

extraordinary thing for the Governor to veto such a bill, in the face of the large majority which had passed it. Finding that the Government in the past had misconstrued this word "emoluments," and bearing in mind that we were not likely to have the present Government and the present Attorney General always with us to interpret the word, as the House intended it to be interpreted, he thought it was very desirable that the House should do all it could to prevent any future Attorney General from misconstruing the Act again. With regard to the preamble, he thought the wishes of all parties would be served if he were to move the omission of the words, "and it is desirable to limit the application of such word," from the preamble as printed.

MR. BROWN, having expressed his readiness to accept this amendment, withdrew his own; and the preamble was agreed to, with the omission of the words referred to.

The title having been agreed to, the bill was reported to the House.

EASTERN RAILWAY FURTHER EXTENSION BILL.

This bill was considered in committee, and the various clauses agreed to *sub silentio*.

MR. SHENTON asked the Commissioner of Railways upon what principle it was proposed to give compensation to the owners of land through which this line passed, between York and Beverley. He understood that compensation was paid in connection with the third section, when it was not incumbent upon the Government to do so. He believed no compensation could be rightfully claimed except in the case of land which had been improved or was under cultivation; and he should like to know whether it was the intention of the Government to adhere to that principle in the case of the Beverley line.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said that no claim for compensation would be recognised unless such compensation was found to be strictly due.

Bill reported.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 7th September, 1885.

Proposed Mail Contract with P. and O. Co.—Grant in aid of Municipal Councils—Landing Platform, Ashburton—Medical Officer, Gascoyne District: salary of—Urban Tramways Bill: first reading—Municipal Institutions Act Amendment Bill: second reading—Gun License Bill: second reading—Appropriation Bill (Supplementary), 1885: second reading—Explosives Bill: recommitted—Superannuation Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Eastern Railway Further Extension Bill: third reading—Estimates, 1886: further consideration of—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PROPOSED MAIL CONTRACT WITH P. AND O. CO.

MR. MARMION, in accordance with notice, asked the Honorable the Colonial Secretary to lay upon the table a copy of the proposed Mail Contract for the carriage of mails between Europe and Australasia, to be made by the Victorian Government (acting on behalf of the colony of Victoria and the other colonies of Australia) and the Peninsular and Oriental Company. Also, a memorandum showing the estimated annual amount of the Western Australian proportion of the subsidy under such contract; and whether any provision has been inserted by our Government to admit of Fremantle being made a port of call for the Peninsular and Oriental steamers, in lieu of or in addition to Albany, at any period during the term of the contract. The hon. member said his only object in moving for the correspondence was to obtain certain information, the nature of which would probably determine what further action he might take in the matter.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said: The correspondence re the Australian and European mail service—copies of which are laid on the table, with the memorandum of agreement between the Australasian Colonies—afford all the information now at command. The only reply as to the estimated annual amount of the Western Australian subsidy that I can give is that the Postmaster General considers the cost of our mails, if paid for by the pound, may not exceed £3,000 per annum.

GRANT-IN-AID TO MUNICIPAL COUNCILS.

MR. RANDELL, in accordance with notice, moved, That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to place upon the Estimates for 1886 a sum of money as a grant-in-aid of the funds of the various Municipal Councils of the colony, equal to fifty per cent. on the revenue raised by such Corporations from their respective assessments, not exceeding one shilling in the pound upon the rateable value of each Municipality; such grant-in-aid to be paid under such conditions, and at such time or times as the Governor in Council may decide. The hon. member said the idea of moving in this matter was suggested to him on finding that in Victoria and South Australia similar assistance was extended by the Government to municipal institutions; and it struck him that it was a most equitable thing to do, and that it was very desirable that we should have the same privileges here. He thought the hon. member for Geraldton would give him credit for disinterestedness in this matter, and that the hon. member would therefore give him his support, for he would see that this measure was not intended for the benefit of one part of the colony to the neglect of any other part, but that it embraced all the municipalities of the colony. And he might here say that he had the support of all those municipalities, except one, which was that of Newcastle,—a municipality which was in the happy state of not having yet had to declare any rate, and which consequently could not participate in the proposed grant. The *Burton* ~~Wandering~~ municipality, also, owing to a misconception as to the proposal—believing that as their rates only amounted to 8d. in the pound they would be debarred from obtaining any Government assistance—had held aloof; but every other municipality in the colony had given its cordial support to the proposition. He might also say that there were precedents for such a motion—very respectable precedents, he thought. In Victoria the assistance which the Government gave to municipal bodies was at the rate of £2 for every £1 raised by local rates; and the South Australian Government assisted the municipal institutions of that colony to the extent of £1

for every £1 so raised. But he did not rest his claim for assistance upon precedents only. He took it—and he hoped the House would be with him when he said that it would only be an act of justice on the part of that Council and of the Government to render the assistance here asked in aid of the municipal institutions of the colony. As regards Perth, a few years ago the City Council used to receive £300 a year from the Government, but of late years the grant had been reduced to £100, which was given ostensibly on the ground that the municipal authorities had to maintain the main road from Perth bridge to beyond Crawley—a distance of about five miles—a road that might be said to be used more or less by the whole of the eastern and southern portions of the colony. He need hardly say that this £100 did not suffice to keep that road in order, and that the City Council had to supplement it to a very considerable extent. There was another point which he ought to mention. A few years ago the municipalities of Perth and Fremantle were in the habit of having the assistance of a party of prisoners to keep their roads in repair; and, in Perth, some of the principal streets were made entirely by prison labor. The services of these prison parties had since been lost to the municipal councils, which he thought was another reason why this assistance should be granted. In addition to that, large sums had been raised by means of municipal loans, which had been expended entirely upon the streets of the city. Altogether £12,000 had been raised by the Perth municipality in this way, and the citizens were now taxed 6d. in the pound to meet the charges upon these loans, in addition to the general rate of one shilling in the pound. It was further contemplated to raise another loan, for street improvements, and for rendering the city more attractive, not only to the residents but also to visitors. There was still another reason why, he thought, the municipality of Perth was entitled to Government assistance. He alluded to the large number of public buildings and other property—churches and schools, halls and institutes, and other institutions—that paid no rates at all, but which, if they were taxed, like private property, would yield a considerable

revenue. It would be observed that the assistance he asked for was a sum equal to 50 per cent. of the revenue raised by each municipality from assessments, up to 1s. in the pound. In Victoria, as he had already pointed out, the Government assisted municipal institutions to the extent of 200 per cent.; and in South Australia similar assistance was given to the extent of 100 per cent. But here he had modestly contented himself by asking for only 50 per cent. He found that the total amount of assessments levied last year by all our municipalities that would be entitled to claim this assistance was about £4,500 a year, so that the whole of the vote asked from the Government, to be shared between them, next year, would only be £2,250. He did not know what course the Government benches intended to take in this matter; but it had been hinted that there would be no funds available. It was not his business to suggest where the money was to come from; but this he might say—he had noticed that whenever anything was recommended and passed by that House involving an expenditure of public money, the necessary funds were generally found, somewhere; and he had very little doubt it would be the same here, if this address were passed. He did not at all join in the pessimist views to which expression was given the other evening with regard to the financial prospects of the colony. He thought we might take a much brighter view than some hon. members seemed to take of our finances; and he only hoped the House would go with him in supporting this address, for which he thought he had made out a pretty strong case. He felt sure that if not acceded to now, very strong representations would be made, and very strenuous efforts would be put forward, to bring the claims of the various municipalities of the colony strongly to the notice of the House and of the Government. The residents in these municipalities had come forward voluntarily and taxed themselves, for the purpose of making and maintaining their roads, and he thought this spirit of self-assistance ought to be encouraged. Although the same privilege of levying local taxation for the support of their roads had been conferred upon our country residents, it was a notorious fact that in no instance had this been done.

Therefore, it appeared to him, the assistance now asked for in aid of those who had shown their readiness to tax themselves was assistance which could not fairly be looked upon with any feeling of jealousy by our country friends. He had already said that he had the hearty co-operation of every municipality in the colony—with the exceptions already mentioned—in the step he was now taking, and he was further supported in the matter by the unanimous voice of a representative and influential public meeting of citizens held in the Town Hall only a few weeks ago. He only hoped that the hon. members of that House would also extend their support to the motion, which he now begged to submit to their favorable consideration.

MR. WITTENOOM said he had much pleasure in seconding the motion. He thought it was one of those things that were very much required in the towns of the colony. They all knew that the local rates were not at all sufficient to make and to keep the streets in repair, and that this grant-in-aid would be of great assistance to the various municipalities. He always believed in the good old principle of helping those who helped themselves, which was all this address asked for.

MR. MARMION said that as one of the representatives of the town of Fremantle he could not do otherwise than support the motion. He thought most hon. members would agree that assistance of this nature might very well be afforded by the Government to the various municipalities of the colony, and especially those that had showed a disposition, as some of them had, to tax themselves so heavily to improve their towns. He quite concurred with the hon. member Mr. Randell as to the desirability of making our principal towns as attractive as possible not only to the inhabitants, but also to visitors. He thought this applied not only to the fair city of Perth, but also to the picturesque town of Fremantle. But the difficulty that presented itself to him at the present moment was the question of where the money was to come from, if this address were carried. The majority of hon. members would, he should imagine, be inclined to go with the hon. member in his desire that some assistance should

be given to our municipalities in this matter; and, whatever might be the views of hon. members as to the means of providing funds for the purpose, at present, he hoped they would at any rate show their sympathy with the proposal. Where there was a will there generally was a way; and, if hon. members would only show that evening that they had the will to grant this assistance, he had very little doubt that the Government would find the way.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said the hon. member who had moved the resolution had advocated with much ingenuity and in a very practical manner the claims of our municipalities. In doing so the hon. member took occasion to refer to the views—the “pessimist” views, the hon. member called them—which were expressed in that House the other evening with regard to the finances of the colony. He presumed the hon. member referred to the views which he (the Colonial Secretary) had enunciated, when making his financial statement. Whether those views were pessimist views or optimist views was immaterial just now; all must agree that it was necessary we should regard our financial position with caution. The undertakings of this Government were manifold. It was truly a fatherly Government. It took under its fostering care a great many matters affecting the public interest and the public welfare, which Governments in other colonies left to local bodies to look after; and, for that reason, the claims upon its funds were, he might almost say, endless. He believed himself that, perhaps, in a small community, with a limited population, scattered over a wide area, this paternal form of Government might possess certain advantages, and that it might be an economical arrangement rather than otherwise. But when they bore in mind that this session, already, we had to face the question of limiting our grant for roads and of curtailing our expenditure upon surveys, and that the hon. member for Greenough had that evening given notice of his intention to ask the House to commit itself to an additional expenditure of some £20,000, upon immigration, roads, and surveys; when they found another hon. member now coming forward with a proposal to

still further increase the demands upon our public funds, he thought the House would do well to pause, hon. members would do well to hesitate, before they undertook any fresh responsibilities. He understood that one of the objects which the hon. member had in view was to assist these municipal bodies in borrowing. [Mr. RANDALL: No, no.] He thought one of the objects was to enable the municipal authorities to go to their creditors and point out to this annual grant from the public funds of the colony as so much additional security or guarantee. [Mr. RANDALL: No, sir.] At any rate it might be so used. He would say again, he thought the House would do well to pause before committing itself to any fresh expenditure, until at any rate it had disposed of those other claims which had already been put forward. Occupying the position which he did in that House, were he inclined too much to take an optimist view of things, were he to come before hon. members and before the public painting the position of our finances in the brightest possible tints exhibiting everything as *couleur de rose*, showing only the silver lining of the cloud—were he to do this, rather than to put matters before them in an honest light, and in guarded tones, he considered he should be taking up a position which would be open, and rightly open, to condemnation. He endeavored neither to take an optimist nor yet a pessimist view of things, but to keep a careful look-out, and see that we did not get among financial breakers. Already there were considerable demands upon the public funds towards assisting our municipalities, in the shape of giving them town halls; and looking at the many other claims which were being pressed upon the Government on all hands, he regretted he was unable to support this address,—unless, indeed, hon. members could show him where the money was likely to come from. He thought that before venturing upon any new ground in the way of grants out of public funds, we ought to see as far as possible how far we could satisfy our more urgent claims, in the shape of roads and surveys, and other pressing matters. When the revenue of the colony began to feel the good effects of the various public works about to be inaugurated, when our re-

sources became better able to bear additional strain, he thought that House might rightly consider the further claims of municipalities to some support. But looking at our present responsibilities, the responsibilities already undertaken, he thought the House should shrink from adding to them. He therefore regretted he should not be able to give the motion his support.

MR. SHENTON said that whilst fully agreeing with the principle laid down by the hon. member who brought forward this address,—that when the Government was in a position, financially, to assist municipalities it should do so; still, at the present time, in the face of the estimates of revenue and expenditure now before the House, he could not see how the House could recommend the Government to give an annual grant of £2,250 to assist the various municipalities of the colony. He thought it was the wish of every hon. member to see the colony and its resources developed, and they all admitted that to do that we must have population, and we must have our lands surveyed. Yet, on looking at these Estimates, he saw no vote for immigration; the vote for roads was reduced by one half, and the vote for surveys was also cut down. For his own part he should like to see these items above all things dealt with liberally; and, looking at the difficulties which would have to be solved in the shape of ways and means before the most urgent wants of the colony could be provided, he failed to see how they could ask the Government to undertake these fresh burdens. While therefore agreeing in principle with the proposal now made, he regretted his inability to support it, in face of the Estimates at present in the hands of hon. members.

MR. LAYMAN opposed the motion on the ground that by far the greater portion of the grant-in-aid would go to Perth and Fremantle, instead of to country municipalities, which stood much more in need of assistance than these towns did.

MR. RANDELL, referring to what had fallen from the Colonial Secretary, said that when he made use of the word "pessimist," his thoughts were not of the Colonial Secretary at all, for he did not understand that hon. gentleman to

take a gloomy view of the finances of the colony. He referred to other hon. members. As to what had fallen from the hon. member for the Vasse, and his objection to the proposal because of the large amount that would be given to Perth and Fremantle, let him remind the hon. member that those two towns contained about one-third of the whole population of the colony, and that they contributed in an equal ratio, or very nearly so, to the general revenue of the colony. On that ground alone they had a strong claim for assistance. The city of Perth had a very large extent of streets to maintain, and its citizens were already heavily taxed to keep up those streets; and he thought the claims of our two principal towns were unanswerable, as regards assistance out of public funds for municipal purposes. He regretted to find that the motion which he had submitted was not likely to meet with the success which he honestly believed it deserved, and which he had imagined it would have received. He must, however, be content to leave the matter in their hands, conscious of having done what he conceived to be a public duty which he owed to the municipality over which he had the honor to preside, and to the other municipalities of the colony.

The motion was then put, and the committee divided, with the following result:

Ayes	5
Noes	16
Majority against			11

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Crowther	Hon. A. P. Hensman
Mr. Marmion	Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. Penrose	Hon. J. A. Wright
Mr. Wittenoom	Mr. Brockman
Mr. Randall	Mr. Brown
(Teller.)	Mr. Burges
	Mr. Burt
	Mr. Grant
	Mr. Harper
	Mr. Layman
	Mr. Loton
	Mr. McRae
	Mr. Shenton
	Mr. Steere
	Mr. Venn
	Hon. M. Fraser (Teller.)

The motion was therefore negatived.

LANDING PLATFORM AT THE ASH-BURTON.

MR. MCRAE, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an humble address be

"presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he would be pleased to place on the Estimates for the year 1886 the sum of £100, for the purpose of constructing a landing platform on the West side of the Ashburton river." The hon. member said that, last year, he moved for a sum of £200 for the purpose of constructing a platform on the East side of the river, and, although the sum was voted, the work, for some reason or other, had not been done yet, and the settlers were in the same position as they were in last year, while a good landing place had been ruined for the want of a couple of hundred pounds spent upon it. The present vote was for a platform on the West side of the river for the convenience of the settlers in that direction. Of course it would be better to have a bridge across the river, but that would entail an expenditure of about £2,000. He thought, however, the settlers of the district were entitled to some consideration. Not a fraction had yet been spent in providing them with harbor or landing accommodation, though the steamers called there regularly, besides coasters. A wool ship would take about 1,200 bales from the place this year direct, and yet there was not a plank on which to roll a bale from the shore to a boat. He hoped the House would agree to the address, and that the Government would lose no time in getting the work done.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said he merely wished to say that he had no intention of opposing the presentation of the address, and he hoped they might be able to knock something off the Estimates so as to meet the claims of the district to landing accommodation. No doubt the small sum now asked for could be found, but he should like to see something better provided.

MR. SHENTON said the House had agreed the other day to give a grant of money towards a Town Hall for York, but he noticed that at a public meeting held at York a few days ago it was decided not to build a hall this year. He thought the money appropriated for a town hall at York might be given towards this work, which would be a far greater convenience to the settlers than a town hall at York.

The motion was agreed to.

SALARY TO MEDICAL OFFICER, GASCOYNE DISTRICT.

MR. BROWN, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he would be pleased to place on the Estimates for 1886 a sum of £200, as salary for a medical officer for the Gascoyne District." The hon. member said that last year he brought forward a similar motion and the House passed it, but the Government did not see their way clear to assent to it. The medical officer at Kimberley was already getting £200 a year—he assumed because Kimberley was within the tropics, and the population was smaller and the private practice consequently less than in other districts. The same might be said with regard to the medical officer at Roebourne, who had long been receiving a salary equal to £200, with some other advantages in the shape of quarters. For some years past only £100 had been placed on the Estimates for the Gascoyne District, and the Government had been unable to procure any medical officer to proceed there on such a salary. It therefore must be apparent that if the district was to have the benefit of a medical officer at all, the salary would have to be increased, as had been done in the other northern districts. For three years now the colony had been saving the £100 a year voted on the Estimates for a medical officer for the Gascoyne, so that he considered there was now a sum of £300 to the credit of this vote, and he submitted that this money ought to be expended in the interests of the district. He knew there was a difficulty in the way—the difficulty of providing funds; but he trusted they would be able to see their way clear to find sufficient funds to meet the necessities of the colony, and he looked upon this as one of them.

MR. WITTENOOM said he did not rise to oppose the motion, for he thought it was very desirous that there should be a medical officer at the Gascoyne. But he would suggest, if an appointment were made, that the officer should be stationed some distance up the river, and not at Carnarvon; so as to be within easy reach of most of the Murchison people as well. He could then serve

both districts, which would be better for himself and for the settlers.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said hon. members must be aware of the difficulty in obtaining medical officers to go and locate themselves in these far outlying districts. There was a difficulty now with regard to the North District, the resident medical officer wanting to be relieved. The only way he could see out of the difficulty was for the settlers of the district to guarantee a certain salary to a medical officer, as was done in the other colonies. Supposing the House voted this £200 and the settlers guaranteed another £300 so that a salary of £500 might be offered to a medical officer, some good might come out of it then. But he felt certain that for this paltry sum of £200 no medical officer worth his salt would go and locate himself in a wilderness like the Gascoyne district; and without some further guarantee he felt certain that their efforts would be in vain. If those interested in the matter would urge upon the settlers the necessity of guaranteeing what with the Government grant would be a decent income for a professional man—say £400 or £500—without which no one could expect a man to go to such a place—then they might probably have their wants supplied.

MR. MARMION said, granting that the services of a medical officer might not be obtained, no harm will have been done by placing this sum at the disposal of the Government. A large amount of revenue was received from the district, and it was entitled to some consideration. There was also something in the fact pointed out by the hon. member for the district, that for three years past a sum of £100 a year had been voted by the House for this purpose, not a penny of which had yet been expended. He did not think they could fairly refuse the district what was now asked.

The motion was then put and passed.

URBAN TRAMWAYS BILL.

MR. S. H. PARKER obtained leave to introduce a bill authorising the construction and maintenance of tramways in towns, and for other purposes.

Bill read a first time.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the order of the day for the resumption of the debate upon the second reading of this bill (introduced by Mr. Randell),

MR. BROWN said he understood that the Fremantle town council, who had held a meeting to consider the provisions of the bill, were in favor of the bill, with the exception of the clause dealing with pavements—making it compulsory upon the owners of property in front of which pavement was laid down, to defray a moiety of the cost; and that though they would have preferred to have some of the other matters dealt with in the bill referred to a Commission before being passed into law, they thought there were portions of the bill which it was very desirable should become law at once. Under these circumstances, he did not intend to offer any further opposition to the motion for the second reading. He thought the hon. member in charge of the bill had made out a very good case indeed, as regards some of its provisions.

The motion for the second reading of the bill was then agreed to.

GUN LICENSE BILL.

MR. BURT, in moving the second reading of this bill, said it was a measure that had been called for, he believed, very generally throughout the colony for some time past. It might be in the recollection of some members that a bill of this description was introduced in 1879; but, on that occasion, the second reading was lost. In the framing of the present bill he had endeavored to meet as far as possible the objections that were made to the previous bill; and he thought, when they went into committee on the bill, if it reached that stage, hon. members would find that those objections had been provided for to a very great extent. The object of the bill was to license all persons, above a certain age, using guns. It proposed to prohibit the use or the carrying of guns by anybody below a certain age, to be determined in committee,—he would himself suggest 16 or 17; and that a certain fee should be charged for permission to use a gun by persons above that age. The fee suggested in 1879, when the other bill

was introduced, was 10s., and he would suggest the same fee now, or 7s. 6d. For his own part he was indifferent as to the amount; the main object of the bill was to prevent the carrying of guns by boys of tender age. It had been represented to him from all parts of the colony that small boys were in the habit of popping off guns all over the country, scaring away birds and every other game. The bill did not prevent a man using a gun upon his own land; nor was it intended to apply to all parts of the colony, but within the limits of municipalities, and within a certain radius of such limits.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. P. Hensman) said he merely wished to ask for information,—did he understand the hon. member's object to be to protect the public from the use of guns by young persons because of the danger of the indiscriminate use of firearms, or was the bill brought in for gaming purposes? If it was to protect the community from the danger of using guns, he would suggest whether it would not be more to the point to prohibit the carrying of guns absolutely, within certain limits. The question was whether a fee of 7s. 6d. would prohibit the use of guns to the danger of the community. He had not yet had an opportunity of perusing the bill, or making himself acquainted with its provisions.

MR. BURT said it was evident the hon. and learned gentleman had not read the bill, or he would have seen that it absolutely prohibited the use of guns by persons under a certain age, fee or no fee. Therefore they would be unable to carry guns at all after the passing of this measure.

The motion was then put and passed.
Bill read a second time.

APPROPRIATION BILL (SUPPLEMENTARY), 1885.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser), in moving the second reading of this bill, said it was unnecessary for him to say anything in explanation, hon. members being quite familiar with the details of the bill.

The motion was agreed to, *sub silentio*.
Bill read a second time.

EXPLOSIVES BILL.

On the order of the day for the third reading of this bill,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. P. Hensman) moved that the order be discharged and the bill recommitted.
Agreed to.

IN COMMITTEE:

Clause 3:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. P. Hensman) moved some verbal amendments, which were agreed to *sub silentio*, and the clause as amended put and passed.

Clause 6—Places where explosives may be kept:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. P. Hensman) said it had been pointed out to him since the bill was under the consideration of the select committee, that the 2nd sub-section of this clause was liable to misconstruction. The clause provided that explosives shall not be kept except at certain places, and among those exceptions, according to the 2nd sub-section, was any "store" lawfully existing when the Act should come into operation for such explosives. It might be thought from this that any shop or store where explosives had been sold when this Act came into force might continue to be kept for the storing and sale of explosives, whether licensed or not, which, of course, was not the intention of the Act. He had therefore to move that the 2nd sub-section be struck out.

Agreed to, *nem. con.*

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. P. Hensman) also moved that the first proviso in the same clause be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof, so as to carry out the expressed wish of the committee:

"(1.) To a person keeping, within the limits of a municipality, gunpowder to an amount not exceeding on the same premises five pounds, or keeping, without the limits of a municipality, gunpowder to an amount not exceeding on the same premises thirty pounds, or to a person keeping, without the limits of a municipality, blasting powder to an amount not exceeding on the same premises one hundred pounds."

Question—put and passed.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.
Bill reported.

SUPERANNUATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the order of the day for the third reading of this bill,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. P. Hensman) said he was sorry the hon. member who had brought in the bill was absent, as he was going to ask the hon. member whether he thought it was clear, with regard to "table allowance," whether such allowance meant an allowance for the entertainment of other persons, or an allowance for an officer's own use and benefit.

MR. STEERE said it was he who moved the amendment, introducing table allowance among the emoluments that shall not be taken into consideration in calculating an officer's pension. There were only two officers in the service who received a table allowance, and it was given to them for the entertainment of other persons than themselves. It was therefore clear that they had no right to regard it as part of the emoluments of their office. He did not know how it might apply in future.

The motion for the third reading of the bill was then put and passed.

EASTERN RAILWAY FURTHER EXTENSION BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

ESTIMATES, 1886.

ADJOURNED DEBATE ON THE BUDGET.

MR. BROWN, in resuming the debate upon the budget, said that ever since he had been a member of the House, on every occasion when a budget speech had been made, either the leader of the Government, or some other hon. member, or hon. members, had taken a most gloomy view of the position of the colony; so that the House must by this time be perfectly accustomed to these somewhat discouraging anticipations. But, so far as he remembered, not one of these gloomy vaticinations had been realised. He thought, however, that no one could find fault with the statement made by the Colonial Secretary the other evening that the circumstances of the colony required great caution in dealing with them. He never remembered a time when they did not require great caution, on the part of that House as well as on

the part of the Government. They must all agree that it was the duty of that House and of the Government to practise economy, true and proper economy—he did not mean a niggardly economy, but to exercise a prudent and wise economy. It was, of course, unfortunate that, in consequence of the measures which had been adopted in the past by the Legislative Council, the estimated expenditure for next year equalised the estimated revenue, and that this expenditure had to be cut down to such an extent that nothing appeared on these Estimates for immigration, and that the amounts asked for roads and for surveys had been largely reduced. Every hon. member who had spoken on the subject agreed that these were the most salient features of the budget, the most important points they had to consider, and one and all regretted that such was the state of affairs they had to look in the face. With regard to immigration, he perfectly agreed with the hon. member for Perth that it was highly desirable that Western Australia should by some means or other increase her producing population, and that until we shall have a considerable increase of population we cannot expect a very much better state of affairs than that which we have before us. With regard to that point, however, he would remind the House that, though nothing appeared on these Estimates for immigration, we were not entirely blocked. The Board of Immigration had something like £13,000 already in hand for expenditure between this and the end of next year; and it was to be hoped that with the immigration scheme undertaken by Mr. Hordern in connection with his railway contract, the population of the colony will be considerably increased before the end of 1885. He also hoped that by the end of next year we shall find the circumstances of the colony so far improved that we shall be able to place on the Estimates for 1887 a very large amount of money for immigration purposes. With regard to our present financial position he did not think there was the slightest occasion for alarm. Indeed, he anticipated that we shall receive during next year a larger amount of revenue than that estimated by the Government. At the same time, he appreciated the caution of the Gov-

ernment in not attempting to over-estimate the revenue. The reason why he thought it probable that we shall receive a larger revenue during 1886 than the Government anticipated was that he expected very large benefits would accrue from the various public works which are to be carried out before the end of that year by means of loan money. A portion of that money was already being expended in extending the railway to Beverley, and they hoped also to be able to undertake branch lines to Newcastle and Northam; and he believed the effect of this railway extension will be as great, comparatively, as the effect of railway extension in the past had been. In addition to these railways, the various other works contemplated in different parts of the colony could not fail, he thought, to produce a beneficial effect upon the revenue. With regard to roads, he regretted, in common with every other country member, that the vote for next year was not larger; but he hoped even this would have one good effect—he hoped it may be the means of inducing the residents of country districts to tax themselves in the manner contemplated by the Legislature years ago, and which had been referred to by every hon. member who had addressed himself to the question. With regard to surveys, he looked upon surveys as reproductive works. Perhaps there was not a work that could be undertaken which would more directly and immediately bring in more money to the revenue in proportion to the amount expended than judiciously carried-out surveys. Therefore, if before the session closed, some means could be found for enlarging this vote, he himself should be delighted. One of the most serious features disclosed by these Estimates he considered to be the immense expenditure contemplated in connection with the Works and Railways Department; and, when the committee came to these items, he trusted that the head of the department would give the fullest possible explanation to the House as to the necessity for this expenditure. He had no doubt the hon. gentleman at the head of the department would be able to make out a very good case indeed, but so great was the expenditure under this head that hon. members would not only feel an

interest in the explanation of the hon. gentleman, but also feel it their duty to be satisfied that it was absolutely necessary there should be such a large increase—an increase of £12,000—over the expenditure last year. The hon. member for Perth—whose absence he regretted—stated the other evening that, in view of the great increase of expenditure in connection with our railways, he considered it would be the duty of the Legislature, ere long, to bring into greater use certain lands in the colony; and the hon. member proposed to do this,—how? By placing a tax upon all the good lands—the hon. member, he believed, referred to the country from about Spencer's Brook to York—so as to compel the owners of these lands to cultivate them, instead of running sheep upon them. In other words, the hon. member would have that House declare to persons who had bought their land in a free and open market that they were no longer free to deal with their property as residents in towns and other parts of the colony were free to deal with theirs. The hon. member said he would put a special tax upon these particular lands, and compel the owners to deal with them as the State wished, and not as they themselves wished. Now he looked upon that as too revolutionary a measure altogether, and he should be sorry indeed to see that House adopting it. It may become necessary to increase taxation to meet these ever increasing railway expenses; but he could not believe that this extra taxation would have to be raised from one particular class, the owners of property in country districts alone. Could anyone deny that a railway in a country like this was not a national benefit? Could it be denied that every resident in the colony was not indirectly benefited by railway extension? He maintained that the residents of our towns, the residents of Fremantle, of Perth, of Guildford, and York, derived as great a benefit from this railway as did the persons through whose lands the line ran. Why then should the latter be specially taxed to meet the loss sustained in working the line, any more than the houses and lands of the dwellers in these towns should be taxed? He could quite understand that, in exceptional cases, it might become the duty of the State to take away lands

from persons who had purchased them; but they certainly should only do so when they were prepared to fairly remunerate such persons for their lands. That it was not the owners of good land who alone had benefited by this railway was shown by the action of the Government itself, in raising the upset price of land alongside the line between here and York from 10s. an acre to £3 an acre. That land, as regards its quality, bore no comparison with the good land owned by private individuals between Spencer's Brook and York; yet the Government considered that this railway had enhanced the value of its own land between the valley of the Avon and Guildford to the extent of 50s. per acre, or about six times its former value. He was sure if the owners of the good land referred to by the hon. member for Perth received an offer of anything like £3 an acre for it, they would be very satisfied to accept it; and if arrangements of that kind were made, perhaps one could not say it would do very much injustice.

MR. WITTENOOM said he was surprised at the proposition made the other evening by the hon. member for Perth, who, he was sorry to find, was not in his place now. The hon. member suggested that a tax should be placed on all lands that were benefited by a railway going through them, unless such lands were brought under cultivation. He hoped the hon. member would not limit the application of his policy to lands that were benefited by railways. There was a large amount of property in Perth which had been largely benefited by the improvements that were going on, but which the owners kept locked up, and it was hoped that the hon. member would not spare these when he came to put a tax upon the country districts. He thought it was rather inconsistent and rather late in the day for the hon. member now to come forward to propose that these lands should be taxed. He must have known that the railway was to go through these private lands, and why did he not object to the line being constructed at all. The hon. member, like many other people, was very wise after the event. He (Mr. Wittenoom) took it that the object of this railway was to cheapen the cost of transit, so that the settlers of the district might be better

able to compete with the corn-growers of the other colonies. But what would be the use of cheapening the cost of transport, if at the same time they were to raise the price of land from which the produce was obtained, by taxing it? The question as to how the railway was going to pay was a question that ought to have been considered before the work was entered upon, and not now. As to the Estimates, he did not see anything very dreadful about them, apart from the railway expenditure, which certainly was becoming rather serious. But, after all, it was only an experiment so far, and this railway really had as yet had no chance of showing whether it would pay or not. The section between Perth and Fremantle had paid beyond all expectation, and the amount of traffic was greater than anybody ever dreamt of. He considered it was too soon yet to pronounce judgment upon the rest of the line. As to the estimates of expenditure, generally, he would point out that this was a very expensive colony to manage. With our scattered community, and widely separated districts, it was impossible to expect that the affairs of the colony could be managed as cheaply and economically as if the population was more concentrated and the various parts of the colony closer to head quarters. The worst feature of all, he thought, was the fact that our exports were falling off, and he was very much afraid the return for next year would show a still further falling off amounting to thousands of pounds. The Government hitherto had been in the habit of estimating the value of our exports at too high a price, which he thought was a very bad policy, as it was calculated to mislead, and to create a feeling of false security. The reduction of the grant for Roads and Bridges was another wrong policy. It was useless opening out railways unless we provided means for the settlers to bring their produce to the railway. There was another matter which he thought ought not to be lost sight of. A considerable proportion of their new loan was about to be expended upon what he could only look upon as luxuries, that would produce nothing in return for the money expended upon them. He also regretted that no provision was made on these Estimates for

immigration. He considered that the two things that would most tend to advance this colony were, in the first place the discovery of precious metals, and in the next place an influx of population. If we found the former we should not have to wait long for the latter.

MR. MARMION said he had been endeavoring for the last few hours to collect a few figures in connection with the financial position of the colony. He might in the first place refer to some remarks which he made last year when the Colonial Secretary made his Budget speech, bearing upon what fell from the hon. gentleman then as to what appeared to some hon. members as a gloomy aspect of affairs. He thought it necessary upon that occasion to say that he considered it was ill-advised policy on the part of the members of that House to be continually, year after year, taking this gloomy view of the future of the colony; and he must again take the liberty of repeating what he then said. He thought this was a very mistaken policy, because the remarks made by members in that House went beyond that chamber: they went forth among the settlers of the colony and among many people outside the colony, as the deliberate conclusions and utterances of the members of the Legislature, who might fairly be considered to possess an intimate knowledge with statistical matters at all events, and with the actual financial position of the colony. He thought that in all probability His Excellency the Governor himself had perhaps a somewhat undue inclination to dwell upon the necessity of caution. He did not blame His Excellency for being cautious, but perhaps there was a limit beyond which it was not wise to go even in that direction, and possibly the remarks made by His Excellency, followed by those made last session and this by the Colonial Secretary, had had the effect upon some hon. members of making them take that gloomy view of the future which in his opinion was not at present sustainable by the facts of the case, and the figures which he hoped presently to place before the committee. In order to show the wonderful manner in which our finances had improved during the past four or five years, how the revenue had increased year after year, it

was his intention to go back as far as the year 1881, and to give a rough statement of the revenue and expenditure for each year; also a comparative statement of the revenue of each successive year. He would then endeavor to show that, in his opinion at any rate, His Excellency the Governor had been over-cautious in estimating that the balance at the end of 1885 would only be £46,000. In his opinion it would amount to considerably over that; and, as the basis for the Estimates for 1886 was taken from the estimated balance remaining to credit at the end of 1885, if it could be shown that a much greater balance than that estimated would, or should, exist, and that His Excellency himself did not consider it necessary to have a larger "nest egg" than £30,000 at the end of 1886;—if he could show this, if he could show that this balance had been under-estimated, then he submitted that they would be justified in expending during next year a considerably larger sum than we would be justified if the available balance at the end of this year was only £46,000, and at the end of next year only £30,000. In 1881 the revenue from colonial sources amounted to £244,163 3s. 4d., and the Imperial grant swelled it up to £254,313 3s. 4d. That, however, included a sum of £48,635 9s. 6d. which was refunded to general revenue out of loan money on account of the amount expended out of current revenue in the construction of the Eucla telegraph; so that the actual net revenue for the year 1881 was £205,677 13s. 10d. The expenditure for the same year was £197,386 4s. 11d., leaving a balance for that year of revenue over expenditure of £8,291 8s. 11d. Next year, 1882, the revenue amounted to £241,122 2s. 6d., or, with the Imperial grant (£9,250), £250,372 2s. 6d. The expenditure for the same year was £205,451 6s. 2d., leaving a balance for that year of £44,920 16s. 4d. Comparing the net revenue for 1881 (£205,677 13s. 10d.) with the net revenue for 1882 (£250,372 2s. 6d.), there was a surplus of £44,694 8s. 8d. in favor of the latter year, and bearing in mind that the Imperial grant was £1,000 less in 1882 than it was in 1881, there was an increase of £45,694 8s. 8d. in the revenue for 1882 as compared with the revenue for the previous year. The revenue for

1883 amounted to £284,363, and the expenditure to £240,566, showing an excess of revenue amounting to £43,797, and an increase of revenue over the preceding year of £33,991; or, taking into consideration the reduction of £1,000 in the Imperial grant, an increase of £34,991 over the revenue for 1882. In 1884, the revenue received amounted to £283,819, and the Imperial grant was £6,500, giving a gross income of £290,319. The expenditure for the same year amounted to £291,306, showing a small excess of £987. Comparing the revenue of 1884 with that of 1883 they had an increase of £5,956; but to this they had to add the difference in the Imperial grant, which was £1,750 less than in the previous year, giving an actual excess of £7,706; and, in the majority of instances, this increase was shown to be in those items which were indicative of the general progress of the colony. Referring to Governor Robinson's speech at the opening of the session of 1881, he found it there stated that the deficit on the 31st December, 1880, amounted to £80,950 16s. 10d. That however, was reduced to £32,315 7s. 4d., by the repayment of the sum expended on the Eucla line £48,635 9s. 6d. Now giving credit for the surplus revenue over expenditure in 1881, namely, £8,291 8s. 11d.; the surplus revenue over expenditure in 1882, namely, £44,920 16s. 4d.; and the surplus revenue over expenditure in 1883, namely, £43,797,—being a total surplus of £97,009 5s. 3d., and deducting from this the deficit in 1884, namely, £987, they had a sum of £96,022 5s. 3d., being surplus of revenue over expenditure since the 31st December, 1880, when the reduced deficit was £32,315 7s. 4d., which would leave a balance to credit at the end of 1884 of about £63,707. They were told, however, that on that date there was a balance in the chest of £75,165,—a discrepancy which he had not yet been able to clear up to his satisfaction, though no doubt a satisfactory explanation could be given of it. The hon. member then proceeded to show that, in his opinion, the estimated surplus balance in the chest at the end of this year (1885) had been underestimated. He pointed out that the revenue actually received during the first half of the present year, according to the

published returns, was £183,935, which compared with the revenue for the corresponding period last year (£167,628), showed an excess of over £16,000. The expenditure for the first six months of the current year was £135,150 16s. 5d.—being £48,784 17s. 3d. less than the revenue for the same period. With regard to the remaining six months of this year, he would take, as the basis of his estimate of revenue, the revenue received during the last six months of 1884, which—seeing that the revenue during the first six months was largely in excess of the corresponding period last year—would at any rate be a modest estimate. The amount received during the last half of 1884 was £122,690; and, assuming that we shall receive no more this year, this, added to the amount received up to 30th June, £183,935, would give us a total revenue of £306,625. To this would have to be added the surplus brought forward from last year to begin this year with,—£75,165, making a grand total (in round numbers) of £381,790. The estimated expenditure for the year, including the supplementary estimates, was £328,128, which, deducted from the revenue figures just given, showed a surplus balance of £53,662 at the end of this year. Bearing in mind, again, that the actual expenditure for the whole year rarely came up to the total estimated expenditure, and that last year it fell short of the estimated expenditure by nearly £22,000; and, taking one half of this amount as the basis of his calculation of the allowance that might be made for the remaining half of this year—in other words, deducting £11,000 from the estimated expenditure for the whole year, and adding this to the estimated surplus balance already mentioned, we should have a credit balance on the 31st December next of something like £64,662, or about £18,000 more than His Excellency the Governor had anticipated. The hon. member said he believed himself there would be a surplus of between £70,000 and £80,000; but, putting it at the lower figure which he had quoted, and which he thought he had clearly demonstrated might be calculated upon, he thought there was no ground for apprehension, but, on the contrary, cause for congratulation; and that he believed

they would be justified in increasing the votes for surveys and roads, and also in making some provision for immigration, on the present Estimates. There was another reason he thought for assuming that his calculations were correct, and that the surplus balance had been underestimated by His Excellency and his advisers. In the speech with which His Excellency opened the last session of Council, His Excellency said: "I am again able to say that the Government is in a good financial position. The current year began with a Treasury balance of £76,152, or more than double the sum in the chest on the previous year"—another hopeful augury. "The revenue to the 30th June," His Excellency said, "has been £167,628, and the expenditure (including £20,000 carried to the immigration fund) £141,010. The unappropriated cash balance at the end of last month was therefore £102,770. It appears probable that the revenue estimated for 1884 will be realised, or nearly so. But should you pass the supplementary estimate of £14,235 which will be presented to you . . . the original estimate of expenditure will be considerably exceeded. After making every possible allowance the cash balance at the end of this year (1884) may, however, be safely computed at over £30,000,"—the sum, His Excellency added, he had named in a previous speech as the limit below which he did not think the floating capital of the Government could prudently be reduced. Now, instead of having at the end of 1884 a surplus balance of £30,000 they had no less than £75,000—a difference of £45,000 over the amount estimated by His Excellency. Let him again read His Excellency's words at the opening of the present session, which were almost a reflex of what His Excellency said before: "The financial position of the Government," His Excellency told them, "is highly satisfactory. The funds in the chest on the 30th June had risen to £123,950, and though I shall be obliged to lay before you considerable supplementary estimates—due chiefly to increased expenditure consequent upon the progress and development of the colony—the balance in hand at the close of the year will probably not be less than £40,000." Arguing

by analogy, and from their experience of the previous year, when His Excellency's estimated surplus of £30,000 had increased to £75,000, it was only fair to assume that the surplus balance at the end of the current year, which His Excellency estimated at £40,000, would at least amount to £85,000, for they might fairly assume that His Excellency had again erred on the side of caution rather than otherwise. He thought, therefore, there was every reason to be hopeful rather than despondent over the financial prospects of the colony. If the future proved equal to the past, they had reason to be particularly hopeful that their most sanguine wishes would be realised. The only thing that gave cause for any alarm was the low price obtaining for the staple products of the colony. No doubt the purchasing powers of the community had been reduced largely during the last year or two, as was indicated by the reduced Customs receipts last year. But this was one of those circumstances over which we had no control. The only satisfaction—if satisfaction it was—was that the other colonies were suffering from the same causes. If the price of wool was low for us, it was also low for them, and for the rest of the world; and the same might be said with regard to other products. He hoped, however, a change would soon come. No doubt the large expenditure upon public works would to some extent make up for the low prices ruling for the products of the colony. A liberalisation of our land laws would also no doubt have a beneficial effect. While on this subject he could not help drawing attention to the fact that it was to our land revenue, and to our land revenue almost entirely, that we owed our ability to undertake our extensive public works. Hon. members therefore would do well to apply their minds to the necessity for liberalising our land laws, so as to encourage settlement, for, if we lost this source of revenue, we must undoubtedly have recourse to other modes of taxation to meet the growing financial burdens of the colony.

MR. RANDELL complimented the hon. member for Fremantle for the able and lucid manner in which he had marshalled his figures, and upon the satisfactory financial statement which he

had been able to make—a statement for which he thought the House and the country ought to feel grateful to the hon. member. He principally rose, however, to say that he felt very sorry indeed, after the very hopeful view which the hon. member took of our financial outlook—a view in which he might say he fully concurred—he was only sorry that his motion in favor of subsidising municipal funds had not been delayed until after the hon. member had made his financial statement. He believed he should then have scored a victory instead of sustaining a defeat.

The vote for the *Governor's Establishment*, Item £543 16s. 8d., was then put and passed.

Legislative Council, Item £975:

Agreed to, without comment.

Colonial Secretary's Department, Item £1,719:

Agreed to, without discussion.

Treasury Department, Item £1,335;
Audit Department, Item £1,270; *Customs Department*, Item £5,437:

These votes were passed *sub silentio*.

Postal and Telegraph Department, Item £31,547:

MR. SHENTON asked what was being done in the matter of the appointment of Superintendent of Telegraphs, and whether it was proposed that the officer who received the appointment should be qualified to take charge of the telephone as well as the telegraph.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said he understood the Postmaster General was making every effort to get a competent man, a scientist possessing a practical knowledge of both branches.

MR. SHENTON called attention to the large increase in the vote for linemen. There appeared to be a far larger number of linemen required to look after the new Northern line, with its iron posts and all the latest improvements, than were employed on the old lines where wooden posts were used, and other old fashioned appliances.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said the great additional cost of many of the items in connection with the Northern line for next year, as compared with the votes for the present year, was because provision had to be made on the present Estimates for the whole year,

whereas last session provision had only to be made for a portion of the year. To a certain extent the vote asked for was only speculative, but he thought they would do well to accept the estimate of the head of the department.

MR. McRAE thought there would be no necessity to have a lineman at the Fortescue. The Ashburton lineman could attend to that.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said he would see the Postmaster General on the subject.

Progress was then reported.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Tuesday, 8th September, 1885.

Railways of the colony: Cost of construction, maintenance, profit and loss, etc.—Wharfage charges, Fremantle jetty—Bridge over the Avon at Beverley—Appropriation Bill (Supplementary), 1885—Estimates, 1886: further considered—Message (No. 23): Public Works, Land Grant Railway proposals, Immigration, Surveys—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

RAILWAYS OF THE COLONY: COST OF CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE, &c.

MR. GRANT, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways the following questions:

1. What has been the total cost of the Eastern Railway from Fremantle to York?
2. What is the amount of interest per annum that has to be provided for this amount?
3. What is the amount of sinking fund per annum that has to be provided for, and when is the first payment due?