

THE ALLEGED MURDERS ON THE HIGH
SEAS.

Yesterday being appointed for the reading over and translating the voluminous depositions taken before Mr. Yardley in this complicated and difficult case, all the accused parties were formally arraigned at the Thames Police-court. Ahalt and Ali, two Malays, charged with assaulting and wounding Mr. W. Burford Treatt, the chief mate of the Queen of the Teign, with intent to murder him; and Captain William Stapley Stooke, the master of the Queen of the Teign, William Northcote, and Thomas Goldsworthy, English seamen, with manslaughter, in killing and slaying five Lascars during the disturbance on board, on the 22d of July last.

Mr. Jarman, of the Treasury Solicitor's-office, attended on the part of the Crown; Mr. Humphreys, solicitor, for the European prisoners; Mr. Dennison again acted as interpreter in the Malay language; and Seaman, an ex-police constable of the H division, officiated as interpreter in the Hindostanee language.

Mr. Yardley said on the first day the case was brought before him he did not rightly know what the accused parties were charged with, and he took evidence against the whole. It was, however, soon ascertained that there was a distinct charge against the Malays, and that there was not a joint charge against all the prisoners. He proposed that all the parties should stand up in the dock together.

Mr. Humphreys: Yes, sir; the depositions taken the first day apply to all five persons.

Mr. Jarman thought the parties had better stand up together.

All the accused parties having taken their places in the dock,

Mr. Pyer commenced reading over the depositions up to a certain point, when the European prisoners were directed to stand down, and the case against the Malays, Ahalt and Ali, for cutting and wounding Mr. Treatt, with intent to murder him, was proceeded with. The evidence was very skilfully and fluently interpreted in the Malay language by Mr. Dennison, and made out a strong case against the Lascars of having attacked the chief mate and the Europeans on deck in the night time; that no provocation whatever was given for the mutiny, and that the captain and Europeans acted only on the defensive, after the chief mate was cut down upon the deck, and had received fourteen wounds from the daggers and knives of the Malays.

The reading of the depositions against the Malays having been completed, Mr. Yardley requested Mr. Dennison to inform the prisoners that the evidence they had heard was that on which he should commit them for trial, and that they might put any questions to the witnesses, or say anything they thought proper in their defence, with this caution—that what they did say would be taken down in writing, and might be used against them on their trial.

Ahalt, in his defence, said that it was very true what had been read to him, meaning that the depositions had been faithfully rendered in his language by Mr. Dennison, but he knew nothing at all about it. He slept, and could not know anything. It might be true, but how could he know it if he slept? He said he had nothing to say at all.

Mr. Yardley committed Ahalt and Ali to Newgate for trial, and bound over the witnesses to prosecute and give evidence in the usual manner.

The Europeans were then arraigned on the charge of manslaughter, and the Malays gave a different version of the matter, and said the affray commenced in consequence of the chief-mate beating one of the Lascars on deck, and that some of the people were killed after the "bobby" was over. Their statements varied considerably, and it seemed there had been some conversation among the Lascars about murdering the captain and mate, and taking the ship to California.

David Fairfold, an English seaman, who had been disgraced for incompetency and misconduct, and lived among the Lascars in the fore-castle, and who was put in irons a few days after the unfortunate transaction, partially confirmed the natives as to one Lascar being shot and other cut down after the disturbance was over.

Seaman, the Hindostanee interpreter, said the Mahometans ought to be sworn on the Koran with their shoes of which was ordered to be done, and Mr. Yardley said the Seaman had done quite right in mentioning it.

Mr. Dennison said the Malays attached not the least importance to the form of swearing whether they had their shoes on or off was all the same to them.

The depositions against the Europeans having been completed, Mr. Humphreys said: On behalf of my clients, I have to say they assert their perfect innocence of the charge imputed to them.

Mr. Yardley: Shall I have that taken down?

Mr. Humphreys: If you please, sir.

Mr. Yardley committed Captain Stooke, Northcote and Goldsworthy for trial for manslaughter, and took bail for their appearance at the sessions as before, and they were set at liberty.

Mr. Jarman applied to the magistrate to bind over Inspector White, of the Thames police, as he had the charge of the cresces (Malay daggers), knives, bolts, belaying pins, iron bars, and other weapons, said to have been in the hands of the Malays on board the Queen of the Teign, and sent over to England by the authorities at Gibraltar.

Mr. Yardley complied, and said that Mr. Jarman would see that the witnesses and interpreters were properly remunerated.

Mr. Jarman: I was about to apply to you, sir, for certificates for the witnesses, to enable them to obtain their expenses of the county treasurer, as usual.

Mr. Yardley said he would grant the certificates, but he thought Mr. Jarman ought to take the interpreters in his hands. Their remuneration, he supposed, would be provided for by the Treasury.

Mr. Jarman: We don't pay any more than we can help.

Mr. Yardley: No doubt of that; but the Treasury will receive all it can get [a laugh].

Mr. Jarman: Yes, sir; there is a great objection on the part of the Treasury to pay more in these cases than is absolutely necessary, and considerable expense has already been incurred.

Mr. Yardley: But, Mr. Jarman, although the Treasury very properly will not pay more than it can help, that gentleman (Mr. Dennison), who has so truly and faithfully interpreted the English into the Malay language, is a person of rare accomplishments, and he ought to be remunerated accordingly. We could not get on until he was found, and he should be rewarded according to his rarity. He has proved himself to be a most efficient interpreter, and an accomplished scholar. The facility with which he interpreted the English into Malay was extraordinary.

Mr. Dennison said he could speak the Malay language with as much ease as his own native tongue, but he was obliged to proceed in a roundabout way to convert the English questions into the Malay, so as to make them understood.

Mr. Yardley: There is Seaman, too; he deserves to be liberally rewarded. The Court could obtain no better interpreter for the Hindostanee than Seaman. He had done it with wonderful facility, and had been of great service to the Court on many occasions. It is much to the credit of the force which he belonged that he should be able to translate Eastern languages, and it is to be regretted he is not in a better situation.

The proceedings then terminated.