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CHINESE MARITIME CUSTOMS SERVICE: THE CUSTOMS' GAZETTE, 1869-1913



The Customs' Gazette, published by order of the Inspector General of Customs of China in Shanghai, provided quarterly reports on trade that were prepared and submitted by various custom houses based across the country. This statistical and narrative information provided the central Chinese government with an in-depth analysis on trade. But, the Gazette also provided insights into local and regional economic and social conditions, policing of customs and trade, and conditions at Treaty Ports.

Date Range: 1869-1913

Content: 36,710 images

Source Library: Shanghai Library

Detailed Description:

The Chinese Maritime Customs Service (CMCS) was established in 1854 during the Qing Dynasty and operated until the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949. CMCS was run by an international- predominantly British-team and the last foreign Inspector General resigned in 1950. CMCS was more than just a tax collection agency as it was well informed about local conditions, deeply involved in local, provincial, and national politics, and in international affairs. CMCS further involved itself in China's diplomacy, organized its representation at nearly thirty world fairs and exhibitions, and ran various educational establishments.

Among its various publications, the Customs' Gazette was a quarterly published by order of the Inspector General of Customs of China in Shanghai. The Customs' Gazette was established in 1869 and ceased publication in 1913. The Gazette published quarterly reports on trade prepared and submitted by the custom houses based across the country including Newchwang (Yingkou), Tientsin, Chefoo (Yantai), Hankow, Chinkiang, Ningpo, Foochow, Amoy (Xiamen), Swatow (Shantou), Tamsui, Takow, Kiukiang, and Canton. Each report covers numbers of vessels handled and tonnage, imports, exports, re-exports, internal transit, passenger traffic, revenue receipts, and so on. There are also sections in the Gazette on

quarterly reports on dues and duties, précis of fines and confiscations, notifications, rules and regulations, movement in the service, and appendixes.

The Gazette had published a total of 180 issues and this collection from Shanghai Library contains 150 of them — the missing issues are 29-36 (1876-77), 45-46 (1880), 49-56 (1881-82), 61-64 (1884), and 77-84 (1888-89).