

Missionary Intelligence.

FROM THE S. P. C. REPORT, 1855.

LUNDU.—The Rev. W. H. Gomez is stationed on the Lundu, west of Sarawak, among the Sebuyow and Balow tribes. The population has lately increased in consequence of great numbers of the Malays and Lara Dyaks leaving Samba to take shelter under the government of Rajah Brooke. Mr. Gomez earnestly asks for a second Missionary to share his labours, which are to some extent thwarted by Mahometan influence. He has sent copies of a Malay Catechism and a Dyak Spelling-Book, printed for the use of his flourishing school. A letter from him was printed in the *Gospel Missionary*, vol. v. p. 121. In a letter dated December 3d, 1854, he gave the following account of the Dyak ceremony of reconciliation, which he had been invited to witness:—

"The Semaro and Kanyi Dyaks of the Sambilas territory were for a long time at enmity with the Sebuyow and Balow Dyaks of Lundu. Twenty years ago two Sebuyows were killed by the former, and to avenge their death, the present Orang Kaya Temangong, with the assistance of Serit Sahib—the great pirate, who at that time resided at Sadong—went up and attacked them. These tribes have since been avowed enemies, but as under the Rajah's government head-taking is strictly forbidden, they were both anxious for a reconciliation, which will enable them to visit each other for the purposes of trade. To effect this object, the chiefs of the Semaro and Kanyi Dyaks, with the Orang Kaya of the Lara Dyaks, who acted as mediator, came down to perform the usual ceremony at Lundu. As the Semaro Dyaks were the aggressors, the pledges of fidelity on their part were to be greater than those of the Sebuyows. The latter have given a cup, a tampayan, (i. e. native jar) and a pig; the former are to give cups, a tampayan, a chanang (native bell), white cloth, fowls, pigs, &c. &c. On the present occasion the Lara ceremony of reconciliation was adopted instead of that of the Sebuyows. According to the practice of the Sebuyows a pig is killed, and the chiefs of the two tribes drink a portion of the blood, to make their mutual promises of fidelity more binding. If either party get sick over it, it is looked upon as an infallible sign of his proving faithless. Our present Orang Kaya was, at the request of the Rajah, twice in this manner reconciled to the Semaro Dyaks, but on both occasions the weak stomachs of the Semaro chiefs could not stand the ordeal: their present hostile and treacherous character has unfortunately the effect of confirming the absurd notions of the Sebuyows in this respect. The slightest breach of the solemn contract thus formed is considered "*permatu hantu*," i. e. a heinous offence, which will surely bring upon the tribe the curse of Heaven.

"After every preparation for a grand feast was made the Orang Kaya Temangong addressed the assembled chiefs to this effect:—Our Malay rulers have always encouraged feuds among us, but the alah Orang Patch is different. The Rajah of Sarawak is merciful and kind to all the Dyaks, and so long as we are good subjects we may calculate upon his protection. But his anger is equally severe against all disturbers of the public peace; head-taking is looked upon as murder, and will be punished as such. To merit his kindness we must henceforth live in peace and friendship. If your hearts are at all unclean (sic), and you do not earnestly desire a reconciliation, let us not proceed further, for to enter into a contract when we have no mind to keep it, is highly improper." This address, the substance of which I have given above, lasted for about half an hour; and after the several chiefs, in the presence of all, acknowledged that in seeking a reconciliation they were actuated by the sincerest motives, one of the Manangs went round, moving about two fowls over the heads of the whole company, wishing all enmity to cease and good feeling between the tribes henceforward to exist. The chiefs then spat upon the fowls, as indicative of a cessation of hatred and animosity. Gold-water (*ayer mas*), i. e. water in which a gold ring was put, was next rubbed over the forehead, breast, feet, and hands of the principal persons of both tribes, followed by a species of anointing, viz., putting a little oil on the head of each individual. All this portion of the ceremony, in which not only the chiefs but the old men of the several tribes took a part, was performed with much the same kind of address as before, by which mutual promises of friendship were renewed, with this difference, that it was offered in the form of a prayer to their gods. The fowls and a pig were next killed, the blood of which, mixed with rice, was thrown up seven times into the air.

[I may remark here, that seven is a sacred number

with the Dyaks, and they cannot give any reason for their using it beyond the fact of their following the custom of their ancestors. The Dyak head-feast lasts seven days; seven strokes are made in driving the Antu from a sick man; a Manang must be engaged seven nights before a cure can be performed, &c. &c.]

"The pig slaughtered became the property of the Semaro and Kanyi Dyaks, of which, to prove their sincerity, each individual of the tribe is to partake a little. The whole was consequently salted and taken up with them, their hours being three days' journey from Lundu. The Lund Dyak dance, with feasting, concluded the whole ceremony.

"Fifty families of the Lara Dyaks have left Samba and are now living in the Sarawak territory, not far from Lundu. These, with others who are expected shortly to join them, will considerably increase the Dyak population here.

"I am sorry to say that the expedition against the refractory Sakarrans has returned victorious, after the absence of nearly a month. The Lundu Dyaks had not a single man dead or wounded, and yet they are sorry and downcast because they got no heads! I endeavoured to explain to them how far preferable it was to have victory without less than a few heads, but all in vain. In the expedition of 1849 they got a great many heads, but the Orang Kaya lost two of his sons. All my efforts to show that our present success is a matter of greater rejoicing have been fruitless. The Orang Kaya's son, a young lad, asked me, 'Don't white men take heads?' I said, 'No, of course not.' 'What then is the use of fighting?' he replied with a laugh, as if he thought us fools for allowing dead men to keep their own heads. Christian education alone, under God's blessing, can uproot these time-grown prejudices."

News Department.

From Papers by R. M. S. Asia, December 8.

DESIGNS OF RUSSIA IN REFERENCE TO ENGLAND.

The value of a fleet in diplomacy, as well as in war, is too great to have been overlooked by a Power so cunning as Russia; and clumsily though she has managed the matter, after all there can be no question that, while she was paying her out nothing, and, no doubt, sincere addresses to Constantinople, she had an eye—ridiculous as such an ambition may seem—upon England. She, who had risen from a desert, peopled with nomad and barbarous tribes, to be a nation sufficiently disciplined twice to overthrow the greatest soldier of his age—first, in Charles the twelfth, and, secondly, in Napoleon—might hope even to conquer England. For what other ultimate object was the Baltic Fleet created by the late Emperor? From the Neva to the Sound he had not a single foe to dread. If he had chosen to add the Northern Provinces of Norway to Finland, Sweden had no power to prevent him; and such a navy could only be meant to resist the interference of England. It is a circumstance very remarkable, that, amongst other obligations laid upon the officers of that fleet, was one that they should learn English. Not only our language, but even our dockyards have been turned to an account, and ships built after their plans. It is well known, moreover, that no description of foreigners was the Imperial welcome so readily or warmly extended as to travellers from this country; nor can it be denied that the Emperor never lost sight of the fact that to England alone it was owing that his navy was "cabin'd, cribb'd, confin'd, bound in" by the shores of the Baltic. A circumstance strongly demonstrative of this fact occurred some years ago, when it was rumored that the Russian fleet was preparing for a much more distant cruise than it had hitherto attempted. Some foreign Ministers remonstrated, and stated that it would be necessary to give their Governments some explanation of such a circumstance, a declaration of the object of the expedition. Of these expostulations no notice was taken, and preparations at Cronstadt went on as actively as ever. At this time a warm discussion on Russian affairs happened in the English Parliament, whereupon Lord Durham, who was then our representative at the Court of St. Petersburg, interfered, and the intended expedition was abandoned. Lord Durham was just the man for the situation. Such men come seldom. A seaboard on the Atlantic would give her a purchase for working out her designs, which could only ultimately succeed either by overcoming England, or by becoming her rival on the sea. In either event, the prestige of this country must pass away. We are what we are by virtue of our naval power. Without merchant crews, or a hardy race of

fishermen, Russia has no means of renewing her navy in the event of her daring to put forth that arm. Norway would give her both; and from that hour the decline of Great Britain would commence. As long, then, as Russia holds Finland, there is no guarantee that she will not acquire Norway, and divide the empire of the sea with Great Britain, or strip her of it all together. These things cannot be too much dwelt upon. The power of Russia, even before the war, vast as her dominions were, was incomplete. It was unwieldy, while it was immense. The towns knew nothing of one another; the country knew nothing of the town. The country was thinly populated, the levies for the army leaving, even in time of peace, hardly men enough to till the ground, and gather in the harvest. At a single English sea-port of any magnitude might be seen in a single day more vessels than Russia could boast altogether. And without a seaboard in the Atlantic she would never alter this—never become commercial—thoroughly—populous. In the way to this stood England, and how to remove the obstacle was a far more important consideration than even Constantinople.

The *Newcastle Journal* states that a change of great importance is about to take place in the diocese of Durham with regard to its vast revenues, and the power of granting leases of land, royalties, and minerals. It is understood that Bishop Milby has made, or is about to make, an arrangement of the whole revenues of the see to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, in consideration of an annual stipend, the amount of which has not yet transpired. Dr. Milby has been, upon the whole, a fortunate Bishop of Durham, for throughout his career his receipts have largely exceeded the income—£8000 a year—proposed to be allotted to him; even during the last year, after paying over £11,000 to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, and £2,000 to the Milby fund, the Bishop's receipts have, it is believed, been enormously large.

The *Post* Marcellis correspondent telegraphs the arrival of the *Egyptian* with news from Constantinople to Nov. 26th; according to which our position at Kertch is threatened. Admiral Lyons, says the despatch, continues to cruise near the shore of the Crimea to survey the point of Kertch, against which the Russians seem to be preparing an attack during the winter. They are fortifying Arabat, and are concentrating in its environs 30,000 men, whilst 15,000 more are sent towards Geneteli, in order to re-establish communication between the mass of the army of Prince Gortschakoff and the interior of Russia by the road over the Spit of Arabat. The guns of the boats and steamers of the allies, and of the floating batteries, can reach the Russian convoys along the whole route, and across the whole breadth of the Spit, unless maritime operations are suspended by the freezing of the Sea of Azoff. Accounts from Kertch state that the Russian cavalry, which had been in the neighbourhood of that place, have retired into the interior. Five gunboats are still cruising in the sea of Azoff. Three hundred sail of merchantmen are lying wind-bound in the Sulina mouth of the Danube.

UNITED STATES.

WASHINGTON, Dec. 14.—I mentioned in my despatch last evening that the President would recommend in his forthcoming message the purchase of the Hudson Bay Company's possessions on the northwest coast of America. This is an important recommendation, and will without doubt receive as the message recommends, the early attention of both Houses of Congress. It is an acquisition of vital importance; and ever since the treaty which was concluded between this government and Great Britain in 1846, while Mr. Buchanan was Secretary of State, it has been part and parcel of the policy of this government to become possessed of the interests of the Hudson Bay Company.

The first article of that treaty, defining the boundary line between the United States and British possessions west of the Rocky Mountains, is as follows:—

From the point on the forty-ninth parallel of North latitude, where the boundary laid down in existing treaties and conventions between the United States and Great Britain terminates, the line of boundary between the territories of the United States and those of her Britannic Majesty shall be continued westward along the said forty-ninth parallel of north latitude to the middle of the channel which separates the continent from Vancouver's Island, and thence southerly through the middle of the said channel, and of Fuca Straits to the Pacific Ocean; provided, however, that the navigation of the whole of the said channel and Straits south of the forty-ninth parallel of North latitude remain free and open to both parties.