

Copper cash continued to be largely imported ; the amount imported in 1863, in vessels under foreign flags, cannot have fallen far short of 2,500 tons weight.

CURRENCY, &c.

The tael weight of silver is the standard of value in commercial transactions here as elsewhere in China ; dollars are not in favour. At present  $95\frac{4}{10}$  Kewkeang taels are equal to 100 Shanghai taels ; the taels used in the purchase of land is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. more than that used in ordinary commerce, and the Haekuan or Government tael, in which duties are paid, is of still higher value ; 100 Haekuan taels are equal to  $106\frac{3}{10}$  Kewkeang taels.

There is no bank yet established in Kewkeang, and, as almost all the trade is with Shanghai, the rates of exchange upon England cannot be given. On an average, the Haekuan tael may, perhaps, be estimated at 7s., and the Kewkeang tael at, say 6s. 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ d.

The weights and measures do not materially differ from those which are in use in other parts of China.

GENERAL REMARKS.

The total amount of duties received during 1863, at the Chinese Custom-house, under foreign management, is—

Quarter ending	Export.	Import.	Coast Trade.	Tonnage.
	H. Taels.	H. Taels.	H. Taels.	H. Taels.
31st March ... ..	135,149·414	162·233	66,159·264	262·1
30th June ... ..	99,491·501	... ..	45,466·431	4·1
30th September ... ..	136,534·357	... ..	68,269·524	1719·4
31st December ... ..	213,152·690	... ..	106,508·859	867·3
	579,327·962	162·233	286,404·078	2852·9

amounting in all to taels 868,747·173, which, at 7s. per tael, equal £304,061 10s. 3d.

The import duties, it may be remarked, are usually paid in Shanghai.

The general business of the port has greatly increased during the year. Ten British and three American firms have branch establishments here, and in addition there are three British local firms. Several large houses, godowns, &c., have been built within the British concession. The Chinese city and suburbs have also undergone a great change ; numbers of handsome shops have been erected, and the Canton storekeepers, of whom several have established themselves, are doing some good to trade by popularising the taste for articles of foreign manufacture.

The chief obstacles to the development of foreign commerce offered by the Chinese authorities are their failure to carry out the Tariff Regulation respecting trade in the interior under transit passes, and their unwillingness to open the Poyang Lake.

With regard to the first of these obstacles, it is found that the authorities of the province of Hoopoh, do not recognise passes issued in this province ; consequently a merchant has to pay all local dues as if his produce belonged to a native, and applications have in vain been made to the Chinese authorities for a refund of the amount paid in excess of legal transit duty. Worse than this is the case in this province, and in that of Ganhwuy, where the passes are recognised, but before the tea is allowed to be put into the junks to be conveyed to Kewkeang from the tea districts,

a tax of taels  $1\frac{2}{10}$  per picul in some cases, in others of taels  $1\frac{4}{10}$  is levied ostensibly upon the native dealer, but really on the foreign merchant who has also to pay the transit duty of taels  $1\frac{2}{10}$  per picul on the arrival of the tea at Kewkeang. The treaty transit passes are now practically abolished, as the merchant finds it his interest to have the tea brought from the place of production as Chinese property, or to give up trade in the interior altogether, and purchase produce at the ports of trade. Practically this state of things works well enough at present, but the objections to it are that it leaves merchants to some extent at the mercy of the mandarins, and does away with the protection provided by treaty against extortionate charges in the interior upon goods belonging to British subjects.

Endeavours have been made by private individuals to induce the Chinese authorities to consent to the employment of steamers on the Poyang Lake, but without effect. There is no doubt but that the measure would be attended with the most beneficial results. The shallowness of the greater portion of the lake, and the narrowness of the navigable channels which traverse it, will always prevent the employment of any but very small steamers, which, though adapted for the short trip between places on the lake and Kewkeang, could not be employed with profit for direct communication with Shanghai. At present boats, laden with tea, often remain windbound for weeks in the lake ; if permission were given by the authorities, these boats could be towed to Kewkeang in a few hours. Rapid and direct communication with the green tea districts, and the potteries near the south-east border of the lake, and with Woo-