

the cordial support of such eminent statesmen and lawyers as Lords Cairns, Shaftesbury, Salisbury, Lyttleton, Selborne, Houghton, Penzance, Brougham, and Romilly—many of whom were among the most prominent and brilliant statesmen in the Conservative ranks—he did not think he need trouble himself much with regard to the opinion of the hon. member for Murray,—that the Bill was a revolutionary one, because it had been introduced at home by a Liberal ministry, which was ousted out of power a few years afterwards, and that its provisions were “absurd and preposterous.”

The motion for the adjournment of the House was then put and negatived.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) said his sympathies were with the Bill and with those whom it was intended to benefit, but he thought it was too late in the Session to proceed any further with the Bill at present. He would therefore move, as an amendment upon the motion for the second reading, that the debate be now adjourned, *sine die*. This would enable the Bill to be dealt with again next Session, when he hoped to see it become law.

MR. RANDELL thought the sweeping condemnations expressed against those in favor of the Bill were hardly justified. The Bill, he believed, sought to remedy a grave and serious wrong, which was known to exist, not only in our own community, but in almost all other communities. No doubt there was room for difference of opinion as to its details, and for that reason he hoped the hon. member in charge of the Bill would not press it into Committee this Session. He thought the hon. member might safely let it stand over until next year, in the full assurance that it would then become law.

The motion for the adjournment of the debate was then put and carried, on the voices.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 12th September, 1881.

Price of Mineral Lands—Telegraph Extension from Northampton to Roebourne—Appropriation Bill, 1882: first reading—Development of the Eastern Districts: adjourned debate—Closure of Street in Pinjarrah Bill—Reply to Message No. 22: re Railway to King George's Sound—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PRICE OF MINERAL LANDS.

MR. STEERE, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands, “Whether the price of Mineral Lands in the Colony was ever £10 per acre, as per paragraph 114 of the Land Regulations of 1872?” The reason he asked the question was, because there was an idea prevailing in the minds of some people that the Government had raised the price of mineral lands about this time in order to prevent a certain company from taking advantage of their agreement.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) replied “That the 114th paragraph of the Land Regulations which were in force from the 20th March, 1872, until the 22nd May, 1873, provides that ‘At the termination of any mining lease the lessee may purchase the land contained in such lease at the rate of ten pounds per acre, or the lease may be renewed for a further term of years, on such conditions as may be agreed upon.’”

TELEGRAPH EXTENSION TO ROEBOURNE.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL, in moving the adoption of the report of the Select Committee to whom the resolutions relating to the proposed construction of a telegraph line to Roebourne, on the land grant system, had been referred, said the House would observe that the Select Committee did not suggest any alterations in the resolutions committed to them, except in clauses 5 and 6. He would point out, briefly, having spoken upon the matter at length before, the object of the amendments in these clauses. His own scheme was of this

nature: the Government having already made a certain bargain with leaseholders within second-class lands, and having agreed to allow them, until the termination of their leases, to purchase 400-acre blocks at five shillings per acre, we should induce them, by, as it were, giving discount for cash down, to purchase now, instead of eleven years hence, paying for their land in telegraph construction instead of in money. But the Committee had taken into account that this bargain made with second-class leaseholders had been a very bad bargain, enabling them completely to ruin their runs, so far as the Crown was concerned; it was not therefore thought advisable that we should encourage them to take advantage of this bargain under the present proposed arrangement, but that we should fix a much larger minimum limit upon the blocks of land to be taken up. The Committee was not unanimous as to what that minimum limit should be, but they put forward 8,000 acres for the consideration of the House. Of course, seeing that the present value, discounted, of the 400-acre blocks was only three shillings per acre, it was necessary, when we limited the extent of land to be granted under these proposals to twenty times that amount, that we should be far more liberal in our terms than before, if we would hold out any inducement to lessees to come forward and undertake the work. The Committee had therefore suggested that the price should be fixed at two shillings and sixpence per acre. He thought that something in the nature of these proposals of the Select Committee were preferable to the resolutions which he had originally brought forward, and he trusted they would commend themselves to the House. His hon. friend, the member for Geraldton, had kindly consented to take charge of them when the House went into Committee.

The House then went into Committee for the purpose of considering the resolutions *seriatim*.

Clauses 1, 2, 3, and 4—affirming the desirability of the proposed undertaking being carried out on the land grant system—were agreed to without discussion.

MR. BROWN moved, That the 5th clause, as originally printed, be struck

out, and the following clause inserted in lieu thereof, in accordance with the recommendation of the Select Committee: "That so soon as the local Administration is empowered to take action in the matter, tenders should be invited from any lessees of second-class lands, who, in return for grants of land within their leases, might be willing to form a syndicate for the purpose of constructing the said telegraph line between Roebourne and Northampton; such tenders to include all stations, complete equipment for working the same, and all materials required for the said construction. The tenders should, also, in the opinion of this House, comprehend the cost of supervision, and of whatever surveys may be necessary, both in carrying out the line, and in respect of the lands alienated to the contracting parties; and the whole of the above work should be performed, and the materials supplied, in accordance with plans and specifications to be furnished by the Government."

MR. STEERE said he noticed that, according to this clause, it was proposed to invite tenders for the construction of the telegraph from the lessees of second-class lands in any part of the Colony, whereas the original proposal was to limit the invitations to lessees of such lands in the Northern District. He should like to be informed what were the reasons which induced the Select Committee to make this recommendation.

MR. BROWN said the consideration which had guided the Committee—and, so far as he remembered, they were unanimous on the point—in coming to this decision was, that they saw no particular reason why other districts, embracing second-class lands, should be excluded from participating in the privileges proposed to be granted to those lessees who are prepared to expend their capital in carrying out the proposed work. The Committee thought there would be a better chance of the object in view being attained by throwing the tenders open to all lessees of second-class lands, than by limiting them to lessees in the district more immediately concerned.

The clause was then agreed to.

MR. BROWN moved, That the sixth clause of the resolutions, as originally

printed, be expunged, and the following new clause, as recommended by the Select Committee, be adopted in lieu thereof: "That, in order to induce lessees to come forward for the purpose of carrying out these proposals, it is advisable that the value of the lands granted in payment for the contemplated work should be fixed at 2s. 6d. per acre: provided, always, that 8,000 acres shall be the minimum size of the blocks which any one member of the prospective syndicate may, within his leases, select, under this proposed arrangement; such block, as regards shape and other particulars, to be taken up in accordance with the provisions of the existing land regulations."

MR. MARMION moved, as an amendment, that "4,000" acres be inserted in lieu of "8,000," as the minimum size of the blocks which any one member of the proposed company may select within his leases. If they were going to restrict intending contractors to a minimum of 8,000 acres, the privileges and concessions proposed to be made in consideration of the construction of the line would be limited to the wealthier few, who might happen to hold second-class lands. It might be said that this was no argument against the scheme from a financial point of view—that, so long as the necessary capital for constructing the line was forthcoming, it was a matter of no consequence to the Colony by how many or how few it was provided. That was true. At the same time he saw no reason why this privilege—if privilege it be—proposed to be extended to certain leaseholders, should not be extended to a greater number than would be able to avail themselves of it were the minimum fixed at 8,000 acres. It had been argued that to reduce the size of the blocks to 4,000 acres would enable lessees to pick out the eyes of the land, but he did not agree with that. It was estimated that the total number of acres which would have to be alienated—calculating the whole cost of the undertaking at £50,000—would be 400,000 acres, and the only difference which a reduction of the minimum would cause was, that the land alienated would be divided into one hundred blocks instead of fifty. It must be borne in mind that all lessees of second-class lands would, at the expir-

ation of their leases, be entitled to the right of purchasing blocks even of 400 acres within their leases, at the rate of 5s. an acre, which would give them a much better chance of picking out the eyes of the country than would be the case if the minimum size of the blocks which any one lessee should be allowed to select under the terms of the proposed contract were ten times 400 acres. On the other hand, the minimum recommended by the Select Committee (8,000) would preclude a large number of persons from participating in the privileges contemplated in the scheme, but who, otherwise, would be able to take up a sufficient quantity of land for a homestead, and a home paddock for their working stock, while at the same time it would tend to popularise the scheme, and remove any impression which may have been created that the project was put forward in the interests of the wealthy few.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) did not think there were many of these lessees who would not be able to find £1,000, which, according to the rate proposed to be fixed as the value of the land, namely, half-a-crown an acre, would entitle them to 8,000 acres.

MR. BROWN said the hon. member for Fremantle, in moving his amendment, said that if the House fixed the minimum at 8,000 acres, it would have the effect of restricting the advantages offered to the wealthier few, and the hon. member went on further to state that this might probably give rise to an impression that the scheme was really put forward in the interests of those few. But he (Mr. Brown) assumed that no hon. member in that House, in dealing with this question, would in any way consider who were the particular persons who were likely to take advantage of these proposals. All hon. members had to consider was—what would be the best bargain for the country at large? And in endeavoring to secure that bargain, care must be taken that they did not defeat the object which they had in view—the construction of this line of telegraph from Northampton to Roebourne. Every precaution should be observed, that, in their efforts to secure this desideratum, they should not, by imposing such conditions as would deter

people from coming forward to undertake and carry out the work, frustrate the very object which they wished to see carried out. That was what they had to consider—and not whether the scheme would benefit a wealthy few, or a larger number of persons, some of whom might be wealthy and others not so wealthy. He thought the Select Committee had very good reasons indeed for believing that, in fixing the minimum at 8,000 acres, they would not endanger the object which they all had in view, namely, the connection of our Northern settlements with all the other parts of the Colony by means of this telegraph line. He admitted that if the minimum were reduced to 4,000, a greater number of persons would be in a position to take advantage of these proposals, but it was a question for consideration whether they would come forward and do so. If the minimum were reduced by one half, he certainly would feel bound to ask that the price per acre should also be increased. It was patent to anyone that if the minimum size of the blocks were reduced from 8,000 to 4,000 acres, lessees would have a correspondingly better chance of making a good selection; and if 2s. 6d. an acre was considered a fair rate to fix for an 8,000-acre block, surely it would only be right and proper to increase the rate if they were going to allow the lessees to select 4,000-acre blocks.

MR. MARMION said the hon. member's argument would have some weight if it was proposed to introduce a new set of Land Regulations. The hon. member seemed to lose sight of the fact that, according to the conditions under which these lessees now hold the lands, they would be legitimately entitled, a few years hence, to purchase blocks of land within their leases at 5s. an acre. The present purchase value of that land is 3s. an acre, and surely it would be necessary to offer some little inducement to the lessees to come forward to invest their capital in this work. But if they were going to increase the rate per acre from 2s. 6d. to 3s., they would simply be offering these people the actual present value of the land, namely, 3s.—land, which, ten or twelve years hence, they would be fully entitled to purchase at what would be an equivalent value

then, namely, 5s. an acre. He thought there was quite as good a prospect of the scheme being carried out if the size of the blocks to be sold were reduced to a minimum of 4,000 acres, as there would be with a larger minimum.

MR. SHENTON thought it would be advisable to reduce the minimum, in order that a larger number of people might participate in the proposed concessions; at the same time he thought with the hon. member for Geraldton that if they reduced the minimum they ought to increase the price per acre. He thought they would find that the Secretary of State—to whom, of course, the matter would have to be referred before anything definite came out of it—would consider half-a-crown an acre a very low rate, especially if the minimum were reduced to 4,000 acres.

MR. GRANT said hon. members talked about picking out the eyes of the country; why, it would be really more advantageous to the lessees of these lands to take up their 400-acre blocks now at 5s.—they would be able to secure more good land in that way than they would be able to do under the present scheme; and, were it not for the great advantage which this telegraph would confer upon the Northern settlers, and, he might say, upon the Colony generally, he would really prefer going in and buying up 400-acre blocks at 5s. an acre, than taking up the land under the conditions here proposed. As to the minimum size of the blocks, he was in favor of the lesser minimum proposed by the hon. member for Fremantle, as it would be a great boon to many of the less prosperous lessees to be thus enabled to take up a homestead.

MR. STEERE also would be inclined to support the amendment, principally for the reason just mentioned by the hon. member for the North, that it would enable the smaller leaseholders to secure the fee-simple of their homesteads. He also thought that the greater the number of persons they could induce to come forward to take an interest in the construction of this line of telegraph, the more likely would it be to prove popular, and the more likely would it be to prove successful—much more so, in his opinion, than if left in the hands of a few individuals. As to increasing the rate per acre if they reduced the minimum to

4,000-acre blocks, he did not think they ought to attempt to do that. If they were to raise it to 3s. an acre, that would be equivalent to the amount for which the lessees would, if the price at the end of their lease were financed, be able to purchase blocks one-tenth in size, and so make a better selection. He was entirely opposed to land being alienated in such small quantities as 400 acres, which admitted of the very eyes of the country being picked out; but he did not think the same objection would apply to 4,000-acre blocks, especially as regards the class of land known to exist in the Northern part of the Colony, land which was unfit for the purposes of agriculture, and which, in reality, had no eyes to be picked out.

MR. BROWN was pleased to hear the hon. member for the Swan say that, if they reduced the minimum to 4,000 acres, they ought not to increase the price, as suggested by the hon. member for Toodyay. If that hon. member would give the subject a thought he would see that, if they were to increase the present price of these blocks to 3s. an acre, there would be no inducement whatever to the lessees to take advantage of the offer now proposed to be made to them, for it would simply be equivalent to the price which they would have to pay for the land thirteen years hence.

Question put—That the figures proposed to be struck out (“8,000”) stand part of the clause.

Committee divided, with the following result,—

Ayes	...	...	10
Noes	...	...	7

Majority for ... 3

AYES.
 Lord Gifford
 The Hon. A. C. Onslow
 The Hon. M. Fraser
 Mr. Burges
 Mr. Hamersley
 Mr. S. S. Parker
 Mr. Randell
 Mr. Stone
 Mr. Venn
 Mr. Brown (Teller.)

NOES.
 Mr. Shenton
 Mr. Burt
 Mr. Grant
 Mr. Higham
 Mr. S. H. Parker
 Mr. Steere
 Mr. Marmion (Teller.)

The amendment was therefore negatived, and the clause adopted.

Resolution reported to the House.

APPROPRIATION BILL, 1882.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford), with leave, without notice, moved the first reading of a Bill intituled

“An Act to appropriate the sum of “£158,911 4s. 7d. out of the General “Revenue of the Colony for such services “as shall come in course of payment “during the year 1882.”

Bill brought in and read a first time.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE EASTERN DISTRICTS.

On the Order of the Day for the adjourned debate upon the report of the Select Committee appointed to consider certain questions connected with the development and settlement of the Eastern Districts, as suggested in the message sent to the House last year by His Excellency the Governor,

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL said he had moved the adjournment of the debate the other day, not because he had anything particular to say about the report, for he really did not see that there was much to say about it, but because the report appeared going by the run, and he thought it would be well that hon. members should have some further time to consider the matter. As he had already stated, he did not see that there was much to be said about the report, for, besides the statistical information it contained, there was very little in it indeed. He noticed three recommendations and one expression of opinion. The first recommendation was, that all Crown Lands within twenty miles of the railway extension should be surveyed and cut up into blocks. Another recommendation was that, when the railway is approaching completion into the Avon Valley, money should be borrowed for the purpose of introducing immigrants; and the third recommendation was, that lands along the present railway line should be reserved. As to the expression of opinion put forward by the Committee, it appeared to him to savour very much of confiscation, and he thought the House ought to hesitate before affirming such a principle as that. He thought the best course to adopt would be to base some resolution upon the report and agree to such resolution, rather than to adopt the report itself.

No other hon. member rising, the question was put—that the report of the Select Committee be adopted—and the proposition was negatived on the voices.

The matter then dropped.

CLOSING OF STREET IN PINJARRAH BILL.

MR. S. H. PARKER, who had brought in this Bill, said, as it was so late in the Session, and as hon. members had probably not had an opportunity of mastering the great constitutional principles underlying the Bill, or to grasp its voluminous details, he would not press the motion for its second reading, but allow the Bill to lapse.

The Bill was then discharged from the Notice Paper.

RAILWAY TO KING GEORGE'S SOUND ON THE LAND GRANT SYSTEM.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL, in accordance with notice, moved the following amendment upon the resolution submitted by the Colonial Secretary on August 7th, relating to the Governor's Message forwarding a despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies approving of the proposal to construct a railway to King George's Sound, on the land grant system:—"This House thanks "His Excellency the Governor for the "cordial manner in which, when addressing the Secretary of State upon the "subject, he supported the views of the "House contained in its Resolution of "the 25th March last, regarding the "alienation of Crown Lands for Public "Works. And this House desires to "express its gratification that the Secretary of State is prepared favorably to "entertain any well-considered scheme "for the construction of a Railway "between the Eastern Districts and "King George's Sound on the Land "Grant System. The Council further "prays that His Excellency will be "pleased to cause such information to "be obtained, with the least possible "delay, as will place the Government in "a position to open negotiations for the "commencement of the work. The Council suggests that such information "should include a Sketch Survey of the "most desirable route, together with "accurate data as to the amount and "character of all available Crown Lands "within a reasonable distance of that "route. Should His Excellency be furnished with this information some time

"prior to the ordinary annual meeting "of the Legislature, this Council prays "that His Excellency will be pleased to "call it together in Special Session, for "the purpose of considering what steps "it may be advisable subsequently to "take as to sending a Delegate to England, and for otherwise forwarding the "undertaking." The hon. baronet said the reason he had submitted this amendment was because he thought the original resolution committed the House to rather more than it was desirable it should be committed, and they knew from past experience, and from late experience, how extremely careful they ought to be in wording any resolution upon which the Administration was to act. Hon. members would observe that he commenced by expressing the thanks of the House for the cordial way in which His Excellency had supported the resolutions which he (the hon. baronet) had the honor of putting forward last year, and he was sure the House would affirm that expression of thanks. At the same time he regretted that a little more promptitude had not been displayed in bringing the resolutions under the attention of the Secretary of State, for no steps appeared to have been taken in the matter for two months after the resolution was adopted by the House. The resolution submitted by the noble lord opposite virtually committed the House—though he was perfectly well aware that was not the intention—to this extent: that the whole matter should be placed entirely in the hands of the Government, and the House might have no further voice in it. He presumed that what the Government really intended doing, after receiving the necessary information as to the character of the country, was to send home a delegate, armed with such information, in order to open up negotiations for the commencement of the work, and, having ascertained upon what terms the undertaking might be carried out, to place the scheme before the Council. But he thought that was rather putting the cart before the horse. At present they had very little reliable data indeed to go upon, as to the nature of the country which the proposed railway would traverse, and it was absolutely necessary that such information should be forthcoming. When

the required data had been obtained, the Council would then be in a position to advise His Excellency as to the nature of the terms upon which, in the opinion of the Legislature, negotiations should be opened with capitalists at home. He was fully aware that this was a matter which was entirely within the province of the Imperial Government, but, so far as the land question was concerned, he was inclined to go with the hon. member for Geraldton, that, in nearly all matters connected with the Land Regulations of the Colony, that House had been well treated by the Home Government, its opinions on the subject being invariably treated with respect and attention. He had no doubt the Government fully intended to consult the House hereafter on the subject, still he thought, before they agreed to the proposition of sending a delegate home, the Council ought to be placed in possession of some further information as to the country through which the line would pass—a country with regard to the character of which neither the Government nor the House at present possessed anything but the vaguest knowledge. Besides, the House would remark that the resolution brought forward by the noble lord was one authorising the irregular expenditure of money outside the Estimates, which His Excellency the Governor had himself so frequently condemned. For this reason alone he hoped the House would agree to the amendment.

MR. STEERE said the amendment so entirely carried out his views on the subject that he felt bound to support it. He thought it would be utterly useless to send home a delegate to endeavor to induce capitalists to embark in this undertaking, unless we were in a position to furnish them with more definite information as to the quality of the land, the extent available for settlement, and the general character of the country, than we at present possessed. When the House was placed in the possession of this information, it would be time enough then to consider what steps it would be advisable to take as to sending a delegate to England, or whether it would be advisable to send one at all.

MR. BROWN saw nothing in the amendment that he disapproved of, any more than he did in the original resolu-

tion—of the two, he thought, he preferred the former. But he thought it was well worthy the consideration of the House, whether the steps proposed to be taken in this matter were the most judicious steps that could be taken, namely, having armed our delegate with all the information obtainable as to the quality of the soil, the extent of land available for cultivation, and the general lay of the country, we should send him home to place this information before British capitalists. It had been suggested to him—the idea was not his own, but it recommended itself to his favor—that the wiser course for us to pursue would be to procure as much reliable data as we could, for the information of that House, of the Government, and the Secretary of State, but furnish as little information as possible to outside capitalists, and let them find it out for themselves. It was just possible that if we endeavored to induce these capitalists to embark in the undertaking, by means of any information furnished to them by our delegate, and that information should be calculated in any way to mislead, we might find ourselves involved in very serious litigation hereafter. He thought hon. members would agree with him that that was a rock which they should endeavor in every way to steer clear of, after their past experience. What it had been suggested to him ought to be done was this: to send home a delegate—he did not think they would ever be able to have the line constructed unless they did send home a delegate—who would be in a position to inform English capitalists of the number of acres per mile the Colony was prepared to give in consideration of the construction of the line, and to tell them, roughly, of the character of the country which the railway would run through, and that, having done this, he should invite them to come out and see for themselves; that we guaranteed nothing as to the quality and capabilities of the land, but that the land was there, and that we were prepared (with the consent, of course, of the Secretary of State) to alienate so much per mile to any company who undertook to construct the railway. Probably, it would be desirable, when the question again came before the House, to vote a

sum of money towards the passage and expenses of the accredited agent of any company, of the *bona fides* of whose intention to embark in the undertaking we were satisfied. It appeared to him that this would be a very good plan to adopt, rather than let our delegate go home, for the purpose of inducing capitalists to enter into negotiations with the Government, upon representations which might hereafter be found to be misleading, and which might involve the Colony in litigation. At any rate, he thought it highly desirable that the House should be again consulted in the matter, before any definite proposals were made by the Government with a view to open negotiations with capitalists at home. He considered that very desirable for this reason: that the House, possessed of the information now proposed to obtain, would be in a better position to say how many acres per mile should be alienated, and to decide generally as to the most advantageous terms to the Colony, than the Secretary of State—unless he were placed in possession of the views of the House on the subject—would be likely to be.

MR. MARMION said that to a great extent the amendment met his own views with reference to this matter, but he would ask hon. members to consider whether we were not, to a certain extent, pledging the Governor to an expenditure of public funds, for the purpose of obtaining the required information, by means of a survey and examination of the country, without at the same time making any provision to meet such expenditure. They had heard a great deal of late years in condemnation of this irregular proceeding, and he thought the House should guard, as much as possible, from adopting the same course in the future. This proposed survey and examination of the country could not, he presumed, be conducted without money, and he should like to ask the Commissioner of Crown Lands whether he thought, with the funds now at his disposal for survey purposes generally, he would be able to have this sketch survey and examination of the country carried out?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said, so far as the first portion of the amendment was concerned, he failed to see where it differed from the

original resolution, but the last paragraph appeared to him to imply that the House was not prepared to trust the Government in the matter. (Several hon. members: No, no, no.) Well, he thought it did, and for that reason he would not be prepared to accept it, unless shorn of this objectionable feature. He frankly admitted that, before the Government entered upon any scheme, or pledged the Colony in any way to the construction of this line, it was but right and proper that they should come to that House and have their proposals ratified. But surely it would not be maintained that, in dealing with an undertaking of this kind, the hands of the Government should be so tied, and their actions so fettered, that not a single step should be taken without first consulting the House. The scheme would never be brought to a head if the Government was to be so hampered in every movement it thought proper to make.

MR. STEERE failed to see that the amendment implied any want of confidence in the Government. He thought it was only reasonable that the Council should have a further opportunity of considering the matter, before any negotiations were entered upon. The Legislature would, in his opinion, be guilty of a dereliction of the duty which it owed to the country, if it were to authorise the Governor to send home a delegate to negotiate with English capitalists before the House had been placed in possession of further information on the subject.

MR. STONE thought a good deal depended upon what powers it was proposed to delegate to our representative. He did not suppose for a moment it was the intention of the Governor to clothe him with plenary power to commit the Colony to any undertaking, but simply enable him to bring the scheme under the attention of capitalists at home, with the view of discovering whether there was a prospect of the project being carried out. Surely they must give some latitude to the Executive in initiating a scheme like this. The House was assured there was no intention on the part of the Government to enter into any negotiations which would be binding upon the Colony without again consulting the Legislature on the subject.

MR. STEERE failed to see the necessity of sending home a delegate at all. It appeared to him all that was necessary to be done was this—when the scheme was more matured, and they were placed in possession of reliable information as to the character of the country, and the sanction of the Secretary of State had been obtained, that the Crown Agents be instructed to advertise that the Colony was prepared to enter into negotiations for the construction of the line, on the land grant payment system. If that were done, he had no doubt they would soon find capitalists ready to embark in the undertaking, if they thought it would pay them, and, in order to ascertain that, they would send out their own agent, and would not be guided by any information placed at their disposal by this Colony.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) pointed out that the course which the Government contemplated to adopt was very much the same as that pursued by the Queensland Government, when initiating a similar scheme in the interests of that Colony.

MR. STEERE thought that, after the dreadful mess the Executive Government had made, and the great loss entailed upon the Colony, by the manner in which they had conducted their guano business, it behoved the House to see that hereafter no contracts are entered into on behalf of this Colony without consulting the Legislature on the subject.

MR. BURT had waited until this moment to learn, if possible, out of what vote the expenses connected with this proposed survey were going to be provided by the Government.

MR. MARMION: They decline to tell us. I put the question to the Commissioner of Crown Lands, but the hon. gentleman did not deign to reply.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said if the hon. member would read the original resolution, he would see that it was proposed that, in order to save expense, the survey should be undertaken by officers already in the employ of the Government.

MR. MARMION: If the House agrees to that suggestion, I would ask the hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands

whether he thinks that the suggestion could be carried out with the funds now at the hon. gentleman's disposal for ordinary surveys?

MR. BROWN: Probably the hon. gentleman would decline to answer the question, on the ground that he has already informed the House, in the course of the previous debate on the subject, that he could not hope to carry out this special survey, and also the ordinary surveys, out of the sum voted by the House for the department for next year, namely, £1000.

MR. BURT congratulated the hon. member for Geraldton upon the very courteous reply which he had given the House on the part of the Government. But what puzzled him was this: how were we going to save any expense (as alleged in the resolution) by employing Government officers to do the work, unless these officers are going to work for nothing. He did not suppose they would do that? How then were they going to save expense?

The amendment was then put and negatived, upon a division, the numbers being—

Ayes	...	...	7
Noes	...	...	10
Majority against...			3

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Burt	The Hon. A. C. Onslow
Mr. Grant	The Hon. M. Fraser
Mr. Higham	Mr. Brown
Mr. Marmion	Mr. Burgess
Mr. S. H. Parker	Mr. Hamersley
Mr. Venn	Mr. S. S. Parker
Mr. Steere (Teller.)	Mr. Randell
	Mr. Shenton
	Mr. Stone
	Lord Gifford (Teller.)

The amendment was therefore negatived.

The original resolution was then put and carried in Committee, and reported to the House.

MR. S. H. PARKER: Before the report of the Committee is adopted, I should like to point out the position we are in. The resolution affirms that the House concurs in His Excellency's Message, and the only suggestion made in that Message is that the House should authorise His Excellency to incur the expense of sending a delegate to England. Having thus expressed our concurrence with this Message, I take it that the Committee by adopting this resolution

authorises the Governor to incur the expense. But we have voted nothing for it on the Estimates. How is it proposed to defray the expenses of this delegate?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said he could see his way perfectly clear to do that, without a special vote for the purpose. He had this expenditure in view when framing the Estimates, and it would come out of the vote for "Incidental Expenses." Moreover, he did not suppose they would be in a position to send a delegate home before next Session.

MR. S. H. PARKER: Then what is the use of asking the House to pass this resolution?

The question was then put—that the report of the Committee be adopted—when another division took place, and the motion was negatived, the numbers being,—

Ayes	8
Noes	10

Majority against...	2
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AYES.
The Hon. A. C. Onslow
The Hon. M. Fraser
Mr. Burges
Mr. Hamersley
Mr. S. S. Parker
Mr. Shenton
Mr. Stone
Lord Gifford (Teller.)

NOES.
Mr. Brown
Mr. Burt
Sir T. C. Campbell
Mr. Grant
Mr. Higham
Mr. Marmion
Mr. S. H. Parker
Mr. Randell
Mr. Venn
Mr. Steere (Teller.)

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Tuesday, 13th September, 1881.

Appropriation Bill, 1882: second reading; in committee—Audit Bill, 1881: recommitted—Railway to King George's Sound—Message (No. 28): Forwarding Correspondence—Message (No. 29): Law and Parliamentary Library Act, Amendment Bill—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

APPROPRIATION BILL, 1882.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford), in moving the second reading of this Bill, said the text of the Bill was very much the same as had been used for some years past, but hon. members would observe that there was a verbal alteration in the title and preamble. This change, though but a verbal one, involved an important principle, for, whereas in the Appropriation Bills passed heretofore the title and preamble, as also the appropriation clause, recited that the sum appropriated was to be issued and applied "for the service of the year," the present Bill enacted that the money was authorised to be expended "for such services as shall come in course of payment during the year." This alteration was made in order to secure a simplification of the public accounts, and to afford a greater check upon the expenditure made in the course of the year.

Bill read a second time, and committed.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1.—"Out of the General Public Revenue not otherwise by law specially appropriated there shall or may be issued and applied, for the service of the year one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two, any sum or sums not exceeding the sum of one hundred and fifty-eight thousand nine hundred and eleven pounds, four shillings, and sevenpence, for defraying the charge of the Colonial Government for the year ending the thirty-first day of December, one thousand eight hundred and eighty-two."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) moved, That the words "the service of," in the fourth line, be struck out, and the words "such services as shall come in course of payment during," be inserted in lieu thereof.

Amendment agreed to, and clause adopted.

Clause 2.—Treasurer to pay on Governor's warrant:

Agreed to.

Preamble and title agreed to, and Bill reported.

AUDIT BILL, 1881.

On the Order of the Day for the third reading of this Bill,