

HONGKONG.

MEMORIAL RESPECTING GAOL EXTENSION.

Laid before the Legislative Council by Command of His Excellency the Governor, on the 25th January, 1893.

HONGKONG, 6th January, 1893.

SIR,

We beg most respectfully to thank you for having given us an opportunity to express our views on the question of the Gaol extension—an opportunity which we gladly avail ourselves of inasmuch as we and the overwhelming majority of the other members of the Chinese community are strongly opposed to the Gaol being extended in any way for the following reasons:—

1. Because the accommodation provided by the existing buildings is ample, so much so that the prisoners have more space allowed them than they have ever had when not in prison. In a word, they are far better off in gaol than out of it.

2. Because the Gaol is already looked upon as a paradise by many a rascal, and situated as we are within a stone's throw of the Chinese territory, any extension of the Gaol will certainly lead to an influx of bad characters from China.

3. Because we differ from the view of those who allege that the separate system will act as a deterrent to Chinese prisoners. We have no hesitation in saying that such an opinion must be formed through ignorance of the habits of the Chinese criminals who will be in no way deterred by having to live in separate cells.

4. Because the gaols in China, to which the Chinese criminals who come to Hongkong have always been accustomed, cannot be in any way compared with the Gaol in Hongkong. They are so arranged that bad characters are afraid of committing crimes in case they may be lodged in them. The present Victoria Gaol does not inspire much fear, and it would inspire still less if made more comfortable which would most certainly lead to an increase of crime, as criminals will have no dread of entering it.

5. Because we are of the opinion that the most efficacious way to prevent persons from committing crimes in the Colony is not to enlarge the Gaol but to use more freely the power of banishment and the rattan, and to make the prisoners' life not so much a life of ease as it is at present.

Honourable J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,

Registrar General.

In conclusion, we beg to point out that being Chinese ourselves, it is not likely that we would discourage the Government from doing anything for the real benefit of our own countrymen, which would be of advantage to the Chinese community generally. But, in the present instance, being convinced that the extension of the Gaol would bring harm to the community, and would lead to a large influx of criminals into the Colony, and a great increase in crime, we feel compelled to sincerely state our views, which, we trust, His Excellency the Governor may be pleased to consider favourably.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servants,

WEI A YUK, J.P.
 LAU WAI CHÜN, J.P.
 SEUNG SZ KAI, J.P.
 IP JUCK KAI.
 HO FOOK, J.P.
 CHAN PAN POO.
 LAW YAM CHUEN.
 C. CHEE BEE, J.P.
 POON PONG.
 HO KAI, J.P., M.L.C.
 CH'AN A FOOK, J.P.
 WONG SHING, J.P.
 CHOW PENG, J.P.
 CHEN QUAN EE, J.P.
 KAW HONG TAKE, J.P.
 WOO LIN YUEN, J.P.
 HO TUNG, J.P.