

THURSDAY, 14TH. APRIL, 1836.

It is painful to us to be called upon, in the course of our public duty, to record, almost every week, instances of piracies—the two Journals of this Settlement teem with accounts of atrocities committed in our neighbourhood by sea-robbers, and we have every reason to fear that this our task is not likely to end soon. It seems that the “rousing out” which the boats of the *Wolf* and *Zephyr* gave the fleet of pirates at *Point Romania*, as noticed in our last, has injured and intimidated them so little that they recommenced operations the moment these cruisers returned to harbour, and have ever since been reaping a harvest of booty stained with blood, from defenceless native traders. The result of the late cruise only points out more forcibly the necessity of employing light-armed steamers on expeditions against pirates; as it is well known that these fellows out-sail or out-pull our boats and laugh at the gallant, praiseworthy, but over-laborious and futile attempts of our tars to do them any great injury.

On Monday a Malay named *Hah*, deposed on oath at the Police Office, before a Magistrate, that he is the owner and commander of a prahu belonging to *Bungoran* (an island near *Billiton* we believe) which place he left late last month, in company with another boat belonging to and commanded by his son, named *Mayer*. Fifteen days after leaving *Bungoran*, on

nearing *Tanjong Panjoosoh*, in the morning, they saw two boats coming out from the land and making towards them. The number soon after increased to eleven—two had cloth sails and were tope-rigged. The whole came close, and commenced firing into the *nakhodah*'s and his son's boats. They, however, resisted and continued a running fight for some hours. *Hah* lashed his son's boat to his own, and sent out a sampan with a *lelah* in her, under charge of his nephew *Salcy*. During the action many of the pirates swam off to these boats with the intention of cutting away the rudders—a number of them, however, were killed in the water. About 4 o'clock in the afternoon, the rope parted, and a squall coming on, the son's boat could not join company again, having lost her rudder. The pirates got possession of her and of the sampan—the four men in the sampan were murdered, as also the crew of the captured prahu, in which *Hah* had 2 sons—he had 2 nephews in the sampan.

The topes with cloth sails had large guns and about 100 men each apparently—two others were shaped like pucats, and contained 40 men each, and the other 7 had about 30 men each. These latter chased *Hah*'s boat beyond *Panjocsooh*, but the appearance of two vessels at sea, deterred them from continuing, and *Hah* arrived at Singapore the following day. The cargo of the captured boat consisted of 30 pls. tripang, value £1200 2 coyans of oil, value £800, and 2000 cocoanuts, value £20.

This poor bereaved *nakhodah* was not however, alone in misfortune—another Malay named *Hussain* deposed an oath, at the same time, that he owns and commands a small prahu of one coyan, belonging to *Tringannu*, which place he left on the 2nd or 3rd inst. When off *Panjocsooh* he was chased by 9 boats, but on his standing out to sea, one boat only followed, and continued the chase from 6 to 12 noon. When the boat came close, it fired—and *Hussain* having no firearms, surrendered. The pirates ordered him and his men to leave the boat and they were obliged to go into the water and hold on by the vessel while the pirates swam off and plundered the boat of every thing they could find, even the *cadjan* sails, &c. The cargo consisted of oranges, a part of which was taken. After leaving the boat the pirates wantonly fired shots and wounded two of her crew. Rain and a squall coming on soon after, she got away, and chanced to fall in with *Hah*'s vessel, which towed him in.

It would be well if our recital ended here; but not so—A junk arrived here on the 12th, bringing an account of 2 or 3 Hainan junks being at a river near *Pahang*, (probably *Kemaman*) in charge of Malays, who were selling pigs, rice and salt very cheap—no doubt, all captured property.

We received yesterday morning an account of the exertions which our neighbours at *Rhio* have been making lately in suppressing piracy—and we are certain that we give the authorities at *Rhio* no more praise than what is due to them on this head, when we say that they are unremitting in their endeavours to exterminate pirates in these seas, as far as they can. It is stated that on the 3rd inst. whilst three of the armed boats were cruising in *Rhio* Straits, they fell in with 6 piratical prahus off *Battam Point*, who on the first appearance of the cruisers shewed a disposition to resist, but when they came sufficiently near for guns to tell, the pirates divided into two divisions—one sailing towards *Romania* & the other to the Straits of *Boelan*. The latter was pursued by the armed boats until they escaped among the numerous islands and rocks of *Boelan*—places but too well suited for the retreat of pirates. On the return of the armed boats to *Rhio*, the Resident ordered out the whole armament, 5 boats, to overhaul the newly discovered haunt, where the pirates had gathered themselves in force, defying the armed boats to visit them again. However, on the approach of the latter, they dispersed, and after a diligent search, a junk was discovered in a creek and was taken possession of and towed to *Rhio*. It still contained a great quantity of salt. Official information to this effect has been sent over to the Authorities here, as there may be some persons here who might recognise the vessel.

The armed boats likewise entered the district of *Benkillo*, and seized on some plundered articles sold by the pirates consisting of Chinese hogs, and some logs of ebony—the latter however, are supposed to have belonged to the *Chuliah* brig which was captured lately off *Cape Rachado*.

A Chinese named *Oey Tian*, formerly residing at *Rhio*, to whom great suspicion was attached for being connected with pirates, and who had been tried—is at length, sentenced to banishment to the *Molucca Islands* as being a dangerous and worthless character.

It would be well if our Authorities would act a similar part with the *TUMUNGUNG* here;—who, it is too notorious, is deeply concerned in, and directs most of the piracies committed in the neighbourhood. Even the better disposed part of his own race do not hesitate to acknowledge that he is what we accuse him to be. It is well known that this pensioned robber left his house at *New Harbour* the very night the *Wolf* arrived here, and is ascertained to have been present at *Johore* when the action took place between the boats and pirates! A removal of this wily chief would be striking at the root of the evil, and cause the dismemberment of the inferior agencies of piratical traffic.