

LATEST NEWS FROM CHINA.

Early this forenoon we received the *Canton Press* of the 5th and Singapore *Free Press* of the 17th ultimo, as also private advices from Macao dated the 6th of the same month; up to which time the *Ardaser* had not arrived. The intelligence from China is not important, but we have been nevertheless induced to publish an extra, as there is no probability of any later news arriving prior to the departure of the overland mail on the evening of Monday next. Sir Henry Pottinger is still at Hongkong. His Excellency has issued several proclamations, declaring Tinghai and Hongkong free ports. He has also endeavoured to encourage trade at Kolangsoo (near Amoy) by guaranteeing, in the event of the place being, at any future period, evacuated by the British forces, that ample time to remove their property, shall be allowed to merchants and other settlers. His Excellency has also attempted to give greater confidence to the Chinese inhabitants of Chusan, and to induce them to be less reserved in transacting business with the British, by assuring them that should the island ever be again given up to the Emperor it will be the care of Her Britannic Majesty's representative to insist on an Imperial Edict being first issued guaranteeing an amnesty to all Chinese who may have fallen under the displeasure of their own Government, by holding communication with foreigners.

All was quiet at Canton, and business extremely dull. The populace had latterly evinced a strong disposition to insult foreigners. It was also rumoured that several Russian officers had arrived in the City from Peking; and were actively employed in instructing the Chinese in the art of war.

By the latest accounts from Macao. Opium was selling at the following low rates.

Patna from.....	435	to	440 dollars.
Malwa ".....	340	to	350 "

The *Fattay Salam* with the Bengal volunteers left on the 6th March for Singapore.

The intended attack on Hong-chow was postponed in consequence of Sir Hugh Gough deeming it necessary to disperse, in the first instance, a large body of Chinese Troops which had again assembled near Yuyao.

CHINA.

HONGKONG.

(From the *Canton Press*, July 25.)

Although to our local readers a description of Hongkong may be of little interest, most of them having either been there lately, or compelled to live in Hongkong Bay on board their ships, after they forced them to leave Macao on August 4th, 1839, it is interesting to give a slight outline of its position, and to state, for as our observation of a few days enabled us to make, may not be unacceptable.

The projected town of Hongkong extends along the shore of the bay in a direction almost due east to west, about four miles, the last now occupied points to the east being the peninsula on which Messrs. Jardine, Matheson & Co. are building, and to the west a battery now occupied by the Bengal Volunteers. These two extreme points of the town are connected by a road, the cutting of which, from the inequality of ground must have been a work of considerable labour, but which from the convenience it affords the settlers amply repays the trouble and expense. This road is so cut as to leave generally enough space between it and the water, for the erection of godowns, and this space has been parcelled out into water frontage lots, of 100 feet frontage each, and many of them were last July disposed of to merchants at auction for a certain annual quit-rent, while the government reserved a great proportion for their own purposes. Great bustle and preparation is at present observable on these water frontage lots; on five or six of them substantial godowns, built of brick, with a foundation of granite, which of a good quality abounds every where on the island, have already been erected; whilst almost on all the others belonging to private individuals the ground is levelled, foundation for building are being laid, and piers of granite run out into the water for the greater convenience of landing goods. One of the largest warehouses as yet erected, has lately been purchased by government. On one part of the road the space between it and the water is occupied by one of the Chinese bazars, which still chiefly consists of matches; but brick buildings are fast rising, and we doubt not that in a very short time no others will be seen there, since the great danger from fire will, suggest to the occupants the greater economy of substantial buildings, even were the authorities not to interfere.

The ground immediately contiguous to the road on the other side away from the water is divided into what are called town lots, and their number and depth along the road varies according to the nature of the ground, which sometimes rises abruptly, not affording building room, whilst at other places, buildings may be erected a considerable distance inland. On these town lots several dwelling houses have already been erected, and the applications for lots, particularly from the Chinese, are very numerous. Two streets forming a bazaar, built of brick houses are in a state of great forwardness; these houses, generally, we believe, 15 feet street frontage and about 35 feet deep, pay an annual groundrent of five dollars each, and other town lots pay in the same proportion to their size. The prices realized for the water frontage lots are much higher, and those apportioned since the public sale, are to pay quit rent in proportion to the prices realized at that sale.

Beyond the town lots, are the suburban lots, and these, we imagine, extend over the whole island; their value is much less, and will of course be governed by circumstances.

The government buildings consist at present of a Magistracy, a large and convenient brick building, just finished; the post office, record and land office, the jail, and several other small buildings, some warehouses, and several barracks either finished or building.

We have thus given in a few words an imperfect outline of the town of Hongkong, and from what we have said, it will be seen that a very large sum of money must already have been laid out by government and private individuals, of course under the conviction that Hongkong will remain a permanent possession of the British Crown; no orders from the government concerning it are however as yet understood to have been received by the British authorities in China; and although we firmly believe that it will never be restored to the Chinese, yet the uncertainty on this head has considerably retarded the success of the establishment, which however cannot fail in the end. Its situation for mercantile purposes is admirable; it skirts along a magnificent bay, in which ships of all

sizes and numbers may find shelter at all times, and although in July last year the typhoons did considerable damage, all the ships that had paid due attention to the signs of the weather, and taken the necessary precautions escaped unhurt. It is in the immediate neighbourhood of Canton river, and cannot, long at least as the present difficulties last, fail to attract a great portion of the trade of Canton; it is within a few days sail as the monsoon may be, from the mercantile provinces of Fuhkeen, several of whose junks have already gone there, and there is little doubt that a considerable trade would already at this moment be carrying on, had not that most injudicious measure of seizing the junks, and condemning them as prizes, driven for the present all commerce away; and although, since the Plenipotentiary's return from the northward, orders in future not to molest Chinese trading vessels have been given, and to restore such as had not at the time of his arrival been sold, yet it will be sometime ere confidence can be restored. Just now, whilst the trade at Canton continues open and unmolested, that carried on at Hongkong is of little consequence, and chiefly confined to Opium, and here and there a few manufactured goods may be disposed of, or a little tea and cassia purchased. The trade now carried on by the Chinese population is with the exception of salt, of which already Hongkong is said to have become a depot chiefly confined to their immediate wants. This population, composed of mechanics, shopkeepers, and labourers has, we think been overrated at 15,000. We are aware that without a census it is almost impossible to arrive at numbers with any degree of correctness, yet we should think little more than half that number to be nearer the truth.

If however, in a mercantile view, the situation of Hongkong be so very desirable, considering it as a place of residence, its locality offers many drawbacks to its other advantages. It stretches as before said along the bay from east to west, with a southern aspect; it is consequently open to the piercing northwinds in winter; whilst in summer the very high hills which rise abruptly immediately behind it and behind which the setting sun now disappears to the Hongkongians before four o'clock, preclude the possibility of its being cooled, by the southerly winds, prevailing during the south west monsoon. It must therefore be very cool in winter, and almost insufferably hot in summer. We have hardly yet obtained sufficient experience to know whether this formation will be favourable to health or otherwise; the latter may be apprehended, and indeed a good deal of fever prevailed during the warm season and till late last year, but there were several causes then besides the climate to account for its appearance. At the time of our visit the place was perfectly healthy. A great advantage is its being so well supplied with very fine water. Wherever we have been dug, water has been found of good quality at a small depth; and in a well lately dug behind the magistracy, although at a considerable elevation water was found at the inconsiderable depth of 8 feet. Besides the wells there are numbers of rivulets, which gives a sufficient supply at all seasons.

The road running through the town of Hongkong is contained all through the island to its southern extremity at Tytam bay, at the village of Cheekheuen. It is a work of great labor, for during the whole extent of about 8 or 9 miles it is cut into the sides of hills, or leads over ravines, and manifest considerable engineering skill, not however wholly accessible to the English engineer, as some part of it had already been made by the Chinese, and has only been improved and widened at present. The interior of the island presents scenes as wild as can be; it is with the exception of a few small valleys, from which the industrious Chinese reap scanty crops of rice and wheat, nothing but a wild jumble of hills, that generally seem to rise in an angle of about 45 degrees, and in many instances are even much steeper. They are covered with a scanty vegetation of brush-wood and fern, and stunted fire trees may be found here and there, although, where the soil is cultivated, fruit and other trees seem to thrive well. It would be therefore a work of immense expense, if at all feasible to mark the road fit for carriages; at present, with the exception of a few spots, gullies over which the bridges have not been completed, a horse may be road to Tytam bay. This bay, near which and the village of Cheekheuen there is plenty of ground for building a considerable town, is as far as regards climate, much more favourable situated than Hongkong; it is sheltered from the north, and open to the south winds, but unfortunately the bay though spacious, is not sufficiently sheltered from the southwinds, to allow of ships anchoring there during the south monsoon. Another place, Cheekpwan to the southwest of the Island, is said to offer a situation for a settlement more favourable than either Hongkong or Tytam bay; but the water here is shallow, and the ground is very low. At Cheekheuen one barracks for 35 men, and an officer's house is already completed, and the foundation for another barracks of the same size laid down.

THE IDLER IN HONGKONG.

No. 2.

As promised in my last, I now send you some remarks on our projected town, you will find a Fort is now building on Kellett's Island, which was intended, but certainly does not command the Leimoon passage. The value of this fort will be only estimated, when I say that it is regarded with a contemptuous smile of derision by the competent authorities of Hongkong who have christened it "Gough's Folly;" and who confidently averred that the arrival of the Plenipotentiary would be the signal for the abandonment of the work. The reason now alleged for its prosecution is, that a contract had previously been made for its completion; so completed it will be, and thus heedlessly are the public funds wasted, for it is now found that the point beyond must also be fortified, as a work there would command the Leimoon passage, and thus protect one of the entrances to the harbor. It is rumoured that fortifying Kellett's Island, is a pet project of Hugh Gough's, whose prepossessions in this respect are shared by our Lieutenant Governor and by no one else.

A casual observer would say that this fort was specially constructed to protect the magnificent establishment of an eminent firm, which is proposed to be erected on the point immediately contiguous. I know not whether Sir Hugh Gough be an Irishman but certainly this erection is a practical bull, as he ought to have built, not a fort, but a magazine in such a position. In reference to similar blunder the witty Dean of St. Patrick's extemporised as follows:—

"A solid proof of Irish sense,
Here Irish wit is seen,
For where the fools have built the Fort,
They should have built their magazine."

But to resume. Going westward we encounter half moon battery or platform, which is to mount some half dozen heavy guns on carriages. This work is in front of the barracks, now occupied by the 37th native Infantry, and a similar one is constructing, at the extreme west of the town, to protect the barracks there, and at which are stationed the Bengal Volunteers.

The battery eastward is dignified Pottinger, whether commemorative of the Plenipotentiary's rapid ad-

vance, and glorious successes in the north, or his speedy and prudent return to the south, we have not yet discovered. We would venture to suggest that the battery westward should be named Ochterlony, in compliment to the talented superintending engineer officer of that name who, on all and every occasion, has most unequivocally shown his thorough identification with the best interests of Hongkong.

With regard to the barracks now occupied by European troops, and so much complained of, it is but justice to Captain Mylius (the land officer, and director of public works) to say, they were originally built, and intended for sepoy and in point of convenience are fully equal to any similar erection in India. That barracks adapted to European troops, with proper officers quarters, have not been erected, is not the fault of Captain Mylius, as from his professional reputation, coupled with the enormous charge of the transport service, he could not fail to have pointed out to the authorities the expediency of this measure. And we are assured that fully 140,000 dollars have thus been misapplied, during the last four or five months a sum fully adequate to the construction in the best manner, of all requisite barracks, commissariat godowns, &c. &c.

We shall be grievously deceived if some very stringent queries are not put in St. Stephens touching this matter; as also about the seizure of the junks, flogging of Chinamen, Ningpo prize-money, and other matters which shall be at present nameless—such interrogatories will, we are afraid, place some of our magnates in no very enviable position at home; where we defy them to be able

To prove by reason, in reason's despite,
That white is black, and black is white,
That right is wrong, and wrong is right.

We believe that orders have at last been given by the Plenipotentiary for the disembarkation of the troops, paying off of the transport, and erection of barracks; if so, then his visit to Hongkong will not be altogether useless.

The barracks on the other side of the Island are situated at Chekehen and seem admirably adapted for the purpose, and every way creditable to the judgment of Captain Mylius, who we are sorry to hear, is soon to leave this to join his regiment in the north, and whose departure will be much regretted; as, in an untiring zeal and industry, he superadds far more intelligence and businesslike attention than is ordinarily found in a temporary occupant of a colonial office.

It is not yet known who is to be his successor in an office the importance of which cannot be over estimated, whether we regard the health, comfort or prosperity of the future Colony.

The intended town of Hongkong should be one of the most salubrious in the world, and as respects the health of its inhabitants no site more eligible, provided proper local regulations be made and enforced by the authorities; in respect of whose duties, we shall not (if asked what they are) reply as the present premier, Sir Robert Peel, did, viz: "It will be time enough to offer advice when it is asked of us in office" but we shall most patriotically inform them what to do and how to do it, that is if we are not better employed.

Before concluding, we are compelled to remark that the deepest dissatisfaction is felt by the Hongkongians, at the ominous silence of the Plenipotentiary, relative to the permanent occupation of the Island. In many, perhaps in most cases, silence is wisdom, and the well known aversion of the colonial office at home to new settlements, on the score of expense, is as regards Hongkong deemed no valid excuse for the dogged taciturnity, and which, if persisted in will cause us to ask "what does he in the south when he should serve his sovereign in the north!"

We should ourselves say from some consideration of the matter, that Hongkong as a Free Port and without any exclusive rights or privileges could not fail (except under the most deplorably inefficient government) to pay *aboriginally* all the expenses of the necessary establishments and offices which are now, or may hereafter be required, thus costing John Bull not a farthing. And we would further add, that only the principles of political economy, and modern colonization can prevent Hongkong from becoming, other than a self sustaining colony, and one of the most important commercial entrepôts in the east.

(From the *Hongkong Gazette* of 26th Feby.)

The following proclamation issued on the 14th day December last, by Her Britannic Majesty's Plenipotentiary, &c., &c., in China, is now published for general information.

PROCLAMATION.

The undermentioned, Plenipotentiary, &c., of Her Britannic Majesty, publicly notified, by a Proclamation dated on the sixth day of October last, that the city of Tinghai, and the island of Chusan, and its dependencies, would not be restored to the Emperor's authority until the demands of England against China should not only be acceded to, but carried into complete execution; and the inhabitants were therefore invited to resume their usual occupations and trades under the assurance of being protected and kindly treated as long as they should conduct themselves as peaceable and obedient subjects of the existing government.

It has lately brought to the notice of the undersigned, Plenipotentiary, &c., that some of the inhabitants of the above named city of Tinghai as well of other places, are labouring under a feeling of apprehension, that they will hereafter be published by the Imperial government and the mandarins, for having returned to reside under the authority of the British Government, and also for having held intercourse, and dealt with its officers and its subjects. It therefore seems to be expedient and necessary to adopt measures to allay and remove the above described feeling of apprehension; and with that view, the undersigned Plenipotentiary, &c., hereby further announces, that (if they ever are restored) one of the stipulations in which the restoration of the said city and island, and its dependencies, is to depend, will be, that the Emperor shall under His Imperial sign manual, edict and promulgate an edict of amnesty and indemnity to all and every one of the subjects of China, on account of his or their residing under, or having intercourse and dealings with, the British government, its officers and subjects.

This proclamation is now issued for general information, and the special assurance of all persons whom it may concern.

God save the Queen of England.

Dated at Ningpo on the 14th day of December, 1842.

(Signed) HENRY POTTINGER.

By order, J. ROBT. MORRISON,

Chinese Secretary and Interpreter.

PROCLAMATION.

Her Britannic Majesty's Plenipotentiary, Minister Extraordinary, and Chief Superintendent of the Trade of British subjects, in China, deems it advisable to notify, that pending the receipt of the queen's Gracious and Royal Pleasure, the harbours of Hongkong and Tinghai (Chusan) and their Dependencies, shall be considered "Free Ports," and that no mander of Customs, Port Duties, or any other Charges shall be

