

towards the funds of the society, which, he believed, was acknowledged to be a most worthy society. Upon an appeal being made to this Government, a contribution of £20 was forwarded to the society, and they were informed at the same time that the Legislature would be asked to continue this small donation annually.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) then moved that the following item be added: "Compensation for land taken for Northern Railway, £125." Hon. members were aware that a claim had been made for compensation in respect of some land resumed for the purposes of this railway, and, no provision having been made to meet the claim, he had now to move this item.

The motion was agreed to, and the item "Miscellaneous, £19,921" put and passed.

Refunds, Item £600:

Agreed to, without comment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) moved that the Chairman of Committees should report the Estimates to the House on the following day.

Agreed to.

The House adjourned at midnight.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Tuesday, 9th September, 1884.

Appointment of Mr. J. G. Lee Steere to a seat in the Executive—Opening of Closed Pearling Banks at Sharks Bay (Message No. 22)—Beverley-Albany Railway Bill: first reading—Public Works Loan Bill (£525,000): first reading—Transfer of Imperial Convict Establishment (Message No. 33)—Refund of Duty upon Machinery and Plant for Perth Gas Co.—Albany Mechanics' Institute Bill: third reading—Police Benefit Fund Bill: third reading—Governor's Salary Bill: third reading—Estimates, 1885: re-committed and reported—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

APPOINTMENT OF Mr. STEERE TO A SEAT IN THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

Mr. GRANT moved, "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he may be pleased to lay upon the Table of the House the Despatch from the Secretary of State, by virtue of which the recognised leader of the elected members of the Legislative Council, Mr. J. G. Lee Steere, had been appointed a member of the Executive Council."

The motion was agreed to.

RE-OPENING OF SHARKS BAY PEARLING BANKS.

Mr. BROWN, in moving the resolution standing in his name, said hon. members were aware that certain papers relating to measures advocated in connection with the opening and closing of the pearling banks at Sharks Bay had been forwarded to the House by His Excellency the Governor, with a request that the Council would let him know what course it was inclined to recommend as to the opening of the banks which had been closed, some three years ago. These papers were referred to a select committee, of which he had the honor of being chairman, and he had now to ask the House to agree to the recommendations made by the committee in their report. The committee ascertained that in the opinion of those engaged in the pearling industry at Sharks Bay all the banks within the closed area were now plentifully restocked with mature shells. This allegation was fully borne out by the result of recent dredging upon some of these banks, carried out under the personal supervision of the Government Resident, who reported that there were plenty of well matured shells. The committee had an opportunity of inspecting some of these shells, and of comparing them with the shells now being dredged from the open banks, and the conclusion forced upon the committee as regards these Sharks Bay shells was that they matured in the course of three years—an opinion which was shared by the Resident Magistrate of the district and by the pearlers generally. It was also asserted by those engaged in this industry that the banks now open were completely worked out, and that unless fresh banks were opened

the pearling industry in this locality must collapse. This opinion was confirmed by the Chamber of Commerce at Fremantle, a letter from which body was among the papers submitted to the committee, who concurred in that view. It appeared there were about forty boats now engaged in this industry, and it was conceived it would be a considerable blow to the pearling business and also considerably affect the revenue of the colony if the industry were to collapse. Under these circumstances the committee recommended that the whole of the closed area be opened as soon as possible, except a small portion "bounded on the North by an East line from Quoin Point to the 5-fathom line; on the East by the said 5-fathom line; on the South by a line extending from Mr. Aubrey Brown's house, and on the West by the eastern shore of Dirk Hartog's island." The object which the committee had in view in excluding this area was for experimental purposes, and it was proposed that the banks within this area should remain closed till the expiration of the full period for which it was originally closed, which would be for about another two years. The committee further recommend that upon the re-opening of the closed area, the banks lying off the shore of Perou peninsula (between Cape Peron and Eagle Bluff) be closed, as, from the evidence before the committee, it appeared to the committee these banks had now been sufficiently worked, and that consequently it would be improvident to dredge them any longer. It was shown to the committee that within the proposed closed area there were numerous banks which had never yet been worked, but they were so interspersed amongst the worked out banks, that it appeared to the committee it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to define and open them for dredging upon conditions that would secure the surrounding worked banks from molestation. Therefore the committee had no option but to include these unworked banks within the prescribed area. These were the conclusions which the committee had arrived at, and he had now to move that the following humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor: "The Legislative Council, having considered

"His Excellency the Governor's Message No. 22, relative to the expediency of opening the closed Pearling Grounds at Sharks Bay, beg respectfully to submit, for His Excellency's consideration, the report of the Select Committee appointed by this Council to consider and report upon the question, which report is approved by the Legislative Council."

Mr. VENN said while he cordially agreed with the conclusions arrived at by the committee,—that it was desirable in every way, in the interests of the pearling industry at Sharks Bay, that the steps proposed to be taken should be taken, still he was doubtful whether it was yet an established fact that these shells arrived at maturity in three years, if by maturity was meant the stage of procreation—the stage at which the shells might be depended upon to replenish the worked out beds. It was just a problem to his mind whether if we reopened these banks we should not entirely denude the beds. If it were an established fact that these oysters arrived within three years at a stage capable of procreation there would be no doubt in his mind as to the wisdom and advisability of the step now taken, but that there was a doubt in his mind, and very considerable doubt, as to whether they did arrive at that stage within three years. He took it that the object which the Government and the Legislature had in view, in regulating the control of the industry, and the opening and closing of the banks, was to ensure that when the banks are closed they shall be closed a sufficiently long time to have them replenished. But circumstances altered cases, and, in this particular instance, the committee, although they had certain evidence before them to establish the fact that the shells matured in three years, had nothing before them to justify them in arriving at any definite conclusion that the shells became procreative in that space of time. But with the fact staring them in the face that an important industry was now languishing—an industry in which a considerable number of people were engaged, and in which a great deal of money and of labor had been sunk, it appeared to the committee that it would be better—better in the interests of those engaged in the industry, and entirely in

their interests—to have the present closed banks reopened, reserving a certain portion for the purposes of experiment. This reserved area consisted of land-locked beds, and it was to be hoped the Government would, two years hence, have a very patient investigation made of these beds; in fact, he would suggest that an annual investigation should be made, in order to ascertain what stage of development the shells had arrived at.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said the committee devoted a great deal of time to the consideration of the question, and not only this committee but also committees who had sat in previous years; but as the hon. member for Wellington truly observed, we were yet in the infancy of our knowledge as to the proper management of these banks. He had no doubt, however, that the recommendations of the committee would have a beneficial effect and have the result of protecting an industry which ought to be guarded. He agreed with the hon. member for Wellington also as to the desirability of an annual inspection of these pearling banks. It was only by such periodical inspection that we could hope to obtain that practical knowledge of the subject which it was so desirable we should obtain, in order to arrive at the best system of dealing with this industry.

MR. MARMION said that some little time ago he had been asked to accompany a deputation of pearlers and of members of the Chamber of Commerce, who waited upon His Excellency at Government House, to represent the position of affairs as regards the pearling grounds; and he might say, as representing the views of that deputation, that he was pleased with the conclusions arrived at by the select committee. One thing was certain,—unless these new banks were opened within a reasonable period, this industry must collapse. A large amount of money was invested in it, and a great many people were dependent upon it, and he thought every effort ought to be made to protect such a valuable industry. He would suggest that, when a large area of ground was closed, smaller areas within the closed-up grounds should be opened from time to time, so that the gradual development of the shells might be watched, for it was

only by conducting a systematic series of experiments that they could hope to arrive at a knowledge of the proper time to close these banks.

The address was then agreed to.

BEVERLEY-ALBANY RAILWAY BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. P. Hensman) moved the first reading of a Bill for authorising the construction of a Railway on the land grant system from Beverley to Albany.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

PUBLIC WORKS LOAN (£525,000) BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. P. Hensman) moved the first reading of a Bill for raising the sum of £525,000 by Loan, for the construction of certain Public Works.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

TRANSFER OF CONVICT ESTABLISHMENT (MESSAGE No. 33).

THE HON. J. G. LEE STEERE moved, "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that—for the reason given in the report of the select committee appointed to consider His Excellency's message (No. 33) on the subject—His Excellency would be pleased to appoint a Commission to inquire into the proposals now made for the transfer to the Colonial Government of the Imperial Convict Establishment." The select committee considered that at this late period of the session there would not be sufficient time at its disposal to make a proper inquiry into the various circumstances that would have to be considered in determining this question, and they therefore recommended the appointment of this Commission, on whose report the House would be enabled to determine next session what decision to arrive at in the matter.

The motion was agreed to without discussion.

DUTY ON PERTH GAS CO.'S MACHINERY.

MR. S. H. PARKER moved, "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying him

"to be pleased to place a sum of £200 upon the Estimates, as a refund to the Perth Gas Co. for duties paid by the company upon machinery and plant." The hon. member said he understood the value of the machinery and plant imported into the colony by the company was about £7,000, the duty on which at 5 per cent. would be £350, but he only asked a remission of duty on £4,000, which he thought the Government might fairly be asked to give, as a subsidy towards the establishment of a very desirable and much-wanted industry.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said the hon. member having had an opportunity of making his motion would, he was sure, be satisfied. The hon. member could not expect the House to take up the matter seriously, nor indeed could he imagine that the hon. member himself was serious in the matter. If the Council once recognised the principle underlying the hon. member's motion, they would have every manufacturing company in the colony, little and big, asking for a similar concession.

The motion was negatived, on the voices.

ALBANY MECHANICS' INSTITUTE BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

POLICE BENEFIT FUND BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

GOVERNOR'S SALARY BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

ESTIMATES, 1885. (RECOMMITTED).

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES reported to the House that the committee had considered the Estimates, and had agreed to a vote of £246,955 1s. 11d.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) moved that the Estimates be recommitted for further amendments.

Agreed to.

IN COMMITTEE:

Postal and Telegraph Department reverted to:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said that when this department was under discussion the other day and the question of the extension of the

telegraph office hours, certain proposals were made by the House having that object in view, and it was agreed that the hours should be extended, so far as the principal offices were concerned. Since then the Governor had addressed the House on the subject by message (No. 34), informing the House that certain alterations could be effected without incurring any additional expense, and asking hon. members whether they would be prepared to accept the arrangement suggested by the Postmaster General as some improvement on the present regulations. Under the arrangement referred to, it would be possible to keep the telegraph offices open continuously from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and again from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m., instead of the present hours. This would give an extra hour daily for keeping the offices open, and the Postmaster General said he was unable to do any more, unless further provision was made on the Estimates to meet the additional expense. The Government were unable to propose any further increase of expenditure under this head at present, and he hoped hon. members would be satisfied. When the House met again, he hoped the circumstances of the colony would admit of a further extension of the telegraph hours and of the further expense which the concession would entail; and, if desired, provision might be made on the Supplementary Estimates for giving effect to the wish of the House in this matter and other matters which, for want of funds, the Government were at present unable to carry out.

MR. CROWTHER thought the Government had no right whatever to put their veto upon the decision arrived at by the House, with regard to these telegraph hours—a decision which he thought would have proved advantageous to the whole colony.

MR. MARMION said the usual complaint was that the House would not grant the Government sufficient funds to provide the accommodation required by the public; but, in this instance, the case was reversed. He thought there was an amount of inconsistency manifested in this case by the head of the Executive himself, seeing that the Postmaster General had himself recommended that the telegraph hours should

be assimilated with the hours observed by the South Australian offices, the present hours being admittedly a hindrance to the transaction of business, both public and private. The House in a most liberal manner had offered to provide the necessary funds to give effect, if not to the Postmaster General's own recommendation, to the wishes of the majority in the matter, and he was sorry to find now that the only stumbling-block was the Government itself. Not a single word was said at the time that the hours recommended would have involved any extra expenditure; and, if there had not been somebody else behind the scenes, he had no doubt himself but that the Postmaster General would have been able to carry out the proposed change without incurring any extra charge. He thought it was a very strange and anomalous position for the Executive to assume in the matter.

MR. GRANT could not understand the action of the Government at all. If the House was prepared to vote the necessary funds to have the public convenience attended to in the matter of these office hours, why should the Government interfere, and throw obstacles in the way? If the public paid its servants to work for them, why not get them to serve them in the hours during which other people were at work? He thought the public, who found the funds, had a perfect right to exact from its officials such services and such hours as would best meet the public convenience.

THE HON. J. G. LEE STEERE: Are we to understand that the Government have made up their minds to establish these hours—from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and from 7 to 8 in the evening?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser): The Governor, in his message to the House, wishes to know whether hon. members will accept that arrangement,—not as a perfect arrangement, but as some improvement upon the present hours; and it will be my duty to move a resolution approving the proposed arrangement, if no other hon. member is prepared to make some different proposition.

The matter then dropped.

MR. S. H. PARKER moved that the item "Postmaster, Newtown, £10" be

struck out. He understood there were only about five people in the place.

The motion was negatived.

Works and Railways Department reverted to:

THE HON. J. G. LEE STEERE, referring to the item "Eastern Railway: salaries to two station masters at £275 each," said it was distinctly understood, when this item was under discussion the other evening, that the £275 for the station master at Perth was intended as a recognition of the personal claims of the gentleman at that time holding that position. Since then, unfortunately, the officer referred to had died, and he thought the Government should bear in mind that the increase from £250 to £275 was not intended for any new officer who might be appointed. The new station master, whoever he might be, should commence with the salary which his predecessor was receiving prior to the increase being sanctioned.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said the intention of the Railway Department would be called to the matter, and, when the appointment came to be made, the question of salary would be brought under the notice of His Excellency.

Police Department reverted to:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said that in order to carry out a suggestion made the other day by the hon. member for the Gascoyne, that separate provision should be made for rewarding constables, instead of the money coming out of the Benefit Fund, he had to move that the item "Subsidy to Police Benefit Fund, £1,300" be reduced by £100, and that the following item be added: "Rewards to police under Police Benefit Fund, £100."

Agreed to.

Volunteer Department reverted to:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said a suggestion had been made by an hon. member the other day that provision should be made for obtaining a supply of small arms and ammunition, for sale to the Volunteers, for the purposes of practising. He was sorry he could not now act upon the hon. member's suggestion. About £300 worth of ammunition had been ordered from Melbourne, on very advantageous terms, from the military authorities there, which

would suffice for a considerable period. Next year, if necessary, and there should be funds available, a further vote might be asked, and no doubt obtained. Since this item was under discussion the other day, a claim had been put forward for a drill instructor for the Perth Artillery, and he had now to move that the vote for "Corps Drill Instructors" be increased by £16 15s. He was also prepared, on the recommendation of the hon. member for the district, to add £10 to the item "Band Allowances," for the Fremantle Bandmaster. It had further been pointed out to him that there were four more Volunteers who were entitled to a money grant of £12 10s. in lieu of land, and he had therefore to move that the following item be added: "Money Grant in lieu of land, £50." This would increase the total vote for the Volunteers to £2,732 15s.

MR. S. H. PARKER said it was a most extraordinary thing that there seemed to be no end to the votes asked for in connection with drill instructors. When the present Inspecting Field Officer was appointed they were told that part of his duty would be to act as drill instructor, and they were led to believe that they might then do away with this vote altogether; instead of which, they seemed to have more drill instructors than ever. When it was found that the Inspecting Field Officer would not act as drill instructor, as he was expected to do, and as he was told he would have to do when he accepted his appointment, the Government then sent home for a Staff Drill Instructor, with a salary and allowance amounting to £175, but who it appeared was merely a clerk for the Inspecting Field Officer, so that the Inspecting Field Officer might be able to devote his energies to other duties outside his military functions. And now the House was asked to provide additional Corps Drill Instructors.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said these officers also acted as armourers.

MR. S. H. PARKER said he did not care what they acted as. It was the duty of the Inspecting Field Officer to act in the capacity of drill instructor, and the Government ought to keep him to the terms of his appointment. It could not be for want of time on his part, for it

appeared he could find plenty of time to discharge duties in no way connected with his military position.

MR. BROWN advocated the claims of the bandmaster of the M.R.V. Rifles to an increase of pay, if not this year, then certainly next year.

THE HON. J. G. LEE STEERE thought these matters came within the province of the commanding officers of the various corps, rather than of the members of that House.

MR. CROWTHER was afraid that if these matters were left to the head of the department the result would be that in a few years there would be no Volunteers left. He should be glad to see the good services of the Perth bandmaster recognised, and of other bandmasters recognised, but he certainly objected to any more money being voted for the Volunteers, if the expenditure of the money was to be left to the sole control of the present head of the department. As a rule, he believed in letting the heads of departments distribute the funds placed at their disposal by the Legislature, as to them might seem best, holding them responsible to the House for any bad management. But he was afraid that our Volunteers under the present régime, unless very carefully handled, would soon cease to exist as a body; and he should be very sorry for that, because he looked upon the movement as an excellent movement, tending as it did to counteract the evil results of larrikinism.

MR. MARMION said if he thought that the officer at the head of any department was injuring the best interests of his department, as some hon. members seemed to insinuate was the case here, he hoped he should have the courage of his opinions, and move to have the vote struck out altogether.

MR. CROWTHER said he was speaking not of individuals but of a system, and no one could gainsay that under the present régime the Volunteer movement was becoming unpopular.

MR. BROWN thought the discussion that had taken place on this vote justified the opinion that a reorganisation of the department at any rate was desirable. If the movement was worth keeping up at all, it ought to be kept up in such a way as to ensure its efficiency, and not

only to ensure its efficiency but also to maintain its popularity. There was no doubt room for improvement in more respects than one. It appeared to him that the salaries paid to the staff-officers were meagre in the extreme. Let them take the Inspecting Field Officer to commence with. If such an officer was necessary at all, his salary, it appeared to him, was totally inadequate; and he believed the Government would have proposed a very much larger salary to that officer but for the fact that the office was created by the then Governor, in spite of the expressed wish of that House to the contrary. Let them either do away with the office altogether, or let it be adequately paid. Some of the other officers, too, if necessary, ought to have at any rate fair salaries. He said "if necessary," for he should be sorry indeed to see the movement starved in order to maintain a staff of useless officers. He did not intend to take any steps in the matter this year, but next year he hoped to see an improvement, otherwise he was very much afraid we should find that our Volunteer movement had become a thing of the past.

The additional votes moved by the COLONIAL SECRETARY were then agreed to.

Miscellaneous (reverted to):

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) moved that the item "Quarantine Stations, £100" be increased to £500. The hon. gentleman said as it was impossible to foresee what expenditure might be absolutely necessary under this head, he thought it better to ask the committee to increase the vote. He only hoped the money would not require to be spent, and, if so, hon. members might rest assured it would not be expended.

The motion was agreed to, without opposition.

MR. S. H. PARKER said, before the Estimates were reported, he should like to ask whether the Government had any intention of establishing a botanical garden in the vicinity of Perth? He thought the time had come when some steps should be taken in that direction.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said he was not aware that there was any present intention of establishing a botanic garden, but he hoped that some good work would be done in

the way of acclimatising plants, under the energetic direction of the committee appointed for that purpose, the scene of whose present labors was not far distant from that chamber. Beyond that, he was not in a position to say anything more on the subject.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES then reported that the committee had reconsidered the Estimates, and had agreed to a further sum of £476 15s., making a total of £247,431 16s. 11d.

The report was adopted.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 10th September, 1884.

Quarantine on South Jetty, Fremantle—Immigrants from the South of France, Switzerland, and Italy—Imported Labor Registry Bill: in committee—Message (No. 36): Refund of £10 to Presbyterian Church—Message (No. 37): Assenting to Bills and Reserving the Governor's Salary Bill for the signature of Her Majesty's pleasure—Election of members of Finance Committee—Joint Stock Companies Ordinance, 1858, Amendment Bill: second reading; in committee—Supreme Court Ordinance, 1861, Amendment Bill: second reading; in committee—Presbyterian Church Bill: recommitted—Beverly-Albany Railway Bill: second reading; in committee—Report of Select Committee on Public Works Loan (Message No. 21)—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

QUARANTINE ON SOUTH JETTY, FREMANTLE.

MR. S. H. PARKER asked the Colonial Secretary why the Government had declared a portion of the new south jetty at Fremantle a place for quarantine? It seemed strange and inexpedient that a spot so near the town should have been selected for such a purpose, and he thought the public would like to know the reasons that had actuated the Government in the matter.