

MR. SHENTON said that £2,000 was placed on the Loan Estimates for this building. The original tender was for £5,493 6s., and since then the contractor had been paid another £450, bringing it up to about £6,000; and he understood there was still an amount due to the contractor, of about £2,000, which would make the cost of these workshops about £8,000. The question he wanted to know was—when this tender was accepted, where was the authority obtained for the expenditure of so large an amount over and above the amount voted?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said he had already frankly acknowledged that the original vote had been exceeded, and very considerably exceeded. It was found that £2,000 was totally insufficient, and it was anticipated that the balance would have been available out of the £15,000 voted for the completion of the Eastern Railway. But, instead of there being £15,000 available, it was found that there would not be more than £9,000, which was required for other purposes in connection with that railway; and he had now to ask the House to confirm the present vote. This was the first item that he had exceeded out of all the contracts he had entered into since he assumed charge of the department,—contracts involving in the aggregate a sum of £750,000; and he very much regretted the error that had been made in this instance.

MR. LOTON thought the explanation offered was a straightforward one, and to him it was a satisfactory one.

MR. A. FORREST said the votes required for works and buildings were becoming very serious items. On these Estimates alone, they had a sum of about £30,000 asked for; and, if the House did not take care, this colony would be ruined yet by its public buildings,—works which did not bring in sixpence to the revenue. He was not blaming the Director of Public Works, but he asked the House to pause.

MR. SHOLL believed the "extras" in connection with these railway workshops amounted to fifty per cent. of the amount of the original tender. There must be something rotten somewhere.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright): Probably in the state of Denmark.

The vote was confirmed.

MR. A. FORREST would like some information as to the item "Fremantle railway carriage shed, £4,500."

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said this expenditure was advised by the Finance Committee at a time when there was a great outcry about want of employment amongst artisans. The hon. member himself formed one of the deputation that waited upon him, urging the necessity of finding work for the unemployed, and this work was consequently put in hand, the men being employed on it by the day, instead of the work being let by contract.

The vote was agreed to.

Progress was then reported, and leave given to sit again next day.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 3rd August, 1887.

Albany Jetty: Increased accommodation—Reduction of Royalty on Pearl Shells—Message (No. 27): Victoria Public Library—Vote for eradication of Rabbits at Cheyne's Beach—Reorganisation of Colonial Hospital—Supplementary Estimates, 1887: further considered in committee—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

INCREASED ACCOMMODATION, ALBANY JETTY.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works how soon the Government proposed to carry out the work of increasing the accommodation afforded by the Albany jetty, funds

for which were provided in the Schedule of the Loan Act, 1884?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said the Government was already carrying out the work of increasing the accommodation for the Albany jetty, by constructing a goods shed and bonded store, which was considered by everyone who had the real interests of the colony, the port, and the town of Albany at heart, as of the greatest necessity.

REDUCTION OF ROYALTY ON PEARL SHELLS.

MR. RICHARDSON, in accordance with notice, moved that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he would cause the export duty on pearl shells to be reduced from the present rate of £4 per ton to £2 per ton. The hon. member said it might appear somewhat unpatriotic to move for a reduction in the public revenue; but he did not do so without what appeared to him good and sufficient reasons. They all knew that the value of shells now was not what it was when the present duty of £4 was first levied. At that time shells, too, were more plentiful, and there was less difficulty and expense in obtaining them. Fishing for shells now had become more of a scientific operation and occupation, and a more expensive class of boats and more expensive apparatus were required. The industry altogether required a much larger amount of capital to be embarked in it to make it successful, while, on the other hand, the margin of profit was not so great as was generally supposed. The net value of shells at present was not more than about £80 per ton on the ground where they were obtained, after all expenses had been met. The gross value was about £110. Formerly, the market value used to be £130 to £140. A considerable number of foreign vessels—vessels not owned in this colony—were now engaged in the industry, and there was a general impression that these vessels obtained the greater portion of their supplies out of the colony, and that they contributed little or nothing to the fiscal revenue, paying very little duty upon the goods they consumed. This was an entirely erroneous impression. [The hon. member here read an

extract from a letter which he had received from one of these "foreign" companies, from which it appeared that the company employed over a hundred luggers, etc., representing a capital of £70,000; that they employed 750 men during the season; that the wages they paid last year amounted to £32,440; that, in addition, they consumed a large quantity of duty-paying goods, and that £20,000 in hard cash was circulated in Cossack during three months, at the end of last season, in the form of wages for their employes, and that £1,000 had been taken over the counter, in one week, in one retail store in Cossack.] The agents of this company had reported to him that the duties on most of the goods they consumed were higher here than in Queensland, the former scene of their operations, and that Queensland shells were worth about £20 per ton more than ours, and that there was no export duty there at all. For all that, they preferred this side of the coast, if they could only get a little remission upon the duty they were now called upon to pay upon shells. Those who were engaged in this industry had to undergo great hardships and they were liable to heavy losses. In addition to this, he maintained that the principle was a good one: he thought we should not, unless there was very grave necessity indeed, tax our exports. He believed that according to the views of political economists it was not considered a sound principle, and that the right principle for the State to adopt was to encourage and foster by every means in its power the export trade of the country, inasmuch as all that was exported came back in imports, in the shape of dutiable goods. The less our exports were hampered and handicapped the more they were likely to grow and expand. He thought it was the duty of every country to encourage by every legitimate means its export trade, and not to cripple it by excessive imposts. He was only asking a reduction of £2 per ton upon the duty on these shells, which would still leave a duty of £2—a considerable tax in view of the present value of shells, and the expense of obtaining them. He would remind the House that this was not all the revenue which the colony derived from those who were engaged in the industry; indirectly the

colony gained a great deal from the operations of these people, and he thought that every effort should be made to encourage and to foster the industry.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) pointed out that, with the exception of a small licensing fee, the whole of the revenue derived by the Government from the pearl fisheries consisted of this export duty, in return for which the Government had to maintain a revenue vessel for the protection of those engaged in the industry, the cost of which vessel amounted to £1,200 a year. It was now proposed to employ a larger vessel for this purpose (the *Meda*), which would considerably increase the cost of maintenance, as the vessel would have to be kept in commission all the year round, whereas, in the past, the revenue vessel was only employed about six months in the year. Now, however, that the pearl shell fishery was carried on under different conditions—diving being resorted to, without intermission, all the year round—it would be necessary to keep the revenue vessel likewise employed, which would considerably enhance the expenditure to be incurred. In 1884 the revenue received from this export duty was only £570 18s. 10d.; in 1885, £1,132 14s. 6d., and, last year—owing to the influx of a considerable number of what he might call foreign vessels—the revenue amounted to £2,978 0s. 3d.; but the average for the past three years, including licensing fees, did not exceed £1,560 11s. 7d. He thought the House would agree that it was only fair that those engaged in this industry should be called upon to contribute towards the cost of the protection afforded to them by the Government. If the revenue derived from this source did not suffice to cover the cost, the money would simply have to come out of the general revenue. He would point out that, even accepting the hon. member's own estimate as to the net value of these shells, the present duty only amounted to one-twentieth part of the value of the shells. But, referring to the account sales which he himself had seen, and to quotations which hon. members may have seen of the market value in London, he thought it would be found that pearl shells realised a considerable sum in advance of £80 per ton, after paying all expenses of freight and other

charges; and they all hoped these prices would continue. He believed that, notwithstanding the increased expense now attending the prosecution of the pearling industry, those who were engaged in it were engaged in a very profitable enterprise; and, looking at the fact that it was necessary we should husband all our resources, and provide the necessary protection for those who were employed in this industry, he could not think himself it would be politic to consent to such a large reduction of duty as was here proposed. In fact, he thought that in justice to the revenue and to other divisions of the colony, the export duty on shells should remain as at present fixed by statute.

MR. McRAE said that those who were engaged in the industry contributed largely to the revenue in other ways. They consumed a large quantity of duty paying goods, as well as paying an export duty. When shells realised £140 per ton the present duty, he admitted, was a fair one, but now that the price of shells had come down to £80 he thought the duty was excessive. Moreover, he doubted whether the duty was one that could be legally enforced, as the industry was now being prosecuted for the most part in depths beyond the boundary line of the territorial waters of this colony; and, if the Government insisted upon levying the present high rate of duty, those engaged in the industry might resist payment, and there were strong doubts as to whether they would not have the law on their side.

MR. MARMION said that, without discussing now the legal question suggested by the hon. member for the North, he thought the Government were entitled to receive some contribution from those engaged in this industry, in return for the expenditure incurred in protecting the industry. In case of any untoward calamity overtaking the pearling fleet the Government were expected to come to their assistance; and, it was only very recently that the Government showed them that they would not be backward in affording this assistance. He could see no reason himself why the pearling industry should not contribute something towards the cost of that supervision which was absolutely essential, both in the interests of the pearlery themselves and of

the Government. As to the present value of shells, he was not aware that there had been recently any serious fall in their value, and he was unable to give credit to the statement that the price was so low as that stated by the hon. member (£80). According to recent prices current in London the value averaged from £130 to £160 and £170. [Mr. McRAE: They are Sydney shells]. The commoner shells realised corresponding rates. If the hon. member could show him that the average value had been reduced to £80, he would be prepared to support him in his resolution; but he did not believe himself there had been such a falling off in the price as that. He thought it would be neither expedient nor patriotic to reduce the duty on these shells as proposed.

MR. SHOLL said he hardly knew whether to support or oppose the motion. But if the price of shells had fallen to the extent stated by the hon. member for the North, and the reduction was likely to be permanent, he thought these people had very good reason for asking for this reduction in the duty. He knew that very expensive diving apparatus and other machinery had now to be employed, and a very high rate of wages was paid to the divers, so that with the heavy cost of collecting the shells there was a very small margin of profit compared to what it used to be. But he could not think that the price of shells was so low as £80; if it was, all he could say was that the "prices current" were not reliable. He thought the Colonial Secretary in the figures which he quoted as to the take of shells in late years had rather argued against himself, for, according to the hon. gentleman's figures, the export duty last year amounted to nearly £3,000, whereas in the previous year it was only about £1,100 or £1,200, showing that there had been a considerable increase in the number of those engaged in the industry, which meant a corresponding increase in the consumption of dutiable goods. According to the hon. gentleman's own showing, the duty received last year was more than enough to pay the expense of the revenue cutter. He thought the matter might be left to the Government, to grant this concession, in the event of the present low price of shell continuing. Should the price rise again,

the present royalty might be re-imposed.

MR. HENSMAN said the resolution was hardly correct in form. The export duty on shells was payable by reason of a statute, and therefore the Governor had no power to reduce the duty any more than anybody else. It was entirely a matter for the Legislature. He would suggest to the hon. member that he might withdraw his motion, by leave of the House, for the present, and for a reason which he would presently mention. He quite agreed with him that it was contrary to the principles of political economy to impose any export duty, or import duty either, if you could do without it. But the reason why he made this suggestion was that, having brought forward his arguments, which were undoubtedly worthy of the attention of the House, the hon. member might for the present be content, seeing that before long the whole question of the tariff of the colony, both as regards imports and exports, would be considered; and it would be almost impossible for one particular duty to be considered, unless it was in relation to the whole subject. Moreover, it would be absolutely necessary, if the hon. member's views were to be carried out, that an Act of that Council should be passed to carry them into effect.

MR. LAYMAN thought it was a pity the hon. member had brought forward his motion. From his own showing, the pearling industry was a very remunerative industry, and one that ought to be called upon to contribute its fair share towards the revenue and cost of Government. According to the Colonial Secretary's figures, the average amount of duty paid for the past three years was only £1,560, which he thought was a very small proportion of the earnings of those engaged in the industry. He was one of those who would like to see all royalties and duties removed as far as possible; but the Government must have some funds to carry on the administration of the colony; and he thought the present was a very inopportune time to propose any reduction in the revenue.

MR. LOTON thought it was quite probable that most hon. members would agree with him to this extent,—that if we could see our way to remove all royalties and export duties, and also all

import duties, we should be very glad; but, unfortunately, that happy time had not arrived yet, and he did not think it was likely to arrive, in Western Australia, at all events, for some years to come. One of the hon. member's main arguments in support of this motion to reduce the duty was the reduced value of shells at the present time, as compared with the value a few years ago, and also the extra expense incurred by those who prosecuted this industry, reducing the margin of profit. It was strange that Queensland pearly-shell Queensland, where there was no royalty on shells, and where the shells were a great deal more valuable than the shells of this colony—should elect to come here where they had to pay this royalty upon a less valuable article. [Mr. McRAE: No more shells there.] The Colonial Secretary had shown them that evening that the revenue from this source was increasing rapidly—not on account of any extra duty imposed, but in consequence of the increased production of shells; so that it appeared to him this industry must be rather a tempting one and also a lucrative one. As to the actual value of shells now compared with what it was some years ago, the latest account sales that passed through his hands, within the last fortnight, showed that the shells had realised a little less than £100 per ton. He thought there might be some ground for a little reduction in the duty, but not to the extent here proposed.

MR. RICHARDSON said, after what had fallen from the hon. and learned member for the Greenough, if the Executive had no power to reduce this duty, it was not much good his going on with his motion. Considerable capital had been made of the supposition that the cost of maintaining the revenue cutter amounted to more than the duty received from the shells; but, according to the Colonial Secretary's figures, the annual expenditure in connection with the revenue vessel was not more than £1,200, whereas the average amount of duty received from shells during the past three years amounted to £1,500, leaving a considerable margin to the good.

The motion, upon being put, was negatived, on the voices.

MESSAGE (No. 27): VICTORIA PUBLIC LIBRARY, PERTH.

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

"Referring to the third paragraph of the Speech with which he opened the Session, the Governor has the honor to request that the Honorable the Legislative Council will favor him with their views respecting the steps to be taken in connection with the establishment of the Victoria Public Library in Perth.

"2. The Report of the Committee already presented to the Council, and the circumstances of the case, suggest the following points for consideration:—

"a. The selection of a design for the building.

"b. The sum of money to be expended on the building, and upon the fittings, the books, and the necessary staff; the manner in which the money should be provided; and the course and extent of immediate and future expenditure.

"c. The arrangements to be made for the early opening of the Library. These include the consideration of the proposal to lease the premises lately occupied by the Western Australian Bank, and to convert them into a reading room, sending at once to England for books to the value of, say, £1,000.

"d. The erection of a suitable building for a new Boys' School, and the provision of the necessary funds, in order that the present school building and the site of the Library may become available for the purposes of the Library.

"3. The Governor proposes to introduce a Bill into Your Honorable House during next Session establishing the Library, and providing for the appointment of Trustees and a Board of Management.

"4. It may be thought desirable to consider whether, in view of the establishment of the Victoria Public Library in Perth, any reconstitution of the present so-called Law and Parliamentary Library would be advisable. It has been suggested in some quarters that the legal portion of the literature contained in this Library might be removed to the Supreme Court, that

"the parliamentary portion might form the nucleus of a Legislative Council Library, and that the volumes of general reading might be transferred to the Public Library. The Governor merely mentions these proposals without offering any opinion upon them.

"Government House, Perth, 3rd August, 1887."

VOTE FOR ERADICATION OF RABBITS AT CHEYNE'S BEACH.

MR. RICHARDSON, in accordance with notice, moved that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to place upon the Supplementary Estimates, 1887, a sum of money not exceeding £350 for the purpose of completing the eradication of rabbits in the colony; the erection of a rabbit proof fence of wire netting across the peninsula, in vicinity of Cheyne's Beach, to be provided for out of the vote. The hon. member said he confidently expected the unanimous support of hon. members to this motion. In his opinion we could not treat this question too seriously. If, through laxity on our part or the want of stringent regulations, this rabbit pest was allowed to get the upper hand of us, it would be time for us to quit the colony, and that pretty soon. We could not afford the enormous expenditure incurred by the other colonies in coping with the evil. Victoria alone had expended about £5,000,000 in the eradication of rabbits, and they were not half dealt with yet. There was a current idea among many people that there was not much fear of rabbits increasing here as they do in the other colonies,—that they would not multiply and thrive here as they did there. This idea, however, was clearly contradicted by plain facts. Rabbits were very numerous on some of the islands on our coast—lands that were almost barren of vegetation—and it was surprising what they lived on. If they managed to exist, and to increase and multiply, on these sterile islands, what would they do on the mainland? He had read the report of Mr. Inspector Hare on the subject, and he did not consider it at all reassuring. It appeared to him there was no certainty that the rabbits had been cleared, on the mainland, and it was acknowledged that they infested some of the islands.

These islands were frequently visited, and there was nothing to prevent people bringing rabbits ashore with them. He thought it was absolutely necessary we should take some stringent and systematic steps, while there was yet time, to eradicate this most dangerous and destructive pest. The sooner this was done, the cheaper would the cost be.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said that some few sessions ago they passed a very stringent Act dealing with this subject, and he was quite in accord with the hon. member in his dread of these rabbits taking possession of the land. He thought we ought to do everything in our power to keep them down, and to prevent their spreading, as they had done in the other colonies. That House had voted small sums in the past to endeavor to carry out the provisions of the Act, and he thought, if only in justice to ourselves, we ought to continue to make strenuous efforts to exterminate these most destructive pests. He noticed that, in one of the other colonies, the Government were advertising for cats, with the view of assisting in the extermination of rabbits. He did not know whether that would prove an effectual measure or not, upon these islands of ours. At any rate, some steps ought to be taken, undoubtedly, to eradicate the pest; and, if the House agreed to the resolution, he was authorised to say that the proposed steps would be undertaken.

MR. SCOTT said, as to cats, they were a great nuisance in Perth, and if the Government were to gather all the cats they could get and turn them loose on these islands,—if they did not destroy the rabbits, they would confer a great benefit upon the community.

MR. A. FORREST said he intended to oppose the motion, and for this reason,—it was well known there were no rabbits on the mainland in this colony, and, so far as he was aware, they had done no harm. He had travelled over the whole colony, and he had never seen a rabbit yet. The territory between Esperance Bay and Albany was only scrub, and never likely to be settled, so that it would not do much harm if the rabbits took possession of it. He doubted whether even rabbits would thrive there. His most serious objection, however, to

the motion was that it could not be regarded so urgent as to require this vote to be placed on the Supplementary Estimates.

MR. LAYMAN did not know that the vote would be of any service. He thought it was pretty well known that such a small sum as this would only go a very little way; and, so long as the rabbits did not get on the mainland, there was not much danger.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL said he had listened with extreme surprise to the remarks of the hon. member for Kimberley. Surely the hon. member must be aware of the enormous evil and loss which had resulted from the spread of rabbits in the other colonies, where hundreds of thousands of pounds had been expended in attempts to cope with the evil. But perhaps the hon. member was not aware of the history of the spread of these rabbits in those colonies. Just the same circumstances occurred in those colonies as were occurring here. In Victoria, it was about thirty years after they were turned out before they began to spread, so as to cause any alarm; but, once they did so,—they all knew the result. As to the country between Esperance and Albany not supporting rabbits, he believed it was just the sort of country they preferred. He did not know that it would be necessary to have a rabbit-proof fence, as suggested, across the peninsula, in the vicinity of Cheyne's Beach, for he understood, from Mr. Inspector Hare, that the rabbits had been exterminated at Cheyne's Beach. Steps however should be taken to clear the island of them. He believed it was from an island that rabbits first spread over Tasmania. He thought there was scarcely any question of so much importance to the colony as keeping it clear from these vermin; and he thought the House would be thoroughly justified in voting this small sum of money, which would do a considerable amount of good, if judiciously expended.

MR. KEANE said the motion would have his support. He thought as regards these rabbits the same as regards other things—"a stitch in time saves nine;" and, if we did not take time by the forelock, we might find that instead of spending £300, or even £3,000, we may have to spend £30,000. If we should be

successful in exterminating the rabbits before they became masters of the situation, he was sure the colony would have good ground for congratulating itself.

MR. HENSMAN thought hon. members had forgotten that in 1883 that Council passed a Rabbit Act, and that by that Act it was made unlawful to keep, or to bring into the colony, any live rabbit. Exception, he believed, was made with respect to islands situate more than five miles from the mainland.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL: That Act has since been amended.

MR. HENSMAN said he had not been aware of it. He agreed with the hon. member for Kimberley that this was not one of those pressing matters requiring to be provided for on the Supplementary Estimates. The matter could not be regarded as one of particular urgency, calling for action between this and next November. Nor did he think the vote would have any practical effect. The motion was for "completing the eradication of rabbits in the colony." How were they going to prove that rabbits had been completely eradicated?

CAPTAIN FAWCETT said he had done all he could on his estate to encourage rabbits, but he could not make them grow. He believed it would be found impossible to make them grow in this colony. If they should happen to increase and multiply to any dangerous extent, he believed with the Colonial Secretary that the best remedy was—cats. If they kept cats in a cage, and fed them on rabbits for two or three generations, so as to give them an acquired taste for rabbit, and then let them loose they would play the deuce with all the rabbits in the place. Hon. members might laugh; but it was a known fact in England that if cats were fed for two or three generations on rabbits, and then turned loose into a rabbit warren, they would destroy all the rabbits in the place.

MR. McRAE thought the amount asked for was too small. He thought it ought to be £500 at least. It would be better to expend that amount now than have to spend £5,000 a few years hence. He thought the Government ought to do everything in its power to eradicate these rabbits, otherwise they might become a curse to the colony.

MR. RICHARDSON said he had been surprised at the trifling way in which some hon. members seemed to regard this most serious subject. Our neighbors did not so regard it. As for the object not being of sufficient urgency to justify the placing of this small sum on the Supplementary Estimates, he thought the hon. member for Kimberley must have economy on the brain, when he tried to have this paltry sum postponed for a few months, because the annual Estimates were not before them. The hon. member must be economy mad. There was no subject to his (Mr. Richardson's) mind that was more urgent and important; and he hoped the House would not be so foolish as to postpone the motion.

The address, upon being put, was adopted.

RE-ORGANISATION OF THE COLONIAL HOSPITAL.

MR. VENN, in accordance with notice, moved the following resolution—That in the opinion of this House it is desirable to popularise the facilities and advantages of the present Colonial Hospital, by extending its present system and forming it on somewhat similar basis to kindred institutions of the other Colonies, and that such basis should be mainly as follows:—

1. That a Board be appointed by the Governor, consisting of not more than five persons; not more than two of whom shall be medical men, and that the Governor have full power to fill up all vacancies as they may from time to time occur.

2. That the Board so constituted shall have power on approval of the Governor to make, alter, or amend rules and regulations for the proper working and administration of such Hospital.

3. That such regulations be the regulations of the Hospital.

4. That the first meeting of the Board shall be called together by the Governor, but all subsequent meetings and arrangements be determined by the Board.

5. That the Colonial Surgeon shall be *ex officio* Chairman of the Board, and in his absence such other person as the Board may elect.

6. That three members present at a meeting will form a quorum for transaction of business.

7. That all Hospital arrangements, staff, &c., be under the direct supervision of the Colonial Surgeon, subject to the approval of the Board.

8. That the Medical Staff of the Hospital shall, for the present, consist of the Colonial Surgeon, one Resident Medical Officer, and three Honorary Visiting Medical Officers.

9. That the Honorary Visiting Medical Officers shall be elected by the Board, subject to such rules as the Board may determine.

10. That Honorary Visiting Medical Officers be elected for 3 years, and be eligible for re-election, and shall give their gratuitous services in such manner and times as the Board may direct by regulations.

11. That each Honorary Visiting Medical Officer shall have the right of admission to not more than three patients at one time, respectively, to the Hospital, and shall have, for any surgical operation, full use of the Operating Ward, subject at all times to such rules and regulations as the Board may determine.

12. That all patients admitted to the Hospital, in a position to pay Hospital Fees, should pay the same.

13. That the funds for the general support and administration of the Hospital be provided out of the General Revenue of the Colony.

14. That at every Session of the Legislative Council the Hospital Board shall have laid upon the Table of the House a full copy of their Regulations, with amendments that are made each year; and also furnish a full and entire Report and Return of the general proceedings of the Hospital, signed by the Chairman.

The hon. member said he hoped the resolution was one which would receive the support of the House. He had been led to take this action from the report of the select committee appointed last year, and from what he had heard outside. The report of the select committee altogether supported the course he had taken in bringing certain definite resolutions before the House, to be acted upon by the Governor. The committee, it might be remembered, examined Dr. Waylen, Dr. Jameson, Dr. Thomson, Dr. Scott, Dr. Kenny, and others, and all the medical witnesses testified as to the

desirability of extending the present accommodation at the Colonial Hospital. When the report of the committee was brought up, the hon. member for Perth (Dr. Scott) moved an address, requesting the Government to take the necessary steps to give effect to the recommendations of the committee; but the Government was not likely to take action upon an abstract resolution like that of last year, and hence the present definite scheme, which in reality spoke for itself, and which he trusted would recommend itself to the good judgment of the House. If so, he felt certain the Government would act upon it. It had been suggested to him that it was rather a mistake to move in this matter just now, in view of the approaching change in the Constitution. But he had once or twice already protested against that being urged as a reason for putting off useful legislation, which they were quite capable of dealing with under the existing Constitution. This was a question that, to his mind, required their immediate attention. The new Constitution might possibly not eventuate for two or three years, but this hospital question called for immediate consideration; and, if action was not taken now in the direction indicated by the resolution now before the House, there was not the slightest doubt that a very radical change would be made when another form of Government came into force. He was not wedded entirely to every word of the resolution—not at all. It might occur to some hon. members, as regards the formation of the proposed Board, that the Legislature should have the right to appoint some of the members of the Board. He had considered that question from every point of view, and the conclusion he arrived at was that it would be better to have the Board formed in this manner, by the Governor, and constituted as stated in the resolution. But, rather than jeopardise the establishment of such a Board, he would waive his own feelings on that point, and bow to the opinion of the majority. It might be argued that in the other colonies the public hospitals are not supported solely by the Government, as the Colonial Hospital here was, but to a great extent by private contributions; and that therefore one could not apply the principle that prevailed under that dual system to

an institution supported entirely by the State. But he thought the great object to be gained was to throw open this hospital to other practitioners, besides the present Government staff, so as to give a stimulus to members of the profession, and also at the same time confer a great boon upon the suffering public. Although he had limited the number of patients for which each visiting medical officer might claim admission to three, that was simply done with a view to economy; otherwise we might be called upon to enlarge our hospital accommodation very considerably. He believed that at present they could make up about 50 beds in the hospital, but the average number of patients, according to the last returns, was only 20; so that if the three honorary visiting surgeons availed themselves of their full privilege to admit three patients each, the hospital beds would not all be occupied. He did not think the Colonial Surgeon would take any objection to the proposed scheme; it would tend to relieve him of a great deal of his present arduous duties, which would be shared in by the visiting surgeons. He might add—although he had not included it in the resolution—he thought it was very necessary we should have some system of training nurses in connection with the hospital, and he thought the Board of management might frame rules and regulations having that object in view. He placed the resolution before the House with entire confidence, and he hoped the various proposals would be criticised freely. Any amendment that might be suggested, he should meet, he hoped, in a proper spirit, and, if he felt it would be to the advantage of the colony and conduce to the better working of this institution, he should be only too glad to accept it. He should like to take the sense of the House as to whether the proposals embodied in the resolution had better be considered *seriatim*.

THE SPEAKER suggested that the hon. member should first move the substantive resolution, leaving the details to be dealt with afterwards, in their numerical order.

MR. VENN thereupon moved a resolution, as follows: "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable to popularise the facilities and advantages of the present Colonial Hospital, by extending

"its present system, and forming it on somewhat similar basis to kindred institutions in the other colonies."

MR. KEANE said he had much pleasure in seconding the resolution. He thought with the hon. member who had brought it forward that the scheme of re-organisation which he had sketched out would meet with general approval. He thought it was quite time that the chief hospital of the colony should be put on something like the same footing as the public hospitals of the sister colonies and similar institutions at home. The hon. member who brought forward the motion said it might possibly be urged that the proposed change in the Constitution ought to induce them to postpone dealing with this question at the present time. For his own part he did not see why the public should suffer on that account. He saw no objection himself to the matter being disposed of now; and he did not see what the question of constitutional change had to do with it.

MR. SCOTT said the proposals of the hon. member for Wellington would certainly have his support. He took a considerable amount of interest last year in gathering information with regard to the working of the present institution, and, though the committee of which he was a member found that to a great extent it was as satisfactory as existing circumstances would allow, still he thought the committee were somewhat of opinion that it would be advisable that the hospital should be managed by a Board, on the principle now suggested. It was considered that the advantage of having a Board of Management would to some extent popularise the institution in the eyes of those for whose benefit it was chiefly maintained. The idea prevalent at present amongst a large class of people, for whose use the hospital mainly existed, undoubtedly was that it was very much like a prison—a place to be avoided. From his own experience and intercourse with this class he had found this to be the general impression, and he was sure that every medical man, both in Perth and Fremantle, had found such to be the case. This feeling would be removed to a great extent if the hospital were managed by an independent Board—independent to a great extent of the Government—to whom the outside public might come

with their complaints. The proposal to have an outside honorary staff was also a good one, and one which he had always regarded as a desideratum. Patients, too, he was sure would regard this part of the scheme with approbation. Sick people generally liked to be attended by the doctor they had previously been under; and it would undoubtedly be a great boon to patients, in many cases, if their medical attendants could obtain admission for them into the hospital and attend upon them there. In many instances it was impossible to treat diseases properly in any other place than a hospital, where there was a staff of nurses. Nursing, perhaps, was a more important branch of hospital treatment than doctoring; and there were very few people who, unless they obtained admission to a hospital, could secure for themselves proper nursing during their sickness. There was another advantage that would accrue from the appointment of this honorary medical staff. It would act as a stimulus to the members of the profession, affording them as it would those opportunities for observation, and for diagnosing disease, which the profession enjoyed in the centres of population in other countries, and the want of which they felt very acutely here. At present, the members of the profession were admitted into this hospital simply through the courtesy of the Colonial Surgeon, and as a favor. He thought it would be a very great boon not only to the public but to the profession if there were an honorary visiting staff connected with the institution. It would entail no additional expense upon the colony, but rather the reverse, for, according to the terms of this resolution, the members of the visiting staff were to give their services gratuitously; and he was sure that many of them would only be too glad and thankful of the opportunity of doing so. Lastly, he thought that by appointing an independent Board of Management and having this honorary visiting staff, they would so popularise the institution that the general public would take a much greater interest in it, with the result that their benevolence and liberality would be stimulated, and we should soon have the institution regarded as an institution which the public were in duty bound to support by their voluntary contributions, as similar institutions were supported in

the mother country, and in the other colonies—perhaps more by the poorer class themselves, by their Hospital Sunday and Hospital Saturday collections and other means, than by the more wealthy sections of the community. He thought if our own hospital were popularised in the way here indicated, we should find in the course of a few years that instead of having to be supported entirely, as at present, by the State, it would be largely supported by voluntary contributions.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) pointed out that under our present paternal form of Government, the State in this colony had many responsibilities cast upon it, and many functions to discharge, which did not devolve upon the central Government in the other colonies, and that there would be some difficulty experienced in assimilating the management of our public institutions with the systems which obtained in those colonies. The Colonial Hospital was a case in point. Ever since its establishment this institution had been under the sole control of the Government, and supported entirely by State aid; and it had not been alleged that the system of management was essentially defective. A committee was appointed last year to deal with this question, and he could not find in the recommendations of that committee the seed or germ of which the present scheme was the growth. The other evening, in considering the question of the classification of clerks, the House in its wisdom determined that it would be well to wait for the approaching change in the Constitution before attempting to reform the civil service system; and he thought it would be impolitic and inexpedient to propose any radical changes at present in the system of management connected with this State hospital, seeing that it had been efficiently managed, on the existing lines, so far, under the present paternal form of Government. If an attempt were made to get in the thin end of the wedge for separating the management from the Government, it should be followed by calling upon the people themselves to contribute towards the upkeep of the institution. On no other ground could it be contended that the system of management should be assimilated with the system pursued in the other colonies. In Victoria these institutions received £1

from the State for every £1 subscribed by the supporters of the institution. In New South Wales they received £2 for every £1 voluntarily contributed by the public. In New Zealand, where a system of district hospitals was in operation, these hospitals in many instances were maintained by the district itself. He thought the principle, if admitted, was a good one, that the revenue of the colony should be relieved not only as regards the support of hospitals, but of many other public institutions, now supported entirely from State funds. But he thought this was a question that might well be left to stand over until we effected a change in the Constitution. He thought the present time was not opportune for proposing these violent changes in the system of management, and no reason had been urged for it by the Commission last year. No complaint had been made by the present operating staff that they were not capable of carrying on the work; and he could not see, looking at this hospital as an integral part of the Medical Establishment of the colony, why, until at any rate the public contributed directly towards its maintenance, the existing system should be abolished. When the public recognised the claims which such institutions had upon their private benevolence, and people came to contribute freely towards their support, then undoubtedly they should have a voice in their control. But he could not see at present why any departure should be taken in the organisation of this branch of the Medical Department, any more than in the organisation of any other branch of the public service. He hoped the House, upon a review of all the circumstances, would come to the conclusion that it would be inadvisable and impolitic at the present moment to recommend these changes, which he thought—as he had already said—should go hand in hand with the proposed change in the political institutions of the colony.

MR. LAYMAN was understood to say that the motion had his sincerest support. He did not see what the change in the Constitution had to do with it. He saw nothing to prevent this or any other useful measure from being adopted under the present form of Government. There might be some of the details of the scheme

which he would be inclined to disagree with, but he approved of the principle.

Mr. RANDELL said his sympathies were with the resolution, but he did not wish it to be understood for a moment that, in saying so, he was expressing or insinuating any kind of reflection upon the present management of the hospital, though it appeared from the report of the select committee of last year that certain alterations were desirable, which alterations he understood the Government intended carrying out. It was admitted that the institution was a public institution, and that every member of the community had a right to enter it, under certain conditions; and hence he thought every member of the community had an interest in the proper working of the institution, and that it should fulfil in the best possible way the purposes for which it existed. The difficulty that had met the committee last year was the fact that the institution was entirely supported out of public funds; and, at that time, he had been impressed with the difficulty of popularising such an institution in the sense of giving others besides the State a voice in its management. Since then, however, his views on that point had undergone some modification. Still he thought it was a difficult matter to deal with. Inasmuch as no contributions in the shape of voluntary assistance were made towards the support of the institution, they could hardly, he thought, expect the Government at once to allow a more popular element to enter into its management and control. This, however, was a difficulty which might, possibly, be surmounted. The principle had been admitted in several other important directions, of introducing outside influence in the management of our public institutions supported entirely out of public funds, such as the Central Board of Education, the Board of Immigration, and other bodies which to a certain extent had cast upon them the entire control of departments of the public service. He was quite sure that the hon. member for Wellington and those who were with him in this matter had no intention whatever of reflecting upon the Colonial Surgeon, who was at the head of this Establishment. They were all perfectly satisfied with his skill, and his desire to do the best in every possible way for the promotion of

the objects for which the institution existed; and he should imagine that the Colonial Surgeon himself would not have any serious objection to be assisted by other members of the profession in the treatment of those who had become inmates of the hospital. He certainly did think it would be in the interests of the public that other medical men in town should have the right—which they only had now as an act of courtesy—of entering this hospital and to treat their patients there; and it was only natural that the patients themselves should desire to have the attendance of their own doctor. To young practitioners especially it would be a great advantage if they were allowed to obtain that experience which they would gain if allowed to visit such an institution, affording, as it would, a larger and more varied sphere than they could possibly have in their own private practice. He also thought it would be to the advantage of the hospital staff to have at their command available professional opinion and assistance, which they could fall back upon in critical cases. With reference to the suggestion that we should wait for a change in the Constitution before attempting any other reform, he could hardly see that there was very much weight in it. If the necessity existed for any new movement, or any useful measure of reform, he thought the approach of a change in the Constitution was not a very good argument to use against the adoption of such measures—measures which in themselves were necessary. For his own part, he would prefer to see the matter quietly dealt with by the master hands who were accustomed to work the present Constitution than leave it to be entrusted to the prentice hands of those who would be called upon to work the new Constitution. He could hardly think that, amongst the hubbub and excitement that would then take place, and in view of the ambition of hon. members to become seated on Ministerial benches, such secondary objects as these would appeal very strongly—well, he would not say to their interests. He thought at any rate they would not be likely to receive much attention until things began to settle down, and the new constitutional machine got into smooth working order. In any case, he was in favor of the proposal to

popularise this institution by the appointment of an independent Board of Management. He thought the hon. member for Wellington, to whom they were indebted for this scheme, had been very conservative in his proposals; he had provided that the Governor should still have a very considerable control over the institution, the nomination of the members of the Board being entirely in his hands, and that the Colonial Surgeon should still be at the head of the establishment. He thought the hon. member had dealt with this matter in a spirit that would commend itself to all their minds. Under these circumstances he felt it to be his duty to support the hon. member's motion.

MR. MARMION said it was always with extreme regret that he opposed anything which on the face of it seemed to be a progressive movement, and which in itself was a good object. But what he complained of in this instance was that, whilst the hon. member who had brought forward this matter had himself possibly given the subject considerable attention, the hon. member had not perhaps called to his assistance others who would possibly have been well fitted to assist him in a matter like this. He was opposed to any cut-and-dried scheme being thrust upon them to capsize a public institution which had worked well for many years, and which at present was purely a State concern. At the present time this institution was supported and managed entirely out of public funds, and the whole staff consisted of servants of the State, paid by the State and appointed by the State. Now, however, at a moment's notice, the hon. member wished to bring forward a cut-and-dried scheme to revolutionise the whole establishment, by what he called "popularising" it,—although the establishment itself would still have to be supported out of public funds. Seeing that if the motion they were now asked to affirm would, if adopted, lead them to a consideration of the whole scheme, in all its details, which they were to be asked to deal with at one sitting, he thought the majority of hon. members would agree with him that it was too much altogether, and too important a subject altogether, to be settled off-hand in this way. If the hon. member had asked that during

the recess this question should be referred by the Governor to a Commission, to report next session as to the expediency and desirability of the scheme being entered upon—a Commission, with the Colonial Surgeon as its chairman, and two or three medical men upon it, and two or three other gentlemen known for their practical benevolence—a Commission that would have ample time to examine into details and to formulate a definite scheme of re-organisation—if the hon. member had done this, he should have been disposed to have gone with him. But to be asked, after the most perfunctory consideration, to accept a crude scheme like this, having for its object to revolutionise the whole system of management of an important public institution, was too much to expect from them. It was only twelve months ago that a select committee of the House sat on this very subject. That committee examined a number of medical witnesses, including the Colonial Surgeon himself, and the conclusion which it arrived at was, that it was inadvisable at that stage to make any great change. The particular reason which induced the committee to arrive at that conclusion was that the circumstances of the colony did not warrant such a change. Although they recognised that it might be desirable, when the colony became more populated and made further advance, and when the public manifested more readiness to support an institution of this kind by their own voluntary efforts, that the hospital might be re-organised, and placed upon a more popular basis, they considered that so long as the institution was wholly supported out of public funds and the whole system of management was that of an essentially Government institution, it would be undesirable, without a complete change in the management, to make an alteration in these matters of detail. It had been said that people at present looked upon the institution more in the light of a prison than of an hospital. He submitted that it was not because of the system of management, and it was not because it was a Government institution, that such an impression, if it existed, had been created, but simply because it was an establishment supported entirely by the State, and that those who became in-

mates of it placed themselves somewhat in the position of State paupers. If there was any likelihood of the public supplementing the efforts of the State by voluntary contributions towards the support of the institution, he would not have objected to this scheme being considered by the House. But the hon. member who had brought it forward wished to have all the advantages likely to accrue from popularising the institution, while at the same time he wished it to continue to be supported entirely out of public funds. He thought the hon. member might have left this institution alone until other institutions of the colony had been popularised, as the hon. member wished to see them popularised. In those days no doubt every liberal institution would flourish, every liberal movement would be supported, and he should hope that among the very first institutions that would benefit by the introduction of that enlightened policy would be the present Colonial Hospital, the only institution of the kind in the colony.

MR. HENSMAN said the attention of the House had been drawn to the report of the select committee of last year. There was nothing whatever in the report of that committee that went against the present resolution; on the contrary, that report led up directly to such a movement as that now before the House. The committee contemplated that as the population of the colony increased it would be necessary to effect various reforms in the system of management; and, happily, there had of late been a continual increase of population, and it was only natural that the public should desire to have some voice in the management of their hospital. It had been said that the hospital was supported by the Government alone. But what did that mean? It meant this—that the money of the people of this colony was voted by their representatives in that House for the support of this hospital. And all that the hon. member who had brought forward the motion wished was that this hospital, supported entirely by the money of the people, should do the greatest amount of benefit it could to the people. It had been suggested that we ought to wait for a change in the form of Government. He could not see the slightest similarity

himself between this question and that of the classification of clerks; the latter affected the service of the Government, whereas the former was simply a question of whether a public hospital could not be made more useful than it was at present. What the hon. member who had brought the matter forward wished was that this hospital should emerge from being a hospital supported and managed entirely by the State into a position in which it would be partly so supported, and partly by voluntary contributions, until eventually it would be maintained entirely by the subscriptions of the public. Great interest was now taken by the public in hospitals at home. These institutions were peculiarly the growth of modern benevolence and philanthropy—the result of the interest taken by the public in any institution when they felt they had some voice in its management. It was not a new principle here, the introduction of what he might call a popular element into the management of State institutions. The Board of Immigration, the Central Board of Education, the various Roads Boards—all of which were supported out of public funds—were managed by gentlemen unconnected with the Government. It might be said that the Colonial Surgeon did not agree with the scheme. But this was not a question of individual opinion, and he regretted that any personal element should have been introduced into it. The House was capable of forming its own opinion upon the subject, without in any way casting the slightest reflection upon the Colonial Surgeon or anyone else. The desire was to place the Colonial Surgeon in a far more important position, at the head of a body of his professional brethren. There was nothing that a lawyer desired more than a consultation with his brethren, and he believed it was the same with the medical profession; and he should imagine the Colonial Surgeon would not consider it was the slightest derogation to his dignity having to enter into consultation with some of his brother-practitioners, who might become members of this Hospital Board. He believed it would be beneficial to the doctors themselves to be thus brought into contact with each other, and, certainly, it would be most beneficial to the public. Objection had been made to the present proposals because they

were cut and dried. But what would have been said if the hon. member who had brought them forward had come before the House with some vague and general motion? Hon. members would have wanted at once to know something about the details of the scheme, and to see whether the scheme was one that was likely to work. It had also been suggested that the matter should be referred to a Commission. What need was there for that? What body of men could be more justly appointed upon a Commission than the members of that House? The resolution did not bind the House down to the details of the scheme. All it contemplated was that the details sketched should "mainly" form the basis of the proposed re-organisation. There would be no extra expense whatever; for, according to this scheme, the medical men's services would be honorary; and probably there would be competition, honorable competition, amongst the medical practitioners of Perth to be attached to this institution. He hoped the House would not be led away by any suggestion for putting off this question—or, at all events, from expressing an opinion, which was all that was asked for at present.

Mr. VENN thought the hon. member for Fremantle, who appeared to be the only member who was strenuously opposed to the proposal, was most illogical. The hon. member said if the public were to contribute to the support of this hospital he would not object to their having a voice in its management. Did the hon. member think the public were going to contribute until they had a voice in its management? The hon. member had not adduced, or attempted to adduce a single argument against the scheme itself, but contented himself by speaking generally as to the desirability of maintaining the present state of things. As to referring the matter to a Commission, that would be simply another way of shelving the question entirely. This would be the first step towards creating an interest on the part of the public in this institution, and it would educate them in the necessity of showing their practical sympathy with the institution by voluntarily contributing towards its support. As to waiting until the colony adopted another form of Government,

he should have thought that this would have been a graceful act on the part of the present Constitution to perform in these its dying days—an act which would confer an immense benefit upon the public, and be gratefully accepted by them as a parting gift from a Government that was tottering to its grave, and which would prevent the Constitution from being consigned to its tomb "unwept, unhonored, and unsung."

The motion was then put, and, upon a division, there appeared:—

Ayes	...	...	...	10
Noes	...	...	...	11

Majority against ... 1

AYES.	NOES.
Captain Fawcett	Mr. E. R. Brockman
Mr. Housman	Mr. Congdon
Mr. Keane	Mr. Forrest
Mr. Layman	Hon. Sir M. Fraser
Mr. Loton	Mr. Harper
Mr. Randall	Mr. James
Mr. Richardson	Mr. Marmion
Mr. Scott	Mr. McRae
Mr. Sholl	Mr. Pearce
Mr. Venn (Teller.)	Hon. C. N. Warton
	Hon. J. A. Wright
	(Teller.)

The motion was therefore negatived.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1887.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of the Supplementary Estimates for 1887.

Works and Buildings—(adjourned debate):

Mr. SHOLL said he should like the Commissioner of Railways to give the committee some information as to the item "Reservoir at Clackline, and Water Supply, £1,200." This seemed a large sum of money.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said he could not do better than read, for the information of the hon. member, a portion of his report upon the subject of water supply, for the locomotives, on the Eastern Railway, which was one of the most serious items of expenditure they had to meet. In his report he said: "This question of water supply for our engines is a most serious one. Indeed during last summer it threatened for some time to stop the service; and, had not immediate steps been taken to obtain a proper supply at York and Beverley by placing steam pumps at pools in the

"Avon (although unfortunately at some distance from our stations) the consequence would have been that we should have been compelled at all events to reduce the number of trains just when there was most traffic, through the greater part of our wells having given out entirely. Unfortunately this present year shows no improvement in the wells, and we are compelled to make other and more reliable arrangements. More watering stations are still required, one especially at the Clackline Junction to supply the engines both for the main and branch lines. I propose at this place to construct an impounding reservoir to catch the water from the Clackline Gully, the ground permitting of this being done easily, and at an estimated cost of about £800. Unless this be done I fear it will not be possible to work the Newcastle line, at all events with safety or economy. By this means I hope to be able to diminish this costly item of expenditure, which otherwise threatens to increase far out of proportion with our mileage. Unless indeed something be done in the matter at once, I dread that at any time we may be compelled to reduce our train service, or even to suspend it for want of water."

MR. SHOLL asked what was the meaning of the next item, "Cottages for men, Beverley, £1,300?"

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said he found it was impossible to find any place for his men to live at Beverley. They required cottage room for four men, with their families, and, although they had offered to pay a large rental if anyone would build houses for them, no one seemed inclined to do so; and the consequence was these men with their families had to live at a public house. It was now proposed to build them some cottages to live in.

MR. SHOLL said he had already opposed the practice of providing residences for public officers, such as magistrates, and he should object to houses being built for these railway men. He moved that the item be struck out.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said there was no analogy whatever between providing free quarters for Resident Magis-

trates and providing cottages for these railway men, who would have to pay rent for them.

MR. A. FORREST believed the vote was required, and if the Commissioner would reduce it one half—which would be quite enough for this year—he should support it.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) pointed out that it would be more economical to let the contract for the four cottages at once, rather than for only a couple of them. Although the whole vote might not be required before the end of the year, he could not let the contract unless the whole amount was authorised.

The motion to strike out the item was negatived.

MR. PARKER thought the item, "Tank, gas fittings, etc., new workshops, Fremantle, £420," was a very large item for gas fittings.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said the tank was required for watering the locomotives, and it would be a very large one, costing probably £100. The gas fittings were required to enable the men in the railway workshops to work at night, and these would probably cost not less than about £300.

MR. PARKER said if it took as much as £300 to provide the fittings, the gas bill would be something gigantic, he should imagine. Surely the department could do without these gas fittings until the end of the year. They had done with oil hitherto.

MR. SHOLL thought they could do with oil again, and he should move that this item be omitted.

The committee divided on the motion to omit the vote, the result being—

Ayes ...	...	...	10
Noes ...	...	...	14

Majority against ... 4

AYES.

Mr. H. Brockman
Mr. Forrest
Mr. Harper
Mr. Hensman
Mr. Layman
Mr. MacRae
Mr. Parker
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Scott
Mr. Sholl (Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. E. E. Brockman
Mr. Congdon
Captain Fawcett
Hon. Sir M. Fraser
Mr. James
Mr. Keane
Mr. Loton
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Pearse
Mr. Randell
Hon. J. G. Lee Steere
Mr. Venn
Hon. C. N. Warton
Hon. J. A. Wright

(Teller.)

MR. MARMION asked if there was any pressing necessity for including the item "Ashburton police station, £600," in these Supplementary Estimates?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said it was required to provide accommodation for native prisoners.

MR. McRAE thought they could do very well without a police station at the Ashburton for the next six months.

MR. MARMION moved that the item be struck out; which was agreed to.

MR. SHOLL asked what repairs were wanted to the Geraldton jetty, for which a vote of £400 was asked?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said that according to the report of the Resident Engineer there were about fifty piles broken, which would require replacing, and it was proposed to make some alterations for the accommodation of the crane.

MR. SHOLL thought these repairs might stand over for six months.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright): If the hon. member chooses to take the responsibility, I shall have nothing to say to it.

MR. KEANE said the jetty, to his knowledge, was in a very dilapidated condition, and the sooner the repairs were effected the better, both on the score of economy and safety.

The item was agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said it was necessary that he should move to increase the item, "Minor Works and Services," from £1,500 to £2,000; which it was believed would not be more than was required to meet the demands on the department, from all quarters.

MR. PARKER said that so far from increasing the vote he would move that it be struck out altogether. It appeared to him that the Government had been instructing their Resident Engineers all over the colony to see what possible expenditure they could put upon these Supplementary Estimates; and when the House had voted nearly all these specific items, they were now asked to vote an additional £2,000 for minor works, too numerous to mention. If they gave the Director of Public Works this additional vote, for no specific purpose, to spend as

he liked, and upon what he liked, he would be able to carry out the works which the committee had struck out, and they might as well have let them remain.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright): To say that I would spend this money upon works rejected by the committee is simply to impute dishonesty to me. This sum is actually required to meet contingencies. Every day requisitions are received for something or other to be done, which it would be impossible to foresee. As an instance, only to-day £280 is asked for, for repairs to the Fremantle Lunatic Asylum. If I placed this amount on the Estimates hon. members would only cavil at it and would probably strike it out. Anyone would think that I was going to spend this money for the mere pleasure of spending it.

MR. SCOTT said instead of the attack coming from that side of the House it always came from the other side. Hon. members wanted to cut down these Estimates. Supplementary Estimates should be drawn as nearly as possible to the amount required, and should consist of purely unforeseen expenditure. The Commissioner said if he had put down £280 for the Fremantle Lunatic Asylum it would be cavilled at. Had not members a right to cavil—let them cavil whether the leader of the House called it "balderdash," or "rot," or anything else. [Cries of "Drop that" and "Order."] The attack always came from the other side, but whether members cavilled or not, he was sure no one impugned the honesty or *bona fides* of the Commissioner.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton) said that during his life, as a member of the House of Commons, he had seen Estimates for from £80,000,000 to £100,000,000 passed without anything like the cutting down which had taken place in that Council. Under Responsible Government it would be impossible for any ministry to remain in power if their Estimates were cut down as these had been.

MR. PARKER said it had been stated that £280 was required for the Fremantle Lunatic Asylum, but that the amount was not put down because members would cavil at it. Apparently then the vote for "Minor Works," &c., was to be spent on items the House would not

approve of. That being so, he was not prepared to vote the money. He saw that £5,000 was voted for this item last session, and he would like to know how much of it was misspent. He thought this vote had been abused enough already. There were a number of works paid for out of it which in his opinion ought to have been the subject of a separate vote,—a gun-shed, for instance, for the Artillery, which cost some hundreds of pounds. There was still a balance of £1,500 unexpended from last year's vote, which ought to be enough until the end of the year.

MR. HENSMAN said that a more extraordinary reason for asking for a vote he had never heard of. That House had a duty cast upon it, as well as the Government. The Attorney General had referred to the Estimates in England of £100,000,000 not being cut down; but probably that was because they were so carefully arranged that the House could not do it. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL: A Government majority.] The present vote looked like an attempt to make up any small item that had been struck out. There was no intention, however, on the part of hon. members to impute any dishonesty to the Commissioner.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said he thought the words used by Mr. Parker would bear the interpretation put upon them by him. They would recollect that since one o'clock yesterday he had been under the lash of hon. members opposite, and every vote he had asked for had been cut to pieces as fast as possible. As to the £280 for the Lunatic Asylum, it was not decided yet to spend it; he only gave that as an instance.

MR. KEANE thought a department like that of Public Works could not carry on without petty cash.

MR. RANDELL thought they could trust the Commissioner with this money. He was not bound to spend it all, and he was quite certain it would not be spent unless it was considered necessary. If they were going to have retrenchment, it should be discriminating retrenchment at all events.

MR. PARKER said that £627 was spent out of this vote last year for the Fremantle Lunatic Asylum; there was

also a quarantine vote of £500 and other large items, including salaries of draughtsmen, spent out of the vote. When amounts like these were so expended, it showed that the votes were liable to abuse. Why should not hon. members have an opportunity of voting these items separately?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said it was impossible to foresee every item of expenditure so as to include it in the Estimates, and particularly so with regard to the Works Department; and he thought it was the duty of the Government to provide a margin, rather than to fall back upon the Finance Committee for every petty item.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said, as to the gun-shed, there were refunds to meet that expenditure. As regards draughtsmen employed on public works, they were paid by the hour. Those who were employed on works constructed out of loan funds were paid out of those funds; those who were employed on "minor works" were paid for out of that vote; which he believed was the correct way of keeping these accounts. These men were only temporarily employed.

MR. PARKER thought they ought to be paid by salary, and placed on the staff. He objected to employing outsiders in this way. It appeared to him we already had a gigantic staff connected with this department, and he did not see the object of keeping such a large staff if they had to go to outsiders to do the necessary work—especially when the House had no control over the amounts paid to these men.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said there was only one draughtsman on the staff of the Works Department, and it was considered more economical to employ occasional draughtsmen than to have a large staff who might have little or nothing to do a great deal of their time.

The committee divided upon the motion to strike out the vote; the numbers being—

Ayes	8
Noes	10
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Majority against	2

AYES.
Mr. H. Brockman
Mr. Hensman
Mr. Layman
Mr. Lotoa
Mr. Parker
Mr. Scott
Mr. Sholl
Mr. Forrest (Teller.)

NOES.
Mr. E. R. Brockman
Hon. Sir M. Fraser
Mr. Harper
Mr. James
Mr. Keane
Mr. Randall
Hon. J. G. Lee Steere
Mr. Venn
Hon. C. N. Warton
Hon. J. A. Wright
(Teller.)

Mr. PARKER then moved to reduce the vote by £500. He had already, he said, pointed out that the vote was liable to be abused, and, in his opinion, had been abused. Out of last year's vote, in addition to what he had already mentioned, no less than £627 was spent upon the Lunatic Asylum. He was quite sure it never was the intention of the House that such items as that should come out of the vote for "minor works."

The motion to reduce the vote by £500 was then put, and, upon a division, the numbers were—

Ayes ... 9

Noes ... 8

Majority for ... 1

AYES.
Mr. H. Brockman
Mr. Forrest
Mr. Harper
Mr. Hensman
Mr. Layman
Mr. Lotoa
Mr. Scott
Mr. Sholl
Mr. Parker (Teller.)

NOES.
Mr. E. R. Brockman
Hon. Sir M. Fraser
Mr. James
Mr. Keane
Mr. Randall
Hon. J. G. Lee Steere
Hon. C. N. Warton
Hon. J. A. Wright
(Teller.)

Question—That a sum not exceeding £15,700 be granted to "Works and Buildings"—put and passed.

Progress was then reported, leave being given to sit again next day.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Thursday, 4th August, 1887.

Supplementary Estimates, 1887: further consideration in committee—Message (No. 23): Assenting to Bills—Message (No. 23): Vote for dealing with the Rabbit Pest—Fremantle Harbor Works (Message No. 23)—Clackline-Newcastle Railway Bill: in committee—Coastal Steam Service: Renewal of Contract (Message No. 3)—"Hansard" Reports: adjourned debate—Excess Bill, 1886 (amended bill): referred to a select committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1887.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of the Supplementary Estimates, 1887.

Miscellaneous, £6,518 6s. 8d.:

Mr. SHOLL, referring to the item "Travelling expenses of officials, £1,500," said he had already asked for a return relating to this vote, but, through an oversight on the part of the Auditor General, all the information he had asked for was not supplied; therefore he would suggest that the consideration of this item be postponed until the information he had asked for had been furnished. It was a vote which he considered was very much abused, and it was increasing year by year, at a very great rate. He had taken the trouble to go back some years, to see how the vote had been increasing. He found that in 1884 the sum voted by the House for travelling expenses of officials was £1,100, and the Finance Committee afterwards voted £165—making £1,165 in that year. In 1885 the sum voted on the annual Estimates was £1,200, in addition to which there was another £400 voted on the Supplementary Estimates, besides £254 sanctioned by the Finance Committee,—making a total of £1,854, or £689 in excess of the previous year. In 1886, the sum voted on the Estimates-in-chief was £1,200, and there was a further sum of £700 voted on the Supplementary Estimates, in addition to which the Finance Committee voted £931 16s. 8d., making a total of £2,831 16s. 8d., or nearly £1,000 more than in the preceding year. On last year's Estimates £1,800 was voted under this head, and on the Supplementary Estimates now before them