

GOVERNMENT HOUSE,
HONGKONG, 27th July, 1878.

SIR,—After giving my best consideration to your letter of the 29th of June, and with the most anxious desire to meet your wishes, I do not think I should be justified in recommending any further appropriation from the Treasury of this Colony for the China Famine Relief Fund.

2. My predecessor, Sir ARTHUR KENNEDY, obtained a vote of \$1,380 and I had the satisfaction of obtaining the consent of the Legislative Council, and of Sir MICHAEL HICKS-BEACH to a further vote of \$10,000. In addition to this, the European Community here subscribed about \$12,900, and the Chinese Community about \$108,000; being a total of over one hundred and thirty-two thousand dollars.

3. Looking to the limited population of this Colony, it may perhaps be only fair to say, that no Community in any part of the Globe has contributed more, in proportion, for the Famine Fund than the Community of Hongkong.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

J. POPE HENNESSY.

W. S. WETMORE, Esquire,
*Chairman of the
China Famine Relief Fund.*

CHINESE HOUSES.

The following Documents relating to the structures of Chinese Houses in the Chinese part of the Town of Victoria, are published for general information.

By Command,

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 27th July, 1878.

PRICE,
Secretary.

(Translation.)

To His Excellency

JOHN POPE HENNESSY, I.G.,
Governor of Hongkong,
&c., &c., &c.

The humble Memorial of the undersigned, Land Owners
and Residents in the Colony of Hongkong.

SHEWETH:—Your Memorialists venture to memorialize your Excellency with reference to the following subject:—

A letter has been brought to their notice recently addressed by the Honourable Mr. PRICE, Surveyor General, to Mr. R. G. ALFORD, regarding certain plans for Chinese houses, prepared by the latter, as Architect, for Mr. LEE TAK CHEONG and others, which had been officially laid before Mr. PRICE. Your Memorialists observe from this letter that your Excellency concurs in objections raised to these plans by the Surveyor General on the ground that houses built in accordance with them would be unhealthy, and in the suggestions made by the Surveyor General for improving the ventilations of the houses by widening an alley space already allowed for in one plan, and by allowing space for two alleys where such had not been provided for in the other.

The terms of Mr. PRICE's letter lead your Memorialists to infer that your Excellency in concurring in the suggested alterations and the reasons for them is, to a certain extent, laying down or is prepared to lay down general principles for the guidance of all land owners intending to build Chinese houses, because having been shewn the plans in question they observe that the buildings as designed are for a very superior class of residence, that they provide for the ordinary requirements of

Chinese tenants in a satisfactory manner, and from their point of view seem in no way deficient in regard to supplying the space for the admission of light and air which is required by their habits, ideas and wants.

Now these habits although your Memorialists are given to understand that they are condemned by the more recent rules of Western science are, as a matter of fact, the outcome of a lengthened experience among the Chinese of living in large and crowded cities, and are as deep rooted as most of their social customs, so that it is quite certain that the tenants for whom these houses are intended as they would not understand the reason, would in no way avail themselves of the facilities for the free access of light and air which the Surveyor General's proposed alterations would provide for them.

The windows looking out into the proposed alleys would be kept closed and the alleys themselves not being intended for use as thoroughfares would be made receptacles for the deposit of refuse and filth which would beyond question be suffered to accumulate to an extent in itself dangerous to health.

Such in fact has been the practical result of providing similar alley ways in other parts of this city as, for instance, in East and West Streets, Taipingshan, where, owing probably in great measure to this cause, epidemic diseases are frequent in the hot season, and at times when houses in Tung-mun Lane, Gilman's Bazaar and other streets leading from the Queen's Road to the Praya where houses have been built back to back remain altogether free from such visitations.

The great cities in the mainland of China such as Canton and Fatshan, are singularly free also from epidemic disease, and there all along the streets and main thoroughfares it has been the practice from time immemorial to build the houses back to back.

In Hongkong, as your Excellency is aware, land has become extremely valuable, and in order to make it profitable as an investment, it is necessary to take advantage to the utmost of the space at command. Chinese tenants are, as a rule, on the other hand, unable or unwilling to pay high rents for their dwelling rooms, and it is only by so dividing the houses that many families or persons can reside in each division that Chinese property is made profitable and at the same time the necessary lowness of rents attained. Having regard then to Chinese habits, it is practically certain that all available building space taken out from any given plot of land for the mere purpose of ventilation will be so much taken away from the comfort of the tenants and will only lead to further overcrowding.

Again, the open spaces never being used as thoroughfares, and consequently never properly lighted, will be a great nuisance to the police, and both as hiding-places for thieves and as easy access to them in both sides will afford special facilities for robbery, the escape of burglars and the consequent plunder.

For the foregoing among other reasons your Memorialists venture to point out to your Excellency that the principle of providing alley spaces for the purposes of admitting light and air to Chinese residences would meet with but little measure of success and would be in no way appreciated by those whom it is kindly intended to benefit. On the other hand, it is certainly calculated to alarm and irritate those interested in land and to depreciate the value of property. It is a principle never, as they believe, hitherto carried into effect in Hongkong, based upon no local Ordinance, and investors who have bought land have done so in ignorance that they would have to abide by it.

Your Memorialists belong to a law abiding order, to whom, as the long experience of the Government of this Colony has shown, factious opposition is unknown: and they should not in this instance depart from their usual habit of silent submission to such laws and regulations as are made for their obedience, if they did not feel strongly that the points apparently decided in the letter of the Honourable the Surveyor General tend to pass with injustice upon them, and are such as they think ought not to be finally decided without their having a hearing and some voice in such final decision.

Within the limits of a Memorial such as this, it is not possible to enter fully into the details of all the objections which exist on the part of your Memorialists to the conclusion arrived at, or to do more than indicate the arguments by which their objections can be supported; but they think they have sufficiently succeeded in shewing that the matter should not be allowed to rest where it is, and that it is of sufficient public importance to require a further investigation.

Your Memorialists therefore humbly pray that your Excellency will be pleased to take the subject matter of this Memorial into your consideration and cause enquiries to be made either by means of a Commission appointed to take such evidence as your Memorialists may be able to lay before it and to hear their arguments, or by such other means as may seem to your Excellency to be best fitted to elicit the truth.

Hongkong, 24th May, 1878.

(Signed,)	LEONG ON.	(Signed,)	CHEA TAT SHING.
"	NG SHANG.	"	WONG YIK PUN.
"	NG YIN.	"	LEE TAK CHEUNG.
"	TUNG WA HOSPITAL.	"	SZ TO WAI.
"	CHEUK TO.	"	WONG YIK HIN.
"	LEE TSEUNG.	"	LEE HING.
"	KWOK ACHEONG.	"	SHAY HOP TUK TONG.
"	LEE SING.	"	YUNG LEUNG.
"	LEE CHUN.	"	CHUN KUN.
"	CHEANG SING YEONG.	"	YIP WONG.
"	YIP CHOOK KAI.	"	NG SHANG.
"	CHEUK LUENG.	"	KWOK SHOONG TAK.
"	NG WAI.	"	LEE TSEUNG.
"	CHUN AYAU.	"	KO MOON WAH.
"	LEE KAT.	"	KUM CHEUNG.
"	CHUN YOW.	"	CHUN HEE.
"	CHUN SHING.	"	YIP CHIM.
"	CHEANG YEW SHEK.	"	LEUNG KWONG.
"	CHEUNG KAI.	"	SHEE YOW.
"	NG TSEUNG.	"	YEE ON.
"	LEUNG YIP SHOW.	"	LO YUM KAI.
"	LUM ASOW.	"	TANG LUK.
"	TSO YOW.	"	WONG SHING.
"	LEUNG TSO KUN.	"	HO SOW KAI.
"	YEONG PAT.	"	WAI YUK.
"	PANG WAH.	"	WONG SHU TONG.
"	CHAN SHUNG LAI.	"	WONG SHEH TAI.
"	TAM SHAN.	"	WONG YIP HUNE.
"	PANG YUK LEONG.	"	HO WOON SHING.
"	TSANG HOONG.	"	WONG TSOI TIN.
"	LEE SHING HO.	"	WONG YEW.
"	PANG HEUNG.	"	WUN KUM CHOONG.
"	CHOY CHAN.	"	YEONG MOW.
"	MOK SZ YEUNG.	"	YOO WAI.
"	PANG SHUT.	"	HO TUK.
"	LO CHEUNG.	"	LOK.
"	YEUNG SHU LUN.	"	LONG PO.

Minute by His Excellency the Governor.

This Memorial, which relates to the structure of purely Chinese houses in the Chinese quarter of the town, is signed by nearly all the leading Chinese inhabitants of Hongkong, in fact it is signed by those intelligent and influential Chinese residents whose views with respect to such questions are entitled to the greatest weight.

Agreeing with them in the general principle which they have now put before me, I would be glad to learn that the Memorialists could see their views conforming to the essentially Chinese style of dwelling common both to Canton and Hongkong, and which, while economizing space to the utmost, admits of a certain amount of light and ventilation through the small square spaces left at the back, called smoke-holes.

J. POPE HENNESSY.
13th July, 1878.

With reference to the foregoing documents, the following Supplementary Conditions to the form of Guarantee required to be signed by all persons allowed to erect Verandahs over Crown Land, will in future be enforced in respect to the arrangement of properties in crowded localities, at the discretion of His Excellency the Governor.

In consideration of the privileges afforded by this Verandah being erected over Crown Land, I hereby undertake, in reference to the arrangement of all dwellings to be constructed upon the Lot before named during the continuance of such privilege, that with a view to improved sanitary measures being observed:—

1. So long as a continuous blank wall forms the back of any Tenement not adjoining a side street, an open yard shall be provided between the house and its kitchen of the full width of the said house and of a depth proportionate to the number of stories contained therein, viz., 4 feet deep for every house of two floors high (including the ground floor), 5 feet deep for every house three floors high, and increasing 1 foot in depth for every story in height beyond.

2. That the said yard shall not at any time be tiled over or covered in except by such bridges (roofed on the top floor only) of a width of not over 4 feet each as may be necessary to afford access to the kitchens from the upper floors, and that the said yards shall be paved with granite.

3. That in case the party or external walls of such contiguous yards shall be built up above the ground floor there shall be provided on each side of every yard and at the level of every floor an aperture for ventilation through such party or external wall of a size of not less than 6 feet by 3 feet, in which no windows, jalousies or obstruction shall be placed, other than iron bars for the protection of property.

4. That the utmost endeavours shall be used to cause the Tenants of the houses to keep the said open yards in such free and clean condition as shall allow of the continuous passage of air through them on the level of every floor from one end of such block of buildings to the other.

No. 146.

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.

The following Extract from the *London Gazette* of Tuesday, May 14th, 1878, is published for general information.

By Command,

J. M. PRICE,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 26th July, 1878.

Foreign Office, May 14, 1878.

Major WODEHOUSE, Her Majesty's Commissioner and Consul-General at Honolulu, has reported that the Hawaiian Government withdraw the Notice to terminate Articles V and VI of the Treaty of July 10, 1851, between Great Britain and the Sandwich Islands.

The Notice to terminate Article IV of that Treaty, as announced in the *Londo. Gazette* of February 19, 1878, is maintained.

No. 147.

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.

His Excellency the Governor is pleased to direct that Monday, 31st August, being a Bank Holiday, is to be observed as such in all Government Departments.

By Command,

J. M. PRICE,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 26th July, 1878.

No. 148.

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.

His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to recognize provisionally and pending the receipt of Her Majesty's Exequatur, Don JOSÉ VELEZ as Vice-Consul for Spain at this Port.

By Command,

J. M. PRICE,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 26th July, 1878.

No. 149.

GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.

The following Return of Births and Deaths for the 2nd Quarter ending 30th June, 1878, received from the Registrar General's Office, is published for general information.

By Command,

J. M. PRICE,
Acting Colonial Secretary.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 26th July, 1878.