

20TH DECEMBER, 1923.

**PRESENT:—**

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, SIR REGINALD EDWARD STUBBS, K.C.M.G.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GENERAL OFFICER IN COMMAND OF THE TROOPS, MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JOHN FOWLER, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O.

HON. SIR CLAUD SEVERN, K.B.E. C.M.G., (Colonial Secretary).

HON. MR. J. H. KEMP, K.C., C.B.E. (Attorney-General).

HON. MR. C. MCI. MESSER, O.B.E. (Colonial Treasurer).

HON. MR. E. R. HALLIFAX, C.B.E. (Secretary for Chinese Affairs).

HON. MR. E. A. IRVING (Director of Education).

HON. MR. H. T. CREASY (Director of Public Works).

HON. MR. H. E. POLLOCK, K.C.

HON. MR. A. O. LANG.

HON. MR. CHOW SHOU-SON.

HON. MR. A. R. LOWE.

HON. MR. R. H. KOTEWALL.

MR. A. G. M. FLETCHER C.M.G., C.B.E. (Clerk of Councils).

**ABSENT**

HON. MR. P. H. HOLYOAK.

**Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed.

**Finance**

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. The Governor, laid on the table Financial Minutes Nos. 108 to 112, and an additional Financial Minute relating to the redistribution of unexpended balances of

Public Works Department votes, for the year 1923, and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee for consideration.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. The Governor, laid on the table the Report of the Finance Committee (No. 14) and moved that it be adopted.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

**The Holidays Ordinance**

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of a Bill intituled, An Ordinance to amend the Holidays Ordinance, 1912.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

The Council then resolved itself into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause. The Bill passed through the Committee stage without amendment, and on the Council resuming, the third reading was carried, and the Bill passed into law accordingly.

**Law Relating to Opium**

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of a Bill intituled, An Ordinance to amend and consolidate the Law relating to Opium.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

On clause 21 (3), which provides that if any ship is proved to have been used for the conveyance of opium, the owners,

agents and master shall be deemed to have contravened the provisions of the Ordinance unless it is proved, to the satisfaction of the Magistrate "that every reasonable precaution has been taken to prevent the unlawful use of such ship, and that none of the officers or of their servants, or of the crew of such ship were implicated therein."

HON. MR. A. O. LANG said — Your Excellency, In section 3 I beg to suggest that the following words be omitted: "And that none of the officers or of their servants or of the crew of such ship were implicated therein." I submit that their inclusion imposes an undue penalty on the shipowners. In a recent case, wherein the Indo-China Steam Navigation Company were summoned and fined \$1,000 for allowing their steamer, the *Loong Sang*, to be used for the conveyance and exportation of opium the Magistrate, after stating that he found the shipping company innocent of any connivance and that they had adopted all reasonable precautions, went on to say: "One purpose of the section would appear to be to penalise shipowners in respect of the conduct of their employés. In effect, also, it provides that the guilt of their employés is to be assumed until their innocence is established. In this case the defendants have failed to prove innocence for certain Chinese members of the engine room staff of the ship." The Chamber of Commerce has made representations on several occasions to the Government in this connection without any effect, and it would appear to me that the effect of the law and the Magistrate's interpretation of it is that if opium is found on board a ship the shipowner, however innocent and diligent, must be fined, for it is obviously impossible for the owner to prove that not a single one of his crew was even slightly implicated. Fines imposed in these circumstances cannot have any preventative effect at all. The shipowner can do no more, and the fines do not trouble the crew. Representations in a similar connection were made to the Chinese Maritime Customs some two or three years ago and they recognised the undue penalties to which shipowners were subjected by a clause of that nature and they agreed to waive it. I submit, Sir, that these words might be omitted from the Ordinance.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—The matter which

the hon. member has raised has been brought forward on several occasions by the Chamber of Commerce, and I have before me to-day another letter from them on the subject, to which I am prepared to give further consideration. But I should like to explain that in the present instance what we are doing is not altering or amending the law, but consolidating it, with the view to its inclusion in the Consolidated Ordinances, and the particular point raised can be dealt with separately by an amendment of the Ordinance, if we can find a form of words to suit the parties. We can take that up next year. At the same time I have one or two remarks I should like to make. The hon. member says it is impossible to prove that none of the officers or their servants, or the crew, have been implicated in these transactions. I am afraid that, in many cases, the impossibility arises from the fact that the officers or their servants or the crew have been so implicated—in fact, it is extremely difficult to believe that any case arises in which some member of the crew has not been concerned, and I am afraid we have not received from the shipping companies of this Colony the support we have a right to expect: that they have not dealt sufficiently severely with members of their crew when there has been a question of opium smuggling and a doubt has been thrown on the *bona fides* of the members of the crew. To put it quite frankly, it is a fact well known to everybody that the compradores' departments of shipping firms have a great deal too much to do with this matter and that an officer who is too strict in looking for opium smuggling is afraid of getting into trouble with the compradore and of not being supported by the employers. With regard to the particular case of the *Loong Sang*, to which the hon. member referred, the Magistrate made certain observations which, I think are not warranted by the facts. What Mr. Wood said was that he was satisfied that the ship had taken every precaution, but the evidence given in that case was not that every precaution had been taken but that precautions would have been taken before the ship got to Manila. In that instance the opium was found in the tunnel of the propeller

shaft. I am not a sea-faring man, but I venture to submit that it is impossible to examine a propeller shaft tunnel while the ship is under way, and I think a matter which might have been enquired into was: Who gave instructions that the examination should not be made until the ship was under way at a time when discovery was practically impossible. There was very grave suspicion in that case, and I think Mr. Wood's remarks were scarcely in accordance with the evidence which had been received. As I have said, the matter will receive consideration and the present clause contains no alteration in the law. I suggest to the Council, therefore, that it be passed as it stands.

The clause was approved without amendment and the Bill passed through the Committee stage without alteration.

The Council resumed and the third reading was taken. The Bill passed into law accordingly.

#### **Police Force Ordinance**

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of a Bill intituled, An Ordinance to amend the Police Force Ordinance, 1900.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

The Council went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

On clause 22, the ATTORNEY-GENERAL said—Representations have been received in regard to this clause and I propose that for it be substituted the clause, a draft of which was handed to hon. members just before the commencement of the sitting of the Council. The new suggested draft omits paragraph (a) and inserts in the last line, between the word "commit" and the words "any offence," the words "or of intending to commit."

THE CLERK OF COUNCILS read the amended clause as follows:

22.—It shall be lawful for any police officer to stop and search, and, if necessary, to arrest and detain for further inquiries, any person whom he may find in any street or other public place, or on board any vessel or in any conveyance, at any hour of the day or

night, who acts in a suspicious manner, or whom he may suspect of having committed, or of being about to commit, or of intending to commit, any offence.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—The object of the introduction of this clause is to avoid any possibility of undue interference with the public by the undue exercise of the power of arrest and detention of any person who may happen to be in the street between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. I have agreed, as far as I am concerned, to the substitution of the amended clause because I think it desirable that the law as it stands should provide for the normal state of affairs. We may trust that when affairs are normal it will be unnecessary to assume that everybody who is walking in a public street between the hours of 6 p.m. and 6 a.m. was there for an unlawful purpose. At the same time I should like to say that in normal times we can take the power to arrest and detain in such circumstances under the law passed last year and the regulations for use in an emergency. If the circumstances make it desirable I shall have no hesitation in recommending the Council to adopt those powers. The clause as altered appears to me to be sufficient for normal times.

The amended clause was approved.

On clause 23, the ATTORNEY-GENERAL said — Representations have been made regarding this clause and I have drafted an alternative clause which has been handed to hon. members. It reads as follows:

23.—It shall be lawful for any police officer to take the finger prints of:

- (a) any person who has been convicted of any offence;
- (b) any person who has been arrested on a warrant issued under section 4 (4) of the Deportation Ordinance, 1917; and
- (c) any other person upon the written order of the Captain Superintendent of Police or of a Deputy Superintendent of Police.

The present clause in the Bill is much wider and gives the power to take finger prints of any person who may be lawfully in custody. The suggested alteration restricts it to the three classes named in the draft.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—The objection to the original clause, as I understand, is the fact that members of the Chinese community have an objection—an objection which I confess I have never been able to understand—to having their finger prints taken unnecessarily, and I think the substituted clause will remove any reasonable objections.

The clause as amended was approved, and the Bill passed through the Committee without further amendment.

On the Council resuming, the third reading was then agreed to, and the Bill passed into law accordingly.

#### **Forest Officers: Power of Arrest**

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, An Ordinance to confer certain powers of arrest on forest officers.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded the motion was carried and the Bill was read a second time.

The Bill passed through the Committee stage without amendment.

On the Council resuming the third reading was taken and the measure passed into law accordingly.

#### **The Companies Ordinances**

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, An Ordinance to amend the Companies' Ordinance, 1911.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded

The Bill having been read a second time, the Council went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

On clause 2 the Hon. Mr. H. E. POLLOCK said: I would suggest that the words "or translation" be omitted in the sixth line. The learned Attorney-General in his speech at the last meeting of the Council referred to such names as "Ewo" and "Taikoo" as being nicknames. He also referred in the "Objects and Reasons" to colloquial and unofficial designations of a company. I suggest, Sir, that the terms "Ewo" and "Taikoo" are the only Chinese equivalent known to Chinese unacquainted with English for the firms

Jardine, Matheson and Co. and Butterfield and Swire, and therefore such words cannot properly be described as nicknames or colloquial or unofficial names. They, in fact, amount to a translation of the names of those firms. To the ordinary Chinese unacquainted with the English language "Jardine" or "Butterfield and Swire" mean nothing: the only names they understand would be "Ewo" and "Taikoo." I quite agree that they are not transliterations—obviously they cannot be—but I think they are translations in view of the fact that they are the only Chinese equivalent which the Chinese would understand. I think, Sir, it would be safer to leave out the words "or translation."

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL — "Ewo" is not a translation, for you cannot translate the name Jardine, Matheson and Company, Ltd. You might translate a name like Armstrong: you might translate it "strong in the arm," or you might translate Hongkong Development Co., but "Ewo" is not a translation of Jardine, Matheson and Company. If the words "or translation" were omitted I would enable a company to translate its name into Chinese and leave out the word "Limited," which is against the policy of the Companies Ordinance and of the English Acts.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—It seems to me that you remove one difficulty and make a greater one.

HON. MR. POLLOCK — To the ordinary Chinese "Ewo" means Jardine, Matheson and Co.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—I agree that such equivalent may probably be a translation but if you cut out the words "or translation" the Attorney-General points out that you incur a much greater difficulty. A title such as "the Hongkong and Whampoa Dock Company" can be translated without any difficulty I suppose: any company with the word Hongkong can be translated. So long as this clause—the exact practical object of which I confess I have never quite understood—exists, you must provide for it. What is the practical point—that a company which does not employ these Chinese characters in its name is liable to certain penalties?

HON. MR. POLLOCK—Yes.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—But in view of the opinion of the learned Attorney-General that these names are not a transliteration or translation there is no danger of their incurring litigation.

HON. MR. A. O. LANG—this Ordinance was submitted to the Chamber of Commerce sub-committee and they saw no objection to it.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—By passing the clause as it stands I think we shall save ourselves from more difficulties than we shall incur by altering it, especially as, I think, there are only two firms using such names.

HON. MR. R. H. KOTEWALL—There are many other firms that employ such names as "Taikoo" and "Ewo." To my mind they are not translations nor transliterations, but they are Chinese names adopted by these firms because of their special meaning. They are better understood by the Chinese, and are intended to be used amongst the Chinese for purposes of business. Another point is that if you exempt a firm which employs such names as "Ewo" and "Taikoo," what about a firm which is not as reliable as Jardines, using a name like that in order to escape using the Chinese characters for limited company.—*yau han. kung sze?*

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL — This Ordinance is not an attempt to impose fresh burdens on companies, but to relieve them. The effect of the Ordinance of 1921 seems to be that if Jardine, Matheson and Co., Ltd., put the word "Ewo" on a bale of merchandise they are breaking the law unless they put the word for "limited" after the word "Ewo." This clause is an attempt to relieve them from the necessity of using those words on every occasion that they use the fancy name. I do not think, Sir, that in these modern times strict insistence on the use of the word "Limited" after the name of a company is of any great practical importance, but it is the policy of the English Acts and I think we ought to keep to it, though not to extend it to the use of fancy and colloquial names.

HON. MR. KOTEWALL—That being the object I have no objection to the printed clause remaining as it is. I do not think the name "Ewo" can be classed as a translation.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—Your second point is a very difficult one, Mr. Kotewall, because

if any company is able to get round this clause by calling itself something else it seems to me the clause becomes a dead letter.

HON. MR. KOTEWALL—And the business community would be devoid of the protection which the law seeks to give it.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR — Does it, as a matter of fact, afford any protection? Does the Chinese community pay the slightest attention to the existence or otherwise of these characters?

HON. MR. KOTEWALL—I take it the object of the law is to have them there; so it is plain to them.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR — As my name appears on the Bill I hope I make the object plain.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Section 62 of the principal Ordinance requires a company to have its name painted or printed as the case may be on certain places or documents—that is the full official name which it gets on registration. When that name is used they must use the word "Limited" with it. It is a survival of days when the system of limited companies was not so well known, but it is only in those cases where they must print or paint up the full official name that they have to add the word "Limited." There is no obligation upon a company to print its full official name on every bale of merchandise.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR suggested that it was necessary on letter headings.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL read the appropriate section in which the words letter heading did not occur. He added: The danger suggested by Mr. Kotewall is not serious in view of the fact that a company must have its full official title on important documents.

THE HON. MR. KOTEWALL—But only in English — not Chinese. Many firms which adopt what the learned Attorney-General calls "fancy names" only show the English and the fancy name without having the words *yau han kung sze* added.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—In answer to that, I do not think that in modern times

this provision is of very much practical importance.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—I think we most of us have come to the same conclusion on that point. Do you suggest any amendment, Mr. Kotewall?

THE HON. MR. KOTEWALL—No, Sir.

The clause was then approved.

It was agreed that the Ordinance should come into force on December 21st.

Other clauses of the Bill were passed without amendment, and on the Council resuming the third reading was taken and the Bill passed into law accordingly.

#### **Interpretation Ordinance**

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill intituled An Ordinance to amend the Interpretation Ordinance, 1911.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The Bill having been read a second time, it was referred to Committee. It passed through the Committee stage without amendment and on the Council resuming, the third reading was carried and the Bill passed into law accordingly.

#### **The Passports Ordinance**

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill intituled An Ordinance to regulate the admission of persons into the Colony of Hongkong.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The motion was carried and the Bill was afterwards considered in Committee.

HON. MR. POLLOCK—With reference to paragraph 4 of the schedule it seems rather a strong measure to provide that if any person is convicted of an offence against regulation 1 it shall be lawful for any magistrate to order that such person shall be expelled from the Colony. The power to order a person to be expelled is usually exercised by the Governor in Council. In sub-section 2 there is a reference made to the Governor-in Council, because he has to say by what ship the person proposed to be expelled is to depart from the Colony. Would it

not be better to make the Governor in Council the authority throughout I do not know where there is any precedent for giving this power to the Magistrate.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—The point is that the man ought not to be in the Colony at all. Therefore from a constitutional point of view you regard him as non-existent.

HON. MR. POLLOCK—The effect of giving the power to the magistrate is that it would be seldom exercised. The Governor-in-Council would be a much better body to determine whether anybody coming in without a passport should be expelled from the Colony.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR — Is this an alteration of the existing law?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—We have no passport regulations at present. I think that there is a similar power in England.

HON. MR. POLLOCK—Is not the Home Secretary the deciding authority there?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—No, I think he has the power, but the magistrate also has the power to order deportation in certain cases. I have not looked up the point. The object of this clause is to give the power to a judicial officer. The object is not banishment for a term of years. If a man comes back again with proper evidence of identity he can, of course, re-enter the Colony. He must not come into the Colony without proper evidence. If he has come in without such evidence he must be expelled again. I think it is a power that should be exercised by the magistrate.

HON. MR. POLLOCK—suggested that the magistrate might often be in a difficulty as to exercising this power.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—It would be almost an automatic order.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—My recollection is a little obscure, but I thought the magistrate in England merely recommended deportation.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The regulation can be amended at any time. Might it not be passed now? This schedule

can be amended at any time by the Governor-in-Council and that point might be considered, whether the power should be given to the magistrate or to the Governor in Council.

HON. MR. A. R. LOWE—The ordinary passport officer has the power to prevent people landing. The magistrate can expel them; the passport officer does not let them land. It amounts to practically the same thing.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—I think we had better pass the law now. The question is whether we should try and amend the regulation at the moment or later. Do you feel prepared to suggest a form of words, Mr. Pollock? One way of getting over the difficulty would be to say, that it is lawful for this magistrate to recommend to the Governor-in-Council and that that recommendation should be sufficient authority for the police to detain the person. I cannot suggest the exact wording at the moment.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL — One advantage of giving the power to the magistrate is that a man has an opportunity of stating his case against an order for expulsion.

At the suggestion of H.E. the GOVERNOR the expression "any police officer" was substituted for "all police officers" in section (2) of the schedule.

The Bill passed through the Committee stage without further amendment, and on the Council resuming the third reading was carried and the Bill passed into law accordingly.

#### **Short Adjournment**

The Council then adjourned in order that the Finance Committee might consider the financial minutes and the additional financial minute relating to the redistribution of unexpended balances Public Works Department votes for the year 1923.

On the resumption, later, the COLONIAL SECRETARY reported that financial minutes 108 to 112 and the additional P.W.D. financial minute had been approved by the Finance Committee and he moved that they be adopted.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded,

and the motion was carried.

#### **H.E. the Governor's Thanks to the Council**

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—Gentlemen, This is the last meeting for this year and I have once more to express my very cordial appreciation of the assistance which you have given me without stint whenever I have asked you to do so. I feel I have occupied a great deal of your time during this year: I can only say that virtue is its own reward and I hope you may feel you are rewarded by the sense of having done extremely good work in the various committees and commissions in which I have had to ask you to take part. We have had a busy year and I think that on the whole we have done a considerable amount of valuable work. We have had also a very prosperous and successful year so far as public finances are concerned. I hope that next year we may find ourselves continuing in the career of prosperity which has lasted up to the present moment. I am sorry that the Hon. Mr. Holyoak is unable to be present and I feel sure I shall speak for the Council in wishing him a speedy recovery from his present trouble. I thank you very cordially, gentlemen, and wish you a merry Christmas.

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

At the meeting of the Finance Committee, the COLONIAL SECRETARY presided.

#### **Bacteriological Institute**

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$800 in aid of the vote Bacteriological Institute, and Mortuaries, Other Charges, Animals and Fodder.

THE CHAIRMAN—This sum is required to pay for calves used in the preparation of vaccine. The sale will realise a much larger sum, but it is necessary to take a vote.

Approved.

#### **Grant to a Canton Hospital**

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$25,000 in aid of

vote Charitable Services, Grant in aid of Charitable Institution: John G. Kerr Hospital, Canton.

THE CHAIRMAN—This vote has been already approved by the Finance Committee.

Approved.

#### **An Opium Vote**

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$82,000 in aid of the vote Imports and Exports Department, Other Charges, Opium, Purchase of Raw Opium, etc.

THE CHAIRMAN—This liability was incurred principally early in this year, being the amount of the large reward paid in connection with an opium seizure in a cave near Kou I Chau. There is also a sum due in connection with the difference in the rate of exchange between this Colony and India for payments for opium.

Approved.

#### **The Extension of Government Civil Hospital**

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$11,050 in aid of the following votes:—

Medical Department, Civil Hospital, Other Charges:—

Bedding and clothing .....	\$ 7,400.00
Cleansing materials .....	350.00
Furniture .....	3,300.00
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Total .....	\$11,050.00
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THE CHAIRMAN—These sums are required to buy articles for the additional ward at the Government Civil Hospital. The amounts only became known recently in the Crown Agents' Account.

Approved.

#### **Fire Brigade**

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$4,100 in aid of the following votes:—

Fire Brigade, Other Charges:—

Incidental expenses .....	\$ 100.00
Repairs to motor engines and plant .....	500.00
Repairs to floating engines .....	3,500.00
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Total .....	4,100.00
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THE CHAIRMAN—In putting forward these requests the Captain Superintendent of Police has written in respect of incidental expenses: "This vote has already been expended by special warrant, issued in July, for \$300. It has now been found that this sum was insufficient to cover necessary expenses. From this vote all travelling expenses of the Brigade are paid, also the cost of upkeep and running the lift at the temporary central station. The second item, repairs to motor engines and plant, the excess is due to a number of accidents which have proved costly. As to the third item, repairs to floating engines, it is stated that the practice has been to slip the float at the end of the year, the account generally being paid in the following year. This year, however, it is expected that the bills for annual overhaul will be submitted in time for inclusion in this year's expenditure.

Approved.

#### **Public Works Expenditure**

On the special minute dealing with P.W.D. votes the CHAIRMAN said—This additional financial minute shows in detail the supplementary votes required to pay for various public works, recurrent and extraordinary. If any hon. member would like an explanation of any of the sums appearing, I should be glad if he would ask in order that the Director of Public Works may give an explanation.

#### **Magistracy at Kowloon**

HON. MR. POLLOCK asked if the Magistracy at Kowloon had been opened.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—No, I think not.

HON. MR. POLLOCK—When will the building be ready?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—I do not think they have actually begun yet.

THE CHAIRMAN—The old Yaumati Police Station will be ready in February.

### Completion of Queen's Pier

HON. MR. A. O. LANG—I should like some information as to when Queen's Pier is likely to be completed?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—The iron work will be completed by the end of the year, but there has been considerable delay as regards the masonry of the approach to the pier.

HON. MR. A. O. LANG—It has taken a long time: At one time it was mooted that the pier would be open at the time of the Prince of Wales' arrival.

THE CHAIRMAN—That could not have been done because plans for the entrance were not passed until after the Prince of Wales's visit. The plans, I think, were passed before February—a very short time before I went on leave.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—The pier was damaged by the typhoon.

THE CHAIRMAN—When will the whole of the work be completed?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—In about nine months.

THE CHAIRMAN—But the pier will be open for traffic before that?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—I think it will be better not to open it for traffic until it is finished.

HON. MR. A. O. LANG—The work was started about two-and-a-half years ago.

THE CHAIRMAN—About October, 1921,—rather over two years ago.

HON. MR. A. O. LANG—It will be three years before it is finished.

THE CHAIRMAN—Not the pier: the plans were not decided on and passed until February last. I do not think any beginning was made with the building of the approach until quite recently. (To the Director): Is it not a fact that the Praya wall was found not to be strong enough to carry the masonry structure and very careful investigations had to be made as to the foundations?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—That is so and the rubble on which the wall is constructed was displaced by the typhoon.

THE CHAIRMAN—This is very heavy and the plans require alterations. This work was never contemplated when the Praya wall was made. I am sure hon. members will agree it would be a deplorable thing if this ceremonial pier was opened and then began to crumble.

The minute was approved.

The proceedings then concluded.