

13TH OCTOBER, 1905.

PRESENT:—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, MAJOR SIR MATTHEW NATHAN, K.C.M.G.

Hon. Colonel C. H. DARLING, R. E. (Commanding the Troops).

Hon. Mr. T. SERCOMBE SMITH (Colonial Secretary).

Hon. Sir H. S. BERKELEY, K.C. (Attorney-General).

Hon. Mr. L. A. M. JOHNSTON (Colonial Treasurer).

Hon. Mr. E. A. IRVING (Registrar-General.)

Hon. Mr. BASIL H. TAYLOR, R.N. (Harbour Master).

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

Hon. Mr. R. SHEWAN.

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

Hon. Dr. HO KAI, M.B., C.M., C.M.G.

Hon. Mr. GERSHOM STEWART.

Hon. Mr. WEI YUK.

Hon. Mr. W. C. DICKSON.

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

MINUTES.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

STANDING COMMITTEES.

HIS EXCELLENCY—In accordance with standing order No. 47 I appoint the following committees:—Finance Committee—All the members of the Council except the Governor with the hon. the Colonial Secretary as chairman. Law Committee—The hon. the Attorney General as chairman, and the hon. the Harbour Master, the hon. Dr. Ho Kai, the hon. Mr. Shewan, and the hon. Mr. Wei Yuk as members. Public Works Committee—The hon. the Director of Public Works as chairman, and the hon. the Colonial Treasurer, the hon. Sir Paul Chater, the hon. Mr. Dickson, and the hon. Mr. Gershom Stewart as members.

FINANCIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the minutes Nos. 43 to 48 be referred to the Finance Committee.

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

RAILWAY LOANS.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I rise to ask leave to introduce and read for the first time a bill entitled An Ordinance for Raising the Sum of Two Million Pounds by Loan for the Purpose of Defraying the Cost of a Railway from Kowloon and for other Railway Purposes.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

HIS EXCELLENCY—Gentlemen, I have called you together for an extraordinary meeting to pass the Railways Loan Bill of 1905. This Bill, in addition to

authorising me to raise funds for the construction of the Hongkong section of the railway from Canton to Kowloon, is connected with the agreement announced in the "China Mail" of the 7th and the "South China Morning Post" of the 9th instant. It is not in the public interest that I should dilate here on the subject of that Agreement, the general terms of which have appeared in the public press, nor is this necessary as I have reason to believe honourable members have sufficient knowledge of the principles guiding the Government's policy in the matter. The amount included in the Bill makes ample provision for the expenditure it is intended to cover. It is only an authority for me to raise funds as occasion requires, and I will see that you are informed when any loan is actually raised on that authority.

The motion was agreed to.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I rise to move the suspension of the Standing Orders in order to move the second reading of this Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded and the motion was agreed to.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I rise now to move that this Bill be read a second time. The reasons which have lead to its introduction have been stated by His Excellency to the House, as well as the reason why the Bill should be passed into law at once. The objects of the Bill are sufficiently set out in the preamble to obviate the necessity of my taking up the time of this Council in explanations as to the details of this Bill. It has long been the hope of every person interested in the colony of Hongkong that a railway from Kowloon to the frontier should be built, and this Bill gives the opportunity of seeing the accomplishment of that desire.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL—I move that the Council resolve itself into committee to consider this Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the motion was agreed to.

The Bill was then considered clause by clause.

On the Council resuming,

HIS EXCELLENCY said—I have to report that the Bill entitled An Ordinance for Raising the Sum of Two Million Pounds by Loan for the Purpose of Defraying the Cost of a Railway from Kowloon and for other Railway Purposes, has passed through committee with only verbal amendments.

On the motion of the ATTORNEY-GENERAL seconded by the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the Bill was read a third time and passed.

HIS EXCELLENCY—The Council stands adjourned till after the meeting of the Finance Committee.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

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

EDUCATIONAL.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of Fifty-three Dollars (\$53) in aid of the vote, Education—Other Charges. Belilios Public School, for incidental expenses.

JUDICIAL AND LEGAL.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of Six hundred dollars (\$600) in aid of the vote, Judicial and Legal Departments, Land Registry Office, for New Territories,— Other Charges, for Language Allowance to Mr. J. R. Wood, assistant land officer, who has passed the examination in the Cantonese dialect.

RAINSTORM DAMAGES.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of two thousand three hundred and fifty dollars (\$2,350) in aid of the vote, Public Works Extraordinary, for rainstorm damages.

PRINTING.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of five hundred dollars (\$500) in aid of the vote, Miscellaneous Services, for printing miscellaneous papers.

MISCELLANEOUS SERVICES.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) in aid of the vote, 22 Miscellaneous Services, telegrams sent and received by Government.

GAP ROCK CABLE.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of five thousand eight hundred and seventy-one dollars and sixty-five cents (\$5,871.65) in aid of the vote, Public Works Extraordinary, for repairs to Gap Rock cable.

On the Council resuming,

The COLONIAL SECRETARY said—I have to report that the Finance Committee have just considered the Financial minutes No. 43 to 48 and have approved of them. Under these circumstances I move their adoption.

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

A NEW CLOCK TOWER.

HIS EXCELLENCY—I took the opportunity of our meeting to-day to get the Director of Public Works to lay on the table a plan showing the elevation of a Clock Tower which it has been suggested might be added to the Post Office Buildings. I am no more convinced than when I last spoke on the subject that there is a general desire to remove the old Clock Tower but I think opportunity might be taken of this new building being in course of erection to add to it a Clock Tower which would be visible from the harbour and from the different levels of Victoria City. I should like members to look at the drawing. The Council stands adjourned *sine die*.