

Mr. FLINTOFT: We are here at your pleasure. We do not want to run away, we are here to answer all the questions you wish to ask and to give you all the information you desire.

WITNESS: On page 73, there is a statement there about what happens on the China coast, and the witness—that is Mr. O'Donovan—says:—

When the Empress boats are going through pirate waters they have to be very careful. The ships are so constructed that the alleyway of the ship—you know what the alleyway of a ship is, the stokehole and all that sort of thing—

I never knew the stokehole was the alleyway, but he says it.

—is along that way, and there are long bars, big gates like they used to have in the old prison ships years and years ago. As soon as they are in pirate waters all these bars are put along and they are clamped and there are armed men on each side. Every one carries a revolver, with the exception of the linen keeper. I understand he is not armed. But all the rest are armed. There are your British subjects, and they cannot get out of that trap.

*By Mr. Neill:*

Q. What is the suggestion, that they have to be kept under lock?—A. The suggestion was that they locked the Chinese in.

*By Mr. MacNicol:*

Q. That is the Chinese crew?—A. Yes.

*By Mr. Neill:*

Q. For fear they may be pirates?—A. Yes, for fear they mutiny themselves. That is a most unfair statement.

The imputation that in pirate waters on the China coast the Chinese crews cannot be trusted is quite wrong and very unfair. It is true the officers of the ship are armed, and in addition armed guards are carried between Shanghai and Hong Kong, but this has no relation whatever with any alleged disloyalty on the part of the crew. The precautions so taken are in case pirates should get on board the ship in the guise of passengers. It is quite obvious from the statements made both by Mr. Reid and Mr. O'Donovan that they have no clear conception of the situation at all. The Chinese crew are at absolute liberty to go anywhere throughout the ship in the prosecution of their duties.

*By Mr. Neill:*

Q. Are they armed?—A. No, they are not armed.

*By Mrs. Black:*

Q. No. White crews are not.—A. Every ship that goes up and down the coast with passengers has protection against Chinese pirates. But the pirates are not amongst the crews. They are a special class of people who smuggle themselves aboard amongst the passengers.

Mr. NEILL: All right. Proceed.

WITNESS: I am passing over quite a lot that I made a note of.

Mr. FLINTOFT: Go on. You have missed your train now. Go on and give your story.

*By Mr. Neill:*

Q. You are going to leave that with us?—A. Well, it has not been entered. If you wish, it can be entered.

[Captain Edmund Aikman.]