

13TH JUNE, 1912.

PRESENT:—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT, HON. MR. CLAUD SEVERN.

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GENERAL OFFICER COMMANDING THE TROOPS, MAJOR-GENERAL C. A. ANDERSON, C.B.

HON. MR. C. CLEMENTI (Colonial Secretary).

HON. MR. C. G. ALABASTER (Attorney-General).

HON. MR. A. M. THOMSON (Colonial Treasurer).

HON. MR. W. CHATHAM, C.M.G. (Director of Public Works).

HON. MR. E. R. HALLIFAX (Registrar-General).

HON. CAPTAIN F. J. BADELEY (Captain-Superintendent of Police).

HON. SIR KAI HO KAI, M.D., C.M.G.

HON. MR. E. OSBORNE.

HON. MR. MURRAY STEWART.

MR. R. H. CROFTON (Clerk of Councils).

Absent

HON. MR. WEI YUK, C.M.G.

HON. MR. C. H. ROSS.

HON. MR. H. E. POLLOCK, K.C.

Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved.

Financial Minutes

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, laid on the table Financial Minutes Nos. 29 to 31, and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded,

and the motion was agreed to.

Financial

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, laid on the table the report of the Finance Committee (No. 7), and moved its adoption.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

Advertisements Regulation**Ordinance**

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY—I beg to lay on the table the Regulations made by the Officer Administering the Government-in-Council under section 2 of the Advertisements Regulation Ordinance, 1912 (Ordinance No. 19 of 1912), on the 11th day of June, 1912. These regulations have been referred back to the Executive Council, and they have been amended as suggested at the last meeting of this Council. I beg to move their adoption.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

Sanitary Byelaws

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY—I beg to move the adoption of the amendments of byelaws made under section 16 of the Public Health and Buildings Ordinance, 1903 to 1908. These bye-laws were referred back to the Sanitary Board, and they have been amended as suggested at the last meeting of this Council.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

Papers

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of His Excellency the Officer

Administering the Government, laid on the table the following papers:—"Report on the Police Magistrates' Courts for 1911," and "Report on the Finances for 1911."

The Closing of Jubilee Road to Motor Traffic

THE HON. MR. MURRAY STEWART asked the following questions standing in his name:—

1.—Will the Government re-consider the recently issued Regulation closing the Jubilee Road to motor traffic, and modify it to the extent of permitting such traffic, in one direction only, during certain hours of the day?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS replied as follows:—The answer is in the negative. The Jubilee Road was closed to motor traffic because in the opinion of the Officer Administering the Government-in-Council it is wholly unsuitable for such traffic.

HIS EXCELLENCY—I think it may be convenient to the Council if I take this opportunity to make a short statement on the subject of the Vehicle Regulations, as some misunderstanding appears to exist with regard to them. The question of providing for the proper regulation of road traffic in the Colony has been under consideration for some months. Early in May I was concerned at the constant accidents caused by motor vehicles, and I obtained a report which showed that there are 21 motor cars in Hongkong, of which seven are privately owned, and 14 belong to four garages. No accidents had been caused by the former, while the latter had been responsible for 28 accidents during the 16 months from the 1st January, 1911, to the 30th April, 1912, which resulted in four persons being killed and four seriously injured, a very bad record. It may be argued that the public of Hongkong are unaccustomed to motor cars and that as time goes on these accidents will cease, but I am of opinion that, speaking generally, Hongkong, unlike the Straits and Shanghai, is unsuited for motor traffic except to a very limited extent, and I think this view is held by a large majority of those who are in a position to judge. The Government, therefore, considered it their duty to safeguard the public interests by closing to motor traffic all the roads of the Colony, except those which are suitable

for such traffic. Of the two roads which connect the City of Victoria with Aberdeen it was decided to close the Jubilee Road, as it is narrower and has sharper curves than the Pokfulam Road. I am convinced that the Regulations will in no degree restrict the proper employment of motor vehicles in this place, and they certainly will render our steep and narrow roads safer for that very large majority of the people who are unable to travel in motor cars, and who have hitherto been accustomed to use the roads without hindrance or danger.

HON. MR. STEWART—May I ask if any of these accidents occurred on Jubilee Road?

HIS EXCELLENCY—I can't say. I think not. We are not legislating for accidents that have occurred, but for possible accidents that might occur.

The State of a Peak Road

THE HON. MR. STEWART also asked:—Will the Government take steps to expedite the work which has now, for several months past, rendered the Craigmin Road impassable for chair traffic and dangerous to pedestrians?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS replied:—The whole of the road will be restored for traffic within 10 days from the present time given favourable weather.

Magistrates' Powers

HON. MR. MURRAY STEWART—I beg to give notice of my intention, at the next meeting of Council, to ask the following questions:—(1) Will the Government, at an early date, take whatever steps may be necessary to confer upon the Magistrates greater punitive powers than they at present possess for dealing with cases of criminal assault on children? (2) Will the Government, pending legislative action, call the attention of the Magistrates to the power which they at present possess of inflicting corporal punishment upon all persons convicted of this specially heinous offence?

Airships Ordinance

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of a Bill entitled, "An Ordinance to regulate the ascents, descents and flights of balloons, airships, aeroplanes and parachutes."—In doing so he said—Last year Ordinance No. 3 was passed with a view to the control of the ascents of these vessels from the Colony, but since then the industry has advanced, and there is no law to prevent ascents being made in the neighbouring country and flying over and inspecting the fortifications of this Colony. Therefore an amending Ordinance is necessary, and it is thought desirable to put all the regulations with regard to airships in one Bill, which is done.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

Council then went into committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

On Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL reported that the Bill had passed through committee without amendment, and, no member objecting, moved that it be read a third time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a third time and passed.

HIS EXCELLENCY—Council will adjourn *sine die*.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held afterwards, the Colonial Secretary presiding. The following votes were passed:—

General Works

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of Nine thousand Dollars (\$9,000) in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, Drainage, Miscellaneous Drainage Works, (f.) General Works.

Lighthouse Expenses

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of One thousand four hundred and nineteen Dollars (\$1,419) in aid of the vote Harbour Master's Department, Special Expenditure, G. — Lighthouses, Installation of Matthews Incandescent Oil Burners in Gap Rock, Waglan Island and Green Island Lighthouses.

Duty Pay

The Officer Administering the Government recommended the Council to vote a sum of Five hundred and seventy-one Dollars (\$571) in aid of the vote Harbour Master's Department, A.—Harbour Office, Personal Emoluments, Assistant Harbour Master, Duty Pay at £100 per annum.