

HONGKONG.

REPORT ON PUBLIC WORKS.

Laid before the Legislative Council, by Command of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government.

No. 172.

SURVEYOR GENERAL'S OFFICE,
HONGKONG, 10th July, 1890.

SIR,

Owing to my recent appointment and other causes, I was prevented from making an annual report on the operations of the Public Works Department for 1889, but I have now the honour, by direction of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, to submit an intermediate report. I propose in future, although such does not appear to have been the practice in past years, to send in at the close of each year a full and exhaustive report on the works executed during the year.

**Repairs of damage done by the great Storm of
29th and 30th May, 1889.**

2. With the exception of the bridge on the Kennedy Road and minor repairs to the bridle tracks to Stanley and Cape D'Aguilar these repairs are now completed, and but for the scars on the hill-sides which are not yet altogether recovered by vegetation, hardly a trace remains of the ruin wrought by this storm. It has been found necessary to defer the reconstruction of the bridge over the Albany Nullah on the Kennedy Road until the training channel for the nullah already commenced has been brought down to this point. It is very desirable that this training channel should be completed by this Department as far as the commencement of the Military property near Mr. KENNEDY'S stables, and I am glad to learn that the Military Authorities contemplate carrying on the work through their lands to join the masonry channel below. When this work is completed the nullah will be effectually protected from the harbour upwards as far as the Tytam filter beds above the Bowen Road, a distance of about 1,222 yards. I may add that the whole of the repairs of storm damage have been completed considerably within my estimate, although much more work than I had originally contemplated in the training of the Albany Nullah has been executed. The length of nullah now finished from the service tank northwards is 216 yards, about 353 lineal yards of masonry channel have yet to be constructed by the Colonial Government, and 203 lineal yards by the Military Authorities.

Gap Rock Lighthouse.

3. During the North East Monsoon but little work could be done on the Gap Rock owing to the extreme difficulty in effecting a landing. All preliminary arrangements were however completed in time to allow operations to be undertaken and vigorously prosecuted immediately the more favourable weather of the South West Monsoon set in. Since the 21st March a body of workmen have been working continuously on the rock. At first it was necessary to limit the number, owing to the difficulty in providing lodgings, and ensuring an adequate supply of water, but as soon as these obstacles were overcome by the erection of substantial

coolie quarters in brickwork, and the construction of a cistern capable of holding 6,000 gallons of water, the number was increased to sixty-five. Much had to be done to level the hard metamorphic rock to receive the foundations of the lighthouse, keepers' quarters, and permanent tank, no less than 1,000 tons of rock having to be blasted. This work is now however well advanced, and I hope soon to be able to commence the masonry. In the meanwhile derricks have been erected to facilitate the landing of men and material, a landing place and roadway from the sea-level to the summit of the rock are nearly completed, and the material for the buildings has been prepared. The progress recently made has quite come up to my expectations, and reflects credit on those charged with the superintendence of the work. It was at first thought that there would be great difficulty in getting the Chinese to remain on this isolated rock, and that the heat and glare would seriously affect their health. I am glad to say that so far, owing to the precautions taken for their safety and comfort, no difficulty has been found in procuring workmen, and up to the present time the locality has proved exceptionally healthy.

Praya Reclamations.

(a.)—*Work included in Ordinance No. 16 of 1889.*

4. Two contracts have been let for the construction of the rubble mound which forms the base of the Praya sea wall, viz.: Section No. 2, 782 lineal feet and 1,157 lineal feet of Section No. 7, and the deposit of the stone is now progressing actively at either extremity of the line of the new wall. Up to the 5th instant, 59,567 cubic yards of rubble stone had been deposited in Section No. 2, and 35,043 cubic yards in Section No. 7, making a total of 94,610 cubic yards.

(b.)—*Reclamation in front of the Wharf and Godown Co.'s Wharf.*

(Length 592 feet.)

5. This reclamation which is being carried out by Government under an agreement with the Wharf and Godown Company, lies west of Section No. 2. The rubble mounds have been formed, the granite footing courses of the wall laid, and the earth filling behind the wall is progressing satisfactorily.

(c.)—*Reclamation in front of the Sailors' Home.*

6. This reclamation which it was I understand intended to utilize as the site of the "Western Market" is situated between the Wharf and Godown Company's Reclamation and the new Praya Section No. 1. The rubble-mound for the sea wall was completed in December, 1889, and a contract was entered into on 5th February, 1890, to complete the works for the sum of \$50,800. I regret to say that we are having much trouble with the contractor.

(d.)—*Reclamation in front of Mr. Chater's property—Kennedytown.*

7. This work is progressing satisfactorily. The wall is brought up to 7 feet 9 inches below quay level, and the sewers and earth-filling are being pushed on. I trust this reclamation will be completed about the end of the year.

New Central Market.

8. A contract has been let to Mr. TSANG KENG for the foundations of this building, the work was commenced on 23rd May last and is now being vigorously prosecuted. A requisition for the iron beams and columns to support the upper floor has been transmitted to the Crown Agents. The detailed drawings of the superstructure are nearly completed and we shall then be prepared to receive tenders for the main structure.

9. The market as planned consists of two blocks running the whole length between the Queen's Road and the Praya. These blocks will be connected by central towers in which are provided quarters for the Inspector and watchmen. Each block contains two stories, the lower one on the Praya level, the upper floor on the Queen's Road level. The market buildings will therefore consist of four separate markets each 296 feet long and 50 feet wide. A central avenue 20 feet wide traverses the whole length of each market, and on each side will be ranged the shops and stalls.

10. The extent of the accommodation provided is as follows :—

External area covered by Market,37,680 square feet.

Internal area of Market, both floors,58,864 ,,

Area available for Shops and Stalls,33,884 ,,

Quarters for Staff of Civil Hospital.

11. A contract was entered into with Mr. TSANG KENG on the 15th November last for the completion of this building for the sum of \$42,500. The work is progressing favourably, the walls having now reached an average height of 13 feet above the ground floor.

Servants' Quarters—Civil Hospital.

12. A contract was entered into on 27th January last with Mr. Wo SING for the erection of this building for the sum of \$6,150. The progress made by the contractor has not so far been satisfactory, and it has been found necessary to take the work out of his hands.

Lunatic Asylum for Chinese.

13. This building is in course of erection on a piece of Government land immediately north of the European Lunatic Asylum. It is a two-storied building, with basement which may be used as store-rooms and for other purposes. The Asylum will provide accommodation for sixteen patients, each having a separate room ten feet by eight feet, with day rooms for the more tractable cases and quarters for attendants. The contract was entered into on 25th April last with Mr. YEE HING for \$16,300. The foundations have been completed and the building is now raised to the ground floor level.

Reconstruction of Pier at Kowloon Point.

14. A contract was entered into with Mr. CHAN A-TONG on the 11th January last, for the removal of the old pier and the construction of a new one 73 feet in length and 45 feet wide for the sum of \$7,000. This work was completed in May last.

Additions to Government House—Ball Room.

15. Designs for a new Ball Room and accessories have been prepared by Messrs. PALMER & TURNER under my direction, and a contract has been let to Mr. YEE HING for the main structure. The masonry is now advanced to 23 feet above the ground floor and the contractor is making good progress, as the work suffers little interruption during rainy weather, owing to the protection afforded by a huge "matshed" which covers in the whole building. The contractor has undertaken to complete the work by the 15th day of March next.

16. The new building will form a wing on the eastern side of Government House and will consist of a Ball Room 60 feet long, 40 feet wide, and 26 feet high on the upper floor. It is approached from Government House by a vestibule and wide flight of steps. To the left is a billiard room and on the right a staircase descends to the basement in which are placed a large supper room, card and smoking rooms, and other conveniences. The estimated cost is \$40,000.

Recreation Ground—Happy Valley.

17. The improvements estimated to cost \$16,000 for which the sum of \$8,000 to be expended this year was voted by the Legislative Council on 9th ultimo consist in filling in the round pond and improving the surface. The work has been commenced. It is in my opinion very desirable that the drainage of this Valley for which much has already been done, should be completed by improving the watercourse on the west side of the Race Course, diverting it to the westward from near the Grand Stand to a point near the Bowrington Sugar Refinery, removing the weir opposite the refinery and contracting the width of the canal from the refinery to the Harbour. I hope shortly, in consultation with Mr. CHADWICK (in so far as the question of main drainage is concerned) to be able to submit plans embodying these proposals which must tend to improve the sanitary condition of the locality.

New Slaughter-House, Extension of Cattle Dépôt and Dépôts for Pigs and Sheep.

18. A Committee consisting of The Honourable O. CHADWICK, the Colonial Veterinary Surgeon, and the Surveyor General, having been appointed to report on the question of a site for the proposed new Slaughter-House and Dépôts for Pigs and Sheep, recommended that these should be erected at Kennedytown immediately to the south west of the present Cattle Dépôt. This site has the great advantage of concentrating the dépôts and slaughter-houses for cattle, sheep, and pigs in one locality. A plentiful supply of water which is essential for these purposes, can be obtained from the large nullah which traverses this site, supplemented when necessary by the Pokfulam aqueduct. These establishments should be placed under the supervision of a European Inspector, residing on the spot whose duty it will be to see that the sanitary regulations are strictly enforced. With this precaution, combined with an efficient system of drainage, and an ample supply of water, the sanitary condition of the locality will be amply guaranteed. A survey has been made of the site and the working drawings of the slaughter-house, and pig and sheep dépôts, are now in hand.

19. As regards the other public works included in this year's Estimates, I must admit that less progress has been made than I would have desired. This has arisen from various causes, but is chiefly due to the system which appears to have prevailed in the past of including in the Estimates of the year all works sanctioned by Government, irrespective of the consideration whether it was possible to execute them during the year or not. Consequently I found on my arrival that the list of "Extraordinary Public Works" in the Estimates of 1889 included the arrears of many years. It will be much better in future to include in the Estimates of the year only such works as there is a reasonable probability of carrying out wholly, or at least in part, during the year. Some delay has also been caused to the operations of the Department by the changes in the staff incident on the temporary separation of the water and drainage works from the Public Works Department. Now however that the departmental staff has been strengthened by the arrival of two Executive Engineers (Mr. TOOKER and Mr. CHATHAM) I hope to be able to make headway with the arrears.

20. With regard to some of these works, I may add that I hope shortly to be in a position to commence the erection of the Police Stations at Aberdeen and Quarry Bay. The question of Public Laundries, and Public Latrines, has been referred to Committees of the Sanitary Board who have sent in reports, and action may I think shortly be taken to carry out the recommendations of the Committees. A site has been selected and plans are being prepared for a new school for the Saiyingpún District. Plans are nearly completed of the new offices, store-rooms and residence for the Superintendent of the Botanical and Afforestation Depart-

ment. The reconstruction of the pier at Yaumati can stand over for the present, but instead thereof it is a matter of urgent necessity to construct a new pier at Stone Cutters' Island, as the existing one is in the last stage of decay.

Ordinary Repairs.

21. The Government buildings generally have been maintained in a fair state of repair. It will be necessary shortly however to carry out extensive repairs to the Powder Magazine at Stone Cutters' Island owing to the ravages of white ants.

22. The main streets and roads have been considerably improved, but their maintenance must be attended with some difficulty so long as the new drains and water pipes are being laid. By an organised system of road scraping the condition of the surface of the main thoroughfares in wet weather has been considerably improved.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

S. BROWN,
Surveyor General.

The Honourable

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.