



## SUPPLEMENT

To the HONGKONG GOVERNMENT GAZETTE of 9th June, 1888.

### GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 259.

The following Report of the Superintendent of Fire Brigade, for the year 1887, which was laid before the Legislative Council on the 4th instant, is published for general information.

By Command,

FREDERICK STEWART,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 9th June, 1888.

No. 8.

FIRE BRIGADE DEPARTMENT,  
HONGKONG, 20th February, 1888.

SIR,—I have the honour to present the following report in connection with the Fire Brigade for the year 1887.

The year has been characterized by an unusual number of fires, some of which have attained serious proportions, but the greater part of which have been soon extinguished. There were nearly three times as many fires as the maximum number recorded in any previous year and the resources of the Brigade have been very fully taxed. To those who know how easy the spread of a fire is in the crowded Chinese town with its back to back houses, and narrow lanes, I think the Brigades may be congratulated on the success that has attended their efforts.

In one of these fires only has a charge of incendiarism been made. It was made at the instance of an Agent for a German Insurance Office, and was committed for trial at the Supreme Court, where the defendant was acquitted without being called upon to make his defence.

I understand that a civil suit is pending in connection with this trial and I forbear therefore from dwelling upon this particular case. Generally speaking, however, I may say that the practice of insuring contents of Chinese houses without any check beyond what is caused by the self-interests of the parties concerned is a grave source of temptation, and is fostered by the interests both of those who insure and of those who accept the risks.

Even supposing abuses not to arise it is inexpedient to give opportunity for them and the danger created by the facilities for bad practices is aggravated by the difficulty of detecting and exposing such as take place, and by the natural reluctance which a Company concerned only with its own interests feels to take the initiative by refusing a claim.

In the interests of the Brigade I think it would be well if it were made obligatory upon Insurance Companies and Agencies to furnish the Superintendent or the Government with full particulars as to date, amount and nature of policies effected in houses in which fires occur, and thus possibly to afford some idea as to how far Insurance and fires stand to each other in the relation of cause and effect. I do not think there would be any reluctance to give the information, and it might in time form a valuable record.

It is possible however that when systematic enquiries on oath are made, other causes such as the indiscriminate and careless use of Kerosine oil, or the increase of accidents arising with the growth of the population may be found to be the prime promoters of conflagrations, but the tendency of insuring is undoubtedly to give rise to incendiarism, and even apparent carelessness may be the result of careful forethought.

Two or three cases of undoubted incendiarism have come under my own notice, occurring not necessarily in the house in which the fire originated, but in the house adjoining it, and I am credibly informed that on the occasion of the large fire in Queen's Road West some weeks ago, the fire broke out simultaneously in three different houses separated from each other and with no possibility of inter-communication of the flames.

The fires of the past year have been marked by some painful incidents. Towards the close of the extensive conflagration in Queen's Road West to which I have just referred a member of the Government Fire Brigade named Fox lost his life in venturing into a house, the upper portion of which was in a dangerous state. The house collapsed and fell down upon him while he was inside.

In another case, six Chinese lives were lost. The fire broke out in a room on the first floor and communicated itself to the stair-case before the inmates above were made alive to their danger. There were no means of escape either by the roof or by windows and all six lost their lives.

The last incident that occurred was at an extensive fire in Bonham Strand, where, without a minute's warning, five houses fell outwards across the street resulting in the most serious injuries to Mr. Ross the foreman of the Volunteer Fire Brigade. A member of the Government Fire Brigade was also slightly injured, but to those who witnessed what took place, it was a mercy that no more harm was done than was actually occasioned, as there were at least six firemen whose position at the time seriously jeopardized their lives.

It may not be out of place at the commencement of another year to take stock of the existing condition of the Fire Brigade and of its adequacy to meet the requirements of the Colony.

At the present moment the Fire Brigade consists of thirty three Europeans of whom seventeen are firemen, six engine drivers, and the rest, superintendents, foremen, and assistant foremen, and of ninety-one Chinese firemen besides stokers and interpreters. The pay of the European firemen is four dollars and fifty cents a month and that of a Chinese fireman from one dollar and fifty cents to one dollar. The foremen, stokers, and interpreters are of course paid at a higher rate. The Brigade is further strengthened by the services of the Hongkong Fire Insurance Volunteers, the Pawnbrokers, and other bodies all of whom have been present on every occasion of a fire and have rendered most valuable services.

The head quarters of the Fire Brigade are at No. 5 Police Station in Queen's Road. Watchmen are stationed at the Clock Tower and at the Tower of the Fire Brigade Station, and upon an alarm of fire the bells are rung at the Central Police Station, at the Fire Brigade Station and at the Clock Tower. Three separate strokes indicate a fire west of the Harbour Office, two separate strokes a fire between the Harbour Office and the Murray Barracks, and one stroke a fire east of the Murray Barracks.

The Engines are located at the Fire Brigade Station. They are four in number, not including the floating engine which is known as the No. 1 Engine. The latter is located in the harbour near Yau-mati. It is an invaluable engine and can throw four jets of some sixty feet high. It has recently been modified with a view to increasing its speed and it is now capable of steaming at a rate of about eight knots an hour.

In addition to the steam engines I have mentioned, there are also a certain number of manual engines stationed in different parts of the island. So far as the City of Victoria is concerned, there is one at Government House, one at the Central Police Station, one in Hollywood Road, one at the Harbour Office and one at Saiyingpún. There are also boxes with fire appliances in various parts of the Town.

Practically speaking however the main strength of the Brigade is at the Fire Brigade Station. At an alarm of fire in the City of Victoria, a telephonic signal is immediately sent to what is known as the No. 2 Tank. This tank is situated in Caine Road, and supplies the City of Victoria with water from the Pokfulam Reservoir. The water is distributed by two main pipes from which branch out smaller pipes throughout the Town. Its limits are broadly speaking Queen's Road at the foot of Gough Street to the west, Queen's Road to the north and the City Hall to the east. At frequent intervals are what are known as street fire plugs. They are distinguishable by iron plates level with the street, and on removing this iron plate, hose can be attached. Many of these plates have a raised knob on the top of them. The knob is to distinguish them from the other plates that are without them, and indicates that they are stop plugs, that is to say that they are merely for the purpose of shutting off water. Before this distinguishing mark was put, the greatest confusion often resulted, and much time was lost in waiting for water at one of these stop plugs, when there was none to come.

The No. 2 Tank is in its turn supplied from another tank at the western end of Robinson Road. This tank also supplies Caine Road and some other streets. These are the two chief distributions of water from the Pokfulam Reservoir. There are other subsidiary supplies which are strictly local. One is in Glenealy Ravine and supplies the Gaol and Police Barracks. Another is above the Government Civil Hospital and another near the Albany. Wanchai, as far as the City Hall, is supplied from the tank that is to be seen in the Wong-nei-chung Gap.

Generally speaking the fresh water supply is very unsatisfactory. It is uncertain inasmuch as it is not always running, it is inadequate and its pressure is not uniform. Much of its possible pressure is also diminished by leakage throughout the houses in which it is distributed along its route to the fire and by other causes such as the friction of the pipes, and sudden changes in their diameter. In reducing therefore the working of the Brigade to a system, it is impossible to regard the fresh water supply as other than a very poor adjunct, and in almost every instance recourse is had to the harbour.

In starting the engines in connection with the harbour, consideration has to be given to the locality of the fire. Experience has shown that it is impossible to safely work pressure to a higher point than is able to afford a sufficient jet for houses placed between Queen's Road and the harbour. The rule therefore is to work direct from the harbour with all houses comprised within those bounds, but in the case of fires at a higher level than Queen's Road, the engines are distributed at intervals up the hill as far as may be required; they are connected the one with the other with hose and each engine pumps into the other until the level of the fire is reached. All this occasions great wear and tear of engines and hose and fire materials, and leaves only a very limited supply of water when the fire is reached, but it is inevitable so long as the fresh water supply is arranged as at present. Nor do I see that the increased supply of water from Tytam will much improve matters unless with it there is an increase of pressure, a uniformity of distribution and a certainty of water at all times.

It is impossible to insist too much upon the element of certainty. It is not as if fires could be met by arrangements devised for them at the moment. They must be treated in accordance with general arrangements applicable to all cases, and of these the first desideratum is water, and until one can base one's arrangements upon the certainty of a sufficient fresh water supply at any given point, the harbour must be regarded as the single basis of one's calculations.

The hilly nature of the site of the City of Victoria would seem to point to a system of high level tanks as being that best adopted for the requirements of the Town. In the case of a fire spreading up the hill it would be of immense advantage to be able to meet it from above and the constant growth of the Town up the hill points still further in this direction. Nor am I at all sure that with such a system, if properly devised and carried out, the necessity for land steam engines will not almost entirely cease to exist. The cost would of course be considerable and it may not be thought to be worth while to incur it. The proposed Praya reclamation scheme, however, if carried out, will necessarily bring this matter to the front, and in the meantime I would merely ask His Excellency's attention to the question and also to the consideration as to the extent to which the working of the reclamation scheme will interfere with the water supply from the harbour.

The following is the arrangement at present in force with regard to the steam engines. Three of the engines proceed to the Praya. Two of them run out hose to the fire. The other stands by with fires lighted, but does not run out hose until the order is given. The fourth engine remains in the station in reserve. Each engine has its own hose reel, and the branch pipes have special marks to indicate to which engine they belong. In order that in the confusion the branch pipes may not be attached to the wrong hose, a slight delay takes place between the removal of each engine from the station, and the driver is under orders to see that his engine never starts without the proper hose reel accompanying it. With a view further to obviate any miscarriage from hurry or ignorance or neglect, duplicate branch pipes are supplied, two being attached to each engine and two to each hose reel. The branch pipe is frequently termed the nozzle, but strictly speaking the term "nozzle" is applicable only to the end of the branch pipes from which the water issues.

Generally speaking the efforts of the Brigade have been directed rather to the simplification of duties and to the instruction of the men in a few broad elementary rules with regard to the running out of hose, the protection of the adjoining property, and such like matters, together with the provision before hand of all such arrangements as are likely to be of service on the occasion of a fire.

Owing to the constitution of the Fire Brigade, which consists of Policemen who have in the first place to consider their Police duties, it is not possible to assign particular duties to individual firemen and it has been sought rather to familiarize each one with the elementary rudiments of Fire Brigade drill, and by a careful prearrangement and simplification of appliances and by general rules as to dealing with fires, to minimize the drawbacks occasioned by the impossibility of assigning special duties to selected individuals.

Among some of the principal changes that have been made in this direction, I may mention the substitution of a broad thread screw for the narrow thread that it was customary to use in the hose couplings. A great saving of time and labour has been effected by this change, and it has been found to be of the greatest possible advantage to the Brigade. Another change that has been found very valuable has been the institution of a light service in the form of what is termed a "Supply Cart." This Cart can be drawn by two men, and contains all the necessary appliances for dealing with a fire at the outset. Inasmuch also as it has been found that very frequently a fire without actually spreading to an adjoining house, will ignite it inside to the extent of making it necessary to play water upon the incipient flames, the Supply Cart carries with it two hand pumps and two extincateurs, which have been constantly found sufficient to extinguish the flames, when without these appliances resort must have been had to a hose, with the consequent delay of stopping the engine, attaching a new length, and a great destruction of property by a deluge of salt water, even supposing the flames to have not made uncontrollable way in the interval.

Other changes of a similar kind have been made, of which I have already mentioned the duplicate branch pipes, and in which I may include the institution of reserve hose reels to be taken to the fire

and used exclusively for adding new lengths when required, instead of as formerly having recourse to the engines when additional lengths were wanted, and lastly the practice of indiscriminately cutting down wood work has been entirely abandoned. No wood work can now be cut down without the order of an officer, and such an order is seldom required. In the opinion of many the spread of the great fire in 1878 was largely due to the immense destruction of wood work on that occasion, the streets in some places being blocked with shutters and broken timbers which at one and the same time impeded the movements of the Brigade, and served as a bridge for the flames.

With regard to the spread of fires they are occasioned by the beams and rafters of the roof of the house on fire being in contact with those of the adjoining houses, and in many cases protected from access by the ceiling below; also by the falling of lighted matter through the smoke holes of neighbouring houses, and again by projecting verandahs which probably contain inflammable articles. Heat alone is often sufficient to ignite either the opposite houses, or anything near that is capable of catching fire. A double brick-wall is however absolute protection to the extent of the space covered by it. The clothes stands on roofs though invariably igniting have not so far as my experience goes been a principal cause of fires spreading. They consist only of upright and horizontal bars, with hollow spaces between them, and do not readily burn.

The accompanying report from Mr. BREWER will show the state of the engines at the present time. They have worked well throughout the year, and have been carefully tended by Mr. BREWER, the Engineer, and Mr. WAGNER, the Assistant Engineer.

There is great need of another floating engine. The present floating engine lies at Yaumáti, and is not immediately available for service on this side. Also when a fire occurs anywhere on the other side or in the harbour, there is no launch at the disposal of the Brigade for taking the men to these places. What is required is a floating engine similar to that now in use, and capable of transporting men to different parts of the Island. At present if the existing floating engine breaks down, there is nothing able to take its place, and considering the vast shipping interests in the harbour, and the valuable property located at Yaumáti, the Naval Yard, Kowloon, and Hunghóm, one floating engine is not enough. The nature of the country on the other side does not admit of the transport of land engines, and the only practicable method of dealing with fires there is by floating engines. I trust therefore that His Excellency will give this matter his favourable consideration and will sanction the purchase or construction of another floating engine.

Also I think the European element of the Brigade should be further increased. Men who before were available for fire duties have now to attend to engines, and considering the growth of the town I do not think an increase of ten men would be by any means out of place. We are always hampered by want of men, some being in Hospital and some on Police duty, and at the initiatory stages of a fire the want of a sufficient European complement is much felt, as it is on them that the Superintendent has mainly to rely to see that his general system of organisation is properly carried out. Police firemen are not allowed to leave their beat to go to a fire, so that the nominal strength of the European element is reduced by one half at the outset, and to this must be added absence from sickness and other causes.

On the other hand I think the Chinese element might be largely reduced. With an increased European element, I think we might easily dispense with a sufficient number of Chinese to balance the additional expense in the increased European element, so that the change could be accomplished without further cost to the Brigade.

I will conclude this report with a return of fires and alarms of fires during the past year. The origins assigned to the different fires given in the schedule must be accepted with reservation, and are not to be taken as authoritative.

I have only to add that the Brigade has enjoyed the hearty co-operation of the officers and men, throughout the year, who have all worked well under the exceptional strain that has from time to time been put upon them.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

H. E. WODEHOUSE,  
*Superintendent, Fire Brigade.*

The Honourable F. STEWART, LL.D.,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

&c., &c., &c.

(Copy.)

FIRE BRIGADE DEPARTMENT,  
HONGKONG, 5th January, 1888.

*Annual Report on Fire Engines.*

SIR,—I have the honour to forward herewith a report on the state of the Government Fire Engines for the year ending 31st December, 1887.

*No. 1 Floating Fire Engine by Merry Weather.*

This engine is 19 years old, and was formerly a land engine on wheels, but was found too heavy for the roads and cumbersome of transportation; it was therefore put into a launch in March, 1883, and has since done good service. The Boiler is now 10 years old, and requires a new fire box. It was intended to execute this repair some months ago, but it was postponed pending the arrival of the new engine from England. The fresh water tanks are rusting internally, and require to be removed for scraping and painting and generally overhauling, I would recommend this be done immediately after the Chinese New Year.

The machinery and hull of the launch are in good order and with a view to increasing the speed of the launch, a new propeller of more suitable design is now fitted.

*No. 2 Steamer by Merry Weather.*

This Engine is 19 years old. It was fitted with a new boiler in 1878 and new steam cylinders by Messrs. FENWICK & Co. in 1886. The Engine is of obsolete type and too heavy for our roads, proof of which, it has on two occasions broken through the roads and sunk up to its axles. The engine has however done good service feeding the small engines on high levels with salt water. This engine should be supplemented by one of modern type lighter more powerful and a quick generating boiler (as the present one takes 25 minutes against the modern one of 7½ minutes to raise steam.)

*No. 3 Steamer by Shand and Mason.*

This Engine is 8 years old and was formerly of the auxiliary cylinder type. It was altered last year upon my recommendation, the auxiliary cylinder removed and a balance wheel substituted, which has rendered the engine more efficient and has given every satisfaction. In consequence of the age of the boiler, I have reduced the working pressure of steam to 75 lbs. which has necessarily somewhat handicapped the engine in its work. In my last year's report I recommended a new fire box which I find it is impracticable to attach, and would suggest that Messrs. SHAND & MASON receive instructions to send out a new boiler complete, which we can fix here.

*No. 4 Steamer by Shand and Mason.*

This Engine is 5 years old and is in excellent condition. New valves have been fitted and the working parts adjusted.

*No. 5 Steamer by Shand and Mason*

Was supplied upon my recommendation last year. This engine is of the most modern type, and has proved a valuable auxiliary to our fire extinguishing apparatus.

"Stanley" Floating fire pump has only been used once during the past year, and is not available on emergency, as the launch is kept at Stone Cutters' Island.

The manual engines 9 in number, are all in good working order.

Generally.—Though the calls on the Fire Brigade have been heavy this year, I am happy to state that no Engine has been totally disabled during a fire, and no serious breakdown has occurred at any time, yet I am still of opinion, we have not sufficient engines for the increasing size of the Colony, as two fires at the same moment would drain our resources, and an engine laid up for repairs renders our appliances insufficient.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

(Signed) JOHN S. BREWER,  
Assist. Supt. and Engineer.

H. E. WODEHOUSE, Esq., C.M.G.,  
Superintendent, Fire Brigade.

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FIRES AND ALARMS DURING THE YEAR 1887.

No.	DATE.	TIME.	SITUATION OF FIRE.	No. OF BUILDING DESTROYED.		DAMAGE.	CAUSE.	REMARKS.
				Wholly.	Partly.			
1	Jan. 3,	.....	Grass on the hill-side at Mount Davis, .....	...	...	Trifling	Unknown.	
2	" 4,	.....	Grass on the hill-side above Kennedy Road, .....	...	...	Do.	Do.	
3	" 4,	.....	A stack of grass at No. 207, Shaukiwan, .....	...	...	\$10	Incendiary.	
4	" 8,	Midnight.	A wooden hut in Garden Lane, .....	1	...	\$100	Ignited by the burning husks.	
5	" 9,	9 a.m.	A partition on the ground floor of house No. 199, Holly-wood Road, .....	...	...	Trifling	Accidental while cooking.	
6	" 12,	1 a.m.	House No. 16, Sai Woo Lane, top floor, .....	1	2	\$1,400	Upsetting of a kerosine lamp on a quantity of hemp bags.	
7	" 12,	12.15 a.m.	Some clothing in No. 39, Taak Lane, .....	...	...	Trifling	Unknown.	
8	" 13,	4.30 a.m.	A straw shed at the back of No. 146, Third Street, .....	1	...	Do.	Do.	
9	" 13,	9.30 p.m.	No. 142, Second Street, ground floor, .....	2	3	\$14,000	Do.	
10	" 14,	9.30 a.m.	The verandah of No. 115, Queen's Road West, .....	...	...	Trifling	Accidental.	
11	" 14,	4 p.m.	Gallery of the Ko Shing Theatre, .....	...	...	None.	.....	This was a false alarm and greatly excited the audience for a short time.
12	" 15,	5 a.m.	No. 48, Queen's Road West, cock-loft, ground floor, .....	2	4	\$23,000	Capising of a kerosine lamp on a quantity of paper, straw and shavings.	Was insured in Messrs. Siemens & Co.'s Office for \$3,000.
13	" 15,	9 p.m.	A quantity of mattings at the back entrance of No. 215, Queen's Road East, .....	...	...	None	Incendiary.	
14	" 16,	9 a.m.	A mosquito curtain at No. 172, Wellington Street, .....	...	...	\$2	Accidental.	
15	" 16,	4 p.m.	Some papers and old baskets at No. 230, Queen's Rd. Central, .....	...	...	Trifling	Unknown.	
16	" 16,	11.30 p.m.	A kerosine lamp at No. 117, Queen's Road Central, .....	...	...	None	Accidental.	
17	" 18,	4.30 p.m.	Grass on the hill-side at Deep Water's Bay, .....	...	...	Unknown	Incendiary, .....	A large number of young trees were destroyed.
18	" 20,	6.30 p.m.	A number of mat bags saturated with kerosine on the roof of No. 5, Bonham Strand, .....	...	...	\$30	Do., .....	The man who sat fire to the bags on the roof was seen running away by a boy.
19	" 20,	8.15 p.m.	A stack of grass on the hill above Man Ming Lane, .....	...	...	\$5	Unknown.	
20	" 21,	11 a.m.	The chimney of No. 31, Lyndhurst Terrace, .....	...	...	None	Do.	
21	" 22,	5.8 a.m.	Some papers and a wooden box at Man Mo Temple, .....	...	...	Trifling	Do.	
22	" 22,	11.20 p.m.	House No. 103, First Street, .....	...	...	None	Incendiary, .....	A small quantity of paper and shavings saturated with kerosine with a cracker and a lighted incense stick attached were found at the foot of the staircase.
23	" 25,	2.45 a.m.	Some papers stored on the second floor of house No. 63, Wellington Street. A Printing Office, .....	...	...	\$25	Unknown, .....	Was insured in Messrs. Adamson, Bell & Co.'s Office for \$5,000.
24	" 26,	1 p.m.	Ground floor of house No. 59, Queen's Road West, .....	1	1	\$3,000	Do., .....	Was insured in Messrs. Schellhass & Co.'s Office for \$3,200.
25	Feb. 3,	8 p.m.	Ground floor of house No. 3, Bonham Strand, .....	1	...	\$12,000	Dropping of a kerosine lamp, .....	The contents were insured in Messrs. Meyer & Co.'s Office for \$12,000.
26	" 13,	.....	The grass on the hill-side at Kai Lung Wan, .....	...	...	Trifling	Unknown.	The buildings were not insured.
27	" 17,	5.40 a.m.	Ground floor of No. 129, Queen's Road West, .....	1	1	\$2,900	Accidental, .....	
28	" 22,	.....	Grass on the hill-side near Stanley, .....	...	...	Trifling	Unknown.	

FIRES AND ALARMS DURING THE YEAR 1887,—Continued.

No.	DATE.	TIME.	SITUATION OF FIRE.	No. OF BUILDING DESTROYED.		DAMAGE.	CAUSE.	REMARKS.
				Wholly.	Partly.			
29	Feb. 22,	7.20 p.m.	Some clothing on the ground floor of No. 81, Hollywood Rd.,	...	...	Trifling	Unknown.	
30	" 24,	3.45 p.m.	A shed on the roof of No. 17, Salt Fish Street,	...	...	Do.	Do.	
31	" 27,	8.20 p.m.	The shrubbery under one of the matcheds at the Race Course,	...	...	None	Incendiary.	
32	March 4,	.....	Chimney of No. 63, Bonham Strand East,	...	...	Do.	Unknown.	
33	" 7,	12.30 a.m.	A wooden partition in house No. 22, Queen's Road West,	...	...	Do.	Do.	
34	" 9,	5 a.m.	No. 15, Sz Mi Lane, ground floor,	6	...	\$19,000	Carelessness with joss papers,...	Insured for \$2,000 at Messrs. Schellhass & Co.
35	" 12,	.....	A cooking stall in Chinese Recreation Ground,	...	...	None	Unknown.	A large quantity of paper, a number of books saturated with kerosine were found, and also a chatty and a tin containing some kerosine.
36	" 15,	8.50 p.m.	No. 76, Jervois Street, ground floor,	...	...	Trifling	Incendiary,	
37	" 16,	5.50 p.m.	Chimney of No. 276, Queen's Road Central,	...	...	None	Unknown.	Property of Government.
38	" 22,	10 a.m.	Matcheds at Taitám Water-Works,	14	...	\$550	Unknown,	Three small pigs roasted alive.
39	" 22,	4.25 p.m.	Two matcheds at Tsimshátsui,	2	...	\$10	Careless use of fire,	Insured for \$2,000.
40	" 23,	3.50 a.m.	No. 17, Wing Kut Street,	1	...	\$2,500	Upsetting a kerosine lamp,	
41	" 23,	5.20 p.m.	Chimney of No. 135, Queen's Road West,	...	...	None	Unknown.	
42	" 24,	9 p.m.	No. 34, Bonham Strand West,	1	...	\$1,800	Falling of a kerosine lamp,	Insured for \$20,000 in Messrs. Meyer & Co., and \$20,000 in Messrs. Pustau & Co.
43	" 26,	.....	Wood-work in the cook house of No. 36, Bonham Strand West.	...	...	Slight	Accidental while cooking.	
44	" 27,	10 a.m.	Grass on the hills between Stauley and Taitámuk,	...	...	Do.	Incendiary.	
45	" 27,	12 a.m.	No. 143, Queen's Road Central,	...	...	None	Attempted arson,	A quantity of kerosine was found poured over the staircase.
46	" 29,	1 a.m.	A kerosine lamp at No. 111, West Street,	...	...	Do.	Accidental.	
47	" 29,	6 p.m.	The chimney of No. 4, Wellington Street,	...	...	Do.	Unknown.	
48	" 29,	9 p.m.	No. 13, Tank Lane, ground floor,	...	...	Slight	Upsetting a kerosine lamp.	
49	" 31,	4.30 p.m.	No. 8, Taitámuk,	1	...	\$70	Accidental.	
50	April 3,	11.15 a.m.	Grass on the hill-side at No. 2 Bridge, Pokfúlam Road,	...	...	Unknown	Unknown,	A number of young trees were destroyed. Some young trees were destroyed.
51	" 5,	.....	Grass on the hill-side at Mount Davis,	...	...	Do.	Do,	Caught fire while worshipping at graves.
52	" 5,	.....	Grass on the hill-side near Whitfield,	...	...	\$7	Accidental,	Caught fire while worshipping at tombs. A number of trees and shrubs were burned.
53	" 5,	.....	Grass on the hill-side near Shaukwán Village,	...	...	Unknown	Do,	
54	" 5,	.....	Grass on the hill-side at Stauley,	...	...	Do.	Do,	
55	" 5,	2 p.m.	Messrs. Blackhead & Co.'s coal shed at Tsimshátsui,	1	...	\$125,000	Combustion of accumulated coal	
56	" 5,	5.30 p.m.	No. 37, Market Street,	...	...	Trifling	Burning of joss paper.	[gas.
57	" 8,	4.30 a.m.	A quantity of firewood on the ground floor of No. 19, Sheung Fung Lane.	...	...	None	Do.	

FIRES AND ALARMS DURING THE YEAR 1887,—Continued.

No.	DATE.	TIME.	SITUATION OF FIRE.	No. OF BUILDING DESTROYED.		DAMAGE.	CAUSE.	REMARKS.
				Wholly.	Partly.			
58	April 27,	.....	No. 17, Graham Street, .....	...	...	None	Incendiary, .....	Chan A-woo who formerly lived in the same house as the woman Ching Hi, and had been charged at the Police Court for assaulting her, poured kerosine oil on the stairs and attempted to set it on fire, when observed by inmates he ran away. Insured for \$10,000 at Messrs. Pustan & Co. Kau Hung placed a basket of shavings saturated with kerosine and set fire to it. He was arrested by P.C. 236 and charged with arson.
59	" 30,	7.10 p.m.	No. 273, Queen's Road Central, .....	...	2	\$8,000	Unknown, .....	.....
60	May 1,	9 a.m.	No. 4, Wai Tak Lane, .....	...	...	Trifling	Incendiary, .....	.....
61	" 1,	6 p.m.	Chimney of No. 107, Wellington Street, .....	...	...	None	Unknown.	.....
62	" 3,	.....	Marshes at Sandy Bay, Pokfulam, .....	1	...	\$120	Accidental.	.....
63	" 4,	6.45 p.m.	First floor of No. 7, Station Street, .....	...	...	Trifling	Unknown, .....	Some oakum caught fire.
64	" 4,	7.25 p.m.	No. 35, Battery Road, .....	1	...	\$60	Upsetting of a kerosine lamp, ...	The house was not insured.
65	" 7,	.....	Chimney of No. 28, Wing Lok Street, .....	...	...	Trifling	Unknown.	.....
66	" 13,	11 a.m.	Cock-loft of No. 51, Market Street, Hunglön, .....	...	...	\$3	Accidental while burning incense paper.	.....
67	" 16,	7.30 p.m.	Tsimshátsui, .....	...	...	None	Messrs. Blackhead & Co. were trying a new patent lamp at Tsimshátsui, and an alarm of fire was raised.	.....
68	" 30,	5.45 p.m.	Chimney of No. 47, Lower Lascar Row, .....	...	...	Do.	Unknown.	.....
69	" 31,	.....	Grass on the hill-side near Aberdeen, .....	...	...	Do.	Do.	.....
70	" 31,	5.30 p.m.	No. 142, Queen's Road West, .....	...	...	\$9	Accidental, .....	Insured for \$3,000 at Messrs. Siemens & Co.
71	" 31,	6.40 p.m.	Chimney of No. 2, Hollywood Road, .....	...	...	None	Unknown.	.....
72	" 31,	.....	Grass on the hill-side above Aberdeen Docks, .....	...	...	Do.	Do.	.....
73	June 3,	2.30 p.m.	Chimney of No. 189, Hollywood Road, .....	...	...	Do.	Do.	.....
74	" 13,	8 p.m.	A mosquito curtain in house No. 362, Queen's Road West, .....	...	...	Trifling	Accidental.	.....
75	" 19,	7 p.m.	The chimney of house No. 99, Wátsai Road, .....	...	...	None	Do.	.....
76	July 2,	6.45 p.m.	A mosquito curtain in house No. 56, Caine Road, .....	...	...	Do.	Do.	.....
77	" 3,	9.5 p.m.	House No. 28, Tank Lane, .....	1	...	\$300	Dropping of a light on some shavings.	.....
78	" 25,	8.30 p.m.	House No. 185, Queen's Road West, .....	15	4	\$26,000	Breaking of a kerosine lamp, ...	Insured for \$1,500 at Messrs. Melchers & Co.
79	" 27,	2.20 a.m.	In the ruins of house No. 187, Queen's Road West, .....	...	...	None	.....	.....
80	Aug. 3,	10.55 p.m.	Room No. 14, College Chamber, .....	...	...	Very little	Upsetting of a kerosine lamp.	.....
81	" 7,	.....	Grass on the hills near Stanley, .....	...	...	Slight	Unknown.	.....
82	" 23,	9 p.m.	House No. 311, Queen's Road Central, .....	2	...	\$2,000	Dropping of a kerosine lamp, ...	Insured for \$1,350 at Messrs. Carlowitz & Co.
83	" 29,	.....	A thatched hut at Apichian, .....	...	...	Trifling	Unknown.	.....
84	" 30,	.....	Chimney of house No. 135, Wellington Street, .....	...	...	None	Do.	.....



FIRES AND ALARMS DURING THE YEAR 1887,—Continued.

No.	DATE.	TIME.	SITUATION OF FIRE.	No. of BUILDING DESTROYED.		DAMAGE.	CAUSE.	REMARKS.
				Wholly.	Partly.			
85	Sept. 4,	7 p.m.	Chimney of house No. 137, Queen's Road Central, .....	...	...	Unknown	Unknown.	
86	" 9,	8 a.m.	Messrs. Russell & Co.'s coal godown, Praya East, .....	...	...	Do.	Do.	Both houses were insured for \$1,600 at Messrs. Schellhass & Co.
87	" 12,	3 a.m.	A basket of charcoal at No. 2, Tak Hing Lane, .....	...	...	Do.	Do.	* A paper torch was found in a clothes press and partly burnt along with some papers and a Chinese jacket.
88	" 15,	5.5 a.m.	No. 39, Wing Lok Street, .....	1	...	\$1,200	Unknown, .....	
89	" 15,	"	No. 37, Wing Lok Street, .....	...	...	None	Incendiary, * .....	
90	" 18,	.....	Some papers in cook house on first floor of No. 15, Morrison Street.	...	...	Trifling	Unknown.	
91	" 21,	10 p.m.	No. 76, Queen's Road West, .....	2	1	\$4,000	Do.,	Insured for \$1,500 at Messrs. Carlowitz & Co.
92	" 25,	2.30 p.m.	A small quantity of hay at No. 52, Hing Lung Street, ...	...	...	None	Do.	
93	Oct. 4,	4.45 a.m.	The chimney of house No. 254, Queen's Road West, .....	...	...	Do.	Do.	
94	" 5,	5 a.m.	House No. 9, In Ku Lane, .....	1	...	\$1,500	Do.,	
95	" 7,	5.25 p.m.	House No. 5, Gage Street, .....	1	1	\$3,000	Dropping of a lighted kerosine lamp.	The contents were insured for \$25,000 at Messrs. Meyer & Co.
96	" 8,	11.40 a.m.	Some clothing on second floor of house No. 7, Station St.,	...	...	Very little	Unknown.	
97	" 9,	2 p.m.	A wooden hut at Mongkoktsui, .....	...	...	\$250	Accidental.	
98	" 10,	8 p.m.	Some clothing on first floor of No. 2, Wing Fung Lane, ...	...	...	\$1	Carelessness with matches.	
99	" 26,	.....	Grass on hills at Stanley, .....	...	...	Slight	Unknown.	
100	" 31,	4.45 a.m.	A matshed at Kennedy Town, .....	...	...	Unknown	Burning of joss paper.	
101	Nov. 2,	8.45 p.m.	The cook house chimney of Star Hotel, .....	...	...	None	Unknown.	
102	" 5,	.....	Cook house No. 7, Pokfulam Road, .....	...	...	Do.	Accidental.	
103	" 5,	11.42 a.m.	House No. 9, Sheung Fung Lane, .....	1	1	Do.	Shavings caught fire, .....	The house was not insured.
104	" 7,	5 p.m.	First floor of house No. 12, Gilman Street, .....	...	...	Slight	Unknown.	
105	" 9,	.....	Some grass on Victoria Peak, .....	...	...	None	Discharging of rockets.	
106	" 10,	.....	Some grass near Magazine Gap, .....	...	...	Do.	Unknown.	
107	" 14,	6.30 p.m.	Some empty packing cases on first floor of house No. 5, Cochrane Street.	...	...	Slight	Accidental.	
108	" 16,	7.20 p.m.	House No. 253, Queen's Road Central, .....	24	10	\$90,000	Bursting of a kerosine lamp, ....	Fireman Fox was killed at this fire while engaged in its suppression.
109	" 16,	7.30 p.m.	Staircase of house No. 55, Square Street, .....	...	...	Slight	Incendiary, .....	A rag soaked with kerosine and a lighted joss stick were found at the foot of the staircase.
110	" 18,	10 p.m.	A quantity of mat bags on hill-side at Shekt'ongtsui, .....	...	...	\$3	Unknown.	This was a false alarm and greatly excited the audience who made general rush for the doors.
111	" 18,	"	Ko Shing Theatre, .....	...	...	None	Incendiary, .....	A quantity of joss paper saturated with nut oil was found burning just inside the street door.
112	" 19,	11 p.m.	House No. 115, Wellington Street, .....	...	...	Slight	Incendiary, .....	

FIRES AND ALARMS DURING THE YEAR 1887,—Continued.

No.	DATE.	TIME.	SITUATION OF FIRE.	No. OF BUILDING DESTROYED.		DAMAGE.	CAUSE.	REMARKS.
				Wholly.	Partly.			
113	Nov. 20,	10 p.m.	Partition of house No. 21, Stanley Street,.....	...	...	Slight	Carelessness with a lamp.	
114	" 21,	.....	Grass on the hill-side near Hoktsui, .....	...	...	Do.	Unknown.	
115	" 21,	5.30 p.m.	A quantity of firewood in the cook house No. 341, Queen's Road West.	...	...	None	Do.	
116	" 22,	8.15 a.m.	Some clothing and matting on ground floor of No. 2, Rutter's Lane.	...	...	Very little	Do.	
117	" 22,	11 p.m.	A mosquito curtain in house No. 32, Third Street, .....	...	...	None	Do.	
118	" 23,	9.15 p.m.	House No. 42, Queen's Road West, .....	...	...	Do.	Incendiary, .....	
119	" 24,	3.10 a.m.	House No. 13, Triangle Street, .....	1	...	\$150	Unknown, .....	Some old rags saturated with kerosine were found in the staircase.
120	" 24,	3.30 p.m.	Coals in one of the Kowloon Godown Company's sheds at Tsimshatsui.	...	...	Very little	Spontaneous combustion.	The house was not insured.
121	" 24,	9.30 p.m.	Some dried grass at No. 16, Wing Fung Street, .....	...	...	None	Unknown.	
122	" 25,	.....	Matsheds at Taitam Water-Works, .....	12	...	Unknown	Do.	
123	" 25,	8.20 p.m.	Ko Shing Theatre, .....	...	...	None	.....	This was a false alarm and a general rush was made for the doors.
124	" 25,	9 p.m.	Beams of verandah of No. 348, Queen's Road West, .....	...	...	Not much	Incendiary.	
125	" 26,	.....	Grass on the north-side of the hill below Mount Kellet, ...	...	...	Unknown	Unknown, .....	A considerable amount of damage was done to growing trees.
126	" 26,	3.30 p.m.	Grass on the hill-side near Kai Lung Wan, .....	...	...	Do.	Do., .....	A few acres of grass burnt and part of the wood and young plants slightly damaged.
127	" 26,	8.15 p.m.	Ko Shing Theatre, .....	...	...	None	.....	This was a false alarm. A general rush was made for the doors. Two men were arrested for raising false alarm.
128	" 27,	.....	A kerosine lamp on the ground floor of house No. 20, Graham Street.	...	...	Do.	Accidental.	The house was not insured.
129	" 27,	6.30 p.m.	First floor of house No. 1, Nullah Lane, .....	1	...	\$190	Accidental, upsetting of an oil [lamp.	
130	" 27,	7.5 p.m.	A basket of old clothing at No. 348, Queen's Road West,	...	...	Slight	Unknown.	The house was not insured.
131	" 28,	8.45 p.m.	House No. 107, Wellington Street,.....	2	1	\$1,000	Accidental, .....	The house was not insured.
132	" 29,	6.40 a.m.	House No. 163, Queen's Road East, .....	1	...	\$150	Accidental, bed curtain caught fire while worshipping.	The house was not insured.
133	" 29,	7.30 p.m.	House No. 165, Queen's Road East, .....	1	...	\$150	Unknown.	
134	" 29,	7.40 p.m.	House No. 4, Staunton Street, .....	...	...	Very little	Do.	
135	" 29,	8.30 p.m.	House No. 107, Wellington Street,.....	...	...	None.	.....	The smouldering ruins of old fire broke out afresh.
136	" 30,	5 p.m.	House No. 40, Wing On Street,.....	7	3	\$16,000	Accidental, upsetting of an oil lamp.	
137	" 30,	"	Messageries Maritimes Coal Godown, Praya East, .....	...	...	None	.....	No fire, but the coal was smoking and it was removed.
138	Dec. 1,	7 p.m.	House No. 55, Square Street, .....	...	...	Do.	Incendiary, .....	A piece of rag saturated with kerosine, some matches and joss sticks were found burning at the foot of the staircase.

FIRES AND ALARMS DURING THE YEAR 1887,—Continued.

No.	DATE.	TIME.	SITUATION OF FIRE.	No. OF BUILDING DESTROYED.		DAMAGE.	CAUSE.	REMARKS.
				Wholly.	Partly.			
139	Dec. 1,	9.20 p.m.	House No. 21, Pound Lane,	1	..	\$200	Unknown, .....	Seven people were perished. False alarm. Great confusion was caused amongst the audience. Two men were arrested for raising false alarm.
140	" 1,	9.30 p.m.	Ko Shing Theatre, .....	..	..	None		
141	" 2,	3 p.m.	House No. 55, Square Street, .....	..	..	Do.	Incendiary, .....	Some shavings soaked with kerosine oil were found on the staircase.
142	" 2,	4 p.m.	House No. 55, Square Street, .....	..	..	Do.	Do., .....	A few rags and shavings were discovered alight on the staircase.
143	" 5,	4.15 p.m.	Chimney of No. 3, New West Street, .....	..	..	Do.	Accidental.	Carelessness with joss paper.
144	" 5,	8 p.m.	A bed quilt at house No. 336, Queen's Road West, .....	..	..	Do.	Incendiary.	
145	" 5,	.....	Servant's quarters at Staunton Street, .....	..	..	Do.	Unknown.	A lighted joss stick and a handful of white cotton saturated with kerosine oil were found on the staircase.
146	" 6,	.....	Grass on the hill near Tait'atank, .....	..	..	Slight	Incendiary, .....	
147	" 6,	6 p.m.	House No. 116, Wellington Street, .....	..	..	None	Unknown.	Wong Tai died subsequently.
148	" 7,	1.40 p.m.	Cook house chimney of house No. 31, Elgin Street, .....	..	..	Do.	Unknown.	
149	" 8,	.....	A grass water-proof coat on the hill-side at Yaumati caught fire while Wong Tai, a mendicant was wearing.	..	..	Do.	Accidental while cooking, .....	The contents of house No. 15 were insured for \$6,000 with Messrs. Schellhass & Co.
150	" 11,	6.50 p.m.	House No. 15, Morrison Street, .....	..	2	\$1,800	Unknown, .....	
151	" 20,	5 a.m.	A mosquito curtain at No. 88, Station Street, Yaumati, .....	..	..	Slight	Accidental while smoking opium.	The contents of the house were insured for \$5,000 in Messrs. Schellhass & Co.'s Office.
152	" 20,	5.50 p.m.	House No. 5, Kau-ti-fong, .....	..	4	\$1,500	Accidental, falling of a kerosine lamp.	
153	" 20,	7.20 p.m.	House No. 34, Cochrane Street, .....	..	..	Slight	Upsetting of a kerosine lamp.	Carelessness with some lighted joss sticks.
154	" 24,	6.50 p.m.	Chimney of No. 22, Hing Lung Street, .....	..	..	None	Unknown.	
155	" 26,	7 p.m.	Some wood on the back premises of house No. 112, Holly-wood Road.	..	..	Slight	Carelessness with some lighted joss sticks.	Mr. Ross, the foreman of the Volunteer Brigade, sustained severe injuries.
156	" 28,	1.30 a.m.	House No. 56, Bonham Strand, .....	..	..	\$30,000	Unknown, but very currently reported to have been the act of incendiarism.	
157	" 28,	7.30 p.m.	A stack of grass near the Burning ground at Yaumati, .....	..	..	Unknown	Unknown.	A woman was slightly burnt.
158	" 28,	10.45 p.m.	The temporary Market at Hungk'om, .....	..	..	Do.	Do., .....	
159	" 28,	.....	Matcheds and grass at Wai'sai Gap, .....	..	..	Do.	Do.	A lighted bundle of paper was thrown into the window.
160	" 28,	7.50 p.m.	House No. 223, Queen's Road West, .....	..	..	None	Incendiary, .....	
161	" 31,	1 p.m.	Some books in a drawer at house No. 1, Square Street, .....	..	..	Do.	Carelessness with matches.	

Fire Brigade Office, Hongkong, 13th January, 1888.

H. E. WODEHOUSE,  
Superintendent, Fire Brigade.