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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, No. 21.

FRIDAY, 27<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER, 1901.

PRESENT:

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR

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

His Excellency Major-General Sir WILLIAM JULIUS GASCOIGNE, K.C.M.G., General Officer Commanding.

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary, (JAMES HALDANE STEWART LOCKHART, C.M.G.).

the Attorney General, (WILLIAM MEIGH GOODMAN, K.C.).

the Acting Colonial Treasurer, (CHARLES McILVAINE MESSER).

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

the Director of Public Works, (WILLIAM CHATHAM).

ARTHUR WINBOLT BREWIN.

HO KAI, M.B., C.M.

THOMAS HENDERSON WHITEHEAD.

WEI YUK.

JAMES JARDINE BELL-IRVING.

JOHN THURBURN.

ABSENT:

The Honourable CATCHICK PAUL CHATER, C.M.G.

The Council met pursuant to summons.

The Minutes of the last Meeting, held on the 5th December, 1901, were read and confirmed.

FINANCIAL MINUTES.—The Colonial Secretary, by command of His Excellency the Governor, laid on the table the following Financial Minutes, (Nos. 71 to 74), and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee:—

HENRY A. BLAKE.

C.S.O.  
3886 of 1901.

The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of Three hundred and thirty-nine Dollars (\$339) in aid of the vote of \$15,200 for "Coals, Repairs, &c., to Steam-launches", Harbour Master's Department.

Government House, Hongkong, 6th December, 1901.

HENRY A. BLAKE.

C.S.O.  
8484 of 1901.

The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of One thousand two hundred and fifty-two Dollars and Fifty Cents (\$1,252.50) to cover the cost of:—

13 pairs of wheels and axles complete at \$22.50 per pair,.....	\$292.50
24 pairs of cushion tyres at \$40 per pair, .....	960.00

Total,.....\$1,252.50

for the use of the Sanitary and Police Departments.

Government House, Hongkong, 9th December, 1901.

HENRY A. BLAKE.

C.S.O.  
3594 of 1901.

The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of Nineteen thousand and two hundred Dollars (\$19,200) in aid of the following votes:—

PUBLIC WORKS, ANNUALLY RECURRENT EXPENDITURE.

1. Maintenance of Buildings, .....	\$ 2,700.00
2. " of Macadamized Roads in Victoria, .....	10,000.00
3. " of Praya Wall and Piers, .....	500.00
4. " of Waterworks, City and Hill District, .....	2,000.00
5. Drainage Works, Miscellaneous,.....	4,000.00

Total,.....\$19,200.00

Government House, Hongkong, 13th December, 1901.

HENRY A. BLAKE.

C. O. Tele-  
grams of 28th  
Nov. & 10th  
Dec., 1901.

The Governor recommends the Council to vote a sum of Thirty thousand seven hundred and twenty-eight Dollars and Twenty-seven Cents (\$30,728.27) to meet the cost of increases of salaries of the Subordinates in the Civil Service during the current year.

Government House, Hongkong, 24th December, 1901.

The Acting 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 5th December, 1901, (No. 15), and moved its adoption.

The Acting Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

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

Correspondence regarding Kowloon Waterworks Gravitation Scheme, and informed the Council that a telegram had been received from the Secretary of State to the effect that the Scheme had been referred to Mr. CHADWICK for report.

MOTION.—SUMMONING OF CHINESE ORDINANCE.—The Attorney General addressed the Council, and moved:—

*Whereas by section 5 of The Summoning of Chinese Ordinance, 1899 (No. 40 of 1899), it was enacted that the said Ordinance should only continue in operation for the period of two years from the coming into operation of the said Ordinance and for such further period or periods as might from time to time be determined by Resolution of the Legislative Council:*

*It is hereby resolved by this Council that The Summoning of Chinese Ordinance, 1899, shall be continued in operation for the further period of three months from the 30th day of December, 1901 (inclusive).*

Mr. BREWIN seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

SALARIES OF CIVIL SERVANTS.—His Excellency the GOVERNOR addressed the Council as follows :—

“ Before we proceed to the orders of the day, gentlemen, there is a matter I wish to say a word or two about—namely, a telegram I have received from the Secretary of State for the Colonies. In October last the estimates of expenditure went home and at that time we were aware that in the Straits Settlements and the Federated Malay States an increase had been granted in the salaries and emoluments of the Officials. However there was no provision made for any increase here further than that recommended at the time by the Committee. A short time afterwards I received from the Secretary of State a copy of the despatch that had been sent to the Straits Settlements in answer to the representations made by the Straits Settlements and Malay States. The Secretary of State had determined that in future all appointments the emoluments of which were over \$1,200 a year shall be paid in sterling, as also the salaries of the European Police, Prison Warders and other subordinate positions occupied by Europeans appointed from home, but as regards the present holders of these there were certain exceptional advantages at present, such as the advantage of officials receiving when they are on leave their half-pay at  $\frac{3}{8}$  a dollar, and pension at the same rate. [The COLONIAL SECRETARY—4/- on leave and  $\frac{3}{8}$  on pension.] Yes. Well, the Secretary of State felt that he could hardly interfere with these advantages enjoyed by the present holders. So, as far as the present holders of these were concerned, they received the option whether they would have their salaries in future paid in sterling at what the practical valuation of the sterling was, taking into consideration the possible advantage to pension pay, but that they would have the alternative of an increase not on the pay but that while actually serving in the Colony the compensation allowance for exchange should be given on the whole instead of the half salary. That increase was not to be calculated in either their leave or their pension, but was to be a purely local increase while they continued to serve in the Colony, during the lifetime of the present holders. Well, when that came before me, in that despatch the Secretary of State informed me that he did not at present propose to increase the salaries of the officials in Hongkong until he was satisfied as to the financial position of Hongkong. When I received that despatch I saw at once the position in which this Colony would be placed if the officials in the Straits were to be paid better than the corresponding positions were worth in Hongkong. Both Colonies are recruited, and will be recruited in the future, by Cadets who go through the same examinations, and in accordance with their positions on the list these Cadets have the option of choosing where they go. Naturally, if we are the worst paid Colony in the East, we must expect to get simply the remainder. The most successful will naturally choose the best paid position. I wrote in answer to that and I pointed out this to the Secretary of State and also that we find it extremely difficult to get recruits for our Police, Water Police, and Warders, or any position for which we want Europeans in this Colony. I pointed out further the position in which this would place Hongkong. Furthermore, I went into the question of the financial position of the Colony, and—I am speaking entirely to the unofficial members of this Council—I think it is unnecessary for me to say anything upon that matter. Anybody who has seen the list of public companies, shares, and other matters which are within the cognisance of anybody who chooses to take the trouble to inquire, must see that the operations in this Colony are very much larger than in Singapore; and I think as far as I, after nearly three years' experience, can gather, the financial position of this Colony is as sound as that of any in the British Empire. I pointed out that, and in answer to that I received this telegram from the Secretary of State on the 12th :—‘ Referring to Despatch 443, I agree to proposed grant to Government officials additional exchange compensation, to begin the first of next month, on condition laid down in the case of the Straits, and subject to consent by the Legislative Council, who must be warned that more revenue may be required.’ He pointed out in his despatch that possibly very large votes would have to be taken as a consequence of a possible revisitation of the plague, also possibly as the result of the visits from the two experts coming out, and that it was right to put this before you. But that being so, I place the matter before you. Every official member except myself is interested in this and it is, I need hardly say, a matter upon which they can neither speak nor vote. The following are the number of people who would be affected. There would be on the whole a total of 311 public officials affected by this—135 in the

Police, 26 in the Gaol, 17 in the Harbour Master's office, 27 under the Sanitary Board, 32 in the Public Works Department, 9 in the Colonial Secretary's Office, 10 in Queen's College, 24 in the Medical Department, etc.—and the amount that will be necessary to pay that increased exchange compensation during their service in the Colony would be about \$120,000 a year, as far as I can see. These are the facts—the only facts—I have and am able to place before you. My own view is that it would be very injurious to this Colony, if it were placed upon a basis of inferiority to the Straits Settlements and the Malay States, and further I may tell you that we have the greatest difficulty at the present moment with our present salaries in procuring men for the Gaol, the Police, the Water Police and those small appointments for which Europeans are required. The Colonial Secretary has placed in my hands a letter from the senior unofficial member, Mr. Chater. He states that he is sorry at being unable to be present and adds:—‘I am very strongly of opinion that our Civil Service here should not be placed in a worse position than in Singapore, and I feel sure that the community would be of the same opinion.’ That is all I have to say upon the subject, and I place it before you.”

Honourable Dr. HO KAI.—“I understand, Sir, the unofficial members are chiefly concerned in this matter and that the official members will neither discuss nor vote.”

His Excellency the GOVERNOR.—“No, they will not.”

Dr. HO KAI then addressed the Council, and moved the following resolution:—

“That the decision of the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies regarding the further grant of exchange compensation to Civil servants of this Colony, subject to the approval of the Legislative Council, be approved by this Council.”

Mr. BELL-IRVING seconded.

Mr. WEI YUK supported the resolution.

Mr. WHITEHEAD expressed his sympathies with the Civil servants, but asked for a postponement of the motion until the next meeting of Council.

His Excellency the Governor replied.

Mr. THURBURN supported the resolution.

His Excellency the Governor addressed the Council.

Mr. WHITEHEAD withdrew his motion.

The resolution was put to the Council, and carried unanimously by the Unofficial Members. The Official Members did not vote.

BIRTHS AND DEATHS REGISTRATION AMENDMENT BILL.—This item was discharged from the Orders of the Day.

CHINESE EMIGRATION AMENDMENT BILL.—The Bill entitled An Ordinance to further amend the Chinese Emigration Consolidation Ordinance, 1889, was recommitted.

Council resumed, and Bill reported with amendments.

The 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*.

W. J. GASCOIGNE,  
*Officer Administering the Government.*

Read and confirmed, this 27th day of February, 1902.

R. F. JOHNSTON,  
*Acting Clerk of Councils.*

#### GOVERNMENT NOTIFICATION.—No. 107.

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

R. F. JOHNSTON,  
*Acting Clerk of Councils.*

Council Chamber, Hongkong, 28th February, 1902.