

MR. SHENTON said he would be prepared to accept the suggestion of the hon. member for the Greenough, that a moiety of the expense should be defrayed by the owners of the vessel and the other moiety by the Government. The other point raised by the hon. and learned member was worthy of consideration; and he would now move to report progress, and ask for leave to sit again on Thursday.

Agreed to.

Progress reported.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 10th August, 1887.

Enrolled Guard acting as Police Constables—Carrying out of Public Works at Wyndham—Sea-going Steam Dredge: Provision for purchase of, in next Loan—Message (No. 30): Replying to Addresses—Alteration of terms of Beverley-Albany Railway Contract, as regards Immigration—Postage Stamp Ordinance, 1854, Amendment Bill: third reading—Joint Stock Companies Fees Bill: third reading—Telegraphic Messages Act, 1874, Amendment Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

ENROLLED GUARD ACTING AS POLICE CONSTABLES.

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

1st. Whether it was a fact that when the lately disbanded Enrolled Guard, consisting of the best conducted men of the old Pensioner Force, was transferred from the Imperial to the Colonial service each member of such Enrolled Guard was sworn in as a policeman or constable, and by virtue of the oath then taken was, during the existence of the said Enrolled Guard, liable to be called upon at any

time to perform the duties of a policeman or constable?

2nd. If the members of the Enrolled Guard were so sworn in when the force was formed, and thus became a reserve police force, whose services were available in any case of emergency, were they not justly entitled, when the Enrolled Guard was disbanded, to receive from the Colonial Government the usual gratuity or time service money granted and paid to members of the Police Force of this colony when any deserving member of such Police Force is retired?

3rd. If so entitled to the aforesaid gratuity or time service money, did they receive the same when the Enrolled Guard was disbanded; if not, why not?

4th. If such gratuity has not been awarded, has any claim been received by the Government from any member of the lately disbanded Enrolled Guard for the payment of such gratuity, and in such case was it considered, and with what result?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) replied:—

1st. There is no record of members of the Enrolled Guard having been sworn in as police constables, or of the liability of any member of the Guard to perform the duties of a policeman or constable.

2nd. They would not have been entitled to any gratuity, inasmuch as they were paid from a distinct fund and were not subject to deductions towards the Police Benefit Fund.

3rd. They did not receive any gratuity on disbandment, because they were not entitled to any.

4th. I have no knowledge of any claim having been received by the Government from any member of the late Enrolled Guard for the payment of a gratuity; neither has the Police Department received any.

PROSECUTION OF PUBLIC WORKS AT WYNDHAM.

MR. A. FORREST, in accordance with notice, moved an address to His Excellency the Governor, praying that His Excellency will be pleased to carry out the public works, jetties, and wharves at Wyndham, the contract for which was accepted some six months ago. He found that in 1886 the House voted

£9,615 for public works at East Kimberley, and, in the Estimates for 1887, this amount was again carried forward; and tenders were called for and the contract was let, at a sum which he was not now in a position to state; but he found that the amount carried on for this year was £4,271. He was inclined to think this was an error, for he did not think that £5,000 had been spent upon these works up to the present time. It would be in the recollection of hon. members that a ship was chartered and the timber tendered for; but the news from the goldfields not being of a very satisfactory character at the time, the Government thought it would be better in the interests of the colony to stop these works. Since then the news from the goldfields had been highly encouraging, and he hoped the Government would offer no opposition to these works being proceeded with. There was a great cry in the district for the works being carried on at once.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said the Government were perfectly willing and ready to start these works as soon as they were satisfied, by the news from the goldfield, that they would be required. He believed that the news recently received was of a very promising character, and as soon as the Government were satisfied as to the permanency of the goldfields these works would be proceeded with.

MR. SHOLL thought this was a matter that might be left to the Executive Government. All they were waiting for was some authentic news from the goldfield, as to the prospects of the field. He thought the Government had been quite justified in stopping these works, some time ago, when the news from the goldfield was so conflicting. It would have been useless going on with the works, if the goldfields did not turn out well.

MR. A. FORREST said there seemed to be a desire on the part of hon. members to "sit upon" Wyndham. He thought these works ought not to be delayed a day longer, for the success of the goldfield was now an accomplished fact. He thought it behoved us to do all we could to bring the trade of Wyndham down this way. If we were not careful what we were about we should lose Wyndham altogether. He hoped

the House would put its foot down, and insist upon these works being undertaken and carried out at once.

The motion, upon being put, was declared by the Speaker to have been carried, on the voices; but the hon. member who moved it called for a division, with the result that the motion was negatived, the numbers being—

Ayes	10
Noes	13
Majority against ...			3

AYES.

Sir T. C. Campbell, Bart.
Mr. E. R. Brockman
Mr. Harper
Mr. Hensman
Mr. Keane
Mr. Marmion
Mr. McKee
Mr. Pearce
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Forrest (Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. H. Brockman
Mr. Condon
Captain Fawcett
Hon. Sir M. Fraser
Mr. James
Mr. Layman
Mr. Randall
Mr. Scott
Mr. Shepton
Mr. Sholl
Mr. Venn
Hon. C. N. Warton
Hon. J. A. Wright
(Teller.)

The motion was therefore negatived.

PROVISION IN NEXT LOAN BILL FOR PURCHASE OF SEA-GOING DREDGE.

SIR T. COCKBURN - CAMPBELL moved the following resolution: "That in the opinion of the House it would be desirable that the Government should consider whether in any future loan an amount might not, with advantage to the colony, be included for the purchase of a first class sea-going dredge." Hon. members would observe that the resolution was worded in a very modest way. For some years past he had been impressed with the necessity of the colony obtaining a sea-going dredge for deepening the approaches to our harbors and jetties. Even at Albany it would soon be found necessary to take some steps for deepening the entrance to Princess Royal Harbor. The steamers now frequenting it were so increasing in size that in the course of a few years they would have some difficulty in entering the inner harbor. In fact, one or two of the steamers had already had to lie outside; and now that there was an immediate prospect of the "Orient" steamers calling at Albany, an absolute necessity would soon arise for dredging the entrance. He had not been aware until recently how much a sea-going dredge was wanted in other ports of the colony, and he had hesitated in bringing

the matter forward; but he had heard lately from nautical men, that even in connection with the harbor works at Fremantle, such a vessel would be very useful, in dredging, in the neighborhood of the jetty. He had also seen a letter on the subject from Mr. Bethell, who, on several occasions recently, had visited all our coastal ports northwards of Fremantle, and who considered that a dredge of the description referred to was the first thing this colony should address itself to obtaining. Mr. Bethell went so far as to say that, in his judgment, a sea-going dredge should even have the precedence of railways or harbor works, for this reason: a dredge would be in use whilst these other works were being constructed, and, by enabling vessels to get to the jetties with materials would considerably decrease the expense, by saving the lighterage on material. Mr. Bethell pointed out in his letter the necessity for dredging operations at all our Northern ports. Commencing with Derby, he said: "Steamers now get to the jetty at top of high tide with difficulty—when there, they lay aground in safety. For instance, last voyage we scraped through the mud with the *Australind*, and succeeded in reaching the jetty; but, a few inches in our draft or a few inches less flow of water, and we should have had to remain in the Amur Pool, which would mean, there, not even cost of lighterage and risk to our stock shipment for Singapore only, but absolute stoppage of same as there is now no lighter at Derby. This risk could be put an end to by a small amount of dredging away mud between the Amur Pool and jetty." With regard to Cossack, Mr. Bethell said that dredging at that port would be of great assistance in enabling steamers to go more frequently into the Creek at high tides, and save 8s. per ton lighterage, or 20s. per head, and great risk on stock: at present row boats and lighters could not get in or out at low tide, which was a great detriment to the navigation of the port, and could be obviated with a dredge. "Last trip south" (Mr. Bethell said), "landing in a small port, all on board had to get out, and we had to pull the empty boat over the shallows about half a mile, wading ourselves in order to get ashore without delay of some hours awaiting the tide." "At

"Onslow, also," he said, "last voyage south, a lighter with 400 sheep on board got on the sand at mouth of the river, and had to remain all night, incurring delay to steamer and mortality to sheep. A dredge is urgently wanted here to open up the mouth of the Ashburton." With regard to Carnarvon, Mr. Bethell said: "I have been told by the storekeepers that the jetty now building cannot be used by either steamer or the wool traders, until a dredge is sent to deepen the channel through a sand bank in the way. Going alongside this jetty would save merchants about 10s. per ton, and make the transit of stock and sheep to the south practicable." At Geraldton, too, it appeared everyone was crying out for a dredge. Writing on that port, Mr. Bethell said: "We can get within about 30 feet of the jetty, but, until the small amount of dredging necessary is done, the importers and exporters have to pay 5s. per ton lighterage, and I think 6d. per head on sheep; the shipment of the latter and of horses being also attended with risk in putting into and taking out of lighters." Hon. members would see that a dredge for these Northern ports would be very useful. He believed that at Bunbury and Busselton, too, a small amount of dredging would enable the coasting steamers to go alongside the jetties, in all but very rough weather. As for Albany, he thought it would be suicidal policy to allow the steamers calling there to entertain a doubt as to their being able to enter that harbor. As to the cost of one of these sea-going dredges, he had been considerably alarmed when it was suggested the other day that it would cost no less than £100,000. He had been under the impression himself that the cost would be about £50,000; but he was glad to hear that a first-class dredge such as we required could be had, now, for £30,000, and, at second hand, for a considerable amount less. The resolution did not pledge the House nor the Government to incur this expenditure. It merely asked the Government to consider whether in any future loan an amount might not with advantage to the colony be included for the purchase of such a vessel. His intention in wording the resolution in this manner was that the Government should, during the

recess, acquire all the information it could as to the cost of a dredge suitable to our requirements, before the Loan Bill was introduced next session.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said he did not rise to dissent from the resolution, but, in his opinion, it was to a certain extent superfluous, seeing that at the present time they were not prepared to consider the question of a loan. Hon. members might recollect that when the schedule to the last Loan Bill was under consideration every care was taken to consider every item upon its merits; and no doubt the same would be done with reference to the schedule of the next Loan Bill, so that there was no necessity to discuss the subject at present. The hon. baronet said his object in bringing forward the resolution was so that the Government might take steps to ascertain the cost of a dredge. There could be no harm in that. But, beyond that, he saw no necessity for this resolution; for he believed it was generally acknowledged that it was very desirable the colony should have a sea-going dredger, when the necessary ways and means were provided. No harm, however, could come out of the Government taking steps to ascertain the cost of a dredge, of a capacity and power suitable to our requirements.

MR. SHENTON did not think that one dredge could do the work at Albany and at the Northern ports. Moreover, Albany would require a different kind of dredge. No doubt a great deal of very useful work might be done with a sea-going steam dredge. Even at Champion Bay the *Rob Roy* was the only one of our coasting steamers that could go alongside the jetty to discharge.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said he perfectly agreed with everything that had fallen from the hon. baronet who had moved this resolution as to the desirability of the colony obtaining a dredge of this description. He had already said so in his official report. He thought it was of the utmost importance that such a vessel should be obtained, more especially for Champion Bay and our Northern ports. As to Albany, he should say that Albany, with its 25ft. of water, was one of the last places that

would require it. With regard to Mr. Bethell's letter, no doubt Mr. Bethell was a gentleman whose opinion on shipping matters was worthy of all respect; but if a dredge was going to be used at every port mentioned by the hon. baronet, from Albany to Onslow, he was afraid it would be some time before all the work before it could be accomplished, by one vessel. At the same time he thought it was absolutely necessary that the colony should have a sea-going dredger, and that provision should be made for it in the next loan. But it seemed rather premature to move in the matter at present.

MR. MARMION was somewhat surprised that the resolution should have been brought forward at this stage, and still more so that the hon. member should propose that Albany should be the first harbor to get the benefit of this dredge, —Albany which had the reputation of being one of the best harbors in the world. It seemed to him there was a much more important proposal before them than the purchase of a sea-going dredge, namely, the construction of harbor works at the port of Fremantle. He observed that a steam dredge was part of Sir John Coode's scheme for improving that harbor, and that Sir John Coode's estimate of the cost of the necessary dredging plant would be not less than £47,000. He was surprised at the low estimate of cost given by the hon. baronet, in the face of Sir John Coode's estimate; and the question was, were they going to pledge the colony at the present time to obtain this dredge, until the much more important question of harbor works at Fremantle was settled. A sea-going dredge to do all the work required of it, all along the coast, right up to their northernmost port, would cost not only a large sum in the first instance but also a large sum to maintain and work it. He had no desire to oppose the resolution, but he decidedly objected to a dredge costing some £50,000 being purchased in order to clear the entrance to Princess Royal Harbor. He would support the resolution, if the hon. member would connect it with the proposed harbor works at Fremantle.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL said he could not do that. The dredge required for Fremantle was a different

kind of dredge from that which he contemplated, for sea-going purposes.

MR. SHOLL said he intended to support the motion. He thought the time had arrived when such a vessel should be procured, especially for our Northern ports, where its services were very much required, before the jetties could be fully utilised. As to making it contingent upon harbor works being undertaken at Fremantle, he would remind the hon. member (Mr. Marmion) that if those works were carried out it would require two or three dredges constantly employed at Fremantle, and their services would not be available for any other work. He believed the advantages that would be derived from the use of a sea-going dredge would be more than commensurate with the outlay of purchasing and working it; but he doubted whether the same could be said as to harbor works at Fremantle.

MR. PARKER said one would think from what had been said about Albany by some hon. members—and especially the hon. member for Fremantle—that Albany was some foreign port, and that any money expended upon it would simply be a wasteful expenditure of the funds of this colony. He would remind the House that at the present moment Albany was not only the very best harbor which the colony possessed, but also the most important, being the port of call of the mail steamers; and when they found that the depth of water at the entrance to this harbor was only 25ft., and that the class of steamers now built for the mail service drew more than that, he thought it became a very serious matter for this colony, and that steps should be taken without delay to prevent the possibility of these steamers being unable to enter Princess Royal Harbor. He thought it would be a great calamity for this colony, after going to the trouble of having a railway constructed to connect Albany with this part of the colony, and in view of the proposed fortification of that important strategic station, if these steamers were unable to enter the harbor without impediment. He thought if this dredge did nothing else, the money spent in purchasing it would be money well spent. The hon. member for Fremantle had told them that Sir John Coode's estimate of the cost of a dredge was £47,000.

He was surprised to think that the hon. member for Fremantle, above all men, had not studied Sir John Coode's report. Sir John Coode did not say that the first cost of a dredge would be £47,000. What Sir John Coode said was that the sum of £47,000 would not only include the purchase and delivery of the plant, but also provide for the dredging of the entire area which required to be dredged. Bearing in mind the extent of this area, he should imagine that the work of dredging would be the principal part of the outlay. Even if we did not obtain these harbor works, this steam dredge would be very useful at Fremantle, as well as at our Northern ports; and, in affirming this resolution, the House did not pledge itself in any way as to where this dredge was to be employed—whether at Albany first or at Fremantle, or anywhere else. They did not even pledge themselves to procure a dredge. All that the resolution contemplated was that the Government should consider whether it would not be desirable to make provision in the next Loan Bill for the purchase of a sea-going dredge. He could not imagine what possible objection there could be to such a resolution.

MR. HENSMAN said if he thought that by voting for this resolution the House would be pledging itself to purchase a sea-going steam dredge, he should be sorry to support it; but all it asked was that the Government should consider the question. It seemed to him a perfectly harmless resolution, and it might do some good; therefore he had no hesitation in voting for it.

SIR T. COCKBURN - CAMPBELL said the hon. member for Fremantle seemed to consider the construction of harbor works at that port a national question. But he (Sir Thomas) considered that keeping the gates of the colony open at Albany was equally a national question. When they found that steamers even now had to creep in, at that port, stirring up the mud in their passage, and some of them when heavily loaded unable to come in at all, he thought it was a matter of the most serious importance that the entrance should be deepened, and that no excuse should be afforded these steamers for keeping away. The only reason he had for bringing the matter forward at the pre-

sent time was that the Government might ascertain the feeling of the House on the subject, and obtain full information as to the probable outlay, with a view to further action on a future occasion.

The resolution was then put and passed.

SIR T. COCKBURN CAMPBELL moved that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, acquainting him of the resolution.

Agreed to.

MESSAGE (No. 30): REPLYING TO ADDRESSES.

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

"The Governor has the honor to inform the Honorable the Legislative Council that he is considering what action can be taken upon Address No. 7 of the 11th of July, relative to the introduction of Cattle Disease from South Australia into the Kimberley District.

"2. The Governor will comply, or will endeavor to comply, with the requests of Your Honorable House contained in the undermentioned Addresses:—

No.	Date.	Subject.
20.—1st August, 1887.		Completion of Public Buildings.
21.—1st August, 1887.		Return of Convict Expenditure.
22.—1st August, 1887.		Improvement of Entrance to Swan River.
23.—1st August, 1887.		Reward of £1,000 for discovery of Coalfield.
25.—4th August, 1887.		Coastal Steam Service.
28.—9th August, 1887.		Water Supply, Ashburton to Murchison.

"3. The money required for the improvement of the entrance to Swan River—£1,000—will require to be re-appropriated from the 1884 Loan by a Bill which has been directed to be introduced into the Council.

"Government House, Perth, 10th August, 1887."

BEVERLEY-ALBANY RAILWAY CONTRACT: IMMIGRATION CLAUSE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser), in accordance with notice, moved the following resolution: "That, in the event of it appearing advisable in the interest of the colony to vary or abrogate the stipulations under the Beverley-Albany Railway contract for the introduction of immigrants, or to arrange for

the earlier completion of the railway, the Government is authorised to sanction the necessary alteration of the existing contract." The resolution, he said, dealt with two matters—one relating to the discontinuance of immigration, under the contract with the company, and the other the completion of the railway before the contract time. He proposed to deal with the two questions separately. He regretted very much that the circumstances of the colony had of late brought us face to face with the difficulty which existed in settling and disposing of the immigrants who had been arriving here in considerable numbers, recently. The House, a few years ago, agreed unanimously as to the necessity of introducing into the colony a considerable number of persons of the laboring classes, at the expense of the State; and for some time past there had been a constant flow of immigrants, so assisted, coming to our shores. We had not been altogether unsuccessful as regards our immigration policy, though the result had not been so satisfactory as we could have wished. It had been stated that the immigrants introduced were not suitable to the requirements of the colony; but he thought that, on the whole, they were as respectable a body of the working class as went to any colony. Hon. members were aware of the difficulty of inducing English farm laborers to emigrate, and the colony, like other colonies, was perforce obliged to put up with such immigrants as could be induced to leave the old country. He regretted exceedingly that the circumstances of the colony at the present moment did not allow of the absorption of more immigrants. If the truth—the "brutal truth"—must be told, he was afraid that it was owing to the impecuniosity of the agricultural settlers of the colony that these employers of labor were unable to employ as much labor as they would wish, or as they would do if they possessed the means; and the result was a congestion of the labor market. It therefore behoved the Government—and it was the duty of that House to support the Government in any proposal having for its object the successful settlement of the colony by a contented population—to take some steps to check the introduction of immigrants into the colony, in the present state of the labor market. The House was aware that

under the present conditions of the agreement with the W.A. Land Company—who took over the late Mr. Hordern's contract—the company continued to import immigrants in large numbers; and, at an early stage of the present session a proposal was submitted by the managing director of the company, in which, under certain conditions, he proposed that in future this immigration should be conducted at the discretion of this Government. That proposition, however, was never dealt with by the House to completion, as the managing director withdrew his proposals when he found that there was some difference of opinion and some opposition on the part of hon. members to the suggestion then put forward. The Government, however, acting as they always did in what they conceived to be the best interests of the colony, deemed it wise and expedient to invite the attention of the House again to this question; and he trusted that the resolution he had just read would meet with acceptance. With regard to the immigration question he had a private letter from Major Young, the managing director of the company, saying that he did not wish to stand in the way of the colony, and that if the Legislature chose to ask him to cancel the clause of the contract with reference to the introduction of immigrants, he would offer no obstacle. What was now proposed was that, in the event of its appearing advisable in the interests of the colony to vary or abrogate the stipulations of that clause, the Government should be authorised to do so. He hoped that, for the reasons he had shortly given, the House would agree to this, and authorise the Government to deal with the company as to the introduction of the company's immigrants, at such time and in such numbers as the circumstances of the colony might render desirable. With regard to the second part of the resolution—that the Government, if considered desirable in the public interests, should be allowed to arrange with the company for the earlier completion and opening of the line than was stipulated in the contract—he was informed that the company had fully satisfied themselves that they had legal powers under the terms of their contract to complete the railway in such a manner and within such time as might suit their

own convenience, but that they could not claim the whole of their concessions until the railway was opened for traffic according to contract. The intention of the company was, as soon as the line was completed and they obtained possession of their grants of land, to come forward with a large scheme of settlement, and to bring their lands under the notice of the outside world; and, although he should be glad if the House could see its way clear to accept this portion of the resolution, he did not wish to force it upon its acceptance. He thought, however, there would be no possible opposition to the other portion of the resolution, in the present condition of the labor market.

Mr. HENSMAN said he should oppose the resolution. When this Hordern contract was settled a few years ago by the Legislative Council, the House was very jealous in settling not only the principle of the contract, but also the terms of the contract, down to the minutest details. They allowed no liberty to the Government whatever to vary or deviate from the contract, in any particular. A short time ago a suggestion was made by the managing director of the company as to varying the terms of the contract in the direction now proposed, and the matter was considered by the House. The Colonial Secretary had told them that the matter was not on that occasion finally settled, the proposition having been withdrawn. Probably those who had put forward the proposition deemed it more prudent to adopt that course, than have the proposition rejected. There were two ways of going out of a room—you might walk out, or you might wait until you were propelled out. This gentleman preferred to walk out. The House, it was found, was averse to the proposals made; and he was not aware that anything had since happened calculated to alter the views of hon. members. If this contract was to be altered at all, let it be altered by that House, who made it, and not by the Government. He asked the House not to stultify itself, having framed this contract with the utmost care and deliberation—he asked the House not to stultify itself now by giving over to the Government, or anyone else, power to vary that contract.

MR. A. FORREST intended to support the resolution. He saw no possible objection to the company being allowed to complete the railway within a shorter time than that stipulated in the contract. This company were not outsiders. When the line was completed they would be the owners of about 2,500,000 acres of the colony's land, and they must do something to get it settled, otherwise it would be a very expensive "white elephant" for them. From his own knowledge of the company, he believed they intended, *bonâ fide*, to settle this land, but they found that the only way to do so successfully was to wait until the whole line was opened for traffic from Albany to Beverley. He failed to see what possible harm it would do this colony if the company were allowed to complete the line at an earlier date than the contract time. It would be a great saving to the colony—a saving of time and of money—in the transport of mails to and from Albany, and it would open up one of the best agricultural districts in the colony—the Kojonup district. He had been informed by one of the leading bankers of Perth, a gentleman well qualified to express an opinion on the subject, that if this colony consented to allow the company to complete this railway within a shorter time than was stipulated in the contract, it would be the best advertisement the colony could possibly have in the eyes of English capitalists. If the company could make a few thousand pounds by completing the line sooner, he did not see what it had to do with us, so long as the line was constructed according to specifications; and he had no doubt the Commissioner of Railways would see to that. If the House refused to sanction this proposal, it would be doing one of the greatest injuries to the colony it had ever sustained.

MR. SHOLL said that when the original contract was discussed in the House it was agreed that, upon certain concessions being made as to the size of the blocks of land which the company were entitled to select, the line should be commenced and carried on simultaneously at both ends—Albany at one end and Beverley at the other. Now that the company had secured that concession as to the size of their blocks of land, they

wanted to carry on the line from the Albany end only, which would give them certain advantages, in having all their goods, and their supplies, and railway material landed at that port, to the detriment of this part of the colony. He agreed with the proposal so far as the immigration clause was concerned, but he certainly would not give the Government power to alter the contract in any other respect. It was said that the company had a large scheme of settlement in contemplation. He believed that was understood to be their intention when we first entered into the contract with them—that they were going to settle their immigrants upon the land as the line progressed. But had they done so? No. He would move, as an amendment, that the words "or to arrange for the earlier completion of the railway" be struck out. That would still leave the Government at liberty to arrange the question of immigration with the company. It was no use introducing a thousand immigrants into the colony, annually, unless the colony could absorb them.

MR. McRAE seconded the amendment.

MR. VENN regretted that he was unable to support the resolution in any shape or form. It was an old friend, but with a different face altogether, and he did not like it. If anything was required to be done in regulating the influx of immigrants, let it be done by that House. He thought the House had no right to abrogate its functions and to delegate its powers to the Government in the way it was proposed. He thought, too, it would be a very risky thing for the Government to tamper or meddle in any way with this contract, which had been very carefully settled by that House. Whatever high-falutin notions about land settlement the late Mr. Hordern may have had, it was evident that the present company regarded the whole question from a strict business point of view, and that they intended to carry out the strict letter of their agreement, and nothing more. He differed from the Colonial Secretary as to the colony having reached the limits of its absorbing powers as regards the introduction of labor; and he should be extremely sorry that such an impression should get abroad. He thought this colony

could absorb a very large population indeed, provided it got the right class; and he should regret to see this immigration clause abrogated in any way. It had been stated that the company had in contemplation a large scheme for placing their lands in the market. He did not think it would be a good thing for the colony to have this enormous area of land thrown into the market all at once. He could not help regarding such a scheme as a bogus scheme. He should prefer to see these lands thrown open gradually, as the line progressed, rather than that the market should be flooded with them by-and-bye, which could not fail to have a prejudicial effect upon the colony.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said, as to the "high-falutin" referred to by the hon. member for the Gascoyne, it appeared to him that the "high-falutin" emanated from hon. members themselves, when they talked about the colony being able at the present moment to absorb any more labor. If any hon. member thought that there were no unemployed here, he could assure that hon. member he was wrong; and, if these immigrants continued to be introduced in the manner they had been introduced, this colony would soon be called upon to increase its poor relief fund. The question now was whether it would not be well for that House to endeavor to work harmoniously and amicably with this company, who had right on their side in this matter—right to finish their line when they pleased. As to insisting upon their carrying out the provisions of the immigration clause, there could be little doubt in the minds of any sensible man that in doing so, in the present state of the labor market, we would be simply paying so much for the carriage of these immigrants to the other colonies. He thought the colony would do well to let it be seen that it was prepared to deal fairly and even liberally with these syndicates, who embarked their capital in developing the colony.

MR. MARMION said that nothing had occurred, since the question of immigration was before them the other day, to induce him to alter his views on the subject. He, for one, was not going to help to spread so bad an advertisement,

that Western Australia was unable to absorb the few immigrants which this company was bound to send out. As to the earlier completion of the company's railway, that subject was thoroughly threshed out when the select committee sat upon the contract when it was originally prepared, and it seemed to him it would be a most dangerous thing, without the fullest consideration, to permit the Government now to make any alteration in the terms of the contract. If there was to be any modification of the conditions as to immigration, he should prefer to see the clause cancelled altogether, rather than give the Government power to vary it. If immigration was to be stopped at all, so far as the company was concerned, let it be stopped altogether, and at once; and not wait until the company completed their line and threw open their lands, and then have the colony called upon to pay for the introduction of all the immigrants which the company might then want.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL did not know whether the House was aware that a serious state of things was arising in consequence of so much land being locked up alongside this railway, between Albany and Beverley. There was a great deal of dissatisfaction and disappointment amongst people who wanted to take up land; and, on this ground alone, it seemed to him highly desirable that the House should do anything that was reasonable to have this railway finished as soon as possible, and these lands unlocked. It would seem from what fell from the Colonial Secretary—and he had heard it from other sources—that the company had taken legal advice in the matter, and that they found they could do what they now asked the House to agree to, without reference to the House at all,—namely, carry their rails, supplies, etc., from the Albany end of the line. If so, he thought the Government might consent to the striking out of the words relating to the earlier completion of the railway, which appeared to be the chief bone of contention in connection with the resolution. From what little knowledge he possessed of the labor market, he thought it would be well to cancel the immigration clause of the contract. He did not see why members should not alter their minds on a question like

this, when they found that the object they originally had in view had not been realised, or that a scheme did not work well.

MR. LOTON said there could be no doubt in the mind of any observant person that there existed, to a certain extent, a dearth of employment among certain classes of the community. This, in his opinion, was in a great measure owing to the introduction of the wrong class of immigrants, and also, in a measure, owing to the fact that the company made no attempt to settle their own immigrants upon their land. He thought it could not be denied—although it might not be mentioned in the contract—that the intention of the House when it agreed to the contract was—nor could it be denied that the colony was led to believe and understand that the intention of the contractors was—not only to introduce so many immigrants annually, but also to settle them upon the land which was granted to the company adjacent to the railway. Provision was made in the 50th clause of the contract (sub-section e) whereby the contractors might be allowed to settle their immigrants upon the land, as soon as the line commenced, and was completed in sections. The section he referred to was as follows: “The contractor shall be entitled upon the commencement of the construction of the railway to select one-half of the lands to be granted to him upon the completion and opening for traffic of the first sections at either end of the railway, and to occupy such lands so selected, for the purpose of settling the immigrants to be introduced during the construction of the first sections.” But it was well known that the company had never availed themselves of this power. He thought it would be a very serious matter to interfere with the contract at all. He would leave it to the legal intelligence of the House to say whether a contract like this could be varied in one particular respect without invalidating the whole of it. If it could be done by mutual agreement between the contracting parties, without in any way affecting the validity of other portions of the contract, he saw no objection to varying the terms as to the introduction of immigrants, though, at the same time, he thought the colony ought to be able to deal with these few

immigrants, if only due care were taken at the other end in their selection. As to giving the Government power to arrange with the company for the earlier completion of the line, he thought it would be a most dangerous thing to do, without the House knowing what the conditions were to be. If the company chose to finish the line before their contract time, there was nothing to prevent them doing so, and there could be no objection so far as that House was concerned. Therefore, he failed to see what they wanted to come there at all for. But he could see this very clearly—looking at the matter from a business point of view—their object was to make money. Now, if they wanted to make money, he would tell them how to do it. Let them settle people on their land and spend money in improving it—the very thing they would not do. They wanted somebody else to do that; probably, short-sighted English capitalists, if they could entrap them. He did not think that House nor the Government of the colony should assist this syndicate to mislead the English people. Let them settle their immigrants on the land themselves, and spend some money in clearing and fencing it; and not wait for other people to do it for them.

MR. PARKER could not help thinking it was wrong to say that the company had asked the House for any concessions; it was the Government who had made the proposals now before them; and he understood it emanated solely from the Government in consequence of what had been said in the House when the vote for immigration was under discussion the other day, in committee of supply, on the Supplementary Estimates. It was then suggested that it would be desirable if the Government could make some arrangement with the company to discontinue sending out immigrants, in the present circumstances of the colony, and he presumed the Government, having heard that expression of opinion, communicated with the managing director, and in reply received the letter referred to by the Colonial Secretary. With regard to the other portion of the resolution, he was surprised, after the opposition which had been already shown in the House to the definite proposals made on the subject by the com-

pany, that the Government should now ask the House to authorise them to vary the contract in this respect, in any way they pleased. With regard to this question of the earlier completion of the line, it would be remembered that when the scheme first came before them a few years ago, they regarded it as a grand thing for the colony—one of the grandest projects ever brought before them, opening up a vista of almost unbounded prosperity, connecting this part of the colony, as it would, with the port of call of the mail steamers, and opening up a large area of country for settlement. If the project possessed all these potential advantages, he should have imagined that the sooner the line was opened the better; but, the House having already refused to entertain the definite proposals made by the managing director, he was very much surprised to find the Government asking them to assent in general terms to the present resolution. He had been sorry to hear the hon. member, Mr. Loton, speaking in the disparaging terms he did of this company, as if it really was a company that had come here and obtained its concessions by means of false pretences and fraud. He thought it was an ungenerous reflection upon a company that had faithfully carried out every iota of its contract with the colony, a company that had spent, and was spending, large sums of money in carrying out its contract, and in purchasing land, and that was doing everything in the most *bonâ fide* manner possible. He defied anyone to say a single word against the actions of the company; yet the hon. member insinuated that the object of the company was to mislead and to entrap the English public in disposing of its lands. Was it right and proper for any hon. member in that House to speak of a company like this in such terms? Had the hon. member one tittle of evidence which would entitle him to make such a flagrant accusation against the *bona fides* of the company? The hon. member asked, why did the company not settle and improve their lands? There was nothing in the contract requiring them to do so. All we could expect of the company was to carry out the specific terms of their agreement. The present company had nothing to do with the late Mr. Hordern's personal intentions as regards settlement

and colonisation. If Mr. Hordern held out hopes to the colony that he was going to settle these lands and convert them into prosperous settlements, we must not blame this company for it. With regard to the immigration clause he thought it should not be varied but absolutely cancelled. It would save the colony an expenditure of about £12,000 per annum. We were paying the company £10 for every immigrant introduced, and there where other charges connected with the selection of the immigrants at the other end, which brought up the cost of every immigrant to about £12. If these immigrants, when they came out, settled on the soil or remained in the colony, there might be some excuse for our incurring such expenditure; but, from what they heard, a great number of them only made the colony a stepping stone to reach some of the other colonies. There was undoubtedly a large surplus of available labor in this colony at the present time, and was it wise to incur expenditure to increase the present difficulties? Was it fair even to the laboring classes already here, that we should spend this money in bringing others here to take the bread out of their mouth, or to increase the present destitution. It had been said that if we got the right class of immigrants we could absorb them. He wished those who said so would tell them what class was the right class.

MR. LOTON: The man who, when he arrives here, can go to work and earn his own living.

MR. PARKER said that did not apply to any particular class. So far as he understood, many of those who were now out of employment were quite capable of earning their own living if there was work for them. It was said that farm laborers were required. So far as he knew, he did not believe that fifty farm laborers could find permanent employment in the colony at the present time.

MR. SCOTT said there could be no doubt that there was great congestion in the labor market at present, and there was no probability of this congestion being relieved except by temporarily suspending immigration. As to the class of immigrants introduced by this company, he did not think the Government could exercise any control over them, under the terms of the contract; and, under the cir-

cumstances, he thought it would be better to cancel the clause. As to the earlier completion of the line, he considered it would be a good thing for the colony and for the company if the line were completed as early as possible, provided it did not affect the validity of the contract in other respects, or injuriously affect the interests of any section of the community. He would move the adjournment of the debate, until Friday evening.

MR. HENSMAN thought that the contract having been made by virtue of a statute, no variation of it, except under similar statutory power, would be of any avail. At all events, whatever variation of the contract took place should only be in virtue of a distinct resolution of the House, if not by statute. The same power which made the contract ought to vary it; and, he submitted, the House would not be doing what was legally or morally right in authorising the Government to vary it, unless the House showed clearly in what respect it was willing it should be varied, and showed it by a specific and substantive resolution. If the Government had formed any views at all on the subject, as to the nature of the proposed variation, let them submit those views to the House, and embody them in the resolution, and not come there and ask for *carte blanche* to vary it as they liked when that House was not in session.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said if he thought any advantage would be gained by adjourning the debate, he would support the motion for adjournment most cordially; but, seeing that there seemed to be a general consensus of opinion in favor of abrogating—or, if hon. members preferred it, cancelling—the immigration clause of the contract; and, seeing that he had prefaced his remarks by stating that he had no intention to press the other part of the resolution, he failed to see what object would be gained by adjourning the debate. He was entirely in the hands of the House in the matter.

The motion for adjourning the debate was then put and passed.

POSTAGE STAMP ORDINANCE, 1854, AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

JOINT STOCK COMPANIES FEES BILL.
Read a third time and passed.

TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGES ACT, 1874, AMENDMENT BILL.

This bill was passed through committee, *sub silentio*.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Thursday, 11th August, 1887.

Melbourne Exhibition, 1888, and Derby and Wyndham Telegraph Line—Inkeepers Relief Bill: second reading—Fire Inquiry Bill: third reading—Telegraphic Messages Act, 1874, Amendment Bill: third reading—Utilisation of Guano Deposits: Report of Select Committee—Supplementary Estimates, 1887: report stage—Small Debts Bill: further considered in committee—Water Supply for Perth and Fremantle (Messrs. Saunders and Barratt's proposals)—Roads Bill: committed—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

MELBOURNE EXHIBITION, 1888: AND DERBY AND WYNDHAM TELEGRAPH LINE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser), with leave, without notice—in order to bring the resolutions formally under the notice of the Governor—moved that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, informing His Excellency that the Council have agreed to the following resolutions:—

1. That in the opinion of this House it is not desirable that this colony should be represented at the Melbourne Exhibition of 1888.

2. That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the construction of the Derby and Wyndham telegraph line be commenced forthwith.

Question—put and passed.