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**GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.**

The following Letter from the Board of Trade, in reply to a communication from this Government on the subject of Certificates granted to Masters and Mates of the Mercantile Marine under Ordinance No. 17 of 1860, is published for general information.

By Order,

W. T. MERCER,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 7th March, 1864.

*Mr. Farrer to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.*

(Copy.)

OFFICE OF COMMITTEE OF PRIVY COUNCIL FOR TRADE,  
MARINE DEPARTMENT, WHITEHALL, 18<sup>th</sup> December, 1863.

SIR,—I am directed by the Lords of the Committee of Privy Council for Trade, to acknowledge the receipt of your Letter of the 1st Instant, transmitting for the consideration of their Lordships a Copy of a Despatch from the Officer Administering the Government of Hongkong respecting the application of the provisions of the Merchant Shipping Act 1854 to Masters and Mates of Vessels belonging to that Colony who have passed examinations for Certificates under the Colonial Ordinance No. 17, 1860.

In reply I am to acquaint you for the information of Secretary His Grace The Duke of Newcastle that the Imperial Statute does not enable the Board of Trade to give to Certificates granted by Colonial Examination Boards the same effect as if they had been granted in the United Kingdom under the supervision and control of this Board. Whether, considering the extent and variety of the different Colonies, it would be possible to amend the Act in this respect may be a matter for consideration. But as the Law at present stands the Board of Trade are bound by it.

I am further to point out that Masters and Mates possessing Colonial Certificates of Competency are permitted to go up for examination before Local Marine Boards in this Country without the payment of a Fee on producing to their Examiner their Colonial Certificates. If however they fail in their first Examination they are charged the usual Fees on any subsequent attempt to pass. Further, Colonial Vessels are allowed to clear from the United Kingdom without production of any Certificates for the Masters or Mates if they are bound to their Colony as their ultimate destination, notwithstanding that they may touch at other places or Countries before arriving there.

Lastly I am to point out that the Imperial Act requiring the production of Certificates applies only to Vessels entering or leaving Ports in the United Kingdom and that consequently there is nothing in that Act to prevent a Vessel clearing from one Port in the East to another, with a Master who does not possess a Certificate.—I have, &c.

(Signed,) T. H. FARRER.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE,  
*Colonial Office.*

No. 46.

**GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.**

It is hereby notified that holders of the Silver or Copper currency of the United Kingdom (now no longer a legal tender within this Colony) can have those Coins exchanged for the new subsidiary currency by application at the Colonial Treasury up to the 19th instant.

By Order,

W. T. MERCER,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 7th March, 1864.