

1ST APRIL, 1909.

**PRESENT:—**

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, SIR FREDERICK DEALTRY LUGARD, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O.

H. E. COLONEL DARLING, R. E. (General Officer Commanding).

HON. MR. F. H. MAY, C.M.G. (Colonial Secretary).

SIR HENRY BERKELEY, K.C. (Acting Attorney-General).

HON. MR. A. M. THOMSON (Colonial Treasurer).

HON. MR. W. CHATHAM, C.M.G. (Director of Public Works).

HON. MR. E. A. IRVING (Registrar-General).

HON. MR. F. J. BADELEY (Captain-Superintendent of Police).

HON. DR. HO KAI, M.B., C.M., C.M.G.

HON. MR. WEI YUK, C.M.G.

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

HON. MR. E. A. HEWETT.

HON. MR. H. A. W. SLADE.

Mr. A. G. M. FLETCHER (Clerk of Councils.)

**Minutes**

The minutes of the last meeting were read, and confirmed.

**Financial**

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY—I have the honour to lay on the table Financial Minutes Nos 10, 11 and 12, and to move that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

HIS EXCELLENCY — Gentlemen, with regard to Financial Minute No. 12, you will see that it embodies a resolution by the Council to spend a certain sum for the Observatory. You will recollect that in September last when the Estimates were introduced I promised the Council that I would instruct the Director of the Observatory to visit Manila with a view to comparing our instruments with theirs and in order to get into touch with the Director of the Observatory at that place. Since that date I have been able to inform the Council that by the courtesy of the American Government in the Philippine Islands we hope that a wireless telegraphy station will be established at Santo Domingo de Basco which will be of great value to us, and I have also informed the Council that the Admiral commanding the China Fleet has promised that men-of-war cruising in the neighbouring waters shall communicate any observations that may be of use in forecasting storms.

I propose in connection with this financial minute to briefly inform the Council of the

results of the visit which has been paid by the Director of our Observatory to Manila. On February 16th, as soon as his annual returns were completed, Mr. Figg started for Manila and remained there until the 23rd February. Every day during his stay he visited the Observatory, and I need hardly say that he was received with the utmost courtesy by Father Algué who placed his entire time at his disposal during his residence in the Islands. The Manila Observatory, Mr. Figg informs me, cost about \$145,000 and the staff consists of one director, three assistant directors, a secretary and librarian, and ten native observers, calculators, draughtsmen, and mechanics. There are some forty out-stations in the archipelago connected with headquarters. Some of them report three times a day, some twice a day. The ordinary observation hours are between six a.m. and seven p.m. Father Algué agreed that the primary object in view for improving the information regarding typhoon warnings is the creation of as many stations as possible and the more frequent despatch of observations from existing stations. In this connection he promised to send extra observations from other stations in the Philippines whenever the station at Aparri should be interrupted, which unfortunately frequently occurs. He also said he would send any additional information which might be useful for the determination of the position of typhoon centres. Mr. Figg, on his part, promised to send extra observations from here whenever they might be required by the Manila Observatory, the Manila Government defraying the cost of transmission. He also promised, at the request of Father Algué, to send all typhoon warnings, (which has hitherto not been done), whether the typhoons arise in the neighbourhood of the Philippine Islands or not.

With regard to the instruments for forecasting storms. The Manila Observatory has two seismographs and a tromometer. The seismographs, Farther Algué said, were of some indirect use in the Philippines, but he had considerable doubt whether they would be of any use to us as we fortunately are not subject to earthquakes, and as they are very costly instruments, having to be mounted on stone pillars, we do not propose to adopt them. In regard to the instruments for registration; the Manila anemograph registers in the office

whereas ours can only be consulted by going on the roof which is always difficult and often impossible. It was moreover damaged during the last typhoon. The Director strongly recommends the purchase of a pressure tube anemograph of the Davies-Baxendall type with a recording apparatus mounted on the lower floor. We propose to purchase this and the necessary vote is before the Council now. As this is primarily a pressure instrument he is of opinion that it may be valuable to the Building Authority and to civil engineers in the colony, since the instrument registers the wind pressure momentarily,—the pressure of each gust of wind—and is of course of more value for gauging the resistance of any building than our Beckley which only registers the average velocity of the wind. These pressure tube instruments are adopted by many of the British Observatories. The cost is estimated, including some alterations to the building, at about \$1100.

It is also said that our instrument could be very greatly improved by fitting to its velocity gear a cheap chronograph in order to measure the wind velocity at short intervals by the aid of an electric current. We propose to adopt that to our existing instrument at a cost of about \$100. This suggestion was made by Mr. Hunt, who is the meteorological expert of the Commonwealth Government, and who has been visiting during the last eight months the principal Observatories of America, Europe and India in order to see their instruments, and ascertain whether the instruments in Australia could in any way be improved. He spent a day in Hongkong at the end of January and Mr. Figg was able to obtain from him valuable information of exactly the nature we were seeking. The Manila Observatory has a Spring-Fuess barograph which registers mechanically instead of photographically as ours does. It is of advantage as the records thus registered are immediately available. Mr. Figg tells me it would be a convenience but would add nothing to his ability to forecast storms and since it costs about \$2,000 it is not proposed to adopt it.

On the main principle of forecasting typhoons I am glad to say that Mr. Figg finds himself in complete agreement with Father

Algué that "the chief reliance for the early prediction of storms must be placed on observations of barometer, wind and weather telegraphed promptly from surrounding areas." Manila Observatory has a barocyclo-thermometer, but Father Algué did not recommend it. He said he possessed one but did not consult it frequently. He considered it useful for isolated observers but not for observatories connected with other stations.

The motion was agreed to.

#### **Resolution Under the Rating Ordinance**

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the following resolution:

Resolved by the Legislative Council that the percentage on the valuation of tenements payable as rates in the undermentioned places be altered from the 1st day of July, 1909, as follows:—

		per cent.		per cent.
Tokwawan .....	From	9	to	$9\frac{3}{4}$
Hok Un .....	"	$10\frac{3}{4}$	"	$11\frac{1}{2}$
Taikoktsui .....	"	$10\frac{3}{4}$	"	$11\frac{1}{2}$
Hunghom .....	"	$12\frac{1}{4}$	"	13
Tsimtsatsui (Kowloon Point)	"	$12\frac{1}{4}$	"	3
Yaumati .....	"	$12\frac{1}{4}$	"	13
Monkoktsui .....	"	$12\frac{1}{4}$	"	13

He said—In these districts fire hydrants have now been fixed and fire appliances are available for use in case of fire. Therefore it seems reasonable that the rates be increased by the usual three-quarter per cent.

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

#### **Public Health and Buildings Amendment Ordinance**

THE ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the first reading of a Bill entitled An Ordinance to amend The Public Health and Buildings Ordinance, 1903.

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

#### **Life Insurance Co's Ordinance**

THE ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL

moved the first reading of a Bill entitled An Ordinance to amend The Life Insurance Companies Ordinance, 1907.

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

#### **The Code of Civil Procedure**

THE ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the first reading of a Bill entitled An Ordinance to amend The Code of Civil Procedure.

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

#### **The Evidence Ordinance**

THE ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the first reading of a Bill entitled An Ordinance to amend The Evidence Ordinance, 1899.

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

#### **Wireless Telegraphy Ordinance**

THE ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the first reading of a Bill entitled An Ordinance to amend The Wireless Telegraphy Ordinance, 1903.

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

HIS EXCELLENCY — Council stands adjourned until Thursday next.

#### **FINANCE COMMITTEE.**

A meeting of the Finance Committee was then held, the Colonial Secretary presiding. The following votes were passed.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of Eleven thousand six hundred and thirteen Dollars (\$11,613) in aid of the vote, Miscellaneous Services, Compensation to Licensees for closure of Opium Divans.

THE CHAIRMAN — This is for compensation to the licensees of twenty-six opium divans which have been closed as from the 1st March.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER—In connection with this is there any intention

on the part of the Imperial Government to carry out their abstract resolution for paying compensation for loss?

THE CHAIRMAN—No, those terms do not come into operation until the beginning of the next farm. This is a matter of small compensation.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER—It is the direct result of the action taken by the Home Government.

THE CHAIRMAN—I don't think we will squabble over an item of \$11,000. We are not so hard up as all that yet.

HON. DR. HO KAI—It might be noted, however. By-and-bye we shall be presenting our Bill.

THE CHAIRMAN—That does not come until we let the new farm. This obligation will be discharged by the Colony.

HON. DR. HO KAI—It would be included as part of the loss.

THE CHAIRMAN—I have tried to explain to members that the loss will be calculated as from March 1st, 1910, on the letting of the new contract.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER—That is the difficulty. How is the loss to be calculated? You cannot tell what the new farm may bring. This is a definite loss.

THE CHAIRMAN—Yes.

HON. DR. HO KAI—There is no harm in noting it down.

THE CHAIRMAN—We know it is an actual loss. Still it is a very small thing.

HON. MR. HEWETT—The principle is a very important one, and the loss before we are finished will be very serious. I think the Colonial Treasurer is quite right in raising the question at this time. There ought to be a preliminary protest as the action has been forced upon us by the Imperial Parliament against our wish and we believe to the detriment of the Colony at large.

THE CHAIRMAN—The question will come up when we let the new farm. We will then know how much the letting value has been diminished. I have no doubt, as his Excellency has informed the Council, we will receive every consideration from the Home Government. It only complicates matters to bring up this small matter, as it was understood we would not press a claim of this kind.

HON. MR. HEWETT—We look to the Home Government and expect liberal compensation, but it does not follow that we will get it unless we make a protest at once.

THE CHAIRMAN—I think His Majesty's Government understand that. However, I will inform His Excellency of what hon. members have said,

#### **Medical Department**

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of Fifty Dollars (\$50) in aid of the vote, Medical Department, A—Staff, Other Charges, Health Officer of Port, Boat's Crew and Messenger.

#### **Observatory Vote**

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of Nine hundred and fifty Dollars (\$950) in aid of the vote, Observatory, Laboratory Expenses for purchase of Anemograph and Chronograph.