

MALAYAN HISTORICAL SERIES

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A HISTORY OF SELANGOR
1742-1957

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J. M. GULLICK

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PREFACE

The history of Selangor down to 1957 falls naturally into three parts. First there was the period when Bugis warriors established and extended a new Malay State on the Selangor coast. This period ended with the death of Sultan Ibrahim in 1826. Then there was half a century during which the immigration of Chinese to work as tin-miners imposed an increasing strain on the Malay government leading to the final catastrophe of the Selangor civil war of 1866 – 1873. The third period saw a British protectorate regime governing in the Sultan's name while rapid economic development and an immense flow of immigration from Indonesia, China and India produced a new Selangor within the constitutional framework of the old.

In my account of the first two periods I have drawn on Sir Richard Winstedt's "History of Selangor" and on S. M. Middlebrook's "Yap Ah Loy" (both published in the Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society). It is a debt which I acknowledge with gratitude. But this history is, so far as I know, the first to carry on the story through the third period to the present day. There is a growing interest in the past which after all fathered the present.

This is a short and general account of the history of Selangor designed for the general reader

rather than the specialist. There is need of much more research by professional historians into the history of the Malay States. Meanwhile it may also be of some use to make more accessible the gist of what has already been discovered.

It only remains for me to express my thanks for the help which I have received. Mr. Gerald Hawkins, O.B.E. made some valuable suggestions when the plan of this book was being worked out though he bears no responsibility for what has been written. A Chinese gentleman, who prefers to remain anonymous, has allowed me to read and make use of his unpublished memoirs, covering among other things the course of public life between the wars. Mr. J. M. H. O'Reilly, Senior Inspector of Mines in Selangor, provided the twentieth century statistics of tin output which have been used in the diagram facing page 96. Sir George Maxwell, K.B.E., C.M.G., allowed me to copy a photograph of his father which he considers to be the best likeness ever taken. To Mr. R. L. Akers, Director of Drainage and Irrigation, to Miss M. Regan and Enche Mohamed Salleh of the Unilever Organisation and to Dr. C. A. Gibson-Hill of Raffles Museum I am also indebted for photographs used as illustrations of this book.

J. M. G.

April 1958

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The pictures of H.M.S. *Rinaldo*, of the rubber estate and tin-mine, and of the Stock Exchange scene are reproduced by permission of the proprietors of *The Illustrated London News*; the Merdeka photograph by permission of the proprietors of *The Straits Annual*. The bullock cart photograph and the portrait of Sir Frank Swettenham were originally published in the Bulletin of the Rubber Growers' Association. The Tanjong Karang photographs were supplied by the Director, Drainage and Irrigation, and the soap factory photograph by Unilever Ltd. The portrait of Yap Ah Loy is a copy of the one belonging to the Yap Clan Association. The portrait of Sir William Maxwell was provided by Sir George Maxwell.

CHAPTER ONE

THE BUGIS

Selangor is a land of five rivers — Bernam, Selangor, Klang, Langat and Lukut.* These are not great rivers as Malayan rivers go but, in the days when there were no roads and railways, the rivers were the only means by which travellers and goods could move in and out of the country. Hence the districts assigned to chiefs to govern were river valleys, controlled and taxed from a stockade at the river mouth.

Selangor was unusual in having several small river valleys instead of the usual configuration of a Malay State which is a major river with several tributaries. There was in Selangor no single river mouth at which the Sultan could tax the trade of the whole State. On the other hand the interior of Selangor,

* Lukut, historically part of Selangor, was ceded to Negri Sembilan in 1880 in exchange for Semenyeh.

where the tin deposits were to be found, was nearer the coast and so more accessible by one or other of the rivers than the inland region of, say, Perak. These peculiarities of Selangor geography affected the course of its history.

Until seventy years ago Selangor was an almost empty country, covered with an unbroken canopy of jungle from the inland edge of the coastal mangrove swamps to the top of the mountains which divide Selangor from Pahang. There was but one thing which drew men to it. They came in search of tin.

Settlers, or at least prospectors for tin, there have been in Selangor for most of two thousand years past. Implements of iron and bronze have been found in the Klang valley which are made in the style of products of the kingdom of Funan. Funan flourished in what is now Vietnam fifteen hundred years ago and more. The literature of other and later kingdoms mention Klang among the conquests of the Indian king, Raja Chulan, in the eleventh century A.D., and then as a dependency first of Majapahit, a kingdom of eastern Java, and later of Malacca in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries respectively. Later still Klang and the Selangor coast were known to the Portuguese and to the Dutch at Malacca as important centres of tin-mining.

The *State* of Selangor however in only two hundred years old. By "State" we mean Selangor as a political unit with its own ruler, the Sultan, resident in the State. We shall pass over the period, of which in any case little is known, during which Selangor was an unimportant appendage of other kingdoms and relate its history since it became a State in the course of the Bugis wars.

The Bugis wars were a struggle between the Bugis on the one side and the Malays, with their Sumatran allies, and the Dutch on the other. The Malay stronghold was Johore whose Sultan claimed to be heir to the Sultans of Malacca and overlord of all southern Malaya. But at this time Johore, weakened by war, invasion and intrigue was a mere shadow of the past.

The Dutch had ousted the Portuguese from Malacca in A.D. 1641 and had since then been the leading European power in the Straits of Malacca. They held Malacca to assure the passage of their ships on the lucrative trade route to the East Indies. To hold Malacca they had to station troops there. Dutch policy at Malacca was to control the trade of the Straits in order to obtain revenues with which to meet the cost of their military establishment. This trade consisted in the collection and export to Europe and China of tin, pepper and other "Straits produce" and the import and distribution in the

region of trade goods, among which textiles manufactured in India were the most important. A two-way trade of this kind requires a collecting and distribution centre — what in modern times is called an "entrepot port". The Dutch tried to make Malacca the entrepot port of the Straits. They bullied the rulers of small states in western Malaya and eastern Sumatra into making trade treaties by which they promised to sell all their tin, pepper and other export produce at fixed prices to the Dutch. The import trade in textiles etc., was likewise to be canalised through Malacca.

The Dutch offered a low price for tin and charged a high price for trade goods. Malay chiefs and traders had every inducement for evading Dutch controls in order to buy and sell at some other trade port than Malacca, where the prices were more favourable. The Bugis wars were in part trade wars arising out of resistance to Dutch economic policy.

The third power in the struggle, the Bugis themselves, were traders appropriately enough. They were also famous sailors and fighting men. Their home was a district in the southwest of the Celebes. From this base they journeyed far and wide. In their small sailing ships — square-rigged, two-masted, with high poop and overhanging stern — they were at sea for up to nine months of the year. They set out eastwards from the Celebes with the

last of the southwest monsoon and picked up cargo as far away as New Guinea. When the wind changed with the coming of the northeast monsoon they voyaged westwards and traded in the ports of Java, Borneo, Malaya and Sumatra. The first winds of the next southwest monsoon carried them home again to the Celebes.

In the course of this well-established trade some Bugis merchants settled in the ports of western Indonesia, especially Borneo, and of Malaya. These Bugis colonies usually held themselves aloof from the local people among whom they lived. They rarely intermarried with them. In time of trouble they looked to each other for mutual assistance. They had their own leaders in men of rank who gathered the commoners under their protection. Bugis in one port had ties with a Bugis colony elsewhere. It was a far-flung brotherhood of the sea-ports.

Francis Light had Bugis among his people in the early days of Penang. He describes them thus:—*

"They are Mahomedans, a proud, warlike, independent people, easily irritated and prone to revenge. Their vessels are always well provided with arms, which they use with dexterity and vigour. They are the best merchants among the Eastern

* Quoted in H. P. Clodd's *Malaya's First British Pioneer* at p. 100.

Islands. They are better governed by patient and mild exhortation than by force. If they commit a trespass they are easily made sensible, and may be persuaded to render satisfaction; but they reluctantly yield to stern authority. They require to be carefully watched and cautiously ruled. The great value of their cargoes, either in bullion or goods, with quantities of opium and piecegoods they export, make their arrival much wished for by all mercantile people."

Bugis settlers became numerous in western Malaya towards the end of the seventeenth century A.D. because Dutch military action in their native Celebes had destroyed much of its former prosperity. So they migrated westwards in considerable numbers and made new homes for themselves, engaging in the local trade of the Straits of Malacca. As early as 1681 there were large and wealthy Bugis settlements at the mouths of the Klang and Selangor rivers. Bugis traders, sailors and mercenary soldiers were to be found as far north in the Straits as Kedah and Aceh.

As they became more numerous, wealthy and powerful, the Bugis began to play a leading part in the political and economic struggle in the Straits. In Johore there was a power vacuum. The last Sultan of Johore of the Malacca royal line had been assassinated in 1699 and his successor was insecure

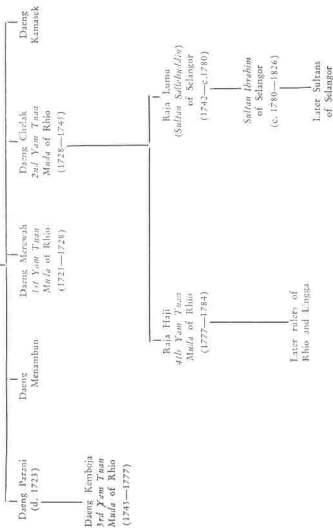
on his throne. In 1721 five Bugis noblemen, all brothers, seized power in Johore. Their leader, Daeng Parani, caused one of his brothers, Daeng Merewah, to be appointed Under-King (Yam Tuan Muda) of Johore. This was the beginning of the system by which Bugis ruled Johore under the fiction that the Under-King was deputy to the impotent Malay Sultan. Although Daeng Parani and his brothers had come direct from the Celebes to Johore they obtained ships and fighting men from the Bugis colonies of the Selangor coast.

The Bugis also established themselves at Rhio, a group of islands off the Johore coast (and near where Singapore now is). Rhio in time became the capital of the Bugis Under-King of Johore and a trade port which rivalled Malacca as the entrepot of the Straits. The Bugis also intermeddled in the affairs of Perak and Kedah and another Bugis dynasty seized power in Aceh.

There was fierce resistance to Bugis expansion first by the Malays and later by the Dutch. The first Bugis-Malay struggle lasted intermittently over some twenty years (1722-1742). A Sumatran prince, Raja Kechil of Siak, led the Malays and inflicted some local reverses on the Bugis. But the general result of the fighting was an increase in Bugis power and influence. As Bugis naval power grew the merchants of Rhio, cautious at first, be-

EARLY BUGIS RULERS OF RHIO & SELANGOR

Upa Tenribang Daeng Rilaka of Likkai (in the Celebes)



came bolder and traded more extensively in defiance of Dutch control measures directed from Malacca. So the Dutch had good reason for joining in the fight against the Bugis.

But first let us relate how the State of Selangor was founded. In 1742 Raja Lumu became the first Sultan of Selangor with the title of Sultan Sallehuddin. He was a son of Daeng Chelak, the second Yam Tuan Muda, and through his mother he was related to the leading Bugis families of the Selangor coast. The new Sultan made Kuala Selangor his capital and the new State took its name from the capital.

It was probably inevitable that the concentration of Bugis power along the Selangor coast should lead to the creation of an independent Bugis kingdom there. We do not know what was the immediate reason for it in 1742. The Bugis had just won a victory in Perak and may have been elated by it. Raja Lumu and his local supporters in Selangor may have wished to become independent of Rhio. For the Bugis of Rhio a new State, carved out of the domains of Johore, was a diminution of their power — so long as they controlled Johore. On the other hand it would be a refuge to fall back on if they lost control of Johore, where their position was always insecure.

Daeng Kemboja had become Yam Tuan Muda

of Rhio in 1745. He found it expedient to assume office among friends in Selangor; he was not installed in Rhio until 1748. Persistent Malay hostility so threatened his position in Rhio and Johore that in 1753 Daeng Kemboja withdrew with his followers and his cannon. He established himself at Kuala Linggi which became the southern bastion of the Bugis confederacy on the Selangor coast. In addition to Sultan Sallehuddin at Kuala Selangor there was a third Bugis leader, Raja Tua, at Klang.

In 1756 the Dutch and the Malays joined forces. Sultan Sulaiman of Johore made a treaty with the Dutch by which they were to regain their monopoly of the export of Selangor tin in return for their military aid in recovering the Sultan's lost territory of Selangor. Moreover Dutch ships were to be free of customs duties in all ports of the Johore kingdom. It was a challenge to the commercial position of the Bugis as well as to their military power.

For a year there was sporadic fighting in which the Bugis raided southwards along the coast towards Malacca and the Dutch retaliated with raids northwards into Selangor territory. In 1757 the Dutch, with the aid of the Sultan of Trengganu, captured the main Bugis position at Kuala Linggi. The Bugis leaders then came to terms and made a treaty with the Dutch. But although they had lost a battle

they had not lost the war. Their power was still unbroken whereas the Dutch and Malay offensive against them seems to have come to a halt after the siege of Kuala Linggi. In Raja Haji, brother of Sultan Sallehuddin of Selangor, the Bugis had one of the most renowned fighting captains of Malay history. By 1760, thanks to the inherent strength of the Bugis confederacy and to some notably inept diplomacy on the part of Sultan Sulaiman of Johore, Daeng Kemboja had re-established himself at Rhio as Yam Tuan Muda.

For seventeen years until his death in 1777 Daeng Kemboja remained in undisputed control at Rhio. Neither he nor the Dutch wanted another fight. He grumbled at Dutch restrictions on trade but did not allow them in practice to interfere with the profitable commerce of Rhio in tin, opium and textiles. Much of the foreign trade of Bugis merchants was now with the English.

During this period Sultan Sallehuddin was able to secure wider recognition of his claims to be ruler of Selangor. The Sultans of Perak were particularly important in this respect since, although not powerful, they were a branch of the old royal family of Malacca and therefore of high status. Just before 1770 Sultan Sallehuddin, accompanied by his brother the redoubtable Raja Haji, went on a visit to Perak with a force of twenty ships to ask for the hand in

marriage of the niece of the Sultan of Perak. The request was granted—it was in the nature of a shotgun wedding. At the same time the Sultan of Perak invested Sallehuddin with the insignia of Malay royalty. He also attended the subsequent installation ceremony in Selangor. A few years later Sallehuddin extended his relations with other Malay dynasties by marrying his daughter to a Kedah prince who became Sultan Abdullah of Kedah in 1778. The Raja Muda and other Perak notables attended this wedding ceremony.

In 1777, Daeng Kemboja died and was succeeded in the office of Yam Tuan Muda by Raja Haji, brother of Sultan Sallehuddin of Selangor. But the brothers were soon separated by the death of Sallehuddin. The next Sultan of Selangor was Sultan Ibrahim, son of Sallehuddin. Ibrahim was assisted by his brother, Raja Nala, who bore the title of Raja Muda of Selangor. Thus the dynasty began to acquire the established position of an accepted royal family.

Raja Haji did not long enjoy the office of Yam Tuan Muda of Rhio. He departed from the policy of his predecessor and picked an open quarrel with the Dutch. Fighting broke out in 1784. Sultan Ibrahim and Raja Muda Nala of Selangor came to the aid of their uncle, Raja Haji. After raiding Rembau they sailed their ships along the coast to-

wards Malacca, overcoming what little resistance there was, until they were at Tanjong Kling only seven miles from Malacca. Raja Haji himself led a force from Rhio in a do-or-die assault on Malacca town. He was shot down as he charged, with a dagger in one hand and an Islamic religious treatise in the other.

Sultan Ibrahim may not have been present at the final battle outside Malacca town. He was soon hard-pressed to hold his own base, the Fort at Kuala Selangor, against a Dutch attack. Eventually the Dutch fleet drove him out to exile in Pahang; a pretender was established on the throne of Selangor; a Dutch force was stationed at Kuala Selangor to control the export of Selangor tin.

But Sultan Ibrahim was an energetic leader and a stout fighter. A year later, in 1785, he returned with Malay allies from Pahang and retook the Fort at Kuala Selangor by a night attack. The Dutch fled leaving behind their cannon and heavy stores. Sultan Ibrahim, being far from secure, made an approach to Francis Light at Penang for British protection. But Light was unable to help. A Dutch force of three large ships and a dozen small ones then blockaded the mouth of the Selangor river. They could not enter the estuary because Sultan Ibrahim had blocked the channel with large stones (to its lasting detriment). For a year the blockade

went on. At last Ibrahim gave in and swore an oath on the Koran that he would send all the tin of Selangor to Malacca and be a friend of the Dutch. But this phase of Selangor relations with the Dutch ended when the British took over Malacca in 1795.

This account of the founding of Selangor and of the first fifty years of its history is of necessity a tale of battles and sieges, of treaties and alliances. The Bugis leaders who made Selangor were energetic warlike men, for the most part shrewd in their diplomacy but over-ready to resort to arms. They counted it a virtue that their settlements lived in a state of preparedness for war. As a military force they were formidable. By now the Bugis had probably given up wearing in battle their famous coat of chain mail — for they were of little use against firearms. But they still preferred "a furious attack in closed ranks to fighting in single parties." At close quarters they used dagger, sword or lance; they also carried muskets and ammunition. Their ships were used for two purposes — to move their force speedily along the coasts in swift raids and to get alongside the enemy and board. These ships were armed with light cannon but they probably lacked the range to permit bombardment from a distance with all the subtleties of naval manoeuvre. The forts in which they stood long sieges were built of mud, brick and timber and were equipped with

cannon. This artillery they obtained from their countrymen who ruled Aceh. Sultan Ibrahim's pride among the armament of the Fort at Kuala Selangor was a long, brass 32-pounder. Such was its potency that stories were told of the white snake which slept in the barrel and of the ill which would befall anyone who touched it.

The following account of the prosperity of Rhio in the 1750's gives some indication of the Bugis way of life:—

"Hundreds of vessels came from Bengal, from Java, from the further East, from China, from Siam. The people of Rhio became rich, especially the Bugis. Thousands of Chinese came to work as coolies in the gambier plantations. The Yang di-Pertuan Muda, Temenggong, Bendahara and Shahbandar were overwhelmed with presents, and all were very happy. The revenues amounted to hundreds of thousands in every season, and a large fleet of big vessels, heavily armed was kept, partly ready, partly laid up. The Sultan, all the high dignitaries and princes built fine palaces. Sayids and Shaikhs, saints and learned men from Arabia flocked to Rhio. Religious and temporal law was strictly kept, a law-code was compiled by the high dignitaries and the chiefs, weights and measures were controlled, and justice was dealt out equally to Bugis and Malays."^{*}

^{*} *Salasilah Melayu dan Bugis*—translated by Hans Overbeck in JMBRAS (1926) Vol. IV pt. 3 p. 366.

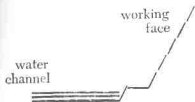
We know something of the Bugis code of maritime law. The captain of the ship had absolute control while he was at sea subject however to the unanimous decision of the rest of the ship's company including the two chief officers — Jurumudi (helmsman) and Jurubatu (navigator). There were rules on freights, passage money and on partnership in joint trading ventures.

Rhio was at this time the very centre of the mercantile empire made by the Bugis whom Crawford considered to be "the bravest men and the most enterprising merchants and navigators of the Archipelago."⁸ Selangor lacked the wealth and bustle of an international trade port such as Rhio then was. It had no gambier plantations and many fewer Chinese and other foreigners. But it lived by trade; it practised the same law and collected the same revenues. In a remoter, quieter way it was a part of the same Bugis world.

Selangor did indeed differ from Rhio in one important respect. The wealth of Selangor came from the export of tin and many of its people were miners. The men of the inland mining villages were probably Sumatran immigrants, Mandiling, Rawa and Batu Bahara men rather than Bugis. Malay miners used the *lampan* method which in its simplest

⁸ J. Crawford: *Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands*, p. 74.

form was just "panning" for tin in streams. In larger mine-workings the method was developed by leading a fast-flowing stream of water through the mine. The tin-bearing stratum was dug up (or pulled down from the working face of the mine) and thrown into the water channel. The water washed away the earth but left the ore to settle at the bottom whence it was recovered later:—



Three-quarters of a century afterwards Swettenham saw the remains of a large mine of this kind in Ulu Selangor which had been worked before 1800. To provide a supply of water a stream had been blocked with a dam. This earth dam had cost \$8,000 (say \$160,000 in terms of modern prices) to build and it extended for 200 yards across the valley. Upstream of the dam was an artificial lake one and a half miles long and ten fathoms deep in places. From each end of the dam the miners had dug sluice channels, three to ten feet deep, over a

distance of a mile to carry the water to their workings. The mine itself was forty feet deep and, so Swettenham was told, had yielded six and a half tons for each sixty square feet of surface excavated.

CHAPTER TWO

SULTAN IBRAHIM

In 1795 the British took over Malacca from the Dutch. Except for one more brief episode (1818–1825) the Dutch had left the Malay Peninsula for good. Relations with them ceased to be the major problem of the rulers of Selangor.

The energetic Sultan Ibrahim, who ruled Selangor until 1826, found scope for expansion in the new situation. He had successfully weathered the storm after Raja Haji's catastrophic attack on Malacca in 1784. But Rhio did not recover. It suffered Dutch occupation for ten years (1785–1795) during which its Bugis rulers were in exile from it. Even when the Bugis got back to Rhio with British help in 1795 they could not restore the political and commercial primacy of their predecessors. A generation later the development of nearby Singapore as a free port proved a final blow to the

commercial position of Rhio. With the decline of Rhio Selangor became the most important Bugis state in the Straits.

The rise of Penang as an entrepot port was another new factor in the situation. Bugis merchants were an important element among the trading community of Penang. Their fellow-countrymen in Selangor were content to divert their trade northwards away from Malacca and Rhio to Penang. This flow of trade between Selangor and Penang may explain the attention which Sultan Ibrahim gave to relations with Perak, lying alongside that trade route. The tin of Perak made it in any case a valuable prize.

Perak, although it was a more ancient State than Selangor and more populous, was at this time inferior in wealth and power. The Perak Malays were regarded as country cousins by the cosmopolitan Bugis of Selangor. In 1804 it must have seemed to the Perak Malays that the opportunity had come to break away from their dominating neighbour. For there had been trouble in Rhio and Sultan Ibrahim had been away from Selangor for two whole years in an attempt to restore the position of his Bugis kinsmen at Rhio who were in conflict with Sultan Mahmud of Johore. A mission from Perak arrived to offer the vacant throne of Perak to Sultan Mahmud. The invitation came to nothing but

was — and was intended to be — an affront to Sultan Ibrahim of Selangor.

Ibrahim, ever prompt in action, took a sufficient force up to Perak and demanded an explanation. Why had Perak broken the agreement between the two States which like a single blanket covered two sleepers, that night in Perak should be night in Selangor, sickness in Perak sickness in Selangor, and the death of a Sultan in either State to be announced to the other? The Perak Malays temporised while they tried to block the channel up the Perak River. It took a better stratagem than that to outwit the Bugis. The Selangor fleet closed in on the riverside forts, holding back the fire of their cannon until it could be delivered as a devastating broadside at point-blank range. Thus Ibrahim conquered Perak. He then held it under military occupation for two years (1804–1806), sending word to Penang (whose trade with Perak had been interrupted) that: "This country I have taken with powder and ball, with which custom the Governor of Penang is acquainted." In passing one may remark the Sultan's liking for a good phrase. He was a man of words as well as deeds.

Ibrahim demanded the cession of territory between the Bernam and the lower reaches of the Perak River for some way inland in order to secure control of the tin exported from Lower Perak. But

this demand was not pressed and never became effective. He was more successful in expansion along the coast of Perak, northwards from the mouth of the Perak River up to the boundary with Province Wellesley. His object no doubt was to safeguard his trade route with Penang against interference. This stretch of the Perak coast (Larut and Krian) was then largely uninhabited and of no interest to the rulers of Perak whose effective domain was limited to the Perak River basin. It is likely that Ibrahim first gained control of the Perak coast in the campaign of 1804. This coast was certainly still regarded as Selangor territory in 1824.

Ibrahim also tried to extend his territory southwards. The bone of contention in this case was the mouth of the Linggi River. Kuala Linggi had been Daeng Kemboja's headquarters from 1753 to 1757 when the Dutch captured it from him. Thereafter it seems that the Dutch kept the Bugis from interfering with the export of tin down the Linggi from Sungei Ujong and Rembau. The matter became of more importance in 1804 when Adrian de Koek and other Malacca merchants invested money in opening new mines with Chinese labour in the Linggi valley. Sultan Ibrahim maintained that after the fighting at Kuala Linggi in 1757 the Dutch had agreed that "wherever the Bugis gunpowder reached should be theirs." But the British, who now held Malacca,

would not let him have Kuala Linggi.

By these moves Ibrahim had made his authority as Sultan of Selangor run from the southern boundary of Province Wellesley along the coast as far as a point just north of Kuala Linggi. In addition to his own hinterland of Selangor he had a sphere of influence in Perak. His son, Raja Muda Mohamed, was established at Bernam to oversee the affairs of Perak. This expansion of Selangor had been possible because there was no serious opposition. The British were preoccupied with fighting the French and were in any case friendly disposed towards Ibrahim. The Dutch were out of the picture from 1795 to 1818.

The situation — from Sultan Ibrahim's point of view — then took a turn for the worse. He did not conceal his dismay on learning that Malacca was to be handed back to the Dutch in 1818. Governor Bannerman of Penang, to whom the Sultan wrote, was likewise concerned at the damage to Penang's trade with the Malay States which was likely to ensue if the Dutch were able to reinstitute their monopoly of the trade in tin and other local produce. He argued that the old trade treaties between the Dutch and the Malay rulers had lapsed when the Dutch were ousted from Malacca in 1795. To forestall any Dutch move to renew those treaties he sent a Penang official, Mr. Cracroft, to negotiate new treaties between the British and the Sultans of Perak

and Selangor. Ibrahim would have preferred a guarantee of British protection against Dutch attack. But, since he could not have that, he agreed to the proposed trade treaty. The gist of the "Cracroft treaty" of 1818 with Selangor was that both parties were to avoid discriminatory arrangements with other powers which would restrict their mutual trade with each other. In particular no "interrupted treaties with other nations" were to be renewed. This, so Mr. Cracroft assured the old Sultan, should suffice to spare him any embarrassments with the Dutch.

The Dutch however would not submit to being squeezed out in that fashion. No sooner were they back in Malacca than a Mr. Stecker arrived to remind the Sultan of Selangor of the treaty he had made in 1786 by which Selangor tin was to be sold only to the Dutch. He assured the Sultan that the Dutch and the British were on excellent terms and that it was unnecessary for the Sultan to refer to Penang for advice — or help. If the Sultan did not share the Dutch view that the treaty of 1786 was still in force, the Dutch would be forced to take military measures to persuade him to a more correct attitude to his obligations. As ever, the Sultan's addiction to metaphor increased in a moment of crisis. He wrote to Penang that he was "like one divided between iron on the right hand and iron on

the left hand, cut in two." But, since the British could not help him, he had to give in to the Dutch. It was, however, a brief embarrassment. The Dutch withdrew from the Malay Peninsula under the Anglo-Dutch treaty of 1824 and thus passed out of Selangor history.

Sultan Ibrahim was now an old man whose thoughts turned to making the pilgrimage to Mecca and to ending his days in quiet piety. But this was not to be. The expansion of Siam to the north of Selangor was a new threat. In 1817 Siam, through the agency of its vassal State of Kedah, overran Perak and thus reached the northern frontier of Selangor itself. Sultan Ibrahim mustered his forces to fight his last campaign. In 1822 the combined efforts of Selangor and Perak expelled the Siamese and Kedah forces from Perak. In return for this help Ibrahim drove a hard bargain with Sultan Mansur of Perak. Under a Selangor-Perak treaty of 1823 the export duty on Perak tin was to be shared by the two Sultans "as between brothers". Traders from Selangor were to be free of customs duties in Perak. Two Selangor nobles, the Raja Muda and Tunku Hussein, were installed in a fort near the mouth of the Perak River to collect Selangor's dues.

There was then a confused situation in which the Sultan of Perak was apparently playing off

Selangor against Siam. But by 1825 Siam had got ready an expedition of 3,000 men to attack Selangor. Sultan Ibrahim also had mobilised all his ships and men. Meanwhile British diplomacy had been striving for a settlement which would keep Siam out of central Malaya. An Anglo-Siamese treaty of 1825 provided that Siam should not invade Perak or Selangor if the Selangor tax-gatherers and their supporters were withdrawn from Perak.

The British felt that Sultan Ibrahim had been saved from Siamese occupation of his country and should be glad to comply with his part of their bargain by withdrawing from Perak. But the Sultan still laid claim to half the duty on Perak tin and to debts totalling \$3,128. The arrival of a British warship at the mouth of the Perak River expedited the departure of Tunku Hussein, the Selangor tax-collector. On the other points British envoys continued to visit and reason with the dogged old Sultan. He died while the negotiations dragged on. His successor proved more complaisant. One result of the settlement was that the Bernam River was recognised as the boundary between the two States. Selangor gave up its claim to the Perak coast.

Throughout his long reign Sultan Ibrahim kept order and comparative harmony in Selangor. Yet the troubles which were to divide the State in the time of his successors already had their beginning

The root of the problem was the increase in numbers of the Raja class without a corresponding expansion of the wealth of the country. Sultan Ibrahim, with characteristic energy, is said to have begotten no less than sixty children of whom some twenty or thirty survived him. Other leading families likewise multiplied in each generation. There were only two occupations open to a Selangor Raja. He might become a trader and business man, more particularly a miner or exporter of tin. But at this time Selangor's total output amounted to only some 15-20 tons of tin per month and its population was estimated at 12,000. So far as is known neither was increasing. There was no scope here for a large number of traders. The second occupation open to a Raja was the profession of arms. Hence emerged that superfluity of fighting men which was to be the curse of Selangor for half a century to come.

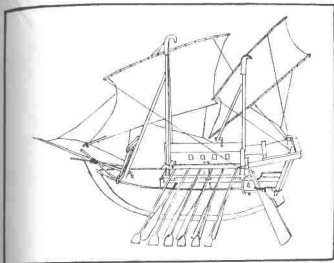
In Sultan Ibrahim's time foreign wars and adventures provided an outlet. It was also the great age of piracy in the Straits. The opportunity began when the British naval squadron was withdrawn from Penang in 1815 at the end of the Napoleonic war. It ended with the return of the British Navy to the Straits, to suppress piracy, in 1836. In the season of the northeast monsoon the pirates made Pangkor Island their main base. At other times they were farther south among the

islands near Singapore. The Selangor coast with its long channels among the islands had a bad reputation as a nest of pirates. Selangor pirates there certainly were. But two things are clear. First, there was never any piracy organised by the Sultan of Selangor or any responsible officer of state. It was privateering. Secondly, the most bloody pirates were Illanuns and other voyagers from far away. There are many degrees of piracy ranging from mass murder on the high seas to occasional extortion of illicit dues from passing vessels. The Bugis were pirates of the milder sort. Sometimes it was almost a matter of necessity imposed upon them. For example it was said of the ships assembled to repel the Siamese in 1825 that "the crews are no doubt as usual on such occasion committing devastations in their neighbourhood." It was their only means of getting rations and pay.

Newbold* gives this account of pirate tactics:—

"The prahus used by Malay pirates are from eight to ten tons in burthen, extremely well manned and remarkably fast, particularly with the paddle commonly used. They are generally armed on their bows, centre and stern with swivels of small calibre but long range. When preparing to attack, strong

* *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca*, Vol. 1, page 36.



A BUGIS VESSEL

This is a drawing of design of the "Bintak", the type of vessel which the Bugis used for trade — and piracy — a hundred years ago or more.

Note the tripod masts, square sails, built-up stern and cabin amidships. The masts could probably be unshipped when the ship was being propelled with the double-banked oars. This would have been convenient when going into action or rowing against a head-wind.

(Reproduced from the Journal of Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society, by permission of Dr. C. A. Gibson-Hill.)



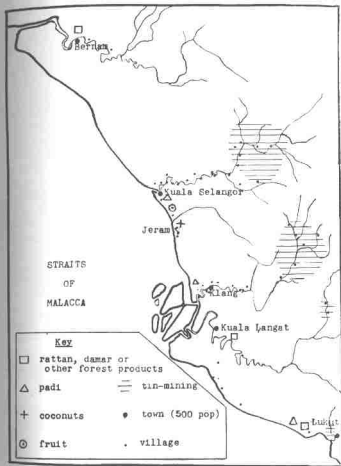
and musket-proof bulwarks of wood, called Apilans, are erected, behind which the crew ensconce themselves, fighting with their long guns, until their prey is disabled or till the gong sound the signal for boarding. But what they mainly depend upon for safety and success, is their skill in paddling (Malay pirates scarcely ever attack except during the lull between the land and the sea-breeze, or in a calm), the swiftness of their boats and their knowledge of the intricate channels. . ."

The internal management of Selangor was a family matter in which the Sultan was aided by his kinsmen. It is said there were four territorial chiefs: the Penggawa Permatang and Penggawa Tua who ruled the estuaries and the coast; the Penghulu Aru in charge of the interior other than the tin-mines of the Klang valley; and the Orang Kaya Kechil who administered the Klang valley mining areas. But there is no mention of any chiefs with these titles in the narrative of events. Rather we find particular princes of the royal house assigned the charge of districts, as the Raja Muda was given Bernam at one time. In the next chapter we shall tell the story of the most successful district chief of them all, Raja Juma'at of Lukut.

The whole economy of the country depended on the export of tin. The known tin-deposits were being worked to the extent that the *lampan* method

availed — generally on a small scale and only to a shallow depth. The tin was smelted on the mine and exported from Selangor to Penang in small pieces of one kati each. Selangor tin was superior in this respect to Perak tin which was exported from that State in large slabs, often containing impurities such as lead hidden inside. The Chinese merchants who bought tin resmelted it at Penang into slabs of the standard size, adding a small quantity of sulphur. It was then known as "old tin" (Timah Tua) and commanded a premium over the white or "new" tin as it came from the Malay States.

ECONOMIC MAP OF SELANGOR c.1820



ECONOMIC MAP OF SELANGOR c.1820

The information shown in this map is taken almost entirely from a book published in 1824 entitled *Political and Commercial Considerations relative to the Malaya Peninsula and the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca*. Its author, John Anderson, was an official in the service of the Penang Government who had visited Selangor in the course of his duties. He obviously knew much more about the Selangor and Klang valleys than the southern part of Selangor. It is not possible to identify the sites of all the villages which Anderson mentions. The dots should be taken as a rough guide to the distribution of the population.

Another source, Newbold, estimates the total population of Selangor at 12,000 but adds that a few years before it had been larger. T. J. Newbold published his book *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca* in 1839. He had been a British Army officer stationed at Kuala Linggi (i.e. at the Malacca/Selangor boundary) in the early 1830's.

Anderson and Newbold are the main sources of information on the history of Selangor in the period 1810-40.

CHAPTER THREE

THE CHINESE MINERS

The death of Sultan Ibrahim in 1826 marked the end of the first phase of Selangor history. Sultan Ibrahim, and Sultan Sallehuddin before him, had been strong rulers. They had welded the scattered settlements of the Selangor coast into a single State by leadership in war against external enemies. Sultan Ibrahim had begun his reign with a desperate struggle against the Dutch (1784 – 1786); he went on to invade and occupy Perak (1804 – 1806); at the end he confronted the threat of Siamese aggression (1819–1825). All these external circumstances had now changed. The Anglo-Siamese treaty of 1825 kept the Siamese back from central Malaya. As part of that settlement the British insisted that Selangor should desist from interfering in Perak. A few years later, in 1836, they stamped out piracy in the Straits.

All the outside pressures which helped to save Selangor from internal fission were gone. After the death of Sultan Ibrahim there was no one left with the authority of a national leader. Moreover the constitutional tradition which the Bugis had brought from their homeland in the Celebes was against strong central control. Crawford describes the Bugis states of the Celebes as "little states united in confederations for general purposes . . . under a prince elected by the chiefs of the tribe from the members of a family in which the office is hereditary . . . the princes form a council which must be unanimous."² In accordance with this pattern the Sultan became merely the first among the noblemen of Selangor.

Personalities played their part in the change. We know very little about Sultan Mohamed who reigned from 1826 to 1857. Newbold says that he was "indolent and sensual". Much the same kind of disparagement came the way of Sultan Abdul Samad who succeeded Mohamed. It was not true. They were weak rulers not so much from defect of character as because they were prisoners of the circumstances of their time. Stronger rulers would have lost their thrones.

Sultan Mohamed was the son of a secondary wife of the previous ruler. But he had become

² J. Crawford: *Descriptive Dictionary of the Indian Islands*, p. 74.

Raja Muda (Heir Apparent) in his father's lifetime and this fact assured him of the succession. He was unable to exercise control over the numerous princes of the royal house and could not designate his own successor. For years the office of Raja Muda remained vacant because no one could settle the competing claims to it of two of the Sultan's sons (Rajas Sulaiman and Usman) and one of his brothers (Raja Yusuf). In the event the Sultan outlived them all. But their intrigues were a disrupting influence.

The explanation of this situation is that the revenues of the State, which were the source of power, had become dispersed into too many hands. These revenues were derived mainly from the export of tin. It is evident that in the previous reign Sultan Ibrahim had been able to keep the tin trade under his control. For example, in 1818-1819 the British at Penang tried to follow up the treaty negotiated by Cracroft with large purchases of Selangor tin in order to keep it out of the hands of the Dutch. The scheme was a failure. The significant thing about it is that the only Selangor tin which they obtained came from the Sultan. It was possible for the Sultan to control the production of tin so long as it was on a small scale and concentrated in two valleys (Selangor and Klang) in the centre of the State. The situation changed with the arrival of Chinese miners who opened mines in many new areas

and increased output enormously.

In Selangor the first centre of large-scale Chinese mining was Lukut. The Chinese arrived at Lukut in the late 1820's and at first mined on their own account, paying a fixed duty to the Sultan. These miners were financed and controlled by Chinese merchants in Malacca through the medium of a secret society (the Ghi Hin) with its headquarters in Malacca and a local lodge at Lukut. This system will be described in detail later in this chapter.

The rapid success of the Chinese miners at Lukut attracted the attention of a prominent Selangor nobleman, Tunku Bongsu or Busu, who persuaded the Sultan, his kinsman, to give him charge of the Lukut district. We are told by Newbold that Tunku Busu "took upon himself the entire direction" of the Lukut mines. It may have been a form of financial control, usual in Selangor at that time, by which the Chinese miners were obliged to sell all the tin they produced to the Malay chief at a fixed price very much below the market value of the tin. The essential feature of the change whatever it was, lay in the fact that the Chinese had to give up a larger share of the value of their tin than before.

Tunku Busu (otherwise unknown apart from this episode) is said to have been the ablest ruler

among the Selangor Rajas of his day. But he failed to prevent, if he did not actually incite, lawless acts by the Malays against the Chinese. A Malay raid on the treasury of the secret society headman at Lukut was accompanied by much bloodshed. This robbery caused a financial crisis in Malacca and the secret society meeting hall there had to be closed down for lack of funds.

Inevitably there was an act of revenge. On a dark, rainy night in September 1834 the Chinese miners of Lukut, some three to four hundred strong, rose in revolt and massacred every Malay in Lukut without sparing age or sex. Tunku Busu himself was killed and his wife and children were thrown back into the flames of their burning house. The loot included cash, gold dust, silver trinkets and jewellery from the bodies of the murdered women to a total of more than \$20,000. The proceeds were used to build two new secret society halls in Malacca.

The massacre was followed by reprisals in which the original Chinese miners of Lukut perished. But more were sent up from Malacca. Malay-Bugis noblemen too were prepared to try their luck despite the disaster which had befallen Tunku Busu. Among these Malay miners was Raja Ja'afar of Rhio. A Bugis from Rhio, although he might be a kinsman, was an outsider in Selangor now. A new generation of Selangor-born Rajas, although proud of their

Bugis descent, had grown up to regard Selangor as their country — and as their preserve. (For that reason we shall from now on generally refer to them as Malays rather than as Bugis.) So Raja Ja'afar, although he was allowed to open mines at Lukut, was only a private citizen and did not have the status of a chief. But he prospered exceedingly from his mines at Lukut.

By contrast Sultan Mohamed lost a great deal of money in unsuccessful ventures in tin-mining in the Klang valley. This money had been lent to the Sultan by Chinese merchants at Malacca and they pressed for repayment. In 1839 the Sultan, returning from a visit to relatives at Rhio, incautiously brought himself within reach of his creditors by breaking his journey at Malacca. He was threatened with imprisonment for debts amounting to \$169,000 (some £35,000). He was extricated from this predicament by Raja Juma'at, son of Raja Ja'afar of Lukut, who was travelling with him. Raja Juma'at guaranteed the payment of the Sultan's debts — and thereby laid the foundation of his climb to power. Soon afterwards Raja Juma'at married a daughter of the Sultan. A few years later, in 1846, the Sultan was in further trouble over his debts. Raja Juma'at took them over and in return was granted the district of Lukut to rule as chief.

Raja Juma'at made a model state of Lukut. He

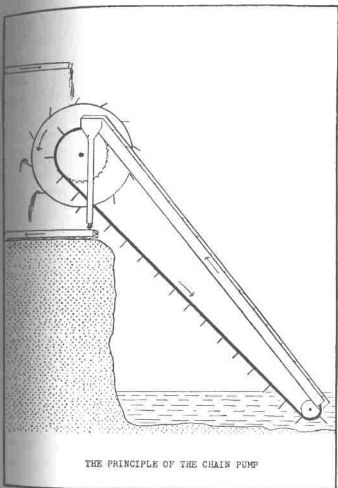
built a fort on the hill and under its protection he established an excellent system of local government. There was a courthouse, a police force, and even a post office. The main tax was a 10% duty on all tin exported. This was a much lighter impost than the system in force elsewhere in Selangor by which Chinese miners were compelled to sell all their tin to the Malay chief at a fixed price of \$30 per bahara (about two-thirds of its value). The essentials of Raja Juma'at's system were an assurance of justice and order and a reasonable burden of taxation. Within this framework the Chinese could conduct their enterprises as they wished. They flocked to this oasis of good government. Raja Juma'at built himself a solid brick customs godown to handle the tin. A small town grew up at Lukut with a row of merchants' houses along the main street. At its peak Lukut had a working population of more than 2,000 miners and it yielded to Raja Juma'at the fabulous revenue of \$10,000 per month.

Previously mining had been confined to those places where the ore lay near the surface because a deep excavation soon became flooded with water which Malay miners could not get rid of. The Chinese solved this problem by using a primitive kind of pump, driven by a water-wheel, to lift the water from their mines. In this way they could carry their open-cast mines (*lombong*) to a depth of as much

as forty feet and exploit the richer deposits previously unworked.

On the other hand the presence of Chinese miners presented its own problems. The Chinese were a community of males, all of working age. Their environment was grim indeed. It was not uncommon for malaria to kill half the miners within the first year of opening a mine. For their recreation drink, opium, prostitutes and gambling were purveyed in abundance — since their employers made large profits out of these amenities. In mining camps of this kind some brawling was inevitable. But the worst violence occurred in quarrels over competing claims to rich mining land and to the limited amount of water in the streams which could be diverted to drive their water wheels.

Men who live in such conditions, far from home and kindred, will naturally band themselves together for mutual help in time of sickness or adversity and for common defence against attack. This is the reason why secret societies became so powerful among the Chinese immigrants. These societies had their historical and local origins in China itself. But in Malayan mining camps they acquired new functions. Moreover, employers found them a useful means of controlling their labour. On arrival from China at a port in the Straits Settlements the new immigrant (*sinkbeh*) was inducted, with a ritual



THE PRINCIPLE OF THE CHAIN PUMP

To make a chain pump (*chin chia* in Chinese) the miners first cut and carefully fitted together three planks of up to 100 feet in length to make a long trough. The trough was placed at an incline with the bottom end in the water which had accumulated in the mine and the top end projecting over the side of the mine. An endless chain passed up the centre of the trough (returning underneath). At right angles to the line of chain were fitted pieces of wood accurately shaped to the dimensions of the trough. The chain passed over a large cog-wheel at the top end which revolved on the same shaft as a water-wheel. The smaller wheel at the bottom end served to guide the chain and its wooden cross-pieces into the trough. Each wooden cross-piece carried up with it a quantity of water which was run off at the top end into the same channel as the water discharged from the water-wheel which drove the pump. The water to drive the water-wheel was channelled off from a stream at a higher level and carried to the mine in a long runnel made of split bamboo. The waste water from the wheel and the pump was sometimes piped on to provide power for the water-wheel of some other mine lower down the valley.

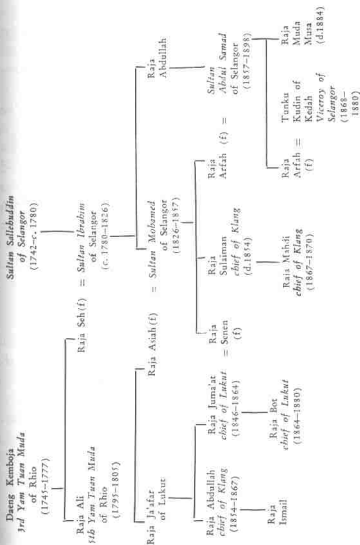
intended to terrify him into submission, into one or other of the major secret societies. The leaders in Malaya of his society might well be the men who put up the money to open the mines to which he was to be sent in the Malay States. At the mine the local headmen and managers under whom he worked were also the officials of the local lodge of his society. It was a system of financial and administrative control within the Chinese community, a government of labour by employers. It was also a means of raising defence forces since every member of a secret society was pledged to support his fellows when the rallying call went out. The leaders had bodyguards and lieutenants, professional fighting men, who acted as commanders in war and as policemen to enforce the authority of the society on its members. When a quarrel broke out between members of rival societies, there were attempts at negotiation between spokesmen of either party. If these failed, there was no other solution but to fight it out.

Raja Juma'at was able, however, to keep the peace at Lukut until 1860. Meanwhile, in the heyday of Lukut in the 1850's, Raja Juma'at by his wealth and influence was the leading figure in Selangor. The Sultan conferred on him the Bugis title of Raja Tua and made him Mentri (Secretary of State). When the chieftainship of Klang fell vacant in 1854 by the death of Raja Sulaiman, a son

of the Sultan, Juma'at was able to get it conferred on his brother, Raja Abdullah. Raja Mahdi, son of the late chief, had some claim to succeed him but was passed over. This was the origin of the quarrel which led to the Selangor civil war later on.

The rise of the "Rhio Rajas", Juma'at and Abdullah, was naturally resented by the "Selangor Rajas", i.e. the sons and grandsons of Sultan Ibrahim. But, divided among themselves and without an effective leader as yet, they dared not oppose Raja Juma'at in the days of his greatness. For his part Juma'at did his best to remove the root cause of the feud, viz., the inequality of wealth among the Selangor ruling class. Rajas who held important districts collected all the taxes and, in theory at least, remitted a stipulated proportion to the Sultan who might share his revenue with relatives not otherwise provided for. But in practice there was a wide gulf in wealth and power between the chiefs of districts and the other Rajas. The trade in tin was now largely in Chinese hands and it was not easy for a Raja to make headway in it as the merchant adventurers among his Bugis forebears might have done.

In 1857 Raja Juma'at proposed a reform of the revenue system. He suggested that a duty of 20% should be levied on all tin exported from Selangor and that uniform duties should also be collected on imports of opium, rice, etc. The proceeds of these



taxes were to be paid into a State Treasury from which allowances would be paid to all Rajas, not only district chiefs, considered eligible for maintenance at public expense. But this scheme was too novel for the Selangor Rajas who rejected it.

This discussion took place at a conclave held after the death of Sultan Mohamed in 1857. The Sultan's only son by his consort was a small boy. No one except the boy's mother challenged the idea of choosing an older candidate to be Sultan. Left to themselves the kinsmen of the late Sultan would probably have chosen one of his brothers, Raja Haji. The actual choice fell on Raja Abdul Samad, a more distant relative who was a protege of Raja Juma'at. One story is that Juma'at did not intend Abdul Samad to be Sultan but only Regent during the minority of the late Sultan's son.

The new Sultan was insecure on his throne. He lived in dread of assassination and partly for that reason did not often appear in public. He was already fifty years old though destined to reign for forty years. He was a quiet, shrewd man, with a good head for business (he had made a success of promoting tin-mining in Ulu Selangor) and a marked sense of humour. In his old age he became an enthusiastic gardener.

Raja Juma'at's influence declined after 1857. There was serious bloodshed at Lukut in 1860 and

many of the Chinese miners went off to other places. The best of the Lukut ore deposits had now been exhausted. Juma'at himself died in 1864 after a long and painful illness. He was succeeded at Lukut by his son, Raja Bot, who was too young and inexperienced to handle the growing difficulties with the Chinese miners. The decline of Lukut went slowly on.

By now the richest tin district in Selangor was the Klang valley. Sultan Mohamed in the early years of his reign and his son, Raja Sulaiman, who was chief of Klang until 1854, had lost money in attempts to develop the tin deposits known to exist along the Klang river. A band of Sumatran miners had had some success at Ulu Klang. But the decisive change came when Raja Abdullah, brother of Raja Juma'at, became chief of Klang in 1854. Abdullah may have been encouraged by the success of a new Chinese mining settlement at Kanching. For Kanching, although it was in Ulu Selangor, was very close to the northern limit of the Klang basin. With the backing of Raja Juma'at it was possible to borrow \$30,000 from two Chinese merchants in Malacca. A prospecting party of Chinese miners from Lukut was assembled. They went up the Klang river in boats in 1857 and selected a site later called Ampang ("The Dam") just above the confluence of the Klang and Gombak rivers and only

ten miles south of Kanching. Within a month of clearing the site all but seventeen of the party of eighty-seven were dead of malaria. But Raja Abdullah sent up a larger party of one hundred and fifty more miners from Lukut. By 1859 the mines at Ampang were exporting tin in large quantities.

Reports of the success of the new mines reached Lukut at a time when the miners there were troubled by the exhaustion of the ore deposits and by the bloodshed of the "Lukut Massacre" of 1860 (a secret society clash). They were glad to move on. With their supplies they travelled in boats up the Klang river as far as the junction of the Klang and Gombak rivers. Here they disembarked and went on by footpath to the mines. The point of disembarkation became the trading post of the area. Small traders, Sumatran and Chinese, set up there. In some fashion (there are several theories) the place got the name "Kuala Lumpur".

Like most Chinese mining centres of any size Kuala Lumpur had one of its leading miners (and secret society headmen) as its local governor under the title of "Capitan China", conferred by the Malay chief of the district. To assist him in his work a Capitan China had a number of lieutenants and bodyguards. In 1862 the Capitan China of Kuala Lumpur invited a young Hakka Chinese, whom he had known at Lukut, to join him in Kuala Lumpur

as his assistant. This young man, Yap Ah Loy, succeeded his patron in the office of Capitan China in 1868. He was to hold office through good times and bad until his death in 1885. We shall have much to tell of him.

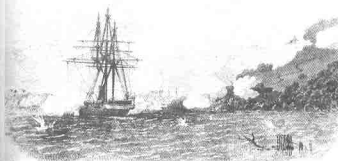
Not everyone rejoiced in the prosperity of Kuala Lumpur. There was a deadly enmity between the miners of Kuala Lumpur and those of nearby Kanching. The Kanching deposits were not extensive and would soon be worked out. The establishment of Kuala Lumpur blocked the way against expansion southwards by the Kanching miners. Feelings became more bitter when the Kuala Lumpur leaders got one of their number appointed headman of Kanching and tried to absorb it as a dependency of Kuala Lumpur. The local feud was a reflection of the rivalry throughout Selangor and Perak of two groups of secret societies, the Hai San and the Ghi Hin. When fighting broke out at Larut in Perak in 1862 some Hai San men from there fled to Kuala Lumpur, a Hai San stronghold, with all the bitterness of refugees against their enemies, among whom they included the Ghi Hin miners of Kanching.

CHAPTER FOUR

CIVIL WAR

In 1866 Selangor was enjoying great prosperity. The mines around Kuala Lumpur were producing five times as much tin as the whole of Selangor had exported a generation before. The Chinese miners at Kuala Lumpur already numbered five to ten thousand and were increasing fast. There was also a smaller but steady flow of Sumatran immigrants — Mandiling, Rawa and Batu Bahara men — who established new trading posts and mines along the rivers of the interior. At the coast around Kuala Selangor and Klang there were long-established villages growing padi, coconuts and other food-crops.

Beneath the prosperity there was tension and instability. The Sultan lacked authority to settle disputes among his kinsmen over the fruits of office. Inland the Chinese miners and Sumatran immigrants were left to resolve their quarrels for themselves.



H.M.S. *RINALDO* SHELLING THE FORT AT
KUALA SELANGOR — 4 July 1871.



KUALA LUMPUR — The Padang c. 1890

Market Street (right centre) was then the main shopping centre and the railway line to the north (foreground) ran along the edge of the Padang.



A CHINESE TIN-MINE, c. 1910
(Note the characteristic "hen-run" ladders.)



THE STOCK EXCHANGE at the height of the
Rubber boom of 1910.

Each had their own leaders — the Capitan China of Kuala Lumpur and the Dato' Dagang (headman of foreign Malays). But there was no central authority effective throughout the State.

In these circumstances a small upset could be the start of serious trouble. In 1866 Raja Abdullah, district chief of Klang, made a contract with two Singapore businessmen, W. H. Read and Tan Kim Cheng, that they should pay him a fixed monthly sum in return for the right to collect (and keep) the taxes at Klang. This arrangement, called "letting the tax farm", was the usual method of getting taxes collected at this time. The new tax farmers, through ignorance or zeal for large profits, demanded customs duties of Malay aristocrats who by tradition were exempt from paying such dues. Raja Mahdi, son of the former chief of Klang, now earned his living as a trader there. He imported two chests of opium for resale to the miners of Kuala Lumpur — and was affronted by a demand for import duty on them.

Mahdi had allies at hand in the Sumatrans up the Klang river. One of their number had been killed at Raja Abdullah's customs post at Kuala Lumpur. Abdullah had refused the request of their headman, the Dato' Dagang, for redress. With the support of the Sumatrans Mahdi blockaded Abdullah at Klang. The rebellion was a scratch affair —

some of Mahdi's gunpowder brought from Kuala Selangor had been stored there since the Dutch war of eighty years before. But Mahdi was also able to obtain supplies from a Chinese merchant of Malacca, Baba Tek Cheng, who gave him credit in the hope of being repaid handsomely if Mahdi secured the rich prize of Klang.

Both sides kept ships and boats at sea off the coast to cut off the other's supply ships. Trading vessels from Malacca suffered minor acts of plunder and violence which the British authorities regarded as piracy. In Klang town Mahdi and his followers held the Fort and besieged Raja Abdullah's sons in the customs post (on the site of the modern police station). Abdullah himself raised a relieving force of three ships at Malacca but when it reached Klang it was found that the guns on the ships were so mounted that they could not be trained to fire upwards at Klang Fort on the hill. After this fiasco Raja Abdullah withdrew his forces under truce and Raja Mahdi became master of Klang.

Sultan Abdul Samad was quite willing to accept Mahdi as chief of Klang provided that the usual sum of \$500 per month was remitted to him from the revenues of Klang. But Mahdi, a man of volatile temperament, was elated by success. He defaulted on his bargain with the Sultan and, like Raja Abdullah before him, he made the mistake of deny-

ing justice to the Sumatrans up the river.

The tide began to turn against Mahdi in 1868. In June of that year the Sultan married his daughter to Tunku Dzia'uddin (usually abbreviated to "Kudin"), a son of the Sultan of Kedah. Kudin was a man of education who had absorbed many western habits and ideas which made him distrusted by his Malay countrymen. But he was able and energetic — and he pressed the harassed Sultan to give him some share in the government of Selangor. The Sultan, vexed with Raja Mahdi over the question of the Klang revenues and pursued by the complaints of the sons and widow of Raja Abdullah, appointed Kudin as a sort of arbitrator to settle the dispute over Klang. For this purpose he formally appointed him "Viceroy" (Wakil Yam Tuan) of Selangor. But the Sultan's scheme miscarried. Raja Mahdi and the other Selangor nobles had had enough of foreign interlopers (the Rhio Rajas) and they refused to recognise Kudin's authority. After the Dato' Shahbandar (a very minor chief) had openly defied him at Kuala Langat, the district which the Sultan had assigned to him, Kudin went back to Kedah ostensibly to attend the funeral of his mother. But first he went to Malacca and negotiated a credit with a Chinese merchant to meet the cost of the coming campaign.

On Kudin's apparent withdrawal from his task

the Sultan remarked that Raja Mahdi and the sons of Raja Abdullah were all young men — they must settle their quarrel by fighting it out. The Sultan was helpless and the storm was brewing. At about this time Sultan Abdul Samad withdrew from Klang, which had been the royal capital in his reign, and settled at Jugra in Kuala Langat. He did not wish to be caught up in the struggle for Klang.

Although his enemies were preparing to attack him Raja Mahdi continued for the time being to control the Klang valley. In June 1869 he visited Kuala Lumpur to install Yap Ah Loy as Capitan China. Ah Loy's position was insecure. His succession to the office of Capitan China had been disputed by rivals and by the relatives of his predecessor. The Kanching miners had murdered a leading Kuala Lumpur mine-owner who had been sent to administer Kanching. Hence Ah Loy was glad to have the declared support of the chief of Klang.

The installation of Yap Ah Loy was an interesting blend of Chinese and Malay custom:—

"Yap Ah Loy entered dressed in Malay costume complete with the head-dress of a Raja. His head fighting men stood in two straight lines behind him wearing the uniform of their several ranks and holding tufted spears in their right hands."^{*} A pro-

^{*} *Yap Ah Loy* by S. M. Middlebrook at p. 39.

clamation was then read in Chinese and afterwards Ah Loy was carried round Kuala Lumpur in a sedan chair with a supporting procession.

Two months later, in August 1869, the second battle for Klang began. A son of Raja Abdullah, Raja Ismail, led a mixed force of Illanun pirates and Bugis fighting men in a surprise night attack on the outer fort of Kuala Klang, commanding the approach to Klang town. He then sat down to besiege Mahdi. The Sumatrans of the interior rose in revolt with arms which had previously been smuggled in to them. Then, in October, Tunku Kudin returned from Kedah with five hundred Kedah Malays at his back. Half this force was sent to Kuala Langat. With the other half, and a European gunnery expert called de Fontaine, Kudin joined Raja Ismail in the siege of Klang. The Chinese of Kuala Lumpur were forced to divert their tin down the Langat valley. The Sultan, whose personal revenues at Kuala Langat were thereby increased, regarded the civil war as not an unmixed curse. As supplies became scarce in Klang town the price of rice rose to a dollar for what would fill half a coconut shell. But the blockade and the bombardment went remorselessly on. For Tunku Kudin was a stayer, persistent, undramatic. In March 1870 when Mahdi could hold out no longer he fled with a few followers up the coast of Selangor to Sungei Buloh. Tunku Kudin then

took over the government of the Klang district.

For four more years the fighting went on. There was a flurry of fighting and then the victor sat down to enjoy his conquests while the loser prepared for the next attempt. The four maps, and their captions, indicate the ebb and flow of operations at the critical phases.

Out of the duel between Raja Mahdi and Tunku Kudin there emerged two coalitions of which they were the respective heads. Raja Ismail, the son of Raja Abdullah, gave place to Tunku Kudin and went off to open tin-mines in Pahang. Kudin, as the chief of Klang, depended on the mines of Kuala Lumpur to provide him with the revenues which he needed for carrying on the war. Yap Ah Loy and the miners of Kuala Lumpur needed a friendly power in Klang who could keep open for them the best route for the export of their tin. So Kudin and Ah Loy became firm allies in the defence of the Klang-Kuala Lumpur area against their common enemies. They were men of rather similar temperament—quiet and determined, organisers rather than brilliant strategists.

Mahdi's coalition was made up of Malay chiefs with a grievance against Kudin and Chinese miners of the Ghi Hin societies who hated the Hai San men of Kuala Lumpur. The real strength of the coalition lay in the Selangor valley, especially among the

THE SECOND PHASE OF THE SELANGOR CIVIL WAR 1870-1873

The four maps which follow (Scale 13 miles to 1 inch) show the course of the fighting over the years 1870-1873. Tunku Kudin and Yap Ah Loy held Klang and (except for a few months — *v.* Map 3) Kuala Lumpur also. The main base of their enemies was in Ulu Selangor. Kuala Selangor changed hands more than once.

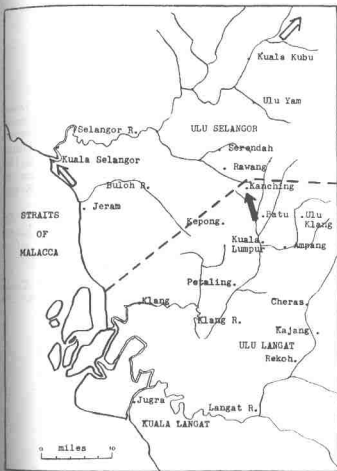
The Kudin - Ah Loy coalition generally faced northwards. The broken line indicates the approximate northern limit of the territory within which they controlled the villages and lines of communication. The black arrows show their attacks and advances. The white arrows denote attacks by the forces of Mahdi's coalition.

MAP 1 : JULY 1870

Yap Ah Loy had just wiped out Kanching. His leading opponent there, Chong Chong, fled to Kuala Langat where he met Syed Mashhor and they planned an attack on Kuala Lumpur. In September 1870 their combined forces advanced from Ulu Selangor towards Ampang. Here they were separately defeated in battle by Ah Loy's troops and were forced to withdraw.

Meanwhile Raja Mahdi, advancing northwards from Sungei Buloh, had wrested control of Kuala Selangor from the weak Raja Muda Musa. With munitions imported through Kuala Selangor he equipped a force of Sumatran (Rawa) fighting men which he took over the hills into Pahang to join in fighting in progress there.

MAP 1

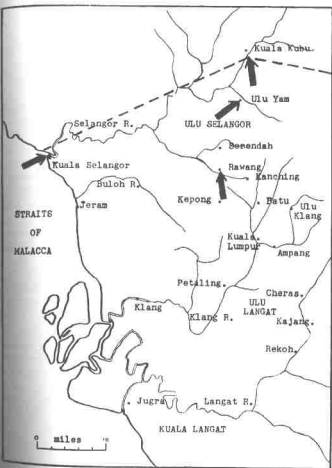


MAP 2 : MAY — NOVEMBER 1871

By May 1871 Syed Mashhor and Chong Chong had raised new forces for a second attack on Kuala Lumpur. They were again outmanoeuvred and defeated — this time near Rawang — by Yap Ah Loy's forces. Ah Loy then made a sustained attempt to drive his enemies right out of Ulu Selangor. His troops, augmented by reinforcements, reached Ulu Yam in August 1871 but were unable to capture Kuala Kubu, commanding the route over to Pahang.

Raja Mahdi was at Kuala Selangor. In July 1871 the British warship *Rinaldo* arrived there in search of Chinese pirates who were reported to be using it as their base. After a clash between a naval landing party and Mahdi's supporters the *Rinaldo* shelled Mahdi out of Kuala Selangor. Tunku Kudin then put a garrison into the vacant fort of Kuala Selangor under the command of Pennefather, a former British Army sergeant.

MAP 2



MAP 3 : AUGUST — SEPTEMBER 1872

Yap Ah Loy's forces made a final attempt to take Kuala Kubu in April 1872 but were defeated. They then withdrew to Rawang to shorten their lines of communication. As a result of this reverse and of intrigue by Syed Mashhor the Sumatrans of Ulu Klang and Ulu Langat, who had until then supported Yap Ah Loy, went over to the side of Syed Mashhor. Mashhor and Mahdi closed in on Kuala Lumpur from the north, east and south and threatened to cut its communications with Klang down the river.

Kudin's forces supporting Yap Ah Loy at Kuala Lumpur were commanded by a Dutch soldier of fortune, Van Hagen. After fighting a hard but indecisive battle outside Kuala Lumpur Van Hagen tried to break out down the Klang valley. He and his troops were trapped and slaughtered at Petaling. Yap Ah Loy and a few followers escaped by another route to Klang. Kuala Lumpur fell to Mahdi and Mashhor in August 1872.

A Malay force from Pahang, enlisted by Tunku Kudin, had come over into Selangor but, owing to lack of communications, its presence at Ulu Klang and Kepong was unknown to Van Hagen in the hour of his need.

Soon afterwards Syed Mashhor, aided by treachery, took the fort at Kuala Selangor. Half the garrison were killed.

MAP 3



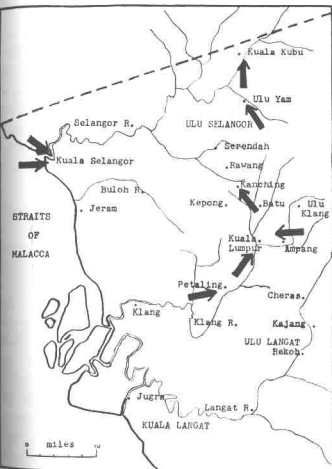
MAP 4: 1873

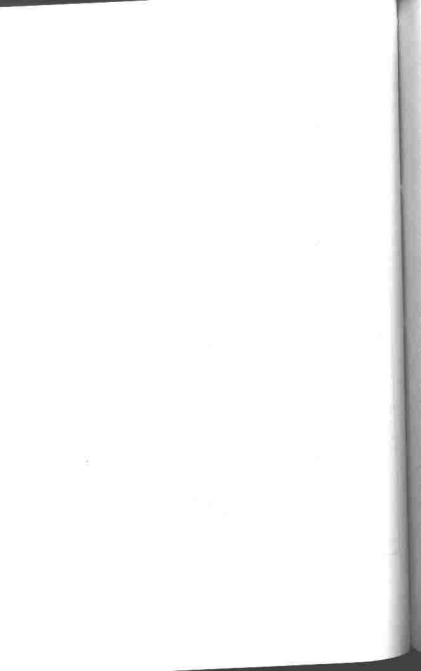
Tunku Kudin and Yap Ah Loy reorganised their forces at Klang for a campaign to recapture Kuala Lumpur. A mixed Chinese - Malay force under Ah Loy and Mat Akil took Petaling in November 1872. The Pahang forces had meanwhile withdrawn to Bentong owing to supply difficulties. In March 1873, after the monsoon rain was over, the two forces from Klang and from Pahang closed in on Kuala Lumpur. Mashhor fought bitterly to hold Kuala Lumpur as long as he could. When driven out he escaped to Ulu Selangor.

Kudin's Malay forces then drove Mashhor back step by step through Ulu Selangor. There were engagements at Kanching, then Ulu Yam and finally at Kuala Kubu (May - Aug. 1873). Dislodged from Ulu Selangor Syed Mashhor fell back on Kuala Selangor. A new Malay force was brought round from Pahang by sea to attack Kuala Selangor. Syed Mashhor then fled to Perak; Raja Mahdi and his entourage had gone south to Kuala Langat and Lukut much earlier.

At the end of 1873 Tunku Kudin and Yap Ah Loy were masters of the whole Klang and Selangor valleys — for the time being at least.

MAP 4





miners of Ulu Selangor. Mahdi was titular head of the coalition but most of the hard fighting was done by Syed Mashhor. Mashhor was of Arab descent on his father's side but related to the Selangor Rajas through his mother. He had a personal quarrel with Kudin whom he suspected of complicity in the killing of his brother. Although capable of wild courage in battle Mashhor was at most times a cold, persistent, dogged leader. In this he was a contrast with Raja Mahdi who was impulsive, restless, always moving on from one thing to the next. The third leader of Mahdi's coalition, Raja Mahmud, was a renowned fighting captain of whom it was said that he feared God and no one else. But like Mahdi he was a dashing figure who lacked the determined persistence of Mashhor.

There was in a sense a third group — the neutrals — headed by Sultan Abdul Samad. The Sultan in seclusion at Jugra in Kuala Langat was ostentatiously detached from either faction and yet ready to come to terms with whichever of them might prove the winner. Much wit has been expended in deriding the Sultan's unheroic role. But his critics have not suggested what else he could more usefully have done. He had no army with which to restore the peace and no reason to give wholehearted support to either side. The Sultan had learnt in Mahdi's time as chief of Klang that Mahdi wished merely

to be a district chief and to keep his revenues for himself. As for Tunku Kudin, the Sultan feared that his Viceroy's ambitions would lead him to claim the throne of Selangor in succession to himself, thus ousting the Sultan's heir, Raja Muda Musa. Moreover the Selangor Rajas who surrounded the Sultan at Kuala Langat (and whom he feared as potential assassins) were enemies of Kudin. A younger and more energetic ruler (the Sultan was verging on seventy years of age) might have played a more active part — and have lost his throne or his life, or both, in the course of it.

The Sultan's son, Raja Muda Musa, was a man of religious disposition and, for the same reasons as his father, unable to take a strong line. He was at Kuala Selangor, as its titular chief, in 1870-1, but remained entirely passive during Mahdi's occupation. The other members of the royal family were generally opposed to Tunku Kudin as an interloper from Kedah. But they merely constituted a whispering gallery of rumour and intrigue around the Sultan at Kuala Langat. Raja Bot, the chief of Lukut, gave refuge to Mahdi and his supporters in time of adversity but took no part in the fighting.

The British authorities in the Straits Settlements were concerned at the occasional minor piracies which occurred off the Selangor coast in the course of blockade measures by the belligerents. They were

also subject to constant pressure by the advocates and friends of both sides. Tunku Kudin had backers among the businessmen of the Straits Settlements — J. G. Davidson, W. H. Read, Kim Cheng and others. Raja Mahdi too had his financial backers and also an influential "friend at court" in the Maharaja of Johore.

In July 1871, just after the *Rinaldo* had shelled Raja Mahdi out of Kuala Selangor, the Governor of the Straits Settlements sent his Colonial Secretary, J. W. W. Birch, on a mission to the Sultan at Jugra. Birch's object was apparently to induce the Sultan to impose a settlement on the warring factions. This was to ask the impossible. The Sultan did propose on this occasion to transfer to a commission of three (Kudin himself, Raja Bot of Lukut and his brother Raja Yahya) the extraordinary powers as Viceroy which he had conferred on Kudin in 1868. This scheme might be regarded as an attempt to broaden the basis of Kudin's position by associating the Lukut Rajas with him. But it was too oblique an approach to the problem for Birch and nothing came of it.

It was a costly war, both in terms of cash expenditure and of economic devastation. Tunku Kudin had no following in Selangor and was obliged to import his troops. He brought in a force of Malays from Kedah in 1868 but the other side then

made representations to the King of Siam, as suzerain of Kedah, to get these troops withdrawn. Later Kudin had a few hundred mercenary soldiers, mainly Indians and Arabs, raised and commanded by professional soldiers of fortune such as de Fontaine, Pennefather, Van Hagen and Cavalieri. These troops were recruited from among the seamen of the Straits Settlements ports with a sprinkling of Eurasian non-commissioned officers. They were used to garrison key points such as Klang, Kuala Lumpur and Kuala Selangor. For operations in the jungle of the interior Kudin relied on Malay contingents from Pahang, led by their own chiefs, but employed as mercenaries for reward. The commissariat and supply side of Kudin's army was organised by an Arab merchant, Syed Zin.

Up to 1872 Kudin had considerable revenues from the tin exported from Kuala Lumpur through Klang. But by the end of the war he had run up war-debts to the amount of \$400,000 owed to backers in the Straits Settlements.

Yap Ah Loy had ample manpower at his disposal in the thousands of his miners who could be mobilised under the command of the professional fighting men (panglimas) who acted as bodyguards to the secret society headmen. At critical periods Ah Loy had a thousand or two of his miners under arms. But it was an expensive call-up as they had

to be paid wages and they were lost to their productive work of mining for tin. Perhaps for this reason he also employed Sumatrans, under their own headmen, to fight his battles.

The full amount of Yap Ah Loy's war expenditure is not known. He spent his fortune, estimated at \$100,000 in 1870, and incurred debts besides. For a period after the war he was allowed a special levy of \$1 per bahara on all tin produced around Kuala Lumpur to recoup his war expenses. He complained that the \$16,000 thus obtained was quite inadequate.

As always, less is known about the losing side. Raja Mahdi took Kuala Selangor in 1870 with a force of 200 Malays from Jeram. Later he was reported to be spending \$30,000 which he had borrowed on provisions, muskets and gunpowder. It had taken him a year to raise enough money (possibly the \$30,000 just mentioned) to finance his foray into Pahang in 1870. In 1872, with some aid from Johore, Mahdi equipped a force of four ships, with men and munitions, at Bengkalis in Sumatra. Syed Mashhor's forces were mainly Sumatran and Chinese miners from Ulu Selangor. Some of them may have fought for loot and some, such as the Chinese survivors of Kanching, for revenge. But, even if they were not paid, they had to be fed and armed. How it was done is simply not known.

There were never more than a few hundreds or at most thousands of men under arms in this war at any time. Supply lines consisted of porters carrying loads along jungle paths or of convoys of boats moving up the rivers. It was not possible to maintain large numbers in the field. The lesson of Yap Ah Loy's catastrophic campaign in Ulu Selangor in 1871-1872 was the unwisdom of setting too large a task for too small a force at the end of too long a line of communication.

The dense jungle and thickets in which the fighting took place also discouraged the use of large numbers of troops. There was no open space in which to deploy them. The advances — and retreats — were along rivers and jungle paths. This system of narrow communications was controlled by stockades at junctions and key points. Sound tactics consisted in taking one strongpoint and then moving on to take the next (avoiding ambushes meanwhile). The defenders of a stockade, well protected by walls of timber, had the advantage. Their small cannon could be used to good effect against a frontal attack. Success was most often won by surprise, treachery, or a stratagem such as feigning defeat and rout in order to draw the elated defenders forward from their positions — and into the ambush which had been prepared for them. Apart from the light cannon on the stockades the

soldiers carried their weapons with them — muskets, swords, spears, daggers. Leather jerkins and shields of wood or wickerwork were sometimes used for protection. In some battles the commanders rode on horseback. Losses were not heavy unless one side was completely defeated. Quarter was not often given to wounded or surrendered enemies.

Kudin's victory in 1873 would not have been the end of the war if Raja Mahdi could have raised more funds to renew the attack. It was the financial aid of backers in the Straits Settlements which prolonged the fighting for so long. They hoped to be rewarded with substantial concessions when the war was won. The British intervention of 1874, however, put a stop to the war.

Although the fighting had generally been on a small scale the results of the war were appalling. By 1874 the once flourishing villages around Klang and Kuala Selangor were deserted. The men had been pressed into service or had fled with their families to avoid the depredations of the unpaid soldiery of either side. In the interior the Pahang Malay levies lived on the country while waiting for their promised reward. The mines had become muddy pools because the essential work of pumping out the water had been abandoned. The miners were dead or had migrated to more peaceful mining centres in Lukut, Sungei Ujong and elsewhere. The

mine-works and buildings had been burnt or destroyed in the fighting.



TUNKU KUDIN
Viceroy of Selangor, 1867 - 1880



SIR WILLIAM MAXWELL
British Resident, Selangor



SIR FRANK SWETTENHAM



YAP AH LOY
Capitan China of Kuala Lumpur
1868 - 1885

CHAPTER FIVE

YAP AH LOY AND SWETTENHAM

In February 1874, the new Governor of the Straits Settlements, Sir Andrew Clarke, came on a visit to Sultan Abdul Samad at Kuala Langat ostensibly to demand redress for an act of piracy against a Malacca trading vessel which had happened on the Sultan's doorstep in the anchorage of Kuala Langat itself. The Governor's real purpose was to install a British Resident in Selangor in accordance with the new British policy towards the Malay States.

The Sultan was greatly perturbed. He feared that he was about to be deposed and carried off into exile. He hastened to explain that he himself was now too old for piracy — he left it to the younger men. When this anxiety about his personal position had been dispelled, Clarke found the Sultan ready enough to accept a British adviser. The Sultan and Tunku Kudin, who had not met for two years, were confronted with one another under the watchful

es of Clarke and his advisers. It was plain that whatever misunderstandings there had been in the past there was still goodwill and confidence between them.

The new British protectorate was established therefore on the basis that Tunku Kudin should continue to be Viceroy, residing at Klang, and that the British Resident should also be stationed there to assist him. The Sultan remained in retirement at Jugra in Kuala Langat. A State Council was set up in 1876 with Kudin as its President and a few Malay Rajas and Yap Ah Loy (as Capitan China) among its members. Raja Mahdi and his supporters had no part in this new regime but they could not oppose it. A brief revolt in Ulu Langat in the autumn of 1875 was quelled without difficulty. Raja Mahdi remained in exile from Selangor until his death in 1882. Syed Mashhor and Raja Mahmud did not return until 1876.

Selangor's greatest need was peace and a revival of its economic life. Tunku Kudin and the new Resident, J. G. Davidson, set about their task with energy. It was fortunate that they were personal friends. Davidson, a Singapore lawyer and businessman, had been one of Kudin's backers during the war. As his assistant Davidson had with him for a few months a young member of the Straits Settlements Civil Service, Frank Swettenham, whose parti-

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ask it was to live with the Sultan at Kuala and to prevent serious intrigue in the Court support of Raja Mahdi.

clamations were posted in the principal announcing an amnesty for all and bidding to return to their villages and Chinese to nes. Slowly the people trickled back from hiding to their neglected fields and flooded Davidson, a man of great tact and sympathy into the Malay point of view, was able to make the chiefs and other notables to accept a system by which all taxes were to be paid to the Central Treasury in return for allowances to which totalled \$60,000 per annum, about one-fifth of the revenues of the State. A young soldier Syers was given charge of the remnants of Kudin's mercenaries at Klang. It was a small and demoralised force but Syers was remarkably successful in making a satisfactory police force. Davidson and Swettenham found time during the long journey up the river to visit Yap in Kuala Lumpur and to see what needed to be done there.

Fortunately both Davidson and Swettenham were in good luck for Perak. The new British Resident for Perak, Bloomfield Douglas, was a brusque, ex-naval officer of modest ability. Douglas had replaced Kudin who resigned his post as Viceroy

and went back to Kedah. Douglas also clashed with Yap Ah Loy and with several Selangor Rajas. During the years 1876-82 in which Douglas was Resident the Selangor Government achieved very little for itself or for the people of Selangor.

The fortunes of the State in these critical years depended mainly on the success or failure of Yap Ah Loy in restoring the tin-mines around Kuala Lumpur. At the time this was the only possible source of revenue for the progress of Selangor as a whole.

The urgent problem which confronted Yap Ah Loy was to raise the money which he needed. Men he already had. Some 2,000 miners had returned up the Klang River and hundreds more overland from Sungei Ujong and Lukut as soon as the civil war was over. More men to work in the mines were imported direct from China. The old mines were pumped out and desilted. New mines were dug. But it took several months to bring a mine into production. The soil lying above the tin-ore stratum had to be dug out and carried away in baskets. Water channels, water-wheels, chain pumps, kongsi-houses had to be constructed. During all this time the miners must be fed and either paid a wage or given cash advances against their share of the future profits (both systems were in use). Months of expensive work might end in

total loss if ore was not found in remunerative quantity. If there was sufficient ore it had to be dug out, carried up out of the mine in baskets to the washing troughs, smelted into ingots, carried by boat down the river to Klang, passed through the Government customs house where duty (about 5% *ad valorem*) was paid, and finally shipped to Malacca or to Singapore. Only when it reached the Straits Settlements was the miner's tin an asset which he could turn into cash.

Yap Ah Loy and the other miners of Kuala Lumpur had been ruined by the civil war. They had no ready money with which to finance the long-drawn process of opening mines and exporting tin. What they must have was supplies on credit and cash advances to be repaid months later in tin with interest at 18% per annum. To restore the mines of Kuala Lumpur to their 1870 level of output of 2,000 tons per annum required perhaps as much as \$300,000 of working capital. This was a large sum to borrow. The merchants of the Straits Settlements were reluctant to lend. The disasters of the civil war had given Kuala Lumpur the reputation of being unlucky. The price of tin had fallen to a point at which mines far inland with higher costs and transport charges between mine and coast could hardly pay their way.

Davidson, when he visited Kuala Lumpur and

Ulu Klang in August 1875, reported that the miners were in despair. Left to themselves they might have cut their losses and closed down the mines. If they had done so, Kuala Lumpur would not have prospered rapidly enough to become the capital first of Selangor and then of Malaya. But Yap Ah Loy would not give up and he would not let the others go. Swettenham, who saw the situation at first-hand in 1875 and again in 1878, said of Ah Loy that "his perseverance alone, I believe, has kept the Chinese in the country."^{*}

It took more than perseverance of course. The money, the essential money, had to be got. Yap Ah Loy pleaded and manoeuvred for money from any source. In addition to loans from Chinese merchants he borrowed from the Selangor Government and from the Singapore merchants, Guthrie & Co. He borrowed on the promise of tin to repay the debt—and diverted the tin to stave off a more pressing creditor. Thus he struggled on.

With energy and resource he tackled the problem of reducing his costs of production. He persuaded the Sumatran villages in Ulu Langat to plant padi so that he might have rice for his miners at a cheaper rate than the exorbitant price he had to pay to suppliers in Malacca. (He began to build a road

^{*} Official report quoted in S. M. Middlebrook's *Yap Ah Loy* at p. 95.

from Kuala Lumpur to the coast to avoid the slow and costly transport of supplies and tin by boat along the upper reaches of the Klang river.

By 1878 he was near the end of his financial tether. Rumours were abroad that his creditors were about to cut off supplies and force him into bankruptcy. But luck, miner's luck, which had been against him for so long, turned in his favour at last. The price of tin rose sharply and the mines of Kuala Lumpur, restored to full production in the lean years, became highly profitable again.

The turn of the tide was dramatic. In twelve months (1878-9) the population of Kuala Lumpur increased by one-third. Kuala Lumpur was at this time a town of wood and atap huts, packed close together along narrow lanes. Its water came from shallow wells or from the river — both polluted sources. Refuse lay where it fell and stank to heaven. In front of each house was a barrel of water — the only protection against fire. In the centre of the town was a market place (Old Market Square), a huge gambling shed where wildly excited miners gambled away their earnings throughout the twenty-four hours of the day, and the brothels where women plied their trade in windowless rooms six feet square. The management and profits of all this fell to Yap Ah Loy. It was his town. He maintained an asylum for the sick for which he

levied an impost of \$1 on each pig slaughtered for pork. He supervised the trade in tin. He built miles of timber corduroy roads so that bullock carts could travel between the town and the mines. His only police force was six men lent him by Syers but he kept excellent order among a population of several thousand.

The problems of administering Kuala Lumpur, especially the serious fires and epidemic diseases which swept through the town frequently, became worse with the boom of 1879. These responsibilities were transferred to new shoulders when the State Government decided to move its capital from Klang, now deserted, to the boom town of Selangor. The move took place in March 1880. A new settlement of a dozen or so officials' houses clustered on the west bank of the Klang river, grateful to have the river between them and the Chinese from whom they feared an attack. A police parade ground was laid out and so Kuala Lumpur got its famous Padang.

After two years, in which he failed to make any impression on the problems which faced him in Kuala Lumpur, Douglas was removed from his post of Resident and was replaced by Frank Swettenham. In the years 1883-6 Kuala Lumpur was completely rebuilt and the general standard of administration throughout the State was much improved. By this time Selangor was divided into the familiar

six districts — three on the coast and three inland.

Swettenham's greatest contribution to the progress of Selangor was his scheme for building a railway from Klang to Kuala Lumpur. In 1883 the scheme entailed borrowing a sum equal to a whole year's State revenue. It was a bold plan for a young official (Swettenham was only 33) to risk his reputation on. Other than a mile or two in Perak there was no railway in Malaya at this time. The railway was built and then opened in 1886 by the Governor and the Sultan who made an inaugural train journey up to Kuala Lumpur at the breakneck speed of thirty miles an hour. The Sultan said it was quite the best bullock-cart ride he had ever had. The railway reduced the time in transit between Klang and Kuala Lumpur from twelve hours to one and the charge for a picul of tin from about thirty cents to eleven. Within three years the railway was yielding the Selangor Government a net annual profit of more than 25% on the capital invested in it. The rapid expansion of later years depended on the good, cheap communications with the coast provided by the railway.

Between 1882 and 1884 there was a short-lived European incursion into Selangor mining. The five European companies relied greatly on mechanisation, especially the use of steam engines to drive centrifugal pumps for de-watering the mines. It was

Yap Ah Loy who had pioneered this technique* by importing the first steam engine into the Selangor mines in 1881. When the price of tin fell in 1884 the European mines failed because of inadequate prospecting, over-reliance on costly machinery and expensive managerial staff. As the European companies closed down the Chinese miners bought up their steam engines and pumps at bargain prices with great benefit to their own mines.

Many new mines were opened, especially in Ulu Selangor and at Sungei Besi. The railway was extended north and south from Kuala Lumpur in the early 1890's to these areas. This was the beginning of the Singapore-Penang main line.

Yap Ah Loy died in 1885 at the age of only 48. He had crowded an immense achievement into his thirty years in Malaya. His funeral was a day of public mourning in Selangor. The State had lost one of the greatest of its citizens.

In addition to mining there was rapid development in agriculture. Yap Ah Loy in his time had been granted 12,000 acres of land west of Kuala Lumpur which he had planned to plant with tapioca and later with pepper and gambier. But with his many preoccupations he was never able to carry through these schemes. The first European estate

* Yap Ah Loy was the first to use a steam engine on a mine in Selangor. Hugh Low had imported the first one into Perak in 1879.

in Selangor was Weld Hill Estate (now part of Kuala Lumpur) opened in 1881 by R. B. Downall who planted its 194 acres with Liberian coffee, tea and pepper on an experimental scale. He sold out to Heslop Hill who was to be the leading Selangor planter for many years to come. There was a considerable inward flow of European capital as Ceylon planters, whose coffee estates were being ravaged by disease, came over to Malaya. By 1888 there were a dozen estates in Selangor totalling some 7,000 acres. Most of these early estates were situated along the Klang-Kuala Lumpur railway. Apart from communications one of the attractions of Selangor was its system of land titles. W. E. Maxwell, who succeeded Swettenham as Resident in 1889, was the greatest land officer of his generation. During his time in Selangor he worked out the details of the Malayan land system.

The early planters experimented with all sorts of crops — tea, tobacco, pepper and gambier, cinchona and coffee (both Arabian and Liberian varieties). It was found that Liberian coffee was the most promising of them all. About 1893 the final collapse of the Ceylon coffee industry brought more planters over to Malaya and began a coffee boom. By 1896 there were sixty European estates in Selangor with a *planted* acreage of over 10,000 acres. They employed almost 4,000 labourers of whom over

2,400 were Tamils. This was the beginning of a sizeable Indian element in the population of the State. Although coffee planting ran into difficulties in the later 1890's owing to a fall in the world price of coffee, the plantation industry had by then been established and the way prepared for a new crop — para rubber.

In parallel with the development of plantation agriculture there was a rapid growth of Malay smallholdings. Malays, mainly immigrants from Sumatra, had been in the interior of Selangor as traders and miners for a generation or more. They turned to agriculture in the decade 1870-80 when there was a slump in tin. Inland communications were improved by the construction of "bridlepaths" so that goods as well as people could move overland. The growing population of Kuala Lumpur created a brisk demand for rice and other foodstuffs. As we have seen, Yap Ah Loy was shrewd enough to encourage his Malay neighbours to grow rice for sale. At first the Malay smallholders grew food-crops for local consumption — padi, bananas and other fruit, vegetables. Later they took to commercial export crops such as tobacco, pepper and gambier, and above all else coffee.

There is a recurrent pattern in the story of these villages. An immigrant who knew Selangor already and who had some resources and connections

there decided to establish a new village. He went to the Sultan or some other prominent Raja for financial aid, if required, and for backing in his application to the Government for the land of his choice. The Sultan took a great interest in these ventures and at one time had lent as much as \$3,000 of his own money for this purpose. The prospective village headman then went back to his own home in Sumatra or wherever it was and invited kinsmen and friends to join him in the new settlement. The settlers started on the heavy work of clearing the jungle on their land and bringing it into cultivation. In the early stages they tided themselves over from one sparse harvest to the next by working as labourers for the Government or on the new estates. The headman, too, used his capital to help his villagers through hard times. Over the years the community became well-established and perhaps prosperous. The families intermarried. The founder's family had a recognised right to provide the village headman from among its members; often the office (Penghulu) passed from father to son.

They brought with them the cultural heritage of their old homes to enrich their pioneering life in Selangor. A visitor to Kajang in 1883 thus relates how he was entertained:

"We had scarf dances and shawl dances and saucer dances and besides singing, Malay and Chinese

instrumental accompaniments, all the performers being men.”*

They had ghostly companions too — the hantu and all the demons of their old and new homes combined. There were the familiar rituals of sowing and harvest, the festivities of weddings, funerals and initiations. Every village of any size built itself a mosque and found a Haji among its number to be Imam.

The Bugis noble families who had founded Selangor a century before had now receded into the background. The civil war had ended the political career of their most active leaders, the men who had supported Raja Mahdi. The new British regime had abolished the institution known as “debt slavery” by which a Raja gathered round him a band of fighting men for such deeds, good or ill, as his fancy prompted. The allowances which they received from the Treasury, although generous at the start, became insignificant as the wealth of Selangor grew. A few were active in promoting agricultural settlements such as we have described — the Sultan and his close kinsmen in particular. Others became headmen of large villages or sub-districts under the title of “Penghulu”. This was the fate of Syed Mashhor, the hard-fighting captain of Mahdi’s forces

* Despatch to Colonial Office from Sir Frederick Weld, Governor of Straits Settlements, quoted in *Kuala Lumpur 1880-95* by J. M. Gullick, p. 59.

in the civil war. He became Penghulu of the new settlement at Kerling in his old stronghold of Ulu Selangor. He stuck to it with characteristic perseverance. But at times, when the urge for violence and excitement rose strong in him, he would cross the water to Sumatra for adventures there. Raja Mahdi whiled away the tedium of exile in Singapore with interminable correspondence about debts due to him in Selangor and with playing the violin. He died in 1882. The former Viceroy, Tunku Kudin, came back to try his hand at business in Selangor in partnership with his old chief of staff, Syed Zin, but gave it up and retired to the life of a gentleman, riding out in his carriage and pair, at Penang.

Sultan Abdul Samad adapted himself to the new age better than his kinsmen. In 1884 he assumed the office of President of the State Council, left vacant by the death of his son, Raja Muda Musa. He was then eighty. Two years later he came out of his retirement at Jugra to make the inaugural journey from Klang to Kuala Lumpur, where he stayed for three weeks. Many of the large number of his subjects gathered there had never seen their Sultan before. The shrewd, witty old man made a great impression. He went back to the quiet life of gardening, his absorbing interest, at Jugra but took much more part in public life

thereafter. He went to Singapore in 1890 and to the first Durbar of the F.M.S. Rulers at Kuala Kangsar in 1897. When over ninety he continued to preside over meetings of the Selangor State Council held at Jugra and showed a complete grip of intricate questions of land policy among others. In his last years his principal adviser and confidant was his grandson, Raja Muda Sulaiman, who succeeded as Sultan when at last the old man died in 1898.

Raja Sulaiman was one of the younger men who had grown up with the new age. Another was Raja Bot whom we met twenty years before as the inexperienced chief of Lukut after the death of his father, Raja Juma'at. He had left Lukut when it was ceded to Negri Sembilan under a frontier readjustment in 1880 and had settled in Kuala Lumpur soon afterwards. These and other leading Malay Rajas saw that if the old ruling class were to regain its place in the administration of the State, they must absorb the modern technique of government. Hence about 1890 an English school for the sons of Malay Rajas was opened in Kuala Lumpur. The "Jalan Raja" of Kuala Lumpur takes its name from the site of this school. The other communities in Kuala Lumpur felt an equal need of a good secondary school for their children. This demand led to the foundation of the Victoria Institution

(in which the Raja School was absorbed) in 1894.

The technical equipment of the modern age had now come to Kuala Lumpur in full flood. It had its own (Selangor) postage stamps in 1879; the railway and a telegraph line (to Malacca) in 1886; the first telephone and pillar box in 1892. It was to see its first balloon ascent (a flop) in 1894, it had its first electric light (at the Railway Station) in 1895 — on this historic occasion there was dancing on the main-line platform. The first motor-cars came soon after 1900.

Kuala Lumpur now had a prosperous middle class of merchants, miners and businessmen. A new way of life, owing something to European influence, had been evolved. Merchants no longer lived on their business premises in the centre of the town. The wealthy Chinese had begun to build themselves fine houses along the Ampang Road. There were new recreations, notably race-meetings which were held once or twice a year from 1890 onwards. Cricket, soccer and athletics had begun to attract local players. The Lake Gardens had been laid out and there were band concerts by the police band in the Gardens and on the Padang. The shops offered imported goods of many kinds. Well-to-do families vied in laying out artistic gardens and in keeping fine carriages and horses. We read of one young Chinese blood driving a carriage and six

horses, with postilions, down Petaling Street on Chinese New Year of 1895.

Beneath this agreeable surface of new western habits the Chinese and other communities preserved their traditional customs and modes of behaviour. In the rebuilding of Kuala Lumpur in the 1880's much money had been spent on Chinese temples and association halls. The greatest Chinese public occasion in Kuala Lumpur was the procession, held with full ritual only once in seven years, to do honour to the god Sen Ta, protector of pioneers, to whom Yap Ah Loy had built a temple in the early days of Kuala Lumpur. The priest of the cult in a state of mediumistic possession seated himself on a chair of sharp spikes and was thus carried through the streets. After him followed the leaders of every Chinese community in magnificent coats of silk, with supporters carrying banners. There were musicians and dancers of many kinds. The procession of 1902 is said to have cost \$100,000.

There was much misery too. The means to check malaria and beri-beri had yet to be discovered. Mortality from these and other diseases was appalling. Kuala Lumpur's population had grown rapidly and it was very badly housed. There were still far more men than women — and a system of officially licensed brothels to relieve the problem. There were licensed opium dens and gambling halls as well.

When prosperity failed and there was a slump, as in the early 1890's, there was hardship and starvation among unemployed labourers. Even in 1902 the streets of Kuala Lumpur were swept by gangs of convicts in chains.

CHAPTER SIX

MODERN TIMES

In 1895 the Sultan of Selangor and the rulers of Perak, Negri Sembilan and Pahang accepted Swettenham's plan for the formation of the Federated Malay States. Much that has happened in the ensuing sixty years can be traced back to that decision.

The new federal government, in the strong hands of Swettenham as Resident-General, took away from the States the power to decide most of the questions on which their welfare and progress depended. The Selangor State Council, shorn of all real authority, lost vitality. On the other hand the new Federated Malay States became in time a cohesive unit with a political life of its own. A Federal Legislative Council was established in 1909 and this provided a central organ for the expression of opinion. There was a feeling that the F.M.S.

was strong and large enough to stand on its own feet. It had to unite in a struggle — or at least it *felt* that it had to — if the domination of powerful mercantile interests in the Straits Settlements was to be cast off. A generation later when Malay opinion had vigorously rejected the Malayan Union imposed in 1946, the F.M.S. provided a pattern on which a more acceptable fusion of States and Settlements could be formed. So the people of Selangor, pulled into the F.M.S. willy-nilly by a masterful administrator in search of efficiency, began on a course which has made them part of the independent Federation of Malaya.

It is difficult to isolate the political history of Selangor after 1895 because it is so intermingled with that of the F.M.S. Leaders from Selangor played a large part in federal affairs. Kuala Lumpur was the common capital of F.M.S. and of Selangor. Much of F.M.S. history is also Selangor history and we shall on occasion treat it as such.

There are two main trends in the history of Selangor since 1895. For the first thirty years or so the energies of its people were absorbed in economic expansion at a pace unique in Asia. This had passed its peak by 1920 and has never since regained its full momentum. The surge of economic development left behind a legacy of political and social problems which demanded reform. Discontent

with things as they were contributed to the drive for independence. The Japanese occupation of 1942-5 turned "Malaya Upside Down". After that the solid inertia of the old regime had vanished and there was less impediment to the progress of change.

Of all the developments of the first part of this period the planting of rubber — no less than half a million acres in Selangor alone — was the most remarkable. Rubber is first mentioned in the published Selangor records in 1900. It had of course been grown experimentally in Malaya for twenty years before that. But Selangor planters began to plant rubber only as the price of coffee crashed in the late 1890's. Once started rubber came on with a run. By 1910 Selangor had 100,000 acres under rubber, most of it immature (i.e. planted in 1904 or later). In the same year the world price of rubber for one delirious day touched its highest level ever of 12/9d. (say \$5.47) per pound.

Rubber planting soon swallowed up all Selangor's coffee estates and much new jungle land besides. With the prospect of large profits as soon as the trees matured, early rubber planting was a hasty, haphazard process. European and Chinese businessmen took up land. When it had been cleared for planting the labourers set to work. According to one account each man carried a bag of rubber seeds and a twenty-four foot bamboo pole.



A RUBBER ESTATE OF 1910

It had not yet been learnt that multiple tapping cuts are more than the tree can stand. The wheeled latex cart would be unusable on ground on which most rubber is now planted.



RUBBER TO RAILHEAD BY BULLOCK CART
(c. 1910)



HARVESTING IN TANJONG KARANG
The oldest industry in a modern setting.



TYPICAL SWAMP BEFORE CLEARING,
TANJONG KARANG
Much of modern Selangor was carved out of
terrain like this.

He planted a seed, laid out his pole on the ground in front of him, walked to the far end, planted another seed—and repeated the process again. When the young rubber seedlings were growing, a planting expert was commissioned to write a report on the project. On the strength of the report a company was floated in London to buy the land from the original promoters. It was not unknown for the prospectus of a new rubber company to forecast a dividend of 100% per annum.

There was good and bad in this. Some schemes were hopeless or worse. But others were the beginnings of companies and estates which have survived and prospered to this day. Many of the original trees are still being tapped. The general result was a massive influx of capital to the great advantage of Selangor and of other Malay States. The weaknesses of early rubber planting lay in the rough-and-ready methods of cultivation and production, the sometimes lavish overhead expenses, and in the expectation that the price of rubber would always stay at the high level of 1900–1910.

Malay smallholders soon joined in the rush to plant rubber. Orchards and rice fields, as well as new land, were planted with the new crop at a wild pace. The owners too often succumbed to the lure of quick returns by selling their land instead of waiting seven years for the rubber trees to become

productive. Hence there developed a traffic in village land which was checked only by the Malay Reservations Enactment of 1913. As an example of the trend it was stated in the Federal Council in that year that in Perak nine-tenths of all land originally granted under title to Malay smallholders had been sold.

The end of the 1914-18 war brought a slump in rubber prices among others. This setback, although temporary, marked the end of haphazard planting and quick profits. Practical experience and scientific research began to show how higher yields per tree could be obtained and how to produce rubber of a higher and more consistent quality. Of these innovations the most significant was the introduction (by bud-grafting) of selected high-yielding strains of rubber and the replacement of the trees by replanting when their yield began to fall away seriously some thirty years after planting. These and other new techniques were at first the eccentricities of a few pioneers. By an almost silent revolution they have spread to become the accepted practice of what is now a highly technical industry.

The smallholders continued to be beset by their own special problems. Various improvements were made in the Malay Reservations Enactment to prevent evasion of its purpose. But, as rubber growing

became more complex, the smallholding usually of 2 to 5 acres proved to be too small for the new techniques. In Selangor as elsewhere the trade in smallholders' rubber passed almost entirely into the hands of Chinese dealers whose local agents were village shopkeepers. Out of this grew a two-way trade in which the smallholder buys what he needs on credit and pays his debt in rubber. This is not the place to discuss the controversies about the working of that system. But the Malay smallholder's sense of being exploited, whether justified or not, became a major issue of Sino-Malay relations.

Beginning in the 1920's experiments were made in co-operative marketing of smallholders' produce. The Javanese settlers of Ijok in the Kuala Selangor District made their rubber marketing co-operative the pride of the movement in the 1930's. In 1953 the newly developed Tanjong Karang padi area built a large modern rice mill in partnership with the Selangor Government. Selangor too had the first co-operative coconut oil mill. All these ventures ran into difficulties to a varying degree. There was commercial opposition and the peasant producers were unable to throw up fully trained managers from their own ranks. By 1957 the prospect for the future was much brighter. There was a much enlarged Government department to advise and aid the co-operatives; there were training facilities at

the new co-operative College established at Petaling Jaya; the Rural and Industrial Development Authority (RIDA) was available to provide credit and other help.

Tin continued to be the second most important industry of Selangor after rubber. The arrival of the first dredge in Selangor in 1912 was the beginning of a major change in ownership as well as of mining methods. Owing to the supply difficulties of the 1914-18 war period dredging did not begin on a significant scale until 1920. It was at all times in the hands of European companies whose stake in the industry thereby increased. In 1920 Chinese interests controlled 63% of the Selangor tin-mining industry. By the late 1930's their share of a much larger industry had fallen to 36%.

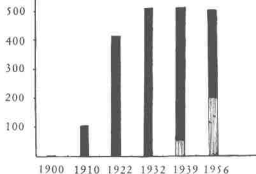
There was much other expansion and development too. Kuala Lumpur grew to a town of 300,000 people with its planned satellite town at Petaling Jaya. A third major Malayan port for ocean-going ships was built among the mangrove swamps of Port Swettenham. A colliery was developed at Batu Arang and more recently an allied cement factory at Rawang. Kuala Lumpur itself has a modern soap factory, the Railway workshops and other light engineering works and a host of small processing industries such as rice mills, saw-mills as well as the food-processing and service faci-

ANGOR'S R AND TIN

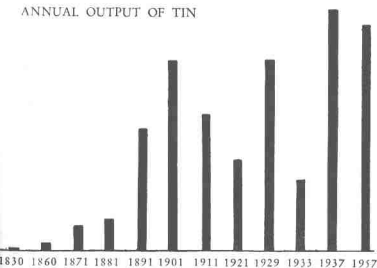
Planted
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ACREAGE PLANTED WITH RUBBER

Seedling High-Yielding



ANNUAL OUTPUT OF TIN



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ilities required by a large urban population. In addition to the Railway there is in 1957 a flourishing road transport system, short- and long-distance bus services and an international airport. There is a shoe factory at Klang. In the countryside too the achievement is impressive—notably the reclamation of the Tanjong Karang swamps to make 50,000 acres of first-class rice land on which 80,000 people have been settled in less than a decade (1948-57).

Throughout the years from 1895 population increased rapidly. At first immigrants flooded in. The population of Selangor doubled (from 81,592 to 168,789) in ten years from 1891 to 1901. It went on increasing by immigration so fast that in 1921 less than one in four of the Malay population of Selangor had been born in the State. The proportion of Selangor-born Chinese and Indians was of course even less. In more recent years population has risen by natural increase rather than by immigration to a total of 1,012,047 in 1957.

In 1895 Kuala Lumpur had only 25,000 inhabitants. It was a remote, inland mining centre which few people from afar were likely to visit (it had no hotel) and few in the world had ever heard of it (it had no newspaper). The ambitious Secretariat building in the Moorish style begun in 1894 was designed as part of a campaign to "put Kuala Lumpur on the map" by equipping it with more

imposing buildings. There were other developments at about the same time. In 1896 lawyers were allowed for the first time to practise before the courts of Selangor. The legal fraternity was soon established in Klyne Street though it still numbered only a dozen in 1913. In 1896 H. M. Robson established "The Malay Mail", Kuala Lumpur's first daily newspaper. The Chartered Bank opened its branch in Kuala Lumpur in 1888 and the other exchange banks followed not long after. This was an important development since previously there had been considerable difficulty in raising credit for productive investment in Selangor. Banks and other lenders in the Straits Settlements were reluctant to advance money for purposes and on security of which they had no first-hand knowledge. Selangor got its first local Chinese bank in the Kwong Yik (Selangor) Banking Corporation founded in 1913. The Oversea-Chinese Banking Corporation, with a branch in Kuala Lumpur among other places, was formed by an amalgamation of Chinese banks in 1932.

The leading merchants of Singapore gradually found it to their advantage to establish branches in Kuala Lumpur and these have steadily increased in importance. Kuala Lumpur became the recognised headquarters, in the form of Chambers of Commerce, of business interests extending over the

whole F.M.S. As a commercial centre it gained steadily in influence and — equally important — in confidence over the past fifty years. The days are gone when a Singapore magnate can treat Kuala Lumpur as merely one of the places where he has an up-country branch.

Kuala Lumpur is slowly equipping itself for its new status as a national capital. The vision of Tunku Abdul Rahman gave it a first-class stadium for the Merdeka celebrations of 1957. But it still lacks a public library. The influx of foreign diplomats since Merdeka begins to give it a rather more cosmopolitan air.

In half a century the whole way of living changed. By means of bicycle, bus and train people could live at a distance from their work and travel more freely. Newspapers, films, radio, amusement parks, dance-halls, a dozen varieties of sport to play or watch — all this added variety and enjoyment and banished to the shadows the vices of the old pioneers, the opium den, the drink shop, brothel and gambling hall. The steady course of change has given women and the youngsters of both sexes greater freedom than they had before. Health has improved immeasurably. Malaria and beri-beri, uncontrollable scourges in 1895, had almost vanished by 1957.

But much human misery still remains. The

population of Kuala Lumpur grew more rapidly than the supply of dwellings. Many still live, as fifty years ago, in airless, overcrowded cubicles in the tenements of Petaling Street. Others huddle in shanties with flattened petrol tins for roofs and brown-paper for partitions in the lanes behind Batu Road. Kampong Bahru, the area of Kuala Lumpur set aside for Malay occupation and industrial development nearly sixty years ago, remains undeveloped and is swept by floods almost every year. The social problems of urban life, the juvenile delinquent, the street-walker, the homeless aged, have come with the new age. In the countryside too there is poor housing and, in some areas, a growing pressure of population on the land.

The first serious slump of modern times hit Malaya in 1921. Rubber fell to sixpence a pound in the world market. Labourers on estates and mines were thrown out of employment. The remedy at that time was to give the unemployed a free steamer ticket back to the country from which they had come. In Selangor over 30,000 Chinese were repatriated during the first three months of the slump. Prosperity returned only to be followed by the more enduring slump of 1932. Thousands of Chinese scattered to become squatters on unoccupied land in remote places. Here they could scratch a living, growing food and rearing pigs, at the periphery of

a social and political system which they felt was unhelpful if not actively hostile. In these conditions of insecurity and hardship, the Communist party was able to extend its hold on the Chinese working-class population. The first fruit was a wave of strikes, mainly in Selangor, among estate and mine labour in the late 1930's. The situation was aggravated by the economic stagnation of the Japanese occupation period of 1942-4. After the war when the Communists launched their terrorist campaign in 1948 they relied mainly on the squatters for supplies and information. As a counter-measure the squatters have since 1950 been resettled in compact "New Villages" where they can be protected against intimidation. These villages have amenities such as piped water and in some cases electric light. Wherever possible the management of the village is entrusted to an elected village council. The council is also the link between the village and the government. A start was thus made towards absorbing the rural Chinese population into the community in which they now have an accepted and recognised place.

Relations between the working population and its employers have been improved by the spread of trade unionism. The unions had to make a fresh start after being freed from Communist domination in 1948. They are in 1957 strongly established

among labourers on estates and among Government employees.

Throughout all this welter of activity, progress and suffering the Government of Selangor continued on the even tenor of its way. For forty years from 1898 the ruler was the popular and respected Sultan Sulaiman who in himself covered the span of modern history. He could remember as a child the upsets of the latter part of the civil war in the early 1870's. In the course of his long reign he brought the Malay aristocratic viewpoint to bear on the process of government. The British adviser ruled and the Malay ruler advised, it has been said of the Malay States in this period.

Out of pressure by the Malay Sultans (more especially by Sultan Idris of Perak) grew the system by which the sons of Malay aristocrats were trained at the Malay College at Kuala Kangsar for a career in the administrative service. It was a deliberate effort to make an opening through which the traditional Malay ruling class could regain some part of the power it had lost in 1874. At the outset, in 1905, there was some official hesitation about the merits of the scheme. But the shortage of British staff during the 1914-18 war gave an impetus to the recruitment and advancement of Malay administrators. By the 1930's there were Malays in District Officer posts. Malay civil servants provided

the national leaders in the revolt against the Malayan Union in 1946. Selangor contributed its quota of distinguished Malay administrators, notably Raja Sir Uda bin Raja Mohamed and Dato' Hamzah bin Abdullah.

Education was not of course confined to the sons of Malay aristocrats. As we have seen, Kuala Lumpur founded its first secondary school, the Victoria Institution, in 1894. In the ensuing years a number of other secondary schools were established there by missions of various Christian denominations. All these schools were known as "English schools" because English was their medium of instruction. The main outlet for their pupils lay in entry to the various branches of the Government service as clerks, teachers or as technicians. Until after the war of 1939-45 there was little opportunity of obtaining the higher qualifications required for appointment to the senior executive and professional grades. Those cadres were filled by British staff recruited from abroad.

In 1891 Selangor introduced compulsory education for all Malay boys living within two miles of a school. But schools were few and far between. Even in 1910 Selangor had only 44 Malay boys' schools and two for girls with 2,099 and 72 pupils respectively. Malay education took on new impetus under the direction of Mr. (now Sir Richard)

Winstedt. The enrolment in Malay schools in Selangor reached 4,174 by 1923 but had doubled (to 8,623) by 1931 and went on increasing to 9,501 in 1935. Since 1945 it has expanded enormously on the basis of the foundations laid before the second world war. Even so it has only with difficulty caught up on a rapidly increasing population of school age to the point at which most Malay children get some schooling though not always of a very high standard. The Malay schoolmaster, increasing in numbers with the schools, has become a pillar of rural society.

The aim of Malay schools, up to 1941 at least, was "to make the son of the fisherman or the peasant a more intelligent fisherman or peasant than his father had been".* There were, however, special arrangements by which a few Malay boys could pass from elementary instruction in their own language to secondary education at English schools. But there was no secondary or higher education in Malay.

The first Chinese school in Selangor was established in Kuala Lumpur in 1885 by Yap Ah Loy. Chinese schools, in contrast to Malay schools, were financed and managed by the Chinese community and were not a charge on public funds. This discrimination was based on the thesis that the Chinese

* Official report quoted by Mr. H. R. Cheeseman, C.M.G. in the *Malayan Historical Journal* Vol. 2 Part 1 p. 35.

were birds of passage who did not intend to make their permanent homes in Malaya. It was a source of grievance. In general the Government left the Chinese schools to their own devices except for a measure of regulation to counter political trends inimical to it.

There were also Indian vernacular schools mainly on estates for the children of estate labourers. They were often of rather indifferent quality.

The pattern of education as it existed in Selangor (and elsewhere in Malaya) down to about 1950 has been described in some detail because it was a major formative influence in shaping the minds of the generation of children born and educated in Selangor from say 1920 onwards.⁵ The English schools brought together children of different races and instilled a harmony and common outlook which contributed materially to the quality of the national leadership later on. Almost all the political leaders, civil servants, professional men and some of the businessmen of the post-1945 era had been educated together at these schools. But because there was no local opportunity of higher education (except for the few hundreds who could go to Raffles College or the King Edward VII

⁵ For an account of the other manifold essential and welfare services the reader is referred to *Public Administration in Malaya* by Mr. S. W. Jones, C.M.G.

College of Medicine in Singapore) the system was incomplete. By the late 1930's its inherent frustration of human talent was already acutely felt by those who suffered it. Government plans for the training of Malaysians to replace British staff in the higher ranks of the public service got under way only after 1945. The sense of grievance that "we never had the chance" provided the head of steam behind the post-1945 "Malayanisation" drive with its large programme of scholarships at universities in Malaya or overseas for Government officials who had ended their schooling at the Senior Cambridge (School Certificate) stage in the 1930's.

Frustration and resentment among pupils and teachers alike at Malay and Chinese schools over the limited and subordinate position assigned to them in the educational scheme gave rise to a series of reports (Barnes, Fenn-Wu, Razak) of the 1950's. The need for an education system of common *Malayan* content was by 1957 unquestioned. But the choice of means to that end, notably the languages to be used in teaching, was still the cause of dispute.

The year 1957 has been taken for the close of this history because it saw, in the historic Merdeka ceremonies in Kuala Lumpur, the final transfer of power by which Malaya became independent again. Merdeka in 1957 was of course the climax of a long

sequence of changes. When Selangor came under British protection in 1874 her political and economic system had been shattered by a civil war. The root cause of the civil war was the impact of foreign capital and labour, imported to develop the tin-mines, on a traditional political system which was not adapted to deal with such problems. In theory the British Resident's task was to advise the Sultan how to improve his government so that it became adequate for the task. In practice the Resident found that the most convenient, sometimes the only possible means of doing what Singapore and London expected of him was to do it himself or to engage British staff to do it under his directions. The Residential system did not adapt the old government to new conditions. It swept it aside and put something new in its place. There was no serious attempt to adapt existing Malay and Chinese political institutions to make them an instrument of government in the new mode. The Sultan faded into a background of great dignity and little power. Malay chiefs of districts were no longer appointed. The office of Capitan China of Kuala Lumpur was allowed to lapse in 1902.

Yet, after the Malay revolt of 1875 known as the "Perak War", it was accepted policy that the old ruling class must be drawn into the new regime. The main instrument to that end was the State

Council—originally called a "Mixed Council" (of British, Malay and Chinese members). A State Council was accordingly established in Selangor in 1876. All legislation and major matters of policy, such as the annual estimates of revenue and expenditure, were laid before the Council. But the members of the Council had little influence on the result. They were nominated—and could lose their place if they became objectionable to the Resident. Douglas, ever injudicious, did try to oust a Malay chief from the Selangor Council in 1878. The matters laid before the State Council were often technical and were usually set out in working papers in English, a language which Malayan members understood imperfectly if at all.

What was the attitude of Malayan Councillors of this period such as Yap Ah Loy? Men like Yap Ah Loy had been accustomed to resolving by themselves the problems of their communities. Before the British arrived Ah Loy had kept order in Kuala Lumpur, defended it against attack, regulated its trade, provided money for the development of its mines and, among minor duties, had managed its market, hospital, revenue system and much else besides. He had been the government in his own person. Some of these functions, albeit in a different form, had passed to the new British administration. In respect of these matters, such as taxation

and land administration, his object in the State Council, was to avoid decisions damaging to the interests of his community or to himself. In other matters, such as the settlement of disputes and the maintenance of order, he went on much as before. As new needs arose Ah Loy and the Chinese leaders who came after him took the initiative. Ah Loy himself founded the first Chinese school. Others after his death founded a larger hospital for the practice of Chinese medicine, a decrepit home for disabled miners and a sort of residential labour exchange.

But the situation was gradually changing all the time. By 1890 the problems of health and social welfare of the people of Selangor were becoming too large to be solved by the unaided effort even of millionaires. The last of the philanthropic tycoons was the fabulous Loke Yew. Even he merely donated a large sum to open the subscription list. Others must subscribe too. In most cases it was necessary to persuade the Government, which alone had the money and the trained staff required, to provide the solution. On the other side the Government official was learning all the time how much more effective his efforts would be if they had informed local support.

The Kuala Lumpur vaccination campaign of 1890 is a significant case. Only western medicine

could check the scourge of smallpox which threatened to sweep through Kuala Lumpur. But there was a natural reluctance on the part of ordinary people to submit to a painful incision resulting in a sore for no apparent good reason. In this emergency Yap Kwan Seng, the Capitan China, convened weekly assemblies at his official residence at which vaccination was conducted on a large scale under his personal encouragement and supervision. Raja Bot, the Malay leader in Kuala Lumpur, had himself trained as a vaccinator and went out to practise his new skill among his own people.

The same year, 1890, saw the formation of the Kuala Lumpur Sanitary Board. This body, far more than the State Council which lost influence under the centralising tendencies of the F.M.S., became the training ground of political leaders. The Sanitary Board, until converted into a Municipal Council soon after 1945, was concerned to advise on the local management of urban affairs in Kuala Lumpur. The subject matter — street cleansing, markets, building rules, licensing of trades — was not the stuff of which great political careers are made. But, as in India, municipal affairs provided a training in technique. The unofficial members of the first Kuala Lumpur Sanitary Board included such prominent figures as the Capitan China, Cheow Ah Yeok, Raja Laut and Raja Bot and

(from 1894) Tambusamy Pillai. In time they and their successors mastered the technicalities of public administration — estimates, committees, speeches on the adjournment and all the minutiae of municipal government. Armed with this knowledge they could hold their own in argument with officials in the course of formulating policy. Their proceedings were public and their minutes were published in the official gazette. Hence they could to some extent marshal public opinion in support of their views.

The establishment of a Federal Council, meeting in Kuala Lumpur, in 1909 was a further step in the evolution of representative local government. After a slow start the Federal Council began to warm up to its task with the arrival in 1924 of the first Malay unofficial member, Raja (later Sir) Chulan of Perak. Raja Chulan, with a wit and good humour which concealed a serious purpose, began to harry the official spokesmen in the Council with an unending flow of questions and speeches on matters of interest to him, notably the advancement of Malays in all branches of the public service. Here was the beginning of public debate on issues of wide appeal to a broad section of the population.

Public opinion had only limited effectiveness in the shaping of policy. There were as yet no elections or parties organised to campaign for power through elections. In these circumstances public

demands tend to be frustrated by their own weakness and fall apart into sectional strife. As an example the Chinese of Kuala Lumpur were agreed in wishing to build themselves a central meeting hall for their many associations and gatherings. A site was found in the land originally granted for the depot for immigrant labour (at the end of Petaling Street). It was necessary to persuade the Government to re-alienate the land for its new purpose. Loke Yew, before his death, had donated a handsome sum to start the building fund. There were sharp differences over the choice of a name for the new building. Some wished to commemorate one of the former Capitans China all of whom had come from the Fei Chew Hakka Yap clan; others preferred Sun Yat Sen or Loke Yew. Eventually it was the British Resident who decided the issue by stipulating in the new land title that the building should not bear any personal name. It became merely the "Chinese Assembly Hall".

The political leaders of the period between the two world wars (1918-39) seem to have accepted the inevitability and beneficence of the British rule. A Chinese who was a Federal Councillor in these years has written that on first appointment to the Council his mind turned to those specific questions of welfare, e.g. prison administration and workmen's compensation, in which he felt the need of

improvement. It did not enter his head to suggest that progress should be made towards the ultimate independence of the country.

The sense of national feeling which was nonetheless evolving found expression in loyalty both to the British Crown as the protecting power and to the Malay Sultan as the local sovereign. The Sultan was the focus of loyalty not only to his Malay subjects, many of whom had only recently immigrated from different parts of Indonesia, but also to the Chinese and Indian communities. Be it said that British officials, planters and businessmen shared in this feeling. British national occasions, such as Armistice Day, evoked unhesitating enthusiasm. In particular the visits soon after the end of the 1914-18 war of the warships *Malaya*, *Hood*, *Repulse* and *Renown* were the occasion of generous hospitality and welcome by all communities, and were remembered years afterwards. It is thus related that on one such occasion no less than 10,000 bottles of beer were drunk. Service in the F.M.S. Volunteer Force and representative rugby and association football also played their part in forming and expressing the loyalties and sense of solidarity of at any rate the upper and middle class strata of Selangor society.

The war of 1939 brought this unquestioning loyalty to the British regime to its apogee. The

moral effect of the British defeat of 1942 was therefore the greater. The idol had feet of clay. It was not only the British administration but the whole comfortable scheme of things which crashed in ruins.

The impact of the Japanese occupation on the Malayan community in Selangor was many-sided. The Japanese reversed a controversial British decision of a few years before that the eldest son of the late Sultan Sulaiman should not succeed him — but their decision was in turn reversed again in 1945 without much apparent controversy. In general the Japanese tended to play off the Malays against the Chinese and thus to damage relations between them. It was a period of economic stagnation owing to the cessation of the export of rubber and tin. Most of all the Japanese occupation brought into public consciousness the latent nationalism which had been growing unobserved. Neither the British nor the Japanese were acceptable as masters. The time for independence had come.

In the years since 1945 Kuala Lumpur has seen most of the decisive events in the rapid sequence towards Malayan independence. It was here in 1946 that representatives of local Malay associations of the different States in a white heat of passion against the Malayan Union forged themselves into the first effective political party, the United Malay



TANJONG KARANG IRRIGATION SCHEME

The main dam.



THE SUNLIGHT FINISHING LINE IN LEVER BROTHERS' FACTORY IN KUALA LUMPUR

In the background (right) girls are seen at work wrapping Sunlight tablets.

associations, trade unions and other representative bodies they had become proficient in organising and in putting across a point of view. In the years since the Alliance Government took power it became more and more apparent that the rank and file intend to have a share in shaping the policies of their parties. Here is the stuff of democracy.

Meanwhile in the ten years up to 1955 the working relationship between unofficial members of various councils, federal, state or municipal, and the British civil servants had been changing. More and more the councillor, gaining in expertise and in confidence, was becoming the master. The long years of political evolution through nominated councils produced Members (later called Ministers) of the Federal Government from 1951 onwards who were well prepared for their task.

When Merdeka came in 1957 Selangor could claim a full share. By birth or long residence there belonged to Selangor three of the Ministers, the first Governor of Penang and the permanent secretaries of the Prime Minister's Department and of the Ministry of External Affairs. Moreover the Sultan of Selangor became Deputy Paramount Ruler of the Federation. In the future, as in the past, Selangor has a large part to play in Malayan history.

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NOTE:

(1) Abbreviations:—

JMBRAS Journal of the Malayan Branch, Royal Asiatic Society, Singapore.

MHJ Malayan Historical Journal, Kuala Lumpur.

JRAS Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, London.

(2) In addition to these published sources much information has been obtained from the records of the Straits Settlements Government and of the Selangor Government.

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