

21ST DECEMBER, 1916.

PRESENT:—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, SIR FRANCIS HENRY MAY, K.C.M.G.

HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR-GENERAL F. VENTRIS (General Officer Commanding Troops in China).

HON. MR. CLAUD SEVERN (Colonial Secretary).

HON. MR. J. H. KEMP (Attorney-General).

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

HON. MR. E. R. HALLIFAX (Secretary for Chinese Affairs).

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

HON. MR. C. MCL. MESSER (Captain Superintendent of Police).

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

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

HON. MR. E. SHELLIM.

HON. MR. P. H. HOLYOAK.

HON. MR. LAU CHU PAK.

HON. MR. C. E. ANTON.

MR. A. G. M. FLETCHER (Clerk of Councils).

Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed.

The Governor's Protest

HIS EXCELLENCY said:—Gentlemen, before I proceed with the Orders of the Day, I wish to say a few words about a matter which has caused me and others in the Colony extreme annoyance. I refer to certain anonymous letters in the public Press commenting upon the attitude of Britons in this Colony in the matter of their duty to their country. For example, a letter was recently published in which the writer accused members of the local armed forces of the Colony of taking refuge in the uniform of the

Hongkong Volunteers or of the Special Police Reserve, being unwilling to do their duty to their King and country. This is an ignorant and mischievous statement, for which there is not a shadow of foundation. The policy of this Government has been to grant facilities to every man who can be spared from this Colony to go to the front, and to organise the remainder as members of the local armed forces, or in other capacities in work connected with the war. The number and efficiency of our local armed forces has made it possible to release a large portion of the regular garrison for service elsewhere. In carrying this policy into effect it has been my unpleasant duty to refuse the applications of scores of men to leave the Colony to go to the front, and I have no hesitation in saying that all those members of the armed forces in the Colony who are medically fit would volunteer for the front to-morrow if they were allowed to go. (Applause.) I trust that these ignorant criticisms will cease. If any persons resident in the Colony, or visiting it—and I suspect the criticisms emanate from visitors who are ignorant of the facts—have any heart-searchings on the subject of Hongkong's attitude towards the war, I trust that they will come direct to me or to the Colonial Secretary. We are always accessible and always ready to give every enlightenment. (Applause.)

New Member

The HON. MR. C. E. ANTON, who succeeds the Hon. Mr. D. Landale, took the oath of allegiance as a member of the Council.

Papers

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. the Governor, laid upon the table the quarterly return of excesses on sub-heads met by savings under heads of expenditure for the third quarter of 1916.

Kowloon Petition

HON. MR. P. H. HOLYOAK—I beg leave to lay upon the table a petition addressed to your Excellency by the ratepayers of Kowloon in connection with the joining up of Nathan and Coronation Roads, Kowloon. In 1911 a vote of \$20,000 was made with this definite purpose in view, though up to this time the obstructing hill between these two roads remains. The ratepayers urge in arguments—which are so fully laid out in this petition that it is unnecessary, and it would be undesirable, for me to add to them—that this hill should be removed, as part of the scheme for a road going from Kowloon into the hinterland, during the present year as part of the purposes of the Budget. I have carefully studied all the arguments put forward, especially those relating to the water mains, and I feel sure the petition will receive the indulgent sympathy of your Excellency, and if possible, that what is asked for will be carried out.

The petition was then handed to his Excellency.

Finance

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. the Governor, laid upon the table report of meeting of the Finance Committee held on October 31st (No. 9), and moved that it be adopted.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and this was agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. the Governor, laid upon the table Financial Minutes Nos. 39 to 59, and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and this was agreed to.

Grant to Chinese Dispensaries

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY proposed—That it is desirable that the sums of \$2,000 inserted in the Estimates for the years 1916 and 1917, under the headings Charitable Services, Grants in aid of other Institutions, \$2,000 for Chinese Plague Hospitals, be applied for the general purposes of the Chinese Public Dispensaries, at the discretion of the Secretary for Chinese Affairs.

HON. MR. WEI YUK seconded, and this was

agreed to.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR then left the Council and the Finance Committee was held.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held, the COLONIAL SECRETARY presiding.

Public Works

39.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of four hundred dollars (\$400) in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, New Territories, Buildings, Police Station, Lok Ma Chau.

THE CHAIRMAN—The amount expended in 1915 was \$23,251, and then there was an additional sum of \$2,500, making a total of \$25,757. The total cost of the station and the boat-shed will be \$26,151, and the estimated cost was \$25,600, and the extra cost necessitates this vote. The boat-shed site had to be excavated out of the soft mud on the banks of the river.

The vote was agreed to.

41.—The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of three thousand five hundred dollars (\$3,500) in aid of the following votes:—

<i>Public Works, Recurrent.</i>	
Hongkong, Miscellaneous, Dredging	
Foreshores	\$2,800
Kowloon, Lighting, Electric Lighting	700
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Total	\$3,500
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49.—The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of twelve thousand one hundred and fifty dollars (\$12,150) in aid of the following votes, viz.:

Public Works, Recurrent, Hongkong, Water Works, Maintenance of City and Hill District	12,000
Public Works, Extraordinary, Hongkong, Miscellaneous, Boundary Stones	150
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Total	\$12,150
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50.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of one hundred and thirty-nine thousand five hundred dollars (\$139,500) in aid of the following votes, *viz.*:—

<i>Hongkong—Buildings.</i>	
Quarters for Subordinate Officers, Happy Valley	\$6,000
Latrine Accommodation at Kennedy Town	1,800
<i>Miscellaneous.</i>	
Miscellaneous Works	1,700
<i>Water Works.</i>	
Tytam Tuk Scheme, Second Section	130,000
Total	\$139,500

THE CHAIRMAN—The amount was reduced in the estimates for the current year by \$4,000, from \$12,000 to \$8,000, and the receipts from the dredging of sewer and outfalls has fallen from \$3,708 to \$117 during the year. The supplementary vote of \$2,800 is required. New electric lights have been instituted in Kowloon. The amount of \$12,000 has been incurred at the Tytam reservoir, where the banks were washed away and had to be rebuilt. The \$150 has been caused by the many sales of land and the necessity for erecting boundary stones. The item of \$6,000, for quarters, is a re-vote. A number of new houses has been built at Kennedy Town, and this necessitates the erection of a latrine. The amount of \$1,700 was due to alterations in connection with the annex to the Government offices to accommodate the staff of the Public Works Department. The item of \$130,000 is due to the greater progress which has been made with the work at Tytam Tuk than had been anticipated.

The votes were agreed to.

47.—The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of two thousand six hundred dollars (\$2,600) in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, New Territories, Buildings, Police Station, Castle Peak.

THE CHAIRMAN—This is for a temporary station which has to be built at Castle Peak. The residents in the neighbourhood, which has developed very rapidly, urge that the number of armed robberies taking place in that district denote that greater protection is required. It is proposed to build a temporary station at a cost of \$1,400, and a sum of

\$1,200 is required for a telephone connecting the place with Pingshan.

The vote was agreed to.

56.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of four hundred and fifty dollars (\$450) in aid of the Public Works, Extraordinary, New Territories, Miscellaneous, Deep Bay Buoying Channel.

THE CHAIRMAN—This vote is for providing a new system of buoys and moorings. It is a very important channel for the police launches.

The vote was agreed to.

57.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of three thousand dollars (\$3,000) in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, Hongkong, Miscellaneous, Dredging off Kowloon Point.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—The cost has exceeded the estimated sum, and this extra amount is required to complete the work. The dredger had to work longer than was anticipated, and it was not in a suitable condition for carrying out the work. Recently, for example, the dredger had to dredge a cargo of stone which had been deposited by some junk sunk during a typhoon. It is impossible to accurately ascertain the condition of the bottom of the sea, and elevations were found in some places causing more dredging than was anticipated.

The vote was agreed to.

59.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of five hundred dollars (\$500) in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, Hongkong, Communications, Roads, General Works.

THE CHAIRMAN—This sum is required to pay for improvements recently effected in the roads at Kennedy Town, where a large number of Chinese houses have been erected. As they are erected the Government are responsible for the making up of the roads.

The vote was agreed to.

Police and Prison

45.—The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of eight hundred dollars (\$800) in aid of the following votes, viz.:—

Police and Prison Departments.

C.—Prison, Other Charges:—

Clothing and Shoes for Staff	\$ 500
Fuel and Soap	200
Gratuities to Prisoners for Industrial Labour	100
	—
Total	\$ 800
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THE CHAIRMAN—These items are due to the increased cost of materials. The last one is also due to the increased cost in the work performed.

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—I think we should have an explanation of the last item. It seems a most extraordinary thing for prisoners to be paid for their work.

THE CAPTAIN SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE—It is the usual thing. Certain prisoners, when they go out, are entitled to a certain sum. It is a sum which is given to men of good conduct.

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—I was unaware that prisoners were paid anything at all for work done. It seems rather extraordinary to me.

THE CHAIRMAN—The hon. member has no doubt visited the gaol and seen the prisoners at work.

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—Yes, I have seen the work being done, but my impression was that it was part of the prisoners' discipline, and not that they were paid for it.

THE CAPTAIN SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE—It is the custom in gaols to give a little sum, as many of the convicts, when they come out, are absolutely penniless.

THE CHAIRMAN—It is an old system.

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—All right, sir. I was merely asking for the sake of information.

The vote was agreed to.

55.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150) in aid of the vote Police and Prison Department C.—Prison, Other Charges, Light.

THE CHAIRMAN—This is in connection with the lighting of the warders' quarters, and the extra cost of the remaining installation of gas.

The vote was agreed to.

Miscellaneous

42.—The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of eleven thousand four hundred and twenty dollars (\$11,420) in aid of the following votes, viz.:—

Miscellaneous Services.

Printing and Binding:—

Blue Book,	\$ 50
Civil Service List	70
Government Gazette	300
Miscellaneous Papers	1,000
Ordinance, Regulations and Reports	1,000
Stationery	9,000
	—
Total	\$11,420
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THE CHAIRMAN—These are due entirely to the increased cost of paper. Every effort has been made to keep down expenses in stationery. It is impossible to get the mass of paper required from England, and we had to go to India for it, and the result was a greatly increased cost.

The vote was agreed to.

51.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of fifty dollars (\$50) in aid of the vote Miscellaneous Services, Bonuses for Interpreters and Translators.

THE CHAIRMAN—This has been occasioned by the new system of bonuses to interpreters who pass examinations. Two of the men at the Supreme Court, the interpreter and the translator, earned bonuses of \$450 each, and this sum is required to make up that amount.

The vote was agreed to.

58.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of one hundred and five thousand one hundred dollars (\$105,100) in aid of Miscellaneous Services, Coal.

THE CHAIRMAN—This is for coal which has been bought in Japan for next year. It was advsable to take the opportunity of purchasing coal at a lower price than was anticipated in the future and it was necessary to provide the money before the end of this year. The coal was bought at a very favourable price and we have been paying the cost of the coal as each cargo arrived. It is proposed to carry out the same process next year.

The vote was agreed to.

Kowloon-Canton Railway

40.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of twelve thousand one hundred and ninety-five dollars (\$12,195) in aid of the following votes:—

A.—Working Expenses.

Locomotive, Carriage, and Wagon Expenses, Other Charges,	
IIa.—Running Expenses in connection with cleaning Carriages and Wagons,	
(2) Running Stores, Carriages and Wagons	\$ 600
III.—Fuel, (1) Coal	10,520
VI.—Repairs and Renewals of Vehicles	
(2) Goods Vehicles, (a) Wages	500
Fanling Branch Line, Locomotive, Carriage, and Wagon Expenses, Other Charges	
Coal	325
Running Repairs, Locomotive	250
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Total	\$12,195
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54.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of two hundred dollars (\$200) in aid of the vote Kowloon-Canton Railway, *A.—Working Expenses, Traffic Expenses, Personal Emoluments, (4) Telephone Staff—(a) Wages, Linesmen.*

THE CHAIRMAN—Both these financial minutes relate to the Kowloon-Canton railway. A sum of \$3,000 appears in the estimates for the current year for the first item, which was a reduced sum, the amount asked for having been \$3,578. The manager of the railway did his utmost to keep below the vote, but he finds that it is impossible to perform the work which he had to do except at a cost of \$400 more

than was provided in the estimates, and he estimates that up to the end of the year he will require a sum of \$600 more. The work has been done under contract, and although he reduced these items as much as he could, he has not been able to keep within the estimates. The cost of coal is much higher and the next item, \$10,520, is required for the extra cost. The item of \$500, for renewals and repairs has been necessitated by the putting of very necessary new roofs on wagons. The vote for the Fanling branch line is due to the extra cost of coal. The vote of \$200 is a small addition to the cost of the working expenses, telephone staff and the wages of linesmen. The manager estimates that the increase is likely to continue, and that \$200 will cover the extra cost.

Both votes were agreed to.

46.—The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of four thousand and seventy-five dollars (\$4,075) in aid of the vote Kowloon-Canton Railway, *B.—Expenses of Construction, VIII.—Stations and Buildings, (a) Buildings and Fixtures.*

THE CHAIRMAN—This item is caused by the running shed at Hunghom, which will cost \$200, and also for certain repairs executed in the drivers' quarters, which will cost \$1,100. The total amount required is set out in the minute.

The vote was agreed to.

Judicial and Legal

43.—The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150) in aid of the vote Judicial and Legal Departments, *C.—District Officer, Other Charges, Southern District, Transport.*

THE CHAIRMAN—This small item is due almost entirely to the increased cost of hiring a launch.

The vote was agreed to.

44.—The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of six hundred and fifty dollars (\$650) in aid of the following votes, *viz.:*—

Judicial and Legal Departments.

D.—Attorney-General:—

Personal Emoluments, Duty Pay of a temporary Assistant	\$ 500
Other Charges, Incidental Expenses	150
Total	\$ 650

THE CHAIRMAN—The Attorney-General had additional assistance in his department, and there was no duty pay available for the officer, and a sum of \$500 had to be provided for duty pay. The \$150 was for furniture for the office of the assistant.

The vote was agreed to.

Education

48.—The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of three hundred and thirty-five dollars (\$335) in aid of the following votes, viz.:—

Education, Other Charges.

Director of Education, Incidental Expenses	\$ 55
Director of Education, Transport	150
Queen's College, Incidental Expenses	100
Saiyingpun School, Electric Fans and Lights ..	30
Total	\$ 335

THE CHAIRMAN—These small sums are required for the Education Department. The Director of Education underestimated his vote for incidentals. The inspectors have been visiting schools more frequently than hitherto. There have also been extensions in the Queen's College reference library. The supply of electric light to Saiyingpun School was cut down this year, but it has not proved quite sufficient.

The vote was agreed to.

Harbour-Master Department

52.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of twenty-five thousand eight hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$25,825) in aid of the following votes, viz.:—

Special Expenditure.

Repairing and overhauling the Steam Tender <i>Stanley</i>	\$23,250
Installation of Wireless Apparatus on board the Steam Tender <i>Stanley</i>	2,575
Total	\$25,825

THE CHAIRMAN.—The launch was found to be in a very bad state, and it has been thoroughly overhauled and repaired. A wireless apparatus has also been installed on the *Stanley*, which will prove very useful for communicating with distant outlying parts of the Colony.

HON. MR. SHELLIM—This is a rather big item.

THE CHAIRMAN—The cost was cut down. The work was done by Taikoo, and the estimate was reduced by about \$1,890. The Government Marine Surveyor reports that the *Stanley* had been practically gutted, and that as a result of the repairs the value of the *Stanley* has been increased by 100 per cent. He had no hesitation in saying that the money had been well spent.

The vote was agreed to.

Post Office

53.—The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of six hundred and sixty dollars (\$660) in aid of the vote Post Office, Special Expenditure, Parcel Office—Fittings.

THE CHAIRMAN—A sum of \$610 was put in the estimates for electric plant, but it is impossible to go on with this work until the telephone lines have been laid underground. The Postmaster-General had also informed us that special fittings were required for the parcels office, owing to the shipping companies only taking small parcels. This had resulted in the Post Office having to handle an enormously increased number of parcels.

The vote was agreed to.

H.E. THE GOVERNOR then returned to the Council Chamber.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY—This being, presumably, the last meeting of the Council during the current year, I have to report that Financial Minutes 39 to 59 have been considered by the Finance Committee, and agreed to, and I move that they be adopted.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and this motion was approved.