

31ST JULY, 1899.

PRESENT:—

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

The Hon J. H. STEWART LOCKHART (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. Dr. HO KAI.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD.

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

Hon. WEI A YUK.

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

PETITION.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—Your Excellency, I have been asked by the solicitors of certain dealers in arms to present a petition for the consideration of this Council which I now lay on the table. I understand that a copy of it was forwarded to the Government some two or three weeks ago.

QUESTIONS.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I beg to give notice that at the next meeting of the Council I will ask the following question:—

Will the Government lay upon the table copy of Despatch No. 107 of 28th April last to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and its enclosures, regarding the recent disturbances in connection with the taking over of the new territory leased by China to Great Britain by the June Convention of last year and any other Despatches from the Colonial Government to the Home Authorities bearing on the subject?"

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—I beg to give notice of the following question which I will put at the next meeting of the Legislative Council:—

"Referring to the report by the Hon. J. H. Stewart Lockhart on the Kowloon Extension to the Colony, will the Government state what is the source of the information referred to in paragraph 1 under head of Revenue, page 13 of the Blue Book, stating:—'But from information derived from another source it is estimated that the annual revenue of that portion of the Sun On District contained within the leased area amounts to \$160,000, or, say, £16,000' this being an increase of more than a lakh of

dollars on the estimate given by the Sun On District Magistrate for the territory in question?"

His EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR—May I suggest that in giving notice of questions honourable members should to save time merely hand in their notices?

PAPERS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table the report of the Inspector of Schools for 1898; reports on the Hongkong Volunteer Corps; report of the Principal Civil Medical Officer for 1898; the Secretary of State's despatch respecting the recent disturbances in connection with the taking over of the New Territory; and the report on the assessment for 1899-1900.

FINANCIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table financial minutes Nos. 9 to 10 and proposed that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded and the motion was carried.

THE HONGKONG AND SHANGHAI BANK'S

NOTE ISSUE.

The Hon. C. P. CHATER—Your Excellency, I have the honour to move the first reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance to continue the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank Ordinance, 1899. I am aware, sir, that it is unusual to speak when moving the first reading of a Bill, but as it is my intention, with your Excellency's permission, and if honourable members have no objection, to pass this Bill through the various stages to-day, a few explanatory words at the present moment may not be inappropriate. It will probably be in the recollection of honourable members that about this time last year a Bill was introduced into this Council authorising the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation to issue notes in excess of its paid-up capital on the condition that the Bank should deposit dollar for dollar for the excess issue. This condition, I may mention to Your Excellency, was proposed by the Bank itself and received the sanction of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State and a Bill was passed. The period this privilege was to extend was fixed for twelve months from the 31st July, 1898. Later on, sometime about the beginning of the present year, the Secretary of State sent out instructions to introduce another Bill into the Council repealing this Bill, namely No. 6 of 1898, and, bringing forward the Bill No. 1 of 1899 authorising the Bank to issue notes in excess of its paid up capital on the same terms and conditions as before, with one or two additional conditions, and the period for which this privilege was granted was fixed for a year from the 31st July, 1898. The period was not altered. Consequently it expires to-day. The object of the present Bill is to allow the Bank to continue issuing these notes in excess of its paid up capital on the same terms and conditions as in No. 1 of 1899 for a further period of 12 months from this date. Honourable members will no

doubt have observed that there is absolutely no benefit to the Bank by the passing of this Bill; on the contrary it entails expense and trouble to the Bank and a good deal of responsibility, but it is done for the benefit of this colony and to help trade and commerce. Therefore I have no doubt honourable members will consent to the Bill going through the first second and third reading to-day. With these remarks I beg to move the first reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance to continue the Hongkong and Shanghai Bank Ordinance, 1899.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and the motion was carried.

The Standing Orders having been suspended to allow of the Bill passing through all its stages, the second reading was carried, after which the Council went into committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

On the Council resuming the Bill was read a third time and passed.

THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to move the first reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Protection of Women and Girls Ordinance, 1897.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—If I may make a suggestion in connection with this Bill. I observe that the Singapore Legislative Council have appointed a committee to enquire into the matter. If we could be supplied with copies of the committee's report we should be assisted in arriving at a conclusion.

His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR—If we had the report there would of course be no objection to members being supplied with copies, but we have had their Bill and we know the whole question pretty well now. I do not think I would advise that this Bill should be delayed for the purpose of getting the report of the Singapore Committee. I will write to Singapore, and if we obtain copies before the next meeting of the Council honourable members will be supplied with them.

The motion was carried.

NATURALIZATION.

A Bill entitled an Ordinance for the Naturalization of Yeung Cheuk Hin *alias* Yeung Shun Kong was read a first time.

A Bill entitled an Ordinance for the Naturalization of Wong Ping Lam *alias* Wong U K'ai was read a second and third time and passed.

THE CONCEALMENT OF OPIUM.

On the motion of the ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL, seconded by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, a Bill entitled an Ordinance for the Prevention of the Concealment of Opium on board Steamships was read a first time.

THE CATTLE DISEASES ETC., ORDINANCE.

The Council went into Committee on the Bill entitled an Ordinance to further amend the Cattle Diseases, Slaughter-houses, and Markets Ordinances.

Clause 3 of the Bill read as follows:—"Section 12 of the Cattle Diseases, Slaughter-houses and Markets Ordinance, 1887, is hereby amended by the deletion of the words 'for sale.'"

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—In consequence of having seen the Hon. E. R. BELLIOS and having been interviewed by certain Indian gentlemen, I have an amendment to move to clause 3. In the first place it seems to me that it would not be wise to delete the words "for sale" from section 12, because the word "animal," in section 12 of Ordinance 17 of 1887 includes sheep and goats and other ruminating animals, and swine, and I do not think it would be wise to make it a penal offence to slaughter and dress the carcass of a swine except in the slaughter house appointed in the ordinance, as it might prevent people from killing pigs in their own backyards. I take it that Europeans sometimes kill pigs on their own premises, and I should imagine it is not advisable to make this a penal offence.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR—I do not know what the customs are here, but it seems to me that seeing that we have a slaughter house provided for the purpose of preventing animals except those fit for human food from being slaughtered, it would be inadvisable to allow any to be slaughtered in any other place than the slaughter-house. Otherwise a man might take a swine which had been refused admission to the slaughter-house into his own back-yard and kill it.

The CAPTAIN SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE —I do not think it would be advisable to make the alteration without further consideration. It is not long since we made by-laws providing for the taking of pigs to the pig depot, where they are now kept and slaughtered. Practically all the pigs are owned by Chinese.

The Hon. Dr. HO KAI—I think it would be a great hardship to have to take a sucking pig to the slaughter-house to be slaughtered.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR —What is the custom of the country?

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—The common practise amongst the European community in Hongkong is to slaughter sucking pigs in their own houses.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR—As far as I can see, the effect of the Attorney-General's amendment would be that while you are not allowed to offer for sale any meat unfit for human consumption, you may slaughter it if you like in your own back-yards for your own consumption. But you gentlemen know more about the customs of the place and the necessities of the people than I do, and the matter is entirely in your hands.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—May I ask who suggested the deletion of the words, "for sale."

The ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL—I am sorry to say that the papers dealing with this matter seem to have gone astray altogether, but I think the suggestion came originally either from the Colonial Veterinary Surgeon (Mr. Ladds) or the Medical Officer of Health, and I think that probably the suggestion was made because as the Captain Superintendent of Police has pointed out it was not considered advisable for the Chinese to be allowed to kill swine in their own backyards. But it has been pointed out to me that that is rather a common custom and it was also pointed out to me that if we passed this Bill as it stands it would be a penal offence for any European to kill or dress a sucking pig on his own premises.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS—As to the condition of the animals slaughtered at home, I may say that they are specially fed so that they are in healthy condition when they are slaughtered. Especially is this the case at festivals.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR—I understood that the alterations were for the purpose of enabling Mahomedans to slaughter certain animals without taking them to the slaughter-house and to meet the requirements of their religion?

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—That will be provided for. The question divides itself into two points—whether these words "for sale" shall be left out, and then it is proposed to go on with the question of slaughtering for Indian troops or Indian police quartered in the colony.

The CAPTAIN SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE —It would be a very dangerous thing to strike out the words "for sale." There are thousands of pigs slaughtered by Chinese.

The Hon. Dr. HO KAI—I think it would be better if section 3 were deleted altogether, and if we let clause 12 stand as it has stood for nine years.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to move that clause 3 of the Bill be amended as follows: by striking out the words "By the deletion of the words for sale" and substituting in lieu of these words "By the insertion between the word 'goats' and the word 'may' of the words 'or sheep;' and by the insertion after the word 'slaughtered' and before the word 'by' of the words 'or dressed elsewhere.'"

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I think this is an irregular course to pursue altogether. These amendments should be printed and circulated in order that members might have a reasonable amount of time to consider them and to see whether they meet the case or whether they do not. I submit that it is rather unreasonable that the

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members should be taken up in drafting amendments in the way in which this has been drafted.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR—It is quite in order for any honourable gentlemen to suggest any amendment which strikes him during the passing of a Bill through committee. As a matter of fact this was foreshadowed.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD — This was an amendment suggested some three weeks ago.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR — This was foreshadowed by the Hon. E. R. Belilios.

At this stage the Hon. C. P. Chater obtained His Excellency's permission to retire, as he did not feel well.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL — This is how section 12 will read after being amended as I propose:— "No person shall slaughter any animal or dress any carcase thereof for sale except within a slaughter house appointed for the purpose under this Ordinance, always provided that goats or sheep may be slaughtered or dressed elsewhere by or for any Indians, Indian troops' or Indian police quartered in the colony" The effect of this amendment, suggested by the Hon. E. R. Belilios and the Indian gentlemen he introduced to me, will be that it will be possible for them to slaughter on their own premises sheep as well as goats when necessary.

The amendment was adopted.

The Hon. E. R. BELLIOS threw out the suggestion that instead of the wholesale slaughtering of herds in cases of rinderpest they should build pens in the Hinterland and when suspected cases appeared transport the whole herd to such pens.

The Council then resumed.

HIS EXCELLENCY GOES TO TAIPOHU.

His Excellency the GOVERNOR—Before we adjourn I want to tell you that on Wednesday I propose to go to Taipohu to meet the committeemen who have been appointed under the Ordinance which was passed some months ago. I need hardly tell you that from that time until now the Colonial Secretary has been busily engaged in going over the New Territory and dividing out the districts. We have made eight districts and a very large number of sub-districts, and we have appointed about 350 committeemen. I am going out to meet nearly 300 of them on Wednesday at Taipohu. The *Wingfu* will leave here at seven o'clock in the morning, and if any of you gentleman would like to accompany me. I shall be glad to see you. I want to get there at about 12 o'clock, and so we shall have to leave here at about seven o'clock in the morning. I propose to see some committeemen at Taipohu on Wednesday and then see a smaller number at Pingsan on Friday.

The Council then adjourned until Tuesday of next week.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

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

The CHAIRMAN—The first business I have to bring before the Committee to-day is a Bill entitled an Ordinance to authorise the appropriation of a supplementary sum of three hundred and eight thousand six hundred and seventy-two dollars and eighty-seven cents, to defray the charges of the year 1898. I propose to follow the usual practice and take each item, and if any honourable member has any question to ask in regard to it the Colonial Treasurer will answer it.

The Supplementary Colonial Estimates for 1898 were then gone through.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—With reference to the items under "Medical Departments" I observe that there is an increase of \$7,000 and it would be very desirable I think if, for the information of members of the committee, the Government would have a statement prepared showing the income and expenditure of the Civil Hospital for the last four year; and if the hospital is not self-supporting it is possible it may be made more self-supporting than it is. I do not know exactly whether it is self-supporting or not, but the fees appear to me to be very low. If the first-class patients went to a hotel they would have to pay much more, even if they went to a second-rate hotel, than they pay at the Government Civil Hospital.

The CHAIRMAN — The statement the honourable gentleman would like prepared will be prepared and laid before the Council. With regard to the fees I think the new scale was only drawn up a short time ago.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—It came into force in January last.

The CHAIRMAN—I take it from your remarks that you think the fees too low.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I do not propose that the Government should make a profit out of the Government Civil Hospital, but if it is not self-supporting it may be made more so without injustice to the first-class portion.

The total of items headed "Public Works extraordinary" amounted to \$94,695.76, and

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD remarked— That is an extremely large item.

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS explained that a larger store of materials was necessary in consequence of the taking over of the New Territory. He thought that under the circumstance the increase was not excessive.

It was decided to recommend the Council to sanction the Bill.

The CHAIRMAN—I may say that I had intended to bring several financial minutes before the committee to-day but in view of the fact that two of the unofficial members are absent I think it desirable we should postpone the consideration of these votes until we have a fuller meeting.

This was all the business.