

which, although not of great calibre, are capable of throwing a shot beyond the range of small-arms. It is said that they seldom attempt an attack unless the sea is calm, which enables them to approach their victims with more assurance of success, on account of the facility with which they are enabled to manage their boats. The frequent calms which occur in these seas between the land and sea breezes, afford them many opportunities of putting their villanous plans in operation; and the many inlets and islets, with which they are well acquainted, afford places of refuge and ambush, and for concealing their booty. They are generally found in small flotillas of from six to twenty prahus, and when they have succeeded in disabling a vessel at long shot, the sound of the gong is the signal for boarding, which, if successful, results in a massacre more or less bloody, according to the obstinacy of the resistance they have met with.

In the winter months, the Straits of Malacca are most infested with them; and during the summer, the neighbourhood of Singapore, Point Romania, and the channels in the vicinity. In the spring, from February to May, they are engaged in procuring their supplies, in fishing, and refitting their prahus for the coming year.

I have frequently heard plans proposed for the suppression of these pirates, particularly of those in the neighbourhood of the settlements under British rule. The European authorities are much to blame for the quiescent manner in which they have so long borne these depredations, and many complaints are made that Englishmen, on being transplanted to India, lose that feeling of horror for deeds of blood, such as are constantly occurring at their very doors, which they would experience in England. There are, however, many difficulties to overcome before operations against the pirates can be effective. The greatest of these is the desire of the English to secure the goodwill of the chiefs of the tribes by whom they are surrounded. They thus wink at their piracies on the vessels of other nations, or take no steps to alleviate the evils of slavery. Indeed the language that one hears from many intelligent men who have long resided in that part of the world is, that in no country where civilization exists does slavery exhibit so debasing a form as in her Indian possessions. Another difficulty consists in the want of minute knowledge of the coasts, inlets, and hiding-places of the pirates, and this must continue to exist until proper surveys are made. This done, it would be necessary to employ vessels that could pursue the pirates every where, for which purpose steamers naturally suggest themselves.

What will appear most extraordinary is, that the very princes who are enjoying the stipend for the purchase of the site whereon the