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## Tuesday, 4th March, 1902.

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## TUESDAY, 4TH MARCH, 1902.

TO-DAY, by the courtesy of the Hon. Dr. Brown, a further letter from the Colonial Secretary, on the Telephone question, will be found in another column. Those who take an interest in the matter can come to no other conclusion than that the public side of the case has been most ably laid before His Excellency, in the former letters that have already been published, and we quite agree with all that has been said regarding it.

It seems, however, pretty clear to us that the Government, in inviting subscriptions at a fixed rate to carry out the arrangement proposed, placed itself under a distinct obligation to the original subscribers—that was to supply telephonic communication to them for, at any rate, a reasonable period. It can also be conclusively proved that the rate of subscription so fixed was not based on any questionable data, but was the same as that laid down by a private telephone company who offered to open and conduct the service on the same basis. Further, it can also be shown that shortly after the opening of the communication, that is to say some time last year, the Government definitely fixed the rates that were to be charged to the few original subscribers who lived beyond the Municipal limit. It seems to us, therefore, particularly hard that any change, much less the very extreme advance that has been laid under the new tariff—a rise in some cases of 50 *per cent*—should so soon be made, and that the co-operation of the original subscribers should be ignored. These latter, it appears to us, have a distinct claim (if not actually a legal right) on the Government, for at any rate what may be termed a reasonable term. This there should be really little difficulty in determining between the public and the Government, seeing that in such matters there has been laid down, we may almost say for generations, in the collection of all rates and taxes, formerly undertaken by the Government, and which is still we believe in force under the new Municipal Act, a distinct period when such disputes should, if necessary, be rectified. Surely no better precedent could be followed.

So far we have referred only to the original subscribers, to whom a definite promise was made to supply telephonic communication at a fixed monthly subscription. To the others the question resolves itself into the fact that any

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## THE WEEK.

THE WEEK. Tuesday, 4th Town Baud, Golf Club, at 5-30 p.m. High-water 8-00 a.m. and 8 25 p.m.

## Tuesday, 4th March, 1902.

Tuesday, 4th March, 1902. To-day, by the courtesy of the lion. Dr. Brown, a further letter from the Colonial

## The Assizes.

The Assizes. This morning the second Assizes of the year was opened at the Supreme Court by Mr. Justice

## Muhammadan Mosques in

Penang

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rates charged beyond what is necessary to pay the upkeep of the department, with a reasonable percentage for ordinary wear and tear and to meet unforeseen contingencies, amounts to nothing more nor less than an indirect governmental tax. And as a matter of principle alone should be strenuously opposed.

From the point of view of an ordinary mortal, most people would expect that a scheme of this nature would, in a growing place like Penang, with a subscription based upon the calculations of a specialist, be a very paying concern, and that the probabilities are that, with a large influx of subscribers, the prospect would rather tend towards lower rather than higher charges. At least we know that this was the view taken by the promoters of the original scheme. And although no doubt some allowance must be made for the advantages which the latter enjoyed in connection with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Co. as compared with the Government, it appears from the figures that have already been given in the correspondence to which we have already alluded, that the department is doing quite as well as could be expected in its infancy, and that before the term of years laid down in the Municipal Act, and referred to above, has expired the present rate should be found ample to meet all its requirements. We certainly cannot agree with the statement in the letter from the Government now published, that a system which gives such abundance of aid to the public service (vide register of subscribers) should be burdened with the necessity of giving a substantial return to the public purse also. That is killing two birds with one stone with a vengeance.

THE recent experiments that have been made at Monte Carlo by M. Santos-Dumont, in connection with his new flying machine, have apparently been crowned with so much success that it may now be taken for granted that the question of a man being able in a certain sense to fly, or at any rate to travel on the air, has been abundantly demonstrated. It seems, however, highly improbable that at least for some time to come this new method of locomotion will be taken advantage of by many people—the increased risk to life and limb being looked upon with the same dread and repugnance that the introduction of railways was by our “forbears.” But habit and usage soon work wondrous changes, and it is now quite on the tapis that before many years are past the aerial machine will have as many admirers and “scorchers” as the familiar bicycle, or the more recently invented moto-car. And indeed it is probable that the pace of travelling both by land and sea will be very considerably augmented by other means; as in the former case, the new mono-line system, over which it is expected that a speed of 117 miles an hour

will be easily attained, and in the latter a new four propeller steamer promises 40 knots an hour. All this is of great interest to dwellers in the Far East, and it is to be hoped that full advantage will be taken of these new discoveries by our Government in any new contracts that have to be made. They all point to one end, and although it would be certainly rather premature for us to demand that a certain number of a mono-flying fleet—by means of which it is highly probable that the greatest speed will eventually be obtained—should be

placed at our disposal; it would seem that, comparing our mail steamers from Suez to Colombo, and especially from Colombo eastwards, and *vice versa*, and the greyhound steamers of the American and other lines, there is considerable scope for improvement in our national service, both as regards speed and comfort.

MR. A. B. VOULES, Dr. Peart and Mr. C. G. Ogilvie, of Perak, will be going home shortly.

PROFESSOR JENES, an high official in the United States service, is touring the Native States just now.

A MEETING OF ENGLISHMEN to make arrangements for St. George's Dance is called for Friday, the 7th instant.

THE FUNERAL of the late Towkay Yap Kwan Seng, Captain China of Selangor, will take place on the 17th of next month.

DURING 1901 THERE were exported from West Australia to the Straits Settlements 1,215 loads of jarrah, valued at £4,861.

MR. CHUNG THYE PIN'S tender for the Upper Perak General Farm, 1902-1903, has been accepted by the Perak Government.

TWO ACRES of land in Kuala Lumpur, containing buildings let at about fifty dollars a month, have recently changed hands for fourteen thousand dollars.

ONE OF THE Malays living in the Malay Settlement is running an incubator for fowl's eggs, says the *Malay Mail*. Among the Chinese a box of padi is often used as an incubator for ducks eggs.

THE P. AND O. R. M. steamer *Malta*, having left Colombo at 8 p.m. on Sunday, is expected to arrive here at 8 a.m. on Friday, the 7th instant, and will leave for Singapore and China the same day.

THE POST AND TELEGRAPH Department in Pahang, which used hitherto to be under the charge of the Treasurer at head-quarters, has this year been made into a separate establishment with its own head.

THERE HAS BEEN AN alteration in the date of the fifth and last test cricket match, Australia v. England. It has been decided to commence play on 23rd February instead of 1st March. Reuter has not yet wired result.

THE DEATH is announced at Taiping of Mr. Henry Lecot, at one time employed on a sugar estate in Province Wellesley, and latterly in the office of the Divisional Engineer for Railways, Taiping. Deceased was a son of a wealthy French merchant at Pondicherry.

THE AGENDA for to-day's meeting of the Legislative Council includes the Government motion *re* Singapore harbour improvements, the third reading of the Court of Requests Act Amendment Bill, the second reading of the Singapore Tramways Bill, and consideration in Committee of Adrian Koek's Estate Bill.

A NEW SCALE of fees chargeable in the Police Courts has been published in the *Government Gazette* of the 28th ultimo, and will come into force on 1st April next. Items 1 to 8 remain as at present, while ten additional ones have been made which refer to special fees for orders issued under the new Criminal Procedure. These fees (at the rate of \$2) were not exacted under the old Procedure Code.

THE ANNUAL REPORT of the Postal Department is published in Friday's *Gazette*. It shows that in 1902, 1,017 tons of mail matter were dealt with, almost double that of 1900. No less than 425,773 registered articles were dealt with, one only being lost in Singapore, though several were tampered with in Malacca. There was a surplus of revenue of \$22,236. We hope to notice the

report fuller in to-morrow's issue.

Mr. F. C. Bishop, formerly a manager of the Chartered Mercantile Bank both here and in Singapore, and recently manager of the Bank of China and Japan, Limited, in London, has accepted the London manager-ship of the Eastern Department of the Guaranty Trust Company of New York. A branch of this institution was opened in Hongkong on 1st ult., and another will be opened in Manila during the present month.

A CHINAMAN was yesterday fined \$50 for offering an illegal gratification of a \$5 note to a Police Sergeant of Prangin Station. It appears that the officer had arrested a gambling case, and it was alleged that defendant had gone to the station and tendered the money in order to induce the Sergeant to arrest no more. His defence was that when speaking to the Sergeant about an assault he took an handkerchief from his pocket and the bank-note dropped.

IT IS NOT generally known, says the *Petak Pioneer*, that Towkay Loke Yew of the South, under two decades ago, was a coolie in a Cantonese shop in Singapore—he is himself a Cantonese. To-day he is the richest man in the Native States, and pretty nearly King of Selangor. He there controls the Opium, Spirits and Gambling Farms. He handles many of the biggest Government contracts, is the Chinese banker of the State, is largely interested in tin mines, owns nearly a million dollars worth of house property in Singapore, and is a partner in the Hongkong Opium and Spirit Farm. He is proceeding to Europe to be present at the Coronation of King Edward.

LAST EVENING, at the concert room of the Engineers' Institute, the advertised exhibition match between Roberts, the famous billiard champion, and a local billiard expert Mr. Khoo Ghee Eng (Kitchil) came off. Considerable interest has centred in this match, with the result that there was a very large attendance of local billiard enthusiasts, who watched the play with a keen interest. Special arrangements for the seating accommodation for the large number of visitors had been made by erecting tiers of seats along each side of the table, which enabled everybody to watch each stroke with perfect ease. There were no very big breaks made by either players, Roberts's highest being 70, 63 56, 51, 47, 39 and 31. The highest break by the local player was 31. It was evident from the first that, whether the breaks were large or not, our local man would be unable to make a stand, as in fact no one expected him to do against his celebrated opponent. The smallness of the breaks made by the champion was stated on many sides to be due to various reasons, principally that he was not aiming so much at making big hits as demonstrating his ability to do so by placing the balls in various advantageous positions by fancy strokes, and cannoning them from the positions placed. The play was for 1,000, of which Kitchil was given 500. He was beaten by Roberts on the figures of 1,002 against 967, play finishing just after midnight. Afterwards Roberts gave a quarter of an hour's exhibition of fancy strokes. Another game will likely take place on Thursday.

A CONTRIBUTOR who signs himself "Coffee Pot" writes:—Boarding houses and "Tea Tables" must certainly be remunerative establishments, for within the past two months two have been started, one in Penang Road and the other in Leith Street, and curiously enough under the management of the wives of medical men. There is no doubt some connection between *poultices* and *puffs*.

A CORRESPONDENT writes:—On Saturday and Sunday last Mr. Lee Teang Tew and Mr. Tan Kang Hok entertained a number of their friends and acquaintances at their seaside bungalow at the back

at their seasonal obligation to the  
of Batu Kawan Island, the occasion  
being connected with the festivities of  
the new year. The picnic was a most en-  
joyable one, and thanks are due to the hosts  
for the liberal and attentive manner in  
which they treated their guests. At night  
(Saturday) the grounds were illuminated  
with Japanese lanterns, and large crowds  
from Pulau Kra were attracted to the place.  
Creature comforts were well looked after.  
Everything went on as merry as a bell,  
and the advent of the *Intan* on Sunday  
evening closed a most successful outing.

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