

IMPERIAL PARLIAMENT.

HEAD MONEY FOR PIRATES.

On the second reading of the Pirates (Head-money) Repeal Bill.

Sir G. CLERK [*Dover*, 2 m.; p. 17,795; c. 2,060] thought it unfair to persons exposed to this dangerous service to deprive them of a reward so long allotted to the navy.

Sir F. BARING [*Portsmouth*, 2 m.; p. 49,214; c. 2,189] said, the existing system of head-money was open to grave objections, and rendered the navy liable to imputations highly derogatory to the service. The course adopted by the Government, in altering the system, was, not to deprive the persons performing such a service of a fair and proper reward, but to place a discretion in the hands of the Admiralty, instead of the reward being compulsory.

After some observations from Mr. HUME and Sir F. BARING,

Mr. COBDEN [*Yorkshire, W. R.*, 2 m.; p. 1,154,924; c. 36,984] took occasion to advert to the "Bornean massacre," as he designated it, and observed that there was no evidence to show that the parties so "murdered" had ever molested an English ship or an English subject. It was not a question of Chinese, or Malay, or Sooloo pirates; they were two small tribes who were engaged in carrying on predatory expeditions against each other, and it was too bad that we should commit a wholesale slaughter of such men. To add to the atrocity, it did not appear that a single man was killed on board the English ships. For the honour of the country this matter should be thoroughly sifted.

Sir H. VERNEY [*Bedford*, 2 m.; p. 8,578; c. 1,071] said, if this or any other country desired to carry on commercial transactions between Australia and China, the extermination of the pirates in those seas was absolutely necessary.

Colonel THOMPSON observed that what was wanted was evidence to show that the Dyaks were pirates. The public entertained a fear and jealousy lest a temptation should be held out to our navy to go about the world, kill parties under the name of pirates, and charge them in the bill.

The bill was read a second time.