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# The Singapore Free Press. FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1912.

The Singapore Free Press and Mercantile Advertiser, 7 March 1902, Page 2

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PROFESSOR J. W. JENKS, Professor of Political Economy and Politics at Cornell University, U.S.A., is visiting the Native States. We are told that "he has been through British India and Burmah and is visiting the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States, as a special Commissioner, on behalf of the United States Government, in order to make inquiries regarding the methods of Government here. He will, in particular, give special attention to the questions of imported labour, local taxation, and police."

If Professor JENKS would like a hint worth ten times his weight in gold and far more than that to the United States Government, let him point out to the U.S. authorities that it is not the British flag, but the flag of the respective Sultans that flies in each of the Protected Malay States. Apply the same practice to the Philippines which America came to protect from Spanish and ecclesiastical oppression, not to subjugate. A protectorate would gratify the patriotic sentiments of the Filipinos, it would not serve to wrest the construction of the U. S. constitution to wrong applications, and it would enable the American Government to have the advantage of a complete elasticity in its relations with the Filipinos, that would allow of endless modification and adaptation as circumstances might demand from time to time. Although the Anglo-Japanese Agreement will serve to exclude aggression from the region of the Pacific, and especially from China

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The Singapore Free Press. FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 1912.

**Untitled**

**BOER DELEGATES IN AMERICA.**  
BOER DELEGATES IN AMERICA. Private Visitors. Mr. Haj mid Prevideut

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and Korea, it is within the bounds of possibility, in a distant future, that the United States might need the aid of a Filipino Army Corps to vindicate its influence in the Far East. That can all be secured at the cost of a few hundred yards of bunting of the right pattern, that of the Filipino flag. That would involve no claim to an independence which, politically, would prove a complete curse to the Philippines, for the Filipinos, if left to themselves, and in the absence of protection, would not exist for a fortnight without a foreign aggressive seizure of their ports.

THERE is one aspect of what is considered the permanent arrangement that assesses our Colony's revenue to the extent of 20 per cent for defence purposes, that demands, so we think, some very close scrutiny on the part of the local Government. In passing, we are glad to declare that the time has gone when utterly false relations between the Colony and the Government were set up, by the Imperial Government using the Governor and his official majority as an instrument of coercion to obtain votes of money to which the Governor and his officials had the strongest objections. The last stage of the arrangement was that by which the unknown liability of the Colony to provide works lands and buildings over and above the 17½ per cent assessment on revenue was commuted *in perpetuo* for another extra 2½ per cent of revenue, making the "contribution," or rather the levy, a fixed proportion of 20 per cent of revenue. Now the underlying presumption is that when the Colony had to pay for "works, lands, and buildings," the War Office said what it wanted, and got it: and that when now defence conditions require the provision of works, lands, and buildings, the War Office, in virtue of the extra 2½ per cent of Colonial revenue, earmarked on that behalf, applies that balance with alacrity to the purposes for which it was intended. But, we desire to ask, is that so? Our impression is that it is not so. But that the Colony is merely paying an extra squeeze of 2½ per cent on that nominal head. When the Colony was left liable

for those items, the ingenuity of the War Office, in declaring that so many acres of land were wanted here, so many barracks there, so many alterations to defence works elsewhere, was as multitudinous as it was unending. Now that the cash is made over,

we "twig the trick." "Lands, works, and buildings" may be wanted: but they are not now provided out of that extra 2½ per cent of revenue. To take the most obvious case in point. The Army Estimates for the year expired, 1901, exhibited a European battalion and a Native battalion for infantry stationed at Singapore. We have, it is true, two native battalions, each of relatively weaker strength than a European battalion, and allowed, on the Indian barrack scale, a smaller cubic area of barrack accommodation. Result: the two native battalions (3rd M. L. I. and 13th M. I.) are pigging it in the barracks in Tanglin that are held to be merely sufficient for one European Battalion. But if a European and a native battalion were estimated for, it would be natural to suppose that the immediate step to be taken would be the provision, even of a temporary character, of hut, if not barrack, accommodation for the native battalion that cannot be quartered at Tanglin after the arrival of an European battalion. What was been done? Nothing. The fiction in the estimates stands, but the authorities do not even show any sham of provision of barracks which they are bound to do under the head of "lands, works, and buildings," and in consideration for which they draw that extra 2½ per cent of revenue. Now the estimated revenue for 1901 was over seven millions of dollars. Two-and-a-half per cent on that, roundly, is \$175,000. Has that been spent in the new barracks for the estimated garrison? If not, why not. The official creature will probably say: Why spend the money when the other regiment has not arrived? The Colonial Government might retort: "Do you expect a tenant without building him a house to occupy?" Now we assert that this Colonial payment for a specific Imperial liability as to "works, lands, and buildings" is being diverted to improper uses, and that genuine needs, that would have been promptly exacted from the Colony had the liability been left on our shoulders, are now left deliberately unsupplied. Sir FRANK SWETTENHAM has, in all this, a particularly good case for making the War Office give an account of itself. And we trust that His Excellency may succeed, and there is nobody more likely to succeed, in giving the War Office a particularly warm time over this malversation of Colonial money. If the money is not to be spent, let us keep it in a special fund and derive at least the interest on our money. But to be mulcted in this way, without a pretence of expenditure on the heads of

... was levied to meet, is a position not to be meekly acquiesced in.



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