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The above Scale of Charges will take effect from this date.

June 8th, 1843.

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THE FRIEND OF CHINA,
AND HONG-KONG GAZETTE.

VICTORIA, THURSDAY, AUGUST 3RD, 1843.

It is a matter of vital interest to the Colony that the intentions of the Government, with respect to the Storage of Opium in this port should be immediately made known. By Sir Robert Peel's speech on Lord Ashley's motion, it is obvious that it rests with H. E. whether the importation and storage of Opium shall or shall not be permitted in HongKong.

We would respectfully urge that an authoritative announcement on this subject should as early as possible be made, to set at rest the inquietude which at present prevails, and which is greatly detrimental to the best interests of the Colony.

For ourselves, we have full confidence in the practical sagacity of H. E. averting so ill judged a measure, as to prohibit any article of trade in a free Port. Moreover with respect to the Opium Trade, H. E. cannot but be conscious that the evils complained of, will be aggravated in a ten fold degree should it be prohibited here.

The anticipation of Governmental interference has already led six of the most influential of our merchants to determine to remain at Macao. And it is to be observed that those parties have expended vast sums in the Island and who now hesitate not to say, that they will not expend another dollar until they know on the best Authority whether Victoria, is or is not, to be a FREE PORT.

Some of our friends loudly complain of having been deluded into the outlay of large sums by the declaration of Government that HongKong was to be a Free Port. Indeed discontent and dissatisfaction universally prevail.

Several parties authorised to erect houses and Godowns on the Ratifications of the Treaty being exchanged, now decline so doing the onward progress of this Settlement is for the time stopped, and building almost suspended.

The effect at Macao has been that Rents during the last month have advanced fully fifteen per cent and unless the integrity of HongKong as a Free Port is maintained, it is certain Macao will long continue to be the abode of the British merchants in China.

We are not unaware that the very moderate rates of the new Tariff must subtract considerably from the advantages which it was supposed would be derived from a residence in this Port. We fully admit this, yet we are not so prejudiced in favor of local interests as not, to rejoice at the adoption of a Tariff so truly advantageous to British interests.

If so reduced a scale of duties be, as it is, a heavy blow and great discouragement to HongKong, yet we are consoled by the countervailing reflection that our Country will benefit thereby and with the prosperity of Anglo-Chinese commerce, mayhap Victoria, will hereafter derive important advantages.

Enough has been said, to justify our making the inquiry, with which we began. If answered in the way we do not expect; yet as is confidently avowed it will be, then it behoves our friends to look about them; as the value of all outlay here will be diminished at least one half, and Victoria which

promised to become one of the Emporia of the East will soon be naught but a military Post, (for it will be surplussage to have any kind of civil Government) and the only inhabitants a garrison, with a few natives to supply its wants.

At the risk of being censured for detestable iteration, we would venture again to claim the attention of our commercialists to the expediency of unanimately petitioning H. M.'s Government for a reduction of the Duty on TEA. Never was there so fair, so favourable an opportunity as the present. Thanks to H. E. we have a Chinese Tariff, which puts to shame the hideous complexities and enormous duties which disfigure the British and most other European Tariffs.

We will not repeat the arguments we have before used, but fealy, no time should be lost, and a strong remonstrance, or appeal should now be made, and we dare promise it will meet with a ready response from the people of England, and necessitate the reduction which Sir Robert Peel will gladly make, if public opinion does but declare in its favour. And if the value and significance of reciprocity be appreciated, who can doubt it?

THE PROCLAMATION in the first Page calls for no particular remark, except that it is to be regretted that any prohibition should disfigure a Tariff otherwise so wholly commendable.

We are not surprised that parties should avail themselves of the clause with respect to all unenumerated articles and affirm that Opium would be admissible (as it would appear to have been, but for H. E. Proclamation) in that category, at a five per cent duty.

If any prohibitions are to be enforced they ought at once to be made known, for the Tariff hitherto published are but imperfect documents, by such omissions.

As the traffic in Opium is well known to be declared illegal and contraband, it was not mentioned in the Tariff. So also is the traffic in Gunpowder, Guns and warlike implements, and hence we would beg to ask whether this prohibition is also maintained? We would conclude, by respectfully urging the expediency of at once publishing the prohibited articles of traffic, otherwise our Merchants will have just reason to complain, indeed the neglect of this may now cause pecuniary loss to Shippers at home.

COMMERCIAL.

We learn from Canton, that the whole of the insolvent Hong Merchant's debts are now liquidated. It is a great point gained, that the new system should be unembarrassed by any disagreeable remnants of the old system.

The first transaction which has taken place in the new TEAS, was for two Chops of good Congou, at twenty six of taels, which, with the Hong charges and duty, will amount to thirty taels, or about 1s 8d per lb., in London.

A large Crop of TEA, and of excellent quality, is said to be certain, and much larger arrivals of all kinds of China produce, than has ever before taken place at Canton, is looked for confidently by those who are best informed.

Much embarrassment in the Opium Trade, has been occasioned by the sudden removal of all the vessels engaged in this traffic from Canton River.

PARLIAMENTARY SUMMARY.

HOUSE OF LORDS—7th April Lord Brougham carried his motion for a vote of thanks to Lord Ashburton for having succeeded in negotiating the Washington Treaty. 25th April the Duke of Wellington moved an address of Congratulation to her Majesty on the birth of a daughter and on the 27th one of Condolence on the death of her uncle.

HOUSE OF COMMONS—10th April a Conversation took place regarding Slavery in the East. 24th A Grant of £ 50,000 was voted to defray the expenses of Steam Communication to India by the Red Sea when Dr. Bowring asked if any steps had been taken to increase our means of Communication with the East Indies to which the Chancellor of the Exchequer replied the present arrangements were very regular, and that it was not practicable to do better at present. On the 25th the house moved the addresses of Condolence and Congratulation to the Queen. On 1st May, Lord John Russell gave notice that if the motion for a vote of thanks to Lord Ashburton was successful, he would move that Sir H. POTTINGER also receive one for his services in China.

MISCELLANEA.

LADY SALES PARRIVA has been published and confirms Lieut. Parry's history; a new outcry is therefore likely to be raised for Parliamentary inquiry.

Intelligence from Bombay of the 1st April appeared in the London Papers of 4th May.

The Directors of the East India Company and the East India and China Association have remonstrated against the late arbitrary and uncalled for announcement of the Post Office "that all letters for China, Australia, New Zealand, Mauritius, and other places beyond the territories of the East India Company intended to be sent to these places be addressed to some person in India who will pay the postage or otherwise they will be detained at Bombay."

The Duke of Sussex has left the bulk of his property to the Duchess of Inverness, at whose death it is to revert to his two children by a former marriage.

Four Companies of the 98th Foot, consisting of nearly 700 men are nearly ready to embark for HongKong to relieve the 55th.

The Bishop of London has sent a pastoral letter to all the clergy of his diocese directing a collection to be made for providing religious instruction according to the Principles of the Church of England, in China.

A friend of the Church Missionary Society has just made a munificent donation to that institution of £ 6000 to enable it to commence a mission to China.

Prince Augustus of Saxe-Coburg, Gotha, was married at St. Cloud on the 20th April to the Princess Clementine of France.

INQUEST.—15TH JULY, 1843.

Before Mr. E. Farncomb, Coroner

This was an Inquest on the Body of a Chinese who had been found with his throat cut in the Wong-nei-choon Valley

The Jury being sworn proceeded to the view. After which the following Evidence was taken. George Fathers, A policeman sworn.

About halfpast 12 O'clock, this morning, in consequence of information having been received by Mr. Hillier, the Assistant Magistrate that a Chinese had been found with his throat cut near the Wong-nei-choon Valley I was sent there to look after the Body and bring it to the Town. I found the Body lying in a paddy field near the road. I examined the place for some distance round where the Body was lying but found no Knife or weapon of any sort. The ground was not trodden about where the deceased was lying, neither was there anything extraordinary in the appearance of the road near the paddy field. A soldier of the 98th Regt. pointed out to me the spot where the Body was lying.

The Inquest was adjourned to the 17th, that further Evidence might be procured. Inquest resumed 17th July.

Mark Upson private of the 98th Regt. Sworn.

About 7 O'clock on Saturday morning I was playing with some of my companions at the Detachment on the hill overlooking the Village in the Wong-nei-choon Valley. I heard a sound like that of a man groaning, and on looking towards the place whence it proceeded, I observed a Chinese lying on his back in a paddy field below, and he seemed to be in the last struggles. I went down with one of my companions and on reaching the place where the man was lying I found that his throat had been cut and the blood was flowing copiously from the wound—He was then dead. There had been several Chinese Chin-Chinning Joss some five or six yards from the spot and they made a great noise. Several Chinese passed by the deceased as he was lying there, but never attempted to render him assistance. We examined the road and the ground all round for some distance to see if we could find a Knife or other weapon but could find none.

Verdict.—Wilful Murder against some person or persons unknown.

SHIP NEWS.

The Peninsular & Oriental Steam Navigation Company's Steamer "Benitck" of 1,800 tons and 520 horse power is advertised in London for the Cape of Good Hope, Mauritius, Ceylon, Madras and Calcutta, to sail on 24th August.

LOADING FOR CHINA.—At London; to sail 8th May from Portsmouth. Anna Maria and Juliet 10th May from Deptford Lady Macnaughten M. S. Elphinstone and Florida.

At Liverpool; John Dalton, Viscount Dalton, John Bull and Emperor.

At Glasgow; Orissa. The Spiteful Steamer for China arrived at Madeira on 3rd April and proceeded on her voyage on the 6th. The Bombay for Bombay and China passed Falmouth on 12th April.

The Maid of Athens for Hong-Kong put into Lisbon on the 10th April in a leaky condition and it was supposed would have to discharge her cargo.

SAILED FROM LONDON—9th April Bombay for Bombay and China; 16th Rookery for Mauritius and Hong-Kong; 23rd Indian for China; 29th Duke of Cornwall for Madras and China; 2nd May Anna Maria for China. FROM PORTSMOUTH—11th April Cleopatra for China; 16th Anna Price for Madras and China; 27th Castle Eden for Madras and China.

