

## GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 489.

The following Circular Despatch and its enclosures, are published for general information.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 19th November, 1887.

## CIRCULAR.

DOWNING STREET,  
30th September, 1887.

SIR,—I have the honour to inform you that, during the continuance of the Indian and Colonial Exhibition, steps were taken to obtain reports by competent experts upon the raw materials and certain other articles exhibited by the Colonies.

These Reports were prepared under the superintendence of the Society of Arts, and they have now been published by the Royal Commission in an interesting volume, of which I believe a copy has been supplied to you.

In order to render more accessible those parts of the Reports specially relating to the Colony under your Government, or upon the products in which that Colony is particularly interested, I have had them separated from the rest of the volume, and they are enclosed herewith.

You will no doubt agree with me in thinking it desirable that the fullest possible publicity should be given to these suggestive reports, and I request that you will dispose of them in the way best adapted to secure this end.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

H. T. HOLLAND.

*The Officer Administering the Government of*

HONGKONG.

## HONGKONG.

*Vegetable tallow* (Meinyah Tunkawang).—This name is applied generally to a number of fats which, as before remarked, spasmodically pervade the English markets. The tribe of fat-yielding trees is very large and widely dispersed, and no doubt, could one certain species be fixed, and its product well identified and put to thorough practical tests, it would tend greatly to clear up the existing haziness as to these tallows.

Lant Carpenter, \* who has treated this subject pretty exhaustively, as one having considerable practical experience in the matter of soap-materials, states that the two distinct vegetable tallows coming from Asia are: (1) Chinese tallow, from the *Stillingia schifera*, a white, brittle fat, chiefly produced in the Chusan Archipelago; and (2) Vegetable tallow, from a species of *Hopea*, also *Tetranthea laurifolia* (growing in the Malay Archipelago). The latter appears to be identical with the samples exhibited in bamboo cases as collected by the natives. It is greenish-gray when crude, but after boiling with dilute acid a few times, becomes nearly white. No experiments were undertaken with the actual exhibit, the samples being too small—but previous experience of the writer and others show that this fat is a glycerine of a high solidifying point (85° to 90° Fahr.), yielding hard and white fatty acids, and a good soap. In a dearth of palm oil, or even as a white substitute, vegetable tallow should have a ready sale. The supply is said to be all-sufficing, but the natives are too lazy to collect and treat the nuts or berries.

Regret may be here expressed that the Hongkong Court did not exhibit either Chinese wax or tallow. Considerable hopes had been entertained that this would prove an opportunity of negotiating a commercial quantity of this beautiful material, the annual production of which is valued at £600,000. Hardly a hundredweight finds its way to England now: perhaps because, in the golden days of spermaceti, *Pela* was coldly received. Its highly crystalline structure and intense hardness (180°

\* "Soap and Candles," E. & F. N. Spon, London, 1885.

Fahr. m.p.) present some obstacles, but of a noble kind, and doubtless surmountable. Spermaceti appears to have had its day; every year now witnesses an increasing scarcity, and elevation of price (now 2s. per lb.). An efficient substitute would be highly welcome. The Chinese formerly used all their supply themselves for "lobchocks," &c.; but as many tons of cheap scarlet paraffin candles are imported for the same purpose, it may be supposed that a corresponding amount of Chung-pela is to be had.

*Mining Industries.*—This Colony possesses no mines; but it exhibited cubes of coarse and fine-grained granite of various colours. One block of stone was very cleverly and curiously carved by members of the Stonemasons' Guild of Hongkong. A bottle of Hongkong sand seemed at first sight of small importance, but its use and value were understood on turning to the exhibits of the Hongkong and Macao Glass Manufacturing Co., Limited.

*Sugar.*—The sugars exhibited from Hongkong, unlike those from our other Colonies, were refined sugars: that is, they were made from imported sugars which had been redissolved, not directly from the cane juice. They comprised all the qualities usually turned out by refiners, from sugar candy to low pieces. They were very creditable to the China Sugar Refining Co., although they did not come up to the best makes of this country.

*Timber No. 1.*—The Timber Exhibits of this Court, sent by Mr. C. Ford, Superintendent of the Public Gardens, were arranged in five tiers, and set up in a case or frame against the wall. They were eighty-six in number, the dimensions being about 10 inches in length, by a third part segment of trees, varying from 6 to 10 inches diameter. It is therefore assumed that the trees of the Colony are all small.

Judging from the appearance of the specimens, *Artocarpus*, *Sarcocephalus*, *Spondias*, and *Vitex* are probably the best in quality, and suitable for furniture; some others might be employed for general purposes, while a few would be of little value.

The timber exhibits, having regard to the growth of trees in the Colony, were appropriate, and suited to the purpose; but there is no evidence of there being a good supply or even sufficiency for local wants, consequently there can be none to spare for export. Hongkong is clearly dependent for most of the woods in use there upon foreign supplies.

*Silk.*—There was much of sericultural interest in this Court, although cocoons were not shown.

The exhibits, however, may be said to illustrate the wealth of China in silk rather than of the small Colony of Hongkong, where silk culture is hardly practised, although much of China's silk is shipped from there. The exhibits thus represent the merchandise in silks and not their production, nevertheless it would be a serious omission if a description of them were not given.

First, as to entomology. There was a very fair and interesting collection, although much damaged in transit, of wild silk-producing moths, amongst which I noticed the Atlas moth (*Attacus atlas*) and the Eria moth (*Attacus ricini*), both so well-known in India, also the Chinese Tussur moth (*Antheræa pernyi*), and a few other species probably not yet named. These formed only a small part of a large collection of Chinese Lepidoptera, but suggested strongly the desirability of a careful systematic collection of all the silk-producers of China.

I strongly urge a two-fold collection: first, specimens of larvæ, moths and cocoons of *Bombyx mori* from all and every silkworm-rearing centre for the purpose of scientific comparison with those of France, Italy and other countries, and to help research with the view of improving the qualities of silk by breeding and crossing; second, a thorough search for the wild silk-producers and their cocoons, at present so little known, except the Chinese Tussur silkworm found in the North of China in abundance feeding on the oak. It was the cocoons of this species, which, owing to the greater quickness of the Chinese than the people of India, were collected and sent over to Europe to supply the demand for Indian Tussur at and subsequently to the Paris Exhibition of 1878. China has sustained

her ascendancy, unfortunately for India, up to the present time, and throughout the astonishing increase in the utilisation and consumption of Tussur silk, but India has at last awakened, and the two countries are on equal terms as to the supply effort.

A reeling factory has been established at Chefoo by Herr Otto Anz, and *pernyi* silk of very good quality is reeled there.

Too much emphasis cannot be given to my suggestion for exhaustive collections persistently sustained from time to time of wild silks, as although the cocoons of some species may not be reelable, all can be carded and spun, and there is not only a good European market for them, but a ready and eager demand.

The only illustrations of purely sericultural work consisted of working models of reeling machines such as are used in China.

These machines were quite simple. There was a reeling table at which sat a figure of a Chinese reeler, and upon which was fixed an imitation of the basin in which the cocoons to be reeled are softened in water.

Behind the figure was a reel which, in one of the models was made to revolve by clockwork, and in another had to be turned by hand, and which drew the fibres or *baves* from the cocoons, winding them upon itself in skeins.

A very complete series of silks in the early stages of manipulation was contributed by Messrs. Arnhold, Karberg & Co., of Hongkong, Canton, and of London. They comprised specimens of waste silk under the head of "Punjam," and a most interesting series of raw silks such as the European and other markets are supplied with. The following is the list of them in its completeness, which forms a most desirable addition to the published nomenclatures of silk :—

| No. |                            |                               | Size<br>in Deniers. | How produced from<br>the Cocoon. |
|-----|----------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1   | Punjam                     | } waste silk<br>for spinners. |                     |                                  |
| 2   | "                          |                               |                     |                                  |
| 3   | "                          |                               |                     |                                  |
| 4   | "                          |                               |                     |                                  |
| 50  | Canton Tsatlee Curio ..... | Loonkong.                     |                     |                                  |
| 51  | " No. 1 .....              | "                             |                     |                                  |
| 52  | " Curio .....              | Loongshan.                    |                     |                                  |
| 53  | " No. 1 .....              | "                             |                     |                                  |
| 54  | " No. 2 .....              | "                             |                     |                                  |
| 55  | " No. 1 .....              | Kodngon.                      |                     |                                  |
| 56  | " No. 2 .....              | "                             |                     |                                  |
| 57  | " No. 2 .....              | Soeytang.                     |                     |                                  |
| 58  | " No. 3 .....              | "                             |                     |                                  |
| 59  | " No. 4 .....              | "                             |                     |                                  |
| 60  | Canton Long Reels .....    | Lacklow.                      |                     |                                  |
| 61  | " " .....                  | Mahang.                       |                     |                                  |
| 62  | " " .....                  | Kowkong.                      |                     |                                  |
| 100 | Kwong Shun Cheong .....    |                               | 13/15               | Canton Steam.                    |
| 101 | Min King Lun .....         |                               | 14/16               | Filature Silk.                   |
| 102 | U Han Cheong .....         |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 103 | Kai Cheong Loong .....     |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 104 | Yee Wo Cheong .....        |                               | 13/15               | "                                |
| 105 | " " .....                  |                               | 14/16               | "                                |
| 106 | Hing Loong Cheong .....    |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 108 | Chong Kee .....            |                               | 13/15               | "                                |
| 109 | Kwong Hing Lun .....       |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 110 | " " .....                  |                               | 10/12               | Canton Steam.                    |
| 111 | Kam Lun Cheong .....       |                               | 13/15               | Filature Silk.                   |
| 112 | Poo Cheong Woo .....       |                               | 13/15               | "                                |
| 113 | How King Cheong .....      |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 120 | Wing Wo Lun .....          |                               | 12/14               | "                                |
| 118 | King Wo Cheong .....       |                               | 18/22               | "                                |
| 114 | Wing Kee .....             |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 115 | " .....                    |                               | 14/16               | "                                |
| 116 | Shun Po On .....           |                               | 13/15               | "                                |
| 117 | Lee Han Sang .....         |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 119 | Ko King Lun .....          |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 121 | Ohn Ching .....            |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 122 | Sia Lun Cheong .....       |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 123 | King Cheong Loong .....    |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 124 | Lee Ching Cheong .....     |                               | 11/13               | "                                |
| 125 | Yaen Hang Lee .....        |                               | 10/12               | "                                |
| 126 | Eun Kee .....              |                               | 10/12               | "                                |

The above examples with the reeling machine models have all been lent to the Royal Jubilee Exhibition at Manchester, of 1887, by Messrs. Arnhold, Karberg & Co.

The display of manufactured silks in the Hongkong Court was of high interest, but the limited space at my disposal entirely prevents my doing them justice. I can only barely enumerate them.

In the selling bazaar dress silks of various kinds of Chinese manufacture found ready purchasers.

Of Crêpe, of excellent quality, and style, were pieces, 20 yards in length, of various colours, of which the selling price was £4.10s.

Of Damasks there were pieces 15 yards in length and 21 inches wide, of thin stiff material, which were sold at £3 each.

Of Shantung silk, made from Chinese Tussur cocoons of the species which I have described, there were pieces in the undyed state, 19 inches wide, which were retailed at 1s. 6d. per yard. As in India, the application of colour to this silk still presents difficulties which the native dyers have not succeeded in overcoming, or at least only to a most limited extent. Happily the researches which I have had the honour of conducting for some years past for the Government of India have resulted in the total overcoming of these difficulties, alike with the indigenous natural dyes of the East and the modern artificial dyes of Europe, as well also in the successful bleaching of this silk; and there is now no reason why Tussur silks, manufactured from either the Indian or the Chinese species, should not receive decorative tinctorial treatment by both dyeing and printing, in a similar degree to the ordinary silks of commerce. The future of the Tussur silk industry is a very great and promising one, and too much attention cannot be given to the production of the raw material.

Of embroideries the Court contained a collection well illustrating this mode of Chinese decoration. Some pieces were very valuable and in perfect taste as to colour, whilst as to design there was everything to illustrate the strange fantasies of Chinese treatment.

Mr. J. Whittall, of Hongkong, lent a very large piece of embroidery on a red ground. The colours were produced by native dyes, and were of good tone.

There were loans of embroidered screens and portières.

Messrs. Stolterfoht and Hirst, of Hongkong, exhibited an interesting case of silk handkerchiefs.

But the principal decorative feature of this Court was a very large piece of embroidery of most exquisite treatment placed at the north end of the Court. It is a magnificent embroidered scroll, presented by the Chinese merchants of Hongkong to His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, President of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, in testimony of their loyalty and appreciation of British rule in Hongkong.

Its merits quite constituted its claim to be considered one of the most important pieces of art work in last year's Exhibition, and it was a model of beautiful, thoughtful, and patient work, deserving the close attention of all ladies interested in reforming the low state into which the art of embroidery has fallen in England in this century.

I must not omit the mention of a collection of silken stuffs lent by Lady Bowen, the wife of Sir George F. Bowen, the present Governor of Hongkong. I offered to insert a short description of them if Lady Bowen would furnish me with it, but as I have heard nothing from the gentleman who promised to communicate with her, I assume that it was not thought necessary. The collection consisted of old silks, both pattern-woven and embroidered. One of the principal merits of these silks was the absence of artificial dyes, and the conspicuous success of the employment of indigo for the blues as well as excellent colours in red and green.

This collection possessed high interest for all those who delight in the peculiar forms of Chinese decoration. In colour treatment many of the fabrics were good models for any school or style.

My acknowledgments are due to H. E. Wodehouse, Esq., C.M.G., Special Commissioner for Hongkong, and to the Assistant Commissioner, E. H. Fishbourne, Esq., LL.B., M.A., for much attention during numerous visits of inspection which I found it necessary to make to this Court.

I formally applied to these gentlemen for a collection of larvæ, moths, and cocoons from China for the Royal Jubilee Exhibition at Manchester, where such a collection will meet with perhaps more appreciation than in London, Manchester being in the centre of the districts where both reeled and spun silk fabrics and threads are manufactured.