

9TH NOVEMBER, 1891.

PRESENT—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE ACTING GOVERNOR, Major-General G. DIGBY BARKER, C.B.

Hon. W. M. GOODMAN, Acting Colonial Secretary.

Hon. A. J. LEACH, Acting Attorney-General.

Hon. J. H. STEWART-LOCKHART, Registrar General.

Hon. N. G. MITCHELL-INNES, Colonial Treasurer.

Hon. F.A. COOPER, Acting Surveyor-General.

Hon. W. C. H. HASTINGS, Acting Harbour Master.

Hon. P. RYRIE.

Hon. C. P. CHATER.

Hon. HO KAI.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD

Mr. A. M. THOMSON, Acting Clerk of Councils.

NEW MEMBER.

Capt. Hastings, the Acting Harbour-Master, was sworn in as a new member of the Council.

FORMAL.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—By permission of his Excellency I have the honour to lay upon the table the report of the Acting superintendent of the Fire Brigade for 1890. I have also to lay upon the table the report of the Finance Committee and to move the adoption of the report.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded and the report was approved.

THE LODGING-HOUSE BY-LAWS.

The REGISTRAR-GENERAL—I beg to lay upon the table and to move the approval by this Council of the by-laws, as amended, relating to common lodging-houses. It will be within the memory of hon. members that these by-laws came before the Legislative Council in May last and were approved. Since then they have received the careful consideration of the Sanitary Board and all the members of that Board are unanimously of opinion that the object aimed at by the Government in these by-laws is more likely to be attained by delay than by immediate action. They, therefore, recommend to the Council that section 17 of the by-laws be amended so that the by-laws may not come into operation until 1892. A policy of delay under ordinary circumstances does not always lead to the best results, but in this case delay, in order to allow time for further consideration and inquiry, is more likely to attain the object aimed at than hasty action based upon imperfect knowledge of all the facts of the case. I therefore beg to lay upon the table the amended by-laws and to move their approval.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—Might it not be as well to give us an opportunity of perusing these by-laws before being asked to approve of them?

The REGISTRAR-GENERAL—I have no objection to any delay in order that hon. members may have an opportunity of reading these by-laws. I may say, however, that my reason for bringing them forward at this meeting was that it was the express desire of the members of the Sanitary Board that the bye-laws should be laid before the Council at this meeting, and I am merely carrying out the wishes of the Board.

Hon. HO KAI—I beg to second the proposal of the Registrar-General that the Council do approve these by-laws. I think they have already been seen some time ago by members of this Council. The only alteration is in the date of their operation, putting it backward one year, and I think after this explanation the hon. member will not object to their being passed. I think it is very desirable that the amended section should be approved.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I have no further objection.

The motion was therefore carried.

THE QUESTION OF QUARANTINE.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD said—I rise to move the resolution of which I gave notice at the last meeting of the Council. Medical, sanitary and scientific experts of many nations assembled in great strength at the meeting of the International Congress of Hygiene held in London three months ago, but not one of them took advantage of the opportunity which it gave to say a good word for quarantine. Two leading authorities, viz:—Dr. Cunningham, C.S.I., formerly Sanitary Commissioner to the Government of India, and Inspector-General Lawson, read papers at the said meeting in which the futility of quarantine was very confidently asserted, while no one was disposed to support the other side of the case, or to offer a scientific vindication of it. Dr. Cunningham, C.S.I., read a paper on "The Mode of Preventing the Spread of Epidemic Disease from one country to another." The modes of preventing were (1) quarantine, (2) medical inspection, and (3) sanitary improvements. He held that the chief factor of cholera, being carried by atmospheric currents, cannot be excluded from any country, and where it has been distributed over any area it excites the disease directly in many persons who are predisposed to it, and forms foci of it whenever it finds localities suitable for its increase; these are often very limited in extent, not embracing

more than a single house or ship; the mortality among the steerage passengers in the latter is often very great, while the cabin passengers and all the crew have scarcely a case. Such foci are always badly ventilated, and the emanations arising in them acquire much greater density than in the open air; as a natural consequence the clothing of those who reside in them absorbs an amount of the emanation sufficient to produce cholera in susceptible persons outside until it has been dissipated by exposure; those so affected, however, and the others who have contracted the complaint apart from such foci, do not seem to have any such influence, it being not the body but the emanations from the locality which generate disease. Cholera, therefore, cannot be excluded from any country by general quarantine. All that can be done is by hygienic measures to improve the health of the population, and to remove the conditions which favour the formation of foci. The placing ships which arrive with cholera on board under observation, removing their crews and passengers to suitable localities on shore until the disease ceases among them, are very proper precautions and may prevent a small amount of the disease among the surrounding population, but can never prevent an epidemic if the necessary factors be in progress. Inspector-General Lawson read a paper on the communicability of cholera from country to country. He pointed out "that since 1882 when cholera visited Europe in the epidemic form, cholera nostras has been observed to fluctuate every few years, and with the milder cases occur a certain number presenting all the characters of the malignant disease; these cases occur singly or in small groups, but in every instance accompany epidemics of varying severity, at no very great distance off, and are under the same 'epidemic influence.' Those who support the theory that man diffuses cholera are, necessarily, required to show that persons under the disease must arrive at points where it has not yet appeared before it commences in the latter, and that the first attacks in the new locality have been in persons exposed to the imported cases; but there are now a good many instances of epidemics springing up in localities at a distance from where the disease was already prevailing, and without any trace of importation, and where those first attacked had resided in the country for many months in succession without communication with any previous case. Such were the outbreaks at Southampton in 1865 and New Orleans in 1878, and at Toulou and south of France in 1884, all of which were most carefully investigated on the spot. The only other conclusion open is that the necessary factors were supplied by epidemic influence; and if supplied in one instance supplied in all; where there appears to have been importation at the commencement of the outbreak it must not be assumed that the disease was communicated by man, unless the epidemic influence can be excluded, as at present it cannot.

It seems probable that the exciting factors are conveyed by the air, whether fully or only partially developed, and consequently it is not in our power to exclude them; but much may be done by hygienic and other local means to limit their development in the localities they reach, and so to avoid excessive mortality." Positive evils result from quarantine, for it leads people to rest their faith in measures which are not remedies. Quarantine is generally admitted to be a failure. Nearly all belief in it has been lost, and it is almost universally condemned. It is not defined in the new Merchant Shipping Ordinance though it is proposed to continue quarantine in its worst form, because it is left entirely to the discretion of the Health Officer to detain in quarantine at his pleasure for an indefinite period vessels arrived from a port proclaimed. The London *Times* three months ago defined quarantine as "a homage to the ignorance of the vulgar, an exploded superstition, and one which no person could be found to support before a scientific audience." It is not possible to completely and effectively carry out quarantine in this port as a practical measure and on that ground alone I object to quarantine here. If quarantine is to be forced upon the Colony against the Colonists' wishes, let it be clearly defined in the new bill, and not left to the discretion and the whim of the Health Officer, however good a professional man he may be. The place previously set apart to be a Lazaretto and referred to in the proposed new Quarantine Regulations has been abandoned. There is now no such place, it may be possible to substitute Green Island, but there is no provision in next year's estimates for making a Lazaretto. If Government have any faith left in quarantine as a practical measure it seems incredible that it should have abandoned the Lazaretto on Stonecutters Island and should not have made any provision for the suitable detention of passengers and other persons arriving in these waters in vessels subject to quarantine. The hulk *Hygeia* only receives persons actually suffering from infections and contagious disease. The absence of a Lazaretto cannot but be regarded as a serious neglect and a want of due consideration for what after all is really the Colony's life-blood, viz: its shipping trade. If the present quarantine rules are continued and enforced with no Lazaretto available much of our shipping is liable to be paralyzed and driven away from these shores. Our late Governor in writing to the London *Times* about two months ago asserts that Hongkong is the third, if not the first shipping port in the world, but the very discreditable state in which the port stands in regard to our lack of means for carrying out our discredited quarantine laws is not alluded to. Let us assume that two or more steamers arrive here with 400 or 500 Chinese passengers on board each, of whom 2 or 3 persons are suffering

from small-pox, and supposing a fresh case breaks out every 3 or 4 days after arrival for one or two months, what will be done? The present system would detain the vessels in quarantine with the non-infected passengers on board for an indefinite period in consequence of there being no Lazaretto. Such unreasonable detention would expose the Government to claims for heavy damages. These laws which are proposed to be continued are made by Government to apply solely to vessels of European construction and not to native craft. The laws are just about as vexatiously hurtful and inconsistent as they well could be, for they subject healthy men and women to restraints as severe as though they were pest stricken. Our junk trade according to official returns aggregated 3,500,000 tons in 1890, carried in and out of these waters crews totalling 587,838 men in addition to 283,273 passengers. These returns evidently do not include the numerous passenger boats trading between the near mainland of China and the colony and which carry a vast number of people. All the passengers and crews of native craft have hitherto passed and still pass to and fro in the Colony's waters and on the Island of Hongkong without the slightest let or hindrance from our Quarantine Regulations. The Government have admitted their incapacity to apply Quarantine Regulations to this vast Chinese traffic or the more dangerous portion of shipping frequenting the port. Therefore our system of quarantine is rendered useless for all practical purposes. Why should the European constructed vessels only be subjected to Quarantine Regulations when the Government has not made any arrangements to permit of the proposed Regulations being carried out, and when the vast Chinese trade and passenger traffic are exempted altogether from quarantine? Chinese junks may convey to this Colony numerous passengers attacked with cholera and small-pox, but our Quarantine Regulations are not made to apply and it is not possible to apply them to Chinese vessels and junks. Government have admitted this in former correspondence with the Chamber of Commerce. British philanthropy, which prefers to tax its own commerce, and allows aliens to share it without restriction of any kind, can be the only excuse for the continuance of this vexatious and unreasonable anomaly. Seeing that small-pox is nearly always endemic here is it not absurd to apply Quarantine Regulations to it? Several medical men have quite recently in all seriousness assured me that our quarantine is practically useless and a perfect fiasco. The *London Times* as I have already stated defines quarantine as "a homage to the ignorance of the vulgar, an exploded superstition, and one which no person could be found to support before a scientific audience." Under all the circumstances I beg to move—"That in view of the opinion expressed at the meeting of the International Congress of Hygiene and Demography held in London on 11th August 11st, the

Government appoint a commission composed of medical men to investigate and report on the whole subject of quarantine and quarantine regulations and as to the advisability or otherwise of retaining Section 25 in the proposed new Ordinance to consolidate and amend the laws relating to merchant shipping." I might be permitted to suggest, if the Government is disposed to appoint a commission, that it should consist of the principal Naval Medical Officer, the principal Military Medical Officer, the Colonial Surgeon, Dr. Hartigan, Dr. Cowie, and as it would be desirable to have some business men on the commission I would suggest the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce and Mr. Francis. Q.C., with perhaps Mr. MoCallum. Sanitary Superintendent, as Secretary of the Commission.

Hon. P. RYRIE—I have much pleasure in seconding the resolution of my friend. I think that this quarantine system is a most useless and old world idea altogether. In this place we know that they are attached to old-world systems, but my opinion has been for many years that quarantine is utterly useless to prevent the spread of disease—utterly useless. I need not say anything more. My friend has given all the views, all the most recent views, on the subject and I most cordially support his resolution.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—Perhaps I may be allowed to say a few words on this matter. I understand that his Excellency, as he will probably himself tell you, has had in contemplation the appointment of a commission of this kind, although not a commission constituted almost entirely of medical men, as suggested in the resolution of the hon. member. In the latter part of that resolution I observe that it is suggested that the commission should take into consideration the advisability of doing away with Section 25 of the Merchant Shipping Ordinance relating to quarantine which gives the Governor in Council the power to make quarantine regulations but it can hardly be safe in that way to allow the commission to order what the legislation on the subject should be. I take it that would be for the Council, and they would have the advantage of considering the matter fully themselves. Therefore though I oppose the resolution of the hon. member I am not by any means sorry that he has brought it forward because the subject is one of great interest, and it would be well to have all the information before us on this important question that we can. Sometimes I have heard gentlemen say that quarantine is absolutely useless. Now, what do we mean by quarantine? Let us take a case. Would it be suggested that if a ship coming from some infected port and having on board a large number of Europeans and a still larger number of Chinese with cases of cholera—would it be suggested, I say, that any wise Government

would sanction the landing of those people on the shores of this Colony, to come through the streets of the town, and carry abroad the infectious disease? The literal meaning of the word infectious implies its character, and if you can catch the disease ~~whereby~~ you would not have people bringing it into the Colony and up alongside you? I am sure that the hon. member himself would not like a man from a ship that had cholera on board to stay with him a week or two. What then do we mean by saying that quarantine is useless? You will all agree that we should have a medical examination of an infected vessel.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—And junks.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—It does not follow that because the law may not hit all cases that it should not hit some. Because you cannot prevent nineteen people, it is no reason why you should not prevent eighteen from coming. Assume that you have got a lot of cases of cholera on board a ship, and assume, as I suppose everyone will, that it is necessary to have a health officer, and that the health officer should inspect the vessel and say that he finds a number of cases on board. All cases of sickness are naturally segregated and put upon the *Hygeia*. That is quarantine in the proper sense. The remaining problem then is what are you to do with the people left on board and who are not actually sick but who may be in process of incubating the disease, a process which takes, I believe, in the case of cholera three days, and small-pox as long as twelve days, to develop itself? There are three courses to select. You can make all the people stay on the ship and see whether any fresh cases develop. Or you can let them all land without restriction and carry with them the infection of the malady which they are incubating if they have received the disease. The third course is to let them land and place them in some lazaretto. Under the old system they had a lazaretto at Stonecutters' Island. With what result? I was informed—I don't know how far it was correct—that on one occasion there were a great number of coolies placed there from an infected ship. I don't know to my own personal knowledge, but I am informed that these coolies refused to stay on the island, that they threatened to murder the Doctor, that they made rafts and came to the mainland upon them. If therefore you are going to establish a lazaretto it is quite clear that you would have to place a guard there and, as you could not leave the guard to knock about among infected people, you would require a house. And that means money. You would certainly want a lazaretto of a more suitable kind than that at Stonecutters' Island. It seems to me that the main scope of enquiry for this commission will be to see whether according to modern scientific principles it is deemed better to keep people on the ship for a short time, which though a hardship for them is not so considered by persons on shore

or whether you shall have a proper lazaretto or impose no restrictions at all and allow the people to come on shore as soon as the doctor has selected the sick people. That is an important question to settle. I understand that the opinion was expressed at a congress at home that it is most important that the place on which the persons are landed should be a sanitary place and then if any cases did break out they would not probably spread the disease. But they are of course not afraid to do things in England which we cannot possibly do here. There was an important commission held about three years ago at Demerara. Commissioners were appointed from all the West Indian islands and one of the commissioners happening to be a personal friend of mine I received a report of the proceedings. I assure you the opinions expressed there were very different to the hon. member's. The question at that conference appeared chiefly to be how long these diseases take in incubating and the time ships should be detained. In England of course they have a temperate climate and with excellent laws of health circumstances are not favourable to the spread of disease. I don't wish to weary you by dealing at any further length with the subject, but I want to point out that the Government have not forgotten this matter. We found that Stonecutters Island lazaretto was of very little use and instead of that building we have now the *Hygeia* which is infinitely preferable and having lost the ground at Stonecutters we now have to find some other place if we want to carry out that idea. I have no doubt his Excellency will express his view on the matter and I have no doubt that the commission would give some interesting information. I do not think that the commission would express the opinion that the quarantine system is all nonsense from beginning to end.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I am quite willing to modify the wording of my resolution.

HIS EXCELLENCY—I am quite prepared to appoint a commission upon this subject. Since my attention has been directed to it I have come to the conclusion that there is a great deal to be said in favour of what the hon. member has brought forward. This seems to be in Hongkong a summer of awakening. We seem to be suddenly finding out that a great number of our laws are radically wrong, that for instance our opium laws are immoral and our quarantine laws perfectly useless—I forget the exact hard terms which have been used in reference to them. The only objection I have to make is that these things are generally put forward, perhaps not intentionally, so as to make it appear very much as if it is the present holders of office who were introducing these laws for the first time, whereas they merely happen to be holding office, while the laws have been existing many years

without question and have suddenly been found capable of improvement. We must all march with the times and I for one am not at all sorry that the hon. member has drawn attention to this subject and given us the benefit of what he has read to us. I have been looking up the subject and I think the term quarantine has been rather confused. Some, I believe, have applied it one way and others another. When the present arrangements were made,—so far as I can find about two years ago—the sanction of the Secretary of State was obtained for the doing away with the lazaretto which simply meant a small house and a piece of ground with no buildings on it beyond the small house, and the substitution for it of the *Hygeia* as a quarantine station. What does quarantine mean? Does it mean dealing with those persons who are sick or those who are not sick but are expected to become so? or does it refer to both? In making the arrangements to substitute the *Hygeia* for the house and land it was clear that the Government who arranged it must have had in contemplation, as the Colonial Secretary has told us, one of two courses as regards those who are not actually ill; either to keep them on board ship until the Health Officer is satisfied that there are no germs of disease in them and that they may land without injury to the health of the inhabitants, or to land them without these safeguards at once. As we find the laws they appear to imply—I don't think there is any doubt about it—that it was intended that the former course should be adopted and that all persons, after removal of the sick, remaining on the ships where infectious diseases have been were to be kept on board until the Health Officer was satisfied that they can land with safety. Whether this is right or wrong, whether it is of any use or not are interesting questions which I think ought to be carefully looked into. I am therefore prepared to appoint a Commission. I think in regard to the constitution of the Commission that it is not desirable that it should be made up simply of medical men and I would propose that it should not be a subject for a resolution. The Government is quite alive to the importance of it and I undertake to appoint a Commission in which the medical profession is represented of course and in which all interests shall be represented that should be. I will call on that Commission to investigate the subject and make a report upon it, and I shall send their report to the Secretary of State with any suggestions that may be desirable. With this statement I hope the hon. member will not see any necessity to press his motion.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I accept your Excellency's undertaking.

THE "HYGEIA."

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—In accordance with notice I beg to ask the following question:—As the place formerly set apart to be a Lazaretto, viz., "that part of the northern shore of Stonecutters' Island which is bounded and contained by a line of yellow posts." has been abandoned, the hulk *Hygeia* having, as stated in this Council by the Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary on the 19th October, 1891, been completed and substituted for it, in

accordance with arrangements made last year with the concurrence of the Secretary of State, but as this arrangement does not provide for the removal from the ships of persons other than those actually suffering from infectious or contagious disease, will the Government inform the Council what provision Government has made, or what provision does Government propose to make, if any, for the suitable detention of passengers or other persons arriving in the waters of the port in vessels subject to quarantine?

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—When it becomes necessary in the opinion of the Health Officer to detain passengers arriving in vessels subject to quarantine, such passengers, other than those actually suffering from infectious or contagious disease (who will be segregated and removed) will, under present arrangements, be required to remain on board for such time as the Health Officer may deem necessary.

THE OPIUM FARM.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—Is it the fact that a reduction has been made in the Opium Farmer's monthly payments under the existing contract, and if so, to what amount and from what date, and on what grounds has this reduction been made?

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—A reduction of \$4,000 per month will probably be made to date from 1st March last, but until certain documents have been received from the Farmer's sureties in the Straits Settlements the reduction cannot be regarded as absolutely granted. His Excellency Sir Wm. Des Voeux was advised to grant the reduction after the accuracy of the representations made by the Farmer—to the effect that he was losing money—had been carefully inquired into.

THE JINRICKSHA FARM.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—Referring to Government Notification 384 of 12th September 1891, under the authority of what ordinance or law is the Government proceeding in establishing a Jinricksha Farm?

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—The Government had in contemplation the establishment of a Jinricksha Farm, but having since decided to retain the present system, with slight modifications and an increased licence fee, it will be unnecessary to apply to the Legislative Council for any amendment of the existing ordinance.

A PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—Sir, I rise to make a short personal explanation I observe in the mail supplement of the *Hongkong Daily Press* of October 29th that this paragraph appears at the end of the speech of the Hon.

Mr. Whitehead:—"Feelings have been expressed by the hon. member which I am grieved should exist in the minds of officials towards the inhabitants." My attention was called to that passage and I could not recall having heard it. I referred to the *Daily Press* report of the previous Tuesday morning and I found that the report ended at the words "Chamber of Commerce." The paragraph I have mentioned was not in the report at all. As I could not quite understand why this extra paragraph had been added to the mail supplement which goes home, and knowing that the paragraph would be recorded in the local Hansard, I took the trouble to enquire how that extra passage came to be put in and I was informed that it was put in at the express request of the hon. member. Now I do not wish to say more on this point than to remark that I am on the best of terms with the inhabitants of this colony, as those who know me well know. I have never expressed any feelings hostile to the inhabitants of this colony, for the simple reason that I have never experienced anything but kindness from them and I entertain the kindest feelings towards them.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—At the time there was a conversation going on and I certainly made use of the words which appear in the proof which was sent round to me for revision.

THE APPROPRIATION BILL, 1892.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the second reading of the Appropriation Bill, 1892, and also that the Bill be referred to the Finance Committee.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

Bill read a second time.

His EXCELLENCY then vacated the chair and the Finance Committee proceeded to consider the Bill, the Acting Colonial Secretary presiding.

On the vote for the Colonial Secretary's Department,

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD said he noticed that the reference clerk had been done away with. Why was this clerk not required next year if it was necessary to have him this year?

The CHAIRMAN said he believed the reference clerk had been transferred to the Treasury Department.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said there was still a reference clerk. The only difference was that it was found more convenient for him to be attached to the Treasury than to the Colonial Secretary's Office.

On the vote for the Audit Department.

The CHAIRMAN said that objections were made to this vote last year. These objections were laid before the Secretary of State, who said he was sorry he could not give weight to them and that he felt quite sure that after members had a little more experience of the system they would become converts to it.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—My opposition to the vote is stronger now than it was last year. I don't see any necessity for having one side of the accounts audited in Hongkong and the other side at home. Unfortunately I cannot see it with the official mind. To business men it appears distinctly undesirable.

Hon. P. RYRIE—It was introduced in order to prevent defalcations. It was started after the embezzlement at the

Post Office.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—But the heads of the departments should see that there are no defalcations. They should be made responsible. What is the use of having highly paid men at the head of the Post Office and Treasury unless you make them responsible?

The COLONIAL TREASURER—As I understand the orders sent out from home, the Colonial Treasurer is responsible. Practically he has to audit the accounts. As I understand it the Colonial Treasurer make a preliminary audit, the local auditor makes another audit, and they go home for another audit by the auditor there. The auditor here takes no responsibility. The Treasurer is responsible.

The CHAIRMAN—I have had to prosecute in two very painful Bank cases and in both instances there were most excellent officials at the head of the department. In theory they were responsible for what occurred but really they were not responsible. If people determine to be dishonest it is impossible often to prevent them being so. The head of a department can really be no more held responsible for everything that occurs in his department than a bank manager be held responsible for the dishonesty of those under him.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I move the omission of the item from the estimates.

Hon. P. RYRIE—You cannot very well do that. We are called upon to pay \$10,000. Mr. Nicolle only gets \$4,000 out of that.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I object to the whole item.

Hon. HO KAI—I beg to second the motion for the omission of the item.

The CHAIRMAN—Of course we can take a vote on the motion, but we have the local auditor here and we shall have to pay him his salary.

Hon. P. RYRIE—Well, let us vote Mr. Nicolle's salary and omit the balance. We have no objection to Mr. Nicolle. He does his work extremely well.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—It is not Mr. Nicolle we object to, it is the system. Mr. Nicolle may be a very efficient officer, but what we say is that he is not required here.

The Council then divided on the amendment.

FOR.	AGAINST.
Hon. T. H. Whitehead	The Acting Harbour Master
Hon. Ho Kai	The Acting Surveyor-General
Hon. C. P. Chater	The Colonial Treasurer
Hon. P. Ryrie	The Registrar-General
	The Acting Attorney-General
	The Act. Colonial Secretary

The amendment was therefore lost and the vote agreed to.

With regard to the vote for the Treasury Department,

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD said he noticed an increase in the salary of the third clerk.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said Mr. Madar had been over twenty years in the service and had received very little increase of salary. He was a very efficient officer.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I don't wish to oppose the increase, but there appear too many highly paid officers in this Department. In my opinion the officers in the Treasury are not overworked.

The COLONIAL TREASURER—There is no reason why officers in the Treasury should be overworked.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I mean that they find considerable trouble in filling up their time. I know I should like to be able to get away to polo every afternoon at four o'clock.

Hon. P. RYRIE. If you stand on the Supreme Court steps, the moment the clock strikes four, you can see the officials rushing off.

The COLONIAL TREASURER—I challenge the hon. member to name three days in the week on which he sees me come out of my office before five.

Hon. P. RYRIE—Well, perhaps not you. I don't know that I have seen you.

The REGISTRAR-GENERAL—I also challenge the hon. member to say that he ever sees me rushing away at four.

The ACTING ATTORNEY -GENERAL—Or does the hon. member refer to me?

Hon. P. RYRIE—But you do other work besides what you do for the Government.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD moved that the vote be reduced.

The COLONIAL TREASURER said the increase was largely due to the new regulations with regard to audit.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—The Treasury and Audit departments cost \$37,000 to collect two millions. A bank or a merchant's office would do the work for less than half that sum and make money out of it.

The CHAIRMAN said the hon. member must recollect that there was other work to be done besides the mere work of collection. There were questions of reference and legal questions constantly arising that involved an enormous amount of work.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD said he would not press his amendment. He would agree to the vote being passed now and members would have an opportunity of expressing an opinion when the vote came before Council and they had more information on the subject.

The COLONIAL TREASURER—I would ask that until hon. members know something of what is done in the Treasury they would refrain from expressing an opinion as to the officers having nothing to do there. The remarks may not have been made seriously, but if repeated the idea may gain ground that there is no work being done in the Treasury. I think if any hon. member were to pay a visit to the Treasury for a day he would no longer hold that opinion.

The vote was agreed to.

With regard to the vote for the Surveyor-General's department.

The CHAIRMAN said it was regrettable that Mr. Brown had died as he did. His sudden death had thrown a great deal of work on Mr. Cooper.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD said he agreed with the Chairman in regard to the high eulogy passed on Mr. Cooper. He thought the Colony would be very fortunate if it could retain Mr. Cooper's services as Surveyor-General. With regard to the vote as he was not prepared to go into the various items as fully as he would wish he asked that it might stand over to the next meeting.

Agreed to.

On the vote for the Post Office,

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD asked that a rough account of receipts and expenditure in connection with this department might be drawn up so that it could be seen whether the Colony was losing or gaining on the Post Office.

The CHAIRMAN promised that the information asked for should be supplied.

On the vote for the Harbour Master's Department.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD said he noticed that in the schedule of the new Merchant Shipping Ordinance there were certain increased fees proposed to be levied. To whom did these fees go?

The ACTING HARBOUR MASTER said all fees levied went to the Government.

On the vote for the Ecclesiastical Department.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I see a sum of \$2,100 is put down for a Protestant Chaplain. What Protestant Chaplain does this refer to?

Hon. HO KAI said he noticed a grant of \$2,100 for a Protestant Chaplain for the Gaol and Hospital. There was more than one chaplain in the Colony who visited these places and he thought the money should be equally divided between them.

The CHAIRMAN—You must have someone responsible for the work at the Gaol and Hospital and I hardly think you could divide the \$2,100. The congregation of the Cathedral will, I think, find it quite as much as they can do to provide a salary for their incumbent.

Hon. HO KAI—I think all the denominations should be treated in the same manner. If a Presbyterian Minister goes to the gaol or hospital surely he should be allowed something.

It was agreed to let the vote stand over.

With regard to the vote for the Educational Department.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD said—I notice there is an increase of \$10,000 in the vote for this department. The increase appears to be due chiefly to the increase for grants-in-aid and to the building grant of \$5,000 to the Diocesan Home.

The CHAIRMAN—As the Colony grows, of course more is required every year for education.

Last year the amount for grants-in-aid was insufficient and a reduction had to be made *pro rata*. In some cases this amounted to a reduction of ten per cent. This was very discouraging to the teachers and was really an injustice to them. With regard to the Diocesan Home the grant has been made on special conditions. The Government gives one half on condition that the other half is subscribed, and certain regulations have to be conformed with.

The REGISTRAR-GENERAL—The institution is a most excellent one. It is doing good work and is deserving of every support.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I do not wish to oppose the vote. I have no doubt that the money will be well spent but we must remember that the colony is in a most deplorable financial condition. \$84,000 seems to me a very large proportion of the revenue of the Colony to spend in this manner. The object, I admit, is a most excellent one, but we must cut our coat according to our cloth, and we have to remember that the majority of the inhabitants of this colony are in a most impecunious condition.

The vote was agreed to.

With regard to the vote for Miscellaneous Services.

The ACTING SURVEYOR-GENERAL said there was a slight increase in the item for gas lamps. it being thought advisable to retain the lamps in case of any accident occurring to the electric light.

Hon. C. P. CHATER drew attention to the increase of the refund for void houses from \$15,000 to \$18,000. The

statistics prepared by the Registrar-General showed that the population was increasing. If that were so surely more houses were likely to be occupied.

The CHAIRMAN said the increase, he believed, occurred through a change to be made in the system of dealing with houses at the Peak. Formerly no refund was granted unless the house was vacant for six months. It was now proposed to put the Peak houses on the same footing as those on the lower levels and give a refund for a house that was vacant for a month. That he believed was the reason of the increase in the estimate.

On the motion of Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD the vote stood over for further consideration.

With regard to the vote for Public Works recurrent.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD said he thought that if more money were required for the maintenance of the roads the Finance Committee would willingly vote it. The road along Praya East was in a very bad condition.

The ACTING SURVEYOR-GENERAL said he did not think more money would be required. The present state of the roads was due to their being cut up for the carrying out of the water and drainage works.

Several other votes were agreed to without discussion, and the Committee reported progress at the vote for Extraordinary Public Works.

On the Council resuming it adjourned till the 16th inst.
