

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

No. 252.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, No. 4.

THURSDAY, 10TH APRIL, 1919.

PRESENT :

HIS EXCELLENCY THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT
(Mr. CLAUD SEVERN, C.M.G.).

His Excellency the General Officer Commanding the Troops, (Major-General FRANCIS
VENTRIS).

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary, (ARTHUR GEORGE MURCHISON FLETCHER).

„ the Colonial Treasurer, (CHARLES McILVAINE MESSER, O.B.E.).

„ the Director of Public Works, (WILLIAM CHATHAM, C.M.G.).

„ the Secretary for Chinese Affairs, (EDWIN RICHARD HALLIFAX, O.B.E.).

„ Mr. LAU CHÜ-PAK.

„ Mr. PERCY HOBSON HOLYOAK.

„ Mr. HO FOOK.

„ Mr. STANLEY HUDSON DODWELL.

„ Mr. CHALONER GRENVILLE ALABASTER, O.B.E.

ABSENT :

„ the Attorney General, (HENRY EDWARD POLLOCK, K.C.).

„ the Captain Superintendent of Police, (EDWARD DUDLEY CORSCADEN
WOLFE).

„ Mr. DAVID LANDALE.

The Council met pursuant to summons.

The Minutes of the last Meeting, held on the 6th March, 1919, were confirmed.

NEW MEMBERS.—Mr. DODWELL and Mr. ALABASTER took the Oath and assumed their seats as Members of the Council.

MEMBERS OF COMMITTEES.—His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government appointed Mr. DODWELL to serve on the Public Works Committee in place of Mr. SHEWAN, and Mr. ALABASTER to serve on the Law Committee in place of Mr. POLLOCK.

FINANCIAL MINUTES.—The Colonial Secretary laid on the table Financial Minutes Nos. 13 to 20, and moved that they be referred to the Finance Committee:—

No. 13.—Police Department, Rent of Office for Deputy Superintendent of Police (Reserve),.....	\$ 245.00
No. 14.—Attorney General's Department, Personal Emoluments,	9,794.00
No. 15.—Charitable Services, Other Charitable Allowances,	1,000.00
No. 16.—Public Works, Extraordinary, Hongkong, (25) Compensation and Resumptions,	275,000.00
No. 17.—Harbour Master's Department, Acquisition and re-arrangement of Moorings in Victoria Harbour,	23,000.00

No. 18.—Public Works, Extraordinary, Hongkong, Miscellaneous, Erection of a Car Shelter at Deep Water Bay,	\$ 2,400.00
No. 19.—Public Works, Extraordinary, New Territories, (48) Compensation and Resumptions,	25,000.00
No. 20.—Miscellaneous Services, Peace Celebration,	30,000.00

The Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE.—The Colonial Secretary laid on the table the Report of the Finance Committee (No. 3), dated the 6th March, 1919, and moved its adoption.

The Colonial Treasurer seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

REPORT OF THE PUBLIC WORKS COMMITTEE.—The Colonial Secretary laid on the table the Report of the Public Works Committee (No. 1), dated the 27th February, 1919, and moved its adoption.

The Director of Public Works seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

PAPERS.—The Colonial Secretary laid on the table the following paper:—

Extracts from Treasury Minute dated 30th September, 1918.

MOTION.—Mr. HOLYOAK addressed the Council and moved the following resolution:—

That arrangements be made at once for the installation of a powerful commercial wireless station, capable of connecting direct with Colombo or some other station in Ceylon.

Mr. DODWELL addressed the Council and seconded.

Mr. LAU CHÜ-PAK supported the motion.

His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government addressed the Council, and after some discussion the motion was withdrawn.

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

1. *As the introduction and increased use of rickshaws on the Peak footpaths has created a new danger to child life, will the Government hasten the conversion of the corner of waste ground between the Government villas and Mount Kellat Road into a suitable playground?*
2. *Will the Government construct on the unused lot on the north side of the Royal Courts of Justice a pavilion which can be used as a bandstand in the evenings and in the daytime as a sun and rain shelter for the amahs and children who now haunt the Cricket Ground and Court Verandahs?*
3. *What steps is the Government taking before the rainy season commences to save the hill and roadway below the London Mission House at Cheung Chau from being washed away?*
4. *What progress has been made in the work of connecting all Police Stations by telephone?*
5. *Why has the First Police Magistrate and Coroner been appointed to act as Director of Education in addition to his other duties when there are in the Colony two or three educationalists with previous experience of the office?*
6. *Has the Government made any protest against the arbitrary cancellation without notice of homeward bookings by the "Empresses of Russia, Asia, and Japan" and the "Monteagle"?*
7. *Has the attention of the Government been drawn to the serious lack of sufficient hotel accommodation in the Colony? If so, has the Government done anything to assist visitors to obtain shelter?*
8. *Why have there been no Legislative Council Meetings for about a month?*

The Colonial Secretary replied.

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

1. Will the Government appoint a committee of experts to inquire into and report upon :—
 - (a.) The condition of the channel by which vessels enter the Harbour in order to proceed to their buoys or to the existing wharves.
 - (b.) The efficiency, or otherwise, of the present Government dredger the "St. Enoch".
 - (c.) The necessity, or otherwise, of at once ordering a modern dredging plant for constant use in this Harbour.
2. Has the report and finding of the "Civil Service Salaries Commission" been sent in to the Government yet and, if so, will the Government lay it upon the table for the consideration of the Council?

The Colonial Secretary replied.

THE BRITISH TRADERS INSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED (CAPITAL CONVERSION) BILL.—Mr. HOLYOAK moved the First reading of a Bill intituled An Ordinance to authorise the British Traders Insurance Company Limited to convert its silver capital into gold.

Mr. DODWELL seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

Mr. HOLYOAK moved the suspension of the Standing Orders so that the Bill might be read a second and third time.

Mr. DODWELL seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Mr. HOLYOAK then addressed the Council and moved the Second reading of the Bill.

Mr. DODWELL seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

Council in Committee on the Bill.

On Council resuming, Mr. HOLYOAK reported that the Bill had passed through Committee without amendment and moved that it be read a third time.

Mr. DODWELL seconded.

Question—put and agreed to.

Bill read a third time and passed.

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.—His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government addressed the Council and proposed that the course of answering certain questions in writing and publishing the replies be adopted.

The Council agreed.

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

CLAUD SEVERN,
Officer Administering the Government.

Confirmed this 5th day of June, 1919.

A. D. BALL,
Clerk of Councils.

No. 253.—His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government has given his assent, in the name and on behalf of His Majesty the King, to the following Ordinance passed by the Legislative Council :—

Ordinance No. 6 of 1919.—An Ordinance to authorise the Bank of Canton Limited to convert its silver capital into gold.