

THE LATE MURDER, ON BOARD THE JEREMIAH THOMPSON.
— Much comment has taken place here with regard to the now undoubted murder of the man, who has turned out to be a Malay, named John Hatchway, whose body was sent on shore from the Jeremiah Thompson. The evidence given before the coroner established clearly that the death of Hatchway was caused by a fracture of the skull from a blow inflicted by a blunt instrument. The boatswain, John Keegan by name, was proved to have beaten and abused the deceased, and it was stated that Keegan was supposed to have gone, or fallen overboard and been drowned, and here all trace of the alleged culprit is at once lost. No one saw Keegan go overboard, the nearest approximation to that being that some one heard a splash in the water, and that after that splash Keegan was never again seen. So far as the evidence went, seemingly no search was made on board the ship to ascertain whether Keegan was not concealed there, neither was there the slightest effort made to discover whether, if he was really drowned, the drowning of Keegan was not a second murder perpetrated to conceal the circumstances and the perpetrator of the first. This looseness of investigation becomes the more remarkable and the more reprehensible, from the fact that the mate, Hamilton Perry, acknowledged that he had ordered the carpenter to make the box into which the body of Hatchway was placed. He acknowledged that the body was sent ashore clandestinely by his orders, and in a note to the captain, which accompanied the body, and which he acknowledged he had written, it is expressly stated that he (the mate) had been told that the man had been killed by Keegan. With this knowledge, however, he attempted to get rid of the body in the manner described, "because if the boatmen had been told it was the body of a man, they might have refused to take it on shore." Perry thus in a very conclusive manner established himself as an "accessory after the fact;" yet in the face of all this, no effort was made to investigate his knowledge of—if not his connection with—the murder. He was allowed at once to go at large, and on Tuesday the Jeremiah Thompson proceeded on her voyage to New York, bearing with her, no doubt, Mr. Hamilton Perry, her mate, and there are not wanting people here who believe that that officer is accompanied by his amiable boatswain, Mr. John Keegan. Consequent on these transactions and the convenient mode in which this tragedy has been passed over, the coroner and the police authorities meet with severe and general censure. As some defence of these extraordinary proceedings, some parties here say that, as all the individuals connected with the crime, victim as well as perpetrator, or perpetrators, were foreigners, and as the crime was committed on board of a foreign ship, the English laws could not be made to reach the case. This may be so, and if so it seems absurd, not to call it by a stronger name; but, whether it was so or not, like the drowning of Keegan, and the ignorant innocence of the mate, it appears to have been taken for granted. No evidence was adduced to show that the vessel and the supposed criminal were foreign. In point of fact, as Keegan was not found alive, he was held to be dead, and on the loosest of evidence it was equally held to be unnecessary to pursue the inquiry further. If such is to be the mode in which inquiries into such important cases are to be conducted, it is generally said here, that whatever may be the state of the law, is a matter necessarily of the most complete indifference. Even the slightest offences against the rights of property are inquired into with a minuteness and intelligence which contrasts strongly with the apparently loose manner in which the investigation of this atrocious crime has been conducted.