

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 12th August, 1885.

Revenue and Expenditure, North of Arrowsmith River—Church of England Collegiate School Bill: first reading; referred to a select committee—Message (No. 12): Papers connected with New Guinea and Federal Council—Message (No. 13): High School Scholarships and University Exhibition; Conditions attached to—Message (No. 14): Replying to Address of the Council relative to proposal to appoint two Unofficial Members of the Executive Council—Salary for Inspector of Mineral Lands at Northampton—Water-boring, Encla District—Schedule to Loan Act, Public Works (Message No. 11): referred to select committee—Imported Stock Amendment Bill: third reading—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE, DISTRICTS NORTH OF ARROWSMITH RIVER.

MR. WITTENOOM, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Secretary to lay on the table of the House a return showing the amount of revenue and expenditure, for the year 1884, of that portion of the Colony north of a line drawn due east from mouth of Arrowsmith River.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser), before replying, said he might point out incidentally that the form in which this question was put was a violation of the understanding arrived at, a session or two ago, that no hon. member should call for elaborate returns of this character involving a considerable amount of clerical labor and research, except upon an address adopted by the House. Waiving that objection, his official reply to the hon. member's question would be as follows: The Treasury accounts were based as a whole on the Annual Estimates, and the accounts were kept accordingly, under the provisions of the Audit Act. Separate accounts were not kept of the receipts and expenditure connected with the several districts; and no such return as called for could be given with any approach to accuracy, as it would be impossible to determine the receipts of Customs to be credited to each district. Goods cleared at Fremantle were consumed at the North-West and all over the colony,—how much in each district it would be impossible to ascertain.

MR. WITTENOOM was afraid the hon. gentleman did not wish to answer the question. He was not at all satisfied with the reply given, and he should move an address to the Governor on the subject.

CHURCH OF ENGLAND COLLEGIATE SCHOOL BILL.

MR. BURT, in accordance with notice, moved for leave to introduce a Bill to dissolve the Corporation of the Governors of the Perth Church of England Collegiate School, and for other purposes.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

MR. BURT, in accordance with the requirements of the standing orders, the bill being a private bill, moved that it be referred to a select committee, consisting of Mr. Loton, Mr. Steere, Mr. Harper, Mr. Venn, and the mover.

MR. PARKER called for a ballot, which resulted in the election of the following members to serve on the committee: Mr. Burt, Mr. Loton, Mr. Parker, Mr. Steere, and Mr. Venn.

MESSAGE (No. 12): ADMINISTRATION OF NEW GUINEA AND THE FEDERAL COUNCIL ENABLING BILL.

THE SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:

"The Governor has the honor, with reference to the Address of the Honorable the Legislative Council No. 9, of the 7th instant, to transmit herewith, for the information of the Council, the printed and other papers enumerated in the annexed Schedule*, on the subject of New Guinea and other islands in the Western Pacific Ocean, and on the subject of the Bill for constituting a Federal Council for Australasia.

"2. The contribution of this Colony, as already approved by Your Honorable House, towards the sum of £15,000 for the Administration of the annexed portion of New Guinea has been fixed at £161 16s. 9d. per annum. It will be perceived from the memorandum of His Excellency Major-General Sir Peter Scratchley, K.C.M.G., that further assistance is required, and other papers will show the light in

* Vide "Votes and Proceedings," p. 66.

"which the matter is regarded by the Governments of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, and New Zealand. The Governor will be glad to learn the views of the Legislative Council of this Colony on the question.

"3. The Bill for constituting a Federal Council has passed the Imperial Parliament. The Governor hopes shortly to receive copies of it, and also the draft of the measure which the Governments of Victoria and Queensland propose to bring forward in their respective Parliaments for the adoption of the Imperial Act, when a similar Bill will be introduced into Your Honorable House.

"4. Further papers, copies of telegrams, &c., on these subjects, which could not be formally presented to the Council without some inconvenience, may be perused at the Colonial Secretary's Office by any members of the Legislature who may desire to see them.

"Government House, Perth, 12th August, 1885."

The consideration of the Message was made an order of the day for August 14th.

MESSAGE (No. 13): CONDITIONS ATTACHED TO HIGH SCHOOL SCHOLARSHIPS AND UNIVERSITY EXHIBITION.

MR. SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:

"The Governor has the honor to transmit, herewith, for the consideration of the Honorable the Legislative Council, a letter and memorandum, dated 30th July last, from the Rev. D. G. Watkins, also a petition from Mr. A. J. Saw, relative to the conditions on which the High School Scholarships and Exhibition have been established, and suggesting certain alterations in those conditions.

"2. In limiting to the pupils of the Government and Assisted Primary Schools the benefits of the two Scholarships offered annually for competition, the idea was to affiliate the Government lower-grade schools to the superior institution, and to offer the masters and pupils of the Government Schools a special encouragement, in a manner

"very common elsewhere. The Scholarships, in short, were intended as a means of improving the system of Education conducted at the public expense.

"3. In the same manner, the Exhibition from the High School to an Australian University was intended to benefit and enhance the value of the Education given at the principal centre of learning in the Colony. Precedents for this exist in every civilised country.

"4. The High School Exhibition was made tenable at some Australian University because its value, £100, is not sufficient to meet the cost of sending a student to a British or European University, and because it was thought that the class of parents who would send a son to Oxford or Cambridge, for instance, would necessarily possess considerable means, and that the Exhibition had better be given to the student who, without it, would receive no University Education at all, and whose additional expenses it would just meet.

"5. These were the Governor's ideas at the time the scheme was approved of by the Legislature, and they are the views which he still holds.

"6. The Governor considers, however, that it is of much greater importance that the conditions attached to these Educational prizes should be acceptable to the community than that they should be devised by himself, and he will with the greatest willingness consent to any changes in the Regulations which may be thought advisable by the Legislature.

"Government House, Perth, 12th August, 1885."

The consideration of this Message was fixed for August 17th.

MESSAGE (No. 14): REPLYING TO ADDRESS RE PROPOSAL TO APPOINT TWO UNOFFICIAL MEMBERS OF THE EXECUTIVE.

MR. SPEAKER further notified that he had received the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:

"The Governor has the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Address No. 2, dated the 3rd instant, of the Honorable the Legislative Council, informing him that Your Honorable House approves of the proposal for the appointment of two Unofficial members of the

"Executive Council, as indicated in the Governor's Message No. 1, of the 27th ultimo.

"2. The Governor has, however, observed that this proposal has been supported by only a narrow majority of the unofficial side of the Legislature, and that it has met with considerable opposition out of doors.

"3. The Governor's only object in making a suggestion which, at the time, he had some reason to believe would be generally acceptable, was to take a step of a liberal character which would give satisfaction to the community, and he cannot but feel that this object would be defeated were he now to act on the Address which he has received.

"4. Therefore, while thanking Your Honorable House for your approval of the suggestion contained in his Message No. 1, and for the consideration bestowed upon it, the Governor proposes to take no further step in the matter at present.

"Government House, Perth, 12th August, 1885."

SALARY FOR INSPECTOR OF MINERAL LANDS.

MR. WITTENOOM, 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 Supplementary Estimates a sufficient sum of money to provide a salary for the Government Inspector of Mineral Lands at Northampton. The hon. member said the reason he had brought forward this motion was to do away with an injustice which he thought had been put upon the inhabitants of Northampton and the Geraldton district for some time past. Hon. members were aware that when the mineral survey of the Victoria District was made, a portion of it was set apart as a mineral area, out of which no land for agricultural purposes could be purchased. After a while, this was altered, and people were allowed to take up land, within this area, for agricultural purposes, providing they first obtained a certificate from the Government Inspector that the land in his opinion did not contain minerals. For this purpose an Inspector was duly appointed, and a table of fees was prepared

which the applicant for the land had to pay before he could obtain this certificate. These fees and the expenses of the Inspector amounted to £3 or £4, so that people who had the misfortune to live in this district had to pay this much more for their land than those residing in other parts of the colony, the upset price of the land itself being the same. He thought hon. members would agree with him that this was an injustice. The appointment of this Inspector and the charges incidental to the obtaining of these certificates were made in order to protect the rights of the Government and to preserve the minerals of the colony; and it was very hard that the applicants for agricultural land should have to pay for protecting the public against itself. The object he had in view was to relieve the inhabitants of the district from this injustice, by providing a regular salary for the Inspector, so that applicants for land might be relieved from paying more for their land than was paid by people living in other parts of the colony.

MR. GRANT, in seconding the motion, said he considered that the payment of these fees was a great hardship, and he knew of no just cause why the inhabitants of the district should be saddled with them.

MR. BURGESS said he was one of those who had suffered a considerable amount of hardship from the regulation referred to, having had to pay considerable sums to the Inspector. He looked upon the present regulation as a very unjust one and a very vexatious one. In one case he had to pay as much as £10 for the inspection of a mineral section, and he knew of many instances in which small applicants had had to pay £4 or £5, in addition to the upset price, before they could get the piece of land they wanted.

MR. BROWN was one of those who viewed Supplementary Estimates with disfavor, but no doubt there were two sides to the question, as there was also to the question now before the committee. It was quite true that the residents within this mineral area had to pay these fees, and that persons who wished to purchase land outside this area were exempted from the payment of such fees. But it was at the special and urgent request of the inhabitants of the district

that the Government allowed persons to purchase land for agricultural purposes within this mineral area, and it was done upon the express condition that the applicants should pay for the certificate of the Inspector. Although this certificate afforded some protection against mineral lands being taken up for agricultural purposes, still it was absolutely impossible to say for a certainty that there were no minerals underneath; and he did not think it would be denied by the Inspector himself that some purchasers had some very valuable mineral lodes upon their selections. As he had already said, he viewed Supplementary Estimates as a rule with disfavor, and, unless it were shown that it was absolutely necessary to incur these supplementary charges, he should always be adverse to sanctioning them. In this instance, the motion asked them to request His Excellency to place a sufficient sum for the salary of the Inspector of Mineral Lands upon the Supplementary Estimates for the current year; but he could not conceive that providing a salary for this officer was a question of such urgent necessity that the House should be asked to agree to its being placed on the Supplementary Estimates. If the proposal had been to have it put on the Estimates for next year, it would have been a different thing, for he was rather inclined to think that the Government ought to pay this Inspector, so as to do away with the anomaly referred to, of the residents of one district having to pay more for their land than the residents of other parts of the colony. But he did not think the matter was of such urgency that it should be dealt with on the Supplementary Estimates. He would therefore suggest to the hon. member that he should strike out the word "Supplementary."

MR. MARMION asked if anyone could say what amount of work this Inspector had to perform. Why should not the Government pay him his fees, instead of the public having to do so, rather than provide a fixed salary for him?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) pointed out that there was already a sum on the Estimates for paying the Inspector of Mineral Lands, in the event of an applicant not obtaining a certificate.

Formerly the applicant had to pay whether he obtained a certificate or not, but that was considered to be rather hard upon the applicant, and the House placed a sum on the Estimates to meet such cases. It had been on the Estimates now for two years, and was on the Estimates still. If the House wished to go any further, he thought it should be left to the discretion of the Government as to whether the Inspector should be paid in fees or have a fixed salary. There was nothing in the Land Regulations that he knew of to prevent the Government raising the price of land in any part of the colony; the present upset price of 10s. was simply the minimum price, and he thought that sum should go to the coffers of the State, without any deductions in the shape of fees or anything else; and, if it should be decided that the Government were to pay this Inspector's fees, he thought it would be only fair that the price of land within these mineral areas should be raised, so as to recoup the Government. Should the hon. member succeed in carrying his motion, he could not promise him that the price of land in his district would not be raised, so that, after the payment of all charges, the Government should clear a net profit of 10s. an acre on all land sold.

MR. CROWTHER agreed with what had fallen from the hon. member for the Gascoyne that this question was not one of such vital necessity that provision should be made for it on the Supplementary Estimates. He certainly was opposed to these Supplementary Estimates himself. They were getting too much the fashion altogether. If they went on at the rate they had been going on of late with their Supplementary Estimates the result would be that there would be no annual Estimates to present. Land within these mineral areas was estimated to be worth £3 an acre, but if an applicant obtained a certificate he got the land for 10s. an acre, so that there was no very great hardship in calling upon the applicant to pay a little extra in the shape of these fees, though he confessed that it was somewhat anomalous that the people of one district should have to pay more for their land than their neighbors who happened to live across the border. Seeing, however, that the

whole question of our Land Regulations was under the consideration of a committee appointed for that purpose, he thought it would be advisable to wait until the committee brought up their report, before dealing with these mineral land regulations. If there was any portion of the Land Regulations which required alteration more than another, it was that portion dealing with mineral lands. He would support the motion if it were made to apply to next year's Estimates.

MR. WITTENOOM said it was impossible to get over the injustice of making the residents of one particular district pay more for their land than the price set upon it by the Government. It was only another illustration of the unfair way in which the House treated the North, and another source of irritation. The Commissioner of Crown Lands threatened to raise the price of land at the North, if this motion were carried,—more sandflies. Of course, if it was the wish of the majority of hon. members that the motion should be made to apply to next year's Estimates, it would be no use his opposing it, but he felt it was very unfair.

MR. BURT said he felt inclined to condemn the whole system, but he thought the matter might be left to the select committee then sitting. After all, this Inspector could only give a certificate to the best of his knowledge; it was impossible for any man to tell from a mere surface examination whether a piece of land contained any mineral lodes underneath or not, and he thought that purchases within mineral areas should be stopped at once. That would do away with the necessity of paying for these certificates either by means of fees or salary.

MR. MARMION said he remembered distinctly that when the privilege of purchasing land for agricultural purposes within these mineral areas was first conceded, it was done simply in order that the mining population at Northampton might have an opportunity of obtaining a bit of land for cultivating a little corn and a few vegetables for their own requirements. It was looked upon as a great boon at the time, and a concession, but now it appeared it had come to be looked upon as a great hardship and even an injustice. He was afraid this was only another instance of how the Northern

members sought to work round that House, yet, after all, they were not satisfied.

MR. S. H. PARKER said, in order that the House should not give a direct negative to the motion, and thus debar the hon. member from bringing it forward again this session, he would move that the Chairman leave the chair.

This was agreed to, and the House resumed.

WATER-BORING, EUCLA DISTRICT.

MR. BROWN repeated the question he had put to the Commissioner of Crown Lands on August 10th—whether the applicants for assistance in water-boring in the Eucla District, referred to in the Governor's Message, were the same persons who, in 1883, had applied for and were refused a similar concession?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said that the W.A. Pastoral Association and the Eucla Land and Pastoral Association applied, in 1883, to be assisted in boring for water at Eucla, and that the matter that was considered by the Legislative Council in that year was the advisability of assisting those companies in boring for water.

PUBLIC WORKS SCHEDULE (MESSAGE No. 11).

On the order of the day for the consideration of His Excellency's message relating to the execution of the various public works enumerated in the schedule of the Loan Act,

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said as he proposed to move that the message be referred to a select committee, it was not his intention to address the House at any length himself. Yet he thought it would be desirable that there should be a general expression of opinion on the part of hon. members with regard to the numerous works referred to, which would be some guidance to the select committee in framing their report. This was a most important question. They had now to consider in what order the large number of works included in the schedule should be undertaken, and also when they should be undertaken. He need not make any remark with reference to the first work mentioned in the message—harbor improvements at Fre-

mantle—for the reason that they all knew that this important question was at the present moment in the hands of the eminent authority invited to report upon it; and, until they were placed in possession of Sir John Coode's report, it would be impracticable for them to deal in detail with this work. The Beverley railway was already in the hands of the contractor, and was being carried on with characteristic despatch. The routes of the railway from Spencer's Brook northwards, and of the Bunbury and Greenough railways, still remained to be finally determined; and it was very desirable that, in addition to determining the question of route, the House should express an opinion also as to the character of these works. Again, it would be the duty of the select committee to advise the House not only as to the order of precedence in which these various works should be undertaken, whether immediately and under what circumstances, but also to decide, or at any rate to suggest, as regards the projected lines of railway, where the lines shall commence and where they shall terminate. With regard to the proposed tramway between Roebourne and Cossack, he was sure the hon. member for the district would be able to give the House the benefit of his advice as to the construction of that work. The branch railway to the Perth race-course was an undertaking to which he thought there would be no opposition—not even from the hon. member opposite (Mr. Parker). The extension of the telegraph system from Roebourne to Derby was another work which the member for the district would be able to give them his views upon, and which he was sure the hon. member would tell them should be proceeded with at the earliest possible date. Whilst on this subject it might not be out of place were he to mention that, on the completion of this line to Derby, it was hoped by the Government that funds would be found to further extend the line, and to effect its junction with the South Australian telegraph system, by way of Cambridge Gulf, through our settled Kimberley district. The important harbor works projected at Carnarvon—which in future would no doubt become the shipping outlet of an extensive district—were works which hon. members would

probably agree should not be proceeded with until the Engineer-in-Chief had visited the locality. But it was very desirable that there should be an expression of opinion as to what should be the character of these works; and so with regard to the other works enumerated, but to which it was unnecessary for him now to refer. He now begged to move that His Excellency's message be referred to a select committee, consisting of the Director of Public Works, Mr. Grant, Mr. Brown, Mr. Wittenoom, Mr. Shenton, Mr. Marnion, Mr. Venn, Mr. Loton, and the mover. He might say that he had named the committee, in the geographical order of the districts which the hon. members represented, commencing northwards, and associating with the members for the districts his hon. friend, Mr. Loton.

MR. LAYMAN said he did not hear the Colonial Secretary say anything about jetties. He thought the jetties were the very first works that ought to be undertaken. It appeared to him that the Government were at a loss what ought to be done first with this money, and, for his own part, he thought they could not do better than take in hand the various jetties agreed upon. So far as the Vasse jetty was concerned, it now ran into 8 feet of water, but an extension of 60 feet would only bring it to shallow water (some 4ft. 9in.), and it would be absolutely necessary for the jetty to be carried over this bank, so as to bring it into deep water.

MR. BROWN was pleased to hear that it was proposed in the first place to refer this message to a select committee. He thought the Colonial Secretary had imposed upon them a large duty in requesting a general expression of opinion with reference to all these works; and for his own part he intended to confine himself to speaking of the message in general terms. He was sorry to see in this as in other papers relating to the same subject, the expression "harbor works at Fremantle," instead of "at or near Fremantle."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) explained that the expression which the hon. member took exception to embraced the whole of the port of Fremantle, extending from Rockingham on the south to the northern extremity of Rottnest.

MR. BROWN said he was very glad indeed to have elicited that information. This question of Harbor Works was one of great importance, whether the works were entered upon at Fremantle or near Fremantle. With regard to the routes of the contemplated railways, from Geraldton to the Greenough, from Bunbury, and from Spencer's Brook northwards, he was not aware whether the Railway Department had completed the surveys of these lines—he believed they had, as regards the Greenough line; but, with regard to these undertakings, and the other works generally, he was thoroughly in accord with the Governor when His Excellency said, "it is believed that it will be most beneficial to the colony to lose no time in proceeding with the whole of the works in the loan schedule." It would be beneficial for many reasons, and amongst them that stated by His Excellency himself—that the fact of so many large public works being on foot at once would bring and attract workmen from elsewhere, and correct any disturbance of the local labor market more effectually than if the works were spread over a longer period. At the same time, he was quite in accord with His Excellency when he pointed out that the conditions of the different undertakings and the limited resources of the Works Department must necessarily prevent the whole of the works from proceeding simultaneously. It therefore would become a question to decide—and this, he thought, was pre-eminently a question for the select committee, after conferring with the head of the department, to decide—the order in which the various works should be taken in hand, regard being had to the resources of the department, and the information already in the possession of the department, for, after all, their decision in this matter must depend very much upon these considerations. With regard to the works contemplated at Carnarvon, the necessity for improved harbor accommodation there had been universally admitted, both by the Legislature and the Government; and the attention of the Government was called to this fact last session,—that, before determining upon the scheme of works necessary, some competent authority connected with the Works Department should visit the locality. There

had been ample time for this since last session of Council, a year ago, and, if it had not yet been done, he trusted the Government would lose no time in deciding what the character of these works shall be.

MR. SHENTON thought the only way they could properly deal with the Governor's message in detail was by referring it to a select committee. The schedule itself only furnished very meagre information, and there were many questions of detail yet to be considered. For instance, there was the question of the railway routes. As regards the district which he had the honor to represent, the line projected was simply described as a line from "Spencer's Brook northwards." It would be necessary to determine the route of that line, and, before the work could be entered upon, they must have surveys. But there were other works which could be proceeded with almost immediately, one of the most important in his opinion being the extension of the telegraph from Roebourne to Derby. The line to Roebourne would be finished in October, and no delay should occur in taking steps for carrying on the extension. With regard to jetties and other minor works, he thought these works should be pushed forward as soon as the department had the necessary plans prepared. The harbor improvements at Cossack and Carnarvon would of course have to wait until the head of the department had an opportunity of visiting those localities, and no doubt that officer would avail himself of the first opportunity of doing so, in order that all parts of the colony may as soon as possible participate in the advantages to be derived from the expenditure of this loan.

MR. MARMION was very pleased to see that at last there was some prospect of harbor works being undertaken at the chief commercial seaport of the colony, and that the boundaries of that port were wide enough even to satisfy the desires of the hon. member for the Gascoyne. It was gratifying to find that a commencement was intended to be made with these works next year, and that £30,000 would be set apart for this purpose. The sum was comparatively small, but it showed that in Sir John Coode's opinion works of a practical nature, and within our means to carry out, may be undertaken at the

port of Fremantle. He regretted that some time must necessarily elapse before the Government would be placed in possession of Sir John Coode's report, and that consequently the commencement of these long deferred improvements must be still further deferred; but it was satisfactory to find that the question was now brought within the range of practical politics. The telegraph line to Derby, he thought, should be proceeded with as soon as possible after the completion of the line to Cossack. When he said that, he did not mean that tenders for the extension should not be called for before the line to Cossack was completed. He thought no time should be lost in calling for these tenders, as some interval must necessarily elapse before the materials for the construction of the line could be imported from England. As to the proposed railways, it was very desirable also that these works should be undertaken as soon as possible, but he thought a fair amount of time ought to be allowed in calling for tenders. He thought it would be desirable to do so not only here but also in the other colonies, and, as His Excellency suggested, possibly in places beyond those colonies; so that, as the result of competition, we may get the works constructed at the minimum of cost and the maximum of efficiency. They were already asked to approve of the plans and drawings prepared for the various minor works in the schedule, excepting the additions and improvements to Government House and Domain. Why this exception he did not exactly know. [The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS: Simply because the plans are not ready.] He had thought so. With regard to the Mandurah estuary, this expenditure was approved last year conditionally upon a favorable report being received from Sir John Coode as to the feasibility of opening the river, for this amount. As to the Geraldton Jetty, he thought it would be wise to wait for Sir John Coode's report as to the harbor, before doing anything with regard to the jetty. With reference to the works projected at Carnarvon, he thought it would be impossible to determine the specific character of these works until the locality had been visited by the Engineer-in-Chief, or someone in whom the House had every confidence. Carnarvon was the port of what

must eventually become a most important and extensively-settled district,—a district that was increasing in importance every year. With reference to the desirability of losing no more time than could possibly be avoided in proceeding with the various undertakings embraced in the schedule, he was fully in accord with the message on that point. He only trusted that the expenditure of this large amount of money, much of which would be expended amongst a comparatively small number of people, and within a comparatively short period, would give a stimulus to the districts concerned, and induce a considerable influx of population, who may settle in the colony, and contribute to its advancement.

MR. RANDELL said, without attempting to enter upon the details of the numerous works projected—which he thought should be left to the select committee—the question which they were now asked to consider was essentially a question of policy. For his own part he was inclined to accept the whole scheme as placed before them in His Excellency's message. He thought, having obtained the money, it was most desirable we should at once, as far as practicable, put in operation the whole of these works. In the nature of the case, priority must be given to some of them over others, according to the completeness of the information in possession of the Government; but he thought it would be far better to initiate as many public works as possible, at one and the same time, so as to attract labor into the colony, and so as not to disturb the local labor market more than possible, by proceeding with the works piece-meal. He believed a much larger number of artisans and laborers would be introduced into the colony, if this half-a-million of money were to be expended within a comparatively short space of time, than if its expenditure were distributed over a number of years. Some of the works were already in hand, others merely waited the approval of the House as to the plans and drawings. One or two must necessarily be delayed, but he had no doubt that every effort would be made by the Government to allow of these works being tendered for and proceeded with at as early a date as possible. The Governor in his message told them that "the policy of the Government in expending this new loan of

£525,000 was to give the progress of the colony as great an impulse as possible by setting on foot and proceeding with, at the earliest practicable date, the whole of the public works for which funds had been provided." That was a policy which he was quite sure would meet with the approval of the House and of the country generally.

MR. WITTENOOM said he had only one word to say, and that was to point out that the initiation of public works on a scale of this magnitude must necessarily very seriously disturb the labor market, and unless something were done to introduce additional labor very great inconvenience would be felt, especially by country settlers. He hoped the select committee would not lose sight of this most important fact.

MR. VENN said that, to his mind, had the question of harbor works at Fremantle been decided upon and settled, those works would have been works of primary importance. With reference to the railway, starting from Bunbury, when this work was under discussion last year a question arose as to what style of railway it should be, and it was considered that possibly a tramway would answer the purpose; but, afterwards, it was considered advisable to have a line similar to the other Government lines. He himself did not consider it would be necessary to have such an expensive railway, and he hoped they would hear from the Commissioner of Railways what his opinion was with reference to these pioneer lines. The railway was popularly called a railway to the timber ranges, but he had always regarded it as the first section of a line that at no long distant date would extend to Bridgetown, and eventually connect with the land grant railway to Albany. But he thought there was no necessity at present for an expensive line, and if they could get a line that would answer their purpose at one third the cost of our ordinary lines, they would get a great deal more railway for their money. He regretted that a movement was on foot to alter the route of the proposed railway, and he was perfectly sure that the advocates of this deviation were laboring under a mistake entirely as to the intended direction of the line. He thought the original route possessed many advantages over the proposed deviation. With regard to

the other works, he hoped the committee would come to the conclusion that the telegraph lines and the jetties should be undertaken at once, and be proceeded with simultaneously.

MR. GRANT said he thought the Governor had shown a wise policy in recommending that the Derby telegraph line should be commenced at once. Great and important events might happen at any moment in the Kimberley district, and it would be well that we should be prepared for such a contingency. Tenders should be invited for this work at once, so that the contractors may order the material. He also thought it was very desirable that the route should be immediately explored for the further extension of the line, beyond Derby, in the direction of Cambridge Gulf, before South Australia took the wind out of our sail. As to the other works, he thought they should be proceeded with, without delay, and simultaneously, so as to attract an influx of labor from the other colonies to supply the great demand which these works must give rise to.

MR. STEERE said, as his name was not put on the select committee, he felt bound to say a few words with reference to what had fallen from the hon. member for Wellington, as to the Bunbury railway. The hon. member referred to the line as the first section of the Blackwood railway. If that was the case, all he had to say was that the route described on the map was not in the direction of the Blackwood at all. The route as proposed went to a position about equidistant from two timber stations, one of which had not been working for two years, and the other was just about to be removed to the Augusta. Even if these timber stations were in full operation, he submitted it was not the duty of the Government to build a railway to benefit one particular industry, but to benefit the whole district. [THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Hear, hear.] He read in the report of the surveyor that if the intention hereafter was to take this line in the direction of the Blackwood, they would have to come back some miles, and start in another direction altogether from the line now surveyed. If this railway were to be continued in the direction it ought to take, it would tap quite as good timber country as the line

now proposed would tap. Nearly the whole of the available land on the projected line was in the hands of timber companies, and the country had no right to be saddled with the expense of making a railway for the convenience of these companies, who, if they wanted railway facilities, ought to construct their own branch lines. He thought there was a great deal to be said in favor of the agitation for diverting the route of this railway. Not only would it open up much good land, but it would also pass through a fine timber country. A considerable quantity was now being cut in this locality for a jetty at Port Darwin. He was afraid the sum appropriated for this railway (£40,000) would take it but a very short distance in any direction; but, if the line went in the direction indicated on the map, it was a matter for serious consideration whether it should be proceeded with at all.

MR. VENN said the hon. member was entirely in error as to the route which the line was intended to take.

MR. BURT said as he should not have the honor of sitting on the committee he might be allowed to offer a few observations at this stage. He thought that what they were now called upon to express an opinion about was a question of policy—was it desirable to start all these works together, or should some of them be postponed, and, secondly, which of the numerous works projected should have priority. He was of opinion that none of them should be postponed, but it was impossible that they should all be taken in hand and carried on simultaneously. The Works Department would not be equal to their supervision. But he thought the various projects should follow each other as quickly as possible. As to those that should obtain precedence, he thought with other hon. members that the telegraph to Derby should be proceeded with as quickly as possible. He also thought that the branch railway which was to connect us with Northam and Newcastle should obtain prominence. It would bring extra traffic into play, and give a direct return to the colony. The question of route was a very important one. The line as designated in the schedule was very vague indeed—"Spencer's Brook northwards." He hoped the committee would not advise that the line should

go through country that was utterly useless. He understood that the suggested route went through land that was comparatively worthless, whereas there was another route which, although a little longer, would open up country every acre of which would be available for agricultural purposes. With regard to the extension of the line from Geraldton, that was another work which he thought might be taken in hand at once, as it would not be likely to interfere with the labor market in this part of the colony. There was already rolling stock and a staff of workmen, and almost all that was necessary, except the line itself, to carry it on to the Greenough. But when they came to this Bunbury railway, that was another matter altogether. It would be remembered that he protested pretty strongly last year against the schedule of works as agreed upon by the House; but, how on earth this work came to be included in it at all, he had been at a loss to conceive. What was £40,000 going to do towards building a railway? If the object of this railway had really been the opening up of the Blackwood, there would have been much to be said in support of it; but to spend £40,000 on a line to the timber ranges would in his opinion be money thrown away. If they proceeded with the other works he had mentioned, and initiated harbor works at Fremantle, he considered they would be doing a great deal, and quite as much as could reasonably be expected. He thought that would comprise the main works that ought to be undertaken. The jetties and other minor works could be put in hand as soon as the department was ready to proceed with them. Among these minor works he hoped that prominence would be given to the duplication of the telegraph line on the Albany road, the present line being almost useless to the settlers, in consequence of the great number of foreign and press telegrams continually passing over it.

MR. BURGESS said he understood the route of the proposed line to the Greenough had not yet been definitely settled, —whether it should go through the Front Flats or the Back Flats, and as a public meeting was about to be held in the district on this subject of route, he thought it would be well that the committee should

wait, to hear the opinion of the inhabitants interested, before recommending any particular route for adoption. His own predilections were in favor of the Back Flats route, as it would open up a much greater extent of country, was free from engineering difficulties, and would give those settlers residing more to the eastward the advantage of sharing in any railway communication that may be established eventually with the Irwin district.

MR. CROWTHER expressed an entirely different opinion as to the relative advantages of the two routes. If the railway went to the Back Flats the probability was it would never get out of it. As to the engineering difficulties there was not much to choose between the two routes; the only engineering difficulties that were likely to be encountered being a sandhill here and there. As to the agitation in favor of the Back Flats, that agitation was fomented by the local newspaper, and the agitator-in-chief had no practical knowledge of the relative merits of the rival routes.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said he thought the committee could not do better than adopt the Governor's message in its entirety. That would be an easy way out of the difficulty, and he believed it would meet with the approval of the country. The expenditure of this half a million of money—which was a large sum for us—might do the colony much good if spent pretty quickly, whereas, on the other hand, if these works were not proceeded with simultaneously, or as nearly so as possible, it would interfere very seriously with the local labor market. He should like to see these contracts well advertised, a good while before they were let, not only in the other colonies but also in England. We might find contractors perhaps to undertake several of the works—possibly all of them, if they were put in hand simultaneously. This would enable us to get them done cheaper than if they were let separately and at different times. As to the resources of the Works Department not being able to meet the pressure, he presumed that was only a question of providing the department with an additional staff. With regard to the Bunbury railway, he hoped the House would not oppose that work, as the expenditure of

this money in the district would do much good, and he believed himself the line would be a reproductive line. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. member for the North, that immediate steps should be taken to explore the best route for the extension of the telegraph line beyond Derby, there could be no question as to the route: the line would follow the Fitzroy and its tributaries down to the Ord, and thence to Cambridge Gulf. Once there, no doubt the South Australian Government would join us in connecting our system with their own system at Port Darwin.

MR. BROCKMAN expressed a hope that the principle which would guide the committee in deciding what works should be proceeded with was not that referred to by the Surveyor General—the question of whether the expenditure of the money would do good to the district immediately concerned, but whether it would prove beneficial to the whole country.

MR. S. H. PARKER said he merely rose to say that it afforded him much pleasure to find that the Government in this matter had not only shown that they had a policy, but also that it was a policy that was likely to meet with the approval of the whole country. It was also satisfactory to find that they had delivered themselves of this policy without the assistance of two unofficial members.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said that hon. members had addressed themselves a good deal to the question of policy, but there was much practical work before them apart from any question of policy. The scheme of public works before them involved the expenditure of a larger sum of money than had ever been expended here upon public works before, and it behoved them to be very circumspect, and very careful in seeing that it was spent to the best advantage. The question of the order in which these numerous works should be taken in hand was no doubt, as a question of policy, an important question; but there was another question that had a very much more important bearing than that question of policy, and that was this—that the department entrusted with the expenditure of this money should be informed not only as to the character of the works to be undertaken, but also the most desirable

routes for our proposed railways to take. These were points which he thought might be best dealt with, not by a large committee but by sub-committees, who, if necessary, might take evidence. After what had been said that evening, and the divergence of opinion shown with regard to the routes of the Bunbury line and of the Greenough line, he thought that these sub-committees should as far as possible consist of members who were not directly interested in the districts concerned. There was evidently a strong difference of opinion on the subject, among the residents of the districts, and he certainly should himself object to have the responsibility thrust upon him to decide upon the merits of these rival routes. This was a question, and a most important question, for the committee and for that House to decide. Let the question of route once be settled, and no time would be lost by his department in proceeding with the work. Each line, in his opinion, should be treated on its merits, by persons knowing the country and its requirements, having regard to population and to the development of the country, and the interests of the colony at large. As to the question put to him by the hon. member for Wellington, as to the best style of railway adapted for pioneer lines, that was a question he should have a good deal to say upon in committee; but as to this line from Bunbury, whichever route may be adopted, he apprehended it never would be a main line. Our railways must be divided into main or trunk lines, and branch lines or feeders—the latter being merely of local importance; and he took it that this Bunbury line would be one of purely local importance and interest. His own impression was that the best thing to be done with lines like these was at first to make a cheap railway, adapted for pioneer purposes, and if the line proved successful, it might be replaced with a better style of railway of the ordinary gauge, and the line taken up might be taken to some other part of the colony to serve as a pioneer line.

The motion to refer the message to a select committee, as proposed by the Colonial Secretary, was then put and passed,—Mr. PARKER protesting against the number of members on the committee exceeding five.

IMPORTED STOCK AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

The House adjourned at a quarter past ten o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Friday, 14th August, 1885.

Correspondence between Central Board and District Board re appointment second mistress Government Girls' School, Perth—Petition (No. 4): Bunbury Railway Route—Reserve for Townsite at Lower Blackwood—Government Medical Officers and Private Patients—Message (No. 15): Powers and Responsibilities of Harbor Masters—Message (No. 16): Administration of the Government Stores Department—Message (No. 17): Annuity to Lady Barlee—Plantation of Pines at Rottnest—Bridge at Beverley, across the Avon—Vote in aid of a Town Hall for York—Amendment of Standing Order No. 19—Returns of Revenue and Expenditure, districts North of the Arrowamith—Allowance to His Excellency the Governor: adjourned debate—Explosives Bill: referred to Select Committee—Bush Fires Bill: third reading—Northern District Special Revenue Bill: third reading—New Guinea: Contribution towards expense of Administration (Message No. 12)—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

CORRESPONDENCE RE APPOINTMENT SECOND MISTRESS, PERTH GIRLS' SCHOOL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) laid upon the table the correspondence relative to the appointment of a second mistress for the Perth Government Girls' School, asked for by Mr. Steere, on August 7th.

RESERVE FOR TOWNSITE AT LOWER BLACKWOOD.

MR. LAYMAN asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands whether it was the intention of the Government to set apart a Reserve for a Townsite at or near the Lower Blackwood Bridge, on the Warren Road, and to have such reserve laid out in town grants for selection?