

6TH DECEMBER, 1894.

PRESENT:—

His Excellency the Governor, Sir WILLIAM ROBINSON,
K.C.M.G.

Hon. J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, Acting Colonial
Secretary.

Hon. W. M. GOODMAN, Attorney-General.

Hon. N. G. MITCHELL-INNES, Colonial Treasurer.

Hon. F. A. COOPER, Director of Public Works.

Hon. R. M. RUMSEY, Harbour Master.

Hon. C. P. CHATER.

Hon. HO KAL.

Hon. J. J. KESWICK.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS, C.M.G.

Hon. A. McCONACHIE.

Mr. J. G. T. BUCKLE, Acting Clerk of Councils.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and, having been corrected by the addition of the Colonial Treasurer to the Public Works Committee, were confirmed.

FINANCE.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table the report of the proceedings of the Finance Committee at a meeting held on the 28th November and moved that it be adopted.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

Carried.

PUBLIC WORKS.

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS laid on the table the reports of the proceedings of the Public Works Committee at meetings held on the 25th February and the 28th November and moved that they be adopted.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

Carried.

LORD RIPON ON THE PLAGUE.

HIS EXCELLENCY—I lay on the table a despatch which I received on the 3rd December from the Secretary of State with reference to the extinction of the plague. I will read it out

in order that the public may be aware of its contents at once:

Downing Street,
23rd October, 1894.

Sir.—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch No. 203 of the 4th September giving the welcome intelligence that the outbreak of plague has at length come to an end.

2.—It is a great satisfaction to me to learn that this is the case and that the Chinese have returned and are returning to the Colony.

3.—The Government, their officers, and their advisers have been called upon to face a great crisis, and I am very sensible of the untiring energy and devotion shown by the Medical Staff and by the Permanent Committee of the Sanitary Board under the Chairmanship of Mr. Francis.

4.—I shall hope to receive an account of the proceedings at the public meeting at which it is or was intended to show appreciation of the voluntary assistance which was given to the Government during the prevalence of the plague, and I take this opportunity of acknowledging the receipt of a report on the disease by Drs. Ayres and Lowson which was enclosed in your Despatch No. 196 of the 29th August.—I have the honour to be, &c.,

RIPON.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—The first motion I have to bring forward to-day has reference to the by-laws made by the Sanitary Board for the licensing of common lodging houses. I may remind hon. members that these by-laws came before this Council in May, 1891. Amongst them was one, No. 17, fixing as the date for the coming into force of the by-laws the 1st August, 1891. On the 30th November, 1892, the Colonial Secretary informed the Council that the Sanitary Board had been unable to make the necessary arrangements for enforcing them and had passed a by-law in sub-

stitution for No. 17 postponing to a date to be thereafter fixed the coming into force of the by-laws. The Council approved that. A resolution has now been passed by the Board fixing the 1st January, 1895, as the date for the coming into force of the by-laws. I have the honour to move that this resolution be approved by this Council.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded.

Carried.

SANITATION.

On the motion of the ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY, seconded by the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, additional by-laws made by the Sanitary Board with reference to certain sanitary matters were approved.

WATER METERS.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I beg to ask the following question:—"Have the Government, in view of the statements and recommendations contained in the recently received letter from Mr. Osbert Chadwick on the water supply of this colony, decided to consider the expedience of putting meters in all the houses to which it is laid on, for the purpose of preventing waste?" Your Excellency, with your permission, I will make a few remarks. I need not, I think, refer to what Mr. Chadwick dwelt upon in reference to the dangers of an intermittent water supply as his letter has been published.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—I don't think the hon. member is in order in making a speech on a question.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—Consequently I have to ask your Excellency's permission. I just wish to record my views. Probably I might have brought the matter forward in the form of a resolution, but I do not wish to hamper the Government in anything they may do.

HIS EXCELLENCY—It is an interesting subject. We may hear you, I think.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—Every one is agreed as to the necessity of having an ample supply of water both on grounds of personal comfort and sanitary reasons. The question remains, however, whether, if waste could be put a stop to, the existing water supply with the extension sanctioned at the last meeting of Council would not be found amply sufficient. I believe it would. Why, therefore, should not the Government place meters in every house? No doubt, the first objection raised would be the initial cost, but that could be met by doing as the gas companies do: charge rent for the meter. It would not prove an appreciable tax on the consumer and it would enable the Government to soon cover the cost of the meters and economise the water supply—an end we should all be glad to see compassed. There would be some persons, probably, who would object to pay rent for the water meter. Their case could be readily met. No one is compelled to have the gas laid into his house; there must be no compulsion to receive the water. Those who did not care to pay rent for a meter could, as they did in former times, get their water supply from the nearest street hydrant. This would involve no hardship to any person, but it would effectually check

waste. There would, too, be no class legislation involved; it would be simply a matter of choice. We are not fortunate enough to have a river running alongside our city which could give us an unlimited supply of water. All we can store is all we can catch from the rains during the wet season; therefore if waste is allowed to go on as it has been in the past, all the valleys in the island may be converted into reservoirs and filled with water, yet the supply stored in them will not suffice to avert another such calamity arising from drought as that which visited us in the course of the current year.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—Sir, the answer to the hon. member's question is—Yes.

THE APPROPRIATION ORDINANCE 1895.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY—I have the honour to move the first reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance to apply a sum not exceeding \$2,420,501 to the Public Service of the year 1895, and I lay on the table the usual papers in connection with this Ordinance.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

Bill read a first time.

CATTLE DISEASES ORDINANCE.

On the motion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, seconded by the ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY a Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Cattle Diseases, Slaughter-houses, and Markets Ordinances, 1887, was read a first time.

THE STAMP ORDINANCE.

On the motion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, seconded by the COLONIAL TREASURER, a Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Stamp Ordinance, 1886, was read a first time.

THE POST OFFICE ORDINANCE.

On the motion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded by the ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY, a Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Post Office Ordinance, 1887, was read a first time.

SPIRIT LICENCES.

On the motion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL, seconded by the COLONIAL TREASURER, a Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Spirit Licences Ordinance, 1886, was read a first time.

COPYRIGHT IN TELEGRAMS BILL.

Hon. A. McCONACHIE—I have the honour, sir, to move the first reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance to secure, in certain cases, the rights of property in telegraphic messages.

Hon. J. J. KESWICK seconded.

Bill read a first time.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he would be very glad if the hon. member who had moved the Bill just read a first time would put himself into communication with him; he would be very glad to look through the Bill with him.

ADJOURNMENT.

HIS EXCELLENCY adjourned the Council until Wednesday next at 3 p.m.