

IX. A fee of two dollars and a half for the examination of a Master or Engineer of a steam-launch shall be payable to the Harbour Master for the Government, and such Master or Engineer, shall, if he obtains a certificate, produce three copies of a photograph of himself, one to be attached to his certificate of competency, one to be attached to the licence of any vessel to which he may belong and one for record in the Harbour Office; and when a Master or Engineer is transferred from one steam-launch to another steam-launch, he shall produce a photograph of himself to be attached to the licence of the vessel to which he is to be transferred.

X. The owner of every licensed steam-launch shall cause the licence to be framed and exhibited in a conspicuous part of the cabin, so as to be visible to all persons on board the said vessel.

XI. If the owner of a licensed steam-launch wishes to employ his vessel for purposes other than for the conveyance of passengers within the waters of the Colony, or to or from Hongkong and places without the waters of the Colony, the licence shall be delivered to the Harbour Master to be retained by him during the period of such employment.

ARATHOON SETH,
Clerk of Councils.

Council Chamber, Hongkong.

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 219.

The following Circular Despatch is published for general information.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 12th June, 1886.

CIRCULAR.

DOWNING STREET,
9th April, 1886.

SIR,—With reference to my predecessor's Circular Despatch of the 14th of September last, I have the honour to transmit to you, for the information of the Colony under your Government, a copy of a Memorandum which has been prepared by the Board of Trade relative to the alterations made by the *Submarine Telegraph Act, 1885*, in the stipulations of the International Convention of the 14th of March, 1884, for the protection of Submarine Telegraph Cables.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

GRANVILLE.

Officer Administering the Government of
HONGKONG.

Memorandum on The Submarine Telegraph Act, 1885.

The alterations made by this Act in the stipulations of the International Convention of the 14th March, 1884, for the protection of submarine telegraphs, are two, and were urgently pressed for by various Telegraph Companies (including the principal Transatlantic Companies), whose combined capital was stated to amount to about 28,000,000*l.*, and who claimed to own or work about two-thirds of the entire length of all the cables in the world. Their views were supported by Companies who manufacture, lay, and repair cables.

The two alterations are as follows:—

1. Subsection 4 of section 3 provides that a person shall not be deemed to have unlawfully and wilfully broken or injured a submarine cable, where injury has been done to that cable in the *bonâ fide* attempt to repair another cable.

It was thought but fair that it should be placed beyond a doubt that an owner of a cable should not incur a criminal liability for any unavoidable consequence which might result from his undertaking the legitimate operation of repairing his property and restoring telegraphic communication.

2. Section 4 provides that Article IV * of the Convention shall not apply to that part of a cable which is laid in a depth of water exceeding 100 fathoms.

The 100-fathoms limit was here adopted as being the extreme depth within which vessels can anchor, and therefore the depth within which cables would be most liable to damage, and also as being a depth beyond which it is more difficult to take up and repair cables.

* Article IV. The owner of a cable who, on laying or repairing his own cable, breaks or injures another cable, must bear the cost of repairing the breakage or injury without prejudice to the application, if need be, of Article II of the present Convention.