

6TH JUNE, 1895.

PRESENT:—

His Excellency the Governor, Sir WILLIAM ROBINSON, K.C.M.G.

Hon. J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Colonial Secretary.

Hon. A. G. WISE, Acting Attorney-General.

Hon. A. M. THOMSON, Acting Colonial Treasurer.

Hon. F. A. COOPER, Director of Public Works.

Hon. Capt. W. C. H. HASTINGS, Acting Captain Superintendent of Police.

Hon. A. K. TRAVERS, Postmaster-General.

Hon. C. P. CHATER.

Hon. HO KAI.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS, C.M.G.

Hon. A. McCONACHIE.

Hon. J. J. BELL-IRVING.

Mr. J. G. T. BUCKLE, Acting Clerk of Councils.

NEW MEMBERS.

Hon. Commander W. C. H. Hastings, Acting Captain Superintendent of Police, and Hon. A. K. Travers, Postmaster-General, took the oath of allegiance.

DOCUMENTS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid upon the table the following documents:—The report of the Director of the Observatory, the report of the Sanitary Superintendent, the report of the Superintendent of the Botanical and Afforestation Department, the report of the Colonial Veterinary surgeon, and the Blue Book—all for 1894.

A PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

Hon. A. McCONACHIE said—I beg to ask your Excellency's permission to make a personal statement.

His EXCELLENCY assented.

Hon. A. McCONACHIE—At the meeting of Council on the 17th April I read out an extract from the report of the Medical Committee, of which I had the honour of being a member. The fair copy came in to me for signature an hour or so before the meeting of Council I have just referred to. It was accompanied by the draft copy previously initialed by all members. I compared both copies and found them the same word for word and appended my signature. Knowing

that the Ordinance to confer certain powers and authorities on the Medical Officer of Health would come up for discussion that afternoon. I made a hurried pencil extract from the report in case I might find it useful, and it was from that hurried pencil extract note. I read out. How I came to leave out certain words I cannot explain; it was entirely accidental, and I had no motive and certainly I never intended to do so. I now express regret to the Government for the omission.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY — On behalf of the Government I may say, with regard to the statement that has just been made, that it quite understands the explanation made by the hon. member. The Government never for one moment supposed that the hon. member, who has been a ~~resident~~ resident of this colony for so many years, would ever have been guilty of purposely and wilfully trying to mislead this Council. I am sure I am expressing, not only the views of the official members of this Council, but the views of the whole of the hon. members, when I say that the explanation given by the hon. member is satisfactory in every respect.

NOTICE OF QUESTION.

Hon. E. R. BELILIOS gave notice of his intention to ask the following question — "Is it the intention of the Government to invite competitive designs from local architects for the proposed new Government offices, or do the Government propose that the designs shall be prepared and the work carried out by the Public Works Department?"

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the adoption of the report of the Finance Committee.

The ACTING COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

Carried.

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF TAIPINGSHAN.

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—I have the honour to lay upon the table the report of the meeting of the Public Works Committee held on 23rd May last, and to move its adoption. I regret to have to report to this Council that the members of the Committee are not unanimous in recommending the Council to adopt the proposed project for the improvement of the "resumed" area of Taipingshan. The hon. member on my left (Hon. E. R. Belilios) adheres to the belief which he entertained on the 17th September last, and expressed in this Council during the reading of the Bill for the resumption of Taipingshan, namely, that a project entailing only the patching and repairing of the buildings would be sufficient. I regret, however, although such a long time has elapsed, that the hon. member has not furnished the Government, nor, as far as I am aware, any member of this Council, with a more detailed statement of what such a project entailed, or how he proposed to carry it

out. He, however, at that meeting expressed himself in favour of supporting the Government in the total destruction of the buildings, and said that such a scheme might act in somewhat the same manner as a sacrifice to the gods did in ancient times. (Laughter). Well, sir, I am not aware that any authentic records exist that such sacrifices have been attended with any beneficial results whatever, and I think it would be unbecoming on my part to assume that hon. members of this Council attach any belief in such a sacrifice, by which I understand the hon. member to mean a sacrifice to gods of wood and stone. Far be it from me for one moment to come to this Council and ask you to vote any public funds in support of such a superstition. I honestly and conscientiously believe that in what I am asking of you I am serving the best interests of this colony. I believe, sir, that by adopting this report both from a sanitary and a pecuniary point of view, we shall not be going very far wrong. At the time the Taipingshan Ordinance was before this Council the Government had not any detailed information or knowledge of what was going to be done with the area, or what any project for dealing with the area would cost. The Council, as I understand from the newspaper reports and further information I have been able to obtain—being away from the colony during the time—relied on the strong recommendations of the Permanent Committee to the Colonial Secretary, dated 28th June, to resume the area of Taipingshan, relay the streets, widen them, and further improve them, and the strong feeling that existed at that time respecting the effect of such resumption for such objects. The project I laid before the Public Works Committee practically include these recommendations made by the Permanent Committee so far as it entails the total ~~destruction~~ destruction of the buildings, the re-laying out the entire area, and the widening of the streets. From a pecuniary point of view I am bound to say that I am of opinion the resumption cannot prove profitable, and I must say that I think hon. members will agree with me when they consider the provisions of the Taipingshan Ordinance under which the owners of property have been compensated for the resumption, not on the probable future value of the property but upon the rents actually derived from the letting of basements and hovels, unfit in some cases for pig sties, as human habitations. This Council has passed measures by which such occupation is prohibited in the future, and the Sanitary Board are at the present time engaged in enforcing these regulations. But, sir, that increased rental and improved property and improved sanitation will result in the adoption of this project I have very little doubt. The total cost of the resumption up to date has been a little in excess of \$820,000. Well, now, sir, it has been urged by my hon. friend on my left that the adoption of a scheme involving the cutting of a street here and the cutting of a lane there and the general repairing

and patching of the existing buildings would prove more profitable to the colony. Hon. members must consider it is the duty of this Government to look the fact fairly in the face, that this property has been resumed by the Crown, has passed into the hands of the Crown, and that in dealing with it a purchaser would have to comply with the provisions of the Building Ordinance of 1889 and the recent sanitary legislation. There are in the Building Ordinance of 1889, as hon. members are aware, very important provisions dealing with the construction of back yards in all cases where buildings are erected on property purchased from the Crown since the passing of that Ordinance. I have very little hesitation in saying that the majority of the buildings in Taipingshan at the present moment do not comply with those provisions, and the purchaser—if one could be found—of the patched up and repaired property might still continue to let it for human habitation, but on the decay of existing buildings and proposing to construct new buildings, in what position would he find himself? The majority of the lots are of very small depth, some of them measuring only 32 or 33 feet in depth. If the hon. member on my left (Hon. E. R. Belilios) takes away four or five feet which the provisions of the Ordinance require to give sufficient yard space, what would there be left? The purchaser would find that he had, after allowing for cook house, wells, &c., only a ~~small~~ area of about 18 feet by 15 feet. That the Government can go into the market with property of that description and expect to get any return commensurate with the expenditure of \$800,000, I think there can be only one opinion. It is practically impossible. On pointing these facts out to the hon. member at the last meeting of the Public Works Committee he suggested that as this was a special case it might be worth while for the Government to reconsider its legislation in regard to this area. Well, sir, these provisions have been passed, not with the idea of obtaining at any cost an ideal city, but for the benefit of the public health of the colony they have been considered by hon. members absolutely necessary. It is therefore utterly impossible, I think, that any member of the Council should now say "We find that these provisions which we think necessary for the health and the safety of the public are going to touch the public purse and therefore we will have nothin to do with them." I am sure, sir, that such a position would be practically impossible to maintain, and I trust that no hon. member of this Council will bring such a motion as that before the Council. With these few remarks I beg to move that the report be adopted.

Hon. C. P. CHATER—Sir, I beg to second the resolution just moved by the Director of Public Works, and in doing so I am echoing the opinion of my unofficial colleagues, with the exception of the hon. member opposite (Hon. E. R.

Belilios), who no doubt will express his views on the subject shortly. It will doubtless be in your Excellency's recollection that at the Council meeting of the 17th September, 1894, I moved for the appointment of a Commission to decide whether the original plan of destruction of Taipingshan should be carried out or not. It is hardly necessary for me to remind you that the original plan or, if I may say so, the popular plan, was that of total destruction by fire, involving, as I then pointed out, a very large expense to the Government, while it was my hope that if the Commission I asked for were appointed, it would perhaps fall in with my views, formulated after personal inspection of the district, viz, that a partial destruction, that of the foulest and wholly irredeemable blocks, together with the adoption of the necessary measures for rendering the remainder sanitary, the cutting away of the backs of houses, and the making of new lanes and back yards, and thereby permitting the introduction of light and the proper circulation of air, would be sufficient. Since then the circumstances have altered. Mr. Cooper returned from leave, made minute surveys, and issued a report, the outcome of his labours being the scheme he has laid before us, from which it will be seen he has quite abandoned the idea of total destruction by fire. I need hardly say that I have gone most carefully into this scheme. We have had two meetings of the Public Works Committee, and one of the unofficial members called specially to discuss this matter, to which Mr. Cooper was invited and came, and I have also had private interviews with that gentleman. As a result, I have come to the conclusion that, under the circumstances, his scheme is preferable to mine. The main difference between the two consists in that while I contemplated partial destruction, and the opening to light and air of the better constructed blocks, Mr. Cooper advocates pulling down all the houses, with the exception of one block and laying out afresh the entire area. I am still of opinion that had my plan been adopted, though the initial expenses would have been heavier, yet the property would have eventually realized more, the buildings still remaining standing over a considerable portion of the area; and that Mr. Cooper, though the sum he proposes is a smaller one, yet will not obtain so much from the sale of material and sites as would have been realized from the execution of my proposal. The great advantage, however, which his possesses is that, instead of a lot of narrow and irregular streets constructed without any regard to proper arrangement or sanitation, it will confer upon the city a new district properly laid out, and open to light and air, while mine could only have been of the nature of patchwork. Another advantage in his scheme which I may point out is that all the buildings can now be erected in conformity with all the additions and emendations lately made in the Health

and Building Ordinances. It is for these reasons that my colleagues and myself, with the one exception, consider that Mr. Cooper's proposal should be adopted.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I have to propose an amendment, sir. In making my remarks I will not take up the time of the Council in going back beyond the four corners of the report of my hon. friend on my right (Hon. F. A. Cooper). I am glad to note that the Government have finally abandoned the idea of burning the houses, and I also observe from his report that Mr Cooper, at all events, is of opinion that the bacillus of the plague is not to be found in the soil, and that the wood and the other materials of the buildings are not infected. So far this is satisfactory to hear, but I should have thought these conclusions furnished strong arguments in favour of adopting and improving proving the buildings as they stand rather than of destroying them and laying out the area afresh as proposed by my hon. friend on my right. The plan laid before us has been carefully prepared and is creditably got up, and it is with real regret I feel it my duty to oppose it. The plan, moreover, falls in with my individual interests as a property owner, which are best served by having a large number of dwellings closed, as it has a tendency to drive up rents and fill my empty houses. Such a consideration must not, however, be allowed to weigh in the balance with the welfare of the colony, which I propose to show will be most adversely affected if this scheme is permitted to be carried into effect. With your permission I will briefly endeavour to show what Mr. Cooper's plan will cost. He estimates the cost of laying out the area afresh at \$83,000. Now to carry out this plan, sell the sites, and get them all built upon, so that rates and taxes may again be collected from the district, will take, I believe, at least six years. There would therefore have to be reckoned five years interest on \$820,000, the cost of the resumption, which at $3\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. per annum would amount to about \$145,000 added to the \$83,000 for laying it out, or altogether roughly \$1,050,000. Now is it at all likely this amount would be realised by the sale of the ground? I do not think any member present will pretend to say that such a sum can be obtained, the building area having been reduced from 257,000 to 188,000 square feet, a reduction of 69,000 square feet. Half a million dollars is much nearer the figure the Government is likely to get. It should not be forgotten that the Praya Reclamation is going on simultaneously, and land can to-day be purchased on sea frontage for from \$4 to \$6 a foot. Is it at all probable we can get on an average more than $2\frac{1}{2}$ per foot for the land in Taipingshan? Happily there is an alternative project. As it is now known that fire is not necessary as a cleansing agent, and that the germs of disease are neither in the houses nor in the soil, the resumed area can readily, and at a comparatively small outlay, be placed in a good sanitary

condition. The streets were quite recently drained, channelled, kerbed, and paved. Some of the houses might even now serve as models for improvement to the owners of hundreds of tenements in worse slums in this city, and with a reasonable expenditure the district could be converted into a cleanly and healthy one. Fortunately we have in the *Government Gazette* of the 6th March, in the report by the Arbitration Board—Messrs. Ackroyd, Alford, and Danby—a careful estimate of the cost at which the houses in the condemned district can be made fit for human habitation. Details are given of every lot, and the gross amount is only \$30,924.79. Say, however, that this estimate would have to be exceeded, and allow \$40,000. That is less than half the cost of destroying the property and laying it out afresh, and as a matter of fact Mr. Cooper's estimate would also probably be exceeded and the area for sale would very possibly be reduced 80,000 square feet. Then have regard to the saving in time. If the houses were placed in a sanitary condition the work might be done in twelve months, and the district be available for habitation before the summer of 1896. On the other hand, if it be decided to destroy and lay the district out afresh, shall we not be in danger of a repetition of the wanton waste of public money which followed the clearing of the site for the present Queen's College, which lay idle for about ten years and cost the colony by loss of interest alone tens of thousands of dollars? The vacant land and ruined bungalow still standing in front of the Police compound furnishes an instructive lesson of the procrastination of Government in such matters. It has been lying useless and non-productive for more than twenty years. I hope that in this question of the disposition of the resumed area in Taipingshan business principles will be allowed to prevail. There will, I take it, be a loss in any case, but let us do our best to limit it to say half a lakh of dollars and recoup ourselves by raising the Crown rent when we resell the land. Hon. members will be interested to hear that the total area of public and private property resumed consists of 356,000 square feet. Out of these the hon. member proposes to set aside 168,000 square feet for streets, leaving only 158,000 square feet for building purposes. In other words, to use up 45 per cent. of the land for streets. A most injudicious and inadvisable mode of dealing with the property. By adopting the plan of the Director of Public Works, and allowing \$75,000 for errors, omissions, and price of loose materials, we shall augment that loss to half a million dollars. Are we prepared to accept that responsibility? Have we any right to so squander the public money? I say we have not, and I solemnly wash my hands of that responsibility. I should ill

have discharged my duty to the public had I not, to the best of my poor ability, offered my protest against this proposed waste of funds, which are so urgently needed for improvement of other portions of the city not one whit less in need of it. If we adopt this plan we shall have only 200 odd houses in the place of 417 houses now standing in the condemned district. Besides these buildings it will be remembered the Sanitary Board condemned 100 odd houses in other parts of the city. These houses were by a mere fluke, a mere accident, not resumed by the Government. Yet we see that these houses are being cleansed, renovated, and occupied, whilst we are hesitating as to what might be done with this large property in our hands. There are good and bad localities in every city in the world. There is the East End and the West End of the city of London. It would be wise, sir, to reserve in our midst a cheap, healthy district for the occupation of our poor. We should not compel them to pay high rents or compel them to desert this island "for fresh woods and pastures new" on account of high rent. To spend money in improving the land in Taipingshan would be tantamount to spending scent in the desert air. The land is not adapted for much improvement, and it ought therefore to be left alone. If the Public Works Department have time and labour to spare, they had better devote such labour in opening out sites to the east and the west of us. If the Government have money to spare, better let the money out in the construction of a tramway round the island, and open out cheap sites and thus relieve the overcrowding that is going on in the centre of our city. This is a matter which concerns almost every resident in the colony, and it affects the public purse. It is a huge venture, a great undertaking, and a big speculation. In order to be sure that we are not making a mistake it would be wise to seek for the advice of experts outside this Council, and I beg to propose this resolution—"That, before a final decision as to the condemned area of Taipingshan be arrived at, a Committee formed of representatives of the community, to consist of Messrs. Granville Sharp—(laughter)—W. Danby, S. G. Bird, and A. Denison, be appointed, to associate themselves with the Hon. the Director of Public Works, and conjointly give a report on the best means of disposing of property resumed by the Government.' On the last occasion this question was before the Council you kindly permitted all my official colleagues to vote as they thought fit on this subject. I hope on this occasion you will give them the same latitude, so that we may arrive at an honest decision.

HIS EXCELLENCY—I shall be glad to do so when the amendment is seconded. Does anybody second the amendment?

There was no seconder, and HIS EXCELLENCY remarked—I am afraid you have no seconder.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—Though the hon. member's amendment has not been seconded, I think his speech may be considered as one opposed to the motion before this Council. I should therefore like to make one or two remarks in reply. The hon. member has given me the credit of a good deal perhaps, but I think a more careful perusal of my report will show that in that report, especially as regards the source of infection, I absolutely confine myself to recording facts and not expressing opinions on what is entirely a medical question, and not an engineering one at all. The hon. member has again referred to his wonderful and economical scheme, but I should like to point out one important matter that he has entirely overlooked. In the project I laid before the Public Works Committee the back lanes had been laid out in such a way as to render it unnecessary to construct back yards. If the scheme referred to by my hon. friend on my left is carried out a portion of the building sites or of the 417 houses which he takes credit for will have to be devoted to back yards. If you compare the total area for domestic occupation as proposed in his scheme with that proposed by mine you will find that in the hon. member's scheme you will have to take from the area of each lot, probably in the case of three storey houses fifteen feet and in the case of two storey houses ten feet. If the hon. member will figure that out I think he will find that the area which is proposed to be devoted to the streets, thus obviating the necessity of providing back yards to houses, will not be of such magnitude as the back yards which in his scheme it will be necessary to provide. He has talked about a business-like manner of dealing with the question. I must say that the remarks of the hon. member did not strike me as being business like. He has talked about selling the land and then recouping the expenditure by raising the Crown rents. No man would buy land without first enquiring what the Crown rent was. So what he means by recouping by raising Crown rents after selling the land I am at a total loss to understand. He also states that the adoption of this report is a great speculation. Well, sir, if speculation in connection with this project existed at all it existed when this Council passed the Ordinance for the resumption of Taipingshan. It was not then a question of pecuniary profit; it was a question of sanitation, a question of doing something for the good of this colony, from a sanitary point of view. To talk about speculation commencing at this period is, I think, quite out of the question, I think, sir, the hon. member touched on a great many matters which were totally irrelevant—outside railways, &c., which I must say I do not think have any thing to do with obtaining a return on the sum of money already expended on the resumption of Taipingshan.

HIS EXCELLENCY—The amendment not having been seconded the resolution is carried.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I should like to point out that the hon. member did not follow my speech.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The hon. member is quite out of order.

THE ARMS CONSOLIDATION ORDINANCE.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I have to move the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to supplement Ordinance 8 of 1895. (The Arms Consolidation Ordinance, 1895)." In doing so I might mention that the object of this Bill is to supplement certain sections— sections 6 and 15 of the Arms Ordinance passed the other day. In those two sections there is no penalty. They deal with dealers and their registers, and the absence of a penalty is clearly an omission. This Bill provides for a penalty.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I beg to second.

Bill read a first time, carried through all its stages, and passed.

NATURALIZATION ORDINANCE.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to move the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance for the naturalization of Samuel Donenberg." This gentleman wishes to become a volunteer, and you will notice that the Bill is confined to Hongkong.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I beg to second.

Bill read the first time, carried through all its stages, and passed.

ORDINANCES POSTPONED.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I have the honour to move that Orders No. 4 and 5 be discharged from the Orders of the Day. It is not the intention of the Government, at any rate for the present, to proceed with these Bills.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded.

Carried.

AN AMENDING ORDINANCE.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to move the third reading of "An Ordinance to amend Ordinance 17 of 1887." This is a very short Ordinance. As a matter of fact it puts in only one word in section 7 of Ordinance 17 of 1887. When this Ordinance was brought up before there appeared to be some difficulty in the mind of my hon. friend opposite as to the interpretation of the word Government. The object of the Ordinance is to enable the Government to have these depots under their own control, and to eliminate outside depots, because these depots are not likely to be so well constructed or so well looked after as Government depots. That is the reason for the insertion of the word Government.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I beg to second.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I wish to point out—

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—This is the third reading of the Bill.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—Supposing—

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—It is rather late for explanations; this is the third reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—The Bill has passed Committee, on a resolution formally moved by the hon. the Acting Attorney-General, and seconded by myself. The hon. member had full opportunity of making any remarks he wished to make on the point to which he refers when that resolution was before the Council. I beg to second the third reading of the Bill.

Bill read the third time and passed.

THE SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION BILL.

The ACTING COLONIAL TREASURER—In moving the second reading of the Supplementary Appropriation Bill for 1894 I wish to make one or two remarks on the state of the finances during that year. The actual expenditure for the year 1894, including public works not chargeable to the loan, amounted to \$2,299,096 as compared with an estimate of \$1,998,981, the difference in excess being \$300,115; but as credit cannot be taken for any surplus on votes for different Departments nor on any surplus on items in public works, which together amount to ~~755,208~~, the total now to be authorized is \$355,395.88. The excess expenditure due to fall of exchange was over \$15,000; for plague about \$52,000; building grant to the Po Leung Kuk \$20,000, and for exchange compensation \$22,000; these four items together amounting to about the whole of the excess now to be sanctioned. If there had been no plague, only \$200,000 would have been required, of which sum three-fourths was due to fall in exchange, change, and there would have been a clear surplus of \$140,000. The actual revenue for 1894 was \$2,287,203. and as the expenditure was \$2,299,096. the deficit was only \$11,893, or, if public works extraordinary be excluded, there was an actual surplus of \$600 I consider this is a very fortunate state of affairs, taking into account the heavy unforeseen expenditure which had to be incurred throughout the year. I ask the Council to give the Bill their favourable consideration, and I shall be ready to give fuller details in Finance Committee if they are considered desirable.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I beg to move the second reading of the Bill, and avail myself of the opportunity of stating that the Bill will be referred to the Finance Committee. I understand that your Excellency's intention is to wait, so that the third reading may be taken.

The Bill was then considered by the Finance Committee, under the presidency of Hon. J. H. Stewart Lockhart, Colonial Secretary.

Hon. C. P. CHATER—I should like to know if any answer has been received from the Secretary of State to His Excellency's despatch with regard to the military contribution.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—No reply has yet been received from the Colonial Office, but I think I may inform the Committee that a reply is expected very shortly on the question of the military contribution.

Hon. C. P. CHATER—I hope it will be a favourable one.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I hope so; I cannot say whether it is to be favourable or unfavourable, but I am sure it has received careful consideration.

Hon. HO KAI—It will convey the decision of the inter-Departmental Committee sitting on this question?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I believe it will convey the decision of that Committee.

The Committee having recommended the Bill, Council resumed.

Bill read the third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

HIS EXCELLENCY—I have no more business for the Legislative Council, and I have very great pleasure in releasing you from your labours and adjourning *sine die*. I am extremely obliged to the senior unofficial member and the other unofficial members for the advice and assistance given to the Government during the session, assistance
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appreciated and advice which we have constantly adopted. I trust it may not be necessary to summon the Council regularly until late, very late, in the autumn. It is possible, however, that we may have one or two meetings in the meantime. I think when we consider what the colony was passing through at this time last year we have great reason to be thankful, when we recollect that, with the exception of three or four sporadic cases of plague in April, there has been no single case of that disease for upwards of one month. (Applause). The work of the Sanitary Board is going on vigorously, energetically, yet quietly and unostentatiously, and I have great hope that we may be spared an outbreak of any disease during the coming year. Now that the China-Japan war is happily ended and exchange fairly steady. I think we may look forward to an increase in and expansion of our trade and consequent good results to the community generally. With these few remarks, I now state that this Council stands adjourned *sine die*.

