

HONGKONG LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

25TH JANUARY, 1919.

JOINT MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE COUNCILS.

PRESENT:—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING
THE GOVERNMENT, HON. MR. CLAUD SEVERN,
C.M.G.

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

HON. MR. A. G. M. FLETCHER (Colonial
Secretary).

HON. MR. J. H. KEMP, K.C., C.B.E. (Attorney-
General).

HON. MR. C. MCL. MESSER, O.B.E. (Colonial
Treasurer).

HON. MR. W. CHATHAM, C.M.G. (Director of
Public Works).

HON. MR. E. R. HALLIFAX, O.B.E. (Secretary
for Chinese Affairs).

HON. SIR PAUL CHATER, C.M.G. (Member of
the Executive Council only).

HON. MR. E. H. SHARP, K.C., O.B.E. (Member
of the Executive Council only).

HON. MR. E. D. C. WOLFE (Captain
Superintendent of Police).

HON. MR. H. E. POLLOCK, K.C.

HON. MR. D. LANDALE.

HON. MR. LAU CHU PAK.

HON. MR. P. H. HOLYOAK.

HON. MR. HO FOOK.

HON. MR. R. G. SHEWAN.

MR. A. DYER BALL (Clerk of Councils).

H.E. THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE
GOVERNMENT — Hon. members of the
Executive and Legislative Councils,

When Sir Henry May left the Colony last
September, it was not supposed that he would be
away for more than about three months. The
great improvement in Miss Dione May's health
had made it possible for him to contemplate

returning here in March and it was with great
surprise that I received the telegram from the
Secretary of State announcing that he had
accepted Sir Henry May's resignation of the
office of Governor of this Colony.

There can be but one feeling in all our minds
that circumstances should have rendered it
necessary for Sir Henry May to take this course.
Our sympathies have been deeply stirred by the
long period of anxiety through which Sir Henry
and Lady May have passed, and to that anxiety
there has been added in his case the trial of
being separated from his work here in which he
was so deeply interested. When he left, he had
settled the heavy programme of new work for
this year, and was looking forward to returning
to see the beginning of those great developments
in every direction which the war had interfered
with.

It is always a painful moment when a man of
action has to lay aside his arms, or when an
officer of great energy and zeal has to seek
retirement. In the case of Sir Henry May, the
wrench will be especially severe. He loved this
Colony, in which he had risen from a Cadet to
be its Governor; he had grown up with it for
more than thirty years during the most
momentous period of its history, and throughout
the long years of the war, he had guided its
destinies with rare skill and judgment. On every
side can be seen evidence of his untiring labours,
but if I may select one enduring example by
which his long service here may be remembered,
it is the care he devoted to beautifying this
island and the New Territories. Time is required
fully to develop his schemes, but future
generations will bless the keen foresight that
designed the shady avenues, the wooded hills
and the flower-bordered walks.

When Sir Henry May returned to this Colony
in the year 1912, he found some of us
somewhat inclined to resent the intrusion of the
motor-car, but he became one of the pioneers
of automobilism in this Colony and the great
progress that has taken place in the
construction and widening of main roads is due
to his desire to provide cheap and rapid means
of transport and to open up undeveloped parts
of the Colony and the New Terri-

tories, and though Sir Henry May will not be here to see the business through, we can show our appreciation of the lead that he has given us by doing our best to accomplish what he has planned.

The war gave Sir Henry May an opportunity to awaken the latent energies of the manhood of Hongkong. His stirring example has made the Hongkong Defence Corps and the Police Reserve into fine bodies of men, of which the Colony may be proud. He has been very solicitous for the welfare of young men, who come out to the East to spend the best part of their lives. A thorough sportsman himself, he has, throughout his career in the Public Service, endeavoured to stimulate a love for healthy sport in all classes of the community. His sympathy with the aspirations of the Chinese to excel in games has been shown in his efforts to provide suitable recreation grounds, and in the reclamation schemes now in progress, and in the development of the Kowloon peninsula, allowance has been made for open spaces for the same purpose.

In all efforts for the moral and physical well being of the community, Sir Henry May has had the able assistance of Lady May. Her cheerful and ready help has been an immense impetus to every good cause. Throughout the war, she has taken the lead in the splendid work done by the Queen Mary's Needlework Guild, and the great success of such bodies as the Ministering Children's League is due in no small measure to the keen interest taken by Lady May and the members of her family. Her work here will be perpetuated in the Institute, which bears her name, and which has already proved its great value as a centre of useful work among women in the Colony.

Those who follow me in speaking to this resolution, and who have known Sir Henry and Lady May for far longer than I have, will deal with other aspects of their life here. As Colonial Secretary during the full term of his Governorship, I can bear testimony to his keen personal interest in the welfare of every individual member of the Public Service, and when he went on leave he was in communication with the Secretary of State on the subject of the revision of the salaries of the Public Service. I feel it a great honour to have been so closely associated in public work with

such a distinguished member of His Majesty's service, and I can share, in no small degree, in the feeling of deep regret that is felt at his retirement. I am sure that it is the unanimous hope of the community that Sir Henry and Lady May and their family will enjoy health and happiness for many years to come. (Applause.)

I beg to move that:—

"The Executive and Legislative Councils, assembled in joint session on the occasion of the resignation by Sir Henry May of the office of Governor, desire to record their high appreciation of the eminent services which he has rendered to the Empire and to Hongkong during his most honourable career as a servant of the Crown.

The Councils wish to express their sincere regret that the term has now been set to the long connection of Sir Henry and Lady May with the Colony which they have loved so much and have served so faithfully and well."

THE HON. SIR PAUL CHATER—Your Excellency, —I cannot tell you how proud I am that the honour of seconding the resolution you have proposed should have fallen on me; nor how I value this opportunity of bearing testimony to the outstanding qualities of Sir Henry May as a Governor, as a Civil Servant, and as a man. I have known him intimately, both privately and officially, since the commencement of his career as a Civil Servant of the Colony some 36 years ago. I have watched his progress and marked throughout his consistent display of those rarer qualities of conscientiousness and of courage which cause a man to stand out amongst his fellow men. I have seen him, in time of difficulty, in time of danger and in time of smoother running of his official career; but I have never known him falter or waver, never known him swerve from the course which his experience and his duty pointed out as demanded by the interests committed to his care. Undeterred by criticism and undaunted by obstacles, he pressed unflinchingly forward to the end he had in view, an end he rarely failed to achieve. A strong man makes fast friendships, and inevitably incurs some hostility; but at all times, and on all sides, he commands respect, and Sir

Henry was esteemed by the whole community. To an unrivalled experience of the needs and interests of the Colony, he added the natural genius of his race. He possessed the aptitude, given to few, of fastening on the keynote of any problem which confronted him; often where others could not see so wisely or so well. Mistakes he sometimes made, and who is free from them? But the mistakes of a strong man loom larger than those of men of lesser calibre and are apt to be remembered against him where otherwise they would be forgotten. The Government records, if searched, would tell of great results achieved by him, eminently to the Colony's advantage, which never came under public notice. He was not apt to blazon his successes to the public eye. Silently and unsparingly, he worked to preserve and protect the important interests committed to him, and no man can deny him acknowledged success. There is no need for me to refer in detail to the outstanding features of his career. I had the honour of doing so when welcoming him on his appointment to be our Governor. They are known to all. His work as Captain Superintendent of Police; his promotion of education; the impetus he gave to the Volunteer Force; his close co-operation with the Chinese community; and, later, the development of the Colony and the New Territories by well-planned roads and the making safe for the future of the Colony's water supply. The Press has recently dwelt on them; and your speech, Sir, has covered them. As a Governor, he made a mark which will be indelible from the Colony's history and we, beyond ordinary measure, regret that it has not proved possible for him to return and complete the projects he initiated and had in hand. In the sports and pastimes of the Colony, Sir Henry was ever a prominent figure. As a keen racing man, a yachtsman and a golfer, he affected all by his enthusiasm and no one better realised how play is an essential complement to work and forms an integral part of our national life. His participation in our outdoor pastimes was highly appreciated and they never lacked his utmost support. And what of the man himself! Of the man as his friends know him! Of utmost loyalty, of abounding humour, of open heart, his friendship, once acquired, was never lost. Adversity could not alienate it, nor difference destroy it. In sunshine or in trouble, it could be counted and drawn upon without exhaustion and without stint. We do not need to tell him of the depth of our sympathy or the

fergency of our wishes and hopes regarding the causes which, we understand, have led to his resignation. He and his are constantly in our thoughts and we trust that a happy future, free from anxiety, lies before him and all his family. His life and work amongst us cannot be fittingly dealt with independently of Lady May who, for so many years, shared his responsibility and his success. None met her but loved her. None left her but was lifted up. We have shared with her in her happiness and she has shared with us in our troubles. She let no barriers interpose between her and all around. A sweet and gracious lady, as a Governor's wife should be, her memory and her friendship will be treasured throughout life. The unofficial members of the Executive and the Legislative Councils desire to associate themselves in every way with your references to Sir Henry May and I have the honour and the very great pleasure to second the resolution you have proposed.

HON. MR. LAU CHU-PAK—On behalf of the Chinese Community and my Chinese colleague, I heartily, support the resolution. By the retirement of Sir Henry May, the Chinese, in this Colony, have lost a good and sympathetic Governor. During his tenure of office as head of the administration, the Colony has made marked progress and much of that result is undoubtedly due to his own efforts and to his unrivalled knowledge of local conditions. In spite of adverse criticisms and oppositions which were not infrequent, His Excellency steadfastly and courageously carried out whatever he conceived to be good for and in the interests of the Colony. Though sparing of words and sparing of smiles, as the Chinese once said of him, His Excellency never spared himself in the discharge of his duties, however onerous and irksome. To His Excellency, therefore, and to Lady May, whose kindly disposition and bright presence have won the hearts of all, the Chinese community, wish through us, to express their sense of profound gratitude and best wishes.

The motion was carried unanimously and the Councils adjourned.