

the bill ought to have this information.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright): When we go into committee I shall be prepared to deal with the whole question, in all its details, if the committee wish it. I may state, for the information of the hon. member for Kimberley, that there will be sufficient money left to complete the line both from Derby to the goldfields and from the goldfields to Wyndham.

MR. A. FORREST: That's all right, then.

Bill read a second time.

RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the order of the day for the further consideration of this bill in committee,

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said as the bill was certainly one that closely affected the concerns of the general public, and as there had been a generally expressed opinion on the part of the representatives of the people in that House that the remaining clauses of the bill—the clauses limiting the pecuniary liability of the Government and railway companies in cases of accident—did not meet with general approval, or at any rate the approval of the majority of elected members, he rose for the purpose of stating that the Government did not intend to proceed with the remaining clauses. If that met with the approval of this House, the bill would now be reported, and the remaining clauses struck out of it.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said he should like to say one word before the bill was done with. He trusted that the snake, though scotched, was not killed, and that on a future occasion the clauses now abandoned might be brought forward again with a better chance of being successfully carried through. He should also like to be allowed to answer one or two remarks that had been made with reference to the bill as brought forward. It had been stated that it had been brought forward by him as Commissioner of Railways simply in consequence of the result of a recent accident, because the Government had been mulcted in damages. He assured the House—and many members knew it—that for the last twelve months and

more this bill had been under his consideration, and he had wished to bring it forward long before the accident referred to ever took place. He had introduced the bill solely in the interest of the public purse, and without any personal ideas whatsoever. It had struck him that an accident such as that which occurred in Victoria some time ago, which cost that Government £129,000, might in the case of a comparatively poor colony like this cause the Government the most serious financial embarrassment; and it was solely with a view to limit the possible drain upon the public purse that he had brought forward the bill. He hoped that on a future occasion the principle of the bill as regards this question of compensation would find greater favor among hon. members.

Clauses 7 to 10 were then expunged; and the schedule and the preamble and title of the bill as previously agreed to, having been adopted, the bill was reported to the House.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 7th August, 1889.

Revenue and Expenditure in the Plantagenet District—Hampton Plains Railway Proposals—Beverley Railway Station accommodation—Proposed Telegraph Line to the Yilgarn Goldfields—Message (No. 5): Despatch from the Secretary of State acknowledging Memorial re Constitution Bill—Double Trucks for conveyance of Sheep on the Eastern Railway—Railways Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Re-appropriation Bill, 1889: in committee—Municipalities Institutions Act, Amendment Bill: discharged—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE, PLANTAGENET DISTRICT.

MR. DE HAMEL: I desire to ask the Colonial Secretary whether he can in-

form the House of the total amount of revenue received from the Plantagenet District, and the amount of expenditure incurred in that district during the last three years?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): A very similar question was asked by the member for the district some years ago, and a similar question has been asked in the House with reference to the Northern District; but, I regret to state that the manner in which the public accounts have been kept—no separate account of the receipts and expenditure of each district of the colony being kept—it has been impossible to furnish the information asked for. In this instance, in order if possible to ascertain whether the information asked for could be furnished, I communicated with the Colonial Treasurer, who informs me that "There being no separate account kept of the revenue received or amount expended in each district of the colony, I am unable to furnish the information requested."

HAMPTON PLAINS RAILWAY PROPOSALS.

MR. PARKER: I desire, with leave, without notice, to ask the Colonial Secretary whether the Government intend to take any action this session with regard to the communication from Messrs. Stone and Burt conveying certain proposals for the construction of a railway on the land grant system to Hampton Plains? This letter was laid on the table a few days ago by the Government, and it appears to me that it is a matter in which the Government should move, rather than a private member. Perhaps the hon. gentleman will inform the House whether the Government intend to take any action in regard to this proposal this session?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): I am not aware that it is the intention of the Government to proceed any further in the matter this session.

BEVERLEY RAILWAY STATION ACCOMMODATION.

MR. HARPER: I beg to ask the Commissioner of Railways if it is intended to proceed shortly with the proposed

increase of station accommodation at Beverley; and if not, why not?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright): Owing to the trains staying the night at Beverley, according to the present time table, the necessity for the increase in the station accommodation, in the way of a refreshment room, has not been apparent. It will, however, be necessary to build accommodation for parcels and mails, which will be commenced forthwith.

TELEGRAPH LINE TO YILGARN GOLDFIELDS.

MR. HARPER: Sir,—in rising to move the resolution standing in my name—"That in the opinion of this House it is of urgent importance that immediate steps should be taken to construct a line of telegraph between York and the Yilgarn Goldfields"—I should like to refer first of all to the recent report of the Government Geologist on these goldfields. That report has been generally read, and I think I may say that we are justified from the tone of that report in concluding that, in the opinion of the Government Geologist, a goldfield exists in that part of the colony of sufficient value to justify and warrant the expenditure of capital in its development, and that, apparently, the Government Geologist has a high opinion of it. That opinion, I think, is shared by a great many people; and, such being the case, there can be no justifiable reason why the development of this goldfield should not be hastened and facilitated by every reasonable means within the power of the country. It has come within my knowledge, and I dare say it is within the knowledge of almost every other member, that great difficulties are now experienced in keeping up the necessary supply of food both for man and beast on these goldfields, to enable those on the fields to carry on their operations. These difficulties, of course, are largely due to the absence of any rapid means of communication with the field. In the absence of a railway, nothing would obviate these inconveniences and difficulties so much as a telegraph line connecting the fields with the centres of population. It is impossible, with the fluctuating population on a goldfield, to know at a distance what supplies may be required, or

what the position of affairs may be on the field, and very serious inconvenience, and even suffering, may take place, which with a rapid means of communication with the field might be obviated. A day or two ago I was told of a teamster arriving on the field with his load, and with just sufficient horse forage to take his team back again; and this man was surrounded by eager people on the field who offered him as much as £1 a bag for his few bags of chaff; and he was obliged to refuse it. It must be obvious, therefore, what a tremendous strain it must be to these people to carry on their operations, and to prosecute the work of developing these goldfields. A telegraph line would, of course, do much to prevent such a state of things as this arising. The suggestion I have to put forward with regard to the construction of this line is that a cheap line be constructed at present, with the timber along the route. There is abundance of timber the whole way, within a few miles at most, and the line would have to pass through forest country, where the trees might be made available for fixing the wire. If the line were constructed in this manner, it could be done rapidly and cheaply; and, provided these goldfields turn out as we anticipate, long before this line has fallen into disrepair of any consequence, the colony will be able to go in for a less primitive and more permanent line. With these few words I now move the resolution standing in my name.

MR. A. FORREST: I have great pleasure in seconding the motion: I do not think anyone inside the House or outside the House will disagree with me when I say there can be no question whatever that a line of telegraph should be built at once to these goldfields. I should have preferred, myself, if the resolution had gone further, and that it asked that a preliminary survey of a line of railway should also be undertaken without any delay to these goldfields. We have it on the best authority we have in the colony, and that is the Government Geologist, that the success of these goldfields is assured, and that if properly pushed forward the result will be that not only will the colony be able to afford a telegraph line but also build a railway to these fields. I believe

the Government Geologist has given it as his opinion that the Government should at once build a railway. But at present all this resolution asks for is that a cheap line of telegraph be constructed. I presume it would not exceed £10,000 at the utmost,—probably considerably less. For this small expenditure the people engaged in developing these goldfields would be brought into touch with the centres of population and with those who have capital invested in these fields. It is a well-known fact that where people invest their money they like to be in constant communication with that place and to know what is going on. At present, with the very poor mail service that we have, it is impossible for anyone, except those who are in the colony, to invest their money in these goldfields and know how things are going on; and even people in the colony find it very inconvenient to be without better means of communication than at present exist. People outside the colony cannot be expected to come forward with their capital to assist us in developing these fields unless they have some means of direct communication with them. That has been the great drawback in the Kimberley district, this want of a telegraph line. This House, very properly, I think, has appropriated a large sum of money to connect those goldfields with the outer world; and I think the least the Government can do now is to give every facility to get the goldfields at this end of the colony developed as soon as possible. I agree with the hon. member for York that the greater portion of the timber required for this line could be had along the line itself; but I will not go so far as he has in recommending that trees should be used for the posts. I do not think it would be found that it would be an advantage to use trees for telegraph posts in going through a forest country like this; but I believe that the whole of the timber required might be got on the line of road, with the exception, perhaps, of some sixty miles. I hope the leader of the Government will not get up on this occasion and say they have no money for this work: I think they ought to find the money for a necessary work like this. It would not require much; I should think a small amount like this might be provided out of current revenue for the

present, to be recouped out of the first loan. The whole colony is crying out for this line, and I am quite sure there is not an elected member in this House who will not support this small expenditure. Everybody feels that a great deal depends upon the development of these goldfields; I don't know what we shall do if they are not pushed forward. Even those who have not invested a pound in the mines acknowledge that they give every promise if they are properly worked; and I ask how can they be properly worked unless there is some means of communicating with them? If these goldfields were in any other part of the world there would have been a railway to them by this. I recollect, when Broken Hill was first opened, some years ago, before a pound was ever raised there, a railway was surveyed, and the line was completed before any dividend was declared. That was a far longer distance than from York to Yilgarn; and all we ask now is that a line of telegraph be put up. If it is done, I am sure the Government will find that they have carried out the general wish, not only of this House, but of the colony at large.

MR. MARMION: I have much pleasure in supporting this motion. Of course the members on the Government bench will accuse me of being inconsistent, because I refused to support another motion the other evening for the purchase of a dredge for Albany, on the ground that those who put forward the proposal did not show how the money was to be obtained. It may be said that the mover of this resolution has not shown the House where the money for this work is to come from, and that, for the same reason, I ought to refuse to support this motion in the same way as I refused to support the other. But before I deal with the financial aspect of the question I should like to say a few words as to the desirability of the work being undertaken. I am perfectly well aware there are many people who will express the opinion that it would be well to wait the progress of events, and see, before we launch into this expenditure, whether the success of our goldfields is assured: I know there are those who will say that. Possibly I am of a more sanguine temperament than those who take this view of things; and for my part I believe in

taking time by the forelock. I think, when we have such an assurance as we have in the Government Geologist's report that we have a large area of auriferous ground, the working of which in many cases will pay, with a judicious expenditure of money in developing these areas—I think, when we have the assurance of the Government Geologist himself to this effect, that we would be perfectly justified in incurring this expenditure, more especially when we bear in mind that upon the development of these mines the immediate future of the colony largely depends. It is admitted on all hands that something is required to keep the colony going; politically we are (so to speak) hung up between heaven and earth, awaiting the progress of events. But we know now that our aspirations in the direction of a change of Government are not likely to be realised at once; the change is likely to be further delayed, and I maintain it behoves us all—both the members of the Government and the representatives of the people—to put our shoulders to the wheel, and do all we can to try and take advantage of what Providence has placed in our way. One of the main factors in the development of our auriferous resources would be this line of telegraph, which would bring the fields into touch with capitalists and investors, both in the colony and outside the colony. I would not, myself, advocate the construction of an expensive line—I do not think it is necessary; I agree with the suggestion thrown out by the mover of the resolution that we might take advantage of the nature of the country through which the line will pass, and utilise the timber to be found on that line of country; and take the shortest route available in as direct a line as possible. It might be advisable to deviate in some cases, in consequence of the roads and existing lines of communication; but we might take as short a cut as we could, and utilise the natural advantages offered by the country for the construction of a telegraph line. I do not think it would be necessary at present to take the line any farther than Southern Cross, which may be regarded as the centre of the existing goldfields; I do not consider that it is necessary at present to extend the line to Golden Valley and Parker's Range, and such other places as, no doubt,

will yet be discovered to be auriferous. For the present I think these localities might be left to communicate in some other way with the more central terminus at Southern Cross. Of course I am not able to go with any certainty into the question of the cost of such a line; but I should imagine the cost would not be great. I believe the distance from York to the goldfields is something between 150 and 200 miles, and that the cost of such a line as the hon. member for York contemplates would be very trifling. When I say trifling, I mean trifling compared with the advantages that would be secured and the benefits it would confer upon the colony. Probably something like £5,000 would be sufficient to complete the whole of this line. [The Director of Public Works: What!] Of course the Director of Works may have data to go upon that I do not possess; but if a light line of telegraph was suitable to connect districts hundreds of miles apart, and running through uninhabited territory, and subject to other disabilities—I am alluding to the Northern district—surely a very cheap and light line would serve the purpose in this part of the colony, within easy reach of head-quarters. Seeing that the cost need not exceed about £5,000, or say £7,000, I maintain that the Government would be perfectly justified in undertaking the work, even in the present financial position of the colony. It may be asked—where is the money to come from? I believe I can show where it may come from. Our last loan realised a considerable amount above par; the £100,000 realised something like £107,000 or £108,000—so good is the credit of the colony. This would give us something like £7,000 or £8,000 to the good; and, if I remember rightly, so little did we anticipate that the loan would realise so well that we actually provided something like £50 under the head of "Contingencies" to cover any deficiency, and to meet the expense of floating the loan. Deducting what it may have cost to float the loan—which cannot be much—we have here a balance available (an unexpected balance) of £10,000 or £12,000 and I do not know of any more legitimate work to which the money could be applied than to the erection of this telegraph line to our Eastern

goldfields. I would remind the House that when the loan schedule was under discussion it was the general feeling that as large a sum as possible should be appropriated to the development of these goldfields. I have just had handed to me a memorandum from a gentleman who is an authority on the subject, having been engaged in the construction of works of this kind before, and he states that this line would not cost more than about £4,500. I have put it at £5,000, for a pole line: and I have indicated where the money may come from to build such a line. It seems to me that the Government of the colony should be prepared to show its faith in these goldfields. They will be doing the colony a great deal of harm, in my opinion, if they refrain from doing so. The public, so far as they are concerned, have shown their faith in the fields by investing largely in them; and it is the duty of the Government, now that they have the assurance of their own officer, the Government Geologist, that the fields are really worth working, and give promise of very profitable returns in the near future. I say it is the duty of the Government, a duty they owe to the colony, to do all they possibly can to facilitate the development of the fields. Until we are in a position to have a railway, I know of nothing that would conduce so much to the development of the fields as the erection of a telegraph line. I have shown that there need be no difficulty as to ways and means, if the course I have suggested were followed. In fact, if the Government are really in earnest as to the development of these goldfields, they can soon find the ways and means to carry out this most urgent work. I hope they will not let it go forth to the world that they have so little faith in the colony's goldfields that they will not strain a point to get a line of telegraph built to them. I think that would be a most disastrous thing. I think it would be a most damaging thing to the colony, if, after all that has been said, and all that has been done by private enterprise to develop these fields, the Government of the colony were to turn round and say—as they would say, by their action, if they refused to move in this matter, "Oh, other people may have faith in them, but we have none."

I say that would have a most disastrous effect upon the colony; and I hope the Government will show the country that they realise it. I would ask how people outside the colony are likely to come forward and invest any money in these mines, unless they find the Government of the colony showing that they have faith in them? We all admit that what is required to give an impetus to the development of the country is the introduction of outside capital; and I should like to know how we can expect outside capitalists to invest their money in these mines, if the Government of the colony give them no encouragement to do so?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): What the hon. member for Fremantle says is always interesting. The hon. member always speaks earnestly; and in the speech we have just heard from him, I can almost fancy that we, on this bench, have changed sides with hon. members opposite, and that the hon. member for Fremantle has just been announcing to the House the policy of his Government. The hon. member has gone into the question of ways and means, and has sought to show us where the money for carrying out this work may come from. I am afraid, however, that the hon. member's scheme is rather premature,—I will not say anything else; it is rather premature. We are all aware that this session of Council was summoned for a special purpose, the passing into law of a new Electoral Act, in view of certain contingencies. That was the main object of holding the present session. Certain events have since happened, or are now happening, which will make it necessary for the Government to call this House together again in the course of a couple of months, or so, when the question of ways and means will have to be very carefully considered. It will then be for hon. members to give their serious attention to the financial position. Something was said the other day about the present Government carrying on for another year, in view of the unexpected delay in the passage of the Enabling Bill; and I think I then said that we would be prepared to do so. I say so again; but we must be allowed our own way of bringing forward our proposals. Those proposals will, of course,

be subject to the scrutiny of this Council. But the Government must be allowed to do things in its own way, to put forward its own schemes. It will be for this House to say whether they approve of the actions of the Government, and will indorse their proposals. But I think the policy which the hon. member for Fremantle is desirous of forcing upon us is, at any rate, premature. We all must agree that the development of these goldfields should have our first consideration; but we must all admit that time must be allowed for their development. The development of a goldfield is not the work of a day. Let me ask members how many years were the Ovens diggings, the old Bendigo diggings, Sandhurst, Golden Point, near Ballarat, and other famous diggings,—how many years after their first discovery were those fields before they had a railway or a telegraph line? Those who were in the colonies in those days know the way in which teamsters and diggers, hundreds and thousands of them, had to find their way through bush tracks and other difficulties to reach those auriferous localities, and what inconveniences and rough hardships they had to put up with. But here, because a few score of enthusiastic miners and a few business-men plant themselves at a spot a couple of hundred miles from the centres of settlement, and before it is actually proved whether or not these auriferous areas are permanently productive or not,—

MR. MARMION: How can we prove whether they are productive or not if we can't get at them?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): I say it is mere speculation, so far; and we are asked at this stage of the fields to provide not only a telegraph line but some members want a railway as well. I cannot help thinking that it would be better if some attention were given to the question of improving the state of the roads to these fields; and there are other matters which will have to be considered, and which this House will be asked to consider when we come to deal with the question of ways and means for next year. It is all very well for members to make proposals to the Government, for the purchase of dredges and the construction of telegraphs and railways, and to find the

money for this, that, and the other. Doubtlessly, we have a large field for expenditure, and it is not at all difficult to point out scores of desirable works which the colony could do with; but all these things cost money: and as the responsibility yet rests with the Government, and not with hon. members opposite, I think it is only fair to the Government that it should be allowed to bring forward its own proposals. I have no desire to repeat what I said the other evening when another resolution was placed before us, but it seems to me that no practical result can accrue from the adoption of an abstract resolution of this nature. I notice that it is proposed that York should be the point of departure for this line; but I am not aware that the hon. member, who tabled the motion, has satisfied the House that York should necessarily be the point of departure, if this line were constructed. I should say, myself, that it would be very desirable that the telegraph should follow the same route as the railway, when the question of route is determined. I think the construction of the two should go together, if economy is to be considered. At any rate that is a point worth considering. It is not only the question of the construction of the line, but also the maintenance of the line. It will be my duty in the course of two or three months to bring before the House the question of the already large expenditure, and increasing expenditure, in connection with our extensive telegraph system, which is spreading all over the colony; and I really do not see at present where the money is to come from for maintaining all these far distant telegraph lines at the North, and elsewhere? It is becoming a very serious problem. It seems to me that we are seized with an almost unwarrantable desire to emulate the work accomplished by our more wealthy and prosperous neighbors, while our means are very slender. We seem to forget that it has taken them years to attain their present advanced civilisation, and that they have, like ourselves, had to put up with many inconveniences in days gone by, when their means, like our own, were limited. But here we seem to be impatient of any restraints, and nothing will do us but we must emulate our wealthy neighbors in

things that we really cannot at present afford. Members opposite, I know, aspire to have the administration of the colony placed in their own hands: I do not know whether hon. members think they will then be able to listen to the applications that will be made to them from all parts of the colony for assistance for this, that, and the other, and that they will find no difficulty in finding the means to carry out all they may be asked to carry out. If they do, I hope they may not find themselves disappointed. But at present that responsibility is not cast upon them. I must ask them to remember that. I do not know that I need say any more. I cannot see that any advantage would be gained by passing this resolution now, for the reason I have already given,—I do not see where the money is to come from, and that we have not met this session for the purpose of considering questions of expenditure and ways and means, and that we shall have to consider those questions in a general way when the House meets again in two or three months' time. For these reasons, and in the interest of the colony, if this matter is forced to a division, it will be my duty, on behalf of the Government, to oppose it.

MR. SHOLL: I have been accused as being a member who generally takes an objective attitude towards questions that are brought before the House; but on this occasion I most cordially support the motion now before the House. I have listened very earnestly to the remarks of the leader of the Government, and I must say I have been greatly disappointed. When we consider the necessity for the rapid development of these goldfields, and how much the prosperity of the colony hangs upon them, and when we are told that this line could be constructed for £4,000 or £5,000, and that the Government cannot find this small sum for this work,—if that is the position of affairs, all I can say is, the colony is in a very bad state indeed, or else the Government show an utter incompetency. It has been said that we have been called together simply to pass the Electoral Bill; I should have thought that when the Government had called us together they would have been ready to have

passed any measure that was likely to further the interests of the colony. It cannot be said that the Electoral Bill is the only bill that the Government have asked the House to deal with, for we have had a Re-appropriation Bill and a Railway Bill. I think it is absurd for the Government to say that they do not know where the money for this telegraph line is to come from; the development of these goldfields is such an important matter that they might well stretch a point and see if the money cannot be provided in some way or other. If the Government chose, they could soon find ways and means. It appears that the Government have taken up this position now: that whenever any proposal is put forward by members on this side of the House the cry is, "Oh, there's no money." It is a most unfortunate thing for the colony that this hitch has occurred in the introduction of Responsible Government, for I really do not know what is to become of the colony if we are not to have anything done at all until we have another form of Government, and that in the meantime the colony is to be allowed to go to the dogs. It seems to me that the longer the present Government remain in office to guide the policy of the colony, the more incompetent they become. For my own part, the motion now before the House has my most cordial support. The development of these goldfields means so much for the prosperity of the colony that I think the Government would be justified in spending twenty times £5,000 in providing this telegraph line.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL: I have not very much to say on this subject, for I know less about it than those members who have addressed the House; but, in view of the remarks that fell from the Colonial Secretary, and in view especially of what he said of a possible division on the question, I feel bound not to give a silent vote, and to warn the hon. gentleman that he will be unable to have my support if he divides the House. I would point out to the hon. gentleman that the resolution is simply an expression of opinion; it does not bind the Government. It simply expresses the opinion of the House that it is of urgent importance that steps should be taken to build a line of telegraph to these goldfields. Surely

the House may be allowed to have its opinion, and to express its opinion. I would point out to the Colonial Secretary that if he divides the House on this question—the question of the urgent importance of constructing this line—it will distinctly show to the outside world that the Government themselves do not think that there is really anything in these goldfields to warrant such an expression of opinion, and that they have no faith in the goldfields.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): No, no: that is a distortion.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL: That will be the impression. If the Government divide the House on this resolution, which merely affirms the importance of taking early steps to build a telegraph line to these goldfields, what conclusion can the outside world come to but that in the opinion of the Government there is nothing to justify such a step? Beside that, I would point out that as the House is to be called together in a couple of months hence to deal with the Estimates and to consider the question of ways and means for next year, surely it will be of some assistance to the Government to know now what the opinion of the House is on the question of the construction of this line, so that they may frame their Estimates with that knowledge before them? It must be useful for them to have the opinion of the House expressed, and to know what the wishes of the House are in this matter, and the wishes of the country—for they may be perfectly certain that this is the wish of the country; so that they may, in the meantime, between this and next session, a couple of months hence, see whether they cannot find the means for carrying out this very necessary work. But to divide the House on a resolution which simply expresses the confidence of the House in these goldfields is simply to say to the outside public that the Government do not share that opinion; and I hope the hon. gentleman will not press the question to a division. With regard to the depression which we are told on all hands exists, His Excellency, himself, in one of his despatches, referred to these goldfields as one source of progress which he saw in view,—as almost the only hope of consolation there was, from a financial

point of view. The object of the present motion is that this source of hope may be developed. I am perfectly certain from all I have heard, and from those who are competent to judge, that very little can be done with those goldfields without direct means of communication with them. A railway we cannot at present undertake, unless by means other than within the resources of the Government; but this telegraph line is within the resources of the Government; and I think it would not be dealing fairly with the country if they did not do all they can to endeavor to carry out this work. Private individuals, as we all know, occasionally find it necessary to overrun the constable a little in order to enable them to carry out their enterprises; I presume, if they did not do so sometimes, their business would suffer. The same way with the Government; they may find it necessary to overrun the constable a little to enable them to carry out this work; but no one will say that they would not be perfectly justified in doing so, in view of the likely results, and the great advantages it would confer upon the community. I think they would be acting most foolishly and injudiciously if they divided the House on this question; it would certainly create a very bad impression outside, and I hope the hon. gentleman will not do so.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): I am quite sure the hon. baronet has completely misunderstood my hon. friend the leader of the House. The hon. baronet is mistaken if he thinks the Government are not fully alive to the desirability of doing all we can to develop our goldfields. All we say is that this is not the time for dealing with these questions; this is a sort of extra session called for a special purpose. The regular session will be held, as my hon. friend has said, some two months hence, and that will be the time to consider this question, when we are dealing with ways and means; and, when the Colonial Secretary said that he would have to divide the House, he did not mean to show any disapprobation of the motion at all, or any disinclination on the part of the Government to do what is right and proper in the interests of the colony, but simply to show that this is not the proper time to deal with the question,

and that it was not right to force the hands of the Government, seeing that we shall have to deal with these questions when the House meets again in October, for the ordinary sessional work. That is all the Colonial Secretary meant; and, that being so, I shall content myself by moving the previous question.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) seconded.

MR. PARKER: Following what the learned Attorney General has said, I should have imagined that the Government would only have been too glad to have elicited the views of the House on this subject, so as to enable them to prepare their Estimates for the session which we are told will be held a few months hence, the Estimates for the coming year. One would have thought they would have liked to have known what the wishes of the House were as to making provision for this telegraph line, so that the Estimates might be framed accordingly. We all know how difficult it is to get the Government to alter their Estimates once they have introduced them: we all know how difficult it is to get any additional sums placed on the Estimates after they are brought in. The Government say—and I think very fairly—“We have prepared our Estimates on certain lines; we anticipate so much revenue, and we have provided for so much expenditure as we think we shall be able to meet; and, although it is competent for the House to propose any additional expenditure, we do not see how it can be met, as we have already apportioned all the means that we have, or are likely to have at our disposal, according to our calculations.” I do not say that is not a fair position for the Government to take up; but, one would think that before proceeding to frame their Estimates they would be only too glad to know what the House wished, so that they may endeavor to make some provision for meeting the necessary expenditure. If this resolution is passed now, the Government will know that in the opinion of this House some provision should be made for carrying out this work, and they will be able to see whether it will be possible to do so out of current revenue, or by some other means. But if they have nothing to guide them as to the opinion of the

House on this subject, they may well say, when the House meets next session, and they bring down their Estimates,—they may well say that all the money at their disposal has been appropriated, and that they had nothing to guide them as to the feeling of the House in this matter. I presume they will require some time to make a survey of the line and to estimate the cost; and they are not likely to undertake the survey if they have no expression of the opinion of the House as to the necessity of the work. All this resolution does is to express an opinion that the construction of this line is a work of urgent importance.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): And immediate.

MR. PARKER: "That in the opinion of this House it is of urgent importance that immediate steps should be taken to construct a line of telegraph between York and the Yilgarn goldfields." Really I cannot say no to that. If I thought the Government had not a single penny to carry out the work, and I thought it could not be done for the next ten years, my opinion would still be that it is of urgent importance that such a line should be constructed. Nothing could alter that opinion, so long as the prospects of these fields are what they are said to be now. The resolution says that in the opinion of the House it is of urgent importance that immediate steps should be taken in this direction. Of course by immediate steps we do not mean that the Government is to start the construction of this line straight off; but that they should take the necessary steps to have the line surveyed and an estimate framed of the probable cost, so that when the House meets again, two months hence, it may be in a position to vote the money for the work. These goldfields are now looked upon by the public, and, I believe, by the Government, as about the most hopeful prospect which the colony at present has before it. I firmly believe, myself, that these goldfields yet will be something of which we may well be proud, and in the course of a few years, if properly developed, will place this colony on a par with the neighboring colonies. This being my view, I really cannot withdraw from the position taken up by this resolution, that it is of urgent importance that a line of telegraph

should be constructed to the fields. I think it is of urgent importance in the interest of the colony that this should be done, and I think it is of importance in the interest of the finances, in the interests of the revenue, that it should be done.

MR. HARPER: I should like to say a few words in reply to what has fallen from the Colonial Secretary. I had some idea that the Government would possibly object to the motion, but I thought the objection would be this,—that we should be informed by the Director of Public Works that the work would entail such a vast expenditure of money that it would be quite impossible for the Government to undertake it. I had anticipated that objection, and I asked a few of those who were fairly able to judge of what the cost of such a line would really be, and, from all I can gather, the cost would not be more than the sum mentioned by several hon. members, about £5,000. Looking at the amount of premium which our last loan realised, there ought to be no difficulty on the part of the Government in finding the necessary funds for carrying out the work. It seems to me that if the Government were really as anxious and as earnest in this matter as they have shown themselves to be in some other works of, perhaps, less importance, they could very easily overcome the difficulty of finding the money for it. The only difficulty it appeared to me that the Colonial Secretary could find was the difficulty of discovering any really substantial objection to the proposal. Instead of that, he meets it with a sneering remark about a few enthusiastic miners requiring a telegraph line before the fields are shown to be of any value. I must say, such expressions coming from the head of the Government in this House, and going forth to the world, must do far more injury to the colony than the hon. gentleman thought at the time. I think it is to be regretted that such statements should go forth to the outside world as an expression of the opinion formed by the Government of the colony as to the value of these goldfields. I think if the Government had the interest and welfare of the colony really at heart as they so often boast they have, they would do their very utmost to have this

work carried out in the shortest possible time.

Question put, and a division called for by the Colonial Secretary; the numbers were—

| | | | | |
|--------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes | ... | ... | ... | 15 |
| Noes | ... | ... | ... | 4 |
| Majority for | | | | 11 |

| AYES. | NOES. |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Mr. Burt | Hon. J. Forrest |
| Sir T. C. Campbell, Bart. | Hon. C. N. Warton |
| Mr. Congdon | Hon. J. A. Wright |
| Mr. De Hamel | Hon. Sir M. Fraser, &c. &c. (Teller.) |
| Mr. A. Forrest | |
| Mr. Keane | |
| Mr. Marmion | |
| Mr. Morrison | |
| Mr. Parker | |
| Mr. Paterson | |
| Mr. Rason | |
| Mr. Scott | |
| Mr. Sholl | |
| Mr. Venn | |
| Mr. Harper (Teller.) | |

MESSAGE (No. 5): DESPATCH FROM THE SECRETARY OF STATE, RE CONSTITUTION BILL.

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

"The Governor has the honor to transmit herewith to the Honorable the Legislative Council copy of a Despatch (No. 55, dated 21st June, 1889) received by him from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State, in reply to the published Despatch (No. 113, dated 30th April, 1889) by which the Governor forwarded the Memorial (dated 29th April, 1889) to His Lordship from your Honorable House on the subject of the Constitution Bill.

"Government House, 7th August, 1889."

"WESTERN AUSTRALIA, }
"No. 55."

"Downing Street, 21st June, 1889.

"SIR,

"I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your Despatch of the 30th of April, enclosing with other papers a memorial to the Secretary of State from the Legislative Council of Western Australia in connection with the Constitution Bill.

"I request that you will intimate to the Council that the objection which I entertained to their amendment number one in the Constitution Bill related to the fixing of the line of division in respect of land regulations at the tropic of Capricorn, and not to the presence in the Bill of a clause relating

to Crown lands. I regret that the brevity of the telegrams which passed should have led to this misunderstanding, but you will be good enough to point out that the Bill which is to be introduced in the Imperial Parliament, a copy of which is enclosed and which was in the hands of the draftsman before your despatch under acknowledgment arrived, provides that the control of the waste lands of the Colony south of 26° latitude, and of the proceeds of such lands, shall be fully vested in the Legislature of the Colony. You should, however, understand that, as I pointed out in my telegram of April 13, the acceptance of this line as proposed in the Bill may not improbably form the subject of discussion in Parliament.

"With regard to the question referred to by the memorialists as to the payment of pensions, it was indicated generally in the Earl of Kimberley's Despatch of the 24th of March, 1871, that the chief officers displaced on the establishment of Responsible Government should receive such retiring allowances as the Secretary of State might sanction as equitable. The Constitution Act of Victoria, in which the scale of retiring allowances was lower than in the case of New South Wales, appeared to me to be the precedent which should be followed in determining what should be considered equitable, and I accordingly referred you to it. It has since been pointed out to me that in Mr. Warton's case the pension should be two-thirds of his statutory salary (under the Colonial Act of 1870, 33 Vict., No. 13) of £500, not taking into account the additional £100 which depends on the annual votes; and the sum of £400 named in Schedule D. will accordingly be reduced to £333 6s. 8d. when the Bill is in Committee.

"I have, &c.,

"KNUTSFORD.

"Governor Sir F. Napier Broome, K.C.M.G.,
" &c., &c., &c."

DOUBLE TRUCKS ON EASTERN RAILWAY FOR SHEEP.

MR. A. FORREST moved the following resolution: "That in the opinion of this House the rates charged for conveying fat stock on the Eastern Railway are excessive, and, with a view of reducing the same, the present trucks (sheep) be converted into double trucks." The hon. member said he wished to draw the attention of the House to the fact that the whole of the fat sheep consumed in the Albany district came from Perth, or, at any rate, the greater portion of them, and that the Great Southern Railway had made provision for giving every facility for the transport of stock on their line, by providing double trucks for sheep. In this way people could send 70

or 80 sheep in a truck, instead of about 40, which were all they could put on the trucks on the Government line. These double trucks were used almost universally throughout Australia, and he saw no reason why our own Government line should be the exception. He did not ask that reduction should be made in the freight charged for a truck, but that the trucks in use should have a double platform or flooring, so that they would hold double the number of sheep. He appealed to the common sense of the House whether there would be any danger in allowing these double trucks to travel on our railway, any more than on the company's line. He had been informed by the Managing Director of the Great Southern Railway that it was not unsafe at all. He had brought this matter forward in the interest of consumers as well as those who sent sheep to the market; and he believed it would be in the interest of the railway too. At present it was cheaper to drive sheep than to send them by train; but if this motion were agreed to, he believed a great many more sheep would be sent by the railway than were sent at present.

MR. MORRISON thought it was in the interest of the railway department to do all it could to increase the traffic, and one way of doing so was to make the rates as low as possible. Certainly the rates now charged for single trucks were very heavy compared with the rates on the Great Southern line; and if the Government could see their way to allow double trucks to travel at the rates now charged for single trucks, it would be a benefit to the public.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said the hon. member who had brought forward the motion had appealed to what he called the common sense of the House; and in the same breath he told the House that he did not ask for a reduction of the rates but simply that 80 sheep should be carried for the price of 40. He did not know whether the hon. member thought the House had more common sense than it had the ability to do a simple sum in arithmetic; but it would not require very profound scholarship nor common sense to work out this sum: if it cost £4 to convey 40 sheep at

2s. a head, how much would it cost to convey 80 sheep at the same rate? The hon. member said he did not want the rates reduced, but he thought 80 sheep ought to go at the present price of 40. Yet the hon. member appealed to the common sense of the House! As to the question of allowing these double trucks to travel on the Eastern Railway, and as to the question of whether it would be safe to do so, he might say that he had given orders that the Great Southern Railway's double trucks should not be allowed to come on our line, because, in his opinion, it would not be safe. That opinion was shared by the engineer of the Great Southern Railway himself. The hon. member had quoted the authority of the Managing Director; but the Managing Director was not an engineer, nor had he much knowledge of engineering. It was not a question of common sense alone, but also of engineering experience; but he should have imagined that anyone who knew anything about the way sheep travelled in trucks would have known that it would not be safe to have these double-tier trucks on the Eastern Railway, with our sharp curves and such gradients as we had about Green Mount. He might state that since last Monday the rates for the carriage of cattle and sheep on the Eastern Railway had been lowered 25 per cent., which he thought should meet the hon. member's views. He only hoped that the effect of thus lowering the rates would be an increase of traffic. But he certainly was not prepared to run double trucks at the price of single trucks; it would be neither safe nor profitable.

MR. PARKER did not intend to enter into the question of whether it would be safe or not, but he took it that our object should be to make our railways pay, if we could; and if by giving greater encouragement to people to send stock by rail we could increase the traffic, it was worth considering. At present it was cheaper to send sheep by road to the Eastern Districts than by rail; and it was a question whether it would not be wise policy to try and induce people to make use of the railway as much as we possibly could. These trains had to run whether they were full or whether they were empty; and it was

a question whether it would not be wiser to reduce the freight rates if, by doing so, we could increase the traffic. He hoped the Commissioner of Railways would take the subject into his consideration, and see whether he could not make it worth while for people to send their sheep by rail rather than by road.

MR. SHOLL thought it was rather an inappropriate time to propose a reduction in the railway rates, when they were told that the railways did not pay, nor anything like it. He had been thinking of moving a resolution to increase the rates 50 per cent., instead of reducing them. He thought it was preposterous that the colony at large should be made to pay for affording greater facilities to the Eastern Districts, over and above the settlers of other districts. It was the duty of the Government to try and make the railways reproductive, and not run them at a loss, for the benefit of one or two districts, while other parts of the colony were handicapped for the want of a railway at all. He thought the House should be guided in these matters by the head of the department, and not by what private members thought ought to be the right thing to do. The safety of the travelling public was in the hands of the Commissioner, and if he thought it would be dangerous to have these double trucks, they ought to be guided by his opinion.

MR. KEANE said he believed every member would have been glad to support this resolution to give greater inducements to people to use this railway if there was no objection to the proposal; but he did not see what was the use of having a Commissioner of Railways if they were going to take the management of the traffic out of his hands. The Commissioner told them that, in his opinion, it would not be safe to run these double trucks full of sheep on this Eastern Districts line; and the House ought to be guided in a matter like that by the head of the department.

Motion negatived.

RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the order of the day for the third reading of this bill,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton) moved that the order be discharged and the bill re-committed. Agreed to.

IN COMMITTEE.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton) said that certain clauses in the bill had been expunged, the House not approving of the principle of limiting the liability of the Government in the case of compensation for accidents, and in striking out those clauses the interpretation of the word "railway," within the meaning of the bill, had been struck out. It was, therefore, necessary to introduce a new interpretation clause; and he now moved that the following clause be added to the bill: "The word railway in this Act shall apply to all railways, branch railways and extensions, and steam tramways, throughout the colony, whether vested or not in the said Commissioner."

Clause agreed to.

Bill reported.

RE-APPROPRIATION BILL, 1889.

The House went into committee on this Bill.

Clause 1.—"It shall be lawful for the Governor to appropriate out of the said sum of Sixty thousand pounds in the "Re-appropriation Loan Act (50 Vict., No. 23) appropriated to the work Extension of the Telegraph System to "Kimberley Goldfields, Wyndham, and "South Australian Border in the East "Kimberley District, a sum of Six "thousand one hundred and eighty-two "pounds seven shillings and eight pence "for the purpose of completing the construction of the Telegraph, Roebourne "to Derby:"

MR. SHOLL asked for some explanation as to the necessity for this re-appropriation.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said that when the Northern telegraph line from Northampton to Roebourne was finished it was found there was not sufficient money on hand to pay for the work, and consequently a sum of £4,500 was re-appropriated from the vote for the Roebourne to Derby line. When that line was entered upon it was supposed that it would be only 500 miles in length, and

the estimated cost was £35,000. But it was subsequently found that the line was 575 miles long; but, notwithstanding this extra distance, the whole cost of the line, including stations and everything, was only £1,682 7s. 8d. more than the original estimate. The object of this bill was to legalise the necessary re-appropriations, which it was proposed to take from the amount appropriated for the Kimberley Goldfields line. There would still be sufficient money left for the completion of that line.

Clause agreed to.

Bill reported.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS AMENDMENT BILL.

On the order of the day for the second reading of this bill,

MR. SCOTT (who was in charge of the bill) moved that the order be discharged. The main object of the bill was to enable the Municipality of Perth to take the necessary steps for obtaining a water supply for the city; the Municipal Council having decided upon taking steps in that direction. As, however, the bill had been somewhat hurriedly prepared, and would require to be referred to a select committee, which would possibly occupy considerable time; and as there seemed a disposition to bring the present special session to a close at an early date, he proposed to withdraw the bill for the present, being assured by the Government that another session would be held in the course of a few months' time, and that there would be no opposition to the principle of the bill, but, on the contrary, that they would do all they could to further the object in view.

Bill discharged.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Friday, 9th August, 1889.

Further telegrams re Constitution Bill—Midland Railway Contract—Railways Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Re-appropriation Bill: third reading—Electoral Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

TELEGRAMS RE CONSTITUTION BILL.

THE SPEAKER said he had received the following telegrams from the Premiers of Victoria and Queensland, in reply to the resolution passed by the House on the subject of the Constitution Bill:—

To the Honorable Sir James Lee Steere, Speaker of the Legislative Council.

I duly communicated to the President of the Legislative Council, and the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, your telegram of the 27th ult. This Government sympathises heartily with Western Australia in its endeavor to obtain Constitutional Government, and I intend to move in Parliament, on next day of meeting, that an Address to the Queen be passed by both Houses, urging the granting of Constitutional Government to Western Australia.

D. GILLIES, Premier.
Melbourne, 9th August, 1889.

To the Speaker Legislative Council, Perth.

Address urging extension Responsible Government to Western Australia passed both Houses with enthusiasm last night.

BOYD D. MOREHEAD.
Brisbane, 9th August, 1889.

MIDLAND RAILWAY CONTRACT: FORFEITURE CLAUSE.

MR. HARPER asked the Colonial Secretary to inform the House of the earliest date at which the forfeiture clause of the Midland Railway contract could be exercised?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): The date is the 27th February, 1890. If it should be arranged that works are resumed before that date, with an assurance that they will be satisfactorily carried on, the Government would have no objection to allow a moderate extension of time.