

PRESENTATION OF THE ADDRESS
IN REPLY.

At 10 minutes past noon the Council adjourned, and members proceeded to Government House to present the Address in Reply to His Excellency's Speech. On reassembling,

THE SPEAKER announced that the Address had been presented to His Excellency, in accordance with the resolution of the House, and that His Excellency had been pleased to reply as follows:

"MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
"LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,—

"I thank you for your Address in
"Reply to my Speech.

"I take this opportunity of congratulating you, Mr. Speaker, on the honour lately bestowed upon you by Her Majesty the Queen.

"It may, perhaps, be an additional source of gratification to both yourself and the members of Council when I inform you that the recommendation made to Her Majesty on the subject was the spontaneous act of Her Majesty's Government, since, though I was prepared to do so, I had not actually made any recommendation in the matter to the Secretary of State."

The House adjourned at half-past twelve o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 17th October, 1888.

Water Supply for Stock Route between Murchison and Ashburton—Water Supply for the Pilbarra Goldfield—Water Boring Machines for Goldfields—Message (No. 1): Forwarding Draft Constitution Bill and Aborigines Bill—Message (No. 2): Vote on Supplementary Estimates making provision for duties of Chief Justice—Increase and Distribution of Roads Vote—Provisional agreement with Adelaide Steamship Co.—Boat Licensing Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair.

PRAYERS.

WATER SUPPLY FOR STOCK ROUTE
BETWEEN MURCHISON AND ASHBURTON.

MR. RICHARDSON, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Secretary:—

1. Whether it was the intention of the Government to insert in the Estimates for 1889 the amount—£2,000—for providing a water supply for a stock route between Murchison and Ashburton Rivers, in accordance with a motion for an humble address adopted by this Council on August 9th, 1887?

2. Also for similar information with reference to the motion adopted by Council on August 12th, 1887, for £500 to be expended upon harbor improvements and water supply for Cossack.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) replied that the Estimates were then in course of preparation, and the items referred to in the hon. member's question had not been forgotten.

WATER SUPPLY FOR PILBARRA
GOLDFIELD.

MR. RICHARDSON, pursuant to notice, asked the Colonial Secretary, whether any steps had been taken, or were contemplated by the Government, with a view to obtaining a supply of water for the Pilbarra Goldfield?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) replied that a grant of £100 had been made to the District Roads Board for wells, and an extensive water-hole on the field had been reserved for public purposes.

WATER BORING MACHINES FOR
GOLDFIELDS.

MR. KEANE, in accordance with notice, asked the Honorable the Director of Public Works, whether any steps have been taken to provide a new water boring machine for the use of the goldfields. The reason of his asking the question was because at present there was only one water boring machine in the colony, and we had three goldfields; and he wished to know whether the Government had made any provision for one or two more machines, as it would be months and months before the present machine could be shifted from Yilgarn.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said that in the absence

of the Director of Public Works he had been directed to reply that the Works Department were sending to the Yilgarn goldfield a new Tiffin boring machine, capable of boring five hundred feet, with the necessary skilled labor and appliances.

MESSAGE (No. 1): DRAFT OF CONSTITUTION BILL AND OF ABORIGINES BILL.

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

"Referring to the published despatch of the Right Honorable the Secretary of State No. 81, of the 31st of August last, the Governor transmits, herewith, for the consideration of the Honorable the Legislative Council, the following draft Bills:—

"A Bill intituled 'An Act to confer a Constitution on Western Australia, and to grant a Civil List to Her Majesty.'"

"A Bill intituled 'An Act to provide for certain matters connected with the Aborigines.'"

"It is not proposed to proceed beyond the second reading of these Bills during the present Session, as it will be advisable that a general election should take place before finally deciding upon the principle and details of so important a question as a change of Constitution.

"Schedule A. of the draft Constitution Bill, giving the boundaries of the proposed electoral districts, is in preparation, and will shortly be ready.

"Clause 5 of the draft Bill relating to the Aborigines has been added in consequence of a request from the Aborigines Protection Board.

"Government House, 17th October, 1888."

MESSAGE (No. 2): VOTE ON SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES MAKING PROVISION FOR DISCHARGE OF DUTIES OF CHIEF JUSTICE, DURING INTERDICTION.

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

"With reference to the Supplementary Estimates, laid this day on the table of Your Honorable House, and to the item on page 4 under the heading 'Pro-

"vision for duties of Chief Justice, £298 12s. 3d.,' the Governor has the honor to inform the Honorable the Legislative Council that this vote is asked in order to compensate the Acting Chief Justice (Mr. Leake, Q.C.) and the other officers (Mr. James, Mr. J. F. Stone, and Mr. Godfrey Knight) who performed temporary duty between the 14th of September, 1887, and the 11th of May, 1888, being the period during which Mr. Onslow, the Chief Justice, was interdicted and suspended from office.

"Thinking it probable that the papers in Mr. Onslow's case would be asked for in connection with this vote, the Governor communicated on the subject with the Right Honorable the Secretary of State, who has replied as follows:—

"With reference to your request to be furnished with copies of printed correspondence laid before the Committee of the Privy Council in the Onslow case, in order that they may be laid before the Legislative Council, I have to inform you that all the original papers in the case were before that Committee, but that I do not think it desirable that they should be presented to the Legislative Council. The Council are aware of the terms of the decision of the Committee, as approved by Her Majesty-in-Council, and they cannot question or go behind it, and therefore to produce the papers, which would be an unusual, if not an unprecedented, course to take, would not be of any advantage. With the Order of Her Majesty-in-Council before them, and with the information that in all the steps connected with the suspension of the Chief Justice you acted with the advice of the Executive Council, I should not suppose that the Legislative Council will refuse to grant any money required to compensate Mr. Leake or any other officer for the duties temporarily performed by them during Mr. Onslow's suspension."

"To this communication from the Secretary of State, the Governor may add the statement on Mr. Onslow's case made by Her Majesty's Government in

"the House of Commons on the 20th of June last, when, a question having been asked as to the result of the decision of the Privy Council, and also as to 'what course the Government had decided on in regard to the Governor,' the Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies replied as follows:—

"The Report of the Committee of the Privy Council, which was approved by the Queen, found that of the three charges formulated against the Chief Justice, the first afforded no sufficient ground for a formal charge, though the Chief Justice had acted indiscreetly; that the conduct imputed to the Chief Justice in the second charge arose apparently from irritation produced by the first charge; and although the language of the Chief Justice was characterised by much impropriety, yet, as it was not then published, it did not in itself afford adequate ground for a charge intended to lead to suspension from office; that the third charge was more serious, as the Chief Justice had given for publication language of great animosity to the Governor, as well as confidential information, which he had no right so to communicate, and that on this charge the committee had had some hesitation in not recommending the confirmation of the suspension of the Chief Justice; but, as no misconduct of a moral character, or connected with judicial duties, had been imputed to him, they recommended that the suspension be removed. Her Majesty's Government have not felt themselves called upon to take any action with regard to the Governor."

"The Order of Her Majesty-in-Council was published in the *Government Gazette* of the 14th of June last.

"With the above information and facts before them, the Governor trusts that the Legislative Council will appreciate the position in which the Executive Government of the Colony were placed in this very painful matter, and will agree that this is a case in which a money vote may properly be passed to

"compensate officers who had to discharge, for a considerable period, important public duties beyond those of their respective posts.

"Government House, 17th October, 1888."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said as he proposed moving the House into committee for the consideration of the Supplementary Estimates on Monday, this Message could be taken into consideration at the same time.

INCREASE AND DISTRIBUTION OF ROADS VOTE.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL said: Sir, the reason I have brought forward the motion standing in my name— "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to increase the amount of the Road Vote in the Estimates for 1889, and in its distribution that His Excellency will not overlook the requirements of the districts where recent railway construction necessitates the opening of new lines of communication"—is partly one of policy, general policy, and also because certain facts have come to my knowledge which made me think that an increase of the Road Vote is most highly desirable, on particular grounds. No influence was brought to bear upon me before I tabled this motion, but, curiously, since it has been on the notice paper, I have received one or two petitions and several letters bearing on the subject—one petition from a Roads Board in the district I represent, and the other from a Board within the district represented by the hon. member for Murray and Williams, and letters from various persons, interested in public matters, in the country. I great deal fear, unless this House and especially country members, take some action on this Road Vote, we shall see it lapse altogether before long from the Estimates. Hon. members are aware that, during some years past, this House had been in the habit of voting considerable sums for the roads—for the four years previous to the last it averaged from £16,000 to £21,000 (in 1887)—but on the Estimates for this year this amount—which really was not a very liberal allowance, considering the enormous extent of the colony and of

its roads—suddenly dwindled to £8,400; and this, unfortunately, without any remonstrance on the part of members. There was no doubt a necessity last year for a reduction of expenditure, but it strikes me it was very poor policy to reduce this vote in the way it was done, last year. In the other colonies it is a vote that is never touched, however much the measure of reduction that may take place in regard to other votes. I recollect that in New South Wales, at the time they had an enormous deficit of something like £3,000,000, when retrenchment was urgently required, and they were cutting down in all directions, even to salaries I believe, they refused to touch the vote for roads and bridges, because in those colonies they consider it the best policy, in view of colonization and the advancement of settlement, to do everything they can to encourage internal communication. But, apparently, our own Government are not of the same opinion; they seem to consider that the Road Vote is one of the most legitimate items on the Estimates which they can attack. I think, on the other hand, it is one of the most illegitimate votes for the application of the pruning knife in these colonies. Surely, in this colony, with its vast extent of territory, where settlement is so scattered, and the distances that have to be traversed by the settlers in the carriage of goods are so great, no vote requires more generous treatment than this one. I regret very much that, last year, members did not remonstrate with the Government for cutting it down so low, and that there should have been remarks made not very pleasant to country members, that country interests were being neglected to keep up the requirements of the towns. I don't believe that the interests of country settlers are wilfully neglected, but there is no doubt that a good deal of misconception does exist. So long as members appreciate what the country requires I do not apprehend any serious injustice being done; the mere fact of the enormous sums that have been spent in establishing telegraph communication and postal facilities, and providing police protection, throughout the length and breadth of the colony, shows that we do not intend to neglect country interests. Still I am afraid that as regards

this road vote there is some apparent justification for the imputation made. Probably no pressure had been brought to bear upon members with regard to this vote—that may be the reason; but I consider, if they do not now see that the Government retain some sum on the Estimates fairly adequate to meet the requirements of the country in keeping open the various arteries of communication, the remark that the interests of the country are misunderstood or neglected will have some force. The reason adduced by the Government for reducing this vote to such an extent, if I recollect rightly, was that we had been spending large sums in providing railway communication for the country districts, and that if we incurred such a large expenditure in giving improved means of communication to the settlers by means of railways we could not spend so much upon their roads. That seems to me a really most extraordinary argument, when we take into consideration that—although, with our small population, we have spent a great deal upon railways of late—they still only serve an infinitesimal portion of the colony. We have communication between Perth and Fremantle and the various townships of the Eastern Districts—I think we have done everything we possibly could in this way for those districts—and we have spent a considerable amount in the Geraldton district, besides that railway which is being constructed to the South; but, apart from these lines, which, unfortunately, notwithstanding their great cost to the colony, have done very little good as yet in the extension of settlement—what benefit does the rest of the colony derive from these railways? They derive no benefit whatever; and not only do they derive no benefit, but they have to contribute largely for keeping up these lines; therefore it seems to me that, in these circumstances, to dock the small amounts we give the country Roads Boards to keep open their lines of communication is a very great injustice. I quite recognise the fact that where railway communication has been established and is within easy access to the surrounding settlers, it is not to be expected that these districts should have their roads vote increased, but, with regard to the second part of the resolution, I wish

to point out that where railways are now in course of construction, or have only lately been constructed, it seems rather a reason for continuing the vote for a time than cutting it off, if these lines are to receive the full benefit of the traffic of the districts. I have been informed that the Geraldton and Walkaway railway offers nothing like the facilities to the settlers of that district, and will get nothing like the traffic it otherwise would, if it were made available to the settlers by the opening up of communication with it by roads; and my attention has been called personally and by letter to the position of the settlers between this and Albany, with regard to the means of communication with the nearly completed railway running through that line of country. It seems to me, from what I have heard and observed, it would be very foolish policy to cut down the road vote for the districts along this line, if the line is to be of any service to the settlers. It would indeed be absolute folly not to continue, in the immediate future, to grant a fair amount to these districts to open up communication between the various centres of population and the railway. That line, unlike the Eastern Districts railway which directly taps every township of any importance in those districts, runs a distance of at least 30 miles, nearly throughout its length, from any of the centres of settlement in the line of country within the railway reserves. If the line is to be of any benefit to the settlers of the adjacent country, if it is to be of any service to the agricultural settlements at the Williams, Wandering, Arthur, and Kojonup, roads will have to be opened and maintained between them and the new railway; and the country through which these roads would have to pass is of the character known as completely rotten, and unless tracks are opened and beaten during the summer months the winter rains would render the country impassable, so that the settlers would be completely cut off from the railway, with the result that not only would the settlers be deprived of any benefit from the railway, but the railway itself must seriously suffer in the way of traffic. Therefore it seems to me that in justice to the settlers and to the progress of settlement around these railway reserves, funds should be provided to

open up these feeders. I hope that, in reply to my request that the House may agree to this address that the vote for roads should be increased—I shall not be met by the retort that the settlers do not tax themselves for roads purposes. We are aware that a Bill is about to be brought in which will make it compulsory upon the Roads Boards to go into this taxation. For my own part I do not object to it—it will remove a supposed grievance, and it will, further, do this good: it will probably give the settlers a great deal more interest in the election of these Roads Boards, and in the constitution of the Boards, than they have at present. I have no doubt that in some districts this system of compulsory taxation for roads purposes may be usefully made operative, but in many other districts, such as those I have mentioned, to attempt to enforce all this machinery would be very absurd and very useless, on account of the rateable property. But hon. members—those of them who are not bushmen—of course, those who are, know it perfectly well—hon. members will recollect that settlers in outlying country are in a perfectly different position as regards their roads from the inhabitants in the towns. We in the towns pay certainly a small amount in the shape of rates—(Mr. A. FORREST: A good large amount, I think.) Very few of us, I imagine, have to pay more than £10 a year; and for that we have every convenience in the shape of roads. Our goods are delivered at our doors at the same cost as at the stores, whereas these country settlers, many of them live 50, or 80, or 100 miles from town. In my district, I know, many of them live a hundred miles from where they obtain their stores, and it costs them £4 or £5 every time they send a team in or out to get their goods—probably four or five times a year—if not more; so that to say that people in the country are placed in the same position with regard to their roads as people in town are is most unfair to them, or that because they have not hitherto taxed themselves with all this expense of keeping up their roads, we should deny them the amount they have hitherto received in the shape of a Government grant. I have not asked the Government to put down any definite amount on the

Estimates,—I think that is best left to the Government themselves; but I do hope the House will support me in passing this resolution, which, it seems to me is only doing justice to these struggling settlers, whom we call the backbone of the country, and whose interests we ought to do all in our power to advance.

MR. PARKER: I have very great pleasure in seconding this resolution. I think we ought to recognise that the great thing this colony requires, and what we ought to do all we can to promote, is the settlement of the soil; and I imagine that nothing will conduce so much to this end as giving the settlers every means of communication we can afford, either by railways, or, where we cannot give them a railway, by road. My sympathies are rather with those settlers who are not situated within a reasonable distance of a railway; those are the districts which I think ought to have their portion of the road grant increased and continued. Although it might be very well to open up lines of communication with this Great Southern Railway, for those few persons who are living at a distance from it, and who cannot make use of the line unless these roads are opened up; yet, I think, having once opened up these lines of communication with the railway as far as possible, the settlers themselves ought to be taxed to keep up these roads; and the Government grant ought to go mainly, if not altogether, to those districts where there are no railways at all, such as the Wellington district, for instance, the Sussex district, and the Kimberley district. These are the localities where the road vote ought to be mainly expended, and I cannot but think that the Government have not exercised, perhaps, a very wise discretion in the distribution of this vote. For instance, I understand that the York Roads Board had, last year, a sum of £400 to their credit, unexpended. Therefore it is obvious that, in considering the distribution of the vote this year, that Board did not require to have allotted to it the same amount this year. But I have no doubt the York Board has participated in the distribution of the vote this year in the same proportion with those districts that have had no money expended in railways and who have no surplus to their credit. It behoves the Government

to see that this grant is properly distributed, and that the money is actually required, before it is allotted, and not give it to every district simply because they have been in the habit of doing so, and whether they need it or not. I dare say that in the distribution of this vote the course taken by the Government this year is one following the precedent of previous years, but I trust that hereafter the Government will take into consideration the great advantages those settlers possess who have a railway running through their neighborhood, and those who have no line of railway, but who virtually pay the same amount of taxation towards the maintenance of these railways as those whom the railways benefit, and whose lands are so greatly enhanced in value thereby. I trust that when this vote for next year is passed, and increased as I hope it will be to a considerable amount, the Government in distributing it, will bear in mind the few remarks I have made, and made in no prejudiced spirit.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): I can assure the hon. member for Sussex I have listened with great attention to his remarks, and I entirely agree with much that he has said. With regard to the apportionment of the vote last year great care was observed, and, in part, this suggestion he has just thrown out as to the distribution of the grant has been followed. With regard to the York Board and its credit balance, I think it is fortunate for that district that they were in possession of this balance, for I understand they are applying it in a way that must prove of great benefit, in opening up roads eastward to the goldfields. I may say that in framing the Estimates for next year, every consideration will be given to the prayer of this address, if it is the wish of the House to agree to its presentation.

MR. SCOTT: I cannot let this resolution go without some comment. I do not think anybody can disagree with the idea that the roads, in country districts, are very important, and, perhaps, necessary—not only the opening up of new roads but also the maintenance of those already made. But I for one do not think that the country districts do not do enough for themselves in this matter of roads.

No sooner do we give them railways—towards which the towns certainly very largely contribute—than we are called upon to provide them with other means of communication, in the shape of new roads, to keep their railways going. Surely when the value of their properties is so much enhanced by these railways—enhanced tenfold I think—I am certainly right in saying very largely enhanced—we may reasonably expect these country districts to do something to their roads themselves. I don't say they do not do something in this way, but they do comparatively little. But let us consider what is done in the towns. The hon. member for Plantagenet coolly remarks that we pay very little in the shape of rates—that few people pay more than £10 a year. Speaking for myself, I may say I have to pay nearly double £10; and let me tell the hon. member further,—it is quite apparent that we should have to double the present rates unless we in the towns received some assistance for the upkeep of our roads. It is all very well for us to launch out in the making of new roads, but it must be borne in mind that we have to keep them up afterwards. I remember, some two years ago, trying to get this Council to do something to assist our towns and Municipalities in the same way as it assists the country districts in the matter of roads, and I pointed out it was not altogether an unprecedented thing—in the other colonies they do it—and I thought it was only right that our towns should be assisted from public funds in the same way; but I got no support on that occasion. Neither did my hon. friend, Mr. Randell, who had moved a resolution and argued it very ably the previous year. But I cannot but think that we quite as urgently now require assistance in the way of the upkeep of our town roads as they do in the country districts. I cannot help feeling that in the present condition of the colony, and the present state of its finances, it would be unwise for us to pass this resolution, until at any rate we see what amount the Government are prepared to place on the Estimates, and what will be the other demands upon the revenue. Until we know this, I for one shall oppose any such resolution as the one now moved.

MR. MARMION: While endorsing some of the remarks of those who have already spoken on this question, I do not go so far as to say I will oppose the motion of the hon. baronet; but I think, in all probability, he will find it to his advantage to move the adjournment of the subject until a later period of the session. Without going largely into the question now, I would refer to one remark made by the hon. baronet, in which he spoke of the district which he represents and of the railway now in course of construction to Albany. I would ask hon. members to consider one thing, and that is the difference in the circumstances connected with that railway and the railways ordinarily built in the colony. Ordinarily speaking, railways are built by the State, and for the benefit of the State, and the means of communication thus provided by the State tend largely, and wholly in fact, to the advantage of the State. But in the particular instance alluded to we have a railway built by a syndicate or a company—for the benefit of, of course, of the State, because I take it that the State would not have granted the syndicate this concession if they did not consider that some advantages would accrue to the State; but the greater of these advantages will become the property of the syndicate; and I think that, in opening up lines of communication which will largely increase the value of this land, and also increase the traffic on their railway, this corporation, which is largely interested, ought to do something towards opening up these lines of communication. I think members should bear that in mind. These new roads will increase the traffic and swell the profits of the syndicate, and I think this Council should consider whether the whole expense of making these branch roads should fall upon the colony, or whether it should be partly borne by the colony and partly by the corporation interested. Going a little further, I agree that where means of communication in the shape of a railway have been provided at the public cost for any particular district, those districts provided with this improved means of communication, whereby the whole of the property in the neighborhood is vastly enhanced in value, as compared with the value of property in other parts of the colony not favored with a railway—I

agree that the settlers of those districts having railway facilities provided for them should be prepared to put their hands in their pockets, and come to the assistance of the State, by some means or other, in opening up feeders of communication with the railway. There cannot surely be the same necessity for assistance from the public purse for roads in these districts as in those districts that have no other means of communication. Let us look to the Eastern districts. We are told that in those districts last year—no doubt, in consequence of the opening up of railway communication—the sum granted to one of the Roads Boards at any rate left a large balance unexpended at the end of the year; and I think this would be found to be the case in other places where railway communication has been provided for the settlers. But I think it is premature to consider this question now, as we are about to be asked to consider a new Roads Bill,—a measure which presents one good feature, inasmuch as it proposes to compel the various Roads Board districts to put their hands in their pockets, in the same way as people in the towns have to do, to assist the State in opening up and maintaining lines of communication. When this subject comes on for consideration, I may have a word or two to say. I have always been in favor of the country districts, who receive State assistance, doing something themselves towards the upkeep of their roads, and I feel sure the time is not far distant when the Government, and the settlers themselves, will see the absolute necessity of local taxation for this purpose. I am glad that the Government at last have had the courage to bring in a Bill to that effect, and I have no doubt it will be passed by a large majority. I look upon it as putting in the thin end of the wedge to compel them to do what for years past they had the power to do; but they never yet had the courage to exercise that power. With reference to the motion now before the House, I feel disposed to support it to a certain extent, but I think it would meet with the approval of the House generally if the hon. baronet were to postpone its further consideration, until we are in a position to see what amount the Government intend placing on the Estimates. I can

tell the hon. member one thing—and I think I shall be supported by most members—that if he thinks these road votes are going to be increased for the benefit of country districts, and it entails any extra taxation on those in town, I can assure the hon. member, as one of the representatives of one of the principal towns in the colony, my voice will be loudly raised, and my earnest opposition will be offered, against such a proposal.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I should like to say a few words, especially as the cry of "Town against Country" has been raised. I think it is a cry that should not be encouraged. Several hon. members have spoken about the necessity for country settlers helping themselves—these poor settlers helping themselves. If these hon. members were as well acquainted as I am with the position of country settlers, and especially those Southern settlers which I presume the hon. baronet had in his mind when he brought forward this motion, many of whom have spent a lifetime, and their descendants afterwards, in isolation and I may say in poverty, I don't think hon. members would be inclined to raise such a cry about settlers helping themselves, in this matter of roads. The hon. member for Sussex, too, said something about the same thing; but I have no doubt his remarks applied to the district in which he spent some years of his life, and not, I hope, to those districts farther south.

MR. PARKER: I think the hon. gentleman must have misunderstood me. I said that where a railway went through their land and enhanced its value the settlers there ought not to get the same amount of help from this grant as those living in districts where there was no line of railway.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I think I very nearly hit the mark. The hon. member, I believe, referred to the settlers of the Avon valley, where the value of the land has been largely increased. But I think, even in their case, although they have a railway, it has not made them prosperous all in a moment. It will take some time even for these people to realise the full advantages of railway communication. The hon. member for Fremantle seems to be afraid that the Great Southern Rail-

way syndicate, who have invested nearly a million of money in this colony, will make too good a thing out of it—that they will realise too a large fortune, as soon as the line is opened—and he advocates that they should be made to contribute towards these roads, so that they may not be able to make so much profit.

MR. MARMION: Quite the other way. In order that they may make more profit; in order that they may increase their traffic; in order that they may increase the value of their own lands.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I do not think myself that they are likely to make any large profits in the immediate future; but I think they are deserving of every encouragement and support from this Legislature. If they succeed in the great work they have undertaken, I think we should all rejoice, because it will be the best thing that has ever happened to this country. If, on the other hand, they are unsuccessful, and do not make it pay, I think it will be a great disadvantage to us, for it will go forth that this country is not capable of supporting a railway between the great port of King George's Sound and the centres of population near the capital. I think, myself, if members are wise, they will allow the hon. baronet's motion to go forward, leaving it to the Government to do the best they can with the vote that will be given them by this House. I think, for the present, at any rate for another few years, we must not talk about taxing the settlers in the Southern districts—for they are very small farmers, as a rule, they have no large quantity of freehold land, and it is as much as they can do to live—and I hope we shall not talk about placing any more burdens upon them by withdrawing this road vote altogether.

MR. RICHARDSON: This motion appears to me to open out too wide a question to debate this evening. I think when the Roads Bill comes before the House we shall have a better opportunity of thoroughly threshing out and sifting this question. I agree in the main with the purport of the hon. baronet's motion, except that I am not altogether in favor of the last part of it. I observe he has worded it in very general terms, so as not to bind the Government as to the apportionment of the vote in any particular

districts; at the same time it is a moot question how best to deal with the vote. In the first place, we are asked to discriminate as it were between the assistance we give to those districts which, to a certain extent, are provided with railway communication, but which have certain difficulties and obstacles in the way of enabling them to avail themselves of that means of communication, and the assistance we shall give to those districts whose settlers have no railway facilities at all, and who unfortunately require a larger money vote to make their roads trafficable than I am afraid we can afford to give them at present. So it appears to me that the Government will be placed in this dilemma; they will find themselves within very narrow limits as to the amount of the roads vote at their disposal—I am afraid much narrower limits than we should wish—and they will have to decide whether they should assist those districts which are without any railway communication at all, or those which, although possessing a railway, have great difficulties to get to it. I do not think the vote is large enough to give substantial assistance to each and all, and, it appears to me that between two evils we must choose the least. I think those districts having no railway facilities at all are perhaps more entitled to the larger share of the vote. We shall not have enough to provide sufficient for all the districts, and, as we are cramped in the matter of funds, if we affirm this resolution as it stands the Government will perhaps be inclined to behave too generously towards some districts at the cost of other districts. If the resolution could go forward without the latter portion of it, I should be prepared to support it thoroughly; at the same time I am not going to say I am prepared to oppose it as it stands, but I think with the hon. member for Fremantle that the matter might be postponed until we have the Estimates before us. Then we shall see what the Government do propose to give in the shape of a road grant at all, and be in a better position to judge which district has been favored and which neglected.

MR. A. FORREST: I should like to say a few words on this motion. I am sure most hon. members will agree with

me that it is a pity the hon. member for Plantagenet should have brought it forward, for this reason: it is known that he is the representative of a district through which a very large and costly railway is now being constructed, and there will be a feeling against increasing the roads vote for that district. But those who know anything about the district are aware that this railway runs about 20 miles to the eastward of the main road of traffic, and that it is absolutely necessary for that particular part of the colony that certain branch roads should be made, leading from the centres of population and the main track to the railway line, if the line is to be of any use to them. If the hon. baronet had asked some member not connected with the district to have brought forward this motion, I believe there would have been no opposition whatever to it: but knowing that a railway is being constructed through this district, members are up in arms at once when the member for the district asks for a larger vote than usual for the roads; they think all the trade must come to Perth and Fremantle, and that we should do nothing to help this railway syndicate. I say we ought to do all we can to forward the interests of people who have come here and spent nearly a million of money in opening up our country. I believe it would be the worst advertisement this colony could have if this railway does not show a good return for the first twelve months. The report of the first year's traffic on this railway, if it went to show that the line did not pay working expenses, would be the worst thing that could happen to this country. It would be good-bye to any more loans, and to many other things for Western Australia. I think this House should do all it can to help the traffic on this line, by assisting the settlers to make roads from the centres of population between here and Albany to the railway, so that they can make some use of it, and get some benefit from it. I shall most heartily support the resolution myself; but I regret it should have been brought forward by the member for the district, as it leads to opposition, and a little jealousy perhaps. If any other member had brought it forward, it would have been passed without any discussion whatever. I shall cordially support it.

MR. MORRISON thought as there was a Roads Board Bill coming before the House this session, and there was a clause in that bill providing for the compulsory rating of country lands, for roads purposes, it would be advisable to wait and see the fate of that bill, before entering upon this question of the roads vote at all.

CAPTAIN FAWCETT said he would have very great pleasure in supporting the hon. member for Plantagenet in his motion. He was a member of a Road Board, and he knew that the paltry amount of the grant last year hardly made it worth their while to attend to the roads at all. It was no use raising the cry of the town against the country. This road vote was for the benefit of the colony. He should like to ask the junior member for Perth what was the good of the town if they had no communication with the country. He was surprised to hear the hon. member saying he had only to pay rates to the extent of £20 a year for all the good roads and conveniences which the people of Perth had. He could tell the hon. member that if the country settlers had to keep up their roads entirely out of their own pockets it would come to a great deal more than £20 a year. What would be the good of that paltry sum to keep ten miles of road in repair, and to make an occasional fresh road. In Perth all the people resided close together and there was no difficulty in keeping up good roads; but in country districts the settlers were scattered and few in number. It would be utterly absurd to tax them, to keep up their roads. The importance of their roads to these people was very great, and as a country member, who knew something about these roads boards, he was very anxious indeed to support the resolution of the hon. baronet, and he hoped the Government would see their way to increase the amount of the vote very considerably for next year.

MR. SHOLL: I entirely agree with the first part of the resolution, but, in view of the provision contained in the new Roads Bill, compelling the boards to tax the land for the upkeep of their roads, and also in the absence of the amount that was likely to be available on the Estimates for next year for expenditure upon the roads of the colony, I

think it is a pity that this motion was brought forward at so early a stage. Still, at the same time, I think everyone will agree that it is a misfortune to cut down the roads vote at all. In my opinion it is better to cut down for other purposes a great deal than to starve the roads throughout the colony for the want of funds to keep them up. My objection to the latter part of this resolution is that it asks the House to express an opinion, one way or the other, that a particular part of the country should receive what I may call pointed consideration, or at any rate more consideration than any other part. If this address were carried as it stands, the Governor would feel that in carrying out the wishes of the House he would be bound to give this part of the country a greater portion of the vote than any other part of the country; and I don't think that members generally would altogether agree to that. But I agree with that portion of the resolution which asks for an increase of the vote. There are many other districts in the colony that feel the shoe pinch besides the district represented by the hon. baronet. If we take into consideration the hundreds of miles of roads—the thousands of miles, I may say—that the Northern settlers, with the paltry grants at their disposal, have to keep in repair, for conveying their produce to market and their stores for their stations, I think hon. members will agree with me that it is not at all wise policy that the sum of late years voted for that purpose should be reduced. It was ridiculously small, considering the extent of the roads; and it is wonderful to me that these Roads Boards, in these outlying districts, have done so much as they have done with the money at their disposal. I think, sir, it is a pity that this House is not supplied, in some way or the other, with a return showing the distribution of this Roads Vote every year, with the amount given to each Board. [The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The *Government Gazette* always publishes it at the beginning of the year.] That may be so. All of us cannot run away to find that particular number of the *Gazette* when we want this information, and I think there ought to be some record before us easy of reference when a discussion of this kind arises. I hope the hon. member will withdraw the latter part of his resolution; if he does so, I

shall be most happy to support the other part of it, which deals with the vote for roads in a general way. I shall be happy to support any motion for increasing the grant for roads throughout the colony.

MR. CONGDON said he fully recognised the importance of the question under debate, and felt that it affected more or less every settler through the country districts, where this question of roads was of paramount interest. But, looking at the fact that a new Roads Bill, dealing with this subject, was going to be brought before them for their consideration this session, and seeing also that the Estimates were not yet before them, showing the amount they would have to deal with, he thought it would be well if the hon. baronet would consent to withdraw his resolution for the present. He should move that the debate be adjourned for a fortnight.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL said it was directly in view of the framing of the Estimates that he had brought forward the motion at this stage.

MR. E. R. BROCKMAN said he would heartily support the resolution, and thought it would be a pity to defer the matter. It appeared to him necessary they should pass the resolution before the Estimates were framed.

MR. KEANE: I shall have much pleasure in supporting the hon. member for Plantagenet in this instance, and I hope the hon. baronet will not postpone the consideration of his motion. We all know, from experience, that if he consents to put off the motion until the Estimates are before us, he will then be quietly told by the Government, "We can't do it now; you are too late; you ought to have made the application before." At the same time I agree with the hon. member for Gascoyne with respect to the division of this roads vote, and I think with him that the latter part of the resolution should be struck out. Although I agree to a great extent with what has fallen from the hon. member for Kimberley, still I fail to see that the return of traffic for the first year on the Great Southern Railway will be in any way affected by the question of this vote. It will take at least five years to make these roads, therefore the traffic on the railway cannot be in any way affected during the first year. I agree

with the hon. member for Gascoyne, that we ought to have a return presented to the House showing how this grant has been divided every year, and how it is proposed to apportion it. I should think this information could easily be attached to the Estimates, so that members might know the exact amount received by each district. I don't think it would be giving the Government a great deal of trouble, if, when they brought forward the annual Estimates, they brought forward a schedule showing the distribution of this vote. If the hon. member for Plantagenet is prepared to withdraw the latter part of his motion it will have my hearty support.

THE SPEAKER: It would be irregular for a member who brings forward a motion to amend it himself. The proper form would be for some other member to move an amendment.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL: I presume, sir, I could withdraw a portion of it, with the leave of the House?

THE SPEAKER: With leave of the House, certainly, but not without. The rule is that a member cannot amend his own motion.

MR. RANDELL: I think the hon. member for Plantagenet would meet the wishes of the majority if he would consent to the adjournment of the debate. I think, myself, that the resolution is premature, partly on account of the reasons already assigned by members who have addressed the Chair upon the subject, with reference to the Bill which is already before the House, and which, no doubt, in a short time will receive consideration. When we know the result of the debate upon that Bill, we shall be in a better position, I think, to carry such an address as this. I should also like to see us a little nearer to the Estimates, so that we might have a better idea as to ways and means. I think that in discussing and passing this motion now we are adopting a course which the hon. member himself has, I think, on several occasions deprecated—that is, moving at an early stage of the session a money vote—for really that is what it is. I have no doubt the Government are prepared to consider the requirements of the various districts of the colony, having regard to the means at their disposal, and no doubt they will be disposed to deal in a most liberal manner, con-

sistent with other claims upon the revenue, with this Road Vote. I take it that no other course would present itself to their minds. A large sum has been voted for many years for the upkeep of roads, and as hon. members are well aware, a large sum of money has been borrowed for the building and equipment of railways to some of the districts of the colony. I think it was only natural, under these circumstances, and in view of the imperative necessity of retrenchment, that the Government should have fallen back upon the Roads Vote, and reduced it. I have not the slightest doubt in my own mind the subject will receive every consideration at their hands, when the proper time comes. I am in sympathy with the desire which the hon. member has expressed, in common I believe with all other hon. members, for increasing the facilities for internal communication to the utmost possible extent. As to opening up feeders to the line of railway being constructed between the capital and the port of Albany, I do not intend at the present moment to give an opinion, more especially as I understand the hon. member is inclined to excise that part of his motion. I think if he were to consider the feelings of the majority of members he would adjourn this debate at present, and bring the question forward at a later period of the session, with, I think, a very much better chance of success. I would like to refer to a remark that fell from the hon. member for Kimberley, who by-the-bye described himself the other night—for I suppose the hon. member applied the term to himself as much as to those who were leaving the colony—as a Scotchman, and, he said, Scotchmen were the best class of settlers we could have. Be that as it may—generally speaking, at any rate, Scotchmen get the credit of being very “cannie,” but I cannot say that I consider the remarks that fell from the hon. member this evening as to the Great Southern Railway as words of great wisdom. The hon. member expressed an opinion that if this line does not pay its expenses during its first year, it would be a bad advertisement for the colony—I think he expressed himself in stronger language than that. I cannot agree with the hon. member's conclusions. I don't know of scarcely any enterprise

of this kind, of any extent, that ever pays its way the first year; and I think if that corporation are fortunate enough to get a profit upon their expenditure in the course of two or three, or four or five years after the opening of the railway they may be very thankful indeed. I should be very sorry if the remarks which the hon. member has made were to go forth to the world. [Mr. A. FORREST: They expect it to pay]. Of course, we all have "great expectations" of the future; but, unfortunately, the future very often deceives us; and I cannot understand how any man acquainted with the circumstances of the colony, can expect that there will be a large profit, or any profit at all, during the first year of the running of that railway. At all events, I shall not be disappointed if it does not pay as soon as it is opened. But I hope the syndicate will be able to see clearly, from the first year's work; that there is a prospect of the line paying ultimately, and that soon. But that it will do so the first year, no reasonable man can expect; and I should be sorry to see expectations raised by the hon. member that cannot possibly be fulfilled. I hope the hon. member for Plantagenet will consent to the adjournment of this debate; I think he will have a very much better chance of carrying his resolution at a future stage of the session than at the present time. I beg to second the motion that the debate be adjourned.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL: Speaking to the motion for adjournment, it has come to me rather by surprise. I should have thought hon. members would have been aware that the reason why I brought it forward now was that the Government might have some intimation, before framing their Estimates, what the House wished to be done in regard to this vote. I have already pointed out the smallness of the vote, compared with the enormous extent of our roads, even in previous years; but last year it dwindled into a miserable amount,—next door to useless; and, what I want is, for the House to give the Government some kind of intimation whether we want the country districts to have some decent vote on the Estimates for next year, that would be of some use to them for the upkeep of their roads. It is absolutely essential in my mind

that the Government should have an expression of the opinion of the House, before they prepare the Estimates, and not afterwards. I fail to see the use of a resolution like this after the Government have made up their minds as to the way in which they propose to distribute the money, next year. If it is the wish of the House to adjourn the debate, of course I shall not oppose it; but it seems to me not the most sensible thing to do. Speaking further to the question, I regret to see the construction which some hon. members have put upon the latter part of the resolution,—an entirely erroneous construction. One member said it seemed to him that the attention of the Government was pointedly drawn to those parts of the colony where railways were now being constructed, while other parts were to be left out in the cold. I meant nothing of the kind. What I meant was that it was desirable, while these railways were being constructed and about to be finished, that the districts requiring feeders to enable the settlers to cart their goods to the railway, should not be absolutely left out in the cold—not that other parts of the colony should be neglected, and left out in the cold.

Question put—That the debate be adjourned for a fortnight.

The House divided, with the following result—

Ayes	7
Noes	13
Majority against ...			
			6

AYES.
Mr. Hensman
Mr. Horgan
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Morrison
Mr. Randell
Mr. Scott
Mr. Congdon (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. H. Brockman
Mr. E. R. Brockman
Mr. Burt
Captain Fawcett
The Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest
Hon. Sir M. Fraser
Mr. Harper
Mr. Keane
Mr. Parker
Mr. Richardson
Hon. C. N. Warton
Sir T. C. Campbell, Bart.
(Teller).

THE SPEAKER asked if it was the desire of the House that the latter portion of the address be withdrawn? No motion had been made to that effect. If the suggestion that it be withdrawn were dissented from by any member it could not be done. The words could only be withdrawn upon a motion made to that

effect, or with the leave of the House. He would put it to the House—Was it their wish that the latter part of the motion be withdrawn?

The question being decided in the affirmative, on the voices, the resolution as amended, was put and carried.

PROVISIONAL AGREEMENT WITH THE ADELAIDE STEAMSHIP CO.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): I rise, sir, to move "That the provisional agreement entered into with the Adelaide Steamship Co., Limited, be taken into consideration, and that a contract on the terms of that agreement be approved by this Council." This matter is one of considerable importance, and one which has occupied the attention of this Council for the past year or so; for I find that on the 30th June, 1887, a committee was appointed by the House to consider and report upon the best steps to be taken to continue the steam services that we had before, and, in some respects, to add to the services then existing. On the 4th of August, last year—and I think it is well I should bring back to the recollection of hon. members the various steps that have been taken by this Council in the matter—the report of that committee was approved by the House, and a resolution was passed to the effect that tenders should be called for, and a contract made, following out the recommendations of the committee, and that this should be done on the most advantageous terms obtainable. Tenders, therefore, were called for, by advertisements, throughout the Australian colonies, and in London, and other shipping centres—Liverpool, Glasgow, and so forth. These tenders were to be sent in by the 1st of June this year. Following upon the issue of these invitations to tender, a provisional agreement for carrying out the coastal service in the interim, was made, on the 19th of November last year, with the present company, for six months only—from the 1st February to the 1st August of the present year—and for this service it was agreed that the company should receive £666 13s. 4d. a month, or at the rate of £8,000 a year. I should state that when the time for the reception of fresh tenders arrived, no tenders were received except

from the Adelaide Steamship Co., who sent in two or three alternative offers. On the 19th of June, after it having been decided by the Government that none of these tenders was such as came within the conditions laid down in the report of the select committee, and afterwards confirmed by this House, the Committee of Advice were consulted in the matter, and after considering the tenders that had been received, which were all duly laid before them, the Committee advised that as sufficient funds had not been provided for carrying out the terms of these tenders, an offer should be provisionally made to the Adelaide Steamship Co. to continue the then existing agreement for a further period of six months, on the same terms and conditions as had been agreed upon for the past six months, and that such expenditure should be incurred, beyond the provisional vote, as would meet the cost of such service. In compliance with that, the Government after considerable correspondence and negotiation, made an arrangement with the company to carry on the services, which are all particularised in the articles of agreement that I have laid on the table, at the same rate of £8,000 a year, for a term; short notice of the determination of this provisional agreement to be given, in the event of the contract not being approved and accepted by the Legislature. I believe myself that hon. members generally, and more especially those who have served on the select committees which have dealt with this subject, and whose recommendations have been approved by the House, will be inclined to accept the terms of this provisional agreement. But I have no desire, sir, to hurry this important matter to a conclusion on the present occasion, although, to place myself in order, I have moved this resolution. It has been suggested to me by some members of the committee, that it is desirable in the interest of trade and commerce, that certain additions should be made to the conditions attached to these articles of agreement, and so far as I am aware, I do not think these additional conditions will meet with any serious objection on the part of the company. I understand that the hon. member for Fremantle proposes to move that the provisional agreement be referred again to the same

committee that was previously appointed by this House to consider the matter—with the exception that on account of the unfortunate death of one member of the committee it will be necessary to insert another name. If the hon. member does move that the matter be now referred to a select committee, I shall raise no objection.

MR. MARMION moved, as an amendment, that the provisional agreement be referred to a select committee, consisting of the Colonial Secretary, Mr. A. Forrest, Mr. Keane, Mr. Richardson, Mr. Shenton, and the mover. He did not think it necessary at present to indulge in any remarks upon the terms of the provisional agreement.

MR. SCOTT said he should like to call the attention of the House to the advisability of introducing into the agreement some clause with reference to keeping these steamers in a clean and wholesome condition. He thought some hon. members had experienced the necessity of it. He thought not only should the contractors be obliged to provide accommodation for passengers, but also to take care that such accommodation should be sweet and wholesome; and that the state of these steamers should occasionally be investigated by the Harbor Master, or some other competent authority.

MR. SHOLL was glad the hon. member for Perth had got up, as this was probably the only time when members of the House would have an opportunity of drawing attention to any alterations which they might consider advisable, before the committee considered their report. He noticed that the 19th clause of the provisional agreement was to the following effect: "Tide and weather permitting, all steamers employed in the above-mentioned services shall, where jetty or wharf accommodation exists, ship and discharge all passengers and cargo at such jetties and wharves, provided always such can safely be done in the opinion of the company or the master of the steamer." As to this proviso, they knew very well that at some of our Northern ports it might be very convenient for the company or the master of the vessel to state that in his opinion it would not be safe to go alongside. It might mean a little extra trouble. In some of these places, too,

the company he believed had their own lighters, and they charged importers extra for landing their cargo, in addition to the heavy rates of freight already charged. He thought a clause might be inserted to this effect: that, in cases where the company did not choose to take the steamer alongside the jetty or wharf, to land cargo, they should be compelled to land it with their own lighters, free of extra cost. At present, he believed, they charged 5s. or 6s. a ton extra for lighterage, and it had struck him that this consideration might have some influence upon the master of a steamer in deciding whether it would be safe to go alongside or not.

MR. A. FORREST thought the remarks of the hon. member for Perth (Dr. Scott) uncalled for, as to the state of these steamers, and he should be sorry it should go forth that these vessels were not kept in a clean and wholesome state. He had himself travelled by the company's steamers, east and west, north and south, and he thought they were kept in as clean a state as coastal steamers were in any other part of the world. But there was one thing in the provisional agreement which he should like to call attention to, and that was that no provision was made for these steamers calling at Albany. One of the most important ports in the colony, where most of our passenger trade with England and a great deal of merchandise were first landed, was not included in the agreement and the schedule of rates. He thought this ought to be rectified.

MR. MORRISON: I see it is proposed that the agreement shall be in force for five years. I think that is a great deal too long a term to make a contract of this kind, in the present state of affairs. If there is any foundation in the reports we are receiving every day from our goldfields, we shall witness a very different state of affairs on this coast from what we have now, long before this contract expires. I think three years is quite long enough to make this agreement for. I am not in favor of continuing these subsidies once a line is opened up and trade established, and this £8,000 a year I think might very well be saved to the country, or, at all events, half of it. I also think it would be in the interest of the colony, if, instead of making a contract for these coastal services in one lump, we

were to have different contracts for some of the shorter services. I should like to see one tender called for simply for the service between Vasse and Bunbury and Fremantle. Very likely there are other people, with smaller means, who could carry out this short service, and for a smaller sum. It seems to me a sort of monopoly to give this Adelaide Steamship Co. the whole of the trade; and it is very strange that, with all the steamers and steam companies in the other colonies, when tenders were called for there and in England, no tender was received but from this company. I don't think that can be simply for the reason that it wouldn't pay. When one sees these steamers go away from Fremantle, week after week, and month after month, and the cargo they carry, one cannot help thinking there must be a very good business being done, and I think it is nearly time, as we have helped to establish a service to the North, that we should moderate these subsidies, though no doubt the company would like to have them increased. I certainly should like to see a separate contract made for these short distance services, say from Fremantle to the Vasse, and from Fremantle to Geraldton and Dongara. I think one or two local firms could very well put a boat on to perform these services, so as not to leave us entirely in the hands of one company.

MR. HENSMAN: I don't wish to make any statement calculated in any way to injure this company; but I think the House should take care that we get the best steam service we can on the coast, and, without saying anything further than this, or anything that may tend to do any injury to the present contractors, I think we might well have a very much better set of steamers. Everyone knows it is a most uncomfortable thing to make a voyage on board any of these small steamers, and, with regard to the observation made by the hon. member for Perth, I think his remarks are well worthy of the attention of this committee, and of the House when the matter is brought before us. So important does it appear to me that there should be someone who will specially look after the interests of passengers, as well as the interests of goods, that are carried, that I shall propose that the

name of Dr. Scott, in addition to those already mentioned, be added to this committee. With regard to what has been just said by the hon. member opposite (Mr. Morrison) as to the duration of the contract, I agree with him, and I hope that it won't be made for a longer term than three years. I should like even a shorter term if possible, say one year.

The motion to refer the provisional agreement to a select committee (with the name of Dr. Scott added) was then agreed to.

BOAT LICENSING AMENDMENT BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser), in moving the second reading of this bill, said he felt that the explanation required was a very short one. If hon. members would refer to the clauses in the principal Act (42nd Victoria, No. 24) which it was proposed to amend, and to the interpretation clause they would see that the term "boat" as used in that Act applied to any description of boat of a tonnage not exceeding two tons; that the term "vessel" applied to any description of boat, flat, barge, or vessel, other than a steamer, and of a tonnage exceeding two tons; and that the term "steamer" applied to any description of flat, barge, or vessel propelled wholly or partially by steam power. The 21st section of the Act—which was passed ten years ago, when the number of steam vessels in the colony conveying passengers was very small, and confined to a certain class of boats—provided the Governor-in-Council with power to frame a table of rates to be charged by the owners of these licensed boats, and boats only. Since then the circumstances of the colony had changed, and our steam fleet had increased; and the object of the present bill was simply to give the Governor-in-Council power to fix a table of charges to be made by the owners of any description of these licensed vessels. The amendments proposed by the bill were merely verbal.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a second time.

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