

Official Letter which gives a semblance of support to his views. The facts are patent, but what *are* the facts? That certain unseemly sights may be seen here occasionally, which may not be seen in Chinese Towns, proves nothing. Drunkenness is not seen in Chinese Towns.

21. His Lordship is pleased to assume that nothing has been done to lessen the evil. Everything has been done short of a foolish interference with the liberties which would be equally conserved elsewhere. If persons choose to go through the very lowest quarter of a Seaport Town, they must expect to see coarse sights, but that they can go through every street of that lowest quarter without annoyance, risk, or insult, is saying a good deal for any large town.

22. A full Report on the Fire Brigade cannot be looked for from this Office. It may be said nevertheless, that the Chinese Contingent of it is working steadily and well, and that there is every disposition to carry out the wishes of the Executive. It is only justice to the Chinese to add, that the long delay, which took place in forming the Brigade, is more to be attributed to my utter ignorance of how to set about the task, than to any double dealing on their part. The District Watchmen have been found of great use in the work of the Brigade.

23. An examination of the number of cases in which the District Watchmen have brought Offenders to Justice, shews that they have been concerned in 93 such cases, including 123 Defendants, of whom only Nine were discharged. The class of Persons punished through their endeavours may be broadly described as "Thieves," inasmuch as at least three fourths of the cases consist of "Larceny," "Robbery," or "Unlawful Possession." Some few, however, were simply charged with being bad or suspicious characters, and there are also one or two notorious kidnappers who are, happily, in Gaol.

24. The Records however from which these facts are taken, and which only extend over Ten months of the year, (Mr. SMITH having previously reported on January and February) do not adequately represent the service the Watchmen have rendered the Colony. Many cases which must otherwise have gone before the Magistrate, or even before the Supreme Court, have been quietly settled by them to the satisfaction of all parties. The Head Watchmen from their age and authority are often accepted as arbiters of perplexing disputes. Very valuable information has also been collected through them.

25. It is true that a Chinese Police Force will never carry out some of the views of the European Community, but then it is not paid by the European Community. The chief object of the Chinese in paying these Watchmen is to drive away thieves, the cardinal evil of a Shop-keeping population. And it is thought that the Watchmen succeed, not only in arresting actual Offenders, but also in keeping away those who live by pilfering.

26. The Report which appeared, some weeks ago, in a public print, as to a panic amongst the Chinese in regard to the voluntary tax collected amongst themselves for the support of the force, was wholly without foundation. No such panic existed, and if ever it does, it will take the form of a simple discontinuance of the subscription.

27. Much attention has been given to the organization of our Streets. Reforms are in progress for the better control of Street-chairs. An attempt has been made to lessen the number of Hawkers, by a new arrangement of Licenses, which makes unlicensed hawking more difficult. The carrying of Meat through the Streets has been put a stop to, except in stormy weather when boats are unavailable, and up the hill in Sai-Ying-P'ün where no plan but carrying is possible. Though more strictly a Police matter, an effort was made last summer, to prevail on the Chinese Building Contractors to stop the squeaking of the barrows used by their men. It became very evident that the noise *can* be stopped.

28. I may perhaps be allowed to suggest that if the police obtained authority to clear the Streets of the most noisy class of unlicensed hawkers, those, namely, who profess to buy old Copper and Iron, (Mái lán tung lán tit) not only a great annoyance, but also a set of receivers of goods stolen by domestic Servants would be got rid of.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

ALFRED LISTER,  
Acting Registrar General.

The Honourable J. GARDINER AUSTIN,  
Colonial Secretary.

No. 33.

### GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.

The following Circular, of the 11th January, 1869, from The Right Honorable Earl GRANVILLE, K.G., Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, is published for general information.

By Command,

J. GARDINER AUSTIN,  
Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 19th March, 1869.

Circular (1).

DOWNING STREET, 11th January, 1869.

SIR,—I transmit herewith, a copy of a Letter from the Board of Trade, suggesting that a knowledge of the International Code of Signals should be required from Candidates for the position of Masters and Mates in the Mercantile Marine.

viz.:—England.  
France.  
America.  
Denmark.  
Holland.  
Sweden.  
Russia.  
Greece.  
Italy.  
Austria.  
Prussia.  
Spain.  
Portugal.  
Brazil.

That Masters and Mates of Merchant Vessels should be acquainted with a Code of Signals now adopted by the Principal Maritime Nations of the World is so obviously desirable for the interest of Commerce, that I do not doubt the Board of Trade will receive your cordial co-operation in this matter.—I have the honor to be, Sir, Your most obedient humble Servant,

GRANVILLE.

Mr. Gray to the Under Secretary of State, C. O.

BOARD OF TRADE, WHITEHALL, 11th December, 1868.

SIR,—I am directed by the Board of Trade to state, for the information of Earl Granville, that in their opinion the time has arrived when applicants for master's and mate's certificates of competency should possess a knowledge of the International Code of Signals; they have therefore issued directions under the powers vested in them by "The Merchant Shipping Act, 1854," which will prevent certificates being issued in future to any officer of the Mercantile Marine in this country, unless and until he passes a successful examination in the Commercial Code of Signals.

The Board of Trade are anxious that this additional requirement in the examination of candidates for masters and mates, examined in this country for certificates of competency, should be generally known, and they think that it would be well if a similar regulation were enforced in all British possessions abroad, where masters and mates are examined for certificates of competency.

I am, therefore, to enclose copies of the heads of examination referred to, \* in order that Earl Granville may, should he see fit, communicate them to the officers administering the government of British possessions abroad.—I am, &c.

(Signed) THOMAS GRAY.

\* These may be seen on application at the Harbor Master's Office.