

30TH DECEMBER, 1915.

PRESENT:—

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

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

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. MCI. 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. D. LANDALE.

HON. MR. LAU CHU PAK.

HON. MR. P. H. HOLYOAK.

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

Minutes

The minutes of the last meeting were confirmed.

Finance

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. the Governor, laid on the table Financial Minutes Nos. 70, which had been amended, and 74 and 75, and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and this was agreed to.

War Funds

HIS EXCELLENCY—Before we proceed with the Orders of the Day, gentlemen, I would like to mention to you that as you may have seen in the Press, the Prince of Wales' Fund is to be closed to-morrow, and it has been suggested that a Committee might be appointed to receive any subscriptions that may be forthcoming for war charities, or for purposes in connection with the war. It would be a Committee which would receive all such contributions, and which would then allocate the contributions to such purposes as thought best. There are many small subscribers who would like to give perhaps monthly sums, but they do not exactly know to what particular object to give them, and we think, perhaps, that such a Committee would be useful. I have all the names of gentlemen who would be useful in serving on such a Committee, and I will make a communication in due course.

Hon. Mr. Holyoak and Prisoners of War in Hongkong

HON. MR. HOLYOAK—Sir, I beg to give notice that I will move the following resolution at the next meeting of the Council: "That in the opinion of the Council it is most desirable that the interned alien enemies should be removed from this Colony at the earliest practicable moment."

British Nationality and Status of Aliens

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, "An Ordinance to provide for the fees to be paid in this Colony in respect of various things and matters to be granted or done under the provisions of the British Nationality and Status of Aliens Act, 1914." In doing so he said—The Act, which came into force on the 1st of January this year, is an amending and consolidating Act

dealing with the whole question of British nationality and status of aliens, and the acquisition or loss of British nationality. It provides, amongst other things, for the grant of certificates of naturalisation to aliens who comply with certain reforms, and one of the new provisions introduced by the Act is that these certificates may, in certain circumstances, be granted by the Governors of British possessions as well as the Secretary of State. The regulations made in the Act apply throughout the whole of the Crown Colonies, except on one point, and that is on the question of fees, and to complete the machinery of the Act in this Colony it is necessary to pass an Ordinance providing for the fees to be paid on the granting of certificates and the taking of oaths, and the doing of other things required to be done under the Act and the regulations. I beg to move the second reading.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and the Bill was read a second time.

Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

The Bill passed through Committee with a minor amendment, and on Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that it be read a third time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was then read a third time and passed.

Tramway Ordinance to be Amended

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, "An Ordinance to amend further the Tramway Ordinance, 1912." In doing so he said- The two main objects of the Bill are to increase the maximum speed allowed on the Hongkong Electric Tramways, and to give more satisfactory powers as regards detention and arrest of persons committing offences against the Ordinance or the rules made under it. The effect of paragraphs (a) and (b) of clause 2 is to increase the maximum speed on the Shaukiwan sections to twenty miles, and on the other sections to 15 miles. The other alterations made by paragraph (c) is a consequential one. The last two paragraphs, (d) and (e), provide that in cases of necessity the rules made by the Governor-in-Council or the

rules made by the Company can be brought into force within a shorter time than at present is possible. Under the existing law a rule made by the Governor-in-Council cannot come into force under a month, and the rule made by the Company cannot come into force under two months. This, of course, might be very inconvenient, and the amendment in these two paragraphs enables, in case of necessity, the time to be reduced. Clause 3 deals with a very small matter. It relieves the Company of the obligation to exhibit a list of fares on the outside of the cars, as it is impossible to find any place on the outside of the cars where such a list would be of any use. Clause 4 makes some small corrections in the wording of the existing section. Clause 5 repeals a provision in the Ordinance which is more appropriately dealt with in the rules made under the Ordinance. It refers to speaking to the man in charge of the motor on the tram. Clause 6 deals with the second main object of the Bill, and provides more satisfactory means for detaining and arresting persons who commit offences against the Act and the rules. Under the existing law the only power of detention which the officers of the Company possess is the power of detention where a person refuses to pay his fare. The provisions in the new section will enable them to detain passengers who commit any offences against either the rules or the Ordinance itself. The existing law also is somewhat unsatisfactory in that it renders it practically impossible, when a person gives a false name and address, for the Company to secure his arrest. I beg to move the second reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a second time.

Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

The Bill passed through Committee without amendment, and on Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that it be read a third time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was then read a third time and passed.

Societies Ordinance

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, "An Ordinance to amend the Societies Ordinance, 1911." In doing so he said- The object of this Bill is to exclude money loan associations from the operation of the Societies Ordinance, 1911. It was not intended ever that these associations, which are very common in the Colony, and are a great convenience, should be made illegal societies under this Ordinance, but that is the effect of the Ordinance as it is at present. The Bill proposes to remove these associations from the operation of the Ordinance. I beg to move the second reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a second time.

Deportation Ordinance

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill intituled, "An Ordinance to amend the Deportation Ordinance, 1912-1914." In doing so he said- The occasion which led to the preparation of this Bill was the fact that it was brought to the attention of this Government that the powers of the Governor with regard to the deportation of persons sent down from Shanghai to serve their sentence here were not sufficient. The China (Amendment) Order-in-Council, 1910, provides that "Where a person not belonging to Hongkong is sentenced to imprisonment and deportation under Article 2, and is sent for imprisonment to Hongkong, the Governor of Hongkong shall, if lawfully empowered thereto, deport such person to the place to which he was ordered by the Court to be deported; and if not so empowered the Governor shall cause such person to be sent back to Shanghai." Under the existing law there is no power to carry out that provision, and the present Bill was originally drafted with a view to giving the necessary power. The section, however, was drafted in a general form, and will now apply not only to Shanghai prisoners but to all persons who may under the Deportation Ordinances be ordered to be deported from the Colony. That power may be useful in other cases, as well as in the case of Shanghai prisoners, because difficulties have arisen with regard to sending prisoners to neighbouring countries which object to receive them. The third clause of the Bill deals with another object, and provides that mere registration at a British Consulate in China shall no longer be a bar to deportation, and incidentally defines the form of the Britishborn certificate. I beg to move the second reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a second time.

Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

On Clause 2,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the addition of the following words at the end of paragraph (a):- "Whatever the immediate or ultimate destination of the said ship;" and at the end of paragraph (1), the addition of the following:-"Provided that where extradition proceedings have been previously taken against any such person, and the said proceedings have resulted in the discharge of such person either by a magistrate or by the Supreme Court on habeas corpus, nothing in this sub-section shall be construed as empowering the Governor to order such person to leave the Colony by any ship the immediate destination of which is a place in the territory of the State by which the surrender of such person was demanded."

On Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved that the Bill be read a third time.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was then read a third time and passed.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee followed, the COLONIAL SECRETARY presiding.

Maintenance of Buildings and Lighting

THE GOVERNOR recommended the Council to vote a sum of three thousand nine hundred dollars (\$3,900) in aid of the following votes:-

Public Works, Recurrent, Hongkong.

(1)-	Buildings, Maintenance of Buildings	\$2,500
(2)-	Lighting, Gas Lighting, City and Suburbs and Hill District	1,400
	Total	<u>\$3,900</u>

THE CHAIRMAN-This minute was held over for certain amendments to be made. The first sum of \$2,500 is an amount which could not be foreseen when the estimates for the year were drawn up. There is a sum of \$750 for repairs to the roof of this office, some of the beams having to be renewed. \$500 is also required for a new floor. In the New Magistracy building also, some movement took place in the ferroconcrete floor, due probably to climatic conditions, and this necessitated the renewal of the ceilings at a cost of \$200. Work at the Government Civil Hospital had cost another \$200, and there were a few unforeseen but necessary works amounting to \$850, making a total of \$2,500. The second item is an excess on the vote, and was due to the maintenance of gas lamps fixed during the year, and the replacing of damaged fittings, and the cost of lighting the latrines in D'Aguilar Street and Wellington Street.

The vote was agreed to.

Water Works

THE GOVERNOR recommended the Council to vote a sum of three hundred and fifty dollars (\$350) in aid of the vote Public Works, Recurrent, New Territories, Water Works, Maintenance of Lai Chi Kok.

THE CHAIRMAN-This is in connection with the Kowloon Waterworks, where the channel which conveyed the water from the reservoir to the filter beds was damaged. It was unforeseen damage. The repairs cost \$675, and caused an excess on the vote of \$1,500 of \$350.

The vote was agreed to.

Loss on Subsidiary Coin

THE GOVERNOR recommended the Council to vote a sum of three hundred and ninety-six thousand dollars (\$396,000) in aid of the Miscellaneous Services, loss on Subsidiary Coins.

THE CHAIRMAN-This large sum of \$396,000 is caused by the loss on the redemption of subsidiary coinage. I would like to explain to the Committee that the revenue which we expect to get from the opium this year is estimated at \$4,625,000, which is \$375,000 more than the estimate. The price of

opium was increased to meet the amount lost in redeeming subsidiary coinage, and the excess of \$396,000, is very nearly covered by the increased revenue we expect to get from opium; all except \$21,000.

The vote was agreed to.

Police and Prison Departments

THE GOVERNOR recommended the Council to vote a sum of five thousand nine hundred and sixteen dollars and eighty-five cents (\$5,916.85) in aid of the vote Police and Prison Departments:-

A.-Police, Special Police Reserve:-

Helmets	\$448.33
Uniform	5,446.22
Incidental Expenses	22.30
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Total	\$5,916.85
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THE CHAIRMAN-These two sums, which, of course, were not anticipated when the estimates were drawn up, are for equipping the Special Police with helmets, uniforms, and I might explain that the services of the Special Police have been so useful that it has been possible to spare a number of the European members of the force to go to the front, and there will be a large sum saved, both this year and next, on their salaries, so that the amount which has been asked for will be counterbalanced by a considerable saving, which has not yet been estimated.

The vote was agreed to.

New Territory Buildings

THE GOVERNOR recommended the Council to vote a sum of eight hundred and sixty dollars (\$860) in aid of the following votes:-

1.- Public Works, Recurrent, New Territories, Buildings, Maintenance of Buildings-Mainland and Islands in Northern District.....	\$60.00
2.- Public Works, Extraordinary, Kowloon, Miscellaneous, Miscellaneous Works	800.00
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Total	\$860.00

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.- The sum of \$800 is for filling in a pond in Jordan Road. A child got drowned there.

Exhumations

THE GOVERNOR recommended the Council to vote a sum of two thousand nine hundred and one dollars and sixty-two cents (\$2,901.62) in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, New Territories, Miscellaneous, Exhumation at Po Kong Po Cemetery.

THE CHAIRMAN-During the course of the year it was found necessary to remove a number of the graves at Po Kong Po cemetery to a new cemetery, and the work was undertaken by the Tung Wah Hospital at a certain rate. The whole work has now been completed for the sum of \$2,901.62.

The vote was agreed to.

Roads and Bridges

THE GOVERNOR recommended the Council to vote a sum of five hundred dollars (\$500) in aid of the vote of Public Works, Recurrent, Hongkong, Communications, Maintenance of Roads and Bridges in City.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.- There is some material in store which will counterbalance this amount, to be carried forward to next year. The excess is only a sum of \$500 on a vote of \$76,000.

THE CHAIRMAN-The estimated value of the granite is \$2,000, and that has already been charged to the vote, so really the vote has not been reached if that is realised, but it will not be realised until next year.

The vote was agreed to.

Incidental Expenses

THE GOVERNOR recommended the Council to vote a sum of three thousand five hundred and fifty dollars (\$3,550) in aid of the vote Public Works Department, Other Charges, Incidental Expenses, Stores.

THE CHAIRMAN-Some exception has been taken for some time past to the large sum which appears in the Public Works estimate for unallocated stores. Efforts have been made to reduce these. There are a large number of stores which are not wanted, and will not be wanted apparently for years, and they depreciate in value. So it has been decided to get rid of them. The book value of stores which were found to be of this kind was \$5,117.15. As many as possible were sold to those people who might probably want them, and a few by auction, and a sum of \$1,347.88 was realised, showing a loss in book value of \$3,769.89. The balance on the vote is \$552.35. There are some outstanding accounts to be paid, \$150, leaving a balance of \$402.35. The loss on the whole of the stores sold was \$3,928.11, and this left a balance of \$3,525.76. As the outstandings are not exactly known, it is considered better to take the vote asked for.

The vote was agreed to.

Maintenance of Water Works

THE GOVERNOR recommended the Council to vote a sum of two thousand dollars (\$2,000) in aid of the vote of Public Works, Recurrent, Kowloon, Water Works, Maintenance of Water Works.

THE CHAIRMAN-This is again unforeseen expenditure in connection with the Kowloon waterworks. The normal expenditure for the year amounts to \$7,786, but it was found during the year that the sand used for filtering had become so choked that filtering could not be carried on at the usual pace, and it was necessary to wash a large quantity of the sand in order to replenish the filter beds. The cost of washing the sand, owing to the increased rate of consumption of water, was \$3,204, making a total of \$11,000; and the vote for the year is \$9,000. Therefore, a supplementary vote of \$2,000 is required. I have to express regret that this vote is brought forward at so late a period of the year, but undoubtedly it could not have been foreseen earlier. It is necessary for the amount of water which has now to be provided.

The vote was agreed to.

Bailiff's Quarters, Tai Po

THE GOVERNOR recommended the Council to vote a sum of nine hundred and eighty dollars (\$980) in aid of the vote Public Works, Extraordinary, New Territories, Buildings, Tai Po Quarters, addition to provide accommodation for Bailiff.

THE CHAIRMAN-This is in connection with the quarters built departmentally at Tai Po. This matter came before the Finance Committee the other day, when I explained that the cost of carrying out these works departmentally as an experiment had exceeded the tender by about \$1,000. The Government decided to proceed departmentally in order to discover the difficulties attending building operations in the New Territory. Since then it has been discovered that another \$980 will be required, so the experiment, instead of costing

about \$1,000, is costing us \$2,000.

The vote was agreed to.

Council then resumed, and the Governor took his seat.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY-Sir, I beg to report that financial minutes 59, and 67 to 75 have been agreed to by the Finance Committee, and I move that they be adopted.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and this was agreed to.

Compliments of the Season

HIS EXCELLENCY-This is all the business, gentlemen. This is the last time we shall meet during the current year, and I can only wish you all a better 1916 than 1915 has been.