

SUPPRESSION OF GAMING-HOUSES.

The Magistrates of Bow-street have exercised their determination to exercise to their fullest extent the powers which a recent statute (the Vagrant Act) has vested in them, in order, if possible, to put a stop to the ruinous system of gambling which has of late been carried on with such impunity in and about St. James's; and in pursuance of this determination, another of the "Hells," as they are termed, was attacked on Tuesday. In order to make the surprise the more complete, the attack was made in broad day, when such a visit could have been little expected, and it was managed in such a manner as to do great credit to the police who acted upon this occasion.

About half-past three o'clock on Tuesday afternoon, a warrant having been put a short time before issued, Smith and Rutben, two of the principal officers, accompanied by Nicholls, Morris, Sadler, and a few others, left the office, and proceeded separately to the immediate neighbourhood of Pall-mall, the warrant being directed against No. 33, in that street. A man in a working dress had been previously sent forward with a ladder, with directions to wait as near the house as he could without exciting suspicion. The party having met at the appointed spot, hastened with all speed to a body to the house, one of the party, as he passed where the ladder was lying, snatching it up as if in fun, and carrying it on his shoulder. Arrived at No. 33, the ladder was fixed to the first floor window, and in less than a minute the whole party was in the house, with the exception of two or three, who remained below to guard the doors. The ladder was mounted almost with the rapidity of lightning, and the officers upon entering the first floor room, saw all clear before them, not a soul being there. They rushed on to two doors at the extremity of the apartment, but before they could reach the stair case, the Cerberus of the establishment, whose station was on the landing-place of the first floor, immediately between the two doors, had heard them coming, and sprang up stairs to give the alarm to those in the second floor, where "the business" was going on. Moments were close behind him, and had nearly caught him by the leg, but he succeeded in reaching the play-room, into which he entered, and closed the door against the officers. He was dice confusion now in the room.

The officers were stopped for a few moments at the door by the united strength of some of those within; and they heard money rattling, scrapers, balls, and other implements of play being removed, chairs falling, and players swearing. At length they burst in the door, and two or three of the party within escaped to the confusion in the stairs; but one of them, with a small box in his hand, was secured by Smith and Baker, and the box was found to contain seven dozen and a half silver counters, £12 in silver coin, and £7 10s in gold. Two others succeeded in reaching the roof, and ran along the parapet of the adjoining houses, and one of them escaped into No. 31, by the garret window. The other also disappeared for a moment by a trap-door of the adjoining house, but was dragged forth from his hiding-place by Nicholls, who had followed him pretty closely. The rest of the officers meanwhile were engaged in securing the gamblers and gaming apparatus in the second-floor.

The following persons, 15 in number, were brought away in coaches, viz:—Israel Jackson, John Marc, Louis Laine, James Thomas, Edward Roberts, William Bond, William Jones, William Brown, Samuel Brown, John Monk, Thomas Howard, James Smith, John de Bègre, William Ward, and John Walker.

On examining the premises, the officers found that the precautions they had adopted were quite necessary; for since the former attack on this house, about six weeks ago, it had been doubly and trebly secured. The back windows were heavily barred, and at the top of the first floor stairs was a door nearly 3 inches thick, strongly rased with iron, and fastened inside with 3 stout bolts, and a heavy iron bar. It was just within this door that the poster sat. The officers upon this occasion did not, as formerly, confine themselves to the seizure of the more light and movable apparatus of the gamblers, but, determined to tear the thing up root and branch, as one of them expressed it, they procured the assistance of some carpenters, and had the large fixed tables taken up, and cut asunder for the convenience of removal out of the house, and took away every thing they could find connected with them, even to the lamps that were suspended over them, and the high chairs used by the conductors of the games. In a few minutes after their entry, not a relic of the furniture of the room remained. The whole was removed to the office in Bow-street in a wagon.

The prisoners were lodged until seven o'clock in the evening at the Bunch of Grapes, in Bow-street, and at that hour were conducted to the office for examination. A crowd of persons, who had collected, formed an avenue from one door to the other for the prisoners to pass, and amused themselves with cracking snuff jokes upon them, and reminding them of the pleasures of the *threading mill*. A sweep observed that the gamblers were used to *shaking*, and so they would not mind it. Sir R. Birnie and Mr. Halls were on the bench, and the names of the prisoners having been called over.

Augustus Baron d'Angis was sworn.—He said he lived at No. 5, Eaton-street, Pimlico, and had been an officer in the German Legion, but was not now on half-pay. He had been accustomed

to frequent the house, No. 33, Pall-mall, and knew it to be a common gaming-house for the reception of persons to play at unlawful games.—He believed he knew the proprietor of the house. The prisoner Jackson was the sole proprietor of it, to the best of his knowledge, but he was not the person who put down the money for the bank. He let the house to another party, who are Frenchmen, and from whom he had received a salary of £5 per day, for which he furnished wine and other refreshments, and managed the house. The prisoner Monk was under Jackson, and managed the bank. He brought the bank down and placed it on the table, and replenished it if necessary. The prisoner, William Jones, whose real name was Emmanuel Levy, acted as servant, and turned the wheel of the roulette-table. He also received and paid the money won and lost at the table. Jackson was paid his salary out of the profits of the bank.

The prisoner Samuel Brown acted as a servant to the house, and "was ready to say or swear anything that might be required of him," or to do any thing to serve the house. He carried the roulette up and down stairs, and banded about refreshments. The prisoner Dr. Bègre was the door-keeper, and opened the door to any person who was known, but to no other, unless they were introduced by known persons.

Cross-examined by Mr. Harmer. Heard Jackson say a month ago that he had given up his share of the house; but witness knew better.—This house and others were hired by Frenchmen, who paid very handsomely. Witness did not know their names. They were present. Jackson had acted as *crippier* within the last month. J. J. Smith, the officer, produced the box, money, and counters, taken from De Bègre, by him and Baker.

Rothben, the officer, produced a box and three sovereigns, and described the manner of entry, &c. He also produced two papers which were written—"Gentlemen are respectfully informed, that no declaration will be attended to;" and on the other—"The Royal game commences at half-past 11 o'clock." He also produced a bill of parcels for printing roulette cards.

Nicholls, Bond, Baker, and others, then produced a roulette table and apparatus connected with it, and Nicholls identified the prisoner Roberts as the man he seized and dragged from the trap-door at the top of the house adjoining.

Rothben being again called and questioned by Mr. Halls, said he had seen and played at the game of roulette in France, and from his knowledge and from what he heard and saw at the house in question, he had not the least doubt that the parties found there were engaged in playing at that game.

Mr. Halls said this evidence was in his opinion sufficient to bring the prisoners within the meaning of the statute. Mr. Harmer said he was astonished to hear the Magistrate say so, when there was not a single particle of evidence to prove that any one of them was seen at play. Sir R. Birnie said it was next to impossible to detect them in the act of playing, and therefore they must take the next best evidence. Mr. Harmer said the Magistrate had no right to assume any thing in order to convict a man in the absence of positive proof. The Act said "playing or betting at;" and no such act had been proved.

Mr. Halls said, if there was no evidence that this was a common gaming-house, he might pause, but here there was direct proof of that fact. After some other arguments, Mr. Harmer requested time for the Defendants to procure further legal assistance, and they were all ordered to a watch-house for the night.

Sir R. Birnie took occasion to remark upon the circumstances of so many Frenchmen being engaged in carrying on these infamous houses, and observed, that he should take special care to ascertain whether any of them came under the Alien Act, for its provisions could not be better enforced than against such vagabonds.

Wednesday afternoon, the above individuals were again brought up. Mr. Alley was to have attended for them but was detained at another place. John Cle, foreman to Mr. Green, a printer, proved printing 1000 roulette cards, by order of the prisoner Samuel Brown. Brown ordered him to make out the bill to Monk.

Mr. Harmer repeated his former arguments, and urged the Magistrate to hold the Defendants in bail for twelve months under the old statute, and not to proceed upon the Vagrant Act. Mr. Halls refused to do so, and said he should proceed upon the last named wholesome statute. The prisoner Thomas then stepped forward, and said he had never been in the house before, and that he had been there but three minutes when the officers came. A person who owed him money promised to meet him there, and bring much distressed he agreed to call, though with much reluctance.

Mr. Halls.—How did you get in? Thomas said he went through the passage and up stairs, without interruption. Being asked what he was, he said a seller of coals by commission. He would not mention the name of the person he sold for, but would write it down. Mr. Halls said he thought it was some such vagabond occupation.

Sir R. Birnie.—Did you ever try your hand at any other occupation—as a reporter to a newspaper, for instance? Mr. Halls said he had been accustomed

to mind of their preservers, one of whom succeeded in throwing a rope, with a piece of lead attached, over the stranded vessel; this the crew made fast to another rope, and were alternately dragged on shore. As characteristic of the humanity of our daring sailors, even in the dread of death, we cannot refrain from noticing the conduct of one of the shipwrecked crew. A boy earnestly solicited the last man on the wreck not to leave him behind; he instantly promised he would not, and, at the risk of his own life, made his way to the boy, who was in another part of the rigging, and, fastening himself to his young shipmate, they were both brought safe ashore. The vessel is nearly gone to pieces. The humane efforts of the Preventive Water Guard, and their attention to the sufferers after they had rescued them from the war, entitle them to the highest praise. The crew of the wrecked vessel consisted of the master (who was lost), three men, and a boy. The master (Cawthorn) had been, we are informed, in much better circumstances, and the owner of several vessels, but had been so injured by misfortune, that this big loss remained, which proved the last wreck of his life and fortune.—*Brighton Chronicle*.

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WEST INDIAN TRADE. The following correspondence was placarded on Tuesday last at the Jamaica Coffee-house: (COPY.)

Admiralty Office, Oct. 10. Sir—I am commanded by my Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to acquaint you, that their Lordships, in reference to a statement which has been published of a very savage outrage committed by pirates upon the Master of the *Blessing*, think it right to transmit you, for the information of the West India trade, and of the owners of, and those concerned in the *Blessing*, a copy of a letter which their Lordships have this day received from Sir Charles Rowley, reporting that the whole statement referred to was a gratuitous falsehood.

Your most obedient Servant, J. W. CROKER. (Signed) George Hibbert, Esq. Chairman of the Committee of West India Merchants. (COPY.)

Scrapie, in Port Royal Harbour, Jamaica, Oct. 25, 1822. Sir.—The accompanying affidavits, made by Hugh Hamilton, a free person of colour, and Mr. Smith, the master of the vessel *Blessing*, respecting the plunder of that vessel, and the murder of her master and his son, are of an extraordinary nature, that I take the earliest opportunity of putting their Lordships into possession thereof.

The motive of Hamilton, in disseminating a gratuitous falsehood of the nature contained in his deposition, is not known in this instance, as he can only imagine for what purpose he could have been doing. He held hence on the 1st of this month, in the ship *Hebecca*, Idney, master, for Glasgow, in the neighbourhood of which place it is believed his father, Mr. Hamilton West (a few years since an Attorney in Jamaica), resides, and where it is probable he may be heard of, should their Lordships think the subject worthy of further notice.

As fabrications have been frequent, and stories much exaggerated, respecting the molestation of the British commerce in these seas, I feel anxious to trace, if possible, their authors, and to be convinced that the object is not with a view to increase or keep up the insurance.

I have the honour to be, &c. (Signed) J. W. CROKER, Rear-Admiral.

SHIPWRECK. We are sorry to state, that the very severe gales of the last few days have done considerable damage to the shipping. On Saturday morning (19th inst.) it blew a heavy gale; about half past ten o'clock the Expedition (with about half her ballast) got off the beach, but not till she had considerably injured her bottom by striking against the sand and shingle. They had not been so long before they discovered she made a considerable quantity of water; this increased rapidly, and when off Ruttingham, the crew earnestly requested the master to run her ashore, as the nature of the coast there afforded them a greater chance of saving their lives than if they continued their course to the eastward. He consented, as the last resort, to run the brig ashore, after having made every effort to bring her into the nearest harbour. During the accomplishment of this hazardous, but necessary manœuvre, a heavy sea struck a part of the rigging to which the master was lashed, and knocked him into the sea, where he was instantly lost. The crew continued the daving project, and on her striking the beach, the Preventive Water Guard stationed near, made the greatest exertions to render them assistance. The sea was beating tremendously over the vessel, and the unfortunate crew were alone rescued from their perilous situation by the admirable presence

of mind of their preservers, one of whom succeeded in throwing a rope, with a piece of lead attached, over the stranded vessel; this the crew made fast to another rope, and were alternately dragged on shore. As characteristic of the humanity of our daring sailors, even in the dread of death, we cannot refrain from noticing the conduct of one of the shipwrecked crew. A boy earnestly solicited the last man on the wreck not to leave him behind; he instantly promised he would not, and, at the risk of his own life, made his way to the boy, who was in another part of the rigging, and, fastening himself to his young shipmate, they were both brought safe ashore. The vessel is nearly gone to pieces. The humane efforts of the Preventive Water Guard, and their attention to the sufferers after they had rescued them from the war, entitle them to the highest praise. The crew of the wrecked vessel consisted of the master (who was lost), three men, and a boy. The master (Cawthorn) had been, we are informed, in much better circumstances, and the owner of several vessels, but had been so injured by misfortune, that this big loss remained, which proved the last wreck of his life and fortune.—*Brighton Chronicle*.

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