



Ceylon Government Gazette

EXTRAORDINARY.

Published by Authority.

No. 5,581—TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 8, 1898.

MESSAGE TO THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

WEST RIDGEWAY.

THE Governor has directed the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year 1899 to be laid before the Legislative Council.

The revenue for 1899 is estimated to yield Rs. 24,965,500, being a million and a half in excess of the estimate for the current year and Rs. 246,000 over what will probably be received in 1898. Of the latter increase, the growing receipts from the Railway nearly make up the whole. There is no present reason to suppose that either the trade or the products of the Island from which the revenue is derived will receive any check in the course which they have been recently running, as indicated by the actual receipts for nine months of the current year.

Under Customs the items of Imports are placed slightly below what was actually received under each head in 1897, and below what the actual receipts for nine months indicate as the totals for 1898. There has been a remarkable and unexpected advance in this respect in the past and current years, a continuance of which at the same rate it may not be prudent to anticipate. In Export Duties the higher estimate for plumbago is supported by the receipts of the past few months, by the activity in the trade of this article, and by the numerous applications for land for mining; and the new item for Arrack is based on the operation for six months of the Ordinance of last Session. In the Colombo Harbour Dues there has been a considerable increase in the current year, and the estimate for 1899 has been fixed at about that yield. The increase of Rs. 350,000 over the revised estimate for 1898 of receipts from Licenses, &c., is nearly covered by the increased arrack rents which are now secured by contract for the whole of the coming year. In Salt there is also an increase on account of the larger harvests of this year. In placing the Postal and Telegraph receipts at Rs. 900,000, consideration has been given to the adoption of the Imperial penny rate of postage from Christmas Day next, and it is assumed that half of the loss in the difference of rate, the whole of which has been computed at Rs. 40,000, will be made up by additional letters. The Telegraph receipts have increased from Rs. 145,000 in 1896 to Rs. 168,000 in 1897 and to Rs. 101,000 for the first six months of 1898.

The Railway will rather more than realize the estimate for the current year, and to this has been added an increase of Rs. 200,000 for 1899, a very moderate anticipation of the probable growth of traffic.

The remaining heads of revenue depend much on fortuitous circumstances, about which it is difficult to prophesy, but they have been fixed with due regard to the receipts of past years. In Land Sales there has been considerable activity, which has resulted in an excess of this item of revenue, and which promises from the applications for land to continue.

Great and rapid as has been the increase of the yield of revenue, the demands for its appropriation grow at quite the same rate, as will appear from the total of Rs. 24,931,693 of the proposed expenditure for 1899.

The smaller provision under Debt is due to the adoption of a higher rate of exchange, *ls. 3½d.* instead of *ls. 3d.* No provision is made for the raising of a further loan to meet the cost of Harbour Improvements, Railway Extensions, and other large works sanctioned or proposed, as it is contemplated to use the available cash balances which will certainly meet the expenditure to be incurred at least during the coming year.

The Pensions are paid strictly in accordance with the prescribed regulations, and so long as these remain in force it is impossible to resist an increased provision if called for. The attention of the Legislative Council is specially invited to the proposal to award, under the 32nd clause of the Minute of December 11, 1892, a pension of Rs. 220 to the widow of the late Inspector Nell of the Police, who was killed while in the discharge of his duty.

The larger provision under the head of Civil Service is due to the transfer of the combined office of Inspector-General of Police and Prisons to the First Class, to the increments earned under the re-organization scheme of last year, and to the full provision for the complement of Cadets.

The increase for the Secretariat is chiefly caused by the Veterinary Surgeon having been placed directly under the Colonial Secretary instead of in the Department of Public Instruction, and by the addition of a junior clerk, and of an increase to the expenses in binding and arranging records. There is also a new provision in that of Rs. 3,000 for remuneration of probationers. The regulations for the employment of Ceylonese in the Lower Division of the Civil Service having failed to secure native gentlemen of the desired position and attainments, a proposal has been submitted to the Secretary of State for the employment of young persons in Kachcheries and Courts for a strictly limited and probationary term, with a distinct understanding that the continuance of their services after that term will depend only on their proved efficiency, and that they will otherwise establish no claim to any appointment after that term.

The increasing mass of accounts to be examined in the Audit Office has necessitated the addition of four clerks to the staff at the initial rate of salary. For like reasons, one clerk has been added to the establishment of the Treasurer.

Under Provincial Administration there is a change in the transfer of the station of the combined districts from Vavuniya to Mullaittivu, nearer to which latter town the principal part of the Assistant Agent's work now lies. The change, which has been long urged by the late and present Agents, is effected by the cost of the establishment, for the first time in the Northern Province, of a Village Tribunal at Vavuniya. It has been found necessary to provide salaries for the seven Udaiyars of the Jaffna division, who have hitherto been remunerated solely by the diminishing commissions on revenue collected by them. A small special grant of Rs. 2,000 is proposed for aiding in the industrial settlement of Veddahs at Kallodai in the Eastern Province. Notwithstanding these new items of expenditure, there is an apparent reduction under this head, owing to the unusually large provision last year in the North-Western Province for salt collection.

The increase of Rs. 60,000 in the Survey Department is occasioned by the failure of the system under which applicants for the purchase of Crown land were to have the surveys effected at their own cost and by privately employed surveyors, and by the consequent necessity to revert to the former practice, under which the expense of survey is first met by the Government and is partly reimbursed by the applicant.

In Customs, the new Supervisor of Exports already sanctioned, as well as the pay of attendants for two lights recently established in the Northern Province, is provided for. For the Port of Colombo the additional cost is in a temporary increase of the Police Force for plague protection duty, in expenses at the Ragama Camp, and in some extraordinary repairs for buoys, while the balance of the cost of the new hospital ship has yet to be added, and will more than absorb the apparent decrease. The provision for a buoy and chain cables at Galle accounts principally for the addition to expenses at outports.

In Botanic Gardens, the provision for an Entomologist is proposed at the instance of the Planters' Association and at a salary of Rs. 5,000 a year, with a house at Peradeniya. It is not contemplated that the very suitable gentleman whom it is proposed to appoint will permanently assume duties before the middle of September.

In the several Legal Departments the only material changes are in the addition of four to the salaried Registrars of Births and Deaths with medical qualifications, who displace other registrars formerly receiving fees, and in an increase of Rs. 11,775 in the expenses of Fiscals in the administration of justice.

The Police Force has been increased by two inspectors and by a Harbour Police for Galle temporarily for plague purposes, as well as to a small extent in the ordinary force for Batticaloa; and it is proposed to supply the force with ten more bicycles, which have been found of use in the discharge of their duties. There are some unavoidable additions to the incidental charges as well as some reductions, making in all the total net increase of Rs. 21,915.

The expenditure on Prisons, which had been falling for a few years, has now been increased by Rs. 28,000, partly on account of the higher number of prisoners being maintained by the more energetic pursuit of crime, and partly by the extension to all jails of the provision of uniform and half diet for subordinate officers.

In the Medical Department there is a saving on the retirement of two principal officers, which is nearly absorbed by the extension of the work of animal vaccination.

For working hospitals and dispensaries under the Medical Aid Ordinance there is an increased provision of Rs. 47,000, principally to meet the expenses of the new institutions at Dimbula, Ramboda, Maturata, and Morawak korale, which will be open during a part or the whole of the year. An increase of almost a like amount is provided for the civil hospitals and dispensaries as a consequence of the

addition of wards and of the extension of skilled nursing, which is now so marked a factor in medical treatment. A small sum has been added for the working expenses of a Bacteriological Institute, the building for which has been supplied by the liberality and at the entire cost of Mr. Charles de Soysa. Six new dispensaries will be opened in different parts of the Island. There is a small item of Rs. 500 for the supply of drugs to the Women's Medical Mission, which is doing good work in Batticaloa.

In Education, the Veterinary Surgeon and his assistant have been transferred to the establishment of the Colonial Secretary, and provision is made for a personal allowance to the First Principal Assistant of the Royal College and for a professional Drawing Master at the same institution. Other increases are due to increments earned under standing regulations. It is regretted that the promised inquiry into the work and re-organization of the School of Agriculture has not yet been held. The grants-in-aid of different kinds payable under the Code will, according to present numbers in the schools, be increased by Rs. 38,000.

The increase of a half-penny in the value of the rupee decreases the provision for Exchange by Rs. 30,000.

Under Military Expenditure, the contribution to the Imperial Government, rising with the Island's revenue, is increased by Rs. 129,125. The reserve of ammunition for the Colonial Volunteer Force, on which the Imperial authorities have strongly insisted, necessitates a provision of Rs. 31,208. There is another considerable item of Rs. 154,840 on account of the expenses connected with further fortifications in and around the harbour of Colombo, for the defence of which it has been found necessary to supply some additional armament. As on the previous occasion in 1887, the Imperial Government have undertaken to provide the guns and appliances, and require the Island revenues to meet the cost of construction of the forts. This cost is estimated at £25,000, towards which the sum of £7,000, appropriated by this Council from the sterling loan for Harbour improvements and other works and for the transplacement of two guns at Mutwal now no longer required, has been applied, and it is desired by the Military that the balance should be made available by instalments of £10,000 in the coming year and £8,000 in 1900.

Among Miscellaneous Services, the provision for Archæological purposes has been increased by Rs. 17,000 in accordance with the recommendation of an influential Committee appointed by the Governor at the commencement of the year, and in order to permit the extension of the operations of the survey and to meet the interest expressed by scientific authorities outside of the Island, as well as within it, in the good work of the Commissioner. The refunds to local authorities have increased by Rs. 25,000, and the still growing balance of the Widows' and Orphans' Pension Fund requires the statutory payment of a larger amount of interest by Rs. 18,000. A vote of Rs. 10,000 is proposed for any necessary expenses in connection with precautions against the introduction of plague.

The re-organization of the Forest Department is still under inquiry, and pending a decision on the subject no alteration has been made in the provision for the Department. It is contemplated that there will be some reduction of staff.

In the Post Office, provision is proposed for three new offices: an Accountant at Rs. 5,000 (who will be an expert officer temporarily engaged from the Imperial Service), and two Inspectors of Post Offices at Rs. 3,000 and Rs. 1,500, who will examine the country offices more frequently than has hitherto been possible, and will release the Postmaster-General and his Assistants to give more time and attention to the administrative work of this largely growing and important Department. The salaries for a Deputy Postmaster in Colombo and for four country postmasters and fifteen telegraph masters have also been added, with a provision for an increased number of postmen.

Six new telegraph stations are provided for. The apparently large increase of Rs. 182,000 under the head of Post and Telegraphs is to a great extent due to the transfer to this head from that of Public Works of the vote for telegraph extensions, which have always been carried out by the Postmaster-General. It is proposed to extend the connection by telegraph to Vavuniya, Mullaitivu, Batticaloa Bar, and Kalkuda, to complete some duplication of lines, and to make connections at a few stations now passed by the lines. The provision of Rs. 59,000 for a metallic return circuit has been urged on the Government by its advisers in electricity as a desirable improvement to telephonic communication in Colombo and in consequence of the erection of the numerous wires for the electric tramway service.

The proposed increase of expenditure of Rs. 179,000 on Railways will be required to meet the growing traffic and the demands for more accommodation of those using the line. The amounts have been fixed with due regard to the actual necessary expenses, and a sum of Rs. 598,205 is proposed for new works against Rs. 507,756 in the current year. While some of these numerous small works are such as might probably be charged to capital account and not to current revenues on a railway owned and managed by a company, yet the payment of that cost out of loan moneys would hardly be justified by the practice of public financial administration in the Colonies.

In the Public Works Department the salaries of the two Provincial Engineers of the first grade have by direction of the Secretary of State been restored to Rs. 10,000, from which they were reduced last year by Rs. 1,000 each. It was found that the prosecution of desired irrigation works was retarded by the want of scientific and immediate supervision, and this branch of the Department has been strengthened by the temporary engagement of seven junior engineers, for whose salary provision is made at an additional cost of Rs. 24,360, but a corresponding reduction will be observed in the salaries and allowances hitherto provided for Irrigation. A clerk and some messengers, who have been permanently employed and paid from estimates, have more properly been added to the establishment, and there is a re-arrangement without any material increase of the coolies and watchers at the Colombo Waterworks.

The provision for the maintenance of roads has been further increased by Rs. 57,000, the necessity for which is explained in detail in the report submitted by the Director of Public Works. It has been found necessary to increase by Rs. 31,000 the requisite amount to keep the numerous public buildings and bridges in a proper and economical state of repair. The reduction of Rs. 24,360 in the vote for Irrigation salaries and allowances is explained under the head of the Public Works Department. A vote of Rs. 2,000 has been restored for the acquisition of small lots for sites for building, and for other purposes, to avoid application for supplementary provision for such necessary services.

For Public Works Extraordinary the provision is greater by Rs. 432,519 than that for 1898. In new Buildings, in which the increase is Rs. 303,862, it is proposed to commence a new Technical College and a much wanted office for the Department of Public Works, which will permit of the enlargement of the present accommodation of the Registrar-General, as well as to provide a long-promised residence immediately outside the Lunatic Asylum for the Medical Superintendent of that institution, and to meet a like want of the Assistant Agent at Kalutara, the only officer of his class who is not provided with official quarters. It has also been found necessary to provide houses for the District Judge at Batticaloa, for the Archæological Commissioner at Anuradhapura, for the District Engineer at Passara, and for the Office Assistant to the Government Agent, Jaffna. The building for a Laboratory at Peradeniya is urged by the Director of the Gardens as a necessary complement in the scientific pursuit of botany and agriculture in the interests of the Island and of Science generally. For new Hospitals and Dispensaries the votes amount to Rs. 178,340, besides a sum of Rs. 72,100 under another head for additions and alterations to such institutions. In the different Provinces a sum of Rs. 72,000 has been allowed to the Director of Public Works for increasing the number of cooly lines and overseers' quarters throughout the Island, the better accommodation in which is found successful in attracting and retaining the requisite constant labour.

The provision of Rs. 345,000 for new Roads includes re-votes of some balances which the Department will not be able to spend this year. Arrangements having been made with the proprietors of the land through which the proposed road to Ambawela railway station passes, provision is proposed for the prosecution of as much of this work as it is thought can be done in the coming year. In addition to the Government moieties of the cost of the new branch road at Annfield and on account of that from Ellearawa to Peenawella, provision is made for the completion of the Glenella-Havilland road, and the open vote of Rs. 100,000 is repeated for any applications for branch roads which may come in during the year. A vote of Rs. 248,880 is also proposed for additions and improvements to existing roads. For new Bridges the votes amount to Rs. 439,020. It is proposed to build bridges at Dandugama and on the Wak-oya-Labugama road in the Western Province, and over the Kudupiti-oya and Battulu-oya in the North-Western Province, and to complete the bridge over the Kirinde-oya, and contribute the greater part of the cost of one over the Badulla-oya at Demodara in the Province of Uva, besides some other smaller works.

Under Miscellaneous, there is provided under the several Provinces amounts aggregating Rs. 67,500 for the conversion of wooden bridges into iron ones, a work which has been gradually going on for many years, and in each case as serious repairs are required. The Mannar Causeway will at last be completed next year on the proposed provision of Rs. 12,000. There are numerous other smaller votes, the necessity or object of which does not seem to call for any previous explanation.

If the proposals in these Estimates are accepted and realized, there will be a surplus of Rs. 33,807 on the transactions of 1899. Some modifications in the appropriations will be suggested during the passage of the Supply Bill in Council.

By His Excellency's command,

E. NOEL WALKER,
Colonial Secretary.

November 7, 1898.