

(G 3)

From Whom

Place

Date

SUBJECT.

New Laboratory
Estimate for 1920.

Connected Papers.

MINUTES.

Committee.

The enclosed is circulated
for your information, to enable
you the most effectively to use
your influence

10.9.19.

J. H. ...

Hon. H. W. Frimstone.

Hon. C. G. May

Am 15.5.19

Hon. J. Lim Boon Keng.

W. Howthorn Kemp, Esq

19/11 15/9/19

Seen. WD 15.9.19

Draft

**ON THE NECESSITY OF PROVIDING FOR
THE ERECTION OF THE GARDENS
LABORATORY.**

Sir,

I have the honour at the direction of the Gardens Committee to refer you to the question of erecting a Laboratory in these Gardens, and to explain that an error in regard to it has got into the draft estimates whereby we have asked for twice as much as is needed and it is understood that ^{the granting of the} request is being withheld ~~withheld~~ on account of its largeness.

2. As to the Estimates, the item was inserted in the Public Works Department's vote on sanction given in Gardens 10766/18. I had asked (para 1 section 4 of my letter of December 5th, 1918) for the erection of the Gardens Laboratory with offices underneath, as proposed ~~in file Gardens 10766/18~~, and had given reasons in para 5 of the same letter, the Colonial Engineer had estimated the cost at \$40,000, and in a note dated 26th. Feb., 1919, sanction was given for the entering of this sum in the Estimates, without my having the opportunity of discovering that the estimate of \$40,000 was based upon the ~~the~~ first ~~plans~~ Architect's plans, which were not approved in their entirety.

3. The laboratory ^{had been} proposed by me in a letter dated 16th. June, 1914 (file Gardens 769/14) to be ^{part of} a building erected upon the site of the existing Gardens herbarium building affording double the room of the Herbarium by being two storied, the laboratory of necessity above. Mr. Wilkinson, then Colonial Secretary, however, was not prepared to allow me to

pull down the Herbarium, but he was prepared to sanction ~~the erection~~ three-eighths of my proposal namely the erection of the laboratory as a two-storied building. Unfortunately for the Department upon the outbreak of war erection was postponed, to be postponed again in Gardens G 769/14 by letters dated 16th August, 1915 and 10 June, 1916, the last suggesting the end of the war as the time for erecting it.

4. By a much regretted mischance we now stand exposed to another postponement.

5. On Monday last, the 8th, the Gardens Committee instructed me to urge as strongly as I can that the \$20,000 wanted should be allowed to stand in the Budget estimates for 1920, that the laboratory may be erected. If the Government can do this it will be ^{such} ~~an~~ ^{relating to scientific research} act ^{as I deem} Lord Milner indicated in ~~his~~ ^{his} dispatch ^{of his} ~~of~~ ^{scientific} ~~research~~ which was published in the Gazette of August 8th., 1919, pp. 1166-1167.

6. Not only on these grounds but to avoid waste should the laboratory be built. It was pointed out in my letter of 5th. February 1914, (file 769/14) that the appointment of an Assistant Director, who should be a student of the Lower Plants necessitated a laboratory for his studies; and it has always been understood that the justification for postponing the erection of the building lay in the fact that the services of the Assistant Director had been put at the disposal of the War office for the duration of the war. Now that the Assistant Director, Major Chipp, is at work it is the bounden duty of the Colony to itself as well as to him to supply the laboratory in

which alone can he justify himself and your appointing of him. To appoint the officer, and not to furnish him with the means of doing his work will be wasteful.

7½ You are aware of the organisation of my department, how we have

a Director whose knowledge is of the Higher Plants

an Assistant Director, whose knowledge is of the Lower Plants

an Assistant Curator whose skill is in practical Horticulture

a Field Assistant to help as required

and that this scheme carries the corollary that when the Director is replaced in retirement by the Assistant Director and the highest office in the Gardens is occupied by the expert on Lower plants, the new Assistant Director would be appointed for his knowledge of the Higher Plants. Thus have we planned to cover our ground. It has been ^{too} arranged that in retirement Mr.

Ridley, should write a Handbook to ^{our} ~~the~~ Higher Plants ~~and~~ ^{and} with ^{Major} Chipp at work it is intended to build up "Materials" for carrying the Handbook through the Lower Plants too.

^{Sept 6} I return from leave in May next. Ideally the new laboratory should be in use then; for with my return I hope to free the Assistant Director so much from administrative duties that the progress in our knowledge of the thousands of algae, fungi, and other Lower plants, will be striking. It needs only opportunity and the laboratory to achieve this: and to wait yet another year upon the top of five years of waiting will be disappointing.

using the Sir George King's Materials for a Flora of the Malay Peninsula

8. As I never know when the bogey of overlapping of work may be raised, may I assure you that I expect no overlapping of work between my office and the Department of Agriculture's. My department's purpose is to determine and catalogue the plants occurring in the Peninsula: the mycologist of that Department sits down with a **restricted programme** in the attempt to get so complete an idea of the life-histories of **certain notorious pests** as may enable planters to combat them. The determinations made in my department are the clearing of ground for his operations. A good understanding between the two departments is all that is necessary *for our common interests.*

9. Lastly may I anticipate another possible objection, namely that the scientists in London are going to do it all for us. They cannot; and it is obvious that no one can count upon studying living **Lower Plants** anywhere better than in the climates natural to them.

10. I trust that the sum of £20,000 may be ~~allowed to stand~~ ^{Entered} in the Colonial Estimates for the coming year.

I have,

*It is not in the
Estimates
C.M.*

No Minutes should be written on this page. A separate half-sheet to
be used if required.
