

3RD NOVEMBER, 1924.

PRESENT:—

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

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING THE TROOPS (MAJOR-GENERAL SIR JOHN FOWLER, K.C.M.G., C.B., D.S.O.).

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (HON. SIR CLAUD SEVERN, K.B.E., C.M.G.).

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (HON. MR. J. H. KEMP, K.C., C.B.E.).

THE COLONIAL TREASURER (HON. MR. C. MCL. MESSER, O.B.E.).

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

HON. MR. A. E. WOOD (Secretary for Chinese Affairs).

HON. MR. E. D. C. WOLFE (Captain Superintendent of Police).

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK, K.C.

HON. MR. P. H. HOLYOAK.

HON. MR. CHOW SOU-SON.

HON. MR. H. W. BIRD.

HON. MR. R. H. KOTEWALL.

HON. MR. C. MONTAGUE EDE.

MR. S. B. B. McELDERRY (Clerk of Councils).

Welcome to Sir Henry Pollock, K.C.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR, on taking his seat, said— Before we proceed to business I wish to take the opportunity of welcoming Sir Henry Pollock back to the fold and of presenting to him the insignia of the rank of Knight Bachelor which have been received by me in his absence. It has been a great pleasure to me to obtain for Sir Henry Pollock this honour, which was a well merited recognition of his public services. I am afraid it would be idle to pretend that Sir Henry Pollock and I are in agreement upon all questions, and it is not beyond the bounds of possibility that there may be further disagreement this afternoon — (laughter); but I yield to nobody in my admiration of

the self sacrificing public spirit shown by Sir Henry Pollock during the time I have known him and long before, and I have great pleasure on behalf of myself and the Council in congratulating him on the honour that has come to him.

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—Sir, on behalf of the Unofficial Members of the Council, may I say how much we appreciate the honour bestowed upon our colleague by the King for the long and excellent services he has rendered to this Colony.

SIR HENRY POLLOCK received from His EXCELLENCY a case containing the insignia of the Order, and briefly thanked His EXCELLENCY.

Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed.

Finance

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. The Governor, laid on the table Financial Minutes Nos. 94 to 98, and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

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

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. The Governor, laid upon the table the Report of the Finance Committee (No. 10) and moved that it be adopted.

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

Papers

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. The Governor, laid upon the table the following papers:—

- (1)— Regulation under sections 25(4), 33(2) and 42 of the Merchant Shipping Ordinance, 1899, made on 16th October, 1924.

- (2)— Regulation under the Public Places Regulation Ordinance, 1870 and 1923, made on 23rd October, 1924.
- (3)— Regulation under section 6 of the Dogs Ordinance, 1893, made on 23rd October, 1924.
- (4)— Exemptions from the provisions of the Rents Ordinance.
- (5)— Order under section 9 of the Post Office Ordinance, 1900, made on 30th October, 1924.
- (6)— Report of the Head of Sanitary Department for the year 1923.
- (7)— Fire Station Building (Quarterly Report, Sessional Paper No. 11 of 1924).
- (8)— Queen's Pier (Quarterly Report Sessional Paper No. 12 of 1924).
- (9)— The Erection on Existing Foundations of Bonham Road School (Quarterly Report, Sessional Paper No. 13 of 1924).

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY—I regret that the report of the Head of the Sanitary Department has been so long delayed. The report itself was ready several months ago, but the Medical Report and the Report of the Medical Officer of Health have been delayed for various reasons, and this prevented the whole Report being laid before you. Three quarterly reports asked for by hon. members on the Fire Station building, Queen's Pier and the erection of a new school in Bonham Road are laid on the table.

Crown Solicitors Bill

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Sir, I beg to move the first reading of a Bill intituled, An Ordinance to amend the Crown Solicitors Ordinance, 1912. This Bill will make it clear that there may be more Assistant Crown Solicitors than one, and it will enable any Assistant Crown Solicitor to prosecute at the Sessions provided that he is a barrister or solicitor.

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

Summary Offences Bill

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Sir, I beg to move the first reading of a Bill intituled, An Ordinance to amend the Summary Offences Ordinance, 1845. Section 9 of Ordinance No. 1 of 1845 makes it an offence to occupy Crown land without a permit, but it provides no procedure for the removal of the offender or his goods or buildings, and it is not clear that a continued occupation after the

expiration of a licence is an offence if the first occupation was lawful. Clause 2 of this Bill deals with these two defects.

I must point out that a slight alteration has been made in the Bill since it was circulated to honourable members. The alteration is in sub-section (1) of the proposed new section 9 of the principal Ordinance, which is to be enacted by clause 2 of the Bill. The first few lines of this sub-section now read as follows:—

"No person shall, except under and in accordance with a licence or permit from the Director of Public Works, occupy, etc."

The temptations of the illicit trade in dangerous drugs, opium and arms are so great that secret and sometimes elaborate hiding places are often constructed in ships for the express purpose of smuggling such articles. The sanctions against this practice are insufficient at present. Clause 4 of the Bill proposes to provide what it is hoped will be an adequate penalty.

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

Forgery Bill

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Sir, I beg to move the first reading of a Bill intituled, An Ordinance to amend the Forgery Ordinance, 1920. The Forgery Ordinance, 1922, contains a number of provisions dealing with the forgery of bank notes and the uttering and possession of forged bank notes. It contains no provisions dealing specifically with currency notes, whether issued by the governments of the various British Dominions or by foreign governments. Currency notes do not come within the definition of the term bank note. Forgery and uttering of currency notes can be dealt with under the present Forgery Ordinance, but the maximum penalty is small compared with that for forgery and uttering of bank notes, and it is arguable that possession of currency notes is no offence under the Ordinance. This Bill will fill up this lacuna

in the principal Ordinance. The principal Ordinance makes possession of certain specified forged documents an offence but it contains no general clause making possession of any other forged document also an offence. The Bill will cure this defect also.

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

Telegraphic Messages Bill

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Sir, I beg to move the first reading of a Bill intituled, An Ordinance to amend the Telegraphic Messages Ordinance, 1894. The Telegraphic Messages Ordinance, 1894, Ordinance No. 3 of 1894, provides that when a telegraphic message has been received by any person, association or company in the Colony for publication in a newspaper or for circulation to subscribers, no other person shall publish in a newspaper, or in any printed or written communication, the substance thereof or an extract therefrom, until after thirty-six hours from the time of the first publication of the message by the person receiving the same. This provision is defective in three points. In the first place, it does not prohibit the retransmission of such messages by telegraph. In the second place, it is not clear whether the section applies to messages received or sent by wireless telegraphy. In the third place, it does not apply to messages received or sent by telephone or by wireless telephony. This Bill proposes to cure these three defects.

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

The Budget

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, An Ordinance to apply a sum not exceeding Twenty-five million two hundred and seventy-eight thousand one hundred and thirty-three Dollars to the Public Service of the year 1925.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

SIR HENRY POLLOCK, K.C.—Sir, I would ask your Excellency's permission, as I have so recently returned to the Colony, to ask my hon. friend the Member for the Chamber of Commerce to make the speech on general subjects on behalf of the Unofficial members, and, if you will allow me, I will afterwards

make a few remarks of my own.

HON. MR. P. H. HOLYOAK—Sir,— Before proceeding to the discussion of points arising in connection with the second reading of the Finance Bill now before us, I desire to convey our congratulations on the very able statement presented by your Excellency at its introduction and the highly satisfactory state of the Colony's finances which it records, more especially so in these troubled times in every part of China, contrasting vividly with the peaceful conditions which this Colony has enjoyed under your administration during the past twelve months.

We welcome the statement that our recommendations of many years standing and emphasized again on this occasion last year in connection with the Shing Mun Water Scheme that Public Works Extraordinary such as this, and the Port Development Proposals shall be financed by short and long term loans when the Colony's credit balances have been reduced to somewhere in the region of five million dollars and with this in view, paradoxical though it sounds, we are sure the Colony applauds your courage in budgeting for a deficit of "something over $8\frac{1}{2}$ million dollars."

We shall be glad to hear precisely what stage has been reached in connection with the surrender of the Military lands and whilst on the subject, recommend that the increase in our Military contribution, due to our increasing revenue, instead of being paid over to the War Office, should be credited here to the reconditioning of the Military forces on the Kowloon side, seeing that, under the Washington Convention, our fortifications and general defence cannot, we understand, be increased here, though we desire to draw attention to the fact that we are still entirely without air-defence though others in these latitudes are steadily developing the use of aeroplanes.

It is our conviction that considering the condition of China at present, Hongkong is seriously under-garrisoned and that a far larger force should be kept

here for emergency purposes here and elsewhere; suitably and tactfully approached, we imagine that the British sections of Municipal Councils in Concessions throughout China would be willing to consider a rate levy, in contribution to this Government for the right to call for protection in emergency.

Turning now to the Draft Estimates —there are several points upon which we desire to touch or seek further information and I propose to deal with them as they arise in the headings therein arrayed.

We consider that all European licences should expire at the end of the year and become renewable on the 1st of January and that all licences should be payable to the Treasury Office and not through the Police Department.

In our opinion the minimum scale of fares for Rickshas and Chairs is too low and should be raised.

Harbour Department.—We are glad to know that the Rescue Tug is in course of construction and trust the remainder of the Typhoon buoys for large vessels will be completed in ample time for their possible need next year.

Miscellaneous Services (P. 30).—In connection with the rent of Public telephones, we shall be glad to know what is the present position with regard to this essential Public Service, and when some improvement in present conditions can be looked for.

We recommend a considerable increased vote in aid of the Alice Memorial and Affiliated Hospitals—whose fine work on behalf of the Colony we feel justifies increased support.

Magistracies (P.33).—The growth of the work on both sides of the harbour seems to call for a second permanent stipendiary and we shall be glad to know if the Government are considering this, or if not will do so.

Police Force (P.39).—The considerable increase in the Police, referred to in your Excellency's speech, is both welcome and necessary and we desire to congratulate the Government on the marked improvement in the control and prevention of crime, under admittedly very difficult conditions during the past year, traffic control, and especially in the Fire Brigade, which affords remarkable evidence of greatly improved equipment, general efficiency and administration in this most important department. I

am the more glad to be able to say this because I have myself criticised it adversely on several occasions before.

Medical Department (P.48).—The new Principal Civil Medical Officer has so recently arrived and had comparatively so short a time to study the problem that we prefer to avoid criticism at this stage, of the Hospital Service and Administration in the Colony at the state of which, at this time last year and for long before, we were seriously concerned. The evidence that he has realised all was not as it should be, either in equipment, personnel, stores or buildings gives us sufficient confidence, for the moment, to await developments, but meanwhile we shall carefully watch this department and he may count on our full support for any needed funds to improve conditions generally.

The time is not far distant when the Government will have to consider closing the major part of Kennedy Town Hospital and moving the whole, or greater part of it, to a more favourable site—possibly in the neighbourhood of Happy Valley extensions when Morrison Hill has been finally cast into the sea. Under no circumstances can the conditions surrounding the present "G.C.H." be considered favourable to recovery from serious illness, and in this connection we would pay a well deserved tribute to the Matron and Nursing staff there, whose labours under most trying conditions—especially during the heat of summer—cannot be too highly commended, and we consider the scale of pensions upon which they retire needs substantial increase, and trust the Government will assure us that this shall be gone into and revised favourably at once.

We learnt with some concern that the site for the new Lunatic Asylum on the other side of the water had been abandoned and a further site is being looked for. We cannot too strongly insist that this should be settled without further delay. The condition of the present Lunatic Asylum has been a disgrace to the Colony for years past and we desire that the new Asylum should be pressed forward with all possible speed and that

if the Public Works Department is too busy to handle it—when the site is settled—the work shall be given to outside Architects, as has been done on many occasions during the past year.

Botanical and Forestry Department.— We would like to see more done in the way of planting flowering shrubs and plants on reserved open spaces in the Colony, and certainly more might be done in this respect on the tram line to the Peak where planting seems to have been almost entirely confined to the scarlet Hibiscus. We also advocate much more liberal planting of Firs in the New Territory with a view to protecting and increasing fire-wood supplies.

Public Works Department (P.69).—We are glad to see the increase in the Architectural Department of 5 additional Engineers and 4 in the Buildings Ordinance Office and hope this will lead to the speeding up of the completion of many essential Public Works in hand, such as Sai Ying Pun School, the Kowloon Hospital, Queen's Statue Wharf, the Infectious Diseases Hospital, the New Gaol, the new Lunatic Asylum and other badly needed public works.

To this end we welcome signs of decentralisation in the control of this great department, but decentralisation without co-ordination must be productive of chaos, and we again urge that greater authority should be given to departmental heads; and that the department responsible for issuing Building permits and passing plans, should have a considerably augmented staff so that the present lengthy delays in issuing permits may be avoided.

We are glad to hear that the mechanical filtration of water is to be tried at Bowen Road, and urge that as soon as the tenders invited have been considered, telegraphic acceptance be sent with a request for prompt shipment—that valuable time may be saved in the initial Government experiment and the principle adopted universally if proved satisfactory. The process of mechanical filtration has been in work in the Colony—in private enterprise, for over a year now—and has not only long passed the experimental stage, but has *proved its complete efficiency* for providing absolutely pure water, in large quantities, in a few hours. The process was recently inspected by the entire body of Unofficial members of this Council and we strongly recommend the adoption of either this or a similar system *immediately*, for one set of filter beds. The state of the water, especially as supplied to the Western parts of the City and some

parts of the Peak, continues to be most unsatisfactory, and this point will be enlarged upon by our Chinese colleagues, who also feel strongly on the subject.

Once again, we would draw the attention of the Government to the urgent need for increasing rapid transit communication with the Peak—the present tram accommodation is quite inadequate and we should like to see the proposal for an additional tram-line revived and again very carefully considered.

We are in agreement with the vote for the Canton-Kowloon Railway. It may seem to be sinking more money in a bottomless pit, but taking the long view the day must eventually come when this Railway will form the Southern link of the Trans-Siberian Railway and much cargo be sent down by train for ocean-loading here which to-day is shipped from Yangtze Ports, and mean while the wisdom of protecting through traffic between here and Canton when this becomes possible again by replacing damaged, and stocking a wise amount of new rolling stock, is apparent to us all.

In conclusion, we trust that when your Excellency introduces the Budget twelve months hence—as it is our sincere hope you will do,—in accordance with the unanimously expressed representation of the Unofficial members of both Councils to the Colonial Office—that not only will you be able to record as satisfactory a state of things in the Colony's finance as that existing to-day, but that the fratricidal and suicidal struggle now being waged throughout China will be over, and peace, unity and concord once more reign in that great Country with whose destinies—for weal and woe—this small Island is so inseparably bound up and to which very many of us are deeply attached.

HON SIR HENRY POLLOCK, K.C.—I have had the privilege of reading a draft of the speech which my hon. friend opposite has just given to the Council, and I may say I agree entirely with what has fallen from him. I shall, accordingly, in the remarks I have to make, break into new matter which he has not dealt with. One turns in the first instance to Public Works
E x t r a o r d i n a r y t h e a c c o u n t o f

which begins on page 81 of the Estimates. The first item on that page to which I wish to refer is under the heading of "Fire Brigade Station," (No. 5). I see that the original estimate was \$1,110,000; the revised estimate \$1,450,000. The approved expenditure for 1924 was \$300,000 and the revised estimate of expenditure \$100,000; while the estimated expenditure for 1925 is \$500,000. There has been laid on the table of this Council just now a paper (No. 11, 1924) with reference to this Fire Station building, but I must confess, Sir, that this paper does not seem to me sufficiently explanatory of the position. That paper refers to a contract that has recently been made for this work, as lately as 11th July this year. It does not explain what was done last year. It does not explain who put in the original estimate of \$1,110,000 or under what contract the sum of \$100,000 was expended this year. It leaves a great deal to the imagination of this Council. I should like Sir, to know what happened in regard to the previous contract and why it was that nothing was done as regards inviting tenders for this work until July of this year.

I assume from there being an original estimate and a revised estimate that the original contract was given up and a revised estimate put in. But what has happened is not sufficiently explained in the table laid to-day.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—May I suggest that it would be more convenient to discuss individual votes by raising them in Committee?

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK accepted the suggestion saying that there were several specific items he desired to discuss, and proceeded:

THE PREVALENCE OF TYPHOID

With reference to the question of typhoid prevention, I have spoken a great deal with my hon. friend the member for the Chamber of Commerce on the subject of mechanical filtration, and I would strongly urge that it should be put into operation at the earliest possible moment. In connection with the possible pollution of the water supply I would draw attention to the fact that there are a great number of building operations going on in different parts of this Colony and it certainly seems to me—and the point has been raised by others—that not nearly sufficient attention is paid to latrine accommodation for coolies employed on these different works. With regard to the Pokfulam reservoir, it is not unreasonable to suppose that some of the contamination which I understand has been ascertained to exist in this reservoir has been

due to the fact that coolies have been at work on the new motor road between the old "Homestead" and the Peak Hotel. I should also like, Sir, while I am mentioning this point, to suggest that in regard to the numerous catchwaters that are now being constructed in this Colony that it is essential to see that matsheds, and especially latrine accommodation, should be below the catchwaters on which they are working and not above them. I do not know whether that has received attention in the past, but I trust it will receive attention in the future.

THE PREVENTION OF MALARIA

Another point of general interest that I should like to deal with is the question of malaria. The number of cases in 1923 very much exceeded those in the year 1922 and although it has been suggested that it was to a certain extent due to the importation of the Chinese police from Weihaiwei, I do not think that explanation covers the facts of the case. I think those of us who live on the Peak are well aware that the prevalence of mosquitoes around Mount Kellet, especially on the South and West sides, is very great, and I suggest that the Government should take more drastic measures to exterminate mosquitoes in that district. On the North side of the hill there are various nullahs under the Peak tramway that require to be drained in the interest of the public health. Crossing the harbour there are the Kowloon foothills where there is another very great risk of fever. I have no hesitation in mentioning this district because of the enormous developments that are going on there. For instance, we have the Kowloon Hospital not far off from the old road which, in the old days, divided our territories from the territories belonging to China, and we have also the Kowloon Tong Scheme for housing a number of people of all races. We

have big building developments in the neighbourhood of Shamshuipo and we also have big developments in the neighbourhood of Kowloon City. There can be no doubt that in the interest of all these classes and races it is imperative that the Government should take drastic steps to exterminate the anopheles mosquito which I have been assured, by Dr. Woodman and others, abound in pools in the neighbourhood of these foothills. I lay special emphasis on this point, Sir, because it does not seem to me that we have any particular Department in the Colony that takes upon itself the question of dealing with malaria and with mosquitoes, and I think, Sir, the Government should recognise that it is their responsibility and take steps to see that pools or running water where the anopheles are likely to breed or are to be found should be dealt with either by putting oil over the pools or in such other ways as the Medical Officer of Health advises the Government to be necessary for effectively dealing with the evil.

I notice, Sir, in the Principal Civil Medical Officer's report for last year that a number of young children were admitted to the Victoria Hospital suffering from a form of malarial fever and I think, Sir, that generally there is great risk, unless the Government takes prompt measures to check malaria, that we shall find it increasing in this Colony.

THE STAFF OF THE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

I was very glad indeed to see, Sir, if I may say so, that the Government has been very courageous in this Budget in regard to increasing the Staff of the Public Works Department. In this Council for more years than I care to remember I have been constantly urging on the Government that public works cannot be carried out expeditiously without an increase in the staff of the Department, but until the presentation of this Budget I have always been informed that the Government was making quite sufficient increase in the staff, and that I was really asking for a bigger staff than was warranted by the facts. I am glad to see, Sir, that you have come to take the view, in this Budget, that this increase is necessary. I referred to this matter last year (reported on pages 128 and 129 of *Hansard* under the heading of "Need for Speeding up Public Works"). That is only one instance. Constantly, for years past, the Unofficials have been trying to persuade the Government that the Public Works Department must have an increased staff to grapple with the public works of this Colony.

I think, Sir, that is all I have to say on general subjects, apart from the criticisms I shall have to make

upon various items in Public Works Extraordinary when the Bill goes into Committee.

HON. MR. BIRD—Sir, I wish to endorse fully the remarks which have fallen from the Hon. Member representing the Chamber of Commerce, and to join in congratulating the Government on the Budget which is now before the Council.

I have a few further comments to make on various matters about which I feel very keenly, and my views thereon may or may not have the approval of my colleagues.

THE PUBLIC RICKSHAS

Under the heading of Licences I should like to see more care taken in the granting of licences to public rickshas. The protection against rain in these vehicles is utterly inadequate—the covers and aprons are simply made of painted canvas which after a few days of heavy rain become absolutely sodden. It should not be a very difficult problem to solve, and it is for the Police Department to refuse to license vehicles that are not properly equipped.

WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' PENSIONS

Under Widows' and Orphans' Pensions Contributions I should like to hear from the Government that the contributions made by the various members of the Government service are being invested to the best possible advantage. It would seem that the Contributors have a very real grievance if the money deducted from their salaries is not accumulating in as beneficial a manner as possible. The pensions that have been granted to widows appear to me to be insufficient.

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

I see provision is made for a new motor launch for the Health Officers of the Port. I do not know whether this is in the nature of an ambulance launch—I hope it is, as such is urgently required for the transit of serious cases of sickness from the ships to the shore.

LIGHTING

Under the heading of "extensions of lighting" I wish to draw attention to the very unsatisfactory way in which the City is lighted generally. By unsatisfactory I mean without any real scheme having been thought out—take the show spot in the City—Statue Square—and examine the lighting system there. Some of it is gas in wretched little standards and some of it is haphazard electricity. There is, I can see, a good reason for having some gas in case of the failure of the Electric supply, but why should not the standards be symmetrical, and dignified?

STREET NAMES

I suggest further that when laying out a lighting scheme for the City the question of the naming of the streets be considered in conjunction with the extensions of lighting mentioned in the estimates. As far back as 1918 I drew attention in this Council to the lack of system in the naming of the streets particularly out of the beaten track, and little or nothing has been done to improve matters. You would be surprised, Sir, how hard it is even to one who knows the City well to locate some of the streets. I am aware one of the difficulties lies in the fact that as so many of the older buildings are being pulled down it is impossible to maintain the names, therefore I suggest that if the lighting is systematically carried out the names of the streets be suspended from the lamp posts and in this way they would be more easily seen—as names affixed to the walls of buildings are apt to be obscured by posters, signs, etc.

NEW ROADS

Under Communications, is the Government sure that it is wise to construct so narrow a road to Cape D'Aguilar? From my own observation it seems that the Government is inclined to err on the side of making new roads too narrow in the first instance. For example it is only a few years ago that the new road beyond Aberdeen was made, and now it has to be widened. It must be remembered that it costs far more to widen a road than to make it the full width to start with.

QUEEN'S PIER

I should like to know what has happened to cause the work on the shore end of Queen's Pier to cease entirely. The time taken over this structure is astounding.

PORT DEVELOPMENT

Under Port Works Extraordinary I notice \$1,412,000 is allocated for works in this connection. I had hoped to see the plans for this all-important work laid on the table before this debate so that we should have an idea of the Government's proposals. I gather that the report made by the experts from home has been scrapped and it would seem a large sum of money has been wasted—before any final scheme is decided upon I would ask that the same be submitted to a committee so that it may be considered in all its aspects. I agree with you, Sir, that the community is to be congratulated on having so able a man as Mr. John Duncan to concentrate on this work. I hope that as this scheme progresses, the Government will be careful not to alienate too much of its rights in connection with the Wharf and Reclamation schemes involved. Public enterprise must naturally figure largely in the scheme, but where individual activity is carried on to the obvious detriment of the public the Government representing the interests of the community at large is justified in exercising restraints. The exercise of Government interference can, however, be just as excessive as business enterprise. It is, as it were, a corrective medicine, and it should be more clearly realized that the true function of Government is rather to regulate than to construct, rather to control than to operate, rather to protect the community from abuse by individuals or groups.

COMPENSATIONS AND RESUMPTIONS

Under the heading of Compensations and Resumptions, I should like to see a larger sum allocated for this purpose, and my reason for so saying is that I am afraid the Government has, in certain cases, for some years past evaded what I consider to be its duty as regards compensation by setting modifications of the Building Ordinance against claims for compensation. I can only think of two questions to consider when limiting an owner in the development of his property according to his own fancy, and they are public health and public safety and presumably the Ordinance is drawn up to safeguard the community on these points. But when you modify the provisions of the Ordinance you practically admit that those provisions are too drastic—in other words a modified Ordinance would meet the case. I know it is impossible, particularly in a place like Hongkong, where there are so many different types of houses to deal with, to draft an Ordinance that will cover all cases and that is why the modification clause is necessary. But I contend that the Government has no right to set a modification against a claim for compensation any more than it has to set a permit to erect a verandah over Crown Land against a similar claim—it strikes me as utterly wrong and savours of duress, moreover I feel sure that when the Ordinance was drafted such action was never contemplated. I know that the Government says "we are giving you something in exchange." Yes, so you are, but you are giving what is not yours by right to give, for by granting a modification you are admitting that the provisions are harsher than necessary, therefore there is no reason why the property owner should not have his modification for nothing.

I cannot understand why the Government should receive ground for nothing in order to widen the streets just because it has modified the provisions of an Ordinance which is admittedly too drastic.

To draw a simile, the Government might as well pass an Ordinance insisting on every motor car carrying a dozen lights and then say "We will let you run your car with only three if you pay us another \$20 on your licence."

In making these remarks I wish to make it quite clear, Sir, that I have no authority from the other members of my profession to raise this point. They may or may not support my views.

MUNICIPAL COUNCILS

I am glad to note from your speech, Sir, that important changes have taken place in the Public Works Department in order to relieve the Director of some of his heavy work. I would like to go very much further in this direction and I make the suggestion in all seriousness that the greater part of the Public Works on the Island and Kowloon (not the New Territory) be handed over to a Municipal Council, as is the case in the Straits Settlements. I know this is a big departure to propose, but I honestly believe it would be a benefit to the Colony. You, Sir, doubtless know how the Municipal Council in the Straits Settlements is constituted. It is practically a community representation headed by a President, who is always a Civil Servant, seconded by the Government. There are a number of so-called Commissioners nominated by various sections of the community and approved of by the Governor.

As regards the existing control of Public Works matters I wish to make it quite clear that I am not finding fault with any individual or individuals but simply with the system, which with all due respect, Sir, I submit is too ponderous and moves too slowly. Under the present system there are too many different departments to consult and I believe that members of the Public Works staff will be ready to admit that this is where the delay occurs. When speaking on a resolution in 1921 to facilitate the passing of plans I suggested a committee to relieve you, Sir, and the Executive Council of a lot of tiresome work, and I think that a Municipal Council such as now suggested would afford the desired relief and greater speed would result—for it cannot be held reasonable for two months to elapse between the time an appeal is made and the notification of the result. The system of Municipal and County Councils apparently works very well at Home, where all matters dealing with public works are settled by such bodies. I hope, Sir,

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dismiss this suggestion without giving it a thought, and also that you will give me credit for knowing something about the subject, for I have worked in close contact with the Public Works Department for nearly thirty-three years.

HON. MR. CHOW SOU-SON—Sir,—At the outset I desire to say that all my remarks represent not only my personal views but also those of my colleague, the Hon. Mr. Kotewall.

The honourable member representing the Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce has touched upon the question of the official tariff of fares for public chairs and rickshas, and we would like to add a few words to his appeal on behalf of the poor ricksha coolies and chair coolies for an increase in the fares. The high cost of living affects this hard-worked class of people just as much as others, and it would really be an act of justice to do something towards the betterment of their lot. We sincerely hope that the Government will give this proposal its sympathetic and early attention.

HAWKERS' LICENCES

We see that the item "Hawkers' Licences" under Revenue on page 6 of the Draft Estimates, shows \$5,000 less than the approved Estimate for the current year, from which it may fairly be inferred that the Police intend to continue the policy of restricting and reducing the number of such licences. This matter calls for the close attention of the Government. The urban area has recently been greatly extended, and it seems that the present number of licences may safely be somewhat increased. Naturally there must be some limit to everything, but we submit that in this particular case a certain amount of latitude should be allowed. One effect of too drastic restriction is to lead boys to break the law by hawking without a licence, since they must support themselves or assist their parents; and another effect, a much worse one, is to drive such boys into the streets to get into mischief soon or late. If the Captain Superintendent of Police has already set a limit, we hope that he will allow himself a certain amount of elasticity in dealing with deserving cases after that limit has been reached.

CHINESE CULTURE

It is gratifying to see the grant of \$1,500 to the Hoi Hoi Library under Miscellaneous Services on page 30. Until this Library was established some time last year, there was not a single public Chinese library in this prosperous and important Colony. It is undoubtedly

meeting a long-felt want, for not only does it afford the poor an opportunity of referring to books to which they would otherwise have no access, but it has also organised lectures, given on the premises periodically on Chinese classics and history by distinguished native scholars. Though the Library is still in its infancy, it is becoming a centre of Chinese culture.

RENT ALLOWANCES

On the same page appears the item "Rent Allowances to Asiatic Sub-ordinate Officers," which is applicable to men of over ten years' service. When the Supplementary Appropriation Bill for 1923 was before this Council the Hon Mr. Kotewall expressed disappointment that his earlier and fuller proposal had not been adopted, and asked that the privilege might be extended to men of less seniority. The Honourable Colonial Secretary, in his reply, said that although in this matter the Government had shut the door it was not bolted and barred, and he suggested that the Chinese members might find a formula. After careful examination of the facts by Mr. Kotewall, first with Mr. Chau Shiu-ki, and afterwards with myself on my return to the Colony, we three have arrived at a formula which I now submit for your Excellency's consideration. We recommend that the privilege be extended to men with more than five but less than ten years' service, at, however, only 75 per cent. of the rate granted to their senior brother officers. In making this recommendation it is not that we do not realise the need of those with less than 5 years' service, but simply because we feel that if there is to be any preferential treatment for financial reasons, those with longer service should have the first consideration.

POLICE, HEALTH, ETC.

The various increases in the Police Force, both
u n d e r P e r s o n a l E m o l u m e n t s

and Other Charges, amount to a large sum, but the Chinese community consider them to be absolutely necessary. It is inevitable that, with the enormous increase in our population and the disturbed conditions in the neighbouring provinces, our Police expenditure should increase largely, but we consider it in the nature of an insurance. The feeling of the Chinese in the matter is such that even if the increase had to entail increased taxation, they would willingly and readily submit to it.

In your Budget speech your Excellency said that one of the additional Medical Officers provided for on page 48 is for supervising Chinese hospitals and dispensaries. We desire to know whether it is to replace the English medical officers now supervising the Tung Wah and the Kwong Wah Hospitals, or if he is to be in addition to them. If the latter, the Hospitals should be given an opportunity to consider the functions and powers of this officer before he enters upon his duties.

A matter of particular interest to the Chinese community is the vote for Special Exhumation in various cemeteries, under Special Expenditure, Sanitary Department, on page 60. We desire to express appreciation of the sympathy shown by the Head of the Sanitary Department in having readily consented to the work of exhumation being done in co-operation with the Tung Wah Hospital, so that Chinese susceptibilities might be respected.

NASTY WATER

In connection with the item "Maintenance of City and Hill District Waterworks" under Public Works Recurrent, on page 79, we would draw attention to the condition of the water in the Pokfulum Reservoir. Its odour and taste are nauseous, and they persist whether the reservoir is overflowing or low, though they vary in intensity. Sometimes the water comes out of the top in whitish spurts, and a few hours afterwards it is quite different in colour and taste though from the same source. One is driven to the conclusion that the process of chlorination must be carried out haphazardly. This doctoring of the water is an emergency measure, treating the symptom rather than the cause, and it is hoped that the Water Authority will soon be able to restore the old state of affairs under which pure and palatable water could be drunk straight from the tap. In the meantime we urge that more careful and scientific mixing and more efficient supervision should be provided for, and that steps may be taken to reduce to a minimum the discomfort which has given rise to loud and general

complaint.

The honourable member representing the Hongkong General Chamber of Commerce has already dwelt upon the subject of financing certain types of expenditure by loan. Such a policy has been advocated by the unofficial members on several occasions, and it fell to my lot to repeat the suggestion when dealing with the Estimates in this Council last year. It is gratifying to find your Excellency presenting an unanswerable case for us this year in your speech introducing these Estimates.

NOTE OF WARNING

Finally, Mr. Kotewall and I should like to join in sincere congratulations on the excellent financial position of the Colony, and particularly on the very able manner in which Your Excellency has presented the Estimates now before us. But we wish to sound a note of warning, as we did last year, against embarking upon expenditure which is not absolutely necessary. I think I cannot do better than quote my own words. "At the present moment we happen to have a large surplus, but we should not forget that it has been largely built up by the revenue derived from two items—Opium and Land Sales—which cannot for ever continue to yield their present quota of income. Far be it from us to suggest postponing public works which are essential to the development of the Colony, or withholding ameliorative measures from public servants to make them contented; but we advise close scrutiny of every fresh demand for expenditure so that, when the rainy day comes, as it is bound to come soon or late, we may be able to face it with equanimity." To these remarks I would add, on behalf of my colleague Mr Kotewall and myself, that while we do not grudge the necessary expenditure for the development of the Colony and the protection of life and property, strict economy should be exercised by the Government in all directions, be the expenditure large or small. When the revenue

is expanding rapidly, as has been the case during the last several years, when a great programme of public work is being pushed on as fast as the technical resources of the Colony will allow, and still appropriations remain unspent, when staffs in practically all departments have to be increased, there is always the danger that laxity of supervision may creep in. The price of economy in public as in private affairs is ceaseless vigilance.

THE CAPTAIN SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE—Sir, the question was raised by the hon. member representing the Chamber of Commerce of having all European licences issued on the 1st January instead of on other dates. I may say, Sir, that the Police Department is at present responsible for 30 different kinds of licences, some of which, such as ricksha drivers' licences, represent twelve to fifteen thousand, or even more, and that is but one item. I understood the hon. member referred only to European licences. I would like to point out that at the present time dog and arms licences are issued on the 1st of January, and also licences for private rickshas and chairs. As regards motors, which is the only other serious item to be considered under this heading, there are roughly 1,500 cars or lorries, and 500 cycles, with more than 2,000 drivers, of whom not more than ten per cent. are European, and it will be extremely difficult to alter the present arrangement of licencing, in a way which would enable the the licensing staff in the Police Office to deal with the various kinds of licences. If it were possible to issue European motor vehicle licences separately, that could be quite easily done, but to issue all motor licences on the 1st January is very much more difficult. On the whole I would suggest that the present system be allowed to remain, particularly in view of the fact that not only do the Police advertise the dates in the Press, but in the case of motors, individual notices are sent to the owners. Surely that ought to be sufficient. Talking of vehicles the question of the scale of fares has been raised by the Senior Chinese Member of Council. Fares were considered by the Committee which undertook the revision of the Traffic Regulations, in 1921. Fares were then increased. A similar Committee met again this year to revise the Traffic Regulations once more. After careful consideration, they came to the conclusion that no useful purpose would be served by increasing fares again. I admit that, at the time, there was no Chinese Member to assist them with his information on the subject. I should be glad if any information could be given with a view to showing whether it is really necessary to increase the fares. At the present time the coolies themselves have made no representations; they are not slow in doing so through

their No. 1 men, if they have any serious ground for complaint. The Chinese usually bargain before they take a ricksha.

As regards the protection of rickshas during bad weather I must say it came as a surprise to me to learn that the aprons were so bad. They are examined not less than once a quarter at the Central Police Station. The vehicles are brought up fully equipped with two coolies in proper uniforms, and inspected by the Traffic Inspector. All aprons as well as the tops, in the case of chairs, have to bear the number of the particular vehicle to which they belong, and it should be difficult to substitute old ones after they have left the Station. With regard to the hon. member's remarks I propose to look into the matter forthwith.

The question of the restricting of the number of hawkers' licences came up for discussion some four years ago. At that time the number of hawkers' licenses had been reduced to somewhere in the neighbourhood of 6,000. At the request of the then Senior Chinese Member, Mr. Lau Chu Pak, I went into the matter very carefully, and it was decided to do two things:—(1) to divide hawkers into two classes, the stall-holder hawker, who is more or less a sedentary hawker; and (2) itinerent hawkers, and also to increase the number as far as possible, and further to reserve certain hawkers' stalls for deserving cases. I think the Secretary for Chinese Affairs will agree that I have carried this out as far as possible when deserving cases come before me. In these cases I always endeavour to provide the necessary stall-holder's licence. It is quite a remunerative business. They pay \$2 a stall each month and the stalls pay very well. With regard to the total number of hawkers, I think anyone going round the Chinese portions of the City will find that we do not err in having too few in the streets. In the central, eastern

and western districts of Hongkong and at Yaumati the streets are as full as they can be. We cannot accommodate any more there. We never refuse a licence to a hawker in an outlying district, but in the central districts we must restrict the number. Every hawker who wants a licence wants one for the eastern, western or central district because business is better there.

The full figures may be of interest. They are:

1919	207,297	licences;
1920	217,361	licences;
1921	227,865	licences;
1922	238,497	licences;

and this year 8,489. We are issuing a little over a thousand more than in 1919-1920. A large number of the persons who apply for hawkers' licences are persons who have fled from the interior of China, and not knowing what to do here for a living, apply to the Police for a hawkers' licence. We cannot possibly accommodate them all. No fixed number is laid down for the outlying districts, but we must restrict the number of licenses granted in populous districts.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS— Sir, the hon. member representing the Chamber of Commerce referred to the need of speeding up all work. As regards the passing of plans in the Public Works Department, we have experienced great difficulty in obtaining architects but the Buildings Ordinance staff is now up to strength. We have now 180 plans being dealt with and 100 of these are awaiting amendments by architects.

As to mechanical filtration, that, as you know, Sir, is being introduced and every effort will be made to speed up the order for these filters. Tenders have been received and some are now on their way to the Colony from England. It is hoped that when these mechanical filters are introduced the relief thus given to the ordinary sand filters will overcome the present difficulties.

The hon. member who represents the Justices of the Peace referred to the delay in regard to the Queen's Pier. This delay is very much regretted, but it is unavoidable. An explanation has been submitted up to the end of September, and the last report I have here says the progress during October is still very poor. There has been some improvement during the last few days. There are still "financial troubles" which means that the contractor will not pay his workmen. If progress does not improve in the next

week or two it will be necessary to take the work out of his hands. We have to walk warily so that we will not bring the work entirely to a standstill. The masons are a most independent body.

The Senior Chinese member referred to mechanical filters. It is to be regretted that the Pokfulam Reservoir has become so silted up, but every effort is now being made to intercept the drainage. The eastern filter beds will come to the assistance of the water position at that end of the town. These filter beds are to be brought into operation next month.

As regards Malaria on the south and west side of the Peak and at Kowloon, the matter has had our attention. Our difficulties are that the contractors will not work on such minor work. I have been assisted by a member of the Council and a contract is being let for the training of nullahs. Dr. Woodman's report has been studied by the Department and the areas reported on as being most affected by the anopheles mosquito are receiving attention from the various departments —Drainage and General Works.

Regarding the remarks of the Senior Chinese member on the colour of the water, chlorination does not alter it. It must be laid to the charge of rapid filtration, which we hope is to be improved.

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—I should call it want of filtration.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS— With regard to a scheme of lighting, the scheme itself exists. The number of electric lights is 423 and the number of gas lights 1,567. The installation of high power lights is being proceeded with in Hongkong and Kowloon every year. The Hongkong Gas Company has certain lights on order and it is hoped they will be introduced before long. The orders for lighting of various roads and streets are usually given to the company having existing mains in the roads in which the lights are placed; but not in all cases.

The Hon. Mr. Bird made some remarks on compensations for modifications, and referred to section 180 of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance. The modification most frequently granted relates to section 180 of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance, by which scavenging lanes are allowed to count as open space on condition that no compensation is paid therefor. If these modifications were not granted, the amount of compensation payable by Government would be very large. It seems absurd to consider any suggestion that modifications should be granted and compensation paid in addition. Several modifications of section 188 of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance have recently been granted allowing the erection of buildings more than 76 feet in height and containing more than four storeys. The usual conditions upon which such modifications are issued include the following:—

- 1.— Frontage line to be set back if necessary to widen a street.
- 2.— Frontage line to be set back to widen a footpath if verandahs over Crown land are permitted.
- 3.— Scavenging lanes at the rear to be provided.
- 4.— A small open space to be provided at the ground level for purposes of drainage, etc.
- 5.— All storeys intended to be used for domestic habitation to be provided with open space in accordance with section 179 of the P.H. and B. Ordinance.
- 6.— Buildings to be of reinforced concrete construction throughout.
- 7.— Fire escapes to be provided to the satisfaction of the Building Authority and the Captain Superintendent of Police.
- 8.— Fire fighting appliances to be provided to the satisfaction of the Captain Superintendent of Police.

These conditions appear to me to be reasonable, and it would be a retrograde step to modify them in anyway.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER—With reference to the subject of pensions to widows and orphans of officers in the Civil Service I think the hon. member who raised this question is under a misapprehension. Many years ago there was a separate investment fund kept for contributions to this fund. For various reasons the system was altered and now the contributions from members of the service are kept in the Government account and the Government takes over all liabilities. The amount of compensation depends

on the amount of contribution and I have not yet heard that members wish to pay contributions on a higher scale. The tables on which these pensions are taken were laid out by eminent actuaries at home on the very best figures then available. Only in the last two or three years about 25 per cent. has been added to the pensions.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY — Your Excellency, I would like to refer to various points, raised by honourable members in connection with the Estimates, that have not already been dealt with. In the speech of the hon. member representing the Chamber of Commerce, he expressed the hope that the remainder of the typhoon buoys for large vessels should be completed in ample time for use next year. I think the answer was given quite recently when reference was made in connection with a vote for a certain number of buoys. It was hoped to complete them not later than July of next year.

THE TELEPHONE SERVICE

The position with regard to the public telephones was also referred to not very long ago and reference was made to the fact that there are proposals locally for the forming of a Company to take over the property of the existing Company and to make the necessary improvements, and the whole question was being held over until the return of certain gentlemen to the Colony. I think it should be possible to proceed very shortly now with the consideration of whether it is possible to take over the existing Company, and on what terms.

RICKSHA AND CHAIR FARES

With regard to fares of rickshas and other vehicles, I must say I am in agreement with the Senior Chinese member and I should like to see the minimum fare increased to ten cents. The subject has been considered and although the

minimum fare of five cents is allowed, it is practically the universal custom for persons going short journeys to pay 10 cents, and for this reason it was not thought necessary to deal with the matter. Personally I have great hesitation in thinking that a great number of people still pay the five cents. It was also stated that it was the custom of Chinese to make bargains which would probably allow them to pay less than the legal fare. At any rate I certainly agree with the Senior Chinese member that some increase should be made, and that the minimum fare should be ten cents.

NEED OF AN ADDITIONAL MAGISTRATE

With regard to the number of Magistrates, the question of appointing a Second Magistrate for Victoria will be considered. It was thought when the Kowloon Magistracy was started that the work in Hongkong would be so much reduced that one Magistrate would be able to deal with it. So far it has not proved to be the case and constant help has had to be given, and I see no reason why it should not continue necessary to give help, so that the question of appointing a second Magistrate in Victoria will be considered.

GOVERNMENT CIVIL HOSPITAL AND LUNATIC ASYLUM

In the remarks made by the hon. member representing the Chamber of Commerce he mentioned that the time was not far distant when the Government would have to consider the closing down of the major portion of the Government Civil Hospital and the moving of the whole or a greater part to a more favourable site. Well, I am afraid I cannot agree with him there. I think one result of the opening of the Kowloon Hospital, which we hope will take place next August, and the subsequent opening of the War Memorial Nursing Home and opening of the Maternity wards in connection with the Victoria Hospital, will result in the number of patients at the Government Civil Hospital being reduced. I fully recognise that for patients who are unaccustomed to noise, the position of the Government Civil Hospital is not a suitable one, but the grounds and quarters for the nursing sisters are excellent. The grounds of the Government Civil Hospital are one of the beautiful oases in the whole of Victoria while the hospital itself is conveniently placed for the mass of the people on this side of the harbour, and although if we had to begin again we might not put it in the same place, I think it serves its purpose as a general hospital extremely well.

The question of pensions which the nursing sisters

become entitled to is under consideration. We have received information from various places and the matter will be gone into very shortly.

It is not right to say that the site proposed for the lunatic asylum near Laichikok has been finally abandoned. It is quite true that the tender received for preparing the site is very high. Whether it is possible to adopt a different scheme I do not know. We certainly cannot embark on an expenditure of over two lakhs for preparing the site, but I hope it will be possible to find a more satisfactory site a little further off, and in that case, I think there is no doubt we shall have to abandon the suggested site.

FORESTRY

With regard to the Botanical and Forestry Department planting shrubs and plants I quite agree with the hon. member that a good deal more can be done, although a great deal has been done in various parts of the island, chiefly at the instigation of the late Sir Henry May. The only trouble might be the removal of plants by thoughtless or careless people who do not realise the trouble that had been taken to plant them; but I think a great deal more should be done.

As your Excellency remarked the other day the planting of fir trees near Taipo was to provide for firewood in an emergency and no doubt other areas will be found where it will be possible to extend the plantations for that purpose.

PEAK TRAMWAY SCHEMES

As regards rapid transit to the Peak, various schemes have been put forward, including an alternative line to Victoria Peak, and a line straight up from Wanchai to Wanchai Gap, and a tramline from the neighbourhood of Garden Road to Wanchai Gap. Survey has been going on for some time for a line from

Garden Road to Wanchai Gap. The engineers and surveyors find the route is quite practicable, and a fairly easy gradient—I think 1 in 11. We hope to get that report very soon. I had hoped to have it for to-day. I am not convinced that the present tram accommodation is inadequate. People sometimes have to wait for another tram when one is fully occupied; so they have everywhere. Except on quite rare occasions the trams are adequate, but that is not in accordance with the opinion of others. I travel by them a great deal and I think I have a right to express an opinion.

MILITARY LANDS

Another point raised by the hon. member who represents the Chamber of Commerce was as to the present position of the military lands and the reprovisioning. The Gun Club hill plans, I believe, are complete, but the final plans have not been received. It is the desire of the War Office to have a special staff to carry out the whole reprovisioning and to have one man at the head of that staff who, instead of going away in the middle of the work, will be here for the whole time. Probably the whole staff will remain here during the whole time.

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—Is there anything further in regard to the reference to the Arbitrator on the question of compensations?

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—I may say I have received a dispatch, but that point has been ignored. So far as my memory serves me, the gist of it was that the War Office were not prepared to accept my views as to the excessive amount of the valuation, but otherwise the situation was regarded in a reasonable spirit. I am afraid that this particular point was ignored.

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—I think, Sir, the point should be pressed.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—The point can be raised again.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (continuing) — As regards the remark made by the hon. member in connection with the military contribution the site at Laichikok is now being examined and cuts are being driven through it to find out the amount of rock. If the amount of rock is such as to make the site unsuitable for military building, the Laichikok site will be reconsidered. The work has not progressed far

enough to come to any decision.

RENT ALLOWANCES FOR JUNIOR OFFICERS

Coming now to the point in the Senior Chinese member's speech on the subject of rent allowances to subordinate officers he tells us that a formula has been arrived at which will reach us in due course. I have been waiting a long time for it; in fact, I had given up all hope of it coming. Now that it is coming the Government will certainly consider the modified scale suggested for officers of under ten years' service.

The view the Government is inclined to take with regard to junior officers in the service is that they know perfectly well the terms of their employment when they join the service, and it is certainly up to them to model their expenditure on economical lines during their first years of service. I know it is a habit among Chinese to marry early, but in doing so I think they should be able to make some arrangement to live with their parents during a certain period of their service.

MOTOR LAUNCH FOR AMBULANCE PURPOSES

With regard to the remarks made by the Hon. Mr. Bird concerning the motor launch for the Medical Department, the question whether it can be used as an ambulance launch will be considered by the Principal Civil Medical Officer. It is recognised that it is very necessary to have some means of conveying a case from a ship rapidly and I hope it will be possible to build a launch, possibly a little larger than was intended, so as to be able to fit it as required.

NAMING OF STREETS

As to the naming of streets, the hon. member's suggestion is certainly happy. I have often noticed the need myself. There is a very good practice in Canada of having the name of the street on the pavement. I do not know whether that would do here. The Director of Public Works may be able to devise some other means of meeting the need.

THE ROAD TO CAPE D'AGUILAR

With reference to the road to Cape D'Aguilar, it is a very difficult one to make and very expensive. It is only to be used for official purposes and it is not thought desirable to widen it. Generally the main roads are now being made 25 feet which makes them much safer.

PORT DEVELOPMENT.

The scheme for Port Development, I believe, is practically ready now, and I did hope that we might have had it here to-day. It will be referred to the Chamber of Commerce and other bodies for consideration when it is ready. The hon. member appeared to think that a large sum of money has been wasted in the preparation of the former scheme. The work done by the Consulting Engineers is not lost. The work they asked for was necessary for any scheme. The pricking of the harbour and the other work done will always be valuable for other schemes adopted; and the only money not expended for a useful purpose is what we pay for plans that will not be adopted. The Government is fully alive to the other considerations referred to by the hon. member. It is hoped that whatever decisions may be arrived at, they will be for the best interests of the Colony.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—Let me in the first instance thank you for the very kind way in which you have received the Budget, which I confess I put forward with some misgivings as to your views. Let me thank you for your very kind references to myself, and the very helpful remarks you have made this afternoon, which, I need not say, will receive my very careful consideration. I think most of the points raised have been dealt with. There are one or two on which I find it necessary to make a few remarks. The hon. member representing the Chamber of Commerce recommended that the military contribution instead of being paid over to the War Office should be paid here for the reprovisioning of the military forces on the Kowloon side. I am afraid that suggestion betrays rather a misapprehension of the position, and, may I say—of the character of the War Office. The military contribution is supposed to be provided for the upkeep of the garrison. The War Office contend, and when pressed, produces figures to show, that it does not cover the cost of the garrison. I suggest, therefore, if we ask the War Office to devote to reprovisioning them on the Kowloon side, with land and buildings, the contribution which at present provides for the upkeep of the troops, the War Office reply may be foreseen at once—that we are asking them to abandon

the contribution and merely to pay them the money which they would, in any case, receive to enable them to re-establish themselves elsewhere—a position they never would accept. I am afraid I do not feel that there would be any use in putting before His Majesty's Government a proposal that would be rejected.

I think it would be undesirable to discuss, in public, the question of whether or not Hongkong is seriously under-garrisoned. Perhaps the less said about these matters, at the present time, the better. I would observe that if the statement is correct and is accepted, it would appear to involve an addition to the garrison which again would, I fear, involve additions to the military contribution. Whether the Municipal Councils of the Treaty ports would be likely to contribute, as the hon. member suggests, is a matter on which I confess I have some doubt. The real question is: Are we paying for the Garrison because we want it, or are we paying for it, or most of it, because it is wanted for imperial purposes? That is a subject which has formed a subject of controversy for at least thirty years and I do not think that the parties in the discussion have ever come to an agreement. I confess, that taking the view of a man of peace, it has sometimes occurred to me that our very good friends the Military of this Colony have a somewhat imposing number of officers of high rank, and I think it might be possible to induce the War Office to state whether this desire, which has been apparent since the War, to make two colonels grow where one grew before, is entirely in the interests of this Colony, or in the interests of the forces in this command, which, I would observe, include apart from the garrison here, a battalion in Tientsin, and that very much inspected body, the Peking Legation Guard. That is a point which deserves consideration by the War Office.

The next point, which I think has not been touched on is the grant to the Alice Memorial Hospital. I s h o u l d l i k e t o m a k e

clear to the Council my own position in such matters. I have always felt it is undesirable that the Government should propose a grant or increase a grant to an institution with any religious aspect, unless it is very clear that all the representatives of the Unofficial Community are unanimously in favour of it. I know something—not as much as I should wish—of the working of this institution and if it is the unanimous wish of the Unofficial members that the grant should be increased I am perfectly willing to agree to any reasonable sum they decide among themselves.

With reference to the Botanical and Forestry Department the hon. member raised the question of planting more shrubs and trees. I suppose I raise this question about once every six months myself. I have always wished not only to plant some spaces specially with azaleas and other plants but also to plant firs in a number of the outlying islands at present put to no useful purpose. But I have invariably found that all such proposals are met with the argument that it is quite easy to grow fir trees, but nothing would prevent the Chinese from cutting them down, unless we are going to increase very largely the force of Forestry Inspectors and keep them constantly at work. I confess I look with some doubt on the establishment of large firewood reservations in the territory until in process of time the Chinese abandon what appears to be an ancestral idea of treating all vegetation as the raw material for theft.

The hon. member representing the Justices of the Peace dealt largely with questions of health. The typhoid question has caused a considerable amount of controversy which to some extent I think has followed wrong lines. I have not been able to obtain figures for this year, but I am under the impression that though there has been a considerable number of cases they have not been much more numerous than in previous years. They have been more concentrated and have drawn more public attention in consequence. In any tropical country, and in every other country, you get a certain amount of enteric and I am afraid that whatever steps are taken we cannot hope to rid the Colony of it any more than any other country has done.

The Sanitary Board has recently devised a new type of latrine with which to tempt coolies so that one source of contamination may possibly be removed. We are doing as much as we can to train nullahs and deal with pools to prevent the spread of malaria, but during large building operations it is very difficult to keep mosquitos under control. It is impossible to fill

up all holes as you go along and the result is that in the rainy season you must have a considerable number of pools, which can only be dealt with by oiling. This is being done whenever possible.

The hon. member referred to the number of children in, I think, he said, the Victoria Hospital. Malaria in an adult is a misfortune, in a child it is generally due to a blunder on the part of its parents. We do not perhaps know so much about malarial mosquitos as we used to think but one thing is certain, and that is that the anopheles is nocturnal in its habits. It does not wander abroad in the hours of the day when children should be out, and if mothers would take care that children came in at reasonable hours and the mosquito net is looked after, I think the number of cases in the Victoria Hospital would be very much smaller. People must realise that the malarial mosquito will breed when it gets a chance and if people who complain of the inactivity of the Government would take the trouble to see that there are no breeding places on their own premises there would be less malaria.

I am glad of the words of approval which have fallen from the Senior Chinese member in reference to the grant to the Hok Hoi Library. I should be very glad to see this Colony become a centre of Chinese culture, in addition to European culture, and it is my great hope that I shall, in the near future, see the Chinese side of the University adequately developed with this object.

The hon. member also referred to the provision for an additional Medical Officer for the supervision of Chinese institutions. My explanation was not clear enough. It is not proposed to make any change. The point is that the time of the Medical Officer who devotes his attention to Chinese institutions is so fully taken up that he has no time for other things. It is necessary to make an addition to the medical department in order that the full time services of an officer may be available.

The hon. member continued with remarks that I am entirely in agreement with in regard to economy. I can assure the Honourable member that so far as I am concerned his warnings will not be required. In the course of a quarter of a century I have been accused of many things but never of being a spendthrift of official money, and I am afraid I have been rather a trial to Departments of the Colony by inquiry why quite small sums should be expended. I have been very carefully through these Estimates and I do not think there is anything that can be left out with advantage. I find the task of anybody studying and practising economy is not rendered more easy by such remarks as have been made this afternoon. There are three matters in the Budget which I thought might possibly be open to reasonable attack. One is the great increase in the staff of the Public Works Department. We have had two hon. members congratulating themselves and the Government upon this. The next point is the large increase of police, which the hon. member assured us is recognised as essential by the Chinese community. The last was the provision of large sums of expenditure on the railway which at present runs as far as our boundary. I confess if there was one item on which I had some doubt it was this money for the railway but I thought it wise to provide now for what will be necessary when through traffic is resumed. I am glad to know that the hon. member representing the Chamber of Commerce supports my view entirely. In addition to these endorsements hon. members urge us to make a considerable addition to our expenditure by increasing the grant of housing allowances, so that it will be seen that the task of the habitual economist becomes somewhat difficult.

With regard to the Hon. Mr. Bird's remarks, I should like to say that I entirely agree with him that the best method of indicating the name of a street in which one happens to be is to put the name on a lamp. I confess that the Colonial Secretary's alternative of marking it on the floor has never appealed to me as a suitable method for bipeds whose eyes are not usually glued to the ground.

The hon. member mentioned the Port Development Department and suggested that the money spent on the consulting engineers' report was wasted, as the report had been scrapped. This is not so and in any case what we have paid for is, not the actual plans drawn up by Sir Maurice Fitzmaurice, but his advice generally, and whether his plans are or are not adopted we have very valuable information and advice, for which I may say we are paying what appears to me quite an adequate fee.

SPENDING TOO MUCH

I am afraid I cannot agree with the hon. member's views about compensation for resumptions. It appears to me to be unreasonable that when a man wishes to obtain something at the expense of the community he should also endeavour to obtain from the community the expense of what generally amounts to improvement to his own property. I confess that my opinion is that we spend far too much on resumptions. We are constantly being charged sums which certainly never appear to be below the highest market price, and not infrequently above it when we take a strip of somebody's premises to widen the road. The widening of the road adds to the value of the property, and even if it did not they should be prepared to sacrifice something for the benefit of the community. As for getting anything out of the community for nothing, I certainly think they should not be allowed to do so.

The hon. member's view that permission to erect verandahs over Crown land is a thing to which every British subject has an inalienable right, I am afraid I cannot agree with. I have no objection to people erecting verandahs over Crown land, but if they do so the Crown certainly has a claim to receive something in return.

The last point in the hon. member's speech I am afraid I cannot agree with. The position of this Colony and the Straits Settlements with regard to a Municipal Council is entirely different. Singapore is a portion only of the Straits Settlements. It appears to me quite reasonable that municipal work of part of a Colony should be done by a municipal body created for that purpose. Here, Hongkong and Kowloon form the Colony, and if we had municipality we should either have no further use for the Public Works Department, in which case we are simply substituting one and probably a worse form of control for another, or else we should retain it and duplicate much work, and inevitably there would be a great amount

of overlapping and a great amount of additional expenditure. No time would be saved and a great deal of money would be wasted. These are my sentiments in that matter.

H.E.'S TERM OF OFFICE

I should like if I may, to end with a short personal statement with regard to a remark I made in my speech when introducing the Budget, which, I observed, might very probably be the last Budget I should perhaps put before the Council. As the hon. member representing the Chamber of Commerce has stated to-day, the Unofficial members of the Council paid me the compliment, which I value very highly, of suggesting to the Secretary of State that my term of office should be extended. As you are aware, certain changes have taken place in the Government of Great Britain in the last few weeks, and the Secretary of State very naturally and rightly said he was unable to bind his successor in any way. I can only say that if His Majesty intimated his wish that I should remain here, it would give me great pleasure, and nothing would give me greater pleasure than to continue to work with this Council, as I have worked, harmoniously, for the last five years. (Applause.)

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—I ask your Excellency's permission to reply to one or two points raised in your reply. I think the Director of Public Works, when he referred to the rapid filtration of water, really meant the rapid passing of water without filtration, which has resulted in the complaints made. What we are urging is the adoption of a mechanical process which will filter water very rapidly and which experience has proved for over a year in this Colony can be successfully done. The last report given to me was that, from January to June, 1924, there had been filtered an average of 930,000 gallons per day, including Sundays, and every filtered sample had been absolutely free. This small plant was designed for one million gallons per day but on one or two occasions, it has touched two millions in 24 hours. What we are urging is that the matter should not be left for long consideration. When tenders are in, a telegraphic acceptance should be made and prompt shipment asked for, so that you may have the first plant installed quickly, and have in three or four months' time an experimental plant. If this is successful, then further plant could be installed at the other filter beds.

THE WIDOWS' AND ORPHANS' PENSIONS

My impression of the Widows' and Orphans' Fund, Sir, as far as my recollection goes back, is that these

funds were to a very large extent commandeered by the Government. I can use no other expression. It is perfectly true that Government servants were circularised, and that they agreed to the money being used by the Government in the way that was afterwards adopted, but I think it is quite clear, Sir, from all that I have heard since, that they did not fully understand

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—I am afraid they do not understand it now.

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—I think their complaint is that if the funds had remained in their own administration they would be receiving a higher rate of interest than that credited them to-day. That would have made a great difference to the pensions of widows and orphans. I suggest that the Government should consider whether the time has not now come for a fresh valuation of the whole fund to be made in the interests of Civil Servants. It is nothing to do with me. I am simply asking for justice on behalf of the Civil Servants.

THE TYPHOON BUOYS

I sincerely hope that the Colonial Secretary was not serious when he said the completion of the typhoon buoys would not be absolutely finished until July next year. It should not be delayed as long as that. I submit that the work should be carried out as early as possible.

THE GOVERNMENT CIVIL HOSPITAL

My suggestion for the removal of the Government Civil Hospital is not only in the interests of the patients themselves—it would be an economic saving, because the price received for selling the present quarters will amply compensate you for instituting the hospital further out, where conditions can easily be bettered. I admit the nurses' quarters are quite good, but the hospital itself should be scrapped as soon as it possibly can be.

TREE PLANTINGS

With regard to tree planting the Colonial Secretary admitted, and you, Sir, sympathetically agreed with him, that much more could be done in the way of planting. We hope that will be the case. Certainly, the planting of flowering plants and shrubs will benefit the Colony very much from the ornamentation point alone.

THE MILITARY CONTRIBUTION

I differ, Sir, entirely from you on the subject of the Military Contribution. I know this is an extremely thorny subject. I speak for myself.—I do not pretend it to be the Unofficial view though I have good reason to believe it is.—This small island, Sir, is part of the British Empire. We do not pretend to pay for protection. We have a right to ask for it. The Colony contributes in no small part, in different ways to the Home Government; its contribution is a great deal larger than its area indicates, and its value to the British Empire is infinitely greater than it is often given credit for. We have a right, not only to ask, but to demand protection. We are perfectly willing to contribute our quota for upkeep, but to ask us to support the whole defence, not only of this Colony, but of the greater area which lies beyond us in China, is a burden which the British Government has no right to force upon us, and which we are not willing to accept. For that reason I have again raised the question. I do feel that if the question was put, as I have suggested, to the British communities and their Municipal Councils throughout China, they would feel that it was reasonable that they should be asked to contribute to their protection by the forces on whom they would have the right to call. This is the natural garrison point from which forces are drawn to Peking and Tientsin, and I do feel, sir, that the whole burden of protection of the island and what lies beyond it, involving the whole of British interests in China, should not lie entirely upon Hongkong.

THE ALICE MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

I am glad, Sir, to hear that you will view with favour, if we support it, the vote for the Alice Memorial and Affiliated Hospitals, which has been suggested. I do not think it could be quite fairly said that it is entirely a religious hospital. I know the work of the hospital intimately, and while it is based generally on the broad principle of religion because of its name and of the manner in which it came into being, there is no hospital in this Colony administered on broader lines, and no hospital that admits Chinese

more freely or perhaps obtains better results. It is not that I advocate it in preference to any other hospital, but it is doing a great work on behalf of the Colony which is worthy of all the support the Government can give it. For that reason I have advocated with great pleasure an increased vote.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—I should like to deal with the point of Widows' and Orphans' Pensions which the hon. member has raised. It is a mistake in the first instance to refer to the Fund. There is no fund. There is a system which is embodied in an Ordinance, which says that in return for a certain payment, four per cent. of an officer's salary, a pension of a certain amount, varying according to age, will be available. The original fund was wound up many years ago and handed over to the Government; in return, the Government assumed liability for pensions specified in the new tables. The tables were drawn up by the leading actuary in England and represented what was at that time the best available information with regard to mortality, and I do not think anybody would question the accuracy of the calculations as showing an adequate pension for the contributions received. I am unfortunately excluded from membership of the Hongkong system, but I am very glad to say I am entitled to the benefits of a similar system based on the same tables in Ceylon. You will excuse me quoting my own case, but it is the one I know best. I joined the system at the age of thirty-six, my wife being about twenty-three. I pay a trifle over £5 a month, and in return for that my wife is entitled to a pension of £200 a year for all her life or until her remarriage, and in the event of death or re-marriage the pension passes to my children up to the age of 21 in the case of the daughter, and 18 in the case of the boys. If any insurance company is inclined to offer me similar terms, I hope it will communicate with me without further delay. The confusion of thought, which I know exists among members of the Civil Service, is that they consider, because they subscribe, t h a t t h e p e n s i o n

should be sufficient to maintain the widow. That is possibly a reasonable attitude if the contribution is sufficient to provide for the pension. Of course, what these people who criticise do not take the trouble to consider is that the amount of the contribution is the minimum the Government considers it necessary a man should provide. It does not prevent him insuring himself elsewhere for a reasonable sum. It is perfectly ludicrous to regard 4 per cent. of a man's income as enough to put aside for the purpose of providing for his family in all cases. The whole object of the fund was to provide for numerous sad cases which came before us in the Colonial Office of people who had not taken the slightest trouble to provide insurance for their widows. It is a system introduced in order that the widows and families of officers in His Majesty's service should not be reduced to the workhouse owing to the carelessness of the husband. It was understood that the average husband would prefer to deal with the matter on the insurance basis. This scheme was simply to make sure that an officer should provide a small amount and so make sure that the widow at least received something, and was not left entirely penniless, as had been the case in some instances in the past.

This question of the return on the contribution is one which only an actuary can settle, and I confess is entirely beyond me. The tables were worked out at the rate of six per cent. compound interest. A question now being discussed is whether because of the decrease in the value of money and higher market rates of interest, the tables might be re-calculated on a somewhat higher rate. On this matter the Secretary of State is in communication with us.

The Council went into Committee to consider the Bill, item by item.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK, on the vote for Public Works Extraordinary, said—In regard to Victoria Hospital (page 81, item 6) I should like to ask how it is that this year \$70,000 is being expended instead of \$130,000, and secondly, whether the \$130,000 to be expended next year will be all that will be required? My reason, Sir, for putting the second question is that it is obviously undesirable, in connection with a hospital, that the work should be delayed more than is absolutely necessary.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—The \$130,000 to be expended next year will complete the work.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK—That does not

seem to agree with the revised estimate.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—Considerable sums were spent in 1923. This does not appear on the Estimates. We ought to have another column in these Estimates showing the expenditure in previous years. I did not discover the omission until too late.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK then referred to item 8 on page 81, New Queen's College, and asked how it was that only \$80,000 was being spent this year and only \$30,000 is to be spent in 1925.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—The expenditure has been on site preparation. The plans for the College have not been completed; it will be some time before they will be completed for a contract to be let.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK—Really the work is suffering from lack of staff?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—In the Architectural Department.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK—My next item is No 17 in connection with Quarry Bay School. Will that \$99,500 next year complete this work?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—That is so, Sir. It is in the hands of outside architects—the firm of Little, Adams and Wood—and that is the amount they require to complete the work.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK—The next is Queen's Pier. I must confess that I was simply appalled when I came back to the Colony and saw the backward state of this work, and I am still extremely astonished, not with standing the explanation given in the paper laid on the table to-day. I see the estimated expenditure for 1925 is \$15,000. Does that complete it?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—Yes; that is to complete it.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—The explanation, I understood, is that the stone massons have been on strike a long time. Is that so?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS— On that particular work, Sir, due to the contractor not paying his workmen. It is very difficult to get other contractors to take up the work. I have gone into the matter very carefully. They have had previous experience of this in the Departments.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—Is there any prospect of it being completed?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS— I hope, Sir, it will be completed by the end of the year.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK—With regard to the Kowloon Hospital, I understand the work will be completed in July or August?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS— Yes; that is so.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK—Item 86, King's Park, "Laying out the ground for Reclamation purposes." I presume this is a misprint for "recreation." I should like to ask whether it is intended to lay out King's Park entirely for recreation purposes. At one time that was the intention, but apparently, from something said by your Excellency in introducing the Budget, part of the hilly surroundings of King's Park will be used for quarters for Government servants.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR—The quarters will be on the high ground. They will not really obtrude on recreation.

HON. SIR HENRY POLLOCK—I am glad to hear the Government is not going to utilise the high ground for recreation purposes. I suppose this sum (\$70,000) will complete the laying-out work.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS— Yes; that will complete the work

The Bill having passed through Committee, the Council resumed and on the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, seconded by the COLONIAL TREASURER, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

The Adjournment

H.E. THE GOVERNOR — The Council will adjourn until Thursday, November 13th.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Finance Committee was afterwards held, the COLONIAL SECRETARY presiding.

Harbour Office Vote

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$1,560 in aid of the vote Harbour Master's Department, Other Charges, Repairs to Boats and Buoys.

THE CHAIRMAN—This vote of \$1,560 is made up as follows: The sum of \$1,056 for placing cement concrete buoys in the channel in Deep Bay leading to Shum Chun river. The old marks were continually destroyed and the iron work did not last. These are new buoys designed in the Public Works Department, and we hope they will last. The sum of \$500 is required for the remainder of the year. These are extra charges. The estimate was found insufficient.

New Architectural Office

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$20,000 in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, Hongkong, Buildings, 27, New Architectural Office.

THE CHAIRMAN — The Committee voted \$60,000 for this work, but it is estimated a further sum of \$20,000 is required, as it is hoped to complete the building by the end of December.

Volunteer Defence Corps

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$1,500 in aid of the following votes:—

Military Expenditure, B. — Volunteer Defence Corps, Other Charges:

Camp Expenses	\$ 500
Equipment and Upkeep of Arms	1,000
	<hr/>
Total	\$ 1,500
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THE CHAIRMAN—These sums are required because the number attending camp was greater than expected, and owing to the general increase in the personnel.

A Beacon Light

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$500 in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, New Territories, Miscellaneous, Beacon Light, Cheung Chau Channel.

THE CHAIRMAN—A vote of \$10,000 for this work was taken on the 16th May, but it has been
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some extra work to the foundations to secure the beacons more firmly to the reef.

Incidental Expenses

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$500 in aid of the vote Governor, Other Charges, Incidental Expenses.

THE CHAIRMAN—This amount is required for incidental expenses not estimated for.
