

MURDERS ON THE HIGH SEAS.

Five men who were brought home from Monte Video in the Brazil mail steamer Parana, and landed at Southampton on Saturday, charged with the murder of the captain and some of the crew of the ship Flowery Land, and scuttling the vessel, were taken before the Southampton magistrates on Monday for examination. There are in all ten of the crew implicated in the crimes, five of whom, with two witnesses, were sent away from Monte Video in the steamer Uruguay for Liverpool, and the other five, also accompanied by two witnesses, came home in the Parana. The British Consul was afraid to send them all in one batch, they being such a desperate set of characters, and offered to send a file of soldiers to keep guard over them, but the above arrangement was ultimately adopted. The men brought by the Parana were heavily manacled. Their names are Marco Varto, a native of the Ionian Islands; Marciliano De Lacroix, a Greek; Miguel Lopez, a Malay; George Carlos, and John Williams, three of them being men of colour. The facts of the case will be found detailed in the evidence of James Early, whose examination was taken. This witness stated that he was a sailor on board the Flowery Land, which sailed from the West India Docks on the 28th of July last, and the five prisoners, four of whom could speak a little English, also formed part of the crew. The captain's name was George or John Smith, and the vessel was bound to Singapore. All went on well for five or six weeks, but on the 10th of September one of the crew, a Brazilian, not among those who arrived by the Parana, struck the mate. Witness was on the look-out house, and spoke to the mate, when they struck him again, and told Early to go into the deckhouse. He did so, and called the carpenter, who was asleep in his berth, and he went out. The mate was then lying on the deck. Some of the men struck the carpenter, who went back to the deckhouse and stayed with witness all night. During the night he heard a noise on deck, but was afraid to leave the deckhouse. Between five and six o'clock in the morning witness went on deck, and thence into the captain's cabin, where he found the second mate and some of the men. They were around the dead body of the captain, which was covered with canvas, and the prisoner Lopez put a rope round it and pulled it up, and then they threw it overboard. There was a good deal of blood about the decks, and the men washed it away. Witness also missed from the vessel the chief mate and the captain's brother. The sailors then got the money and the clothes which were in the cabin. One of them took command of the ship, and the second mate navigated it. They sailed the ship for 22 days, until they arrived at the entrance to the River Plate, where they determined on scuttling her. Witness got into a boat with the steward, cook, and second mate. The sailors ordered them to return, and they did so, excepting the steward, at whom they threw bottles of wine, which struck him several times. He remained in the boat till he was very much cut about, and then he got out into the water and was drowned. The sailors threatened what they would have done with the steward if they had him on deck, and said it was too easy a death for him to die. After the steward was dead the men ordered Early to go down and clear the bottles out of the boat. The ship sank in about two and a-half hours from that time, and witness thought the cook and the lamp-trimmer went down in her, for he never saw them again. Some of the men stopped on board till within a quarter of an hour of her sinking. They placed in the boats some clothes, bread, ham, and bottles of wine, and proceeded to the shore, landing on the open beach, and went into the country. The second mate managed to escape from them and made his way to Monte Video, from which place a man-of-war was immediately despatched in search of them, and after a few days they were all taken prisoners. At the termination of the witness Early's evidence the magistrates remanded the five prisoners for a week, to afford time for communication with the Board of Trade.

The steamer Uruguay, having on board five of the men charged with being concerned in the above atrocities, was off Queenstown yesterday, and she is expected to arrive in the Mersey this morning, when the necessary steps will be taken for landing the men in custody. As the Flowery Land is stated to be a London vessel, they will no doubt be forwarded to the authorities there to be dealt with.