

31ST OCTOBER, 1916.

PRESENT:—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, SIR FRANCIS HENRY MAY, K.C.M.G.

HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR-GENERAL F. VENTRIS (General Officer Commanding Troops in China).

HON. MR. CLAUD SEVERN (Colonial Secretary).

HON. MR. J. H. KEMP (Attorney-General).

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

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

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

HON. MR. C. McI. MESSER (Captain Superintendent of Police).

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

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

HON. MR. E. SHELLIM.

HON. MR. D. LANDALE.

HON. MR. LAU CHU PAK.

HON. MR. P. H. HOLYOAK.

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

Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed.

Papers

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H. E. the Governor, laid on the table Sessional Paper, 16, being an abstract showing the difference between the estimates of expenditure for 1916 and 1917.

Finance

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. the Governor, laid upon the table report of meeting of the Finance Committee held on October 17th (No. 8), and moved that it be adopted.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and this was agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. the Governor, laid upon the table Financial Minutes Nos. 34 to 38, and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

Unofficial Representation

HON. MR. H. E. POLLOCK asked:—With reference to the following statements in paragraph 5 of the Despatch of His Excellency the Governor, of the 26th May, 1916, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the subject of the recent Petition for greater representation of the public on the Executive and Legislative Councils, namely:—"It is quite impracticable to apply the principle of election to appointments to a body like the Executive Council and it does not seem necessary to set out the very obvious reasons for which such a proposal could not be entertained": Will the Government state what are the reasons why such a proposal could not be entertained?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied—The Government is not prepared to make a statement on the subject.

HON. MR. H. E. POLLOCK—I rise to a point of order with regard to question 2—Will the Government also state for what reasons two out of the four non-Chinese Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council are Government nominees instead of being elected as Members?—not having been answered. Of course, I quite appreciate the fact, from the letter addressed to me by the Clerk of the Council, that your Excellency has it in your power to decline, for certain reasons, to answer questions which you think fit. But, with all due deference, I venture to submit that that should be stated in Council. I think that your Excellency—and I say this again with all due deference—has no right to prevent questions being asked. Your Excellency could have said that, for certain

reasons, the question could not be answered. My position—and I am still speaking on the point of order—is this: Might I send the Clerk of the Council's letter to the Press so that people might be informed why the question suddenly and mysteriously vanishes from the agenda? I take it, Sir, I am at liberty to send the letter of the Clerk of the Council to the Press; otherwise, it appears that the question which has been put, and of which notice had been given publicly, suddenly and mysteriously disappeared into the void without any explanation at all.

HIS EXCELLENCY—I have no objection to the hon. member sending the letter to the Press. As regards my power to refuse to accept a question, that has been established by precedent in the House of Commons, and it has certainly been established here by various precedents. I regret very much that the question of the hon. member found its way into the Orders of the Day; that was quite inadvertent.

Government Civil Hospital

HON. MR. H. E. POLLOCK asked:—

1.—Of the sums of \$9,905, \$10,147, and \$9,714 stated at the last meeting of Council to have been expended in the years 1913, 1914, and 1915, respectively, will the Government state

- (i).— How much of that expenditure represents drugs and disinfectants
 - (a) supplied from home;
 - (b) purchased locally?
- (ii).— Whether it is not the fact that the price of drugs and disinfectants has gone up considerably since the beginning of the war, with the result that the same sum of money purchased considerably less drugs and disinfectants since the war than it did before the war?
- (iii).— Whether any savings were effected on the amounts voted for drugs and disinfectants in the years 1914 and 1915 or either of them, and, if so, what were the amounts of such savings?

2.—With reference to the morning allocation of Sisters at the Civil Hospital which was announced by His Excellency the Governor at the Council Meeting of the 3rd August last, namely:—

A Block

Morning, 1 Sister on each floor;
Operating Theatre, 1 Sister;
will the Government state

- (i).— On what dates between the 22nd August and the date of these Questions (12th October) it has been found possible to carry out the said intended morning scheme of allocation, namely, 1 Sister on each floor of A Block, and a separate Sister for the Operating Theatre; and
- (ii).— On what dates, between the said dates, One Sister alone has had to attend in the morning not only to the two floors in A Block but also to the Operating Theatre as well, that is to say, to do work which, under the above scheme of allocation, is supposed to be done by three Sisters?

3.—What was the value of the drugs and disinfectants, consigned to the Hongkong Government, which went down in the *Yasaka Maru* in December, 1915?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY replied as follow:—

1.—(i) (a) 1913, \$8,400; 1914, \$3,327; 1915, \$7,811. Owing to delay in presentation of the account a sum of \$539 in respect of drugs ordered for 1914 was not paid until 1915. It is regretted that a mistake was made in respect of the total expenditure in 1914. The amount was \$9,781.

(b).—The balance was spent locally. About half the local expenditure in 1914 was in respect of requirements which could not have been foreseen.

(ii).—Yes, in some instances.

(iii).—1914, \$2,742; 1915, \$2,785.

2.—(i)—On the 22nd August. (ii): September 1, 6-15, 19-30. October 1, 4, 9-12. On no occasion was the Sister without a Nurse's assistance. Owing to leave and sickness it was not possible to give effect to the allocation arranged by H.E. the Governor. Since the 28th July three Sisters have been granted long leave to England, one sister was on sick leave from the 8th to the 17th September, and one has been similarly absent from the 13th September up to date; while under the new system of granting one and if possible two days off in the month 11 days off were given

to the Sisters in August, 11 days in September and 5 days in October up to the 12th instant. This short leave absorbs one Sister.

3.—The value of the consignment was \$501.89

A Correction

HIS EXCELLENCY—Before proceeding with the Orders of the Day I should like to correct a statement which I made at the last meeting of the Council. In summing up the charitable and other contributions made by this Colony to the war, I said that the Tai Yau Bank had contributed one aeroplane at a cost of £1,500, and that the community of Hongkong had contributed two aeroplanes at a cost of £3,000. As a matter of fact, the Tai Yau Bank contributed half the cost of three aeroplanes, and the Hongkong community the other half. Therefore the Tai Yau Bank's contribution was considerably larger than I stated. I regret the error.

Trustees' Ordinance

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL introduced a Bill intituled, "An Ordinance to amend the Trustees Ordinance, 1901."

The Objects and Reasons state that the object of this Bill is to empower trustees to invest trust funds in the loan authorised by the recent War Loan Ordinance, 1916.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL then moved the suspension of the Standing Orders to allow of the Bill being taken through the remaining stages at that meeting.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and this was agreed to.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL then moved the second reading of the Bill. In doing so he said:—The object of the Bill, Sir, is to give trustees power to invest trust funds in the Hongkong War Loan.

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

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

The Bill passed through Committee without amendment, and on Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that the Bill be read a third time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was then read a third time and passed.

The Budget

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, "An Ordinance to apply a sum not exceeding eight million, six hundred and five thousand, one hundred and five dollars to the public service of the year 1917."

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

HON. MR. POLLOCK—Sir, I have been asked by the Unofficial Members of Council to speak on their behalf in reply to your Excellency's speech on the Estimates for 1917.

On the one hand, we desire to express our gratification that the Revenue of the Colony has proved of an expansive nature and has thus enabled us to have a fairly full programme of Public Works.

On the other hand, we cannot, in view of the precarious nature of some of our sources of Revenue, afford to launch out with too great freedom, especially in view of possible unforeseen expenditure which may have to be met in connection with the War and other matters.

In the footnote (2) on page 8 of the Estimates, we notice an estimated expenditure of \$13,000 for 1916, and we hope that that sum represents the last payment to be made to the contractor and shall be glad to know if this is so.

As regards the suggested increase in the Staff of the Exports and Imports Department, we agree that such an increase is urgently required for the purpose of obviating delay, and we would urge that it would be a great convenience to the mercantile community if a Branch Office could be established in a central position, such as the Post Office Building.

In connection with the searching of passengers at the wharves for arms and opium we desire to
s t a t e t h a t s e r i o u s

complaints have reached some of us, and we trust that means may be found to remedy such abuses, which are a hindrance to the river-traffic of this Colony.

We would also suggest that it is a great inconvenience for travellers to be obliged to go up to the Central Police Station, which is somewhat out of the way, for their passes, and the Post Office Building appears to be most conveniently situated for this purpose.

Under the heading of Supreme Court, on page 44 of the Estimates, we notice that a 1st grade Translator has been replaced by a 2nd grade Translator, and we would urge upon the Government the desirability of steps being taken for the improvement of the translation branch of the Service, because in the Supreme Court sometimes the whole decision turns upon the correct translation of a single word. In a big case, where there is plenty of money involved, probably both sides would be able to overcome the difficulty by calling experts as witnesses, but in smaller cases such a procedure would prove both expensive and dilatory, and we would suggest that it should be made possible for the Judge, if neither party wished to go to the expense of calling experts, to invoke the assistance of some cadet in the Government Civil Service for the purpose of obtaining a second opinion on a question of disputed translation. The subject is a difficult one, but it seems clearly desirable that something should be done, and we hope that the Government may, after consulting with the learned Judges of the Supreme Court, be able to effect some improvement upon the present arrangements.

In connection with the administration of the Government Civil Hospital I intend shortly to bring a resolution before this Council, and it is, therefore, unnecessary to discuss such administration upon the present occasion.

In connection with the small saving on page 67 of the Estimates, under the heading "Support of Lunatics Abroad," we would ask why the Government has reverted to the old practice of sending Chinese lunatics to the Chinese Authorities at Canton, instead of to the John Kerr Hospital at Canton, and we must confess to feeling some doubt as to the desirability of the alteration.

We think it regrettable, also, that the present Estimates contain no provision for the improvement of the Lunatic Asylum, which is highly discreditable to the Colony, because its cramped accommodation and restricted space for exercise must tend to have an injurious effect upon the inmates.

On the subject of Education, we desire to state that we consider that the teaching of the English language to Chinese boys in the schools of this Colony is not so good as it ought to be.

Passing on now to the subject of Public Works, we have naturally some comments to make and questions to ask in connection with this important Department, on which we are spending 20 per cent. of our Revenue.

With regard to item 7 on page 97 "For improvements to roads and bridges outside the City," we desire to express the opinion that this item, which stands at the same figure as in former years, is not sufficient in amount. While we approve of the motor road being extended beyond Deep Water Bay on its way to make a circuit round the Island, we consider that it is of far more pressing and urgent importance that the present roads out to Deep Water Bay—namely, the Pokfulam Road, and the Jubilee (or Victoria) Road, which are now so much used by motors—should be improved both as regards blind corners and some of the bridges. We think, also, that the roadway between the paper-works at Aberdeen and the road to Deep Water Bay should be widened and improved.

Coming now to Buildings (on page 99) we are glad to note that the quarters for Subordinate Officers at Happy Valley are to be completed in 1917, and that the Extension to the Central Police Station is to be more vigorously proceeded with. As regards the next item of \$35,000 for accommodation for the Imports and Exports Office, we should be glad to know what is the estimated total cost of the work, and we would ask a similar question with regard to item 5 for \$15,000, "2nd block of Quarters for Subordinate Officers on Mount Parish"; and, in connection with quarters for Subordinate Officers generally, we should like to know whether the completion of all the quarters figuring in the present Estimates will conclude the Government's present scheme for the housing of Subordinate Officers or whether further quarters are likely to be required in the near future, and, if so, to what extent.

With regard to item 8 (b) on page 99, of \$37,500, for the improvement of that section of the Deep Water Bay to Tytam Tuk section of road which goes from Deep Water Bay to Repulse Bay, we should like to know what will be, roughly, the cost of making the remainder of that

section fit for motor traffic, and, similarly, in connection with item 8 (c) we should like to know, roughly, what would be the cost of a motor road from Tytam gap down to Shaukiwan.

Under the heading of Waterworks, on page 101, we are glad to see that the additional Service Reservoir at West Point and the Tytam Tuk scheme (2nd section) are to be both of them completed in 1917.

Under the heading of Kowloon, on the same page, we should like to know whether the sums of \$35,000 and \$18,000, under items 29 and 30, represent the estimated total expenditures on those works, and, if not, what are such totals. We should, also, like to know what are the "General Works" on roads in Kowloon, costing \$22,000, which are item 34 (b).

In connection with Kowloon we suggest that the small children's playground near Hunghom Railway Station ought to be improved by the erection of a shelter from the weather and by the planting of shrubs and shade-trees round the edges. We would also suggest that some public seats might be placed in Nathan Road, near the Church.

From item 39, on the same page, we are glad to note that the Government intends to resume the Ferry Piers on the Victoria and Yaumati-Samshuipo runs, and we trust that steps will be taken, by throwing the ferry service open to public competition, to secure an adequate and regular ferry service to the public.

Before leaving the subject of Public Works, we should be glad if the Director could give us some information as to when the Praya East Reclamation is likely to be begun. The foreshore on Praya East, at low water, has been increasingly disagreeable to the sense of smell for some years past, and, if this Reclamation is not likely to be begun soon, we would suggest that the drains and sewer pipes might be led further out along the foreshore. Another point which seems to require watching, from the Public Health point of view, is the raking about by poor Chinese in the stuff deposited in dust-boats on the Praya and in dustbins in the streets.

We approve of the re-casting of the system of accounts of the Kowloon-Canton Railway, and we hope that it may be found possible to reduce somewhat the working expenses of this costly undertaking. We would also most strongly urge upon the Government the desirability of vigorously pressing upon the Chinese Authorities the necessity

for fulfilling their agreement to link up this line with the Railway which is now being built from Canton to Hankow.

Another point upon which we would ask your Excellency to take action is in connection with the site for the erection of the new building for the Hongkong Branch of the European Young Men's Christian Association. It is most advisable that a central site, which is easily accessible by ricksha from the landing-stages, should be acquired, and we would, therefore, ask you to approach the Secretary of State for the Colonies upon the subject of a grant of a site in a Central situation being made to the Association upon easy terms.

In conclusion, we would venture to express the hope that the residents of this Colony will continue to give liberal financial assistance for the prosecution of the War, and that the local War Loan, which has recently been offered for subscription, may prove to be a very great success, and we would suggest for consideration that the Sinking Fund might be invested by the Government in 6 per cent. Exchequer Bonds, so as to yet further aid the War Funds.

HON. MR. LAU CHU PAK—Sir, speaking on behalf of my senior Chinese colleague and myself, I beg to emphasize the remarks relative to the searching of Chinese passengers leaving or arriving in this Colony. From the nature of the complaints brought to the notice of the Secretary for Chinese Affairs, through the Chinese General Chamber of Commerce, and from similar representations made to ourselves, it is evident that the present system of searching by the native excisemen and police is capable of much improvement. In our opinion there should always be present some responsible officer to whom the Chinese, when searched, could report in case of irregularities or to whom they could turn for guidance when a dispute arises. Many allegations of a serious nature have been circulated for some time amongst the Chinese and duly communicated to the Secretary for Chinese Affairs, who will no doubt bring them before the Government in due course. I need not, therefore, go into details. On behalf of the Chinese community my senior Chinese colleague and myself respectfully request that the Government will give the matter early attention, and adopt such measures as will place a stricter supervision over the

work of the native excisemen and police, and mitigate the hardship and undue annoyance to which the Chinese passing through this Colony are undoubtedly subjected. Turning to the question of the teaching of Chinese boys in English, we also agree that the methods in vogue may well be looked into and improved. Given the same length of time for schooling, and the same standard of education, the Chinese boys learning English nowadays do not as a rule speak and write the language so well as the students of a decade or two ago. The reason is, we should say, that too many subjects are crammed into the heads of the present day students before they have had a proper grounding in the fundamental elements of the language.

THE GOVERNOR—Hear, hear.

HON. MR. LAU CHU PAK—At any rate English not being their mother tongue the Chinese students cannot be expected to learn it with the same facility as the English students taught under the same system. We commend this important question to the careful attention of the authorities interested. We say important, Sir, because on the present day students the Courts here more or less depend for the supply in future of competent interpreters and translators, and the University for qualified undergraduates.

HON. MR. WEI YUK—I beg to support the statements which have just been made by my colleague.

HON. MR. HOLYOAK.—Sir, in rising to support the remarks which have fallen from my colleagues, I desire to state that the hon. member who represents the Justices of the Peace has given to this Council a symposium of thought representing the criticisms which the unofficial members have to pass upon the Budget. It is the desire of all of us to avoid, under the present circumstances, all controversial matter as far as may possibly be done, but it is not within the reasonable bounds of probability or expectation that the expenditure of so large a sum of money as this Budget involves could hope to entire escape criticism of the points which, from a commercial point of view—representing as I do, and have the honour to do, the commercial community of the Colony—we would

force upon the attention of the Government. In the first place, we ask for the removal of the Pass Office to a more central position in the Colony, such as the Post Office, and if possible the removal to a more central position of the Permit Office. The Pass Office is notoriously quite inconvenient. It is difficult to find, and extremely difficult for strangers to find. It should be, we submit, in a central spot, close to the arrival of the large vessels which come and go in these waters, and the natural place would be somewhere on the praya front, or as adjacent to it as it possibly can be. The Permit Office is at present at the Harbour Office, which is some distance from the business locality, and a great deal of time is wasted in going to obtain permits, and although we all recognise that most valiant efforts are made to avoid delays and to meet the wishes of merchants, we submit that this is a point which might be very carefully considered. My colleague touched on the question of the devotion of large sums of money to public works in the Kowloon territory and the further hinterland rather than upon this side, and while we recognise most clearly the desirability of improving roads of communication with a view to developing the territory and desirable building sites on that side, we do consider that very much money is being spent on that side to the neglect of obvious and perfectly necessary improvements for public safety on this side in regard to roads largely used by motor-cars. The importance of linking up the line between the Kowloon-Canton railway and the Hankow section is so obvious that it is unnecessary for me to dwell upon it, except to endorse the remarks which have fallen from my colleague. With regard to the remarks of the hon. member on searching passengers, as chairman of one of the local steamship companies running between here and Canton, I have myself repeatedly stood upon that wharf and watched the examination of passengers. And I can only say, Sir, from my own personal observation in the early stages the searchers were not uniformed and were indistinguishable from any coolie who might happen to demand the right to search passengers on the wharf. And later, even after they were put into uniform, the searching was of a somewhat brutal nature. I do not know what precisely the circumstances

were, but I have repeatedly seen letters rudely torn open and read through. Upon demanding what was the reason for this the searchers said they were searching for revolutionary matter. I do not see that it is in the province of this Colony to protect the Chinese Empire by searching for revolutionary matter going on on steamers, but there have been occasions, from my own personal observation, when passengers have been searched in a manner which was anything but courteous, and might be described as positively barbarous. Such happenings will, I think, tend to drive people away from this Colony, unless proper conditions of searching can be provided for them.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—Sir, I will endeavour as far as lies in my power to reply to the remarks of the hon. member on my right with regard to Public Works. In reply to his first remarks, whether the amount provided in this year's estimates for the harbour of refuge was to include the final payment in connection therewith, the amount provided in this year's estimate does include the final payment to the contractor for the work, and as I pointed out at the time when your Excellency declared the harbour of refuge completed, the work has been completed within the contract amount. My hon. friend suggested that the amount provided in item 7 of Public Works Recurrent was not sufficient. The matters to which he alluded have not been lost sight of, but of course it is a matter of opinion in what particular direction the money available should be expended. The Government has decided that it would be best expended in the direction of extending roads rather than in effecting very useful improvements, no doubt, in existing roads. But the point has not been lost sight of, and it will be taken in hand as soon as funds are available. My hon. friend next asked what was the estimated cost of the Imports and Exports Office. I regret that I am not in a position to give him that information. An estimate for a building to contain the Imports and Exports department was prepared about two years ago, but such extensive developments have occurred since that date that the proposals then made are now out of date and it will be necessary to plan some entirely new building. My hon. friend enquired also about the quarters at Mount Parish, the amount provided for

which is, I think, \$15,000. The cost of the building will be in the neighbourhood of \$20,000 or \$22,000. He further enquired whether further quarters would be required for subordinate officers. Naturally, with the extension of staff, which continues, there will be more quarters required, and it is intended also that quarters should be provided for those officers who are in receipt of comparatively small salaries.

HIS EXCELLENCY—There are two sets of quarters, one free of rent and the other are rented. The whole scheme is now practically completed, but the rented quarters are not completed.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—My friend also enquired what certain sections of the road, which is generally known as the road round the Island, would cost. I am not in a position to answer his question in the form in which it was put, but I may say that, speaking roughly, to complete the road and improve the various portions of the existing road which are in need of improvement, will cost, roughly, \$200,000, in addition to the sum provided in this year's estimates. With regard to the second block of quarters for subordinate officers in Kowloon, I am not in a position at the present moment to give the estimated total cost of that work. As to the market at Shamshuipo, I do not expect that the sum of \$18,000 will be largely exceeded, but there will certainly be a very considerable addition to the item, quarters for subordinate officers, second block. My friend also asked for particulars of item 34 (b), roads and general work in Kowloon. The various totals are:— \$9,200, \$3,250, \$1,200, \$1,200, \$750, \$500, \$380, \$350, \$300 and \$70, making a total of \$17,200. For unforeseen works a sum of about \$5,000 is provided. As to the Praya East reclamation and when it is likely to be done, I regret, Sir, that though matters have progressed in connection with the work it is not yet possible to mention any probable date at which the scheme is likely to be initiated. The matter depends wholly upon the acceptance of the proposed terms by the lot-holders who are interested in the work, and until the complete scheme has been before them and accepted by them it is impossible to say when it will be begun. My friend suggested that

if considerable delay was likely to occur it would be advisable to undertake the extension of sewer outfalls. But I would submit, Sir, that the mere extension of sewer outfalls would do little to remedy the existing objectionable state of affairs. The mud, which composes a large extent of the foreshore is in such a condition even now that whatever you may do in the matter of extension of sewers, if you do not take steps to cover up the mud, the smell will remain as it is. I think, Sir, I have touched upon all the points the hon. member dealt with.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY—The hon. member who represents the Justices of the Peace referred at the beginning of his remarks to what he said was a special assessment for paying off the cost of the typhoon refuge. There is a sum of \$95,000 which appears in the estimates for 1917. If the hon. member will look at the footnote he will see that the balance after the payments made in 1916 is more than \$300,000, and it will probably take another two and a half years, at the same rate to pay half the cost of the whole work as arranged from the special levy. With regard to the question of interpreters and translators in the Supreme Court, the hon. member was no doubt aware that a really good translator and interpreter commands a very high rate of pay, and when other people came along and offered them more money it was nothing less than human that they should wish to take up more lucrative employment. The Government has done its best in getting younger men who have great promise, and it is hoped that after experience they will become equal to those who have gone. It is a very difficult matter to know how to compel those who get very good offers to remain in the service of the Government, and if the hon. member can make any suggestions the Government will be very pleased. As to the question of lunatics being no longer sent to the John J. Kerr institution as in former years, that was only a temporary arrangement made in 1912 when the conditions under which they were received by the Chinese Government were very uncertain and the political position of the country had not settled down, and it was never meant to be a permanent arrangement. Now it is found the services of the institution can be done without it is not proposed to make use of it any

longer. As regards the lunatic asylum referred to, there is no lunatic asylum in Hongkong. There is a lunatics' ward where a few people of the Chinese race can be found and some of the European race. But it is always the policy of the Government, if possible, to send any European lunatics out of the Colony at as early a date as possible. As regards quarters, the Director of Public Works has explained to the hon. member that the free quarters provided for in the estimates are practically completed. The Director of Public Works had dealt with that part of the scheme. The number of officers for whom it is proposed to build quarters for which rent will be charged is at present very small, probably six or eight, and it may be possible before long to complete that very necessary part of the scheme. As regards the ferry services, the hon. member is aware what the proposals of the Government are. The subject is one of great interest to large bodies of persons who have been running ferries for some time. The Government is about to resume certain piers, and the exact form in which future ferry services will be conducted will have to be settled. It will be done at as early a date as possible, but I cannot at the present give any indication of the method.

His EXCELLENCY—I am obliged to hon. members for bringing to my notice the unsatisfactory manner in which searchings on the wharves are carried out. That is a matter on which formerly, in connection with opium, we had a little trouble and which received our earnest attention. Of course, the removing of the Permit Office and the Pass Office to the only available Government building which the Government has in the neighbourhood of the centre of the town is a matter of expense. If we take a room there we lose the rent of it. I am not quite sure whether the Permit Office can conveniently be dissociated from the superintendence of Mr. Hutchison, but I will enquire into the matter, and if anything can be done I will do it. I would not have thought that the Central Police station, where the Pass Office is situated, was so far out of the way as to make it irksome, though I know the people of Hongkong like to have everything brought to their very doors, and we will

try and assist them there if we possibly can. It has been suggested that a trained cadet might be available in conducting translations in the Supreme Court. That has been done in the past, and something might be done on the same lines in the future. My sympathies are with hon. members, and especially with the Chinese members, in their criticism of the teaching of English to Chinese boys. I think the hon. member who represents the Chinese touched on the spot pretty well, and hit the right nail on the head, when he said we tried to teach too many subjects. We have tried to curtail the subjects as much as possible, but you know what schoolmasters are. They hold strongly to their ideas, but we will see what can be done. I think the real trouble is the paucity of English masters, and that again is regulated by expense. What we really want is more English masters, and the teaching then of the lower schools would be much more efficient than it is. That is a subject which my private secretary, Mr. Ponsonby Fane, who is giving his services at Queen's College, has brought to my notice more than once. Perhaps when better days come after the war we will be able to launch out a little further into an English staff. The hon. member who represents the Justices of the Peace suggested that money might be spent on improving the Pokfulum and Victoria roads. I drive in a motor-car a great deal, and I do not think those roads are really dangerous at present. Our object is first of all to get the roads through and then tivate them. I think that he will agree that it is wiser to spend all the money we can in opening up roads from point to point and then to improve them. It is suggested that seats should be provided in the playground at Kowloon. That will be done. We have some there already. Do I understand the hon. member to mean that he would like a permanent building in the playground?

HON. MR. POLLOCK — Yes, Sir, near the Hunghom station.

HIS EXCELLENCY—I think that might be within our compass next year. It has also been remarked that the poor Chinese are in the habit of raking about all the dust and dustbins. That point will be brought to the notice of the Head of the Sanitary

Department. Although not strictly connected with the estimates, I, as one personally interested in the Y.M.C.A., was glad to hear the hon. member say he would be prepared to support a recommendation to the Secretary of State for the granting of a site on easy terms in a central situation. The hon. member who was nominated by the Chamber of Commerce told me some time ago that he would like to put on paper his views on the subject, and I should be very glad to receive them as soon as he has had time to prepare them, and to give the suggestion what support I can. In connection with the War Loan, it was suggested that we should invest our sinking fund in six per cent. exchequer bonds. I do not know if that appeals to the financial mind of the Colonial Treasurer, but we will consider the point. There is just one more thing I would like to add. The hon. member who represents the Justices of the Peace foreshadowed a resolution in this Council connected with the Civil Hospital. Well, now, I would inform both him and other unofficial members, before they embark on such a resolution, that it would be well for them to enquire as to the conditions down at the hospital, not only from the staff but from outsiders who are working in the establishment. There are two, Dr. Aubrey and Professor Digby, who have no connection with the Government whatsoever. There are also ladies in the Colony who have had a wide experience of hospital administration and nursing in other Colonies. These ladies can throw light on methods adopted in other places, and that is always useful. I think that hon. members, if they follow my suggestion, will gain a good deal of information. I beg to thank hon. members for the sympathetic way in which they have dealt with the estimates, and the facilities they have given for passing them smoothly and quickly.

The Bill was then considered by the Finance Committee and passed through the Committee stage without amendment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY then proposed that the Bill be read a third time.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and the Bill was then read a third time and passed.

Bills of Exchange

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of a Bill intituled, "An Ordinance to make provision in connection with the present war with respect to Bills of Exchange payable outside the Colony." In doing so he said—The object of this Bill is to introduce here the provisions of the Bills of Exchange Act, 1914. The Bill contains two substantive sections. One provides that delay in the presenting for payment of bills payable outside the Colony shall be excused if the delay is caused by circumstances arising out of the war. The other section provides that if a Bill has been lost, and the loss is attributable to the war, the Court may allow proof of the Bill to be given by such means as the Court may think fit.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

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

The Bill passed through Committee without amendment, and on Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that it be read a third time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was then read a third time and passed.

This was all the business, and the Council was adjourned *sine die*.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

At a meeting of the Finance Committee, the Colonial Secretary presiding.

Kowloon-Canton Railway

The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in aid of the
v o t e K o w l o o n -

Canton Railway, *B*.—Expenses of Construction, III.—Formation, (*a*) Earthwork.

The vote was agreed to.

Public Works

The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of three thousand five Dollars (\$3,500) in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, Hongkong, Miscellaneous, Miscellaneous Works.

The vote was agreed to.

Miscellaneous

The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of eight hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$825) in aid of the vote Miscellaneous Services, Other Miscellaneous Services.

The vote was agreed to.

Au Tau Creek Bridge

The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of nine hundred and fifty dollars (\$950) in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, New Territories, Communications, Roads, Castle Peak to Shataukok—Bridge over Au Tau Creek.

The vote was agreed to.

Compensation and Resumptions

The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of five thousand dollars (\$5,000) in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, Kowloon, Public Health and Buildings Ordinance, 1903, Compensation and Resumptions.

The vote was agreed to.