M. S. Legation
Macao 6th April 1856.

My dear Sir Jno Bowring.

Referring to the subject of "inaccessible Baracoons" alluded to in your note of a former date, I have to state in confidence on the evening of the 4th inst. I strolled over to the premises formerly owned & occupied by the M. M. Society, as a hospital, situated at Shao Lam, that in the dinner harbor.

The front door was locked, I made friends of a Portuguese, I met in the street, who spoke English. He guided me in by a side door. I back passage to the compound in which was an enclosure of strong bamboo, some twelve feet high, but at the occupied by turkeys. I think it was hardly built for that purpose. We sought to find the keeper of the establishment, from whom I obtained permission to enter the building, which through the iron gratings I perceived was occupied by living when in great numbers. We entered by a back passage.

On entering, heard a great noise, a little bedroom. In one room were forty boys of eleven years. I understand, of them were fighting
like dung-hill fowls in a coop at sea. At the
surprise of the keeper for seeing a stranger— they
became quiet, & their attention was attracted to
the gratings through which they gazed at us &
were full of life & frolic. In a room opposite
were a Company of adults, some Gambling, some
smoking & some asleep. Altogether you may
told 350 in the establishment, as I had
informed. They have been there some weeks,
are destined to the Havana Market for the period of eight years— are allowed 10 Cash
a day now, $1.00 when they embark, & $4. per
Month after, with one (or two?) suits of clothes.
They were all dressed in white cotton—
one thickness, upper & lower garments. I was
pointed to one building containing the store, to
another room, where little Nick-Nacks— eatables &
toys, are exchanged for the daily allowance of
10 Cash. These 350 Chinese—I was informed
are under the supervision of some fifteen per,
seven or eight of whom I saw. One volunteered
the information, that some Months since a
guard of troops were stationed here, under
the apprehension of trouble. As I left my
attention was called, to large reservoirs of
water, buckets here, there in readiness for
accidents from fire.
I venture to say no flaw in the prison of Hong Kong is more securely incarcerated than these Chinese. And why? To prevent their absconding? If they are voluntary emigrants, what fear of their deserting?

My dear sir, is there no remedy for this evil? For an evil I regard it, unworthy this enlightened age — unworthy Christian men nations.

I am informed that the Chinese regard a recent death, of one, who in his lifetime had participated in this traffic — as an instance of retributive justice. — This information was heard incidentally — and I have no doubt the sentiment is entertained.

Ever Yours Sincerely

His Excellency

Sir John Bowring O.L.D.

Son of Hong Kong