THE MASSACRES OFF THE COAST OF BORNEO.

A public meeting was held yesterday evening, at the London Tavern, called by the Aborigines Protection and Peace Societies, to consider the fearful sacrifice of human life on the coast of Borneo in July last; and to petition parliament for the total and immediate abolition of the practice of awarding head-money for the destruction of pirates. Amongst the gentlemen on the platform were Sir J. Walmsley, M.P.; Joseph Sturge, Esq.; James Sturge, Esq.; the Rev. Wm. Bean; L. A. Chamerovzow; Edward Miles; John Mayfield; Alfred Gilks; John Morland; J. H. Parry; C. Gilpin; Rev. R. C. Gribble; Rev. Dr. Cox; George Thompson, Esq., M.P.; S. P. Woolmer; Joseph Barrett; Edward B. Ferry; Rev. J. Turnbull; James Bell; Rev. H. Richard; John Jones; R. S. Bendall; and Wm. Grimshaw, jun., Esq.

JOSEPH STURGE, Esq., on taking the chair, read the following letter from Mr. Cobden:

Manchester, Jan. 29, 1850.

My dear Sturge,—I shall not be back in London in time to attend the meeting upon the Bornean Massacre on Wednesday; but I am glad you are going to make a public protest against the proceedings of our force under the command of Rajah Brooke. I have read with great diligence every paper and report throwing light upon the sanguinary attack upon the Sarebas Dyaks, and have been unable to ascertain the grounds upon which our ships of war were called into use at all on that occasion. Most certain there is no evidence against the 1,500 men who are said to have been put to death which would have convicted one of them of any offence in an English court of justice. It seems to have been a gratuitous and cold-blooded butchery, which stands its author not only with cruelty but cowardice—for there appears to have been not the slightest danger of resistance to the power employed in the massacre. I hope for the honour of our country that the government will be compelled to disavow the conduct of Rajah Brooke, and believe me faithfully yours,

Joseph Sturge, Esq. RICHARD COBDEN.

The cause which they were there met to discuss not only demanded the sympathy of those who, like himself, considered human life to be under all circumstances sacred, but of those professing Christianity, who did not go so far on that point as he did, and of every gentleman present whatever his creed or profession, in whose heart existed a single spark of humanity. (Hear.) They were not met there to discuss the grounds on which they held their eastern possessions either in India or China, otherwise it might be shown that their presence in these countries was marked by oppression and injustice. It must be known to them all that their brief connexion with China had been inaugurated with, if possible, more atrocious conduct than had marked their history in India. (Hear.) They had made, for the sake of a few unprincipled Englishmen, an attack on that country actually to make them pay for the atrocities committed upon them, without a shadow of justice. (Hear.) They were not there to discuss that question, which retarded the progress of peace and love more than anything that had ever occurred. (Hear.) But it was their duty as Englishmen to inquire what their present conduct was in that part of the world, and whether it was right that their ships should be employed in carrying on wholesale murder. (Hear, hear.) It might be said it was for the protection of their commerce. As a commercial man he begged to say a few words on that point. He challenged those who defended these proceedings to produce a single instance in which pirates in China attacked English vessels engaged in legitimate commerce. And here he begged those who heard him to observe, that there was an important distinction between Chinese Malays and Dyaks. (Hear.) He had paid insurances on vessels to the amount of hundreds of thousands of pounds, and he was not aware that he had paid one shilling less on account of English commerce being defended, as was said, by the British navy. If that navy was all scuttled tomorrow, he believed they could insure vessels at Lloyds to any amount without paying one shilling more on that account. (Hear.) They paid 6,000,000*l.* or 7,000,000*l.* for their navy, but he hoped it would not be supposed by any thinking man that the commerce of the country was benefited by it. (Cheers.) He did not think that any one of them would justify the system of blood money which was so atrocious in its nature. But as they might be called upon to pay for what had occurred in China, he would read to the meeting some extracts of a letter which he received from a gentleman in Liverpool who had recently returned from China:

Liverpool, 1 Mo., 27, 1850.

I certainly can confirm the statements in — note, viz., that the trade in opium continues to be a stimulating cause, and one main support to piracy in that quarter. The fact was brought to my notice by a resident of about three years in the north of China, during which time, being engaged in mercantile pursuits, and being in constant correspondence with Hong-Kong and Canton, I had the unsought opportunity of hearing of any acts of piracy that affected British interests, and I have no hesitation in stating that during the time referred to (1845 to 1848) I never knew a British ship to be attacked and plundered by pirates, with the exception of such as were engaged either in sending the drug, in conveying the proceeds of its sale, or, in fact, such as were notoriously in some way or other connected with the traffic.

There could be no doubt that the trade in opium was illegal—as illegal as it would be in France to force brandy upon this country, contrary to the excise laws. (Hear.) He considered that as Englishmen might be called on to pay this blood money, they should look into the whole system. It was only last month that the British public had to pay 11,900*l.* for one case which occurred with the Malays. He believed this was considered to be one of the strongest cases in justification of granting this money which had occurred. He begged it to be understood, that it was not against individuals, but against the system, that he wished to direct his observations. He confessed it appeared to him to be almost incredible that 19*l.* or 20*l.* should be paid for killing persons who were considered pirates. (Hear.) This money was paid under an act which passed in the reign of George IV., when the people of England were more imperfectly represented than they were now. But atrocious as this act was it was clearly never intended to apply except to cases where attacks were made on British vessels and British subjects. But there was no attack in the present instance. There was merely a suspicion of piracy; but the very men who gave evidence of the suspicion of the piracy were the persons who would receive the remuneration. (Hear, hear.) The money which they had paid in respect to the case of the Malays to which he had referred had been distributed in the following manner, as it appeared from the statements of the parties themselves. In the early part of last month it appeared that the officers and crew of her Majesty's ship Samarang, who are entitled to share for services against pirates on the 3rd of June, 1844, are to apply for their shares, respectively, at 39, Charing-cross, on the 29th inst. The amount of these individual shares is stated as follows:—Captain, 1,329*l.* 12*s.* 10*d.*; first class, 319*l.* 3*s.* 2½*d.*; second class 191*l.* 9*s.* 4½*d.*; third class, 95*l.* 14*s.* 8½*d.*; fourth class, 63*l.* 16*s.* 5½*d.*; fifth class, 31*l.* 18*s.* 2½*d.*; sixth class, 21*l.* 5*s.* 5½*d.*; seventh class, 10*l.* 12*s.* 8½*d.* Signed, Ommanney, Son, and Co., agents.—Now, here was a narrative of a transaction that was to be rewarded on the above scale, as extracted from a work entitled "Borneo and the Indian Archipelago, by Frank S. Marryatt, late Midshipman of H.M.S. Samarang, surveying vessel. Longman and Co., 1848."

"Among the latter was a female child, apparently about eight months old, in a state of nudity. The poor little creature's left arm was nearly severed from its body by a grape shot. She was removed into the boat, where the rest of the wounded were placed, with as much care as possible. A low moaning sound escaped from her lips, her eyes were glazed, and she was evidently fast dying; it would have been a mercy to have put an end to her sufferings. The dead were then thrown overboard, and the prahu set on fire. The last prahu, containing the wounded, was left to her fate."

This case came before the Court of Admiralty, when Dr. Addams applied to the court to award the bounties specified in the 6th Geo. IV., c. 49, for the capture and destruction of piratical ships and vessels. He submitted that the affidavits produced clearly showed the character of the persons on board the prahus, and that not less than 1,330 persons were alive on board the several prahus at the beginning of the attack, 350 of whom were killed.—The Queen's Advocate, on behalf of the crown, admitted that a very meritorious service had been performed, and made no opposition to the application.—The Court pronounced for the usual bounties on the number of pirates stated.

In reading these extracts he was struck with a thrill of horror, and could scarcely believe these scenes possible. Inquiry at least should take place, to know if the money of Englishmen went to pay for the murder of this child of 8 months old, and whether the sum was 5*l.* for taking, or 20*l.* for killing it; and he should like to know, at least, how the estimate was made up. They could not do anything with respect to this money, for it had been paid; but Rajah Brooke had sent for 20,000*l.* more, which had not been paid; but he hoped it would not be paid without a protest on the part of this country. (Hear.) He could not but believe, if the facts were known, that these things would be put down by the indignant representatives of the people of England. He would not enter further into the question, as he would be followed by others who were more able to do justice to it than he was, but he would make this remark, that though they had engaged in wars under the feudal system—though they had slain, and waged wars with many of the nations of Europe, which, though very much to be lamented and, as he thought, inconsistent with Christianity—(hear, hear)—yet these wars were for life, liberty, and country—(hear, hear)—and between parties pretty equally matched. He was not, therefore, surprised that men of noble minds sometimes engaged in them. But there was something inexpressibly mean in attacking, for the sake of blood money to be paid by the people of this country, savages who were unable to defend themselves: and, as those who did so ran no personal risk, he could not help looking upon these attacks as the most degrading that Britons could be guilty of. (Hear, hear.) But let them recollect that it was British money tempted them to do these things; and that they would not be guiltless as Englishmen if they did not raise their voices against these things till the stain was removed from the country. (Hear, hear.) He did not speak this in anger but in sorrow. He loved his country, and wished to see it morally great, and a landmark to the world; but when he saw acts like these committed, at which humanity shuddered, he was, like Cowper, almost ashamed to think himself a man. (Hear.) He believed that nothing more atrocious had ever taken place than this attack since that of the Spaniards upon the Mexicans. (Hear, hear.) He trusted it would not pass without reprobation by the British public, and that an inquiry would be demanded into it by the House of Commons. (Loud cheers.)

Mr. AARON SMITH, a gentleman in the body of the meeting, asked if the meeting was called to condemn Rajah Brooke and those brave men who protected British commerce in those distant seas. (Laughter.) The Chairman said that no British vessel was attacked by pirates. He was ready to produce an instance to the contrary. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. GILPIN rose to order, and said that as the resolution was not proposed and seconded he could not address the meeting at that stage, but he would have an opportunity of doing so if he came on the platform when the resolution was before the meeting. (Hear, hear.)

Mr. RICHARDS then came forward to lay before the meeting a distinct and full statement of the facts and circumstances of the case, in order that they might be able to pronounce a fair judgment upon it. (Hear.) He would tell the gentleman who had just spoken that he meant to impugn the conduct of Sir James Brooke. (Hear, hear.) In doing so he would employ no questionable evidence. Unhappily they had no evidence save such as had been coloured directly or indirectly by the influence of Sir James Brooke himself. Had they the representations of the wretched victims, the case would no doubt wear a very different aspect. The evidence in their possession was that which was to be gathered either from the journals, letters, and speeches of Rajah Brooke, or from the papers which were considered his organs in the Eastern Archipelago, or from documents sent home by persons who were present at the expedition, and who were intense and unscrupulous admirers of Sir James. It was necessary that he should give a rapid sketch of the past course of that gentleman in the Eastern Archipelago. It seemed that Sir James was originally a subaltern in the service of the East India Company. Having returned home from India, in the year 1838 he bought and fitted out an armed yacht—the Royalist—and, with a cargo obtained from a commercial house in the city, sailed for the Eastern Archipelago. It was but fair to give Sir James Brooke's own statement of the feelings by which he was actuated. At the beginning of his journal he said, "I can pass over in silence my motives for undertaking so long and arduous a voyage; and it will be sufficient to say, that I have been firmly impressed with its beneficial tendency in adding to knowledge, increasing trade, and spreading christianity." It would soon be seen that Sir James Brooke's notion of the best way of spreading christianity among heathens was very peculiar. (Hear, hear.) Well, Sir James sailed for Borneo, in the first instance, at the town of Sarawak, which was on the north-west coast of the island. On his arrival he found the rajah, or governor, of that province engaged in putting down a revolt among his own subjects in the interior. Sir J. Brooke, thinking it his duty to interfere in this domestic quarrel, immediately placed the men and the guns of the Royalist at the disposal of this rajah, whose name was Muda Hassim. It was sometimes found convenient to represent the Bornean dyaks as ferocious and blood-thirsty. In Sir James Brooke's own account this war appeared very ridiculous; all the service which Mr. Brooke rendered was to break down a stockade of bamboo cane and mud, after which, he said, he and his allies won a complete and bloodless victory. And what had Sir James Brooke the modesty to claim as his reward? Why nothing less than the cession of the entire province and government of Sarawak to him and his successors. He said that in the midst of the war Muda Hassim promised that if he would fight with him against his subjects he should have the country. Whether the promise were made or not he (Mr. Richards) did not know; but it he did, he very naturally wished, after the war was over, to avoid fulfilling the promise. But Sir James Brooke was not a man to be trifled with. (Hear.)

After trying in vain for some time to secure his object by negotiation and threats, "the moment for action at length arrived." But he shall tell the remainder of the story himself: "My conscience told me that I was bound no longer to submit to such injustice, and I was resolved to test the strength of our respective parties. Repairing on board the yacht I mustered my people, explained my intentions and mode of operation, and having loaded the vessel's guns with grape and canister, and brought her broadside to bear, I proceeded on shore, with a party of 25 armed men, leaving the remainder to defend the entrance of the rajah's palace, demanded and obtained an immediate audience. In a few words I pointed out the villany of Makota, his treachery and ingratitude to myself and my determination to attack him by force, and drive him from the country unless, restored to the rajah, that several chiefs, and a large body of Sirriawan Dyaks were ready to assist me, and that the only course to prevent bloodshed was immediately to proclaim me governor of the country. This unmistakable demonstration had the desired effect. I ordered the guns of the Royalist, and with a small body of men to protect me personally, and the great majority of all classes with me, it is not surprising that the negotiation was concluded rapidly to a favourable issue. The document was quickly drawn up, sealed, and delivered; and on the 24th of September, 1841, I was declared rajah and governor of Sarawak, amidst the roar of cannon, and a general display of flags and banners from the shore and boats on the river."

Having in this summary manner taken possession of the country, Sir J. Brooke looked around him, and found that there were certain tribes which were not subjected to the Rajah of Sarawak, but who had long been, and then were, engaged in sanguinary and hereditary warfare with the inhabitants of the province. Among these were the Sakarran and Sarebas Dyaks. In the very first incursion which he made into the province of Sarawak, Sir James observed hanging up in the houses skulls which had been taken by the inhabitants from their enemies the Sarebas. Yet Sir James thought proper to brand these hostile tribes with the character of pirates. About a year or two after Sir James took possession of his province, it happened that Captain Keppel, with her Majesty's ship Dido, was wandering about those seas, having, as was often the case with her Majesty's ships, nothing particular to do, and looking out for a pirate. (Cheers and laughter.) Instantly Sir J. Brooke pounced upon him and proved him into his service. Something like a menace had been put in a government paper; they had there been warned against employing a reproach against the gallant men who were engaged in the naval service of their country. He hoped they would not dare to cast an unjust reproach on the character of any man, whether gallant or ungallant, not because of anything which might appear in the *Globe*, but from a sense of justice in their own bosoms (hear); but if they had a just ground for impugning the conduct of naval officers why should they not dare to impugn it? (Cheers.) Were not those gallant men their servants? ("Hear," and cheers.) Did they not wear their livery? Did they not condescend to receive their pay, coming from the labour of their hands and the sweat of their brow? (Cheers.) If they found these men employing the authority with which they were entrusted by the British people to perpetuate deeds of oppression, and in acting in such a manner as to dim the lustre of the British name, they had a right to protest against such an abuse of delegated power. (Cheers.) Well, Captain Keppel placed himself at the disposal of Rajah Brooke. Expeditions were immediately planned against the various hostile tribes, and in the diary of Sir James, it was said:

"That evening the country was illuminated for miles, by the burning of the capital, Paddi, and adjacent villages; at which work and plundering our native followers were most expert."—(Vol. ii. p. 85.) "The same work of destruction was continued on at Pakou; but the town was larger than at Paddi, and, night setting in, the conflagration had a grand effect."—(P. 85.) "At Rembas, after we had destroyed everything, we received a flag of trince. On our return to the still smoking ruins of the once picturesque town of Paddi, we found that Seriff Jaffer, with his 800 warriors (Mr. Brooke's allies) had not been lazy. The country round had been laid waste. All had been desolated, together with their extensive white stores of rice. It was a melancholy sight; and, for a moment, I forgot the horrid acts of piracy and cruel murders of these people, and my heart relented at what I had done—it was but for a few minutes."—(P. 64.)

Very little evidence let Capt. Keppel to the conclusion that these parties were pirates. Having seen certain boats around Borneo, he immediately concluded that they were pirates, and, without any indication of hostility on their part, or any warning, he opened a deadly discharge upon them. On one occasion, Captain Keppel gave a command to fire a six-pounder at a fleet of Dyaks which were coming up the river; and had not a delay occurred, in consequence of the powder having been blown out, persons who were discovered to be allies of the Rajah would have been sent to their long hesper. (Hear, hear.) Having with the help of her Majesty's vessels destroyed villages and rice fields, and other possessions of the Dyaks, he thought he ought to take the whole island of Borneo under his care. Accordingly, he went to the Sultan of Borneo, the highest authority in the island, and obtained from him a ratification of the grant of his province. And how did he testify his gratitude for that ratification? Why, by setting on foot at the court of the Sultan intrigues for the purpose of deposing him, and raising his own creature Muda Hassim to his place, no doubt with the intention of inducing the latter afterwards to cede to him the whole island. He said,—

"I have long known this man (the Sultan of Borneo) to be unfit to reign; but his time draws to a close, and, from the first, I have never lost sight of the advisability of deposing him, and substituting Muda Hassim in his place. The time, however, is not yet ripe. Brune requires repose, and there are or may be prejudices in England. However, some day, if events follow their present course, he will cease to be sultan."

What right had this forejuster to play in Borneo the part of Warwick the king-maker? (Hear, hear.) The Sultan acted as any crowned head in Europe would have acted in a similar case. Having discovered the conspiracy, he seized Muda Hassim and put him and the other conspirators to death. Sir James Brooke was thrown into transports of indignation, "and said he must avenge the innocent blood. He induced Sir Edward Belcher to go up the river with this intention, and, after picking a quarrel with the sultan, bestowed upon his capital, once, pelloo! him to retire to the jungle, and followed him there, plundering and slaying on his way. Having performed this exploit, he thought of returning to England. A very elaborate system of preparatory pamphlets was instituted. He was represented as a distinguished philanthropist, who was actuated by very disinterested and benevolent motives. He could not modestly publish his own journal; but the Hon. Captain Keppel came to the rescue, and the result was, that Sir James had appeared before the public as a second John Howard. (Laughter.) He returned to England in 1845. The University of Oxford made him a doctor of laws; the Corporation of London presented to him the freedom of the city in a gold box; royalty flattered him, the ministry caressed him, the bishops blessed him. (Laughter.) And then it became a question what should be done to reward this distinguished philanthropist. An attempt had been made by Mr. Brooke some years before to induce the British government to take the province of Sarawak under its protection, but Lord Stanley, who was then at the head of the Colonial Office, declined, and in his opinion wisely, to grant the request. But there was a little barren island called Labuan, and a liberal ministry—for it was liberal in disposing of the people's money—(hear, hear)—set up an establishment on that rock at an expence of 10,000*l.* a-year, at the head of which was Sir James Brooke with a salary of 2,000*l.* a-year. In addition to this he was consul to the Sultan of Borneo, and there was made over to him a monopoly of the trade in antimony ore, besides being governor of Sarawak. Labuan was 300 miles from Sarawak; and how did Sir James perform his conflicting duties? Having pocketed his salary of 2,000*l.* within a month after his arrival he commenced his old work of destroying the Dyaks. It was found convenient, when the conduct of Rajah Brooke was called in question, to represent these Dyaks as desperate and blood-thirsty fellows. But on a former occasion Sir James said of them that they were not as warlike as the other tribes of Dyaks, and that from their dread of fire arms a few boats and six-pounders would be sufficient to put whole fleets to flight. (Hear, hear.) An attempt had been made to mystify the public mind by confusing these Bornean Dyaks with the pirates of the Chinese seas, although he had no doubt that under the abominable system of head money, they would soon have atrocities enough in those seas—(hear, hear)—but an attempt had been made to confuse them, while really there was a complete and broad distinction. The means of warfare possessed by these Dyaks consisted of prahus construted of rattan reeds, woollen spears, and wicker shields, while Rajah Brooke said that when they got fire-arms they fired them once and then threw them away. (Hear, hear.) Against such people as these Rajah Brooke fitted out an expedition in April, which destroyed eight Sarabas villages, and 40 tons of paddy, the principal food of the people. (Shame.) Then came the expedition of July, consisting of H.M.'s ship, Albatross, of 12 guns; Royalist, 10 guns; Nemesis, a large war steamer; besides several gun boats. There was also a large fleet of prahus, belonging to Sir J. Brooke's barbarian allies. They watched their opportunity when every male of the attacked villages were absent, on what was alleged to have been a piratical expedition, although there was no proof of the fact. They watched their opportunity, and, forasmuch as these people resided principally on the banks of the rivers, the squadron stationed themselves at the mouths of those rivers, and watched for a day and a night, until they received the signal of destruction. Instantly the rajah gave the signal for an indiscriminate attack. He would read the description of this attack, given by a person who was present, and who was, by the way, a warm friend of the rajah:

Trying as it was to the patience of all parties, we remained in position until the 31st, during which interval every precaution human foresight could suggest was adopted to ensure success. About half past twelve, an unusual commotion in a rather of what so board the Nemesis, and had almost abandoned all hope of surprising the enemy, when a spy boat returned at best speed, with the long and anxiously-looked-for intelligence that the piratical fleet had rounded Tanjong Sirl, and was coming up in close order towards our position. As yet it was, of course, uncertain for which river they would make. This question was, however, soon set at rest, and a brisk fire of rockets from the outvessel, and of small musquetoons from the remainder of the Rajah's force stationed at the entrance of the Sarebas announced that the enemy had attempted to force that river, and had met with a warmer reception than they had anticipated. A rocket was also fired by the rajah, and the pinnace and launch of the signal Captain Farquhar moved round Banting Marron with the European crews, under the immediate command to support the rajah if necessary, and also with a view to enclosing the enemy between two fires, leaving, however, a strong native force at the mouth of the Sarebas to intercept the pirates in case of their passing the European boats and attempting to regain their native river. Finding themselves foiled at the Kaluka, the enemy, gallantly followed by the two cutters, and the rajah's light skirmishing boats, which kept up a constant fire, broke through them and succeeded in running for the Batang Lupar. Here, however, no doubt, much to their surprise, they encountered Captain Farquhar's boats, and being saluted with round shot and rockets they divided their force. They yet, however, preserved admirable order. Some attempt to land on the Kalakar (all most judiciously guarded by the rajah), renewed their attempt to enter, but with the like bad success; others, passing in shoal water inside Captain Farquhar, made for the Sarebas; and the remainder, having greater speed than his boats, broke through and joined their present in escaping to sea.

The Nemesis had hitherto remained at the mouth of the Sarebas in position, but ready to move at a moment's notice to any point where her services might be required. She now acted her part, and that right nobly. Perceiving the attack upon Captain Farquhar's boats, that the enemy had attempted to put to sea, Commander Wolfe gave chase, and fell in with 17 prahus which had succeeded in escaping from Captain Farquhar, and were making in beautiful line for the Batang Lupar. Opening a fire, he soon assured them with grape and canister from our 32-pounders, raking the entire line, which we then broke, driving many of them on shore badly crippled, where they fell an easy prey to the rajah's boats, which, headed by Mr. Steel, of Sarawak, in the Snake, followed the Nemesis, and, as she never interfered with her fire. We then pursued five others, and destroyed them in detail, passing round each and pouring in a constant fire of grape and canister, continuing the chase for 40 miles, until they drifted past us helpless log, without a living being on board.

That discharge of grape was a fearful sight as, at point-blank range, it crushed over the sea and through the devoted prahus, marking its track with the dead and dying, shattered prahus, planks, shields, and fragments of all sorts. I should have pitied them, if they were pirates, and the thought stooled my heart. At this period the fight was wonderfully in the extreme: fighting was going on in all directions: wherever the eye was turned it met the brilliant double flash of the great gun, the bright quick flame of musketry, the rolling smoke of the rocket, or the dazzling blaze of the blue light; while the ear was saluted with the boom of cannon, the roar of musketry, the wild tone of the combatants, the shouts of the victors, the groan of the still-more fearful warwhoop of the Dyak, telling a tale of destruction and death. The pirates now, finding themselves surrounded, lost all presence of mind—order was no longer preserved—the flotilla scattered and fled in every direction, the crews jumping overboard and swimming for the shore, or running the prahus aground, and taking refuge in the jungle.

About twelve o'clock on the night the fight might be considered as over, although isolated fire continued until midnight. The entire force under Captain Farquhar's command may be estimated at 3,000 men. From information subsequently obtained, that of the enemy cannot be taken lower than 60 prahus and 6,000 men. The loss of the enemy in the action was 90 prahus and 800 lost less than 50 men; whilst we lost but two men killed and six wounded. In addition, however, to the loss in action, the enemy suffered most severely, being followed in the jungle by the Dyaks, who, like bloodhounds, tracked and hunted them down, cutting their heads off, and bringing them in as a proof of victory; and even of those who escaped a violent death at least one-third must have perished between the wounds of their homes, being altogether destitute of food. The total loss of the enemy may, therefore, be estimated at 1,500 men; they have also lost an immense quantity of brass guns, muskets, gongs, and arms of all sorts, with which they were well provided. In their flight they threw overboard to lighten their prahus and increase their speed and prevent them from sinking, or abandoned on taking to the jungle. More than a mile of the beach in front of our position was strewed with wrecks and abandoned prahus, which were either burnt or brought as a prize.

But a more graphic touch than this appeared in the *Singapore Times*, by which it appeared that when the prahus had been of course scattered by the fleet, the Nemesis, a great war steam ship, was ordered to sail up and down among them in order that with her strong paddle-wheels she might dash out the backs of the unfortunate wretches who were swimming in the opening waters. (Hear, hear," and general expressions of horror.) Even that was not sufficient. Their hereditary foes, the Sarawak Dyaks, were let loose among them, pursuing them into the jungle. What was the result? Mr. Vigers, a member of the expedition, sent the following account to the *Illustrated London News*:

During the absence of the boats, numbers of the pirates who had escaped in the action, but were not aware of our still occupying the river, were cut off by the Dyak boats in attempting to ascend the Sarebas, and I then had an opportunity of witnessing the operation of preserving the heads. The Dyaks, having killed their enemy, immediately cut his head off, with a fiendish yell; they then scoop out the brains, and suspend the head from a rod of bamboo, as represented in the sketch. They then light a slow fire underneath, and smoke ascends through the rock, and penetrates the head, thoroughly drying the interior. It is then placed in a basket of very open work, and carried suspended from the belt of the captor, more highly prized than ornaments of gold or precious stones. On one occasion I saw five heads on a Dyak boat, undergoing the operation, and within two feet of it the Dyaks were cooly cooking some wild boar chops for their dinner, and inhaling the mingled perfume of baked human and hog's flesh!

Would Nelson, or Duncan, or Jervis, have allowed such atrocities to be committed by fleets under their command? (Hear, hear.) Would they have allowed their officers to be present and to assist at these banquets of cooked human heads? (Hear, hear.) All present would agree, no matter what might be their opinion, as to the abstract right of putting down piracy that this indiscriminate slaughter of 1,500 human beings was consistent with no laws human or divine. (Hear, hear.) Well, then, what were the evidences of piracy upon which these massacres were committed? He had examined all the documents which could throw any light on the subject, and he found it to be as follows:—First, a report came to Rajah Brooke to the effect that the Sarebas contemplated a piratical expedition. Mind this was merely a report, and brought to the Rajah by the hereditary foe and enemies of the Dyaks. There was another report that they had threatened the inhabitants of a certain town with destruction if they did not furnish them with salt. There was another report, mentioned by Mr. Vigers, that the Sarebas Dyaks had sent a message to the Rajah that he was an old woman, and was afraid to attack them. Now, this was the whole body of evidence on the strength of which this tremendous massacre was committed. (Hear.) There was a person who had written an account of the transaction for a Singapore paper, and he expressed a very strong doubt as to whether the persons destroyed were pirates at all or not. (Hear, hear.) Rajah Brooke had an opportunity of defending himself for his share in this massacre at a dinner given to him on board of her Majesty's ship Albatross to commemorate the exploit. Why not? Captain Farquhar and his crew were to pocket 20,000*l.* head money for their share in the slaughter. (Hear, hear.) The Rajah's health was proposed, and in reply he put himself on his defence by reading reports which had appeared in the Singapore papers. He said, "The whole question must rest on the fact of whether these people were pirates or not;" and then added, "After the recent defeat at sea of a fleet of 120 war pirates, manned by a least 3,500 men, this point might be considered as set at rest." Here was reasoning in a circle with a vengeance. The Rajah first attacks people because he suspected they were pirates, and having destroyed them adduces their destruction as proof of piracy. (Hear, hear.) Then the Rajah took credit to himself for humanity and good feeling, and appealed to the persons present—(hear, hear.)—whether he was likely to save projected a massacre. Of course his fellow executioners agreed to everything he said. (Hear, hear.) But he (Mr. Richards) did not mean to allow any stain to fall off on his high character, or on bombastic appeals to his honour, when charged with the slaughter of 1,500 of his fellow creatures. (Cheers.) But he would go further and say that even if these men were pirates there was no law, human or divine, which could justify such an indiscriminate and unsparing slaughter. (Hear, hear.) According to the act of parliament 29 persons were tried and convicted for piracy, and of that number 19 were acquitted, and executions they were convicted in fair trial. It was far more these poor fellows from being taken in the fact, they took the life of no person, they made no attempt at resistance, they fled and were slaughtered in cold blood, without even the excuse of the excitement of combat. But the rajah need not have gone to the act of parliament, he might have found an exposition of our maritime law in the general orders of Admiral Cochrane to the squadron on the Chinese station. It was there ordered that no Chinese should be treated as a pirate unless he should attack British subjects, or there should be good proof of his having attacked a British ship or subject. (Hear, hear.) He said, then, that the rajah had committed an illegal as well as an immoral act, and had violated the law of God, which said, "Thou shalt do no murder." (Hear, hear.) It might be asked, what were they to do with these pirates? He believed that better means of reclaiming them might be found than those which had been adopted in the expedition under discussion. (Hear, hear.) But Sir James Brooke had no faith in peaceful means. He said:

"What do they expect? Do they really imagine that piracy is to be suppressed by argument or preaching? Do they propose to appeal to the tender feelings of these head-takers? Is it by mild morality, moral maxims, 'Hervey's Meditations,' mesmeric influence, &c.? And in the same coarse strain of mingled insolence and profanity, a writer in the *Singapore Free Press*, in an elaborate paper, vindicating the last bloody exploit of Sir James, says: "I suppose the gentlemen who can, with the flourish of a pen, or the wagging of a tongue, transfer guilt into innocence, black into white, or a wolf into a lamb, have their patent means of reclaiming piratical communities. I wish they would try on a family or a juvenile, or a gin-palace, or a grocer's-shop, or distribute tracts or babyclinic, or both."

He was not, however, to be deterred by the sneers of Rajah Brooke, though supported as he was by a large part of the press of this country, from saying that the profession of Christianity had by these acts been violated. (Hear, hear.) Christianity had been successful in putting down piracy and in humanizing the savage tribes in all parts of the world; and he would answer Sir J. Brooke's taunt by saying that he had more faith in preaching, and in homilies, and baby linen, than in murder, as a remedy for piracy. (Loud cheers.) He regretted to find that some of the members of the Church Missionary Society supported Sir J. Brooke in these atrocities; to these rev. gentlemen—to those bishops, clergymen, and others, who met and applauded Sir J. Brooke at Hanover-square Rooms, he would say, that if their object had been to spread Christianity in those distant regions, it must not be by canister and grape. (Cheers.) In conclusion, he would call on Christian England to lift up her voice against these abominations. (Hear, hear.) We had already blood enough on our hands, in comparison with our Indian empire, and which must ever remain a blot on our escutcheon. But he believed it would be impossible again for such a scene to be perpetrated with impunity—he believed the people of England now, so far from being cowed by the menaces to which he had alluded, would dare to examine, on all occasions, into the conduct of the commanders of her Majesty's vessels employed in distant seas. It was the peculiar character of Englishmen to prefer the weak against the strong—to see fair play, and he now appealed to the generous nature of his countrymen, as they valued their own freedom, and were ever ready to repel any attempt on the part of the strong and powerful to trample on the weak, to aid in carrying out that wish expressed by the poet Cowper, that

Where England's power is felt
Mankind may feel her mercy too.

The Rev. R. C. GRIBBLE, a minister of the established church, proposed the first resolution, viz.:

"That the recent slaughter of 1,500 of 2,000 Dyaks off the coast of Borneo, by English seamen, acting under the direction of Sir James Brooke, on a vague and general intimation of piracy, is a gross outrage on all the rights of justice and humanity, and calls upon this country to declare deep dishonour upon our national character as a civilized and Christian people; and that a thorough and searching inquiry should be immediately instituted by parliament into all the circumstances of this transaction, as well as the general line of policy pursued by Sir James Brooke in his treatment of the aboriginal tribes of Borneo."

He means forward to move this resolution, because as a man he felt that the right of trial before punishment, which was due to the whole human race, had been violated in this case; and moreover as a sailor, who in his earlier days had served in those seas as an officer in the navy. He was aware of the evils of piracy in those localities, and of course did not for a moment excuse it; but what he contended was, that the means now employed to put it down would render the sailor's profession in those seas more dangerous than it ever had yet been. The way to put down piracy amongst these tribes was by establishing friendly and commercial relations with them. It was not his intention to pass an entirely sweeping censure on Sir J. Brooke. (Hear, hear.) In the internal management of the country under his government he believed there was much to be admired and much to be commended. He had put an end to the numerous barbarous punishments and tortures, and he had established trade on a secure footing; nor did he intend to pass an entirely sweeping censure on the naval officers engaged in the expedition, for throughout these transactions he could discover much moderation on their part. (Hear, hear.) Neither did he want to commit himself or the meeting to the extreme doctrines put forward by the Peace Society, though for his own part he must say he looked upon it as the duty of all men to subscribe to the principle of peace—(hear, hear)—but what he wished to say was to combat the false maxim that men were to be regarded as pirates because they were charged with being pirates, and that, being so regarded, they should be destroyed. He maintained there was a certain course of justice to be observed—a dealing with pirates. (Hear, hear.) Supposing these men had been the most vile and most malignant pirates in existence, still our course in regard to them had been illegal and most cruel. (Hear, hear.) He admitted that to a certain extent the piratical propensities of the Sakarrans and the Dyaks, but he believed these people who were thus massacred were not at the time engaged in a piratical expedition. (Hear, hear.) Sir J. Brooke, and those who supported him, took for their first premises that all pirates should be exterminated, without any law or trial, and their next position was that these Sakarrans were pirates, and therefore to be exterminated. He was at issue with them on this first point, and contended that, though piracy ought to be put down, it was not to be put down without law or mercy. (Hear, hear.) But was extermination the only means of abolishing piracy in those seas? The *Times*, as a wind up to some remarks on other day, suggested:

Perhaps at the next meeting of the Peace Society some person will favour the world with a definition of what, in these days, is still to be considered piracy, and we shall be happy to apply the rules to the case before us. There are upwards of 1,000 men selling from place to place with a fleet of 64 ships mounting 320 guns, levying contributions wherever they found means, burning all towns which resisted them, massacring men, and carrying women into slavery. Their crews are those of a regular built, armed, and appointed for fighting only, nor was there anything on board resembling a merchant vessel, the plunder just carried off from Lim-Chou-foo, and some goods which were identified as part of the cargoes of the unfortunate Sylph and Cleopatra, leaving no room to doubt that they are to be described, if not as pirates! and, if as pirates, is not an agitation for the protection of the native fishermen about as reasonable as an appeal to the Society for Preventing Cruelty to Animals in behalf of the new ravenous wolves in the Pyrenees?

There was much of piquancy in this paragraph, in which, however, they had mixed up the more recent case of the slaughter of the Chinese pirates with that of the slaughter of those of Sakarrans. But if it were lawful and Christian-like to call these men wolves, he thought, looking at the conduct of Sir J. Brooke and his associates towards them, they must be regarded as all wolves together. (Hear, hear.) But he denied that they were justified in treating men as wolves, and setting a price on their heads. (Hear, hear.) Alfred, having failed to put a stop to the piracies of the Danes by negotiation, punished the pirates, but he tried them before he punished them. With Sir J. Brooke, on the contrary, execution came first, and evidence afterwards. (Hear.) He held that these massacres were unjust, cruel, and impolitic. The injustice had been shown by Mr. Richards, and also that the act was not justified by the instructions given to the naval officers; but Mr. Richards had not alluded to a treaty which had been entered into between the Queen of England and the Sultan of Borneo, and which was given in the *Colonial Intelligencer*. By that treaty the Sultan engaged with her Britannic Majesty to use all the means in his power to suppress piracy, and not to grant protection or asylum in the ports or rivers of his territory to piratical vessels, nor to permit ships or merchandise captured by pirates to be brought into or exposed for sale in his dominions, and at the same time empowered British vessels of war to pursue and search for pirates in the rivers and ports of that country—not, however, to destroy villages and paddy fields—(hear, hear)—but to seize and reserve for judgment by the proper authorities—not execute without judgment. (Cheers.) Here was the proper course clearly marked out. But what, in all probability, would be the result of the course which had been taken? Was it likely permanently to put an end to the practice of piracy in that part of the world? Quite the contrary. The meeting had probably heard, and he knew from past experience, that the Malay and the Dyak were revengeful to a proverb. If we enter, then, upon a system of retaliation, where was it to stop? And when were our hopes of seeing Christianity recognised in the world if Christian England was thus to go on planting the seeds of implacable vindictiveness in succeeding generations? (Cheers.) Those gentlemen of Singapore who had complimented Sir J. Brooke should remember that though they might destroy the pirates for a time, others would follow, and the Malay, in implacable revenge, would give him the advantage. The only alternative in that case was extermination. Now, was that possible, even if it were politic? Was it possible for Europeans to penetrate the forests and marshes of such a country, for such a purpose? To put an end to the practice of piracy, by exterminating the first place. In Mr. Lowe's book, it was shown that there were the elements of negotiation—there was a deliberative council; there were minds open to English influence—an influence which prevailed while an English representative was present; and that there were two parties, a war party and a peace party. Was there no hope from negotiation, then? And even in the recent slaughter of Chinese pirates, there was evidence that, had the commander of the expedition delayed but a short time, he would have found that his object was in progress of being accompl