

27TH JUNE, 1899.

PRESENT:—

His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR, Sir HENRY BLAKE, G.C.M.G.

His EXCELLENCY Major-General GASCOIGNE C.M.G. (Commanding the Troops).

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. T. H. WHITEHEAD.

Hon. Dr. HO KAI.

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

Hon. WEI A YUK.

Hon. J. J. KESWICK.

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

THE HON. J. J. KESWICK TAKES THE OATH.

The Hon. J. J. KESWICK took the oath as a member of the Council.

PAPER.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL laid on the table a report on the health and sanitary condition of the Colony of Hongkong for 1898.

PETITION.

His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR—A petition

with reference to piers and wharves has been sent in to be laid on the table.

THE HON. T. H. WHITEHEAD'S QUESTIONS.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I rise to ask the questions standing in my name.

The questions were as follows:—

1.—Will the Government lay upon the table a statement of the amount expended by the Public Works Department for repairs and alterations to "Beaconsfield" and of the repayments made by the owner of the building in respect of the former; also state for the information of the Council under what authority this expenditure has been disbursed?

2.—Will the Government lay upon the table a statement of the total expenditure payable out of the Colonial Treasury in connection with the preparations for and the occupation of the Colony's new territory leased by China to Great Britain per the Convention of 30th June, 1898?

3.—What steps have the Government taken to bring the Police Force up to its full strength as authorised by Ordinance, and are the Government prepared to introduce an Ordinance sanctioning the increase of the force to a strength sufficient for the adequate policing of the colony's new territory?

4.—Will the Government lay upon the table a copy of the correspondence which passed between the British Government and the Imperial Government of China and the Colonial Government on the subject of the

arrangements to be made in accordance with the Convention of 27th June, 1898 for the better protection of the Chinese revenue from loss by the smuggling of opium from Hongkong into China?

5.—Are the Government prepared to introduce a Bill to amend the Women and Girls Protection Ordinance on similar lines, so far as circumstances permit, to those embodied in an "Ordinance to amend the Women and Girls

Protection Ordinance, 1896," read a first time in the Singapore Legislative Council on Tuesday, 13th instant—the outcome of correspondence between the Straits Government, the Straits Settlements Association, and the Secretary of State for the Colonies; and if not, will the Government inform the Council of the cause of the delay?

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The answer to the first question put by the honourable gentleman is, payments to contractors \$11,200. Mr. Belilios's legal expenses 5,100.25, A. Hok's expenses \$4,251.45. Total \$20,551.70. Refunded by Mr. Belilios \$1,425. Sale of old material \$50—\$1475.00. Balance \$19,076.70. The answer to the second question is, this amount cannot yet be ascertained. The answer to the third question is, by the power conferred on the Governor by section 5 of Ordinance No. 14 of 1887, the strength of the Police Force has been increased by 75 Indian Police and 53 Chinese Police, over and above the strength provided by Ordinance, to provide for the requirements of the new territory. Steps are being taken to further increase the Force to enable the opening, as they are built, of additional Police Stations in the new territory to those already occupied. Such increase can be made under section 5 of the existing Ordinance and a new Ordinance is not necessary for the purpose. The answer to the fourth question is, the correspondence is laid on the table. (The type written copy is laid on the table pending printed copies coming from the printers.) The answer to the fifth question is, an identical despatch with that addressed to the Government of the Straits Settlements was received here on the 9th June, 1899, and steps are being taken to embody its suggestions in a Bill that will be submitted to council with the least possible delay.

THE HON. E. R. BELILIOS'S QUESTIONS.

The Hon. E. R. BELILIOS—I beg to ask the questions standing in my name.

The questions were as follows:—

1.—Will the Government state whether or not there has been any change, improvement, or progress in the mode of treatment of the plague patients in the Colonial Hospitals since the disease appeared in epidemic form in 1894?

2.—As the proportion of deaths to cases is larger here than in India, where considerable progress in treating the disease has been made, why has not constant (say, weekly) communication been opened with the Indian Government for the purpose of securing the latest information as to treatment of patients?

3.—If no such communication has been

attempted, will the Government take steps to secure it without further delay?

4.—Does the Government supply the medical staff at the hospitals with all the necessary instruments (such as microscopes, &c.) for the purpose of diagnosing cases when first presented? If not, will the Government take steps to procure all the needful appliances for the conduct of medical investigations without delay?

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—The answer to the first question put by the honourable member is that the various new remedies have been tried but without any appreciable success. A supply of Haffkine's prophylactic serum, which is the only one that appears to have been a success, was obtained from India some weeks ago, but the Chinese do not avail themselves of the opportunity of being protected from the disease. The answer to the second question is, the proportionate mortality in this Colony and India is about the same. Here in the epidemic of 1894 it was 93.4 per cent; in 1898 it was 81.79. The Government Medical Officers are in constant receipt of the latest Medical information on the subject. The answer to the third question is, such communication is not necessary. The answer to the fourth question is No. The microscope in use hitherto is the one presented to Dr. Lowson by the Japan Government and lent by him. The question of procuring microscopes is receiving attention.

NATURALISATION.

On the motion of the ACTING-ATTORNEY GENERAL seconded by the COLONIAL TREASURER, the first reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance for the naturalisation of Wong Ping Lam *alias* Wong U Kai was passed.

The ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL—I beg to move the second reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance for the naturalisation of Tsoi Yen-shan. Hon members will see from the preamble to the Bill that Mr. Tsoi Yen-shan is a native of the village of Sheung Chak in the province of Kwangtung, in the empire of China. is now employed as a clerk in the Registrar-General's Office, Victoria, in this Colony, and has resided in this Colony for the last four years, and has declared his intention of residing here permanently.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded and the motion was carried.

On the Bill being considered in committee,

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD said—I observe that a clause which appears in other ordinances of a similar nature, namely, "And is possessed of landed property in this colony," is omitted from the Bill. I should like to know what the

Secretary of State's instructions are with reference to the naturalisation of Chinese or other foreigners.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—There is no necessary land qualification.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—Can you state what the instructions of the Secretary of State are?

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I do not think any definite instructions have been laid down. It has been laid down generally that a man should have an intention to reside here

permanently, that he should have been here some years, and be of good conduct

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—On reading the Bill over the clause about "possessed of landed property" being inserted in one Ordinance and omitted from another struck me.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—As a rule we do put in the clause about a man being the of possessor landed property.

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

On the motion of the ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL, seconded by the COLONIAL TREASURER, the Bill entitled an Ordinance for the naturalization of Fan Nang, alias Fan Sau, alias Fan Pat Shan, alias Fan Tun Shin, was read a second time.

The Bill having been considered in committee, it was read a third time and passed, on the motion of the ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL, seconded by the COLONIAL TREASURER.

THE PIERS ORDINANCE, 1899.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I do not propose to proceed to-day with the second reading of the Bill entitled the Piers Ordinance, 1899. Certain facts with reference to this Bill have been laid before me, and I have not had full time to consider those facts, and therefore I do not propose to proceed with the second reading to-day.

THE PUBLIC HEALTH ORDINANCE.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to propose the second reading of the Bill entitled an Ordinance to further amend the Public Health Ordinance, 1887 Hon. members will see from the Bill that it proposes to amend section 70 of Ordinance 24 of 1887. I will read that section to the Council, and then they will comprehend the meaning of this amendment. The section says:—"If any tenement house, or domestic building, or portion thereof, shall be found to be in an overcrowded condition the Board shall by a written notice require the tenant of the same, or any portion thereof, and also, if necessary, the householder, to abate such overcrowding, within a period of one calendar month; such notice shall specify the cubic capacity available for habitation in such tenement house, or other domestic building, and the number of persons which may be legally accommodated therein. If the said notice be not obeyed it shall be lawful for the said Board to apply to a Magistrate, who on sufficient cause shewn, shall summon before him the tenant or occupier of such dwelling house, or such householder. If the person summoned admits, or

if it be proved to the satisfaction of the said Magistrate that the said house is over-crowded, the Magistrate shall make an order for the abatement of the nuisance forthwith. On the hearing of the said matter the Magistrate may make such order for the inspection, at any hour of the night or day, of the said house, as the circumstances of the case may require. Such order to continue in force for a period not exceeding one month."

Hon. members will see from that section that a month's notice is to be given to the tenant of the house which is over-crowded, and if it is found that by the time the month's notice is up the tenant has left the house, no legal proceedings can be taken under this section. To remedy this it is proposed to substitute the words "one week" in place of the words "one calendar month" in the first paragraph of that section.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded and the motion was carried.

The Council having considered the Bill in committee, it was read a third time and passed, on the motion of the ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded by the COLONIAL TREASURER.

THE ARMS CONSOLIDATION ORDINANCE.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I do not propose to proceed at this Council meeting with the second reading of the Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Arms Consolidation Ordinance, 1895. It has been represented to me that to increase the fee to \$1,200 per annum might possibly weigh heavily on some small retail dealers and I should like to have more information on the question and to consider the point further before moving the second reading.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—It was my intention to have moved the adjournment of the consideration of this Bill for a month, and to direct the Council's attention to what took place in connection with this question in Council.

His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR—The honourable member has nothing before the Council.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—Well, sir, I desire only to repeat what your predecessor said in this Council on the subject in April, 1896. He said:—"Gentlemen, the second item on the agenda paper is the first reading of a Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend and consolidate the law relating to the carriage and possession of arms and ammunition. I propose to withdraw that Ordinance from the list. It is a very delicate and a very difficult question and requires to be very carefully dealt with. You have seen from the newspapers that there has been an abnormal

exportation of arms from the colony to Macao and probably to Canton, and I shall be very much obliged to the unofficial members if they will kindly act on a Committee to report to me on the subject. I propose that the Attorney-General; the Harbour Master, and Commander Hastings represent the officials, and I shall be obliged if Mr. Chater, Dr. Ho Kai, and Mr. Whitehead will agree to serve on the unofficial side to furnish a report and see what it is proper to do to supervise the exportation of arms and ammunition." The unofficial

members named signified their willingness to serve on the Committee, and His Excellency thanked them.

HIS EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR—I am afraid I cannot allow the hon. member to go any further. The Attorney-General is not proceeding with the Bill at present, and therefore there is no question.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—I was only going to suggest that the evidence which that Committee took and the report of the Committee should be printed and furnished to the members. The Committee sat for a considerable time, took a considerable amount of evidence and a great deal of trouble in the matter.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—Did they ever draw up a report? I am not sure.

The CAPTAIN SUPERINTENDENT OF POLICE — The committee never did report.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—The Hon. Attorney-General was chairman of the committee, and if no report was sent in he must have had good reason for the omission.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—We came to the conclusion that the committee could not do anything, and we resolved to do nothing.

The Hon. T. H. WHITEHEAD—The evidence, I think, might be printed.

THE LIQUOR LICENSES ORDINANCE.

On the motion of the ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL, seconded by the COLONIAL TREASURER, the Bill entitled an Ordinance to amend the Liquor Licenses Ordinance, 1898, passed the second reading.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I shall propose that we go into committee on this Bill at the next meeting of the Council.

THE CATTLE DISEASES, ETC., ORDINANCE.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I beg to move the second reading of the Bill entitled an Ordinance to further amend the Cattle Diseases, Slaughter Houses, and Markets Ordinance. It will be seen from the objects and reasons of the Bill printed at the foot that the object of section 2 of the Bill is to reduce the maximum amount payable by the Government of this colony as compensation for slaughtered cattle, it having been found that the sums recently paid as compensation have reached a very considerable total. I may mention that about \$14,000 has been paid as compensation since the beginning of this year. Sub-section 4 of section 3 of Ordinance 17 of 1887 provided that the maximum amount of compensation payable for each animal slaughtered should be \$50 only, but Ordinance 12 of 1890 raised the amount

payable to \$200. It is proposed by this Bill to reduce the amount of compensation payable to \$100 per head. The object of the amendment mentioned in section 3 is to make it a punishable offence for any person to slaughter any animal or dress any carcase except within a proper slaughter-house, even though such animal or carcase may not be intended "for sale." The object of section 4 of the Bill is to make it a punishable offence to counterfeit or make use of or attempt to counterfeit or make use of the official stamp which is used to mark beef or mutton; and section 5 authorizes the destruction of any carcase of beef or mutton which does not bear the official stamp.

The Hon. E. R. BELILIOS—I ask you to postpone the consideration of this Bill for at least a month, as it would impose hardship upon the Mahomedan section of the community, who have been accustomed to slaughter sheep and goats whenever they want meat for their own use. To make it a penal offence to slaughter sheep or goats in their own houses would be a great hardship. Such a provision is not known in India. It is a common practice, especially during festival time, for men who have any means to slaughter sheep in their own houses.

HIS EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR—I would suggest that this motion be seconded, and when the Bill goes into committee the point raised by the Hon. E. R. Belilios can be considered. I think it is a very proper point to bring before the Council. No doubt the Attorney-General will be glad to consider in the meantime any suggestions which the hon. gentleman may make to him.

The COLONIAL TREASURER seconded the motion, for the second reading which was passed.

The ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL stated that he would move at the next meeting that Council go into Committee on the Bill.

APPROPRIATION.

The COLONIAL TREASURER—I beg to move the second reading of the 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. Excluding the consideration of loan account, the actual excess of the expenditure over estimate is \$209,000, but owing to the method of accounting the sum now required to be sanctioned is nearly one lakh more. The chief excesses in detail are on account of additional pensions, salaries paid in England, Post Office charges, compensation

which was under-estimated, plague, and some items under Public Works Extraordinary. At the same time, however, that the expenditure increased by \$209,000 the revenue for 1898 exceeded that estimated by \$223,000, and the balance of assets on 31st December was \$90,000. The balance of revenue over expenditure and of assets over liabilities would have been greater by \$57,000, had they not been what may be described as fictitiously diminished owing to excess purchase

of stores. I shall be happy to answer any questions.

The ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL, seconded and the motion was carried.

On the motion of the COLONIAL TREASURER, seconded by the ACTING ATTORNEY-GENERAL, the consideration of the Bill was referred to the Finance Committee.

The Hon. E. R. BELILIOS—While on this subject may I respectfully suggest that when the next estimate is being considered a little more care be taken to place as near as possible the exact figure before the Council. These Supplementary Appropriation Bills generally come in the year after, and in a small colony like ours the sum mentioned is rather large. It is more than 10 per cent. on the revenue.

The COLONIAL TREASURER reminded the hon. gentleman that the revenue, which is estimated at the same time as the expenditure, had increased by more.

His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR—May I suggest that the hon. member and the Colonial Treasurer fight the matter out in the Finance Committee? (Laughter.)

THE LAWS RELATING TO MERCHANT SHIPPING.

The ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL—The next item has been put down by inadvertence as the second reading of the Bill entitled an Ordinance to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to Merchant Shipping, the duties of the Harbour Master, the control and management of the waters of the Colony, and the regulation of vessels navigating the same. As a matter of fact, sir, this Bill was read a second time and referred to the Law Committee on the 13th Feb., and the Law Committee have been suspending their labours until such time as the Chamber of Commerce sent in their suggestions which they have done recently. With regard to the Law Committee I have to ask your Excellency to appoint a member in the place of the Hon. J. J. Bell-Irving, who is absent from the Colony.

His EXCELLENCY the GOVERNOR invited the Hon. J. J. Keswick to take the position, an invitation which was accepted.

ADJOURNED.

The Council adjourned sine die.
