Hong Kong
General Chamber of Commerce

Report
For The Year
1900

REPORT

OF THE

COMMITTEE

OF THE

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

FOR THE

Year ending 31st December, 1900,

PRESENTED TO THE MEMBERS

AT THE

ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON 11th MARCH, 1901.

HONGKONG:
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1901.

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COMMITTEE, 1901.

(Elected 11th March.)

SIR THOMAS JACKSON, Knt., *Chairman.*

MR. C. S. SHARP, *Vice-Chairman.*
MR. A. HAUPT.
HON. J. J. KESWICK.
MR. W. POATE.
MR. R. L. RICHARDSON.
MR. H. A. RITCHIE.
MR. N. A. SIEBS.
MR. H. E. TOMKINS.

MR. R. C. WILCOX, *Secretary.*

ARBITRATION COMMITTEE, 1901.

MR. A. HAUPT.
MR. W. POATE.
MR. R. L. RICHARDSON.
MR. N. A. SIEBS.
MR. H. E. TOMKINS.

CORRESPONDING COMMITTEE, 1901.

SIR THOMAS JACKSON.
HON. J. J. KESWICK.
MR. H. A. RITCHIE.
MR. C. S. SHARP.

LIST OF MEMBERS, 1901.

MESSRS. ARNHOLD, KARBERG & CO.
" W. S. BAILEY & CO.
" BANKER & CO.
" BENJAMIN, KELLY & POTTS.
" F. BLACKHEAD & CO.
" BRADLEY & CO.
MR. P. BREWITT.
MESSRS. BUTTERFIELD & SWIRE.
MR. B. BYRAMJEE.
MESSRS. CALDBECK, MACGREGOR & CO.
" CARLOWITZ & CO.
" CAWASJEE, PALANJEE & CO.
HON. C. P. CHATER, C.M.G.
MR. W. DANBY.
MESSRS. S. J. DAVID & CO.
" DEACON & HASTINGS.
" DENNYS & BOWLEY.
" DODWELL & CO., LD.
MR. C. EWENS.
MR. J. J. FRANCIS, K.C.
MESSRS. GIBB, LIVINGSTON & CO.
" GILMAN & CO.
" GROSSMANN & CO.
MR. D. HASKELL.
MESSRS. HOLLIDAY, WISE & CO.
MR. HO FOOK.
MR. HO TUNG.
MESSRS. HOTZ & JACOB & CO.
" HUGHES & HOUGH.
" J. D. HUMPHREYS & SON.
" W. G. HUMPHREYS & CO.
" J. D. HUTCHISON & CO.
" JARDINE, MATHESON & CO.
" JEBSEN & CO.
" JOHNSON, STOKES & MASTER.
DR. JORDAN.
MESSRS. JOSEPH & CO.
MESSRS. KRUSE & CO.
" LAI HING HONG.
" DOUGLAS LAPRAIK & CO.
MR. G. P. LAMMERT.
MR. L. A. LEVY, (absent.)
MESSRS. LANE, CRAWFORD & CO.
" LAUTS, WEGENER & CO.
" P. LEMAIRE & CO.
" LINSTEAD & DAVIS.
" W. R. LOXLEY & CO.
" LUTGENS, EINSTMANN & CO.
" McEWEN, FRICKEL & CO.
" McGREGOR BROTHERS & GOW.
MR. A. R. MARTY.
MESSRS. MELCHERS & CO.
" MEYER & CO.
" WM. MEYERINK & CO.
MR. J. R. MICHAEL.
MESSRS. MING KEE HONG.
" N. MODY & CO.
MR. H. N. MODY.
DR. J. W. NOBLE.
MESSRS. E. PABANEY & CO.
" H. PRICE & CO.
" PUNCHARD, LOWTHER & CO.
" RADECKER & CO.
MR. E. C. RAY.
MESSRS. REISS & CO.
MR. A. H. RENNIE.
MESSRS. REUTER, BRÖCKELMANN & CO.
MR. EDWARD ROBINSON.
MESSRS. SANDER, WIELER & CO.
" DAVID SASSOON, SONS & CO.
" E. D. SASSOON & CO.
" SHEWAN, TOMES & CO.
" SIEMSSEN & CO.
" H. SKOTT & CO.

LIST OF MEMBERS,—*Continued.*

MESSRS. SMITH, BELL & Co.
" GEO. R. STEVENS & Co.
" STEWART BROS.
MR. A. G. STOKES.
MESSRS. TATA & Co.
" TURNER & Co.
MESSRS. VERNON & SMYTH.
" WENDT & Co.
" HARRY WICKING & Co.
MR. R. C. WILCOX.
MESSRS. WY SING HONG.

PUBLIC COMPANIES.

THE BANK OF CHINA AND JAPAN, LIMITED.
LE BANQUE DE L'INDO-CHINE.
THE CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY COMPANY.
THE CANTON INSURANCE OFFICE, LIMITED.
THE CHARTERED BANK OF INDIA, AUSTRALIA & CHINA.
THE CHINA FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE CHINA MERCHANTS' STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY.
THE CHINA SUGAR REFINING COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE CHINA TRADERS' INSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE DEUTSCHE ASIATISCHE BANK.
THE EAST ASIATIC TRADING CO. (OSTASIATISCHE HANDELS-GESELLSCHAFT.)
THE GREEN ISLAND CEMENT COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE HAMBURG-AMERIKA LINIE.
THE HONGKONG, CANTON & MACAO STEAM-BOAT COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE HONGKONG & CHINA GAS COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE HONGKONG FIRE INSURANCE COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE HONGKONG & KOWLOON WHARF & GODOWN COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE HONGKONG LAND INVESTMENT & AGENCY COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE HONGKONG ROPE MANUFACTURING COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE HONGKONG & SHANGHAI BANKING CORPORATION.
THE HONGKONG & WHAMPOA DOCK COMPANY, LIMITED.
THE IMPERIAL BANK OF CHINA.
THE MERCANTILE BANK OF INDIA, LIMITED.
THE COMPAGNIE DES MESSAGERIES MARITIMES.
THE MITSUI BUSSAN KAISHA.
THE NATIONAL BANK OF CHINA, LIMITED.
THE NIPPON YUSEN KAISHA.
THE PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY.
THE SHELL TRANSPORT AND TRADING COMPANY.
THE SPERRY FLOUR COMPANY OF SAN FRANCISCO.
THE STANDARD OIL COMPANY OF NEW YORK.
THE UNION INSURANCE SOCIETY OF CANTON, LIMITED.
THE YOKOHAMA SPECIE BANK, LIMITED.
THE AGENCY { PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY. / OCCIDENTAL & ORIENTAL STEAMSHIP COMPANY. / TOYO KISEN KAISHA.
EASTERN EXTENSION, AUSTRALASIA & CHINA TELEGRAPH COMPANY, LD.
WATKINS COMPANY, LIMITED.

OFFICERS OF THE HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

From date of Formation in 1861 to 1901.

Year.	*Chairman.*	*Vice-Chairman.*	*Secretary.*
1861	Alexander Percival	W. Walkinshaw	J. Johnson.
1862	James Macandrew	C. W. Murray	J. C. Baldwin.
1863	J. J. Mackenzie	C. F. Still	J. C. Baldwin.
1864	H. B. Gibb	H. B. Lemann	J. C. Baldwin.
1865	H. B. Lemann	H. B. Gibb	J. C. Baldwin.
1866	John Dent	P. Ryrie	Edward Norton.
1867	P. Ryrie	W. Nissen	Edward Norton.
1868	P. Ryrie	G. J. Helland	J. W. Wood.
1869	W. J. Bryans	G. J. Helland	J. W. Wood.
1870	W. Keswick	J. B. Taylor	A. Noel Blakeman.
1871	P. Ryrie	A. Zimmern	A. Noel Blakeman.
1872	P. Ryrie	L. Kahn	Ed. Baker, *Acting.*
1873	P. Ryrie	L. Kahn	A. Noel Blakeman.
1874	P. Ryrie	James Greig	A. Noel Blakeman.
1875	P. Ryrie	James Greig	A. Noel Blakeman.
1876	P. Ryrie	W. Keswick	N. B. Dennys.
1877	W. Keswick	H. H. Nelson	H. L. Dennys.
1878	W. Keswick	H. L. Dalrymple	E. George.
1879	W. Keswick	H. H. Nelson	E. George.
1880	W. Keswick	H. H. Nelson	E. George.
1881	W. Keswick	P. Ryrie	E. George.
1882	F. B. Johnson	H. L. Dalrymple	E. George.
1883	F. B. Johnson	P. Ryrie	E. George.
1884	W. Keswick	P. Ryrie	H. M. Baily.
1885	W. Keswick	P. Ryrie	H. M. Baily.
1886	P. Ryrie	A. P. MacEwen	H. M. Baily.
1887	P. Ryrie	A. P. MacEwen	H. U. Jeffries.
1888	P. Ryrie	J. Bell Irving	H. U. Jeffries.
1889	P. Ryrie	J. Bell Irving	F. Henderson.
1890	E. Mackintosh	A. P. MacEwen	F. Henderson.
1891	E. Mackintosh	J. J. Keswick	F. Henderson.
1892	E. Mackintosh	J. J. Keswick	Adam Lind, *Acting.*
1893	J. J. Keswick	A. G. Wood	F. Henderson.
1894	J. J. Keswick	E. Mackintosh	F. Henderson.
1895	A. G. Wood	A. McConachie	F. Henderson.
1896	A. McConachie	Herbert Smith	R. C. Wilcox.
1897	R. M. Gray	Herbert Smith	R. C. Wilcox.
1898	R. M. Gray	Herbert Smith	R. C. Wilcox.
1899	R. M. Gray	A. McConachie	R. C. Wilcox.
1900	R. M. Gray	J. J. Keswick	R. C. Wilcox.
1901	Sir Thomas Jackson	C. S. Sharp	R. C. Wilcox.

CHAMBER'S REPRESENTATIVES IN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

Date of Election.	*Name of Representative.*	*How Elected.*
1884	Thomas Jackson	Elected 2nd January.
1886	Alexander Palmer MacEwen	Elected 27th April, Mr. Jackson on leave.
1887	Alexander Palmer MacEwen	Elected 17th September, on retirement of Mr. Jackson.
1888	Bendyshe Layton	Elected 22nd May, Mr. MacEwen on leave.
1890	Thomas Henderson Whitehead	Elected 18th September, on resignation of Mr. MacEwen.
1894	Alexander McConachie	Elected 9th June, Mr. Whitehead on leave.
1896	Thomas Henderson Whitehead	Re-elected 19th September, on expiry of term.
1900	Herbert Smith	Elected 30th April, Mr Whitehead on leave.
1900	John Thurburn	Elected 18th June, on resignation of Mr. H. Smith.

RULES AND REGULATIONS.

I. That the Society be styled THE HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

II. That the object of the Chamber shall be to watch over and protect the general interests of Commerce, to collect information on all matters of interest to the Mercantile Community, and to use every means within its power for the removal of evils, the redress of grievances, and the promotion of the common good; to communicate with Authorities and others thereupon; to form a code of practice, whereby the transaction of business may be simplified and facilitated; to receive references, and to arbitrate between disputants—the decisions in such reference to be recorded for future guidance.

III. That all Mercantile Firms and persons engaged or interested in the Trade of China shall be eligible for admission as Members in the manner hereafter described, and on payment of $50 for Firms, and $15 for single individuals for the current year, and a like Annual Subscription, payable in advance on 1st January.

IV. That candidates for admission proposed by one Member and seconded by another shall be elected at the yearly Meeting by a majority of votes of the Members then present, or in the interval, by the Committee, subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

V. That voting by Proxy, or by Members whose Subscriptions are in arrear, be not allowed, and that not more than one Member of the same Firm be allowed to vote on the same occasion.

VI. That in the absence from the Colony of all the Partners in a Firm, their Representative by Power of Attorney shall be entitled to vote.

VII. That any Member may be expelled from the Chamber on the proposition of the Committee communicated to all the Members, and considered at a General Meeting, provided that not fewer than two-thirds of those present vote for the expulsion.

VIII. That any number of Members not less than 10 shall be held to constitute a General Meeting called in conformity with the rules of the Chamber, whether yearly or special.

IX. That the Business and Funds of the Chamber be managed by a Committee of Nine Members, consisting of Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Seven Members, to be elected annually, at the yearly General Meeting of the Chamber. Four to form a quorum, and the Chairman in case of equality to have the casting vote in addition to his own.

X. That the Committee shall meet at least once a month, on such day as may be fixed for the transaction of business, and at other times when summoned by the Chairman, or in his absence by the Vice-Chairman. The proceedings to be laid on the table for the inspection of Members, subject to such regulations as the Committee may deem expedient. In cases of the non-attendance of the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, a Chairman to be chosen by the Members present.

XI. That in case of a vacancy in the Committee, it shall be filled up *pro tempore* by the Committee until the next General Meeting; and that they have the power to appoint a Sub-Committee from their own number for any purpose whatever.

XII. That a paid Secretary be elected by the Committee, such election to be subject to confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting.

XIII. That the Annual General Meeting of the Chamber shall be held in the month of February (or as soon thereafter as may be found convenient) of each year; and that Special Meetings shall be called by the Chairman, or in his absence by the Vice-Chairman, on the requisition of any Five Members of the Chamber, to be held within ten days subsequent to the receipt of such requisition.

XIV. That all important questions affecting the Trade of the Port, and its Political or Commercial relations with the Empire of China or with other States, may be discussed at the Yearly General Meeting or Special General Meeting for that purpose convened, in the manner provided for by Rule XIII.

XV. That the Committee be empowered to frame By-laws, which shall at once come into force, but must be presented for confirmation at the next ensuing General Meeting of the Chamber; and being so confirmed, shall be equally binding with these Rules upon all Members.

XVI. That the Funds of the Chamber shall be paid into one of the Banks under an account to be opened by the Committee, and that all Cheques shall be signed by the Secretary to the Chamber, countersigned by the Chairman or Vice-Chairman, or in their absence by one of the Committee; that all disbursements shall be sanctioned by the Committee at their ordinary Meetings, and that an account shall be audited by two Members of the Chamber and laid before the yearly General Meeting.

XVII. That a yearly Report of the proceedings be prepared, and, after being approved at a General Meeting, printed and circulated.

XVIII. That the above Rules be added to or altered only by a majority of the Members of the Chamber present at a General Meeting, ten days' notice having been given of the proposed alteration.

XIX. That the foregoing Rules be printed, and an authenticated copy, subscribed by each Member on admission, be kept as part of the records of the Chamber.

BY-LAWS.

I. The Office shall be open daily from Noon to 1 o'clock P.M., when the Secretary shall be in attendance, and ready to communicate with any Member requiring information or access to the Records of the Chamber.

II. The Secretary shall attend all Meetings (including those of the Arbitration Committee, if required), keep a journal of all proceedings, take charge of all documents, keep the accounts of the Chamber, collect Statistics, prepare Statements of Trade, conduct and keep copies of correspondence, and attend to such other duties as may be required by the Committee.

III. All Communications shall be received and answered through the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, or Secretary.

IV. No documents belonging to the Chamber shall be removed during Office hours, nor shall any minute of its proceedings be made public without an order of the Committee.

V. Notice of any proposition or business to be laid before the yearly General Meeting, or any Special Meeting, shall be given to the Secretary at least forty-eight hours before the Meeting, who, in the circular calling such Meeting, will state the business or proposition, and by whom to be brought forward.

VI. The means to provide a suitable Establishment, and to defray expenses in addition to the Subscriptions fixed by Rule 3, shall be raised in the following manner:—By the sale of Statements of Trade, by fees on Arbitration and References, by fees for certified copies of the Records and other Documents in the Archives of the Chamber, and by voluntary gifts and contributions either in money, maps, books, or anything which may be useful to the Institution.

VII. The Committee shall appoint every year five from their number, three of whom in regular succession shall be the Acting Committee, to decide on all cases submitted to the Arbitration of the Chamber, whose functions shall continue so long as any business brought before them during their period of service is undecided.

VIII. The Members of the Arbitration Committee shall be entitled to a Fee of not less than $5, and not more than $20 each, and the Chamber to a Fee (in addition) of not less than $10, and not more than $100, on every case submitted to the arbitration of the Chamber. The amount to be regulated by the Arbitration Committee, according to the importance of the case and the time occupied therein, subject to an appeal to the General Committee, whose decision on the amount shall be final.

IX. The Disputants in an Arbitration case shall be held to guarantee the fees jointly and severally to the Chamber.

X. The Arbitration Committee shall appoint its own Chairman and confine its functions to cases when its intervention or advice is requested, and on no occasion shall it proceed with any case unless all the parties subscribe a Bond making the award a Rule of the Supreme Court. Printed forms of such Bonds legally prepared, shall be kept for the information of Members who may have occasion to resort to the Chamber for Arbitration: and the Committee shall not arbitrate upon, nor take any cognizance of, any dispute whatever, unless one of the parties interested therein be a Member of the Chamber.

XI. That in the event of any question as to the construction or application of these By-laws, the General Committee shall have power to decide the same, submitting the matter to the next General Meeting of the Chamber for its final decision.

SCALE OF COMMISSIONS AND BROKERAGES

adopted by the Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce,

at the half-yearly Meeting held on April 30th, 1872.

COMMISSIONS.

Purchasing or selling Tea, Raw Silk, and Cotton,	3	per cent.
„ any of above, if as returns for Goods sold,	2½	„
„ or selling Opium,	2	„
„ or selling all other Goods and Produce, Ships and Real Estate,	5	„
„ and selling Shares or Stocks,	1	„
Inspecting Tea or Silk,	1	„
Guaranteeing Sales,	2½	„
„ Remittances,	1	„
Drawing or endorsing Bills of Exchange,	1	„
„ or negotiating Bills of Exchange without recourse,	½	„
Purchasing or realising Bullion or Bills of Exchange,	½	„
Remitting the Proceeds of Bullion or Bills of Exchange,	½	„
Paying and receiving Money in Current Account,	1	„
„ Ship's Disbursements,	2½	„
Collecting Freight,	2½	„
Obtaining Freight or Charter,	5	„
„ „ „ and collecting same Freight,	6	„
Adjusting Insurance Claims on Amount Recovered,	2½	„
Effecting Insurance, on the Insured Amount,	¼	„
Prosecuting or defending successfully Claims, either at Law or by Arbitration,	5	„
Prosecuting or defending unsuccessfully,	2½	„
Managing Estates and collecting Rents,	5	„
Transhipping and forwarding Jewellery, and Bullion,	¼	„
Forwarding or transhipping Cargo,	1	„
Transhipping or forwarding Opium,	$2	per chest.
Goods withdrawn or re-shipped,	½	Commission.
Granting Letters of Credit,	1	per cent.
For doing ship's business when no inward or outward Commission is earned,	20	cents per Register ton.

The conversion into Hongkong currency of sterling freight inward to Hongkong, payable in Hongkong, shall, unless otherwise stipulated, be made at the rate for Bank Bills on London payable on demand; and the rate ruling at the close of a mail shall be the rate applicable to such purpose during the subsequent week.

BROKERAGES.

Bills and Bullion	⅛ per cent.	Payable by	Seller.
Produce and General Merchandise,	½ „	„	„
Fire Arms,	1 „	„	„
For negotiating and completing Charters and procuring Freight,	1 „	„	by Ship.

TARIFF OF BROKERAGES

To be charged to Buyer and Seller,

ADOPTED BY

THE STOCKBROKERS' ASSOCIATION OF HONGKONG,

20th January, 1901.

Banks—	
China & Japan, Ltd., ordinary...	25c.
Do. deferred ...	$1.00
Hongkong & Shanghai.....	50c.
National Bank of China, Ltd....	50c.
Do. Founders'...	$1.00
Loans & Debentures—	
Chinese Loan '86 E.	⅛ %
H.K. & Kowloon Wharf 5½ %	⅛ %
H.K. High-Level Tramways ..	⅛ %
Humphreys' Estates	⅛ %
China Provident L. & M. Co.	⅛ %
Insurances—	
Canton	50c.
China Fire.....	50c.
China Traders'	50c.
Hongkong Fire.....	$1.00
North China.....	$1.00
Straits Marine	25c.
Union	50c.
Yangtsze	50c.
Land & Building—	
H.K. Land Investment	50c.
Kowloon Land Investment.....	25c.
Humphreys' Estate	15c.
West Point Building	50c.
Steamship Companies—	
China Mutuals	50c.
China & Manila	50c.
Douglas S.S. Co.	50c.
Hongkong, Canton, & Macao ...	25c.
Indo-China S. Navigation	50c.
Star Ferry.....	10c.
Shell Transports	$5.00
Mining—	
Queen Mines.....	5c.*
Mining—	
Charbonnages	$1.25†
Jelebu	10c.
Olivers	10c.
Punjom ordinary	10c.
Do. preference	5c.
Raubs.....	20c.
Miscellaneous—	
Amoy Dock Co., Ltd.	15c.
Bell's Asbestos	15c.
Campbell, Moore & Co.	10c.
Carmichael & Co., Ltd.	25c.
China Borneo	25c.
China Providents	15c.
China Sugar	50c.
Dairy Farm	10c.
Ewo Cotton Mills.....	50c.
Fenwick & Co., Geo.	25c.
Green Island Cement	25c.
Hongkong & China Bakery ...	50c.
Hongkong & China Gas	50c.
H'kong Cotton Spg. W. & D. Co.	50c.
Hongkong Electric	10c.
Hongkong Hotel	50c.
Hongkong H.-L. Tramways ...	50c.
Hongkong Ice	50c.
Hongkong & K. Wharf & G. ...	50c.
Hongkong Rope	50c.
Hongkong & W'poa. Dock	50c.
International Cotton Mills.....	50c.
Laou Kung Mow Cotton Mills...	50c.
Luzon Sugar.....	50c.
Soy Chee Cotton Spinning Co.	$2.50
United Asbestos Oriental Agency.	10c.
Wanchai Warehouse & Storage	50c.
Watkins, Limited	15c.
Watson & Co., A. S.	15c.
Yah Loong Cotton Spinning Co.	50c.

All Stocks, Market Value $1 and under, as follows:—

$1 and not under 50 cents.....10 cents per Share.
under 50 cents but not under 25 cents..... 5 cents per Share.
under 25 cents .... 2½ cents per Share.

N.B.—On all stocks, on which the brokerage is fixed at 50 cents per share by the above list, and the market value of which falls below $20 per share, the brokerage will be 25 cents per share, below $10 per share, the brokerage will be 15 cents per share; and if the stock drops under $5 per share, only 10 cents per share brokerage will be charged.

On all stocks, on which the brokerage is fixed at 25 cents per share by the above list, and the market value of which falls below $10 per share the brokerage will be 15 cents per share; and if the stock falls below $5 per share, the brokerage will be 10 cents per share only.

* If the price reaches $1½ per share, the Brokerage will be 10 cents per share.
† If $600 and over, the Brokerage will be $2.50 per share.

MINUTES of the Yearly General Meeting of the HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, *held on Monday, the 11th March, 1901, at 3 p.m., for the purpose of receiving the Report of the Committee and passing the Secretary's Accounts for the year ending the 31st December, 1900.*

Present:

Hon. R. M. GRAY (Chairman), Hon. J. J. KESWICK (Vice-Chairman), Mr. A. HAUPT, Sir THOMAS JACKSON, Knt., Messrs. D. R. LAW, R. L. RICHARDSON, N. A. SIEBS, C. S. SHARP, (Committee), Hon. J. THURBURN (*ex officio* member of Committee), R. C. WILCOX (Secretary), F. MAITLAND, HENRY BIRKETT, A. FINKE, G. H. MEDHURST, A. MEURER, D. M. MOSES, G. W. F. PLAYFAIR, H. M. MEHTA, GEO. L. TOMLIN, J. C. BERGANDAHL, R. SHEWAN, A. J. RAYMOND, G. DE CHAMPEAUX, J. A. MACKAY, L. BERINDOAGUE, MURRAY STEWART, A. SHELTON HOOPER, ED. ROBINSON, E. W. RUTTER, and T. F. HOUGH.

The SECRETARY having read the notice convening the meeting,

The CHAIRMAN said—Before proceeding to business I will first, with your permission, confirm the minutes of the last annual meeting and the special meeting of the same day, and also of the special general meeting of 18th June last.

This was accordingly done.

The CHAIRMAN then said—Gentlemen: Conformably with our usual custom, I propose, with your permission, to take the Committee's Report and Secretary's Accounts for the year 1900 as read. Before proceeding to remark upon the business matters which have occupied the attention of the Chamber during that year, I must dwell for a moment on the loss which has been sustained not only by the whole British nation, but also by all those whose interests are in any way bound up with Great Britain, in the death of our beloved Queen, whose influence for good has been a blessing to the nation for 64 years. We have mourned her loss most sincerely and, feeling confident that they were giving expression to the unspoken wish of the whole

commercial community, your Committee made the suggestion to the Government that the day fixed for Her Majesty's funeral should be observed as a day of general mourning, all public offices being closed, and business suspended. This was adopted and the complete suspension of business and universal mourning fitly marked the affection and esteem in which our late Queen was regarded by the entire population.

Our report, you will have noticed, deals with many subjects, but so far as matters affecting the internal trade with China is concerned it is almost a blank. The troubles in North China, which will render memorable the closing year of the past century in the history of foreign relations with the Celestial Empire, caused a practical suspension of the diplomatic intercourse with the Chinese Government, which has fled to Hsianfu, the distant capital of Shensi. Upon the dreadful massacres and outrages on Europeans, which culminated in the historic siege and heroic defence of the Legations at Peking, I need not enlarge ; the details of that anxious time are too well known, too fresh in your recollection, to require recapitulation. Nothing more monstrous than the attack on the Legations in Peking is recorded in modern history. It is a matter for thankfulness that the movement against foreigners inaugurated in the North did not spread through the central and southern provinces, where the viceroys have displayed coolness and discretion, and have saved the situation. But although we may congratulate ourselves that the anti-foreign movement was confined to the northern provinces and was not a national uprising, still the condition of the southern provinces leaves much to be desired, and no room for doubt exists that the country in the Canton Delta is a very hotbed of piracy and blackmailing, which, in spite of certain fallacious reasoning to the contrary, cannot but act prejudicially upon trade, and which it should be the object of the Canton Government to put a stop to without further delay. It is satisfactory to reflect that the suggestion put forward by certain Powers for the withdrawal of the Allied Troops from Peking in August last was not carried out, and that the powers have presented a united front in their determination to insist upon the punishment of the guilty officials. Protracted and wearisome negotiations have now apparently resulted in the reluctant acceptance by the Chinese Government of the terms formulated by the Foreign Ministers, and it is understood that the Emperor and Court intend shortly to return to Peking, where it is to be hoped they will in future be free from the evil influence which has poisoned their councils during recent years. When it comes to actual settlement, there is

reason to hope that the terms will include the arrangement of all outstanding questions, claims and grievances, the removal of illegal duties on imports, the the abolition of injurious monopolies, and cessation from the continual harassment of trade by squeezing mandarins. Foremost among these we look to and must press for the abolition of *lekin* and the various exactions levied on foreign goods after leaving the Treaty Port. What we have specially to contend for is the imposition of one duty on landing which will frank the goods to any portion of the interior. Another change required, and we trust the Foreign Ministers will insist upon this, is the abolition of the dual system of customs which has for so many years had a baneful effect upon the riverine trade. The Imperial Maritime Customs should be entrusted with the collection of *all* customs duties, and a proportion of the revenue received, in the ratio of their individual trade, should be paid over to the various provincial governments to compensate them for the change. All this is a matter of arrangement, and if carried out would result in a gain to both the Imperial and the Provincial Exchequers by saving a vast amount of leakage and wastefnl collection, while it would at the same time, by regulating the taxation on the merchandise, lead to a large development of trade in both imports and exports. [Applause.]

You will observe that during the year a good many subjects of local importance have come up and have been dealt with by the Committee. Among these may be mentioned the Amendment of the Bankruptcy Ordinance, which was recommended and adopted. Also the registration of the partners in Chinese firms, which your Committee advocated concurrently, with the result that the Governor has appointed a committee to consider the advisability of introducing a Bill into the Legislative Council for the purpose. Mr. Robert Shewan has been appointed a member of this committee, as representative of the Chamber, and it is intended to thoroughly thresh out the subject. There can be no doubt that the measure is required for the prevention of fraud, and its introduction will, I trust, be greeted with satisfaction by the bulk of the Chinese trading community. An influential petition in favour of such registration was presented by Chinese merchants and traders here to the Registrar-General in 1882, and the reasons for that action obtain still. It will no doubt be one of the duties of the Committee to ascertain the views of the Chinese on the question at the present time.

A proposal for the creation of a monopoly for the collection of ashes in the harbour which was submitted to the Committee by the Government

seemed to them a rather retrogade step, and calculated to aggravate the evils it was hoped it would abolish, and I believe that the Government have recognised the cogency of the arguments of the Chamber on this subject and abandoned the idea.

An opinion was also asked by Government as to the desirability of improving the lights at the approaches to the harbour by the substitution of the Cape D'Aguilar for the Green Island light, and that of Green Island for the one displayed on Cape Collinson. The Committee strongly approved the project, but went somewhat further and suggested that both lights should be of an occulting or flash description instead of merely fixed lights, which have on occasions been mistaken for ship's lights. It is understood that the question has been referred home for expert opinion, but the fact remains that nothing has yet been done, which forms another example of how a useful measure can be needlessly delayed.

A suggestion having been offered by Mr. MARSHALL for the better control of the Chinese masters and engineers of steam-launches by adopting a system of continuous record certificates, the question was brought to the notice of the Government, who appointed a Committee in October last to investigate it. Messrs. MARSHALL and LAW represented the Chamber thereon, the result being that a record is now kept in the Harbour Office setting forth the dates of each engagement and discharge of each certificated native master or engineer, together with the reason for discharge and all complaints and charges against him, together with any punishments inflicted by the Harbour Master or Marine Magistrate. This measure was urgently needed to establish a check on discharged and worthless men from obtaining immediate employment after being dismissed for neglect, dishonesty, or incompetency.

Quarantine restrictions have again subjected the shipping trade to a very serious loss, which loss, owing to the annual recrudescence of the plague, appears likely to prove a permanent impost of a most oppressive character. The establishment in this Port of a Fumigating and Disinfecting Bureau has been made the occasion of an effort to secure some relaxation from the Government of the Straits Settlements of the restrictions imposed on the Chinese passenger-traffic with the ports of that colony.

In referring to the Fourth Congress of the Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, held in London in June last, at which a great variety of interesting questions of immense importance to the trade of the British

Empire were discussed, our cordial thanks for his effectual advocacy are due to Sir THOMAS JACKSON, who most efficiently represented this Chamber, and took charge of all the resolutions proposed by the Chamber, Mr. WHITEHEAD being unable to reach London in time to fulfil the part which he had been good enough to undertake. [Hear, hear, and applause.] In connection with the subjects that were discussed at the congress, it is gratifying to learn that the much vexed question of the reduction of cable rates has made some substantial progress, the companies, yielding to the pressure of public opinion, having decided to gradually reduce the tariff from 4*s.* 9*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per word, subject to the standard traffic being maintained. This is a step in the right direction, however influenced, and it will probably result in any temporary loss being fully made good by an increased traffic.

Other subjects of interest dealt with in the report hardly require a lengthy reference. The contract between the British Imperial Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for carrying the Canadian Mails has, after negotiations, been renewed for five years. [Hear, hear.] Further correspondence has been carried on with the Government with regard to the Eastern Mail subsidy, with what result we have yet to learn, also with the Colonial Office with reference to the Canadian Preferential Tariff, and with the Amoy Chamber and the British Minister at Tokyo on the subject of the discriminating duty levied on tea in Formosa, with a view to diverting the trade from its accustomed channel, through Amoy and Hongkong, to Japanese ports.

At our last annual meeting Mr. HERBERT SMITH was elected to fill the vacancy in the Legislative Council caused by Mr. WHITEHEAD'S absence on leave, but he resigned in the course of two months, when the Chamber elected Mr. J. THURBURN, who still represents us, pending the return of Mr. WHITEHEAD.

There have been few changes in the Committee since its election. Mr. HERBERT SMITH was replaced by Mr. D. R. LAW, and Mr. H. M. BEVIS by Sir THOMAS JACKSON on his return from England. You will have to elect a new Committee to-day. Several of the present members do not seek re-election, amongst whom I may mention Mr. D. R. LAW, and myself, as I am leaving the colony next week.

In regard to the Secretaryship, I have only to tell you that the work of the Chamber has been carried through with the same care and energy that

we have become accustomed to from Mr. WILCOX for some years, and I do not think that I can say anything higher in his praise than that. [Applause.]

You will observe from the report that we have lost five members by resignation during the past year, three of whom have left or are leaving the colony, and we have gained three members, so the roll is being fairly maintained.

Our financial position has continued to improve, and since the report was drawn up a further sum of one thousand dollars has been added to the reserve fund, which now reaches the respectable figure of $14,000. [Hear, hear, and applause.]

In taking my leave of this Chamber of Commerce, while congratulating the members upon its vitality, I may venture to express the opinion that, so long as it does not travel out of its own sphere of watching over and protecting commercial interests, it will continue to be a valuable body for the Government of Hongkong to consult, and also be capable of exercising much influence for good on behalf of all foreign commercial interests in China. It has become apparent that all Governments recognize more clearly every year what an important factor commerce is in the affairs of nations, and while doing so are more inclined to listen to the opinions and views of those engaged in it. I do not recollect, gentlemen, any other point requiring remark from me now, but, before proposing the adoption of the report and accounts, the Committee will be glad to hear any questions or observations which members may desire to make. [Applause.]

After a pause, the CHAIRMAN said—There being no observations, I beg to propose the adoption of the report and accounts.

Mr. SHEWAN :—Gentlemen, it gives me very great pleasure cordially to second the adoption of the report of the Committee and the Secretary's accounts. I am glad to see from the report, that you have resisted what I may call some attempts at grandmotherly legislation which would, I think, have been detrimental to trade and hurtful to the business of this colony. On the other hand I am rather sorry to see that you appear to have agreed with the objections of the Postmaster-General to the Imperial penny postal rate—objections which, in spite of his pathetic lament over the loss of some $19,000, seem to me to be rather small-minded. Your representative at the Congress of Chambers of Commerce in London was Sir THOMAS JACKSON, and it goes without saying that that part of the work was well done. [Hear,

hear.] The amendment to the Bankruptcy Ordinance will no doubt prove very valuable, but I was rather amused when I read it and saw its use of the term "partners." I wondered if the Committee had the same opinion as myself when I attended the first sitting of the Commission to which you did me the honour to nominate me as to the registration of Chinese firms. I supposed then that the word "partner" was clearly understood, but I found to my surprise that the legal profession, I suppose to enhance the value of their services, have not yet made up their minds as to what constitutes a partner in a firm. It is ordinarily understood that when a man puts money in a firm and receives a share of the profits in return he is a partner. To be told that this does not make a man a partner is a little puzzling. Only lawyers should use terms which they cannot define and which only lead to further litigation and to the general bedevilment of our time, temper, and money. It is no use crying over spilt milk, I suppose, but I cannot help feeling that the Committee might have protested much more strongly than they have done against the way in which the interests of this colony are being injured by what I cannot help calling the selfishness of the naval and military authorities. [Hear, hear.] I cannot believe that there was any reason why our fine Praya should have been spoilt and the east cut off from the west by a dock which is being built in the very heart of the town. Our naval and military establishments occupy some of the most valuable sites in a crowded district. Even to-day a great economy could be effected by their transfer, bag and baggage, to the other side of the harbour. I suppose there must be a new system of tactics. It certainly is new to me that the defenders of a city should hide themselves in the middle of the city. Hitherto they have generally been on the outskirts to meet their enemy. [Hear, hear.] In other respects, gentlemen, I think the Committee have earned our thanks. The year's record is one of work very well done. Politically, we know the Chamber can do but little. We live in a Crown colony, and are governed by officials who have so often to fill other acting appointments that they have little opportunity to take any interest in what they have to do, and who distrust their own laws so much that they have a protector of Chinese amongst their number, though what the Chinese have to be specially protected against in a British colony I have not been able to understand. [Laughter and applause.] There was a time when an English statesman could proudly declare that wherever an Englishman went the strong arm and the watchful eye of England were above him, but *tempora mutantur et homines*, and to-

day we poor merchants in China feel that while the watchful eye can see no further than Afric's golden sands, we have been thumped on the head by "the mailed fist" of Germany, and kicked in another part of our anatomy by the hobnailed boot of America. [Laughter.] Before I sit down I would like to pay a tribute of respect to our departing Chairman. It is the fashion in Hongkong to give testimonials to every one who goes away, but Mr. GRAY has earned some testimonial in some shape or form. He has worked hard, and taken a deep and sincere interest in the work of the Chamber during the past five years in which he has occupied the chair. I think we all owe him a great debt of gratitude for the time which, busy man though he is, he has given us so freely. [Applause.] There is nothing more for me to say except that we must all aim at getting a better representation on the Government of the colony. We must agitate, agitate, agitate, until we realize the ideal of government of the people, by the people, and for the people. [Applause.]

The CHAIRMAN:—I beg to thank Mr. SHEWAN very cordially for his kind words. It is very gratifying indeed to find one's work appreciated. The work has been a pleasure to me, but after all I have been only the mouth-piece of the Committee, assisted greatly as I have been by the help of the Secretary, in having the services of whom I congratulate the Chamber thoroughly. [Applause.]

The resolution was carried nnanimously.

The CHAIRMAN :—The confirmation of the list of new members is the next business before us. I beg to propose that the election of the following new members be confirmed :—

The Hongkong Rope Manufacturing Company, Limited.

The Green Island Cement Company, Limited.

Messrs. Watkins, Limited.

The motion was seconded and carried.

Mr. HOUGH :—Is it in order to propose new members without giving giving notice ?

The CHAIRMAN :—I think there is no objection to the proposal of new members at this meeting.

Mr. HOUGH :—Then I beg to propose Messrs. PUNCHARD, LOWTHER & Co. as member of this Chamber.

Mr. SHEWAN :—I beg to second that proposition.

The CHAIRMAN put the motion to the meeting, and on a show of hands declared it to be carried unanimously.

The CHAIRMAN :—The next business, gentlemen, is the election of a new General Committee. A ballot will be taken and you are requested to fill in the names on the papers which will be handed round to you.

The voting papers were then passed round the meeting, and on their being collected Messrs. MOSES and PLAYFAIR acted as scrutineers.

The CHAIRMAN then announced the following as the result of the ballot :—Sir THOMAS JACKSON, Chairman, Mr. C. S. SHARP, Vice-Chairman, Messrs. A. HAUPT, Hon. J. J. KESWICK, A. M. MARSHALL, W. POATE, R. L. RICHARDSON, N. A. SIEBS, and H. E. TOMKINS, members of the Committee.

This concluded the business of the meeting.

Report of the General Committee of the HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE *for the Year ending 31st December, 1900, for presentation to the Members at the Annual Meeting, to be held on Monday, the 11th March, 1901, at 3.00 p.m.*

Owing to the troubles in North China, which led to a suspension, for some time, of diplomatic relations with the Chinese Government, and which cannot be fully resumed until a settlement has been arrived at for the murders and hostilities of the past year, several questions of commercial interest, which have long engaged the attention of your Committee, have perforce been postponed. Many matters of importance to trade have, however, come under their notice, and received their careful consideration, with good effect in most cases, especially in local questions, the Colonial Government having shown a willingness to meet the views of the Chamber thereon.

Tariff Revision in China.

The contingent probability that the Revision of the Tariff would either be included in or follow the settlement of the terms of peace between China and the Treaty Powers, induced your Committee to address a communication in December last to the British Minister at Peking, reminding him of the promise of his predecessor (Sir CLAUDE MACDONALD) that no change in the Tariff would take place without previous consultation with the Chambers of Commerce at Hongkong and Shanghai. To this a reply was promptly received from Sir ERNEST SATOW to the effect that he would be glad to receive an expression of this Chamber's views at an early date, although it was probable the revision of the Tariff would not come under immediate consideration. (Appendix A.)

The Crisis in China.

In August last a report having been circulated by Reuter that it had been proposed by certain Powers to withdraw the Allied Troops from Peking before the punishment of the guilty officials had been secured or a stable Government re-established, this Chamber despatched a telegram to the London Chamber of Commerce strongly deprecating such action and asking it to

bring the matter to the notice of the Foreign Office, following up the telegram with a letter enlarging on the evils that would follow such a step. The Chairman of the East India and China Trade Section of the London Chamber (Mr. W. KESWICK, M.P.) lost no time in forwarding a copy of the telegram to Lord SALISBURY, and vigorously supported the protest. To what extent this representation, with others of similar tenor, influenced the British Government, your Committee of course have no means of knowing, but it is none the less satisfactory to note that the suggestion for the withdrawal of the Troops was without effect, and they still remain on guard in the Chinese Capital pending settlement of the terms of peace and the re-establishment in that city of orderly rule. (Appendix B.)

The Canadian Pacific Mail Contract.

An expression of opinion as to the desirability of the renewal of the contract between the British Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the carriage of mails from Hongkong by way of the Pacific and Vancouver at its expiry in May next, your Committee, at its meeting on the 18th April, passed a resolution in favour of the renewal of the contract, if possible with an accelerated and fortnightly service. It is satisfactory now to learn that the contract with the Company has been renewedb y the Imperial Government for a period of five years. (Appendix C.)

The Shipment of Japanese so-called Safety Matches.

Two cases of fire on board steamers having occurred in the harbour through the spontaneous combustion of so-called safety matches made in Japan, the Acting Harbour Master submitted to the Government the advisability of declaring these matches dangerous goods and restricting the carriage of them to vessels not carrying more than twenty passengers. The suggestion was referred to the Chamber, and your Committee, after consideration, in view of the interference with trade involved, deprecated this action until representations had been made to the manufacturers with a view to exercising more care in the production of the matches. This was done through communications to the various Chambers of Commerce in Japan, and no further complaints appear to have been made of the goods as dangerous. (Appendix D.)

Delay in Forwarding Mails to Manila.

Postal grievances, though not wholly abolished, have been less conspicuous during the past year. In April last a complaint was made by the Manila Chamber of Commerce of unnecessary delays in the forwarding of Mails on from Hongkong, and this was promptly transmitted to the Postmaster-General, by whom steps were taken to prevent a recurrence of the grievance, with apparently satisfactory results. (Appendix E.)

The Repression of Piracy on the West River.

Piracy is still rampant on the West River, and very recently a house-boat containing a party of foreigners from Canton was attacked and several of them wounded, while one of their native boatmen was killed, before the pirates were driven off. This, too, in spite of more frequent patrolling by gunboats of various nationalities. In April last a suggestion from Vice-Admiral Sir EDWARD SEYMOUR having been submitted to the Chamber for the selection of one route between Samshui and the sea by foreign steamers in order the more efficiently to protect it, this suggestion was laid before the Steamboat Companies, who selected the one most generally in use, viz., by Wangmoon, Sailam and Junction Channels and the West River between Kongmoon and Samshui, and the Naval Authorities accordingly adopted this route. (Appendix F.)

The Navigation of the West River at Lak-lao.

A foreign steamer having been stoned by the populace at Lak-lao when passing that place, the Viceroy, in reply to representations on the subject, stated that the river was tortuous and narrow at this point, and moreover crowded with boats, collisions with which were unavoidable if passed at full speed, and he suggested therefore that steamers should, when passing this town, slow down. This suggestion was recommended by Vice-Admiral SEYMOUR and was brought to the notice of the Steamboat Companies by the Committee. (Appendix G.)

Proposed Monopoly for the Collection of Ashes.

The erection in the Colony of Chinese monopolies has always been regarded by this Chamber with disapproval, and when the Government, having received a tender for the sole privilege of collecting ashes from steam vessels within the Harbour limits, sought the opinion of your Committee as to the desirability of creating such a monopoly, they strongly deprecated its creation, and the proposal was dropped. (Appendix H.)

The Reduction of Cable Rates.

The question, which was before the Fourth Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, at its sitting on the 29th June, when a strongly worded resolution was passed, has now advanced materially owing to the new Pacific cable having been decided upon and a tender for its construction accepted. At the last Annual Meeting of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, the Chairman announced that arrangements had been made for the gradual reduction of the tariff, subject to the standard traffic being maintained, from 4*s.* 9*d.* to 2*s.* 6*d.* per word. The laying of the new Pacific cable, which will, it is expected, be open to traffic at the end of the present or beginning of next year, has no doubt largely influenced this reduction in rates, which will prove very beneficial to trade in the Far East. (Appendices I & N.)

The Canadian Preferential Tariff.

With regard to this question, some further correspondence has passed with the Government, who in July last forwarded a letter from the Secretary of State for the Colonies calling attention to Section 10 of the Memorandum of the Preferential Tariff Regulations, stating that this seemed to him to meet the chief point raised by this Chamber. The Committee, while expressing their thanks for the information thus conveyed, urged that it brought the Colony no nearer the desired privilege, and repeated the request that Hongkong be placed on the list of Colonies entitled to share in the benefits of the Preferential Tariff levied by the Dominion Government on goods manufactured from local products. To this no reply has, so far, been received. (Appendix J.)

Hongkong Harbour Lights.

The Hongkong Government having had under consideration the advisability of transferring the light formerly exhibited at Cape D'Aguilar to the Green Island Lighthouse and the light at present on Green Island to Cape Collinson, with the view of improving these lights and thereby providing for the more efficient lighting of the approaches to the harbour, in August last requested the opinion of the Chamber upon the proposed transfers. The Committee, after inquiry and consideration, expressed the opinion that the advantages to be gained would greatly outweigh the cost, and added a recommendation in favour of the substitution of flash or revolving lights for the fixed ones hitherto employed in the lighthouses named. The change has

not yet been effected, but it is understood that a recommendation has been received from Trinity House in favour of the use of occulting lights, which will no doubt be substituted for those now in use. (Appendix K.)

Proposed Amendment of the Bankruptcy Laws.

In July last a judgment delivered by His Honour the Chief Justice in the Bankruptcy Court of Hongkong, in which it was laid down that, according to the provisions of the Bankruptcy Ordinance, 1891, Chinese traders or others non-resident in the Colony, although carrying on business therein under a firm's name either by themselves or in co-partnership with others, are beyond the reach of that enactment, made it apparent that the law as it stood did not afford that protection to creditors which was intended by its framers. The defect was brought to the attention of the Committee, who received most valuable assistance from the legal profession, and addressed the Government with a view to the amendment of the Ordinance, forwarding a draft Bill for the purpose, which Bill has been passed by the Legislative Council. (Appendix L.)

Proposed Registration of Partners in Chinese Firms.

In connection with, and as a corollary to, the Bill for the amendment of the Bankruptcy Ordinance, 1891, your Committee made a strong recommendation to the Government in favour of legislation to provide for the compulsory registration of the partners in Chinese hongs or firms trading in this Colony. His Excellency the Governor, recognising the importance of the question, has appointed a Committee to consider the advisability of introducing a Bill into the Legislative Council for the purpose, on which one member of the Chamber and its Representative in the Council have been selected to serve. Efforts were made a quarter of a century ago to secure the same object by legislation, but were abandoned for causes that no longer exercise the same effect. Your Committee are of opinion that a Bill to secure registration of partners in Chinese firms will now meet general approbation, not only the British and Foreign but also the Chinese community. (Appendix L.)

The Eastern Mail Subsidy.

Further communications on the question of the Colonial contribution to the subsidy paid to the P. & O. S. N. Co. for the Eastern Mail Service have passed, the Government forwarding to the Chamber on the 30th August a

copy of correspondence between the Colonial Office and the Treasury and of an award given by the Earl of MORLEY as Arbitrator upon the questions which arose as to the proportion of the cost of the service to be borne by the Government of India. The Chamber were also invited (if they so desired) to supplement the remarks made in their letter of the 5th June, 1897. This invitation was availed of by your Committee to emphasize and reiterate the arguments used against the mileage basis being adopted to estimate this Colony's share of the mail subsidy and to bring forward certain new arguments developed by events since their original protest was addressed to the Imperial Government. (Appendix M.)

Fourth Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire.

This Congress, which was held on the 26th to 29th June, 1900, and proved a great success, was attended by the Chamber's Delegate, Sir THOMAS JACKSON, Knt., who moved and spoke at length upon the Chamber's resolution on the Chinese Inland Waters Navigation Regulations on the 26th, moved the resolution in favour of a re-survey of Eastern Seas by the British surveying vessels on the 29th, and seconded the resolution moved by Sir EDWARD SASSOON in favour of a reduction in cable rates. The hearty thanks of the Chamber are due to Sir THOMAS JACKSON for the readiness with which he stepped into the breach and took charge of the two resolutions which were to have been moved by the Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD (who was prevented by unavoidable circumstances from being present at the Congress), and for the efficient manner in which he advocated the questions dealt with. (Appendix N.)

The Re-Survey of Eastern Seas.

The resolution moved by Sir THOMAS JACKSON in the Fourth Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire at its sitting on the 29th June, was subsequently conveyed to the Marquess of SALISBURY in a letter signed by the President and Secretary of the Congress, and a copy of the reply thereto was transmitted to this Chamber under date of 31st August. The resolution had been referred by the Foreign Office to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, who returned a rather indignant reply, declaring that for sixty years vessels had been sent to the Eastern Seas to make surveys, that the greater portions of these seas had been charted, that the main routes through the China Sea and along the China Coast are now as confidently

navigated as any part of the world, and that the Congress must have been misinformed as to the knowledge of these seas possessed by the Admiralty, which though not perfect is still so far advanced that no re-survey of main routes is necessary. The Secretary of the Congress therefore requested to be supplied with some further information on the subject in order that he might communicate with the Foreign Office. This was done as promptly as possible, and a list of uncharted dangers discovered in these seas during the past seven years was forwarded with the Chamber's reply. (Appendix O.)

The better Control of Native Masters and Engineers of Steam-launches.

Recent legislation having made the owners of steam-launches in Hongkong responsible for acts of piracy committed by their craft, no matter whether the crews are implicated in the act or not, and the masters and engineers having shown themselves but little amenable to control, the Chamber was during last October asked to address the Government on the question of the advisability of adopting a system of continuous record certificates, the result being that the Governor appointed a Committee to consider the matter, two members representing the Chamber (Messrs. A. M. MARSHALL and D. R. LAW) being included thereon. The Committee, having investigated the question, recommended in their report that a record be kept in the Harbour Office setting forth the dates of each engagement and discharge of each certificated launch master and engineer, together with reason of discharge and all complaints and charges against him and punishments awarded by the Marine Magistrate or Harbour Master, such record to be open to inspection by launch owners or their representatives. (Appendix P.)

Quarantine Restrictions.

The Colony of Hongkong again suffered heavy losses last year by reason of the quarantine imposed at Singapore and other places against arrivals from Hongkong. Although the plague had long ceased to be epidemic, the restrictions were not relaxed until November last, after ten clear days without a case of plague had elapsed, notwithstanding the appeals made by this Chamber to the Government to issue a clean bill of health for the port. (Appendix Q.)

The Publication of Quarantine Regulations.

In January, 1901, several vessels arriving here from Singapore were

heavily fined for technical breaches of quarantine regulations, in omitting to hoist the yellow flag before entering the harbour limits, the masters pleading ignorance of the fact that quarantine had been imposed at this port on vessels arriving from Singapore. Representations were made to the Government praying that greater publicity than the pages of the *Government Gazette* afford might be given to these notifications, and asking that printed notices might be sent on board each steamer at Singapore. (Appendix R.)

Amoy and the Formosa Tea Trade.

Further correspondence on the question of the discriminating duty levied in Formosa on tea if shipped otherwise than to a Japanese port has passed between the Amoy and Hongkong Chambers of Commerce with the British Minister in Japan, but so far without any beneficial effect. Sir Ernest Satow takes up the position that the British Minister can only intervene on behalf of the tea shipped to Great Britain, the Colonies and India; that destined for the United States he considers an American interest. The position assumed by the Amoy Chamber is that the trade having been created by and being in the hands of British merchants, that trade is a British interest, no matter where the merchant's constituents reside. (Appendix S.)

The Revised French Customs Tariff and Colonial Produce.

Certain changes in the French Tariff, which were originally intended as an act of reprisal against Brazil, were submitted by the Colonial Office through the local Government to this Chamber, but your Committee could not see that the changes made would to any extent affect imports or exports here, and therefore had no suggestions to offer. It has, however, been suggested by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the Foreign Office that as French products are admitted free to this port, exceptionally favourable treatment should be accorded in France and French Indo-China to goods imported there from Hongkong. (Appendix U.)

Scheme for the Improvement of the Navigation of the Yangtsze.

When passing through the Colony in September last, Sir John Lister Kaye, Bart., submitted to the Committee his scheme for the improvement of the navigation of the Upper Yangtsze, by creating a Conservancy Board with powers to remove obstructions in the rapids, &c., to control the traffic, to provide a fleet of fast launches for towing junks, and to levy

a toll to secure interest on outlay. The Committee, after examination of the scheme, as set forth in his petition to the Tsung-li Yamen, while unable to offer an opinion on the details, returned a reply to the effect that the removal of the existing obstructions to the navigation of the Yangtsze would prove of advantage to trade generally. (Appendix W.)

Suggested British Commercial Combination.

With reference to the above changes in the French Tariff, which will operate prejudicially against produce raised in India and some of the British Colonies, a proposal has been received from the United Planters' Association of Southern India to join in a movement for a commercial combination of Great Britain, her Colonies and India against the world by a system of differential duties which would afford some protection to British grown products and manufactures. The Committee could not see their way to join in such a movement and replied to that effect. (Appendix X.)

The death of Queen Victoria.

The deeply lamented death of Her Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, which took place on the 22nd January, plunged the Colony into profound gloom, and your Committee, feeling that the occasion of this illustrious sovereign's funeral should be observed as one of national mourning, addressed a letter to the Government suggesting that the Public Offices should be closed and all business suspended. This course was adopted most fully, and there was such a complete suspension of business as had never been witnessed in the Colony since its foundation. (Appendix Y.)

Proposed Registration of Servants in Hongkong.

A proposal made by the Honourable the Captain Superintendent of Police to the Government to re-enact the provisions of Ordinance 7 of 1866 relating to the registration of domestic servants, together with suggestions to attach a photograph of the holder to the certificate and to deposit one in the register, with penalties for non-observance both to employers and servants, has been submitted to your Committee for an opinion as to the advisability of re-enacting the Ordinance. The Committee considered the matter at their meeting in February, and arrived at the unanimous conclusion that the project was inadvisable and probably impracticable. (Appendix Z 1.)

Sundry Correspondence.

Correspondence dealing with the Appointment of British Commercial Agents abroad and Certificates of Origin of Goods imported into Japan will be found in Appendices V and Z.

The Chamber's Representative on the Legislative Council.

Mr. HERBERT SMITH, who on the departure on leave of the Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD last April was appointed to fill the vacancy on the Legislative Council, having resigned the seat in June, the Chamber were then again invited by the Officer Administering the Government to select another member, and at a special general meeting held on the 18th of that month nominated Mr. J. THURBURN, of the Mercantile Bank of India. Mr. THURBURN has since represented the Chamber in Council, and will continue to do so until the return of Mr. WHITEHEAD. (Appendix T).

The General Committee.

The changes in the *personnel* of the Committee have been fewer than usual. Mr. HERBERT SMITH resigned his seat on leaving the Colony in June, last, and Mr. D. R. LAW was invited to fill his place. Mr. H. M. BEVIS, who left here in October last, was replaced by Sir THOMAS JACKSON on his return from England.

Members.

During the year five resignations have been received from Members, viz., THE YUEN FAT HONG, Mr. W. F. WENYON, Messrs. HARTIGAN, STEDMAN and RENNIE, U. NERVEGNA & Co. and Mr. JAS. MCKIE. The following have been admitted to membership, subject to confirmation at the annual meeting :—THE HONGKONG ROPE MANUFACTURING COMPANY, Limited, the GREEN ISLAND CEMENT COMPANY, Limited, Messrs. WATKINS & Co., Ld.

Finance.

The accounts for the year ended 31st December, 1900, have been audited by Messrs. J. Y. V. VERNON and MURRAY STEWART. The balance at credit of the Chamber, after transferring $2,000 to Reserve Fund, was $674.06. The Reserve Fund stood at $13,000, of which $11,000 is on deposit in the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank, and $2,000 is invested in Debentures. The Pinnacle Rock Fund has again been further increased by the accruing interest, and now stands at **$3,730.27.**

Dr. THE HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN ACCOUNT CURRENT WITH THE SECRETARY. *Cr.*

1900.			1900.		
	To Office Rent,	$ 550.00		By Balance brought forward, ...	$ 678.26

ndry Correspondence.

ling with the Appointment of British Commercial ficates of Origin of Goods imported into Japan will V and Z.

presentative on the Legislative Council.

CH, who on the departure on leave of the Hon. T. H. was appointed to fill the vacancy on the Legislative l the seat in June, the Chamber were then again Administering the Government to select another al general meeting held on the 18th of that month URBURN, of the Mercantile Bank of India. Mr. resented the Chamber in Council, and will continue to Mr. WHITEHEAD. (Appendix T).

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Members.

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Finance.

the year ended 31st December, 1900, have been . V. VERNON and MURRAY STEWART. The balance ber, after transferring $2,000 to Reserve Fund, was Fund stood at $13,000, of which $11,000 is on deposit Shanghai Bank, and $2,000 is invested in Deben- Rock Fund has again been further increased by the ow stands at $3,730.27.

Dr. THE HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN ACCOUNT CURRENT WITH THE SECRETARY. *Cr.*

1900. Jan. to Dec.	To Office Rent,	$ 550 00	
	„ Secretary's Salary,	2,400.00	
	„ Clerk's Salary,	920.00	
	„ Servants' Wages,	210.00	
	„ Auditors' Fees,	40.00	
			$ 4,120.00
	„ Printing Market Report from July 1899 to June 1900,		730.00
	„ Subscriptions to Newspapers,	118.63	
	„ Advertisements,	51.25	
	„ Postage, Receipt Stamps and Petties,	162.24	
			332.12
	„ Subscriptions to Political Telegrams,	4,800.00	
	„ Printing and Circulating Telegrams,	480.00	
			5,280.00
	„ Stationery, Office Printing and Binding &c.,	255.21	
	„ Printing Annual Report,	515.00	
	„ Sundries,	48.30	
	„ Allowance to late J. A. Gutierrez's Children,	150.00	
			968.51
	„ Purchase of Clock,		50.00
	„ Cost of Telegrams despatched to London,		98.00
	„ Fees paid for Arbitration Work,		230.00
	„ Addition to Deposit Account,		2,000.00
			13,808.63
	„ Balance,		674.06
		$	14,482.69

1900. Jan. to Dec.	By Balance brought forward,	$ 678.26
	„ Members' Subscription for 1900,	5,198.33
	„ Sales of Market Report for one year including Postage,	789.23
	„ Uncollected Subscriptions to Reuter's Telegram in 1899,	209.52
	„ Subscriptions to Political Telegrams for 1900,	7,149.41
	„ Sundry Receipts,	4.30
	„ Interest on Current A/c. to 30th June 1900,	34.50
	„ Fees received for Arbitration,	280.00
	„ Interest on Four Hongkong Hotel Co.'s Coupons,	120.00
	„ Interest on Credit Balance,	19.14
	$	14,482.69
	By Balance, $	674.06
	DEPENDENCIES AT CREDIT.	
	Subscriptions to Political Telegrams,	188.52
	Subscriptions to Market Report,	53.45
	Fixed Deposit due 31st December, 1900, A/c. Pinnacle Rock Fund,	3,569.64
	Interest, one Year at 4½ %,	160.63
	RESERVE FUND.	
	Fixed Deposit due 31st December, 1900, $8,000.00	
	Interest one Year 4 %, 320.00	
	Fixed Deposit due 31st December, 1900, 2,000.00	
	Interest at 3½ %, 61.94	
	Amount transferred from Current A/c. 2nd January, 1901, 618.06	
		11,000.00
	Four Debentures Hongkong Hotel Co., Ld.,	2,000.00
	$	13,000.00

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX,
Secretary.

E. & O. E.
Hongkong, 2nd January, 1901.

We have compared the above statement with the books and vouchers, and found it to be correct.

J. Y. V. VERNON, MURRAY STEWART. } *Auditors.*

APPENDIX.

A

Tariff Revision in China.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 22nd February, 1900.

SIR,—A rumour is being persistently circulated here to the effect that the negotiations with the Chinese Government in reference to the revision of the Tariff are being pushed on rapidly.

As the details of the new Tariff with Japan were, most unfortunately for this Colony, not submitted to the Chambers of Commerce here and in the Far East generally until after the new Treaty was signed, the Committee naturally feel anxious lest a similar course should be pursued in the case of China. They therefore most earnestly hope that, before any arrangement is come to with the Government of Peking, they will be afforded an opportunity to express their opinion on the Tariff proposals, and they would further like to be informed whether it is correct that negotiations on the subject have been commenced.—I have, &c.,

R. M. GRAY, Chairman.

Sir CLAUDE M. MACDONALD, K.C.M.G., H.B.M.'s Minister in China.

PEKING, 6th March, 1900.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge your letter of 22nd February. In reply I beg to state that there is no truth in the rumour that negotiations with the Chinese Government in reference to a revision of the Tariff are being pushed on rapidly.

The Chinese Government has approached Her Majesty's Government on the subject of a revision and has received a reply to the effect that Her Majesty's Government have no objections to consider the matter. Nothing further has been done.

As stated in my letter of 29th May, 1896, to Mr. CHATTERTON WILCOX, no change of tariff is at all likely to take place without previous consultation with the parties most interested, more especially the Chambers of Commerce of Hongkong and Shanghai, whose views will receive full and careful attention.—I am, &c.,

CLAUDE M. MACDONALD.

R. M. GRAY, Esq., Chairman of the HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

A

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 18th December, 1900.

SIR,—The statements recently made in the public press, to the effect that negotiations with China for the conclusion of peace will shortly be commenced, and the probable contingency that the revision of the Chinese Tariff may be included in the settlement, have induced the Committee of this Chamber to approach you on the subject.

In February last, a rumour having been persistently circulated that the revision of the Chinese Tariff was being rapidly pushed on, this Chamber addressed a communication to your esteemed predecessor, Sir CLAUDE M. MACDONALD, expressing the hope that, before any settlement was arrived at, the Chambers of Commerce in the Far East would be afforded an opportunity of expressing their opinion on the Tariff proposals, and stating that they would like to be informed whether it was true that the negotiations on the subject had been commenced. His Excellency was good enough, in his prompt reply, to say that there was no truth in the rumour that negotiations were being pushed on rapidly, though it was true that the Chinese Government had approached Her Majesty's Government on the subject, and that the latter had replied that they had no objection to consider the matter. He added that no change of Tariff was "at all likely to take place without previous consultation with the parties most interested, more especially the Chambers of Commerce of Hongkong and Shanghai, whose views would receive full and careful attention."

The Committee make no doubt that there will be a continuity of policy in this as in other matters in the Legation, but they consider it advisable to address your Excellency on this important question, so that it can by no possibility escape attention, as was the case when the new Tariff with Japan was concluded, with results most disastrous to the trade in refined sugar between that country and Hongkong.

Any revision of the Chinese Tariff would of course affect, in a most momentous manner, the trade of this Colony, and that must be our reason for troubling you with this despatch at a period when I am sure your Excellency must have unusual demands on your time and attention.—I have, &c.,

R. M. GRAY, Chairman.

His Excellency Sir ERNEST M. SATOW, K.C.M.G., H.B.M.'s Minister in China.

A

PEKING, 15th January, 1901.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th ultimo, and to state, in reply, that I shall be glad to receive an expression of the views of the Hongkong Chamber of Commerce at an early date.

The matter of revising the Tariff will, however, probably not come under immediate consideration.—I am, &c.,

ERNEST SATOW.

R. M. GRAY, Esq., Chairman of the HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

B

The Crisis in China.

15, QUEEN'S ROAD CENTRAL,
HONGKONG, 3rd September, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—Representing Caldbeck, Macgregor & Company (Members of the Hongkong Chamber of Commerce), I should like to know if the Chamber propose to take any steps, protesting or otherwise, with regard to the proposition put forward by Russia and the United States as per Reuter's Telegram of 1st September (No. 395). Personally I think the Chamber should protest vigorously against the evacuation of Peking at the present time.—I have, &c.,

E. W. MITCHELL.

To the Hon. R. M. GRAY, Chairman, HONGKONG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

CHINA ASSOCIATION (HONGKONG BRANCH),
HONGKONG, 5th September, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—At a Committee Meeting held yesterday it was decided to address your Chamber with the view of ascertaining whether or not the Committee would be inclined to co-operate with this Association in protesting against the suggested withdrawal from Peking, a course which if persisted in would, in the opinion of my Committee, prove equally fatal to British prestige and British commercial interests in China.

A suggestion was made that your Chamber and this Association might

B

act jointly in the direction of calling a public meeting, or sending a strongly worded protest to the Foreign Office, and I shall feel obliged if you will kindly inform me whether or not, either of these suggestions meets with the approval of your Committee.—I am, &c.,

F. HENDERSON, Hon. Secretary.

To R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 6th September, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your favour of yesterday's date desiring to know whether my Committee would be inclined to co-operate with the China Association in protesting against the suggested withdrawal of the Allied Forces from Peking.

In reply, I am instructed to say that the Committee, while thanking you for the courtesy of your proposition, have decided, in view of the cosmopolitan character of the Chamber, to act independently in the matter, more especially as they are addressing the Government through the London Chamber of Commerce.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

F. HENDERSON, Esq., Hon. Secretary, China Association, Hongkong.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 6th September, 1900.

SIR,—I have the honour to announce, for the information of His Excellency the Governor, that this Chamber has to-day despatched to the London Chamber of Commerce the following telegram :—

"Chamber of Commerce, London.

"Please communicate Foreign Office as follows:—Hongkong Chamber Commerce earnestly advocates maintaining Allied Forces Peking until proper Government established and guilty officials punished. Earlier withdrawal most disastrous foreign prestige throughout China. Chairman."—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY.

B

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 7th September, 1900.

SIR,—Yesterday, under instructions from my Committee, I despatched to your Chamber the following message by wire :—

"Chamber of Commerce, London.

"Please communicate Foreign Office as follows:—Hongkong Chamber of Commerce earnestly advocates maintaining Allied Forces Peking until proper Government established and guilty officials punished. Earlier withdrawal most disastrous foreign prestige throughout China.

Chairman."

The Committee are in hopes that the East India and China Section of your Chamber will lend a cordial support to this representation, which has been despatched in consequence of continuous public telegrams stating that some of the Powers contemplated ending the campaign with the relief of the Ministers and Peking residents.

The proposal, which it appears was first mooted by Russia, for the Allied Forces to evacuate Peking before any satisfaction has been obtained or reparation offered for the loss of life entailed through the action of the Chinese Government in directing the efforts of the Boxers to secure the extermination of all the Foreigners in China, seems to my Committee likely to be fraught with the most disastrous consequences if adopted.

It would be regarded by the Chinese of every rank as a confession of Western weakness and of the superiority of Chinese arms, and anti-foreign literature inciting to renewed violence and insults would quickly be in circulation throughout the eighteen Provinces, where, under any circumstances, the most garbled accounts will be given by the officials.

It is the conviction of the Foreign residents in China that the present crisis has been brought on by the deliberate *mala fides* of the Empress Dowager and her creatures, and unless a blow be now dealt at those in high places, and a demonstration be made of the strength and determination of the Allied Powers, there will soon be a fresh and more formidable, because better organised, effort made to sweep foreigners from the Chinese Empire.

Trusting that your Chamber will represent this well considered con-

B

clusion to the Noble Lord the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

K. B. MURRAY, Esq., Secretary, LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 10th September, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, asking whether this Chamber proposed to take any steps in reference to the proposed evacuation of Peking by the Allied Forces, and to state, in reply, that on the 6th instant, a telegram was despatched to the London Chamber of Commerce asking them to communicate a message to the Foreign Office, earnestly advocating maintenance of Allied Forces in Peking until the establishment of a proper Government and punishment of the guilty officials. The opinion was expressed that earlier withdrawal would prove most disastrous to foreign prestige throughout China.

A letter confirming the telegram, and expressing the views of the Chamber at greater length, was despatched by the mail this morning.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

E. W. MITCHELL, Esq.

LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
BOTOLPH HOUSE, EASTCHEAP, LONDON, E.C.,
11th September, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I duly received your cable of the 6th instant, which I at once communicated to the officers of the Chamber and to the Chairman of the East India and China Trade Section, with the result that the communication, of which I enclose a copy, was immediately addressed to the Foreign Office.

Trusting that this will meet with the approval of the Hongkong Chamber.—Yours, &c.,

KENRIC B. MURRAY, Secretary.

The Secretary, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

B

(*Enclosure*)

London, 6th September, 1900.

My Lord,—I have the honour to append a copy of a very important telegram despatched from Hongkong and received here to-day.

The expression of the view of the Hongkong Chamber of Commerce on the disastrous effect upon our relations with China which would result from the withdrawal from Peking of the Allied Forces before an adequate and satisfactory settlement of the grave questions at issue with that Empire had been obtained, is deserving your Lordship's most earnest consideration. The message conveys the opinion of commercial men fully acquainted with the character of the Chinese, with the problems that have to be solved, and who represent interests of vast magnitude.—I am, &c.,

WILLIAM KESWICK, (M.P.), Chairman
of the East India and China Trade
Section of the London Chamber Commerce.

The Most Noble the Marquess of Salisbury, K.G., Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, Foreign Office, S.W.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 24th October, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I beg leave to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 11th ultimo, enclosing copy of the letter forwarded by the East India and China Section of your Chamber to the Foreign Office covering copy of the telegram sent by this Chamber on the 6th idem protesting against the proposed evacuation of Peking by the Allied Forces before punishment of the instigators of the outrages and massacres had been secured. In doing so, I am instructed to ask you to convey to the Committee of the East India and China Trade Section the thanks of this Chamber for the prompt and effective means adopted to bring their views to the attention of Her Majesty's Government.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

KENRIC B. MURRAY, Esq., Secretary, LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

C

Contract for Carriage of Mails by way of the Pacific and Vancouver, B.C.

HONGKONG, 10th April, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—In view of the expiry, in May, 1901, of the contract at present in effect with H.B.M.'s Government for the Carriage of Mails from Hongkong, by way of the Pacific and Vancouver, B.C., I would ask if you could arrange for the passing of a resolution by your Chamber urging the desirability of renewing the Contract in question. Such a resolution on the part of your Chamber would, I feel sure, carry much weight with the British Government when negotiations are opened in connection with the matter.

I need hardly point out that, upon political grounds, the maintenance of the service is all-important, forming, as it does, an essentially British route throughout and capable of being used in any manner that circumstances may demand; and, further, I would call your particular attention to the great regularity with which the service has been carried on by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, during the past nine years—the period during which the existing contract has been running—and also to the rapid transit given to the mails.

Your Chamber may consider it desirable to go further than suggest merely a renewal of the contract by recommending the institution of a more frequent service—say fortnightly throughout the year, at a proportionate increase in the subsidy payable by the Government. Any such suggestions in this or in other directions will, I am sure, meet with the attention they deserve at the hands of the Government.

When the question of Mail subsidy first came up in connection with this Company's Mail route your Committee very kindly took up the matter and urged upon the Government the desirability of instituting the service, and a reference to the Report of your Committee for the year ending 31st December, 1887, will shew what transpired. Your present Committee will, doubtless, see their way to following up the representations, then made, at the present time.

In conclusion, I would mention that a resolution has been passed at the Annual Meeting of the Foreign Chamber of Commerce at Yokohama, a copy of which is attached hereto, for your information. Resolutions to

C

the same effect are in course of being passed at various other Ports in China and Japan.—I am, &c.,

D. W. CRADDOCK, Acting General Agent.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

Copy of Resolution passed unanimously at Annual Meeting of Foreign Chamber of Commerce, Yokohama, 29th March, 1900.

That in view of the quick Trans-Pacific Mail Service viâ Vancouver, so efficiently carried out by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company's steamers, it is desirable, in the opinion of this Chamber, that the present Mail Contract with H.B.M.'s Government should be renewed, and further, that it is desirable that additional steamers should be secured to arrange for a fortnightly service throughout the year, if possible, with a proportionate increase in the mail subsidy, as the continuance and extension of this service is of increasing importance in the general interests of trade.

Average Memo.

Hongkong and Yokohama to London.

	Hongkong.	*Yokohama.*
Canadian Pacific Railway Co.	36 days	25 days.
'Frisco Lines	42 „	31 „
North German Lloyd (Viâ Naples)	29 „	40 „
M. M. Co. (Viâ Marseilles)	31 „	41 „
P. & O. (Brindisi)	31 „	41 „

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 20th April, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge receipt, on the 10th instant, of your letter of that date calling attention to the expiry of your Company's contract with the Imperial Government to carry the Mails from Hongkong to Canada, in May, 1901, and asking if the Chamber could express an opinion in favour of the renewal by the Government of such contract.

The question was duly considered by the Committee, and at their meeting on the 18th instant, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

C

"That in the opinion of this Chamber it is desirable the contract between Her Majesty's Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the carriage of mails from Hongkong, viâ the Pacific and Vancouver, which will expire in May, 1901, should be renewed, if possible with an accelerated and fortnightly service."—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

D. W. Craddock, Esq., Acting General Agent, Canadian Pacific Railway Company.

Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce,
Hongkong, 24th April, 1900.

Sir,—I have the honour to transmit, for the information of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, copy in triplicate of a resolution passed unanimously by the General Committee at their meeting on the 18th instant, on the subject of the renewal of the subsidy paid by Her Majesty's Government to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for carrying the mails from Hongkong viâ Vancouver. The Committee will be glad if His Excellency will be good enough to forward a copy of this resolution to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

To Hon. F. H. May, C.M.G., Acting Colonial Secretary.

No. 1224. Colonial Secretary's Office,
Hongkong, 10th July, 1900.

Sir,—With reference to your letter of the 24th April, I am directed to inform you that His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government duly forwarded to the Secretary of State a copy of the resolution therein contained, and that His Excellency the Governor has received a reply to the effect that the question of renewing the contract with the Canadian Pacific Railway for the carriage of mails from Hongkong viâ the Pacific and Vancouver is now under consideration.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary, Chamber of Commerce.

C

Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce,
Hongkong, 14th May, 1900.

Dear Sir,—The question of the renewal of the contract between H.B.M.'s Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the carriage of the mails from Hongkong to Canada having been duly considered by the Committee of this Chamber at their meeting on the 18th ultimo, the following resolution was passed unanimously:—

"That in the opinion of this Chamber it is desirable the contract between Her Majesty's Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the carriage of mails from Hongkong viâ the Pacific and Vancouver, which will expire in May, 1901, should be renewed, if possible with an accelerated and fortnightly service."—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

To Kenric B. Murray, Esq., Secretary, London Chamber of Commerce.

Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce,
Hongkong, 14th May, 1900.

Sir,—The attention of my Committee having been called to the fact that the contract of the Canadian Pacific Railway Company to carry the Mails from Hongkong to Canada will expire in May, 1901, with a request that they would express an opinion in favour of the renewal by the Imperial Government of such contract, the matter was considered at their meeting on the 18th ultimo, when the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

"That in the opinion of this Chamber it is desirable the contract between Her Majesty's Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the carriage of mails from Hongkong viâ the Pacific and Vancouver, which will expire in May, 1901, should be renewed, if possible with an accelerated and fortnightly service."—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

The Secretary, Chamber of Commerce, Montreal.

C

BOTOLPH HOUSE, EASTCHEAP, LONDON, E.C.,
LONDON, 18th June, 1900.

Hongkong Mail Contract Resolution.

DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge, with thanks, receipt of your letter of the 14th May last, which I will duly bring before the members of the East India and China, the Canadian, and the Postal Committees of this Chamber at their next meetings.

I will inform you of any action which may be taken on this subject by the Chamber.—Yours, &c.,

KENRIC B. MURRAY, Secretary.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

LA CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE DU DISTRICT DE MONTRÉAL,
MONTRÉAL, 4th September, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter and resolution referring to the renewal of the contract in May, 1901, for the carriage of the mails between Hongkong and Canada has been referred to one of our permanent committees for report.—I am, &c.,

JOS. HAYNES, Secretary.

To the Secretary of the HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

LA CHAMBRE DE COMMERCE DU DISTRICT DE MONTRÉAL,
MONTRÉAL, 27th October, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—Referring to your favour of the 14th of May last, I have the honour to be directed by the Board to transmit to you a copy of a Resolution adopted unanimously by your Chamber concerning the renewal, in May, 1901, of the contract for the carriage of mails from Hongkong *viâ* the Pacific and Vancouver.—I remain, &c.,

JOS. HAYNES, Secretary.

To the Secretary of the HONGKONG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

C

The Chamber of Commerce of the District of Montreal.

COUNCIL'S MEETING,
WEDNESDAY, the 17th October, 1900.

L. E. GEOFFRION, President, in the chair.

The following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

"Resolved that—In the opinion of this Chamber, the present opportunity of the renewal (in May, 1901) of the contract between Her Majesty's Government and the Canadian Pacific Railway for the carriage of mails from Hongkong viâ the Pacific and Vancouver, should be seized to ask, in the interest of the Dominion of Canada and the British Empire at large, for additional facilities, both in frequency of departures (increased number of trips at all seasons) and acceleration of service."

JOS. HAYNES, Secretary.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 3rd December, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 27th October transmitting copy of a resolution unanimously adopted by your Chamber concerning the renewal, in May, 1901, of the contract for the carriage of mails from Hongkong viâ the Pacific and Vancouver.

My Committee are glad to learn that your Chamber advocate both an increased number of trips and acceleration of service.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

The Secretary, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Montreal.

No. 414.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 25th February, 1901.

SIR,—I have the honour to transmit for the information of your Committee the enclosed copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies respecting the renewal of subsidy to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the Mail service *viâ* Vancouver.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary to the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

C

Downing Street,
13th January, 1901.

Sir,—With reference to my despatch No. 172 of the 8th June last, I have the honour to state, for your information, that Her Majesty's Government have now agreed to the renewal of the subsidy to the Canadian Pacific Railway Company for the Mail service to Japan and Hongkong *viâ* Vancouver for a further period of five years.—I have, &c.,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

Governor Sir Henry A. Blake, G.C.M.G.,
&c., &c., &c.

D

The Shipment of Japanese so-called Safety Matches.

No. 572. COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 5th April, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed to transmit to you for the consideration of the Chamber of Commerce the enclosed copy of a letter from the Acting Harbour Master on the subject of the desirability of declaring under section 15 of the new Merchant Shipping Consolidation Ordinance when it comes into force, safety matches of Japanese manufacture to be dangerous goods.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Harbour Department,
No. 135. Hongkong, 3rd April, 1900.

Sir,—I have the honour to make the following recommendation.—There having been, during the last six months, two cases of fire on board steamers in this port due to part of the general cargo consisting of Japanese (so-called) safety matches, I submit the advisability of declaring such matches to be "dangerous goods" under Section 12 of Ordinance 26 of 1891 and Section 15 of The Merchant Shipping Consolidation Ordinance 1899.

D

The second case occurred this morning, apparently through spontaneous combustion. It was fortunately discovered while the Acting Senior Boarding Officer was inspecting Emigrants on board, otherwise, had the vessel (the steam-ship *Chunshan*) got to sea before the discovery of the fire, a panic among the 800 emigrants would have been inevitable, and great loss of life and property have probably ensued.

I am aware that there is much to be said on both sides of the question, but these matches appear to be distinctly dangerous, and hence some restriction becomes necessary.

The trade in these matches forms so infinitesimal a portion of the total trade of the port that I imagine it will scarcely be a hardship to the shippers to restrict the carriage of them to such ships as do not carry more than 20 passengers, as provided for in the 1899 Ordinance Section 15 S.S. 5.—I have, &c.,

B. TAYLOR, Acting Harbour Master.

The Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 20th April, 1900.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter (No. 572) of the 5th instant transmitting for the consideration of this Chamber a suggestion by the Acting Harbour Master on the question of the desirability of declaring under Section 15 of the new Merchant Shipping Ordinance, when it comes into force, safety matches of Japanese manufacture to be dangerous goods.

In reply I am directed to say the Committee deprecate action in this matter at present, considering that the proposal is based on the occurrence of only two cases of combustion and those of comparatively recent date, whereas the proposal suggested would certainly divert an important trade from its accustomed channel. This Chamber in the meantime is bringing the matter to the attention of the Chambers of Commerce of Kobe and Yokohama, suggesting to them to urge upon those concerned the necessity of observing more care in the manufacture of these safety matches.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

To Hon. F. H. MAY, C.M.G., Acting Colonial Secretary.

D

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 21st April, 1900.

SIR,—In consequence of two recent cases of fire on board steamers in this port, due to part of general cargo, consisting of Japanese so-called safety matches, a suggestion has been made to the Colonial Government which has been submitted to this Chamber, viz., that under the provisions of the new Shipping Ordinance, these matches should be declared dangerous goods.

This Chamber has, in reply, deprecated immediate action in this direction as it would tend to obstruct trade and because such disasters have not been frequent in the past. The Committee, however, wish to express the opinion that Japanese manufacturers would further their own interests, and obviate interference here, by paying greater attention to the absolute safety of these matches from spontaneous ignition.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

The Secretary, HIOGO & OSAKA GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

[*Similar letters were addressed to the Yokohama Chamber and the Kobe (Native) Chamber.*]

YOKOHAMA FOREIGN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
YOKOHAMA, 3rd MAY, 1900.

SIR,—I have to acknowledge your letter of the 21st ultimo, re Japanese matches, and to say that the match-making industry is almost wholly confined to Osaka and district. That being the case, the matter could probably be taken up with better effect if the Hyogo and Osaka Chamber was informed of the dangerous nature of these so-called Safety Matches. Your letter, however, will be duly laid before the Committee of this Chamber, with the probability of the Yokohama and Tokyo Japanese Chambers being requested to take up the subject.—I am, &c.,

J. E. BEALE, Secretary.

The Secretary, HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HIOGO AND OSAKA GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HIOGO, 4th May, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your favour of 21st April.

D

As Kobe is the centre of the Export Match Trade the subject is one of particular importance and every means will be used by our Chamber to bring your complaint to the notice of Exporters and Manufacturers. I have forwarded a copy of your letter to the Kobe Chamber of Commerce (Japanese).—I am, &c.,

C. W. WURROCK, Secretary.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

KOBE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
KOBE, JAPAN, 17th May, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter dated 21st ultimo. As to the ignition of the safety matches, a warning has been immediately given to the Matches Manufacturers Guild. The manufacturers, having no experience of the spontaneous ignition of matches, were only taking special care in mixing the materials; but greater care will be taken hereafter for emergencies probable to be caused by the mode of transportation or other circumstances. They proposed to me to express to you their hearty thanks for your kind intimation. From time to time warnings will be given them; for, if matches come to be recognised as a dangerous goods under the new Shipping Ordinance, it would be a great obstruction to trade. Wishing your continual favour.—I am, &c.,

T. KIMURA, Secretary.

The Secretary, HONGKONG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

E

Delay in forwarding on Mails for Manila.

MANILA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
ANLOAGUE, No. 8,
MANILA, 7th April, 1900.

SIR,—At a meeting of the Committee of the Manila Chamber of Commerce held yesterday, I was instructed to address a letter to you with the request that you would kindly draw the attention of the Postmaster General at your Port to what seems on this side the unnecessary delay

E

experienced here recently in the receipt of European Mails from Hongkong.

In order to make the matter clear to you, I enclose a Memorandum regarding the most recent cases complained of and would ask you to lay same before the Postmaster, in the hope that he will in future see that the Manila Mails are, when possible, put on board of steamers leaving Hongkong *direct* for Manila.

Thanking you in anticipation.—I am, &c.,

R. CALDER SMITH, Secretary.

R. C. WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

Memorandum re Mails.

The London Mail of 16th February arrived in Hongkong on 17th March, and delivery was begun at 12.50.

It arrived here per *Diamante*, viâ Amoy, on 29th March.

If it had been sent direct per *Sungkiang*, it would have arrived on 25th March.

The London Mail of 23rd February arrived in Hongkong on 26th March, and delivery was begun at 10 a.m.

It arrived here on 4th April, apparently by the U. S. transport *Newark*, whereas had it been sent by *Futami Maru* it would have arrived on 1st instant.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 21st April, 1900.

SIR,—A communication has been received by this Chamber from the Manila Chamber of Commerce drawing attention to the unnecessary delay experienced there lately in the receipt of European Mails from Hongkong. In illustration of the grievance under which they are labouring, the Manila Chamber forward a memorandum giving the most recent cases of such delay (copy of which is enclosed), and express the hope that you will in future, when possible, put the mails on board of steamers leaving here for Manila direct.

Feeling sure that these representations will meet with favourable consideration.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

To E. C. LEWIS, Esq., Acting Postmaster General.

E

Registered No. G. 55.

GENERAL POST OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 21st April, 1900.

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of this day's date, *re* delay in receipt in Manila of European Mails forwarded by this office.

The matter had already been brought to my notice, and I lost no time in issuing such instructions as will prevent a recurrence of the cause of the complaint.—I am, &c.,

E. CORNEWALL LEWIS, Acting Postmaster General.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, HONGKONG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 24th April, 1900.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 7th instant drawing attention to the late arrival of Europeau mails forwarded on from this port to Manila, and enclosing a memo. showing how in two instances this occurred.

In response to your appeal, a letter was on the 21st instant addressed to the Acting Postmaster General, pointing out the grievance under which Manila laboured and suggesting that the mails should be sent, in future, when possible, by steamers leaving direct. I enclose copy of the reply received, which I hope you will deem satisfactory.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

R. CALDER SMITH, Esq., Secretary, MANILA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

MANILA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
ANLOAGUE, No. 8,
MANILA, 4th May, 1900.

SIR,—Your favor of 24th ultimo is duly to hand and I beg to thank you in name of the Manila Chamber of Commerce for same and for the satisfactory result of your application to the Postmaster regarding Mails for this port.

If at any time I can be of the slightest assistance to you, it will give

me great pleasure to put my services at your disposal.—I am, &c.,

R. CALDER SMITH, Secretary.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

F

The Repression of Piracy on the West River.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 5th April, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed to transmit to you for the information of the Chamber the enclosed extract from a despatch from Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Seymour, suggesting that with a view to the better prevention of piracies, merchant-vessels should use one route only between Samshui and the sea, which would be specially protected by gunboats, and proposing one such route. I have to request information as to whether the Chamber of Commerce approves of this route or can suggest a better one.

I am to request you to send me a reply at the earliest possible moment, as it is desired to take immediate action on the Vice-Admiral's proposal.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Acting Secretary, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Extract from Vice-Admiral E. H. Seymour's letter dated 3rd April, 1900.

" For the prevention of such things in future one plan which seems to me advisable is to make it publicly known that efforts will be made to protect one route only between Samshui and the sea. Which this route should be may be difficult to decide, but I should suggest the West River by Campbell Island, Kum-chuk, Chan-lin Island and the Broadway to Macao, as the easiest to patrol and protect, but there may be good reason to prefer another one."

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 20th April, 1900.

SIR,—I beg to own receipt of your letter (No. 568) dated 5th instant,

enclosing extract from a despatch from Vice-Admiral Sir Edward Seymour suggesting that, with a view to the better prevention of piracies, merchant vessels should use one route only between Samshui and the sea, which would be specially protected by gunboats, and proposing such route.

I am instructed to say that the proposal is receiving careful attention, but time is required to obtain full information as to the most desirable route. A reply will, however, be forwarded as soon as possible.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. F. H. MAY, C.M.G., Acting Colonial Secretary.

HONGKONG, 24th April, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—With reference to H. E. Admiral Seymour's suggestion that the " Broadway " should be patrolled by the war vessels employed in the protection of the merchant shipping trading on the West River, we have made enquiries of the Masters of our steamers on the run, and they all recommend that instead of the " Broadway " the following route should be protected for preference, as being the one more generally in use, viz., Wangmoon, Sailam and Junction Channels, and the West River between Kongmoon and Samshui.

We understand that this is also the opinion of the Naval Officers in command of the vessels on the River.—We are, &c.,

BUTTERFIELD & SWIRE.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, HONGKONG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 26th April, 1900.

SIR,—Adverting to my letter of the 20th instant with reference to Admiral Seymour's suggestions that one route only should be used by merchant steamers from Samshui to the sea, and in which he indicates the " Broadway " as the most desirable, I am now in a position to give the reference to those principally concerned.

All the Masters of steamers engaged in the navigation of the river are unanimous in recommending that, instead of the " Broadway," the following route, which is more generally in use, should be patrolled by the war

vessels, viz., Wangmoon, Sailam, and Junction Channels and the West River between Kongmoou and Samshui.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. F. H. MAY, C.M.G., Acting Colonial Secretary.

No. 794. COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 4th May, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 26th ultimo, suggesting a route to be patrolled by Her Majesty's Ships with a view to the better protection of trade on the West River, I am directed to inform you that the Naval Authorities have given directions for the patrol of the route mentioned in your letter, namely from Samshui to the sea by Wangmoon, Sailam and Junction Channels, and the West River between Samshui and Kongmoon.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary to the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

G

The Navigation of the West River at Lak-lao.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 5th June, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed to transmit to you for the information of the Chamber of Commerce the enclosed translation of portion of a report contained in a despatch from His Excellency the Viceroy of Kwang Tung, dated 14th April, together with a copy of a letter relating thereto from His Excellency the Vice-Admiral.

I am to request you to be good enough to use your influence with the masters of British steamers and launches to induce them to slow down when approaching and passing Lak-lao.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary, the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

14th April, 1900.

(Extract.)

"With respect to the stoning of the steamer *Lung-Kong* by people at Lak-lao, I find that the river at Lak-lao is in my district and is tortuous and narrow and that the current runs swiftly. When steamers arrived at this place they were formerly obliged to go slowly; if they did not, collisions with small boats were inevitable and people and the shopmen living on the two banks of the river, when they see steamers coming too fast, throw stones to make them go slowly. They do this, it is quite evident, to prevent collisions with small boats. Lung-Kong is a place within my jurisdiction, and the steamer in question, although it flies a foreign flag, is run by people of this district. Lung-Kong is very close to Lak-lao, and the owners of the steamer must necessarily know the circumstances of the place. As the steamer did not slow down it seems difficult specially to blame the village people for throwing stones. I have already ordered the elders and gentry of the place to put a stop to the stone-throwing, but several tens of thousands of merchants and people live there and I am afraid it will prove difficult to point out who throw the stones and put a stop to it.

"I request that a despatch may be written to the Consul to issue instructions to the captains of steamers hereafter when they arrive at Lak-lao that they must slow down and proceed at a moderate pace so that collisions with small boats may be avoided."

H.B.M.S. *Centurion*,
Weihaiwei, 12th May, 1900.

Sir,—With reference to a despatch from His Excellency the Viceroy of Kwang Tung, dated 14th April, a copy of which has been forwarded to me by the Commodore, on the subject of recent attacks on steam-launches on the West River, I have the honour to inform your Excellency that I quite concur in the suggestion therein that steamers should be obliged to go slowly when they arrive at Lak-lao, so that collisions with small boats may be avoided. The river or creek there is tortuous and very narrow and it is certainly dangerous to boats and native traffic for steamers to pass through at high speed.

2.—I would suggest to your Excellency that notice should be given to

all British steamers or steamboats plying in those waters that they are always to slow down when approaching and passing Lak-lao, and that His Excellency Li should be informed that such notice has been given.—I have, &c.,

E. H. SEYMOUR, Vice-Admiral.

His Excellency Major-General W. J. Gascoigne, C.M.G., Administering the Government, Hongkong.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 8th June, 1900.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, (No. 993), enclosing translation of a portion of a report contained in a despatch from His Excellency the Viceroy of the Two Kwang, dated 14th April, together with copy of a letter relating thereto from His Excellency Vice-Admiral Seymour, and requesting the Chamber to use its influence with the masters of British steamers to induce them to slow down when approaching and passing Lak-lao on the West River.

The matter has been considered by the Committee, who have authorised communication with the Companies engaged in the navigation of the river, who have been supplied with copies of the correspondence and requested to bring it to the attention of the commanders of their steamers, who will no doubt, in future, observe the precaution.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

The Hon. Acting COLONIAL SECRETARY.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 7th June, 1900.

DEAR SIRS,—I beg to enclose herewith copy of a letter received from the Colonial Government, together with enclosures, on the subject of the navigation of a certain creek of the West River, at a place called Lak-lao, recently the scene of a hostile demonstration against a foreign steamer, caused, it is alleged, by steamers passing too rapidly in a narrow and tortuous channel and thereby colliding with native craft. His Excellency the Viceroy now requests, and Vice-Admiral Sir E. Seymour concurs in the request, that foreign steamers passing Lak-lao will, in future, slow down at that point in order to avoid the chance of a collision with th

native vessels. Will you, therefore, kindly make known this request to the commanders of your steamers navigating the West River?—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Messrs. JARDINE, MATHESON & Co., General Managers, Indo-China S. N. Co., Ld.

[Similar letters were addressed to the China Navigation Company, the H. C. and M. Steamboat Company, and Messrs. Banker & Co.]

HONGKONG, CANTON & MACAO STEAMBOAT COMPANY, LIMITED,
HONGKONG, 8th June, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I beg to acknowledge with thanks your letter of the 7th instant with accompanying copy of correspondence anent the necessity for steamers to slow down when passing Lak-lao on the West River, of which due note is taken.—I am, &c.,

THO: ARNOLD, Secretary.

R. C. WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG, 8th June, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—We beg to acknowledge receipt of, and thank you for, your letter of yesterday's date re the navigation of the West River.

We shall notify the captains of our steamers accordingly.—We are, &c.,

BANKER & Co.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, HONGKONG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG, 9th June, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—We beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 7th instant with enclosures relating to the stoning by Natives of British steamers at Lak-lao. As this is a place on the Canton-Wuchow route we have passed on your letter to Mr. Arnold of the Hongkong, Canton, and Macao Steamboat Co., who has control of our steamers in the trade, and

who will reply to you direct.—We are, &c.,

BUTTERFIELD & SWIRE.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, HONGKONG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG, CANTON & MACAO STEAMBOAT COMPANY, LIMITED,
HONGKONG, 13th June, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—Your letter of the 7th instant and its enclosures have been perused by Captain Lossins of the *Loong Kiang*, the only one of our steamers which passes Lak-lao.

Captain Lossins emphatically denies ever having steamed through the narrow waters at full speed, and ever having been in collision with native boats. He states that he only drives just fast enough to keep steerage way on his ship. Chinese launches, on the other hand, Captain Lossins informs me, invariably steam through the narrow waters at full speed and are frequently having collisions.—I am, &c.,

THO: ARNOLD, Secretary.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

H

Proposed Monopoly for the Collection of Ashes.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 5th May, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed to acquaint you for the information of the Chamber of Commerce that a tender has been received by Government for the sole privilege of collecting ashes from Steam Vessels within the Harbour Limits. The ashes so collected would be shifted at specified places and the valueless refuse deposited on authorised spots on the foreshore.

It is anticipated that if the collection of such ashes were entrusted to a contractor the dumping into the Harbour of the considerable quantities of valueless ashes, which there is good reason to believe at present takes place, would be obviated.

From a Police point of view it is expected that the change would also be an improvement, as evidence is not wanting that under existing conditions the collectors of ashes who prowl round the shipping spend much of their time in thieving.

I enclose copy of the Regulations under which such a Monopoly would, if instituted, be enforced and regulated, and I am to add that the contractor would be required to give substantial security for the performance of his contract and for the honesty of his employees.

I am to request that the Chamber of Commerce will favour the Government with their opinion upon the desirability or otherwise of creating such a Monopoly.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 19th May, 1900.

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 5th instant (No. 800) informing this Chamber that a tender had been received by the Government for the sole privilege of collecting ashes from steam vessels within the harbour limits, and requesting their opinion upon the desirability or otherwise of creating such a monopoly.

2.—This question has had the prompt consideration of the Committee, who, as the result of careful inquiry and deliberation, feel bound to record an opinion adverse to the proposal.

3.—At first blush the project appears free from serious objection and calculated to obviate in some degree an admitted evil, namely, the dumping of ashes into the harbour, thereby causing the foreshore to silt up. The objections to the creation of a new monopoly to be worked by Chinese are, however, not far to seek, and greatly outweigh any benefits which might accrue therefrom. The Committee are opposed on general grounds to the principle of farms, but these are accentuated by the manner in which such privileges are worked by the Chinese. It is only necessary to refer to the working of the Conservancy contract to illustrate the evils arising from these monopolies. This contract is sub-let to such a degree that complaints are constant of the abuses arising from the defaulr of the contractors. There is no guarantee that these evils would not be repeated in the case of an Ashes contract.

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4.—There is a danger that, either from want of visits or inability to see the signals, especially from steam launches, considerable delay in the movements of shipping might attend the establishment of an Ash Monopoly, or that steamers would be compelled to carry their ashes out to sea through inability to wait for the arrival of the ash boats.

5.—While it is probable that petty theft prevails under existing conditions, it is more than doubtful whether this might not be succeeded, on the event of a monopoly being granted, by an organised system of bribery, and a greater evil be thus inaugurated.

6.—The present system is of course far from perfect, but it has not given rise to any very serious complaint, and if the Police desire to obtain better control over the ash-collecting boats, my Committee respectfully suggest this might be done as readily by licensing the boats as by creating a privileged monopoly.

7.—The greatly enhanced value of the ashes is causing a wholesome competition for the right to collect them, which ought to serve as a guarantee both against dumping and against misconduct by petty theft if the boats are licensed.

8.—Apart from other objections to the proposal, the Committee earnestly deprecate the establishment of Chinese monopolies, on the ground that they invariably lead to a serious increase in state-created crime, greatly augmenting the work of the Police, and because, though perhaps indirectly, they constitute a burden on legitimate trade.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. Acting Colonial Secretary.

P.S.—The copy of the draft Regulations and conditions of the proposed Monopoly is returned herewith, as requested.

I

Proposed Reduction in Cable Rates.

The Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco,
San Francisco, 29th March, 1900.

Dear Sir,—Referring again to the subject of cable rates to China, I

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have the pleasure of stating that since ours of the 28th of December last, a reply was received from the Western Union Telegraph Company with correspondence with their London Branch; copies of these documents I now enclose, from which you will see that there is a good prospect of a reduction, which was much needed, in the rates to the "Far East." Thanking you for having called our attention to this matter, I beg to remain.—Yours, &c.,

E. SCOTT, Secretary.

R. Chatterton Wilcox, Esq., Secretary, Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce, Hongkong, China.

Western Union Telegraph Company,
San Francisco, Cal., 14th March, 1900.

Dear Sir,—I beg to advise you that the resolution adopted by the Chamber of Commerce on December 12th, 1899, concerning rates on cablegrams between San Francisco and points in China, was by our representative in London handed to the Eastern Telegraph Company, which is our connection for points in the Far East; and I now have the pleasure of handing to you two letters received from him under the dates of February 13th and 17th, forwarding replies from the Eastern Telegraph Company and the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company, in one of which it is stated that the Eastern Extension Company in conjunction with the Eastern Telegraph Company, had already submitted to Her British Majesty's Government, proposals for a general reduction of tariffs, before the memorial of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce was received.

While this is a matter in which we have no voice, I am advised that our representative in London will urge attention to it, and we shall be glad if we can be instrumental in bringing about the desired reduction in the tariffs charged beyond London.—Yours, &c.,

Frank Janes, Superintendent.

E. Scott, Esq., Secretary, Chamber of Commerce, San Francisco.

Western Union Telegraph Company,
252, Gresham House, Old Broad Street,
London, 13th February, 1900.

Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the

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29th ultimo, enclosing minute of a Resolution passed by the Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco, on the subject of telegraph rates between that City and China, and to inform you that in compliance with your instructions we have sent the minute to the Eastern Company with a copy of your above mentioned letter.

I now beg to hand you original letter from the Eastern Company acknowledging receipt of both documents, and I remain, &c.,

G. VON CHAUVIN.

Thos. F. Clark, Esq., Vice-President, Western Union Telegraph Company, New York City, U. S. A.

The Eastern Telegraph Company, Limited,
London, 9th February, 1900.

Dear Sir,—I am instructed to acknowledge receipt with thanks of your letter of the 8th instant forwarding to the Managing Director of this Company copy of a letter which you have received from the Head Office of the Western Union Telegraph Company in New York and a Minute of a Resolution adopted at a meeting of the Board of Trustees of the Chamber of Commerce of San Francisco, dated 12th December.—Yours, &c.,

———, Secretary.

G. von Chanvin, Esq., Western Union Telegraph Company, Gresham House, Old Broad Street, E.C.

Western Union Telegraph Company,
252, Gresham House, Old Broad Street,
London, 17th February, 1900.

Dear Sir,—With fnrther reference to your letter of the 29th ultimo, I now beg to hand you original letter from the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company, Limited, stating that the minute of the Resolution passed by the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce on the subject of rates to China was submitted to its Board of Directors on the 14th instant.

The Company further states, for the information of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, that in conjunction with the Eastern Telegraph

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Company it had already submitted to Her Majesty's Government proposals for a general reduction of tariffs.—I remain, &c.,

G. VON CHAUVIN.

Thos. F. Clark, Esq., Vice-President, The Western Union Telegraph Company, 195, Broadway, New York City, U. S. A.

The Eastern Extension, Australasia, and China Telegraph Company, Limited,
London, 14th February, 1900.

Dear Sir,—Your letter of the 8th instant, addressed to Mr. J. Denison Pender, enclosing copy of a letter from the Head Office of your Company with Resolution of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce on the subject of the telegraph charges between that City and China was duly received and submitted to the Board of Directors of this Company at its Meeting to-day.

In reply I am directed to inform you for the information of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce, that this Company, in conjunction with the Eastern Telegraph Company, had already submitted to Her Majesty's Government proposals for a general reduction of tariffs.—Yours, &c.,

H. HESSE, Manager.

G. von Chanvin, Esq., The Western Union Telegraph Company.

J

The Canadian Preferential Tariff.

No. 1362.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 26th July, 1900.

SIR,—With reference to the Colonial Secretary's letter No. 169 of the 30th of January, I am directed to transmit to you for the information of the Chamber of Commerce the enclosed copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies together with copy of Section 10 of the memorandum therein referred to.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary to the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

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Downing Street,
15th June, 1900.

Sir,—In reply to your despatch No. 37 of the 2nd of February last, I have the honour to transmit to you for your information an extract from a Report of the Committee of the Privy Council of Canada, together with a Memorandum of the Preferential Tariff Regulations.

2. I desire to call your special attention to Section 10 of the Memorandum, which seems to meet the chief point raised in the Memorial of the Hongkong Chamber of Commerce, enclosed in your despatch under acknowledgment.—I have, &c.,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

Governor Sir Henry A. Blake, G.C.M.G.,
&c., &c., &c.

Extract.

"No goods shall be deemed to be imported as direct from any particular place or country unless they shall have been there laden on board the vessel importing them into Canada: provided, however, that goods *bonâ fide* exported to Canada from any country but passing in transitu through another country may be deemed to be imported direct from such first mentioned country, if the goods have been consigned to the importer in Canada for through transportation from such first mentioned country and provided that the goods shall not be permitted to remain in such intermediate country for any purpose (other than for their transit)."

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 11th August, 1900.

SIR,—I beg leave to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo (No. 1362) adverting to previous correspondence on the subject of the Canadian Preferential Tariff, and enclosing copy of a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, together with copy of Section 10 of the memorandum therein referred to.

While thanking the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the information thus conveyed, my Committee do not see that it brings this Colony much nearer to the desired privilege, and they therefore now beg that His Excellency the Governor will forward their request that Hong-

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kong be placed upon the list of Colonies entitled to share in the benefits of the Preferential Tariff levied by the Dominion Government on goods manufactured from local products.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Honourable ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY.

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Hongkong Harbour Lights.

No. 1395.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 1st August, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed to inform you that this Government has had under its consideration the question of the advisability of transferring the Cape D'Aguilar Light to Green Island, and the Light at present on Green Island to Cape Collinson, with the view of improving the Green Island and Cape Collinson Lights and thereby rendering the approaches to the harbour safer for shipping. The transfer of the D'Aguilar Light is estimated to cost $5,600, and according to a rough estimate by the Director of Public Works the transfer of the Green Island Light might cost about $7,000.

The Government will be glad to receive the opinion of the Chamber upon the proposed transfers, and as to whether the considerable expenditure involved in the scheme would be justified by the advantages gained. —I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary to the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG, 7th August, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—In reply to your letter of 3rd instant regarding the D'Aguilar, Green Island and Cape Collinson Lights, we are of opinion that the change proposed by the Government would be a good one and worth the expense involved.

We should also like to suggest, for the consideration of the Government, that the Fog Signal at Waglan should be a gun fired at regular intervals, say every minute, instead of, as at present, a gun fired only on a

steamer's whistle being heard.—We are, &c.,

BUTTERFIELD & SWIRE.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Present.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 10th August, 1900.

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 1st instant (No. 1395) announcing that the Government has had under its consideration the question of the advisability of transferring the Cape D'Aguilar light to Green Island and the light at present on Green Island to Cape Collinson with a view to improving both lights and rendering the approaches to the harbour safer for shipping, and asking the opinion of this Chamber upon the proposed transfers, as to whether the expenditure involved would be justified by the advantages to be gained.

The Committee have carefully considered the question after obtaining the opinion of experts, and they are quite satisfied that the advantages to be secured would greatly outweigh the cost. They are further of opinion that this outlay might be judiciously increased in making provision for the substitution of revolving or flash-lights on Green Island and Cape Collinson, since the present fixed lights are not always distinguishable from the lights on junks, especially in thick weather, always provided that the cost for the same is not excessive.

It has also been suggested to the Committee that, as an aid to shipping entering from the eastward, the fog signal at Waglan should be fired at regular intervals, say every minute, instead of, as at present, only on a steamer's whistle being heard.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. F. H. MAY, C.M.G., Acting Colonial Secretary.

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Proposed Amendment of the Bankruptcy Ordinance.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 31st October, 1900.

SIR,—Recent proceedings in the Bankruptcy Court, and more espe-

cially a judgment delivered on the 9th July last by His Honour Chief Justice Sir John Carrington in the case Kung Hing Shing Kee *ex parte* Albert Ah Wee, in which it was laid down that, according to the provisions of the Bankruptcy Ordinance of 1891, Chinese traders or others non-resident in the Colony, although carrying on business therein under a firm's name either by themselves or in co-partnership with others, are beyond the reach of that enactment, have made it apparent that the law as it stands does not afford that protection to creditors which was intended when it was framed. I am therefore instructed to request you to be good enough to bring the question to the attention of His Excellency the Governor with a view to secure amendment of the Ordinance referred to.

2.—The result of the case above quoted has convinced all those engaged in commerce in this Colony that it is practically useless for a creditor to institute bankruptcy proceedings against a Chinese firm, since, if it should subsequently appear that any one member of that firm is domiciled in China, and has not ordinarily resided in Hongkong within a year of the presentation of the bankruptcy petition, such proceedings could be annulled. The Chinese custom of carrying on business under some fancy name, and of the firm consisting of a large number of partners, many of whom may be resident in China, and placing the conduct of the concern in the hands of a manager or of a partner possessing only a small pecuniary interest therein, is well known, and the evils arising from such custom have long been felt and acknowledged alike by British and foreign merchants and by the Chinese themselves.

3.—The Committee, in asking the Government to amend the Bankruptcy Ordinance of 1891, do so in the full assurance that they reflect the views and give expression to the wishes of the entire mercantile community, the legal profession, and the Judges administering the law. In order to facilitate the end in view, and to indicate the direction they think such amendment should take, the Committee beg respectfully to submit the draft of a short amending Bill (enclosed) for the consideration of the Government.

4.—In forwarding this draft Bill, which the Committee believe will have a most salutary effect in helping to reduce the number of fraudulent bankruptcies, they are not so optimistic as to expect that it will act as a complete check on all fraud of the kind. To secure this it will be necessary

the establish a system for the compulsory registration of the individual members of Chinese firms or hongs trading in this Colony.

5.—This is no new question, nor is it a novel panacea for commercial ills. The advisability of the creation of such a system was considered so far back as 1874, when a Bill entitled the Victoria Registration Ordinance was drafted for the purpose, but did not become law. The question was again urged upon the then Government in 1877 by this Chamber, but without effect, the reply returned, on the 28th August, 1878, stating that it would be "very inexpedient to carry out such registration"; no reason for the alleged inexpedience, however, being offered. Again, in April, 1891, when considering the draft of the present Bankruptcy Amendment Ordinance, the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce expressed a strong opinion that, to render the measure more completely applicable to local requirements, it should be preceded or supplemented by a Bill for the compulsory registration of the partners in Chinese firms, and added that without such registration as an adjunct the proposed new Bankruptcy Ordinance would lose much in usefulness. How thoroughly this prevision has been fulfilled, the records of the Supreme Court can readily demonstrate.

6.—No real hardship would be entailed on the Chinese by the passage of such a measure. European and American houses trading here or in the Treaty Ports of China voluntarily announce to the public, by means of circulars and by advertisements in the newspapers, the names of the individual partners in their firms, and of all changes in such partnerships, at considerable expense, and certain Chinese firms have voluntarily followed the example. It is not too much to ask, if the mass of the Chinese are averse to such methods, that they should register their partnerships with the Registrar-General. As a proof that the Chinese themselves are not likely to entertain any objection to such a system, I would remind the Government that in 1882 a petition very numerously signed by Chinese traders was presented to the Registrar-General praying that hongs or shops be required "to register and to appoint a fixed date within which all shops are to send in without delay the real names and surnames of their masters." This was really only a proposal to put into practice here a custom of trade observed among themselves in China, and as a means of identification and a precautionary measure against fraud could not excite hostility among

reasonable persons.

7.—The creation of such a system would of course entail some trouble, and it would probably necessitate the employment of one or two additional clerks. It might also require the dissociation of the two offices of Colonial Secretary and Registrar-General; but as this is very desirable for other reasons—the work of the former having greatly increased within the last three years—the Committee trust that such a consideration would not be allowed to weigh in a matter of so much importance to the trade of the Colony.

8.—Trusting that His Excellency the Governor will agree with the Committee that the time has arrived when an earnest attempt should be made to grapple with a question so seriously affecting the conduct of business and the administration of justice in the Colony—in proof whereof I need only cite the fact that four recent bankruptcy cases heard in the Supreme Court could have been settled in fewer hours than they took days to hear,—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. Colonial Secretary.

A BILL

ENTITLED

An Ordinance to amend the Bankruptcy Ordinance, 1891.

Be it enacted by the Governor of Hongkong, with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council thereof, as follows:—

1. This Ordinance may be cited as the Bankruptcy Ordinance 1891 Amendment Ordinance, 1900. Short Title.

2. The following provisions shall have effect in the case of a firm carrying on business in the Colony, whether such firm consists of two or more persons being partners or of any person carrying on business under a partnership name, that is to say,—

(1) A creditor of the firm shall be entitled to present a bankruptcy petition against the firm and a receiving order may be made against the firm in respect of an act of bankruptcy committed in reference to the business of the firm by any partner of the firm, or by the

person carrying on business as aforesaid, or by any person having the control or management of the business of the firm;

(2) It shall be sufficient that a receiving order against the firm be made in the firm's name, without mentioning the names of the partners, and such receiving order shall affect the joint and separate property of all the partners, and the like provisions shall apply in respect of an adjudication of bankruptcy; and

(3) The jurisdiction of the Supreme Court to make a receiving order or an adjudication of bankruptcy against the firm shall not be affected by the fact, if it be so, that all or any of the partners of the firm or the person carrying on business as aforesaid are or is not British subjects or a British subject or are or is not domiciled in the Colony.

Repeal of enactment No. 20 of 1891.

3. Section 6 (1) (*d*) of the Bankruptcy Ordinance, 1891, is hereby repealed and the following enactment is substituted instead thereof:—

(*d*) The debtor is domiciled in the Colony or, within a year before the date of the presentation of the petition, has ordinarily resided or had a dwelling-house or place of business in the Colony.

Saving of general provision of the Bankruptcy Ordinance 1891, No. 20 of 1891.

4. Except so far as they are altered by this Ordinance, the provisions of the Bankruptcy Ordinance, 1891, shall apply to proceedings in Bankruptcy against firms.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 9th November, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st October, and to inform you that the subjects with which it deals are engaging the attention of the Government.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 27th December, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—As the question of the registration of partners in Chinese hongs or firms is now under consideration by the Government of this Colony, at the request of the Chamber, will you oblige the Committee by forwarding for examination a copy of a Bill which it was proposed some few years ago to introduce in the Straits Settlements, but which, for some reason unknown to me, was not passed into law.

The Committee will also be glad to learn from you what were the reasons which led to the withdrawal of what certainly seemed to be a most useful measure.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

To ALEX. J. GUNN, Esq., Secretary, SINGAPORE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
SINGAPORE, 5th January, 1901.

DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 27th ultimo asking for copy of Bill introduced here some few years ago for registration of partnerships in Chinese firms.

2. All this Chamber's correspondence on the question is given in Annual Reports for 1892, 1893, 1894 (see copy of Bill at page 18a), 1895 and 1896 (the reprint referred to at page 75 is of the correspondence for 1892/5).

3. I send you a copy of Sub-Committee's Report 1894, as it is not printed in the Reports; to these I would refer you for further information.

If any of them are awanting please let me know and I will if possible send you copies.—Yours, &c.,

ALEX. J GUNN, Secretary.

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Esq., Secretary, HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

Report of the Committee appointed by the Chamber of Commerce to examine and report upon the Draft of Bill for the Registration of Partnerships and Firms.

Herewith we hand the draft Ordinance for the Registration of

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Partnerships and Firms as amended by us, and we beg to draw attention to our having, throughout the Ordinance, made the alterations necessary to bring Malacca within the scope of the Act. We think the inclusion of Malacca is necessary as many Chinese firms in Singapore have branches or agencies at that port.

In clause 2, after the words "any name" on the 5th line of the original draft we suggest the addition of the words "style or chop".

Clause 3.—We suggest the words beginning in the 4th line "upon any premises which are assessed by the Municipal Commissioners on an annual value of six hundred dollars or upwards" be omitted.

We are of opinion that the words we recommend to be struck out would, if allowed to stand, render the Act almost worthless, for the reason that rents paid by Chinese firms generally, and the class of houses occupied are no indications whatever of the magnitude of the business carried on by them. As a matter of fact a great number of Chinese firms enjoying large credit occupy houses at much lower rentals.

Clause 4 Section (1) Sub-section (*c*).—Instead of the words "and agencies of the firm in the Colony" at the end of this sub-section, we suggest the insertion of the words "whether carried on under that designation or as agencies".

Section (2).—At the end of this section we propose the addition of "all such registrations shall be duly notified in the *Government Gazette*." We are of opinion that the usefulness of the Act will be greatly increased if this suggestion is carried out.

Clause 8, Section (1).—At the end of this section also we propose the addition "and advertise the same in the *Government Gazette*."

In reference to the proposed publication in the *Government Gazette* of registrations under this Act and all alterations subsequently made in registered partnerships, we think that there would be a consequent large increase in the demand for the *Gazette*, augmenting the revenue derived therefrom.

Clause 9, Section (2).—We suggest there be added "or to any liability incurred by a person who trading in co-partnership with any other person or persons has held out or represented to the creditor that he is trading alone and not in co-partnership with any other person or persons."

We think this addition would be useful in detecting and preventing fraud.

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We have so far dealt with such particular sections of the Act as we considered required altering and amending. We have carefully considered all the other clauses in the Government draft measure, and consider them acceptable without alteration.

As regards the fees leviable under the Ordinance we would urge upon the Government, that they be made on a scale not larger than enough to cover the cost of efficiently working the Act. In no case should the Government seek to thereby tax the Commercial Community for revenue purposes. We have advocated that all registrations be duly published in the *Government Gazette*, and we may add that if an arrangement can be come to whereby a supplement of the *Gazette* can be published quarterly, containing all registrations and changes made during the quarter, we believe there would be a demand by the Mercantile Community for these issues.

In conclusion, we would state that we have found less alteration necessary in the Government draft measure than was expected from a cursory perusal of the same, and we are strongly of opinion that the Act as now amended would prove a workable one, and be of great benefit to the Mercantile Community.

G. S. Murray.
Jno. F. Craig.
W. H. Frizell.
J. M. Allinson.
H. Katz.
and several others.

Singapore, 5th April, 1894.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Hongkong, 18th January, 1901.

Sir,—With reference to your letter of the 31st October last, I am directed to inform you that His Excellency the Governor has determined to appoint a Committee to consider the advisability of introducing a Bill for the Registration of Partners in Chinese Firms, and I am to request that the Chamber of Commerce will kindly select one of its Members to serve on this Committee.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce.

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HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 1st February, 1901.

DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 5th ultimo, replying to my inquiries in connection with the Singapore Bill for the Registration of Partnerships in Chinese Firms, and enclosing copy of the report of the Sub-Committee of your Chamber appointed in 1894 to examine and report upon the draft of that Bill.

The information forwarded will materially assist this Chamber and be of great use to the Committee about to be appointed by His Excellency Governor Sir Henry Blake to consider the advisability of introducing a Bill for the Registration of Partners in Chinese Firms in this Colony, and, on behalf of my Committee, I beg to thank you for the trouble you have taken in the matter.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

ALEX. J. GUNN, Esq., Secretary, SINGAPORE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 6th February, 1901.

SIR,—In reply to your letter (No. 133) of the 18th ultimo, announcing that His Excellency the Governor proposed to appoint a Committee to consider the advisability of introducing a Bill for the registration of partners in Chinese Firms, and inviting the Chamber to nominate one of its Members to serve thereon, I am directed to submit the name of Mr. Robert Shewan to His Excellency.

I have to apologise for the delay in replying to this letter, which was caused by the lamented death of the late Queen diverting attention for the time from other matters.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, C.M.G., Colonial Secretary.

No. 308. COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 9th February, 1901.

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 6th instant, I am directed to inform you that His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint Mr. Shewan to be member of the Committee which is to consider the advisability

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of introducing a Bill for the Registration of Partners in Chinese Firms.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

The SECRETARY, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

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The Eastern Mail Subsidy.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 30th August, 1900.

SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 5th June, 1897, regarding the question of the Colonial contribution to the subsidy for the Eastern Mail Service, I am directed to transmit for the information of the Chamber the enclosed copy of correspondence between the Colonial Office and the Treasury, and a copy of an award which was given by the Earl of Morley as Arbitrator upon the questions which arose as to the proportion of the cost of the Service to be borne by the Government of India.

2. I am to request you to be good enough to lay these papers before the Chamber at an early date in order that they may, if they desire, supplement the remarks made in your letter above mentioned.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Downing Street,
19th December, 1898.

Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 16834/98 of the 18th ultimo, respecting the apportionment of the cost of the Eastern Mail Service, and to request that you will move the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury to cause this Department to be furnished with the accounts which, as stated in paragraph 2 of your letter, the Postmaster-General has been requested to furnish, as soon as they are ready.—I am, &c.,

C. P. LUCAS.

The Secretary to The Treasury.

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Treasury Chambers,
18th June, 1900.

Sir,—In reply to Mr. Lucas's letter of the 3rd April last, respecting the contributions to be made by Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, and Hongkong towards the cost of the Eastern Mail Service, I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to say for the information of Mr. Secretary Chamberlain that they are only now in a position to give an answer to his request for the accounts promised in the letter from this Department of the 18th November, 1898. The delay which has occurred has been due to the settlement of questions raised by the India Office as to the proper interpretation to be placed upon various passages of Lord Morley's award, and it has been necessary to refer some points again to his Lordship.

Lord Morley has now given his decision upon the points submitted to him, and his decision has been accepted by the Secretary of State for India in Council.

Amongst other things it has been decided that the Mails of the year 1901, the middle year of the contract, should be taken as the basis upon which the cost and earnings of the service should be apportioned between this country and India, and My Lords propose, if the Secretary of State should see no objection, to adopt the same course as regards the contributions of Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, and Hongkong. If this course be followed the accounts cannot be furnished till after the figures of 1901 have been taken, and My Lords propose that in the meantime the contributions now made by these Colonies should be regarded as provisional and subject to adjustment in accordance with the results shown by the account to be taken next year.

The account will, My Lords anticipate, show that the contributions now paid by the Colonies are considerably less than the amounts properly due from them under the award, and will require to be increased accordingly.—I am, &c.,

E. W. Hamilton.

The Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

Downing Street,
13th July, 1900.

Sir,—I am directed by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain to acknowledge the

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receipt of your letter 9732/1900 of 18th ultimo relative to the basis upon which the cost and earnings of the Eastern Mail Service should be apportioned so far as the Colonies of Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, and Hongkong are concerned.

2. I am to request you to inform the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury that their letter will be referred to the Governments of the three Eastern Colonies for consideration, and I am to state that with the information at present before him, Mr. Chamberlain is unable to express any opinion as to acceptance of Lord Morley's award as a basis for the calculation of the future contribution of these Colonies or as to the proposals in the penultimate paragraph of your letter.

3. I am at the same time to enclose copy of a further despatch from the Officer Administering the Government of the Straits Settlements on the subject and to enquire what answer their Lordships would wish to be returned to it.—I am, &c.,

C. P. Lucas.

The Secretary to The Treasury.

31, Prince's Gardens, S.W.,
November 8th, 1898.

My Lords,—In accordance with the request contained in your Lordship's letter of July 20th, I have enquired into the questions at issue between the Postmaster-General and the Secretary of State for India as to the proportion of the Eastern Mail Service to be charged to the Government of India.

2. The case of the Post Office and the case of the Indian Government, which were forwarded to me on July 27th, are annexed to this award.

3. I have had several interviews with Mr. J. J. Cardin, C.B., representing the Post Office, and Mr. H. H. Kisch, the Postmaster-General of Bengal, who have argued the cases of their respective Governments before me.

4. Since Lord Halifax's award in 1876 circumstances have considerably changed, and on the occasion of each subsequent contract the Indian Government has raised questions of importance which have never been definitely settled. During the two contracts from 1880 to the present time the Indian contribution to the Mail Service has been fixed by a series of compromises, the details of which are given in the two cases. It was therefore necessary

for me to go very fully into the principles which have regulated the apportionment of the cost of the service between the two countries.

5. On the conclusion of a new contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Company for the conveyance of the Eastern Mails and Australian Mails for seven years from February 1st, 1898, the Post Office made the following proposals :—

(*a*). That of the total subsidy of £330,000, £85,000 should be regarded as applicable to the Australian service, leaving £245,000 to be taken as the cost of the Indian and Eastern Service.

(*b*). That each country should retain its own collection of postage, as they have done since 1891.

(*c*). That the cost of each of the seven sections into which the Mail route is divided, should be ascertained by dividing the subsidy in proportion to the annual mileage of each section. That one half the cost of the Section should be charged to the United Kingdom, the other half should be paid by India and the various Colonies interested in proportion to the number of letters sent and received by them. The United Kingdom paying for any letters which it exchanges with other countries.

That the incidental expenses should be divided in the same proportions as the cost of the service, and that the amounts received for sea-postage on foreign mails should be divided between the contributing countries in the proportion which each bears of the cost of the service. In its main principles, this is the mode in which the apportionment has been hitherto adjusted.

6. The Indian Government objects to these proposals on the following grounds :—

(*a*). That the amount (£85,000) appropriated to the Australian service is too small.

(*b*). That India should not be charged with any portion of the loss accruing on the sections between Colombo and Shanghai.

(*c*). That, if each administration retains its postal collection, the share of the subsidy charged to India is too large having regard to the fact that the Mails from England to India are far heavier than the Mails from India to England.

The discrepancy between the homeward and outward mails or traffic in letters is not very great, but England sends to India about six times as many Newspapers, Circulars, &c., as she receives.

The following figures for the year 1896-7 were given to me :—

	From the United Kingdom.	From India and Aden.
Letters and Postcards	lbs. 96,000	lbs. 83,800
Newspapers, Circulars, &c.	1,561,200	259,400

The result, it is argued, is that the United Kingdom makes more use of the service than India, and also that the United Kingdom has the advantage of the larger collection of postage, whereas India has to bear the expense of distributing the heavier Mails.

7. To meet this case, the Indian Government suggests that a new principle should be adopted, viz. :—that the Postal Union rules should be applied to the sea-transit, as if it were provided by a foreign Government, and that Postal Union rates should be charged on all Mails to the sending country.

As an alternative scheme it is stated in the Indian Case (Page xiii) that "India would be prepared to return to the arrangement for the pooling of postage and sea-postage which was in force from 1857 to 1891."

8. The Post Office on the other hand states that, if the principles of Lord Halifax's settlement are re-opened, there are various claims which can be equitably raised against India which have not been thus far pressed, *e.g.*—

(*a*). The cost of extra speed on the Bombay line.

(*b*). The cost of sea-sorting (£7,500) which, it is alleged, was established at the instance and for the benefit of India.

9. After a careful consideration of the two cases, and of the arguments used in support of them, I have arrived at the following conclusions :—

(*a*). That, as regards the Australian service, the arrangement proposed by the Post Office should be adopted during the continuance of the contract and that £85,000 should be appropriated to that service. When the present contract expires, it appears to me that it would be desirable to enter into separate contracts for the two services.

(*b*). That, as regards the sections between Colombo and Shanghai, India should not continue to be made liable for any loss which may be incurred on these sections, but that she should pay transit rates for any use she may make of this portion of the Mail route. The receipts from such transit rates being credited to the sections.

(*c*). That the postage collected in the two countries, and the receipts from other administrations for land and sea transit on Mails sent over the line should be pooled, and the balance of the united collections, after deduct-

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ing the cost of continental transit and rates paid to other countries, should be equally divided.

(*d*). That, subject to the above mentioned conditions, the apportionment with the principles laid down in paragraphs 23 and 24 of the Post Office with this exception, that the Indian Government should bear the whole expense of sea-sorting on the Bombay line which by Article 35 of the contract is fixed at £7,500. Under this article, the Postmaster-General may give notice to the Company that he no longer requires provision to be made for sea-sorting and may deduct £7,500 from the subsidy. I understand that he would be willing to give this notice if the Indian Government desires him to do so.

(*e*). That an account should be prepared by the Imperial Post Office and audited by the India Office, and that the amounts thus ascertained shall be payable by the contributing countries to the end of the contract.—I have, &c.,

MORLEY.

The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 11th September, 1900.

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo (No. 1685) transmitting for the information of this Chamber copy of correspondence between the Colonial Office and the Treasury on the question of the colonial contribution to the subsidy for the Eastern Mail Service and copy of an award given by the Earl of Morley as arbitrator upon the questions which arose as to the proportion of the cost of the service to be borne by the Government of India and asking whether this Chamber desires to supplement the remarks made on the subject in their letter of the 5th June, 1897.

This correspondence has received the attention of my Committee, who instruct me to say that they simply wish to reiterate and emphasise the remarks made in the letter above alluded to. They protest now as then most emphatically against a mileage basis being adopted to estimate the proportion of this Colony's share of the mail subsidy; and they would point out that, since that letter was written, Imperial interests north of Hongkong

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have largely developed, not alone by the growth of British trade in China but also by the acquisition of the port of Weihaiwei.

The arguments used in paragraph 6 of the letter have since been strengthened by the fact that the German mail steamers now run fortnightly instead of monthly as formerly and that the Nippon Yusen Kaisha maintain a regular service to London, *viâ* Marseilles.

The inclusion of Hongkong among those Colonies compelled to adopt the penny postal rate within the Empire—a step taken by the Imperial Government in spite of the representations of the local Postmaster-General that it would be a loss to the Colonial Treasury—has had the effect of reducing the revenue of the Post Office Department, which, in 1899, showed a decline of $19,270 on the previous year, mainly due to loss on sale of postage stamps. This furnishes another strong argument why this Colony should not be called upon to make good the losses on correspondence passing through it to the Chinese Treaty Ports.

Sincerely trusting that the Imperial Government may be induced to adopt a more equitable and reasonable basis than that of mileage in calculating the Colony's contribution to the Postal subsidy.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY.

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Fourth Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire.

THE INCORPORATED CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF LIVERPOOL,
B 10, EXCHANGE BUILDINGS,
LIVERPOOL, May 3rd, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I am directed to transmit, for the information of your Chamber, the annexed copy of Resolutions to be moved by this Chamber at the Fourth Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, to be held in London on the 26th of June next, on the subjects of—

(1) Sugar Bounties.

(2) Imperial Telegraphic Communication.

(3) The Metric System.

(4) Commercial Education.

(5) Income Tax in the Australian Colonies.

(6) China Trade, Resources, and Railways.

(7) Trade with Porto Rico, Cuba, and the Philippine Islands.

I am to ask that your Chamber will kindly support these Resolutions at the Congress, and, at the same time, I have, on behalf of the Lancashire Sugar Industry, specially to ask for support to the Resolution on the Sugar Bounties Question.

I enclose copy of a reprint from an important speech on the subject of the Bounties in question made by Sir Nevile Lubbock, at the Meeting of the Association of Chambers of Commerce held in March last.—I am, &c.,

THOMAS H. BARKER, Secretary.

The Secretary, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 25th June, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge, with thanks, receipt of your circular letter of the 3rd May transmitting for the information of this Chamber, copy of a series of Resolutions to be submitted by your Chamber at the Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire about to be held in London.

The Resolutions have been laid before my Committee, but they were received too late for despatch to this Chamber's delegates (Sir Thomas Jackson and the Honourable T. H. Whitehead), but I have little doubt that the Resolution on Sugar Bounties will receive their cordial support, more especially since the Sugar Refineries of this Colony are similarly affected by the Bounties granted by European States to beet sugar.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

THOS. H. BARKER, Esq., Secretary, LIVERPOOL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

CHARTERED BANK OF INDIA, AUSTRALIA AND CHINA,
THREADNEEDLE STREET,
LONDON, E. C., 13th July, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I very sincerely regret to report that unavoidable untoward

circumstances prevented my arriving in this country in time (I did not reach London until the evening of Saturday, 7th inst.) to attend the meeting of the Fourth Congress of the Chambers of the Empire, held in London on 26th to 29th ultimo, and propose the Resolutions entrusted to me as one of the Chamber's delegates, bearing on the reduction of telegraph rates and fresh marine surveys in Eastern Seas, and to support the Chamber's other Resolution in connection with the opening of the inland waters of China to steam navigation. Business detained me after my departure from Hongkong on 14th April last, at Shanghai, Tientsin, and Peking, and fearing that I might not arrive in time to attend the Congress, I despatched the following telegrams to the Chartered Bank in London :—

From Vladivostock on 17th May, 1900 :—

"Please advise Kenric Murray (Secretary) London Chamber of Commerce and Congress, detained Tientsin, Peking, by press of business ; will most likely arrive too late to attend meeting Congress. I will telegraph from Moscow reasons supporting Hongkong Chamber's Resolutions."

From Irkutsk on 15th June, 1900 :—

"Refer telegram from Vladivostock on 17th May, please advise Congress Chambers and Thomas Jackson : telegraph subventions create monopoly, enable companies impose excessive onerous rates Europe Asia. Companies' aggregate undivulged earnings conclusive proof and justify demand for reasonable tariff. Latterly *Imperieuse* discovered uncharted rock Amoy Harbour, *Bonaventure* struck uncharted rock off Corea, *Namoa* total loss off uncharted rock Haitau Straits, *Chingtu* grounded off uncharted shoal North Australia, frequent discovery uncharted dangers, increasing steamers tonnage, etc. Eastern Seas require resurvey. Trade impossible until complete tariff under Chinese inland water navigation definitely negotiated and collection thereof guaranteed by formation separate branch foreign customs. Urge this and demand new workable rules in the interests of domestic and consequent increase of foreign trade."

From Penza on 22nd June, 1900 :—

"Irkutsk telegram of 15th June, please read telegraph subventions, concessions, privileges, &c., create monopoly ; opening Chinese inland waterways concession completely worthless, refer Consul Hosie's Wuchow 1899 report."

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And from Moscow, on 25th June, 1900 :—

"Greatly regret too late attend meeting Congress. Inform Kenric Murray and Sir Thomas Jackson. Please telegraph whether Irkutsk Penza telegrams understood."

On 29th ultimo I received at St. Petersburg a reply from the Chartered Bank, London, intimating that my telegram had been received in an intelligible form and that the China speech had been well received.

I again beg to express my great regret at having been unavoidably prevented from attending the Congress as one of the Hongkong Chamber's Delegates. I endeavoured to do all that was possible under the unfortunate circumstances.—I am, &c.,

T. H. WHITEHEAD.

R. Chatterton Wilcox, Esq., Secretary, Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce, Hongkong.

Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce,
Hongkong, 22nd August, 1900.

Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 13th ultimo, expressing your regret that unforeseen circumstances prevented your arrival in England in time to attend the Fourth Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, held in London on 26th-29th June, and giving copies of the telegrams you despatched respectively from Vladivostock, Irkutsk, Penza and Moscow, announcing probable inability to be present, and summarising your arguments in favour of the Resolutions you had agreed, as one of the Delegates for this Chamber, to propose.

I am instructed by the Committee to say, in reply, that they fully appreciate the earnest desire they know you had to fulfil the duty you undertook, and thank you for the efforts you made to carry it out, so far as was possible, under the conditions.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. T. H. Whitehead, London.

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Extracts from Official Report of the Proceedings at the Fourth Congress of Chambers of Commerce :—

26th June.

British Interests in the Far East.

Sir Thomas Jackson (Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce) : Mr. President and Gentlemen,—The Resolution which I have been asked to move, is a very important one, perhaps very much more important than you may at first be inclined to think, having regard, as it has, to the waterways of China. It is as follows :—

"That the manner in which the Inland Waters Navigation Regulations have been interpreted by the Officials of the Chinese Government being such as to render the right to run steamers on the West River, and other Inland Waters, an almost valueless concession, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs be asked to open special negotiations with the Chinese Government in order to obtain a construction of these regulations more in accordance with the terms of the original agreement."

If China were like other countries, traversed by railroads, and with good roads, this Resolution might not, perhaps, have the importance that it has at present ; but, considering that there are almost no railroads in China, what there are being in the extreme North, and considering that roads, properly so called, do not exist in the Chinese Empire, it stands to reason that the very utmost ought to he made of the fine natural waterways of the country. Until within the last two years we were only able to send steamers to the treaty ports, and very few there ; but two years ago Sir Clande Macdonald achieved what was then considered both by the House of Commons, by the British Trading Companies in China, and by every person connected with trade, a very great triumph in getting permission to navigate the inland waterways of the Empire. I was in Hongkong at the time, and we were all overjoyed when this great step in advance had been made. But time went on, and nothing was done. We heard that regulations for the traffic were being drawn up, and in the course of time those regulations were forthcoming. They were, however, of the most extraordinary kind. It was a regular question of taking back with your left hand what you gave away with your right. I will cite a case in point. To go from one treaty port to

another you had one steamer, but if you went to any of the inland waters you would require another steamer. Thus, going say from Canton to Wuchow, you would have a steamer that would be under the Imperial Maritime Customs, but if you went beyond Wuchow or deviated in any way from the route to one of the ports of call, as they are called, you would require another steamer and to be under another licence. The curse of the whole thing is the dual system of Customs obtaining in China, and until they are removed it will be absolutely impossible to have either this or the general trade of the country on a sound basis. The Imperial Maritime Customs are solely taken up with the treaty ports. The Inland Customs do everything else. It would be the very greatest blessing that commerce could possibly have if the native Customs were absorbed in the Imperial Maritime Customs as at present administered under Sir Robert Hart. As I may be led to speak too strongly about the regulations in connection with the waterways, with your permission I will read two short letters addressed to Her Majesty's *Chargé d'Affaires* at Peking, by Mr. Mansfield, Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Canton. The first letter is dated June 10th, 1899, when we were in the middle of all our disgust at the turn affairs had taken. He says :—" Sir,—Referring to the remarks contained in my despatch No. 16 of the 11th April on the prayer of the Shipping Companies for 'the rescinding of the Inspector-General's decision that the inter-treaty-port steamers shall not also be registered for inland navigation,' I have now the honour to report that about a week ago the Inland Water licences of the S.S. *Lungshan* and *Lungkiang*, two British vessels plying under West River certificates between Canton and Wuchow, *viâ* Samshui, were withdrawn, to their very considerable loss. Two days later a British-owned launch, plying under Inland Water Steam Navigation Regulations between Canton and Shining on the West River, was informed by the Customs that she could not call in at the treaty port of Samshui, which she passes *en route*. This is the logical converse of the ruling of the Inspector-General with regard to the *Lung* steamers, but I venture to suggest that it is its *reductio ad absurdum*. A British vessel running on a certain line under certain regulations passes a number of ports. One of these happens to have been opened by Treaty, and this one she is debarred from entering. This is not a case where any loss of national revenue is involved, and it is conceded here that the liberty hitherto enjoyed had not led to any abuses. It appears to me that the West River

Regulations, while remaining in force for steamers running to and from Hongkong, might very well be abolished for steamers confined to Chinese inland waters. The Inland Waters Regulations with very slight modifications could be adapted to the whole trade, premising always that the disabilities caused by the present reading of the Regulations be removed. The remarks in Consul Hosie's report on the trade of Wuchow under the heading 'Taxation of Domestic Trade' are very much to the point." I will also read you a second letter, dated July 7th, 1899, which gives the opinion of Consul Mansfield even more strongly. It is as follows :—" Sir,—In my despatch No. 27 of the 10th ultimo, I had the honour to report that the I. M. Customs had prohibited launches plying under the Steam Navigation Inland Regulations from calling at treaty ports *en route*. This prohibition has now been extended to apply to Kongmoon, Kum Chuk, Shin Hing, and Tak Hing, mentioned as 'places of call' in the West River Regulations. I have entered a strong protest against this ruling, as being in direct contravention of Regulation 1, which says that steamers 'may proceed to and fro *at will* under the Regulations, but they must not proceed to places out of the Chinese territory.' (The italics are mine.) The result of this action, which I can only characterize as arbitrary, is that steamers, under West River certificate, cannot call now, having had their Inland Waters licences withdrawn, anywhere but at open ports and *places of call*, and steamers with the Inland Waters licence, though they may pass these places, may not enter them. The whole traffic is therefore split up into two services, and two steamers running over the same ground are required to do the work of one. Under such circumstances, I have no hesitation in saying that the Steam Navigation Inland Regulations are absolutely valueless. I am powerless locally as the Commissioner of Customs states that he is acting under instructions from Peking." Those letters of Mr. Consul Mansfield show exactly how the trade is affected by having to deal with two sets of Customs. It may be impossible at the present day to do away with this second set of Customs, but I do hope that after this upheaval which we are now suffering from in China, first and foremost this subject of the Inland Customs of China will be tackled. Chinese trade has doubled within the last ten years, and, notwithstanding that, we hear of the Government being hard up for money, her financial position not being very good, and so on ; but if the Chinese Government got even a fair share of the total taxes which are

received as Inland Revenue, I do not think that any country in Europe would be in a better financial position than China. There is another thing we must bear in mind, namely, that under this dual system there is a constant competition going on between the native shipper and the foreign shipper. The foreign shipowner is constantly complaining that the native Customs are holding out inducements to send cargo by native craft which on its merits would have gone by foreign vessels. I believe there is a good deal in this. The Inspector-General of Customs, however, denies it: but I am sure so long as this dual system remains we cannot have any satisfaction. I may be asked: "Then, if such is the case why put forward a Resolution of this kind?" I say we can do something to ameliorate the position, but we cannot have anything absolutely satisfactory so long as this dual system remains. I think it would be quite possible for all steamers to be allowed to call at all the open ports of call, but at present they can only carry passengers to the non-treaty ports. This would open up another question. One of the curses of the China trade at the present time is the piracy on the inland waters. If foreign steamers were allowed to go at will to all the ports of those inland waterways, it would do more to check piracy than if there were half-a-dozen ships of war constantly patrolling them. In the present state of things pirates nip out of every creek and waterway and attack ordinary trading vessels manned by half-a-dozen or eight coolies, in most instances unarmed; but they would think twice before attacking foreign steamers, which they would find well-manned and well-armed. I can only hope, as I have said before, that when these troubles in the North blow over, as they assuredly will, one of the very first reforms demanded will be that this dual system of Chinese Customs be done away with. I have very great pleasure in proposing this Resolution.

Mr. Henry F. Hibbert (Blackburn Chamber):—I have very great pleasure, as representing a Chamber which is probably more affected by the state of trade in China than any other Chamber in the United Kingdom, in seconding this Resolution. It is of the utmost importance to my Chamber and the thousands who are employed by its members, that the inland navigation of the Chinese rivers should be good and secure. At the present moment, China is the largest market for cotton goods we possess outside India, when you take into consideration the fact that we only touch the very fringe of the country. You may be certain that, at any rate for Lancanshire, good times are in

store, when the country can be opened up. The matter has been exhaustively treated by the proposer, and as the time of this Congress is valuable I will content myself with simply seconding the Resolution.

Rev. C. Poyntz Sanderson (Worcester Chamber):—I most earnestly hope that the Resolution just proposed by Sir Thomas Jackson will be carried. The total foreign import and export trade of China is about 70,000,000*l.*, and of that the British Empire has over 42,000,000*l.*, or over sixty per cent., so that we have on the plainest and simplest grounds of commercial expediency and commercial labour, every right to insist that the navigation on the water-ways of China should be put on a right and proper footing, leaving out of account the simple common measure of humanity with regard to piracy to which Sir Thomas Jackson has referred. When the representative from Blackburn said that we had touched but the fringe of the commerce of China, he said what is a commonplace to everyone who knows anything about that country; and when he said that good times were in store for Lancashire and Yorkshire he spoke in the spirit of a prophet, a prophet of an optimistic kind, a prophet whose vaticinatious there is little probability will ever be fulfilled. For, Sir, we have come now to the parting of the ways. If we have amongst us backbone enough, if we have amongst us clear sight enough to carry out measures such at that which Sir Thomas Jackson has proposed, such a measure as that and other measures of a like kind will most certainly give us so firm a grip on China that we can never be ejected from it, and it will give to the Chinese people themselves a measure of prosperity and peace such as for many generations they have not enjoyed. But, Sir, what is the use of trifling with a little measure, for after all it is but a little measure such as this, and shutting our eyes to the fact that we can neither do that nor anything else of the kind unless we have a clear policy in the Far East, and unless we know whether we mean to stand or whether we mean to go back, and whether we believe that it is for our interest, or it is our duty to maintain our hold upon the Yangtsze, or whether we think it is better that our interests and our commercial energies should cease with the frontier of Burma? For, Sir, if we stand and look, as has been our habit for some time, we shall stand and look at what is happening and we shall see it take place, but we shall have no influence on the events; and when we have allowed the whole of the North of China to pass under the influence of, or into the hands of Russia, and have done nothing to tighten

our own grasp or increase our own influence in the South, then, Sir, we shall find that the whole of our commercial fabric which generations of merchants have built up in the South will wither at a touch at the bidding of the Statesmen of the North. ("Time" and "question".) I thank you, gentlemen, for that reminder. Without any doubt I was being carried a little away from myself; but it does seem a dreadful pity that we should stand still and let such a splendid opening for trade and such an enormous opening for beneficial British influence slide away from us, and we ourselves do nothing to maintain our hold upon it or to exercise our rights.

Mr. George Robertson (St. John, New Brunswick, Board of Trade): I would like to say one word in support of the Resolution. It may seem strange to this Congress or to some members of this Congress, that Canada should be particularly interested in this Resolution, but it is not an uncommon thing in the City that I have the honour to represent for members of its Board of Trade there to hear, "All aboard for Hongkong"—3,000 miles across Canada and then across the ocean. The last speaker, if I understood him, seemed to have the same opinion that the Empire was going to give up —what shall I say?—one of the greatest interests of the Empire. ("Yes.") Well, it is my opinion that Britain will hold her own—(Cheers)—as she always has done, and the Empire will hold its own. (Cheers.) The first pioneers of that wonderful trade and that wonderful people sprang from the heart of this Empire, and I have no doubt that the Empire and the sons of the Empire will be found ready and willing and determined to hold their own, never mind what may turn up in China. (Cheers.) Mr. President, I have nothing more to say, but this simple word for Canada, that we are interested in this question in our great Dominion, and doubtless Her Majesty's Government recognizes the importance of this Resolution with respect to the development of the Chinese trade, and will give due consideration to what I believe will be the unanimous endorsement of this Congress.

The Resolution was carried unanimously.

29th June.

The Re-survey of Eastern Seas.

Sir Thomas Jackson (Hongkong Chamber): The motion that I have to move will not occupy your time more than a few minutes. It is,—

"That in consequence of the rapid increase in the numbers, tonnage, and speed of steamers employed in the trade, and the frequent discovery in some tracks of sunken rocks not recorded on existing charts, the facts should be brought to the notice of Her Majesty's Government that it is necessary to have made, with as little delay as possible, a thorough resurvey of the navigable channels and coast lines in Eastern Seas."

Having had a long experience in China, I can fully bear testimony to the excellent work done by the navy in surveying, but it is worthy of note that the shipping engaged in the Eastern Seas is probably now four times as valuable as it was twenty years ago, and that consequently additional surveys are required. I am fully alive to the fact that Her Majesty's ships are at present very fully occupied in Eastern waters, and that this is not perhaps the proper time to bring forward a Resolution of this kind. However, I join one of the speakers who said that these troubles will not last very long in China, and that I hope when they are over the British Admiralty will give their attention to a resurvey of the Eastern Seas. I may add in this connection, that on the principle of Providence helping those that help themselves, the Hongkong Chamber has got a fund together of some 3,000 dollars. This fund is available to give gratuities to fishermen or native pilots who can report on known dangers to either Her Majesty's Consul or to the flagship on the station. This plan has been tried and found to work excellently. Very frequently we have been brought into touch with dangers that surveying vessels would hardly ever recognize. I am sure we all recognize the importance of this motion, and I have only to commend it to the meeting for it to be carried unanimously.

Mr. J. Walton, M.P. (Barnsley Chamber): May I be allowed to second this because of my experience of the absolute neglect of the Intelligence Department of this country as regards the preparation of proper charts where British trade is conducted, especially on the rivers of China? I could not, in my trip of 1,600 miles up the Yangtsze River, get a British chart that was any intelligible guide whatever for the navigation of the river, and I had, fortunately, given to me a new chart that had just been completed by the Jesuit Fathers, a survey of the whole of the great Yangtsze River, and by the aid of that chart I safely navigated 1,600 miles up the river and 1,600 miles back. But it is not creditable to us. Our trade on the Yangtsze is enourmous, and the trade of France is practically nil, and it ought not to be

that they should be so far ahead of us in the preparation of charts. On the West River, practically the same state of affairs exists. The British chart had been made in 1861 and very little altered since then. The result was that both in going up the river and in coming back, because of our absolute want of knowledge of the channels, I had the pleasure, on one occasion, of being ashore for twenty-four hours, and on another occasion for eight or nine hours. I think this practical experience shows how much needed is the preparation of new charts. I second the Resolution proposed by Sir Thomas Jackson.

The Resolution was put and carried unanimously.

Imperial Telegraphic Communications.

Major-General TWIGGE, (Vancouver, B.C., Board of Trade) moved the following Resolution :—

"That this Congress desires to call special attention to the necessity of completing the All-British Pacific Cable, not only on commercial grounds, but in the interests of the Imperial security."

He said :—I need hardly emphasize the supreme importance of telegraphic communication in such a scattered Empire as ours, both for commercial reasons and for defence. In connection with the question of a cable between Vancouver and Australia, Sir Charles Dilke stated in the House of Commons that the failure of this scheme would be a national calamity. It is very easy to conceive how it would be the cause of national calamity in case of war with any great nations who are dependent on a certain Eastern telegraph line—a line which would be very subject to interruption in time of war. The land portion of the cable now proposed as an additional cable passes through our own territory, Canada, from end to end. The only means that I can see of defending cable communications from interruption, is by multiplication of different routes. Any cable communication is subject to interruption, and it appears to me the greatest security will be obtained by increasing the number of routes, and that these routes should run through our own territory. I will confine myself simply to asking you, gentlemen, to endorse this Resolution unanimously. I may observe that Lord Selborne in his speech referred to this subject, and, as far as I can discover, the matter has been taken up by the Government, which is a cause of great satisfaction. I think the passing of the Resolution will give a lift in that particular direction. (Cheers.)

Mr. WILLIAM WOOD (Canterbury, N.Z., Chamber) : I beg to second that.

Mr. J. E. TINNE (Georgetown Chamber) : I understood that I was to speak on a Resolution to be proposed by Sir Edward Sassoon, but if he sees his way to in any way join the two Resolutions, my remarks solely refer to the West Indian cables. It is the desire of Demerara to see the Jamaica cable extended to St. Lucia, on British territory. There is a gap between Jamaica and St. Lucia. At present we are moving large bodies of troops to the latter island, which is to be our chief military depôt in the West Indies. As the West Indian Panama cable runs though foreign territory, we might at any time be left for days, or even for weeks, without any communication with our troops in St. Lucia. Therefore, on military grounds, I urge that this new cable should be laid.

Dr. G. R. PARKIN (Toronto Board of Trade) : Might I ask a question with regard to these Resolutions ? At present we have three Resolutions on the subject. Sir Edward Sassoon has agreed with the Ottawa Board to incorporate their Resolution in his in order that the whole matter may be discussed, and if General Twigge will waive his Resolution, we shall shortly have one of the most important matters put before us in a definite shape, which we could deal with.

Mr. J. MACFARLANE (Ottawa Board of Trade) : With regard to the Resolution down to be moved by the Ottawa Board of Trade and marked "not to be moved" I am in receipt of a communication from Sir Sandford Fleming, who is also a delegate from the Ottawa Board of Trade (but he is unable to be present), in which he very strongly urges the acceptance of a Resolution bearing on this subject of the cables. I am sorry he was not aware, when he wrote his letter, that a member of the Government, our Honorary President, would make a speech on the subject, and make a statement with regard to the strong action taken by the Government regarding the cable. Therefore I do not know that it is wise, and it might be discourteous, for us to pass a positive Resolution on the subject, and so I coincide with the suggestion that our Resolution should not be moved, provided that sections 2 and 3 be added to the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce Resolution, only substituting the word "Congress" for the word "Board" in these two questions.

Sir E. A. SASSOON, Bart., M.P. (Folkestone Chamber) : You have just heard from the last two speakers that in view of the limitation of time, and

in order to consult the convenience of the Congress, it has been decided to amalgamate all the Resolutions bearing directly on the question of cable communications of the Empire, to concentrate our forces upon one single Resolution, and if I have the authority of the Congress to do so, the Resolution which I have the honour to move on behalf of the Liverpool Chamber of Commerce will then read as it stands, with the addition of numbers 2 and 3 of the Ottawa Board of Trade Resolution—a Resolution which stands in Mr. Tinne's name. Long as these combined Resolutions have become, I should like to ask your permission, Sir, and the authority of the Congress, to move a Rider, because the Congress are aware that since the Liverpool Resolution was put down certain events have transpired. I will, with your permission, now read the Rider and take your judgment upon it. The Rider is to urge upon the Government the importance of instituting a searching investigation by the Departmental Committee, promised by the Government, into both the shortcomings and the merits of a private system of cables, and consequently into the desirability or otherwise of adopting such a course of policy in the future as would lead to the ultimate expropriation of private cables, and to the establishment of State-owned cables throughout the Empire, and to report thereon at the earliest opportunity, such report to be accessible to the public. I think, gentlemen, you will see the extreme necessity of having this Rider, because even a Unionist Government requires to be watched, and although I was instrumental in obtaining a promise from the Government in the House of Commons some four or five weeks back to institute a Departmental inquiry, I am not very easy in my mind as to the terms of reference and as to the composition of the Commission. I would therefore like to be armed with your authority in jogging the Government and in keeping them up to the mark. I think I shall be best consulting your views if I do not go over the same ground which I have traversed in the course of my speeches both in the North and in the South of England during the last twelve months, culminating in the very full debate which we had in the House of Commons some three or four weeks back. My intention now is to go through the points that have been raised in the counter-blast that was issued by the Eastern Telegraph and Associated Companies, pointing out, as they have, the points where we were mistaken. The first thing to which they make reference is the question of tariffs, and they seek to defend their position by assuming, for the purposes of their calculation, a

standard or unit of 100 nautical miles as being the average traversed by a word in Great Britain for the sum of ½*d.* per word. They go on instituting that comparison; but, gentlemen, you will agree, that for such a comparison to be useful a great deal depends upon the correctness of the standard chosen. I am not at all prepared to accept beforehand, and without proof, this convenient unit of 100 nautical miles; because if it turns out, as it might conceivably do, that the average traversed is nearer 200 than 100 miles, the whole of these figures which they have placed before the public will become vitiated. It is obviously misleading to compare a land line system, with its numerous charges consequent upon the many obscure hamlets and villages where the Post Office have to keep branches for public convenience, with a cable system which, in the majority of instances, lands their cables in the very heart of large towns and centres of business. The Congress will see how eminently misleading such a comparison must be. It would be almost as misleading if I told you that in France a Frenchman can send a word to the farthest confines of Tunis in Algeria for ½*d.* per word, a distance involving 400 miles of land lines and 530 miles of cable; or if I told you that a Russian can send one word to Vladivostock, a distance of 4,300 nautical miles, for 4*d.*, equal to a penny a word for 1,000 nautical miles, which the foreign Governments charge their subjects, as against the 5*s.* which the Eastern Company charge us, and expects us to be thankful for. The next point is that we are told, with regard to the Indian and Joint Purse arrangement, that there is no mystery, and that the whole thing is as plain as a pike-staff. In the name of common sense, when I made my request to the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs last August, asking that the documents upon which this Joint Purse arrangement was based should be made public, why were those documents refused? They were refused because Mr. Brodrick said that he could not divulge that document without the consent of the other contracting party, and that consent has not been forthcoming, although a whole year has passed; so it is nonsense to say that there is no mystery about it. No doubt, as far as the public are concerned, the matter must remain shrouded in mystery until the whole of the instruments upon which this arrangement is based are made public. What we do know from the Indian Blue Book is this, that for the last twenty-one years preceding 1891, a sum of no less than £1,884,000 was paid into the Joint Purse, and India only drew from that purse £1,774,000, leaving a net loss

to India of £140,000. The next point I wish to remark on is that Mr. Twisaday, of the India Office, in criticizing the lecture which I delivered before the Society of Arts, in which I took exception to the appointment of the Australian Message Fund, said that I am quite mistaken in thinking that that is prejudicial to Indian Revenue, because Indian Telegraph Revenue has increased since 1891 by something like £10,000. I beg leave to remark to Mr. Twisaday that in the year 1891 a substantial reduction of 50 per cent. was made on the Australian messages, and that therefore the very large volume of business consequent upon the lowering of the rate, had to be carried along the Indian land lines in order to get to Europe; so that, but for this Joint Purse arrangement, my contention is that the Indian profit would have been considerably larger, at all events it would have been larger by the balance which the Indian Telegraph Department paid over to the Eastern and the Associated Companies. The next point is, that the Eastern Company allege that no reduction can be conveniently made until the International Telegraph Convention is sitting——

The Chairman: In view of the decision which has been come to with regard to the length of time allotted to each speaker, I have to inform you, Sir Edward, that your time is up.

Sir Edward Sassoon: With regard to that intimation, Sir, I should like to say that my friend Sir Thomas Jackson, who is going to second the Resolution, has promised to formally second it, so that I may have another ten minutes for my speech, if I have your permission.

The Chairman: I do not think that would be fair to the other speakers, so I must ask you to bring your remarks to a close.

Sir Edward Sassoon: Then, Sir, I shall take the opportunity of publishing the points I wish to bring out in a pamphlet. I think it right where cable companies, who are now at direct issue with the public, have issued their pamphlets broadcast, that it is only fair that the Imperial Telegraph Committee of the House of Commons should equally have their counter-blast in the same way.

Mr. James Scott (Toronto Board of Trade): The urgency and the great importance of this matter lead me to say that the time of the Congress for the next ten minutes will be well served by listening to the completion of the statements to be made by Sir Edward Sassoon. (Hear, hear.) I do not think we shall be doing ourselves justice if we do not allow Sir Edward

Sassoon to complete his statements. (Cheers.)

On the question being put from the Chair, it was agreed that Sir Edward Sassoon should continue his remarks.

Sir Edward Sassoon: I am very much obliged to Mr. Scott for having taken up the cudgels on my behalf. I have taken a great deal of trouble in elucidating the figures that have been given by the Associated Telegraph Company, but I quite understand how impatient people do get just when the luncheon interval is coming on. There is one point which I consider, and I think you will consider, of great importance in this counter-blast, and that is, that they have given an estimate for the construction of a new cable to India, and they make out, that upon the basis of 1*s.* per word which we are advocating, the income would only be one per cent. to anybody who started a new cable upon the requisite capital. The capital which they give is 1½ millions for a new cable to India. I accept that. They put their working expenses at £75,000. I equally accept that. Their out-payments work out at something like 1/7 per cent. of the total earnings. That I accept. The number of paying words that the cable can carry, they work out to be 7½ per minute. That I also accept; but the sting is in the tail, because they will not allow the cable to work more than fourteen hours a day; nor do they allow for its being duplex. There seems no reason, gentlemen, why such a large amount of capital should be allowed to lie fallow for ten hours a day out of twenty-four—(hear, hear)—nor that the cable should not be duplex, because that means doubling the traffic—it means 96 per cent. more traffic than a simplex cable. Coming to my figures—and they are perfectly workable and reasonable—there would be something like 8 millions of paying words per year. That on the basis of 1*s.* means £241,000 clear profit, or 16 per cent. That is rather a far cry from the one per cent. which they give in their estimate; so I think you will agree with the necessity for caution, and the unwisdom of swallowing wholesale all those statistics which the company sends out for public consumption, evidently thinking the public must be very credible and gullible. That is the point to which I wish to refer, because I consider it vitiates and emasculates the whole of the counter-blast which is issued by the cable companies. By my figures I am perfectly prepared to stand. (Cheers.)

A Delegate: I should like to support this Resolution, because in Canada we feel a most passionate and intense interest in the question of the

Pacific Cable.

Sir Thomas Jackson (Hongkong Chamber): I shall not take up your time at all, as I know several others are waiting to speak on the question, but surely fifty years hence those who are then living will look back with astonishment at the fact, that in the year 1900 a telegram to Hongkong cost 5*s.* 6*d.* a word, while at the same time one could be sent to Vladivostock for 4*d.* per word. I beg to second the Resolution.

Sir Frederick Young (Hon. Vice-President): I rise to heartily sympathize with and support the Resolution which has been moved by the Vancouver Board of Trade. We have taken a very active part in this question for some length of time. Only a few months ago the British Empire League had a meeting at the Central Committee Room of the House of Commons, at which the Duke of Devonshire took the chair, and a Resolution was passed unanimously in favour of this very object. I took an active part in regard to that matter. We are very much disappointed indeed that from some cause or other this important question has been allowed to sleep, and we most heartily wish that no time should be lost in urging our Government to take steps with the Colonial Governments, for the purpose of carrying out this very great national question to a satisfactory conclusion.

Mr. B. Plummer (Newcastle Chamber):—I wish to refer to the fact that the Chamber of Commerce of Newcastle, England, which I have the honour of representing, has long held very strongly with the opinion that it is most desirable that postal and telegraph routes should, as far as possible, go entirely through the British Empire. I had the honour of submitting the Resolution to the last Congress in the exact words of the one that stands in the name of Newcastle at the present time, and which is now merged into the general Resolution which has been proposed by Sir Edward Sassoon. I have also had the privilege of moving Resolutions in in the same sense at the Associated Chambers of Commerce. I moved one at Belfast last autumn, and upon that was based a memorial to Mr. Chamberlain, strongly urging, and expressing regret in the delay of, the completion of the negotiations with respect to the Pacific cable, and strongly urging that the original proposal of contributing towards the scheme the sum of £25,000 a year should be set aside in favour of contributing a lump sum of money, and making the cable Imperial property. I have very

great pleasure in supporting the Resolution as it has been proposed.

Dr. G. H. Parkin (Toronto Board of Trade): I regret to find that Sir Edward Sassoon has taken more the line of criticism of the details of the Eastern Extension Company than in presenting the all-important Imperial question which is involved in the general Resolution which has been presented. What is the position? It has been written in words of fire during the last few months all over the world—the question that where you have a ring of nations going round the world uniting for common action on great national purposes, it has become a supreme necessity of our national life that we should in the easiest, most ready, and instant manner be in communication with every part. Look at the condition of our cables on the Coast of Africa during the war! At the very critical time we found that these cables were not arranged sufficiently to carry out the work that was required. Look at the tremendous interests which would be involved if we were engaged in a war, if we had no cables by means of which we could communicate with our Colonies. The only point of safety is by having an all-round British route going across Canada. (Cheers.) We have cables across the Atlantic and across North America and to South Africa, and if you only complete the Pacific cable, you have the means of instant communication around the whole world. What can be more important than that? But what are we all working for? We have just passed a Resolution with regard to the commercial relations between the Mother Country and the Colonies, and the effects of them. Why, to-day there is a thousand pounds spent in telegraphing between Australia and the Mother Country alone, and that is what facilitates the amazing interchange of communications that goes on. There is scarcely a thing that happens but what it is communicated to you. A ship goes down and a report is sent immediately to you, and the next day the news has been circulated broadcast. What is the use of our Imperial forces, and making all our military arrangements, unless we have what is the most important matter of all, viz., the extreme mobility which is given to the Imperial forces by cable communications, and the instant means of communication with every part of the world? I say the most crying wrong that goes on to-day in an all-world-round Empire such as ours where people for reasons of avocation, and business and military reasons, and individual reasons, desire to be in instant touch with each other—the greatest wrong and the greatest scourge

that I know of to-day is the fact that the Eastern Extension Company has been able for the last ten years to resist us without allowing us even an hearing. (Cheers.) Therefore, I say, this great Conference will strengthen the bands of those who are working with regard to this question. Before sitting down, I want to say a word or two with regard to what Lord Selborne said. In making his opening speech he said that the contracts were already out for the cables. We have been trying for that for the last seven years. We met in a Conference with delegates from all parts of the world, and it was agreed that the thing must be done at once, but to this day the Eastern Extension Company has stood as a permanent barrier in the way. Why it is done, and what is the cause of the state of things which prevails in London we do not know, but we know that we have run against it as against a rock, and that to-day we are paying about three times as much as it is necessary to pay for the communication that goes on between the different parts of the world. Let us hold closely to what Lord Selborne has said; he has stated publicly and clearly that contracts are now being called for. If the suggestion is adopted, enormous advantages will accrue. We can cut the rate to Australia at once by one-half, and the enormous consequent advantages will soon make our British people approve of it. You must let it be known that you are not going to have inter-communication either for military purposes or business purposes interfered with by the wants of any Company, however high the dividends they pay, however much they may water their stock, or however much social influence they may command in the centre of the Empire. (Cheers.)

The Chairman: I will now put the Resolution as follows:—

"That this Congress desires to call special attention to the necessity of completing the All-British Pacific Cable, not only on commercial grounds, but in the interests of the Imperial security."

"That this Congress recommends that support should be given to the action which the Imperial Telegraph Committee of the House of Commons is taking with the view of placing the important matter of electrical communication between the United Kingdom, India, and the British Colonies and Dependencies on a footing commensurate with present conditions of Inter-Imperial and Colonial relations."

"That copies of this Resolution be addressed to the Prime Minister, the First Lord of the Treasury, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the

Secretary of State for India, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the Postmaster-General, and the Governors of the self-governing Colonies, urging that every reasonable opportunity may be given in Parliament for discussion of the position of the Telegraph Companies in relation to the Government, with a view to an immediate and satisfactory solution being found for the very serious grievances under which the Commercial and Industrial Communities of the Empire have been labouring for a long time past."

"That in view of the great object to be attained, this Congress is strongly of the opinion that it would be wise policy to make full provision for ultimate State ownership in any arrangements hereafter made to lay cables, by private Companies, between British possessions in any part of the globe."

"That this Congress recommends that the principle of State ownership be especially provided for in the cable proposed to be laid by a private Company between South Africa and Australia."

"That this Congress urges upon Her Majesty's Government the importance of instituting a searching investigation by the Departmental Committee, promised by the Government, into both the shortcomings and the merits of a private system of cables, and consequently into the desirability or otherwise of adopting such a course or policy in the future as would lead to the ultimate expropriation of private cables, and the establishment of State owned cables throughout the Empire, and to report thereon at the earliest opportunity, such report to be accessible to the public."

The Resolution was put and unanimously agreed to.

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The Re-Survey of Eastern Seas.

The London Chamber of Commerce,
Botolph House, Eastcheap,
London, E. C., 31st August, 1900.

Fourth Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, June, 1900.

Dear Sir,—Sir Thomas Jackson, the delegate from your Chamber,

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moved a Resolution in regard to the necessity for the re-survey of the dangerous channels and coast-lines in Eastern Seas, and which Resolution was duly carried and forwarded to the Foreign Office.

I enclose herewith copy of our letter to the Foreign Office and the Premier's reply. Perhaps you can let me have some further information on the subject in order that I can again communicate with the Foreign Office.—Yours, &c.,

KENRIC B. MURRAY, Secretary.

The SECRETARY, HONGKONG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Fourth Congress of Chambers of Commerce,
London, 26th July, 1900.

Your Lordship,—We have the honour to transmit to you the following Resolution on the subject of the necessity for a re-survey of the dangerous channels and coast-lines in the Eastern Seas, which Resolution was unanimously passed by the above Congress :—

"That in consequence of the rapid increase in the numbers, tonnage, and speed of steamers employed in the trade, and the frequent discovery in some tracks of sunken rocks not recorded on existing charts, the facts should be brought to the notice of Her Majesty's Government that it is necessary to have made, with as little delay as possible, a thorough re-survey of the navigable channels and coast-lines in Eastern Seas."

In view of the fact that Her Majesty's Navy is now so fully occupied in Eastern waters, the present is not thought to be an opportune moment for making further remarks upon the resolution.

We are, however, requested to respectfully urge the importance of the matter in the interests of British shipping, and to express the hope that when the present troubles in the Far East are over the matter may not be lost sight of by Her Majesty's Government.—We are, &c.,

ALBERT G. SANDEMAN, President.
KENRIC B. MURRAY, Secretary.

The Most Noble the Marquess of Salisbury.

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Foreign Office,
London, August 28th, 1900.

Sir,—I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to inform you that your letter of the 28th ultimo, calling attention to the necessity for a re-survey of the navigable channels and coast-lines in Eastern Seas, was referred to the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty.

Their Lordships state that for upwards of sixty years the Admiralty have sent vessels to survey the Eastern Seas, and under their directions the main routes from the Indian Ocean, through the China Sea to Japan, as well as a great part of the coasts of China, Palawan Island, Borneo, Siam, the Malay Peninsula, &c., have been charted. They state further that the main routes through the China Sea and along the China Coast are now as confidently navigated as any part of the world, and that the Congress of the Chambers of Commerce must have been misinformed regarding the state of the knowledge of the Eastern Seas at present possessed by the Admiralty—knowledge which, though not perfect, is still so far advanced that no general re-survey of main routes is at all necessary.

Their Lordships add that from the past record of the work executed by their orders in Eastern Waters, the Congress may feel sure that the importance of the traffic in these waters is not by any means overlooked by them.—I am, &c.,

F. H. VILLIERS.

The Secretary, Fourth Congress of
Chambers of Commerce of the Empire.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 24th October, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 31st August enclosing copy of your letter to the Foreign Office of the 20th July transmitting the resolution moved by Sir Thomas Jackson in regard to the necessity for the re-survey of the navigable channels and coast-lines in Eastern Seas and the reply thereto, dated 28th August, for which I am directed to express the obligations of this Chamber.

In reply to your request for some further information on the subject, I beg leave to enclose, on a separate memorandum, a list of certain of the

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disasters that have occurred and the hidden dangers involuntarily discovered during the past ten years, from which I think it will be apparent that there is still room for further research by the surveying vessels in these seas.

While urging that much remains to be done to endeavour to make the routes followed by shipping safe from sudden disaster, my Committee wish to record their high appreciation of the magnificent work done by the surveying vessels of Her Majesty's Fleet, to the immense value of which constant testimony is being borne. The commanders of the numerous transports from India have expressed their admiration of the general accuracy of the charts and their surprise at the excellent manner in which the Coast of China is now lighted and bouyed, the credit for the latter, of course, being due to the well managed Light Department of the Chinese Imperial Maritime customs. At the same time, there can be no doubt that, while so much has been accomplished, there still remains some very important work for the surveying ships to do. The fact that two of Her Majesty's cruisers have quite recently been placed in serious danger—the *Impérieuse* by touching on a rock in Amoy harbour, and the *Bonaventure* by grounding on another at the entrance to Korniloff Bay, in Corea—is sufficient warrant for energetic continuance of the efforts to discover the still unknown dangers in Eastern Seas.

It should not be forgotten, moreover, that the tonnage of vessels in these waters has increased enormously of late years, and that the beaten tracks are not always followed. The navigation by sea-going vessels is, too, carried on much closer to the coast than formerly, and the China coast is noted for pinnacle rocks, which dangers are very difficult to discover.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

KENRIC B. MURRAY, Esq., Secretary,
LONDON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

(Enclosure.)

List of Unchartered Dangers discovered during past seven Years.

12th June, 1893.—A rock with 4 fathoms on it at low water discovered in the channel between Waglan and Sunking Islands, just outside Hongkong.

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29th August, 1893.—A rocky patch of 6 to 10 fathoms, lying midway between Haitan and Turnabout Islands, reported.

20th March, 1894.—Shoal patch, having from 6½ to 7 fathoms fine sand, in Shanghai District, lat. 32° 18′ 30″ N., long. 122° 27′ E., reported by British steamer *Feilung*. Admiralty chart shows from 18 to 20 fathoms.

26th December, 1894.—British steamer *Taisang* reported having touched some danger with Chapel Island bearing S. 67° E. true, distant 4½ miles, where Admiralty chart No. 1,760 shows between 10 and 11 fathoms.

17th September, 1897.—Rocky patch about two-thirds of a cable long in N.E. by E. and S.W. by S. direction, by about one-third of a cable wide and having two pinnacles near its middle on which there is a depth of not more than 3 feet of low water of spring tides, discovered south of mid-channel in Malow-chow Pass.

6th March, 1898.—Rock with a depth on it of 10 feet 11 inches at low water, discovered in Amoy harbour.

28th April, 1898.—Rocky patch about half a cable long in a N. to S. direction by about ¾ of a cable wide and having two pinnacles, about 30 yards apart, near its centre on which there is not a depth of more than 4 feet at low water of spring tides, discovered in Cow's Horn Pass, near northern entrance to Haitan Straits and named the Namoa Rock. (The steamer *Namoa* struck on this then unchartered danger on 3rd October, 1897, and became a total wreck.)

14th February, 1899.—A rock was discovered by S. M. S. *Kaiser* in in Samsah Bay, lat. 26° 37′ 42″ N. and long. 119° 46′ 38″ E., on which there is only a depth of about 3½ metres at low water, where Admiralty chart No. 1,988 shows a depth of 10 fathoms. (This danger was in July following marked by a black conical buoy.)

10th April, 1899.—The master of the s.s. *Chingtu* reported to have grounded on this date on an unchartered shoal off North coast of Australia, approximate bearings being lat. 10° 47′ S., long. 132° 33′ E., Cape Croker bearing S. 18° E., distant about eleven miles.

1st to 8th July, 1899.—H.M.S. *Bonaventure* grounded on an unseen rock at entrance to Korniloff Bay on the coast of Corea.

21st October, 1899.—Two rocks discovered southward of Namoa Island, coast of China, having 18 feet of water of spring tides. They have been

named respectively Tamsui Rock and Kaipan Rock.

11th June, 1900.—The master of the s.s. *Kweilin* reported that his ship struck bottom at 4.50 a.m. on 4th June with East Point Namoa Island bearing N. true and Three Chimney Bluff bearing S. 70° W. true, the vessel then drawing at the point of contact (bilge keel) about 14 feet. Admiralty chart No. 1,957 shows at this place 14 fathoms water.

(A notice to mariners, issued 10th August, announces, however, that this locality was carefully sounded and swept with weight lines and no obstruction found, the least depth obtained being 12 fathoms.)

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Proposal for better Control of Masters, &c., of Steam Launches.

PENINSULAR & ORIENTAL STEAM NAVIGATION CO.,
HONGKONG, 15th October, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—With reference to the attached memorandum, which I have been asked to place before the Committee of the Chamber, I propose at the next meeting to suggest that the Government be approached with a view to the adoption of a system of "continuous record certificates" for the masters and engineers of steam launches holding certificates of competency from the Harbour Department, such certificates to be a record of service from the time the certificates of competency were issued: they should specify place of birth and other particulars of family, &c., every change of employment and character given by each employer, as well as reason for leaving: a photograph should accompany the certificate, also a description of the man, and, if necessary, these latter should be renewed from time to time.

All endorsements on the certificate should be made by the Harbour Master, and a duplicate copy should be kept for future reference at the Harbour Department.

If the same system could be extended to embrace all firemen and sailors, so much the better, but even if it is confined to masters and engineers it will be some kind of protection to the launch owners, who are apparently in future to be responsible for any acts of piracy committed by their

launches, no matter whether the crew are implicated or not.

Perhaps you will be so kind as to ask permission of the Chairman to circulate this letter amongst the Committee, so that members may come to the meeting prepared to make any amendments that occur to them.—I am, &c.,

A. M. MARSHALL.

THE SECRETARY, HONGKONG GENERAL
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

(*Enclosure.*)

NEW LAUNCH ORDINANCE.

The Government will have power to compel launch coxswains to deposit $1,000 security, and although they may not exercise this power with regard to European owned launches, it is unlikely that they will refrain from doing it, sooner or later.

In that event we shall have no alternative but to find the security ourselves, because the coxswains could not as a rule find $100 security, much less $1,000.

The evil lies in the fact that these men (who come of the fishermen class) are not sufficiently under control. Having no family village like other Chinese, they cannot be so easily traced through friends or relatives. Consequently they are coxswains one day, pirates the next, and fishermen the next, and the police would find it difficult to get a man they wanted.

So that presuming the Government compel the owner to deposit $1,000 (for that is what it really amounts to) it simply means that if a coxswain turns pirate, the owner of the launch not only runs a risk of losing his launch, but $1,000 as well. Under existing arrangements, the owner, be he European or Chinese, has absolutely no power over the men.

The demand for their services is so great that they never want for employment; and their wages are so high that they can afford to be idle for months. The coxswain can smash up the launch, the engineer can ruin the engines, and the only redress is to have their certificates suspended, which means they take a holiday and get another billet as soon as they get back. In fact, I have heard that it is possible for a man, whose certificate has been suspended, to go to the Harbour Office and get another certificate, owing to there being no efficient system of identification.

What is wanted is a "Continuous Record Certificate," such as that which I believe is being introduced by the Board of Trade at home for seamen, whereby a man's career can be traced from start to finish.

Every change of employment, every offence committed by the man, should be endorsed by the Harbour Master (not the employer) on the certificate.

Employers should be given the opportunity of having instances of neglect endorsed on the certificate. The photo. should be changed once a year. A full description of the man (such as that given to soldiers) should be stated on the certificate so that he can be effectually identified.

A record of the endorsement should be kept by the Police so that the man cannot destroy evidences of his identity. Further it should be illegal to employ any man, coxswain, engineer, fireman or sailor, without such certificate, and without the employment being first recorded on the back.

EDWARD OSBORNE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 24th October, 1900.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that, at Monday's meeting of the General Committee of this Chamber, the following resolution was unanimously adopted:—

"That the Government be approached by the Committee of the Chamber of Commerce with a view to adoption of a system of 'continuous record certificates' for the masters and engineers of steam launches holding certificates of competency from the Harbour Department, such certificates to be a record of service from the time the certificates of competency were issued."

The need for more effective control over these men than is at present possessed by launch owners, has been gradually forced on their notice by the ease with which they secure fresh employment after discharge for misconduct or gross carelessness, it being, under existing circumstances, a simple matter to obtain a new post within a week after discharge. If the certificates issued to them were continuous, such lapse being duly recorded therein and change of employment registered, some guarantee for their good conduct and efficiency would be provided.

Another consideration, and that of no little importance, is the growing

frequency of seizures of steam-launches for piratical purposes and the consequent necessity for having persons in charge whose antecedents are well known and who are not likely to be in collusion with pirates.

The Committee hope, therefore, that His Excellency the Governor will join with them in recognising that steam-launch owners are not at present sufficiently protected against liability to loss and disaster through the action of the persons in charge of these vessels, and that some effective measures should be taken to bring them under proper supervision and control. If the continuous record system could be extended to the sailors employed on the steam-launches, a still better guarantee for the safety of those craft would be gained.

The Harbour Master and the Captain Superintendent of Police would, it is believed, find little difficulty in working out the details of such a system, which should, of course, as at present, provide for the attachment of a photograph of the holder to each certificate, to be renewed as often as may be deemed necessary for purposes of identification.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

HON. COLONIAL SECRETARY.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 26th October, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th instant, forwarding a resolution by the Chamber regarding a system of continuous record certificates for the masters and engineers of steam-launches, and to state that this matter has already been engaging the attention of this Government.

A further communication will be addressed to you in due course.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,
Colonial Secretary.

SECRETARY, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 13th November, 1900.

SIR,—In continuation of my letter (No. 1,987) of the 26th ultimo, I am directed to inform you that the Government is desirous of being

supplied with the fullest information on the subject of the proposed system of continuous record certificates for the masters and engineers of steam-launches, before coming to a decision as to whether the system should be adopted. For this purpose it is proposed to appoint a Committee to consider the subject and report thereon to the Government. If the Chamber of Commerce will be good enough to nominate two of its Members, His Excellency the Governor will be pleased to appoint two Officers of the Government—the Captain Superintendent of Police and the Acting Harbour Master—to join them on the proposed Committee. If the suggestion meets with the approval of the Chamber, I am to request you to furnish at your convenience the names of the gentlemen nominated.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,
Colonial Secretary.

The SECRETARY,
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 16th November, 1900.

SIR,—I beg leave to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, in reference to the proposed system of continuous record certificates for the masters and engineers of steam-launches, stating that it is proposed to appoint a Committee to consider the subject and report to the Government and asking this Chamber to nominate two of its Members to serve thereon.

In reply, I am instructed by the Committee to submit the names of Messrs. A. M. Marshall and D. R. Law for the approval of His Excellency the Governor, those gentlemen having signified their readiness to serve on such Committee.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. COLONIAL SECRETARY.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 20th November, 1900.

SIR,—With reference to your letter of the 16th instant, and previous correspondence, I am directed to inform you that His Excellency the

Governor has been pleased to appoint Messrs. A. M. Marshall and D. R. Law to be members of a Committee to consider the proposed system of continuous-record certificates.

The Captain Superintendent of Police and Acting Harbour Master have been requested to place themselves in communication with those gentlemen without delay.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary to the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Report of Committee on Continuous Service Records for Chinese Masters and Engineers of Steam Launches.

It was unanimously resolved that the following recommendations be made:—

1. That every launch owner shall report to the Harbour Master the name of, and number of the certificate held by, every launch master and engineer engaged by him, within 48 hours of such engagement.

2. That every launch owner shall report to the Harbour Master the name of, and number of certificate held by, every launch master and engineer discharged by him, giving the reason for such discharge, within 48 hours of such discharge.

3. That every launch master and engineer, holding a certificate, shall, on engagement, produce such certificate to the Harbour Master, and shall pay a fee of fifty cents for registration.

4. That every launch master and engineer shall, on discharge, report such discharge to the Harbour Master within 48 hours of such discharge, producing his certificate.

5. That a record be kept in the Harbour Master's Office, setting forth the dates of each engagement and discharge of each certificated launch master and engineer, also, the reason of his discharge, and all complaints and charges against him, and the punishments awarded by the Marine or other Magistrate or the Harbour Master.

This record to be open to inspection by launch owners or their representatives.

A fee of fifty cents to be charged for registration of engagement.

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It was pointed out by the Acting Harbour Master that this scheme would involve an increase in the clerical staff at the Harbour Office.

Q

Quarantine Restrictions.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.
HONGKONG, 12th September, 1900.

SIR,—I am instructed by my Committee to ask you to be good enough to bring to the notice of His Excellency the Governor the fact that the Bubonic Plague is no longer epidemic in the Colony,—the few sporadic cases are decreasing—and to beg that he will, as soon as practicable, give instructions for the issue of a clean bill of health to the port, to the end that the modified quarantine restrictions still imposed by Singapore and other places against it may be removed.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. F. H. MAY, C.M.G., Acting Colonial Secretary.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 14th September, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant, and to inform you that the Medical Officer of Health will issue a clean bill of health to the port as soon as seven consecutive days have passed without the occurrence of a case of plague, this being the usual practice.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Act. Colonial Secretary.

The SECRETARY TO THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 24th October, 1900.

SIR,—Adverting to my letter of the 12th ultimo on the subject of granting a clean bill of health to this port, I am instructed by my Committee to again bring the question to the consideration of the Government.

Q

It is now considerably more than a month since the plague ceased to be epidemic, but isolated sporadic cases continue to occur, at intervals, and it seems possible that if the practice hitherto ruling be insisted upon, viz., that seven consecutive days pass without a case of plague occurring, the date when the port can be declared free from infection may be indefinitely postponed.

The Committee are given to understand that Swatow has been declared by the Straits Government free from infection, though it is quite possible that sporadic cases may still occur there. May it not be fairly concluded that a port is only infected when a disease is epidemic there?

Will you be good enough to bring to the attention of His Excellency the Governor the enormous loss that these quarantine restrictions, which the Committee respectfully submit are now quite unnecessary, are causing to ship-owners and merchants as well as to trade generally, and ask him to, if possible, take steps to bring about their cessation?—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. COLONIAL SECRETARY.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 7th November, 1900.

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 24th ultimo, I am directed to inform you that the Government fully sympathises with the views of the Chamber regarding the loss caused to Merchants and Shipowners by a rigid adherence to the terms of the Venice Convention, by which ten days (not seven, as stated in your letter) must elapse without the occurrence of a case of plague before clean bills of health can be issued to this port. I am to inform you, however, that this Government has been legally advised that as the Colony has joined the Convention it must adhere without reserve to all its terms. The Colony was urged by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and by the unanimous recommendation of the Sanitary Board to enter into the number of those who were parties to the Treaty, and any failure to observe its restrictions would probably meet with disapproval.

2. I am glad, however, to inform you that the Government has just been informed that ten clear days have now elapsed without a case of plague, and His Excellency has ordered clean bills of health to be issued to

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the port at once.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,
Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary to the Chamber of Commerce.

R

The Publication of Quarantine Regulations.

Hongkong, 14th January, 1901.

Dear Sir,—You are doubtless aware that several steamers which have lately arrived from Singapore have been fined in sums varying from $25 to $250 for neglecting to hoist the yellow flag and to proceed direct to the quarantine anchorage as required by a Government Notification issued on the 28th November last. We believe we are correct in saying that this Notification was published only in the Government Gazette, and to this is to be attributed the fact of its escaping general attention, as shown by the cases of unintentional infringement, to which we have referred.

We feel that heavy fines inflicted under such circumstances constitute a very real grievance, and we bespeak therefore the good offices of the Chamber in representing to the Government the desirability of giving greater publicity to notices of such an important nature. This could be done either by special intimation through the Chamber or by advertisement in one or more of the local newspapers which are more generally read than the Government Gazette.—We are, &c.,

JARDINE, MATHESON & Co., General Managers,
Indo-China Steam Navigation Co., Ld.
BUTTERFIELD & SWIRE, Agents,
China Navigation Co., Ld.
A. M. MARSHALL, Acting Superintendent,
P. & O. S. N. Co.
BRADLEY & Co., Agents, Shan Steamers.

R. Chatterton Wilcox, Esq., Secretary, General Chamber of Commerce.

R

Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce,
Hongkong, 22nd January, 1901.

Sir,—The cases of certain steamers recently fined by the Police Magistrate for neglecting to hoist the yellow flag and to proceed direct to to the quarantine anchorage as required by a Government Notification issued on the 28th November last, have received the attention of my Committee, who feel persuaded that the infringement of the law was not only unintentional but was also due to no default of the commanders of the respective vessels. It is evident that a fine can only properly be imposed when it is clear that the master of a vessel has wilfully disregarded the Government Regulations, and ignorance could hardly be pleaded had reasonable publicity been given to those regulations. But in practice what really takes place? A steamer arrives at Singapore and in many instances stays there only long enough to coal and then proceeds on her voyage. If the consignee is aware of the quarantine imposed he will inform the master, who of course will abide thereby. But what is the position of the master who has no consignee and no agents? It is manifest that through no fault of his own he will be fined by the Magistrate in Hongkong for not hoisting the yellow flag and proceeding to the quarantine anchorage. To expose a master and his owners to fine under such circumstances seems to the Committee both vexatious and unjust. They are also of opinion that considering the special circumstances under which the fines above referred to were inflicted, they have good ground for asking His Excellency the Governor to either remit them altogether or reduce them to a nominal amount.

At the same time, believing that it is far from the desire of the Government to augment the number of State created offences, the Committee beg respectfully to suggest that greater publicity should in future be given to such important notifications than the mere publication thereof in the pages of the "Government Gazette," which has a very limited circulation. Notice might be inserted in the local daily papers, and the Harbour Authorities at Singapore should be requested to inform masters of vessels bound for this port of all quarantine regulations against vessels leaving that Colony. That might readily be done by handing them printed slips containing any new quarantine regulations.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. Colonial Secretary.

R

No. 263. COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 4th February, 1901.

SIR,—In reply to your letter of the 22nd ultimo, respecting the publication of the quarantine regulations in Hongkong, I am directed to inform you that, in view of the fact that a telegram was sent on the 28th November to the Colonial Secretary of the Straits Settlements, to the effect that Singapore had been declared an infected port and that all vessels arriving here from that port must go into quarantine anchorage, and that a notification was duly published in the Gazette, a copy of which is regularly sent to the Chamber of Commerce, His Excellency the Governor cannot consider that the notice given was insufficient.

I am to add that it would appear to be one of the first duties of those connected with shipping to make themselves acquainted with the Government publications in the authorized Gazette.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 9th February, 1901.

SIR,—Several steamers recently arriving from Singapore having been heavily fined by the Police Magistrate for neglecting to hoist the yellow flag on arrival and proceeding direct to the quarantine anchorage through ignorance of the fact that Singapore had been declared an infected port by the Hongkong Government, my Committee would be glad to learn from you what publicity was given at your port to the notification sent to the Colonial Secretary of the Straits Settlements on the 28th November last.

The masters of the various vessels fined for breach of the quarantine regulations pleaded that it was an involuntary offence, inasmuch as they had received no intimation at Singapore that the port bad been declared infected by Hongkong. If this be the case, it seems to my Committee most unreasonable to hold masters responsible for contravention of regulations the existence of which was unknown to them.

The Committee will be glad, therefore, if your Committee can see their way to assist them with the above information, and would be further indebted if your Chamber could induce the Government of the Straits

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Settlements to instruct the Harbour Authorities at Singapore to keep masters of vessels leaving port informed of any new quarantine regulations that may affect them.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

ALEX. J. GUNN, Esq., Secretary, SINGAPORE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 11th February, 1901.

SIR,—I beg leave to acknowledge receipt of your letter (No. 263) of the 4th instant, replying to this Chamber's representations regarding the publication of quarantine regulations in Hongkong, to the effect that His Excellency the Governor cannot consider that the notice given was insufficient.

While admitting that the notification was duly published in the Government Gazette, the Committee still maintain that such publication would not necessarily reach the master of a steamer passing through Singapore on his way to Hongkong. It is a common practice for steamers to call at Singapore for a few hours only in order to coal, and unless there is a carefully organised system observed in Singapore to inform shipmasters of any regulations that may affect them, it is certain that many must go to sea in ignorance of them. When quarantine is imposed in Hongkong on vessels arriving from Singapore there is no doubt the Hongkong agents as a rule wire the fact to the agents in Singapore, who, in turn, inform the masters of vessels consigned to them; but some steamers bound for this port and China passing through Singapore have no agents or consignees there, especially those carrying coal from Cardiff, and these are liable to fine on arrival here. The reasonable course would seem to be that the Harbour Master in Singapore should send a printed notification of quarantine here on board each steamer.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. COLONIAL SECRETARY.

No. 323. COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 11th February, 1901.

SIR,—In continuation of my letter of the 4th instant, I am directed to forward for the information of your Committee the enclosed copy of a

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letter from the Acting Colonial Secretary of the Straits Settlements dated the 28th ultimo.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary, The Chamber of Commerce.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Singapore, 28th January, 1901.

Sir,—The attention of the Officer Administering the Government having been drawn to an account of the trial of the Captain of the S.S. "*Kumsang*" at Hongkong on the 9th instant, for breach of the Quarantine Rules of that port, from which it appears that the defendant alleged that he had no knowledge of the fact that the authorities of Hongkong had declared Singapore an infected port, I am directed by His Honour to inform you that on the receipt of your telegram of the 28th November last notifying this Government of the action taken by the Government of Hongkong, immediate steps were taken to publish the information on the 29th November last, in the local newspapers, a notification to the same effect appearing in the Gazette issued on the following day.—I have, &c.,

W. Egerton, Acting Colonial Secretary,
Straits Settlements.

The Honourable The Colonial Secretary, Hongkong.

S

Amoy and the Formosa Tea Trade.

Amoy General Chamber of Commerce,
Amoy, 20th April, 1900.

Sir,—I beg leave to enclose copy of a letter dated 5th instant, addressed to Sir E. Satow, K.C.M.G., Her Majesty's Minister at Tokio, on the subject of Tea Duties in Formosa.

The Chamber will be grateful to you if you can take any action in support of its representations.— I am, &c.,

FRANCIS CASS, Chairman.

R. M. Gray, Esq., Chairman,
Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce.

S

Amoy General Chamber of Commerce,
Amoy, 5th April, 1900.

Your Excellency,—This Chamber begs to acknowledge receipt of your despatch dated 18th December last, the contents of which have received careful consideration, and it has been resolved to again address you on the subject of export duties on teas shipped from Formosa.

The complaint which this Chamber makes is that the Japanese Government since the 3rd August last, despite the protests of shippers in Formosa, has levied and continues to levy a discriminating duty on Teas shipped from Formosa in the following way:—

1. If shipped *viâ* Japan for the United States and Europe a levy called a "Harbour Tax" of Yen 1.00 per picul is made. This tea can then be exported from Japan without further payment of duty.

2. If shipped to the United States and Europe *viâ* any port in China or *viâ* Hongkong or elsewhere, other than Japan, an export duty of Yen 1.60 per picul is levied.

If shipped *viâ* Hongkong and Japan for the United States and Europe the duty of Yen 1.60 is still charged. Thus making the duty clearly one on a particular route.

It is true, as you point out, that the difference is but 60 sen per picul, but the Chamber submits that the actual amount is not so much the point as the principle involved, which if allowed to pass uncombated, leaves no safeguard that the difference may not be accentuated until British shipping and the choice of the Suez route are handicapped out of existence.

British merchants in Amoy are vitally interested in the Formosa tea trade, it having been developed by them from absolutely nothing under the Chinese sovereignty of the Island. Hitherto Amoy has been the emporium of Formosa teas, whence they are shipped to the United States and Europe, and to Java and the Straits, none being consumed in Japan and practically none in China either. Amoy is the nearest port to Formosa available for ocean steamers, and the natives engaged in the trade are all from Amoy. With these advantages Amoy merchants might naturally look to maintaining their position, provided equal export duties are levied on shipments from Formosa no matter what the destination may be.

In the statement above presented to you there is a clear case of injustice to British merchants, whose trade, after some 30 years of building up, is threatened by means of discriminating duties in favour of a particular route.

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With the near approach of the tea season your kind assistance is urgently asked, to the end that the Japanese Government may be induced to remove the discriminating element in these duties.—I have, &c.,

FRANCIS CASS, Chairman.

His Excellency Sir Ernest Satow, K.C.M.G., Her Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Tokyo.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 28th April, 1900.

SIR,—Referring to previous correspondence on the question of the imposition by the Formosan Government of a discriminating duty on teas shipped from Formosa to the United States or Europe, *viâ* Chinese ports or Hongkong, this Chamber is in receipt of a further communication from the Amoy Chamber of Commerce stating that this duty is still being levied, in spite of protests on the subject.

I am, therefore, instructed to submit to your Excellency that the principle of imposing a variable duty on different routes is a distinct infringement of paragraph 2 of Article VIII of the Treaty of 1894, which provides for the perfect equality of treatment of articles of export, whatever the route or place of destination, and to express the hope that you will be able to induce the Japanese Government to relinquish the attempt to divert the export of Formosan teas from the channel it has for so many years taken, and which has proved most convenient to those engaged in the trade.—I have, &c.,

R. M. GRAY, Chairman.

To His Excellency Sir E. SATOW, K.C.M.G.,
H.B.M.'s Minister Plenipotentiary, Tokyo.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 30th April, 1900.

SIR,—I have the honour to forward herewith, for the information of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, copy in duplicate of a despatch addressed to H. E. Sir Ernest Satow, H.B.M.'s Minister Plenipotentiary in Japan, on the subject of the discriminating duty imposed by the Formosan Government on the export of teas shipped from Formosa

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to the United States or Europe, *viâ* Chinese ports or Hongkong.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

To Honourable F. H. MAY, C.M.G., ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY.

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 5th May, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 30th ultimo, enclosing copy of a letter to Her Britannic Majesty's Minister in Japan, on the subject of the discriminating duty imposed by the Formosan Government on teas shipped to foreign ports, and to inform you that a copy of your enclosure has been forwarded to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The SECRETARY, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 7th May, 1900.

SIR,—In the press of work on the eve of our annual meeting, I inadvertently omitted to acknowledge receipt of your esteemed letter of the 20th ultimo, enclosing copy of a despatch addressed to H.B.M.'s Minister in Japan on the subject of tea duties in Formosa.

I now beg to enclose herewith copy of a letter addressed by this Chamber to H. E. Sir Ernest Satow in support of your Chamber's representations, which my Committee trust may help to forward the object in view.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

J. J. DUNNE, Esq., Secretary,
AMOY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

BRITISH LEGATION,
TOKYO, 8th May, 1900.

SIR,—I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 28th ultimo, addressed to Sir Ernest Satow, in further reference to the question of the discriminating export duties charged in Formosa on teas exported

viâ Chinese ports and Hongkong.

In reply I beg leave to inform you that the question is still under discussion between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Japan, and that before his departure on leave of absence, Sir Ernest Satow addressed a further communication to the Japanese Minister for Foreign Affairs on the subject, to which there has not yet been time to receive a reply.

I may add that Sir Ernest Satow informed the Chairman of the Amoy Chamber of Commerce in this sense on the 18th ultimo.—I have, &c.,

J. B. WHITEHEAD.

The Chairman,
HONGKONG CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

AMOY GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
AMOY, 4th June, 1900.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your esteemed letter of 7th ultimo, enclosing copy of a despatch addressed by your Chamber to H.B.M.'s Minister in Tokyo, in connection with tea duties in Formosa, and the Chamber begs to thank you for the support you have given it in its representations on this subject.

I now beg to hand you herewith a copy of a despatch received by this Chamber from H. E. Sir Ernest Satow, and a copy of the Chamber's reply to the same.—I am, &c.,

J. P. WINGATE, Secretary.

R. C. WILCOX, Esq., Secretary,
HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

[*Enclosures.*]

British Legation,
Tokyo, 18th April, 1900.

Sir,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of 5th instant, with reference to the export duties on tea shipped from Formosa, and to state to you, in reply, that the question is still under discussion between Her Majesty's Government and that of Japan, and that I am unable to give you any more definite answer at the present moment. I should be glad to know whether, in the applications to the Tamsui Customs for export permits for Formosa tea, it is described as being shipped to Amoy simply, or to Great Britain or a British Colony, as the case may be, *viâ* Amoy. I would suggest that, if the latter wording were adopted, the fact of differential treatment would be more apparent. You will of course understand that it is only on behalf of tea, the ultimate destination of which is Great Britain, the Crown Colonies, or such of the Colonies enumerated in Article XIX. of the Treaty of 1894 as have adhered thereto, that Her Majesty's Government would be in a position to make representations to the Japanese Government, the tea destined to the United States being an American interest.—I have, &c.,

ERNEST SATOW.

Francis Cass, Esq., Chairman,
Amoy Chamber of Commerce.

Amoy General Chamber of Commerce,
Amoy, 30th May, 1900.

Your Excellency,—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your despatch of 18th April.

In reply to your inquiry as to whether, in the applications to the Tamsui Customs for export permits for Formosa tea, it is described as being shipped to Amoy simply or to Great Britain or a British Colony, the Chamber states that it has every reason to believe that the majority of the applications on outward cargo, which suffers from the differential tax, are made for Amoy and/or Hongkong, its ultimate destination not being described. As a matter of fact the ultimate destination is oftentimes only decided in Amoy or Hongkong. The cargo finds its way ultimately to Great Britain, Straits Settlements, the Colonies, the United States, the Continent of Europe, China and Japan, and 80 per cent. or more is handled by British merchants, no matter what its final destination may be. The trade route established in the year 1858, when Formosa ports were opened to Foreign trade, was for shipment of Formosa produce to foreign countries *viâ* Amoy and/or Hongkong. An immense amount of British capital has been sunk in establishing that route and it is a differential tax against it that this Chamber feels it most justly, complains of as being unjust and distinctly contrary to Treaty. The Chamber feels that British merchants should be allowed to choose their own route of shipment with-

out having to pay an extra tax for so doing. To compel them to ship *viâ* Japan, in order to avail themselves of a reduced duty if they do so, seems to be a grave injustice and is so regarded by the other Chambers in China. —I have, &c.,

FRANCIS CASS, Chairman.

His Excellency Sir Ernest Satow, K.C.M.G.,
H.B.M.'s Envoy Extraordinary & Minister
Plenipotentiary, Tokyo.

T

Nomination of Member to Legislative Council.

[No. 44/G.]

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
HONGKONG, 8th June, 1900.

SIR,—With reference to my letter No. 23/G. of the 17th April, I have the honour to inform you that owing to the resignation of Mr. Herbert Smith there is again a temporary vacancy on the Legislative Council which should be filled by an unofficial member representing the interests of the Chamber of Commerce, and to request you to call a meeting of the Chamber for the purpose of selecting a candidate for the vacant seat and submitting his name for my approval.—I have, &c.,

W. J. GASCOIGNE, Major-General,
Administering the Government.

The Chairman, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 11th June, 1900.

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter (No. 44/G.) of the 8th instant, informing this Chamber that, owing to the resignation of Mr. Herbert Smith, there is again a temporary vacancy on the Legislative Council, and requesting that a meeting of the Chamber should be convened for the purpose of selecting a candidate for the vacant seat.

Your Excellency's letter has been laid before the Committee, who in

response thereto have called a special meeting of the Members for the purpose on Monday, the 18th instant, and the result of which will be promptly communicated.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

His Excellency Major-General GASCOIGNE, C.M.G.,
Administering the Government.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 18th June, 1900.

SIR,—I have the honour to announce, for the information of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, that at a Special General Meeting of the Chamber, held at 3 o'clock p.m. to-day, Mr. John Thurburn, of the Mercantile Bank of India, Ltd., was elected, by 52 votes to 28 recorded for Mr. Francis, Q.C., as the Chamber's nominee for the seat at the Legislative Council rendered vacant by the resignation of Mr. Herbert Smith.

In connection with the above nomination I beg to hand you the following papers:—

1.—A copy of the notice convening the meeting.

2.—A list of the members present.

3.—The names of the candidates and those of their proposers and seconders.

I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

The Hon. ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Names of Candidates and of their Proposers and Seconders.—

Hon. R. M. GRAY *proposed*—
Mr. C. W. DICKSON *seconded*—
Mr. J. THURBURN.

Mr. G. W. PLAYFAIR *proposed*—
Mr. D. R. CRAWFORD *seconded*—
Mr. J. J. FRANCIS, Q.C.

Result of Ballot:—	Votes.
J. THURBURN	52
J. J. FRANCIS	28
Majority for J. THURBURN	24

[No. 1101.]

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 19th June, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed by the Officer Administering the Government to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th instant stating that at a meeting held on that day the Chamber of Commerce had selected Mr. John Thurburn to be their temporary representative on the Legislative Council, and I am directed to inform you that His Excellency has been pleased to appoint Mr. Thurburn provisionally and subject to Her Majesty's pleasure to be an Un-official Member of the Legislative Council, during the absence on leave of the Honourable T. H. Whitehead.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Act. Col. Secretary.

The SECRETARY, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Nomination of Representative to the Legislative Council.

A special general meeting of the Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce was held in the Chamber Rooms, City Hall, on Monday afternoon, the 18th June, to nominate a member of the Chamber to take the place of the Hon. Herbert Smith on the Legislative Council during the absence on leave from the Colony of the Hon. T. H. Whitehead. The Hon. R. M. Gray occupied the chair, and there were present:—Messrs. H. M. Bevis, A. Haupt, A. M. Marshall, R. L. Richardson, C. S. Sharp, N. A. Siebs (Committee), R. C. Wilcox (Secretary), R. Lemke, W. S. Bailey, G. H. Potts, P. Brewitt, D. R. Law, B. Byramjee, P. Sachse, D. Setna, Hon. C. P. Chater, C.M.G., Messrs. W. Danby, E. Shellim, V. H. Deacon, G. H. Medhurst, J. J. Francis, Q.C., H. W. Slade, D. Haskell, J. A. Mackay, Ho Fook, Ho Tung, J. Hindekoper, T. F. Hough, W. G. Humphreys, W. M. Watson, C. W. Dickson, H. J. Gedge, P. Jordan, J. H. Lewis, G. P. Lammert, D. R. Crawford, O. Wegener, F. Maitland, J. M. Beattie, G. Atzenroth, E. H. Hinds, Jas. McKie, A. R. Marty, Chan Kwai Cheong,

F. Arjanee, H. N. Mody, H. Price, H. Kock, E. C. Ray, A. H. Rennie, R. Fuhrmann, E. Robinson, R. Becker, D. M. Moses, A. J. Raymond, E. H. Melbye, G. C. Moxon, G. R. Stevens, Jr., G. Stewart, M. Mehta, Wong Fook, W. Melchers, J. C. Bergendahl, L. Berindoague, D. W. Craddock, W. J. Gresson, T. E. Sansom, G. L. Tomlin, W. Cruickshank, H. P. Wadman, H. Schottlaender, G. T. Veitch, A. Shelton Hooper, D. Gillies, J. Thurburn, G. de Champeaux, G. W. F. Playfair, L. Suidter, W. G. Saunders, S. Choh, and C. L. Gorham.

The Secretary having read the notice convening the meeting,

The Chairman said it was hardly two months since the members of the Chamber were called together to nominate a gentleman to fill the vacancy on the Legislative Council caused by Mr. Whitehead's departure for home on leave, when they unanimously selected Mr. Herbert Smith. That gentleman had since quite unexpectedly resigned the seat, much to their regret, and left for England, and now they were called upon to elect another representative. After reading the letter from His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, asking that a meeting of the Chamber should be called to fill up the vacancy, the Chairman continued:—I now have to propose as representative for this Chamber in the Legislative Council, during the absence of Mr. Whitehead, Mr. John Thurburn,—(applause)—Manager of the Mercantile Bank of India, and I feel that it is not necessary for me to say more than a few words on his behalf. Mr. Thurburn has been in his present position here for over twenty years and is well known to you all. He has taken part in various commissions instituted by the Government, and has otherwise shown his interest in public matters on various occasions. He will, I am sure, speak out and to the point in Council, when he sees the necessity of doing so. My long experience on the Committee of this Chamber, and the interest I have taken in its proceedings I think entitle me to an expression of opinion—which is, that the present status and influence of this Chamber are due to its proceedings having been directed altogether by responsible men engaged in commerce. I am strongly of opinion that the plain unvarnished tale of a commercial man will do more to further your interests in the Legislative Council than any amount of rhetoric, and I, therefore, have now much pleasure in proposing, as your representative for the time being in the Legislative Council, Mr. John Thurburn. (Applause.)

Mr. C. W. Dickson, in seconding, said he endorsed all the remarks made by the Chairman in reference to Mr. Thurburn. From the position Mr. Thurburn had occupied in the Colony for many years, he was sure he was well aware of the requirements of the community and he considered him well fitted in every way to act as the representative of the Chamber on the Legislative Council. (Applause.)

Mr. G. W. F. Playfair said:—I beg to propose that Mr. J. J. Francis, Q.C., be elected to represent this Chamber on the Legislative Council. For more years than most of us have resided here Mr. Francis has been closely identified with every public question in this Colony and is eminently fitted to express the views of the Chamber. Your representative should be one who has not only a thorough grasp of our local politics but should also be one who can clearly and forcibly give expression to his views. In Mr. Francis the Chamber would have one whose natural eloquence and acquired logical training peculiarly fit him for the position for which I have the honour to solicit your votes. With the extremely limited popular representation which is vouchsafed to this Colony it is all the more important that the Chamber's representative should be the best man to be got in the Colony. He should be strong, thorough, honest, and earnest in his solicitude for the public weal. He should give hearty support and encouragement to the Government in all their efforts for the amelioration of the social and commercial conditions of this Colony and should equally and fearlessly record his dissent should any action be taken contrary to the views of the community, and finally that he should be quick-witted, tactful, eloquent. All these qualities, gentlemen, I know you will find in Mr. Francis or I should not ask you, as I do now, to record your votes in his favour. (Applause.)

Mr. D. R. Crawford, in seconding, said he had known Mr. Francis ever since he came into the Colony, and that was a few months after he arrived himself. He had watched his career since that time. They wanted a man who could speak his mind forcibly, and because many of them thought they wanted a little fighting blood on the Council he had much pleasure in seconding Mr. Francis.

The Chairman:—Has any other gentleman any candidate to propose? If not, we will at once proceed to ballot.

Mr. Francis asked leave to say a few words before the ballot. They

were there to elect a representative in place of Mr. Herbert Smith, whose absence they all regretted very much. If this appointment was an honour, he asked them to confer that honour upon him, notwithstanding what his good friend the editor of the *China Mail* said in his Saturday's issue, and however grudgingly that gentleman admitted that he had done some service in the Colony; if there were duties and responsibilities, not merely honour attached to the occupation of the post, he (Mr. Francis) placed himself confidently in their hands. (Applause.) Mr. Francis then proceeded to detail his various qualifications for the honourable position. He did not agree with all that the Chairman had said anent Mr. Thurburn. He did not know if ever Mr. Thurburn had taken part in any public question, or had spoken at any public meeting. He might be everything that Mr. Gray stated he was, but the main question for the Chamber was to appoint a man who would represent the public opinion of the Colony on questions connected with finance, with the policy in China, with the policy of the Government in Hongkong, with local interests and in connection with legislation.

The ballot papers were then distributed, and on the votes being counted the Chairman read out the result as follows:—

Mr. Thurburn...	52
Mr. Francis	28

He, therefore, declared Mr. Thurburn duly elected.

Mr. Thurburn in acknowledging the compliment, said:—Gentlemen, I have now only to thank you for the honour which you have done me in electing me as the representative of the Chamber on the Legislative Council. I have only got to say that I shall look after the interests of the Chamber to the best of my ability. I can do no more. I have nothing more to say. (Applause.)

The Chairman:—That terminates the proceedings.

U

The French Customs Tariff and Colonial Products.

[No. 908.] Colonial Secretary's Office,
Hongkong, 22nd May, 1900.

Sir,—I am directed to transmit for the information of the Chamber

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the enclosed copy of a Circular Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies covering correspondence regarding changes in the French Customs Tariff, and to enquire whether the Chamber desires to make any remarks on the subject.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Acting Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary, THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Circular.

Downing Street,
27th March, 1900.

Sir,—I have the honour to transmit to you copies of letters from the Foreign Office regarding certain changes in the French Customs Tariff and the concessions which the French Government are prepared ultimately to make in exchange for the equivalent advantages to be given to French products; and I have to request that you will carefully consider these proposals and inform me whether you wish any representations to be made to the French Government on behalf of the Colony under your government.—I have, &c.,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

The Officer Administering the Government of Hongkong.

Foreign Office,
February 5th, 1900.

Sir,—I am directed by the Marquess of Salisbury to transmit to you a copy of a verbal communication made by the French Ambassador on the 31st ultimo, respecting a proposed change in the French Customs Tariff in the case of Coffee, Cocoa and other similar Colonial products and the concessions which the French Government are prepared to make under the new law in favour of British Colonial products, and subsequently in a more definitive manner in exchange for equivalent advantages for certain French products.

I am to request that Lord Salisbury may be favoured with the observations of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, on these proposals.—I am, &c,

MARTIN GOSSELIN.

The Under Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

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D'après la loi douanière actuellement en vigueur en France, un certain nombre de produits qualifiés de "Denrées coloniales de consommation" (notamment le café, le cacao, les épices, &c.) sont uniformement taxés, quelle que soit leur provenance, sans faire de distinction entre le tarif général et le tarif minimum.

Cette loi va être modifiée et il y aura pour ces denrées coloniales, un tarif minimum qui sera le tarif actuellement en vigueur, et un tarif général qui sera de 100 pour 100 plus élevé.

Mais aux terms du projet de loi, le pouvoir exécutif recoit, pour une période de 2 ans, la faculté d'accorder de sa seule autorité, le bénéfice des taxes minima.

En raison des importants intérêts du commerce britannique concernant ces denrées coloniales le Gouvernement français lui accordera immédiatement le bénéfice de cette disposition provisoire.

Il est en outre prêt à concéder cet avantage à titre definitif si le Gouvernement anglai est disposé à offrir en échange des avantages équivalents pour certains produits français à déterminer.

31 Janvier, 1900.

The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and is directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to him, to be laid before the Secretary of State for the Colonies, the accompanying paper, noted in the margin, respecting the French Customs Tariff.

Copies have been sent to the Board of Trade, India Office and Treasury.

Foreign Office, March 2nd, 1900.

LOI modifiant le tarif général des douanes (Denrées coloniales de consommation).

Le Sénat et la Chambre des députés out adopté.

Le Président de la République promulgue la loi dont la teneur suit:

Art. 1er.—Le tableau *A* annexé à la loi du 11 janvier, 1892, est modifié comme il suit:

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Numéros du tarif.	Désignation.		Unité.	Tarif général.	Tarif minimum.
96	Café	en fèves et pellicules...	Les 100 kilogr.	300 „	156 „
		torréfié ou moulu	—	400 „	„
98	Chocolat...	contenant plus de 55p. 100 de cacao	—	300 „	150 „
		contenant 55p. 100 de cacao ou moins	—	200 „	102 25
99	Poivre		—	400 „	208 „
100	Piment		—	400 „	208 „
101	Amomes et cardamomes		—	400 „	208 „
102	Cannelle		—	400 „	208 „
103	Cassia lignea		—	400 „	208 „
104	Muscades	en coques.....	—	400 „	208 „
		sans coques	—	600 „	312 „
105	Macis		—	600 „	312 „
106	Girofle		—	400 „	208 „
107	Vanille		—	800 „	416 „
108	Thé		—	400 „	208 „

Art. 2.—Les droits à percevoir sur les produits d'origine coloniale repris au tableau E sont calculés d'après la tarif métropolitain minimum.

Art. 3.—Les droits applicables aux cafés importés en Algérie sont fixés comme il suit :

Désignation.	Unité.	Tarif général.	Tarif minimum.
Café en fèves et pellicules	Les 100 kil.	300 „	31 20
Café torréfié ou moulu	—	400 „	„

Les denrées coloniales ayant acquitté des taxes spéciales en Algérie ou aux colonies sont passibles, à l'entrée en France, des droits du tarif général, sous la déduction de la taxe spéciale déjà payée.

Art. 4.—Le bénéfice du tarif minimum est réservé aux produits accompagnés de justifications d'origine, dans les conditions fixées par l'administration des douanes.

DISPOSITIONS TRANSITOIRES.

Art. 5.—Les denrées visées à l'article 1er, provenant de pays soumis au tarif général et qui n'auraient pas été déclarées pour la consommation avant la promulgation de la présente loi, seront admises au bénéfice du tarif mini-

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mum, lors de leur mise en consommation, si leur embarquement ou leur prise en charge dans les entrepôts français ont eu lieu à une date antérieure au 24 janvier, 1900.

Art. 6.—Le Gouvernement est autorisé, pendant deux ans, à conférer provisoirement par décret le bénéfice du tarif minimum mentionné à l'article 1er aux pays actuellement soumis au tarif général. La durée de cette concession ne pourra excéder deux ans à partir de la promulgation de la présente loi.

La présente loi, délibérée et adoptée par le Sénat et par la Chambre des députés, sera exécutée comme loi de l'Etat.

Fait à Paris, le 24 février, 1900.

ÉMILE LOUBET,
Par le Président de la République.
Le ministre du commerce, de l'industrie,
des postes et des télégraphes,
A. MILLERAND.
Le ministre des finances,
J. CAILLAUX.
Le ministre des colonies,
DECRAIS.
Le ministre des affaires étrangères,
DELCASSÉ.

The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs presents his compliments to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, and is directed by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to transmit to him to be laid before the Secretary of State for the Colonies the accompanying paper, noted in the margin, respecting the importation of British Colonial produce into France.

Copies have been sent to the Board of Trade, India Office, and Treasury.

Foreign Office, March 8th, 1900.

(No. 50.)
Commercial.

Paris, March 1st, 1900.

My Lord,—With reference to Your Lordship's despatch No. 25

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Commercial of the 7th ultimo, I have the honour to transmit herewith a table, showing, according to the latest available French statistics, the quantities of the various Colonial produce imported into France from the United Kingdom and British Possessions, which would be affected by the new French Customs Tariff, of which a copy was enclosed in my despatch No. 46 Commercial of the 26th ultimo.—I have, &c.,

EDMUND MONSON.

The Marquess of Salisbury, K.G.

Table showing the quantities of Colonial produce imported into France. from the United Kingdom and British Possessions during the year 1898.

Coffee	from the United Kingdom...	677,198	kilos.
"	" British India	6,893,280	"
"	" West Indies	1,149,834	"
Cocoa	" United Kingdom...	876	"
"	" West Indies	5,135,868	"
Pepper	" United Kingdom...	7,645	"
"	" British India	1,567,741	"
Allspice	" United Kingdom...	1,140	"
"	" East Africa	1,605	"
"	" West Indies	24,717	"
Amomum and Cardamom...	" United Kingdom...	3,973	"
Cinnamon	" United Kingdom...	2,021	"
"	" British India	37,220	"
Cassia Lignea	" British India	9,004	"
Nutmeg and Mace	(statistics not given).		
Cloves	from the United Kingdom...	80	"
"	" Africa	1,735	"
Vanilia	" United Kingdom...	2,443	"
"	" Africa	1,381	"
Tea	" United Kingdom...	175,558	"
"	" British India	174,951	"

BRITISH EMBASSY, PARIS,
1st March, 1900.

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HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 28th June, 1900.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 22nd ultimo, (No. 908) transmitting for the information of this Chamber copy of a circular despatch from the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies covering correspondence relating to projected changes in the French Customs Tariff and inquiring whether the Chamber desires to offer any remarks on the subject.

In reply, I am instructed to say that the matter has received the attention of my Committee, who, while thanking the Government for the opportunity offered, do not consider that the changes would much affect articles of import here, and they have, therefore, no suggestions to make with regard to the proposed changes in the tariff.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

Hon. ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY.

[No. 301.] COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 9th February, 1901.

SIR,—In continuation of my letter No. 908 of the 22nd May, 1900, I am directed to transmit for the information of your Committee the enclosed copy of a circular despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, covering an extract from a letter of the Colonial Office, to the Foreign Office dated 4th December, 1900.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

The Secretary to the CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Downing Street,
28th December, 1900.

Sir,—With reference to your despatch No. 316 of the 5th July last, I have the honour to transmit to you for your information the paper noted in the subjoined schedule.—I have, &c.,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

The Officer Administering the Government of Hongkong.

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EXTRACT FROM A LETTER FROM COLONIAL OFFICE TO THE FOREIGN OFFICE, DATED 4TH DECEMBER, 1900.

The ports of the Straits Settlements and Hongkong are free, and French products therefore already receive, on admission to these Colonies, the maximum advantage obtainable: I am to suggest, therefore, for the consideration of the Marquess of Lansdowne, that it might be represented to the French Government that on these grounds exceptionally favourable treatment should be accorded to all exports from the Colonies in question both in France and in French Indo-China.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 14th February, 1901.

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter (No. 301) of the 9th instant transmitting, for the information of this Chamber, copy of a circular despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, covering an extract from a letter addressed to the Foreign Office, dated 4th December last.

In reply, I am instructed to beg that His Excellency the Governor will be good enough to convey the thanks of the Committee to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies for his efforts to obtain exceptionally favourable treatment for exports from this Colony both to France and French Indo-China in consideration of the products of those countries being, as they are, admitted here free of all duty.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

To Hon. COLONIAL SECRETARY.

V

The Appointment of British Commercial Agents.

[No. 1426.]

COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, August 8th, 1900.

SIR,—I am directed to transmit to you for the information of the Chamber of Commerce the enclosed copy of a Circular Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies attaching a Memorandum from the Foreign Office respecting the appointment of certain British Commercial

V

Agents.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Act. Col. Secretary.

The Secretary, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Downing Street,
15th June, 1900.

Sir,—I have the honour to transmit to you for general information, the accompanying copy of a Memorandum from the Foreign Office respecting the appointment of British Commercial Agents in Russia, Switzerland, the United States, and Central America, for an experimental period of two years, and the fees to be charged by Her Majesty's Diplomatic Missions in consideration of services rendered by Commercial Agents in making inquiries for private firms.—I have, &c.,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

The Officer Administering the
Government of Hongkong.

THE Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has appointed Mr. Henry Arthur Cooke, Mr. John C. Milligan, Mr. Seymour Bell, and Mr. E. H. Melville to be British Commercial Agents in Russia, Switzerland, the United States, and Central America respectively, for an experimental period of two years.

Mr. Cooke's Address is:—
Malo-Znamenski per
House Mishin 2,
Moscow.

The head-quarters of the other Commercial Agents have been fixed at Zurich, Chicago, and Guatemala.

The business of the Agents will consist in watching and reporting on the commerce, industries, and products of special districts, and in answering inquiries, on commercial subjects.

Individual firms applying for information will have to pay the prescribed fees as hereafter stated.

Communications intended for the Commercial Agents may be addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg or Washington, or Her

Majesty's Minister at Berne or Guatemala, as the case may require, in order that the proper fee may be assessed and levied before the desired inquiry is proceeded with.

Simple inquiries can be addressed direct to the Commercial Agent, accompanied by the fee of 5*s*.

The following is the scale of fees to be charged by Her Majesty's Diplomatic Missions in consideration of services rendered by Commercial Agents in making inquiries for private firms:—

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
For ordinary inquiries	0	5	0				
For inquiries involving reports as to trades or individuals	1	1	0				
For extended inquiries at the discretion of the Ambassador or Minister not in any case to exceed three months	2	2	0	to	5	5	0

If journeys are undertaken the fees will be—

	£	s.	d.
1. For Agent's services per day	1	1	0
2. For Agent's services for every broken day	0	10	6
3. Subsistence per night ...	1	1	0

together with actual expenses of locomotion.

All fees above 5*s*. are to be prepaid.

The method employed for levying the fees will be as follows:—

In case of an inquiry addressed to the Agent which can be answered forthwith, and for which the lowest fee would be charged, he can reply at once requesting that the sum of 5*s*. may be sent to the Embassy or Legation. He will transmit to the Mission lists of inquiries so answered in order that the payments may be checked, and demanded if not already made.

If the fee has been sent with the inquiry he will remit it to the Embassy or Mission.

In cases of inquiries for which fees of 1*l*. 1*s*. and upwards are to be charged, the Agent will forward the information to the Mission for transmission thence in exchange for the fees which may, according to circum-

stances, be required before the answer is given.

In cases requiring research or a journey the Agent will report to the Ambassador or Minister, who will decide whether an offer should be made to procure the information, and, if so, on what terms; or whether it should be stated that the information cannot be procured.

Foreign Office, May, 1900.

W

Scheme for Improvement of Navigation of the Yangtsze.

In September last, Sir John Lister Kaye, when passing through Hongkong, submitted his scheme (published below) for the improvement of the navigation of the River Yangtsze, more especially the upper branch, which will, he contends, open up the rich province of Szechuen, with its 40,000,000 inhabitants, to the foreign trade of the world, to the Chamber of Commerce. On the ground that the foreign trade of China would thus be immensely increased, and must therefore materially affect and augment the trade of the Colony of Hongkong, Sir John Lister Kaye asked the Chamber of Commerce to address to him a letter of approval and support of his plans, if they felt they could do so, his intention being to submit such letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The following are copies of his petition to the Tsung-li Yamen, and of his scheme for the improvement of the navigation of the river Yangtsze:—

PETITION

TO BE PRESENTED TO THE TSUNG-LI YAMEN WITH REGARD TO THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE NAVIGATION OF THE YANGTSZE RIVER.

(Translation).

PETITIONER BRITISH MERCHANT JOHN LISTER KAYE, A BARONET.

Petitions to form a Company to raise capital for the purpose of undertaking the improvement of the navigation of the Upper Yantsze River, from Ichang to Suchau-fu, to convenience trade and increase revenue.

It is found that the Yangtsze Gorges lying between the provinces of

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Szechuan and Hupeh from Chungking to Ichang, extending for a distance of over a thousand li, abounds with cliffs and precipices of the most inaccessible character and the river is filled with boulders, narrow channels and swift currents from rapids everywhere; in summer, with full flood, ships become uncontrollable, in winter with low water, ships become total wrecks at the least touch of the rocks. The estimates annually of casualties amount to considerably over a thousand vessels, over several tens of thousands of lives are lost, and over several tens of millions of taels in value of merchandise are lost. Since the opening of Chungking as a trading port, the three steam navigation companies represented by the China Merchants, Messrs. Jardine, Matheson and Co. (Indo-China), and Messrs. Butterfield & Swire (The China Navigation) make a practice of selecting the stronger vessels that contain the more valuable cargoes and insure them for premiums. This has proved to be a great boon to, and is appreciated by, traders, but, the three Companies are chary in insuring, as the risks are too great. Traders gauge their profits and losses by comparing the annual number of casualties. No ship can make ten successive trips without wrecking.

Recently a landslip occurred in the district of Yung Yang in the Prefecture of Kweichow, and formed an obstruction in the river, commonly known as the New Sintan, which has been the cause of innumerable shipwrecks. This rapid has been repeatedly improved by the Local Authorities with the object of reducing the force of the current, but their measures have had to be abandoned owing to insufficiency of funds.

These rapids are the greatest obstruction and are feared by all.

The only proper way is to form a Company by which a large capital may be subscribed for undertaking the improvement of the navigation of the Yangtsze Gorges. The removal of the existing obstruction will lead to the free and safe communication of trade and augmentation of Revenue receipts.

The Petition is herewith humbly submitted to your Honourable Yamen, and Petitioner prays that it may be referred to the local High Authorities to examine and report upon and find if the case is actually as Petitioner has laid forth before the Yamen in order that your Honourable Yamen may memorialize to the Throne for an Imperial Edict sanctioning the proposed undertaking.

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Petitioner's Proposals.

Article 1. Petitioner John Lister Kaye prays that permission shall be granted him by the Yamen to survey that part of the Upper Yangtsze River lying between Ichang and Suchau-fu (west of Chungking), for the object of investigating the nature of the rocks, rapids, gorges, and other obstructions to navigation which exist along the route. His Engineer will estimate the cost of improvements needed for navigation.

For instance, the recent formation of the new Sintan Rapid has defied the attempts of the Local Authorities for its improvement which have repeatedly proved abortive and unsuccessful. An immediate survey is, therefore, most desirable.

2. Petitioner prays that the Local High Authorities shall be asked to report upon investigations based on Petitioner's description and if found correct the Imperial sanction shall be memorialized for empowering your Honourable Yamen to give permission to Petitioner to sign a contract and raise capital to undertake these engineering works in order to increase Revenue, promote trade, alleviate distress and pacify discontent, and it is petitioned that the engineering works that will extend from Ichang to Suchau-fu shall be given to Petitioner to solely complete and manage for the period of sixty years.

3. The interest paid on the capital shall be drawn from a "Toll." All ships, boats and junks that pass up along the River from Ichang to Chungking shall pay irrespectively a "Toll" of Twelve and-a-half Haikwan Taels per ton. The "Toll" to commence to be imposed on the day a free channel is available for ships to pass. With respect to the ships, boats and junks that pass down along the River from Chungking to Ichang, Petitioner is willing that no "Toll" shall be imposed and that they shall pass free of impositions of any kind for the object of promoting the carrying trade of native produce in the provinces of Szechuan, Hupeh, Yunnan and Shensi, and thus foster commerce. As a further precaution, it is petitioned that instructions shall be given to the Imperial Customs to collect the Toll for Petitioner which shall be paid over to Petitioner quarterly. The salaries and expense of the extra officials necessary shall be provided for by Petitioner. The period during which Petitioner shall receive this "Toll" shall be limited to sixty years. After the sixty years the Imperial Government shall receive the "Toll."

4. When the works are commenced the "trackers" at present employed in the junk trade, and other unemployed, shall be employed on the works, and when the works are completed and a free channel is effected, these men shall be distributed in the works along the route, so that not only will there be no fear of throwing people out of employment but new means of livelihood shall be created in all parts.

5. The freight on piece goods (including insurance and repacking at Ichang) from Shanghai to Chungking now amounts to Tls. 45.4.0.

If Petitioner's plans are authorised and realised, then it would be possible for ships to pass freely from Shanghai to Chungking and merchants would be saved the expense of repacking at Ichang, which costs Tls. 4.3.0 per ton.

In this manner the cost of transport *inclusive of the "Toll"* would be reduced to Tls. 41.1.0 and in future possibly the actual freight charge between Shanghai and Chungking may be reduced.

6. All financial risks of the undertaking shall entirely and wholly devolve on Petitioner; the Government is free from any responsibility of any kind, but it is petitioned, as a special favour and in order to lighten the financial burden of the undertaking, that permission shall be granted to Petitioner that all material and machinery required for the engineering works shall be exempted from all Imperial Government taxation, whether in transit or locally.

7. These great engineering works will require large capital. Petitioner begs to be given permission to raise capital from all parts and the finding of money will empower him to undertake all that the Imperial Edict sanctions such as:—the improvements to the river, the receipt of the "Toll" during the sixty years, and the sole management of the works during the same period, etc.

8. The raising of the capital, the survey, and the date of the commencement of the work, shall all and severally take place within eight months after the signing of the contract authorised by Imperial Edict.

9. It is considered necessary to help merchants in the transportation of goods from Ichang to Chungking and Suchau-fu and from Suchau-fu to Chungking and thus to Shanghai as much as possible, therefore Petitioner begs that he may have permission to construct Commercial Railways at any place, and to any place from Ichang to Suchau-fu by way of Chungking on the North

or on the South Bank of the Yangtsze River; the object is that in the transport of goods from Ichang to Chungking and Suchau-fu and from Suchau-fu by way of Chungking to Ichang the rapidity of transport by the Railway can be used when required, and within the limit of 150 (one hundred and fifty) li of each end and of each side of any railways constructed or about to be constructed, no other railway shall be permitted to be constructed, unless a previous agreement has been come to between the other parties and this Company.

10. These Railways shall be constructed by the Company at their own expense; as to receipts and expenses and losses of the Company, the Chinese Government shall be wholly irresponsible.

11. The lands acquired by the Company for the purpose of constructing railways, godowns, works, &c., shall be bought and paid for by the Company at local market prices, the owners of such lands shall not intentionally raise prices or raise Fengshui as an objection, or otherwise raise obstructions, and it is requested that the High Provincial Authorities shall instruct the local officials to assist the Company in this matter and protect its interests. But if temples, graves, are met with and their removal is impracticable, then the Company must not employ undue means to effect this, in deference to public sentiment.

12. The materials, machinery, etc., needed for the Railways shall be exempt from taxation of all kinds.

13. Now the cost of these Railways will be very great, and will require large capital, and it is only future profits that can induce investment of capital, and the degree of profits we cannot at present ascertain. If a levy of twenty-five per cent. on nett profits be imposed by the Chinese Government, the Company's limited resources render this impracticable, therefore it is proposed to pay an amount on the commencement of the works subsequent to the promulgation of the Imperial Decree sanctioning this Petition, and it is requested that this levy of twenty-five per cent. shall be exempted, but the Company shall further pay a levy of three per cent. on nett profits from their Railways to the Chinese Government.

The Company is further willing to pay to the Government a contribution of seven hundred thousand Taels as a set off against:

1. The privilege of imposing the "Toll" on ships, boats and junks ascending the Yangtsze River between Ichang and Chunkging.

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2. The exemption of the levy of 25% on nett profits earned from the Railways.

This sum shall be paid in Kuping currency to the Government on the commencement of the works, which will take place after the final survey and subsequent to the Promulgation of the Imperial Decree sanctioning this Petition.

14. A term of ninety-nine years reckoning from the date of the commencement of works of each of the Railways to be constructed shall be granted to the Company to have management of each and all of these Railways in each case, and when the stipulated time is up the Railways at each separate date, lands, machinery, stock and all other works and effects shall be wholly and entirely given up to the Chinese Government as Official or Government Property.

15. As it will be necessary to have business relations with the local officials in carrying out these important river works and railways, the Company will employ a Chinese Manager and Assistants, whose salaries will be paid by the Company.

16. It is requested that the Tsung-li Yamen will memorialize for Imperial Sanction to this Petition and the appended clauses and that when the Imperial Sanction is obtained notice of the same may be communicated by the Tsung-li Yamen to H. B. M.'s Minister at Peking. The final Contract shall then be signed and sealed in Chinese and English in five identic copies, of which one shall be retained by the Tsung-li Yamen, one by H. B. M.'s Minister, one by the Viceroy of Szechuan, one by the Viceroy at Wuchang and one by the Company; and the English version shall be considered as the original.

17. *Labour Fund Clause.*—From the "Toll" of Twelve and-a-half Taels (Haikwan) per ton, there will be one-half Tael or 5 mace per ton set aside for the purpose of the Labour Relief Fund, all employed upon these works, whether employees or otherwise who may fall sick, or, having performed their work and the work is completed, and the Company require them no longer or are too old and weak to work any longer, &c., shall be relieved, after due consideration, and further, men who have served their time shall be superannuated and free hospitals and free medicines shall be instituted and dispensed.

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All the above-mentioned plans shall be carefully considered and a set of regulations drawn up; it is most necessary; and such expenditure shall be drawn from the above-mentioned fund.

Trustees shall be appointed to see that the money is properly applied and the poor really benefit by it.

Sir John Lister Kaye's Suggestions for the Improvement of the Navigation of the Yangtsze River between Ichang and Chungking; and the Explanation of the System proposed to be carried out.

IMPROVEMENT OF THE NAVIGATION OF THE YANGTSZE RIVER BETWEEN ICHANG AND CHUNGKING AND THE EXPLANATION OF THE SYSTEM PROPOSED TO BE CARRIED OUT.

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1. The freight charges (*vide* Blackburn Report pp. 87 & 88) are from Shanghai to Chungking—

Per bale of 50 pieces say 400 lbs. each Tls. 9-0-8 including insurance to Ichang and re-packing at Ichang, therefore per ton of 2,000 lbs. ...Tls. 45 4 0

Per bale of Indian Yarn of 400 lbs. Tls. 7-3-2 including insurance to Ichang and re-packing at Ichang, therefore per ton of 2,000 lbs. ...Tls. 36 5 0

and it takes, under the present conditions of transport service, at least 30 days to transport the goods from Ichang to Chungking.

2. It is proposed to improve the navigation of the Upper Yangtsze River, by a series of engineering works; by a system of buoying the river; by a system of powerful steamers and steam-launches; by a stationary chain service with an auxiliary steam power for hauling; and by a complete telegraph system, having, say, thirty stations over the 360 miles between Ichang and Chungking, which will be the central stations for the permanent location of the steam-launches, the "tying-up" places for the junks at night, and will also be the various centres for a large number of the "trackers," on whom the Upper Yangtsze Conservancy will have the first call by an arrangement which will provide for the payment of a small retaining fee, to be paid to

them annually. To the above system, it is possible there may be added, if considered advisable by a commission of experts, a subsidiary railway in certain places along the north or south bank of the river.

This suggested railway perhaps would only be used for the transport of goods at times of the year when the transport by the entire water route may be considered to be less advantageous.

3. A vast difference will thus be effected in the transport service of the Upper Yangtsze River, for, as will be explained below, it is hoped that it will be possible to arrange that cargo shall be delivered at the port of Chungking even by junk *eight* days after it leaves Ichang, instead of in about thirty days, as at present prevails; it is also hoped that, if the following plans are carried out in their entirety, the merchants of Shanghai will be saved an amount, estimated, as shown below, at about £180,000 per annum, on merchandise shipped direct from Shanghai to Chungking.

4. Now, the plan under which the whole system will be worked will be that in the *first* place, the whole of the surveyed portion, viz., from Ichang to Chungking, will be divided into seven districts of works, under seven separate sets of engineers and contractors, for the principal works are seven in number:—

1. Hsin-tan rapid.
2. Tung-yang-tan rapid.
3. Miao-Shi-tzu-tan rapid.
4. Hsiu-lun-tan rapid.
5. Kweichou; rock and shingle bank.
6. Fang-tu; sunken rocks and reefs.
7. Kweichou-fu; large rock (82).

Thus the whole work will be divided up into seven great districts, which will be treated simultaneously, and will thus cause the works to be all proceeded with at the same time, and finished quickly.

The minor works, amounting to 228 separate works, will be divided as they fall within the seven districts, and will be dealt with by the same engineers and contractors above referred to.

6. In the *second* place, the whole of the river between Ichang and Chungking will be buoyed, and soundings will be taken. The state of the river *then* will be such that the plan to be carried out can be commenced.

7. The whole distance (360 miles) will be patrolled by powerful steam-

launches, of a speed power up to 20 knots; these launches will each patrol a district of, say, 12 miles each, so that in all there would be 30 launches.

8. These launches being of a great power, will be utilised to "tow" junks over the whole distance if necessary where the rapids exist or over part of the distance, and thus the journey by junk should be accomplished in the *eight* days above-mentioned. The reason why it is estimated that the distance can be accomplished in *eight* days by the towing of junks by launches, is that one may estimate that one can arrange the progress of the junks up the river during twelve hours in each day, on an average, at a rate of four knots an hour, including the changes from one launch district to another. Thus it is estimated that 48 miles per diem will be accomplished, and the 360 miles will be accomplished in *eight* days.

9. There are two reasons why it is considered advisable to have a system of probably thirty steam-launches over the whole 360 miles. It is considered advisable to have the "towage" system continuous; so, for instance, No. 1 launch will take a certain number of junks at Ichang, and will "tow" them over its district of twelve miles, in, say, three hours. As the speed of the launches will be up to 20 knots, it is not unreasonable to estimate that No. 1 launch will be in position again at Ichang, within four hours of leaving that place, and will thus accomplish the twelve miles (its district) three times during the day, taking its quota of junks on each of the four journeys.

10. The motive power would thus practically be a continuous service over the whole 360 miles. There is no doubt that many disasters in rivers of swift current troubled with rapids and cataracts, are due to lack of means of speedy information to stations whence help can be summoned.

11. It is proposed to have thirty stations between Ichang and Chungking; where will be the tying-up stations for junks and steamers at nights, and the definite standing stations as it were, for the steam-launches.

12. It is proposed that a complete telegraph system shall run the whole distance from Ichang to Suchau-fu, for the sole service of the Upper Yangtsze Conservancy; the telegraph stations will be located at the tying-up stations above mentioned.

13. It is proposed to erect barracks for the "trackers": (this point will be dealt with under the head of "trackers") at these stations, so that the service system shall be complete in all its details.

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14. It is now proposed to deal with the subject from the point of view as to how it may affect the three industrial divisions of those interested in the trade of the Yangtsze River—

1. Merchants.
2. Junk-owners.
3. Trackers.

MERCHANTS.

15. The improvement of the navigation of the Yangtsze River will affect beneficially the merchants to a greater degree than any of the other interests connected with the transport trade of the Yangtsze River. It is not too much to say that one may, with safety, enumerate as many as four distinct benefit which will directly and indirectly arise from the great waterway being placed in a proper state of navigation :—

1. Security of transport.
2. Rapidity of transport.
3. The opening up of the immense possibilities of trade with a country containing from 40,000,000 to 50,000,000 of inhabitants.
4. The saving to the merchants of Shanghai of as much as about £180,000 per annum, in the transport of merchandise from Shanghai to Chungking.

16. Now, the following figures, taken from the Maritime Customs Reports for 1897, show the amounts and value of cotton goods (shirtings—grey, plain) imported into Shanghai, Ichang and Chungking, and the value of the goods per piece at each city.

Cotton Goods (shirtings : grey, plain,) imported into Shanghai in 1897: 4,019,499 pieces, value Hkn. Tls. 11,344,068. The value per piece works out to be Tls. 2.2.5 per piece.

Into Ichang 454,660 pieces were imported of a value of Hkn. Tls. 1,227,582. This works out at a value of per piece, Tls. 2.7.

Into Chungking 458,394 pieces were imported of a value of Hkn. Tls. 1,145,985. This works out at a value of Tls. 2.5.4 per piece.

The above figures, taken from the Maritime Customs Reports for 1897, show that the freights have to be added to these figures before one can arrive at the actual cost and therefore value of the cotton piece goods in Chungking.

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17. Now I propose to deal with the subject of the transport of the trade between Shanghai and Chungking, as it at present exists, under five heads, and to endeavour to show how and in what manner I propose to improve the transport conditions for the Shanghai merchants :—

1. The trade (imports) of Chungking in the year 1897 and its value. The trade (exports) of Chungking for 1897 and its value.
2. Estimated shipping tonnage which carried the goods from Shanghai to Chungking, and carried the exports from Chungking.
3. The estimated tons of goods carried by the estimated tons of shipping.
4. The cost of carrying the trade from Shanghai to Chungking.
5. How and in what manner I propose to improve the transport condition of the trade between Shanghai and Chungking.

18. Dealing first with "head No. 1.":—The Maritime Customs Reports for 1897 show that the imports to the port of Chungking were £1,776,586. The exports from the port of Chungking were £1,069,017. This, however, must not be considered as the total amount of Trade Exports and Imports of the port of Chungking. On page 29 of Mr. Consul Bourne's report to the Marquess of Salisbury, received at the Foreign Office, March 21st, 1898, occurs the following : "There are no returns to consult, but I will risk an "estimate of the Exports from the whole province of Szech'nan to the "Eastern provinces at £3,300,000 :—

"Opium	£1,800,000
"Salt	300,000
"Drugs	400,000
"Silk	200,000
"Wax, tobacco, sugar, musk, wool, skins, "hides, feathers, bristles, and other ex- "ports	600,000
	£3,300,000

"Of the Imports taken in return, cotton and cotton goods, I estimate

"to account for no less than £2,400,000 value :—

"Raw cotton (200,000 bales)	£ 500,000
"Native piece goods, home spun (300,000 "bales)	1,000,000
"Indian Yarn	600,000
"Lancashire Cottons	300,000
	£2,400,000"

Head No. 2.—The Customs Reports for 1897 show, p. 73 under the paragraph "Shipping," that the total number of chartered junks which entered and cleared at the port of Chungking was 2,311, and that 10,951 Likin junks were reported as having passed the barrier below Chungking, therefore a total of 13,262 junks. The chartered junks showed a total tonnage of 68,444 tons, or an average of rather over 30 tons per junk, and I am informed that the Likin junks can be taken at the same average tonnage. Thus a total tonnage of 396,974 tons of shipping imported into Chungking, and exported from Chungking, was the trade of that port in 1897.

Head No. 3.—Now, in order to estimate the number of tons of cargo which the 13,262 junks, of a registered tonnage of, say, 396,974 tons of shipping, carried, it would be fair to estimate that they carried about *22 tons of cargo each*, say, 291,764 tons of cargo, equal to a value of £8.4.5 per ton of goods imported into Chungking.

Head No. 4.—Now, in order to estimate the cost at which the trade was carried, viz., say, £2,400,000 worth of goods from Shanghai to Chungking, I propose to take an average between the cost of transport of one ton of piece goods as per the Blackburn Report, freight Shanghai to Chungking, (p.p. 87 & 88) including insurance and re-packing at Ichang, Tls. 45.4.0 and the freight charge, including insurance and re-package at Ichang, of one ton of yarn, viz., Tls. 36.5.0.

The average between the two prices would be Tls. 40.9.5 per ton.

Now, the 291,764 tons of cargo are carried at an average estimated freight charge of Tls. 40.9.5 (including insurance and re-packing at Ichang) from Shanghai to Chungking, so would be carried for Tls. 13,947,745.

Head No. 5.—The expenses of transport for the Shanghai merchants would be reduced, in cases where re-packing at Ichang has been necessary,

by Tls. 4.3.0 per ton (*vide* Blackburn Report, page 87, for cost of re-packing at Ichang) equal, on 291,764 tons of goods, to about Tls. 1,254,585, or about £180,000 per annum, thus reducing the transport charge on £2,400,000 worth of goods from Tls. 13,947,745 to Tls. 12,693,160, which, in addition to the reduction of cost thus effected, *will include the "Toll,"* which by the Petition would amount to 12½ Haikwan Taels per ton on all ships, boats and junks which pass up the Yangtsze River from Ichang to Chungking. It is believed that later it will be possible to reduce the actual freight charges between Shanghai and Chungking.

19. The manner in which it is proposed to carry out this improvement is as follows : by the construction of a fleet of powerful steamers for service between Shanghai and Chungking. It is considered most desirable that, in view of the almost certain development and increase of the trade conditions of the whole of the Yangtsze Valley by the proposed improvement of the navigation of the Yangtsze River and as a necessary part of the improvement of the navigation system, that a fleet of powerful steamers shall be constructed which shall be ready to convey the trade of the Yangtsze direct from Shanghai to Chungking, and from Chungking to Shanghai, and it is hoped that the construction of this proposed fleet will induce other corporations and shipping firms also to establish steamers plying direct between Shanghai and Chungking. In order to bring the junk trade to understand that freights must be lowered the "object lesson" of the steamers with their lowered freight charges, and their through transport will be practical arguments beyond discussion. But, as explained in paragraph 8 and under the heading "Junk-Owners", it will be seen that, by the junk-owner having motive power over at least part of the journey offered him, or all, if considered necessary, between Ichang and Chungking, his profits will be greater over the new system than by that which prevails at present.

The steamers will be completed after the great engineering works, the soundings, and the buoying system have defined clearly what kind of steamer, of what capacity, and of what power would be the most beneficial to the service.

Junk-Owners.

20. The junk-owner may make under present arrangements, say, as many as four journeys from Ichang and Chungking in the year, occupying over the complete journey, viz., from Ichang to Chungking loading at

Chungking, and the return journey from Chungking to Ichang, as much as fifty days. His expenses are now great; the wages of the crew, wupan men, and "trackers", and the expenses of the fifty days of food for the above.

21. Under the improved plan, he will have to pay the "Toll" of 12½ Haikwan Taels per ton; on the other hand, his expenses will be reduced by the fact that the motive power will be supplied free of cost to the junk-owner by the steam-launches; he will thus be able to do away with the expenses of the "trackers" and part of his crew and the fact that the duration of the complete journey from Ichang to Chungking and return will be thirty days at the most, instead of fifty days, will again save the junk-owner expense. Moreover, as many of the "trackers" will be in the employ of the Upper Yangtsze River Conservancy, that corporation will be able to allow the junk-owners to employ them, free of cost, when it is considered that the current may be too strong, and the free board of the junk too small and that there will be a risk of swamping the junk if it were forced by the powerful launches up against the strong current. The "trackers" would in such cases be used, and after the rapid or cataract were passed the junk would again be attached to the launch and would continue its course more rapidly.

22. Thus the profit of the junk-owner, owing to the reduction in his expenses of transport, will remain very much the same as formerly, notwithstanding the apparent change in the payment; moreover, with the natural expansion of trade, the journeys of the junk-owner would amount to at least six per annum, instead of only (at most) four, as is the case under the present conditions. Therefore he would make a *larger profit* in the year's business.

The Trackers.

23. It appears that there are about 20,000 men who earn their living by the business of "tracking" the junks up the rapids and cataracts. In the carrying out of the complete system as shown in the foregoing pages, it is intended to primarily retain the services of as many as possible of these men, by the payment to them of a small retaining fee, so that the Upper Yangtsze Conservancy might have a first call on them for the necessary amount of work which there may still be for them to do, notwithstanding the altered conditions of transport.

24. In addition to the fee, and the work found for them, the men would be employed on the 235 sets of works, and it is estimated that with the advent of security to navigation, the same conditions will prevail in the Upper Yangtsze as prevailed in the Lower Yangtsze, where, with the advent of steam, the junk traffic, as distributor of freight and merchandise, increased to a very great extent.

25. In this manner, the "trackers" will find an extra means of livelihood, and with the opening up of the river traffic other industries will be, without doubt, developed, which will bring fresh requirements for labour into the market.

Finance.

26. With regard to the finance, the Petition arranges that the Petitioner shall receive 12½ Haikwan Taels per ton on all ships, boats and junks which pass up the river between Ichang and Chungking.

27. In estimating the Revenue to be received from the "Toll" it is suggested to take 300,000 tons as an average on which the charge would be made. The Revenue, therefore, would amount, at this estimate, to about £535,714 per annum.

28. It is almost impossible to estimate with accuracy, at the present time, the exact cost of the works completed, but it is roughly estimated at about £3,000,000.

29. It would not be advisable to estimate that one could issue 5 per cent. Bonds secured on the "Toll" at a higher rate than 90, so it would be necessary to issue, say, £3,400,000 at 90, producing £3,060,000.

30. The interest at 5 per cent. on £3,400,000 plus ½ per cent. sinking fund (after ten years), to redeem in 50 years (for the right to impose the "Toll" will be for 60 years) would amount to £187,000 per annum.

31. Now, in estimating the up-keep of the Upper Yangtsze Conservancy works, one must remember that the average cost of up-keep of 17 of the great canals of Great Britain is 69 per cent. of the receipts, which would amount, in the case of the Upper Yangtsze River, to £369,842 per annum, but as the works are not continuous, although they extend over a great distance (viz., 360 miles) it is estimated that £346,714 per annum (the balance between interest and sinking fund payment and the amount of the estimated revenue from the "Toll," viz., £535,714 per annum) will be ample to meet the expenses of up-keep.

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32. *Comparative cost per ton per mile of the "Toll" of the Suez Canal and the Upper Yangtsze River Conservancy.*—The "Toll" charged per ton in the Suez Canal is 8/- over a distance of 94 miles; the charge is the same, viz., 8/- per ton for the return journey; therefore the charge for the 180 miles amount to 16/- per ton, equal to $\frac{1}{10}$ per ton per mile.

Now, in the proposed "Toll" of £1-15-11½ per ton on all ships, boats and junks which pass up the river from Ichang to Chungking, viz., up the river (360 miles). there is no charge for the return journey from Chungking to Ichang, notwithstanding that the water-way will have been equally improved for navigation *down* stream as for navigation up stream. The charge, therefore, of 35/11½ per ton for 720 miles amounts to 2½ farthings per ton per mile, or about half the charge per ton per mile of the Suez Canal.

But in excess of this comes the important feature that the Upper Yangtsze Conservancy will provide motive power for the 13,000 junks (*vide* Maritime Customs Report) which ply between Ichang and Chungking, passing up the river *free of cost* by hauling them, if desired, by powerful steam-launches over the whole distance of 360 miles between Ichang and Chungking.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 1st October, 1900.

SIR,—I am instructed by my Committee to thank you for affording them the opportunity of perusing the documents explaining your scheme for improving the navigation of the Upper Yangtsze. Concerning the details of the scheme, the Committee must decline to offer any opinion; but it seems indisputable that the removal of the existing obstructions to the navigation of the Yangtsze River would prove of advantage to trade generally.—I am, &c.,

R. M. GRAY, Chairman.

To Sir JOHN LISTER KAYE, Bart.

16, BOLTON STREET,
LONDON, W., 26th November, 1900.

SIR,—I beg to acknowledge your letter dated 1st October, 1900, and shall be much obliged if you will kindly thank the Committee of the Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce for their kind letter to me with re-

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gard to the Improvement of the Navigation of the Yangtsze River.

I shall be obliged if you will inform the Committee that I am glad to be able to announce to them that Mr. BERTIE informed me last Wednesday that the Foreign Office has written by last Friday's mail to Sir ERNEST SATOW to enquire if the Chinese will agree to my Petition.—I am, &c.,

JOHN LISTER KAYE.

R. M. GRAY, Esq., Chairman, HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, Hongkong.

X

British-grown Products and the Revised French Tariff.

UNITED PLANTERS' ASSOCIATION OF SOUTHERN INDIA,
MADRAS, 11th November, 1900.

DEAR SIR,—At the Annual Meeting of this Association on 8th August, 1900, the following Resolution was unanimously adopted:—

"That considering the critical condition of the tea and coffee industries, this Association do communicate with the Indian Tea Association, the Ceylon Planters' Association, the Indian Chambers of Commerce and the leading firms of merchants and brokers interested in tea and coffee, &c., in this country and in England, and her Colonies, with a view to ascertaining whether a movement in favour of a commercial combination of Great Britain and her Colonies and India against the world (which would by a system of differential duties afford some protection to British-grown products and manufactures) would receive support."

This resolution may be said to have resulted chiefly from the recent revision of the French Tariff in regard to imports of produce from (*inter alia*) India, and the British Colonies and Dependencies. You are doubtless aware that the French Parliament, as an act of reprisal against Brazil, voted recently a law doubling the duties on coffee, tea, and spices imported from countries not having Treaties of Commerce with France, or not enjoying Most Favoured Nation Treatment, among which are India, the British Colonies and Dependencies (with the exception of Canada). The French and Brazilians have made up their quarrel, but the French Tariff

law, which was really directed against Brazil, still subsists. There appears to be reasonable ground for hope that it will not be put into force, but if it should, the consequence would be, to use the words of the *Economist*, that the prohibitory tariff for Colonial produce would only be applied to countries, British Colonies among others, for which it was not intended.

Although it is possible that the French Government may be induced to reconsider the action referred to, yet what has been already done serves as an unmistakable warning of the grave risk to which British Trade is at present exposed, and the burdens it may at any time be called upon to bear.

It is felt that there is a strong and growing feeling in England and her Dependencies and Colonies in favour of what may be termed an Imperial Fiscal Federation for the protection of British interests as against those of the rest of the world. The Association is desirous of eliciting your views on the subject, to co-operate for the purpose of submitting memorials to the Home Government and other Governments concerned, and would be glad of your advice as to the precise form such memorials should take.

If you have already made any move in the direction indicated, a copy of your proceedings would be welcome.—I am, &c.,

H. PERCIVAL HODGSON, Chairman.

The President,
General Chamber of Commerce, Hongkong.

Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce,
Hongkong, 9th January, 1901.

Dear Sir,—I beg leave to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated 11th November last, enclosing copy of a resolution passed at the last annual meeting of your Association to ascertain whether a movement in favour of a commercial combination of Great Britain and her Colonies and India against the world, by a system of differential duties, to afford some protection of British-grown products and manufactures, would receive support.

Your letter was laid before the Committee of this Chamber at its last meeting and considered, but they could not see their way to join in such a

movement as that proposed. —I am, &c.,

R. M. GRAY, Chairman.

H. Percival Hodgson, Esq.,
United Planters' Association of Southern India.

Y

Certificates of Origin in Japan.

Japanese Consulate,
Hongkong, 29th December, 1900.

Dear Sir,—I beg to inform you, for the information of the Members, that the copy of invoice hitherto required to be filed at this Consulate by an applicant for a certificate of origin of goods to be imported to Japan, will not be required on and after the 1st of January next, but, on the other hand, the shippers are requested to provide the forms of the certificate at their own expense, as this office shall not hereafter issue the same *gratis* as it used to be.—I am, &c.,

M. KATO, Consul for Japan.

The Secretary, Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce.

Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce,
Hongkong, 31st December, 1900.

Dear Sir,—I beg to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 29th instant, announcing that on and after the 1st January next, applicants for a certificate of origin of goods to be imported into Japan will not be required to file a copy of invoice, but that shippers are requested to provide the forms of certificate at their own cost, as they will not be supplied gratuitously at the Consulate as heretofore.—I am, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

M. Kato, Esq., Consul for Japan.

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The Death of the late Queen Victoria.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 29th January, 1901.

SIR,—As the occasion of the funeral of Her late Most Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria will be one of national mourning, my Committee beg respectfully to suggest, for the consideration of His Excellency the Governor, that Saturday next, the 2nd February, be so observed in this Colony. Also that the Public Offices be closed and business suspended on that day out of respect for the memory of our much lamented Sovereign.

I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

HON. COLONIAL SECRETARY.

No. 217. COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 30th January, 1901.

SIR,—In reply ty your letter of the 29th instant, I am directed to inform you that His Excellency the Governor has directed that the 2nd proximo should be observed as a day of public mourning and all public offices be closed.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

The SECRETARY, CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

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Registration of Servants.

No. 256. COLONIAL SECRETARY'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 4th February, 1901.

SIR,—I am directed to transmit to you the enclosed copies of a letter addressed to me by the Honourable Captain Superintendent of Police, and to request that you will kindly obtain the opinion of your Committee on this subject with a view to giving some indication, if possible, of the general opinion of the Colony on the question of the registration of servants.

2. I am also to inquire whether, in the opinion of the Committee, it

would be desirable to re-enact the section 7 of 1866 which dealt with registration of servants, and at the same time to draw attention to the fact that if legislation of that kind were re-enacted, it would be necessary to make the penalties for non-observance applicable to employers as well as to employed, and to enforce such penalties equally against both.

3. It would appear from sections 28 and 32 of the Ordinance mentioned (No. 7 of 1866) that this was done by that Ordinance, but I understand the law was not long observed and was eventually repealed by Ordinance 15 of 1888.—I have, &c.,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

The SECRETARY to THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

Police Office,
Hongkong, 6th December, 1900.

Sir,—I have the honour again to recommend that the provisions of Ordinance No. 7 of 1866 relating to the registration of servants be re-enacted with the addition of a provision to the effect that servants must when applying for registration supply two photographs of themselves, one to be filed in the register, and the other to be attached to the certificate of registration.

I addressed you on this subject in my letter No. 200 of the 18th July, 1894, again in my annual report for that year, and for the third time in my letter No. 333 of the 28th September, 1897.

Since the latter date difficulties with servants have greatly increased, and within the last 10 days I have received three appeals for assistance.—I have, &c.,

F. H. MAY, Captain Superintendent of Police.

The Honourable The Colonial Secretary.

HONGKONG GENERAL CHAMBER OF COMMERCE,
HONGKONG, 18th February, 1901.

SIR,—I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter (No. 256) of the 4th instant transmitting copy of a letter from the Honourable Captain Superintendent of Police on the subject of the registration of servants, suggesting the re-enactment of certain provisions of Ordinance No. 7 of 1866,

the attachment of photographs of servants to the certificates, and the making registration compulsory on employers.

The question has been carefully considered by the Committee, who unanimously came to the conclusion that the enactment of a Registration Ordinance as proposed would be inadvisable and probably impracticable.—I have, &c.,

R. CHATTERTON WILCOX, Secretary.

The Hon. The Colonial Secretary.

FORTNIGHTLY

CURRENT QUOTATIONS

FOR THE YEAR 1900.

FORTNIGHTLY CURRENT EXCHANGE AND

QUOTATIONS.	On London Bank, 4 months' sight.	Telegraphic Transfer.	Private Credits, 4 months' sight.	Documentary. 4 months' sight.
Fortnight ending 5th January,	1/11¾	1/11¼	1/11 15/16	2/0 1/16
Do. do. 19th January,	1/11 13/16	1/11 7/16	2/0	2/0⅛
Do. do. 2nd February,	1/11⅞	1/11½	2/0 1/16	2/0 3/16
Do. do. 16th February,	1/11⅝	1/11 5/16	1/11 13/16	1/11 15/16
Do. do. 2nd March,	1/11 11/16	1/11⅜	1/11⅞	2/0
Do. do. 16th March,	1/11 11/16	1/11⅜	1/11⅞	2/0
Do. do. 30th March,	1/11 11/16	1/11⅜	1/11⅞	2/0
Do. do. 13th April,	1/11 11/16	1/11⅜	1/11⅞	2/0
Do. do. 27th April,	1/11 11/16	1/11⅜	1/11⅞	2/0
Do. do. 11th May,	1/11 11/16	1/11⅜	1/11⅞	2/0
Do. do. 25th May,	1/11 11/16	1/11 7/16	1/11⅞	2/0
Do. do. 8th June,	1/11 11/16	1/11 7/16	1/11⅞	2/0
Do. do. 22nd June,	1/11 11/16	1/11 7/16	1/11⅞	2/0
Do. do. 6th July,	2/0⅛	1/11⅞	2/0 3/16	2/0 7/16
Do. do. 20th July,	2/0¼	2/0	2/0 5/16	2/0 9/16
Do. do. 3rd August,	2/0 7/16	2/0⅛	2/0⅜	2/0¾
Do. do. 17th August,	2/0½	2/0 9/16	2/0 11/16	2/0 15/16
Do. do. 31st August,	2/0¾	2/0 7/16	2/0 15/16	2/1 1/16
Do. do. 14th September,	2/1⅛	2/0 13/16	2/1 5/16	2/1 7/16
Do. do. 28th September,	2/1⅛	2/0 15/16	2/1 5/16	2/1 7/16
Do. do. 12th October,	2/1⅛	2/0 13/16	2/1⅜	2/1½
Do. do. 26th October,	2/1 3/16	2/1¼	2/1 13/16	2/1 15/16
Do. do. 9th November,	2/1 5/16	2/1	2/1 9/16	2/1 11/16
Do. do. 23th November,	2/1½	2/1⅛	2/1 11/16	2/1 13/16
Do. do. 7th December,	2/1 9/16	2/1 3/16	2/1¾	2/1⅞
Do. do. 21st December,	2/1¼	2/0⅞	2/1 7/16	2/1 9/16

BULLION QUOTATIONS DURING THE YEAR 1900.

On France, 4 months' sight.	On Bombay, Demand.	On Calcutta, Demand.	Bar Silver.	Specie.	Clean Mexican Dollars.	Gold Bars, 98 touch.	Gold Leaf, 100 touch.
						per tael	*per tael*
Fcs. 2.51½	Rs. 144½	Rs. 144½	10⅝ % pm.	9¼ % pm.	2⅛ % pm.	$52.20	$53.80
Fcs. 2.52	Rs. 144½	Rs. 144½	10½ "	9⅛ "	2¾ "	$51.90	$53.30
Fcs. 2.53	Rs. 145¾	Rs. 145¾	10¼ "	8½ "	3½ "	$51.95	$53.30
Fcs. 2.50	Rs. 145	Rs. 145	10 "	8⅝ "	2½ "	$51.90	$53.20
Fcs. 2.50½	Rs. 146¼	Rs. 146¼	10¼ "	8⅞ "	3 "	$51.85	$53.15
Fcs. 2.50½	Rs. 146	Rs. 146	10⅞ "	9⅝ "	2¾ "	$51.80	$53.20
Fcs. 2.50½	Rs. 146	Rs. 146	10⅝ "	9½ "	2¾ "	$51.70	$53.10
Fcs. 2.50½	Rs. 146¼	Rs. 146¼	10½ "	9⅜ "	3⅛ "	$51.65	$53.05
Fcs. 2.50½	Rs. 146¼	Rs. 146¼	10½ "	9¼ "	2¾ "	$51.60	$53.00
Fcs. 2.50½	Rs. 146¾	Rs. 146¾	10½ "	9⅛ "	2½ "	$51.50	$52.90
Fcs. 2.50½	Rs. 146¾	Rs. 146¾	10⅜ "	9⅛ "	3 "	$51.55	$53.00
Fcs. 2.50½	Rs. 146½	Rs. 146½	10½ "	9¼ "	2½ "	$51.65	$53.15
Fcs. 2.50½	Rs. 147	Rs. 147	10½ "	9 "	2¾ "	$51.70	$53.15
Fcs. 2.55	Rs. 149½	Rs. 149½	10½ "	9⅜ "	5¾ "	$51.95	$53.40
Fcs. 2.56	Rs. 150½	Rs. 150½	11 "	10 "	5 "	$52.10	$53.50
Fcs. 2.58	Rs. 151½	Rs. 151½	11⅛ "	10 "	3¾ "	$50.20	$52.70
Fcs. 2.59	Rs. 151¾	Rs. 151¾	11⅛ "	10 "	3⅞ "	$50.80	$52.25
Fcs. 2.61½	Rs. 152¾	Rs. 152¾	11 "	10 "	3¾ "	$50.60	$52.00
Fcs. 2.65½	Rs. 155	Rs. 155	11 "	9⅞ "	2½ "	$50.00	$51.35
Fcs. 2.65½	Rs. 155	Rs. 155	10⅜ "	9¼ "	2½ "	$49.90	$51.30
Fcs. 2.66	Rs. 155½	Rs. 155½	10½ "	9⅛ "	2⅛ "	$49.65	$51.10
Fcs. 2.70	Rs. 159	Rs. 159	10¼ "	9 "	1 13/16 "	$48.90	$50.50
Fcs. 2.67½	Rs. 156¾	Rs. 156¾	10½ "	9¼ "	2 "	$48.80	$50.25
Fcs. 2.69	Rs. 157½	Rs. 157½	10⅝ "	9¼ "	2¼ "	$48.80	$50.25
Fcs. 2.69½	Rs. 158	Rs. 158	10¾ "	9¾ "	2¼ "	$48.55	$49.90
Fcs. 2.66	Rs. 154¾	Rs. 154¾	11 "	9½ "	2 "	$48.65	$50.00

THE HARBOUR MASTER'S REPORT.

No. 134.

HARBOUR DEPARTMENT,
HONGKONG, *15th March, 1901.*

SIR,—I have the honour to forward the Annual Report for this Department for the year ending 31st December, 1900.

SHIPPING.

1. The total tonnage entering and clearing during the year 1900 amounted to 18,445,134 tons, being an increase, compared with 1899, of 343,825 tons.

There were 41,223 arrivals of 9,228,762 tons, and 41,233 departures of 9,216,372 tons.

Of British Ocean-going tonnage, 2,841,936 tons entered, 2,821,410 tons cleared.

Of River Steamers (British) 1,746,674 tons entered, and 1,745,178 tons cleared; making a grand total of British tonnage of 9,155,198 tons entering and clearing.

Of Foreign Ocean-going tonnage, 2,425,086 tons entered, and 2,425,311 tons cleared.

Of Foreign River Steamers, 8,286 tons entered, and 8,286 tons cleared; making a grand total of Foreign tonnage of 4,866,969 tons entering and clearing.

Of Junks in Foreign Trade, 1,604,632 tons entered, and 1,620,224 tons cleared.

Of Junks in Local Trade, 602,148 tons entered, and 595,963 tons cleared.

Thus—

British Ocean-going tonnage	represented		30.7 %.
,, River	,,	,,	19.0 %.
Foreign Ocean-going	,,	,,	26.3 %.
,, River	,,	,,	0.1 %.
Junk (Foreign Trade)	,,	,,	17.4 %.
,, (Local Trade)	,,	,,	6.5 %.

2. Five thousand three hundred and ninety-five (5,395) steamers, 78 sailing vessels and 17,732 junks in Foreign Trade entered during the year, giving a daily average of 63.6 as against 76.9 in 1899.

For European constructed vessels the daily average entry would be

14.99 against 14.91 in 1899, and, of the vessels entering 68.77 were British.

3. A comparison between the years 1899 and 1900 is shewn in the following table:—

Comparative Shipping Return for the Years 1899 and 1900.

	1899.		1900.		Increase.		Decrease.	
	Ships.	Tonnage.	Ships.	Tonnage.	Ships.	Tonnage.	Ships.	Tonnage.
British.....	7,408	8,725,016	7,511	9,155,198	103	430,182	...	...
Foreign, ...	3,497	4,712,131	3,429	4,866,969	...	154,838	68	...
Junks in Foreign Trade, ...	* 45,067	* 3,696,184	35,425	3,224,856	...	...	9,642	471,328
Total.....	55,972	17,133,331	46,365	17,247,023	103	585,020	9,710	471,328
Junks in Local Trade, ...	† 32,655	† 967,978	‡ 36,091	‡ 1,198,111	3,436	230,133	...	...
Grand Total....	88,627	18,101,309	82,456	18,445,134	3,539	815,153	9,710	471,328
Nett.....					...	343,825	6,171	...

* Including 4,918 Conservancy and Dust Boats measuring 108,834 tons.
† Including 12,826 Conservancy and Dust Boats measuring 316,300 tons.
‡ Including 13,724 Conservancy and Dust Boats measuring 460,196 tons.

4. For vessels under the British flag this table shews an increase of 103 ships measuring 430,182 tons, but when taking into account the decrease in River Trade under this flag, viz., 111 vessels of 58,317 tons, the actual increase to Ocean-going trade would be 214 ships of 488,499 tons. The falling off in River Trade may be wholly ascribed to the steamers *Samshui*, *Wuchow*, *Hoi Tong* and *Kwai Lum*, being sold and off the run.

Of the increase mentioned above the chief factors are:—(i) The turning over of many of the China Merchants' steamers to British colours. (ii) The fact of a greater percentage of tramp steamers calling than heretofore (principally carrying coal). (iii) The increased size of many of the liners on home routes. And (iv) The fact of some of the coasters calling at the port more frequently than they did last year.

For vessels under Foreign flags there is a numerical decrease of 68 shewn, but with an increased tonnage of 154,838 tons, the falling off in vessels is ascribed to the turning over of a portion of the China Merchants' fleet to the British flag, also further augmented by a falling off in vessels under the United States, Japanese and Norwegian colours. The increase

in tonnage is explained by the greatly increased size of many of the German steamers also to the Scottish Oriental Steamship Company turning over to German colours, which has considerably augmented the tonnage under this flag. Vessels under French colours have also helped to enhance the increase, which is explained by their making more trips than were made last year.

5. The actual number of ships of European construction (exclusive of River Steamers) entering the port during the year 1900, was 709—being 363 British and 346 Foreign.

These 709 vessels entered 3,440 times and gave a total tonnage of 5,267,022 tons. In 1899, 603 vessels entered 3,361 times and gave an aggregate tonnage of 4,940,218 tons.

Thus 106 more vessels entered 79 more times and gave a total tonnage increased by 326,804 tons.

STEAMERS.

Flag.	Ships.		No. of Times Entered.		Total Tonnage.	
	1899.	1900.	1899.	1900.	1899.	1900.
British,.....	289	332	1,654	1,759	2,557,920	2,792,973
Austrian, ...	11	18	27	41	71,195	102,727
Belgian, ...	3	3	4	4	4,574	5,963
Chinese, ...	18	16	191	99	248,809	128,479
Danish, ...	7	6	11	8	23,560	17,789
Dutch, ...	1	5	2	13	2,470	22,846
French,.....	20	19	221	232	218,669	229,954
German, ...	78	107	632	656	826,275	952,870
Hawaiian,.....	1	...	2	...	4,596	...
Italian,.....	6	3	15	13	26,710	19,782
Japanese,.....	68	83	330	314	671,817	649,288
Norwegian, ...	25	21	125	110	117,220	122,859
Portuguese, ...	2	2	31	38	1,672	5,856
Russian, ...	3	11	4	12	4,889	24,799
Spanish, ...	1	...	6	...	3,516	...
Swedish, ...	...	1	...	6	...	5,934
United States,.....	17	12	48	53	80,493	87,206
No Flag, ...	...	4	...	4	...	593
Total,.....	550	643	3,303	3,362	4,864,385	5,169,918

SAILING VESSELS.

Flag.	Ships.		No. of Times Entered.		Total Tonnage.	
	1899.	1900.	1899.	1900.	1899.	1900.
British,	23	31	27	40	29,558	48,963
German,	5	3	5	3	9,241	6,303
Italian,	1	1	1	1	794	720
United States,	24	25	25	27	36,240	39,056
Danish,	...	2	...	2	...	895
French,	...	2	...	3	...	337
Japanese,	...	1	...	1	...	515
Norwegian,	...	1	...	1	...	315
Total,	53	66	58	78	75,833	97,104

6. The 363 British ships carried 2,667 British Officers and 15 Foreign Officers, as follows:—

British	2,667
Danish	3
German	4
United States	8
Total	2,682

The proportion of Foreign Officers was, therefore, 0.55 per cent., comprising 3 nationalities—a decrease of 0.63 per cent. with an increase of ships.

The 346 Foreign Ships carried 2,291 Officers, of whom 274 were British, borne as follows:—

In Japanese ships	133
„ Chinese „	60
„ German „	39
„ United States „	19
„ Dutch „	8
„ French „	6
„ Russian „	6
„ Portuguese „	3
Total	274

The proportion of British Officers in Foreign ships was, therefore, 11.9 per cent. distributed among 8 nationalities. A decrease of 3.7 per cent. on 1899, with an increase of 55 ships.

Of the crews of British vessels—

18.4 % were British.

1.3 % „ Other Europeans.

80.3 % „ Asiatics.

Of the crews of Foreign vessels—

1.8 % were British.

28.9 % „ Other Europeans.

69.3 % „ Asiatics.

This shows a slight falling off of Asiatics with a corresponding increase in the proportion of Europeans.

At the same time there is an increase in the percentage of "Other Europeans" employed in British ships, and a slight falling off of British seamen employed in Foreign vessels.

Trade.

7. The principal features to be remarked as to the trade of the port for the year 1900 are :—

(i) A great increase in Sugar Imports amounting to 76.6 %.

(ii) A great increase in Timber showing 74.2 %.

(iii) A great increase in Flour representing 66.1 %.

(iv) A great increase in Coal Imports amounting to 65.7 %.

(v) A large increase in Hemp representing 60.7 %.

(vi) Bulk Oil is almost at a standstill compared with last year; but Case Oil shows a decline of 10,609 tons.

(vii) The Rice Trade which reached its culminating point last year, has fallen back by 98,801 tons and may now be said to be at its normal condition.

The net increase in Imports reported amounts to 422,717 tons.

In Exports there is a decrease of 70,666 tons.

The Transit cargo shows an increase of 186,046 tons.

The foregoing information regarding Trade statistics must be taken as a rough approximation only.

8. The total Import Trade of the port for 1900 amounts to 23,205 vessels of 8,626,614 tons carrying 6,342,138 tons of cargo of which 4,198,389 tons were discharged at Hongkong. This does not include tonnage, number or cargo of Local Trade Junks.

Country.	Ships.	Tons.	Cargo.	
			Discharged.	In Transit.
Class I.				
Canada,	20	57,533	32,303	...
Continent of Europe,	136	380,661	100,352	381,839
Great Britain,	175	470,437	297,515	511,853
Mauritius,	1	828	300	...
United States,	143	357,075	275,442	59,407
	475	1,266,534	705,912	953,099
Class II.				
Australia and New Zealand,	45	78,012	25,132	29,334
India and Straits Settlements,	121	229,597	146,718	90,352
Japan,	414	920,433	890,356	287,846
Java and Indian Archipelago,	186	243,043	274,346	48,501
North and South Pacific,	1	47	8	...
Russia in Asia,	6	9,878	8,520	1,000
	773	1,481,010	1,345,080	457,033
Class III.				
North Borneo,	17	25,442	37,468	...
Coast of China,	1,178	1,567,478	283,942	685,047
Cochin-China,	156	178,964	311,242	3,000
Formosa,	113	93,754	26,769	...
Philippine Islands,	183	217,572	106,854	8,200
Hainan and Gulf of Tonkin,	351	270,813	345,636	31,940
Siam,	154	153,035	243,013	3,030
Macao,	39	8,791	...	...
Kiaochow,	1	3,623	800	2,400
	2,192	2,519,478	1,355,724	733,617
Class IV.				
River Steamers,—Canton, Macao and West River,	2,033	1,754,960	197,606	...
Class V.				
Junks in Foreign Trade,	17,732	1,604,632	594,067	...
Total,	23,205	8,626,614	4,198,389	2,143,749

Similarly, the Export Trade for 1900 was represented by 23,160 vessels of 8,620,409 tons carrying 2,836,905 tons of cargo, and shipping 489,456 tons of Bunker Coal.

Country.	Ships.	Tons.	Cargo.	
			Shipped.	Bunker Coal.
Class I.				
Canada,	21	55,229	16,957	...
Continent of Europe,	81	234,726	71,053	25,750
Great Britain,	81	271,455	118,451	2,925
Mauritius,	2	1,811	1,292	1,100
Natal,	1	1,474	600	400
South America,	1	1,616	2,460	...
United States,	115	286,757	200,135	3,680
	302	853,068	410,948	33,855
Class II.				
Australia and New Zealand,	41	76,387	28,929	7,735
India and Straits Settlements,	201	416,969	253,757	52,466
Japan,	392	834,696	240,913	52,075
Java and Indian Archipelago,	49	71,957	13,608	15,000
Russia in Asia,	26	39,741	42,050	4,181
	709	1,439,750	579,257	131,457
Class III.				
North Borneo,	17	26,325	5,866	6,885
Coast of China,	1,582	2,116,568	401,185	161,052
Cochin-China,	152	179,278	54,584	30,018
Formosa,	10	9,718	42,266	550
Philippine Islands,	155	192,916	180,097	32,433
Hainan and Gulf of Tonkin,	370	289,588	88,369	40,394
Siam,	86	92,461	42,670	22,673
Kiaochow,	14	36,857	1,464	3,895
Macao,	38	7,051	1,617	...
Weihaiwei,	2	3,141	600	550
Class IV.	2,426	2,953,903	818,718	298,450
River Steamers,—Canton, Macao and West River,	2,030	1,753,464	124,307	25,694
Class V.				
Junks in Foreign Trade,	17,693	1,620,224	903,675	...
Total,	23,160	8,620,409	2,836,905	489,456

Comparing this with 1899, we find that the Import Trade has increased, the increase being general among all the classes.

The Transit cargo has also increased in classes I and III but in class II a falling off of 97,550 tons is shown.

In Exports, although the tonnage cleared has increased by 57,282 tons, yet the number of vessels is less by 4,802 and the Export cargo has diminished by 77,892 tons.

9. During the year, 10,940 vessels of European construction of 14,022,167 tons (Net Register) carried 8,170,757 tons of cargo as follows:—

Import Cargo	3,604,322
Export „	1,933,230
Transit „	2,143,749
Bunker Coal shipped	489,456
	8,170,757

The total number of tons carried was, therefore, 58.3 per cent. of the total registered tonnage, or 74.5 per cent. exclusive of River Steamers, and was apportioned as follows:—

Imports—		
British Ships,	2,030,697	
Foreign do.,	1,573,625	
		3,604,322
Exports—		
British Ships,	1,188,608	
Foreign do.,	744,622	
		1,933,230
Transit—		
British Ships,	1,139,173	
Foreign do.,	1,004,576	
		2,143,749
Bunker Coal—		
British Ships,	274,681	
Foreign do.,	214,775	
		489,456
Grand Total,		8,170,757

Trade of the Port of Hongkong for the Year ending 31st December, 1900.

	Tons.							Passengers Carried.
	No. of Ships.	Discharged.	Shipped.	In Transit.	Bunk r Coal Shipped.	Total.	Registered Tonnage.	
British,.....	3,584	1,843,267	1,076,002	1,139,173	249,583	4,308,025	5,663,346	315,634
Foreign, ...	3,293	1,563,449	732,885	1,004,576	214,024	3,514,934	4,840,397	184,642
River Steamers (British),.....	3,927	187,430	112,606	...	25,098	325,134	3,501,852	1,253,378
Do. (Foreign), ...	136	10,176	11,737	...	751	22,664	16,572	
Total,.....	10,940	3,604,322	1,933,230	2,143,749	489,456	8,170,757	14,022,167	1,753,654
Junks in Foreign Trade, ...	35,425	594,067	903,675	...	...	1,497,742	3,224,856	113,095
Total,.....	46,365	4,198,389	2,836,905	2,143,749	489,456	9,668,499	17,247,023	1,866,749
Junks in Local Trade, ...	26,091	164,015	20,354	...	...	191,369	1,198,111	164,330
Grand Total,.....	82,456	4,362,404	2,867,259	2,143,749	489,456	9,862,868	18,445,133	2,031,079

Imports.

European Constructed Vessels.

	1899.		1900.		Increase.		Decrease.	
	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.
Steamers, ...	3,303	4,864,385	3,362	5,169,918	59	305,533	...	...
River Steamers,.....	2,083	1,780,551	2,033	1,754,960	...	...	50	25,591
Sailing Vessels, ...	58	75,833	78	97,104	20	21,271	...	...
Total,.....	5,444	6,720,769	5,473	7,021,982	79	326,804	50	25,591
			Nett,.....		29	301,213	...	...
Imported tons,.....	3,181,605		3,604,322					

As follows —

Articles.	1899.	1900.	Increase.	Decrease.
Beans,	8,110	560	...	7,550
Bones,	1,800	...	...	1,800
Coal,	687,557	1,045,312	358,255	...
Cotton Yarn and Cotton,	34,470	19,993	...	14,477
Flour,	101,939	154,111	52,172	...
Hemp,	32,868	54,105	21,237	...
Kerosine, (bulk),	61,027	64,732	3,705	...
„ (case),	80,588	69,979	...	10,609
Liquid Fuel,	...	2,759	2,759	...
Lead,	6,468	2,350	...	4,118
Opium,	2,775	3,194	419	...
Pitch,	...	...	...	...
Rattan,	3,998	10,204	6,206	...
Rice,	771,830	673,029	...	98,801
Sandalwood,	1,282	3,811	2,529	...
Sulphur,	506	22	...	484
Sugar,	183,162	238,863	55,701	...
Tea,	6,287	6,393	106	...
Timber,	61,110	82,311	21,201	...
General,	1,135,828	1,172,024	26,266	...
Total,	3,181,605	3,604,322	560,556	137,839
Transit,	1,957,703	2,143,749	186,046	...
Grand Total,	5,139,308	5,748,071	746,602	137,839
		Nett,	608,763	...

Exports.

	1899.		1900.		Increase.		Decrease.	
	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.	No.	Tonnage.
Steamers,	3,319	4,861,012	3,363	5,154,215	44	293,203	...	...
River Steamers,	2,085	1,781,264	2,030	1,753,464	...	...	55	27,800
Sailing Vessels,	57	74,102	74	92,506	17	18,404	...	...
Total,	5,461	6,716,378	5,467	7,000,185	61	311,607	55	27,800
				Nett,	6	283,807	...	...
Exported tons,	2,003,896		1,933,230		...		...	
	Strs.	Bunker Coal.	Strs.	Bunker Coal.	Strs.	Bunker Coal.	Strs.	Bunker Coal.
Steamers,	3,319	467,664	3,363	463,607	44	...	...	4,057
River Steamers,	2,085	26,207	2,030	25,849	...	...	55	358
Total,	5,404	493,871	5,393	489,456	44	...	55	4,415
				Nett,	...	...	11	4,415

RIVER TRADE.

Imports, Exports and Passengers.

Year.	Imports.	Exports.	Passengers.
1899, ...	184,177	131,362	1,095,266
1900, ...	197,606	124,343	1,253,378

Imports.

Junks.

Foreign trade,	17,732	measuring	1,604,632	tons.
Local trade,	18,018	„	602,148	„
Total,.....	35,750	„	2,206,780	„

Imported 758,082 tons as under :—

Tea,.....	2,597	tons.
Oil, ...	884	„
Rice, ...	1,539	„
Swine (22,727),.....	1,345	„
Earth and Stones,.....	128,868	„
General, ...	622,849	„
Total,.....	758,082	„

Exports.

Junks.

Foreign Trade,	17,693	measuring	1,620,224	tons.
Local Trade,	18,073	„	595,963	„
Total,.....	35,766	„	2,216,187	„

Exported 934,029 tons as under :—

Kerosine (1,313,452 cases), ...	46,909	tons.
Rice and Paddy, ...	395,824	„
Earth and Stones, ...	57,464	„
General, ...	433,832	„
Total,.....	934,029	„

10. PASSENGERS.

	1899.	1900.	Increase.	Decrease.
British Vessels, Arrivals, ...	139,621	155,889	16,268	...
Do., Departures, ...	105,701	106,360	659	...
Do., Emigrants,.....	44,358	53,385	9,027	...
Total,.....	289,680	315,634	25,954	...
Nett,.....			25,954	...
Foreign Vessels, Arrivals, ...	77,214	95,646	18,432	...
Do., Departures, ...	57,517	58,738	1,221	...
Do., Emigrants, ...	16,717	30,258	13,541	...
Total,.....	151,448	184,642	33,194	...
Nett,.....			33,194	...
River Steamers, Arrivals, ...	558,028	639,589	81,561	...
Do., Departures, ...	537,238	613,789	76,551	...
Total,.....	1,095,266	1,253,378	158,112	...
Nett,.....			158,112	...
Junks, Foreign Trade, Arrivals,	83,239	56,072	...	27,167
Do., Departures,	80,859	57,023	...	23,836
Total,.....	164,098	113,095	...	51,003
Nett,.....			...	51,003

PASSENGERS,—*Continued.*

	1899.	1900.	Increase.	Decrease.
Total Arrivals,	858,102	947,196	89,094	...
Do. Departures,	781,315	835,910	54,595	...
Total,	1,639,417	1,783,106	143,689	...
Total Emigrants,	61,075	83,643	22,568	...
Total,	1,700,492	1,866,749	166,257	...
		Nett,	...	...
Diff. of Arrivals and Dep.,	76,787	111,286	...	...
Emigrants,	61,075	83,643	...	...
Remainder + or −	+ 15,712	+ 27,643	...	...
		Nett,	...	...
Junks, Local Trade, Arrivals,	42,973	80,958	37,985	...
Do., Departures,	42,117	83,372	41,255	...
Total,	85,090	164,330	79,240	...
		Nett,	79,240	...

REVENUE.

11. The total Revenue collected by the Harbour Department during the year was $246,039.12 being an increase of $55,483,62 on the previous year.

1. Light Dues,	$ 55,379.38
2. Licences and Internal Revenue,	47,419.30
3. Fees of Court and Office,	143,240.44
Total,	$246,039.12

STEAM LAUNCHES.

12. On the 31st December, there were 179 Steam Launches employed in the Harbour; of these 95 were licensed for the conveyance of passengers, 84 were privately owned, 15 were the property of the Colonial Government, and 6 belonged to the Imperial Government, in charge of the Military Authorities.

Three Masters' Certificates were suspended for three months, five for two months, five for one month, and three masters were cautioned. One Engineer's Certificate was suspended for three months.

EMIGRATION.

13. Eighty-three thousand six hundred and forty-three (83,643) Emigrants left Hongkong for various places during the year; of these, 53,385 were carried by British ships and 30,258 by Foreign ships; 121,322 were reported as having been brought to Hongkong from places to which they had emigrated, and of these, 92,870 were brought in British ships and 28,452 by Foreign ships.

Returns Nos. XVIII and XIX will give the details of this branch of the Department.

REGISTRY OF SHIPPING.

14. During the year, 6 ships were registered under the provisions of the Imperial Act, and 9 certificates were cancelled.

MARINE MAGISTRATE'S COURT.

15. Forty-two cases were heard in the Marine Magistrate's Court, refusal of duty and absence from ship without leave were the principal offences.

EXAMINATION OF MASTERS, MATES AND ENGINEERS.

(Under Section 15 of Ordinance No. 26 of 1891.)

16. The following table will show the number of Candidates examined

for Certificates of Competency, distinguishing those who were successful and those who failed:—

Grade.	Passed.	Failed.
Master,	19	1
First Mate,	23	1
Only Mate,	...	...
Second Mate.	3	1
Total,	45	3
First Class Engineer,	27	5
Second Class Engineer,	45	24
Total,	72	29

MARINE COURTS.

(Under Section 13 of Ordinance No. 26 1891.)

17. The following Court has been held during the year:—

On the 22nd November, inquiry respecting the circumstances connected with the foundering of the British Steam Dredger *Canton River*, Official No. 102,002 of Waterford, in the Hongkong Harbour on the morning of the 10th November, 1900. Nobody was blamed for the casualty.

SUNDAY CARGO-WORKING.

(Ordinance No. 6 of 1891.)

18. During the year, 419 permits were issued, under the provisions of the Ordinance. Of these, 88 were not availed of owing to its being found unnecessary for the ship to work cargo on the Sunday, and the fee paid for the permit was refunded in each case, and 55 permits were issued, free of charge, to Mail Steamers.

The revenue collected under this heading was $43,550; this was $21,725 more than in 1899.

The Revenue collected each year since the Ordinance came into force is as follows:—

1892,	$ 4,800
1893,	7,900
1894,	13,375
1895,	11,600
1896,	7,575
1897,	11,850
1898,	25,925
1899,	21,825
1900,	43,550

SEAMEN.

19. Eighteen thousand five hundred and twenty-three (18,523) Seamen were shipped, and 22,089 discharged, at the Mercantile Marine Office and on board ships during the year.

Two hundred and thirty-two (232) "Distressed Seamen" were received during the year. Of these, 51 were sent to the United Kingdom, 2 to Singapore, 1 to Colombo, 14 to Calcutta, 1 to Melbourne, 12 to Sydney, 3 to Taku, 7 obtained employment on shore, 4 went to Manila, 2 to Calcutta, 1 to Bombay, 1 to Shanghai, 1 to Canton, 2 joined Chinese Customs, 1 taken charge of by Naval authorities, 2 disappeared, 3 died, 3 remained at the Government Civil Hospital, 2 at Sailors' Home, and 119 obtained employment.

Four thousand one hundred and ninety-eight Dollars and Seventy-five Cents ($4,198.75) were expended by the Harbour Master on behalf of the Board of Trade in the relief of these distressed Seamen, and $213.04 by the Colony.

MARINE SURVEYOR'S SUB-DEPARTMENT.

20. Return No. XXIII shows the work performed during the year by this branch of the Harbour Department, and in forwarding this, I wish once more to draw attention to the undermanning of this sub-department. In December, 1900, the engagement of a temporary Second Assistant Government Marine Surveyor was sanctioned, and this officer is still

employed as such, rendering most valuable assistance, thereby enabling the work to be promptly done and avoiding the detention of shipping. The tonnage of vessels surveyed during the year 1900 was 327,286, an increase of 40,512 over 1899.

During the same period, the number of licensed passenger steam launches surveyed has increased from 134 in 1899 to 187 in 1900; while the number of boilers built under the superintendence of the Government Marine Surveyor has increased from 62 to 73. This being so, I consider it essential that the temporary appointment above mentioned be made permanent.

I may perhaps be permitted to quote the following significant figures, in continuance of Captain RUMSEY's report for 1899, in which he compares the work done in Liverpool, and in this port, by the Surveyor's Department.

In Liverpool in the year 1898, vessels aggregating 1,105,000 gross tons, were surveyed by a staff of eleven, while in Hongkong during the same period 324,610 gross tons were surveyed by a staff of two, this giving 100,454 tons per surveyor at the former port to 162,305 tons per surveyor at the latter.

The returns for six months during 1900, show that in Hongkong the steamers surveyed aggregated 181,485 gross tons, while in Liverpool 550,000 tons were surveyed during the same period, giving in Hongkong over 90,000 tons per surveyor as against some 50,000 odd tons in Liverpool.

The revenue derived, from the work of this Sub-department, by the Colony, has increased from $10,055.87 in 1890 to $15,036.59 in 1900.

This revenue does not show the actual work performed, as all Government work such as survey and reports on Pumping Stations, Disinfectors, Steam Road Roller, Stone Crusher, Dredger, Pontoon Crane and Government Launches do not appear. In one Government Department alone, viz., the Water Police, launches have increased from 3 to 7. These launches are surveyed twice a year and take up a considerable amount of time and attention of this Sub-department.

LIGHTHOUSES.

21. The amount of Light Dues collected was as follows:—

Class of Vessels.	Rate per ton.	No. of Ships.	Tonnage.	Total Fees collected.
				$ c.
Ocean Vessels, ...	1 cent	3,442	5,264,934	52,649.34
Steam Launches, ...	1 „	149	5,802	58.02
River Steamers (night boats),...	⅓ „	1,028	788,756	2,629.48
Launches plying exclusively to Macao and West River, by night, ...	⅓ „	250	12,712	42.54
River Steamers (day boats), ...	Free	1,005	966,204	...
Launches plying exclusively to Macao and West River, by day, ...	Free	483	23,457	...
Total,.....		5,357	7,061,865	55,379.38

Telegraphic and telephonic communication has been kept up with the Gap Rock and Cape D'Aguilar during the year. From the former station 957 vessels have been reported as passing, and in addition 200 messages were received and 3,512 sent, including the daily weather report for the Observatory.

From Cape D'Aguilar, 1,499 vessels were reported, and in addition 1,826 messages were sent and 11 received.

Sixty-five hours and 50 minutes of fog were reported from Gap Rock during the year, and the fog signal gun was fired 410 times. On three occasions the fortnightly relief could not be effected owing to the rough sea.

On December 25th, a telephone cable was successfully laid to Waglan Island in readiness for use when this lighthouse is taken over.

GOVERNMENT GUNPOWDER DEPÔT.

22. During the year 1900 there has been stored in the Government Gunpowder Depôt, Stonecutters' Island:—

	No. of Cases.	Approximate Weight.
		lbs.
Gunpowder, privately owned, ...	21,139	445,815
Do., Government owned,.....	314	42,560
Cartridges, privately owned,.....	5,645	1,283,827
Do., Government owned, ...	58	16,740
Explosive Compounds, privately owned,.....	491	26,177
Do., Government owned, ...	...	...
Total,.....	27,647	1,815,119

During the same period there has been delivered out of the Depôt:—

	No. of Cases.	Approximate Weight.
		lbs.
For Sale in the Colony:—		
Gunpowder, privately owned, ...	11,649	249,570
Cartridges, do., ...	1,262	367,034
Explosive Compounds, privately owned,.....	97	6,588
For Export:—		
Gunpowder, privately owned, ...	601	12,025
Cartridges, do., ...	1,561	412,909
Explosive Compounds, privately owned,.....	22	1,589
Total,.....	15,192	1,049,715

On the 31st December, 1900, there remained as follows:—

	No. of Cases.	Approximate Weight.
		lbs.
Gunpowder, privately owned, ...	8,889	184,220
Do., Government owned, ...	312	42,240
Cartridges, privately owned,.....	2,822	403,884
Do., Government owned, ...	53	15,620
Explosive Compounds, privately owned,.....	372	18,000
Do., Government owned, ...	...	...
Total,.....	12,448	663,964

GENERAL.

33. The present Harbour Office, originally placed in a most unsuitable position (the view of the Harbour to the westward of North-west being cut off by buildings), will shortly be entirely built in.

It is therefore to be hoped that work will shortly be commenced on this much needed new building, and pushed forward rapidly, otherwise the efficiency of this Department will be seriously impaired, by the impossibility of seeing any part of the Harbour from the Office.

The staff of the Department is still of the same strength as it was 26 years ago (if I except the temporary addition of a third Marine Surveyor). During this time the nett register tonnage passing through their hands has approximately doubled. There is, however, every prospect of the clerical staff being increased by one in the near future, which will be of great assistance in coping with the ever increasing work.

During the year, one new Harbour Station has been opened at Tai Po, in the New Territory.

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS (OPIUM) OFFICE.

24. The Return shows that during the year the amount of Opium reported was as follows:—

	1899. chests.	*1900. chests.*	*Increase. chests.*	*Decrease. chests.*
Imported.....	41,690	43,256½	1,566½	...
Exported	40,524	38,721½		1,802½
Through Cargo reported but not landed...	17,346	17,557½	211½	

Fourteen thousand six hundred and forty-four permits were issued from this Office during the year, being a decrease of 656 as compared with 1899.

A daily memo. of exports to Chinese ports was during the year supplied to the Commissioner of Imperial Maritime Customs, and a daily memo. of exports to Macao was supplied to the Superintendent of Raw Opium Department of Macao.

Surprise visits were paid to 81 godowns during the year.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

BASIL TAYLOR,
Acting Harbour Master, &c.

The Honourable J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, C.M.G.,
Colonial Secretary,
&c., &c., &c.

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