

(1) Myoung Shoay-ak Kyouk Myoung, Atwin Woon, the Minister of the Interior.

(2) Oo-Shoay-ak Watima Soot, Woondouk.

Colonel Sladen met the envoys at the gangway, and, after being presented to me, they produced a note, unsigned, in a cover bearing the Royal Peacock seal, of which the following is a translation:—

Dated 4th decrease of Tasoungmon, 1247 (=25th November, 1885).

From His Excellency the Prime Minister, to The Commander-in-Chief of the English War Vessels.

"1. Although the treaty negotiated at Simla was not concluded, the Burmese Government were under the impression that the former friendly conditions would still prevail, and they could not, therefore, believe that the English Government would make war on Upper Burma.

"2. The Burmese Government have always had at heart the welfare and prosperity of the English people. They have all along protected the interests of the Irrawaddy Company's teak trade, and the general interests of all British subjects.

"3. We are desirous of still further protecting British interests as far as lies in our power, both at present and in all future time.

"4. The last letter (ultimatum) forwarded by the British Government contained very important political matter, and our sovereign regrets that the time allowed was too short to allow of serious deliberation.

"5. The English Government ought to have known that the only reason why the Burmese Government in their reply to the said letter did not freely concede all the demands made was because we were not allowed sufficient time for deliberation. It must have been apparent from the tenor of our reply that the Burmese Government was desirous of remaining on terms of amity and friendship.

"6. The Burmese Government did not wholly reject the rights and privileges claimed by the British Government, and we are grieved to find that the English Government, which has always been so friendly, should in the present instance have made immediate war on us. We have simply resisted in order to maintain the reputation of the kingdom and the honour of the Burmese people.

"7. The English are renowned for their just and straightforward action in all matters (political). We look forward, therefore, with confidence to their doing what is just and proper in the present instance.

"8. The country of Burma is one which deserves justice and consideration. We believe that it will receive this consideration at the hands of the English Government.

"9. If this is granted, the kingdom of Burma need not be annexed. It is well to remember, too, that on a former occasion Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen-Emress was pleased to declare publicly that there was no intention on the part of the English Government to annex Burma, unless such a step was necessitated on good cause shown. As no such cause exists, the Great Powers of Europe should not have it in their power to say that the Royal declaration has not been faithfully observed.

"10. In addition to the rights and privileges already granted in our reply to your ultimatum, His Majesty the King of Burma has now declared his will to concede all the other demands which were not at first allowed, because we had not the sufficient time to bring them under our consideration.

"11. His Majesty the King is well disposed (in mind and heart);—he is straightforward and just, and expects the English Government will act in accordance with the wishes expressed in this letter.

"12. By so doing, the world will have no cause to say that the English Government have acted unjustly, or with a disregard of the rules of international law.

"13. The English Government entered our country and attacked us with a number of war vessels. We were obliged to resist. We now desire that hostilities shall cease, and we trust the English Government will meet us half-way, and enter into a treaty by which friendly intercourse may be resumed between the two great countries."

To which the following reply was sent:—

"General Prendergast begs to inform the Ken-Woon-Mengyi, in reply to his letter of this date, that, acting in accordance with the instructions he has received from the Viceroy and Governor-General of India, it is quite out of his power to accept any offer or proposal which would affect the movement of the troops under his command on Mandalay.

"No armistice, therefore, can be at present granted; but if King Theebaw agrees to surrender himself, his Army, and his capital to British arms, and if the European residents at Mandalay are all found uninjured in person and property, General Prendergast promises to spare the King's life and to respect his family.

"He also promises not to take further military action against Mandalay beyond occupying it with a British force, and stipulates that the matters in dispute between the countries shall be negotiated on such terms as may be dictated by the British Government.

"A reply to this communication must be sent so as to reach General Prendergast by 4 a.m. to-morrow."

By order,
E. B. SLADEN, Colonel,
Chief Civil Officer,
Burma Field Force.

S.S. "Doooon,"
The 26th November, 1885.

36. While the note was being translated, the envoys stated that the Europeans in Mandalay were uninjured. As both notes had to be translated, and copies of the letter in English and Burmese were requisite, the interview lasted about an hour. The "Doooon," which had been leading the column, eased speed, and allowed the fleet to pass on, so that the Burman officials could form some estimate of the British force, and might feel assured that time would not be granted for diplomacy.

37. After the interview, Colonel Sladen, with half-a-dozen sailors of the Royal Navy, boarded a King's war steamer that had been guarded by the "Kathleen" till his arrival. The envoys ordered the crew to surrender her. She flew the Burmese standard, was armed with six guns, her decks were barricaded, and had Burman soldiers on board, and was lying with steam up close to the shore. When the steamers approached most of the soldiers deserted; but 57 of them were made prisoners, and a party of the "Kathleen's" crew took possession of her and brought her up to the fleet. She is in good order and a valuable prize.

38. The fleet anchored seven miles below Ava. Orders were issued for the attack on Ava.

39. On the 27th November the force advanced at daylight, but was delayed for an hour and a half by dense fog. After the landing place