

hoped they would not recur. He might add that a report reached the Government a short time ago that the officer acting at West Kimberley was not discharging his duties altogether properly, and a substitute was appointed—Mr. Inspector Lodge, who had recently gone up there, and been authorised to supersede him.

MR. HENSMAN thought it was very necessary it should be known that that House would not vote salaries for acting Magistrates who did not conduct themselves, and who, if brought before a magistrate themselves, would probably be rebuked, or perhaps get something more than a rebuke. A man who got drunk—for it was no use mincing matters—or who conducted himself in such a way as to be held up to public scorn, instead of being an example to other people—was not fit to sit on a judicial bench.

MR. A. FORREST said he, the representative of the district, had not heard a word of complaint as to the conduct of either of these acting officials. He believed their conduct had, on the whole, been good, or fairly good. The officer particularly referred to was an old officer and an old gentleman, and had done good work in the district. He might take a glass now and then; but he did not think any hon. member should make charges or insinuations against any public officer unless he was in a position to prove them. He believed this particular officer was as fit as most Government officers were to occupy a position in the public service.

The departmental vote was then passed.

Police Department, £39,929 6s. :

MR. PARKER: I only rise to say that it must be a source of satisfaction to all hon. members to find the great reduction made by the head of the department in this estimate. Last year's estimate was £47,005, and the Commissioner now estimates that his expenditure for the current year will be less than £40,000. I think that officer has done his best to bring his force within reasonable limits, without impairing its efficiency; and I do not think anything we can do in the way of reducing the vote now asked for would be calculated to benefit the public, and I hope the vote will be allowed to pass as it stands.

The vote was agreed to, without further comment.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Thursday, 22nd March, 1888.

Particulars respecting vote for Telegraph repairs—Estimated cost of running the Bunbury-Blackwood Railway—Repairs of Police (Penitentiary) Barracks—Mail Services between Perth and Vasse—Estimates (Revised), 1888: further considered—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

PARTICULARS RESPECTING VOTE FOR TELEGRAPH REPAIRS.

MR. PEARSE (for Mr. Shenton) asked the Colonial Secretary to lay on the table of the House a return showing—(1.) How the sum of £4,500 voted for telegraph repairs in 1887 had been expended, and (2.) how it was proposed to expend the vote (£1,700) on the Estimates for 1888.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) laid on the table the return asked for; also a return showing the cost of the conveyance of inland mails by contract and agreement.

ESTIMATED COST OF WORKING THE BUNBURY-BLACKWOOD RAILWAY.

MR. VENN asked the Commissioner of Railways to lay upon the table the estimated cost for running the first section of the Bunbury-Blackwood railway, showing the number of employes and the rates of wages, for twelve months.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) laid on the table the return asked for.

REPAIRS OF POLICE (PENSIONER) BARRACKS, PERTH.

MR. SHENTON moved that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to devote such sum from the vote "Repairs to Public Buildings," as may be necessary to repair the damage to the Police Barracks. The hon. member said he pressed for this address because, a few days ago, he moved for a return showing the amount of the lodging allowance to be paid to the police, owing to the recent accident to the Police Barracks which deprived them of their quarters. The amount to be so paid, according to the return, would, he thought, more than cover the interest on the amount required to place the Barracks in a proper state of repair. He had been informed by a good authority on such matters that the walls were not seriously injured, and it was said that unless steps were taken to protect them before the winter set in, the cost of repairing them would be larger than if the work were done at the present time. He urged that the building had not cost the colony one sixpence for erection, and, as Mayor of the city, he did think that after the splendid gift made by the Imperial Government, it would be a lasting disgrace if the building were allowed to remain without being repaired. He brought the matter forward from motives of economy, and thought that if there were no funds available, the cost of repairs might be defrayed by the issue of Treasury bills, as was done some years ago in the case of the completion of Government House.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright), while agreeing that the repairs were desirable, said that the cost would amount to £1,200 or £1,500, so far as he knew at the present time, although it was not improbable that after the work was commenced it would be found to cost more than the colony could afford at the present time. He suggested that further consideration of the matter be postponed until the estimates for Works and Buildings were before the House, but he thought it would be inadvisable to provide for the work out of Treasury bills.

MR. SHENTON said he had no objection to the debate being postponed.

MR. VENN hoped the hon. member would not consent to postpone his motion, — unless it was till next year; but withdraw it. It was impossible at present to estimate what the cost might be. As a rule it was often found, when buildings had been gutted like this by fire, although the walls appeared perfectly sound to outward appearance, that it would be necessary to pull them down and rebuild them. Until recently these barracks were for a long time unoccupied, and it was only a brilliant thought on the part of the Government to locate the police there. Although possibly there might be a little saving, if the building were repaired fit for occupation again, unfortunately the funds of the colony at the present moment were at such a low ebb that this could hardly be regarded as an opportune time for incurring the expenditure of carrying out the work of repair. He believed himself that £1,500 would no more see the work completed, and the building restored to its former state, than £1,000 would; he felt satisfied in his own mind that we should have to spend £2,000 or £3,000. He thought it would be better for the Government to invest in some ivy plants; the building would make a very interesting ruin. As to issuing Treasury bills to cover the cost, he was surprised to hear such a suggestion emanating from the hon. member for Toodyay. Under any circumstances he would not be prepared to support the issue of Treasury bills at this stage of the colony's history.

Debate adjourned.

MAIL SERVICE BETWEEN PERTH AND VASSE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser), in accordance with notice, moved the following resolution, "That the mail services between Perth and Vasse, *via* Bunbury, be carried out by contract, provided suitable tenders be received and due security for the carrying out of the contract be given." Hon. members were aware of his object in presenting this motion, the subject having already been considered when the mail estimates were under discussion. It had devolved upon him of late to revise these estimates, with the assistance of the head of the department, with

the result now before hon. members,—a slight reduction in the gross amount of the vote. It was brought under his notice that it would perhaps be desirable to revert to the old contract system as regards the Southern district mails, rather than continue the present Government coach service. There was no doubt there would be a considerable saving if this were done, and the service conducted in a less expensive way. He could see no more reason why the Government should run a line of coaches than that they should start a co-operative store; it was a matter interfering considerably with private enterprise. Some ten years ago it was decided by that House that three mail services should be established and maintained at public expense,—one being the overland service to Albany, another the Eastern Districts service, and the third a service between Perth, Bunbury, and the Vasse. The Eastern Districts, so long as it lasted, was a profitable service, but it was discontinued when railway communication was established. Even the Southern Districts service, which had always been run at a loss, was more profitable some years ago than it was now, by reason of there being much more frequent communication by steamer, reducing the revenue derived from the conveyance of passengers by mail coach considerably; and latterly the practice had obtained of turning these Royal Mail coaches into what he might call parcel delivery vans. This, as he had already pointed out, in committee of supply, was a very unprofitable business. He maintained it was not a right principle for the Government of a country to interfere with or to hamper the private enterprise of its citizens—and it certainly was an interference with private enterprise for the Government to be running a line of coaches for the conveyance of passengers. Looking at the state of our finances, and the demands made upon the revenue in all directions, he thought the House would agree with him that this was an expenditure in which we might well retrench, while at the same time making provision for the conveyance of settlers' letters and newspapers. When this Royal Mail service was established years ago, there was some ground for making it a passenger as well as a mail service, as the steamers only ran at con-

siderable intervals. Now, however, that they were running every week, and sometimes oftener, the necessity for a passenger coach service no longer existed. At present we were subsidising steamers and we were subsidising coaches; and the result was that we had to look around us and see how we could make both ends meet.

MR. RICHARDSON thought they required a little more information as to the kind of service it was proposed to get; if it was merely intended for the delivery of mails along this road he should certainly oppose it. He did not think it would be fair to the settlers of these districts to deprive them of all means of transit or conveyance. As for the steamers they only called at the terminal ports, and they were of no service whatever to the inhabitants residing inland. If they got a guarantee that this proposed contract service would be as efficient as the present Government service, so far as the conveyance of passengers was concerned, possibly the proposal might meet with approval. The contractor, he thought, ought to be made to agree to carry the same number of passengers as the present coaches carried.

CAPTAIN FAWCETT said he should like to know what the Albany overland mail cost the colony; possibly it was the loss upon that service that gave the Government this fit of economy. It was very annoying, if so, that the settlers between Perth and Bunbury should be inconvenienced. When this Royal Mail service was established by Governor Ord it was done principally for the convenience of the settlers, as it was found that the mail contractors did not provide proper accommodation for the travelling public. The present service was a very great convenience indeed to settlers along the road, and he did not think that at less than £3,000 any contractor could perform it as well as it was now performed. As for the steamers, what convenience did they afford the settlers between Perth and Pinjarrah, or between Pinjarrah and Bunbury? None at all.

MR. VENN said he had that morning been reading up the action of the Government, some two or three years ago, when a certain Mr. Potter, "a gentleman from the other side," made an offer to carry on this service. He found that

the Government, after submitting Mr. Potter's proposals to the House, obtained a resolution empowering them to negotiate, or call for tenders, for the performance of the service, so long as an assurance was given that the service would be as efficient as the then existing service. Nothing however came out of it, and the House heard no more of Mr. Potter nor his offer. In the few remarks he had made, the hon. member for the North had echoed his sentiments in every way: there was an ominous look about the resolution, as if the passenger service was to be sacrificed. It simply provided for the mail service. If they were to understand by that, that all that was intended was the conveyance of letters—possibly on horseback, while the heavier mails went by steamer—all he could say was he could not agree with the proposal in any possible way. Even if it did cost the country £1,000 more than it might cost under contract, the advantages and conveniences of the present service far more than outweighed the consideration of this paltry saving. One hon. member was prepared, a few minutes ago, to spend £1,500 in "titivating" up the Barracks at Perth; he hoped that hon. member at any rate would not object to the expenditure of an extra thousand or so, when the convenience of hundreds of country settlers was at stake. They were told the other evening that the number of settlers in the districts which this Southern mail served amounted to 4,000—and that did not include all the districts included in the service; these 4,000 people must be in communication with another 4,000 somewhere else, so that in reality there were 8,000 people served—about one-fifth of the whole population of the colony. Surely a loss of a paltry £1,000 between so many was not such a serious thing for the country. He should be glad to learn that the service could be carried out by private contract, at a saving, provided the service be as efficient and complete in every respect as the present service. If it could be, and if the Government had been paying £1,000 a year more than a private contractor could afford to do the same work for, he should like to know who had been swindling the Government to this extent all these years? He did not know what the actual deficiency was,—

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): I will tell the hon. member what the loss was last year,—expenditure, £3,020 6s. 4d.; receipts, £1,056 18s. 11d.; leaving a deficiency of £1,963 7s. 5d.

MR. VENN: Then we may expect to save about £1,000, if the contract should be at anything like a reasonable rate. But it appears the Government do not intend calling upon the contractor to provide accommodation for passengers, which was the main object in establishing the present service. I feel sure hon. members will sympathise with the settlers of the districts concerned.

MR. SHENTON said he had been twitted with asking for £1,500 for the repair of the police barracks; but he had done so upon financial and economical grounds, as it would be a saving to the colony to spend this money rather than provide the police with lodging allowance. But in this mail service the colony was actually losing about £2,000 a year, which he thought was too large a sum altogether; and it was their duty to see whether they could not get the work carried out more economically.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said the resolution had been brought forward in order to elicit the opinion of the House. This mail service had been instituted with the concurrence of the House, and it was for the House to say whether, in view of the loss entailed upon the revenue, it should be continued. It was not brought forward as a Government matter, but in order to canvass the opinions of members as to whether it was desirable to effect a considerable saving in this direction, and at the same time have the mail service carried on with regularity. He was almost sure that, for such a service, contractors would be prepared to tender at about one-half what the present service cost. But it was entirely a matter for the House to decide. It did not concern the Government, the House having already voted the funds necessary for continuing the present service, on its present footing.

MR. HARPER said there appeared to be a general feeling on the part of hon. members that it would be unfair to the settlers on this Southern line that they should be deprived of their passenger service. Perhaps it would meet with the

views of hon. members, and that the Government would not object, if he proposed, as an amendment, that the following words be added to the resolution: "Provided further, that the terms of the tenders now invited be amended by making it a condition of the contract that accommodation should be provided for four passengers, on the same terms as those at present in force, in the Royal Mail service."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said if it was the wish of hon. members to add those words, he had no objection.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL said he was glad to second the amendment. He had travelled up and down this line a considerable number of times, and had observed that the settlers derived very great convenience from these mail coaches. The steamers running along the coast were of no service to the inland settlers, whereas these coaches, picking up their letters and parcels, and carrying passengers also, were no doubt an immense convenience. This mail coach service after all was only a railway service in embryo, and, until the better means of communication were provided, the present service ought to be maintained, in the interests of settlement. If, however, the service could be done cheaper by contract—as was very probable—he saw no reason why it should not be done, so long as the public had the same conveniences.

MR. SHOLL said he was in favor of tenders being invited, on the terms proposed in the amendment. Of course if they were asked now for the first time to establish this passenger service, he should not have been prepared to support it; but, as these country settlers had enjoyed this boon so long, and seeing they had no railway or other means of internal communication, he thought it would be hardly fair to deprive them now of it. But he did not think that such a cumbersome vehicle, or such a spanking turn-out, as that now in use need be provided.

MR. RICHARDSON thought that accommodation for four passengers would be insufficient. He had known dozens of instances when the present coaches had been unable to accommodate the number of passengers who wanted to go; and

there was never any certainty of a seat. He thought provision ought to be made for five passengers at least, as well as the driver.

The amendment was agreed to, and the resolution as amended affirmed.

ESTIMATES (REVISED), 1888.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of the Estimates.

MR. SHOLL said he should like to have the Estimates postponed until the financial returns annually prepared by the Colonial Treasurer, together with the Auditor General's report on the accounts of the colony for the past year, had been presented to the House. According to the Audit Act (clause 13) they ought to have had these returns presented to them before proceeding with the consideration of the Estimates. He therefore moved that progress be reported, and leave asked to sit again.

Motion put; and, a division being called for, there appeared—

Ayes 5

Noes 12

Majority against ... 7

AYES.
Mr. Heusman
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Parker
Mr. Veun
Mr. Sholl (Teller.)

AYES.
Mr. Congdon
Captain Fawcett
Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Harper
Mr. Pearse
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Shenton
Hon. J. G. Lee Steers
Hon. C. N. Warton
Hon. J. A. Wright
Hon. Sir M. Fraser
(Teller.)

Gaols Department, £14,648 5s.:

Agreed to, without comment.

Rottneft Native Prison, £3,650:

MR. PEARSE said that he had been under the impression, some years ago, that the Government contemplated forming a station where native prisoners could be kept on the North-West coast. The native prisoners cost (reckoning that there was an average of 80 on the island) about £50 a year each. It did seem that something should be done to save this enormous expense; and it was a pity that so much labor could not be put to better account. Some years ago a large party of natives were employed on the roads of the colony, and they did

very good work. If the natives could be employed in this way, the colony would derive some benefit from their services. At the present time they were simply a source of great expense to the colony, and he hoped that the Government would, during the recess, take the matter into their consideration, with a view to better use being made of the labor of the native prisoners.

MR. RICHARDSON said that the mismanagement of the Rottneest Establishment must be very great indeed. It was scandalous to think that with all the labor available on the island so little was done with it. Any man of ordinary business capacity should be able to earn, by means of the labor of these natives, a considerable amount of revenue for the colony. It would be better, he thought, if the native prisoners were accommodated in the various localities from where they came. This over-grown establishment at Rottneest seemed as if it was kept up for some other purpose than that for which it was ostensibly carried on.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said the report of the Superintendent, which was already in the hands of hon. members, gave full information as to the work of the native prisoners. During last year the revenue from this source had been £600, and stores had been sold to white people on the island to the value of £361 10s. 6d., so that there was a revenue of £1,000 to be set against the estimate of £3,650.

MR. PARKER said he noticed an item "School teacher, £100." Was this schoolmaster intended for the natives, or for whom? He also saw an item "Officer in charge of Reformatory, £145"—how many children were there in this institution? Was it of any use whatever, or doing any good at all? We paid a considerable sum for its upkeep, and one would like to know if the colony was deriving any benefit from it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said the hon. member would find all the information he asked for in the report of the Superintendent. As to the Reformatory, the report said: "Six boys have been admitted into the institution during the year, making a total of nine, under the charge of Mr. Watson, the Reformatory officer. Their

conduct has been good, and they have made fair progress under their schoolmaster."

MR. PARKER said he observed that there was another officer in charge of the salt works on the island, at a salary of £160, and there was another £100 under the head of "contingencies" for these salt works. Did these works really pay the Government?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said the hon. member would find the information he sought for in Mr. Timperley's report, if he would only take the trouble to read it. It appeared that 100 tons of fine salt had been manufactured last year—which was in excess of the demand. Of crude salt 23 tons had been disposed of at the rate of £1 5s. per ton.

MR. MARMION thought it was worthy of the consideration of the Government whether it would not be wise to reduce the price charged for this Rottneest salt. There was a prejudice against it, being a colonial article, as there was against many other articles of local production; and, if the Government saw their way to reduce the price, so as to enable it to compete with the imported article, he believed the sales would be greater than they were at present.

MR. SHENTON concurred as to the expediency of reducing the price of the salt. He thought the Government were asking a great deal too much for it.

The vote was then agreed to.

Printing Department, £3,675 17s. 6d.:

Agreed to, without comment.

Inspection of Sheep Department, £1,862:

MR. SHENTON thought this was an item in which they could make a saving. He had been waiting for some time for an opportunity, and he thought the time had arrived. From the reports received from the inspectors he was glad to hear that scab had been almost entirely eradicated out of the colony, and, such being the case, he could hardly understand why the Government should ask the House to vote the salaries of all these inspectors. Some of them must have a very easy time of it. To his certain knowledge one of them had been living in Perth for months, doing nothing apparently but enjoying himself. He should think that the chief inspector, Mr. Craig, could do

all the work there was to do now, by periodically visiting the various districts.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said he was in a position to move to dispense with one inspector, a vacancy having occurred at the North caused by the unfortunate death of Mr. Miller, the inspector for the Gascoyne district. The Board of Advice had recommended a rearrangement of the boundaries, and there would be no necessity to appoint a successor to the deceased gentleman. To his mind the sheep owners in this colony had been receiving very considerable assistance out of public funds. When he looked at the vote of £1,200 granted for the destruction of native dogs, in addition to this vote of £1,862 for sheep inspection, and bearing in mind that the scab contribution all over the colony did not amount to more than about £1,000 a year, he really thought the matter should be taken into consideration, to see what reductions might be made in this vote. But these reductions could not be made at once, or without reference to the Board of Advice. The reduction he was at the present moment prepared to ask for was the amount of the salary of the late inspector at the Gascoyne for the remaining nine months of the year, and forage allowance for the same period (£262 10s.) He was not prepared to go further now, but he thought it might be well if the House were to pass a resolution, with the view of immediate steps being taken to see how the inspectorial staff could be reduced, so that at any rate when the Estimates for next year were before the House there might be a reorganisation of the department. It had been his opinion for a long time that one of these officers should have a position superior to the others, and be designated Chief Inspector, who should be the responsible head of the department. At present there was a division of responsibility, the department being under the dual control of the Government and the Board of Advice.

MR. A. FORREST said he should certainly object to the vacancy at the Gascoyne not being filled up, unless the district was exempted from contribution. It had been clean for three years, and, if they were not to have an inspector, they ought not to be taxed.

MR. SHOLL concurred with the hon. member for Kimberley. The Gascoyne district contributed largely to this scab fund, although it had been a clean district for some years. He thought the number of inspectors might be very well reduced—especially in those districts that contributed nothing towards their support. He thought the settlers in the Southern and the Eastern Districts might do the same as the sheep owners at the North, appoint their own honorary inspectors, who did the work just as well, if not better, than paid inspectors. They naturally would do so for self-protection. The Colonial Secretary informed them that the scab contribution at present, from all the districts contributing, did not exceed £1,000; that being so, he (Mr. Sholl) felt very much inclined to move to reduce this vote by £862, so as to bring it within the amount contributed by those for whose benefit the department was kept up.

MR. SHENTON said that so long as they kept voting the salaries of all these inspectors, year after year, it was a great temptation to these men to refrain from declaring their districts clean, for fear their services might be dispensed with; and he thought now that the colony was almost free from scab, a considerable saving ought to be effected in this vote. He would move that it be reduced by £700.

MR. PARKER said as it was known the disease had ceased to exist in certain districts of the colony, one would think the Government would immediately have got rid of the inspectors in those districts. He did not understand why the Government wanted time to consider whether they should adopt that course. He believed all that part of the colony south of the Greenough district was perfectly free from scab, and, that being so, there was absolutely nothing for these inspectors to do, except to guard against sheep travelling into their districts from places beyond them. Therefore, he thought it was unnecessary to retain the services of these officers: all that was required was that there should be someone stationed on the boundary between what he might call the "clean" and "unclean" portions of the colony, just to see that no sheep were allowed to travel across the boundary without inspection. Although he

was not at present prepared to vote for any large reduction in this item—he did not ask the Government to discharge these officers without notice; but he hoped that before the Estimates for next year were presented to them, the Government would be prepared to make a very considerable reduction in this vote—at any rate, such a reduction as would relieve the general revenue from contributing anything towards the cost of this department.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) : Such is my desire.

MR. SHOLL said he must enter his protest against sheep owners in the Northern districts being called upon to contribute towards the maintenance of inspectors in districts which contributed nothing themselves, but at the same time had an inspector of their own.

MR. HARPER said that, as he was a member of the Board of Advice, he might be able to assist the House in the matter. The only affected district lately had been Champion Bay, and the inspector had reported that it was now clean. He begged to remind hon. members that under the Scab Act no sheep could be taken from one magisterial district to another without a certificate from the inspector of sheep that they had been free from scab for the previous twelve months. This was distinctly specified; and, if the staff of inspectors was to be largely reduced, it would be necessary to amend the Act, in order that sheep might be allowed to travel without this certificate. The Board of Advice had desired to effect economy, and had brought the matter under the notice of the Government. Until some steps were taken to amend the Act it would be necessary that inspectors should be maintained in all the districts.

MR. PARKER : I presume there is no objection to amending the Act?

MR. HARPER : None whatever.

The amendment submitted by **MR. SHENTON**, to reduce the vote by £700, was negatived upon a division, the numbers being—

Ayes 5

Noes 12

Majority against ... 7

AYES.
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Hensman
Mr. Pearce
Mr. Sholl
Mr. Shenton (Teller.)

NOES.
Mr. Congdon
Captain Fawcett
Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. Harper
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Parker
Mr. Richardson
Hon. J. G. Lee Steere
Mr. Venn
Hon. C. N. Warton
Hon. J. A. Wright
Hon. Sir M. Fraser
(Teller.)

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) then moved to reduce the vote by £262 10s. (being the amount of salary and forage allowance, for nine months, for the inspector of the Gascoyne District).

This was agreed to, and the vote reduced accordingly.

MR. HENSMAN moved that progress be reported. He had, he said, looked into the Audit Act, and found that, as stated by the hon. member, **MR. SHOLL**, under Section 13 the Auditor General was bound to lay before the House, at its next session after the close of the financial year, his report for the year. This had not been done, and he wished to know whether the Government had received that report.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton) said that, properly, the Estimates now under consideration should have been passed in 1887. If they had been dealt with in 1887, the House would have had before it the report for 1886, which was submitted last year. It was not necessary, therefore, that the report for 1887 should be placed at the disposal of hon. members for the purpose of dealing with the present Estimates. Besides the Auditor General, according to the Act, was allowed three months from the close of the year to make up his returns, and that time had not expired.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said that when he introduced the Estimates he explained that the report asked for was not yet printed, but that as soon as it was ready it would be laid on the table of the House.

MR. HENSMAN stated that he was satisfied with the answer to his question, but added that if the consideration of the Estimates was postponed for a few days, the report might then be ready.

The motion to report progress was negatived on the voices.

Educational Department, £10,835 :

Agreed to, without remark.

Registry Department, £370; Poor Relief Department, £9,451; Aboriginal Department, £2,700; Government Store-keeper's Department, £954 16s.; Government Gardens Department, £505 18s.; Mining Department, £1,030.

These votes were agreed to, without discussion.

Special Coast Survey, £2,250 :

MR. SHENTON presumed the *Myrmidon*, the new steamer to be employed in this service, would shortly be on the station, and commence operations on the North-West coast?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said he had a private communication from the Hydrographer to the Admiralty, who said that a new crew had been sent out to Sydney for the *Myrmidon*, and that she would leave Sydney for this colony early in April, proceeding direct to Cambridge Gulf, where she would first break ground, working between there and King Sound.

The vote was then passed.

Works and Buildings, £15,111 :

MR. SHENTON, referring to the item "Police Buildings: Repairs to various stations, £1,800," said that in view of the reduction recently made in the police force he presumed some of these stations had been broken up. Last year the House voted £1,800 for repairing police stations, and this year they were asked for £1,500. He thought they ought to have some specific details as to the expenditure of this vote.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said this was the very lowest sum which it was estimated would suffice to provide for the most pressing requirements of the year. The Commissioner of Police had asked for £6,000, and he had divided it by 4. These police buildings were growing older every year, and necessary repairs were neglected simply because the vote was cut down.

MR. SHENTON and MR. VENN commented upon the ornate and costly description of the cottages provided for railway workmen at Beverley, which they submitted were of too expensive a type altogether.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said these cottages were of an exceptional character, having been designed as a type for the

guidance of the Great Southern Railway syndicate.

MR. SHENTON moved that progress be reported, and leave given to sit again.

Agreed to.

Progress reported.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past four o'clock.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Friday, 23rd March, 1888.

List of Lessees of Crown Lands under new Land Regulations—Revenue and Expenditure Account for 1887—Message (No. 10): Expurgated passage in Secretary of State's Despatch to Responsible Government—Bunbury-Blackwood Railway: Opening of, for traffic—Railway from Bayswater to Vasse: Messrs. McNeil & Co's. proposals—Resolutions traversing Secretary of State's despatches on the subject of a change in the Constitution—Beverley-Albany Railway Contract Confirmation Bill: first reading—Estimates (Revised), 1888: further considered—Adjournment.

The Speaker took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

LIST OF LESSEES UNDER NEW LAND REGULATIONS.

MR. MARMION, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands to furnish a return showing the amount of land, and the names of lessees of Crown Lands in all districts other than the Central District, who have not availed themselves of the new Land Regulations. The reason he moved for this return was in order to ascertain whether Crown tenants had availed themselves or not of the chance which these regulations afforded them of obtaining long leases.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said he regretted he was unable at present to comply with the hon. member's request, as he had not yet received all the returns from the Northern District; but, he