

been taken long before now to repeal it.

MR. HASSELL: For the reasons given by the Attorney General, I shall vote against this bill.

Question put—That the bill be now read a second time.

The House divided, with the following result:—

Ayes	13
Noes	9

Majority for	...	4
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AYES.

Mr. Canning
Mr. Darlôt
Mr. De Hamel
Sir John Forrest
Mr. Harper
Mr. Loten
Mr. Molloy
Mr. Quinlan
Mr. Randall
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Simpson
Mr. Traylen
Mr. Parker (Teller).

NOES.

Mr. Baker
Mr. Clarkson
Mr. Cookworthy
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Hassell
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Venn
Mr. Burt (Teller).

Question—put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ABORIGINES PROTECTION ACT, 1886, AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a first time.

ABORIGINAL OFFENDERS ACT, 1883, AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a first time.

MASTERS AND SERVANTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a first time.

PATENT ACT, 1888, AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a first time.

CUSTOMS CONSOLIDATED BILL.

Read a first time.

GRANTS TO ROAD BOARDS FOR 1891.

MR. PARKER moved for a return of all moneys paid or allotted to the respective Road Boards during the year 1891, out of public funds, including all special votes for roads or bridges out of loan or other moneys.

Agreed to.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past 10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 28th January, 1892.

Message (No. 4): Transmitting the Estimates for 1892—
Financial Statement by Treasurer—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7.30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

MESSAGE (No. 4) FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE ADMINISTRATOR—ESTIMATES.

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

"The Administrator transmits to the Legislative Assembly the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the year 1892, and recommends an appropriation of the Consolidated Fund accordingly.

"Government House, Perth, 28th January, 1892."

FINANCIAL STATEMENT, ESTIMATES, 1892.

The House having resolved itself into a Committee of Supply for the consideration of the Estimates of Expenditure for the year 1892,—

THE PREMIER AND TREASURER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said: Mr. Randall, —I have much pleasure in rising to submit to the committee the estimates prepared by the Government for the year 1892. This year is a most important one in the history of the colony, and in the interests of the constitution which we have begun to work; and it is my very pleasing duty to be able to inform the House that since the introduction of Responsible Government we have progressed at a rate hitherto unknown in the history of this colony.

The Past.

Last year, as hon. members will recollect, I compared the year 1891, which we were just entering upon, with the years 1880 and 1885, and I showed that during the ten years between those wider dates the revenue had increased from £180,049 in 1880 to an estimated revenue of £444,165 in 1891; and that the expenditure had increased from £204,337 in 1880 to an estimated expenditure of

£446,323 in 1891. This year I propose to follow a different course. I don't intend to look back into the past, because I think we may say that the past may be left behind; but I propose to deal with the financial aspect from a closer period, and all my observations to-night will be directed to a comparison between the years 1890 and 1891, and our hopes for the year 1892. I will compare the revenue and expenditure for 1890 and 1891 with what we expect to receive, and what we propose to expend, during 1892. Last year I had very good reasons for comparing the revenue of the colony for 1890 with previous years, as far back as ten years, because I had to show to the satisfaction of this House that the colony was progressing; that it was in a solvent condition; and that we had reasonable hopes for the future. All this was absolutely necessary in order to justify the action which the Government were taking in introducing to this House a Loan Bill for the prosecution of public works to the extent of £1,336,000. The House was good enough to adopt the policy which was placed before it by the Government; and I think we may now say that this ship of State—this Responsible Government, as it is called—has been fairly launched on a broad sea; that this ship has been manned, it will be for you to say how efficiently; and that the sails have been set to a fair breeze which, with a favorable tide, is wafting us on to prosperity and progress.

The operations of 1891.

The revenue for 1891, as estimated by this Government, was £444,165; and I have very great pleasure in informing the House that we actually received £497,670. That is an amount over our estimate of £53,505. As to the expenditure, no doubt hon. members, and particularly the hon. member for the Gascoyne, who is good enough to listen to me, may expect that it has increased in the same ratio; but I am pleased to be able to inform hon. members that it has not. The expenditure was £435,625. That sum, as I shall show further on, was very much under the estimate. We actually received, therefore, a sum of £62,047 during last year more than we expended. In the year 1890 the revenue received was £414,314, and in 1891 it

was £497,670; so that we actually received in 1891 the sum of £83,356 more than we received in 1890; and if we add to this, which I think is not unfair, an amount of £27,000 which we received in 1890 for sales of land at Hampton Plains, which was an extraordinary item of revenue, we have a total of £110,356 received in 1891 more than was received in 1890.

Our credit balance.

Having saved in 1891 a sum of £62,047, and having a balance in hand of £45,600 with which to begin the year, we had on the 31st December last a balance to the credit of the colony on current account of £107,647. I think this must be to all hon. members, as it is to the Government, a source of great satisfaction, as showing unmistakably the progress and advancement of the colony.

Some sources of Revenue—Customs.

I will now glance at some of the principal sources of revenue, and compare the years 1891 and 1890 with the finances prospectively of 1892. In 1890 we received from Customs the sum of £182,546, and the estimated receipts for 1891 were £201,800, while we actually received £237,686, being an increased revenue from Customs of £55,140 received for 1891 over the total received for 1890, and also £35,886 over the amount of my estimate. For the year 1892 I estimate that we will receive from Customs a sum of £250,000, that is £12,314 more than we have received for 1891; and I think that looking at the present condition of the colony and its prospects, this addition of £12,314 to the Customs revenue is not a very high estimate.

Land Revenue.

We next come to the item of Land, which is always important as a revenue-producing item in our estimates, and I find that for 1890 we received £107,636, which sum included £27,000 received from the sale of land at Hampton Plains; so that if we omit that item, which was a very outside one and not likely often to occur, the ordinary revenue was £80,636. The estimate of the Government for 1891 was £100,000, and we received £101,980, or £1,980 more than the estimate; and if we omit the amount received for sale of land at Hampton Plains, the total revenue was

£21,344 more than we received for 1890. Then for the year 1892, in view of the circumstances of the colony, we have placed the land revenue at £100,000, being the same amount as we estimated for last year; and we do this because we are aware that there is a depression in the Northern parts of the colony, which has been subject to a severe drought, and we cannot expect a large increase of land rents from those districts. But, on the other hand, there is a large quantity of agricultural land being opened for settlement along the Great Southern Railway, and along the other railways that are being constructed, so that we expect a considerable addition to our revenue from conditional purchases; and I think we may fairly place the estimated revenue from land for 1892 at £100,000, which is less by £1,980 than we actually received for 1891.

Post and Telegraph.

Another item which is an evidence of progress is the Postage returns, and hon. members are aware that during the past year the postage rate to Great Britain has been reduced from 6d. to 2½d. per half-ounce; but notwithstanding that reduction, the postage returns are eminently satisfactory. In 1890 the receipts were £15,459; our estimate for 1891 was £15,400, and we received £17,573, or an increase of £2,173 over the estimate and £2,114 over what we received in 1890. I think these figures also are very satisfactory indeed. For the year 1892 we estimate that the revenue from postages and commission on money orders will be £19,150, being £1,577 over the amount received for 1891, but not a large estimate considering the progress and development of the colony. Telegrams, again, are another important item as showing the progress of the colony; and I find that in 1890 we received from this source £10,328; our estimate for 1891 was £11,500, and we actually received £12,679, being £1,179 over our estimate, and £2,351 over the receipts for 1890. For the year 1892 the estimate is £13,750, being an increase of £1,071 over the revenue of 1891.

Fees of Office.

The item "Fees of office" has increased considerably during the past year, and I think it may be taken, at any rate, that

people are doing business, because the fees of office in the Registrar General's and the Registrar of Titles' offices and for the Deeds of grants do show that there is business going on, and any increase in these items shows that there is progress. In 1890 we received from these sources £4,284; we estimated for 1891 a revenue of £4,800, and we actually received £7,085, or £2,285 more than the estimate, and £2,800 more than we received in 1890. For the year 1892 the proposed estimate is £7,450, or only £365 more than the revenue of 1891, a moderate estimate, which I think has every prospect of being realised.

Railways.

I now come to one of the most important items, and I think it will soon be the largest source of revenue of all the items in our estimates, and that is our Railways. Nothing, I think, shows more than the railway estimates, the progress and development that the colony is going through, and I believe we are just beginning now to feel the effects of our railway policy. Hitherto, as we all know, we have for many years built them in a half-and-half sort of way, twenty miles now and forty miles again, and we have expected these railways would instantly develop the country and instantly pay. I have always contended that this was altogether a wrong assumption. The fact of a railway running through a country does not make the land more productive, for it is only the inducement to increased settlement that results from a railway, and when you build a railway, it must take some years before results can be attained, and that has been the case with our Eastern Railway. The Government first undertook the section to Guildford, then to Chidlow's Well, then to York, and then to Beverley; but it is only now that the good arising from this railway is being felt and appreciated. The policy of the present Government is to proceed on a different basis. We are not building new railways by small pieces, but we brought forward last session, and received the approval of this House and the country for, a policy by which we shall be able to build railways and open up the country at once, and give it a chance of speedy development. As I have

said on many occasions, it is impossible in a country like this for any real progress to be made unless there are cheap and rapid means of communication, for without it everything is paralysed, because people cannot get about the country. The revenue received from the railways in 1890 was £45,814. The estimate for 1891 was £53,000. The amount received in the latter year was £63,002, being an excess of £10,002 over the estimate, and £17,188 more than was received in 1890. Some hon. members may say, "Yes, the revenue was obtained, but at what amount of expenditure to produce this amount?" Well, omitting the amount for interest on the capital expended, I may say the expenditure to produce this result was £66,251, this being £3,249 of expenditure over the amount received—not a very large amount considering the circumstances of the colony and the short lines of railway. But for the year 1892 I have another statement to make. For this year we estimate the revenue from railways at £91,000, which includes wharfage receipts, estimated at £7,250. It is found that there is some difficulty in separating this latter item from the railways, and in our future accounts it is proposed that the wharfage expenditure, in all cases where they are connected with the railways, will be shown under the heading of "Railways," though the receipts will be kept separate. The estimated increase of receipts for railways in 1892 is therefore £20,748 over 1891. This is a pretty big item, but I have the assurance of the Commissioner of Railways that the estimate of receipts is based on the expenditure in proper proportion, and in the event of the receipts not being up to the estimate, a consequent reduction will take place in the expenditure. My hon. friend is quite sanguine that his estimate is not too large, although it is £20,748 more than we received for 1891. The estimated expenditure is £86,368, so that there is an estimated profit of £4,632 on the working of our railways for 1892.

An Estimated Profit.

Now this is the first year in the history of the colony when there has been any profit, or rather any estimated profit, on the working of our railways. The result has always been a great loss; but if we can make up that loss now, and

if we can make a profit on the working of our railways, when they are short and disjointed, how much more will we make when we have a proper system of railways connected and working together? It seems to me this is one of the most pleasing facts I have to place before the House, that during 1892 the Railway Department intend to make a profit on the working of our railways.

Stamp Revenue.

The Stamp revenue is a very important matter, as showing the transactions and dealings of the mercantile community, and it shows up very satisfactorily. In 1890 we received £7,637 in stamp revenue. We estimated for 1891 £10,000, and we received £11,376, being £1,376 more than the estimate, and £3,739 more than for 1890. For 1892 we estimate the revenue at £12,500, or £1,124 more than was received in 1891. Not too high an estimate, I think, considering the amount of money that will be expended in the colony, and the general progress and development going on.

Interest.

Hon. members will notice, when they get the Estimates before them, that the amount estimated for interest last year has not been realised. In 1890 the revenue from interest was £1,458. The estimate for 1891 was £6,000. We only received £3,132, and that was £2,868 less than the estimate. This deficiency was caused by our not raising as much of the loan as was expected; and from the same cause the provision made on the Estimates for 1891 for interest on loans—viz., £82,056—was under-drawn by £5,284, and the expenditure on this head only £76,772. For 1892 we place the same amount on the Estimates, namely, £6,000, as we hope to raise during the year, and very soon now, another half-million of our loan of 1890. Of course hon. members are aware that the reason we raised so small an amount of money was (there being really no immediate necessity for it) that we did not think it wise to go into the London money market at a time of panic. I have no doubt but that to a considerable extent we suffered from the actions of others, because nothing could have been more favorable than our position financially when we went into the market. Still, notwithstanding this, and also that

in 1888 our loan was placed in the market at a minimum of nearly £108, in the present instance, after the greatest effort on the part of the Attorney General, we could place only a portion of the authorised loan at par. The hon. gentleman himself will be able to tell you the amount of trouble and difficulty he had even in inducing our financial agents to place it in the market at all and at that price. It may be easily said by those who have no responsibility that we should have done something else, but I can only say that the Government did their best. We are not altogether our own masters in this matter; we are to a great extent dependent on the advice of our financial agents, whose advice we are bound to follow or take the very serious responsibility of rejecting it. We cannot act contrary to the advice of our financial agents in these matters; and indeed, I believe, if we had, our loan was certain to have been a failure. However, I am pleased to inform the committee that there is a streak of light on the horizon, and we have hopes that in a short time we shall be able to place another portion of our loan in the market at a fair price considering the conditions, but if any hon. member expects that we are going to get a premium, it is very probable he will be mistaken. We must not be too sanguine in this respect, although I promise the committee that our stock shall not be sacrificed, and that under any circumstances we shall hold off as long as we can for better times.

Banking Returns.

As showing the financial position of the colony, I may just ask hon. members to take a note of the returns which were published the other day showing the banking transactions, and the balances in hand to the end of December, 1891. I am quite surprised to see the amount of money that is in the colony. The amount in actual coin was £386,626, or an increase during the year of £106,250. There were deposits not bearing interest at call amounting to £536,560, deposits at call bearing interest £830,371—a total of deposits at call bearing interest and not bearing interest amounting to £1,366,931, this being an increase of £355,456 during the year. This is certainly a very large amount of capital

to be deposited by so small a number of people.

MR. PARKER: How much has the Government in that?

THE TREASURER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I cannot answer that exactly off hand. I know there is £100,000 of loan money in the banks, besides nearly double that amount of current revenue at fixed deposit and call. However, the returns which I shall shortly lay on the table will show the whole thing.

MR. PARKER: I thought perhaps the hon. gentleman might be able to tell us.

The 1891 Loan.

THE TREASURER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Hon. members will now expect me to tell them something about our loans. They are aware that the Attorney General, at great inconvenience to himself, consented to go to England to arrange our financial business, and to arrange for the appointment of financial agents. The result of his endeavors was that the Government entered into an arrangement with the London and Westminster Bank to do our business and to float our loans. I am sure the Attorney General performed the duties entrusted to him in the most satisfactory manner—in a manner for which he has my entire thanks, and for which I believe the colony is under a deep debt of gratitude to him. A good impression was created amongst the London financiers by the hon. gentleman, and I believe the fact of our being in a position to send a man of his knowledge and attainments did a great deal of good, with the result that we are opening our business and agency in a satisfactory manner. We were empowered by the Loan Act of last year to raise £1,336,000, but we only raised £250,000 bearing interest at 4 per cent. We placed it on the market at par and it realised £100 10s. 10d. I may inform hon. members that all our business in this colony is transacted by the local banks, and any moneys we require from London we import through them. Our loan realised £251,122 8s. 7d., and the expenses of floating it were £2,955 1s. 10d. The amount actually received was £248,167 6s. 9d., or £1,832 13s. 3d. less than the £250,000.

Arrangement with Local Banks.

During 1891, I was enabled to make arrangements with the local banks

(which I think I may say were very satisfactory considering all the circumstances) by which we lodged all loan moneys brought into the colony at 3 per cent. for 6 months. Under that arrangement we brought here £100,000 out of the £250,000 we raised, and the interest realised £1,036. We made a further arrangement, which I think is also a satisfactory one, that on our daily balance on current account we shall receive 2 per cent., provided that anything under £3,000 does not bear interest. From this we received during 1891 (and the arrangement was only made when the year was half passed) £357, and we received besides, for other balances we were able to place at fixed deposit, £1,739; so that altogether we received last year £3,132 from the local banks for interest. Not a very large item, but it seems we have got the thin end of the wedge in, and although 2 per cent. on our daily balance is not large it is very satisfactory, and shows that the banks will meet us in a fair and liberal way, and are desirous to work hand in hand with the Government for the good of the colony.

Cost of raising Loans.

Hon. members may be interested to know the way this £2,955 ls. 10d. was expended by the London and Westminster Bank in floating the loan. I myself think it is not excessive—it is cheap. The composition and other duties were £1,567 10s., and that had to be paid to the Imperial Revenue—brokerage, £576; advertising, £186 11s. 10d.; bank charges of $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent. £625, making a total of £2,955 ls. 10d. I think this is very reasonable, and the bank did not get much out of the transaction. Hon. members may be interested to know the terms on which the London and Westminster Bank have arranged to raise our loans and do our financial business. I shall have much pleasure in placing the returns on the table presently, but I will now give hon. members a few of the particulars. The commission is $\frac{1}{4}$ per cent., and the charge for maintenance, inscribing the stock, keeping all books, registers, and transfers, and doing the business is £500 per annum per million. The rate of interest allowed on deposits in London, I am sorry to say, is not very large, and if we had the money

available we should bring it here, where we could place it to much better advantage. It is $1\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. below the current bank rate of the day. Thus, if the current rate were 2 per cent., we would only get $\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. The rate charged for advances to the Government by the bank is the current Bank of England discount rate. That seems to be very favorable indeed, because the easiest terms on which we could obtain money in the colony from the local institutions is 6 per cent., whereas we can obtain money in London at English bank rates and transfer it here as required. Hitherto we have been able to transfer it here without any charge, and hon. members will see that was a far better arrangement than paying 6 per cent. in the colony. I have great pleasure in saying that the Government are thoroughly satisfied with the arrangements made with the London and Westminster Bank. We can depend on getting the best advice in London on financial matters, and we are dealing with an institution with a world-wide reputation.

Imports and Exports—Population—Gold Export, &c.

Then we come to the imports and exports. The imports for 1890 were £874,447, and for 1891, so far as received, were £1,162,878. The population of the colony at the last census was 49,782 souls, and on 31st December, 1891, it had reached 53,285 souls, an increase of 3,503 in nine months, so that, taking the population at 53,285 on 31st December, the imports are about £22 per head, which is, I believe, as large as any other Australian colony. The exports for 1890 were £671,813, and for 1891, as far as we have received them, were £765,444. I don't think this shows quite so well as the imports, but it makes, at any rate, over £14 per head of the population. I now come to a very important item, which will have a great effect on the progress and prosperity of the colony, and it has now become one of the principal exports, viz., gold. During 1891 there were entered for export at the Customs 30,311 ounces, valued at £115,181, and of this 12,833 ounces were returned as from Yilgarn. Of course we all know that in many cases, especially in the northern parts, a considerable quantity is not entered at

the Customs. The actual quantity obtained from Yilgarn was 14,230 ounces, valued at £53,356. I believe the quantity will very largely increase, because it is now acknowledged by everyone that Yilgarn is a permanent goldfield. We are about to have a railway constructed there, and there is a great difficulty for any of us to-night to prognosticate what will be the future of that field.

Works to be undertaken from Loan Moneys.

I will ask hon. members, in considering these Estimates, not to forget that there will be Loan Estimates besides, and that those Loan Estimates will have to be submitted in a few days, and in them there will be found railways to be constructed, goldfields to be developed, roads to be made, and other items of importance to be dealt with, in addition. There is also £13,000 on the Loan Schedule for buildings in the northern ports, and several other items, and, therefore, if hon. members do not see in the Estimates now before them the particular works which they desire to see placed on them, I would ask them to bear the Loan Estimates in mind, because, if they do not appear on these Estimates, there is no reason why they should not on the others. We propose to expend the £13,000 in the Loan Act for public buildings, &c., at Northern towns in the following manner:—£2,000 on police quarters and cells at Cossack; tramway, car, and goods-shed, Cossack Tramway, £1,000; post and telegraph office, Cossack, £1,500; Broome police station and quarters, £1,500; Wyndham gaol and police quarters (and I hope the hon. member for East Kimberley will listen to this), £2,000; Derby police quarters and cells, £1,500; Onslow police quarters and cells, £1,000; Geraldton post and telegraph office, £2,000; and Carnarvon court house, £500, making a total of £13,000.

The Colony's Indebtedness.

Last year I gave an exact account of our loans in detail. I showed how much inscribed stock there was and how much debenture stock, and I gave the amount of our sinking funds and other particulars. I do not propose to go over this again now. No material change has taken place except in regard to the sinking fund, and as regards some

stock that has been changed from debentures to inscribed stock. The only addition to our loans up to the present is the £250,000 we have borrowed at 4 per cent. The present indebtedness of the colony is £1,613,594. We have a sinking fund, which is invested, amounting to £104,531, which leaves a total net indebtedness and liability of £1,509,062, equal to a little over £28 per head of the population. Queensland, South Australia, and New Zealand have more than double this liability per head of the population. I have not the recent figures, I could not obtain them to-day later than for the end of 1889. At that time the liability of Queensland was £63 per head of the population; in South Australia it was £63; Victoria, £33; New South Wales, £41; New Zealand, £62; and Tasmania, £43. We have therefore by far the least indebtedness per head of the population of all the colonies. No doubt these figures have increased since 1889, still we only owe at the present time £28 per head of the population. I think this is satisfactory, and does not show that we are in a very bad way, as some people would have us believe.

Expenditure for 1891.

While we have been fairly liberal with the expenditure, hon. members will see from the estimates that we have not been extravagant; we have rather been careful. We have jealously guarded the constitutional rights of this House, notwithstanding what the hon. member for East Perth has said. And in cases where there was no vote we have always most carefully considered the matter, and we have never spent a single sixpence unless we felt quite certain this House would approve of it. We not only saved £62,047 during the year, but we actually expended £10,701 less than the estimated expenditure. Hon. members will remember that the estimated expenditure was £446,323, and the actual expenditure £435,622, or £10,701 less than we were authorised by this House to expend, and I think this shows economy and care. Let the hon. member for East Perth consider this.

Revenue for 1891.

There is another important matter. The revenue of 1891 was obtained without any large expenditure of loan moneys.

Some people would say, "You can easily obtain a large revenue by expending hundreds of thousands of pounds of loan money," but only £72,140 was expended out of loan money up to 31st December, 1891. It is thus satisfactory to know that we have not been bolstered up by large loan expenditure and that our satisfactory condition of affairs has been obtained by honest development.

The Future.

Having now, sir, dealt in some way with the past year's operations, I will now take a glance, if hon. members will bear with me, at the future. I say unhesitatingly there never was a time in the history of the colony when the finances were in a more solvent condition. And, I say, that knowing the difficulties that exist in the Northern portion of the colony owing to the drought, and feeling them personally too, there never was a time when the future success of the colony was, as a whole, more hopeful. I will tell hon. members what we have before us, and I think if they have not thought the matter out for themselves I will rather astonish them. There is no reason why people should not flock here in thousands to share in the good things which we offer. We do not, however, want those who are not willing to work; but anyone who is willing to throw in his lot with us and try to develop the colony we shall be glad to welcome.

Amount available for Public Works.

The Government has legally at its disposal for public works and for the services of the colony no less a sum than £1,917,215, and I will show how. We have a balance of £107,647, we have a balance out of the loan of £250,000 we have raised, of £176,027, and we can raise to-morrow a further £1,086,000. We have unexpended balances of £8,765 from former loans, and we have an estimated revenue of £538,775. All these sums added together will show that the Government are legally able, if they so desired, to get hold of £1,917,215 and expend it. I do not suppose we could spend it all in one year—at least we do not intend to. I think this a very satisfactory outlook.

MR. CANNING: Loan moneys and all?

Estimated Revenue for 1892.

THE TREASURER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The estimated revenue for 1892 is £538,775, being £41,085 more than for the year 1891, and if this is added to the credit balance of £107,647, there is available for the services of 1892, and which we are dealing with in these Estimates, a sum of £646,422.

Estimated Expenditure for 1892.

The estimated expenditure for 1892 is £596,809, or £161,186 more than was expended in 1891. I think hon. members will see we are getting into quite respectable figures. I expect that on the 31st December, 1892, we shall have a credit balance in favor of this colony of £49,612.

Sources of Revenue.

The principal sources of revenue are:—Customs £250,000, land £100,000, railways £91,000, postage £19,150, stamps £12,500, which, together with other items, make a total of £538,775. I do not intend now to go through the Estimates as it has been the custom some times, or deal with them in detail, because hon. members will have them before them, and as they pass through, we will be able to explain them. I will, however, touch upon a few of the points.

Some items of Expenditure.

Among the items of expenditure for 1892 you will find the "Miscellaneous Services" are increased from £17,276 in 1891 to £25,338, and works and buildings for which you voted £23,822 in 1891, you will be asked to vote £93,055. The expenditure for 1891 for miscellaneous services, although you voted only £17,276 was £21,939; and for works and buildings you voted £23,822, and we expended only £19,532. One was therefore above the estimate and the other below it.

New Works.

The expenditure on works and building as estimated for this year is very large, namely, £93,055. It includes additions and repairs to buildings throughout the colony, £13,490; erection of public buildings, £41,470; furniture for public buildings, £1,300; harbor and river improvements, £11,750; and miscellaneous services, £20,510. Among the works we propose to ask you to approve of, the

most important are a new wing to Government offices, £6,000; Rottneſt lighthouse, £6,000; new ſchools, £6,700; new poſt and telegraph offices, £6,300; hospitals, £8,200; jetties, £10,800, beſides many other important and neceſſary works eſtimated to amount to £93,055. I think never before was ſuch an amount placed before hon. members for public works and buildings in this Houſe, and I think when the Government has the money to expend on theſe moſt neceſſary and urgent works, it ſhows that we have the money available, and the colony has ſome backbone in it.

Ministerial Salaries.

There is another item you will find in the miſcellaneous votes, which is ſome-what delicate for me to refer to, and that is a propoſed addition to miniſterial ſalaries. It has been repreſented to me by many perſons that the ſalaries provided for Miniſters under the Conſtitution Act are too low, and that £600 a year to each Miniſter and £800 to the Premier is not ſufficient to enable them to do juſtice to the poſition. I believe I have ſaid that I did not intend to move in this matter. However, I muſt retract from that poſition and inform hon. members we have placed on the Eſtimates the ſum of £1,000 for increaſe to miniſterial ſalaries, which will enable an increaſe of £200 to be given to each miniſter. I think there is no doubt that the ſalaries are inadequate for the ſervices rendered—eſpecially inadequate in ſome caſes. Of courſe in my own caſe I cannot ſay it is inadequate, becauſe I have no particular private duties that require my attention, and I am willing to give my time to the ſervices of the country; but in the caſe of the legal officer of the Government, there are very few who are ſuitable and available, and hon. members can ſee how much time and how much loſs it muſt be to any of the leading barristers of the colony to take office. In fact they take it at a great ſacrifice; and in the caſe of the preſent Attorney General, it is perfectly ridiculous that he ſhould be expected to give up his time and neglect his own buſineſs, and be always available for the ſervices of the Government to adviſe on this and that, and alſo draft the numerous bills which, if we had to pay for would amount to

double the amount of his ſalary. Conſidering all theſe matters, I came to the concluſion that we ſhould be juſtified in aſking hon. members whether the time had not arrived when an addition ſhould be made to the ſalaries of Miniſters.

Subsidies to Municipalities.

Sir, we propoſe to make a new departure in our eſtimates of expenditure, which I hope will receive the ſupport of hon. members. We intend to ſubſidiſe the municipalities of the colony. This will, of courſe, be of importance to all the towns of the colony, becauſe though the revenue of ſome of them may be ſmall, ſtill when added to in a certain proportion, it will be of great aſſiſtance to them. More particularly will it be of aſſiſtance to the municipalities of Perth and Fremantle, which will largely benefit, and the ratepayers will be able to make their towns more attractive and really place them in a far better poſition than they are at the preſent time. The City of Perth is repreſented in this Houſe by three members who for ſome unknown reaſon or other ſit on the Oppoſition benches. I only wiſh to be perfectly outſpoken in this matter. That circumſtance does not influence the Government at all. We are as pleaſed to aſſiſt members ſitting on the oppoſite ſide of the Houſe as thoſe ſitting on our ſide, though we prefer to ſee them ſitting on this ſide. In this caſe I do not think we can be charged with allowing our feelings to get the better of us. We think that notwithstanding that the three members for Perth ſit in oppoſition, the city of Perth will be found to be largely benefited by theſe eſtimates, and ſome hon. members may take an exception to ſome of the items; but Perth is the capital of the colony, and ought to be improved and made attractive as the other capital cities. It is deſirable to beautify Perth, and make it a more attractive and healthy place than it is at preſent.

MR. CANNING: Heap coals of fire on the heads of the three Oppoſition members.

THE TREASURER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We think that the time has arrived when the people living in towns and cities ſhould be aſſiſted; and the ſubſidy we propoſe to give to the towns

all alike is 10s. in the pound for each pound they raise on the general rate; and for this purpose we have placed on the Estimates a sum of £5,000. I hope the Government will be able to continue this subsidy in future years; but the municipalities must remember that in voting the subsidy for one year, if the House consents to do it, the subsidy must not be counted upon; and of course this House will require to know how it has been spent. All I can promise the municipalities is that the Government will do their best to carry this £5,000; and next year, if funds are available, we shall be very glad to continue it.

Improvement of the Capital.

There is another important item for Perth in the Estimates, and that is we propose to spend £2,000 in reclamation along Perth Water. I think this will be money well laid out, as this work will give more space for the recreation of the inhabitants, and I believe it will make the place more healthy. But already a great deal has been done in this matter; the Recreation Ground by the water is a source of enjoyment and pleasure to thousands, and it was made without a large expenditure; and I believe this amount of £2,000 will go a long way to increase that space and otherwise beautify and improve Perth Water. We also place £2,000 on the Estimates for improving the Park on the top of "The Mount." It is a beautiful piece of ground, a thousand acres in extent, and with a judicious expenditure it might be made one of the most beautiful and attractive places in Australia, and it seems to the Government that the time has come when something should be done to reclaim it from the waste it now is, and by fencing and clearing and making roads through it, the Park may be made a really attractive place, not only for the inhabitants of Perth, but a source of enjoyment to the people of the colony. We might have roads all about it, for walks and drives to the extent of hundreds of miles; and I look forward to the time when this beautiful piece of land, which by the wisdom of the Government has been set apart as a Park for all the citizens, and also for the people of the colony, can be made attractive and enjoyable as a beautiful place of public resort.

An Observatory.

Another item you will find on the Estimates, and which as we progress and do not wish to be left behind in the race, is very necessary and important, and that is a Perth Observatory, for which £2,000 are put on the Estimates. It is quite a reproach to this large colony that we have not an Observatory in it. Why, any of the small places about the world, if of any importance, has an Observatory, and this is especially noticeable in the other colonies of Australia, which have Observatories wherein astronomical and meteorological observations are registered, and by means of which ships in port can get their chronometers rated by a time-ball. It is a discredit that there is not a time-ball at Fremantle, and that the shipmasters are not able to correct their chronometers except by a rough method of calculation. In Western Australia there is a great field for research. Our weather reports are kept in only a sort of half-and-half way; whereas in the other colonies, and in other parts of the world you will find the weather chart is posted up for public information. We have no department in this colony to take charge of these things. The work that is done now, and done very well with the means available, is carried on by an officer who is in another department; but we want a scientific man at the head of this institution, who will make this matter his constant study; and if you agree to the vote for this Observatory, I shall propose next year that we import a scientific man from the Greenwich Observatory or some other institution.

The Agent Generalship.

There is another important matter which I shall take the opportunity of informing the House of, and the reason why it has not been made public before is, that I only received the information last night. It is in regard to the proposed expenditure of £1,500 for an Agent General. I have much pleasure in stating to the House that the Government have offered the appointment to Sir William Robinson, and he has accepted the position at a salary of £1,500 a year, with a certain tenure for five years. This arrangement is, of course, subject to the approval of this House. If the hon. members do not approve of it, of course

it will not take place. I may say, however, the Government have been in a difficulty in filling up the appointment, as it was necessary to have a man of experience and ability, one who could meet on equal terms the great financiers in London, and we wanted a man of probity and undoubted integrity. We have, in our opinion, obtained such a man, and it will be for this House to say if the arrangements are to be confirmed. I think the colony is fortunate in being able to secure such a man for the position. The salary we always intended to place on the Estimates was £1,250, and that was the utmost I was prepared to offer, but as time went on, and the necessity for the appointment became greater, I came to the conclusion that if we could get a man entirely suitable for the position the amount of £250 should not be allowed to stand in the way. If hon. members think £1,500 too much, we can make it a condition that it shall not apply to his successor, but I think that in these early days of Responsible Government, it is most essential we should be well represented in London. We want one who will deal with these leading financiers, and will meet them on equal terms. If the proposal does not meet with the approval of the House, no harm will be done, because Sir William Robinson is still the Governor of the colony, and can return. The reason we place this matter before hon. members is, that we consider it is the best appointment we can make in the interests of the colony. Personally, I consider Sir William Robinson is not acting wisely in his own interests, because he has, as Governor here, £4,000 a year, a splendid house and gardens, and to give those up for £1,500 a year is past comprehension. Still people have their own views and ideas, and there is the fact that yesterday I received the telegram saying that if the appointment were made at £1,500 a year, with a tenure of five years, he would accept it. I leave the matter in the hands of hon. members, and when the item comes before them, they will be able to express their opinions on it.

Justification of the Government policy.

When I brought the Estimates before the House last year I was told that I was too sanguine. The hon. member for the Swan

told me I should not get the revenue I anticipated. I will just quote what he said from *Hansard*. He said that the Premier had stated "that he had every confidence that we should have at the end of 1891 a sufficient balance to credit to pay the interest on the loan up to the end of 1892. He (Mr. Loton) had grave doubts of this. He doubted if we should obtain our revenue. And then he said that for the current year the Premier estimated he would receive a revenue of £444,165, showing an increase on the ordinary revenue of the previous year, not of £5,000 but, if the windfall of £27,000 was allowed for, of £56,851, and that it was upon this estimate—this somewhat inflated estimate—that the Government reckoned to pay the interest on the loan up to the end of the year." I cannot deny that when I heard such remarks coming from a man of the reputation and experience of the hon. member, I began to consider whether, after all, he might not be right and I wrong, and that I had taken a too sanguine view. I, however, felt convinced that I had not, and the result proved that I was right and he was wrong, for our revenue has in fact exceeded our estimate by £53,505. The Government has, therefore, every cause to be satisfied, and I am sure that the hon. member for the Swan is also as pleased and satisfied as anyone in this House. Then the hon. member for the Greenough (Mr. Traylen), in one of his speeches, described our policy as one of burdening the present population for the sake of attracting others to these shores. I would ask the House whether this has been the result. In the face of many difficulties, can anyone say we have not prospered, and are not progressing? I did say, and the hon. member for the Swan was right when he quoted it, that I hoped the surplus would be sufficient to meet the whole of the interest on our loans for 1892, and I am glad to inform the House that my hopes have been realised. The estimated interest on the loans for 1892, which includes £750,000, of which we have yet £500,000 to borrow, and the whole of our previous loans, is £102,007, and our credit balance on the 31st December last was £107,647, a sum more than sufficient by £5,640 to pay the interest on all our loans for the current year. I have the

right, without being too elated, to claim the honors of victory, and to say that although I have not had a great experience in finance, my judgment was right, and that those hon. members who had more experience were wrong. I would ask hon. members to say whether under these circumstances we can be said to have so managed the affairs of the colony as to be considered reckless; or have we not rather managed them with care and economy? I think the verdict in this case must follow the result. I would ask hon. members, with these facts before them, whether the state of the colony justifies the remarks of the hon. member for East Perth (Mr. Canning) when speaking on the Address-in-Reply a few weeks ago? What did he say? He said: "I cannot help, on this occasion, calling attention to the enormous, the prodigious, rate at which our expenditure has increased during the last twelve months." He also said these words: "There has been a general and lavish—not to say reckless—expenditure all round"; and he said a great deal more in the same strain. I would ask this House whether these remarks were justified? Were they made after due consideration, and with an honest desire to assist this House or the country? Or were they said with an utter disregard of facts and truth, and in a reckless spirit of opposition? I consider that the hon. member has been guilty of culpable recklessness, because, being connected with a financial institution of this colony, his words, although uttered in this House, do not stop here. They go beyond the limits of this House and the colony, and they do quite as much harm as if they were true. The hon. member for East Perth (Mr. Canning), in his desire to attack this bench, forgot his duty to the colony altogether. By his utter disregard for facts, and by his reckless statements, he has injured the colony, whereas his only desire was, I am sure, to injure this bench—a desire in which he has completely failed. Why I speak warmly is that the hon. member has made a statement which will go outside this colony, and from which many will believe and think that there is a reckless Government—a Government which is ruining the colony by an enormous and prodigious expenditure, where-

as in fact we have spent £10,701 less than we were authorised by this House; and I think, therefore, I am justified in replying to the hon. member and telling him that he is not worth listening to. Our policy has been approved of by the colony.

Some causes of the Colony's prosperity.

The change of constitution has worked like magic. During past years we have listened to financial statements from the Colonial Secretary, which, in my experience, have been gloomy and doleful accounts of the colony. We have been told that we must be careful, for the colony was on the high-road to ruin. I do not blame the former occupants of this bench, but undoubtedly a change has taken place. The past year is the only one we have had any experience of, but it is a very easy task for me to-night to place before the House a statement of our position financially, for we have no deficit, but all is prosperity and increase. I might, however, give hon. members a little bit of warning. Although our position as a colony is good, and our financial affairs are solvent, and although our future is assured as far as we can see ahead, I give hon. members warning that this will not do away with the necessity of watching and checking us in our financial proposals. I almost feel that I cannot be right in giving such a glowing description of the financial position of the colony when I know that in a large portion of the colony there is such a dark cloud hanging over and darkening the very doors and houses of the people. The drought is not over yet. Certainly there are signs of its dispersal, but the end is not yet, and whatever the results may be, years and years must pass before persons who have invested their capital and embarked their fortunes in that part of the colony can recover what they have lost. But while we know this, and the fact appeals to us in more ways than one, yet the colony, notwithstanding this calamity, has prospered and is progressing. I can only put down the improvement in our position to gold discoveries, which have come to the rescue. The impetus which has been given to the colony through the discovery of gold and the development of our mineral resources has done away with

the great depression which otherwise must have followed this drought in the North. I can assure hon. members that as far as the Government are concerned, we intend to pursue the course we have started on. We intend to practise strict economy, joined with judicious expenditure and with reasonable boldness. We know the colony and know its resources, and we know whether it will be likely to respond to our efforts. The first year under Responsible Government has been more prosperous than even I anticipated. The change seems to have come at a fortunate period—gold had just been discovered and two railway companies were engaged in railway construction of 500 miles of railway on the land-grant system. A great amount of money was brought to the colony at a fortunate time for us by the making of the Great Southern Railway, and the results of the expenditure of that money between Beverley and Albany are there for anyone to see. A vast area of country which was then lying waste is now opened by a railway, and is going to be a very important field for agricultural development; and instead of that country remaining unoccupied, almost unknown, towns are rising at intervals, and public buildings are becoming necessary as a consequence of the developments that are going on. The same results will certainly occur when the Midland Railway is completed. Another thing that assisted us a little was the slight check which has been given to the great success and prosperity that had attended so long the Eastern colonies. No doubt the more adventurous, the ambitious, and the less successful people in those colonies are now coming to us, and I am sure there is not one person among us who does not wish them God-speed in coming to settle among us.

Effects of the change of Constitution.

We have had one year's experience of this form of Government, and I think the result has been very satisfactory. Our revenue has increased from £414,314 in 1890 to £497,670 in 1891; and we anticipate a revenue of £538,775 for 1892. This increase has not been caused by any fortuitous expenditure of loan money, but by steady development, and also in the face of great drawbacks, for Northern parts of the colony have been afflicted

with a severe drought. Sir, I have completed all I have to say on this occasion. I think we have every cause to be satisfied with our circumstances. As I have said we have had one year under Responsible Government—a form of Government so desired by many and so feared by some has come upon us, and we have now had a short experience of it. If we are to judge by the success and progress made in this one year, of course the verdict must be in its favor; and if the people of the country will take a real interest in political matters, and will devote themselves with energy to the development of the country, I see no reason why the experiment should not be entirely a success. They may depend upon this, that if they neglect the opportunities and are careless of the great advantages which they have now, they will lose them, and other persons will come in and reap the reward.

Conclusion.

I thank hon. members, on behalf of myself and my colleagues, for the generous support which has been given us during the past year. Without the help of the members of this House, we would have been perfectly powerless; but with your assistance and counsel, I believe we shall be able, if we all pull together, to make this colony of Western Australia a place worth coming to, a place worth living in; and I believe, too, if we are honest in our endeavors and work together, as we should, that our colony will be able to take an important position amongst her great Eastern sisters. I beg now to move the first item on the Estimates,—“*His Excellency the Governor, £735.*”

MR. PARKER: Although one of the unfortunate members who sit on this side of the House, and one who is, therefore, viewed with suspicion by those sitting on the other side, it is apparent to me that the Government do take notice of the attitude of hon. members for Perth; although they state that they, in their generosity, do not intend to treat the constituencies otherwise than as if their members were sitting on their own side. But I am inclined to say, with Shakespeare, “*Methinks the lady doth protest too much.*”

THE TREASURER (HON. Sir J. Forrest): Of course I would rather see them on this side.

MR. PARKER: I happen to be one who sits on this side of the House; but, at the same time, I do not rise to criticise the remarks of the hon. the Treasurer adversely. I am happy to find that my views on the question of Responsible Government, which I advocated for so long, have been realised, and that with the aid of those honest and honorable gentlemen who occupy seats on the Treasury bench the colony has so greatly prospered, and I give them every credit for the policy they have initiated and carried out. But, sir, it seems to me that so far this progress and prosperity has not been so much dependent on the policy of the Government, because we find that only a very small portion of their loan money has, up to the present time, been expended. To my mind the present state of things is due in a great measure to the fact that we are now governing ourselves—that the Government is governed by the people here, and not governed by the Colonial Office. This has given a great filip to the colony in the first place. And in the next place there have been those great and grand mineral discoveries which are now being felt. Still, I have no doubt but that when the Government policy is properly developed, and the railways are built, affording a rapid means of communication throughout the colony, and aided by the colony's natural resources, it will tend to give the colony such an impetus that in the course of a very short time will necessitate those right honorable gentlemen who occupy seats in the Upper House being sent to their constituents for election, instead of being nominated. The time when the population of the colony will reach 60,000 is not far distant, and when we have an elected Upper House—one responsible to the constituencies—we shall then have what I consider to be government by the people. In saying what I have, I trust the gentlemen who occupy seats on the Treasury bench will not think I have the slightest idea of impugning either their policy or their motives. When they told us 12 months ago that they were going to borrow over £1,000,000 of money I thought it very doubtful whether they were not rather reckless; but I am

happy to find that the progress and development of the colony, seconded by the adoption of Responsible Government and the discoveries of minerals hither and thither, have justified their action, and I give them every credit for their foresight and prudence. I am pleased to observe that—not at their own suggestion, but at the suggestion of the House—the salaries of Ministers are to be slightly raised. I do not think that even then they will be anything like commensurate with the services they render to the country, and, as I have said, I am pleased to observe that the item of salaries has been increased to something beyond a mere pittance—the amount, I do not hesitate to say, now being anything but equal to that which any of the gentlemen concerned could acquire with a very much less amount of work than they bestow on their respective offices. As regards the amount put down for the Agent General, I do not think it anything too large. £1,500 a year is the least sum we can offer for an Agent General if we expect him to take any position at all in the city—a position commensurate with the importance of this colony. It may, perhaps, be a question for us to consider whether it is advisable for us to tie the appointment up for five years; but, as far as the amount of the salary is concerned, I do not think there can be any question that it is not disproportionate to the services we expect from an Agent General. It may be also a question whether Sir William Robinson, from a business point of view, is fitted for the position. Socially and otherwise I have not the slightest doubt but that he will be more qualified than any Agent General in London sent from Australia. The Attorney General, who has had an opportunity of occupying the position temporarily, will be able to tell us what the business qualifications for such a position are, and we shall be guided in a great measure by his advice. Personally I have no doubt the members of this House and the country at large will regret extremely that Sir William Robinson is leaving the colony as Governor. We have always recognised him as an able administrator, and a gentleman peculiarly fitted to occupy the position he did at the initiation of Responsible Government here; and I know

his advisers, the Ministry, will be the first to recognise that he has been of great service to them and the colony at large. I did not rise for the purpose of criticising the speech of the hon. gentleman; I rose to move the adjournment of the debate, so as to give other hon. members, and those who have been attacked like my hon. friend on my right (Mr. Canning) an opportunity of replying, when we have the speech in print. Before I sit down let me say that it gives me great gratification to find the colony in such a prosperous financial position, and to find that the hopes and prophecies of the Government have been more than realised and justified, and that our future is bright and cheering. I congratulate the colony on its financial position, and I congratulate the Ministry on their successful administration of the affairs of the country during the past 12 months. Having said this much I now propose, so that some of my friends may have an opportunity of criticising those figures which have been laid before us, and so that the hon. member for the Swan (Mr. Loton) may be able to again tell us what his views are on our future prospects, and so that my hon. friend the member for East Perth (Mr. Canning) may be able to reply to the remarks made by the hon. the Colonial Treasurer concerning him, that we report progress.

Question—That progress be reported—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at half-past 9 o'clock.

Legislative Council,

Friday, 29th January, 1892.

Municipal Institutions Act Amendment Bill: message from the Legislative Assembly—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir T. Cockburn-Campbell, Bart.) took the chair at 3 o'clock.

PRAYERS.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.

THE PRESIDENT announced the receipt of the following message from the Legislative Assembly:—

“Mr. President,

“The Legislative Assembly returns to the Legislative Council the Bill intituled ‘An Act to amend the Municipal Institutions Act, 1876,’ and submits the following reasons for being unable to agree to the suggestions received 22nd January, 1892, from the Legislative Council:

- “1. The Assembly considers that, in the ‘interests of Education,’ private ‘schools’ should be exempted ‘from municipal rates.
- “2. Many buildings used as Sunday ‘schools’ by various religious ‘denominations would become ‘rateable were this proposed ‘amendment to become law, inasmuch as they are often used ‘during the week as private ‘schools.
- “3. The probability is that the proposed amendment would have ‘the effect of closing private ‘schools now open, as the assessment would in some cases equal, ‘if not exceed, the rent obtainable.

“JAS. G. LEE STEERE,

“Speaker.

“Legislative Assembly Chamber, 27th
“January, 1892.”

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton) moved that the message be