we know, they had established a settlement in Malacca in the fifteenth century. At the beginning of the eighteenth, there were about one thousand Chinese gambier planters in Johore. When the British founded Penang, the Chinese formed, if not the largest, then the most industrious part of the population of the island, and when Singapore was founded, they were not long in realising the remarkable potentialities of that port. They keenly appreciated the peace and order imposed by the British, for this enabled them to pursue their own economic aims with the minimum of supervision or interference by the officials of the Straits Settlements. These latter, ignorant of the Chinese language and customs, welcomed the immigrants because of their capacity for hard work, but



Chinese immigration: principal places of origin in China

it is important to note that in the first instance the Chinese immigration of the nineteenth century was but the continuation of a centuries-old tradition and was not the direct result of British encouragement.

One of the main causes of the immigration was the appalling state of China herself, which during the nineteenth century was plunging into one of those periodic declines which mark the end of a Chinese dynasty. The Manchus were hated because they were a foreign Tartar dynasty which had overthrown the native Ming. During the two centuries after the fall of the latter in 1644, a number of rebellions,[1] engineered by secret societies, had broken out against them. These secret societies (which were known under various names—the "Triad"; the "Heaven and Earth Society"; the "Hung League"; or the "Thian Tai Hué") had been in existence in China for many centuries. Originally they were peaceful in intention, having such benevolent aims as helping their members in circumstances of distress or securing decent burial for them when they died. But their political activities against the Manchu soon led them to adopt a much more sinister attitude, and their aims and methods deteriorated rapidly. They still, however, retained their high-sounding motto "Obey Heaven and Act righteously." To escape the imperial punishment many society members (which included not a few criminal elements) fled overseas, and particularly to Penang and Singapore. They brought their secret society organisation with them, but as political opposition to the Manchus was now pointless, their aims still further deteriorated. Soon the Triad Society split into various mutually hostile groups whose respective headmen were determined to destroy their rivals in an attempt to make themselves all-powerful. They imposed upon all the Chinese in their group a rigid discipline and organisation "which appear to be as complete as that of any disciplined force of the government".[2] Secrecy and mutual help were imposed on all members. They dared not give evidence against a Chinese in a court of law, even if

[1] The most famous of these was the Taiping rebellion of 1851 which lasted for fifteen years and devasted a great part of China. The secret societies were also responsible for the Boxer rebellion of 1900 and the revolution of 1911 which led to the final overthrow of the Ching (or Manchu) dynasty.

[2] Thus said the Penang Riot Commission which investigated the Penang riots of 1868 in which over 30,000 Chinese and 4,000 Malays and Indians were involved.

they themselves had been robbed or injured; the penalty for disobedience was death.

The rival leaders, whose headquarters were in Penang, Malacca or Singapore, sent their miners into the turbulent interior of Malaya to exploit the tin mines. They provided the necessary capital for implements and supplies and for the payment to Sultans of large sums for monopoly rights over the mines. Their subordinates in each mining centre were the Kapitans China, whom they appointed to supervise each mine, arrange for supplies to be sold to the miners at exorbitant prices, secure for them the monopoly of the sale of opium and send the tin back to them for sale in the Settlements.

The ordinary Chinese caught up in this highly organised secret society had a far from enviable existence. The great majority of them hailed from China's south-eastern provinces, Kwantung, Fukien and Kuangsi (and from the island of Hainan). It was poverty which drove them from their homeland, to which they always intended to return. Knowing nothing of conditions of work in Malaya, and in most cases unable even to pay his fare, the "sinkeh" (new recruit) was persuaded to make a contract with the ship's captain to work for an employer in Malaya in return for payment of his fare, his keep and a few dollars. On arrival he was sent by the wealthy Chinese industrialist, who cared no more for him than for a beast of burden, to work in the tin mines in the appalling conditions of the malarial jungle. He soon found out that if he refused to join the secret society death was the penalty. The mortality rate among men, resulting from malaria, feuds between various societies and quarrels with the Malays, was very high, though some of them, after their year's indenture, by dint of almost inhuman industry, became spectacularly rich from tin-mining or trade.

The British all this time were sublimely ignorant of the carefully concealed activities of the leaders of the societies. It was with these in their capacity as traders or industrialists that they occasionally negotiated without understanding that these leaders felt for them the typical Chinese contempt for the "red-haired devils". To the Chinese, the British were "people without benevolence, rectitude or wisdom", though they conceded that they had a "certain sincerity". There was no intellectual

class among them which might think it worth while to devote attention to European books or ideas. Self-interest was the dominating motive of their leaders, and their one wish was to crush all rival secret societies and make their own supreme. British intervention in their affairs was the last thing they wanted.

As the numbers of the immigrants increased, so did their mutual animosity. In 1824, 1846, 1851 and 1854 there were serious riots in Singapore. In 1854, for example, 400 Chinese who had been converted to Catholicism by Fr. Beurel were killed, and a series of battles took place which lasted for ten days. The most serious disturbances, however, took place in Selangor and in Perak.

66. *The trouble in Selangor*

The two best-known secret societies in the Malay states at this time were the Ghi Hin (who were mainly Cantonese) and the Hai San (who were mainly Hakka).

Chinese miners had prospected for tin in Kanching as early as 1840, and the success they gained gave grounds for hope that better deposits of tin could be discovered in the upper reaches of the Klang river. The chief of Klang, Raja Sulaiman, however, had little success in his tin prospecting in the area, and when he died about 1853, the Sultan of Selangor appointed in his place, not his son, Raja Mahdi, as had been expected, but a Selangor Chief, Raja Abdullah, who was the brother of Raja Juma'at, chief of Lukut, the chief mining centre of Selangor. This appointment led to civil war between Raja Abdullah on the one side and the dispossessed Raja Mahdi, supported by all the Malay chiefs, on the other. In this war the Chinese were soon engaged.

In 1857 Raja Juma'at and his brother Abdullah persuaded Chinese miners of the Ghi Hin to prospect for tin in the Klang valley beyond Lukut. They eventually reached Ampang, and after a bad start, in which most of the miners died of malaria, the mine began to prosper. The Hai San, not to be outdone, established a mining camp a few miles away from their rivals on a site near the confluence of the Gombak and Klang rivers. This site was to develop into the town of Kuala Lumpur. As might have been expected, trouble soon broke out

between the two factions, and during the ensuing civil war (1870–3) between the Malay chiefs, the Hai San fought on the side of the sons of Raja Abdullah (who had meanwhile died) and Raja Kudin, "Viceroy" of Selangor, whilst their enemies supported the cause of Raja Mahdi. Both sides were trying to get exclusive control of the rich minefield and the right of collecting the export dues on the tin sent down to Klang and Kuala Selangor. In this struggle Kuala Lumpur and its "flimsy houses" were destroyed in 1872, but in 1873 Raja Mahdi's forces were routed by Tunku Kudin with the aid of reinforcements from Pahang, and the administration of Kuala Lumpur was taken over by the Chinese headman, Yap Ah Loy, a tough miner who had left China a penniless emigrant, had played a considerable part in the fighting, and had proved himself an outstanding leader of the Chinese.

The civil war, however, did not end until the British took Selangor under their protection in February 1874.

67. *The trouble in Perak*

Larut, lying as it does outside the valley of the Perak river, is, as Wilkinson puts it, in Perak but not of it. This lonely and isolated district of swamps and marshes had no attraction for the Malays, who preferred the banks of rivers for their settlements. No chief, apart from the Panglima Bukit Gantang, had any interest in it, and his sole concern was the guardianship of the pass that led to it.

In 1850 a certain Long Jafar, a petty Perak chief and a relative of the Panglima, settled in Larut where he found three Chinese miners prospecting for tin. He soon saw the potentialities of the area, and the discovery of tin at Kamunting, which brought large numbers of Chinese to the area, brought him wealth through the tolls he levied. Long Jafar seems to have bought from the Sultan the titles to these sources of wealth at Larut, and after his death his son, Che'Ngah Ibrahim, succeeding in obtaining from the Sultan of Perak in 1864 a deed recognising him as the ruler of the whole country from the Krian river in the north to the Bruas river in the south. He was also given the title of Orang Kaya Mantri, a title of the highest rank in Perak.

The Mantri and his father had opened up an uninhabited

province of Perak in search of tin mines. The Mantri brought in colonists, made a few roads and had a small police force and a couple of warships to support his administration. His claim to the area seems undoubtedly to have been a legal one.

By 1874 the Chinese population of Larut had apparently reached 26,000 out of a total population of 33,000. As might have been expected, the Ghi Hin and Hai San Societies were each seeking to gain supremacy, and the Mantri supported now one side and now the other, making profits estimated at $200,000 per year. The Chinese headman, however, resented the control of the Malay ruler, compelled him to give up the profits of the opium and gambling farms, and no doubt in time would have compelled him to give up the tin royalty as well. In 1872, however, the bitter feud between the two societies flared up again. The Ghi Hin at first triumphed, and their junks prevented anyone from landing in Larut by way of the sea. The Mantri accepted them as the victors. The Hai San thereupon organised an expedition from Penang and intrigued with the Mantri's enemy, the Raja Muda Abdullah of Perak, against the Mantri. The Mantri appealed in vain for help to the acting Governor of Penang. In October 1874 the Hai San drove out their enemies from Larut.

Fighting, however, continued; lawlessness reigned supreme, and it seemed as if Penang itself would become a battlefield. The Chinese took to piracy, harrying shipping in the Straits and hiding in the various creeks when pursued by British warships.

The disorders in Larut coincided with a complete breakdown in the Malay administration of Perak. In 1871 the great chiefs of Upper Perak, including the Mantri, whose power had increased in proportion as the Sultan's declined, refused, on the latter's death, to acknowledge the lawful heir, but pronounced in favour of the Bendahara Ismail. The chiefs in Lower Perak in general supported the Raja Muda Abdullah, but there was also a third claimant, Raja Yusuf, who was unpopular with the chiefs but who continued to press his claims, in common with the other two, to the office of Sultan.

It was to end these indescribable disorders that the British intervened in Perak in 1874.

68. *An exceptional state—Johore*

Yet there was one state in the Peninsula which by 1867 exhibited a marked contrast to the rest, in that it had virtually eliminated anarchy and lawlessness. This was Johore; but it owed its comparative calm and prosperity to the fact that it was almost a British dependency. This state was an accidental creation resulting from the foundation of Singapore and the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824. The treaty had divided the old Johore dominions into two parts: one included Riau and the islands south of Singapore, and was under Dutch control; the other, which included Singapore, Johore (in 1824 virtually uninhabited) and Pahang, was under British control. Sultan Husein and the Temenggong of Singapore were, until their deaths in 1835 and 1827 respectively, rulers in name only. Both received pensions from the British Government, but Husein's claims over Pahang were not acknowledged by the Bendahara there, nor were his claims over Singapore and Johore admitted by the Temenggong.

It was the Bendahara's son, Daing Ibrahim, a man of character and ability, who benefited from Singapore's phenomenal development as a port and from the labours of Chinese gambier and pepper planters who moved into Johore and made that no-man's-land into a thriving state. As he grew richer from his new revenues, he became more adamant in refusing to agree to the claims of his rival, Sultan 'Ali, Husein's son, to overlordship of the new state. After prolonged disputes between the two, an agreement was made in 1855, with the concurrence of the Indian Government, whereby Sultan 'Ali abandoned his claims to sovereignty over Johore to Daing Ibrahim in return for a pension and the small area of Muar in western Johore. For his part Ibrahim was content to rule his land under the direction of British officials in Singapore. So also was his son Temenggong Abu Bakar, who succeeded his father in 1862, and who won the warm tribute from Sir Harry Ord, the first Governor under the Colonial Office, that "he takes no steps of importance in administration without the advice of the local government, whilst he is ready at all times to place the whole resources of his country at our disposal".[1]

As Cowan says, Johore in her relations with the British settle-

[1] Quoted in *Nineteenth Centry Malaya*, C. D. Cowan, p. 39.

ments was a model of what a Malay state should be; and it was this model that the British Government had in mind when they finally intervened in the Peninsula in 1874. There was no reason, it seemed to them then, why other states should not prosper equally well, as long as they were governed by enlightened rulers who were prepared to accept British guidance and advice.

III
The Non-intervention Policy of the East India Company, 1786–1867

The East India Company had never shared Raffles's vision of a South-East Asian Empire. To them, their expanding empire in India and India's trade with China were all-important, and they looked on Malaya simply as a bridge providing in Penang, Malacca and Singapore, ports of call for the China trade. They were of course interested too in the growing commercial importance of the area, but after 1833 when their monopoly of the China trade was taken away from them their interest in Malaya became even less, and they acquiesced sullenly in paying the annual deficit of the Straits Settlements. So it was that it was a cardinal feature of their policy not to interfere in the affairs of the Malay states and not to engage in any political treaties with them. Such interference, they thought, would lead to a profitless entanglement in the aimless civil wars which affected the area; it might even lead to further troubles with Siam.

This doctrine, however, based as it was on frankly commercial considerations, could not by the nature of things be carried out in its entirety. It was impossible for their interests in the Straits Settlements not to be affected by events on the mainland. Their very presence in Singapore had a stabilising effect on near-by Johore and kept that state free from the horrors that afflicted the rest of the Peninsula. Penang and Malacca were more or less affected by the chaotic conditions in the adjoining states. Their merchants, mostly Chinese but claiming to be British, continually complained to the authorities about the conditions under which they were compelled to trade.

These complaints received treatment no more sympathetic than that which was accorded to the reasoned pleas of experienced officials like Blundell, Governor of Malacca, or Governor Butterworth. Blundell, in fact, went so far as to say (1842) that the non-intervention policy was in itself a factor contributory to the prevailing anarchy in the states adjoining Malacca. In the end, he said, for the safety of their own people, the Company would be obliged to take possession of the country, the very object they had sought to avoid. It was only when it became absolutely essential to protect British interests or to comply with treaty obligations that the Company would agree to the use of force.

Many examples of this policy might be given. Thus during the Naning War of 1831–2 the Company expressly disclaimed both sovereignty over the state of Rembau and any right over the sale of tin, such as it might be expected to claim as successor to the Dutch Company. When in 1833 a dispute broke out between Rembau and the little state of Linggi over some tin mines claimed by Rembau, the Company refused to intervene on the side of Rembau even though it had received help from that state during the Linggi war. Nor would it help towards the reinstatement of the Rembau chiefs after their defeat by Linggi.

Again, in 1831 Governor Ibbetson freely made over to Johol, without being asked, the area between that little state and Malacca territory, even though this area included Mount Ophir and tin and gold mines. When Blundell and Butterworth asked sanction from the Supreme Government to punish a robber chief who levied tolls on shipping at Sempang on the Linggi river without any authority—his stockade, they said, could be knocked into a heap of ruins by a couple of round-shot —no sanction for the use of force was forthcoming. When the British blundered into the Naning War they were frankly told by India that "expansion of territory at Malacca is no part of our policy", and that "such an extension as might tend to involve us in further contests is greatly to be deprecated". In the civil war which broke out in Perak in 1853 the Company refused to intervene by force (in spite of Low's treaty of 1826) on the grounds that the Sultan had rightly been dethroned for incapacity, and they would only step in if asked to arbitrate. For this the Malays did not ask, and the troubles continued.

69. *The Naning War*

It has been said above that it was only in fulfilment of treaty obligations or to preserve its rights that the Company abandoned its non-intervention policy. We have already seen what unfortunate effects intervention in Kedah at Siam's request had. The Naning War provides an equally unfortunate example of intervention when the Company thought it was pursuing its rights.

Naning was a small state of about 200 square miles between Malacca territory and Rembau, and about ten miles from Malacca town. There were no roads between it and Malacca, and in its undulating valleys movement was impeded by marshes and rice swamps. Its population was about 4,875 Malays, of whom 1,200 were warriors, and its total revenue was from Straits produce, rice and tin.

The question facing the British in 1825 was: was it a part of Malacca territory?

Governor Fullerton had no knowledge of the turbulent history of this and the neighbouring states. He did not know that the Dutch, who had had bitter experience of the recalcitrance of the sturdy Menangkabau, had never insisted on their right to collect the "tenth"[1] under the treaty of 1643, but had commuted this for four hundred gantangs or quart measures of padi. They had allowed the chiefs to remain virtually independent. Fullerton was convinced that Malacca, though much inferior in power and wealth to Penang or Singapore, had far greater prestige in the eyes of the Malays and that it should become the capital of the Straits Settlements. He dreamed (like so many others since the time of d'Albuquerque) of making Malacca independent of the rice supplies of Kedah, Sumatra and Java, and saw it becoming a solid agricultural state, no longer troubled by its recurring annual deficit. Lewis, the Superintendent of Lands, estimated that if the "tenth" were collected it would bring in £4,500 per annum, and so, in spite of opposition from members of the Penang Council, who (rightly) insisted that Naning did not come under Malacca's jurisdiction, he decided to ask the Penghulu, Abdul Said, to collect it.

Abdul Said was a man of great influence among the Malays,

[1] See above, p. 731.

who regarded him as a holy man. He had no intention of carrying out Fullerton's demands, and he was confirmed in this attitude by the weakness and indecision of the British, which was caused by the division of opinion inside the Council. On two occasions Abdul Said was summoned to Malacca to meet the Governor, but he attended on neither. When Fullerton, his patience apparently exhausted, collected a force to march against Naning and then weakly countermanded his instructions, Abdul Said showed his contempt by openly seizing a number of fruit trees belonging to a certain Inche Surin.

Meanwhile the Supreme Government approved Fullerton's recommendation that Naning was to be regarded as a vassal of the Company and had therefore to pay the "tenth". They recommended, however, that war should be avoided. When the new Governor pointed out that this latest act of defiance would encourage the natives of Malacca not to pay the tithe, and when he assured them that Naning would offer no resistance, they left further action to his discretion.

Ibbetson mounted an expedition in July 1831 which, thanks to the guerrilla tactics of the Malays and the fact that there were no roads through the jungle, ended in an ignominious retreat to Malacca. News reached Ibbetson that Rembau had made common cause with Naning, and he now fancied (quite wrongly) that he was faced with the resistance of a federation of states. What made matters worse for him was that he had now learnt from further research into some old Dutch documents that "Farquhar and Lewis had been quite wrong: and Garling and Anderson" (and the Malays) "quite right." The Supreme Government was very annoyed at being dragged into this useless and unnecessary fight and told Ibbetson to make a treaty with Rembau, which he did on 28 January 1832, recognising Rembau as an independent state. He then sent Colonel Herbert with another force to tame Naning. Painfully, Herbert built a road 600 yards wide, advancing at the rate of three or four miles a month. With the aid of Raja Sha'aban of Rembau he eventually captured the enemy's stockade while they were away attending to their farms.

The British then offered Naning to Raja Ali of Rembau, but he refused it. Accordingly they included it in Malacca territory, abolishing the office of Penghulu and placing Naning

under the supervision of a gentleman of Dutch descent. He was to be assisted by fifteen village headmen and by collectors of taxes and policemen.

Abdul Said fled but returned to Malacca on promise of pardon. He lived there in peace, on a comfortable pension, until his death in 1849. It was he and the Naning Malays who had really won the war, for official stupidity had cost the British £100,000 in return for a revenue from Naning which barely covered the cost of its administration. No doubt this episode still further confirmed the Supreme Government in their belief in the wisdom of their non-intervention policy.

IV
The Straits Settlements

In 1819 Singapore had been the "forgotten port of the China Sea". When Raffles left it in 1824 (to be presented by the Company when he reached home with a bill for £20,000 which he had expended in its interests) it was already prospering, with a population of about ten thousand. He had laid it down that it was to be a free port, open to the trade of all nations, and he thus introduced a new idea into Asian economy, the exact opposite of that idea of monopoly which it had always hitherto known. He abolished the slave trade and slavery, even debt slavery; he laid the foundations of a British administration, and of a legal system based on British principles of justice: he sketched out a plan for the future development of the city, and even laid the foundation stone of what he hoped would be a university (though this dream was not realised until the University of Malaya was inaugurated in October 1949). His main hope, however, was that the foundation of Singapore would lead to the opening up and control of the Malay states on the Peninsula by the British. As we have seen, his superiors preferred to this policy of expansion that of non-intervention.

In 1826 the three ports were organised by the Company into the "Straits Settlements", but after 1833, when the Company lost the monopoly of the China trade, it steadily lost interest in these "stepping stones" to China. Bengal was its chief interest, and the Settlements seemed to have little to offer

to Bengal. Malacca seemed destined never to recapture the glories of its Portuguese period. The foundation of Penang had deprived it of its trade with western ports; its harbour was rapidly silting up; and above all the rise of Singapore had by 1830 "annihilated its declining trade". Though in 1843 its trade somewhat improved, its future outlook seemed depressing.

Penang's prospects seemed only a little less so. Its position at the northern end of the Straits, the ever-prevalent and increasing dangers from piracy, and above all the rise of Singapore, discouraged traders from visiting the port. "Singapore," said Fullerton in 1830, "bids fair to annihilate Penang," and though in later years trade with Acheh, Siam and Burma did improve considerably, the disturbances in Larut in the sixties threatened its security and its trade.

The early settlers in Penang had entertained high hopes of making the island self-sufficient in the cultivation of spices. Misfortune dogged their efforts. Thus, for example, though Chinese settlers by 1820 were growing four million tons of pepper a year of excellent quality, the world price of pepper fell, and the growing industry was crippled. Similarly, though by 1847 half the island was covered with plantations of cloves and nutmegs, in 1860 all the plants were killed by a blight.

Singapore, alone, advanced steadily in population and prosperity. By 1832 the population had reached 22,000, including 119 Europeans and 8,500 Chinese. By 1862 the population was 90,000. In 1832 the port was carrying a trade worth over £3 million. By 1860 its trade had reached £10,371,300, which compared very well indeed with the £14,300,000 which was the turnover for the trade of the whole of the Dutch East Indian empire. It was by then the great centre of trade with Britain, India and South-East Asia, and even when Riau (1834) and Macassar (1847) were made free ports by the Dutch, this change of economic policy by the great advocates of monopoly in no way affected its prosperity. It imported cotton, woollen cloths, iron and various manufactured articles from Britain; opium and cottons from India; pepper and other spices, gambier, tin, coffee, ebony, antimony, tortoise shells, Straits produce and many other articles from the islands; tea, silks and cassia from China. It became the great clearing-house of South-East Asia, sending one-half to two-thirds of its exports

to Britain, and the remainder to China, the archipelago and even Europe and America.

For this great expansion of trade the East India Company could claim little credit, and by the mid 1850s a steady feeling of resentment had built up in Singapore against the Company. The prosperous and energetic merchants of Singapore argued that the Indian administration was too far away and too apathetic to understand their problems, and consequently was unable to solve them. They disliked the policy of non-intervention which prevented the interior of the Peninsula from being brought under peaceful government and so made safe for their trading ventures. They pointed with apprehension to the advance of other European powers—France, Holland and Spain —in the Far East, and asked what good non-intervention would do if Singapore's Asian markets were in the control of unfriendly powers?

This general exasperation became vocal when the Indian Government, desirous of increasing revenue, dared to propose port dues to defray the cost of a jetty, lighthouses and other harbour works at Singapore. To the enraged citizens this was further proof that the Indian Government did not even realise that the very basis of Singapore's prosperity rested on free trade. Final proof of India's lack of understanding and ignorance seemed to be given by the Currency Act of 1855 which proposed that the Straits should be brought into line with India by abandoning the silver dollar and adopting the rupee. These two proposals caused such a furore that the Indian Government dropped them, but the citizens of Singapore continued their campaign. When the Indian Mutiny brought the Company's rule in India to an end, the merchants sent a petition to be released from the new Indian Government. The Viceroy, Canning, agreed that it was impossible for an administration based on India to do justice to Malaya, but though the principle was agreed, it was not until 1 April 1867 that the control of the Straits Settlements as a Crown Colony was transferred from the India Office to the Colonial Office.

Meanwhile a private company, in view of the fact that no public works were being constructed in Singapore, undertook this duty on its own initiative by beginning harbour works at what is now known as Keppel Harbour.

70. *Conclusion*

During three-quarters of the nineteenth century the Malay states underwent a long agony caused by the operations of external enemies and by the breakdown of their internal administration. The Straits Settlements, on the edge of this "melting pot", could not but be affected by the prevailing anarchy, which the policy of the Indian Government prevented them from ending. Nor did the Colonial Office immediately abandon the non-intervention policy, for as late as 21 August 1872 it informed the Singapore Chamber of Commerce that "it is the policy of Her Majesty's Government not to interfere in the affairs of the Malay States unless where it becomes necessary for the suppression of piracy or the punishment of aggression on our people or territories", and it went on to say that it was impossible for Government to be answerable for the protection of those traders who "prompted by the prospect of large gains chose to run the risk of placing their persons and property in the jeopardy which they are aware attends them in these countries under present circumstances".

There were other reasons, apart from the pleas of Singapore merchants, why the British Government decided, only one year later, to adopt a firmer policy in Malaya.

PART FOUR

BRITISH MALAYA AND MERDEKA
1874–1957

CHAPTER NINE

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS UNDER BRITISH RULE

I
Events Leading to Intervention (1867–74)[1]

The idea of non-intervention had its roots in the belief that the extension of empire was undesirable. All that was needed was free trade and a free world market. In the nineteenth century there was no other industrial power to compete with Great Britain. She controlled the seas and had a network of strategic bases on which to build her remarkable commercial expansion. With Singapore in her possession together with Hong Kong and Aden (which she annexed in 1842 and 1837–9 respectively) she found herself in control of the old sea route to the East. Colonies seemed both a distraction and an unnecessary expense.

From 1867–73 the Colonial Office followed the normal line that the China trade was all-important and that nothing must be allowed to affect this vital trade route. To them the Straits Settlements were valuable chiefly because they helped to secure this trade. Of Malaya they knew, and wanted to know, nothing. "The true policy of the British Government of the Straits Settlements," said one of their officials in 1868,[2] "is not to attempt to control but to keep clear of native disorder."

Yet, ironically enough, by 1867 the British Government found themselves, almost unwittingly, in the position of the paramount power in the Malay Peninsula. They were engaged by

[1] For a full discussion of this subject the reader is referred to *Nineteenth Century Malaya* by C. D. Cowan.
[2] Op. cit., p. 152.

Federated and Unfederated states in Malaya

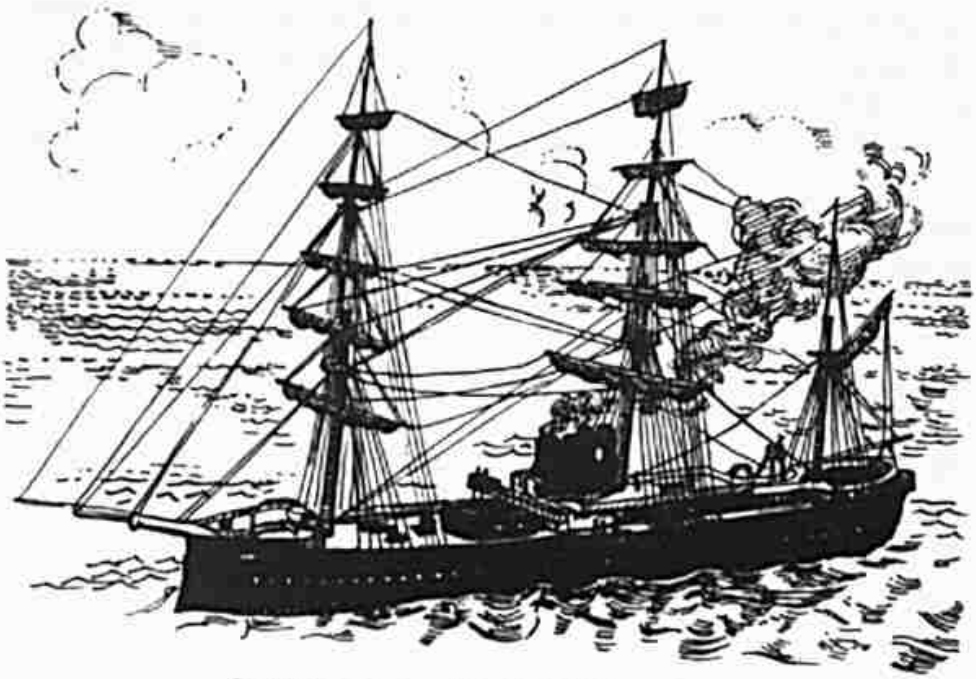
Burney's Treaty of 1826 and Low's treaty with Perak to protect Perak and Selangor from being attacked by Siam or one of the other Malay states, and they also had the right of controlling the foreign affairs of Johore, Pahang and those states which were later to constitute Negri Sembilan.

It is not surprising therefore that the first Governor under the Colonial Office, Sir Harry Ord, though bound by the policy of non-intervention, should have convinced himself soon after his arrival in Singapore that a more realistic attitude should be adopted and the non-intervention policy reversed. He was a man of sound administrative experience and ability, but ambitious and overbearing, who believed in acting first and explaining afterwards. He made an attempt to initiate a forward policy in the Peninsula without informing the Colonial Office in advance of his intentions and methods. He tried to compel the Sultan of Kedah to amend the Treaty of 1800 by altering the boundary of Province Wellesley and drawing up a reasonable scale of duties on articles exported from Penang. When the Sultan refused, he went so far as to make an agreement with Siam, recognising that country's right to overlordship of the northern Malay states—a complete reversal of the policy of his predecessors. In return he gained Siamese ratification of his draft treaty with Kedah and thus overruled the Sultan's protests. The Colonial Office, which had not yet worked out a coherent Malayan policy, refused, of course, to accept his treaty. Nor did they approve of his attempt to clarify the Treaty of 1826 with respect to the island of Pangkor, ceded in that year to the East India Company but not occupied. They feared, perhaps rightly, that occupation was his object. They also disapproved of his attempt to settle the boundary dispute between Johore and Pahang.

Governor Ord's policy of intervention was disowned in 1869 by the Colonial Office. Yet two years later a case of intervention occurred, as clear as any action of Ord's had been, which did not meet with their direct condemnation. This was the so-called "Selangor incident". In 1871 Sir Harry Ord left the Straits Settlements, leaving Colonel Archibald Anson, Lieutenant-Governor of Penang, as his deputy. A report reached Anson about the seizure by pirates of a Chinese junk which was sailing from Perak with supplies for Larut. Anson

sent the steamer *Pluto* to find it. It was discovered in the Selangor estuary, and the British officials, invoking a treaty made in 1826 with the then Sultan of Selangor, demanded the surrender of the pirates and the return of the stolen property. When no response was made to these demands, Anson sent the *Pluto* and H.M.S. *Rinaldo* to enforce them. The two ships were fired on. Without making any attempt to demand satisfaction from the Sultan, the *Rinaldo* proceeded to bombard the town and its forts, and completely destroyed them. This was bad enough; but Anson's representatives J. W. W. Birch and C. J. Irving then proceeded to intervene most decidedly in Selangor's affairs. They compelled the Sultan to place Tengku Kudin in the office of governor or chief over the country about the Selangor river; and Kudin was promised the assistance of the British Government against anyone who disputed his authority. Nothing could have been more contrary to the policy of the British Government than these actions; yet this flagrant misinterpretation of orders by the men on the spot was not denounced as Ord's actions had been. It was condoned on the grounds that it "appeared that the chiefs in possession of the government at Salangore (*sic*) were in rebellion against the Sultan's Authority, and that the Sultan has expressed his satisfaction at your proceedings".

The truth was that the Colonial Office had no knowledge of any Malay state apart from Johore; and it seemed to them that if piracy were suppressed in Selangor (and the Selangor incident was always represented to them as a case of piracy) that state could become as prosperous as Johore. Johore, they argued, had prospered so well because the East India Company had supported the Maharajah with its advice and influence. Might not the "Viceroy" whom Birch had recognised, who was a "chief of intelligence and honesty of purpose", who had gained the support of many of the Straits merchants and was moreover a brother of the Sultan of Kedah (a friend of the Government of the Straits Settlements) be as successful in Selangor as the Maharajah had been in Johore with the moral support of the Colonial Office? To the latter the "incident" did not appear as intervention but as action in support of a friendly ruler suppressing piracy in accordance with the Treaty of 1826.



Small steam warship (British), *c.* 1871

The "Selangor incident" therefore does not mark the real beginning of the British forward movement in Malaya.

Meanwhile, by 1873 events in Larut had reached a crisis. The rival Chinese groups, the Ghi Hin and the Hai San, were compelled to use Penang (which was of course neutral) as their base of operations and supplies. The narrow waters between Penang and the mainland became the scene of frequent sea fights as each side tried to smuggle food and supplies to its stockades, or to prevent its rivals from doing so. The Ghi Hin kept up a successful blockade (with the help of two steamships owned by the Mantri) which stopped the Hai San from exporting tin from the mines, which they controlled. Malay authority no longer existed; the Malay chiefs were themselves parties to the war. On the one side, the Mantri (who favoured Ismail's claims as Sultan) favoured now the Hai San now the Ghi, depending on which side was apparently winning: on the other, "Sultan" Abdullah supported the Ghi Hin. In these circumstances the British were powerless to intervene. They could not stop the fighting, and there was no Malay chief who had sufficient authority for them to recognise. An attempt by Ord to stop the export of arms and ammunition by the rival factions

to make good their shortages merely led to an increase in piracy of passing ships, and in the raiding of villages along the coast from Kedah to the Dindings.

After failing to persuade the rival Malay and Chinese chiefs to agree to a settlement Ord decided to recognise the Mantri, who with the aid of Captain Speedy and a mixed Indian force of one hundred had gained control of most of Larut. The defeated Ghi Hin, however, continued their piratical excursions on an increased scale.

These excesses not only caused even more rancorous criticism in the Straits Settlements against Ord (who had never been popular there) but led to demands that the British Government should intervene under the Treaty of 1826 to restore order in Perak. This demand was perhaps not unassociated with the fact that from 1870 there had been a great increase in the world demand for tin, and that in 1872 the price of tin reached £7 12s. 9d. per cwt, the highest since 1823.

Yet desperate as conditions in Malaya were, and despite the protests and appeals of Straits merchants, the Liberal government in England as late as mid-1873 still showed no inclination to take direct action, and this despite the fact that a new attitude towards empire had become noticeable amongst some of the younger members of that government. Some of the older opponents of imperial expansion in the Liberal government had given place to younger men like Lord Kimberley who became Secretary of State in 1871. These men, though they were by no means jingoistic, were sympathetic to the acceptance of the idea of imperial responsibility and the protection of the traders against foreign competition; but they still shrank from becoming involved in the internal affairs of the Malay states. One factor alone would persuade them to become so involved; and that was the danger that a foreign power might establish itself in Malaya or North Borneo, and thus threaten trade, and especially trade with China.

II

Fear of Foreign Intervention

By 1873 the interest of other powers in South-East Asia was beginning to cause disquiet in Britain. In 1850 the United

States had made a treaty with Brunei by which it had received the rights of the most-favoured nation; and in 1865 an abortive attempt was made by the "American Trading Company of Borneo" to establish a settlement on Kimanis Bay. The declaration in 1871 of Spanish sovereignty over Sulu (whose Sultan, at least in theory, had undeniable claims over the northern tip and the north-east coast of Borneo) had been followed by regulations forbidding non-Spanish ships to trade in neighbouring ports. In 1873 the Spanish government in the Philippines tried to make good their claims by instituting a blockade on all Sulu territory. This had to be lifted because of the infuriated protests of British and German traders, but the Spaniards continued to press their claims to sovereignty.[1] Moreover, in the Indo-Chinese Peninsula there was increasing rivalry between French and British interests, particularly in regard to Upper Burma and Siam. Finally, the increasing evidence of Dutch designs on Sumatra, with the threat these implied to the security of the Straits caused the British Government much anxiety.

Dutch interests in Indonesia, of course, had already been recognised by the British in the treaty of 1824, but the extension of Dutch control over the east coast of Sumatra, following on their treaties with Jambi, Siak and Indragiri, seemed to pose a threat to the Sumatran trade of Penang and Singapore. Though the Dutch had undertaken in 1824 to respect the independence of Achch, their resentment at the continual series of piratical raids organised from Achinese ports and their fear of intervention in Achch by some other European power led them to aim at getting control of that area. In 1871 the British resolved to settle their outstanding differences with the Dutch, and among other things withdrew their objections to Dutch plans for annexing Achch; but they were immediately faced by new worries. In 1873, when the Dutch invasion of Achch began, the Achinese appealed for aid to other foreign powers—to Italy, to the United States, to Germany—offering them bases in the islands and monopoly rights in trade. The appeal to Germany was perhaps particularly disquieting to Great Britain, partly because of Germany's defeat of France in the war of 1870 which seemed to threaten the balance of power in Europe, and partly because of Germany's treaty of friendship in 1873

[1] These claims were finally recognised in 1878.

with Russia, whose designs on India Britain had for a long time feared.

It was the accumulating evidence of the increasing possibility of intervention by other European powers in the Straits that led the British Government in July 1873 to take seriously a request for intervention in Selangor which normally they would not even have considered. The request came from a group of business men in Selangor, who had tried to form a company to exploit a large tin-mining concession granted to one of them, J. G. Davidson, in that state. Finding that the disturbed condition of Selangor made it impossible for them to attract sufficient capital to float their company, the group made their request that the British Government should take Selangor under their protection or that they should sanction the "proposed Company recruiting its own force of soldiers to protect its property and to maintain order amongst its Chinese workmen". As might have been expected, the request, put in this form, fell on deaf ears. The agent of the group in London, a certain Mr. Seymour Clarke, however, then tried another line of approach. He wrote a letter to the Permanent Secretary of the Colonial Office in which he declared that he had heard from "an old resident in Singapore"[1] who was a friend of "many native chiefs" that if the British did not assume a protectorate over the smaller states of the Peninsula, then it was possible that Germany might do so. The effect of this letter was immediate. Kimberley wrote in a minute that "it would be impossible for us to consent to any European power assuming the Protectorate of any state in the Malay Peninsula", and a little later he wrote that if the British Government refused to lend its aid, it would be difficult to justify an objection if any of the states applied for aid to other powers. He therefore suggested that Sir Andrew Clarke should be sent to Malaya to "extend the Treaties with Selangor and the other Malay states" so as to preclude them from ceding territory, or giving to any foreign power rights and privileges not accorded to the British.

In the written instructions that were given to Sir Andrew Clarke he was asked to ascertain carefully as far as he was able the actual conditions of affairs in each state and to report what

[1] Identified by Cowan as W. H. Read, op. cit., p. 167.

steps could be taken to restore peace and order, and secure protection of trade and commerce with the "Native Territories". He was also asked to consider especially whether it "would be advisable to appoint a British Officer to reside in those States", although he was warned that such an appointment could "only be made with the full consent of the Native Government". No reference was made in these written instructions to the possibility of any interference in the affairs of the Peninsula by a foreign power, but that fear of this was the main motive of the British Government seems clear. It is also clear that the decision was in the main line of British policy, for its object was as this had always been, to maintain the safety of the trade route to China.

71. *The Engagement of Pangkor, 1847*

Sir Andrew Clarke, Ord's successor, was an administrator of experience, but he was impatient of the routine methods of civil service procedure. As one of his subordinates said about him later, his policy was "to act first, and always to act, and write about it later". It is very doubtful whether his superiors in the Colonial Office would have appointed him for the delicate task that lay before him if they had been aware of this characteristic.

His service in Australia and New Zealand had impressed on him the importance of empire and the need to foster and protect "the interests of the pioneers of Commerce", and the needs of such "pioneers" in Malaya were emphasised to him very soon after his arrival in Singapore. He found that everyone believed that he had been given firm instructions on which to act, whereas, as we have just seen, he had been told simply to find out and report. Colonel Anson in Penang advised him to intervene at once in Perak, where he could see that conditions were unquestionably critical, not only for trade and good order, but for the future of the 30,000 Perak Malays themselves, who were in real danger of being outnumbered by the Chinese. Clarke, a little over a month after his arrival, characteristically decided to act first and report later. He soon found a pretext to intervene in the form of a letter from Abdullah (which was probably prompted by W. H. Read) inviting the British to arbitrate in the dispute over the Perak succession. His first

move was to arrange a truce between the Chinese factions, the Ghi Hin and Hai San, in Larut. This he did with the able assistance of W. A. Pickering, the Straits Government's Adviser on Chinese Affairs. Twenty-six Chinese headmen and mine owners were taken to Pangkor by Frank Swettenham, then a young official in Province Wellesley, and it was there agreed that all fighting should cease, that a commission of British officials with two Chinese representatives should settle all claims to the mines, and that a British Resident be appointed in Larut to supervise all future mining claims.

Clarke meanwhile had invited the Perak chiefs to meet him at Pangkor to settle the succession dispute. The Raja Muda, Abdullah, accompanied by the Bendahara, the Temenggong, and his supporters from Lower Perak, duly attended. Neither Ismail nor Yusuf did so, and though the Mantri, who did attend, supported Ismail, he was too concerned about his own future in Larut to bother over-much about pressing Ismail's claims. Clarke, who at first seems to have favoured Ismail as Sultan, was impressed by Abdullah whom Braddell described as "more than ordinarily sharp and intelligent". He refused to accept the Mantri's claim to be the independent ruler of Larut (in spite of Sir Harry Ord's previous recognition of this claim) because he was determined to pacify the whole of Larut under the rule of a Sultan "advised" by a British Resident. On 20 January 1874, he persuaded all the chiefs who were present to agree to the Engagement of Pangkor.

This proposed, first of all that Abdullah be recognised as Sultan; that Ismail should receive a pension and the title of Raja Muda; that the Mantri be recognised as the ruler of Larut, under the suzerainty of Abdullah; and that the remaining chiefs be confirmed in their offices. Next, the cession of the Dindings to Great Britain agreed by the Treaty of 1826 was confirmed and the southern boundary of Province Wellesley was extended.

By Clause 6 Sultan Abdullah agreed to accept a British Resident "whose advice must be asked and acted upon in all questions other than those touching Malay custom and religion". On the same terms an Assistant Resident was to be appointed to advise the Mantri, the "Governor" of Larut. By Clause 10 the Sultan agreed that "the collection and control

of all revenues and the general administration of the country be regulated under the advice of these Residents".

Clarke's interpretation of his instructions had gone far beyond Lord Kimberley's intention. Without the British Government's decision he had signed a treaty with a Malay state in which he had appointed two British officials who were, in effect, to be the real rulers of that state. He had moreover appointed as Sultan a ruler who was supported by only half of his subjects, and he had passed over the popular Ismail, who had already been elected by the Malays. It was more than doubtful whether Abdullah would therefore be in a position to persuade the chiefs to accept all the implications of the treaty. Particularly was this the case in regard to the Residency clauses —for by the Engagement the Resident was to be far more than a mere adviser. He was to be in effect the controller and director of policy. Trouble, moreover, was certain to be caused by Clause 10 because this was bound to conflict with the provision in Clause 6 which explicitly stated that the Resident was to have no say in matters affecting Malay religion and custom, but "the collection and control of all revenues and the general administration of the country" had been evolved over the centuries by Malay custom!

The Engagement therefore was bound to lead to trouble in its interpretation. Surprisingly, it met with less trouble in Britain than might have been expected. The Liberal Government of Gladstone had been replaced by the Conservative Government of Disraeli, which looked with much less reluctance on the expansion of empire; and the new Secretary of State, Carnarvon, though cautious, was inclined to trust the judgement of the "man on the spot".

72. *The implementation of the Engagement in Perak*

Captain T. C. S. Speedy (who had helped the Mantri as his chief officer during the Chinese troubles, and who knew the district well) was immediately appointed as Assistant Resident of Larut. He found himself in a very strong position, for though the Mantri had been recognised by Clarke as the ruler of Larut, he had forfeited all his authority. He had been treated at Pangkor as if he were a minor chief and had thus lost much prestige; and neither the Ghi Hin nor the Hai San paid much

attention to the man who had changed sides so often during their recent struggles. Speedy was therefore able to carry out his duties without any undue intervention from Malay authority. By 1874 the district was completely pacified, the Indian Penal Code was in force and he had a revenue of $101,554.

Far different was the situation of the Resident appointed to Perak. J. W. W. Birch, though a man of upright character, had none of the qualities of tact or diplomacy which his situation called for. He was ignorant of Malay customs and the Malay language, and he had little respect for native rulers, whom he considered "perfectly incapable of good government, or even of maintaining order, without the guidance of some stronger hand". Unlike Speedy, he had several Malay chiefs to deal with who, like Sultan Ismail, Yusuf and the chiefs of Upper Perak, had yet to be convinced that the Engagement was in their interests and who, in any case, had never acknowledged the newly-made Sultan Abdullah. He failed completely to persuade either Ismail or Yusuf to abandon his claim to the throne, and when Sultan Abdullah realised that Birch took his duties as Resident seriously, he repented of his impetuosity in accepting the Residency system and decided to ignore it and the Pangkor Engagement altogether.

Meanwhile Birch proceeded to carry out Clarke's instructions "that he was to put down by force, if necessary, all unlawful exactions of whatever nature so as to secure that whatever revenue is collected shall be for the State alone". Each chief had his own means of collecting money, most of them oppressive but made lawful by custom. They now found their livelihood affected, with no compensation provided (though this had been laid down in Clause 9 of the Engagement). Next, Birch compelled the Sultan to hand over the administration to him in accordance with the instructions of Sir William Jervois, Clarke's successor, who now entitled the Residents "Queen's Commissioners". This led to the complaint by the Laksamana that the Sultan was no longer Sultan and the Datos no longer Datos. Injured in their pride and their purses, infuriated by the encouragement and help Birch gave to their fugitive debt slaves, and alarmed by a persistent rumour that the British intended to annex Perak, a number of

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chiefs, with the collusion of Sultan Abdullah, decided to get rid of Birch. He was accordingly murdered by the Maharaja-Lelah at Pasir Salak. The British immediately sent reinforcements from Hong Kong and India, the chiefs were pursued, and those responsible for the murder executed or banished; and Sultan Abdullah was deposed and exiled. The troops remained in occupation until April 1877, when Hugh Low arrived to take up his appointment as Resident of Perak. Swettenham, who, as a junior colleague of Birch's, witnessed these events, claims that "twenty years of advice could not have accomplished for peace and order and good government what was done in six months by force of arms. Mr. Birch did not die in vain: his death freed the country from an abominable thraldom."

The immediate reaction of the Secretary of State to the events in Perak was one of indignation. He censured Governor Jervois and insisted that Residents should give advice to the rulers, not seek to control the states. Residents were not "to interfere with the minor details of administration more than is necessary". They were to foster peace and initiate a sound system of taxation and develop the resources of the country—and all this by tendering advice! Obviously this programme entailed vast changes, and the Residents, though warned that they would be held responsible if they exceeded their powers, in general proceeded to increase their control over administration but by methods far more conciliatory and diplomatic than those attempted by Birch.

73. *Selangor and Sungei Ujong*

Meanwhile Sir Andrew Clarke had also "intervened" in Selangor and Sungei Ujong. In the former state the civil war[1] was still raging, and this was accompanied by many cases of piracy off the Selangor coast which were in many instances instigated and encouraged by the Selangor chiefs and even by the Sultan himself. One of the worst of these took place in the afternoon of 7 November 1833, when a small ship, homeward bound for Malacca, was suddenly surprised by a party of pirates (who were presumably acting under the orders of one of the Sultan's sons); its cargo was seized, and eight of its nine passengers and crew—all British subjects—were murdered. Sir Andrew demanded the instant trial of the murderers, and as his demand was supported by a naval demonstration supplied by ships of the China Fleet which happened then to be cruising in those waters, the Sultan blandly agreed. The murderers were accordingly executed, a fine was imposed (which the Sultan paid), and Clarke appointed Frank Swettenham to "give advice" to the Sultan, hoping that the latter would himself ask for the appointment of an official Resident. This the Sultan in due course did, being much impressed by Swettenham's ability, and by his "cleverness in the customs of Malay government". "I should be very glad," he wrote to Clarke, "if my friend would set my country to rights and collect all its taxes." As Swettenham was still only a very junior official,

[1] See above, p. 167.

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Clarke appointed him Assistant Resident in Langat, making J. G. Davidson, who had supported and financed the Viceroy during the war, the official Resident.

Kuala Lumpur. Apart from recognising Tengku Kudin as Viceroy, the British, whose base was at Klang for the next six years, took comparatively little interest in the interior of Selangor where, to quote Davidson, "Yap Ah Loy was almost supreme." Yap Ah Loy set about the task of repairing the mines (most of which had been flooded or silted up during the fighting) and of attracting new miners to replace those who had fled or been killed. He found the greatest difficulty in persuading the capitalists of Singapore to finance his new undertakings: the price of tin had fallen, and by 1878 he was said to be "on the verge of bankruptcy". In 1879, however, the price of tin

rose, and Kuala Lumpur began to take on the appearance of a boom town.

The town in 1880, though largely rebuilt after the war, still bore the unmistakable marks of its origins—a mining village, constantly ready for attack or defence, whose inhabitants were at once miners and fighting men. The houses, flanking narrow dirty streets, often not more than twelve feet wide, had mud walls and atap thatched roofs. It was thoroughly dirty and full of appalling smells—"the refuse is simply removed from the houses and laid on the side of the road." Small wonder that smallpox, cholera and other epidemics swept through it from time to time, and the danger of fire in the narrow streets was always present. Law and order was maintained by Yap Ah Loy himself with the aid of his secret society. As he himself owned sixty-four houses, he provided such public services as there were, and with the reputation of during the civil war having paid silver dollars for the heads of his enemies, he had little trouble in preserving peace. The boom of 1880, however, put his administration under considerable strain, and as Klang was now rapidly declining, the British decided to move their headquarters to Kuala Lumpur, whose future was so full of promise. Yap Ah Loy did not welcome the change, but after Swettenham's appointment as Resident in 1882 until his death in 1885, he worked loyally with the new régime, though he devoted himself mainly to the management of his many interests, which included the ownership of half the Chinese mines in Selangor.

Negri Sembilan. Though the two successors of Raja Melewar had been selected from Menangkabau in Sumatra, the principle that a son or grandson of the Yam Tuan should succeed him had been accepted early in the nineteenth century. The new heir, however, had to be chosen by the four Undangs ("Lawgivers") of Sungei Ujong, Rembau, Jelebu and Johol, and it was understood that he had no powers of jurisdiction over these major chiefs.

From 1830 there were continual quarrels between the chiefs themselves and between them and the Yam Tuan. Blundell, in 1847 Resident Councillor of Malacca, has described the condition of the little states adjoining Malacca: the people were wretchedly poor and the general lawlessness and insecurity

made it impossible to gain much benefit from their mineral resources. Things were worse in 1874, for the great increase in tin mining led the chiefs to fight each other for the control of the rivers, the only means of communication with the interior. On the banks of these rivers they set up toll-stations to levy duty on the tin that was being exported. Now the Linggi river was the main export route for tin, and as it divided Sungei Ujong (the modern Seremban and Coast districts) and Rembau, its control had for a long time been disputed by the chiefs of those districts. In 1874 Sir Andrew Clarke induced both chiefs to stop their illegal taxation on the Linggi river, and the Dato Klana of Sungei Ujong even asked for a British official to advise him.

This appeal for British protection by the Dato Klana (who was unpopular amongst the local Malays) infuriated the local Shahbandar who now found himself prevented from taxing as he pleased the 10,000 Chinese miners of Sungei Ujong. It also seriously affronted Tengku Antah, one of two claimants to the office of Yam Tuan which had been left vacant by the death of his father, who resented the fact that a subordinate chief should dare to make an independent treaty with the British. Consequently, though in the ensuing war the Dato Klana easily defeated the Shahbandar with British help, Tengku Antah, now recognised as Yam Tuan by the rest of the Malay chiefs, who distrusted British intervention, continued the struggle with their support. In this, perhaps, he was encouraged by reports of the resentment of the Malay aristocracy against the British in Perak and Selangor. By 1876, however, the threat to Sungei Ujong was lifted; the British advanced into the Sri Menanti states, and the Yam Tuan fled to Johore, where he sought the help of the Maharajah, Abu Bakar.

The Maharajah, though he owed his position to the British, had for some time past been making a somewhat pathetic attempt to revive the ancient claims of the Sultanate of Johore to suzerainty over the Malay states. Perak and Selangor, however, were firmly under British control. Was there perhaps a chance that by effecting a reconciliation between Tengku Antah and the British, and thus posing as his protector and champion, the old Johore rights over Negri Sembilan might be recognised? But though the British made peace with Tengku

Antah, they recognised him only as Yam Tuan of Sri Menanti, not of the Negri Sembilan, and the rest of the states ignored the Maharajah's claims. Meanwhile Tengku Antah continued to quarrel with the Sri Menanti chiefs until at last the British persuaded him in 1886 to accept British protection. Similar negotiations were made with each of the other states individually, and until 1895 two residents helped to adminster the Negri Sembilan—Paul supervising Sungei Ujong and Jelebu, and Lister the rest.

It appeared that the old office of Yam Tuan had completely lost its importance, but the death of the "truculent" Tengku Antah in 1877 left the way clear for his son, Muhammad "who was an example of the best type of intelligent, straightforward Malay Rajah" (Swettenham).

He and Lister may be regarded as the main architects of the treaty of 1897 by which the nine states agreed to form the confederation of Negri Sembilan and to follow the advice of a British Resident in all matters of administration save those concerning the Muslim religion. Muhammad was accepted by all as the paramount ruler.

74. *Pahang*

After six years of civil war between three rival claimants, Wan Ahmad became Bendahara in 1863, but conditions in the state went from bad to worse. In 1883, after the death of the last Sultan of Riau, Pahang's nominal overlord, he proclaimed himself Sultan of Pahang. This large state, with only 50,000 Malays and a few hundred Chinese, governed by frightfulness, was yet thought to be potentially rich in gold and tin. Everything was arranged for the profit of the chiefs—lands and mines were taken from native Malays or Chinese and leased to newcomers; monopolies and heavy taxes were imposed; fines were exacted—and all this was accompanied by cruel tortures and judicial murders. In 1887 Governor Weld persuaded the Sultan to agree to a treaty wherein Ahmad's title as Sultan was recognised by the British, an engagement was made for mutual defence, and a British Agent (in this case Hugh Clifford) was appointed. The oppressions, however, continued and in the following year, as a result of the murder of a Chinese, a British subject, by the Sultan, the Governor insisted that the Sultan

should accept a British Resident and also pay an indemnity for the crime. On the advice of Johore the Sultan unwillingly agreed, but many of the chiefs resented the loss of their feudal rights and regarded the compensatory allowances substituted for these "rights" of illegal taxation as inadequate. A revolt broke out and Kuala Lipis was threatened, but the attack was repulsed by Hugh Clifford, the Assistant Resident. On the proclamation of an amnesty most of the chiefs capitulated, but a few, like Bahman of Serentan, continued to fight a sporadic guerrilla war until, after an abortive raid on Kuala Tembeling in 1895, Clifford drove them into Kelantan and Trengganu, whence they were deported to Siam, whose King was the overlord of those states. There was no further military opposition to British rule in any of the four states.

75. *The Residential System*

By 1895 Great Britain had made treaties with Perak, Selangor, Negri Sembilan and Pahang, and each of these treaties conformed to the same pattern. Each state had appeared to accept British protection (which included protection against foreign powers), and in return they had abdicated the right to deal with foreign states except through Great Britain. They had moreover agreed to accept a British Resident whose advice was to be asked and acted upon in all matters except those pertaining to Malay religion and custom.

We have seen that for all practical purposes, "the advice" of the Residents very soon spelt "control", although this was not originally intended by the government in London; but that government was far away and had no idea of the conditions under which the early Residents had to work, nor indeed of the nature of their task. Who, for instance, apart from the Residents could have taken up the task of introducing a country still steeped in outworn feudal customs, to the conditions of the modern world? Who but they could have provided a blueprint for the Industrial Revolution which was soon to transform the material conditions of Malaya? Certainly not the Malays, whose rulers, in spite of their elaborate hierarchic organisation, could not control the prevailing anarchy. Certainly not the Chinese, engaged in their grim pioneering task of developing the mines and owing allegiance only to their motherland.

Neither of these peoples had had experience of self-government, but from time immemorial had been accustomed to authoritarian rule.[1] Neither had any knowledge of the new methods of finance, inventions or industrial techniques which had revolutionised the way of life in Europe.

The Residents therefore set about their task of ending civil war and restoring law and order with a will. Men of the calibre of Low, Swettenham, Lister and Clifford were not likely to repeat the mistakes that Birch had initially made in Perak. They won the confidence and friendship of the Malays and quickly set to work to lay the foundations of good government. They tackled many of the jobs which were later delegated to whole departments—they were at once "policemen, magistrates, gaolers, engineers, surveyors, collectors and treasurers", and by the services they rendered tried to justify the original armed intervention.

There were two problems which demanded their immediate attention in 1874: these were the question of debt slavery and the need to raise money to pay for their projected reforms. The solution of the first problem may be illustrated from Low's experience in Perak. He, of course, shared Birch's detestation of slavery but decided that the "consent of the chiefs" was necessary for its abolition and that reasonable compensation must be paid for the loss of a "property to which by immemorial custom they have been entitled". He therefore laid it down that those who on his arrival were slaves must remain so, and that no runaway slaves were to be freed. On the other hand no free person was in future to be enslaved, and debt slaves "were to be given the right of purchasing their freedom at a fair price" which could not be refused by the master. Evidence of ill treatment would automatically lead to the freeing of a slave. By 1882 the number of slaves in Perak had been reduced to 3,050 (out of a population of 56,642); these were freed at the state's expense, so that by 1883 slavery had ceased to exist in Perak. In Negri Sembilan and Selangor slavery was eliminated even more quickly.

Reform of the Finances. Each Resident was faced with the

[1] In China proper the merchant had always been held in low esteem and had exercised very little political influence. Does this help to explain why the Chinese commercial community in Malaya until very recently took comparatively little interest in politics?

need for "a sound system of taxation" to finance his plans for development. Again a glance at Low's methods in Perak will help to illustrate their methods. In 1877 he abolished duty on all imports (even necessaries of life like rice and salt had before this been taxed) but retained those on opium, spirits and tobacco. He also gained additional revenue by the sale of land, court fines and farming the revenue from Chinese gaming houses, but he derived the great bulk of the revenue from the exports—gutta, jungle produce, and above all, tin, on which last article he imposed a very high export duty. With the money thus obtained he was able to pay generous pensions to the chiefs, which did much to reconcile them to British rule; he discharged the war debts; and in ten years in addition he wiped out the debt of £160,000 which had crippled Perak in 1877. In this, as in the institution of the State Council, Low's Perak provided a model for the other states.

The establishment of the State Council was one of his most revolutionary innovations. He was anxious to lead the Malays to identify themselves actively with the administration, and not passively resist it, to help them, by regular meetings and discussions, to form sound opinions on the measures he propounded to them, and to guide him on the means by which these measures could win Malay support. In short, he aimed at giving the Ruler and the great chiefs a sound political education in the modern manner, and he took care to see that there were two leading Chinese in the Council who, since so much of the wealth of the state came from the Larut tin mines, could present the views of the Chinese population.

Within a few years the equality of all men before the law was established throughout the states. Magistrates' courts were set up in the districts into which for this purpose the states were now divided, and European magistrates, assisted by Malay magistrates, dispensed the law which was based on the Indian Penal Code. In the villages the age-old position of the penghulus was officially recognised, and they were confirmed in their powers of keeping the peace and helping in the administration of law and order.

The result of these efforts was that the states trebled their trade returns during the '80s. New towns arose with water supplies, sanitation and post offices and other amenities admini-

stered by Sanitary (later Town) boards; hospitals began to be built, and, above all, road and rail communications were made, all designed to enable the tin to be shipped to the coast. As time went on a civil service was established in each state to help the Resident to discharge his multifarious functions.

76. *The Federated Malay States*

There was always the danger that the four states, guided by strong-minded individualists, would become separate domains, and that different, perhaps conflicting solutions would be given to urgent problems, such as taxation, land settlement or the planning of new railways. To men like Swettenham it seemed logical to suggest that the administration of the four states should be centralised and co-ordinated. He proposed that a Resident-General should be appointed to perform this function "as agent and representative of the British Government"; that the Resident should continue in charge of each state, but that the heads of the more important departments in each state should be directly responsible to the Resident-General; that the richer states should help the poorer ones (Negri Sembilan and Pahang), though each would retain control over its own finances.

Swettenham's proposals were accepted. He himself was nominated first Resident-General, and he took up his headquarters at Kuala Lumpur, where an administrative centre was built. This was provided with a new harbour, called Port Swettenham.

Swettenham was convinced that as "Agent and Governor" he had executive control over the states, under the direction of the Governor of the Straits Settlements. It soon became apparent that the British officials were the real rulers, with the agreement of the Sultans; the State Councils merely ratified the legislation drafted by the central authority, which now had a highly organised civil service to carry out its decisions. It was apparent, too, that the conferences of the Malay Rulers, held in 1897 and 1903, though valuable as arenas for airing opinion, had little real power.

This fact was made abundantly clear by the protest of the Sultan of Perak at the 1903 conference, and in 1909 an attempt was made to meet the criticisms of over-centralisation. In that

year a Federal Council was created of which the members were as follows: the High Commissioner (President); the Resident-General; the four Sultans; the four Residents; and four unofficial members nominated by the High Commissioner. As the Sultans spoke no English, in which language the meetings were conducted, this change did little to meet their complaints. Nor did the Resident-General's change of title to that of Chief Secretary, with an apparent reduction of status, effect any real diminution of his power.

The plain fact was that the extraordinary economic progress[1] which Malay was undergoing through the exploitation of tin and her new rubber industry tended to throw these constitutional questions into the background.

77. *The Unfederated Malay States*

Meanwhile the remaining Malay states, whilst benefiting from the prosperity of the F.M.S., showed little desire to have their independence abridged by joining them.

Johore. Though Abu Bakar of Johore in his treaty with the British in 1885 (wherein they had recognised him as Sultan) had given up his right to negotiate with foreign powers directly, he negotiated the treaty as an ally, not as a dependant. British control was indeed not necessary; the Sultan had for long been friendly with their officials, had when necessary consulted them on important problems, and in 1895 had set up a model constitution in which he, as head of the state, residing in his new state capital at Johore Bahru, was to be assisted by a Council of Ministers and a Council of State. Later, in 1912, an Executive Council was established, whose members were appointed by the Sultan.

This constitution was further modified in 1914, when the Sultan agreed to accept the services of a general adviser, whose advice was to be listened to on all matters except Malay religion and custom. Johore, from being a desolate, sparsely-populated state had now increased in population and prosperity beyond recognition, and some such reorganisation was called for. But the Sultan, Sir Ibrahim, like his father before him, was determined to preserve the essentially Malay nature of the administration. In theory he and the Mentri Besar

[1] See below, p. 193.

(Chief Minister) controlled affairs; each British officer had a Malay counterpart; and the Government dealt directly with the Governor at Singapore. This constitution lasted until 1946.

Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan, Trengganu. By the treaty of 1909, Siam ceded to Great Britain "all rights of suzerainty, protection, administration and control" over these four states "and the adjacent islands". The "rights" so ceded were never precisely defined, and, in their relations with their new overlord, each state showed itself jealous of its independence. Kedah's policy was "Kedah for the Malays"; the rulers wished to develop rice cultivation and cattle-rearing, with some rubber cultivation, for Malay smallholders, and aimed at limiting Chinese immigration as much as possible. Kedah refused to join the Federation, and though by the treaty of 1923 she accepted a British Adviser who was responsible for policy and administration, the Sultan followed the example of Johore in insisting on the theory that the administration was essentially a Malay one.

In Perlis a British financial adviser was appointed to set the state on its feet and repay a loan which was owing to the Siamese. In 1930, when these objects had been achieved, a treaty was made whereby the Raja accepted the advice of a British Adviser, but his rights as the chief authority in the state were safeguarded, and the State Council and the civil service were almost completely Malay.

Keltanan before 1903 was the most backward of all the Malay states, and the Siamese had in 1902 enlisted the support of British officials to help in its government. When the British officially took it over in 1909, therefore, they were already familiar with the problems facing the state, and they continued to direct and control its administration. Formal authority was vested in the Sultan, who was assisted by a State Council, almost completely Malay.

Finally, in 1909, the British appointed one official to Trengganu, which was almost as badly ruled as Kelantan. In 1919 the usual formal treaty was signed, appointing a British Adviser, and he and his subordinates took over the administration of the state.

The original intentions of the Colonial Office seem to have

been realised more in the Unfederated than in the Federated Malay States, especially in Johore and Kedah, because though advice was given and taken, the Malay rulers in these states retained control. These predominantly Malay states were (with the exception of Johore) principally rice-growing, and their typical citizen was the Malay peasant or fisherman. They had little direct interest (again with the exception of Johore) in the commercial and industrial life of the Colony and the Federated Malay States, with their large and growing cities and their typical urbanised population. They all shared a determination to preserve the Malay way of life, and this was shown even in Johore, where, in spite of the encouragement given to Chinese and Indian immigration, the political power was kept firmly in the hands of the Malays.

78. *The Federated Malay States to 1946*

The success of the Unfederated States in reconciling Malay rule with the challenge of the new economic developments led the Sultans of the Federated States (especially after the slump which followed the First World War) to revive their criticisms of the centralisation of power in the hands of the Federal Secretary. It was widely conceded among British officials that centralisation had indeed been pushed too far, and the power of the Sultans had been unreasonably circumscribed. But many influential business interests were opposed to the grant of self-rule to the individual states on the grounds that this would simply restore trade barriers which the Federation had swept away. Others feared the extension of colonial control over the Federation. An attempt to widen the basis of the Federal Council was made in 1920, and again in 1927. In that year it was decided that the Council should consist of thirteen official and eleven unofficial members; the Sultans were no longer members, but were to meet the High Commissioner, the Chief Secretary and the Residents annually to discuss the general state of the Federation.

The Colonial Office in 1935 made a determined attempt at decentralisation by restoring to the State Councils the power to draw up budgets and pass local legislation whilst leaving to the Federal Council the power to pass general laws and control finance. They also lowered the status of the Federal Secretary

and transferred control of departments to the states. Their proposal for a Malayan Union which was to include all the states and Singapore met, however, with universal opposition. The Unfederated States feared a loss of independence; the Federated States and the Chinese of Singapore feared they would have to spend money to help the poorer and more backward states.

So it was that in 1939 there were in Malaya three constitutions: the Federated Malay States, the Unfederated Malay States, and the Straits Settlements.

CHAPTER TEN

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE UNDER BRITISH RULE

I
Malaya as a Plural Society

The population of Malaya has been estimated at about 300,000 in the year 1874. Between 1911 and 1931 it increased from 2,673,000 to 4,385,000, an increase of 164 per cent in twenty years. By 1947 it had increased to 5,848,910 persons, and by 1954 had reached a total of 7,054,955. The (estimated) population of the Federation in 1956 was 6,252,000.

This increase in population is the most striking phenomenon of the eighty-three years following 1874, and it accompanied the economic expansion carried out under British rule.

Apart from Europeans, Eurasians and some others, three main racial groups made up 98 per cent[1] of the population—the Malays (including immigrants from Malaysia), the Chinese and the Indians. The Malays, who claimed to be the indigenous inhabitants of the country, totalled 43·5 per cent of the population according to the 1947 census, and in the Federation, they constituted the majority of the population; the Chinese (including those in Singapore) totalled 44·7 per cent and the Indians 10·3 per cent. These three groups lived in communities in different parts of Malaya, followed distinct avocations and had little relationship with each other. They constituted in fact a plural society.

79. *Chinese immigration*

The Malay population has increased many times over since 1874, chiefly through natural increase but partly through the immigration of Malaysians from Indonesia. It was, however, the immigration from China and India (especially the former) which revolutionised Malaya's population pattern. The

[1] "Malaya is a No-man's-land by population"—Commentator on the census of 1931.

development of tin mining and the boom in the rubber industry attracted thousands of Chinese immigrants, particularly to the towns on the west coast of Malaya, where they formed the bulk of the population and where they engaged in any occupation that provided them with a livelihood and the means of sending remittances, or retiring, to their homeland in China. In the tin industry they have always played an outstanding role and until the 1930s they produced about two-thirds of the total output. Though as a result of the introduction of more modern techniques and western capital, their share of the production declined, it still accounts for 35 per cent to 40 per cent of the total. Similarly in the rubber industry they played a leading part as estate owners and middlemen, as well as in the processing of the latex. The pineapple industry of Johore which, says Mills, "developed from a small cottage industry to become one of the largest fruit-canning industries in the world, and which ranked third amongst Malaya's industries", owed much to the industry of the Chinese in Malaya. It has been well said that "the economic development of Malaya is a result of two factors—British political control and Chinese enterprise".

80. *The British and the Chinese*

Though the British did not start Chinese immigration, they encouraged it because they recognised in the versatile Chinese the ideal labour force for the execution of their economic blueprint for Malaya. (The Malays were predominantly rural, shunned big cities and were apathetic towards making money.) The British therefore began to take an interest in the welfare of the immigrants, appointing William Pickering as official Chinese interpreter and "Protector of the Chinese" in 1877. Pickering not only eliminated the worst evils of the "contract" system of engaging "sinkehs", but investigated and exposed the secret societies whose existence the India-trained officers of the Straits Settlements had not hitherto suspected. For this he earned the praise of Governor Sir Cecil Clementi Smith and the hatred of the societies, one of whose members attacked and nearly murdered him in 1887. In 1890 all secret societies were made unlawful, but it seems certain that they were driven underground, not abolished. Indeed, lacking the effective discipline of their former headmen, many former members of

the societies formed gangs which committed crimes and openly defied law and order.

All Chinese in Malaya wished to see China strong and powerful again, but when Dr. Sun Yat Sen's revolutionary movement overthrew the Ch'ing dynasty in 1911, this triumph was particularly welcomed by the secret societies, whose war cry had once been "Restore the Ming; destroy the Ch'ing". When a split occurred between the Kuomintang and the Communist party, this was in turn reflected in Malaya. The Hua Chi and Hung Min Societies supported the Kuomintang; and the Chi Kang, the Communists. The latter society bided its time in Malaya until after the war of 1939–45.

And here we may note a peculiar paradox about the Chinese in Malaya. The vast majority pursued their peaceful and busy lives in full conformity with law and order, but they were still profoundly influenced by Chinese culture. In so far as they were influenced by the West, this appeared to be in direct ratio to the influence the West was exerting on China proper. Meanwhile, although an increasing number of Straits-born Chinese regarded Malaya as their mother country, this was not the case with the vast majority of immigrants. Between 1928 and 1937 nearly 2,800,000 landed in the Peninsula, but nearly 2,400,000 left it. Nevertheless, in 1947, 62 per cent of the Chinese in Malaya were born there.

The great problem before the Chinese was how to reconcile their loyalty to China with the ever-increasing loyalty that those who stayed felt towards Malaya.[1]

81. *The Indians in Malaya to 1939*

Modern Indian immigration started on a small scale in Penang and Province Wellesley in the early nineteenth century, the immigrants working on the small plantations of sugar-cane, cassava and copra, and later of spices and coffee. After Bencoolen was given to the Dutch, Indian convicts were sent to the Settlements until 1873, and many of these settled later in Singapore, but until the end of the century the flow of Indian immigration was slight. In 1891 they were included among

[1] The following figures may be said to afford an illustration of the problem. In 1941 the Malayan Chinese sent £12,833,000 in remittances to China. But in 1937, the total Chinese business investment in Malaya was £40,000,000.

"Others" in the census category, but by 1901, they numbered 5,500 and were entered under the heading of "Indians". The increasing demand for labour led the planters, many of whom had come from Ceylon, to look to India for a labour force, most particularly to work on the rubber plantations. Most of these came from Southern India (93 per cent in 1931), but a few came from the Indus Valley—Punjabis or Sikhs. These last generally took up other occupations, often as money-lenders, caretakers or policemen. All hoped for better conditions of life than in India, where there was a much lower standard of living. It may be said that Indian immigration was a direct result of the presence of the British in Malaya.

In 1907 the Straits Government set up the Indian Immigration Committee, which established a fund to which all employers of Indian labour had to contribute. The money thus obtained was used to pay for the establishment of assembly camps in India and the fares of the immigrants from Madras or Negapatam, as well as the salaries of supervisory officials who had been seconded from the Labour Department. In 1910 the "Kangany" system was introduced in place of the bad old system of indentured labour.

The kanganies were foremen sent over by the manager or planters' association to hire labourers for the plantations from among their fellow-villagers in India. These "free labourers" were no longer bound to the job as were the indentured labourers, though they were not infrequently oppressed by the kanganies who would lend them money at usurious interest.

That there was a marked improvement in labour conditions in Malaya is illustrated by the favourable report (1936–7) made on these to the Indian Government by their inspector of labour, Srinavasti Sastri. It is clear that the labourers were better off in Malaya than they ever were at home. Yet though the labour problem was, broadly speaking, solved, and the workers on the estates received free housing, free medical treatment and a subsidy for their staple food, rice, many thousands returned to their native land. The average length of stay was, in fact, three years. This is to be accounted for, first, by the slumps following the fluctuations in the price of rubber (there was, for example, a tremendous exodus to India in 1930–2); by the ban on immigration imposed by the Indian Government

in 1938, accompanied by their abolition of the kangany system; and also by the fact that the Indians, like the Chinese, showed a strong attachment to the mother country which their too-brief stay in Malaya could not loosen.

Nevertheless a solid block of 500,000 Indians (1947 census) remained, of whom one-third were employed on the plantations. Though many of these came to love the country of their adoption, the Indians have shown themselves as unassimilable as the Chinese. Amongst them, moreover, it was possible to discern two groups—the "Malaya-born Indians" comprising the merchants, money-lenders, lawyers' clerks, etc., and the ignorant, still unsettled labourers. Attempts were made (notably by the All-Malayan Indian Conference at Kuala Lumpur in 1927) to form a community sense among the Indians of Malaya, and it is perhaps no accident that in the following year the first Indian member was appointed to the Federal Council.

It is to be noted, in passing, that similar divisions were to be found in both the Malay and the Chinese communities. On the one hand were the Malay upper class holding official governmental or military appointments, and the mass of the Malay peasantry; on the other hand were the wealthy Chinese business men who appeared to have little in common with their poorer fellow countrymen.

Malaya before the Second World War may be described not unfairly as a "melting pot". Could these three races with their different cultures, different languages, different standards of education and values, and their own internal differences find a bond of union in a common loyalty to Malaya, which, in the case of two of them, was an adopted country? The war helped to intensify, and in some degree, to clarify this problem.

II
Economic Expansion

The remarkable economic expansion of Malaya during the last eighty years was the direct result of the changes in European politics that took place during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. For the first three-quarters Great Britain, thanks to her outstanding lead as an industrial country and her doctrine

of free trade, dominated the trade of the world. For some years, however, Britain had been watching with apprehension the gradual advance of Russia south-eastwards to India, and eastwards to China, and she had been equally perturbed by France's intervention in Cochin China in 1858, which led to her annexation of Cochin China and Cambodia in 1867. Britain's own intervention in Burma was inspired among other things by her belief that the Irrawaddy would provide a new means of ingress to China; she was aware that the French regarded the Mekong in the same light.

After 1878 the latent challenge to Britain's dominant position in world trade became clear and open. Other European countries now equally industrialised sought to annex the unexploited regions of the world, where they could obtain control over the essential raw materials. Control was necessary if they were to make their economies self-sufficient, and so they tended to replace free trade by a policy of protection. At the same time they competed with each other even more intensely for the control of overseas markets.

This competition was still further intensified by the increase in the speed of communications. In 1869 the Suez Canal was opened, and this meant that a much shorter sea route was now available for European shipping instead of the long Cape route. There followed an immediate improvement in the construction of steamships, which had hitherto compared unfavourably both in speed and reliability with sailing ships. From now on the steamship became the normal means of transport across the world's oceans; the delays caused by calms and the monsoon were eliminated, and the journey to Singapore was cut from five or six months to one. Singapore's own position as a world port was thus immeasurably strengthened, and the Straits of Malacca became once more a vital link in the sea route between east and west. Finally, telegraphic communications enabled European governments to supervise their colonies more closely and helped business firms to expedite their enterprises.

82. (a) *Tin*

Malaya's most important raw material in 1874, as it had been for centuries past, was tin. The British immediately

recognised its value as a source of revenue to finance their development schemes, and encouraged the Chinese who were already exploiting it to increase their production. By 1899 nearly 44,000 tons, or 52·1 per cent of the world total, were produced, mainly by the Chinese-owned mines. After 1900, however, though the Chinese continued to provide most of the labour, their share in production (four-fifths of the total in Malaya up to 1912) declined to one-third in 1939. This was because the British adopted new methods and techniques in mining for which they chiefly provided the large amounts of capital needed. Since 1910 the annual output of tin has remained fairly constant, but Malaya's contribution to the world total had by 1953 stabilised itself at about one-third. This was due to the increasing competition of other tin-producing countries such as Bolivia, Nigeria, the Congo, Thailand and Sumatra.

The industry has always been sensitive to the rise and fall of demand in the world market, over which, of course, it has no control. In 1926, for example, the price of a ton was £284 7s. 7d.; in 1931, as a result of the world slump, it fell to £129 9s. 1d. In that year, therefore, a number of the tin-producing countries agreed to accept individual production quotas, and an attempt was made to stabilise prices. Malaya's quota was less than 75 per cent of her capacity; countries which had not signed the agreement produced more because the price (£230 per ton) was favourable, and on the whole it is probable that Malaya did not profit by this agreement.

All the tin of Malaya (and until recently a large proportion of that from Indonesia and the Indo-Pacific Peninsula) was smelted by two companies in Penang and Singapore.

No other mineral in Malaya compares with tin in importance. There are, however, quite significant supplies of iron ore, nearly one and a half million tons being produced in 1955 and exported to Japan. The production of bauxite, mainly in Johore, has increased since the war, and in 1955, 220,000 tons were exported to Japan, Australia and Taiwan. Apart from the gold of Pahang, other mineral production is negligible. As for coal, the Batu Arang coalfield in Selangor produced 630,000 tons in 1937, but it has to meet increasing competition from fuel oil produced in Sumatra and elsewhere, and its calorific value is low.

83. (b) *Rubber*

In 1874 the world supply of rubber came from Brazil and Central Africa, where the rubber trees grew wild and the methods of collecting the latex were haphazard and unscientific. In 1876 a consignment of seeds was sent from Brazil by Mr. (later Sir Harry) Wickham to England; they were planted in Kew Gardens, and thence two cases were sent to the Botanic Gardens in Ceylon and Singapore. Twenty-two plants of this original consignment took root and flourished in Singapore, and a few in Ceylon; but the Malayan planters were more interested in growing coffee, then a promising export, than rubber, more particularly as the early rubber trees yielded no latex. In 1888 an Englishman, Henry Ridley, was sent out to the Straits Settlements as the Director of Forests and Gardens, and within a few years he and his collaborators (none of whom had probably before seen a latex-producing rubber tree) proved triumphantly that the soil and climate of Malaya were admirably adapted to the cultivation of rubber. The planters, however, were by no means easily convinced of the utility of the new crop; various diseases attacked the trees; it took time to discover the optimum distance between them; and meanwhile rubber planting appeared to be a speculative venture in comparison with the assured market which coffee apparently commanded. Two events, however, determined the future of the new crop. The coffee plants were blighted by disease; and the uncertainty of world prices completed the ruin of the industry. At the same time the invention of the motor-car created an immediate and immense demand for rubber tyres. At once the hesitating planters saw their opportunity; millions of acres were won from the jungle and soon were covered by long orderly lines of rubber trees; and Malaya was soon able to offer to the world assured supplies of rubber, on terms with which the jungle-produced crops of Central and South America could not compete. By 1924 Malaya was the world's most important rubber producer, and rubber had, with tin, become one of the two major pillars of her modern economy.

History affords many examples of the effect that the cultivation of plants has had upon the development of cultures. The cultivation of the olive in ancient Athens and of the mulberry and rice in China, has, as Christopher Dawson has

pointed out, determined the whole rhythm of life of those civilisations. In the same way, the cultivation of rubber has already effected immense changes in Malaya and indeed in other South-East Asian countries such as Indonesia, Viet Nam and Thailand, which also owe their rubber plantations to the few plants sent out from Kew Gardens in 1876.

Not only were vast areas taken over from the jungle for rubber growing, but the requirements of the industry (reinforcing those of the tin industry) have changed the whole outlook and appearance of the Malay states. The wealth derived from these two industries has helped to transform them from backward into modern communities, caused new towns and cities to spring up, attracted capital from many countries and developed subsidiary industries. If, in addition to this, these industries have posed new problems by attracting immigrants from India and China to work in them, this very fact illustrates the transformation which has made Malaya into a kind of miniature United States, a land of opportunity for many Chinese and Indians, who found there a much higher standard of living than they could get in their own countries. To Henry Ridley a great part of the credit for this remarkable achievement must go.

The rubber industry has also had its share of depressions and price fluctuations, and as a result of the Stevenson restriction plan of 1924 Malaya lost ground to the rubber plantations of Indonesia which continue to produce the greater proportion of the world's supply of natural rubber. She has also to meet serious competition from synthetic rubber. Perhaps part of the answer to this twofold competition may lie in the Government's policy of increasing efficiency in production, particularly by subsidising the planting of high-yielding clones to replace the average and low-yielding trees.

84. (c) *Agriculture*

Tin, rubber and the entrepôt trade between them provided the main bases of Malaya's economic expansion from 1874 onwards. For this expansion the British, Chinese and Indians were chiefly responsible. The fourth basis of her economy was the development of her native agriculture, in which the Malays were directly concerned.

The production of rice, the basic foodstuff of Malaya, is still, as it has always been, the main concern of the Malays, and whilst it is generally cultivated in each state, two-thirds of the total production is now to be found in the "rice bowls" of Kedah, Perlis, Province Wellesley, Perak, Kelantan and Trengganu, all predominantly Malay, or more accurately, Malaysian, states. There was at one time the danger that Malays would become a landless proletariat, chiefly because of their tendency to mortgage their land for loans from Chinese and Indian money-lenders. To prevent the forfeiture of their land as a result of their inability to pay these loans, legislation was passed in 1913, and continually since then up to 1939, which established "Reservations", i.e. large areas of land which were to be occupied primarily by Malaysians. The Malay occupants could not sell their land to non-Malays, whether these were Asian or Europeans. Some of these lands were settled recently —like the Krian, which before 1906 consisted of 50,000 acres of swamps until it was converted into a rice-growing district by the Department of Agriculture. This work of reclamation from jungle or peat swamps was continued by the Department; by 1926–30, 662,000 acres had been won back, and this figure rose to 835,000 acres in 1953–4.

The Malays, not generally interested in commercial gain, provided more or less enough rice for their own consumption but little or nothing for the other races of Malaya. Though in the last thirty years the total production has doubled, so has the population of the country, and the result is that 50 per cent or 60 per cent of Malaya's rice had to be imported from abroad, especially Siam and Burma, chiefly for the benefit of the Chinese and Indian communities. In Singapore and many of the cities of Malaya there has been in recent years a notable increase in the consumption of wheat and wheat flour.

Other fruit and vegetable crops continued to be cultivated, with more intensiveness during the British period, and though they took up only half the acreage of rice, the value of their production was twice as much. These included the custard apple, the durian, the rambutan, the mangosteen and various citrus fruits such as oranges and limes, the banana, an essential element of Malayan diet, yams, sweet potatoes, beans and pineapples. The coconut also, of course, provides an essential foodstuff, though at the same time it provides, in the form of copra, the 2nd most important agricultural product after rubber

stuff, though at the same time it provides, in the form of copra, the second most important agricultural product after rubber.

III
Health

Part of the new wealth which tin and rubber created was devoted by the British to the promotion of medical services. They found that Malaya was a most unhealthy country. Smallpox, cholera, malaria, dysentery and plague raged unchecked; tuberculosis was prevalent in overcrowded Singapore and other towns, and leprosy was not uncommon. The British medical authorities kept careful watch over the ports, and by their preventive work countered the spread of epidemic diseases carried by infected persons. They founded hospitals as well as institutions for the care of lepers and lunatics; established infant welfare centres; set up Sanitary or Town Boards; improved water supplies; promoted education in hygiene; and in the towns, notably Singapore, attacked the problem of overcrowding and installed drains and sewers. But it was in their treatment of malaria that they gained the most spectacular success. In 1910 the death rate from this disease in Malaya was 130 per 1,000; no fewer than 30 per cent of the labour force on the rubber plantations succumbed to it, and it seemed that the whole ambitious programme of economic expansion was doomed by an irremediable check on the part of Nature herself. In 1902 the order was given for the abandonment of Port Swettenham (recently built as a harbour for the Federated Malay States) because of the high death rate. At this juncture, Malcolm Watson, who had recently been appointed as District Surgeon of Klang, sought and gained permission from the Malayan Administration to undertake an active campaign against the scourge. He was familiar with the discovery of his friend, Sir Ronald Ross, that malaria was transmitted by the anopheles mosquito, and the preventive measures he carried out by draining and sealing off all its possible breeding places were so successful that they not only saved Port Swettenham but provided for the whole of the British Empire, and perhaps the world, an object lesson in the prevention of

malaria. The Malayan Administration, thanks to his initiative and help, embarked on a series of anti-malarial measures which reduced the incidence of the disease to a remarkable degree and effected in the process a great saving in human life. Not only Malaya, but Singapore, Indonesia, India and Africa have also derived incalculable benefit from his researches.

The control of disease was perhaps the greatest benefit that the British gave to Malaya.

IV
Education

The first European School of which there is a record was St. Paul's School, founded in Malacca by the Jesuit Fathers during the sixteenth century. It was here that Eredia[1] was educated, and from what he tells us it seems to have provided a classical education similar to that given in schools of the Society of Jesus throughout the Europe of that day. English schools were established after 1786 by missionary societies as private schools. Such were the Penang Free School and the Malacca Free School founded in 1817 and 1826 respectively by the Church of England. The Christian Brothers and the Sisters of the Order of St. Maur established Catholic schools for boys and girls in the Straits Settlements from 1850 onwards.

After the Transfer of 1867, the British established grant-aided schools, with English as the language of instruction, and they also gave grants to the established English private schools. The Victoria Institution was opened in Kuala Lumpur in 1894, and the Malay College, Kuala Kangsar, for the education of sons of the Malay aristocracy in 1905. After the First World War, there was a considerable increase in the number of secondary schools, whose curricula were strongly influenced by the educational reforms that followed the passing of the 1902 Act in England. Higher education was catered for by the King Edward VII College of Medicine (1905) and the Raffles College of Arts (1928) which was a partial attempt to put Raffles's dream of a higher centre of learning into practice.

Malay schools developed out of the traditional Koranic

[1] See Vol. 1, p. 188.

Schools, and after 1918 free vernacular education was made compulsory for Malay children between seven and eleven. As time went on the number and quality of these schools improved. Chinese vernacular schools were founded and run without state aid by the Chinese themselves, who preferred in this way to safeguard their own language and customs. By 1920 it was apparent that these schools were being flooded with anti-British propaganda dispensed by Chinese from China with strong pro-Kuomintang views, and they were accordingly brought under the care of a government department of Chinese Education which aimed at improving the instruction given and eliminating politics from the curriculum. By 1937 the Chinese schools were second in number to the Malay schools, but many Chinese children were sent to the English schools by their parents, and in fact outnumbered all other communities in those institutions.

Some Indian schools were started soon after 1870 for the children of estate workers, and in 1912 the Government ordered all planters to provide schools on their estates, and helped them to do so by providing *per capita* grants. Tamil vernacular education was not, however, very satisfactory, and those parents who could afford it sent their children to the English schools.

V

Malaya in 1939

Thanks to the firm and just rule of the British since 1874—a man's long lifetime—Malaya by 1939 had successfully undergone her Industrial Revolution and, as the world's greatest single exporter of rubber and tin, had become wealthy and contented, with the highest standard of living of any Asian country. For the first time in her history malaria and other diseases had been brought under control. The Malays, then constituting over half the population of the country, seemed secure in their claim, backed by British protection, to be the indigenous people of the country; the Chinese seemed content with conditions which enabled them to make money without the fear of losing it by unjust taxation, and they favoured a system which left them so great a degree of independence. The

Kuala Lumpur, 1884

Kuala Lumpur Today

Sultan Abu Bakar

Sinking of the Prince of Wales

war which broke out so many thousand miles away seemed remote and unreal to Malaya, and doubtless most people thought it would affect them as little as had the First World War.

And yet, as we can now see, this security was precariously balanced. A little country, the size of England, had no fewer than three types of constitution, and clearly this state of affairs would not conduce to decisive and concerted action in the event of a great emergency. There was no such thing as a Malayan nation; this concept may have appealed to some minds in 1939, but the mass of Malays continued to think of their own individual states and of their individual rulers as the objects of their loyalty. The loyalties of the majority of Chinese and Indians were centred elsewhere. The Malayan races showed little initiative in preparing for the future. No doubt it seemed to them in 1939 that there was little need for worry, and that they could safely leave their future to the care of their paternal government. The Second World War, however, and explosive doctrines such as Oriental Nationalism and Communism made the continuation of the old order impossible. It was inevitable after 1945 that the Malays would demand an active and responsible share in the government, and that the Chinese, who had contributed so much to Malaya's economic welfare, would not continue for ever to be regarded as foreigners in their adopted country. It was also made plain that a more broadly based system of education was needed to bridge the gulf that separated Malaya's races, and to help in the formation of a common culture.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

EVENTS LEADING TO MERDEKA
31 AUGUST 1957

85. *The Japanese Attack*

THE rise of Japan from her position in the mid-nineteenth century as an isolated feudal state to the rank of a first-class power is one of the outstanding facts of world history. Japan deliberately adopted Western culture, adapting it to meet her own conditions, and her remarkable success did more than anything else to spread the new spirit of nationalism throughout the East.

Japan had gained her first great success by defeating Russia in the war of 1902. In the First World War she had gained further prestige at little expense as one of the Allies, and in 1931, encouraged by the situation in Europe, she had attacked China, hoping to get control of that great country. The outbreak of war in 1939 left her in a commanding position in the Far East, for Britain's navy was engaged in a life and death struggle with the German U-boats, and the U.S.A. remained neutral. When the Germans had overrun Holland and France, the Battle of Britain was raging, and Russia was being attacked by the German armies, Japan decided that this was the moment to launch her attack, in accordance with the plans she had prepared far back in 1924, to bring South-East Asia and Australia into her South-East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere. She occupied southern Indo-China, destroyed the American fleet in Pearl Harbour and then turned her attention to Malaya. Neither at sea nor in the air were the British (fighting for self-preservation at home) able to resist their formidable and well-planned advance from Kota Bharu through the Peninsula to their main objective, Singapore. This at one time had been thought to be impregnable, and so it might have been with an adequate fleet (supported by adequate air power) to protect it. But already the *Prince of Wales* and the *Repulse*, the two biggest ships of the Eastern fleet, had been sunk; the Japanese had control of the air; and the fixed guns of Singapore pointed seawards, unable to stop the enemy advancing against the inadequately

equipped and increasingly disorganised defenders. On 15 February 1942 the British surrendered unconditionally, and for the next three and a half years Malaya remained under Japanese control.

86. *The Japanese Occupation*

The sudden collapse of British power, on which they had absolutely depended, came as a great shock to all Malayans. For nearly seventy years the Malays, whose ancestors had been fearless jungle fighters or desperate pirates, had enjoyed complete peace, and they had forgotten the arts of war. The Chinese had always despised the profession of arms, and in any case the Malay rulers would never have countenanced the formation of a military body by them. The British were the only trained troops who with the assistance of the Malay Regiment and Malay and Chinese volunteers could even attempt to stem the unexpected invasion from the north. Their defeat left the Malays completely bewildered, and the Chinese, who had contributed generously to the Allied cause, hurt and angry.

The Japanese at one blow destroyed the British administration, whose officers were either interned in concentration camps or sent with many of their Malayan sympathisers to their deaths on the infamous Siamese railway project. They retained, however, the general pattern of State Governments, substituting Japanese for the former British Residents and establishing their own Governor-General at Singapore. At first their slogan of "Asia for the Asians" undoubtedly made an appeal to a number of Malayans, as also did their successful conduct of the war, in which they, an Eastern nation, had signally defeated a Western power. Had their diplomacy and skill in treating a conquered people matched their brilliance in arms, they might have taken advantage of the general bewilderment that followed the British defeat to win the loyalty of the Malayans; and in that event the history of Malaya might have been very different. But their arrogance and cruelty deprived them of this prize.

The Japanese never intended that Malaya should become an independent country under their rule. From the first they adopted a policy of "Divide and Rule" towards the three races of that country. Towards the Malays they tended to

adopt a conciliatory policy. They appointed local Councillors in each district, half Japanese and half Malay, whom they expected to advise them as to the general attitude of the people in their areas. They also combined Malaya and Sumatra under their administration at Singapore, thus reconstituting the old Riau-Johore Empire. By this means they detached Sumatra from Javanese control in the hope that the two countries, with common ties in race and religion, would form a strong Pan-Islamic bloc. They abandoned this plan, however, in 1944, and Sumatra was given a separate government. Towards the Indian community the Japanese held out the lure of helping to destroy the British power then still paramount in India, and to this end they revived in 1942 the Central Indian Association of Malaya which had for some years past, particularly since the visit to Malaya of Pandit Nehru in 1937, concerned itself with Indian political problems. In 1943 the Japanese appointed Subas Chandra Bose as the Commander of the Indian National Army and as Head of Azad Hind, the Indian Provisional Government. While many Indians, partly from love of India, partly from fear of the consequences, partly from motives of personal gain, joined this movement (so that by 1945 it had nine branches in Malaya controlled from Singapore), others, distrusting Japanese motives, refused to join and were imprisoned or joined the guerrilla forces in the jungle. Towards the end of the Occupation more and more Indians turned against the Japanese. The British, on their return, dealt lightly with the Azad Hind Organisation, contenting themselves with trying and imprisoning a few leaders, whom they later released.

Towards the Chinese the Japanese adopted, in general, a ruthless policy, though they also tried at times (without success) to win them over by exploiting their grievances against the Malays or the British. The Chinese in Malaya were united in their opposition to the conquerors, chiefly because of the aggressive war which Japan had been waging since 1931 against China. The Japanese tried to destroy their opposition by imprisonment, mass evacuations and general intimidation and repression, but both Communists and followers of the Kuomintang took to the jungle and waged an unceasing guerrilla war against them.

It is important, in view of later developments, to note the part taken by the Communists in this campaign. It has been observed that the Chinese in South-East Asia are very sensitive to developments in China. Sun Yat Sen's revolution was eagerly greeted by those whose fathers had fled from the rule of the hated Manchu dynasty; Chiang Kai Shek commanded considerable support in Malaya, even the school textbooks reflecting his government's political ideas; and it has even been maintained that the European fashions adopted in Malaya were not directly copied from the British in Malaya but from the Chinese mainland which first, so to speak, sanctioned their adoption. Similarly the Communism of Mao Tse-tung found its representatives in Malaya, and doubtless Mao's adherents were familiar with his *The Strategic Road of the Chinese Communist Party* (1938), notably perhaps the sentence: "Our determined policy is 70 per cent self-development, 20 per cent compromise and 10 per cent fight the Japanese." The Party in Malaya, like its counterparts elsewhere, had supported Russia's anti-British policy until 1941 when Russia was herself attacked by Germany. Then it threw in its lot with the Allies against Germany's ally, Japan, organised its forces under the title of the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (March 1942) and from that time took almost complete control over the Chinese resistance to their enemies. As a result they became the most powerful opponent of the Japanese in Malaya, earning for themselves popular support and great prestige. Their ultimate object, as events showed, was, having got rid of the Japanese, to seize power in Malaya for themselves.

In 1945 the British returned to Malaya. They received a great welcome from the people, but the Occupation had made a return to the old state of affairs that obtained before 1939 impossible. Among the three races there was now a much clearer political consciousness, and the growing spirit of Nationalism (and its corollary "Anti-Colonialism") was soon to demand independence of all foreign control.

87. *The Malayan Union Proposals, 1946*

On the collapse of the Japanese, the Communists made a bid to seize control over Malaya before the British returned by taking over the administration of many parts of the country.

Their terrorist tactics, including the judicial murders which marked their short-lived triumph, gave Malaya an example of what Communist rule meant in practice. Very soon bitter faction fights broke out between them and the Malays, and this augured badly for the future.

And here the British made a very serious error of judgement. During the war, plans for Malaya's future had been worked out, without, of course, the benefit of the advice of officials who knew Malaya really well (most of these were interned), or of consultation with the Malayans themselves. Instead of waiting to avail themselves of this advice, they almost immediately put forward proposals for a Malayan Union, with which the Malay Sultans were virtually compelled to agree. The Malayan Union was to consist of all the states in the Peninsula, together with Penang and Malacca, but excluding Singapore, which was to be a separate colony with its own Governor and administration. The State Councils were to be retained, but the Sultans were to have little influence, real power being vested in each state in a Resident Commissioner responsible to the British Governor who was to preside over a centralised legislature. At the same time it was proposed to establish a common citizenship which would include all Malays, Chinese, Indians and others qualified by birth in the country or by residence for a suitable period of time. By these proposals the planners hoped to establish a strong centralised state in place of the nine separate governments whose lack of a strong executive power had so weakened the country in the war with the Japanese. In effect they were declaring the whole of Malaya to be British colonial territory.

These proposals led to a tremendous outcry among the Malays. Public meetings denouncing them were held all over the country, and a number of parties were formed, most of which united in March 1946 to form the United Malay National Organisation (U.M.N.O.) under the leadership of Dato Onn bin Jaaffar. The declared aims of this party—to secure the defeat of the proposals and to advance the political and social progress of the Malays towards self-government—secured the support, not only of the Sultans, but also of many retired Governors and civil servants and others in Great Britain who contributed to the general chorus of criticism. In face of this unanimous

opposition, the Government dropped their proposals, and agreed to consult with Malay, Chinese and Indian leaders before taking any further steps. The result of these negotiations was the Federation of Malaya Agreement which was brought into force in 1948. The Malays, for the first time in their history, had shown a political consciousness and a capacity for political organisation that no one had hitherto suspected they possessed.

88. *The Federation of Malaya*

The Federation Agreement was in essence a compromise. The powers and prerogatives enjoyed by the Sultans in 1941 were confirmed, and at the same time the British were given full control of defence and the external affairs of the Federation.

The Federation included the nine Malay states, together with the Settlements of Malacca and Penang. A strong federal government was established with a High Commissioner, a federal Executive Council and a federal Legislative Council.

The Federal Executive Council was to advise the High Commissioner, who was appointed by the Crown with the rulers' agreement. All the members were members of the Legislative Council. This consisted of the High Commissioner as President, eleven official members, the nine Presidents of the State Councils of the Malay states, and two unofficial members (one from each of the Settlement Councils). Fifty other unofficial members represented labour, commercial, professional and racial minority interests. The official languages were English and Malay.

A Council of Rulers was also provided for, which, under its own elected chairman, was to meet the High Commissioner at least three times a year.

Each state, whose authority concerned all matters not specifically reserved to the Federation (e.g. the control of state revenues), had its own Executive Council and its Council of State. The Executive Councils met under the presidency of the Ruler; the Councils of State under that of the Prime Minister (Mentri Besar). Normally the rulers acted under the advice of the Executive Council and the Mentri Besar, the Chief Executive Officer.

The two settlements came under direct British rule, the Resident Commissioner (advised by the Settlement Council)

deputising for the High Commissioner as the Sovereign's representative.

The responsibilities of the Federal Government included defence, the police, the railways, labour and postal communications and broadcasting. It had direct control over finance, not only over such matters as income tax and customs duties, but over the finances of each state, to which it made a yearly contribution and whose annual budget it had to approve.

In the matter of qualification for citizenship the Federation's requirements, in deference to Malay demands, were much stiffer than those proposed for the Malayan Union. Those born in Federation territory were automatically granted citizenship, as were those whose fathers were Federation citizens at the time of their birth. Citizenship was to be acquired by applicants who had resided in the Federation for fifteen years out of the twenty immediately preceding application, who had a knowledge of English or Malay and who declared their intention of permanent settlement and their willingness to take the oath of citizenship.

Thus the Federation Agreement not only reversed the Malayan Union proposal to extend a common Malayan citizenship to all on a basis of equality with the native Malays (which would have given potential political power to many whose loyalty to Malaya was, to say the least, doubtful). It also practically put an end to the power of the British Residents by giving many of their previous functions to the Mentri Besar; it increased the authority of the State Councils and improved the position of the unofficial members both in the State Councils and in the Federation. By 1951, indeed, the principle was established whereby unofficial Members took the place of official departmental heads as spokesmen for their departments in the Federal Council; and in 1953 the High Commissioner ceased to be President of the Legislative Council, an unofficial member taking his place.

89. *The Crown Colony of Singapore*

Whilst Malacca and Penang were to form part of the Federation, Singapore was to remain a British colony. The former Straits Settlements thus ceased to exist.

In March 1946 a new administration was inaugurated. The

Governor, with the same status as before, was assisted by an Executive Council, which consisted of four *ex officio* members, two other official members, and four unofficial members, all appointed by the Governor. A Legislative Council was also established with the Governor once again as President, the four *ex officio* members of the Executive Council, five nominated official members, four nominated unofficial members, one unofficial member elected by each of the three Chambers of Commerce (European, Chinese and Indian) and six other elected members. Thus the unofficial members had a clear majority in the Legislative Council. Nine of these represented constituencies. (The number was later increased to twelve.) Elections were to be held every three years.

In the first election, 1948, two parties, the "Progressives" and the "Independents", with policies not widely dissimilar, presented candidates; but the vote was limited to British subjects and only 22,440 (chiefly Indians and Europeans) had their names on the register. Though in the 1951 election the franchise had been extended, it was clear that only three hundred thousand out of a population of nearly a million had the right to vote and that in practice scarcely 2 per cent exercised this right.

In 1953 Sir John Rendel's Commission proposed that a Legislative Assembly should be established consisting of thirty-two members, of whom twenty-five were to be elected. It also proposed that a Council of Ministers should replace the Executive and Legislative Councils, and that this Council should be composed of three senior British officials and six Asian members appointed from the Assembly. In the election of 1955 over half the voters of the 300,309 on the electoral register voted; five parties contested the election, and as a result of a coalition the Labour Party formed a government. The party's leader was chosen as the Chief Minister, and he now assumed most of the duties previously exercised by the Colonial Secretary.

90. *The Emergency*

After the Japanese Occupation, the British Military Administration asked the Malayan People's Anti-Japanese Army (M.P.A.J.A.) to hand in their arms. Though 3,000 or 4,000 guerrillas were disbanded, it was widely believed that the Communists had concealed quantities of arms in the jungle, though

very few of these were recovered. Meanwhile the Anti-Japanese Union (the civilian body which had controlled the M.P.A.J.A.) tried behind the scenes to disrupt the efforts of the British to rebuild Malaya's shattered economy. In these efforts they were helped by the rice shortage following the drying up of imports from Siam and Burma on which Malaya depended. The Communists also infiltrated into the trade unions (reviving now in the new atmosphere of freedom) as they had done before the war, and in January 1946, they successfully engineered a general strike. In February they tried again, but prompt action by the British Military Administration nullified their efforts. The agitation over Malayan Union encouraged them to try for control of the new parties or pressure groups which then came into existence. They supported the first Malay Party "The Malay Nationalist Party" (formed in November 1945) whose own extremist left wing the "Angkatan Pemuda Insaf" was itself a terrorist organisation, and they tried also to control the Democratic Union which sponsored an organisation called the All-Malayan Council of Joint Action. This was a union of all parties which, while disagreeing on many things, were united in a common opposition to U.M.N.O. The Malays, however, soon objected to the predominantly Chinese (largely Communist) membership of this organisation and broke away to form the United People's Front ("Pusat Tenaga Ra'ayat", popularly known as "Putera"). It is significant that on the outbreak of the Emergency both the Malay Nationalist Party and the Malayan Democratic Union dissolved themselves, on the grounds that they were opposed to violent methods of securing their aims.

In June 1948 the Malayan Communist Party, having failed by political means to wreck the new Federal scheme, and probably acting under orders from abroad, took to the jungle and launched a campaign of terrorism. Though their so-called "Malayan People's Liberation Army" never at any time exceeded six thousand men, they aimed at reducing Malaya to a state of chaos, economic and political, in preparation for the formation of a Communist state. They were no respecters of persons, murdering Chinese,[1] Indians and Europeans indis-

[1] By October 1948, 223 civilians had been murdered of whom the majority were Chinese.

criminately if these got in their way. They attacked villages and small towns and police stations, laid ambushes along the main roads against security forces, terrorised Chinese "squatters"[1] into providing them with food, tried to disrupt rubber plantations by intimidating Indian labourers, and spread general terror by a number of atrocious murders. In all these "hit-and-run" activities they had the great advantage of their hide-outs in the jungle, which provided almost ideal cover for saboteurs; they could mingle, without being recognised, with the ordinary community; they received support and intelligence from their civilian sympathisers, the "Min Yuen"; and they had a convenient escape route across the Siamese frontier.

Not unnaturally it took time for the security forces to strike back with effect at this elusive enemy. The first big step forward was the resettlement policy initiated by Lieut.-General Briggs in 1950 whereby almost all the Chinese rural population were settled in new villages which were strongly guarded to prevent the Communists from gaining from their inhabitants food and support. A strong effort was made to make these villages attractive by providing houses, streets, community centres and other amenities, and thus to give a sense of civic pride and security to these virtually stateless people. The Home Guard was formed, and soon its members throughout the country were not only successfully defending their villages against the enemy but also helping in mopping-up operations against them. This work was done at first chiefly by the Malays, but later the Chinese formed their own branch of the Home Guard, which presently became equally effective.

By the middle of 1952, thanks to the remarkable drive and leadership of General Templer, it became clear that the Communist offensive was being contained, and from then on, with more and more areas being freed from their terror, and declared "White", and with thousands of terrorists being killed or captured, the security forces began to search out the rebels in the jungle areas into which they now retreated. Bands of them, however, continued to hold out, notably in places like Johore (where many of the peasantry were strongly pro-Communist).

[1] "Squatters" was the name given to the thousands of Chinese who had been compelled by fear of starvation during the Japanese occupation to make clearings in the jungle and plant food therein.

A New Village, 1951–52

No doubt they hoped that one day Communist China would intervene in the struggle and reverse their fortunes.

91. *Events leading to Merdeka*

The Emergency had the effect of disrupting all the political pressure groups which had been trying to influence the Government, with the exception of U.M.N.O. This organisation found it impossible therefore to negotiate with any counterpart representing the other communities, and consequently Dato Onn and others formed the Communities Liaison Committee which aimed at finding a basis of agreement with these communities with a view to common political action. Meanwhile, with Government approval, Tan Cheng Lock formed the Malayan Chinese Association (February 1949) with the apparent object of organising Chinese public opinion on the subject of the 1948 Federation Agreement. This body, which now claims to represent the interests of all the Chinese in Malaya, was the first organisation of its kind ever to be formed in that country. At first it might have appeared that this organisation and U.M.N.O.

might oppose each other on a communal basis, but thanks to the work of the Communities Liaison Committee and the statesmanship of the leaders of the two organisations, this undesirable possibility was averted. Instead, the two communal parties merged to form the U.M.N.O.—M.C.A. Alliance, a coalition without precedent in Malayan history. The triumph of the Alliance at the municipal elections in Johore Bahru, Muar, Malacca and Kuala Lumpur at the beginning of 1953 provided convincing proof that this intercommunal alliance could work effectively. Indeed its success encouraged the members of the Independence of Malaya Party (the I.M.P. which had broken off from U.M.N.O. in September 1951 under the leadership of Dato Onn) to return to U.M.N.O.; and it also induced the Malayan Indian Congress to seek membership of the Alliance.

In April 1953 the Alliance formulated its political objectives at a party conference. These—which included the establishment of a sovereign and independent state inside the British Commonwealth within two years—led it once again to victory with the cry of "Merdeka" (freedom) in the Federal elections of 1955. The Chief Minister was Tengku Abdul Rahman, a scion of the royal house of Kedah, who had succeeded Dato Onn, on the latter's resignation from U.M.N.O. in 1951, as leader of that party. He now proceeded to put his policy into action.

In the elections of 1956, however, the Alliance received a comparatively slight, but still significant, setback. In Penang, for example, it lost all the eight seats contested. Tengku Abdul Rahman himself attributed this defeat among other things to his government's action in closing the Chung Ling Chinese Middle School in Penang, and to Chinese fears that Penang's politics would be dominated by U.M.N.O. It might also have been partly due to the resurgence of the Labour Party which since 1956 had developed a much stronger organisation.

The Federation's "Merdeka" mission went to London in January 1956 under the leadership of Tengku Abdul Rahman. The principle of Malayan independence had already been agreed to by the Colonial Office, and by May 1957 both sides were reported to "have reached agreement on all outstanding issues" regarding the new constitution that had been drawn up as a result of the report of the Commission headed by Lord Reid.

In the middle of August Britain and Malaya signed an agreement by which Malaya was to become an elective monarchy on 31 August 1957. The Malay rulers elected from among themselves as the first Paramount Ruler of Malaya, Tengku Sir Abdul Rahman, Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negri Sembilan. His term of office was to last five years. The Chief Minister of the new State (whose advice as a constitutional ruler he was bound to accept) was Tengku Abdul Rahman, the former Chief Minister of the Federation.

92. *Singapore*

Meanwhile a similar demand for independence had grown up in Singapore, but the British did not regard this so favourably. The Colonial Office in its explanation (15 May 1956) of the failure of the constitutional talks with the Singapore delegation led by the then Chief Minister, David Marshall, clearly had in mind the vital importance of Singapore for the safety and security of the Commonwealth. They pointed out that there had been no appreciable period of stable democratic government in Singapore; that no political party at that time held an outstanding majority; and that the subversive forces of Communism might possibly get control of the island. Without firm guarantees they refused to abrogate their rights and powers in connection with Singapore.

A second London Conference met in March 1957, this time under a new Chief Minister, Lim Yew Hock, Marshall's successor, who had during his few months of office given a convincing display of his determination to subdue the Communist influences of which the Colonial Office complained. Basic agreement was reached on outstanding issues, and the British demands for the security of their bases on the island and a "concurrent interest in external affairs" were met. The Conference, however, broke down on the British demand that "no person involved in seditious activities may stand in the first elections for the new legislature of the State of Singapore". Lim returned to Malaya and continued there his policy of rounding up Communist agitators, as if to prove that the British fears were unfounded. Singapore's "Merdeka", at the date on which this books ends, was still in sight, but not yet achieved.

CHAPTER TWELVE

CONCLUSION—THE RACES OF MALAYA

A Plural Society

Nature has endowed Malaya with many advantages of a strategic and commercial nature. She is situated at the southernmost extremity of the Asiatic land mass, and as a consequence not only forms a land bridge between the mainland and Indonesia, but also constitutes in Singapore a chief turning-point in the sea communications between the West and the Far East. Moreover, she occupies a central position with regard to other countries in South-East Asia, which, in view of the peculiarly fragmented nature of that area, they have not failed to observe.

These strategic factors have been well recognised throughout her history by successive conquerors. Sri Vijaya, Malacca, the Portuguese, Dutch, British and Japanese have all realised that control of Malaya and the Straits of Malacca would give them control of the whole region. Command of the Straits was to all of them a vital objective because this meant domination of a most important link in the trade route between Europe and China. European and inter-Asiatic trade enabled her ports—Malacca, Penang and, above all, Singapore—to develop and prosper. Traders from many parts of the world visited her shores, attracted by the commercial advantages and not least by her own internal resources, whether they were her fabled wealth in gold or her real wealth in tin. Indians, Chinese, Arabs, Europeans and neighbouring peoples—Siamese, Sumatrans, Javanese, Bugis—have traded or fought with Malaya and in the process have affected her development by their own distinctive cultures.

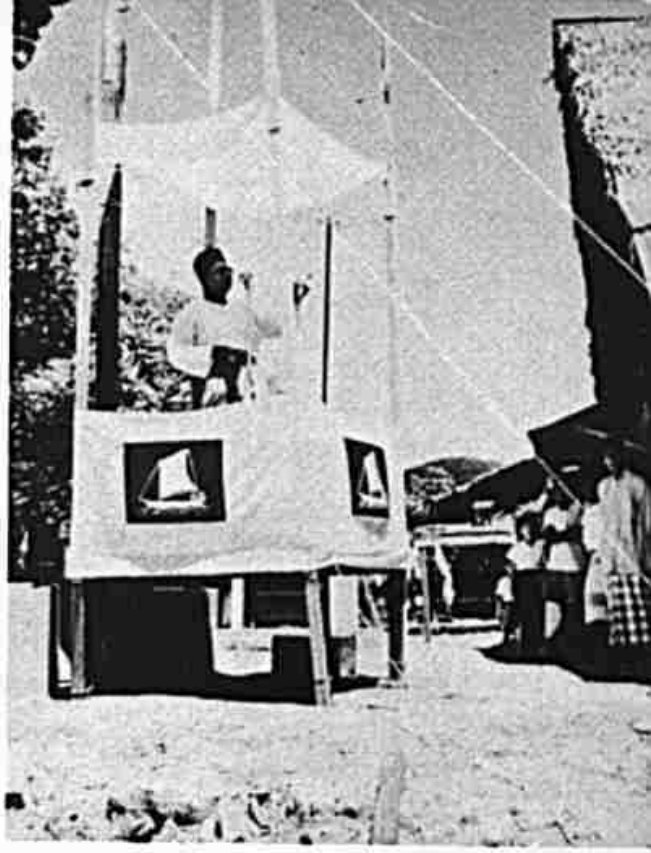
Geographical and historical factors therefore have made Malaya into a Plural Society in which Asian "colonialism" has played as great a part as European—perhaps indeed a greater part as immigrations from Asia extend as far back as prehistoric times and have continued to this day. The original inhabitants, the Negrito or Semang, had to retreat before the invading Senoi, who in turn fled to the jungles before the

Proto-Malays as they migrated southwards from southern China. In the course of centuries intermarriage between the Proto-Malays and the Senoi, and with other races led to the appearance of the Deutero, or civilised, Malay. As Winstedt says, "This broad-headed individual, with more or less Mongoloid features, olive skin, lank black hair is the Proto-Malay plus many foreign strains derived from intermarriage with Chinese from the Chou period onwards, with Indians from Bengal and the Deccan, with Arabs and Siamese."[1] He goes on to point out that differences in local environment and historical accident have produced different characteristics among the Malays, so that it is possible to distinguish the tall Malay from the rich rice area of Kelantan from his smaller brother in the southern states, or to detect differences between the Bugis, the Menangkabau or the Achinese. We have seen that this Deutero-Malay was not a barbarian—he lived in an organised community, the kampong, in his atap-thatched house; he had some sort of local government, with the headman as the chief official; he had domesticated the ox and the buffalo, and he knew how to navigate by the stars. In his religion he was an animist, believing that every stream, grove and tree had its personal spirit whom, no less than the spirits of his ancestors, it was necessary for him to propitiate. Like all peoples in his stage of development he was not a materialist. It was indeed a great effort for him to think in terms of matter, "his mind working along the line that things happen because of the action of spirit upon spirit." Hence he employed shamans to enlist the aid of spirits to divine the future or to learn from their familiars how to control the weather or to cure an illness. Many of these primitive beliefs persist in Malaya to this day.

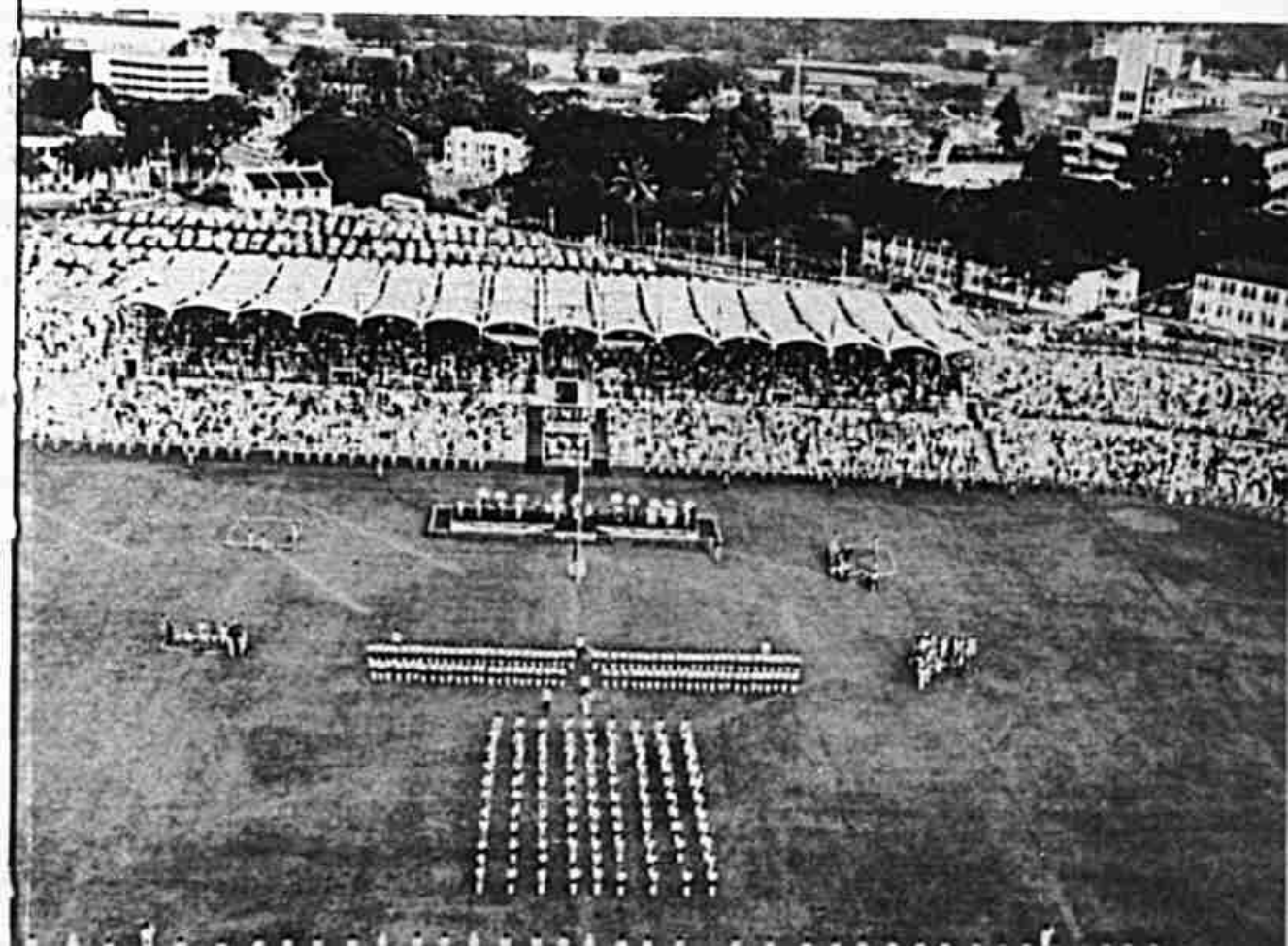
The Deutero-Malay, then, was the product of many races. During the last 2,000 years cultural influences from outside the Peninsula have greatly modified his way of life. Indianising influences, for example, exercised their most marked effect during the period up to A.D. 1500, inspired by the missionary zeal of Buddhism and the desire for trade. Chinese traders and miners also visited Malaya from early times, though their cultural impact was much less obvious. But the most decisive cultural contribution from India was the introduction of Islam,

[1] *The Malays, A Cultural History*, p. 15.

Tunku Abdul Rahman on the Election Platform



Merdeka Celebrations at the Stadium, Kuala Lumpur, 1957



The First Paramount Ruler

by Indian and Arab Muslim traders, which to a very great extent undid the "Indianising" process of the previous centuries by substituting for the pantheistic ideas of Buddhists and Hindus the idea of monotheism. The introduction of this new religion coincided with the rise of the Malay empire of Malacca, the first truly Malay state to emerge into the light of history from the welter of warring states that had competed for centuries in and around the Straits of Malacca. When Malacca was converted to that faith, it became the militant centre of its diffusion throughout the archipelago, making converts and anticipating the missionary activities of Christianity by a few years. The Malays of Malaya itself, with those of many other states of South-East Asia, have since that time remained Muslim.

The advent of the Portuguese in the fifteenth century and the Dutch in the seventeenth century introduced a new factor in Malayan history. The European states brought with them not only western influences but also their mutual animosities which were played out on the stage of South-East Asian history and introduced further tensions in Malaya and elsewhere in the archipelago. In the nineteenth century, when the British became the paramount power, Malaya found herself caught up in vast and revolutionary changes. Once again her peculiar position at the crossroads of one of the world's great trade routes, and the exigencies of world commerce, emphasised how impossible it is for Malaya to remain isolated from outside influence. The growing competition of European powers in South-East Asia and the Far East; the greatly increased world demand for her tin, and her new product, rubber; the shrinkage of distance caused by the opening of the Suez Canal and the invention of the steamship, led to the rapid introduction of modern techniques in industry and commerce and to her emergence within seventy years, under British tutelage, from a feudal into a modern state.

But during these last five hundred years Asian as well as European influences were at work in Malaya. Indians had never ceased to trade there, especially with Penang and Singapore; and towards the end of the nineteenth century they immigrated into Malaya in increasing numbers to man the newly-planted rubber estates. Above all, the Chinese, who like

the Indians had never ceased to visit the Peninsula for trade, swarmed into the mainland and into Singapore during the nineteenth century in great numbers, mining for tin and settling in the new towns where they plied their multifarious activities, to Malaya's great benefit. Then too arrived another power—the Japanese—showing for a time triumphantly how an Asian power could rival the West in industry and war, and encouraging with their appeal to "Asia for the Asians" the movement towards nationalism and hostility towards colonialism.

It is for these geographical and historical reasons that Malaya is a plural society. There are in this small country at least three races (if we exclude the European): the Malay, the Chinese and the Indian, each with its own peculiar way of life, its traditional religious beliefs, its social and judicial organisation, its language (or languages) and economic system. At the same time there is, on the one hand, the basic indigenous Malay society, consisting of a predominantly rural population following its own ancient subsistence economy, and on the other an urban and industrial economy which is inspired by Western ideas and is run largely by Europeans and Chinese.

93. (a) *Aspects of Malay Culture*

The Malays constitute 38 per cent of the population of Malaya, the remaining population comprising the Chinese, the Indians and "other Malaysians" who have immigrated from Indonesia. The immigration of "other Malaysians" has of course been going on for centuries. Achinese, Menangkabau and other Sumatrans, as well as Javanese, entered Malaya at the time of the Malacca empire; and the Bugis from Celebes settled in Selangor and Riau during the seventeenth century. This immigration continues to this day, and according to the census of 1947 over 309,000 (of whom 63,000 were Javanese) had taken up their abode in the country. These immigrants, similar as they are in race and religion, have generally been welcomed by the Malays and soon absorbed in the Malay population. It is noteworthy that many of them settled in the typical Malay areas, Kedah, Kelantan and Trengganu, and they have been prominent in helping in the development of the more recently established rice-growing areas, such as Krian.

Since the time of the Malacca Sultanate, Islam of the School

of Shafi'i has established itself as the religion of the Malays, with its mosques and their religious officials, the imam, the kadi and the guru, or religious teacher. Hindu ideas of a pantheon of gods to be worshipped gave way to the idea of monotheism, and the rulers no longer regarded themselves as incarnations of Hindu gods. The Arabic alphabet replaced the Indian scripts, and Arabic words replaced Sanskrit. Though they are far away from the great centres of Islamic thought, the Malays have a sense of community with other Muslim peoples, and every year pilgrims set out for Mecca. Those who have visited Mecca are held in great respect. Various missionary organisations in Arabia for their part send out pamphlets on religious subjects and try to increase the reading of the Koran with learned commentaries. The Malay peasants attach considerable importance to their weekly visits to the mosque and to the observance of holy days such as the Hari Raya Puasa which marks the end of the month of fasting. Every Muslim boy is taught to recite the Koran from the Arabic text, a training which is designed to teach him his religion and to develop the correct attitude towards Malay society.

Yet many traces survived of the old Indian religions and indeed of the animist beliefs of the early Malays. The most notable survivals of Indian ritual are to be seen in the enthronement ceremonies of the Malay Sultans, and in the preludes to the Malay shadow plays where Indian ceremonials were introduced. Many of the stories of the plays themselves were taken from the *Ramayana*. Certain ceremonials and customs which obtained before the arrival of Islam have been allowed and are still practised in parts of the country. Two of these are concerned, for example, with rice cultivation and fishing. At the time of planting rice, goats and buffaloes are slaughtered as propitiatory offerings; and at harvest time a special knife is used and the blade is concealed from the grain which otherwise might lose its taste through fright at seeing it. Again, there are definite rituals prescribed for the different stages and the different seasons of fishing; and offerings are made to the shaman, whose services are considered essential to the success of each fishing expedition.

The normal Malay areas of settlement have been in agricultural areas or by the coast, and the typical settlement has

been the kampong sited near streams or along the coast in houses built of timber and raised on stilts to avoid flooding or to afford protection from wild animals. It is in this type of settlement that the majority of Malays prefer to live, though there are other Malay settlements near rubber estates or mining areas or in the big cities, where the Chinese and Indians form the majority of the population.

The kampong has always been the typical social unit of the Malays, commanding their prime loyalty. The social system among the Menangkabau, however, is quite different, being based on the matriarchal family. The families in the kampong formed a closely-knit group which worked together for communal purposes such as the building of roads and schools and preparing the trenches and dams for the vitally important job of irrigating the rice fields. The kampong was also the centre of their religious life, the scene of their religious holidays and festivals. It was also the basic political and economic unit, and a combination of several of these formed the mukim or sub-district, ruled over by the traditional penghulu. Six to eight mukims form a district which is under the direct control of the state. The penghulu is the liaison officer between federal civil service and the kampong headman.

The towns in the north-west and north-east, where the Malays predominate, have, with few exceptions, no more than ten thousand inhabitants. In Alor Star, the largest city in Kedah, only one-third of the 32,000 inhabitants in 1947 was Malay. Only in Khota Bharu and Kuala Trengganu (27,000 and 22,750 respectively) were the Malays in the majority.

Malayan law is made up of the Statute law based on the Indian Penal Code introduced by the British; on customary law, which derives from the digests compiled during the sixteenth century and which incorporated much earlier unwritten law; and on the Muslim law, based on translations from the legal treatises of writers of the school of Shafi'i, dealing with marriage, divorce and the legitimacy of children.

The Malay has always been content to grow rice in the padi fields adjoining his kampong for his own consumption. He grows also what vegetables and fruit he needs, and has left to the enterprising Chinese the job of market gardening for a cash market. Nor is he particularly interested in the rearing

of livestock for food consumption. He is interested in the buffalo primarily because it helps him in the cultivation of rice. His diet is largely vegetarian except for hens and chickens; his religion forbids him to eat pork, and in any case he prefers to make more productive use of the limited amount of good pasture land at his disposal. Nor has he ever been particularly interested in marketing fruit—the coconut palm, the durian, the mango and the like provide him and his family with all the fruit they need.

The Malays have always been skilled fishermen, though fishing according to the 1947 census employed less than 6 per cent of the population as a main occupation. In Kelantan and Trengganu, according to Firth, 75 per cent of the male population were fishermen, but they also grew rice as a side line. Their skill in fishing can be illustrated by the expertise they show in manipulating their 150-square-feet net. An experienced fisherman directs the five boats which share in the operation; it is he who "listens for the fish" to judge the correct position in which to place net and boats to obtain the maximum catch. As the cost of the equipment is high—timber for boats, nets, traps, twine, hooks, lines, etc.—it is a common practice for fishermen to co-operate in buying it; but the majority of boats (and the equipment that goes with them) are owned by outsiders. A number of these are Chinese middlemen, who advance the cost of the equipment and accept the risk of loss or of falling prices, but in return secure a monopoly of the catch at a price lower than the market price.

The culture of the Malays therefore is based upon a common faith, Islam; a common social organisation, the kampong, or in the case of the Negri Sembilan, the matriarchal family; a common legal system; and on a subsistence agriculture, based on rice production and fishing. The main centres of Malay settlement are in the north and along the east coast. They have always in the past shown a remarkable loyalty to the Sultan of the state in which they lived, and still in fact do so. Since the last war, however, they have developed a wider loyalty—that to the concept (hitherto very nebulous) of Malaya itself as a national state. They have moreover become conscious of their community of interest in race, religion, language and history with neighbouring peoples in South-East Asia; and this has

Malay fishermen and boats

led to the Pan-Malayan movement and the prospect of the development of a still newer concept—that of "Malaysia".

94. (b) *The Chinese*

The Chinese are like the Malays a closely knit community, who brought with them from their homeland their own particular way of life—religious beliefs, dialects, social organisation, guilds, secret societies, and those special characteristics of unremitting industry, and business and industrial acumen which

have given them a dominating part in the economic life of Malaya. In this country they constitute the most powerful and numerous concentration of their race outside China proper; they also represent about half the total population.

The Chinese immigrants carried with them beliefs provided by Confucianism, Buddhism and Taoism, and these beliefs seem to have interacted upon each other. From Confucianism is derived the code of rules that regulates the behaviour of members of the family and of the clan towards each other, and that inculcates the traditional reverence towards ancestors. From Buddhism, in its Mahayanist form, stems their belief in "karma" and the Bodhisattva,[1] and the worship in Malaya of the "Goddess of Mercy", Kuan-yin, and of many other divinities in the temples and in the home. From Taoism, which has during the centuries borrowed much from Buddhism, has developed a host of magical practices. Underlying all these beliefs and perhaps common to all of them is animism.

The Malayan Chinese have acquired a number of deities peculiar to themselves, many of them being invoked as patrons of individual occupations such as farming or carpentry, and some as gods with more general powers. Among the heroes whom they have deified is the Admiral Cheng Ho who made a great series of voyages during the fifteenth century; and the very popular To Pai Kung, who, however, is said by Purcell to represent, not a historical figure, but the typical pioneering spirit which fought and toiled against great obstacles and hardships in past times. Numerous festivals commemorating these and similar deities are held annually throughout Malaya.

It is to be noted that a considerable number of Chinese are Christians (18 per 1,000 according to the 1947 census) and a smaller number (2 per 1,000) Muslim.

The Chinese have tended to settle on the west coast of Malaya, first in Malacca, then in Penang and Province Wellesley, and then, in great numbers, in Singapore. About 80 per cent of them are settled in this area, as might be expected, as this is the most highly developed part of Malaya where the jungle has been cleared (by Chinese labour) to develop the tin mines and the rubber estates. Much more than the Malays, they have tended to develop, and to live in, cities. According

[1] See Vol. I, p. 29.

Street of Chinese shops in Malaya

to the 1947 census they formed nearly two-thirds of the total urban population in the Federation and over three-quarters in Singapore. Industry and commerce provide the main sources of their livelihood. They produce over 40 per cent of the tin output of the mines, and have substantial shares in the rubber industry. They also dominate the next largest industry —the growing and export of pineapples. They are the chief middlemen and shopkeepers, and generally speaking they own most of the industries which are not otherwise run by the British. Their influence on the Malayan economy is very great.

From the political point of view the Chinese have until recently been content to exist as an alien people, ruling themselves and settling all disputes in accordance with their own customary law. The successive European powers appointed Kapitans China to carry out their general instructions with regard to the Chinese community; but towards the end of the nineteenth century Chinese customary law was gradually replaced by the British legal code. Because most of the immigrants hoped at some time to return to China, they continued to

be uninterested in Malayan politics; but the remarkable growth of political consciousness among the Malays after the Second World War, the rise once again of China to the status of a world power, the fact that more and more of them were able to claim Malaya as their birthplace, and above all the fear that their economic power might be undermined by their lack of political power—all these factors are presenting the Chinese community in Malaya with searching questions as to their position in the country. The choice before them is not only between Communist Peking and the Nationalist Government in Formosa, but between co-operation with the other races in the land of their adoption and resistance, inspired by Communist China, to the political supremacy of the Malays.

95. (c) *The Indians*

The Indians in Malaya are a much smaller group than either the Malays or Chinese, but like these they have their own distinctive way of life. The modern Indian immigration began as a result of the development by the British of sugar and coffee estates in Penang and Province Wellesley in the early nineteenth century. By 1850 a significant number had settled in Singapore and Malacca; but the main stream of immigration began at the end of the nineteenth and in the early twentieth century following on the demand for labour in the rubber estates. The majority tended to settle on the west coast. By far the greater number of these immigrants were Tamil-speaking Indians from southern India, and most of them were Hindus. Before the last war most of the labourers returned to India after a brief stay in Malaya. Since then more have tended to stay as permanent residents. It has been said, however, that "the Malayan Indians, like the Indians in Africa, are not associated with a strong Indian culture and must be studied as an element of urban and commercial society".[1]

Though comparatively small in numbers, the Indians have exercised considerable influence in politics and trade union organisation, both in the Federation and in Singapore. As they become more "Malayanised", it is to be expected that the influence of this very articulate minority will increase in these directions.

[1] *Malaya* by N. Ginsburg and C. F. Roberts, p. 348.

The problems posed by Malaya's plural society are many. The most urgent is the need for reconciling the divergent interests of the three races, and the formation of a common culture which all will willingly accept. Her geographical position has committed her to the front line in the ideological battles of the mid-twentieth century, and one main condition of her survival as a democratic society in face of the threat of Communism is the achievement of internal security.

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