

and before concluding we avail ourselves of this opportunity of offering to Your Excellency our congratulations on the distinction recently conferred on you by Her Most Gracious Majesty, in promoting you to the rank of Knight Commander of the distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, which we recognize not only as an acknowledgment of Her Majesty's approval of your services, but as complimentary to the Colony over which you preside.

In again thanking Your Excellency for the Address with which you have opened this Session of the Legislative Council, we join you in the prayer that we may be guided by Divine Providence in the faithful discharge of the responsible duties entrusted to us."

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) moved, That the address be adopted.

MR. STEERE moved, as an amendment, That the consideration of the address be made an order of the day for Wednesday.

Amendment agreed to.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 11th July, 1877.

First readings—Roads Parties Discipline Bill: second reading—Address in reply: resumed debate.

The SPEAKER took the chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

FIRST READINGS.

The following Bills were read a first time:—The District Roads Boards Audit Bill; the Imported Stock Act, 1876, Amendment Bill, 1877; the Industrial Schools Act, 1874, Amendment Bill, 1877; the Confirmation of Expenditure Bill; the Ballot Bill, 1877; and the Extradition Bill, Western Australia, 1877.

ROAD PARTIES DISCIPLINE BILL.

This Bill was read a second time, and passed through committee, without discussion.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

On the Order of the Day for the consideration of the address in reply to His Excellency's speech being read,—

MR. STEERE rose and said: It may appear somewhat inconsistent to the House that, after the statement I made last session, I should, yesterday, have moved the adjournment of the debate on the address in reply; for it may be in the recollection of hon. members—or, if not, they may refresh their memory by referring to our new book, *Hansard*—that I stated to the House that in future it was not my intention to adopt that course, on account of what appeared to me its inutility under our present constitution. But I was given to understand that it was the wish of several hon. members on the present occasion that the course usually adopted at previous sessions should be followed, so I fell in with their views, and moved the adjournment of the debate. I listened with very great attention to the very exhaustive speech delivered to this House by His Excellency yesterday. Of course, I expected that the Governor would take as favorable a view of the condition and prospects of the Colony as possible—we could not expect otherwise: but I must say, I do not share in the views entertained by His Excellency, especially with regard to the financial affairs of the country. I think it is a matter for grave consideration that the actual expenditure of the Colony for the past year exceeded the revenue by £17,484, and that in the year before the the public expenditure was more than £12,000 over and above the revenue for the same period. At this rate, what surplus revenue we had on hand will soon be exhausted. We have been told that on the 31st December last it had dwindled down to £6,000, and if the expenditure goes on at the same rate as at present we shall find at the end of the current year a balance against us, instead of in our favor. We are told in the speech that, on examination of the estimate of Customs revenue for 1878, we shall find that the Government calculate on a further improvement in the revenue from that

source during the course of the coming year. Really, for myself, I cannot imagine where this increase is to come from, unless it is from the royalty on guano. We have been led to believe in some quarters that the revenue from this source may be valued at hundreds of thousands. Others, less sanguine, estimate it at tens of thousands. At any rate there exists a wide divergence of opinion as to the extent of revenue we are likely to derive from our guano deposits;—my own opinion is that it will not be very great—not more than enough to make up the deficiency which I anticipate from the Customs revenue next year. It must be borne in mind that we have not yet begun to feel the effects of the falling off in the prices of our staple products and principal articles of export; it will not be until next year that we shall experience our real loss from this depression. As to the exports of the Colony being regarded as satisfactory, I must say that I do not regard them with the same feeling of complacent satisfaction as His Excellency. I have entered into a calculation of the actual value of our exports during the past year—so far as regards the principal items—and compared my estimate with the value set against them in the Blue Book; and I find that the official estimate is vastly over-valued, as on former occasions, and that the actual value of our exports was not so great by upwards of £70,000 as they are made to appear in the Blue Book. Pearl shells, for instance, are set down at £190 per ton, whereas I find, on enquiry amongst our largest exporters of this article, that the average value would not exceed £110 per ton, making a difference in the aggregate value of our exports under this head of over £30,000. Wool, again, has been immensely over-estimated in value, and I believe the revenue from this source will be quite £25,000 less than it is made to appear in the Blue Book. There is sandalwood, also, the official value of which is greatly exaggerated. This article is set down at £10 per ton, whereas, as I am informed on the best authority, it will not realise more than £8, on the average; so that in this item there is a difference of about £13,000 between the actual aggregate value of the exported article and the official estimated value. It will thus be

seen that in these three articles alone—pearl shells, wool, and sandalwood—there is an excess of nearly £70,000 calculated upon, to say nothing of minor articles of export. Turning, again, to our imports, I can hardly regard them as satisfactory, seeing that according to His Excellency's speech, the Colony during the past eighteen months imported flour and grain to the value of £40,000. I do not think there is matter for much gratulation or satisfaction in that statement. In the next paragraph of the speech, however, we come upon something a little more encouraging. I am very glad to find from the Postmaster General's report that the statistics of his department furnish "a strong proof of the progress of the colony, socially and commercially." I am also pleased to hear that the local money order system has already worked so well. I recollect that, as a member of the old Council, I endeavored to induce the Government to adopt this system, but at that time there were some difficulties in the way, and the matter dropped. It is, however, satisfactory to find that since the system was brought into operation twelve months ago, it has made good progress, and been appreciated by the public, especially in the country districts where there are no other means of transmitting small sums of money. With respect to the paragraph dealing with the Eucla Telegraph Line, although it is a source of satisfaction to me, as it must be to every hon. member present, to learn that the progress made with this work is satisfactory, there is one sentence in the paragraph with which I cannot agree. His Excellency says, it speaks well for the Colony that we have been able to undertake this heavy work out of current revenue without in any way crippling our resources. I do not think that is correct; for I believe, on the contrary, that our resources have been very much crippled indeed by this undertaking being carried on out of current revenue. I have always maintained, and I think so yet, that a work of this character ought to have been undertaken by means of a loan. The roads of the Colony have fallen into disrepair in consequence of the diversion of the public funds to the construction of this line, instead of being expended on roads and bridges, and other necessary

works of a like character. Therefore I cannot endorse this sentiment of His Excellency. I am sure it must be a source of satisfaction to us all that, through the exertions of the Government, we have, at length, another steamer on our coast; but I do not think the Colony derives that amount of benefit from it which it might do. At any rate, the southern districts of the Colony do not. I think the time-table might be arranged so as to afford greater facilities for those districts. What benefit, for instance, does Bunbury derive from this coastal service when the steamer goes in at night, as she is timed to do, and limits her stay to about half-an-hour? It is the same at the Vasse. Surely these districts have as much right to be considered in the matter as other parts of the Colony. I was very sorry indeed to hear that the steamer has not paid so well as her owners had expected, and that for this reason she is likely to be removed. I think, myself, that the subsidy which we now pay is quite as much as we are justified in paying out of our small means, and I should not be in favor of increasing it. It must be gratifying to the House to learn that an offer has been received by the Government from the Banda Steam Navigation Association to run a line of steamers twice a month between this Colony and Singapore, and I shall willingly, myself, vote the extra subsidy (£1000) for the purpose of carrying out the scheme, which I think will be a source of great benefit to this Colony. Whatever may be the result to the owners of the steamers, there is very little doubt that we shall be gainers by the proposal, if carried out. It is a matter of much disappointment to me, and it must be so to everyone in the Colony, that we have made no further progress in the matter of railways. There existed a very general feeling throughout the country that something definite would be done this session towards the construction of the proposed railway between Fremantle and Guildford, and it must be a source of general disappointment to find that the question has not advanced any further than it appears to have done. Like Mahomet's coffin, hanging between heaven and earth, this railway scheme seems to be for ever floating somewhere between Downing Street and Government House. I really

think it would become the House to take some immediate steps to carry out this important project into fruition, and, to that end, I think the Governor should be asked to introduce a railway loan bill this session, which, if passed—as I have no doubt it would be—and forwarded to the Secretary of State, might be approved of in almost as short a time as His Lordship will be able to reply to His Excellency's despatch of June 6th. It is very discouraging to have to submit to all this delay, and to have the work deferred from year to year. Nor does the Secretary of State afford us much encouragement in his despatch of the 19th June, where he promises that, as soon as he has been furnished with certain information, and can be assured that the necessary funds have been provided to cover the cost of employing competent professional men to make the final surveys, he will—not authorise the work to be undertaken without further delay, but be prepared to give the matter "further consideration." That is as far as we have yet got with this scheme, than which there is no other calculated so much to advance the interests of the Colony, or fraught with so many advantages. As to the question of harbor works at Fremantle, I think—as I have always predicted—we shall have to give it up as a bad job. I entirely approve of the minute (of the 9th March last) drawn up by the Executive Council for the guidance of the consulting engineer, as to the Colony not being in a condition at present to undertake any scheme of harbor works involving an expenditure of over £100,000; but when that information is communicated to Sir John Coode, the probability is that he will not undertake to recommend any scheme that can be carried out for so small a sum as that, and there the matter will rest. His Excellency in his speech draws the attention of the House to the reports from the stipendiary magistrates with reference to the working of the existing Licensing Act. I have had an opportunity to-day of reading those reports, and I find that all the magistrates seem to think that the Act, as amended, has proved very beneficial; but I observe that they all add, as I have always said myself, "if carried out with discretion by the magistrates and the police." While the perusal of

these reports afforded me much gratification, I was by no means gratified with the accompanying reports of some of the officers of police. I consider the tone and style of these communications to be highly reprehensible, reflecting as they do upon the conduct of hon. members in this Council. I think matters have come to a pretty pass, indeed, when a policeman, referring to a member of this House, presumes to animadvert upon his conduct in such language as is made use of in these reports. "I cannot help thinking," says one petty officer of the force—alluding to a statement made in his place in the House by an hon. member last session—"I cannot help thinking that before a person"—a 'person,' forsooth—"makes an assertion which he knows will go before the public, he ought to be sure what he has to say is correct." There are even more improper observations than that introduced in these reports, and I think if the Superintendent of Police had done what was right, he would immediately have sent back the reports to the writers with a severe reprimand for indulging in such language. No objection can be taken to the tone of the memorandum of the Superintendent himself; but the tone which pervades the reports of his subordinates is presumptuous and impertinent. But for its absurdity, it would be really amusing, to note the credit which some of these policemen arrogate to themselves. "The officers and men doing duty under me," writes one, "are too well instructed to exceed or flinch from their duties." With such a paragon of a superior officer as that, one would think no subordinate could ever go wrong, or be guilty of a dereliction of duty. The language used by some of these men is really so unwarrantable that I am not certain whether it is not necessary that the House should take some further notice of it, and assert its dignity. The Inspector at Geraldton in his memorandum says, "I do not know of a single instance where the police (of this district) have performed their duty indiscreetly, nor has any complaint of the kind ever been made to me." Now, at the very time this memorandum was written, I happened to be at Geraldton, and a case came before me of a very outrageous description, in which the police had

acted very indiscreetly—so indiscreetly, in fact, that they were publicly reprimanded by the Bench. Yet at this very time, the Inspector writes that he does not know of a single instance where the police had performed their duty with indiscretion. I am not making these observations in any spirit antagonistic to the Licensing Act, or the provisions of the 41st section,—of which I approve—but I do think it is highly improper that a policeman should be permitted to make use of such language as is to be found in these reports, and to allow their zeal so far to outstrip their discretion. With respect to the Bills which are promised in the speech, I quite agree with the hon. member Mr. Burt that, as regards the Ballot Bill, the Government must not take the credit which the Press has accorded them for the introduction of that measure. It was pressed upon them by the members of this House, who are deserving of quite as much credit in the matter as the Government. Another Bill referred to in the speech is a Bill to amend the Imported Stock Act of last session. I believe some difficulty has been found in working that Act, but I beg leave to state that the original Bill when introduced by me was never intended to have the scope which it ultimately attained in its passage through the House. It was never intended to apply to stock imported from the neighboring colonies, but, while the Bill was under discussion, news was received by the mail that there was a disease among cattle prevalent in those colonies, and, at the suggestion of the hon. member for Newcastle, the provisions of the Bill were made to extend to the sister provinces. This alteration in the scope and design of the measure seemed unimportant at the time, but it appears to have, to a considerable extent, frustrated the object of the Bill. I have not had time to study the Bill which is about to be introduced to amend the Act, but I may say that, before the session closes, it is my intention to bring forward a Bill excluding the Australasian colonies from the operations of the Imported Stock Act. Under ordinary circumstances, there is no reason whatever why stock should not be imported here from the other colonies of the group without such certificates as are required under the present Act. The

hon. member Mr. Burt said yesterday that the Governor's speech dwelt with every subject of public interest, excepting the weather, which the hon. member seemed to regard very lightly; whereas in truth it is a very serious matter, as affecting the prosperity of the Colony. Many parts of the country have up to the present time been blessed with a very excellent "season," but to every thoughtful person the meteorological prospects just now are a subject of very serious import. I do not regard the future of the Colony with any feeling of despondency. Every country, like our own, is liable to periods of depression and stagnation, and when the clouds which now overhang this Colony shall have cleared away, as I hope they soon may do, Western Australia will, I have no doubt, be blessed with a fair share of the sweets of prosperity which fall to the lot of other countries.

MR. BROWN said he was one of those who, with the hon. member for Wellington, would share the responsibility of having taken up the time of the Council by adjourning the debate on the address in reply. At the time the motion for adjournment was made, he could not say that he had any particular object in view when seconding the motion other than this: he did not think that the Council ought hastily to set aside the Governor's speech on any occasion, for in that speech they expected, under our present constitution, to find the policy of the Government set forth. At first glance, that policy might appear to be satisfactory, but, after a few hours' consideration it might be found to be otherwise; and, for that reason, he considered it a very wise practice to adjourn the debate on the address in reply. It was not his intention to travel over all the subjects alluded to by the hon. member for Wellington; he would begin his observations by referring to that paragraph in His Excellency's speech in which allusion was made to the fact that during the past eighteen months the Colony had imported no less than £40,000 worth of flour and grain for home consumption. For years past, certain members in that House had sought to induce the Government to give the farmers of the Colony a fairer chance to compete with their neighbors in the other Colonies, by affording them that pro-

tection which was extended to other sections of the community; but the efforts of those who had thus sought to ameliorate the condition of the farmers, had, so far, been unsuccessful. He trusted, however, that the lamentable fact referred to in the paragraph quoted from His Excellency's speech would quicken the mind of the Government to the necessity of placing the corn-growers of the colony on the same footing as the rest of the tax-payers. He noticed that His Excellency—having supported the recommendation of the select committee relating to the repeal of the 93rd clause of the land regulations, or its modification so far as to enable the Government to grant increased grazing rights to small farmers—seemed to think that this would be a mitigation of the evil under which the agriculturists laboured. But he (Mr. Brown) feared not—at any rate, not to the extent required. Proceeding to another paragraph of the speech, he was pleased to find that the Director of Public Works was able to report that, after many delays and difficulties, the Geraldton and Northampton Railway was now in a fair way to completion. An immense amount of time had been expended in the construction of that line, and it was to be hoped that the anticipations entertained by Mr. Thomas as to its early completion would be realised. The progress of the work had so far been so slow, that personally—and he believed the feeling was shared by the rest of the residents in the district—he entertained very little hope that the undertaking would be carried on vigorously to completion. That, and the Eucla Telegraph, were two exceedingly important works, and when once they were completed he was sure a great spur to the progress of the Colony would be given, such a spur as would surprise many persons. It was therefore to be hoped that the Government would spare no pains or trouble to push the works forward. With reference to the proposed duplication of the Anglo-Australian cable, he would make no remark at present, inasmuch as he had been unable to find the correspondence relating thereto, referred to in His Excellency's speech; but he was fully alive to the importance of the subject as affecting the welfare of the Colony. Reference was made in the speech to the fact that the iron tower for the lighthouse

at Point Moore had arrived in the Colony. It was reported, and he believed on good authority, that an error had occurred in constructing the foundation of the proposed lighthouse, and that to rectify the error would involve the expenditure of a comparatively large sum of money. He made this statement publicly, not because he thought the Government were to blame in the matter, but simply in order that they might become cognisant that such a report was in circulation, and that enquiries should be made and an explanation offered to the House, and, through the House, to the country. As to the "Rob Roy," she was unquestionably an admirable boat for the service, and he congratulated the hon. the Surveyor General on the selection he had made. He (Mr. Brown) was not in accord with the hon. member for Wellington as to our being unable to increase the subsidy rather than let her go away. His opinion was that we ought to keep up steam communication on our coast at any cost, within reason, and if the present subsidy was insufficient let it be increased. When he said that, he did not mean that we should pay a subsidy of £4,250, if £4,200 would be ample. As to the proposal to run a line of steamers between the Straits Settlements and this Colony, he was pleased to hear the hon. member for Wellington express his readiness to vote for an increased subsidy if such were necessary, as, with his support, there was a probability of the scheme being carried out. In looking over the correspondence which had taken place between the Government and the projectors, he was sorry to find that more information about the coastal trade of the Colony had not been accorded the company making the offer. It was evident from the correspondence that the firm were quite unaware of the traffic on our coast, and that there were other ports besides Fremantle at which the steamers might profitably call. All they seemed to think of was the carriage of mails, whereas, had it been pointed out that there was a considerable amount of trade to be carried on along our own coast, and between other ports than Fremantle and Singapore, it was very likely the company would have been satisfied with a lesser subsidy than £4,000 or even than the amount voted last year (£3,000). With

reference to the question of harbor works, he was of the same opinion as the hon. member for Wellington—that there was very little hope of our getting such a harbor at Fremantle as would meet the requirements of the Colony. He was one of those who looked forward to Albany as our future principal port,—and that, too, at no very distant date. As to the steps proposed to be taken for the representation of the products of the Colony at the Paris Exhibition, he should be prepared to give the proposal his hearty concurrence and support. With respect to the much-vexed question of the Licensing Act, referred to in His Excellency's speech, he was one of those who considered there was no occasion for the excessive stringency of the present enactment. In point of fact, there was very little difference between his views as to the licensing system and the views entertained by His Excellency; but what he objected to was this—that the Act, as it stood at present, rendered a man punishable for circumstances which were not within his control, and on that account he should always oppose it. He did not place very much weight on the reports received from the stipendiary magistrates as to the working of the Act, and certainly less on the reports from the police. He thought that, generally speaking, when it was known that a hobby was made of any particular thing by the Governor of the Colony, they would find that when reports were asked from public servants, such as the Resident Magistrates and the police, with reference to the hobby in question, the views expressed would, as far as possible, be framed in accordance with the views known to be entertained by the Governor. He hoped the day would come when the clause in question would be amended; but while the hon. member for Wellington on the one side, and the Government on the other, were determined to carry out any particular measure, or to keep any particular Act in force, it would be utterly futile on his part to attempt to frustrate them. Did he but think he could succeed in amending the Act, he would certainly endeavor to do so. As to the Imported Stock Bill, there was no doubt, as the hon. member for Wellington had said, it had been a great mistake to make its provisions apply to

the other Colonies, which, in the original Bill, were specially excluded from its operations. If the provisions of the Act were limited to countries other than the Australasian Colonies, it would be found to be a very useful measure. In the penultimate paragraph of the speech, the House was informed that questions connected with the payment of teachers under the Elementary Education Act would probably be brought under notice in the course of the session. He was very glad to learn that this matter had at last been brought under the consideration of the Governor, and he did trust that it would eventuate in the Government bringing forward a measure to amend the existing Act, so as to make it fairer in its operation as regarded country teachers than it is now. He had no hesitation in saying that, during the past three or four years, the funds voted for educational purposes had not been fairly nor properly expended. He was delighted to see it stated in the report of the Central Board that the relative benefits derived under the existing system by country teachers and teachers in the larger centres of population was a matter which needed serious consideration. There was no doubt that the disproportion was such as to call for some equitable adjustment in favor of the country schoolmaster and school-mistress, some of whom were barely able to earn enough to live on, and he hoped the Government would be prepared to introduce a measure for that purpose. If not, there were private members in the House who would bring forward such a Bill. With regard to projected undertakings in the nature of public works, he was exceedingly disappointed to find the long-talked-of railway between Fremantle and Guildford still spoken of by His Excellency as a "projected" work. At least two years ago, it was known that the country desired this railway; twelve months ago it was known that this House considered the railway necessary, and passed a resolution affirming the desirability of undertaking the work, and he thought every hon. member present must have felt sure that this session they would have had placed before them a Bill authorising the commencement of the line. On the 19th June, 1876—over twelve months ago—the Secretary of

State had written to His Excellency the Governor, asking for certain information, as a preliminary step to granting authority to construct the railway; but it was not until June last that this information was supplied. The information sought was not such as need have occupied much time in furnishing. A "rough" survey of the route, such as would enable an approximate estimate of the cost of the line to be prepared, was what was asked for, and this was within the power of His Excellency to have furnished without delay; and he must say that it appeared exceedingly strange to him that the information sought by Lord Carnarvon a year ago could not have been supplied before last month (June). Had the compilation of that information been prosecuted with vigour, the Government would have been at the present moment in a position to commence and push forward this very necessary work. Instead of making a "rough" survey, as requested by the Secretary of State, they appeared to have gone extensively and elaborately into the matter, and the result had been, as the hon. member for Wellington had pointed out, that the scheme was still hanging about—no one seemed to know exactly where—between the Colonial Office and Government House. He hoped that the suggestion of the hon. member for Wellington with regard to the introduction of a railway bill during the present session would be adopted, and further that the House would not be content with a line from Fremantle to Guildford, but that it would request the Government to make the necessary surveys for the extension of the railway to the Eastern districts, and when those surveys were complete, to raise the necessary funds to carry on the line, while the other portion was proceeding. If the Secretary of State would not allow us to do so, then they must take the work on their own shoulders. Up to the present, they had had no reason to adopt that independent step; but if the Home Government would not consent to our borrowing money (he did not think they would refuse) for the construction of necessary public works,—without which the resources of the Colony would never be developed—then, all he had to say was, let us do it ourselves. He thought they would be perfectly

justified in pledging the Colony itself in order to secure railway communication, so as to connect the agricultural districts with the port, without which there was no hope of the country ever making any material progress.

MR. CROWTHER, referring to the paragraph in the Governor's speech relating to the report of the Director of Public Works on the Geraldton and Northampton railway, said he had been grievously disappointed with that document. All he found in it, with reference to the railway, was that—from information received—"the line was in a fair way to completion." There he stopped. The same hopes of an early completion of the work had been expressed for the last two years, but, at the present moment, there was a distance of twenty-one miles to be gapped before these hopes would be realised. No arrangements had yet been made for a goods-shed, engine-sheds, workshops, booking office, and other necessary buildings at the Geraldton terminus—unless, indeed, the Government proposed to have the offices a distance of two miles out of town, which, of course, would be useless and absurd. There was only one available site in Geraldton suitable for the railway terminus, and the Government should lose no time in securing it. The Director of Public Works had personally visited the district, and must be aware where that site ought to be; and he (Mr. Crowther) thought, with all due respect, that Mr. Thomas ought to have pressed upon the Government the necessity of securing that spot for a terminus. This omission might have been an oversight on that gentleman's part, or it might not; be that as it may, it was very certain that if the site alluded to were allowed to slip out of the hands of the Government, they could not get another suitable for the purpose, without incurring vast expense. He trusted that when the Director of Public Works visited Geraldton again—which, he hoped, would be at an early date—he would see the necessity of at once securing the site in question for a terminus and goods shed, so that goods coming down by rail from Northampton would not have to stand, unprotected, in the open street. He quite agreed with the hon. member for Geraldton as to the necessity of extending the same protection to the

farmers of the Colony as to others following industrial pursuits. The fact of our having had to import £40,000 worth of flour and grain during the past eighteen months was not attributable to red rust, as the hon. member opposite (Mr. Burt) seemed to think, but to the fact of our farmers, as he had already said, being "handicapped" in the race for a livelihood, as compared with other sections of the community. Once put the farmer on the same footing as the "tinker and the tailor," and they would soon find the breadth of land under wheat increasing, and the importation of flour becoming smaller by degrees and beautifully less. At present, the Western Australian farmer was perforce content to eke out an existence by supplementing corn-growing, which did not pay, with sheep-farming; and unless some effort were made to foster and encourage the agricultural interest the result would be, as he had said the day before, that instead of importing flour to the extent to which we do now, we should have to depend altogether on Adelaide for our supply, for our farmers would devote their attention to something more profitable than corn-growing, so long as they labored under present disadvantages. He was not in favor of taxing the so-called necessities of life—he was not in favor of taxation at all, in fact—but he failed to see why, so long as we had recourse to taxation, the bread we eat as well as the clothing we wear should not bear its share of the burden. He was glad to find the Government were likely to make some definite proposition with respect to amending the existing Education Act in so far as it affected the earnings of country teachers. A mere glance at the return showing the stipends earned by schoolmasters in the centres of population as compared with the earnings of rural schoolmasters, showed how unfair the present system operated in the case of the country teacher. The total expenditure on account of education for the past year was £8,695; of this sum one-half was expended in Perth and Fremantle alone, the other moiety being distributed all over the Colony, which was neither a fair nor an equitable distribution. He hoped, however, that when the promised Government measure was introduced, it would deal with something more than the mere

regulation of teachers' salaries; he was afraid the existing Education Act could never be licked into shape so as to suit the requirements of both town and country. The South Australian Act was, as near as possible, the measure we wanted; there they had fixed salaries and also payment by fees and results. He trusted the session would not be allowed to pass without a more suitable Education Act being passed into law than that now in operation; if the Government would not introduce a Bill having this object in view, they would be forestalled by private members. Everybody seemed to be in the dark as to the intention of the Government with respect to this subject, and no light was thrown upon it in the Governor's speech. He really could not see the necessity for all this mystery, all this tremendous amount of secrecy as to the intentions of the Government. It was known years ago that the Act in its present shape was not adaptable to the requirements of a Colony with a sparse and scattered population like this; this was known to the Government as well as to the Central Board. Why, then, delay the evil day any longer? With regard to the steamer "Rob Roy," he would like to see her unfettered altogether by the mail service, unless it were the intercolonial mail. He would be glad to see her making a trip to Adelaide once a month, conveying mails and passengers to and from the neighboring Colonies—a service which he believed would entail but very little more expense than that which the steamer now performed. As to railway extension, he only hoped that the hon. member for Wellington would see his way clear to induce the Government to introduce a railway loan bill during the present session, providing not only for the construction of the proposed line from Fremantle to Guildford, but also the necessary survey of the proposed Eastern Districts extension line. With reference to the reports laid on the Table—and referred to in His Excellency's speech—relating to the working of the Licensing Act, he would only say, without going into particulars, that it appeared to him that some of the police officers who had undertaken to report on the subject seemed to have availed themselves of the occasion to air their independence—not

to say their impudence. As to the report from Champion Bay, he would content himself at present by simply stating that it was untrue; there had been very just cause for the remarks made by hon. members as to the indiscretion of the police.

The motion for the adoption of the address in reply was then adopted.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) moved, That the address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, by Mr. Speaker and other hon. members of the House who might find it convenient to attend, on the following day, at half-past twelve o'clock.

Motion agreed to.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Thursday, 12th July, 1877.

Address to His Excellency the Governor—His Excellency's reply—Postponement of Orders of the Day.

The SPEAKER took the chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

ADDRESS IN REPLY.

MR. SPEAKER said that, in accordance with the pleasure expressed by the Governor, he proposed to wait upon His Excellency at half-past twelve o'clock to present the address in reply to His Excellency's speech, with as many members as might be pleased to accompany him.

At twenty-five minutes past twelve o'clock Mr. Speaker left the chair, and, accompanied by a number of honorable members, proceeded to Government House, and presented the address. On returning, he said he had to inform the Council that the address to His Excellency the Governor had been presented in accordance with the resolution of the House, and that His Excellency had been pleased to give the following answer:—