

4TH OCTOBER, 1899.

PRESENT:—

HIS EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR (SIR HENRY BLAKE, G.C.M.G.)

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

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

Hon. R. MURRAY RUMSEY (Harbour Master).

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. BELILIOS, C.M.G.

Hon. WEI A YUK.

Hon. J. J. KESWICK.

Mr. R. F. JOHNSTON (Acting Clerk of Councils).

PAPERS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table English translation of the proclamations issued by the Magistrate of the San On District and the Viceroy of Canton regarding the New Territory; statement of expenditure on plague; statement of extra expenditure under sub-head "Miscellaneous services" (Other); statement of expenditure (actual and estimated) for 1899 in connection with the New Territory; and further papers relating to the military operations in connection with the disturbance on the taking over of the New Territory.

FINANCIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table financial minutes Nos. 13 to 15 and proposed that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded and the motion was carried.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table report of the Finance Committee (No. 4) and moved its adoption.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

BEACONSFIELD AGAIN

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I rise to move that the report No. 4 be referred back to the Finance

Committee for amendment and in order that the members may have the opportunity of discussing the printed statement which should have been before the committee at last meeting and before the vote of ~~5170,000~~ was passed. At the last meeting of the Council the honourable the Colonial Treasurer, in reply to my query as to why no finance minute had been submitted to the Council in connection with the expenditure on "Beaconsfield." said, "I do not know." At the last meeting of the Finance Committee it was discovered that the expenditure of \$20,095.89 in question was included under the head "Miscellaneous services, (other)." In fact, it appeared to have been smuggled in, and it was not until questions were asked that we found out that the expenditure on account of "Beaconsfield" was included under the heading of "Miscellaneous services." The said minute was laid on the table on the 31st July last by the honourable the Colonial Secretary. The honourable the Colonial Secretary and the honourable member were present when the Colonial Treasurer replied to my query. I think it was the duty of the Colonial Secretary to have informed the Council that the expenditure in question was included under the head "Miscellaneous services" instead of keeping the information concealed from the Council. At the meeting of the Finance Committee in question the honourable member the owner of "Beaconsfield" was allowed to vote for the expenditure of public money for repairs to his own property. Sir, I would ask you to instruct the Colonial Secretary, the chairman of the Finance Committee, to direct the honourable member the owner of "Beaconsfield" to refrain from voting on those questions in which he is pecuniarily interested. Speaking in the House of Commons on the 7th July last Mr. Chamberlain, the Secretary of State for the Colonies, said: "I observe from the newspapers to-day that I am stated to be one of the largest shareholders of the Royal Niger Company, and one or more of these newspapers state that I am thus in the

position of vendor and vendee...I desire to state exactly what my position in the matter is. When the National African Company, which was the parent of the Royal Niger Company, was formed 17 years ago I applied for shares, and a certain allotment was made to me. As it was less than the application made, I subsequently increased my holding to 1,500 shares. There seems to be a misapprehension as to the value of this investment, because there are two classes of shares in the Company—one of £10, fully paid up, and the other £2 only paid up. My allotment was the £2 shares, and my total investment was of the smaller amount—£3,000. I may say in passing that it would be difficult for any hon. member of this House to invest in anything which might not at some time or other be the subject of discussion in this House. But when the question of the possible revocation of the charter came before the Government I took the opportunity to inform the Prime Minister and my colleagues of the fact that I had some interest in the Company; and I begged, therefore, to be excused from offering any opinion on the transaction, and from taking any part whatever in any negotiations which might subsequently take place. Accordingly these negotiations have been entirely in the hands of my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and I did not know of the result until the matter was substantially settled." I observe, sir, from the printed statement of the expenditure estimated and actual for the nine months of this year in connection with the New Territory the sum will amount to the grand total of \$346,629.17. I think, sir, that the unofficial members are entitled to a little more time to carefully consider and study the matter. At the last meeting of the Council the Honourable the Colonial Treasurer informed the members that the expenditure in connection with "Beaconsfield" was paid by and under the authority of your Excellency on the 3rd of May last. I think, sir, that to pay public moneys on the 3rd May and four months later to ask the Council to sanction the said expenditure after the money has gone beyond their control is an irregular proceeding, and I believe also that it is contrary to Colonial Office regulations. At all events it is a proceeding against which I record my formal protest.

His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR—What matter do you refer to?

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD — I refer to "Beaconsfield" expenditure of \$20,095.89. In 1891 Sir William Des Voeux, who was then Governor, followed a like course, in paying away public funds without the sanction of the Council first obtained, and three of the unofficial members forwarded a written protest against same to the Secretary of State, and Lord Knutsford in a despatch addressed to the Officer Administering the Government, dated 4th August, 1891, said:—"Sir,—I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch No. 166 of 28th May last, forwarding a protest from three of the Unofficial Members of the Council

against the payment of the lapsed portion of the Military Contribution for 1899, before it had been revoked by the Council. I regret that the Council was not informed when asked to re-vote the money that it had been already paid in anticipation of the re-vote, which should have been taken first" I, therefore, sir, propose the amendment I have mentioned.

His EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR (after a pause)—Does any honourable gentleman second it? Whether it is seconded or not I should be very sorry indeed if the honourable gentleman did not receive some explanation, which I think is due on the question of this item, for I take it that the item which the honourable gentleman is alluding to is the item in connection with "Beaconsfield." I saw in the public press after the last finance meeting what had taken place at that meeting. I think it well that the Council should know exactly what took place, and I will tell you so far as I am able. A very short time after I arrived in the colony I received a letter from Mr. Belilios asking me to re-open the question of "Beaconsfield." I looked over the papers and I found that it had been decided before I came here by my predecessor, and consequently I answered that I declined to re-open the question. That was in December. In the early part of January it was brought to my notice, and in fact it was recommended by the Acting Attorney-General, that this case should be compromised. I think the Acting Attorney-General can have no objection to my saying this now, although there is a salutary rule that the opinions of the Attorney-General are held to be confidential. At that time the position was peculiar. The position at that moment was that a case had been taken against Mr. Belilios by a contractor named Ah Hok, who claimed from him certain moneys due for an expenditure on "Beaconsfield" which he declared by his pleadings had been undertaken by permission of Mr. Belilios and carried out through Mr. Belilios's agent. The counsel for Ah Hok in that case was the Acting Attorney-General and the solicitor for Ah Hok was the Crown Solicitor. The case came before me at a moment when the pleadings were changed. The pleadings were changed in this way—that the Public Works Department were inserted in them as the agents of Mr. Belilios. I had at the time as Acting Colonial Secretary Mr. Sercombe Smith, who was also a barrister. Mr. Sercombe Smith was very strongly of opinion that the Government were not liable in any way, but the result of the change of pleadings practically would be that in the event of the case being decided in favour of Mr. Belilios the Government would be the defendants, and in the face of  
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and under those circumstances I really did not know who the Government were to look to. The gentleman at that time engaged as counsel for Ah Hok would either be engaged for Ah Hok or for the Government, having first of all decided from the pleadings that practically the Government were liable. I say distinctly that no one has a higher opinion than I have of the Acting Attorney-General, and that no one realises more fully than I do the enormous care he takes in all his cases and his anxiety to do his work faithfully and honestly, but what I felt was that human nature was human nature, and that it was almost impossible for any man to judge both sides of a question when that man is engaged and has been engaged for some time on one side of that question. That was my own view; I may have been perfectly wrong. Having looked over the papers and much correspondence I shared the opinion of my Acting Colonial Secretary, who was, as I have said, a barrister, that the Government were not liable and should not be held liable, and I held furthermore that if the Government were liable then Mr. Belilios ought to be paid and that if they were not liable I would not pay him a fraction. That was the position I took up, and I declined to interfere in any way. I said if the court of law decides that the Government are ultimately liable for this money then the colony can pay the money; if the court of law does not decide in this way then we do not pay anything. The case went before the court, and a jury of seven decided by a narrow majority of one that Mr. Belilios was not liable. There is a phase of this question which I think it as well you should understand. At the meeting of the Finance Committee it looked as if the Colonial Secretary knowing certain circumstances was positively concealing them. A great part of the correspondence which had taken place, including a very strong recommendation from the Acting Attorney-General that I should compromise this case, and my observations in answer to his minutes, I put by on a confidential file. It was not put with the other papers and was not seen by the Colonial Secretary, who knew practically nothing at all about the matter. As you know he was engaged in the New Territory, and that will explain the fact that, not having had the papers before him, he had not seen this phase of the matter. But there is the case. Honourable members will see that so far as I am concerned I declined to pay anything we were not obliged by law to pay. When the present Acting Chief Justice, Mr. Goodman, but who was then Attorney-General, came back in April, I put the whole of the matter before him. He looked closely into it and he said we might possibly succeed in the event of Ah Hok bringing a case against the Government, but in his opinion the Government

would not succeed. But if we did succeed the position would be that a contractor who had honestly done what he was ordered to do, either by one of the Public Works employees or the Assistant Director of Public Works, and had done it faithfully, would be placed in the position of not being able to recover either from the Government or from Mr. Belilios, which would be a scandal, and on the whole he strongly advised that the man should be paid. I ordered that he should be paid, and in doing that I was wrong. I ought to have put the matter before you and asked for your vote. It did not strike me at the time, and I am sorry it did not. That is the whole case so far as this matter is concerned at the present. I think the advice given by the Acting Attorney-General was sound advice, but I was in a peculiar position at the time, and, as I have said before, I felt that if Mr. Belilios had a right to be paid he should be paid in full—it was not a matter to higgie over—but that if he had not I did not feel justified in paying a penny of public money until the court of law had decided the point. On the question of bringing this matter before the Council I confess, as the honourable member has pointed out, that the money ought not to have been paid before it not been brought before the Council, and I regret it very much (Hear, hear.) Does any honourable gentleman second this amendment of the honourable Mr. Whitehead's?

No one seconded the amendment, and the motion was put and carried.

#### REPORT OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE.

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS laid on the table the report of the Public Works Committee.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—In connection with that report I may be allowed to earnestly hope that the Director of Public Works will not fail to proceed without delay with the construction of the three roads, as they are very much needed he there mentions—the road from the Upper Tram Station to High West Saddle; the road from Castle Peak Bay to Ping Shan and Un Loong, and the road along the Pokfulam Conduit East End I fully concur in the words of General Black that "roads are the precursors of civilisation and progress, and that they distinguish a rising from a barbarous state."

#### TAXING COSTS IN THE SUMMARY COURT.

The ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL laid on the table rules for taxing costs in the Summary Court and proposed that they be approved of to by the Council.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the motion was carried.

#### QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I rise to ask the questions of which I have given notice.

The questions were as follow:—

Has the attention of the honourable the Colonial Secretary been directed to a leading article in the *China Mail* of Wednesday, August 9th, and will the honourable member inform the Council:—

(1a.)—Is it the intention of the Government to appoint a Commission to enquire into and report on the alleged land jobbery in the colony's recently acquired territory, referred to in the said article and widely and publicly spoken about?

(2.)—Was the late Tung Cheong entrusted by the Government on or about the 17th April last with certain Government proclamations to be conveyed into the New Territory to be posted and placarded in the various villages and towns therein?

(3.)—If so, under whose direction did the deceased undertake the mission without an armed escort?

(4.)—Is it true that on the said mission at or near the village of Un Loong on 17th or 18th April last the said Tung Cheong was foully and brutally murdered?

(5.)—What remuneration, if any, has been paid to the deceased's family?

(6.)—Will the Government lay upon the table a copy in English of the Proclamations issued by the Canton and the Colonial Governments previous to the 17th April last and posted and placarded in the villages and towns throughout the New Territory informing the people and the inhabitants as to the effect the change of Government would have on their lives, liberties, and possessions, and state the dates when such proclamations, if any, were posted and placarded?

(7.)—What satisfaction, if any, has been obtained from the Chinese Government for the assault by the Chinese on the Honourable the Captain Superintendent of Police before our New Territory was taken over, and in respect of the resistance by thousands of armed Chinese to the British entering into possession of the area leased by the Imperial Chinese Government to Great Britain per the Convention of June, 1898, the quelling of which resistance resulted in considerable and lamentable loss of life and which forced upon the colony a substantial amount of extra and avoidable expenditure?

(8.) Has the attention of the Honourable the Director of Public Works been directed to the *China Mail's* leading articles of 15th and 23rd August alleging the existence of jerry buildings in Hongkong; will the Honourable Member inform the Council whether the said allegation is well founded; and if so, will he state what powers his Department possesses to prevent the erection of such buildings; what action has been taken by his Department in the matter; and if his powers are insufficient, is he taking any steps to get increased powers?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied as follow:—

The answer to Question I is in the negative.

In reply to Question 1A, I beg to refer the Honourable

Member to paragraph 52 of the correspondence laid upon the table at the last meeting of Council.

The answer to Question 2 is that at the instance of the Colonial Secretary one of the gentry of the New Territory undertook to have copies of the Proclamation posted and he entrusted the duty of posting some of them to Tang Chueng.

In reply to Question 3 I beg to refer the Honourable Member to the answer to the last question.

The answer to Question 4 is in the affirmative. The murderers have been convicted and have suffered the extreme penalty of the law.

In answer to Question 5 I beg to state that the Government is taking care of one of the sons of the deceased.

In reply to question 6, I beg to refer the Honourable Member to page 21 of the published correspondence for a translation of the Proclamation issued by His Excellency the Governor, and I now lay upon the table a translation of the Proclamations issued by the Magistrate of the San On District and the Viceroy of the Two Kwang Provinces. So far as can be ascertained the dates of posting the Proclamations were as follows:—

The Proclamation of the San On Magistrate was posted between the 27th and the 30th March; the Proclamation of the Viceroy was posted about the 5th April; the Proclamation of His Excellency the Governor was posted between the 10th and 15th April.

The answer to Question 7 is, "I cannot say."

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS, replying to the eighth question, said:—I have read the articles referred to and think there is foundation for the allegations. The powers possessed by my department are defined in the Ordinances 15 of 1889 and 25 of 1891. An officer of the department, assisted by an overseer, inspects building works in progress. The exceptional amount of such work in the colony at present makes an increase in the staff necessary if this work of supervision is to be thoroughly performed. The matter is engaging the attention of the Government.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD gave notice of his intention to ask the following questions at the next meeting of the Council:—

1—With reference to the Honourable The Colonial Secretary's report, dated 8th October, 1898, on the extension of the colony, which under Expenditure reads:—"The cost of administering the new territory is estimated at \$125,000. The chief items are:—Police \$33,223, Surveyors \$14,400, Miscellaneous \$24,657, total \$72,280. When the work of survey has been completed such a large staff of surveyors will be unnecessary, but it is important, as has been

pointed out, that the land under cultivation should be surveyed as quickly as possible. Miscellaneous expenditure has been estimated at a high figure, as unforeseen expenses are sure to be large when the territory is first taken over," will the hon. member inform the Council how and upon what basis the said estimate was arrived at, and state whether the Hon. The Captain Superintendent of Police was satisfied that the said estimate of \$33,223 per annum would be adequate to efficiently police the New Territory —seeing that in the statement of expenditure in connection with the New Territory for 1898 laid upon the table to-day the grand total of expenditure amounts to no less than \$346,629.17, of which the police expenditure, actual and estimated, for April to December, 1898 is \$88,972.10?

2.—Will the Honourable The Colonial Secretary lay upon the table a statement showing the expenditure incurred by the Colonial Government in consequence of the rebellious disturbances and the armed Chinese opposition to British occupation of the Territory leased by the Imperial Chinese Government per the June Convention of last year?

3.—Through whose omission or neglect was it that the Government were not sooner informed of the presence in and around Taipohu of 2/3000 armed Chinese with guns entrenched and in position which must have taken several days' preparation, and what precautions, if any, were taken to find out the actual condition of the Chinese on the borders of and in the New Territory between Mirs Bay and Deep Bay before ordering luncheon for a large number of invited guests, effecting insurance on the steamer *Hankow* for the trip to Mirs Bay which did not take place, and making elaborate arrangements for the opening ceremony at which it was proposed to hoist the British Flag at Taipohu on 17th April last, all which arrangements, after considerable expenditure was incurred thereon, had at the last moment to be abandoned?

With reference to Financial Minute No. 12 in which the Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of \$91,500 to cover the cost of three steam launches required by the Police in the waters of the New Territory, will The Honourable The Harbour Master inform the Council:—

1.—Whether tenders for the construction of the launches have been invited from the various shipbuilding institutions in the colony?

2.—If so has any tender been accepted and if accepted what will be the cost of the respective launches?

3.—What are the sizes of the hulls and the engines?

4.—Will they be composite built or will the frames be of hard wood?

5.—If of the latter will the curved frames be natural or cut from straight timber?

6.—Whether launches constructed with curved

frames cut from straight timber will be as serviceable and as durable as composite built launches?

7.—Whether launches with frames of wood are more costly than those with steel frames? and

8.—Whether Experts in Shipbuilding would pass launches built of curved frames cut from straight timber?

Will the Honourable The Harbour Master inform the Council of the circumstances under which the Government refused clearance to the American transport *Tartar* on 13th September last, and granted clearance to the said transport on 14th idem without her having added in any way in Hongkong to her lifesaving appliances?

#### PROPOSED WORKS.

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS — With your permission, sir, I beg to move that the following proposed works be referred to the Public Works Committee for report:—(1) Extension telephone to Pingshan and Un Long; (2) Police Stations (permanent) at Starling Inlet, Saikung, T'sün Wán, and Shatin.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the motion was carried.

#### FIRST READINGS.

The following passed their first readings:—

Bill entitled an Ordinance for the naturalization of Sin Hip Pan, alias Sin Shu Fan, alias Sin Shiu Kin, alias Sin Ping Kim.

Bill entitled an Ordinance for the naturalization of Kwok Yung Kam alias Kwok To Kai alias Kwok Ying.

Bill entitled an Ordinance for the naturalization of Ho Shun To, alias Ho Kwan Yuk, alias Ho Ping Un, alias Ho Tsoi.

Bill entitled an Ordinance for the naturalization of Hu Choo, alias Hu Shun Ts'un, alias Hu Ping Fong, alias Hu Nai Kwai.

Bill entitled an Ordinance for the naturalization of Lo Kun Ting, alias Lo Fo, alias Lo Ching Chiu, alias Lo Tin Fui.

Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Vagrancy Ordinance, 1897.

Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Rating Ordinance, 1888.

Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Crown Lands Resumption Ordinance, 1889.

#### THE PROTECTION OF WOMEN AND GIRLS.

The Council went into Committee on the Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Protection of Women and Girls Ordinance, 1897.

A slip of paper containing suggested further amendments to be made in committee had been circulated, and some of these amendments, which were but small ones, were adopted without comment.

It had been suggested to amend clause 5 of the Bill so as to read as follows:—

5.—After the use of any premises as a lodging house for prostitutes, or disorderly

persons or as a brothel has been discontinued under the provisions of clause 4 of this Ordinance, the immediate landlord or the mortgagee in possession of such premises for the time being, or if such landlord or mortgagee is absent from the colony or under any disability, his attorney or agent shall, if such premises are found to be again in use as a lodging house for prostitutes or disorderly persons, or as a brothel, be liable upon summary conviction before a Magistrate to the payment of a fine not exceeding five hundred dollars, and in default of payment of such fine to imprisonment for a term not exceeding one year with or without hard labour:

"Provided nevertheless that if such landlord or mortgagee or attorney or agent shall either make such complaint to a Magistrate as in the next section mentioned within such time as such Magistrate shall consider to be reasonable, or else shall prove to the satisfaction of the Magistrate that neither he nor the person employed by him or on his behalf to collect the rent of such premises knew or had reasonable means of knowing that such premises were being so used as aforesaid, then and in such case the Magistrate shall not convict under this section."

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The object of this amendment is to meet a point raised at the last meeting of the Council that it would be hard upon the superior landlord who had had nothing to do with the letting of the premises that he should be liable if they were found to be made use of by these women again. By this clause the onus of taking care that the premises are not used in this way is thrown upon the immediate landlord instead of upon the ultimate landlord, or if the immediate landlord is absent upon his attorney or agent.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR—Supposing a company buy a house and it comes under this section, whom would you put in for hard labour, the chairman or the secretary?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—The Secretary; he is always registered at the Registrar General's Office.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—But he would say he was not the landlord, and he would not be.

The COLONIAL TREASURER—There was a case at the Police Court the other day and the secretary was summoned and he did not raise any objection to it.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR—But here you have a criminal offence. You have to get someone to do hard labour, and we want to know who is to do it, (Laughter.)

The COLONIAL TREASURER—In the case I mentioned the secretary appeared and was fined.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—He was fined as secretary and not as Shelton Hooper. The Secretary is always accepted in the registration of houses.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR—It is quite conceivable three or four men might form themselves into a combination for the working of these brothels in

order to evade this provision.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said that it was provided in Ordinance 13 of 1888 that in the case of a company the secretary or manager should be the responsible party, and there had been no difficulty experienced in the working of the Ordinance.

It was ultimately agreed to delete all reference to the mortgagee, and to add after the words "attorney or agent" in the first paragraph of the clause the words, "or in the case of a corporation or company which is the immediate landlord the secretary or manager thereof for the time being" the words "or secretary or manager" to also follow the words "attorney or agent" in the second paragraph.

It was decided to insert the following new clause to be numbered clause 6:—

Upon complaint made to a Magistrate by such landlord or attorney or agent or secretary or manager as is in the preceding section mentioned to the effect that any premises, the use of which as a lodging house for prostitutes or disorderly persons, or as a brothel, has been discontinued under the provisions of section 4 of this Ordinance, are again in use as a lodging house for prostitutes or disorderly persons, or as a brothel, the Magistrate may, if he thinks fit, make an order which shall be recognized and given effect to in any proceeding in any Court in this Colony, absolutely putting an end to any existing tenancy of such premises as of the date of such order, and thereupon any tenancy so put an end to shall absolutely cease and determine on such date for all purposes, and any occupier or tenant of such premises may thereafter be treated by such landlord or attorney or agent or secretary or manager as a trespasser on such premises.

The Bill was then left in committee.

#### HIS EXCELLENCY MAKES A FURTHER EXPLANATION.

HIS EXCELLENCY—Before the Council adjourns there is a matter I wish to mention with regard to the question of Beaconsfield. The Hon. Mr. Whitehead made some observation and put a question to me for my ruling as to one of the honourable members, the Hon. Mr. Belilios, having voted at the Finance Committee meeting in a matter in which he was interested. It goes without saying, and I have no hesitation in saying, that a member ought not to vote on any question in which he has a financial interest. I do not know whether Mr. Belilios had actually a financial interest in this matter, because he had been paid the money, and whether the Council approved or not he had no other interest in the proceedings. I believe from the Colonial Secretary, who has spoken to me

upon this matter, that the vote which was before the Finance Committee included various items upon which the honourable gentleman would be perfectly justified in voting. (The Hon. E. R. BELILIOS: Hear, hear.) There is only one other matter which struck me at the moment the Hon. Mr. Whitehead was speaking, and it was a matter which in my explanation of my own action as regarded "Beaconsfield" I overlooked. I think the honourable gentleman made use of the word "smuggled," a word which I am sure on consideration he will regret having made use of. When this official minute came before me it had been signed by the Colonial Secretary and the Colonial Treasurer and I signed it as a matter of course. I am quite sure neither the Colonial Treasurer nor the Colonial Secretary would smuggle either this or any matter before the Finance Committee or the Council. I was rather anxious I should have the opportunity of informing the Council how this matter stood. A great many observations had been made, and it was well that some time or other my own reasons for the action

I had taken should be stated in the only place in which they could be stated—in this Council Chamber. The Council will now adjourn until Wednesday next at three o'clock, when I hope to lay the estimates on the table.

The Council then adjourned.

#### FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee was subsequently held under the chairmanship of the Colonial Secretary. The following votes were agreed to:—

A Sum of Two thousand and One hundred Dollars for the purchase of the old site of the Tung Wa Hospital Mortuary at Kennedy-town.

A sum of Ten thousand and Eight hundred Dollars in aid of the vote for "Scavenging the City, Villages and, Hill District."

A sum of Five thousand Dollars to defray the cost of the "Pokfulam Conduit Road."

This was all the business.

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