

NOTICE TO CORRESPONDENT.

We have received a letter from Macao, which we shall endeavour to get translated, and if it contains nothing improper, it will appear in next issue.

NOTICE.

New advertisements will be received, until 4 O'Clock, on the evenings previous to publication, viz: Tuesdays and Fridays.

Table with columns: Month, Year, and various numerical data points. Includes sub-tables for 'METEOROLOGICAL TABLE FROM 1874 TO 1884' and 'LATEST DATES'.

THE FRIEND OF CHINA, AND HONGKONG GAZETTE.

VICTORIA, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14th, 1844.

For American news, see the back page.

The band of the 4th Regt, M. N. I., in future, will play on the evenings of Monday and Friday on the parade ground, near the Governor's House.

We cannot corroborate the statement made by the Register that, for the past week there have been no new cases of fever. Unfortunately there have been both new cases and deaths. However laudable the motive, it is useless attempting to disguise the real state of affairs, either from ourselves or others.

By the Possidon, from Amoy, we regret to hear that sickness continues to prevail at that place to an alarming extent; business being at a perfect stand still in consequence. The troops have suffered severely, about one half being in Hospital, and of the other half many are unfit for duty.

The new ship Montauk, has made the passage from New York to Macao, in the unprecedented short period of eighty six days. The Montauk was to be followed by another splendid new vessel, appropriately named after Howe, whose strong American predilections, were as beneficial to the commerce of the United States.

The present state of the tea trade in England, with accumulated stocks, increased shipments from the east, a consumption almost stationary, and a falling off in the demand for the continental market of Europe, from a subject fit for the serious consideration of the Legislature of Great Britain, and to the Merchants engaged in the China trade is one of the first importance. The accumulated shipments of tea from China to Great Britain direct, for the year ending with June, 1844, is fifty two millions of pounds weight, which, with the imports from Singapore, and the Assam herb from Calcutta, will give a total for the year, of fifty five millions, an increase on the previous year of upwards of six, and on 1843 of twelve millions of pounds weight. To compare this, there is unfortunately not a proportionate consumption; at the end of last year the stock on hand was four millions of pounds greater than at the same

period in 1842, for although the local consumption had increased two, the re-export to the continents had decreased one million on the year. The maximum home consumption of Great Britain, was that of 1836—when the duty was lowest—forty and a half millions; since that period, it has fluctuated between thirty-one and thirty-eight millions, regularly rising and falling as the duties were laid on or taken off. With all the advantages of good wages and internal quiet, there is little chance of the United Kingdom's affording an outlet for more than forty millions; for although the duties are nearly assimilated with those of 1836, and the population has increased three millions, which would give a proportionate increase, in the consumption of ten of four, and a half millions, at the average of 1836, which was one and a half pounds per head, for the entire population, this increase, however, has been checked by the low price of Coffee, a reduction of 100 per cent. in the duty on which, in seven years, troubled the consumption and greatly improved the revenue. Forty millions, in the most favorable view may be taken as the extreme of the home demand, and five millions, as the re-export, leaving for the year, a surplus stock over deliveries, of ten millions of pounds weight, an increase upon the present, heavy stocks which may well shake the nerves of the holders, inducing them to push large parcels into the market and by a ruinous loss upon the article cause a panic which if it does not run, will entail heavy losses upon the holders.

In the present mercantile relations with China, any sudden check put upon the tea export, would have the most injurious influence upon the manufacturers of cotton goods. In Europe and America, rival factories, and high tariffs, are gradually driving our goods out of the markets. It is in our own colonies, our magnificent possessions in India, and in China, where we now look for a support to the manufacturing interest of Great Britain, and the recognized principle of encouraging the importation of colonial produce, by low duties, must be extended to the chief productions of China, if we cultivate the field for commerce which is now opening to us, and which, with India, and the colonies, with due care and protection will more than recompense for the loss of the continental or American markets. England only requires a fair field for competition with the manufacturers of other countries, and she has nothing to fear in some articles other nations may, and do excel, but in the grand staples of an extended commerce, she has no competitor. Here all countries are upon an equality and though we are well aware that Great Britain has opened the gates of Chinese commerce to the commerce of other nations, as well as her own, and they are embracing the opportunity that she offers them, of extending their commercial operations, we are also confident that, none will benefit more largely by the facilities now possessed, than the country through whose medium they were obtained.

For the extension, or even retention of our present trade with China, it is indisputably necessary that we take their produce in exchange for our manufactures; on this footing alone, can our goods be sold to advantage, and unless we take returns in what they have to offer as the fruits of their industry, trade must of necessity be limited. We offer goods for cash and find few buyers, where the people have not the cash, but if for money we take an equivalent in the surplus produce, we encourage the national industry, add to the prosperity of the country, and at the same time, to our own. Tea is the grand export of China, and the quantity that could be brought forward, is limitless. It was argued, and we think, clearly proved, by a former editor of this paper, that a reduction of the duty to 15 per pound would more than double the consumption, and not be a permanent loss to the revenue. We lately attempted to show, by the consumption of tea in the Australasian colonies, the increase of the revenue derived in England from a reduction of one-half in the duty on Coffee, and other statistical facts that, were the duty fixed at 15, not only would the consumption greatly increase, but that the revenue would be a benefit to some extent, especially if the duty upon foreign Sugar was also reduced to 84s. or 10s per cent. more than plantation grown Sugar; this reduction on foreign Sugar has been made, and will, consequently, only be preparatory to a reduction of the heavy and impolitic duty imposed upon tea. We will not reiterate the particulars of our former arguments, but as a corroborative proof of their soundness, and the advantages derived from low duties on produce, advantages alike beneficial to commerce and the revenue, we lay before our readers the following extract from the Ceylon Herald of the 17th June.

The causes of this extraordinary change, are not only attributable to a general state of prosperity, but to the striking circumstance, the Cinnamon Trade, in which we shall shortly make a trade. The Cinnamon duty amounted to 2000000000 and the sales to 212,124 and the sales £3,224 showing a decrease of £48,196, and only amounting to 113,940 instead of £50,000 as calculated by the Colonial Secretary. Since the reduction of the Cinnamon duty to one Shilling in May last, we see by the table in this issue, that the sales for the year have produced 21,085,000, a total of £27,408, of which about £28,438 are applicable to last year's surplus. The injurious influences of the high duty on Cinnamon are now removed, and as in every other instance, where the liberal policy of

moderate duties has been brought into operation, the revenue has been increased and the prosperity of the colony greatly enhanced. A mercantile friend has obligingly furnished us with another excerpt which bears strongly upon the point, proving that for upwards of a century the demand for tea has been mainly influenced by the duties, and that there is nothing chimerical in the views of those who advocate an immediate reduction.

THE TEA TRADE. The history of the tea trade affords abundant proof of the effect produced on consumption by alterations in the rate of duties. In 1784 the duty was 1s. per pound, and 37 per cent on the value, and the quantity consumed was no more than 4,949,988 lbs. In the following year, the rate was reduced to 13 per cent on the value, and the consumption rose in that and the two following years under— 2,1785, 10,578,000 lbs.; 1786, 12,530,350 lbs.; 1787, 17,047,000 lbs.

Similar effects had followed reductions in the duty at former periods. In 1746 a reduction equal to about 2s. per pound caused an increase in the quantity to more than three times that on which duty had been paid in 1746. In 1768 an abatement of 1s. per pound on black tea, caused the consumption to increase immediately 50 per cent, and when in 1773 the stilling duty was imposed, the consumption fell back to its former scale.

If our commercial relations with China shall be placed upon a secure footing, and a bold measure of reduction in the duty on tea is adopted, can it be doubted, with these historical facts before us, that the Exchequer would soon find an advantage from it, while the trade and manufactures of the country would be proportionately benefited, and the people of this country, the working classes, would have the sum of their rational enjoyments enlarged.— Porter's Progress of the Nation.

A circumstance has occurred, which places the lives of at least seventy human beings in jeopardy, upon which at present, we cannot venture to express our sentiments, merely laying the facts as reported to us, before the public.

A few days ago, a Chinese smuggling vessel arrived in the harbour, with a crew of seventy men—who was armed, as is usual with such craft—and of course, without any clearance from the five ports which are permitted to trade with Hongkong. The Harbour-master finding she had no papers, and suspecting the character of the vessel, made a seizure, and yesterday, by order of His Excellency, she and her crew were banded over to the Mandarin, at Cooloon, to be dealt with according to the barbarous laws of China, there being every probability that the poor fellows will be tortured to death, and the owners at Canton, or wherever they may reside, either sharing the same fate, or being amerced in heavy fines which will entail ruin upon them. We cannot even conjecture the inducements which caused Mr. Davis to adopt such a measure—certainly not the treaty with China, nor provide for such a contingency. The only stipulation bearing upon this point, that we are cognizant of, is the 14th Article of the Supplementary Treaty, which, to save the trouble of reference, we lay before our readers in full, leaving them to judge of the correctness of His Excellency's conduct in this case.—

"XIV. At Hongkong, an English Officer must be appointed, who, on the arrival of Chinese vessels at that port for the purpose of purchasing goods, must strictly examine their papers; and should there be any Chinese, or traders not provided with papers, or with papers not furnished at Canton, Fuchau, Amoy, Ningpo, and Shanghai, shall consider them as smugglers and evaders of the duties, while a report of the circumstances shall be sent to the Chinese Officers in order to inquire into the affair: under such an arrangement not only will piracies be stopped in their progress, but all kinds of smuggling will be prevented."

CHINESE COMMERCIAL GUIDE.

BY THE LATE HON. J. R. MORRISON. Macao, S. Wells Williams 1844. The purchasers of this compilation cannot fail to note its misnomer. Mr. Morrison, who died about a year ago, was not in the possession of the present pamphlet, did publish a similar work, the contents of which were totally different; with this confession in the preface we read on the title page by J. R. Morrison. In the history of literature, it is something new, to confer posthumous honors upon those, who are already not unknown to fame, by bestowing upon them the work of another, whether that work is worthy of the posthumous; they thus settle it upon, or not. There are two people in China, who were acquainted with Mr. Morrison, who will not regret to see his name, long after his untimely death, admitted to a share in the arrangement of which he had no share, for the defects of which he is not responsible, and whose fame, good or bad, he does not require a work, which now for pecuniary considerations, is brought forth by those, whom he may have benefited, whilst alive, but who would still draw nourishment from his name after death. Mr. Morrison was a public man in China at least, a distinguished one, known to be a man of talents, and we are of opinion that in the present instance, the publication of this work, as a little modified in punctuation, and in the title page of the book, as he would have done, and that of Walter Scott or Benjamin Franklin. Of all privileges, literary is the most honorable, and the most objectionable, those upon the head of the most objectionable. We cannot believe

that, in the present instance, the publisher could have been solely influenced by the mercenary consideration, of trapping Subscribers by the bait of Mr. Morrison's name, but, if such was his motive, he has been successful, as we venture to affirm that the piratical liberty thus taken, induced many to subscribe, who otherwise would have hesitated about doing so. It has been suggested to us that, it is the intention of the Editor, to devote the profits of the book, to the erection of a suitable monument over Morrison's remains—such may be the case, and the laudable intention, may somewhat palliate, though nothing can entirely extenuate, the fraud committed upon the name of him who is no more.

The work itself is divided into several chapters, the first and by far the most valuable, contains sailing directions for the coast of China. These directions, are the result of surveys made within the past four years, by Captain Collinson, and other officers, of His Majesty's ships; and although they have all already appeared in local periodicals, are now collected in a form, which must be exceedingly useful to the Mariner, unacquainted with the coast; indeed, the chapter contains the only really valuable part of the work, and its separate publication, in a cheap pamphlet, would doubtless meet with a large sale.

The second chapter, contains a mass of mercantile information, some of it rather antiquated, and referring more to the past than the present trade of China, it also contains the regulations under which trade is carried on at the five ports, Mr. Thom's "Tabular statement of the foreign import trade" and a vast deal of other matter, which, though not original, in its collected form, may be useful, or at least interesting, to those who are entirely unacquainted with Chinese commerce. There are many errors in this section of the work, but they are so palpable that they will only mislead the very ignorant. We note the chief errors. The value of the exports of Opium, Under the head of Opium, it is stated that the exports are near 350,000 piculs, or 57,000,000 lbs. viz: to England, 40,000,000 lbs.; to the United States 14,000,000 lbs.; to all other countries 3,000,000. For the year ending with June the export of tea to Great Britain alone was 51,443,883 lbs., and to this 14,300,000 to the United States, 4,000,000 to Singapore and all other countries, and the 57 millions swell into 70 millions, adding nearly 25 per cent, or three and a half million of dollars, to this one item of export. In Opium, the gross imports of Bengal, Malwa and Turkey, are not far short of 37,000 chests, giving an average of 8750 at least, taking into account the sales on the coast, and drawing from China in specie and bullion \$25,000,000, or 30 per cent more than the sum stated in the Guide.

We might also notice raw silk, set down at 5,000 bales, the value of the exports 3,000 bales; and cotton goods, both of India and Long-cloth is quoted at \$2 75 per piece, and grey drill \$2 25. If we take the average price in the Canton market, of the former of these, (Long-cloths) for the year, it is not less than \$3 50 cents, of the latter (Grey Drills) there have been more sold at \$2, than at \$2 25—no however, they would command a higher figure than the quotation, a figure which we think they will maintain. We need not take much trouble in pointing out all these errors, the Guide's circulation is principally local, and to our readers, its failings are palpable; we would not be astonished, however, to see it quoted in England or America, as *quid pro quo*, by some theoretical writer on commercial affairs, though perhaps with as great a degree of correctness, as the majority of the inflated, or mis-stated statements, which are put forth by literary lunks who dabble in commercial statistics.

The remaining sections, contain some useful Tables of currency, weights, measures, &c. &c., and the Appendix, lists of commercial houses, insurance companies, and a good deal of information about the colony of Hongkong, all of which to strangers, will possess some degree of interest.

But for the mendacity of the Compiler, his labours would have been treated with that good natural indifference, which is so characteristic of the foreign community in China; but the very injurious, and unwarrantable liberty, he has taken with the name of Mr. Morrison, will call for observation, and perhaps induce some to enquire into the merits of a work, whose claims to be the illegitimate offspring of a man of genius, may for the time draw it from obscurity, only to have its title of bastardy treated with contempt.

(From the Government Gazette.)

To Contractors. Tenders will be received at the Surveyor General's Office Victoria, on or before Thursday the 20th day of August at noon, for the construction of a Road from the Wooden Bridge in the Wungah Valley to join the Road through Sumpu Valley.

Plans and Specifications may be seen and every information obtained on application between the hours of 10 and 12 on and after Monday the 12th instant.

FREDERICK W. A. BRUCE, Colonial Secretary, Victoria, Hongkong, 8th August, 1844.

To Contractors. Tenders will be received at the Surveyor General's Office Victoria, on or before Thursday the 20th day of August at noon for the construction of three Lines of Road in separate contracts, situated on the South of the Queen's Road and Westward of Magistral Hill. Plans and Specifications may be seen and every

