

28TH MARCH, 1895.

PRESENT:—

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

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

Hon. A. G. LEACH, Acting Attorney-General.

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

Hon. A. M. THOMPSON, Acting Colonial Treasurer.

Hon. R. M. RUMSEY, Harbour Master.

Hon. C. P. CHATER.

Hon. Ho KAI.

Hon. J. J. KESWICK.

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

Hon. A. McCONACHIE.

Mr. A. Seth, Clerk of Councils.

FINANCIAL MINUTES.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, Financial minutes 7, 8, and 9 were referred to the Finance Committee.

THE REGULATION OF SHEEP AND SWINE
DEPOTS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I have the honour to move that certain by-laws made under section 13 of Ordinance 14 of 1887, for the regulation of public depôts for sheep and swine be approved by this Council. These by-laws have been made by the Sanitary Board.

The ACTING COLONIAL TREASURER suggested that several of the by-laws went beyond what was provided for in the Ordinance, and that those referring to financial matters seemed to encroach upon the Governor's prerogative.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL thought it was a pity that the hon. member had not made his objection before the by-laws were brought before the Council.

His EXCELLENCY—They had better stand over until the next meeting.

RESTRICTING IMMIGRATION.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to move the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to enable the Governor in Council to restrict the immigration of Chinese into the colony and for other purposes in connection therewith." I will only briefly state to-day the object of the Ordinance. The Sanitary Board has made certain suggestions with reference to the Ordinance which I have not had the opportunity of considering in detail. I think it would be better before making any further remarks upon the Bill that those suggestions should be considered.

The object of the Bill shortly is, not to prohibit immediately the immigration of Chinese, but to give power to the Governor to prohibit the immigration of any Chinese in the event of the plague prevailing or existing in any place outside the colony.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I beg to second.

Bill read a first time.

THE WATERWORKS ORDINANCE.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The second item on the orders of the day is the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to further amend the Waterworks Ordinance, 1880." With regard to this Ordinance I will briefly state the object, which is in the first place to provide against the misuse and abuse of water in the Kowloon district, where, I think, the waterworks are approaching completion, and to provide that where the consumption of water exceeds the domestic quantity, in the case of persons who occupy detached or semi-detached houses on their own ground, they may have the option of having a meter attached instead of having the water cut off. The other objects of the Bill are to cure an anomaly in section 15 of the Ordinance of 1890 and to prevent, by amending section 29 of the old Ordinance, the washing of clothes in the waters connected with the waterworks. These being the objects of the Bill I do not propose to go more into detail.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I beg to second.

Bill read a first time.

THE BUILDING ORDINANCE.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to move the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance to further amend the Building Ordinance, 1889." The object of the amending Bill is to amend the law with regard to giving notices of the commencement of work and also to repeal sections 84 and 85 of the Ordinance and to substitute a new section in their stead, in order to do away with the apparent inconsistency between the two sections.

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—I beg to second.

Bill read a first time.

THE LICENSING OF PRIVATE VEHICLES.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to move the first reading of a Bill entitled "An Ordinance for regulating the licensing of private vehicles." The object of this Bill is to provide for the due regulation of traffic in the

public streets in regard specially to private vehicles, and more particularly with regard to trucks, carts, and trollies, which are daily becoming a growing nuisance. I do not intend to go into any details of the Bill to-day, but briefly to say that we must distinguish between this Ordinance and the old Ordinance 21 of 1887, which deals with public vehicles. This Ordinance deals solely and entirely with private vehicles, with the exception of private chairs and jinrickshas.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I beg to second.

Bill read a first time.

THE POSSESSION OF DEADLY WEAPONS.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I now move that the Council go into Committee on the Bill read a second time at the last meeting relating to the carriage and possession of deadly weapons.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Hon. J. J. KESWICK said that about two hours ago he received a letter addressed to him in his capacity of Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce. The letter was signed by Messrs. Meyer and Co., Stolterfoht and Hagen, Arnhold, Karberg and Co., E. Schelhass and Co., Siemens and Co., and Carlowitz and Co., and had reference to the Bill, and asking for the postponement of its consideration until the next meeting. The hon. member had not had time to submit the letter to the Government or to the Chamber of Commerce, and he therefore asked for a postponement.

The consideration of the Bill was thereupon postponed.

PAPERS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid upon the table the report of the Sanitary Surveyor for 1894 and also the scheme for the improvement of the resumed area in Taipingshan. With regard to the scheme relating to the resumed area he moved that it be referred to the Public Works Committee.

The resolution was carried and the Council adjourned until next Thursday.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held immediately after the Council meeting, the Colonial Secretary in the chair.

SANITARY DEPARTMENT.

The CHAIRMAN—The first minute is one in which the Governor recommends the Council to vote the sum of \$540, being salary of a temporary clerk to the Sanitary Department at the rate of \$60 per mensem for nine months from the 1st April, 1895. The Sanitary Board has pointed out that the work has so increased that if it is to be overtaken it is absolutely necessary to appoint this temporary clerk. It is hoped it will not be necessary to retain his services longer than nine months and it is necessary to vote a sum sufficient to cover his salary during that period.

Vote recommended.

EXCHANGE COMPENSATION.

The CHAIRMAN—The next minute is one in which the

Governor recommends the Council to revote the sum of \$58,000 for payment of exchange compensation is respect of 1894. The above is approximately the unexpended balance of the sum previously voted. Hon. members will remember that at the meeting of Council held on the 28th November the hon. the senior unofficial member moved that a sum of \$80,000 be voted in respect of exchange compensation for 1894. Only part of that sum was expended last year, as all the members of the service did not accept the terms then offered to them. Members of the service have accepted the terms since offered to them and it is necessary to pass this revote to cover the amount that has to be paid in respect of last year.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—Have all the members of the service accepted it?

The CHAIRMAN—All who are entitled to exchange compensation.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I don't suppose the question has been cleared up even now. For what period have they accepted this agreement?

The CHAIRMAN—The Secretary of State has laid it down clearly that this arrangement is subject to yearly reconsideration.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—Suppose exchange goes to 1s. 6d. or to 4s., can we then reconsider it?

The CHAIRMAN—I have just informed the hon. member that the agreement is subject to reconsideration yearly and if exchange fluctuates to the extent the hon. member mentions I think it is certain it will be reconsidered.

Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—Yearly?

The CHAIRMAN—Yes.

Hon. A. McCONACHIE—I understand the members of the service have all accepted the new terms, not the old terms.

The CHAIRMAN—The difference in the terms, I may mention, is this. When the vote last came before the Council the Secretary of State had made an offer that half the salary while on active service be paid at 3s. and that pay while on leave be paid at 3s. These terms, it was discovered, were not the same as had been offered to the sister service in the Straits Settlements and a large majority refused to accept them, and the matter was referred home in a memorial by the members of the service to the Secretary of State. The Secretary of State has reconsidered the matter and has decided the civil service of Hongkong should be given the same terms as the civil service of the Straits, that is, half pay while on active service at 3s. and leave pay at 4s. So the difference is that the former offer was for 3s. both ways and in the present case it is 3s. on half the salary while on active service and 4s. while on leave.

Hon. A. McCONACHIE—Those who accepted the first offer are not bound by it?

The CHAIRMAN—No, the present offer is made to all alike.

Revote recommended.

SHEEP AND SWINE DEPOT.

The CHAIRMAN—The next minute is one in which the Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of \$600 for the salaries of the Chinese staff at the new sheep and swine depôt. Hon.

members are no doubt aware the sheep and swine depôts have been completed; in fact they have been ready for some time, but owing to delays they have not been occupied. The Sanitary Board has been considering the matter and has now sent in a letter representing that it will be necessary to vote \$600 for the Chinese staff necessary to supervise the depôts.

Vote recommended.

