

REVOLT OF CHINESE COOLIES, AND GREAT SLAUGHTER.

(From the *Singapore Straits Times* of March 21.)

A boat arrived at Singapore yesterday morning, having on board nine of the crew of the Peruvian ship *Carmen*, which vessel left Swatow with 200 Chinese coolies for Callao. During the passage down the China Sea, some time at night, the coolies rose *en masse*, but were driven down below and the hatches closed. The Chinese coolies secured down below set fire to the ship, which was soon a mass of flames. The crew took to the boats. One of the boats arrived yesterday, but the men were so completely exhausted by privation and exposure (having been out nine days without food) that they were unable to work, and were towed into Singapore from Buddoo by a Malay sampan. Off Pulo Tingi the boat was attacked by a pirate prahu, manned by three men and a boy, who wounded some of the boat's crew with spears and stones. There were fire-arms in the boat, but no ammunition, and the men were too exhausted to fight.

The above information was received from a gentleman who communicated with the *Carmen's* boat off Buddoo early yesterday. We expect further details during the day.

After the above were set in type the boat reached town. From the chief officer of the *Carmen* we have obtained the following particulars, delaying the publication of our journal to enable us to do so.

The Peruvian ship *Carmen*, Captain Louis Camogli, left Swatow on the 1st March for Callao, with 200 Chinese coolies and the following passengers: Messrs. Pedro Pereyra, Carlo Mason, José Pioman, N. Rivera, T. Collasos, Atanasia Cardamé, and M. Tisé. On Sunday, March 8, when off the Great Natunas, at about 7 or 8 p.m., the interpreter warned the captain that the coolies meditated a revolt, and intended to take the ship, upon which, as it was nightfall, the coolies were forced to go down between decks. About three hours afterwards the interpreter returned, and requested that they might be set at liberty, and the captain endeavoured to pacify them by asking for delay until the following day, when he would place the four ring-leaders in irons. Next morning, between 7 and 8 o'clock, the coolies proceeded on deck, and remained quiet until the crew went to breakfast. Some of the coolies—thinking probably to get possession of the ship, and that the crew would go below to extinguish the fire—went to the forepart of the ship and threw a quantity of burning straw into the hold, which fell amongst the contents of their beds (straw), paper, and fragments of wooden boxes, which it appears they had previously broken up. The crew speedily armed, and

the coolies were forcibly driven down below. The captain first desired the powder in the ship to be thrown overboard, and then tried to extinguish the fire by closing the hatchways, but in vain; the flames soon seized on every part of the ship, affording time only to get out two boats. The captain, officers, and crew, numbering in all fourteen, with seven passengers, having been able to secure a few arms, but without water or provisions, quitted the burning ship in the boats, the captain proceeding in the same boat with the chief officer. Finding there was no sail in the boat the captain got into the other boat, and returned towards the ship, if possible to secure something that would serve for a sail. At this time some of the coolies had managed to force the hatchways, and were observed passing up the rigging, but the masts shortly afterwards fell over into the sea. Just as the boat (in which was the captain) had reached the vessel, the latter went down, and the boat must have been taken down with the sinking ship, as nothing was seen of the captain or the people in the boat, although the mate remained close by for nearly four hours. The greater part of the coolies must have been suffocated by the smoke—the whole perished, except an interpreter, from whom the mate subsequently ascertained that it had been arranged by the coolies to take the ship just outside of Swatow (as was done in the case of the French ship *Anais*, fourteen of the coolies who were on board that vessel when cut off being in the *Carmen*), but owing to the rough weather most of them were sea-sick.

In the boat with the captain there were of the crew three Chileans, two Italians, two Greeks, five others, and an old man, a Greek passenger. In the boat with the mate were the seven passengers abovementioned and four of the crew. In the last boat were two baskets of sweet potatoes (the only provisions they were able to secure), a musket without ammunition, and three swords.

The mate's boat having no sail the shirts of those on board were converted into one, and they made for Singapore, the nearest port of refuge. Their sufferings and misery were intense; exposed in an open boat for nine days, without water, and with no other food than the two baskets of sweet potatoes and a dolphin, which they fortunately caught, and most eagerly devoured uncooked. In this pitifully exhausted and wretched state they were cruelly attacked, when off Pulo Tingi, by a piratical prahu, manned by three Malays and a boy, who threw spears, killing one seaman and the passenger, Mr. Pedro Pereyra. Others were wounded, but by dint of great exertion, in their famished and weak condition, they managed to get away and reached Singapore as above mentioned. The survivors are now in the Sailors' Home, except two, who, we hear, have been sent to the hospital to be cured of their wounds.

We have written until our fingers have ached against this inhuman traffic, but apparently without effect. The trade in human flesh is persevered in regardless of its horrors. How much longer will civilisation allow his disgusting commerce to continue?

In the *Friend of China* of March 15, we read:

"We had hoped our summary would have been completed without the second of another coolie horror, but this morning, to our extreme regret, we find announced the arrival of the British ship *Gulnare*, 1,100 tons register (Captain Wardrop), bound from Swatow to Havana, with coolies. The substance of the affair is as follows:

"On Wednesday, 11th inst., the *Gulnare* left Swatow, with coolie passengers for Havana. She rounded the Cape of Good Hope at 5 p.m., and then placed armed sentries fore and aft. Nothing occurred all night. At 7.15 a.m. on the following morning, the coolies in a body attacked the third mate and sentry in the fore part of the ship. The watch at the time were washing down the poop. The high land of Tongas a little before had been sighted bearing N.W. about twelve miles distant. The chief officer was at the time talking to the interpreter, when the Chinese gave one of the most horrible yells possible to be imagined. The captain, officers, and crew immediately rushed out and rescued the third mate and sentry, who were seriously wounded. The coolies fought with fearful desperation, and in some instances were fairly cut to pieces before they were driven below; in fact, they returned the fire for some ten minutes with basins, firewood, &c., and, by an oversight of the officers, had smuggled from the deck all the chain hooks and axes, and concealed them below. After the coolies had been driven below they again began throwing up at the crew basins and firewood. One pistol was fired up the after hatchway in the direction of the poop. Finding they could not regain the deck, the coolies broke up their berths and set the ship on fire in the main, mizen, and poop and hatchways, but when the leaders in the incendiarism were shot down, they immediately extinguished the fires. The third mate and sentry were the only two of the crew who were seriously wounded. Twenty seven coolies were killed and wounded, ten killed, three drowned, and fourteen wounded. Some have since jumped overboard. The *Gulnare* arrived here yesterday at a quarter to 8 p.m. The captain speaks in the highest terms of the coolness and bravery displayed by his officers and crew throughout the fight. The coolies speak well of the treatment they have received on board. Some say a mandarin came on board before they sailed in disguise and incited them to take the ship. It is asserted by a few that at the present time an agent of the mandarins is on board, but no one will point out the man."

The *Singapore Free Press* remarks: "If coolie emigration is to be allowed at all, it must be put upon an entirely different footing from what it is at present. It is very evident from all we have heard that in most of these shipments from Chinese ports for the Havana and countries in South America, many of the coolies are procured by a system of kidnaping, and are sent away against their will. Hence the frequent risings amongst them. Until the whole system is altered no merchant who has the least regard for his own reputation ought to participate in it, directly or indirectly. Any person lending himself to the continuance of such an infamous business ought to be held up to the contempt and detestation of the public."