

THIRD READINGS.

The following Bills were read a third time and passed: Factors Bill, 1878; Contingent Remainders Bill, 1878: Partition Bill, 1878.

The House adjourned at eleven o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Tuesday, 18th June, 1878.

Busselton Government School House—Residency and Public Offices at Roebourne—Wild Cattle Nuisance Act, 1871, Amendment Bill, 1878: further considered in committee—Confirmation of Expenditure Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

BUSSELTON GOVERNMENT SCHOOL HOUSE.

MR. CAREY, in accordance with notice, asked the Honorable the Colonial Secretary, if he was aware of the state of the Busselton Government School House and the premises attached; and if it was the intention of the Government to take any steps therein.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) replied as follows:—It was proposed at one time to build a new school at Busselton, and plans were submitted by the Director of Public Works for that purpose. Owing to the expense the idea was abandoned, more particularly as, after a personal inspection of the school, I felt persuaded that the present building might be enlarged at a small outlay. Those views I submitted to the Central Board, and the Director of Public Works was asked to suggest how such alterations might be made, and he now has the matter under his consideration. The school in question will be one of the first schools that shall receive our attention.

RESIDENCY AND PUBLIC OFFICES, ROEBOURNE.

MR. HARPER, in accordance with notice, asked the Honorable the Colonial Secretary, if it is the intention of the Government to take any steps towards rebuilding the Residency and Government Offices at Roebourne, destroyed by a hurricane in 1872.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) replied as follows:—The Government has had under consideration for some time past the expediency of rebuilding the Residency at Roebourne, but has been deterred from proposing the measure by its great cost—estimated at £2,000. The Governor has recently directed an allowance of £50 per annum to be paid to the Resident for house rent—an arrangement with which that Officer has expressed himself satisfied. The information sought as to Government Offices will be furnished to-morrow.

WILD CATTLE NUISANCE ACT, 1871, AMENDMENT BILL, 1878.

IN COMMITTEE—FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF

MR. CAREY, in accordance with notice, moved, That the following new clause be added to the Bill: "The licenses to be granted under the said Act shall be licenses authorising the destruction of wild cattle as defined by the said Act, or licenses to kill wild horses only. For licenses to kill wild cattle as aforesaid, a fee of Two pounds shall be charged. Any person holding either of the above named licenses shall be deemed to be a licensed person within the meaning of the said Act." The hon. member said that this fee would not prevent those who were desirous of taking out licenses for the *bonâ fide* purpose of destroying wild cattle, from doing so, while at the same time it would prove a check to some extent upon those who sought licenses for improper purposes, and who were not particular whether the cattle they destroyed were wild or tame.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. H. H. Hocking) pointed out that, under the provisions of the Bill now under consideration, no unlicensed person was allowed to kill wild cattle without sub-

mitting himself to a heavy penalty, and those who had a license were only permitted to destroy such cattle on the lands over which they were so licensed. He thought this would be a sufficient check upon the nuisance complained of by the hon. member.

MR. BROWN said the only districts which would be likely to be benefited by the additional clause, so far as concerned horned stock, were Albany and the Vasse, and as the two members who represented those districts, and who were most interested in the matter, were of opinion that the proposed fee would have a salutary effect, he would support the motion for the introduction of the new clause.

MR. CAREY said the imposition of a fee would be so much added to the revenue, and would most decidedly prevent many undesirable persons from applying for a license who now do so. He was somewhat surprised to find the hon. the Attorney General opposing the clause. He thought that when the House consented the other evening to the withdrawal of the resolution of the hon. member for Albany (relating to the necessity for the exercise of greater discretion in granting licenses under the Act, and of a stricter enforcement of its provisions generally), the Government would have offered no obstacles in the way of the introduction of the clause now before the Committee. If the Government did oppose it, it would be a long time indeed before he would agree to the withdrawal of a resolution again.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. H. H. Hocking) said the hon. member was laboring under an erroneous impression if he thought that the Government were desirous of interposing any obstacle in the way of abating an acknowledged nuisance, or wished to encourage the indiscriminate issue of the licenses referred to in the clause. He had already said that, in his opinion, the existing Act, if strictly enforced—and they had the assurance of the Government that the provisions of the Act *would* be strictly enforced in future—would meet the requirements of the case. The hon. member seemed to be laboring under the impression that the Government was beholden to him for agreeing to the withdrawal of the resolution of

the hon. member for Albany. He failed to see in what way. For his own part, he did not care whether the House divided on the subject, or not—he objected to the clause simply because he considered it unnecessary.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said he had no wish to divide the House on the motion for the introduction of the new clause, after hearing what had been said on the subject by the hon. members representing the districts chiefly concerned; but after what had just fallen from the hon. member for Vasse, by way of a threat that unless the Government agreed to the introduction of the clause he would do this, that, and the other, he (the Colonial Secretary) would personally be inclined to divide the House on the point.

MR. CAREY said the hon. gentleman had misunderstood him. He had offered no threat, nor had he any intention of doing so. What he said was, that he was surprised the Government, after the House consenting to the withdrawal of the hon. baronet's resolution, should throw any obstacles in the way of amending the Act, and that if they did so he would not be a party to the withdrawal of another resolution.

MR. BROWN said he was extremely sorry to have heard the hon. member make use of such an expression as he had made in that House, and he was glad the Government had not allowed it to pass unnoticed. While prepared to support the introduction of the proposed clause (for the reasons he had already assigned), he could not agree with the hon. member in the course he had adopted to induce the Government to support it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): If the hon. member still persists in holding his threat *in terrorem* over us, I shall divide the House on the question; if, on the other hand he is prepared to withdraw his threat, the Government have no wish to oppose the introduction of the clause.

MR. CAREY: You can proceed to a division if you wish. I repeat, there was no threat made, nor intended to be conveyed. If I did not express myself as clearly as I should have done, I trust the explanation I have offered to the House will be deemed satisfactory.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): After what has fallen from the hon. member, we are quite willing to accede to the introduction of the clause.

MR. MARMION: As an elected member of this House, I must object to the course which the hon. the Colonial Secretary has pursued in this instance. Because an hon. member says he will not in future agree to the withdrawal of a resolution, I do not think the Government is justified in bringing any pressure to bear upon the House, as has been done in this case. I think it is but fair and proper that all hon. members should treat the Government benches with all the respect that is due to the hon. gentlemen who occupy them, and I would be the last member in the House to do or say anything disrespectful towards them. But I must rise on behalf of the hon. member for Vasse, and in the interests of the other hon. members who sit on this side of the House, and declare our independence and liberty of speech. I think it is within the province of any hon. member to make use of any remarks he may think proper in reviewing the measures of the Government, or in commenting on the actions of the Government, so long as those remarks are not disrespectful to Mr. Speaker, or to the Chairman of Committees—whichever may be presiding over our deliberations—or to the House, or to the hon. gentleman to whom such remarks are addressed. I cannot think that in this instance the hon. the Colonial Secretary really intended, in adopting the course which he did, to intimidate or “put down” the hon. member for the Vasse, but the hon. gentleman’s remarks certainly had that tendency, and no doubt would have that effect in the case of a novice in the House, and prove very dangerous. I think the hon. gentleman has made a mistake in thus taking advantage of his position as leader of the Government to endeavor to put down the hon. member for Vasse, and in accusing him of having uttered a threat when no threat was made or intended, and when the hon. member has disclaimed, with all due humility, any such intention.

MR. CAREY: I do not quite understand what the hon. member intends to convey by the expression “with all

humility.” I have offered no apology for any remarks I uttered, for the very sufficient reason that I had nothing to apologise for.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): I think the hon. member blows hot and blows cold, alternately. I certainly understood him to say he had not intended to utter a threat, and I am prepared to accept his explanation. With regard to what has fallen from the hon. member for Fremantle as to dictating to the hon. members on this side of the House, or to any other member, I have no wish to do any such thing, nor do I see how my conduct on the present occasion can be so regarded.

Clause agreed to.

Bill reported.

CONFIRMATION OF EXPENDITURE BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. SHENTON proposed that the various items of excess be taken *seriatim*, and that the schedule be taken first, commencing with the item “Legislature, £40 9s. 2d.”

Agreed to.

Item: Legislature, £40 9s. 2d:

Agreed to, without comment.

Item: Surveyor General, £253 18s. 2d:

MR. SHENTON asked for some explanation with respect to the excess vote.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser): understood that the hon. member was in the House when the Bill was read a second time, and when he (the Commissioner of Crown Lands) entered into the various details connected with the several items embraced in the schedule. The hon. member was also in possession of the official report on the Survey Department, which afforded every information on the subject. For the gratification of the hon. member, he would read the paragraph which related to this item. It was as follows: “Throughout the year “I have endeavored to keep the work “within the limits of the estimate, from “time to time regularly checking the “books, but unwittingly have been found “outside the sum of £7,010 voted, I am “informed by the Auditor General to “the extent of £253 18s. 2d., which is

"owing to a sum of £432 11s. 7d. being charged by the Crown Agents for surveying instruments, lithographic plant, and charts supplied for the year. Owing to not knowing when such orders are executed in London, I have not been able consequently to exactly regulate the available balance, but my wish and intention was, to keep well within it, and I should have done so except for these charges. The stock of Marine Charts now in hand in the Office is worth, at selling price, £166 4s., besides those in care of the Harbor Masters at Fremantle and Albany, who act as selling agents. A regular account of sales of these is kept, and the money paid periodically into the Treasury."

MR. SHENTON thought the House ought to be placed in possession of full explanation regarding every item which constituted the excess vote.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) said he could afford no further information, unless he had the bill of costs before him.

MR. CAREY regarded £432 11s. 7d.—the sum charged by the Crown Agents for surveying instruments, lithographic plant and charts supplied for the year—a very large sum indeed, in excess of the amount voted by the House for the department.

MR. MARMION asked if these surveying instruments were sold to the officers of the department, and the amount which they realised placed to the credit of the general revenue.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) said an arrangement had been made, under which, when it was absolutely necessary for an officer connected with the department to obtain one of these instruments, the same should be sold to him at a price fixed by the Auditor General, which amount was placed to the credit of the public. The instruments referred to in the paragraph read, were specially ordered for trigonometrical surveys, and would be useful for many years to come. There were also among them some instruments required for the meteorological department—about £150 worth—which tended to swell up the excess.

MR. S. H. PARKER said he noticed, on page 12 of the report on Crown

Lands and Surveys, two schedules, purporting to show the amount of work done and the sums paid in connection with surveys for the past year. According to one of these schedules the amount paid was £2,461 17s. 3d., whereas, according to the other, it appeared to be £2,513 19s. 8d., showing a discrepancy of nearly £100.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) said he had explained these schedules more than once. This was nothing new. It was impossible under a system of payment by results to ascertain the precise amount due on any given date. One of the returns referred to showed the amount of work performed and the sums actually paid on account thereof: the other return showed the amounts claimed by the various surveyors for their work. It did not follow that because £2,513 19s. 8d. was claimed, that amount had been paid. The actual amount paid on account of surveys during the year appeared in the first schedule referred to—£2,461 17s. 3d.

The vote was then agreed to.

Item: Customs Department, £90 8s. 11d.:

MR. MARMION said he understood this overdraft was on account of contingent expenditure in connection with the Revenue Vessel. The sum might appear a very small one, but he thought it would be as well to call the attention of the House to the expenditure in connection with this vessel. The vote for contingencies, wear and tear, and provisions for 1877 was £426, which was independent of the master's pay and the wages of the crew, which latter amounted to £35 10s. per month—an amount which appeared to him more than ample to cover the expenditure under this head. Yet he found that these votes had been exceeded by nearly £100. This would not be so much, perhaps, were it all; but he found on reference to the return laid on the Table showing the estimated revenue and expenditure of the year 1878, as approved by the House, and the probable revenue and expenditure, that there was likely to be an excess this year of £609 on account of this Revenue Cutter. This amount, added to the vote for contingencies for the year, exceeded £1,000, which showed that this item was

really growing at a serious and alarming rate. He thought it would be better to ask the Home Government to place a man-of-war at our disposal than continue this extravagant expenditure: we would then have something respectable to boast of, at any rate, and the expense would be very little more than the expenditure connected with this Revenue Cutter, which in 1878 will amount to something like £1,600. He really thought it was worthy of the consideration of the House whether it would not be wise to do away with this expenditure altogether.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said he entirely concurred with the hon. member who had just spoken. He thought there had been a great deal of undue expenditure in connection with this vessel, and it was one of the matters which had engaged his attention, and which he had brought under the notice of His Excellency the Governor. The result was that they had adopted means which they thought would, in future, obviate the necessity for an excess vote under this head. He did not himself think there was any excuse for it. In saying this, he did not wish to cast any blame upon his predecessors in office, for hon. members would bear in mind how difficult it was to control and to check expenditure at such a long distance from head quarters. Certain restrictions had now been placed upon the master of the vessel, which it was hoped would remedy this evil of excessive expenditure, and prevent its recurrence in the future.

MR. MARMION said he was quite satisfied with the remarks which had fallen from the Colonial Secretary, and hoped that the hon. gentleman's anticipations would be realised.

The vote was then agreed to.

Item: Medical Department, £949 1s. 10d.:

Agreed to without comment.

Item: Harbor Master, £408 10s. 2d.:

MR. SHENTON complained of the overdraft under this head, which he understood was attributable to the items of beacons and buoys, and the repairs and purchase of boats for the department. A sum of £500 was voted for this purpose, about one-half of which had been expended in the purchase of a

new lugger, leaving a balance of about £250 for repairs, which ought to have been ample to cover the expenditure under this head. Instead of that they were confronted with an overdraft of over £400.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said an excellent boat had been imported for the department from England—the best that had ever been received in the Colony, and which necessarily cost a large sum of money by the time it was landed at Fremantle. In addition to the repairs of boats, there were also expenses in connection with beacons and buoys. He did not think they would require any further expenditure under this head for some time.

The vote was then ordered to stand part of the Bill.

Item: Police Department, £1,596 9s. 11d.:

MR. PARKER said a very liberal allowance of £22,650 was made by the House last year for this department, and he was astonished to see an over-expenditure of sixteen hundred pounds, which he understood to consist of items of fuel and light, travelling, incidental, and forage, "insufficiently provided for." He thought ample provision had been made for these items in the Estimates for 1877, and he would like to know why there should be all this excess.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): This item requires some further explanation than is afforded in the remarks of the Auditor General on expenditure statement. I may state that the police are provided with clothing from England, for which they pay fifteen per cent. in addition to the prime cost. By the 1st January, 1878, the amount expended on clothing will be refunded, which will reduce this excess vote to about £500. Against this there are other refunds, amounting to £303 19s. 3d., on account of sales of broken down horses belonging to the department, and of condemned stores, thus reducing the actual overdraft to about £250, which is, in reality, the amount which the House is asked to provide in excess of the ordinary vote for the department—a sum at which hon. members can hardly take exception when it is borne in mind that the expenditure connected with the

department was nearly £23,000. It is impossible to estimate such a large expenditure within a few shillings.

MR. SHENTON said he understood from the Surveyor General when moving the second reading of the Bill that there was about £1,000 worth of blue cloth now in store.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) did not think it all consisted of blue cloth.

MR. SHENTON: All I can say is, if there is such a quantity on hand there must have been gross mismanagement somewhere; for however careful they might be with regard to the preservation of the cloth they could not prevent the moths destroying it.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) said it had been the practice of the department, in order to ensure the members of the force being uniformly clothed and at as low a cost as possible, to order annually a sufficient supply of cloth for the year. Previous to the breaking up of the Convict Department, the police used to get this cloth through that department, but since that establishment was broken up the police department had obtained their supplies direct from home. It did not follow that all the cloth ordered was now in store, for a great deal of it had already been used, and he understood that the clothing required during the past year, during the current year, and during the next year, was included in this lump sum.

MR. SHENTON: That does not alter the state of the case at all. If there is a thousand pounds' worth of cloth in the stores of the department there must have been gross mismanagement on the part of those responsible. A long time must necessarily elapse before such a large quantity can be used, and, in the meantime, it must deteriorate in quality.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said it was not £1,000 worth of clothing alone, but other materials and accoutrements for the force.

MR. SHENTON: No matter what amount we vote for this department, it is invariably overdrawn, and there's no department in the service over which the House is more desirous, and naturally so, of exercising watchful and jealous super-

vision. I think the head of the department would do well to bear this in mind, and exercise a little more care in carrying out the wish of the House in economising the expenditure connected with the department.

MR. CAREY pointed out that in the explanatory remarks appended to the comparative statement of estimated expenditure and actual expenditure, and which were supposed to afford the House every necessary information with reference to the various items of overdraft, no allusion whatever was made to the item of clothing in connection with this excess vote. The only explanation there vouchsafed was "items of fuel, light, travelling, incidental, and forage, insufficiently provided for." It would be interesting to know under which of these heads clothing was included.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): Incidentals.

MR. CAREY: I must say it's a very strange way of putting it, to say the least.

MR. S. H. PARKER: In the Estimates for 1877, full provision was made under the head of "incidentals;" a sum of £700 being voted for that contingency.

MR. MARMION would like to know if the same expenditure had been incurred in previous years. It was very well known, and particularly so to the members of the Government, that this item of "police" had attracted a great deal of attention, and a desire had been generally and frequently expressed that the expenditure in connection with it was excessive, and should be curtailed; yet, in spite of that, here was another overdraft of £1,500. Possibly the department thought it would be well to lay in a good stock of cloth, in order to guard against the probability of this item being disallowed in future years. He did not mean to say that such was really the case, but it did seem strange, considering there were only about a hundred policemen on the force, and that the Government disposed of the cloth to them at an advance of twenty per cent. on the prime cost—it did seem astonishing that the annual expenditure on each policeman, in the matter of material for clothing alone, should come to about £12 10s. Of course, it was very little use raising any objection to

the item, nothing the House could do would bring money already expended back again; but he did think it desirable that the House should so express its views on the subject as to show the Government that if this sort of thing continued the overdraft would have to be met in a manner which would not be altogether acceptable to the officers responsible for the excess.

The vote was then agreed to.

Item: Gaols, £620 0s. 4d:

Agreed to, without discussion.

Item: Rottnest Native Penal Establishment, £574 4s. 1d.:

MR. S. H. PARKER considered it very strange there should be such an overdraft in connection with this establishment, especially bearing in mind the very liberal allowance made on the Estimates for the past year as compared with the previous year. In the item of provisions, and of firewood for salt-works, the vote for 1877 was much in excess of the vote for 1876, and yet these were the very items in respect of which there was overdraft. In the latter year the vote for "provisions and other necessities" was £600; in 1877 this was increased to £850; and the vote for firewood was doubled. Yet, notwithstanding this liberal provision, there was an overdraft on these two items alone of £570. Surely there could be no necessity for this, in connection with an establishment like that at Rottnest.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said the excess occurred almost entirely in the item of "provisions," with respect to which he could not do better than direct the attention of the House to the report of the Departmental Commission appointed to enquire into the expenditure connected with the establishment, from which it would be seen that the administration had been conducted as economically as possible.

MR. S. H. PARKER: In future, it appears to me it would be well—looking at the overdraft which takes place year after year—that a more liberal provision be made so as to avoid these everlasting overdrafts.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): That is the real cause of excess in connection with almost every department—the inadequacy of

the provision made for its maintenance.

The vote was then agreed to.

Item: Government Printer, £506 2s. 9d:

Agreed to, without comment.

Items: Poor House and Charitable Allowances, £3,088 13s. 2d.; Education, £257 10s. 7d.; Works and Buildings, £414 4s. 6d.; Roads and Bridges, £315 19s.:

Agreed to.

Item: Miscellaneous, £8071 13s. 4d.:

MR. S. H. PARKER called the attention of the Government to the fact that whereas overdrafts and excess votes were carefully looked after and submitted for the affirmation of the House, no account was rendered of moneys voted for particular purposes but which remained unexpended. For instance, a sum of £2,000 was voted the previous year for "preliminary and final surveys in connection with the Fremantle, Guildford, and Eastern Districts Railway." According to the report of the Director of Public Works only about £500 of this amount had been expended, yet no explanation was afforded to the House as to what had become of the balance. He thought it would be much more satisfactory to the House and to the public if the Government showed every year how much of the votes of the House for special purposes like this remained unexpended. It appeared to him that this unexpended balance of £1,500 in connection with the vote for railway surveys, should be deducted from the amount of these "miscellaneous" items.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said no money voted for the past year was available for the present year's expenditure. As for the information which the hon. member thinks should be supplied to the House with regard to these unexpended balances, he, for one, would be happy in future to furnish him with the information he desired, and the items would henceforth appear as he wished.

MR. BROWN failed to see how hon. members could expect to get items more in detail than they had in the Auditor General's remarks printed at the end of the Expenditure Statement, in which the particulars of each overdraft were specified. As to underdrafts that was

another matter. He would however say this—they had had far more information, generally, afforded them this year on these subjects than had ever before been given to the House.

MR. CAREY said he thought it was the late Acting Colonial Secretary (Mr. Lefroy) who once said in the House that it did not matter what the House said about expenditure the Government would spend the money if it was wanted.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): I do not echo that remark.

MR. CAREY believed there was a resolution of the House limiting the overdrafts in any one year to £5,000, yet in the face of that he found that during the past seven years the aggregate amount of excess bills passed by the House was over £100,000. It appeared to him that discussion upon these items of overdraft was perfectly useless. Whatever the Government thought proper to spend, they did so, and then asked the House to confirm the expenditure, which the House invariably did.

The item "Miscellaneous" was then agreed to.

Item: Refunds, £741 6s. 6d.:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) explained that this amount was principally on account of drawbacks of customs duties.

The item was ordered to stand part of the Bill, which was then reported, the third reading being made an Order of the Day for Wednesday, 19th June.

The House adjourned at four o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 19th June, 1878.

Petition—Railway from Fremantle to Perth and Guildford: Southern Route—First reading—Health of flocks of various districts: return moved for—License for removing timber—Northern Railway: deviation from original route—Eastern Railway: line of survey—Game Acts, 1874-6, Repeal Bill, 1878: motion for second reading—Third Readings—Message No. 1 (Fremantle, Perth, and Guildford Railway): consideration of, in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 7 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PETITION.

MR. S. H. PARKER presented a petition signed by 320 citizens, landowners, and others of Perth, praying that the City Central Railway route, in combination with the Southern Line, laid down by Mr. Victor, be adopted; and moved that the petition be received.

Motion agreed to. Petition read.

RAILWAY FROM FREMANTLE TO PERTH AND GUILDFORD—SOUTHERN ROUTE.

MR. BROWN, with leave, without notice, asked the Colonial Secretary, Whether the adoption by this House of a route for the railway between Perth and Fremantle on the Southern side of the river would necessitate reference to the Secretary of State for the Colonies before His Excellency the Governor would be empowered to sanction such a route?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) replied that he could find nothing in the Despatch from the Secretary of State to justify His Excellency, in the event of the feeling of the House being in favor of the South side, sanctioning the immediate commencement of the railway on that side; but that the wishes of the House, whatever they might be, would at all times be considered by the Government.

FIRST READING.

The "Transfer of Land Act, 1874, Amendment Bill, 1878," was read a first time.