

would have caused considerable contraction and expansion of the material, and acting on these old walls would have considerably tended to the collapse. All the timber in the floor that I examined was sound and good and the top floor appeared to be supported on hard-wood joists. I believe, from the way the floors were lying, that the party wall between Nos. 32 and 34 was the first part of the building to collapse. The failure of this wall would have caused the floors to tumble down and the shock would have been quite sufficient to throw the front wall out. I attribute the accident generally to the bad state of the old brickwork of the whole building. The old Building Ordinance No. 8 of 1856 placed no restriction on the use of blue bricks but it required that all walls should be solidly built.

ERNEST MANNING HAZELAND sworn and examined:—

I am Civil Engineer and Architect. Some time in November and December, 1900, I was asked by Mr. Chan Tsun Cheong to prepare plans for an additional floor with verandahs to houses 30, 32 and 34, Cochrane Street. I sent one of my assistants to measure the premises up. He reported the walls were sound and plumb and thick enough to add an additional storey in compliance with the Building Ordinance and Public Health Ordinance. Plans were prepared and submitted to the Public Works Department for approval. These plans were approved by the Public Works Department and I gave the plans to the owner. I had nothing to do with carrying out the alterations and additions to these premises. I was not engaged to superintend the work. I was formerly Assistant Engineer in the Public Works Department. My principal duties while in the Public Works Department were to carry out the provisions of the Building Ordinance. If I had the least suspicion that these walls were unsound I would not have sent these plans to the Public Works Department.

HUGH POLLOCK TOOKER recalled:—

I would wish to bring to the notice of the Court that in all the cases coming before the Court of collapses, the plans were prepared by European Architects, but in each case, they said that they had no power to supervise the construction. I believe if the work had been under the supervision of a European Architect, as soon as the roof was pulled off, he would have seen the bad state of the walls and would have doubtless pointed out the necessity of re-building them. Section 76 sub-section 3 of the Building Ordinance gives the Director of Public Works or any officer deputed by him power to enter any house, building or tenement where he has reasonable grounds for believing that within any houses, building or tenement there are works being completed or carried out in contravention of this Ordinance.

Adjourned to 2.15 p.m.

F. A. HAZELAND,  
*Police Magistrate.*

30th August, 1901, at 2.15 p.m.

JOHN MITFORD ATKINSON sworn and examined:—

I am Principal Civil Medical Officer. I produce list of bodies received on the 14th and 15th August sent by the Police from the collapsed buildings at Nos. 32 and No. 34, Cochrane Street. I have also placed on the list the cause of death and the approximate age.

F. A. HAZELAND,  
*Police Magistrate.*

### GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 559.

The following Communication from Civil Engineers, Architects, &c., regarding Professional Supervision of Building Works, which was laid before the Legislative Council this day, is published.

By Command,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 26th September, 1901.

HONGKONG, 6th September, 1901.

To the Honourable

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, C.M.G.,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

SIR,—In accordance with your letter No. 2171 dated 29th August, 1901, to Messrs. LEIGH & ORANGE, a meeting was held yesterday of the undersigned Civil Engineers, Architects and Surveyors, who represent the Firms who have been in practice for the longest period in the Colony.

It was resolved to thank you for the opportunity given to express our ideas on the subjects mentioned in Messrs. LEIGH & ORANGE's letter to you of 19th August.

It was felt that the question of design and supervision of buildings was by far the most urgent and that we could defer the deliberation on plans for new houses until we had received copy of the Honourable the Acting Director of Public Works' Plan of Improved Chinese Dwellings, dated August 1st, 1901, which we would be glad to receive at your early convenience.

We trust you will not think we are going beyond our province in discussing questions which you had not expressly referred to us, but the seriousness and urgency of the matter is our excuse.

We beg to suggest that this question of professional practice and supervision of works might be dealt with speedily by the making of a special short Ordinance, and we trust the following (our unanimous opinion) may be of some assistance.

*Suggestions.*

1. Only qualified Civil Engineers, Architects and Surveyors to be allowed to practise in the Colony, and plans from only such persons to be accepted by the Government under the Building and Public Health Ordinances.

2. All building operations must be carried out under the supervision of a qualified Civil Engineer, Architect or Surveyor.

3. The Civil Engineer, Architect or Surveyor to have the power to employ, at the expense of the owner, such supervision as he may consider necessary.

4. The following persons to be admitted as qualified to practise, viz. :—

(a.) Members or Associate Members of the Institution of Civil Engineers, England.

(b.) Fellows or Associates of the Royal Institution of British Architects.

(c.) Any person who has carried on the profession of Civil Engineer, Architect or Surveyor for 10 years continuously in the Colony.

(d.) Any other persons who shall satisfy a Board (such as the Public Works Committee) that they are properly qualified to practise.

*Reasons.*

For suggestion 1—

The numerous accidents and collapses of buildings that have taken place in recent years.

Plans are now prepared by a number of so-called Architects, etc., and who, in our opinion, have not the qualifications nor the knowledge necessary to design and carry out work.

It is not unusual to see buildings being constructed with an utter disregard of stability and strength of materials.

We beg to draw attention to the Enquiry on the Cochrane Street disaster, where plans for an additional storey were admittedly prepared without the necessary precautions.

For suggestion 2—

It is not possible nor usual anywhere for the Authorities (*i.e.*, the Building Inspectors) to go thoroughly into every design, calculate all the strains on piers, walls, columns, beams, &c., and thus take the responsibility of checking plans, nor is it possible for the Building Inspectors to thoroughly supervise all buildings in course of construction: this can only be done by the Architect and the Overseer who is constantly on the works and under the orders only of the Engineer or Architect of the job.

The Government Inspection should be quite general, to see that the laws of the Colony are observed, and we think that with all buildings under the supervision of qualified men and absolutely no constructive work carried out without such supervision, the task of Government Inspection will be comparatively light and will not necessitate a large staff.

Considerable building operations are now being carried out without any Architect and consequently without proper supervision, the owners not caring to pay for more than the plans and being satisfied with inferior work.

It is probable that most of recent failures will be found to have occurred on buildings not under the supervision of properly qualified persons.

We again draw attention to the evidence given at the Enquiry into the Cochrane Street disaster which showed that there was no skilled supervision, and to the evidence of Mr. TOOKER when he is reported to have said that he believed if the building had been under the supervision of a European Architect, when the roof had been removed the Architect would have seen at once the bad state of the walls and the disaster would have been averted.

The large amount of building now being done by Chinese Contractors without the supervision of qualified persons is having a deplorable effect on quality of work and workmen and in consequence it is getting more difficult every year to get good work done.

For suggestion 3—

Owners often decline or are unwilling to pay for the services of an Overseer, and it is not the duty of an Architect to be constantly on the work and thus ensure continuous good work and material.

For suggestion 4—

We beg to assure the Government that there is no desire on our part to restrict any qualified person from practising in the Colony, but we know to our certain knowledge of plans being made and work carried out by men who, we honestly do not think, should be permitted to do so.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

WM. DANBY,

*M. Inst. C.E.*

PALMER & TURNER.

DENISON & RAM.

LEIGH & ORANGE,

*M. M. Inst. C.E.*

### GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 560.

The following Financial Statements for 1900, which were laid before the Legislative Council this day, are published.

By Command,

J. H. STEWART LOCKHART,  
*Colonial Secretary.*

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hongkong, 26th September, 1901.

### ASSETS AND LIABILITIES,

ON THE 31ST DECEMBER, 1900.

ASSETS.	\$ . c.	LIABILITIES.	\$ . c.
Subsidiary Coins, .....	958,000.00	Military Contribution, .....	54,405.78
Coins in transit, .....	970,000.00	Contribution towards Barrack Services for 1900,.....	45,000.00
Arrears of Taxes, .....	804.32	Deposits not available,.....	469,579.03
„    „ Crown Rent, .....	36,332.14	Refund of Taxes, .....	2,300.00
„    „ Land Revenue, New Territory,	98,400.00	Officers' Remittances, .....	16,867.15
„    Miscellaneous,.....	1,890.00	Money Order Remittances, .....	25,548.87
Advances, .....	51,678.39	Transit Charges, General Post Office,.....	7,336.00
Suspense House Service, .....	103.00	Civil Pensions, .....	17,500.00
Profit, Money Order Office,.....	8,000.00	Police Do., .....	14,200.00
Water Account,.....	881.91	Private Drainage Works, .....	292.36
Suspense Account, .....	398.73	Public Works,.....	34,779.46
		Miscellaneous,.....	9,500.80
		Balance Overdrawn, .....	328,393.35
		TOTAL LIABILITIES,.....\$	1,025,702.80
		BALANCE, *.....\$	1,100,785.69
TOTAL ASSETS,.....\$	2,126,488.49		\$ 2,126,488.49

\* Not including \$40,415.82, value of Silver at Mint.

C. McI. MESSER,  
*Acting Treasurer.*

Treasury, Hongkong, 29th March, 1901.