



AND

Conception Bay Journal.

HEARTS RESOLVED AND HANDS PREPARED, THE BLESSINGS THEY ENJOY TO GUARD.—SMOLLET.

VOL. VI.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1840.

No. 324

HARBOUR GAUGE, Conception Bay, Newfoundland:—Printed and Published by JOHN THOMAS BURTON, at his Office, opposite the MARKET PLACE.

SEIZURE OF THE BRITISH QUEEN, STEAM SHIP FOR SMUGGLING.

A good deal of excitement was raised yesterday owing to the report that the gigantic transatlantic steam ship the *British Queen*, which is at present moored at *Blackwall*, had been seized by the commissioners of customs, in consequence of a large quantity of contraband Tea, Cigars, and Tobacco being found concealed on board; and from inquiries made, the rumour turns out to be well founded. The *British Queen* arrived in the river from *Portsmouth* between the hours of 4 and 5 last Sunday afternoon, and was moored in her usual position, nearly opposite the *Brunswick Wharf*, at *Blackwall*. As soon as her mooring was completed, *Richard Keefe*, a custom house officer, and *Giles*, a pilot surveyor, went on board to inspect her cargo and her passengers' luggage, and take charge of the ship. The passengers having debarked, and the greater part of their luggage being conveyed on shore, *Giles* and *Keefe* proceeded to search the vessel, and soon afterwards found a whole cask buried amongst the coals. They brought it out with considerable difficulty, and it to contain American manufactured tobacco, commonly called "negrohead" the duty upon which, in common with all other foreign manufactured tobacco is 9s. per pound on being imported into this country. The officers prosecuted their search, and found a further quantity of tobacco in the coal, also nineteen pounds eight ounces of tea. These articles were conveyed to the Queen's warehouse at the Custom-house on the following morning, and information given of the circumstance to the Board of Commissioners, who issued orders to the officers to rigidly examine the ship. Acting upon these directions they continued their search, and in various parts of the vessel, but especially in the engine room, amongst the machinery, and under the coals, they discovered a vast quantity of Tobacco, and 20 lbs. 4oz. of Cigars. The quantity of Tobacco seized altogether is rather more than 700 lbs., out of which 84 lbs. are in the coal, and the rest of American manufacture. The amount of the duty payable upon all the goods seized is between £300 and £400.

The articles found on the second examination were taken to the Custom house on Wednesday, and the commissioners gave orders that the steam ship should be seized in the Queen's name, and several officers were sent on board to take charge of her. The *British Queen* is still under seizure,

and will still continue so until the affair is formally brought before the Board of Customs. There is not the remotest ground for supposing that *Captain Roberts*, the commander of the *British Queen*, or any of the officers of the ship, are in any way implicated in these contraband transactions. The firemen, stokers, and engineers are without doubt, the only parties concerned. They are upwards of 40 in number, and from the gigantic dimensions of the engineering department of the ship they possess facilities for smuggling, which they seldom neglect to avail themselves of. There is scarcely a steam vessel trading to foreign port enters the river, which smuggling is not more or less carried on by the engineers and firemen. One of their most successful tricks is to conceal contraband property among the machinery. By doing this they defeat the vigilance of the custom house officer, who, if they attempt to search the machinery, are prevented by the engineers, on the ground that they may disarrange something. The stupendous machinery of the *British Queen* would admit of an enormous quantity of smuggled goods being stowed away.

In the course of yesterday two firemen belonging to the *British Queen*, named *Orr* and *Hogg*, were brought to the *Thames Police Court*, in the custody of Inspector *White*, charged with endeavouring to convey on shore 3 lbs. of negrohead tobacco of the same quality as that found by *Giles* and *Keefe*, and lodged in the Queen's warehouse in the Customs. The 2 men left the *British Queen* in a boat, and landed at *Blackwall*. They were soon afterwards met by the Police Inspector, who, remarking the enormous bulk of their legs, suspected there was something wrong. *White* accordingly questioned them, when *Orr* assured him that he was dropsical in his extremities. *Hogg*, upon being interrogated, averred that he was dropsical too. The inspector however, told them that that story would not do, and took from them the quantity of tobacco mentioned above. The men, in reply, said they purchased 4lbs. of tobacco each at *New York* for their own use, and the remainder they took on shore, thinking they were doing no harm. They both declared that they knew nothing about the large quantity of tobacco found on board, and observed that it must belong to some person who had more money to spare than the engineers and stokers, as they were only allowed to draw one dollar when they reached *New York*.

A gentleman who attended on behalf of the *British and American Steam Navigation Company*, to

whom the *British Queen* belongs, informed the Magistrates that the Company did every thing in their power to prevent smuggling amongst their servants, and their motive in not allowing them to draw more than a dollar upon account was that they might not invest their money in the purchase of excisable articles, with the view of smuggling. The engineers and firemen on board the *British Queen* were paid by the month. The negrohead tobacco was about 2s. a lb. in *New York*.

The Magistrate inquired when the *British Queen* would sail for *New York*?

The gentleman said she was appointed to leave *Blackwall* on the 27th or 28th inst., and would sail from *Southampton* for *New York* on the 1st Sept.

Mr. Ballantine told the two prisoners they knew very well they were doing an illegal act in bringing tobacco on shore, from the simple fact of their having concealed it about their persons. If fellows in their capacity were not severely punished, masters of steam vessels would be completely at their mercy. He should order them to pay a fine to the Queen of 30s., and if there did not pay it he should send them both to prison.

Something similar happened to the City of *Boulogne*, a vessel belonging to the Commercial Steam-packet Company, a short time ago. It was seized by the French authorities, because some of the engineers had endeavoured to smuggle some English lace into France, concealing it in the ship. It was only the high character of her commander, *Captain Fane*, that prevented the French authorities fining the company in a very heavy penalty. As it was, it cost upwards of £50.

The affair of the *British Queen* will probably come before the commissioners of Customs for adjudication.

THE EASTERN QUESTION.

(From the Times.)

The correspondent of a Morning Paper, in a letter from *Constantinople*, dated the 29th July, asserts that it is known from official authority that the Russian army to be employed against the *Circassians* will very speedily be raised to two hundred thousand men, and that the whole force of the empire is to be concentrated in the southern provinces. The armies, indeed, of *Wosnesensk* and *Wessarabia* have long since taken up their ground; but, heretofore as has been the resistance, and extraordinary

as has been the success, of the *Circassians*, armies of this magnitude cannot be collected only to subdue their span of mountain coast. They are destined to a larger field; and, with whatever anxiety we may view the armaments of France as opposed to England on the eastern question, the great preparations of our confederates are a ground of far more seriois distrust and apprehension. Despatches have reached the Foreign Office from *Constantinople* and *Vienna*, which have, doubtless, conveyed more distinct information to the Government than we at present possess.

(From the Morning Post.)

The *Presse* has a Berlin letter of the 12th, in which it is stated that the King of Prussia, in answer to *Messin's* representations to prevent the ratification of the quadruple treaty, replied that although animated by a sincere desire to maintain the most friendly relations with France, he would never lend himself to sustain the pretensions of *Mehemet Ali*, whom he looked upon as a rebel vassal; that consequently, as soon as he had learnt that *Austria* and *Russia* had given to the court of Berlin the assurance of the approaching conclusion of a treaty having for its object the employment of coercive measures against the *Pacha*, to force him to make his submission to the Porte, he had charged *barons de Maltzahn* and *Lulow* to declare that Prussia acceded entirely to the views of those powers. The King added, "that Prince *Mellornich* held the formal promise of Prussia to ratify the treaty." The letter concludes by saying that the sudden departure of the Count of *Maltzahn* for *Koenigsburgh* was to sign the ratification of the treaty conjointly with *Austria*.

SPAIN.

Madrid journals of the 12th inst. state that no period was yet fixed upon for the return of the Queen.

The stage coach from *Toledo* to *Madrid* was stopped on the 11th by 9 armed men of the band of *Saturno*.

The government was said to have instructed the consular agents of Spain abroad to deliver passports to the refugees anxious to return home who should make their submission to the Queen. Superior officers alone are to be excepted, and only allowed to re-enter Spain on the authorization of General *Espartero*.