

28TH JUNE, 1897.

PRESENT:—

His EXCELLENCY the Governor, Sir WILLIAM ROBINSON, G.C.M.G.

His EXCELLENCY Major-General BLACK, C.B. (Officer Commanding the Forces).

Hon. J. H. STEWART LOCKHART (Colonial Secretary).

Hon. W. M. GOODMAN (Attorney-General).

Hon. T. SERCOMBE SMITH (Colonial Treasurer).

Hon. W. CHATHAM (Acting Director of Public Works).

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

Hon. R. MURRAY RUMSEY (Harbour Master).

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

Hon. Ho KAI.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD.

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

Hon. J. J. BELL-IRVING.

Hon. WEI A YUK,

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

MINUTES.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

PAPERS.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid upon the table the following papers:—The Educational Report for 1896, the report of the Superintendent of the Fire Brigade for 1896, and an additional by-law made under section 13 of Ordinance 15 of 1894. In reference to the by-law the Colonial Secretary said—Some weeks ago certain by-laws made by the Sanitary Board were brought before the Council. Among those by-laws was one which Your Excellency decided, in deference to the wishes of this Council, should be referred to the Commission now inquiring into the question of insanitary properties. That Commission considered the by-law and returned it to the Government in an amended form. It was then referred to the Sanitary Board and the Sanitary Board considered it and passed it. My object in laying it on the table to-day is to have it published so that the public may have an opportunity of considering it. At the next meeting I will move, with Your Excellency's permission, that it be approved by this Council.

FINANCIAL MINUTE.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table Financial Minute No. 14 and moved that it be referred to the Finance Committee after the amount stated in it had been altered from \$251 to \$346.42.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded.

Carried.

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE.

The ACTING DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS moved the adoption of the report of the proceedings of the Public

Works Committee.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Carried.

COST OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD, in pursuance of notice, asked the following question:—In view of Your Excellency having received several applications for an increase of salary from officers in the service of the Government and your proposal to refer these to a Committee for consideration and report, will the Government lay upon the table a statement shewing the total cost of or expenditure on the administration of the Government, including pensions, exchange compensation, and all other allowances, during the years 1895 and 1896 separately?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY—Sir, in reply to the hon. member I beg to lay upon the table a return which gives the information asked for.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS.

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD gave notice of the following questions:—

RETRENCHMENT.

With reference to the Report of the Retrenchment Commission will the Government lay upon the table a copy of the despatches and instructions received from the Secretary of State for the Colonies in relation thereto, and in connection with applications in respect of salaries similar to those recently referred by His Excellency the Governor to a Committee?

GOLD PAYMENTS.

Will the Government lay upon the table a return shewing all sterling payments made in England for any purpose or in the colony on a gold basis with the equivalent dollar amounts disbursed by the Treasury in respect thereof, such return to commence with 1890 and to include the estimated payments for 1897 and 1898?

TAIPINGSHAN.

What steps do the Government now propose to take with a view to the speedy disposal of the Crown land available at Taipingshan and what were the causes of the failure of the Government to obtain a bid for any lot at the recent sale by public auction?

GOLD LOANS.

Will the Government lay upon the table a detailed statement or account of the loan of £200,000 raised in 1887, shewing separately in sterling and in dollars all receipts and all payments in connection with or in respect of the principal, interest, and sinking fund, with

the dates and the rates of exchange at which each item was converted from sterling into dollars or *vice versa*, in short, a detailed account shewing how much interest per cent, per annum the ratepayers have paid for the loan in question, and a similar account to date in respect, of the last loan of £200,000 floated in 1894 shewing in addition what amount thereof is still available, if any, how and in what way the monies have been expended, and what are the available assets in respect of said disbursements? The statement to shew in what securities the sinking fund has been invested, the cost thereof in sterling and in dollars, the annual revenue derived therefrom and the present market value of the securities.

SUPPLEMENTARY APPROPRIATION
ORDINANCE.

The COLONIAL TREASURER moved the first reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance to authorise the appropriation of a further supplementary sum of \$900 to defray the charges of the year 1895.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The Bill was read a first time and passed through all its stages without amendment.

THE TITLE OF THE COLONIAL SURGEON.

The ATTORNEY -GENERAL moved the first reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance to give effect to the change in the name and style of the office heretofore known as that of the Colonial Surgeon.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

Bill read the first time.

Before the Bill was read the second time the ATTORNEY -GENERAL said—I understand that Dr. Atkinson's substantive appointment of Colonial Surgeon takes effect to-day, and the name by which he will be known is that of the Principal Civil Medical Officer. This change has been brought about by instructions received from the Secretary of State, and to prevent any difficulties which might arise this Ordinance has been drafted on the same lines as the Ordinance changing the title of the Surveyor-General Director of Public Works. In dealing with documents a quibble might possibly arise as to whether the officer known as the Colonial Surgeon is the same as the Principal Civil Medical Officer, and

it is as well that the new title should be formally recognized by the Legislative Council.

The Bill was read the second time.

In Committee on the Bill the Hon. T. H. Whitehead said it seemed to him that the first and only clause was somewhat mixed up. He had not had time to look up the Ordinance changing the title of the Surveyor-General, but he thought the clause might be made simpler and equally as effective if it read after the word "occurs," such Ordinance, order, &c., shall be read and construed as if the words Principal Civil Medical Officer had been contained therein instead of the words Colonial Surgeon.

The ATTORNEY -GENERAL said that would not meet the case. He quite appreciated the hon. member's desire to make the clause simpler, but the Ordinance related to some matters which were now past. For instance, in regard to the pension minute, he was afraid the Colonial Surgeon would not like to have the words "Principal Civil Medical Officer" substituted because that might have the effect of giving Dr. Atkinson Dr. Ayres's pension. (Laughter.)

Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD said he had no desire to deprive the previous Colonial Surgeon of his pension. (Laughter.)

Council then resumed and the bill was read the third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council adjourned *sine die*.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee was then held. Hon. J. H. Stewart Lockhart (Colonial Secretary) presided and all the members were present.

MINUTES.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The CHAIRMAN said the only minute he had to bring forward was one in which the Governor recommended the Council to vote the sum of \$346.42 in aid of the vote "Repairs to Post Office steam launch." The launch was examined by the Government Marine Surveyor, who reported that the repairs were absolutely necessary.

Vote recommended.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Committee then adjourned.