undertake even naval operations till he had secured absolute power at home. The opinion of the judges had given the king the right to levy ship-money, but, unless his Majesty had “the like power declared to raise a land army, the crown” seemed “to stand upon one leg at home, to be considerable but by halves to foreign princes abroad.” The power so gained indeed must be shown to be beneficent by the maintenance of good government, but it ought to exist. A beneficent despotism supported by popular gratitude was now Wentworth’s ideal.

In his own case Wentworth had cause to discover that Charles’s absolutism was marred by human imperfections. Charles gave ear to courtiers far too often, and frequently wanted to do them a good turn by promoting incom­petent persons to Irish offices. To a request from Went­worth to strengthen the position of the deputy by raising him to an earldom he turned a deaf ear. Yet to make Charles more absolute continued to be the dominant note of his policy, and, when the Scottish Puritans rebelled, he advocated the most decided measures of repression, and in February 1639 he offered the king £2000 as his contri­bution to the expenses of the coming war. He was, how­ever, too clear-sighted to do otherwise than deprecate an invasion of Scotland before the English army was trained.

In September 1639, after Charles’s failure in the first Bishops’ War, Wentworth arrived in England to conduct in the star-chamber a case in which the Irish chancellor was being prosecuted for resisting the deputy. From that moment he stepped into the place of Charles’s prin­cipal adviser. Ignorant of the extent to which opposition had developed in England during his absence, he recom­mended the calling of a parliament to support a renewal of the war, hoping that by the offer of a loan from the privy councillors, to which he himself contributed «£20,000, he would place Charles above the necessity of submitting to the new parliament if it should prove restive. In January 1640 he was created earl of Strafford, and in March he went to Ireland to hold a parliament, where the Catholic vote secured a grant of subsidies to be used against the Presbyterian Scots, An Irish army was to be levied to assist in the coming war. When in April Strafford returned to England he found the Commons holding back from a grant of supply, and tried to enlist the peers on the side of resistance. On the other hand, he attempted to induce Charles to be content with a smaller grant than he had originally asked for. The Commons, however, insisted on peace with the Scots, and on May 9, at the privy council, Strafford, though reluctantly, voted for a dissolution.

After this Strafford supported the harshest measures. He urged the king to invade Scotland, and, in meeting the objection that England might resist, he uttered the words which cost him dear, “ You have an army in Ire­land,”—the army which, in the regular course of affairs, was to have been employed to operate in the west of Scotland,—“you may employ here to reduce this king­dom.” He tried to force the citizens of London to lend money. He supported a project for debasing the coinage and for seizing bullion in the Tower, the property of foreign merchants. He also advocated the purchasing a loan from Spain by the offer of a future alliance. He was ultimately appointed to command the English army, but he was seized with illness, and the rout of Newburn made the position hopeless. In the great council at York he showed his hope that if Charles maintained the defen­sive the country would still rally round him, whilst he proposed, in order to secure Ireland, that the Scots of Ulster should be ruthlessly driven from their homes.

When the Long Parliament met it was preparing to impeach Strafford, when tidings reached its leaders that Strafford, now lord-lieutenant of Ireland, had come to

London and had advised the king to take the initiative by accusing his chief opponents of treason. On this the impeachment was hurried on, and the Lords committed Strafford to the Tower. At his trial in Westminster Hall he stood on the ground that each charge against him, even if true, did not amount to treason, whilst Pym urged that, taken as a whole, they showed an intention to change the Government, which in itself was treason. Undoubtedly the project of bringing over the Irish army, probably never seriously entertained, did the prisoner most damage, and when the Lords showed reluctance to condemn him the Commons dropped the impeachment and brought in a bill of attainder. The Lords would probably have refused to pass it if they could have relied on Charles’s assurance to relegate Strafford to private life if the bill were rejected. Charles unwisely took part in projects for effecting Strafford’s, escape and even for raising a military force to accomplish that end. The Lords took alarm and passed the bill. On May 9, 1641, the king, frightened by popular tumults, reluctantly signed a commission for the purpose of giving to it the royal assent, and on the 12th Strafford was exe­cuted on Tower Hill. (S. R. G.)

STRAITS SETTLEMENTS, the collective name given to the British possessions in the Malay Peninsula (see vol. XV. p. 320, and Plate VI.), derived from the straits which separate the peninsula from Sumatra and which form so important a sea-gate between India and China. The Straits Settlements are defined, by letters patent 17th June 1885, as consisting of the island of Singapore (which contains the seat of government), the town and province of Malacca, the territory and islands of the Dindings (off Perak), the island of Penang, and Province Wellesley, with their dependencies actual or prospective. The Cocos or Keeling Islands (*q.v.*), formerly attached to Ceylon, were transferred to the Straits Settlements in 1886. These possessions have formed a crown colony since 1867, previous to which they were administered as a presidency of the Indian empire. The governor, appointed for six years, is assisted by an executive and a legislative council. Resident councillors are stationed at Penang and Malacca, and since 1874 British residents have exercised supervision at the native courts of Perak, Selangor, and Sungei Ujong, and are assisted by a staff of European officials.

The following are the area and population (with details of race divisions) of the settlements :—

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Area in sq. miles. | Population in 1871. | Population in 1881. | | | | |
| Total. | Euro­  peans. | Malays. | Chinese. | Natives of India. |
| Singapore... | 206 | 97,131 | 139,208 | 2,769 | 22,155 | 86,766 | 12,058 |
| Penang | 107 |  | 90,951 | 612 | 21,772 | 45,135 | 15,730 |
| Province |  | 131,889 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wellesley. | 270 |  | 97,324 | 76 | 58,723 | 21,637 | 10,616 |
| Malacca .... | 659 | 77,755 | 93,579 | 40 | 67,513 | 19,741 | 1,891 |
| Dindings.... |  |  | 2,322 |  |  |  |  |

The population, which thus was 306,775 in 1871 and 423,384 in 1881, was estimated at 473,000 in 1884. The increase is solely produced by immigration of Chinese and natives of India; for, while the total number of births registered in Singapore, Penang, Province Wellesley, and Malacca was in the three years 1881-83 only 21,134, the deaths were 37,151.@@1 In 1883 61,206 Chinese landed at Singapore and 48,419 in Penang; and, though the influx of Indian coolies has been retarded by the stringent protective laws of the Indian Government, the stream of immigration has been steadily increasing in volume. The number of Chinese is probably below the truth, as they were very reluctant to fill up the returns. In 1867, the date of the transfer to the crown, the colony had, it was estimated, not more than 283,384 inhabitants.

The revenue, w’hich was in 1868 only about 1,301,843 dollars, had risen by 1886 to 3,710,639, a large proportion being derived

@@@1 The number of hospital cases, and consequently the death-rate, is affected, however, by the fact that natives from the rest of the penin­sula, whose diseases prove beyond native skill, are often brought to the colonial hospitals.