

27TH FEBRUARY, 1899.

PRESENT:—

His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR (Sir Henry Blake, G.C.M.G.).

His EXCELLENCY Major-General GASCOIGNE, C.M.G. (Commanding the Troops).

Hon. J. H. STEWART LOCKHART C.M.G. (Colonial Secretary).

Hon. H. E. POLLOCK (Acting Attorney-General).

Hon. R. MURRAY RUMSEY (Harbour Master).

Hon. F. H. MAY, C.M.G. (Captain Superintendent of Police).

Hon. A. M. THOMSON (Colonial Treasurer).

Hon. R. D. ORMSBY (Director of Public Works).

Hon. C. P. CHATER, C.M.G.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD.

Hon. Dr. HO KAI

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

Hon. J. J. BELL-IRVING.

Hon. WEI A YUK.

Mr. J. G. T. BUCKLE (Clerk of Councils).

PAPERS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table a report on the proposed erection of a refuse destructor for the city of Victoria, Hongkong, and a report of the Captain Superintendent of Police for the year 1898.

FINANCIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table financial minute No. 5 and moved that it be referred to the Finance Committee.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

Carried.

SANITARY BYE-LAWS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the Sanitary Bye-laws made by the Sanitary Board dealing with cattle and sheep be approved.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

Carried.

THE FLUSHING OF DRAINS AND SEWERS.—

THE DISPOSAL OF THE CITY REFUSE.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I beg to ask the questions standing in my name.

The questions were:

(1.)—Are the Government taking steps to provide for the flushing of the drains and sewers and the watering of the roads throughout the city by the construction of tanks along the upper levels either for fresh or salt water, and if the latter for the construction of the necessary pumping stations?

(2.)—Are the Government taking any steps to introduce destructors for the disposal of the city refuse?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I beg to answer as follows:—The answer to the first question is: The Government is advised that no such provision is at present required. There are now in use in the city 32 automatic flushing tanks placed in the most suitable positions. The sewers have been laid to self cleansing grades in nearly every case, and through them pass daily most of the 3,000,000 gallons of water consumed in the city every 24 hours. An examination of these sewers at any of the manholes usually shows them running half full of water. Regarding the use of sea water for flushing drains, Mr. Cooper in his report on the water supply in 1896 wrote as follows:— "During recent years many seaside towns have adopted a dual system of water supply, using sea water for watering streets, flushing drains, fire service, etc. In considering the foregoing the practicability of adopting such a system for the city of Victoria

has not been lost sight of and though the use of sea water favours deposits in sewers its adoption for street watering has advantages over the use of fresh water, and may with advantage be used in comparatively level localities. Any project for the utilisation of sea water for such purposes in the city of Victoria, owing to the varying elevations of the built area, viz., from practically sea level to 600 feet above sea level, must necessarily involve the installation and maintenance of pumping machinery and the construction of service reservoirs in addition to those used for the water supplied for potable purposes. It would further be necessary to lay throughout the city a separate system of distribution mains and hydrants. The cost of such a project would not compare favourably with the gravitation projects put forward in the preceding passage of this report, and consequently I am of opinion no such project should be entertained so long as a supply of fresh water sufficient for all purposes can be obtained at a reasonable cost by gravitation." The cost of pumping up sea water to the 600 foot level, and laying distribution mains in order to use it for flushing sewers would be prohibitive even if desirable. Further storage of water in the Tytam Valley is projected, and with a more abundant water supply the flushing tanks may be used more freely. The answer to the second question is: The Government has obtained reports and estimates which have just been laid on the table regarding refuse destructors and the subject is at present under the consideration of the Sanitary Board.

QUESTIONS AS TO THE HINTERLAND.

TAE CUSTOMS STATIONS TO BE REMOVED.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I beg to ask the questions standing in my name.

The questions were:—

(1.)—The Special Commissioner appointed to report on the newly-leased territory at the back of Kowloon having duly made such report to the Colonial Office, returned to Hongkong, and resumed his duties as Colonial Secretary, will the Government lay on the table copy of his report and of all correspondence in connection with the extension of the Colony?

(2.)—Will the Government be good enough to state when and how the new territory will be taken possession of?

(3.) Has any hitch occurred in the negotiations to cause the delay which has taken place?

(4.) Will the leased area become part and parcel of the colony of Hongkong administered by the existing officials or is it designed to appoint a separate staff of officials to govern the new territory?

(5.) If it has been decided to make it a separate administration, will the Government say whether any estimate has been given of the cost of such undertaking?

(6.) Has the question of Chinese jurisdiction or otherwise in the City of Kowloon been settled?

(7.) If Kowloon City is not included in the

concession, will the Government state what steps have been taken to relieve the harbour of Hongkong of the espionage of the Chinese Customs cruisers?

(8.) Are the existing Customs stations on the borders of the Harbour to be set back to the outer edge of the new frontier?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—In answer to these questions I have to reply as follows: The answer to the first question is: They cannot be laid upon the table at present. The answer to the second is: As soon as the northern boundary has been defined. The answer to the third question is: No. The answer to the fourth question is: The leased area will become part of the colony. The details of the administration have not yet been finally settled. The answer to the fifth question is: The estimate of the cost of administration is not yet complete. The answer to the seventh is: The Customs stations are to be removed from the harbour and new territory. The answer to the eighth question is: This question is not sufficiently defined; this Government cannot say what the Chinese Government will do. This Government only knows, as already stated, that the Customs stations are to be removed from the harbour and new territory.

THE JUBILEE ROAD.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I wish to ask a question or two at the next Council meeting as to the construction of the Jubilee Road.

His EXCELLENCY—Will you kindly put them in writing and send them in to the clerk.

FIRST READING.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to move the first reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance to provide for the Performance of Divine Worship and other Services in accordance with the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England at Saint John's Cathedral Church at Victoria and elsewhere in this Colony; for the Incorporation of a Church Body in which the said Cathedral Church shall be vested and by which it shall be administered; and for other purposes connected with the said Cathedral Church.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Carried.

THE PRISONS ORDINANCE.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to propose the third reading of the Bill entitled An Ordinance to amend and consolidate the Law relating to Prisons.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Carried.

The Council then considered the Jury List in private.

The Council adjourned for a fortnight.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.
THE GOVERNOR'S PEAK RESIDENCE—A
PROTEST FROM THE HON.
E. R. BELLIOS.

A meeting of the Finance Committee was subsequently held, the Colonial Secretary presiding.

The CHAIRMAN—I have only one minute to lay before the Finance Committee to-day, and that is one in which the Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of \$3,500 for the erection of a temporary bungalow at "The Cliffs." If any honourable member desires any information with regard to this, vote, the Hon. Director of Public Works will be glad to give it.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS (standing)—I do not believe—

The CHAIRMAN—Excuse me, we are in committee and it is not necessary for the honourable member to stand.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I do not believe in extending old buildings, sir, and I shall have to say something at the next Council meeting when the Governor is present as to the building of a house for His Excellency.

The CHAIRMAN—I understand you are not in favour of recommending this vote?

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I am not.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I think the Committee is entitled to some information in regard to this matter. There is a building at "The Cliffs" already. What is this proposed bungalow? What lease have the Government taken of "The Cliffs," and what arrangements have been made with the owner of the property in regard to taking over this bungalow. I is purely a matter of business, and I think the committee is entitled to some information.

The CHAIRMAN—I have already stated that the honourable the Director of Public Works will be glad to give any information asked for. A lease has been taken of "The Cliffs" for two years, and the understanding is that the Government has authority to remove any temporary structure they may put up at the termination of the lease. The bungalow which is mentioned in the vote is a temporary bungalow. The nature of that temporary bungalow will be described by the Director of Public Works to any honourable member who chooses to ask him.

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—It is intended to erect a bungalow with four rooms for the accommodation of some of His Excellency's staff. There will be brick pillars and a tiled roof. The understanding is that at the termination of the lease it can be removed and the materials sold unless the proprietor of "The Cliffs" wishes to take it over at a

valuation.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—May I ask what is the present rent of "The Cliffs."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I have not got a copy of last year's estimates by me, but speaking from memory I think \$2,700 a year. But I will send for a copy of the estimates.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—If I remember rightly the old rent of the house was something like \$2,000 a year.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—You wish to know the old rent as well as the present?

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I hear that the old rent was \$2,000 per annum and the Government leased "The Cliffs" for \$2,700 a year. I understand that for the extra rent the proprietor promised to extend the building and adapt it to the Governor's wants.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I do not know where you derive your information from, but you are labouring under an entire misapprehension. It would be interesting to know where you obtained your information.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—The last tenant would be able to tell us what he paid.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—I do not see how the question of the last tenant affects the agreement of the present tenant. I think the question you asked was, what is the present rent? I see that according to the estimates it is \$2,600 a year.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I do not believe in putting up a temporary building. In the estimates something like \$40,000 was provided for a house at the Peak for the Governor. Is the erection of that house to be indefinitely postponed?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—That I cannot say. It is postponed at any rate for the present.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—Surely it is not wise to spend \$3,500 on property which does not belong to the Government?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—The Governor has brought this before the Finance Committee and considers that the expenditure is warranted. I therefore bring the vote before the Committee to-day to ask them whether they recommend it. I understand you are not favour?

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I am not.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—Has any other honourable member any question to ask in regard to the vote?

No other questions being asked the vote was agreed to, only the Hon. E. R. Bellios voting against.

This was all the business.