

19TH JULY, 1919.

MEETING OF 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, C.B.E.
(Colonial Secretary).

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.

HON. MR. N. J. STABB.

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

HON. MR. LAU CHU PAK.

HON. MR. HO FOOK.

HON. MR. S. H. DODWELL.

HON. MR. C. G. ALABASTER, O.B.E.

HON. MR. E. V. D. PARR.

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

HIS EXCELLENCY said: Honourable Members of the Executive and Legislative Councils,—I consider it a great privilege that I should have the opportunity of presiding on this memorable occasion at a meeting of both Councils, as I did at the meeting last November on the occasion of the Armistice. Since that meeting much has happened. A Conference unique both in magnitude and importance has laboured for months preparing a Treaty of Peace so comprehensive in its terms as to form a volume of considerable size. It is the work of some of the greatest brains in the Allied and Associated nations. While dealing with firmness and justice with the situation brought about by the complete victory of the Allied arms, the Treaty aims at no vindictive or savage punishment of our

fallen foes. It clearly lays down that the nation which was entirely responsible for the war shall make full reparation for its awful crime against humanity. It rightly stipulates for such a re-adjustment of national boundaries as shall prevent the natural subjects of a nation being governed by an alien Power. It rectifies grievous wrongs suffered in past years, and makes it clear that the civilized world from henceforth will demand that Public Law shall be respected, and that the national rights of all peoples, both great and small, are precious possessions that cannot again be trampled on.

Such is the Treaty whose signing and ratifying is the cause of our rejoicing to-day. "Victory and Peace" is a motto that we see everywhere about us, and if we cannot even yet completely grasp all that this supreme event means to us and our Allied brethren throughout the world, we can, at any rate, determine that the lessons we have learnt during the years of war will not be forgotten during the years of peace. The peace has been won by mighty sacrifices. In several of the nations a large proportion of the best of their manhood has fallen in gaining the victory, and if those of us who are alive to-day do not shoulder the burden which they have laid upon us, if we do not prove worthy of the sacred trust reposed in us, so that a new spirit of brotherhood and love may animate our public life and our private conduct, it were better that the Great Struggle had never taken place. The men who have fallen and the men who have fought to gain the victory deserve our life-long gratitude. We must do everything in our power to prove it.

Throughout the world to-day the dawn of Peace is being acclaimed. We are met here on behalf of the people of this Colony to tender to our beloved Sovereign our heartfelt thanks and congratulations on the glorious victory that has been consummated by an honourable Treaty of Peace. His Majesty has indeed been a leader of his people throughout the war, and Her Majesty the Queen, and the other members of the Royal Family have nobly done their part. The whole Empire to-day

is united by a bond of loyalty and unity more real and more permanent than ever before.

The Peace that has been achieved derives its great significance from the fact that it is the combined work of representatives of all the Allied and Associated Powers. Such a Peace could not have been achieved except by mutual co-operation and sacrifice. Our own Prime Minister, whose strenuous labours have assisted so much towards the final result, gave fine expression to this outstanding feature of the Conference on his return to London. I feel that I cannot conclude these few remarks better than by quoting his words:—

"Yesterday at Versailles a just peace was concluded by the labours and sacrifices of men of all classes and all races of this great Empire. A peace charged with hope has been won for the world. We all helped to do it and it is because everybody helped that it has been won. I sincerely trust that the united spirit of concord and co-operation which won this great Peace will continue until we have established on a firm foundation a new world won by the sacrifices of millions of valiant men. The hideous slaughter of brave men has come to an end in a righteous Peace. Let us thank God for that. Let us rejoice in this great victory, not in a spirit of boastfulness, which was the downfall of Germany, but in a spirit of reverence, worthy of the noble sacrifices that have been made."

I beg to move that:—

"The Executive and Legislative Councils assembled in joint session, on behalf of the people of the Colony of Hongkong, desire to tender to His Majesty the King a humble expression of their loyalty and devotion, and their respectful and heartfelt congratulations on the attainment, in conjunction with the Allied and Associated Powers, of a just and victorious Peace. It is their

fervent hope that the whole Empire, united by bonds of mutual sympathy and self-sacrifice, is about to enter on a new era of progress and prosperity."

SIR PAUL CHATER: Your Excellency—As the senior unofficial member of the Executive Council, it becomes my honoured privilege to second the resolution which you have just proposed. That it gives me infinite pleasure to do so, and to associate my colleagues on both Councils and myself with this resolution, I need scarcely say. It is with feelings of heartfelt thankfulness and rejoicing that we realize that the terrible war, which for nearly five years raged so furiously and at so great a cost to humanity, is at last brought to an end, and Peace once more firmly established; and we in this distant Colony will whole-heartedly take our part in the universal rejoicings throughout our Empire and the Allied countries.

THE HON. MR. LAU CHU PAK: Your Excellency, as senior unofficial member of the Legislative Council, and also as senior member representing the Chinese, I beg respectfully to support the resolution, and to associate myself with the sentiments just expressed by Your Excellency. For over four years Hongkong has generally, in common with her sister Colonies, suffered severely as a result of the terrible war, and to-day we rejoice that peace has at last come, and with it is born a regenerated world—a world in which, let us all hope, brotherly love, justice, and liberty will take the place of hatred, aggrandisement, and tyranny. (Applause).

HIS EXCELLENCY—I beg to put to the meeting the resolution which I read and which has now been seconded by the senior unofficial member of the Executive Council and supported by the senior unofficial member of the Legislative Council.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

The proceedings closed with the singing of the National Anthem.