

8TH NOVEMBER, 1905.

PRESENT:—

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

HIS EXCELLENCY Major-General VILLIERS HATTON, C.B. (General Officer Commanding the Troops).

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

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

Hon. Mr. A. M. THOMSON (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. Sir C. P. CHATER, C.M.G.

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

Hon. Mr. R. SHEWAN.

Hon. Mr. GERSHOM STEWART.

Hon. Mr. WEI YUK.

Hon. Mr. C. W. DICKSON.

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

MINUTES.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

FINANCIAL.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table Financial Minutes Nos. 49 to 57. I move that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

REPORT.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table the Report on the Insanitary Property Resumptions in the years 1894 to 1905.

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

HIS EXCELLENCY — Three of these eight Financial Minutes which it is proposed to refer to the Finance Committee deal with sums of \$1,000 or less with regard to which you will not require any explanation from me. Minute No. 50 for \$3,887, is for resuming certain small houses and buildings in Cheung Sha Wan Bay, which have been awarded to claimants by the Land Court. In order to carry out the scheme for roads and boulevards and for lots for industrial undertakings in this important district it is necessary that all private rights should be extinguished within the area. It is advisable to do this at once. Financial Minute No. 53 is for an excess on the vote for printing miscellaneous papers, mainly due to the publication this year of the first issue of the Hongkong Civil List and also of some rather bulky sessional papers like the one which has been laid on the table of the Council this afternoon.

Financial Minute No. 54 is for the sum of \$50,000 in extension of the vote which was taken on September 7th this year for the survey of the preliminary work of the Canton to Kowloon Railway. The survey has proceeded somewhat more rapidly than I had expected and we are now in a position to resume the land required for the road from Lo Fu ferry to Tai Po Fu. It has been decided that this resumption should take place at once because the harvest is now being gathered in, and in the ordinary course of events ploughing would commence at the end of this month and that would interfere with the survey marks. I am unable to suggest savings on the approved estimates from which this further sum of \$50,000 can be met. It will therefore go to decrease the excess of assets over liabilities at the end of this year. Both this sum and the sum of \$25,000, already voted and certain payments that have been made to *personnel* in the Public Works Department who have been employed in connection with the survey, will be debited to the loan for the Railway as soon as it has been raised and credited to the revenue account.

The motion was agreed to.

WORKMEN'S CARS.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL—moved that the resolution passed by this Council on 14th September, 1904, requiring the Hongkong Tramway Electric Company to run workmen's trams at certain hours of the day, morning and evening, be now rescinded. He said: That resolution was passed twelve months ago. The cars have run regularly according to the requirements of the regulations, but it has been represented to the Government by the management of the Company that these cars have not been in any sense taken advantage of. The purpose of the resolution has therefore not been effected, and the Company in consequence are purposelessly running these cars at considerable unnecessary expense. The matter has been considered in the Executive Council, and this resolution is now put before you with the object of relieving the Company of unnecessarily running these cars. It will be remembered that when this resolution was introduced it was intended that it should only be tentative. We did not know how it would work and the Council guarded itself against anything like an indication of a permanent intention to keep the Company to the obligation to run these cars by putting in the words "until further notice." If it be found necessary at any time to renew this resolution, that can be done under the powers of the Tramway Ordinance. I move that we now rescind the original resolution.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded.

The Hon. Dr. HO KAI—Before the resolution is put I should like to ascertain whether the Tramway Company have advertised or done something to make it known generally that workmen's cars are run at certain hours for the benefit of workmen, mechanics and labourers. One of the conditions of the concession to the Tramway Company was to have a certain number of trams running night and morning for the benefit of the workmen who work at the extreme ends of the town. If the fact that there is this service of teams be known to these people and they do not make use of the service then the resolution is proper, but if there is a doubt about the matter, I think it would be a serious thing for us to rescind our resolution. As this matter has been discussed in the Executive Council, I suppose your Excellency can assure me that everything has been done by the Company to notify the Chinese workmen, otherwise I shall have to ask the Council to postpone the resolution until that fact has been ascertained. I think it is only due to the workmen and the public generally that these cars should not stop running until we ascertain that those for whom they were intended do not use them.

The Hon. Mr. R. SHEWAN—Perhaps I can assure the hon member. I represent the agents of the Company. The manager has assured me that he has done his best to notify the public at each end of the line that these workmen's cars are running, but there is absolutely no demand for these cars. I cross-questioned him before I came to the Council and he told me the workmen did not avail themselves of the facilities afforded.

His EXCELLENCY—The cars are marked "Workmen's Cars?"

The Hon. Mr. R. SHEWAN—Yes. And they have been running all these months without advantage being taken of them. Of course the Company can resume this service, but at present there is absolutely no demand for it, as the men prefer to live on the spot rather than travel backward and forward to their work.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL—The fact that there are workmen's cars is a matter of public notoriety. The cars are placarded "workmen's cars" and I don't know whether we can expect the Company to do any more than that.

The Hon. WAI YUK.—I would suggest that the resolution be postponed until the facts are ascertained.

His EXCELLENCY—It was much the wish of the Government that these workmen cars should be used. I have been requested on various occasions to bring forward this resolution which will involve their no longer running, but I have postponed it in the hope that some use would be made of the cars. If you can suggest any means of bringing the running of these cars further to the notice of the Chinese, if you think that there is a probability of getting them to use the cars, I should be willing to postpone the resolution, say for a month.

The Hon. Mr. R. SHEWAN—I have no objection to that at all.

His EXCELLENCY—Do you think there is a reasonable chance of getting the people to use the cars?

The Hon. Dr. HO KAI—I will communicate with the Chinese newspapers, and also let it be widely known that unless the cars are used they will be withdrawn.

His EXCELLENCY—I can state as a positive fact that the cars are not used. I pass the Naval Yard frequently at the hour they are running and see the workmen crowding out of the Yard and allowing the cars to pass them empty.

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that the motion to rescind the resolution stand over till the next meeting of the Council.

This was agreed to and the council rose.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee was held after the Council—the Colonial Secretary presiding.

The following votes were passed:—

AFFORESTATION.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of one hundred and fifty dollars (\$150) in aid of the vote, Botanical and Afforestation Department—Other Charges, for the item, Peak Garden—Formation.

LAND COURT JUDGMENT.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of three thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven dollars and sixty-two cents (\$3,887.62) in aid of the vote, Miscellaneous Services for Acquisition of Houses under Section 36 of the Cheung Sha Wan Land Court Judgment.

JUDICIAL.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of two hundred and fifty dollars (\$250) in aid of the vote Judicial and Legal Departments, Supreme Court—Other charges for the item Electric Lighting and Fans.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of one thousand dollars (\$1,000) in aid of the vote, Miscellaneous Services for Other Miscellaneous Services.

PRINTING.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of one thousand two hundred dollars (\$1,200) in aid of the vote, Miscellaneous Services, for Printing Miscellaneous Papers.

SURVEY WORKS.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of Fifty thousand Dollars (\$50,000) in aid of the vote, Public Works Extraordinary, Railway to Canton, Survey and Preliminary Work.

GAOL CHARGES.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of fifteen dollars (\$15) in aid of the vote Gaol—Other Charges, for the item Executioner's Fee, and for inflicting Corporal Punishment.

EDUCATIONAL.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of two hundred dollars (\$200) in aid of the vote, Education, Inspector of Schools— Other Charges, Honorarium to Dr. Pearse for the preparation "Course of Hygiene for the use of Hongkong Schools."

POST OFFICE CHARGES.

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of two hundred and sixty-one dollars (\$261) in aid of the vote, Post Office—Other

Charges, for the following items:—

Allowance for Attendance on Sundays, &c.	\$ 36
Coals, Stores, &c., for Steam-Launch Shanghai.	200
Municipal and Land Rates	25
Total	\$261

On the Council resuming,

The COLONIAL SECRETARY reported that Financial Minutes Nos. 49 to 57 had been considered by the Finance Committee and the recommendations therein had been approved. He laid the report on the table and moved its adoption.

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

HIS EXCELLENCY—The Council stands adjourned till Thursday, 21st December.