

9TH DECEMBER, 1926.

FINANCE COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held in the Council Chamber, the Colonial Secretary (Hon. Mr. W. T. Southorn), presiding.

PRESENT:—

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (HON. MR. W. T. SOUTHORN).

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

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

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

HON. SIR SHOU-SON CHOW.

HON. MR. A. O. LANG.

HON. MR. H. W. BIRD.

HON. MR. R. H. KOTEWALL, LL.D.

HON. MR. D. G. M. BERNARD.

Supplementary Expenditure

H.E. The Governor presented for the consideration of the Committee items of Supplementary Expenditure Nos. 208 to 224 of 1926. These totalled \$127,227 and were all approved.

ITEM NO. 209

Extensions to Sisters' Quarters at the Government Civil Hospital\$5,500

HON. SIR H. E. POLLOCK — What are these additional quarters?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—
A new wing for the Sisters' Quarters. The original estimate was \$102,000 and the revised estimated \$142,673.04. The original estimate was only approximate

as it was prepared from sketch plans and it was not known then whether the project would be carried through. Subsequently complete plans were drawn up and there had been many additions including two large verandahs. The amount spent in 1925 was \$112,173.04. The amount voted for 1926 was \$25,000 and the amount required was \$30,500. This balance of \$5,500 was now asked for.

ITEM NO. 215

Fencing Queen's College playing ground \$610

HON. MR. A. O. LANG—Do you propose to do the same for other football clubs in the Colony whose grounds may require fencing?

THE CHAIRMAN—Not unless they are Government grounds.

ITEM NO. 217

Newspapers and periodicals.....\$1,500

HON. MR. A. O. LANG—What is this?

THE CHAIRMAN—It represents the cost of daily papers and certain periodicals obtained from Home for Government departments. Certain technical and medical journals are also provided.

ITEM NO. 219

Transport of Government Servants ...\$46,000

HON. MR. H. W. BIRD—How is it you do not know exactly what Government officers are due for long leave?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER—This year there have been a large number of people, with very large families, going home. I cannot exactly estimate beforehand how many will go.

HON. MR. BIRD—I can understand that in a few cases leave may be advanced or retarded, but I should have thought the time would be fixed in the great majority of cases.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER—In August we don't know who is going because they have not applied.

HON. MR. BIRD—They have to go at a certain time don't they?

THE COLONIAL TREASURER—No.

ITEM NO. 221

Fitting Wireless set on No. 2 Police Launch, cost of set \$2,500; fitting \$300.—Total \$2,800

THE CHAIRMAN—This item is on the estimates for next year, but owing to the fact that the launch is being put on the slip this year, it was thought better to ask the Committee to allow the work to be done this year and make the deduction of the amount in the estimates next year.

ITEM NO. 222

Gratuities to personal representatives of Chan Yam, Chung Fat, Chung Sing and Soo Yau..... \$1,322

THE CHAIRMAN—There are the unfortunate people who lost their lives at the Pokfulam Pumping Station when the large boulder, loosened by the heavy rain, crashed upon it.

ITEM NO. 224

Maintenance of Waterworks, Kowloon..... \$15,000

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—There has been a large number of applications for meters. These are revenue producing and we want to meet these applications as soon as possible.

THE CHAIRMAN—The amount your engineers estimated would be required for maintenance was cut down very considerably last year.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—That is so.