

"of Collie and Brunswick Bridges. The "Bunbury Jarrah Company's tender for same. And the Acting Director of "Public Works' letter of 4th February, "notifying acceptance of tender. (2.) "The order or memo. of lengths and "sizes of timber required for repairs to "Collie and Brunswick Bridges, as supplied to the Bunbury Jarrah Company "by Superintendent of Roads, dated "27th March, 1882. (3.) The whole of "the correspondence that has taken place "to date, between the Government and "the Bunbury Jarrah Company, relative "to the above specifications and payment for timber supplied. (4.) The "Resident Magistrate's report of his examination of the bridge near Trigwell's, "Preston, for which the Public Works "Department advertised for tenders to "execute repairs, &c., in January last." The hon. member said he was induced to move for these documents owing to the reply he received the other evening from the noble lord when he asked for them before, namely, that they were documents of a nature which made it necessary for an Address to be presented to His Excellency before they could be produced. He therefore now moved an Address to that effect. While on his legs he wished to avail himself of the opportunity of stating that, in moving in this matter, he was acting in no way in connection with the Bunbury Jarrah Company, who, he believed, did not approve of his taking any action in the matter.

The motion, which was seconded by Mr. STEERE, was agreed to.

WIDTH OF TIRES BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow), without comment, moved that the Width of Tires Bill be now read a second time.

Motion agreed to, and Bill read a second time *sub silentio*.

PEARL SHELL FISHERY BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow), in accordance with notice, moved the first reading of a Bill to make further provision for the regulation of the Pearl Shell Fishery.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time,

SCAB ACT AMENDMENT AND CONSOLIDATION BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

IMPORTED LABOR REGISTRY BILL.

This Bill was further considered in Committee.

Clause 11:

Question—That the words moved by the ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) be added to the clause (*vide* p. 170 *ante*)—put and passed, without discussion.

MR. BROWN pointed out that the same objection which he had raised the other evening as regards the 7th clause—and which was removed by the introduction of a few words, rendering it open for certificates to be granted by any Government medical officer—applied also to the 12th clause, which, as at present worded, rendered it necessary that all contracts shall be explained to the laborer in the presence of the Resident Magistrate at or nearest to the port at which such laborer shall have been landed. The amendment which had been just agreed to in the 11th clause made it still more necessary to amend the 12th clause.

MR. S. H. PARKER moved, That Progress be reported, and leave given to sit again another day (August 24th).

Agreed to.

Progress reported.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 23rd August, 1882.

Expenditure on First Section Eastern Railway—Persons employed on Eastern and Northern Railways—Jetty Accommodation at Fremantle in connection with the Eastern Railway—Financial Statement—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS,

EXPENDITURE ON FIRST SECTION EASTERN RAILWAY.

MR. STEERE, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Secretary, "To lay upon the Table a detailed account of the sum of £7,465 7s. 9d. expended on the first section of the Eastern Railway, out of the loan raised for the second section of the line." It appeared by the returns prepared by the Colonial Treasurer and presented to the House (Sessional Paper No. 26), that out of the loan raised for extending the railway from Guildford to Chidlow's Well a sum of £23,444 7s. 8d. had been expended on the extension up to the 30th June last, but it also appeared from the same return (No. 5) that a sum of £7,465 7s. 9d. had been spent, out of the same loan, on the first section of the line, and it would be satisfactory to the House to have a detailed account of this expenditure.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said the details asked for were being prepared, and would be laid on the Table as soon as they were ready.

PERSONS EMPLOYED ON EASTERN AND NORTHERN RAILWAYS.

MR. STEERE, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Secretary, "To lay on the Table a return of the total number of persons employed on the Eastern Railway, showing their occupation, and their rate of pay; also a similar return for the Northern Railway."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said the returns asked for would be prepared. He might also add that papers having reference to the proposed reorganisation of the Railway staff were about to be submitted to the House by His Excellency the Governor.

JETTY ACCOMMODATION AT FREMANTLE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford), in accordance with notice, moved for the appointment of a Select Committee to consider and report on the steps desirable to be taken for the improvement of jetty accommodation at Fremantle, in connection with the Eastern Railway; such Committee to consist of Mr. Steere, Mr. Marmion, Mr.

Shenton, Mr. Carey, and the Mover; with power to call for persons and papers. The noble lord said the question of improving the jetty accommodation at Fremantle, with a view to facilitate railway traffic, was a somewhat difficult one to deal with, without obtaining the opinion of practical men, and this, he thought, would be better done by a Select Committee, empowered to examine such persons, than it could possibly be done in a Committee of the whole House. With regard to the members to serve on the Select Committee, if the House preferred that the Committee be elected by ballot he had no objection whatever to that course being adopted.

The motion was then agreed to, and the Committee nominated appointed.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford), having moved the House into Committee, rose and said: Sir—I rise to perform a somewhat more satisfactory task in addressing the House upon the financial position of the Colony than I did when I had to discharge a similar duty last year. It will be unnecessary for me—for it will be fresh in the recollection of hon. members—to remind them of the financial difficulties which the country at that time, and for some time previously, had to struggle against. Last year, in passing in review the financial transactions of the Colony for the preceding twelvemonth, it was my unpleasant duty to remind you that we commenced the year with a deficit of about £80,000, according to the statement furnished; and, with a view to restore the financial equilibrium, the Council and the Government took immediate steps to equalise the receipts and the expenditure, so as to relieve our temporary embarrassments. Acting upon several recommendations which from time to time emanated from this House, the Government, on their part, adopted a policy of rigorous reform and retrenchment, which I believe has met with general approbation, both on the part of the Legislature and of the country. The Council, it will be remembered, with a view to place the finances of the Colony on a more satisfactory footing, proposed to raise a sum of £50,000 by loan to

recoup the general revenue the amount which had been expended upon the construction of the Eucla telegraph, and there is no doubt that this financial expedient was of great assistance in helping to restore our finances to a more sound condition. That loan, I may here state, realised £48,160, and, as I have said, was a great help to the Government in their efforts to restore the financial equilibrium, and in placing the public accounts in the satisfactory position in which you now find them. Before proceeding any further, it will be necessary for me, in order to elucidate the financial position of the Colony, to review our transactions during the last year. Hon. members are aware that, when I stood before them last Session to expound the position of the Colony, and to forecast our financial operations for the coming year, I estimated the revenue for 1881 at £192,154; but I am happy to say that this estimate was more than realised. The total receipts passed to the public credit for the year amounted to £254,313. That sum, however, includes the recoupment of the sum of £48,160 realised by the Eucla telegraph loan, leaving the actual revenue received during the year at £206,152. The estimated expenditure for the same period was £192,508, but the actual expenditure amounted to £197,386, showing an excess of £4,878, last year, of actual over-estimated expenditure. There was, however, an underdraft of £3,259, which, in reality, reduced the Excess Bill now before the House from £8,137 to the above mentioned figure, which, I venture to submit, is not very much out of the way, when it is borne in mind that the year's transactions amounted to nearly £200,000. I think this alone will satisfy the House, and will satisfy the country, that every care has been exercised by the present Government to meet the wishes and the expressed desire of this honorable House, as regards the expenditure of public funds. The revenue proper for the year under review exceeded the estimated revenue by £13,104, and, in order to show how satisfactory has been the progress of the Colony, I may add that it exceeded the actual revenue of the previous year by no less than £26,104. This was exclusive of the £48,160, the proceeds of the £50,000

raised by loan to recoup the general revenue for the expenditure incurred in the construction of the Eucla telegraph line. This satisfactory evidence of progress is mainly attributable to the increase of legitimate trade, to the large amount of territorial revenue received, and to the development of our railway traffic. The receipts from the last named source of revenue have been very satisfactory, notwithstanding the fact, as hon. members are aware, that we have as yet been unable to develop fully the goods traffic, as we hope to do in the course of a short time. In addition to the sources of revenue which I have indicated as having contributed to swell the public income beyond its estimated limit, I should also refer to the stamp duty. This tax came into operation towards the close of the year (in November), and brought in no less than £1200; and this item had not been estimated at all in the receipts for that year. These, then, were the principal items which contributed to augment the public revenue beyond our expectations during the past year. The year's expenditure, I may say, compared with that of 1880, shows a reduction of £6,951,—notwithstanding the fact that railway expenses increased to £12,215 from £5,634 of the previous year, and that a sum of £10,695 had to be provided for sinking fund and interest on loans. Turning to the import and export trade of the Colony for the same period, we find the same satisfactory indications of progress and of the development of trade. Last year the total value of the imports of the Colony amounted to £404,831, against £353,669 in the previous year, showing an increase of over £50,000. This must surely be regarded as a very healthy sign of the material advancement of the Colony, and an earnest of the brighter future still in store for it. Regarding our export trade, I find that the total official value of the exports during the past year was £502,769, which does not show so satisfactory an increase over the preceding year as our imports did,—the actual excess compared with 1880 being £3,586. Several causes have contributed to bring about this comparatively small increase in our export trade, which can be explained. For instance, no guano was exported last year, whereas the value of the shipments

of this article in the previous year amounted to £6,650. Lead ore, too, has fallen off considerably, the exports under this head during 1880 having been 1921 tons, of the estimated value of £15,368, against 1,400 tons last year, estimated at £11,000,—showing a falling off of about £4,000. This, however, was simply the result of the depression of the lead market, and not to any falling off in the mineral resources of the Colony. There is also an apparent reduction in the quantity of wool exported,—I say apparent, for the fluctuation which takes place with respect to the export of wool from year to year is frequently the result—as it was in this instance—of our wool ships clearing out immediately after the close of the year. The apparent falling off in this article, after all, was not very great, the total quantity exported in 1880 having been 4,342,606lbs. as compared with 4,107,038lbs. last year,—a reduction which, as I have already said, is due to the fact of some of the wool shipments having been cleared at the commencement of the present year. On the other hand, there are most satisfactory indications of the development of some of our other staple articles of export, such as sandalwood and timber. In sandalwood alone there is an increase of over £25,000 in the value of last year's exports as compared with the previous year. The total quantity shipped in 1880 was 5,197 tons, estimated at £51,970, whereas last year we exported 7,716 tons, of the estimated value of £77,160. One cause for this increase can hardly be regarded as a satisfactory one, for there is no doubt that our exports under this head were considerably increased owing to agricultural depression, the poorer class of farmers having to resort to sandalwooding in order to eke out a livelihood. With reference to the timber trade, our exports last year show an increase of 2,600 loads over those of the previous year, the value of our timber shipments in 1880 having been £66,252, compared with £79,277 in 1881. For my own part, I do not look upon this increase with unmixed satisfaction. No doubt our timber companies expend considerable sums of money in the payment of wages to the men employed by them, but, on the other hand, I cannot overlook the fact that a great many people who

otherwise would be employed in the cultivation of land are induced to abandon that occupation in favor of timber hauling, which I am informed affords them an easier means of earning a living than the cultivation of the soil. Some of these companies, however, do not confer so much benefit upon the Colony by the payment of wages as might be expected of them, for they require their men to take out part of their wages in stores, and these stores are as a rule obtained from the other colonies, so that we do not get the full benefit even of the wages earned by the workmen employed by those companies who resort to this truck system. (Mr. CAREY: Hear, hear.) Reverting to the increase of trade which the transactions of the past year bore evidence of, there is yet another quarter which affords satisfactory indication of commercial development. I allude to the shipping returns. From these it appears that the amount of tonnage which entered the ports of the Colony last year was (in round numbers) 21,000 tons in excess of the previous year. With regard to agriculture, although the past season was a bad one, there was more land under cultivation in 1881 than there was in 1880, the number of acres in each year being 67,437 and 63,902 respectively, showing an increase of 3,534 acres in the estimated area of cultivated land in the Colony. With reference to pastoral lands, the increase under this head was much more remarkable. I find that last year there were no less than 58,243,503 acres of land leased or licensed for pastoral purposes, as compared with 44,211,623; whilst, as regards land sold or granted, it amounted to 19,242 acres. No doubt this progress in the occupation of pastoral lands is in a great measure attributable to the fact that the Kimberley District has been thrown open for settlement. In that district alone, up to the 30th June this year, rent was paid for no less than 16,360,000 acres, while about 19,000,000 acres in addition have already been applied for. Up to 30th June last, we had received about £13,000 in land rents from the Kimberley District. Whilst on this subject, I think it would not be out of place here were I to refer briefly to what is proposed to be done with reference to the

survey of this part of our territory. There is at present a great want of knowledge not only as regards the geography of the district, but also as to its capabilities, the opinions expressed with reference to it being somewhat conflicting. I think, however, whatever may be the future of the district as a pastoral country, there are portions of it which will be found very suitable for the cultivation of sugar and other tropical products, which, when it becomes better known, will undoubtedly increase the value of the land, and I hope yet to find that instead of charging 10s. we shall be justified in charging £10 an acre for some of this land. As I have already said, there is a great want of knowledge with reference to the geography and capabilities of the district, and it is hoped that the expenditure of £5,500, which the Government contemplate, for the purpose of surveying the country, will tend to supply us with fuller information on these subjects. I shall refer to this survey more in detail when I come to deal with the estimates of expenditure. The export of wool from the North District last year amounted to 500 bales in excess of the quantity exported during the previous year. The number of sheep in the district had increased by 55,000 between 1880 and 1881. In addition to this indication of advancement hon. members are aware that the last pearling season was a most successful one, no less than 234 tons of shells having been taken, the estimated value of which was over £35,000. Passing from these satisfactory signs of progress and prosperity, I will ask the Committee to follow me while I cursorily review our position in regard to our funded debt. We have up to the present date borrowed, altogether, sums amounting to £511,000, in addition to which we propose, as you know, to float another loan of £260,000, which will increase our liabilities to £771,000. Against this, however, we have provided £30,000 towards a sinking fund for the redemption of debentures, and I do not think that our liabilities, or the fiscal provisions made to meet them, have pressed very heavily upon any section of the community, when it is borne in mind the strong efforts we have lately put forward to push the Colony ahead, by

initiating public works,—works which I trust and believe will prove of a reproductive character. Among these undertakings is the extension of the railway to York; and, with regard to this extension, I may say that, if the financial results of this section will prove, as we hope they may prove, as satisfactory as the results which—withstanding the slight difficulties we have had to contend with—have accrued from the first section of the line, I think it will be a matter of congratulation to the House and to the country at large. Again, there is the telegraph to Roebourne, for which we require about £50,000,—a work that cannot fail to result in encouraging settlement in that part of the Colony. The other work proposed to be undertaken out of the new loan which this House will be asked to sanction, is the extension of jetty accommodation at Fremantle, with regard to which a Select Committee has been agreed to by hon. members this evening. I will therefore defer any remarks I have to make upon this undertaking, pending such time as the House is in possession of the Select Committee's report. In addition to these important works, which it is proposed to undertake out of loan money, there is another project which I have already briefly referred to, and which is scarcely less in importance, or fraught with less advantages to the Colony; I allude to the commencement of the proposed survey of the Kimberley District—a work which I am sure will meet with the cordial support of this honorable House. I think I ought to observe, in connection with the expansion of our liabilities, and in view of the important works we have already on hand, or in contemplation, that it is not proposed to increase the burden of taxation in any way. On the contrary, we propose to lighten it. So far as the stamp tax is concerned, very considerable reductions are contemplated in the direction where this tax probably presses most heavily, namely, upon mortgages. I think it will also be admitted that the readjustment of the tariff will give general satisfaction, relieving as it does some of our most deserving classes from a weight of taxation that pressed somewhat unduly upon them. The fact that we are able to incur and increase our loan liabilities, and to

undertake important works out of current revenue without having recourse to any additional taxation, but, on the contrary, in face of a reduction of taxation, appears to me a most satisfactory proof of the elasticity of our revenue, and affords convincing evidence that the Colony is growing in prosperity. At the same time the Government of course reserve to themselves the right to increase taxation, should such a course be found necessary to meet the interest on the new loan—provided the revenue does not come up to our anticipations. This brings me to the question of the estimated Revenue for the coming year. I calculate upon a revenue during the next twelvemonth of no less than £229,140. I do not think that amount is over-estimated at all, when it is borne in mind how the revenue last year exceeded our expectations, and consideration is given to the reproductive works now in course of progress. The Customs last year brought in a revenue of £107,993, and I reckon we may safely estimate that the receipts from this source during the coming year will not be short of £112,000. From land we anticipate a revenue of £51,900, as compared with £40,000 received from that source in 1881,—which I do not think an excessive estimate by any means, when we take into consideration the large quantity of land taken up in our Northern and our Southern-Eucla territory, and the increased recognition which the Colony is receiving at the hands of capitalists from the other side. I think we shall find, unless something which we cannot forecast occurs to disturb our calculations, that the estimate of our territorial revenue will be somewhat exceeded. The next big item to be considered in this connection is our railway receipts, from which I estimate no less than £15,300. This is a very large increase, hon. members will observe, over the receipts from the same source last year (£9,308), but it must be borne in mind that we shall, in all probability, have the second section of the Eastern Railway opened in June next, and that the goods traffic will before that time be in full working order. Basing our calculations upon the receipts from railway traffic during the first half of the present year, I think it will be

found that our estimate is a very fair one, and I shall be very much surprised, if all goes well, if it is not considerably exceeded. Although a reduction is proposed in the stamp duties, I anticipate that the receipts from this source during the ensuing year will not be less than £5,700,—if the amount received during the first half of the present year may be accepted as a criterion; for it may be expected that the increase of business throughout the Colony will considerably enhance the receipts from this source. Before proceeding any further, I would refer to another proof of the satisfactory and sound condition of the Colony, which is afforded in a direction that is not generally referred to when making financial statements in this House. I allude to our banking statistics, as periodically published in the *Government Gazette*, than which I know of no more striking proof of the stability of the Colony, from a monetary point of view. In 1879 the amount of coin held by the local Banks was £70,684, whereas I find that in 1882 the amount of coin on hand was no less than £115,746, while the deposits bearing interest amounted in the aggregate to £184,939, against £38,030, in 1872, ten years ago. This, I should say, is altogether exclusive of the money deposited with the banks by the Government, on interest. We now deposit the whole of our loan and other money, not actually required for immediate disbursement, with the local banks, on which we are allowed interest at various rates; and at the present moment, we have a large sum lying at interest in this way. So that hon. members will see we endeavor to get the most we can out of every penny that comes into our hands. In addition to the increased amount of private deposits lying in the local banks, there is an increase in the amount of the Savings Bank deposits, and also in the number of depositors, showing, as I take it, a corresponding increase of thrift and prosperity among our working classes. I find that in 1880 the number of deposits in the Post Office Savings Bank was 2,200, whereas last year the number had increased to 3,219, and the balance due to depositors increased during the same period from £21,942, to £22,598. The revenue derived from all sources during the first six months of the current

year affords every indication of a still-growing prosperity. Hon. members are aware that the total estimated revenue for the whole year ending 31st December next was £200,565, while the receipts from all sources during the past half year amounted to £130,055. Of course, it must be borne in mind, in looking at this satisfactory result, that we have now received the greatest bulk of our land revenue; but, on the other hand, we have yet to receive the bulk of our Customs, on the arrival of the wool ships, with their annual supply of goods for our merchants. The territorial revenue for the first half of the present year exceeded the estimate by £8,876, and the Customs revenue during the same period reached about £49,000 (the estimate for the year being £99,400), while the great bulk of our revenue from this source, as I have already said, remains to be received during the present half year; so that it will be seen there is every prospect of the estimate being considerably exceeded under this head. There is, in fact, a corresponding increase in almost every item of revenue, judged by the standard of the half year which ended 30th June last. The Post Office, Mail, and Telegraph Department shows an increase of £764 on the half year, over the corresponding period last year, while the revenue received from the stamp tax—which, for the whole year, was estimated at £3,500—up to the end of June had reached £2,547. It is true that, on the other hand, we have had to come to this House with a supplementary estimate of expenditure for the year amounting to £11,658, but this sum was entirely met by the land revenue received in excess of our anticipations, and by sums provided for on the Estimates which were not required. It will be remembered that we began the year with a deficit of £12,565, but on the 30th June we had a surplus balance of £20,178. I now come to the estimated Expenditure for the coming year which we anticipate will amount to £226,101. Possibly this may appear a large sum in comparison with the expenditure of the past year—£197,386. But it must be borne in mind that, if a man increases his business he naturally incurs larger expenses, and so it is with public finance. I think, however, I may give hon. members an

assurance that in this increased expenditure we are not going beyond what our means justify. I have already shown hon. members what our income is likely to be, and they will see that it will be more than ample to meet our liabilities. Among these, I would point out that provision is made to meet the year's interest on the proposed new loan of £260,000, which, reckoned at four per cent., will amount to £10,400. Hon. members, on reference to the Estimates laid on the Table this evening, will observe that there are slight increases under various heads of departmental expenditure, and that in some instances it is proposed to augment the salaries of some of our public servants. There is a very large increase in the vote for the Survey Department, which for this year amounts to £8,134, whereas the expenditure contemplated in connection with this department next year is estimated at £14,063. This additional expenditure, however, is necessitated in consequence of a desire on the part of the Government to carry out the wishes of this House, and I think I may say of the country, as regards a most important and most necessary work,—the survey of the Kimberley District. In addition to the topographical survey of that district, a vote of £1,000 will be asked for a geological survey. Little or nothing is known, as yet, of the geological formation, or of the mineral resources, of this part of our territory, and I believe myself that we lose much by not having more information on this subject at our command. There is no saying how rich the district may prove to be in mineral deposits, and it is considered very desirable that a competent geologist should accompany the survey party which it is proposed to despatch to the district. With reference to the proposed expenditure in connection with the Works and Railways Department, it will be my duty to submit to the Council, in the course of a day or two, certain papers with reference to the reorganisation of the railway staff; and the sum of £16,489 set down as the estimated expenditure in connection with this department (and that of Works) will, I believe, be ample to meet all demands. I do not think for a moment the vote will be exceeded; on the contrary, I am of opinion we shall be

able to effect a good saving on it. We have had to increase the vote for next year, in view of the expected opening for traffic of the second section of the Eastern Railway. There is also an increase in the Postal and Telegraph Department, but not to any very large amount, and chiefly in salaries, commencing with the Postmaster General, whose claims to an increase have long been pressed upon the Government by hon. members in this House. There is also a slight increase under the head of the conveyance of mails, as it is proposed to make fresh arrangements in connection with this branch of the service, and to afford increased postal facilities to the settlers at the North; and, as soon as the railway is open to Chidlow's Well, it is intended to have the mails to and from the Eastern Districts carried at more frequent intervals than at present. The details of this fresh scheme I will explain to the House when the item is under consideration in Committee of Supply. The same will be done with reference to the increased postal facilities proposed for the North District, both eastward and westward of Roebourne, which cannot fail to prove of great service to the residents of those outlying settlements. While on the subject of mail communication, I may mention, incidentally, as regards the subsidy voted by this House for the purpose of inducing ocean mail steamers to call at Fremantle, that several companies have been nibbling at the bait, but, as yet, we have been unable to hook any of them. I think, however, as the Colony increases in importance, and its resources become better known, and when we have established telegraphic communication with our North-West settlements, there is every probability that some of the boats may be induced to call here, periodically. Under the head of the Police Department hon. members will observe an increase of no less than £3537, but hon. members must not suppose that last year's vote has increased to this extent: the increment is caused by the provision which we intend to make for extending police protection to the Gascoyne and the Kimberley Districts. It will also be observed that we have placed under this head the salary of the Itinerary Magistrate intended for the Gascoyne, and his police

escort. I believe it is the wish of the House that steps should be taken for the appointment of the proposed establishment, and, as hon. members are aware, we have already made a move in this direction. By the middle of next year we shall probably have a better knowledge of how this itinerary scheme works. This vote also includes the erection of a police station and Customs office in the Kimberley District, and the purchase of remounts. It is proposed to station a police force at the Fitzroy and also at Roebuck Bay, as it is reported that the natives in some of these parts are somewhat troublesome, and consequently police protection is considered desirable, so as to place the settlers in as secure a position as we can, with the limited means at our disposal. We propose to establish two stations at Legrange Bay, in the most inexpensive way we can; and, I believe, if we succeed in carrying out these proposals it will be a great boon to the settlers, who will thus be afforded not only protection from hostile natives, but also a means of intercommunication with head quarters at Roebourne, in the event of an emergency. Whilst on this subject, I may state that it has been found desirable and necessary to slightly increase the vote for the Revenue Cutter employed on the North-West coast, the vote of last year having proved inadequate for the maintenance of this vessel and the charges incidental to its hire. The settlers and the pearlers themselves say they like to see the boat amongst them on the coast, as it is a source of great convenience to them; and of course we ought to consider the wishes of these people. The work carried out by the vessel last year was most satisfactory, and I do not think the slight increase proposed in this item will be regarded as excessive. I think, some day, it will be worthy of consideration whether it would not be advisable that we should have a boat of our own for this service, and whether, in the long run, it would not be a more economical arrangement than the present one of hiring a vessel. The only other item on the Estimates to which I think I need at present refer, in addition to that of immigration—which, being already under the consideration of the House, I will not comment upon now—is the vote for

Roads and Bridges, which it is proposed to increase from £6000 to £10,000. I must say that, in my opinion, this question of roads will shortly become a very serious matter for consideration. I am aware that a great many people think, and among them several hon. members of this House, that the £50,000 raised by loan for roads purposes might have gone much further than it has done; but I would remind the Committee that, with the enormous extent of roads over which it had to be distributed, such a sum was a mere drop in the ocean. It would be impossible to put every road in the Colony in good order with it, as some people seem to expect. In addition to the roads, some of our bridges too are getting into a disgraceful condition, and becoming a heavy charge upon this vote and on the unexpended balance of the loan. Under these circumstances it has been found necessary to increase the grant for roads and bridges from £6,000 to £10,000. I think myself this question of road maintenance will require our very serious consideration before long, and demand quite as much if not more attention at our hands than almost any other subject. If we intend to open up the country for settlement, and to develop its resources, some means must be found for the construction and maintenance of our roads, in order to afford means of communication; and, I need hardly point out that, as settlement extends, the greater will be the demand upon our funds in providing and maintaining this increased means of communication. This appears to me a very important question, the solution of which must sooner or later engage the serious attention of this Council. One thing is very certain, we cannot again provide the means to carry out these works out of loan; that is out of the question. It appears to me that the day must come when we shall have to devote the proceeds of our land sales to such purposes as these, rather than for purposes of general expenditure, and I hope to see the day when the revenue derived from Customs and other sources, independent of land sales, will be as much as will suffice for carrying on the whole machinery of Government, and that we shall be able to devote our territorial revenue towards the construction of necessary

and reproductive works, and thereby save the interest on loans, letting the money out at only a slight rate of interest with a small sinking fund. If something is not done to husband our national estate, if we are going to devote every penny we get out of it for meeting our present liabilities, the day will come when we shall regret that we did not make better use of our estate. I have now, Sir, completed to a very great extent the duty entailed upon me. From the figures which I have quoted the Committee will see that I anticipate a revenue of £229,140 during the coming year, and that on the 31st December next there will be an estimated surplus balance of £9,322 to carry to the credit of the new year, giving us an income, as I hope, of £238,462, to meet an expenditure at present estimated at £226,101. This at the end of next year, if all goes well, and if our expectations are realised, will, after providing for loans and every other liability that we can foresee at present, leave a surplus balance of £12,361. This, I submit, is a most satisfactory state of affairs. Some people may think I take too sanguine a view of the position of the Colony, but I hope I shall be able, if I am called upon to do so next Session, to show hon. members that what I have predicted will have been realised to the fullest extent. I say again, there is every indication that the Colony is now on the road to prosperity. Its financial position is thoroughly sound; for, notwithstanding the fact that we are remitting duties, notwithstanding the fact that we have placed on the Estimates amounts to meet all our liabilities in respect of loans and to meet all our ordinary expenditure, we shall still have a substantial surplus. And I am certain that, with reasonable care and prudence in the administration of its public affairs, the prosperity of the Colony is, with the blessings of Providence, assured for the next year at any rate. Of course we must not be led away by these indications of prosperity. We must not launch into expenditure simply because we have the means to do so. There may come a time of adversity. There is always an ebb-flow in commercial prosperity; and this Colony cannot expect to escape those fluctuations which occur in the commercial life of

every country, and which it is impossible to forecast. But, so far as any reliance can be placed upon human speculations, we have every ground, judging from our experience of the past, and regard being had to our present position, to look with every confidence to the future. As a formal matter I will now move the first item on the Estimates—"Governor's Aide-de-Camp, £50."

On the motion of Mr. SHENTON, Progress was then reported, and leave given to sit again for the consideration of the Estimates on Monday, August 28th.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Thursday, 24th August, 1882.

Messages (Nos. 4, 5, and 6) from His Excellency the Governor—Telephone Exchange between Perth and Fremantle—Report upon Diseases in Vines—Pearl Shell Fisheries Bill (thrown out)—Imported Labor Registry Bill—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

MESSAGE (No. 4): BILLS PASSED LAST SESSION.

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

"The Governor informs the Honorable the Legislative Council that Her Majesty, by Order in Council, dated the 29th June last, has been pleased to assent to three Bills passed during the last Session of the Legislative Council entitled:—

"1. *An Act to provide for the more effectual Keeping and Auditing of the Public Accounts.*

"2. *An Act for the Re-appropriation of certain monies appropriated for the pur-*

poses of a Steam Tug, by 'The Loan Act, 1878.'

"3. *An Act to prevent the Destruction and Export of Immature Sandalwood.*

"The Governor's correspondence on the subject with the Secretary of State is herewith submitted for the information of Your Honorable House.

"Government House, Perth, 24th August, 1882."

MESSAGE (No. 5): ASSENT TO BILLS.

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

"The Governor informs Your Honorable Council that he has this day assented, in Her Majesty's name, to the undermentioned Bills:

"4. *An Act to provide for the payment of certain additional and unforeseen expenses in the year One thousand eight hundred and eighty-two, over and above the Estimates for that year.*

"5. *An Act for imposing Duties on Imported Goods, and for exemption of certain Goods from Duties.*

"Government House, Perth, 24th August, 1882."

MESSAGE (No. 6): FORWARDING TRESPASS, FENCING, AND IMPOUNDING BILL.

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

"The Governor forwards, herewith, for the consideration of Your Honorable Council, a Bill entitled 'An Act to consolidate and amend the Laws relating to Trespases of Live Stock and the Poundage thereof, and to consolidate the Laws relating to the construction of Fences.' The consolidation of the Laws in question has become necessary, in consequence of the fragmentary character of the Statutes now in force, and the Governor is of opinion that the Bill now submitted, which has been very carefully drafted, will be found to be a valuable piece of legislation. The Law as regards fencing is left absolutely in *statu quo*, except so far as verbal alterations and a better arrangement are concerned.