

17TH DECEMBER, 1914.

PRESENT:—

HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR, SIR FRANCIS HENRY MAY, K.C.M.G.

HIS EXCELLENCY MAJOR-GENERAL F. H. KELLY, C.B. (General Officer Commanding Troops).

HON. MR. CLAUD SEVERN (Colonial Secretary).

HON. MR. J. H. KEMP (Attorney-General).

HON. MR. E. D. C. WOLFE (Colonial Treasurer).

HON. MR. A. F. CHURCHILL (Director of Public Works).

HON. MR. E. R. HALLIFAX (Secretary for Chinese Affairs).

HON. MR. C. MCI. MESSER (Captain Superintendent of Police).

HON. MR. WEI YUK, C.M.G.

HON. MR. E. A. HEWETT, C.M.G.

HON. MR. LAU CHU PAK.

HON. MR. E. SHELLIM.

MR. M. J. BREEN (Clerk of Councils).

Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were confirmed.

Paper

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY laid on the table the report of the proceedings of the Finance Committee held on the 3rd December.

Financial Minutes

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, by command of H.E. the Governor, laid on the table Financial Minutes Nos. 82 to 87, and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER seconded, and this was agreed to.

Local War Expenditure

HIS EXCELLENCY—With regard to Financial Minute No. 84, this is an item of \$78,200 for expenses in connection with the war. I would like to remind you that two votes have been passed by this Council of \$50,000 each for expenses in connection with the war, but it is proposed now, if you approve of this vote, to cancel these two votes—in fact, the second one has already been cancelled—and to substitute this one. Now this vote involves payment by the Colony of the expenses that have been incurred in connection with the mobilisation of the Volunteers, and in speaking of the Volunteers I include the Volunteer Reserves. Also expenses connected with the cable and postal censorship and various other miscellaneous items: payment of police, and the payment of the passages of the crews of Prize vessels who have been sent Home, or to their native places, and various other minor expenses which are all included under the head "miscellaneous." I hope that hon. members will agree with me that it is fitting that the Colony should bear this expenditure. That is to say, should bear the cost of the mobilisation of the Volunteers and the other expenses which have been incurred. If you approve this vote, you will, in fact, accept the principle and approve it, of the continued payment of these and similar charges throughout the duration of the war. Other Colonies, as you know—having read your newspapers—have made substantial contributions towards the Imperial Exchequer in this matter, and I am sure hon. members would like to see this small dependency of the Crown doing what she can to relieve the British taxpayers of the enormous burdens which have fallen upon them.

Sketching Ordinance

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill entitled, "An Ordinance to Amend the Defences (Sketching Prevention) Ordinance, 1895."

In doing so he said—The object of this Bill, Sir, is to extend the provisions of the principal Ordinance, so as to include certain objects which are cognate to its original intention. The principal Ordinance, which prohibits the sketching of certain defences, refers only to the sketching of batteries, field-works, and fortifications, and there is no prohibition against sketching other military and naval premises, His Majesty's ships, or any naval anchorage, and this Bill proposes to add these three classes to the things which may not be sketched without the permission of the Governor. It also makes the attempt to commit the offence an offence, which it is not in the principal Ordinance. Also, in order to make the definition of "sketch" of sufficiently wide meaning, the Bill includes, in the meaning of that word, the negative of the photograph as well as the actual photograph itself or the actual sketch which might be made. I beg to move the second reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

On Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL said that the Bill had passed through Committee without amendment, and he proposed the third reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was then read a third time and passed.

Recreation Grounds Ordinance

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL moved the second reading of the Bill entitled, "An Ordinance to amend the Recreation Grounds Ordinance, 1909." In doing so he said—The object of this Bill, Sir, is to place on some regular footing both the tenure and the appropriation, and also the power of regulating and controlling the Chinese Recreation Ground. As hon. members no doubt know, this is an open space near the western end of Hollywood Road, not far from the Ko Shing Theatre. It is used by the poorer classes of Chinese for recreation, for the sale of food and refreshments, and so on. Other open spaces, such as Blake Gardens, the Peak Gardens, and King's Park, Kowloon, have been recognised and

set apart as open spaces under legislative authority, but this particular open space has not been dealt with heretofore in that way, and the effect of the Bill will be to place this open space on the same footing as the other open spaces I have just mentioned. It will also have the effect of enabling regulations to be made for the management and control of the ground. I beg to move the second reading.

Council then went into Committee to consider the Bill clause by clause.

On Council resuming,

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL said the Bill had passed through Committee without amendment, and he moved its third reading.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY seconded, and the Bill was read a third time and passed.

The Next Meeting

HIS EXCELLENCY—It will be necessary to have one more meeting this year to go through various items. I would like to enquire whether it would be convenient to hon. members to meet next week. Wednesday or Thursday would suit the official members, and would no doubt suit the unofficial members.

Subsequently, Council was adjourned until 24th December.

FINANCE COMMITTEE.

A meeting of the Finance Committee followed, the COLONIAL SECRETARY presiding:—

Loss On Subsidiary Coin

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$310,000 in aid of the vote miscellaneous services, loss on subsidiary coins.

THE CHAIRMAN—This is due to the large amount of subsidiary coin which has been sent to be demonetised. It is very much greater than was intended when the Estimates for the current year were made up.

THE COLONIAL TREASURER—The main vote was actually \$136,000, but as a result of the taking over of the opium monopoly, and the pledge which the Government gave to demonetise all

subsidiary coins that came into its hands, this vote was, of course, largely exceeded, and the amount now asked for is to cover the loss on the amount demonetised during the year.

This was approved.

Public Works

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$2,600 in aid of the vote public works, extraordinary, new territories, communications, roads, extension at Castle Peak Bay, including construction of pier.

THE CHAIRMAN—This sum of \$2,600 is required for the extension of the road at Castle Peak. In the estimates for the current year a sum of \$3,000 was provided, and next year \$1,000, making \$9,000. The amount of the tender is \$11,615.90. That leaves a balance of \$2,615.90 for this year to be expended.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS—What has happened really is that more work was done this year than was anticipated and provision made for in the Estimates. The result is that this year's vote has been exceeded, and next year's will be less by the amount of the excess.

This was approved.

War Department Expenditure

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$78,200 in aid of the following vote:—

War Department Expenditure.

Personal Emoluments:—

Cable Censorship	\$14,506.97
Postal Censorship	5,169.96
Volunteers	39,417.73
Miscellaneous	5,716.81

\$64,811.47

Other Charges:—

Cable Censorship	\$ 676.39
Volunteers	2,025.54
Miscellaneous	10,662.56

\$13,364.49

Total

\$78,175.96

THE CHAIRMAN—This has already been explained by H.E. the Governor.

The vote was approved.

Volunteer Expenses

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$3,000 in aid of the vote military expenditure, B.—Volunteers, other charges, Volunteer Reserve, camp of instruction.

THE CHAIRMAN—This is for the Camp of Instruction in Musketry held at Stonecutter's at the beginning of November. It is, I think, an outside cost, and the actual cost will be somewhat less.

Approved.

Education

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$53.73 in aid of the following votes:—

Education, A.—Department of Director of Education, other charges, Peak School.

Books	\$14.00
Incidental Expenses	39.73

Total

\$53.73

THE CHAIRMAN—This is a small amount required for the Peak School. Early in the year it was difficult to ascertain exactly what would be required. A book-case was bought for \$30, and there were several other small items which make up the amount now asked for.

Approved.

Swamps at Shaukiwan

The Governor recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$150 in aid of the vote public works extraordinary, Hongkong, drainage, draining swamps at Shaukiwan.

THE CHAIRMAN—The amount provided this year was \$4,500. The actual amount expended was \$4,618.76, and this vote of \$150 is asked for to be on the safe side.

This was approved.