

VOTES AND PROCEEDINGS OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL OF HONGKONG.

No. 15 OF 1874

MONDAY, 16TH NOVEMBER, 1874.

PRESENT:

The Honorable the Chief Justice (SIR JOHN SMALE).
The Honorable the Colonial Secretary (JOHN GARDINER AUSTIN).
The Honorable the Attorney General (JOHN BRAMSTON).
The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer (CECIL CLEMENTI SMITH).
The Honorable PHINEAS RYRIE.
The Honorable RICHARD ROWETT.
The Honorable WILLIAM HASTINGS ALEXANDER.
The Honorable JAMES WHITTALL.

ABSENT:

His Excellency the Governor SIR ARTHUR EDWARD KENNEDY, K.C.M.G., C.B.

The Council meets this day at 2.30 P.M., pursuant to adjournment.

The Honorable the Chief Justice presides, and informs the Council that His Excellency the Governor is unable to attend owing to ill-health.

The Minutes of the Meeting held on the 13th instant are read, corrected, and confirmed.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary, by way of a personal explanation, desires to place on record that paragraph 3 of the Honorable PHINEAS RYRIE's Protest of the 16th instant is not an accurate statement.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary reads the following Minute by His Excellency the Governor regarding the Fire Brigade :—

"The complaints now made against the efficiency and organisation of the Fire Brigade are the first that have come to my knowledge either publicly or privately.

"The Brigade, as at present constituted, was handed down to me by my predecessor as being in a most efficient state, and until the present time I have never heard any other opinion, or of any want of promptitude when its services were required. No fire has occurred during the last two-and-a-half years which was not speedily extinguished.

"Under these circumstances, I have seen no necessity for interfering with an establishment which worked so satisfactorily. And, moreover, as the services rendered by the Brigade were to a great extent voluntary, I deemed interference or new rules to be injudicious and unnecessary. I know of no shortcoming on the part of the Brigade as a body, nor on the part of those in charge of it.

"Nevertheless, I shall direct an enquiry as to whether the rules applicable to the Brigade can be amended, and also, with a view to a reduction of the cost,

whether the charge to the public bears an equitable proportion to that borne by the Insurance Offices, who derive so large a benefit from the existence of an efficient Fire Brigade.

"I shall be glad to have some specific charge of inefficiency before any steps are taken to disturb a system which has hitherto worked so harmoniously, and, as far as my knowledge extends, efficiently."

The Council resumes consideration in committee of the Estimates for 1875 :—

Services exclusive of Establishments.

Colonial Treasurer,.....	\$ 1,700.00.
Surveyor General,	720.00.
Postmaster General,	4,640.00.
Registrar General,.....	50.00.
Harbor Master.....	60.00.
Judicial,.....	200.00.
Educational,.....	4,620.00.
Medical,.....	18,870.00.
Police Magistrates,.....	390.00.
Police,.....	36,925.00.
Gaol,.....	15,000.00.
Charitable Allowances,.....	3,300.00.

On this vote being taken, the Honorable PHINEAS RYRIE moves that this Council begs to recommend to His Excellency the Governor the propriety of obtaining the sanction of the Secretary of State to a grant of £700, a sum equivalent to one year's salary being made to the children of the late Mr. DOUGLAS, Superintendent of Victoria Gaol. The Honorable Member states that the family of Mr. DOUGLAS, an Officer of nearly twelve years' service, is left in a destitute condition, and it was most desirable that a Government Grant should be made to supplement the private subscriptions which had been raised.

The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer seconds the motion on the understanding that the money, if granted, should be placed in trust for the children only.

The Council unanimously agrees to the motion.

The Honorable RICHARD ROWETT draws attention to the great and good work done by the Italian Sisters of Mercy, and moves that the annual grant to them be increased by \$600.

The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer explains how the sum now voted is distributed among the Roman Catholic Charitable Institutions in the Colony, and advises that no further grant should be made to any particular Institution without a full enquiry by the Government.

Motion withdrawn.

Transport,.....	\$ 4,500.00.
Works and Buildings,.....	102,000.00.

On this vote being taken, the Honorable the Colonial Secretary moves, the Honorable the Attorney General seconds, that the vote for Public Gardens and

Plantations be \$3,000 instead of \$2,000 as recommended by the Sub-Committee.

Motion agreed to.

Roads, Streets and Bridges,.....	\$ 37,220.00.
Lighthouses,.....	2,000.00.
Miscellaneous Services,.....	36,800.00.
Military Contribution,.....	96,000.00.

The Bill as amended is reported and passed, hearing the Title of *An Ordinance enacted by the Governor of Hongkong with the Advice of the Legislative Council thereof, to apply a Sum not exceeding Seven hundred and Thirty thousand Dollars to the Public Service of the Year 1875,—being No. 6 of 1874.*

Read a second time the Bill—*To control Recruiting in the Colony of Hongkong for the Service of Foreign States.*

The Honorable the Attorney General explains the objects and reasons of the Bill.

The Council goes into Committee on the Bill, which is reported without amendment, and passed, bearing the Title of—*An Ordinance enacted by the Governor of Hongkong, with the Advice of the Legislative Council thereof, to control Recruiting in the Colony of Hongkong for the Service of Foreign States,—being No. 7 of 1874.*

The Honorable the President adjourns the Council at 4.15 P.M. *sine die.*

JOHN SMALE,
President.

Read and confirmed, this 23rd Day of February, 1875.

ALFRED LISTER,
Clerk of Councils.