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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, NO. 11.

TUESDAY, 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER, 1898.

PRESENT:

HIS EXCELLENCY THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT  
(Major-General WILSONE BLACK, C.B.).

The Honourable the Acting Colonial Secretary, (THOMAS SERCOMBE SMITH).

„ the Harbour Master, (ROBERT MURRAY RUMSEY, R.N.).

„ the Captain Superintendent of Police, (FRANCIS HENRY MAY, C.M.G.).

„ the Acting Colonial Treasurer, (ALEXANDER MACDONALD THOMSON).

„ the Director of Public Works, (ROBERT DALY ORMSBY).

„ CATCHICK PAUL CHATER, C.M.G.

„ HO KAI, M.B., C.M.

„ EMANUEL RAPHAEL BELILIOS, C.M.G.

„ JAMES JARDINE BELL-IRVING.

„ WEI YUK.

ABSENT:

The Honourable the Acting Attorney General, (HENRY EDWARD POLLOCK).

„ THOMAS HENDERSON WHITEHEAD.

The Council met pursuant to summons.

The Minutes of the last Meeting, held on the 10th October, 1898, were read and confirmed.

His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government addressed the Council as follows:—

All business firms whether large or small take stock once a year, and call a momentary halt to see how they stand before girding up their loins for the work of the coming year. Governments, which are but large business firms working for the public weal, in the same way review each year their position, and not only put forward their balance sheet but indicate with modest satisfaction schemes which have run smoothly and well, and gloss over those which, however well laid though they may have been, have gone agley. I take, then, no unusual course in asking you to listen while I briefly touch upon some of the events which have made the ten months I have had the honour to hold the reins more eventful than many like periods of your past history. Although less severe than in 1894, the Plague has this year claimed 1,163 victims out of 1,320 stricken. Wisely abandoning the too stringent application of Western methods the Government erected suitable hospital buildings at Kennedytown, placed them in charge of the Tung Wa Hospital, and induced the Chinese to carry their sick to that benevolent institution. While deeply deploring the loss by this dread visitation, I am glad to congratulate the medical profession, and the other Government officials whose duty connected them with the suppression of the plague, for the strenuous

and unselfish efforts with which they carried out their humane duties. Three of the Sisters caught the infection at the post of duty, of whom two died, giving up their lives as nobly as men who die on the field amid the din and excitement of battle. The outbreak of war between Spain and America—two countries in friendly relations with England—threw on this Government the onerous task of maintaining the laws of neutrality. A little island stored with food, coal, and all the munitions of war in great abundance lying off a coast indented with harbours, is naturally a convenient spot where belligerents might replenish their stores of coal and food, and it is a source of satisfaction to this Government that, thanks to the energy and tact with which the officials carried out their duties, the laws of neutrality were strictly enforced, and yet the end of the war found us on as friendly terms with either belligerent as at the beginning. The changes that this war may bring may deeply affect this Colony, but they still lie in the future and are not yet within our ken. A social incident not without its bearing on a great national movement was the arrival in Hongkong of a German Prince charged for the first time with high command in Eastern waters. The Prince of Prussia would have found a welcome for his own sake. Courteous, kind, and capable, yet every inch a Prince, he was welcomed by the whole community of Hongkong, and the English inhabitants did not forget in their welcome that he and his wife are grand-children of our beloved Queen. Hongkong has long felt the anomaly of its position, with the northern side of its magnificent harbour actually belonging to another Power, its forts at the eastern entrance commanded at short rifle-range by the Devil's Peak, and the end of its mine fields almost touching the Chinese soil, the Bay of Kowloon within the precincts of its harbours but outside its jurisdiction. In June last a Convention was signed by which our boundary line is pushed some thirteen miles to the north, thus sweeping away these anomalies giving Hongkong room to expand, and more than all preventing the passing into other hands of the roads of Lantau, and the spacious harbour of Mirs Bay. Much interest is naturally felt in Hongkong as to the position of the stations of the Maritime Customs. It seems to me only just and necessary that these should recede with the new boundary, for it would be an abdication of sovereignty if a Foreign Power were allowed to exercise control within British waters. At the same time I recognise that it is right that we should aid the friendly Government of China in her task of protecting her revenue, made so difficult by the indented nature of the coast line, and to this end I have suggested that opium should be stored in Government godowns, and only issued on Government permit. In legislation much useful but unobtrusive work has been done. I may instance The Trade Marks Ordinance, The Liquor Licences Ordinance, The Bank Note Ordinance. The increased issue of Bank notes has, from causes well known to you all, been long demanded and the enlarged circulation is proving a great boon. The Queen's Recreation Ground Ordinance. In the last I have taken great interest, and I have some right to look upon it as a bantling of my own. The recurrence of the plague has forced on every thinking man the need of letting light and air into the blocks of Chinese houses, which, full of human beings in many cases, literally stand back to back in the City of Victoria, containing rooms into which the sun never enters, and where the fetid air has no motion. Doctors and physic, good though they be by themselves, are powerless to cure, while sun and air are a sure preventive; and great as the task may be of bringing these natural agents into this reeking mass of humanity their admission must be secured by law. A Bill is now before you which I admit does not go far enough, but it will at least be the beginning of a great reform. Many complaints have been made as to the shortcomings of the Post Office; a great deal of the confusion comes from retrenchment having been carried too far, and from the business having outgrown the building. I have submitted recommendations to the Secretary of State which will, I trust, produce great improvement in the department, in whose well-being every individual is concerned. Nearly allied to the Queen's Recreation Ground is the reservation of the rocky bluff on which stands the boulders called Sung Wan Toi, or the "Watch Towers of the Sung," which, as far as I can gather, is the only historical monument which links modern history with the old-world time. To make its reservation more certain I applied to the Secretary of State for leave to bring in a Bill to this end, and his permission is now on the sea. I regret that I will not have the pleasure of giving assent to it. A survey has been made of the Jubilee Road round the Island. It has been traced with easy gradients, and offers in the section between Aberdeen and Deep Water Bay, an important sanitary reform, for part of the scheme is to fill up and turf over the festering inlet to which the leading medical men of the Colony point as the source of the malaria which has so long marred the health of Aberdeen and the neighbourhood of Magazine Gap. I have nothing but the good of the community at heart, and I emphatically state that if you believe medical testimony, it is your duty to decree that this section be the first taken in hand. Health and pleasure and the wheels of progress, and I may add of bicycles, move on roads, and in my belief a great strengthening of the defence of this Island will take place when the tracing across the pathless barrier of Mount Cameron and Mount Nicholson is broadened into a road. Shortly after arriving in this Colony I urged the Government to take this in hand on public grounds,

and it is with great pleasure that by an agreement effected on my representation this boon to the pleasure of the Colony and to its defence may be expected shortly to begin. I can hardly teach you much about finance; the revenue is increasing, the financial position is sound, and taxation is light; but costly works lie ahead. New Law Courts, new General Post Office, a new Government Residence at the Peak and other public works for which money will have to be provided; in fact, the cry is ever "Onward," and I have no doubt that under the able Director, the public works of the future will be as magnificent and useful as those undertaken in the past. It is beyond my province to do more than allude to the great dramas that have been and are being enacted around us. We live in a history-making epoch, and changes are now in progress which will powerfully affect the future destinies of the five great nations of the world. Little Hongkong is not far removed from the centre of action, and its rulers may have a word to say to the shaping of events. Sir HENRY BLAKE will shortly arrive to assume the reins of Government, and I congratulate the Colony on having secured a chief so able and so experienced, and have no doubt that the Colony will advance under his wise rule. I cannot retire from the presidency of this Council without thanking the Honourable Members for the zeal and attention which they have brought to bear on all matters submitted to them and for the kindly spirit which has animated all their dealings with me. I have much pleasure in acknowledging the loyal and willing co-operation with which the Colonial Secretary and the other official members have worked with me in our joint task of carrying out the administration of the Colony.

Mr. CHATER addressed the Council.

Dr. HO KAI addressed the Council.

The Acting Colonial Secretary addressed the Council.

FINANCIAL MINUTES.—The Acting Colonial Secretary, by command of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, laid on the table the following Financial Minutes, (Nos. 16 to 22), and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee:—

WILSONE BLACK.

C.S.O.  
2304 of 1898.

The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of Three thousand Four hundred and Seventy-two Dollars (\$3,472) in aid of the following votes:—

(a) Provisions for Prisoners, .....	\$2,000.00
(b) Materials for Remunerative Industry, .....	1,000.00
(c) Clothing, etc. for Gaol Staff, .....	472.00
Total,.....	<u>\$3,472.00</u>

Government House, Hongkong, 26th September, 1898.

WILSONE BLACK.

C.S.O.  
2159 of 1898.

The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of Two thousand and Three hundred Dollars (\$2,300) to meet the cost of certain alterations in the Gaol for laundry purposes.

Government House, Hongkong, 27th September, 1898.

WILSONE BLACK.

C.O.D.  
185 of 1898.

The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of Two thousand and Seven hundred Dollars (\$2,700) to meet the following expenses during the current year:—

(1.) Half salary of the Acting Colonial Secretary from 26th June to 5th October, 1898,.....	\$1,347.82
(2.) Expenses of the Special Commissioner (Honourable J. H. STEWART LOCKHART, C.M.G.) in connection with the extension of the Kowloon boundaries, .....	1,352.18
Total,.....	<u>\$2,700 00</u>

Government House, Hongkong, 4th October, 1898.

WILSONE BLACK.

C.S.O.  
2108 of 1898.

The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of One hundred and Fifty Dollars and Ninety-four Cents (\$150.94) to cover the expenses incurred in connection with the recovery of the Gap Rock Moorings.

Government House, Hongkong, 20th October, 1898.

WILSONE BLACK.

C.S.O.  
2625 of 1898.

The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of Six hundred Dollars (\$600) in aid of the vote "Improvement of Gas Lighting, City of Victoria."

Government House, Hongkong, 2nd November, 1898.

WILSONE BLACK.

C.S.O.  
2639 of 1898.

The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of Five hundred Dollars (\$500) in aid of the vote "Incidental Expenses" Sanitary Department.

Government House, Hongkong, 10th November, 1898.

WILSONE BLACK.

C.S.O.  
2696 of 1898.

The Officer Administering the Government recommends the Council to vote a sum of Nine hundred Dollars (\$900) in aid of the following votes, Police Department:—

- |   |          |
|---|----------|
| 1. Oil and Wick and Gas for Barracks, ..... | \$500.00 |
| 2. Meals for Prisoners in Cells, .....      | 100.00   |
| 3. Photography, .....                       | 200.00   |
| 4. Secret Service, .....                    | 100.00   |

Total,.....\$900.00

Government House, Hongkong, 11th November, 1898.

The Acting Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.—The Acting Colonial Secretary, by command of His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government, laid on the table the report of the Finance Committee dated the 10th October, 1898, (No. 7), and moved its adoption.

The Acting Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

SANITARY BYE-LAWS RELATING TO CEMETERIES.—The Acting Colonial Secretary laid on the table the Bye-laws made by the Sanitary Board under sub-section 18 of section 13 of Ordinance 24 of 1887, as amended by Ordinance No. 12 of 1891, and moved that they be approved.

The Acting Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

RESOLUTION.—The Director of Public Works, pursuant to notice, addressed the Council and moved the following resolution:—

"That the percentages on the valuation of tenements in Hok-üu and Kwo-lo-wan (the latter now known as Kowloon Marine Lot 40) at present payable as rates under the Rating Ordinance of 1888, as amended by Ordinance No. 5 of 1892, be altered from 7 per cent. to 9 per cent."

The Acting Colonial Secretary seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

BILL ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE TO MAKE FURTHER PROVISION FOR THE SANITATION OF THE COLONY AND TO REPEAL CERTAIN ENACTMENTS OF THE CLOSED HOUSES AND INSANITARY DWELLINGS ORDINANCE, 1894.—The Captain Superintendent of Police addressed the Council and moved the first reading of the Bill.

The Acting Colonial Secretary seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

BILL ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE TO AUTHORIZE THE IMPOSITION OF FEES FOR THE ISSUE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF HONGKONG OF CERTAIN CERTIFICATES TO CERTAIN CLASSES OF CHINESE WHO ARE DESIROUS OF GOING TO THE PORT OF MANILA IN THE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS.—The Acting Colonial Secretary moved the first reading of the Bill.

The Acting Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

The Acting Colonial Secretary moved the suspension of the Standing Rules and Orders.

The Acting Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

The Acting Colonial Secretary moved the second reading of the Bill.

The Acting Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Council in Committee on the Bill.

Council resumed and Bill reported without amendment.

The Acting Colonial Secretary moved the third reading of the Bill.

The Acting Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Question put—that this Bill do pass.

Bill passed.

BILL ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE FOR THE NATURALIZATION OF ONE ÜN CHUNG Wo alias ÜN Oi Ü alias ÜN HI alias ÜN KWOK HI.—The Acting Colonial Secretary moved the second reading of the Bill.

The Acting Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Council in Committee on the Bill.

Council resumed and Bill reported without amendment.

The Acting Colonial Secretary moved the third reading of the Bill.

The Acting Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time.

Question put—that this Bill do pass.

Bill passed.

ADJOURNMENT.—The Council then adjourned *sine die*.

WILSONE BLACK,  
*Officer Administering the Government.*

Read and confirmed this 22nd day of December, 1898.

J. G. T. BUCKLE,  
*Clerk of Councils.*

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GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 584.

The following Bills, which were read a first time at a Meeting of the Legislative Council held this day, are published.

J. G. T. BUCKLE,  
*Clerk of Councils.*

Council Chamber, Hongkong, 22nd December, 1898.