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LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, No. 20.

THURSDAY, 14TH DECEMBER, 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.).

„ CATCHICK PAUL CHATER, C.M.G.

„ Ho KAI, M.B., C.M.

„ THOMAS HENDERSON WHITEHEAD.

„ EMANUEL RAPHAEL BELILIOS, C.M.G.

„ WEI YUK.

ABSENT:

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

„ JAMES JOHNSTONE KESWICK.

The Council met pursuant to summons.

The Minutes of the last Meeting, held on the 30th November, 1899, were read and confirmed.

PAPER.—The Colonial Secretary, by command of His Excellency the Governor, laid on the table Despatches relative to the services rendered by the Hongkong Volunteers in connection with the occupation of the New Territory.

QUESTION.—Mr. WHITEHEAD, pursuant to notice, asked the following question:—

With reference to Government Notifications Nos. 653 and 654 of 25th instant, will the Honourable the Colonial Secretary inform the Council whether the Sanitary Board in future is to be constituted in accordance with The Public Health Ordinance No. 24 of 1887, sections 4 and 5, and if the nominated members are as formerly to be unofficial members of the civil community?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY.—In reply to the honourable member I beg to answer as follows:—The Sanitary Board will be constituted under the provisions of Ordinances 24 of 1887 and 9 of 1895. The Governor has nominated, in addition to Mr. OSBORNE, Major BROWN, R.A.M.C., Messrs. FUNG WA CH'ÜN, CHAN A FOOK, and the Medical Officer of Health.

Mr. WHITEHEAD, with the permission of His Excellency the Governor, asked the following questions:—

1. *With reference to the leading article in the "Hongkong Telegraph" of 11th instant, will the Honourable The Colonial Secretary inform the Council whether the Government have granted any exclusive privilege or monopoly for the dredging for and the collection of shells, used in the manufacture of lime, in the waters of the New Territory leased by the Convention of last year; if so, why were public tenders not invited; under what authority or power has the monopoly been conceded, to whom, and for what consideration?*
2. *Will the Honourable the Colonial Secretary inform the Council whether any agreement or arrangement has been entered into between the Postmaster General in London and the Compagnie des Messageries Maritimes concerning the proposed change in the day of departure from this homewards of the Company's fortnightly mail steamers, and if so, what are the terms?*

The COLONIAL SECRETARY.—In reply to the first question I have the honour to reply:—(1) No such exclusive privilege or monopoly as is referred to in the question of the Honourable Member has been granted. (2) A Crown Rent has been fixed for a limited extent of Crown land surrounding Ping Chau off the East coast of Lantao used by the manufacturers of lime on Ping Chau, and leases for short terms granted to them at Crown Rents amounting to \$1,300 per annum under the general instructions of the Secretary of State. The reply to the second question is:—The Government has no knowledge of any such agreement or arrangement.

FINANCIAL MINUTE.—The Colonial Secretary, by Command of His Excellency the Governor, laid on the table the following Financial Minute, (No. 27), and moved that it be referred to the Finance Committee:—

The Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.—The Colonial Secretary, by command of His Excellency the Governor, laid on the table the report of the Finance Committee dated the 30th November, 1899, (No. 11), and moved its adoption.

The Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

BILL ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE COMPANIES ORDINANCE, 1877.—The Acting Attorney General moved the first reading of the Bill.

The Colonial Secretary seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

BILL ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE TO PROVIDE FOR THE SUMMONING OF CHINESE BEFORE THE REGISTRAR GENERAL.—The Acting Attorney General moved the first reading of the Bill.

The Colonial Secretary seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

BILL ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND THE DANGEROUS GOODS ORDINANCE, 1873.—This item on the Orders of the Day was discharged.

BILL ENTITLED THE NEW TERRITORIES LAND COURT ORDINANCE, 1899.—The Acting Attorney General moved that the Council do go into Committee on this Bill.

The Colonial Secretary seconded.

Honourable T. H. WHITEHEAD moved as an amendment that this Bill be referred to the Standing Law Committee.

Honourable HO KAI seconded.

The amendment was agreed to and the Bill was referred to the Standing Law Committee.

BILL ENTITLED AN ORDINANCE TO CONSOLIDATE AND AMEND THE LAWS RELATING TO MERCHANT SHIPPING, THE DUTIES OF THE HARBOUR MASTER, THE CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT OF THE WATERS OF THE COLONY, AND THE REGULATION OF VESSELS NAVIGATING THE SAME.—The Acting Attorney General moved that the Bill be re-committed.

The Colonial Secretary seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Council in Committee on the Bill.

Council resumed and Bill reported with amendments.

ADJOURNMENT.—The Council then adjourned until Thursday, the 21st December, 1899, at 3 p.m.

HENRY A. BLAKE,
Governor.

Read and confirmed, this 21st day of December, 1899.

R. F. JOHNSTON,
Acting Clerk of Councils.