

DESPATCHES FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

No. 221.

CIRCULAR.

DOWNING STREET,
17th June, 1911.

SIR,—I have the honour to refer you to Mr. Chamberlain's Circular despatch of the 18th of December, 1897, and to inform you that it appears that the influence of Members of Parliament and others in this country is still sought by some officers in the Colonial Service as a means of bringing their services to the notice of the Secretary of State with a view to consideration for promotion.

2. The objection to such procedure is obvious, but, as it does not seem to be sufficiently realized in some quarters, I shall be glad if you will take steps to make it known again to public officers serving under your Government that this procedure is disapproved. Among other means this and the preceding circular should be published in the Gazette.

3. Arrangements are in existence in this Office which ensure due consideration of the claims of all suitable officers on the occurrence of vacancies in the service. The attempts which have recently been made to obtain promotion by irregular means have not been of advantage to the officers concerned.

I have, etc.,

L. HARCOURT.

The Officer Administering the Government of
HONGKONG.

CIRCULAR.

DOWNING STREET,
18th December, 1897.

SIR,—Letters recommending Colonial officers for promotion or honours are received at this Office from so many correspondents, who appear to have been appealed to on the ground of their supposed influence, but who have neither themselves been connected with the Colonial Service nor are in a position to judge of the merits of other candidates for similar promotion, that I am compelled to request you to make it known among such officers of your Government as it may be likely to affect, that I do not approve of the use of these means to influence my judgment, and that applications of this kind are by no means necessarily of advantage to the persons recommended in obtaining the fulfilment of their wishes.

2. I do not mean to suggest, however, that the great majority of Colonial officers have not already a perception of the drawbacks and the irregularity of the proceedings upon which I have felt it my duty to comment, and this should be stated in the communication which I have directed you to make to your officers on the subject.

3. It should also be stated that I have no wish to discourage direct applications from officers who desire promotion to particular appointments, or who consider that their services entitle them to promotion generally. Such applications will continue to receive my careful consideration, provided, of course, that, if the officer is in the Colony when he applies, the Colonial Regulations as to the transmission of correspondence through the Governor are complied with.

4. If an officer applies while on leave of absence in this country, the application will, when there is any occasion to do so, be referred to the Governor, unless there is a recent report respecting him on record in this Office; and in this connexion I have to call your attention to section 73 of the Colonial Regulations, in which it is laid down that every Governor shall make, once in each year, a confidential report on the claims of candidates for appointment or promotion whom he may consider to possess the necessary qualifications, in order that, when a vacancy occurs, the Secretary of State may have material over and above the immediate recommendation of the Governor, for judging how far the particular candidate recommended is on the whole the best qualified, and whether a candidate of proper qualifications is to be found in that or in any other Colony.

5. I regret to find that, with one or two exceptions, this rule has not of late years been observed, and that, in the case of some Colonies, promotion is therefore apt, occasionally, to go to the man who applies at the right moment rather than to those—possibly the more deserving—who do not press their own claims. In order to prevent such mistakes, I am anxious that the practice of making annual reports should be resumed. I need hardly say that you are not required to report upon the claims of every officer of your Government, which would be unnecessary and impracticable; but I see no reason why you should not be able to supply each year a report upon those officers whose claims to promotion either elsewhere or in the same Colony might reasonably be expected to come shortly under the consideration of the Secretary of State. It is chiefly in connexion with the transfer of officers from one Colony to another that these reports are wanted. In the Eastern Colonies the number of officers who may be desirous of such transfer, and whom it may be feasible to transfer, is comparatively small. On the other hand, in the West African Colonies a very large proportion of the European officers are desirous of being transferred.

6. Subject to these remarks, I leave it to you to determine in the first instance what officers should be reported upon. It will be convenient, for the sake of uniformity, that the reports should be made out on the forms of which I enclose copies; and as far as possible they should be arranged under the heads mentioned in Lord Derby's Circular of the 4th December, 1884,* a copy of which is enclosed, and which need not any longer be treated as confidential. The reports should be sent to me in the first instance as soon as possible after the receipt of this despatch, and in future they should be taken in hand immediately after the annual estimates have been passed and should be despatched so as to reach the Colonial Office as early after the beginning of January as may be practicable.

I should be glad also if you would invariably require officers who may be applicants for promotion to fill in, in the first place, a form of particulars similar to that now transmitted.

I have, etc.,

J. CHAMBERLAIN.

The Officer Administering the Government of
HONGKONG.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

No. 222.—His Majesty the King has not been advised to exercise his power of disallowance with respect to the following Ordinances:—

Ordinance No. 15 of 1911, entitled—An Ordinance to amend the Census Ordinance, 1881.

Ordinance No. 16 of 1911, entitled—An Ordinance to amend the Law with respect to Persons carrying on business as Money-lenders.

Ordinance No. 18 of 1911, entitled—An Ordinance for regulating the supply of Electricity for Lighting and other purposes within the Colony of Hongkong and its Dependencies.

C. CLEMENTI,
Clerk of Councils.

COUNCIL CHAMBER,
25th July, 1911.

APPOINTMENTS, &c.

No. 223.—His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint, under Sub-section 22 of Section 37 of the Merchant Shipping Ordinance, 1899, (Ordinance No. 10 of 1899), Mr. ROBERT HUNTER to be a Surveyor of Boilers of Unlicensed Steamships under 60 tons burden.

25th July, 1911.

* *Note.*—This Circular was not at the time sent to all the Colonies to which it might apply.