

PROCEEDINGS OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE  
NIGERIAN COUNCIL, 29th DECEMBER, 1919.

PRESENT :

- His Excellency the Governor and Commander-in-Chief, Sir Hugh Clifford, K.C.M.G.,  
His Honour the Acting Lieutenant-Governor, Southern Provinces, and  
Administrator, Colony, the Honourable Major H. C. Moorhouse, C.M.G.,  
D.S.O., etc.,  
The Attorney-General, the Honourable E. Greenwood,  
The Acting Director of the Medical and Sanitary Service, the Honourable Dr.  
T. E. Rice,  
The Acting Treasurer, the Honourable J. H. D. Bratt,  
The Comptroller of Customs, the Honourable T. F. Burrowes, C.B.E.,  
The Acting Secretary, Southern Provinces and Colony, the Honourable Major  
C. T. Lawrence,  
The Secretary, Northern Provinces, the Honourable G. R. Matthews,  
The Honourable Kitoyi Ajasa (representing Native community of Lagos),  
The Honourable A. M. Harvey (representing Chamber of Commerce, Lagos),  
The Honourable T. Spearpoint (Representative of Banking),  
The Honourable J. R. U. Little (Representative of Shipping),  
The Honourable R. McNeill (Representative of Commerce).

ABSENT :

- His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, Northern Provinces, the Honourable  
H. S. Goldsmith, C.M.G.,  
The Acting Commandant, Nigeria Regiment, the Honourable Lieutenant-  
Colonel R. Godwin Coles,  
The Acting Director of Marine, the Honourable Commander A. B. Crosse,  
R.D., R.N.R.,  
The Central Secretary, the Honourable D. C. Cameron, C.M.G.,  
The Honourable F. Beckles Gall,  
The Honourable R. A. Roberts,  
The Honourable Dr. J. C. Maxwell, C.M.G.,  
The Honourable E. J. Arnett,  
The Honourable H. R. Palmer,  
The Honourable J. Watt,  
The Honourable N. D. Maidman (Representative of Commerce),  
The Honourable Oladugbolu Onikepe, C.M.G. (Alafin of Oyo),  
The Honourable Richard Henshaw (Chief, Calabar),  
The Honourable Mohamadu Maiturare, Sarkin Musulumi (Sultan of Sokoto),  
The Honourable A. R. Canning (representing Chamber of Mines),  
The Honourable Abubakr Garbai, C.B.E. (Shehu of Bornu),  
The Honourable Usuman, Emir of Kano.



- (4) The reasons for the institution and maintenance of compulsory pilotage between Bonny and Port Harcourt at additional heavy expense to Government and Shipping?

Considering that since Port Harcourt has been opened ships have been able to navigate the channel easily and without accident and also in view of the fact that pilotage over Bonny Bar—the most dangerous part of the voyage—has never been considered necessary, is it not possible to dispense with the pilotage?

What amount has been paid for pilotage for the past twelve months?

- (5) When is the new berth at the Customs Wharf, Lagos, to be deepened to allow ordinary ships using the port to lie alongside the new extension of the wharf?
- (6) When is proper office accommodation to be provided at the Lagos Customs? Considerable delay is caused in the transaction of business in the various makeshift offices now existing.

The Acting Lieutenant-Governor of the Southern Provinces replied to the first five questions as follows:—

- (1) Provision is made in the 1920 Estimates for the construction of a wharf at Ejirin at a total cost of £2,850. The materials were ordered this year, and as soon as they arrive, staff is available to commence construction. Plans showing the position of the wharf and details of construction are in existence, and arrangements will be made to send them to the Chamber of Commerce. It is anticipated that the work will be completed in 1920 but no date can be given.
- (2) Provision for shedding and foundations to the amount of £19,640 is provided in 1920 Estimates. The construction depends entirely on when the material which is on order can be supplied. One shed has been promised for delivery in March.
- (3) The extension of the Customs Wharf has not yet been decided on. The possible necessity has not been overlooked and it is one of the questions connected with the general scheme of wharfage accommodation in Lagos which has been submitted to the Consulting Engineers for their advice.
- (4) In the absence of the Director of Marine I will endeavour to answer the next two questions standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Shipping.  
There is no compulsory pilotage at Port Harcourt.  
The amount paid in pilotage fees for the last 12 months is £490.
- (5) It is proposed to start dredging at the new berth at the Customs in January, when a dredger will be available.

The Comptroller of Customs replied to the sixth question as follows:—

- (6) It is quite impossible to say when the new offices will be ready. The Director of Public Works has been asked to endeavour to expedite the work as much as possible.

The President then thanked Honourable Members for their presence and declared the Council adjourned *sine die*.



**THE HONOURABLE MR. LITTLE** :—Your Excellency : I beg to support the Honourable Mr. McNeill's motion. I think that the meetings of this Council should be held at least once every two months in order to give members an opportunity of expressing their views on current topics. It is interesting, no doubt, at the end of the year to discuss and review what has happened, but we know all about the past, and it is the future to which we look and in which we have our interests.

**THE PRESIDENT** :—I am going to make to the Honourable Member who has proposed the motion which is at present before the Council a personal request. I am going to ask him to be so good as not to press his motion to a division. I have in the course of my address mentioned that there are various matters of policy which "I have of set purpose ignored—some of them of the greatest moment—which obviously demand attention, but with regard to which it would at the present time be premature to attempt any pronouncement."

Speaking as the individual who administers the Government and who under the present system is primarily responsible for legislation in Nigeria, I confess that I do not find that the machinery at my disposal is as satisfactory as I could wish. I think, however, that you will all recognise, on the other hand, the very great difficulties which exist in modifying our system upon lines which have been adopted in other parts of the tropical possessions of the British Crown, and in adapting them to our local circumstances. The difficulties are due to the enormous size of the country, the great variety of conditions that obtain in various parts of it, and to the great distances which divide the principal administrative centres, which render it difficult to assemble at frequent intervals any Legislative Body which would be truly representative of all interests in Nigeria. Nevertheless, even with the advice of my Executive Council, of which since my arrival here I have made a steadily increasing use, I do not feel that legislation at present is subject to that close scrutiny and criticism which I have always regarded as of the greatest assistance which a Government can have when attempting to frame legislation that shall be in the best interests of the community. I therefore hope it will be possible ere long to put forward, if not for immediate adoption, at any rate for discussion, proposals for a reorganisation of our legislative machinery.

In these circumstances, I trust that the Honourable Member will agree not to press his present motion to a division.

The Honourable Mr. McNeill intimated his willingness not to press the motion to a division.

#### QUESTIONS.

Pursuant to notice the Honourable Mr. Little asked the following questions :—

- (1) When Government expects to be in a position to construct a wharf at Ejinrin? Have the plans for the arrangements been prepared? If so, might they be sent to the Chamber of Commerce and an approximate date given for completion of this work?
- (2) When is the construction of shedding urgently required at the Customs Wharf, Lagos, likely to go on?
- (3) When is the Extension of the Customs Wharf to be continued?



## II.

THE HONOURABLE MR. MCNEILL :—Your Excellency :  
I beg to move the following motion standing in my name :—

“That this Council be either reconstructed so as to make it a serious factor in the governing of this Colony and Protectorate, or else be abolished.”

The motion, Sir, as it stands looks somewhat truculent, but I have no such intention. I am convinced that the opinion is held by most people of this country—European and Native—that this Council is not fulfilling any really useful purpose. In the old days, every measure affecting either the Colony or Protectorate passed through and was examined by the Legislative Council. In 1914, when the scope and authority of the Legislative Council were curtailed and confined to the Colony, presumably it was intended that the Nigerian Council should take its place in dealing with matters affecting the Protectorate. I do not think that has been done. I do not profess to have any definite knowledge as to the precise reasons for the formation of this Council, but at the same time I do not think that it has been performing the functions it was supposed to fulfil. It meets once at the end of the year. We are told what has taken place during the year, and I am glad to see that this year Your Excellency has taken the step of giving us some idea of what is going to happen during the coming year, but that is not really of very much use. The Council has not opportunities of debating on any legislation before it passes into law. I should have thought that this Council should be given a chance of examining and criticising any Bill affecting the Protectorate, but this is not possible, so long as it meets only once at the end of the year when all the legislation has been enacted, and thus, in my opinion, one of the chief functions of this Council is entirely lost.

I am not prepared at the present moment to make any detailed suggestions as to the lines on which the Council might be reconstructed. Possibly, the matter might be referred to a Committee for their advice. In any case, I am certainly of the opinion that unless the Council meets once a quarter and unless Bills are submitted to the Council for its criticism and advice, it is of no value to the Colony or to Your Excellency.

I must apologise for the somewhat brusque terms of the motion. It was, however, framed in a hurry and I had no time to polish it.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HARVEY :—Your Excellency :  
In seconding this motion I have very little to add to what has been said by the Honourable Member opposite. The meetings of what should be a most important body in the administration of this Government take place once a year, and this fact naturally limits its opportunities for usefulness almost to *nil*. If the advisory functions of the Council are of value, I agree with the Honourable Member that it should be possible to make fuller use of its advice. As it is, we meet once a year and we are informed of what has taken place during the past year and, on this occasion, of the policy and probable measures of the future ; but the Council does not exercise any legislative functions, nor does it have sufficient opportunity for reviewing or discussing future policy of the Government. I think that if some reconstruction of the Council on the lines suggested by the Honourable Member could be conceived, the Council would be of more use to the Colony.



and are shortly altogether to be forgotten. I also trust that not only will he carry back to the North an expression of the goodwill of all who are in the South, but I am confident all of us in Nigeria will be united in a common effort for the development of the country and the improvement of the condition of its inhabitants.

I am afraid that the Honourable Mr. Little has regarded the statement of what I believe to be a fact as in some sort an attack on the Shipping firm which he represents. We all owe a great debt of gratitude to this firm for their services during the five years of war, and I do not suppose that anybody realises more than we do in West Africa how great those services have been and how very moderate the Company was in the advantages it might have taken of the enormous opportunities that were in its way for making great profits. Moreover, I am sure that we share the keen admiration which is felt throughout the British Empire for the Mercantile Marine, and that we in West Africa particularly feel very warmly how much we owe to the line which kept up during these anxious years our communication with home, in the face of appalling dangers.

As regards the sum of 11s. a ton which is put down as the amount which it costs the Marine Department to bring coal from Port Harcourt to Lagos, I asked precisely the same questions which naturally presented themselves to the Honourable Member, and the answer was in the affirmative, with the exception that the Headquarters Office expenses were not included, but I was informed that all charges relating to the actual shipment of the coal were so included. I have not personally examined the figures, but I have every reason to believe that the charges are as stated, and I am sure that if the Honourable Member so wishes, the Director of Marine will be pleased to place the figures at his disposal. In mentioning the figures in my address I did not intend in any way to complain of the charges made by Messrs. Elder Dempster and Company. My sole object was to show what the actual cost of a ton of coal was, delivered at Kano.

With regard to the Lagos and Lagoon trade, I do not think that it is possible for anyone to go into the situation without being fully convinced that it is a branch of the commerce of the country which is of very great importance and is likely to be of even greater importance in the near future. The wharfage at Apapa will be mainly designed to convey our ocean trade to the interior and to carry off our products from the interior, but, as far as I am at present able to judge, the Lagos trade is likely to require as much attention as the new wharfage scheme at Apapa, and it is upon these lines that Mr. Coode is about to prepare the report which he has promised on this subject.

## MOTIONS.

### I.

After ascertaining that no Member of the Council had been asked by the Honourable Mr. Henshaw, in view of his absence, to propose the following motion standing in his name, the President ordered that the consideration thereof be postponed:—

“That for the better administration of Government and in the interest of the teeming masses of the natives of Nigeria the major portion of whom are illiterates or cannot yet grasp the complicated system of the English Law, this Council considers it advisable that Government give early and full recognition to native customary law where it is not repugnant to equity and good order.”



It would also be interesting to know how the figure of 11s. per ton is arrived at. Does it include interest on capital, depreciation, and insurance?

Shipping is undoubtedly one of the most important factors in the trade of a country, and Your Excellency will observe from the export figures that during the past year shipping in this port has been much heavier than before the war. On the whole, notwithstanding a certain unavoidable shortage of tonnage, the situation has been dealt with by the Shipping Company to the general satisfaction of the commercial community, and I am pleased to be able to state that every possible step has been taken to ensure an adequate supply of tonnage in the near future to meet the rapidly expanding trade.

I desire to express appreciation of Your Excellency's decision with regard to the situation of the Capital or Headquarters of the Government Administration. Kaduna undoubtedly suffers from many disadvantages, particularly from its distance from Lagos, the chief port and commercial centre, with its waterways and transport facilities. I feel that we may congratulate ourselves on having a "commercial" Governor.

THE HONOURABLE MR. HARVEY :—Your Excellency and Honourable Members of the Council: In Your Excellency's Address which has been laid before us I am glad to observe the sympathetic reference which Your Excellency makes to the Lagoon trade. Since the Apapa scheme has been mooted, there has been a kind of feeling among people that, in the enthusiasm for the new project, Apapa was to be developed, more or less to the exclusion of Lagos. Your Excellency expresses your confidence in the extension of the Lagoon trade and the necessity for providing proper shipping facilities for that portion of the commerce of the country, and I hope that Mr. Coode's report will lead to the necessary extension, the return from which will, I am sure, justify it.

THE PRESIDENT :—Honourable Members: I rise to pass a few comments on the remarks which have been made on my Address.

With regard to the Honourable Mr. McNeill's statement, I am afraid that the fault is mine for not having made the position more clear. It is not suggested that an additional £412,000 to the Revenue of this country will be likely to enable us to defray from Revenue any capital works of importance. It is precisely because we anticipate that during the next year or two it may be necessary to float loans amounting to nearly six millions that we require to have in hand extra revenue which will enable us to finance such loans.

I am grateful to the Honourable Mr. Ajasa for the kind terms in which he has referred not only to me but to Lady Clifford. I am specially interested in his remarks on the subject of education. The problem is a very big one, and it is one which I have not yet had an opportunity of studying closely, but I trust that in the years to come we shall be able to see very notable improvements effected in that most important direction.

We have all listened with great appreciation to the remarks of Mr. Matthews, the Secretary of the Northern Provinces, and to his very humorous references to the relations which formerly existed between the North and the South. I hope and believe with him that old feelings of jealousy are now greatly modified



rather inclined to adopt the Dutch practice of "giving too little and asking too much" for the little we give. Sir Percy Girouard was well acquainted with poker parlance and he was in the habit of emphasising and illustrating his policy by quoting it.

One of the keynotes of his policy was "Make it cheap to come in," and I hope that in future traders and others coming to the Northern Provinces will not only find it cheap to enter, but that the Government will be able so to arrange matters that they may be induced to leave something behind, if they ever leave.

I have not been accorded time in which to prepare a speech, but am obliged for the opportunity granted to me to say a few words on this occasion, the last on which I shall be privileged to attend this Council. In conclusion, may I associate myself with the Honourable Member opposite in wishing Your Excellency long life, health and happiness.

THE HONOURABLE MR. LITTLE:—Your Excellency: I would like to draw attention to one of the paragraphs of Your Excellency's Address to the Council in which a reference is made to the rate of freight charged by Elder Dempster and Company for conveying coal from Port Harcourt to Lagos. I observe that Your Excellency mentions that the cost of transport by Government Colliers is 11s. per ton, while Elder Dempster and Company charge £2 per ton. No doubt one of the reasons for this difference is the fact that the Marine Department are able to discharge their coal into lighters or other craft and on the wharf at the same time, whereas in the case of coal carried by the Company's vessels the Railway only take delivery direct from the steamers, which have to go alongside the Railway wharf, where considerable delay takes place owing to the shortage of wagons. Of course, this shortage has arisen through War conditions and is not the fault of anyone, but at the same time it is a factor to be considered. The Marine Department are also able, if necessary, to bunker craft at night time, but the Company can only discharge during the day time. The colliers for the Railway are also delayed as they cannot go alongside the Railway wharf except at a certain state of the tide; delays of 24 hours through this cause are of frequent occurrence.

I have been investigating some of the Shipping Company's returns, and, with your permission, Sir, would like to mention a few particulars, namely:—

Steamer.	Tonnage discharged.	Time taken.	Average per hour.
"Baro"	982 tons.	8 days.	15 tons.
"Iddo"	892 "	9 "	12 "
"Uromi"	681 "	8 "	10 "

All these vessels are well-equipped with winches and other gear, and are capable of discharging 300 tons daily. Your Excellency will readily realise from these figures the great delay at Iddo.

There is also the question of delay to shipping at Port Harcourt, which is becoming very serious. It takes the Company's colliers five days to take a full load of coal at that port, whereas in the past the time taken was only one day and a half. I understood some time ago that certain improvements had been made, but unfortunately we now see that steamers are taking five days to load instead of the usual time, namely, a day and a half.



the interest taken in bringing us Africans together, thereby showing in a practical way that you are not for one section of the community but for all.

I hope, Sir, that your sojourn among us will be characterised with great developments and advancements in Nigeria, and that when the time comes for you to say good-bye to these shores you will be able to look back on the share which you have taken in making us as worthy citizens as in any part of the Empire—citizens who are loyal to the Throne and loyal to their country; and, further, that you will always have the satisfaction of having done your best and that you could do no more. The only thing I wish for you, Sir, is health and long life.

**THE HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY, NORTHERN PROVINCES** :—Your Excellency: I should like with your permission to say a few words with regard to the territories from which I come or that part of Nigeria which lies to the North of the wet forest belt.

There are one or two statements included in Your Excellency's speech to-day which will cause disappointment in the Northern Provinces. First of all, we are disappointed to hear that the proposal for locating the new capital at Kaduna has been abandoned. But although it will cause some disappointment in the North, yet this long delayed decision was not altogether unexpected, and perhaps it will afford some relief.

Another point I would like to deal with is in connexion with the expenditure which is to be devoted to the important extraordinary works in the Southern Provinces, with regard to which Your Excellency says "it is necessary to lay the base of a monument well; and truly before the superstructure can be erected upon it." I am not going to say anything against this pronouncement, which might possibly be misconstrued, but I hope, Sir, that you will be able to erect a superstructure in the years to come perfect in its parts, satisfactory to the builder, and morally and materially beneficial to the people of these territories—citizens of no mean Empire.

Northern Nigeria, if we must still think of it as such, will receive particular attention later.

Your Excellency goes on to say that there is still a certain amount of jealousy between the two Protectorates, even now. I think this is regrettable, but the position to-day is a considerable improvement on the former state of things. It is not so many years ago that Sir Frederick Lugard, then High Commissioner of Northern Nigeria, issued an ultimatum to the late Sir William MacGregor, to the effect that unless the Ekiti farmers refrained from cultivating in the Ilorin Province he would send down troops to turn them out. In 1906 or thereabouts, we were in a state of war with the Southern Provinces. That state has happily disappeared, and it is not too much to hope that any little jealousy which may still exist will disappear in the immediate future.

There is just one more point to which I would like to make reference, and that is with regard to the question of land. One thing that impressed the Honourable Mr. Ajasa when he came to the Northern Provinces a few years ago was the amount of land available, but he was still further impressed when he discovered that there were no such things as conveyancing fees. There is land for all in the Northern Provinces, though I think we are



ourselves but to the country. I desire to see introduced into Nigeria a system of education which will make us Africans more loyal to the Throne of Great Britain and more loyal to our Government, which will make us self-reliant, satisfied and ready to co-operate with every section of the community for the betterment of Nigeria: a system of education, I hope, which will not produce men discontented as in other parts of the Empire such as India and Egypt: a sound system of education which will make us realise that it is our duty to work together for the good of the country and not become dangerous elements of the community in which we live. It is a system of education on such lines that I trust Your Excellency will introduce, or, at all events, foster.

I should also like to make mention of the satisfaction with which I have observed that the long delayed decision as to the provision of wharfage accommodation in connection with the main terminus of the Railway has been taken in favour of Apapa. The position was one which caused a great deal of uneasiness. To-day one heard that it was to be Wilmot Point and the next day it was Apapa, and I am very glad to see it definitely stated that Apapa is going to be the future terminus. It is such definite statements of policy that we want, and when that is forthcoming it allays the minds of the people. Ignorance or uncertainty as to the intentions of the Government lead to suspicion, but let us know what you intend to do with the country, and you will not find us a bit behind in affording all the assistance which we ought to give.

Your Excellency has stated that in the near future it may be necessary, in the interest of the development of Nigeria, to revise the principles on which the Government legislate with regard to land. I would crave the indulgence of the Council to quote Your Excellency's words:—"I urge the acceptance of the principle that, in a raw, semi-developed country, such as is Nigeria to-day, the advantages attaching to the opening up of the country and to the development of its resources must be held altogether to outweigh any direct and immediate financial gain that may be made to accrue to the public revenue from land sales, rents and similar sources of income which, if too great an importance be attached to them, may tend to restrict enterprise and to discourage the investment of capital." I am wholly at one with Your Excellency in this matter. I cannot for one moment see how we can expect to attain to that goal to which we all look eagerly, unless we encourage the investment of capital in the country. Our past Governors have always had some nickname attached to them as characterising some outstanding feature of the policy of their Administration. We have had our "Roads" Governor; we have had our "Sanitation" Governor, and so on. I am always reluctant to assume the rôle of a prophet, but I make bold to say that long before the time comes for you to lay down your staff you will be known as the "Commercial" Governor. The development of commerce is one of our greatest needs to-day and without it the country cannot go ahead.

I view with great satisfaction the efforts which Your Excellency has put forward to bring together the two sections of the European element of the community—the official and unofficial. We Africans look on at the somewhat isolated position of the two sections with feelings almost of perplexity, but when we see genuine friendship developing between these two vital elements in the country, we take courage and have confidence that all will be well. In this connection I think I should say also how grateful we Africans feel to Your Excellency and Lady Clifford for



experience of public life in Lagos I have found that the presence of a Lady at Government House has been most helpful to the Governor and greatly appreciated by the public generally. For, already, Your Excellency and Lady Clifford have endeared yourselves to the people, so that it would seem as if you have been among us for five years instead of five months. I think this augurs well for the future, and I would venture to give my assurance that the co-operation which Your Excellency so earnestly desires from the African members of the community will be readily and cordially afforded.

The Address which has been laid on the Table bears signs throughout of having been most carefully prepared, and although in the opening remarks thereof Your Excellency speaks with some diffidence of your knowledge of local affairs and problems, in view of the fact that the period of your residence in Nigeria is limited to five months, yet it must be apparent to all that those five months have been put to great use, for not only does the Address show a thorough grasp of the needs of Nigeria, but it also displays an intimate acquaintance with the people and their aspirations.

Your Excellency has touched a note which has also occurred to me, namely, that with the conclusion of the war there will be a rush into Nigeria. These are Your Excellency's words: "Nigeria to-day, in a sense, resembles a country which is about to experience a vast inundation—a rush of many waters which the hand of no man can withstand." We recognise that there must be an enormous rush of commercial activity into Nigeria if the country is to be developed and to progress, but I trust that the policy which the Government of Nigeria has maintained in the past of safeguarding the aborigines of the country from unscrupulous exploitation will always have your first consideration, for it is obvious that with the inrush will come men of far superior intelligence to the natives of the country, and this must inevitably operate to the detriment of the country in many respects if some protection is not forthcoming.

Another question which Your Excellency has touched upon is that of Education. I welcome Your Excellency's pronouncements in this connection and I trust that the hopes expressed by you will be realised during Your Excellency's tenure of the Governorship of Nigeria. It was my privilege to know what were the desires and intentions of your predecessor in this direction, but he was hampered by the war and was not able to carry out his schemes. Knowing, however, what I have learnt of your accomplishments in the matter of education on the Gold Coast, I feel certain that all the influence you have brought to bear on education in that Colony will be bestowed on Nigeria also, and that you will succeed in raising us from the position of inferiority in education to the Gold Coast or Sierra Leone.

Two or three years ago, speaking in this Council on the subject of education, I ventured to make a suggestion which I am afraid was not taken seriously. I suggested that there should be a Chair for Agriculture in connection with King's College, but the suggestion was apparently considered to be premature. It must be obvious to all that if we are to progress it will not be by book knowledge alone: that is, after all, a secondary matter. We also need improved agricultural methods and the introduction of machinery which will save us the tremendous amount of labour which has hitherto been entailed in preparing our products for the market, and also enable us to send away our products from Nigeria in such a condition as would be of greater advantage not only to



The present system has been built up on the supposition that the seat of Government would be removed to a point several hundred miles up country. After consulting not only my official colleagues, but leading members of the public, I think I may say, without risk of contradiction, that the general consensus of opinion is that, at any rate for many years to come, Lagos must be the seat of the Administration. I do not propose at the present moment to go into the question of the alterations in the system of the Administration which that new orientation in policy will impose upon us, but I think it should be regarded as a cardinal factor which must entail very considerable alterations in the original scheme of amalgamation.

I will not detain the Council any longer. I, however, desire to sound one note. The scheme that was devised in 1914 was for the amalgamation of Nigeria. What I suggest to Honourable Members should be our duty in the years to come is to try and make Nigeria not only amalgamated, but united, and when I say united, I do not mean to convey the idea that uniformity of system is in any way essential to unity. In a country so vast as ours, a country in which the local conditions vary so widely, we cannot with utility attempt to secure uniformity of practice in a large number of most important matters; but I maintain that it is possible for Nigeria to become as united as British India itself, if we all work together—official and unofficial, Europeans and Africans—to build up that unity, and if we recognise that where uniformity is not possible, at any rate co-operation is possible; and it is trust in the whole-hearted co-operation on the part of my colleagues in the public service and public generally—European and African—which I confidently hope to receive that heartens me for the great task which lies before us during the next few years.

THE HONOURABLE MR. MCNEILL:—Your Excellency: I have not much to say. On behalf of the commercial community, however, I wish to say that I am extremely pleased to hear that the deficiencies of the last few years are to be made up as soon as possible. The Railway especially is undoubtedly in a parlous condition at the present moment, and I am glad that the Government intend to make serious efforts to redeem their obligations to the public in this respect.

I quite recognise that unless we are prepared to accept increased taxation, these much needed improvements in public services cannot be effected, but I doubt very much whether the Government will be able, by this means, to raise adequate funds to carry out the necessary works. I should say, "why don't you borrow more money." Surely, with a revenue of five and a half millions, you can borrow money freely enough. I cannot see how £400,000 is going to meet the case. That, however, is perhaps a question for experts to advise Your Excellency on. But it is the opinion of the commercial community that, with the vast resources of the country and a rapidly increasing revenue, Nigeria can stand a much bigger debt than it has at present; and I think the time has come when that debt should be increased. That is really the only point that I wish to lay before Your Excellency.

THE HONOURABLE MR. AJASA:—Your Excellency, Gentlemen of the Nigerian Council: As an African Member of this Council, I take this the first opportunity which has presented itself to welcome Your Excellency most cordially to Nigeria, and in so doing, I desire respectfully to associate the name of Lady Clifford with that welcome. During the past 26 years of my



To-day we are still in a position of some uncertainty, although the trade of the Colony has shown some signs of resuscitation, and although the amount of our exports is to-day in excess of the exports for 1913, the last completed year before the war. The volume of our imports is still only about one-half of what it was before the war began, and owing to the policy inaugurated by His Majesty's Government at the beginning of 1919, Nigeria has made a sacrifice of one million sterling *per annum*, in order to give effect to the policy with regard to liquor traffic which His Majesty's Government has adopted and which has recently been crystallised in a Convention signed by all the principal Allies.

On the other hand, we to-day see the value of our trade during the current year amount to practically twenty-five millions sterling, as against fourteen millions sterling in the year 1913. During the coming year we shall see our revenue amount to nearly five and a half millions, but when we compare the value of money as it is to-day with what it was in 1913, it will be realised by all of us that that increase is to some extent merely a paper increase rather than an increase of funds which will enable us largely to increase our powers of expenditure. Therefore, when we provide in our present Estimates for a surplus balance of about one million sterling on the 31st December, 1920, we are, I submit, only taking a safe course, because the Estimates of Expenditure for the current year, although they have been framed with great care in the three Secretariats which are responsible for their preparation, are to some extent tentative.

The items in connexion with salaries, both for the European and the African Services, will have to undergo very considerable revision before the actual figures of expenditure for 1920 can be definitely ascertained. At a recent meeting of the Legislative Council of the Colony, attention was drawn to the inadequate remuneration of the Police. That is an instance of the many directions in which the published Estimates of Expenditure for 1920 cannot be regarded as final. It is obvious to all of us that the figures put down are of a tentative rather than of a definite character; and, therefore, having regard to the demands for expenditure which are made with great urgency in so many directions; to the necessity which exists for thoroughly equipping our Railways; to the necessity which exists for saving our trade from the strangulation which will follow if adequate harbour facilities are not afforded; and to the necessity for making up leeway after the stagnation of the last five years, it is absolutely necessary that increased taxation should be imposed; and it is for that reason that increased export and import duties, which are expected to yield £412,000 during the year 1920, have recently been brought into force.

I must confess that, though I am not reluctant to assume responsibility, the machinery at present at my disposal for deciding what form additional taxation should take is not as adequate as I could wish. The machinery for the Government of this country, which has been devised for certain ends, has been in an experimental stage for a period of five years. It would be premature for me to express an opinion as to the directions in which it is capable of improvement, but I think there is a very general consensus of opinion that considerable and, perhaps, radical alterations will be necessary before the required standard of efficiency can be attained. This is one of the directions in which the policy of the Government will probably have ere long to undergo some revision.



The Address in question, as I have said, has been prepared in circumstances of more than usual difficulty. That is, of course, due to the fact that five months have not yet expired since I assumed the Government of Nigeria. It is also due to the fact that up to the end of 1918 conditions were abnormal and any comparison with the period following the outbreak of the war is apt to convey a misleading impression.

Moreover, the position of Nigeria has been one of considerable difficulty. The effects of the war have been felt especially in countries such as ours which are still in the infancy of growth and development, but in no part of the tropical possessions of Great Britain did the outbreak of hostilities fall more disadvantageously than was the case in Nigeria, because it almost synchronised with the inauguration of the new scheme of amalgamation which, in the ordinary course, might have been expected to bring about a very special development of the abundant resources of this vast territory. As it was, Nigeria, during the first three years of the war, was heavily handicapped, and it was only when the need for oleaginous products made itself keenly felt in Europe that some return of prosperity was at last experienced.

Nevertheless, at the end of 1918, Nigeria found herself in a position of difficulty. The personnel of the various public departments throughout the Colony and Protectorate had been allowed to become depleted to an extent that was unprecedented in the history of the country, and even as I speak to you to-day, most of the public departments are seriously undermanned, and the Political Staff, both in the North and the South, may be said to be almost dangerously depleted. It is obvious that the ravages of five years of war cannot be repaired in a short time, but every effort will be made during the coming year to bring our public departments, technical as well as political, up to the required standard. It must be recognised, however, that, to-day, owing to the great change in the value of money, the cost of personnel must be very much heavier than it has ever before been in the history of Nigeria.

As Honourable Members are aware, a Committee is at present engaged on a thorough inquiry, with a view to revising the salaries and regrading the staffs throughout the public departments, and until the report of that Committee is to hand, it will be premature to attempt any forecast of what its proposals will be; but I think it is safe to anticipate that a very considerable increase of our recurrent expenditure will be entailed by the acceptance of the recommendations of that Committee. In this connexion, I would say that our first effort should be to obtain efficiency, and that efficiency is not to be attained unless the servants of Government in a tropical country such as ours are adequately remunerated, not only for the labour they give, but also for the hardships they endure.

There are many other respects in which we must foresee heavy expenditure. Not only had the Staffs of the public departments become dangerously depleted by the end of 1918, but the lack of material which had been unobtainable during the war had compelled such urgent works as the harbour works at Lagos and Port Harcourt, the proper equipment of the Railway and its extension to remain at a standstill. Indeed, I think that if we look back at the circumstances of those five years, we must all very heartily congratulate my predecessor and his colleagues in the public service for what they were able to achieve, in spite of the very heavy handicap under which they laboured while the war lasted.



## OATHS.

Mr. Kitoyi Ajasa, on re-appointment as an Unofficial Member for a further term of four years from the 4th June, 1919, subject to the approval of His Majesty the King, and Mr. James Reginald Upton Little, on provisional appointment during the absence on leave of Mr. W. A. E. Evans, subscribed to the Oath of Allegiance and took their seats as Members of the Council.

Mr. Alexander Morrison Harvey, appointed provisionally to be an Unofficial Member during the absence of Mr. Selwyn Waring, did not take the Oath of Allegiance, as he had previously done so as an Unofficial Member of the Legislative Council.

## MINUTES.

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 30th day of December, 1918, which had been circulated to Members in print, were confirmed.

## MOTION.

**THE ACTING LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR, SOUTHERN PROVINCES** :—Your Excellency : Before we proceed further with the Order of the day, I would ask the leave of the Council to move a motion of condolence with the relatives of the late Mr. Gower Bruce, who died at Calabar on the 26th of this month. The late Mr. Bruce was a Member of this Council and the first Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce at Calabar. I am sure Members of this Council feel deeply his loss and that they would wish to express in some form their sincere sympathy with his relatives. I therefore formally move :—

“That this Council desires to record its sincere sympathy with the relatives of the late Mr. Gower Bruce, a Member of this Council, who died at Calabar on the 26th instant.”

**THE HONOURABLE MR. MCNEILL** :—Your Excellency : I rise to second the resolution. The late Mr. Bruce was an old friend of mine and I regard his death as a personal loss. When I heard of his death last Sunday morning it came as a great shock to me, as he passed through Lagos not long ago and seemed to have been in the best of health.

**THE PRESIDENT** :—As President of this Council, I desire to associate myself with the resolution which has been proposed by the Acting Lieutenant-Governor of the Southern Provinces, Colonel Moorhouse, and seconded by the Honourable Mr. McNeill.

I would ask Honourable Members to record their vote in the usual manner, standing and in silence.

Honourable Members recorded their votes accordingly, and the motion was carried unanimously.

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS BY THE PRESIDENT.

Honourable Members of the Nigerian Council :

\*The Address which is now laid on the Table has already been circulated, and though it has been framed in circumstances of great disadvantage, I trust it will fulfil the purpose for which the Governor's Address is prepared for the Nigerian Council, that is to say, as a text upon which a discussion can take place, in support, opposition or criticism of the general policy which the Government is adopting.