

SHIPPING INTELLIGENCE.

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DEPARTURES—On the 6th. instant, the *Elizabeth*, Captain Back, for Leschenault. Passengers.—Messrs. Crichton, Samson, J. Leake, Bull, and Watson.

On the 7th. instant, the *Chieftain*, Capt. Clark for Batavia. Passenger—Mrs. Bull.

We are sorry to announce that the *Lady Stirling* was wrecked on the 7th. instant, and lest this accident should be cited as another proof of the dangers of our much abused coast, we think it right to publish the following particulars.

The *LADY STIRLING* put to sea on the morning of the 7th. instant, having a day or two before, while in Port, sustained some injury in consequence of the negligence of the parties left in charge of her. About three miles from Fremantle the vessel started a plank, and made so much water that it was thought advisable to run for the nearest land, and she was accordingly run ashore on the north side of Woodman's Point, where she now lies a total wreck. We are informed that had there not been an unusual number of hands on board, to assist in keeping her clear, she must have gone down in deep water. The cargo is we believe, saved, but of course many of the articles are much damaged.

All we shall say of this matter is that if persons will put to sea under such circumstances, they alone are to blame. The *Lady Stirling* was on her way to Leschenault.

Extract from a Meteorological Journal kept at the office of the Honourable the Surveyor General in Perth.

Date.	Time	Therm.	Bar.	Wind	
5	10 A M	63	30 .20	SSW	fresh breeze, cloudy— showery.
	4 P M	65	.30	SSW	ditto. ditto.
6	10 A M	62	.46	SSE	light breeze fine, clear
	4 P M	61	.44	SSE	ditto. passing clouds,
7	10 A M	62	.54	NE	moderate breeze, fine, clear,
	4 P M	70	.54	W.	light breeze ditto.
8	10 A M	61	.35	NNW	fresh squally breeze
	noon	66	.35	NNW	ditto cloudy
9	10 A M	63	.30	SW	light breeze,—fine cloudy horizon
	5 P M	64	.35	W	ditto. ditto.
10	10 A M	61	.35	N	light breeze—fine— passing clouds
	4 P M	67	17.	N	light breeze—fine— much rain during the night.
11	10 A M	59	.16	S	fresh breeze cloudy —showery
	4 P M	62	.25	SSW	strong breeze—fine— passing clouds

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENTS.

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We are very much obliged to "Fair Play," and regret exceedingly that his letter arrived too late for insertion—it shall however appear in our next.

THE INQUIRER

A WESTERN AUSTRALIAN
JOURNAL,

WEDNESDAY AUGUST 12th. 1840.

THE rupture between Great Britain and China forms a subject of considerable interest, and affords an ample field for speculation and conjecture, and as the proceedings of the Mother country must ever be of primary importance to our brother colonists, we purpose making a few remarks upon this question which seems to have awakened the attention of nearly every nation on the globe. That a war will ensue between the two countries, seems scarcely to admit of a doubt; the proceeding of the British Superintendent from the very outset, the deadly animosity which exists between the parties, directly point to such a result; and when we look at the mighty force that has been sent by the British Government towards the coast of China, we cannot but think that they have made their resolve, and that war is inevitable. But will this war be confined to the English and the Chinese? We think not; other nations will join in the quarrel, and the consequence will be a general warfare, the issue of which no man may foresee but which cannot fail to be desolating and terrible in the highest degree.

It has been said that "a just war is better than an ignominious peace;" now without inquiring whether any war, except one waged in defence of our altars and our hearths, can be justifiable, let us see how the question of justice stands in the present case. We will pass over the several petty insults and injuries which were given and received,

for of these probably there was an equality on both sides, and come at once to the point on which the main question turns viz: the importation of Opium into the empire.

A formal act of the constituted authorities of the Nation had long ago forbidden the importation of this drug; the reasons assigned for the prohibition were wise, and even had they been otherwise the mere will of the authorities would have been alone sufficient; the act was known to all, and yet in the face of its provisions the trade was still carried on to a vast extent, the baneful drug found its way into China from every little bay and inlet along its extensive coast, and a system of smuggling was introduced to a degree unparalleled, the demoralizing effects of which were felt from one end of the Chinese empire to the other. Upon this the authorities acted, and empowered a Commissioner to insist from the British Superintendent at Canton, that the whole of the Opium then in store belonging to British Merchants should be delivered up to him. It was so delivered up and the whole mass was publicly burnt by order of the Chinese Commissioner, and one of the objects of the expedition sent against China is, to obtain for the Merchants compensation for the loss of their property in this very Opium, the which object is manifestly unjust upon the very face of it. We will put a parallel case,—A French lugger is caught upon the English coast running a cargo of contraband goods—the goods are seized, and as formerly was the case, burnt by the government. Now what would be thought were the French in such case, to send an expedition to the British shores, and with bullying words and unblushing front, demand compensation for the owners! and yet such, as it appears to us, is precisely the course England is about to follow with regard to China.

Much has been said as to who should in justice bear the loss—it is urged that compensation is due to the owners from some one or other not yet defined, but we really do not see that this follows so strictly; if the traders carried on the trade at their own risk without authority from any one, then should they bear the loss—their profits have been large, they can afford to lose something out of them; but if as we suspect the trade has been carried on under the sanction of the British Government, the case is altered; they may have acted under some guarantee that they would be protected, and if so compensation may be due to the Merchants not from the Chinese, but from the government which sanctioned the traffic. The fair and manly course under these circumstances would be for Ministers to go down to the House of Commons, avow their responsibility and ask compensation from the nation; it might be refused, but surely this course would be more honorable than to involve the nation in an expensive and unjust war, or to pick the pockets of the unfortunate Chinese because we happen to be the stronger party.

The Colonial Gazette, in several admirable articles, has handled this question with its usual ability; it attaches considerable blame to Mr Elliott the British Superintendent at Canton, and seems to infer that he has made himself personally liable from the nature of the receipts which he gave to the various persons who delivered up Opium in consequence of the mandate of the Chinese Commissioner. Whether the British government will leave their representative in the lurch remains to be seen.

We have elsewhere stated that we do not believe that any formal declaration of war had been made between the two powers up to the date of the last arrival from England; no doubt the commander of the expedition was instructed to proceed to extremities unless certain conditions were complied with; the first declaration of war therefore will most probably be the thunders of a British battery, and the result to the Chinese is most forcibly expressed in the following beautiful sentence from the Colonial Gazette "through the smoke of the first shot which one imagines to be fired by the English in the Bocca Tigris is seen the Celestial Empire crumbling to pieces—the foreground of a long vista of foreign encroachment, rivalry, rapine and bloodshed." But even this picture is not complete—that the Chinese empire would be extinguished in the struggle is beyond a doubt—but this result would not be the only one. Through the same smoke may be discerned the embattled armies of many nations contending for fancied rights—a long era of desolation and misery throughout the East, and their

consequent effects upon the West, in fine through that smoke may be discerned the commencement of a war which for importance and general effects, will have had no parallel in history.

Even as we write the war may be in full operation, the fatal gun may have already been fired; but while we confess that this is the issue we look for, let us trust that it may yet be contrary to our expectations. By far the most influential portion of the Press of our mother country, is using its best exertions to avert the calamity; from private intelligence we gather that the war would be most unpopular to the British public, and in the face of such adversaries it would be with difficulty supported. Our only fear is that public opinion at home may have been expressed too late;—it is a far cry to China, and although government may see reason to regret their precipitation, the evil may be beyond recall.

The loss arising from the stoppage of the British trade with China, is no doubt a serious one; but it should be borne with patience, especially as it has resulted from our own misconduct; there is no law that compels one nation to trade with another against its will, while on the other hand the right of a people to restrict their own trade, and regulate their national affairs, as to them may seem best, is accorded by every law. Reason and justice forbid foreign interference in the internal government of any nation whatever; the productions of a country are exclusively its own, and although, for the advantage of society, an interchange is desirable, such interchange should be the result of free will, and not exacted at the point of the bayonet—we confess we would rather that British trade with China might cease altogether, than see one, how lucrative soever, carried on at the expense of justice; the national honour of Old England is as dear to us now as ever, and we would wish to see it preserved at whatever cost—having that, we yet have something—nothing having all but that.

The several articles from Correspondents, which have lately appeared in the pages of the "Perth Gazette," upon the subject of banking, will have been read with very considerable interest, and we must congratulate our contemporary on having such willing and able assistants.

We are ourselves very glad that the subject has been mooted, for the arguments *pro*, and *contra*, will tend to prepare the public mind for the arrival of the gentleman who has been commissioned by the Bank of Australasia to form a branch in this Colony, and whatever may be the result of the negotiations it is quite as well that the Directors and shareholders of the Bank of Western Australia, should have had an opportunity of considering the subject, so far as the matter can be entered into in the absence of any definite proposition.

The following is from a correspondent, and we may observe that the report he alludes to, is in our possession.

"I consider that the best mode of putting an end to the present feverish feeling which appears to be so prevalent among the Directors of the Western Australian Banking Company established at Perth, and the public, would be to publish the last report, made by the Directors of the Bank of Australasia (Incorporated by Royal Charter,) to the Proprietors assembled at the Fifth annual general meeting held at the Office of the Corporation No. 18, Aldermanbury, London, on Monday 8th. June, 1839. This will shew the strong basis as well as the honorable terms upon which they claim their privilege for entering the field for the purpose of extending their usefulness to Western Australia. Be it known that Swan River is included in the original Charter. They put forth to the world their bona-fide paid up capital and when, or should it ever occur that, they require to trade on the funds of the public they make it a principle to allow a corresponding interest in proportion to the profit derived from the use of such deposits as may be placed in their Bank for a term exceeding three or six months.

I do not believe that any instance can be brought forward wherein $\frac{1}{2}$ or $\frac{3}{4}$ per cent. has ever been charged by that Bank on deposits, on the contrary, occasionally the bank has allowed as much as $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. at Sydney, and Hobart Town.

The introduction of their Capital will leave the present Capital of our bank disengaged, and it appears to me that it cannot be better employed than by using it for the introduction of stock into the colony, for until the price of cotton is brought down, and we increase our back cargo, the Colony cannot be expected to progress so rapidly as it do under other circumstances. We want more frequent rivals from England,—more labor, and an influx of British and I see no cause more likely to accomplish these objects sooner than additional capital employed in the way I have pointed out."

It will be seen that our Correspondent is in favour of one Bank; and that one the larger of the two, and that he thinks the Capital of our present Bank might be more profitably employed, for the public good, in operations of a different nature.

We are not inclined to enter upon these points at the present, but we must say that the observations of our Correspondent are marked by strong good sense, and well deserve the attention of our readers. The question of employing the capital of the present bank in another way to us a new feature in the case, although we are inclined to think that the present directors will not thank our correspondent for the hint. We shall be most happy to see him enter upon this subject more at length.