

"term not exceeding three months, with "or without hard labor." Clause 3 provides that "subject to the provisions of "Part II. of the principal Act, any employer of an aboriginal who shall be "guilty of any breach of a contract "under the principal Act shall, upon the "complaint of any Justice of the Peace, "Protector of Aborigines, or other "person, and upon conviction before any "Justice of the Peace, forfeit and pay a "sum not exceeding Twenty pounds," and clause 4 provides that "it shall not "be obligatory upon any member of the "police force to serve any summons or "execute any warrant of arrest against "an aboriginal, in respect of any offence "under section two of this Act, beyond a "distance of fifty miles from the place "where such summons or warrant was "issued, except when specially directed "by a Resident Magistrate."

Question—put and passed.

PATENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

This Bill was considered in committee and agreed to without amendment.

BANKRUPTCY BILL.

This Bill was considered in committee and agreed to without amendment.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House at 4:30 o'clock p.m. adjourned until Friday, 19th February, at 3 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 16th February, 1892.

Masters and Servants Act: third reading—Estimates, 1892: further considered in Committee of Supply—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 2:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

MASTERS AND SERVANTS ACT.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ESTIMATES, 1892.

The House went into Committee of Supply for the further consideration of the Estimates for 1892.

Educational, £13,625 :

MR. PARKER believed that this educational vote was expended under the direction of a Board, which was established under the Elementary Education Act, 1871, and that this Board also received certain school fees. He did not know whether the Board ever furnished any account of the money so received, but, any way, this sum was expended by the Board, which apparently was not responsible to that House. Under the old Constitution, no doubt, it was all very well to have these Boards, but under the system of Government which prevailed at the present time, which was essentially one of Ministerial responsibility to the members of that House and the country at large, he thought it was obvious that these irresponsible Boards should cease to exist, and that there should be some Minister who should be responsible to the House for the funds voted every year, and for the due carrying out of the Education Act, and who might be questioned in the House, and account for the doings of the Government in relation to educational matters, and tell them all about the progress of education in the colony. He thought it was high time that this irresponsible Board should be disestablished, and make way for some Minister directly responsible to the Legislature for the administration of these funds. He knew full well that they could not expect

the Government to institute and carry out all these reforms in a moment; it necessarily must take some time; but he trusted that the Premier would give the House an assurance that before the next session of the Legislature the Government will consider this matter, and will be prepared to bring in a bill to carry out the suggestions he had made, either by amending the present Act or otherwise. There was another matter he would like to speak upon, and that was the University Exhibitions. He noticed there was only £200 on the Estimates for these exhibitions this year, which would be required for the two exhibitions now running; he did not know whether it was the intention of the Government to abolish these exhibitions.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We said so last year.

MR. PARKER said if such was the intention, he could only say he was very strongly opposed to it, for these exhibitions had been a success, he thought, so far. Up to the present, four of the youths of the colony had gone to the mother country and entered universities there, and he had no doubt that all of them would become a credit to the colony. He believed he was correct in saying that not one of them would have gone to a University had it not been for this exhibition of £100 a year. This was essentially a grant to the poorer classes of persons. A rich parent would not care a bit for this £100; if he intended to send his boy to a University he would do so, without this exhibition. Therefore it was essentially a vote for assisting the poorer class of parents, who might have a particularly bright and intelligent lad who, with a little assistance would be likely to make himself a name in the professional or the political world, and become a credit to the colony. That was certainly the intention of the Legislature when it established these exhibitions some years ago.

MR. RICHARDSON: Why confine it to the High School?

MR. PARKER said it was not confined to the High School. These exhibitions were open to any boy attending any school in the colony, private or public.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): As a matter of fact, they have always gone to the High School.

MR. PARKER: They were not confined to that school. Any boy attending any school in any part of the colony could compete for them. It was true they had gone to High School boys in the past, because other schools had not competed for them. He believed there had been a very good school recently established at Albany, and he was told by the master of that school, who, he believed, was an excellent and highly-qualified teacher, that it was his intention to compete against the High School, and that he had some youths well qualified to compete for these exhibitions. They also knew there was another school at Fremantle with an excellent reputation, and he imagined that school would not be long without having some boys qualified to compete for this scholastic prize. As he had said, these exhibitions were open to every boy in the colony, unlike the High School scholarships, which were confined to that particular institution; and it was intended to assist parents of the poorer class, who might not otherwise be able to give a boy, who gave promise of distinguishing himself as a scholar, an opportunity of obtaining a university education. That was the object in view when these exhibitions were founded at the public expense, and there was nothing unfair about it. We were expending thousands of pounds annually in providing the youth of the colony with what were called the rudiments of Education. We also voted £500 a year for a High School, and there was nothing incongruous in their providing these University exhibitions. He thought it was a very unfortunate thing if the introduction of Responsible Government was to see this vote struck off the Estimates. Of course it was impossible for members to replace the vote on the Estimates, but he hoped there would be such an expression of opinion on the subject that the Government would restore the vote, so that one West Australian boy at least might every year have a chance of going to the mother country for a University training.

MR. RICHARDSON: It is still on these Estimates.

MR. PARKER: No. The £200 now on the Estimates was already pledged. There were two colonial boys now receiving a University education in Eng-

land, who had gained this exhibition, and who were entitled to £100 a year until their term expired. There was no provision made for any fresh exhibition, and the Premier had told them that the Government did not intend to put it on any more. He hoped, however, there would be such an expression of opinion on the subject that the Government might be induced to reconsider the matter. After all, £100 a year was a mere nothing to the colony, while on the other hand it would be a great assistance to people of limited means who might have a promising lad to whom they would like to give a University education. Some of these youths might yet become a credit to the colony, and attain distinctions that would shed a lustre upon it. He therefore hoped there would be such a strong opinion on the subject that the Government would be induced to continue these exhibitions, and do this much to promote the cause of higher education.

MR. RICHARDSON said no doubt there was a great deal in what had been said by the hon. member for York, that it was desirable this vote should be continued. While on the subject, he should also like to see these High School scholarships thrown more open. He did not see why they should not be open to any school in the colony, like the University exhibitions. Why should they be limited to the High School? The answer perhaps would be that that institution was the only school of the kind that was endowed by the State. But all our elementary schools were endowed by the State, and he did not think there was any principle of equity in confining these scholarships to one particular school.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it had been publicly stated and notified that the Government did not intend to provide these University exhibitions in the future, and he believed the reason for doing so was the very strong expression of opinion on the subject in that House, if he remembered rightly, last session. It had not, he believed, worked well. So far as he remembered, in almost every case in which an exhibition had been given, there had been no competition. A single boy had been the only candidate, and in many cases a very poor candidate; so he

understood. At any rate he got his £100 a year from the colony for three years. Therefore he did not think the hon. member was quite right in saying that these exhibitions had been a complete success in the past. Nor did he think it was right to say that these exhibitions had benefited the poorer classes. Whatever may have been the intention of the Legislature in establishing them, he did not think it could be said that the boys who had obtained these exhibitions were boys of the poorer class. In the three instances he knew of, the boys certainly did not belong to what might be called the poorer class; they belonged to parents who ought to, and he thought could, have well afforded sending them to a University. In one case, he knew the parents would have done so, if they desired. He thought another reason why members were opposed to the continuation of the grant was that there really was no competition for it. One solitary lad came forward, and the examiners passed him through; as he had made an effort, they thought they would give him the benefit of it. To say that such a test was a success was absurd. He thought it was a mistake to have these exhibitions connected with universities out of the colony. If we had a university in the colony, he thought it would be a good thing to have them; but he did not think the country ought to be called upon, in our present circumstances, to undertake the expense of sending boys to England to be educated. These were the reasons urged by members who opposed the grant last year, and they were the reasons which had actuated the Government in deciding—in the present circumstances of the colony, at any rate—that they would not continue these exhibitions. He would much rather see scholarships to our own schools, or to the Perth High School, than have these exhibitions to universities abroad. No doubt there was some competition for the scholarships, from different parts of the colony, and he thought that in maintaining these scholarships the Government were doing all that could be expected of them in this direction.

MR. RICHARDSON: Why confine them to the Perth High School?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he was not aware why they should be confined to that school, more than

this, that the High School was an institution founded by statute and subsidised by the country; and it was supposed to be the highest educational establishment in the colony. He did not know whether they should give scholarships open to other schools; he was afraid it would be difficult to draw the line, once they departed from the present system. With reference to the educational grant generally, and the point referred to by the hon. member for York, the matter had been considered by the Government. They were not in any particular hurry to tackle this education question, nor were they particularly desirous of taking the whole responsibility on their shoulders of breaking up the present system, until at any rate they had some expression of opinion from outside, desiring them to do so. It was not a task that was likely to give any Ministry much ease, but on the contrary a great deal of trouble; and, so long as the community was satisfied—and he had not heard any complaints, himself, as to the way the Act was administered at present—he did not think it was for the Government to rush in and break up a state of affairs that on the whole appeared to be giving satisfaction to the community.

MR. MOLLOY said, with reference to the suggestion of the hon. member for York, that the present school boards should be abolished, he did not know that there was any great objection to these boards, considering the way they were at present constituted. They were thoroughly representative bodies, and each religious denomination was represented on them.

MR. PARKER: Pardon me; I did not propose to abolish these District Boards, but the Central Board.

MR. MOLLOY said that being so he would say no more about it. With regard to other suggestions, that the University exhibitions should be continued, the Premier told them that there had been no competition for these exhibitions; that the examinations were generally limited to one boy; and that it was not a very creditable examination that was passed. All he (Mr. Molloy) could say was that, to his own knowledge, one of these boys at any rate, if he did not pass a very creditable examination here, had

fulfilled the object of these exhibitions when he went to England, for he believed that in every instance there he had passed with honors. It could hardly, therefore, be said that these exhibitions had been a failure, and he thought it would be a very wise provision to continue them. He would point this out: whether a boy passed a creditable examination here or not, he did not become entitled to one of these exhibitions until he matriculated as an undergraduate at some University. Therefore the candidate must, at any rate, be qualified to pass a matriculation examination at one of the English universities before he could claim any portion of this grant.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said, with regard to this High School subsidy, he thought it should be insisted that if this State subsidy was to be continued to this school, it should be a High School in reality, and not merely a High School in name. He thought that before a boy was admitted to this school he should be able to pass a certain examination. This High School, at present, was simply a preparatory school, open to children of any age almost. So far as elementary education was concerned, they subsidised other schools to provide that standard of education; and they ought to insist upon a higher standard at this High School, and that there should be a sort of matriculation examination before a boy could be admitted to it. They did not want a High School to compete with the elementary schools. With regard to the university exhibitions, he did not exactly know what course was followed, but he understood masters of schools found very great difficulty in getting the examination papers, when they had a smart scholar whom they wished to compete. On one occasion, he was told, a schoolmaster was absolutely unable to obtain the necessary information as to these examinations. He did not know to whom masters of schools had to apply for the information, but it appeared to him that the way things were now managed the High School scholars had an advantage over the scholars of any other school in this respect. This was a matter that should not be lost sight of. An opportunity should be given to all schools throughout the colony to compete for these exhibitions, and every information should

be easily available as to the examinations.

Vote agreed to.

Registry Department, £660 :

Put and passed.

Charitable Institutions, £9,206 :

Put and passed.

Government Gardens, £391 2s. :

MR. SIMPSON asked the reason for the reduction in this vote from £460 to £391 2s.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said this was all that had been asked for by the department which had charge of the vote.

Defences, £13,795 12s. 9d. :

MR. TRAYLEN asked whether the colony was considered to be in such imminent danger of attack that it was necessary to have a Commandant at £500 a year ?

MR. QUINLAN questioned whether the Government would be able to get a competent man for £500. If they could he thought it would be money well spent, and result in our having a better defence force. At present there was not sufficient encouragement for the men to turn out, and they became unconcerned ; but a really competent and experienced Commandant would infuse new life into the force. He should also like to see the band allowance increased. They all knew the bandmaster at Perth was an excellent man, yet he only received a paltry sum of £60 a year ; whereas if we got a man from England we should probably have to pay him £200 a year, and get nothing more for it.

MR. MOLLOY failed to see the necessity for this item of £500 for a Commandant, when we were now only paying £100. It was notorious, from our experiences in the past with regard to imported Commandants, that they had turned out failures. He thought the force was in quite as efficient a state under the present Commandant, at £100 a year, as it was previously when we had a Commandant who received £500 a year. He knew that many years ago, in the early days of the force, when the commanding officer received nothing at all, the Volunteer Force then, if not so numerous, was more efficient in its drill, etc., than it was when we paid £500 a year for an ornamental Commandant. He thought this item

might be reduced, and the colony suffer nothing by it.

MR. A. FORREST said that almost ever since he had been a member of the House he had objected to this Volunteer vote, and he had generally moved that it should be reduced ; but he thought that times had now altered. We were going in for fortifications at Albany and also at Fremantle, and, after spending thousands of pounds in fortifying these places, it would be absolutely necessary to have a defence force to look after these works. Had it not been that the colony was committed to these fortification works, he should certainly have moved to reduce several of these items. But now that we are fortifying both Albany and Fremantle—

MR. R. F. SHOLL : What is there to defend at Fremantle ?

MR. A. FORREST said he would leave his hon. friend the member for North Fremantle to answer that. As we were fortifying these two places, it appeared to him it would be necessary to have an officer who would be able to devote the whole of his time to his duties. No doubt the present Commandant, considering his other official duties, had done the work well, so far ; but it would be impossible for him to look after these fortifications and the Volunteer Force all over the colony, with his other duties to attend to. It was no use our voting £13,000 a year for a defence force unless we had somebody to look after it.

MR. PARKER asked whether these fortifications at Fremantle had been agreed to by the House ?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said they had, by a resolution of the House, two or three years ago.

MR. DE HAMEL said it appeared to him that the whole Volunteer service of the colony required reorganising, and putting on a thoroughly efficient footing. At the present moment it was an absolute case of playing at soldiering, and tossing this money away. The money that was voted every year for the maintenance of the Volunteers—he spoke deliberately—was money thrown away. The officers had no power to compel the men to attend any parade ; the men took little or no interest in the movement ; and if you were to take the whole of the various Volunteer corps of the colony you would

find they were all undermanned and under-officered. He believed that at Fremantle there were only one or two officers left, and at Perth the number was altogether insufficient, and it was the same in other places. It was absolutely necessary, if we wanted an efficient force, that we should have an efficient Commandant, but it was also necessary, in the first place, that the whole service should be reorganised. One thing was certain: £500 was not sufficient to secure for us a thoroughly good Commandant, a really experienced man to take charge, and to put the whole of our forces in the position they should be in. But we must have the service reorganised first. For the last two years there had been a demand for reorganisation, and a demand for the men to be paid. They had been told that the force was going to be reorganised, and men would not join until they knew what their position would be, and whether the force was going to be converted into a militia, or what. As to the capitation and band allowances, he thought we were wasting money in this direction, and he would sooner see the money spent in increasing the efficiency of the force. The men would have to be paid sooner or later, and the force reorganised on a different basis; and the question was whether this should not be done before the Commandant was appointed. He had thought the Government would have been prepared to lay before the House this session some scheme of reorganisation, and it was a great disappointment to many Volunteers that this had not been done, as they expected it would.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Nothing has been said about it to the Government.

MR. DE HAMEL said there was a general belief all over the colony—how it got about he did not know—that the Government had some scheme of reorganisation prepared; and, until this scheme was brought forward, the Volunteer Force was simply stagnating, and the money voted for its support was to a very large extent thrown away. The whole thing wanted reorganising, and the sooner this was done the better. There was going to be a Commandant at Albany in charge of the fortifications there, and there was going to be a Com-

mandant of Volunteers, and he should like to ask who was going to be chief of the two Commandants. He believed the Albany one was to be jointly appointed by the other colonies, who had joined this colony for purposes of federal defence; and he should like to know whether this officer was going to boss our own volunteer service or militia service (whichever it was going to be). He thought we should secure for our own Commandant an officer of superior rank in the Queen's Army, otherwise we should find ourselves in a very peculiar position. The Albany Commandant would be able to snap his fingers at our own Commandant, unless he was of a higher rank. But the first thing necessary was to reorganise the whole force. He thought the House should appoint a Commission to inquire into and settle this question, with the view of organising a paid force, that would be a credit to the colony, and make it a compulsory service as in England. Until that reorganisation scheme was placed before them, he really did not see any good in appointing a Commandant.

MR. QUINLAN said as to reorganising he entirely agreed with the hon. member, but he thought the hon. member had got hold of the wrong end of the stick, if he proposed to reduce the band allowances and the capitation money. It also appeared to him that we required a properly qualified officer as Commandant to reorganise the force, instead of reorganising the force first, and then appointing a Commandant.

MR. COOKWORTHY said he perfectly agreed with the hon. member for Albany as to the status of the Commandant at Albany. He did not know what the rank and status of this officer would be, and he thought the House ought to be enlightened on that point. There was £1,000 on the Estimates for the maintenance of a garrison at Albany, and he should like to know under whose control that garrison was to be. Was the officer in command to receive his orders from Melbourne or from the Government of this colony, through our own Commandant? If from Melbourne it would be an *imperium in imperio*, and would work badly.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the arrangements connected with the garrison at King George's Sound had not

yet been completed, nor could he tell the House the position or rank of the officer to be appointed to take charge. Probably he would be a subaltern, but the matter had not yet been definitely settled. It would be within the knowledge of members that under this system of federal defence agreed upon between the colonies, our contribution towards the construction of the forts here was fixed at £5,000, out of some £13,000 or £14,000, and we paid one-fourth of the cost of their upkeep, the other colonies contributing the rest. So that it was not altogether a matter that concerned ourselves alone. All the other colonies were contributing to it. But the House might rest assured that the arrangements that would be come to would be entirely satisfactory to this colony. He could not say more at present, as the arrangements were only in progress. But he was positive there would be no desire on the part of the other colonies in any way to interfere with this colony. All would work amicably in the interest of federal defence. He thought it showed the desire of the other colonies to work amicably with us in this matter when we found them willing to bear the larger amount of the cost of the construction of these forts at King George's Sound, and also the larger share of the cost of maintenance.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it had always been a moot question in that House whether this Volunteer vote should be continued or not, and there had been a strong feeling in favor of striking it out altogether. He had been opposed to the vote himself in the past; but now that we were committed to these fortifications and defence works, it would be necessary to obtain the services of someone capable of superintending our defence forces. Hitherto, however, there was no doubt the whole vote had caused a great deal of dissatisfaction, and there was a general feeling that we were not getting our money's worth. Some time ago a Staff Drill Instructor was imported from home—a very capable man, who did a great deal of good; but somehow or other that officer (as they had seen from an illustrated paper) had of late developed into a full-blown General, with feathers and a cocked hat, and a most gorgeous uniform, and a long list of battles he had fought, and wonderful deeds

he had performed. He did not know whether this distinguished officer now performed the humble duties of a drill instructor. He understood he did not, and probably this was the reason why the Volunteer Force was not as efficient as it ought to be. He noticed it was now proposed to have another drill instructor for Fremantle. If this officer was going to rise in the ranks like the other one did, and become a full-blown General, we should soon have no end of Generals in this colony. Perhaps, from that point of view, the money would be well spent, for he was sure no European Power would ever dream of attacking us when they found we had so many distinguished officers amongst us. As to the fortifications at Fremantle, the Premier said these were undertaken in accordance with a resolution of that House. He had just glanced at the debate that took place on that occasion—he had not had time to read it through—but it was never anticipated at that time that these fortifications were going to cost so much as was down for them on these Estimates, £4,700. As a member of the Finance Committee he knew that, although the Imperial Government had supplied us with guns for the battery, they had not provided the carriages for mounting them, and the Finance Committee had to vote the money—£2,000, he believed.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the resolution of the House was in these terms: "That it is desirable that the defence of Fremantle, as typified in His Excellency's Message should be proceeded with." This was in 1889. On reference to His Excellency's Message, which would be found on page 31 of the "Votes and Proceedings" for that year, it would be seen that it was there distinctly stated that these forts at Fremantle were estimated to cost £4,066. The hon. member was therefore wrong in saying that when the House agreed to the resolution it had no idea these fortifications were going to cost so much.

MR. SYMON said, with regard to the statement that Fremantle folk had nothing to protect, he should like to inform the hon. member who made that statement, and others who looked forward no doubt to the day when all the shipping would be brought up to Perth,—he

should like to point out that even in that case it would be necessary, in the interest of the capital itself, that the mouth of the river should be protected and fortified. The House had already agreed to this expenditure two or three years ago, and it was only a waste of time in discussing it now. As to the Volunteer Force, he quite agreed with the hon. member for Albany that the force required re-organising; but he did not see how it would be possible to do so unless we had a competent officer to carry it out. He did not know that £500 would be sufficient to induce a really good man to come out; but if we did succeed in obtaining a thoroughly experienced officer he thought he would be of great service in re-organising the force; and he had much pleasure in supporting this vote.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said the hon. member for the Gascoyne had alluded to the fact that the Imperial Government had given us some guns for the fortifications at Fremantle, but that the Finance Committee had to vote £2,000 for carriages for those guns. What did the hon. member think the Imperial Government gave us the guns for? Did he think they were given to us to put away in a shed covered with galvanised iron; or did he think they were given us for the purpose of being mounted for purposes of defence? The House having already agreed to the erection of these fortifications the Government now came forward and placed £4,700 on these Estimates for that purpose, not necessarily to be all spent this year, but in order to make a commencement with these works, and having made a commencement, so that the Government should have the funds available for completing them, and not leave them half finished. As to having nothing at Fremantle to protect, the hon. member for South Fremantle (Mr. Symon) had just taken the words out of his mouth when he spoke of the necessity for protecting the mouth of the river. Fremantle must always be the key to the entrance to Perth. It was the port of Perth, and likely to remain so, whatever hon. members might say or think on the subject, or whatever the river might eventually become. Even if the P. and O. steamers lay alongside Perth jetty, it was absolutely necessary that

the mouth of the river should be protected. With regard to the re-organisation of the Volunteer force, he was not an authority on military affairs; and it was quite possible that some re-organisation was required. But he would ask the hon. member how he was going to re-organise the force, if we had no competent authority here to whom we could refer the subject. It would be absurd to attempt to re-organise the force without having somebody to do it for us. The hon. member said the force at present was under-officered and under-manned; who, then, was going to re-organise it? As to reducing the capitation or the band allowance, perhaps the hon. member had not had such a lengthened military experience as he (Mr. Marmion) had as a volunteer in this colony. Probably the hon. member was not aware that he had served as a volunteer for eight years, and had risen to the distinguished rank of a sergeant. His experience of the Volunteer force was that without the capitation allowance the force would soon cease to exist; and more so still with regard to the band allowance. There was no corps in the colony that would last a month, if we did away with its band; and we knew these bands could not exist without some allowance from the Government.

MR. DE HAMEL said it seemed to him that the Minister of Lands was mistaken somewhat in his argument with regard to this capitation money. The whole of this money went for clothing. He did not object to the money being expended, provided it was expended in the right direction. So far from objecting to this capitation grant of £915, he thought we should require £3,000 at the very least for the payment of the men under any well-organised scheme of defence. The hon. member for the Gascoyne had referred to a very good officer we have in the Staff Drill Instructor, but said he did not know whether this officer still acted in that capacity. He could inform the hon. member that he did, and one lesson from him to any corps was worth half-a-dozen from any ordinary drill instructor. This officer was one of the most efficient drill instructors that any colony could possess. He (Mr. De Hamel) had seen many drill instructors, but never saw one more efficient than our present Staff Drill Instructor. The great

fault was this: that our corps drill instructors attached to each corps were not efficient; it was not with the head man that the fault rested. As to having a competent officer to re-organise the force, the question of re-organising was nothing; our present Commandant could himself get out as good a scheme of re-organisation as any man in the service, and, knowing as he did, the circumstances of the colony and the resources of the colony, he perhaps could get out a better scheme of re-organisation for our local forces than a stranger. The crux of the whole question was, where the money was to come from to pay the force when it was re-organised, for it must be a paid force.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he wished to correct a statement he made that the Finance Committee had incurred the expenditure in connection with providing carriages for the guns given to us by the Imperial Government. He remembered now it was the Crown Agents who had expended the £2,000, and not the Finance Committee. The Crown Agents having already spent it, without authority, the Finance Committee simply confirmed the expenditure. With regard to the Staff Drill Instructor, he thought he was a very capable officer, and he said so before; what he complained of was that he was not kept in that position, but allowed to develop into a full-blown General.

Vote agreed to.

Special Coast Survey, £3,000:

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he was afraid this sum would not be required. The Government had information from the Admiralty that they did not intend to continue this coast survey that had been carried on for some years on our North-West coast. He had made urgent representations through the Government to the Secretary of State on the subject, and the Attorney General, when he was in London, interviewed the Admiralty, and the Government had done all they could in the matter, but he was afraid without avail. The correspondence was not yet at an end, but from all they knew the chances were almost certain that the work would have to be discontinued. He was very sorry to have to inform the House of this; but the Government had done the

best they could in the matter. They had placed this sum, as usual, on the Estimates for the current year in the hope that some of it might be required; but, as he was at present advised, it appeared to him it would not be required.

Vote—put and passed.

Central Board of Health, £200:

Put and passed.

Treasury, £2,790:

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked if the revenue had increased so much as to warrant them in having a clerk and cashier at Albany?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that there was a little reorganisation to be made both in Geraldton and Albany, by which the duties of Customs and Treasury were combined. Hitherto the offices had been separate, but now business had increased and an alteration had to be made.

MR. HASSELL said he could quite bear out what the Premier had said as to the increase of the business at Albany. He knew as a fact that such was the case.

Vote agreed to.

London Agency, £2,730:

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he did not like to see this vote passed without a word. Several members had expressed an opinion that they did not like to see the colony pledged for five years to any Agent General; and it was known that the salary proposed to be attached to the office had been increased from £1,200 to £1,500 simply because it had been stipulated by Sir William Robinson that those were the only terms on which he would accept the position,—a salary of £1,500 for five years. As he had stated on a former occasion, he rather objected to any Agent General dictating his own terms in this way, and he objected to the Government pledging the country for five years. It was hardly fair even to the Government themselves, and the present Ministry might not be in office all that time, and it was certainly not fair to their successors to pledge them to this appointment for a term of five years. If the colony on its part bound itself for five years, there was nothing binding on Sir William Robinson's part to hold the office for five years if it didn't suit him. The agreement in that respect was all one-sided. No doubt Sir William Rob-

inson was a capable man, who would serve us well, and he did not think that £1,500 was too much to pay such a man; still he did think this term of five years was too long for the colony to be pledged to. There were men in that House, on the opposite side of the House, whom he should have liked to see occupy this position of Agent General,—men who knew a great deal more about the colony, and who could do a great deal more service to the colony than this gentleman.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): No.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: His opinion was that unless they could get an assurance from the Government that they would not bind the colony for five years this vote should not be passed as it stood, and he should move a reduction in it. While saying this, he was bound to say that the Government had behaved very fairly indeed towards that House in this matter. They might have taken upon themselves to make this appointment without reference to the House at all, and he admitted they had behaved very frankly in the matter in taking the House into their confidence as they had done. For this reason he did not like to oppose the vote, but he certainly had a very strong opinion as to this term of five years.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that when he made his Financial Statement he explained exactly, in the clearest way he could, the position the Government occupied in regard to this appointment. He then stated to the House that they had not made any appointment, and that unless the House approved of the terms he then mentioned—that the salary should be £1,500 and the term of office five years—the appointment, so far as Sir William Robinson was concerned, would not be made. He now reiterated that statement. The offer finally resolved itself into this, so far as Sir William Robinson was concerned: if he could be assured the term of five years at £1,500 a year, he would accept the appointment; if not, he could not see his way clear to accept it. That was exactly the position now. As to what the hon. member for the Gascoyne stated about the Government making terms, committing the colony for five years, why, in every agreement between

two parties there must be some terms specified; and unless the terms proposed by one party could be accepted by the other, no agreement could be concluded. He did not look upon this term of five years as any very lengthened term. In some of the colonies these appointments were for life; in others the term varied. In Queensland, as they all knew, the Agent General generally went out of office with the Ministry of the day. Sometimes it was Sir James Garrick and sometimes Mr. Archer, who changed about with the Ministry in power. He did not know whether that was a desirable thing. As regards New South Wales, as they knew, Sir Saul Samuel had what might be called a life appointment, a freehold appointment; he ranked as a member of the Civil Service, and held the office until he was superannuated or retired, according to the rules of the service. As regards Victoria, the late Agent General, Sir Graham Berry, had retained the office for six years. In our own case we proposed to give our first Agent General, Sir William Robinson, a five years tenure of office. Five years, after all, was not a very long term; it will soon pass away. It seemed to him that if we had a very efficient officer, no matter what Government might be in office, the chances were that the term would be renewed, even after the five years expired. So long as the colony had an Agent General who gave satisfaction, it must obviously be to its advantage to continue the services of an experienced man, thoroughly acquainted with the colony, rather than have a new and untried man. No matter how well acquainted he might be with political matters here, it would take a new man some time before he became acquainted with the routine business in England, especially with regard to financial matters. He could assure the House that this appointment of Agent General had given the Government a considerable amount of trouble and anxiety; and it had relieved them of a very considerable difficulty in being able to secure the services of Sir William Robinson on the terms he had mentioned. He could not but think that in these early days of Responsible Government it must be to the advantage of the colony to have a man of recognised ability and recognised status as its Agent

General. He thought, without being invidious, we might compare the position this colony will occupy as regards its Agent General, if we have Sir William Robinson, as compared with the position of some of the other colonies. Why, some of the Agents General of the other colonies had actually served under Sir William Robinson as their Governor; and it could not but be that his influence among them would be much greater than the influence of any person we could send from this colony. There was Mr. Munro, the newly-appointed Agent General of the important colony of Victoria, who was personally well known to Sir William Robinson when he was Acting Governor of that colony. He had not served under him certainly, for he was then leader of the Opposition, but he was personally known to him as the Administrator of the Government. Then there was Sir John Bray, the recently appointed Agent General for South Australia. Sir John Bray was for many years Prime Minister of that colony when Sir William Robinson was its Governor, and the most friendly relations existed between them still; and we could easily imagine what influence a man like Sir William Robinson would have with the other Agents General. It had been suggested that perhaps he was not a good man of business. But that he (the Premier) altogether denied. A man who had successfully administered several Crown colonies, and virtually been his own Prime Minister for 25 years, must possess some knowledge of business, and a very considerable amount of experience. Sir William Robinson had been all over the world, acting as Governor over various types of colonies, from the severest type of Crown colony to the most advanced and most progressive Australian colony. He presided over the Executive in South Australia for six years, and administered the affairs of Victoria for a year, and, as they knew, he had administered the affairs of our own colony for a great many years, at different times; and surely he must have gained some knowledge of business and some experience in financial matters during his long official life. Besides that, we knew he was a man of good presence, a polished man of the world, and we knew he was a discreet man and an able man. We

also knew that Sir William Robinson was one of the most sensible men that ever came to this colony. When we could obtain the services of a gentleman who combined all these good qualities, surely to goodness it could not be said that the Government were not making a good arrangement in securing his services for as long a term as they could. Most members who had spoken on the subject agreed that we could not get a better man for the position, and no one objected to the salary proposed. All that some members objected to was the difference between three years and five years as the term of office. He asked members to help the Government in this matter, and to be guided by the Government. They had had the position under their review for a long time, and it had caused them a great deal of anxiety, and they now found themselves in this position: there was not the slightest chance of Sir William Robinson accepting the office for three years, because he had a five years' term as Governor of the colony. He knew—in fact, he was speaking with authority—that unless we could offer him this appointment of Agent General for five years, we must seek elsewhere for our Agent General. He wished to be perfectly plain and straightforward with hon. members. Personally, he would really prefer to see Sir William Robinson coming back here as Governor; but, as Premier of the colony he did not think he would be doing what was best in the interests of the colony if he did not urge upon them to agree to this appointment. Many difficult matters might arise, and were arising now, that required the presence in London of an Agent General who was not only trusted from this end, but who was also trusted at that end, and whose opinion the Government here could rely upon and value; and he believed that in Sir William Robinson we had such a man. He would therefore ask members, even if they did not much like this term of five years, not to object to it, but to assist the Government in this very important matter.

Mr. LOTON said it appeared, from what they had heard, not only that day, but on a previous occasion when this appointment was under discussion, that the main (and he might say the only) objection to this appointment seemed to be as

regards this term of five years. It appeared to him that if Sir William Robinson was in all other respects a desirable man to appoint, looking at him all round, as a practical and experienced administrator and a man thoroughly conversant with Australian politics, and, even if not a financier, certainly a man of considerable experience in such matters, a man who was well known in London circles; if, in short, he was on the whole a first-class man for the appointment, and this extra term of two years was the only objection to his appointment, he thought we might very well sink that objection. He thought we might do so for one simple reason: supposing Sir William Robinson accepted the position for three years, and he gave every satisfaction, as he was likely to do, during that term, what would be the result at the end of those three years, even supposing we had a change of Ministry? The natural outcome would be that he would be reappointed for another term. Therefore, why not close with it now? He thought the colony was fortunate in securing the services of a man of the position of Sir William Robinson; he said "fortunate," looking at it all round. There might be some individual objections, but they were not worth naming. With regard to the amount of the salary, he should be sorry indeed to see it go forth that Western Australia, with its excellent financial position as it had been proclaimed to the world, had set down a less sum than was here proposed for its Agent General. He was sure no person occupying such a position in London, as the representative of one of the Australian colonies, and maintaining the position as it ought to be maintained, could live on this salary. He had very much pleasure in supporting this vote.

Vote agreed to.

Customs Department, £7,626:

MR. TRAYLEN thought it was due to the House that they should have some explanation with regard to a statement published in the newspapers, that the Collector of Customs had allowed to pass out of his custody certain railway materials on which there was an embargo, and which he ought to have retained possession of.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he really did not know anything

about it. He believed that some goods were, by mistake, taken from the Customs. They were in trucks and were hauled away by the Railway Department, through some error; but no harm was done. The goods came to the colony without an owner, and were placed in trucks and left standing some time. Some little irregularity had occurred, but nothing of consequence, and there had been no loss. The goods were now safely in the hands of the Government.

MR. TRAYLEN scarcely liked to contradict the Premier, but there had been some expense incurred, if no loss.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): What expense?

MR. TRAYLEN said in re-loading goods that had been discharged. The point was this: if the Customs ought to have retained a hold over those goods, how was it that the Railway Department removed them? Could any explanation be given as to whether it was a neglect on the part of the Collector of Customs to give the necessary instructions?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Government intended holding an inquiry, but he did not think the inquiry had commenced yet. The matter would be thoroughly inquired into.

MR. TRAYLEN said this assurance would satisfy him.

MR. SYMON hoped that the chief clerk and others in the Customs at Fremantle would be paid more in proportion to their duties, and that they would be remembered in preparing the Estimates for next year. The chief clerk, who had been in the service for 23 years, only received £270; and another clerk, who had been in the service eleven years, only received £170, which was only £10 more than was down for a gentleman who had only been in the service one year. He thought the Government ought to pay these senior clerks more, as they were thoroughly capable of doing their work. The amount paid to the landing surveyor was also altogether insufficient.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) admitted the hon. member was right to this extent, that the salaries in the Customs did not appear to be very high. Most of the clerks had received an increase, though not very much. He was prepared to admit that the salaries were low for the importance of the services

rendered. There was a difficulty in giving great rises to clerks, but he promised to look into the matter next year, and see whether these Customs clerks could not be placed in a little better position. The service no doubt ought to be regulated by statute, and the Government would have to consider the matter.

MR. A. FORREST said it was generally found that as soon as a person got into the Government service he required an increase of salary. It was so right through the service. A great many of the Government servants were not worth much, and if they were in a private office they would not remain long. It appeared to him that a good officer got about the same increase as a bad one.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the hon. member was quite right. It seemed to be a part of the religion of all the clerks in the service to keep on applying for increases of salary. This system caused a great difficulty. The service ought to be regulated by some statute, and they must consider how far this could be done. He often wondered that the salaries were not greater, considering the persistent efforts made during many years to get increases. Every year a crusade was made against the heads of the departments, to try and get them to recommend an increase of salary, and it showed to the credit of the Ministers that they managed to keep the salaries as low as they were.

MR. PEARSE did not think it could be said by anyone that £270 was a very high salary for a gentleman like the senior clerk at Fremantle, who had been 16 or 17 years in this position. He thought it was a very small salary indeed, and he hoped the Ministry would consider the position of this officer, and also the responsibilities of the position.

MR. COOKWORTHY objected to the efforts made by certain members to get the salaries of officers increased in their several districts. The discretion of the Ministers should not be interfered with in this manner. Surely those in charge of the departments must have a better knowledge of the value of an officer's services than people outside. If the same system of interference were attempted in the case of private firms, as to the salaries of their employées, such interference would be instantly resented.

If the Government incurred any rash or lavish expenditure, they could be brought to book. There was another view of the question. If it were known that members could exercise an influence on the Ministry in raising salaries, the result would be that they would continually be bringing this influence to bear; and on the other hand their constituents would be continually bringing their influence to bear upon their representatives. He considered it was bad in principle and bad in practice.

MR. A. FORREST thought that members had a perfect right to afford every information they could to the Government in these matters. Had it not been for the action taken by members in that House the claims of many a deserving officer, especially in outlying districts, would be entirely neglected. What were they there for? They were there to represent their constituents, and they had a perfect right to bring under the notice of the Government the claims of any deserving officer. If they were not there to represent their constituents, the public, he did not know what they were there for, unless it was to represent themselves.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said, as members all round were looking after the claims of their own districts, he thought it was time he did the same. He saw that the landing waiter at Carnarvon was down for only £25. That appeared to him very small pay for a landing waiter.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): He is a policeman.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: It does not matter what he is; he ought to get more than this.

Vote agreed to.

Postal and Telegraph Department, £50,957:

Put and passed.

Harbor and Light Department, £8,261:

MR. SYMON said he noticed that the assistant pilot at Albany received £250, while the assistant pilot at Fremantle only received £200. He thought all these officers ought to be placed on the same level. The duties at Fremantle were quite as onerous as at Albany.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Government had been fortunate in securing the services of Captain Irvine, as pilot at Albany, and he had been pro-

mised that, subject to the decision of the House, a salary of £250 would be placed on the Estimates. Captain Irvine gave up a much better appointment in order to join the service. The responsibilities of pilots at Albany were greater than those of the pilots at Fremantle, in consequence of Albany being the port of call for the large ocean-going steamers.

MR. SYMON said he thought all these pilots ought to receive £250.

MR. R. F. SHOLL thought the responsibilities upon the pilots at Albany were greater than those upon the Fremantle pilots, by reason of the larger number of arrivals at Albany. On that account he did not think the salary proposed was too great.

MR. DE HAMEL said it must be borne in mind that the pilot at Albany had to bring in those enormous mail steamers, both day and night, in all weathers, and the risk was very great. He was happy to say that, notwithstanding these risks, there had not been an accident during the last twenty years. He thought it was highly creditable to the service to have such a record.

Vote agreed to.

Government Storekeeper, £3,968 :

MR. MOLLOY said he noticed that while increases were being made in all other departments, there was no increase proposed to the head of this department, notwithstanding the increase of the work. This officer had remained at the same salary for years past, and he thought the Government when they knew they had a good officer ought to reward him. He thought a little increase to the head of this department would come with good grace from the Government.

Vote put and passed.

Revenue Services, North-West Coast, £2,180 2s. :

Put and passed.

Ecclesiastical Grant, £3,543 :

MR. SYMON called attention to the alteration proposed in the amounts granted to the various denominations. Some were to receive less and some more than they received last year. The Church of England, which received £2,075 6s. 10d. last year, was this year to receive £2,004 4s. 6d.; the Roman Catholics, who received £1,073 11s. 10d. as their share for last year, only received £1,008 11s. 9d. this year. On the other hand there

was an increase in the grant for the Presbyterians and the Wesleyans. The latter who only received £265 18s. 10d. last year were down for £368 13s. 5d. this year; and the Presbyterians, who received £128 2s. 6d. last year, were now to receive £161 10s. 4d.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that was the result of the late Census. This grant was distributed on the *pro rata* principle, according to the population belonging to each denomination. There was no increase in the total amount of the vote.

MR. SYMON said he did not believe in these grants at all. We had one religious body, the Independents, who received no State aid at all, and he really did not see why we should continue it to the others. He would not advocate the immediate abolition of the grant, but he thought it was advisable to reduce it gradually, until it disappeared altogether. He thought people ought to pay their ministers themselves, and not come to the State.

MR. A. FORREST asked the Premier if the Government had any intention of reducing this vote, or did they intend to keep it up from year to year? He wished to know this, so that those who were opposed to the grant might know what to do. He thought the best way would be to reduce it by degrees, and he would move now that the odd amount, £543, be struck off, making the grant for this year £3,000 instead of £3,543. If a man wanted a clergyman he ought to pay for him, the same as he had to pay for anything else he wanted. He could not see why the colony should be put to the expense, year after year, of providing religious bodies with money that ought to come out of the pockets of those who attended Divine Service. It was unheard of in the other colonies. The whole thing had been wiped out years ago.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) asked the hon. member not to press his motion to reduce the vote now, but, if he wished it, move an abstract resolution by-and-bye, when the question could be discussed on its merits. If it should appear that the opinion of the House was distinctly in favor of reducing or abolishing this vote, the Government—if it was a reasonable resolution, and if it was carried—would then give notice to these

religious bodies that it was intended to cut down the grant, and, next year, effect would be given to it. That would be a much better way for accomplishing what the hon. member desired than to move a reduction of the vote now, in this random way, and without any notice whatever.

MR. A. FORREST said that, under the circumstances, he would withdraw his motion.

MR. CANNING said that both the hon. member for South Fremantle (Mr. Symon) and the hon. member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) had expressed surprise at this grant being continued, and that they saw no reason why it should be so, or why the State should aid the religious bodies at all. It should be borne in mind that in every country, amongst every civilised people on the face of the earth, since the earliest times of which we had any knowledge, religion had been supported by State aid in some form or the other. In America, in the other Australian Colonies, and in all civilised communities, religion had been supported by the State, up to a certain point in their development, until the population had become sufficiently numerous to render State aid unnecessary. We had not arrived at that stage in this colony yet. With our present small population, scattered over an enormous territory, the circumstances of this colony, quite as much certainly as any country he knew of, required that the State, for the present, and for some time to come, should give a helping hand to religion. They heard a great deal about the necessity for an increasing population; what greater inducement could you offer to persons who contemplated emigrating from the mother country than the knowledge that they would find themselves, when they came to the colony, even in the country districts, within reach of the church or chapel they belonged to. Certainly, there would be many country districts in this colony without religious ministration if this State aid were withdrawn. He thought if the grant were increased it would be to our advantage, in the peculiar circumstances of the colony. He need not go over the old arguments about the clergy operating as a kind of moral police. There could be no doubt that without them in many of the country districts

the condition of the people would be very much worse than at present.

MR. A. FORREST: We do not object to the clergy, but to the State paying them. Let their own people pay them.

MR. CANNING said the population was not enough to support the clergy in many of our rural districts. No one would contend that a district should be deprived of all religious ministrations, simply because its population was numerically small. Twenty people congregated together were just as much entitled to religious ministrations as twenty thousand. In some of our country districts, if all the population subscribed to the utmost of their ability, it would not be sufficient to support a minister; and, in these circumstances, the State should come in with its assistance, as it had done from time immemorial in all civilised countries, in some form or another.

MR. PIESSE quite agreed with the hon. member for East Perth (Mr. Canning) with regard to this vote. He thought that for some time, at any rate, it should be continued. With regard to religious services in country districts, no matter what denomination it was, they had a great struggle to support their respective churches; and, until our population increased and the condition of the country improved, he hoped that House would, for some time at least, vote this ecclesiastical grant. No one acquainted with our country districts would deny that the presence of the clergy and their ministrations had a moral and refining influence upon the people, and helped in a great degree to diminish crime and immorality. He should be very sorry to see this grant reduced, for some time at least, until the population increased and the country became more prosperous.

MR. A. FORREST thought the House ought to have a return placed before it, showing how these grants were expended by the various bodies, so that members might know how much of the money went into these country districts. It was all very well for the hon. member for Katanning to talk about high moral influences, when we had large sums on these Estimates to provide his district with gaols, and lock-ups, and police and magistrates.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said that in the absence of the Premier he

might say that these returns referred to by the hon. member for West Kimberley had often been furnished to that House, but very little information was to be obtained from them. As a matter of fact, the money was handed over by the Government to the heads of the various denominations, who expended it in the way they conceived to be to the best advantage of their respective flocks. He should like to point out that whilst the population of the colony had been increasing by leaps and bounds, this Ecclesiastical Grant had not been increased at all. When we had a population of only 30,000 this grant was as much as it was now, with a population of 54,000, or nearly double. He had taken the trouble to calculate what the grant now amounted to per head of the population, and he found it came to 1s. 4d. per head. That was the extent of the liberality of the colony in providing State aid to religion, the large sum of 1s. 4d. per head of the population.

MR. RICHARDSON said he was tired of listening to these old fusty arguments, year after year, about the duty of the State to provide religion for the people. They were quite worn out, and it was about time we had new ones. The facts were too strong for them. Facts were entirely against this principle all the world over. It was an historical fact, beyond all controversy, that the less a religion depended on State aid the more vitality it possessed. There was nothing more calculated to reduce it to a moribund condition, and to make dead bones of it, than State aid; and he thought it was about time they had done with these old worn-out arguments, which had been exploded long ago.

Vote agreed to.

Progress reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 5 o'clock, p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 17th February, 1892.

Fremantle Harbor Works: report of Select Committee—Married Women's Property Bill: third reading—Police Bill: amendments of Legislative Council—Game Bill: conference with Legislative Council—Drill Instruction in schools—Estimates, 1892—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

FREMANTLE HARBOR WORKS.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. W. Venn) brought up the report of the Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament on the question of the proposed Harbor Works at Fremantle.

Report received and ordered to be printed.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY BILL.

Read a third time and *passed*, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council, and their concurrence desired therein.

POLICE BILL.

AMENDMENTS OF LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said it was just as well that he should explain what the Legislative Council wished in this matter. They had received the following message from the other House:—"The Legislative Council has agreed to amendments Nos. 1 and 3, and 6 to 14 inclusive, made by the Legislative Assembly in the Police Bill, and has disagreed with the amendments Nos. 2, 4, and 5 as indicated by the annexed Schedule. The Legislative Council transmits the reason for not agreeing to amendments Nos. 2, 4, and 5, and returns the bill herewith." The amendments which the Council could not agree to were at page 18 of the Bill, clause 53, line 2, to strike out the words "public place;" at page 18, clause 54, line 2, also to strike out the words "public place," and at page 20, clause 59, line 1, also to strike out the words "public place." The reason given for not agreeing to the