

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 210.

There is a vacancy in the Sanitary Department for an Inspector of Nuisances. The emoluments of the Office, are :—

Salary, \$60 a month rising, by annual increments of \$48, to \$80 a month.
House rent, \$15 a month.
Chair allowance, \$12 a month in summer.
Uniform.

For further particulars apply at the Sanitary Board Room, Government Offices.

Applications with copies of Certificates to be sent to the Colonial Secretary before Noon on Thursday, the 31st instant.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 19th May, 1888.

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 211.

The following Notice is published for general information.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 19th May, 1888.

POSTAL NOTES.

1. Postal Notes of the values named below, payable within three months at any Post Office in the United Kingdom, or at Constantinople, can be obtained at Hongkong or at any British Post Office in China (except Hoihow and Tientsin) at the following prices, which include Commission ;—

1/-	34 cents.
1/6	51 ..
5/-	\$1.70 ..
10/-	\$3.40 ..
20/-	\$6.80 ..

All money orders on the United Kingdom for even sums not exceeding \$5 applied for at Hongkong or Shanghai will be issued by means of these Notes.

2. The purchaser of any Postal Note must fill in the Payee's name before parting with it. He *may* also fill in the name of the Office where payment is to be made. If this is not done the note is payable (within three months) anywhere in the United Kingdom, or at Constantinople. Any Postal Note may be crossed to a Bank.

3. Postal Notes should always be forwarded in Registered Covers. If this precaution is not taken NO ENQUIRIES WHATEVER will be made as to the loss or alleged loss of any Note.

4. Postal Notes issued in the United Kingdom are not payable in Hongkong or China.

GENERAL POST OFFICE.

HONGKONG, 14TH MAY, 1888.

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 212.

The following Finding of the Marine Court, held on the 12th instant, to enquire into the loss of the British Ship *Rock Terrace*, Official No. 72,217, of St. John's, New Brunswick, SAMUEL ATKINSON, Master, whose Certificate of Competency is 65,492, of Liverpool, is published for general information.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART,
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 19th May, 1888.

FINDING.

We find that the British Ship *Rock Terrace*, Official Number 72,217, of St. John's, New Brunswick, of which SAMUEL ATKINSON was Master, the Number of whose Certificate is 65,492, issued at Liverpool in 1869, left Philadelphia on the 22nd September, 1887, bound for Hiogo, Japan, with a cargo of petroleum in cases.

That all went well until the 28th of January, when during a squall, and while the hands were employed in shortening sail, the ship struck on the Brougham Shoal, in Latitude 9° 30' S. and Longitude 165° 30' E.

That she remained fast for about 10 minutes, during which time she bumped three or four times heavily, whereby she sustained considerable damage, and that she eventually worked herself off the reef.

That the crew were then sent to the pumps and an endeavour made to work the ship to her destination, but that this was eventually abandoned and a course shaped for the Island of Guam, in the Marianas Group, with the intention of trying to beach the ship and save the cargo.

That on the 29th of February, the *Rock Terrace* arrived off the Island of Guam and that an inspection was made from the ship for a suitable place for beaching, but this not being found and the crew being much worn out with pumping, all hands took to the boats and abandoned the ship.

That no lives were lost, and the greater part of the men's effects were saved, but not the ship's papers or Log-books.

That the crew remained at Guam until the 25th of April, when they were taken to Manila and from thence sent to Hongkong.

We are of opinion that the striking of the ship on Brougham Reef was brought about by a mistake in the position at Noon on that day, caused either or both by an unknown error in the chronometer and a defect in the Master's observation for Longitude, which had not been checked by the Mate. On this point, we do not consider that the Master was guilty of any wrongful act or default.

That while we commend the decision of the Master to endeavour to reach his Port of destination after the casualty, we are of opinion that the utmost endeavours were not made having this object in view. No attempt was made to ascertain with any certainty the actual damage that the ship's bottom had sustained, nor was any means adopted to try and stop the leak by placing a sail under the ship's bottom or any other method. The amount of water made by the ship does not appear to have been very excessive or of sufficient quantity to endanger her safety. It also appears that there was a steam donkey pump on board which was not used.

With reference to the abandonment of the ship, we are of opinion that it was premature. Having arrived off Guam, no attempt was made to communicate with the shore, though the boats were in good condition and the weather not very unfavourable, that no signals were made except that of distress (viz., the Ensign Union down) either to the shore or to a vessel seen to be at anchor in the Harbour. No attempt was made to anchor the ship and send on shore for assistance. The anchors were secured for sea and the chains unbent. Nor does the vessel appear to have been in any worse condition at this time than she was when she came off the reef, nearly five weeks previous.

The conduct of the Master in thus abandoning the ship, appears to us only explicable on the ground that the mental anxiety through which he had gone had temporarily undermined his reasoning powers, and the order for abandonment was given in a fit of despondency, also that it was done, as he thought, to save risking the lives of his crew; and while recognising this and his much-to-be-deplored want of harmony with his Mate and crew, we cannot absolve him from blame, and we regret to have to direct that his certificate be suspended for a period of six months, but recommend that a First Mate's certificate be issued to him during such suspension.

The evidence before us forms our opinion that the conduct of the Mate, AUGUSTUS HARRIS, under the circumstances in his special sphere of duty was sufficiently culpable to amount to a wrongful default. Instead of assisting the Master to the best of his ability under the trying circumstances, his course appears to have been one of rather more than passive resistance; and we are of opinion that had he acted differently, he might have sustained the Captain and have been the cause of saving at least the cargo of the ship. Under these circumstances, we direct that his certificate of competency as Master No. 1,648 issued at Yarmouth N. S. September, 1882, be suspended for a period of six months.

Given under our hands at Hongkong, this 12th day of May, 1888.

R. MURRAY RUMSEY,	<i>Ret. Comdr., R.N., President of Court.</i>
J. BUCKNER,	<i>Staff Commander, R.N.</i>
W. H. HATTON,	} <i>Masters of Mercantile Marine.</i>
J. D. C. ARTHUR,	

The certificates cannot be given up as they were lost with the ship.

R. MURRAY RUMSEY, *Ret. Comdr., R.N., President of Court.*

Approved,

G. WILLIAM DES VŒUX,
Governor, &c.