



THE HONGKONG  
Government Gazette.

報 門 轅 港 香

Published by Authority.

No. 50.

VICTORIA, SATURDAY, 7<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER, 1899.

VOL. XLV.

號十五第

日三初月九年亥己

日七初月十年九十九百八千一

簿五十四第

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, No. 12.

THURSDAY, 24<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST, 1899.

PRESENT:

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

(Sir HENRY ARTHUR BLAKE, G.C.M.G.).

His Excellency Major-General WILLIAM JULIUS GASCOIGNE, C.M.G., General Officer Commanding.  
The Honourable the Colonial Secretary, (JAMES HALDANE STEWART LOCKHART, C.M.G.).

the Acting Attorney General, (HENRY EDWARD POLLOCK).  
the Harbour Master, (ROBERT MURRAY RUMSEY, R.N.).  
the Colonial Treasurer, (ALEXANDER MACDONALD THOMSON).  
the Captain Superintendent of Police, (FRANCIS HENRY MAY, C.M.G.).  
the Director of Public Works, (ROBERT DALY ORMSBY).  
CATCHICK PAUL CHATER, C.M.G.  
HO KAI, M.B., C.M.  
THOMAS HENDERSON WHITEHEAD.  
EMANUEL RAPHAEL BELILIOS, C.M.G.  
JAMES JOHNSTONE KESWICK.  
WEI YUK.

The Council met pursuant to adjournment.

The Minutes of the last Meeting, held on the 8th August, 1899, were read and confirmed.

PAPERS.—The Colonial Secretary, by command of His Excellency the Governor, laid on the table the following papers:—

1. Report of the Subsidiary Coinage Committee.
2. Returns of the Superior and Subordinate Courts for 1898.
3. Despatches and Other Papers relating to the Extension of the Colony of Hongkong.

FINANCIAL MINUTE.—The Colonial Secretary, by command of His Excellency the Governor, laid on the table the following Financial Minute, (No. 12), and moved that it be referred to the Finance Committee:—

HENRY A. BLAKE.

C.S.O.  
Confidential  
82 of 1899.

The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of Ninety-one thousand and Five hundred Dollars (\$91,500) to cover the cost of Steam-launches for the use of the New Territory.

Government House, Hongkong, 16th August, 1899.

The Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

NOTICE OF QUESTIONS.—Mr. WHITEHEAD gave notice that at the next meeting of Council he would ask the following questions:—

- (1.) *Has the attention of the Honourable the Colonial Secretary been directed to a leading article in the "China Mail" of Wednesday, August 9th, and will the Honourable Member inform the Council:—*
  - (1a.) *Is it the intention of the Government to appoint a Commission to enquire into and report on the alleged land jobbery in the Colony's recently acquired territory, referred to in the said article and widely and publicly spoken about?*
  - (2.) *Was the late Tung Cheong entrusted by the Government on or about the 17th April last with certain Government Proclamations to be conveyed into the New Territory to be posted and placarded in the various villages and towns therein?*
  - (3.) *If so, under whose direction did the deceased undertake the mission without an armed escort?*
  - (4.) *Is it true that on the said mission at or near the village of Ūn Long on 17th or 18th April last the said Tung Cheong was foully and brutally murdered?*
  - (5.) *What remuneration, if any, has been paid to the deceased's family?*
  - (6.) *Will the Government lay upon the table a copy in English of the Proclamations issued by the Canton and the Colonial Governments previous to the 17th April last and posted and placarded in the villages and towns throughout the New Territory informing the people and the inhabitants as to the effect the change of Government would have on their lives, liberties, and possessions, and state the dates when such proclamations, if any, were posted and placarded?*
  - (7.) *What satisfaction, if any, has been obtained from the Chinese Government for the assault by the Chinese on the Honourable the Captain Superintendent of Police before our New Territory was taken over, and in respect of the resistance by thousands of armed Chinese to the British entering into possession of the area leased by the Imperial Chinese Government to Great Britain per the Convention of June, 1898, the quelling of which resistance resulted in considerable and lamentable loss of life and which forced upon the Colony substantial amount of extra and avoidable expenditure?*

*Has the attention of the Honourable the Director of Public Works been directed to the "China Mail's" leading articles of 15th and 23rd August alleging the existence of jerry buildings in Hongkong; will the Honourable Member inform the Council whether the said allegation is well founded; and if so, will he state what powers his Department possesses to prevent the erection of such buildings; what action has been taken by his Department in the matter; and if his powers are insufficient, is he taking any steps to get increased powers?*

QUESTIONS.—Mr. WHITEHEAD, pursuant to notice, asked the following questions:—

- (1.) *New Public Works.—Will the Colonial Secretary inform the Council whether the Government has sanctioned the Director of Public Works withholding from the consideration of the Public Works Committee, plans, drawings, specifications, estimate of cost, and full information regarding proposed new Public Works, and, if so, what are the reasons for departing from the course in connection therewith and which has been customary hitherto for years past?*
- (2.) *"Beaconsfield." Repairs and Alterations.—Will the Honourable the Colonial Secretary inform the Council why the proposal to expend a substantial amount of Public money on repairs and alterations to "Beaconsfield" was not submitted to the Public Works Committee for their consideration and report to the Council as has hitherto been customary?*
- (3.) *"Beaconsfield" Expenditure.—Will the Honourable the Colonial Treasurer inform the Council—(1) under what authority was the sum of \$19,076.70 expended in alterations and repairs to "Beaconsfield," and cost of the litigation in connection therewith, disbursed; (2) on what date was the said money paid; and (3) why has no financial minute been submitted to the Council or the Finance Committee in respect thereof?*
- (4.) *Public Works Committee.—Will the Honourable the Director of Public Works inform the Council why plans, drawings, specifications, estimate of cost, and full information in re the new Public Works undertaken since about the middle of last year have not been submitted to the Public Works Committee for consideration and report to the Council as has been customary hitherto for years past?*
- (5.) *Special Commissioner's report on New Territory.—With reference to the Special Commissioner's report dated 8th October, 1898, on the Extension of the Colony, will the Honourable the Colonial Secretary inform the Council whether, exclusive of servants, any other gentlemen or persons, Foreign or Chinese, other than those mentioned in para. 3 of the said report, accompanied him on his visiting any of the villages and towns in the New Territory; if so, what were their names, what was the necessity for their presence, and why and for what purpose were they permitted to accompany the Commission?*

(6.) *Kowloon Fire Precautions.*—Will the Honourable the Colonial Secretary inform the Council whether, in view of the increasing number of houses on the Kowloon Peninsula, the Government has considered and deemed it expedient to make requisite provision in respect of a Branch of the Fire Brigade there whereby it will be possible to attempt to cope with any fires which may hereafter take place?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY.—The answer to the first question of the Honourable Member is “No.” The answer to the second question is, “Because the expenditure was not contemplated.”

The COLONIAL TREASURER.—The answer to the third question is (1) “On the authority of His Excellency the Governor. (2) 3rd May last. (3) I do not know.”

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS.—The answer to the fourth question is, “No new Public Works have been undertaken since the middle of last year which have not been submitted to, considered, and approved by the Committee of the whole Legislative Council, except a few works in the New Territory which being of urgency were undertaken without the usual formalities being gone through.”

The COLONIAL SECRETARY.—The answer to the fifth question is, “Yes; Commander DE HORSEY, some of the other Officers of Her Majesty’s Ship *Plover*, and Mr. LI PAK, for purposes of curiosity it is presumed, accompanied the Commission on one or two of its visits to villages in the new territory. Mr. NG SUI SHANG accompanied the Commission throughout the tour of inspection, arranging for transport, guides, etc., and his services proved of great assistance.”

The COLONIAL SECRETARY.—The answer to the sixth question is, “The matter is at present under the consideration of the Government.”

MOTION.—The Director of Public Works, by permission of His Excellency the Governor, moved that the following proposed works be referred to the Public Works Committee of the Council for consideration and report:—

- (1) Police Station at Kennedytown.
- (2) Chair Shelter at Peak Tram Station.
- (3) High West Road.
- (4) Waterworks Extension, Hongkong.
- (5) The erection of a Refuse Destructor at Kennedytown.
- (6) Electric lighting at Government House.
- (7) Minor Roads in the New Territory.
- (8) Preparing the site for the Governor’s Peak Residence.
- (9) Kowloon Water Supply.
- (10) Pokfulam Conduit Road.

The Colonial Secretary seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

BILL ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE LIQUOR LICENSES ORDINANCE, 1898.—The Acting Attorney General moved the third reading of the Bill.

The Colonial Secretary 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*.

HENRY A. BLAKE,  
Governor.

Read and confirmed, this 4th day of October, 1899.

R. F. JOHNSTON,  
Acting Clerk of Councils.

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GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 534.

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

R. F. JOHNSTON,  
Acting Clerk of Councils.

Council Chamber, Hongkong, 4th October, 1899.