

HONGKONG.

THE ASSESSOR'S REPORT ON THE ASSESSMENT FOR 1893-94.

*Laid before the Legislative Council by Command of His Excellency
the Governor, on the 17th July, 1893.*

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 19th June, 1893.

SIR,—I have the honour to submit my fourth Annual Report, on the Assessment for the year 1893-94.

2. By order of His Excellency the Governor in Council, I have made a new Valuation of the whole Colony, which comprises the City of Victoria, the Hill District, the Chinese Villages in Hongkong, Kowloon Point, and the Chinese Villages in British Kowloon.

3. The City of Victoria is divided into ten (10) rating districts, and, counting each village, &c. as an unit, there are eighty (80) rating districts, or areas, in the whole Colony.

4. The number of houses reported to be vacant, and inspected under Section 35 of the Rating Ordinance, has been about the same as in the previous year, when I estimated the number of inspections at 3,500.

5. During the period from 1st July, 1892, to 1st June, 1893, Interim Valuations were made as follows :—

In the City of Victoria.

155 new tenements with a rateable value of	\$46,630
54 improved tenements with a rateable value of	\$67,740
replacing existing assessments amounting to	\$51,775

In the rest of the Colony.

143 tenements with a rateable value of	\$56,962
re-placing then current assessments of.....	\$27,112

The total Interim Assessments for the whole Colony being 352 tenements with a gross rateable value of \$171,332 less \$78,887, on account of assessments cancelled, leaving an increase of \$92,445.

6. The result of the new General Valuation is that the Rateable Value of the Colony as a whole has increased by \$6,247 or 0.17 per cent.

7. There is a decrease in the City of Victoria of \$21,761 or 0.68 per cent. accounted for *firstly* by a continuance of the causes affecting the rental value of property, and *secondly* by certain tenements having been demolished since the last Valuation, and therefore not being rateable, and by property having gone out of rating in previous years, and not yet having been replaced. These properties include the new building for the Chartered Bank adjoining the Hongkong & Shanghai Bank, the Offices at the corner of Ice House Street and Queen's Road, the new store near to Messrs. LANE & CRAWFORD'S, 52 houses in course of construction upon the site of the Godowns, Praya West, near the Sailors' Home, and several other tenements in various localities. Nearly all of the properties referred to above will become rateable during the ensuing year, and I estimate the Rateable Value to be at least \$40,000.

8. I estimate the gross loss to Rateable Value in Victoria attributable to depreciation in rentals at \$129,340 equal to 4.08 per cent. This shows a slight improvement on last year's return when the reduction from this cause was \$145,720 or 4.44 per cent. The gain from new and improved property is \$107,579, which, deducted from the above mentioned \$129,320, leaves a net decrease of \$21,761 on the Valuation of the City of Victoria.

9. The Rateable Value of the Hill District shews a decrease of \$6,030 equivalent to 6.46 per cent. 71.31 per cent. of this arises at the Magazine Gap District, where rents generally have fallen considerably. Since the Valuation was completed, I find that, in two or three instances, houses at the "Peak" have been let at improved rents, and there are indications of better figures being obtainable in the future.

10. In Kowloon Point there is an increase of \$2,190 or 2.18 per cent. Yau-ma-ti and Hung-Hom shew increases of \$1,470 (3.46 per cent.) and \$929 (1.22 per cent.) respectively, Kowloon Villages, *i.e.*, the whole of the Peninsula excluding Kowloon Point exhibit an increase in Rateable Value of \$4,354 or 2.54 per cent.

11. Hongkong Villages have increased in Rateable Value \$27,494 equal to 27.73 per cent. \$16,822 of this is owing to the extensions at the Tai Koo Sugar Refinery at Quarry Bay. Increases are also seen at Aberdeen and Shau Ki Wan of \$3,752 (19.69 per cent.) and \$2,404 (20.61 per cent.) respectively.

Out of a total of 68 Villages in the Colony, only 9 have decreased in Rateable Value, the total reduction being \$1,135 against an increase of \$32,983 in the other 59 Villages.

12. The Village Rolls throughout the Colony have been carefully revised, and the houses wholly re-numbered. I take this opportunity to thank the Honourable the Director of Public Works for the valuable assistance rendered me by Mr. KING, the Land Bailiff, in obtaining squatters' names, and in the identification of houses where the numbers had been obliterated, or where from other causes difficulties arose.

As the Village Lists are now more complete than has been the case previously, I have the honour to suggest that an Annual Valuation of the outlying districts is not necessary. If arrangements could be made for the Land Bailiff to supply me with a periodical return, half-yearly or yearly, of all changes in ownership which come under his observation, together with a list of new dwellings, &c. and those pulled down or removed, a general revision of the country districts, excepting the more important places, such as Shau Ki Wan, Aberdeen, Hung Hom and Yau-ma-ti once in three or five years, or even less frequently, would be quite sufficient.

13. I annex Table "A" giving a comparison of the Valuations of 1892-93 and 1893-94 for the City of Victoria, the amount increased or decreased in each district, and the net decrease; Table "B" giving similar comparisons for the Hill District, Hongkong Villages, Kowloon Point and Kowloon Villages; Table "C" a summary for the whole Colony.

14. I venture to express the opinion that the result of the year's work as shewn above cannot be considered other than gratifying. It certainly proves that "the Colony as a whole is progressing."

15. Mr. LAU-HI-TO, my late Interpreter, died from Beri-beri on 3rd December last, and his place has been efficiently filled by Mr. IP YUK PUI, who is employed temporarily. The Clerk to Assessor, Mr. CH'AN PUI, continues to give satisfaction.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

ARTHUR CHAPMAN,
Assessor.

The Honourable N. G. MITCHELL-INNES,
Colonial Treasurer.

Table A.
CITY OF VICTORIA.

DISTRICT.		VALUATION 1892-93.	VALUATION 1893-94.	INCREASE.	DECREASE.
No.	Name.				
1	Kennedy Town,.....	\$ 17,225	\$ 18,940	\$ 1,715	\$...
2	Shek Tong Tsui,.....	109,110	113,964	4,854	...
3	Sai Ying Pun,.....	637,115	640,770	3,655	...
4	Tai Ping Shan,.....	333,855	325,810	...	8,045
5	Sheung Wan,.....	418,345	412,830	...	5,515
6	Chung Wan,.....	1,288,080	1,278,005	...	10,075
7	Ha Wan,.....	148,270	143,815	...	4,455
8	Wan Tsai,.....	114,395	112,440	...	1,955
9	Bowrington,.....	43,210	42,710	...	500
10	So Kon Po,.....	57,565	56,125	...	1,440
		\$ 3,167,170	\$ 3,145,409	\$ 10,224	\$ 31,985
DEDUCT INCREASE,.....					10,224
TOTAL DECREASE,.....					\$ 21,761

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Table B.

THE HILL DISTRICT, HONGKONG VILLAGES, KOWLOON POINT, KOWLOON VILLAGES.

LOCALITY.	VALUATION 1892-93.	VALUATION 1893-94.	INCREASE.	DECREASE.
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Hill District,.....	93,260	87,230	.....	6,080
Hongkong Villages,	99,118	126,612	27,494
Kowloon Point,.....	100,080	102,270	2,190
Kowloon Villages,	171,318	175,672	4,354

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Table C.

THE COLONY OF HONGKONG.

LOCALITY.	VALUATION 1892-93.	VALUATION 1893-94.	INCREASE.		DECREASE.	
			Amount.	Per-centage.	Amount.	Per-centage.
City of Victoria,.....	\$ 3,167,170	\$ 3,145,409	...	%	\$ 21,761	0.68
Hill District,	93,260	87,230	...	...	6,080	6.46
Hongkong Villages,	99,118	126,612	27,494	27.73	...	...
Kowloon Peninsula,	271,398	277,942	6,544	2.41	...	...
	\$ 3,630,946	\$ 3,637,193	\$34,038	...	\$27,791	...
		Deduct Decrease,.....	27,791	...		
		Total net Increase in the Rateable Value of the whole Colony,...	\$ 6,247	= 0.17 per cent.		

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