

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL No. 5.

WEDNESDAY, 4TH NOVEMBER, 1885.

PRESENT:

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

(SIR GEORGE FERGUSON BOWEN, G.C.M.G.)

His Honour the Chief Justice, (SIR GEORGE PHILLIPPO, Knt.)

The Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary, (FREDERICK STEWART, LL.D.)

„ the Attorney General, (EDWARD LOUGHLIN O'MALLEY.)

„ the Colonial Treasurer, (ALFRED LISTER.)

„ PHINEAS RYRIE.

„ THOMAS JACKSON.

„ FREDERICK DAVID SASSOON.

„ WONG SHING.

ABSENT:

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary, (WILLIAM HENRY MARSH, C.M.G.), on leave.

„ WILLIAM KESWICK, on leave.

„ the Surveyor General, (JOHN MACNEILE PRICE), by leave.

The Council met in pursuance of adjournment.

The Minutes of the last Meeting, held on the 28th ultimo, were read and confirmed.

VOTES PASSED BY THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.—The Acting Colonial Secretary moved the following Votes passed by the Finance Committee:—

(Finance Committee, 30th October, 1885.)

PAYMENTS IN EXCESS OF THE ESTIMATES OF 1885.

SERVICES EXCLUSIVE OF ESTABLISHMENTS.

Medical.

C.S.O. 2021 of 1885.	(1.)	For general overhaul and repairs to Health Officer's Steam-launch <i>Blanche</i> ,	\$ 210.00
		Hire of Steam-launch while the above repairs are being executed, 10 days, at \$5 per day,	50.00
			<u>\$ 260.00</u>

Gaol.

C.S.O. 2421 of 1885.	(2.)	For rent of a house in Wyndham Street to be used as a Prison for females, at \$40 per month, for 2 months, (October and November),	\$ 80.00
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Works and Buildings.

Mis. Doc 692 of 1885.	(3.)	For converting a portion of the east wing of the old Gaol at Stone Cutters' Island into a temporary Magazine for Gunpowder,	\$ 1,300.00
C.S.O. 1691 of 1885.	(4.)	For fitting up the Hungghòm Police Station with guard-beds, shelves, pegs, baths, &c.,	\$ 245.00
C.S.O. 2090 of 1885.	(5.)	For converting house No. 47, Wyndham Street, into a Gaol for female prisoners,	\$ 500.00
C.S.O. 2582 of 1885.	(5.)	For re-building the retaining wall below the Civil Hospital, damaged by the recent fire,	\$ 8,000.00
C.S.O. 2509 of 1885.	(6.)	For alterations in the Post Office building, to provide rooms for the Parcel Post service,	\$ 504.00

Roads, Streets and Bridges.

- C.S.O. 2012 of 1885. (8.) For compensation to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, for removal of their pier in 1878, when constructing the Praya-wall. (Re-vote,—see Legislative Council, 20th July, 1883), \$ 800.00

Miscellaneous Services.

- C.S.O. 2525 of 1885. (9.) For contribution towards the expenses connected with the Indian and Colonial Exhibition, £500 @ 3/5= \$ 2,926.82

Colonial Defences.

- C.S.O. 1255 of 1885. (10.) For cost of 7,680 rounds of Ammunition for the Nordenfeldt Gun on board the *Charles May*, £378.16.11 $\frac{1}{2}$ @ 3/8= \$ 2,066.44

- C.S.O. 1665 of 1885. (11.) For fitting Nordenfeldt Guns into the boats of the Hongkong Auxiliary Flotilla Corps, £165.5.0 @ 3/6 $\frac{1}{8}$ = \$ 941.48

- C.S.O. 1795 of 1885. (12.) For making 3 Trollies for the conveyance of Nordenfeldt Guns from Steam-launches to store, \$ 120.00

- C.S.O. 2400 of 1885. (13.) For fitting machine gun to Police Steam-launch, No. 2, £72.0.6 @ 3/5 $\frac{5}{8}$ = \$ 415.28

- C.S.O. 2400 of 1885. (14.) For flags supplied by the Naval Yard, for the Auxiliary Flotilla, £8.0.6 @ 3/5 $\frac{5}{8}$ = \$ 46.27

EXTRAORDINARY WORKS.

- C.S.O. 1874 of 1885. (15.) For repairs to damages caused by the Rainstorms of the 8th and 12th June, 1885, \$ 9,695.35

- C.S.O. 2369 of 1885. (16.) For building of a retaining wall to prevent landslip at the rear of Inland Lot 696, East of the Government Civil Hospital, \$ 945.00

- C.S.O. 1725 of 1885. (17.) For resumption by the Crown of Marine Lots 192, 230, and Sections A and B of Lot 193, in connection with the proposed New Central Market, \$ 37,000.00

Seconded by the Colonial Treasurer.

Question—put and passed.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE ON THE BILL ENTITLED THE LOAN ORDINANCE, 1885.—The Acting Colonial Secretary read the following report of the Finance Committee on this Bill:—

The Committee reports—

"That, considering the present unsettled value of silver, and more especially the steady depreciation of it which has taken place during the last twenty-five years, it is highly dangerous and inexpedient for this silver-using Colony to contract any debt re-payable in gold, in connection with which, judging from the experience of the past, a heavy loss in exchange is almost sure to be sustained.

That instead of adopting such a course, it is desirable that the Government should raise money for its requirements by issuing, from time to time, from the Treasury in Hongkong, Debentures bearing interest at the annual rate of five per cent., thus avoiding costs and commissions of every kind, as well as the risk of loss on exchange.

That the raising of a loan in Hongkong, besides being free from all the expenses connected with the issue of Debentures or Stock at home, except for printing and stationery, will add to the Revenue of the Colony in Stamp Duty and in other ways; and moreover the Government will be in a position, from time to time, to redeem its own Debentures in any number, and to fix a much shorter period for the ultimate redemption of the loan than would be possible under the proposed Ordinance. The charge for interest will also be minimised, as the Debentures will be issued only as funds may be required.

The Committee therefore resolve that it is undesirable to proceed further with the Loan Bill in its present shape."

HONGKONG, 4th November, 1885.

MOTION.—The Honourable P. RYRIE, pursuant to notice, moved—"That an enquiry be made into the over-charges recently made by the owners of cargo-boats to the detriment of shipping interests, and that the Registrar General's Department be empowered to deal with all such grievances," and addressed the Council.

The Honourable T. JACKSON seconded, and addressed the Council.

The Attorney General replied.

The Honourable P. RYRIE then moved—That a select Committee of this Council consisting of the Honourable the Attorney General, the Honourable the Colonial Treasurer, the Honourable P. RYRIE, and the Honourable F. D. SASSOON, with the mover as Chairman, be appointed to enquire into this matter.

The Honourable T. JACKSON seconded.

Question—put and passed.

BILL ENTITLED THE LOAN ORDINANCE, 1885.—DISCHARGED.—The Honourable the Attorney General stated that in face of the resolution of the Finance Committee, which had been communicated to the Council, it was not intended to proceed with this Bill, and asked that the order for going into Committee on it might be discharged.

Question—put and passed.

The Governor then addressed the Council as follows:—

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.—I think it right to inform you that I have always concurred with the principle of the resolution adopted by the Finance Committee, viz., that it is expedient to raise the small proposed loan locally. As most of you already know, I transmitted a proposal in this direction so far back as in last April. I will now forward by next mail the Resolution adopted by the Finance Committee, and recommend it to the early and favourable consideration of Her Majesty's Government, with a request that I may be informed by telegraph of its decision.

BILL ENTITLED THE PRISON ORDINANCE, 1885.—COMMITTED.—On the motion of the Attorney General the Council went into Committee on this Bill.

Bill reported with a verbal amendment and the addition of a clause.

The Attorney General gave notice that at the next meeting of Council he would move the third reading of the Bill.

POSTPONEMENT OF THE OTHER ORDERS OF THE DAY.—The Attorney General moved the postponement of the other Orders of the Day.

Question—put and passed.

The Council adjourned until Wednesday, the 11th instant, at 4 P.M.

G. F. BOWEN,
Governor.

Read and confirmed, this 11th day of November, 1885.

ARATHOON SETH,
Clerk of Councils.