

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES.

Legislative Council—Session of 1882.

Opened on Wednesday, 26th July, 1882.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 26th July, 1882.

Opening of Council—New Member—The Governor's Speech—Poor Houses Discipline Bill: first reading—Address in Reply to the Governor's Speech—Adjournment.

OPENING OF COUNCIL.

THE Council was prorogued by His Excellency the Governor on the 16th September, 1881, to the 19th December next ensuing; thence to 16th of January, 1882; thence to 20th February; thence to 20th March; thence to 24th April; thence to 22nd May; thence to 26th June; thence to 10th July; thence to Wednesday, the 26th July, on which day it met for the despatch of business.

The Council assembled at three o'clock, p.m.

NEW MEMBER.

Mr. George Glyde, being introduced to Mr. Speaker, took and subscribed the usual oath of allegiance, and his seat as a nominated member.

THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

Shortly after three o'clock, HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR entered the Chamber, and took the Chair.

HIS EXCELLENCY, having desired that honorable members be seated, was pleased to deliver the following Speech:—

“MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF
“THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,—

“As this is the first occasion on which
“you have assembled since the recent
“attempt on the life of the Queen, it is

“proper that I should communicate to
“you the telegrams which were exchanged
“between the Colonial and Imperial Go-
“vernments on that painful occasion.
“The universal expressions of loyalty and
“devotion to the Sovereign which were
“evoked by the attempt on Her Majesty's
“life, found an echo in the hearts of her
“Western Australian subjects, and in
“tendering to Her Most Gracious Ma-
“jesty, on behalf of the Government and
“people of this Colony, our respectful
“congratulations on her providential es-
“cape from the danger to which she was
“exposed, I am well aware that I only
“expressed the sincere and heartfelt feel-
“ing which animated the entire commu-
“nity.

“In meeting you again for the despatch
“of public business, I am happy to say
“that the position and prospects of the
“Colony are highly satisfactory.

“The deficiency on current account has
“been liquidated, and Her Majesty's
“Government have, at my request, sanc-
“tioned a further outlay on Public
“Works which will give an impetus to
“the Colony generally, and advance the
“development of our resources.

“On the subject of the early extension
“of the Railway from Chidlow's Well to
“York, I stated publicly at Guildford on
“the 9th November last, that, in view of
“the improved financial position of the
“Colony, I saw no reason why the money
“for the next section should not be bor-
“rowed before the completion of the
“second section, which was then about to
“be commenced; and I expressed an
“earnest hope that such an interval of de-

"lay as elapsed between the construction of the first and second sections would not take place with regard to the commencement of the third section.

"Accordingly, as soon as I was in a position to report that our finances were once more in a thoroughly sound condition, I lost no time in applying to the Secretary of State for permission to raise a further loan of £210,000 for the completion of the Railway to York *via* Spencer's Brook, and for the improvement of Jetty accommodation, in connection with the Railway, at Fremantle. At the same time I asked to be allowed to raise £50,000 for the construction of an Overland Telegraph Line to Roebourne, the proposal to build that line on the land grant system having led to no practical result. On the 7th instant, as you know, I had the pleasure to receive from the Secretary of State a telegram informing me that the new Loan was approved, and consequently Bills to give effect to my proposals will be forthwith submitted for your consideration. I need not enlarge on the self-evident importance of the various works enumerated. This feature of the case is alluded to in some detail in my Despatch to the Secretary of State, a copy of which is before you, and in quitting the subject for the present I will only express to you my gratification at having had the opportunity of furthering a policy which cannot fail to be attended with the greatest advantage to the Colony.

"Returns showing the financial condition of the Colony since the new system of account came into operation on 1st April, 1881, have been prepared in the Treasury, and will be submitted for your information. I may here observe that the present state of the public accounts leaves nothing to be desired, and that credit is due to the officers of the Treasury Department for their zeal and industry in the matter.

"The Revenue for 1881 amounted to £254,313. It should, however, be observed that this amount included the sum of £48,160, being the net proceeds, less floating expenses, of the loan raised to recoup the general Revenue for the cost of construction of the Eucla Telegraph Line. The Revenue proper for 1881 was therefore £206,153, being

"£13,426 in excess of the estimated Revenue of £192,727.

"The Expenditure for 1881 amounted to £197,386, being an excess of £4,878 over the estimated Expenditure. The receipts of Revenue proper exceeded the Expenditure by £8,767, while the total Revenue, inclusive of the amount repaid on account of the Eucla Telegraph Line, exceeded the Expenditure by £56,927. By the 31st December last the deficit had consequently been reduced to £12,565, from £80,950 on the 31st December, 1880.

"In my Speech on opening the Session of Council in July last, I stated, 'We may confidently expect, even if our credit balance at the end of the present year should prove less than was originally anticipated, to clear off the whole of the deficiency within the next twelve months at the latest.' You are already aware that my anticipations have been more than realized, and that on the 30th June last there was a balance of £20,178 to the credit of the Colony, after meeting all ordinary charges to that date. It will, however, be necessary to exercise caution during the latter portion of the year, as our present large credit balance is mostly due to receipts of land and other Revenue which are payable during the first half of the year.

"I may observe that the Revenue for the six months ending the 30th June last was £130,055, being an increase of £23,174 as compared with the first half of last year. The expenditure for the same period was £97,311 against £97,233 in 1881.

"The Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for next year will be duly laid before you. The Revenue, including the Imperial Grant in Aid, and a surplus balance of £9,307 carried on from the present year, is estimated at £238,447; the Expenditure, in which due provision has been made for interest on the new Loan at 4 per cent. per annum, is estimated at £226,101, leaving a probable surplus of £12,346 at the end of the year.

"The details of the Estimates will be fully explained to you by the Colonial Secretary, who, both in preparing the present Estimates, and during the last twelve months, has seconded my efforts

"to keep down the expenditure to the lowest point consistent with the requirements of the Service.

"Under the head of Custom duties an increase of £4,107, as compared with the amount received in 1881, is anticipated. The Commissioners recently appointed by me to consider and report on the Tariff state that, in view of the circumstances of the Colony, they have not deemed it advisable to attempt a readjustment of the Tariff upon what has been termed a 'scientific basis,' as such a course would have rendered necessary a large additional clerical staff in the Customs Department, and would at the same time have resulted in great inconvenience to importers. They report that they have striven to simplify the Tariff as far as possible by placing a specific duty upon many articles which are now charged with *ad valorem* duty; that they have used great caution in making changes; and that their aim has been to foster all local industries without favoring any particular branch of the community. The Commissioners recommend that Immigrants arriving in the Colony be permitted to import the implements and tools of their trades to the value of £10 without payment of duty—a recommendation which will I trust be endorsed by your Honorable Council. The full report of the Commission will be submitted to you, and I take this opportunity of expressing to the Commissioners my acknowledgments for the attention which they have bestowed upon the important subject remitted by me for their consideration.

"The Revenue under all other Heads of importance shows a stability, and in some cases an increase, which speaks well for the general progress of the Colony, and I am happy to say that it will not at present be necessary to have recourse to further taxation.

"Provision has been made on the Estimates of Expenditure for the appointment of an Itinerary Magistrate, with Police escort, for the Gascoyne and Murchison Districts. The amount required for these purposes for next year is £1,418, and, considering the importance of the interests at stake, I do not apprehend that you will consider the vote excessive. From reports which I

"have received from the Magistrate recently despatched on a special mission to the District, I am disposed to think that the difficulties of what has been called the 'Native Question' have been exaggerated, and I have every confidence, as I stated on a recent public occasion, that, by a policy of strict impartiality and firmness, combined with justice and humanity, we shall speedily succeed in converting the present hostile attitude of the two races into one of amicable relations, to the great advantage of both.

"It will also be necessary to provide some Police protection for the Kimberley District. The isolated position of that District, and the large amounts which we are already receiving from it in the shape of rents, impose this obligation on the Government. Moreover, it is beyond a doubt, that whatever we may spend for such a purpose (and the same argument applies to the question of surveys, to which I will presently refer) will be more than returned to us by the stimulus which will thereby be given to the further settlement of the District.

"It is proposed, as a provisional measure, to establish a Police Station and Customs Office at Roebuck Bay, which I am informed is admirably adapted for shipping purposes, and also a Police Station on the Fitzroy—a few miles inland from the head of King's Sound. The cost of these arrangements is estimated at £2,599.

"For the Survey of the Kimberley District, I have placed on the Estimates a sum of £6,500. This amount includes £1,000 for the services of a competent geologist, as I think it of great importance that such an officer should if possible accompany the party.

"From the Surveyors now employed at the Gascoyne we may look for satisfactory reports. There is reason to hope that the recent rains have extended to the country between the Murchison and Ashburton Rivers, and, if so, good work will be accomplished before the withdrawal of the parties in the summer. The hazy state of the atmosphere, mirage, and other causes, makes it necessary to cease field work in that climate during the hot months of the year, but so far as the funds at dis-

“posals will permit the Surveys there will be resumed in April, provided the season admits of it.

“On the subject of surveys the Surveyor General’s report for last year contains the following striking remarks: ‘A great want of knowledge concerning the geography and the topography of the whole country North of the Murchison River (excepting the settled district round Roebourne) has made the task of apportionment a harassing one, for the reason that districts as large as European kingdoms are thrown open to free and almost unfettered selection for pastoral purposes, and blocks of land are advertised in, some of them the size of an English county, and immediately after approval, rent being paid, I am supposed to issue documents concisely giving a tenure for years. More money for surveys must be had from the increasing Land Revenue or confusion will ensue.’

“It is beyond a doubt that for some years to come the best interests of the Colony will demand a liberal expenditure on the part of the Survey Department.

“In this Colony, as elsewhere, prosperity goes hand in hand with the development of the natural or acquired resources of the country. Last year our Exports were valued at about half a million sterling, of which the three staple products of wool, timber, and pearl shells brought nine-tenths of the whole, namely, wool, five-tenths, timber and sandalwood, three-tenths, pearl shells and pearls, one-tenth. Owing to the depressed state of the mineral markets the export of lead ore decreased to £11,204.

“The progress of pastoral settlement has been mainly confined to the Northern Districts of the Colony. Further explorations and further experience of the country between the Murchison River on the South, and the Northern boundary of the territory, have led to enormous areas being taken up for pastoral purposes; and as the attention of capitalists in the Eastern colonies and elsewhere has now been attracted to our resources, there are reasonable grounds for belief that a great future awaits tropical North-West Australia.

“The question of the up-keep of the roads will necessarily occupy your attention. In reply to a circular from the Colonial Secretary’s Office, the District Boards have, with one or two exceptions, declined to levy local rates for the maintenance of their roads; and therefore, until it be made compulsory on the Districts to tax themselves, I am of opinion that, unless we are prepared to see the Minor Roads fall into a state of great disrepair, we must provide for both Main and Minor Roads from General Revenue in accordance with the practice which prevailed before the raising of the Roads Loan. I have accordingly placed £10,000 on the Estimates for the up-keep of Main and Minor Roads, and hope that you will sanction the expenditure.

“The Immigration Vote is proposed to be increased from £3,000 to £4,000. The nomination system, as now carried out, is, so far as it goes, a satisfactory one, and although it by no means conduces to a rapid influx of population, I should not advocate a return to the former system until we can provide for an Immigration Agency in England, which shall be in a position to devote its attention to the selection of suitable free Immigrants likely to remain in the Colony. The subject is altogether a most important one, and I shall be happy to co-operate with you in any feasible steps for placing it on a better footing.

“To complete the revision and reprinting of the Statutes a further sum of £1,000 will be required. The Commissioners—whose valuable services I am happy to have this opportunity of acknowledging—have completed their labors, and arrangements are about to be made for printing the revised edition, which I hope will be issued in four or five months at the latest.

“The vote for the Working expenses of the Eastern Railway will require to be increased by £4,460, inasmuch as the Contractors, who are making good progress with the work, will probably complete and hand over the second section to the Government before the 30th June next.

“To the salaries of some of the public officers small additions are proposed. I consider that on the whole the public

"service here is an efficient one, though
"in many instances underpaid; and I
"confess that I should be glad to see
"some of the officers, particularly in the
"lower grades of the service, remunerat-
"ed on a more liberal scale—especially
"as the cost of living has of late years
"largely increased. Combinations of
"offices and employments should be
"effected whenever it may be possible to
"do so, for I think you will agree with
"me that, speaking generally, the State
"is better served by a smaller staff of
"well paid and well satisfied officials,
"than by a larger number of underpaid
"officers who are too frequently obliged
"to eke out their scanty incomes by
"irksome employment before and after
"office hours.

"The temporary interruption of traffic
"on the Eastern Railway in February,
"consequent on the break-down of the
"Locomotives, was the cause of incon-
"venience to the public and of annoyance
"and anxiety to the Government. The
"report of the Commission which I
"immediately appointed to investigate
"the question will be laid before you.
"Some blame is attributed by the Com-
"mission to the Railway Staff for not
"seeing that the Locomotives were
"properly and promptly attended to, but
"in justice to the Department it should
"be noticed that the Director of Public
"Works was animated by an earnest
"wish to keep down the working ex-
"penses to the lowest possible limit, and
"that the endeavor to do this contributed
"in some measure to what occurred.
"On the recommendation of the Com-
"mission I sent to the Eastern Colonies
"for additional skilled hands for employ-
"ment in the Locomotive workshops,
"since when the train service has been
"conducted in an efficient and satisfactory
"manner.

"The stranding of the *Rob Roy* at
"Cossack, and the consequent interrup-
"tion of the newly established service to
"the North-West coast, has also been
"most unfortunate. The owners, how-
"ever, inform me that a contract for the
"repair of the steamer has been accepted,
"and that they expect to replace her on
"the coast in the month of September.
"In the meanwhile we are practically
"working under last year's contract, the
"extra subsidy provided for the ad-

"ditional service to the Northern ports
"having been relinquished by the Con-
"tractors for the present. No doubt it
"would have been open to us to termin-
"ate the Contract when the *Rob Roy* was
"obliged to be withdrawn from the
"service, but I do not think that the
"country would have gained by such a
"step, the first result of which might
"have been to leave us for some months,
"pending fresh arrangements with some
"other Company, without any Steamers
"on the coast.

"The question of establishing some
"regular communication between Cossack
"and the Kimberley District is one
"which calls for attention. I shall be
"glad to receive your suggestions upon
"the subject.

"An unusually large number of in-
"teresting and important papers and
"reports have been printed for your
"information. They will, I am sure, be
"useful to you in carrying out the work
"of the Session, and will form a valuable
"addition to the accessible records of the
"Colony.

"I have much pleasure in informing
"you that Her Majesty's Government
"have presented to the Colony, free of
"cost, the Military Stores, valued at
"about £1,500, which remained on
"charge on the disbandment of the
"Pensioner Force. I am sure that the
"liberality of Her Majesty's Government
"in this matter will be duly appreciated
"and acknowledged by Your Honorable
"Council.

"Papers will be submitted to you
"relative to the Great International
"Fisheries Exhibition which it is pro-
"posed to hold in London next year.
"Our Colony is not wanting in interest-
"ing specimens of Fish life, but the
"business of fishing is not so extensively
"carried on as to justify the hope that
"any large number of private exhibits
"will be forwarded to the forthcoming
"Exhibition, and I believe that if any-
"thing is to be done it will have to be
"undertaken by the Government. I
"hope to be able to submit to you in a
"few days a further communication
"upon the subject.

"In addition to the new Loan and
"Railway Bills to which I have already
"alluded, the following measures have
"been prepared for your consideration:—

"To repeal the present Law relating
"to Hawkers and Pedlars, and
"to substitute other provisions
"in lieu thereof.

"To amend an Act passed in the
"sixth year of Her Majesty, No.
"5, intituled 'An Act to provide
"a summary remedy in certain
"cases of Breach of Contract.'

"For the better regulation of and
"maintenance of Discipline in the
"Government Poor Houses.

"To provide for the Registration of
"certain Persons who shall be
"imported into Western Austra-
"lia or employed in any manner
"within the Territorial Dominion
"thereof.

"To amend certain clerical and
"other errors and omissions which
"occur in various Acts of the
"Legislature of the Colony of
"Western Australia.

"To amend 'The Railways Act,
"1878.'

"To confirm the Expenditure for
"the services of the year One
"thousand eight hundred and
"eighty-one, beyond the grants
"for that year.

"To amend 'The Jury Act, 1871.'

"To regulate the Breadth of Wheels
"on certain Vehicles, and the
"Weights to be carried thereon,
"and for other purposes.

"To make further provision for the
"regulation of the Pearl Shell
"Fishery.

"To amend 'The Stamp Act, 1881.'

"To amend 'The Customs Ordi-
"nance, 1860.'

"For imposing Duties on Imported
"Goods, and for exemption of
"certain Goods from Duties.

"I feel confident that these and all
"other questions which may come before
"you will receive your careful attention,
"and I earnestly pray that your labors
"on this occasion may contribute to the
"well-being of your fellow subjects, and
"the general progress of the Colony."

HIS EXCELLENCY having handed
a copy of the Speech to Mr. Speaker,
withdrew from the Council Chamber.

POOR HOUSES DISCIPLINE BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord
Gifford), with leave, without notice,

moved the first reading of a Bill for the
better regulation of, and the maintenance
of discipline in, the Government Poor
Houses.

The motion was agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

ADDRESS IN REPLY TO THE GOVERNOR'S SPEECH.

MR. HAMERSLEY rose to move that
a respectful Address be presented to His
Excellency the Governor in reply to the
Speech with which he had been pleased
to open the Council. The hon. member
said that, in rising to move the Address
in reply to His Excellency's Speech, he
might state that though he regretted the
task had not been undertaken by a more
able speaker, at the same time he was
confident it could not have afforded a
greater degree of gratification to any
member of the House. He had listened
with attention to that Speech, and it
contained scarcely a line he would desire
to alter. The Speech had not taken him
by surprise, it was thoroughly in accord-
ance with the opinion he had formed
and publicly expressed of His Excellency's
high ability and zeal in forwarding the
true interests of the Colony. That
opinion was not his alone; he was certain
it was that of the House and of the
country. He had a few, very few, brief
remarks to make in connection with the
reply. In the first place with regard to
the value of the proposed scheme of
public works recommended by the Gov-
ernor to the Secretary of State for the
Colonies, no difference of opinion could
exist. We were at present, on that
point, fighting in the right direction.
Scarcely a man in the House, scarcely a
man in the country, was to be found who
was not a supporter of that great work,
the railway to the Eastern Districts. And
while on this subject he would desire to
remove an impression that he had depre-
ciated the services rendered by this House
to the country in connection with that
line, and that he had been opposed to
railways in the past,—as loose statements
had been made to that effect. The rail-
way to the Eastern Districts had been with
him the hope of a life. During the many
years which had elapsed since it was first
mooted, money had been borrowed and
spent freely in the construction of public
works which it appeared to him were of

secondary importance; but he never went further than this,—those works should have *followed* not *preceded* the great work we are now undertaking. This work had been deprecated by an hon. friend of his as merely speculative, as likely to cripple our borrowing powers, and so forth. He ventured to say that railway would cost the Colony nothing. No district in the Colony would be injured by it. He had no reason to doubt that the line would not only pay interest on the amount borrowed for its construction, but also its working expenses, leaving an annual balance in favor of the revenue. Let this be fairly established—and he thoroughly upheld the Governor's advice upon that point (contained in his despatch to Lord Kimberley)—and this very work would in its results prove the strongest argument which could be adduced in favor of the local works which may be required in other parts of the Colony being prosecuted. It would in fact pay for them. In connection with the Eastern Railway, he considered shipping facilities at Fremantle a matter of scarcely secondary importance. The proposed extension of the jetty might afford this, though the amount intended to be expended in this direction appeared low, and he should be prepared to go much further. He had always been an advocate for superior harbor accommodation at Fremantle; but he had never held that it was necessary to expend a million to enable us to despoil Albany in order to benefit Fremantle. What we wanted was such facilities as would be sufficient for our present trade, with a view to future extension. The telegraph line to the North-West was also a work generally approved, and he had no doubt it would prove of the greatest value to the Colony. The great scheme of works proposed by the Governor would, he sincerely trusted and hoped, pass the House in its integrity; any attempt to mar it would seem to him to betray a want of judgment to be deplored by every true friend of the Colony. No alteration, he observed, was suggested by the Government in our Land Regulations, and he thought wisely so. His further opinions with regard to His Excellency's Speech were so fully embodied in the Reply, that he could say no more if he spoke for an hour; he would therefore content himself by moving that the following Address be

presented to His Excellency the Governor, in reply to the Speech he had been pleased to deliver to the Council:—

*"To His Excellency Sir William Cleaver
"Francis Robinson, Knight Commander
"of the Most Distinguished Order of
"Saint Michael and Saint George,
"Governor and Commander-in-Chief in
"and over the territory of Western
"Australia and its Dependencies, &c.,
"&c., &c."*

"MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,—

"We, the Members of the Legislative Council, desire to express our thanks "to Your Excellency for representing to "Her Most Gracious Majesty our sincere "and heartfelt congratulations on her "providential escape from the danger to "which she was recently exposed.

"It is highly satisfactory to receive the "assurance from Your Excellency that "the finances of the Colony are in such "a prosperous condition, and that the "deficit on current account has been "liquidated. We are quite in accordance "with Your Excellency on the subject "of continuing the Railway to the "Eastern Districts in view of the "improved financial position of the "Colony, and it is with gratification we "learn that the Northern Telegraph is "to be at once constructed, as we consider the work of paramount importance to further the progress of the "Colony, and to develop the Northern "Districts, and we take this opportunity "of thanking Your Excellency for furthering a policy which we believe will "be attended with the greatest advantage "to the Colony.

"The Estimates of Expenditure will "receive our most careful consideration.

"We learn with pleasure that the "Public Accounts are now kept in such "a manner as in the opinion of Your "Excellency leaves nothing to be desired.

"We are gratified to hear that the "Revenue for the past six months has "exceeded the Estimates, and is in such "a prosperous condition.

"The re-adjustment of the Tariff on "the lines indicated is a subject of vital "importance, and will receive our closest "attention.

"It is a subject of congratulation that owing to the prosperous state of the revenue no additional taxation at present will be required.

"We shall carefully consider any proposals which may be made for the appointment of an Itinerary Magistrate for the Gascoyne and Murchison Districts, together with a Police escort; and we trust with your Excellency that the difficulties existing between the settlers and the natives in those districts may be speedily arranged to their mutual advantage.

"Your proposals for the appointment of a Customs Staff and Police Force for the Kimberley District will receive our earnest attention.

We will gladly consider any scheme which may be submitted to us for the carrying out of the Survey of the Kimberley District.

"We echo your Excellency's opinion that there are reasonable grounds for belief that a great future is in store for North-West Australia, and we are of opinion that every inducement should be offered for its settlement.

"It is with pleasure we learn that a larger amount has been placed upon the Estimates for the up-keep of Main and Minor Roads.

"The question of Immigration is one of vast importance to the progress of the Colony, and we will gladly co-operate with your Excellency to place the system upon a better footing, as the necessity of introducing labor into the Colony is clearly visible if our resources are to be developed.

"The addition to the salaries of certain public officers will receive our due consideration, and we agree that a combination of offices and employment should be effected wherever practicable.

"We refrain from expressing any opinion on the temporary interruption of traffic on the Eastern Railway until the whole of the documents in connection therewith have been laid before us, but we desire to express our thanks for the measures that were adopted at once for the procuring of skilled hands from the Eastern Colonies when the stoppage on the line occurred.

"We regret that in consequence of the stranding of the 'Rob Roy' the contract for the Coastal Service has not

been carried out in the manner proposed last year, and the question will receive our attention.

"We view as a matter of great importance the necessity of establishing more regular communication between Cossack and the Kimberley District, and we hope, as invited by Your Excellency, to submit some suggestions on the subject.

"We trust that Your Excellency will convey our thanks to Her Majesty's Government for their liberality in presenting to the Colony certain Military Stores, valued at £1,500.

"Your Excellency may confidently rely on our most carefully considering all measures submitted, and we earnestly pray that our labors may contribute to the welfare and progress of the Colony, and our wish is cordially to co-operate with Your Excellency's Government to bring about the advancement of this country, which can best be secured by the union of the Government and the Representatives of the people."

MR. GRANT said it gave him pleasure, in one sense, to second the motion of the hon. member for York, but he thought it was very hard indeed that he should have been asked to do so, and to commence the talking, seeing that he had never taken any prominent part in Parliamentary speechifying. He thought it would be better on such occasions to put the work on the shoulders of some hon. member who was more used to the work than he was; but, the duty having been imposed upon him, he had much pleasure in doing his best to carry it out,—though he would have been quite content if the duty had devolved upon somebody else. With regard to the finances of the Colony, referred to in His Excellency's Speech, he thought our position was a very satisfactory one. Having recovered from the evil effects of the gross mal-administration of a past régime, it was very gratifying indeed to find that our finances had now been restored. He thought that great credit was due to the Governor for the way in which the Colony's finances had been managed of late. But he would go further than that,—he thought a great deal of credit was due to the Legislative Council, too. He considered credit was due to the Council for making such a

persistent stand as it had in fighting for its rights, in fighting for those liberties which our forefathers fought for, and won, centuries ago, in the mother country;—the right that all money votes should come through the representatives of the people. This had not been recognised in Western Australia until very recently; the Government considered that it could do as it liked in regard to the public funds. But he was very glad that a change had taken place in this respect, and he believed that the present Governor had an honest desire to work cordially with the Council, for the general benefit of the Colony. Referring to His Excellency's Speech, and to the paragraph dealing with the railway to York, this railway would no doubt cost a great deal of money, but he believed it would be money well spent, and money that would greatly benefit the Colony at large, for it ought to enable us to dispense with sending thousands of pounds to the other colonies for our corn and grain produce. Not only that; it would enable us, he hoped, to do away with the duty upon agricultural produce—a duty which was felt very heavily in the district which he had the honor to represent. He hoped, when we had our railway opened to the corn-growing districts Eastward, this obnoxious tax would be repealed, this abomination of an *ad valorem* duty would be swept away. Another subject connected with the proposed loan for railway extension was the telegraph to the North-West. He approached this subject with mingled feelings of satisfaction and of disappointment,—satisfaction that the telegraph was at last likely to be constructed, and disappointment because it had not been carried out before. He thought it was a great pity that, when we got the Secretary of State's permission to undertake the work, nearly two years ago, the money voted for it was used for another purpose, being added to the amount required for carrying on the railway towards York. He considered that was a great mistake, for, had the telegraph been then undertaken, we should now be in constant communication with our distant Northern settlements. The necessity for it had been seriously felt of late, and a great deal of anxiety, and possibly of misunderstanding, in con-

nection with the native atrocities committed up there, would have been prevented. There was another thing to be thought of with regard to this telegraph line: when completed, there was very little doubt that it would result in another submarine cable being laid down, and, if so, that cable would almost surely come to our North-West coast, which would greatly swell the receipts of our Telegraph Department. He was glad to notice that much prominence was given to the Kimberley District in His Excellency's Speech; but perhaps some hon. members would begrudge the small dole of expenditure which it was proposed to incur in connection with that part of the Colony. In his opinion, however, it would be money very well spent. There was a great deal of information yet wanted with regard to that district,—information which would be productive of great benefit to the Colony at large. And it should not be forgotten that the money proposed to be spent there in surveys and exploration was not money taken away from other districts, but money which had been received by the Government from the settlers up there,—money derived from rents of land. He had heard something said about the North-West being under the "fostering care" of this part of the Colony, but he thought the district had no occasion as yet to be particularly thankful for any benefits it had derived at the hands of the Legislature or the Government. No one could deny that it was the making of a splendid district, with its twenty millions of acres of pastoral land, a continuous sea of waving grass, capable of carrying millions upon millions of sheep and cattle. Surely the expenditure of a few thousand pounds in letting the outside world know a little more about this part of our Colony would not be money thrown away. At present hardly anything was known about the sugar-growing capabilities of the district which undoubtedly were worthy of consideration, when they looked at the benefits which Queensland derived from its sugar-growing industry,—an industry which developed itself more rapidly than most other colonial industries, and which had proved so very remunerative to Queensland. There were many other products besides sugar—tropical products, which our Nor' West country was admir-

ably adapted for, and it would pay the Colony well to furnish the outside world with a little information with regard to it. There was another point in favor of this part of our territory—a point which had not escaped the attention of early explorers, long before our days, namely, that the country was auriferous. The early Dutch explorers must have been struck with that fact, for they named this part of the Colony *Terra Aurifera*, showing at any rate that they believed in the existence of gold in that locality. Not only that, if we relied on the deductions of the great geologist, Sir Roderick Murchison—and he supposed he knew more about these things than most people—our Northern territory would yet turn out to be the richest gold-producing part of all Australia. And surely, in the face of all these favorable indications, hon. members would not object to the expenditure of a few thousand pounds in exploring and surveying, and thereby obtaining some reliable information about the district. We had a pretty fair idea of the pastoral capabilities of the country now, but as to its minerals we know very little indeed. It was true that Mr. Alex. Forrest travelled over hundreds of miles of country which in his opinion was identical in character with the gold-bearing district of Port Darwin; but Mr. Forrest, though a splendid bushman, did not pretend to any great geological knowledge. It might be said that Mr. Forrest's expedition had a geologist connected with it; but that was a mistake. There was no real geologist belonging to the party. There was an "imposition" from Victoria—which reminded him of another "imposition" which had since been foisted on the Colony from New South Wales; but he hoped and trusted that the report made by that so-called "geologist" would have no weight with the Council or with the outside world, for the mere fact that he saw no signs of gold was no criterion at all that gold did not exist, in the face of what they now knew about the country, and what they were told of it by really scientific and competent men. He did not mean "competent men from the other side"—far from it. We had had quite enough of them. He had referred to the benefits which the Colony would derive from the

expenditure of money in connection with the survey and exploration of the Kimberley District; but, in reality, he could not mention all the advantages which the country would ultimately derive from that expenditure, without imposing upon the patience of hon. members. The North District of the Colony was the source of a very considerable amount of public revenue, and, in ten years hence, if it had fair play, the Gascoyne would be as profitable to the Colony as the North District was now. All that was wanted was for the Government and that House to behave a little liberally towards this most recent addition to our territory, and give it a share of that lavish expenditure of loan money which was being bestowed upon other and more favored parts of the Colony. And talking of loan money reminded him of what had been termed outside that House as an "unfortunate admission" made by His Excellency in his despatch to Lord Kimberley as to the utmost limit of the borrowing powers of the Colony having been arrived at. He did not believe in that altogether. The time would possibly come when there would be a separation between the North and South, and if His Excellency had that separation in view when he spoke of the Colony having arrived at the limit of its borrowing powers, and if His Excellency merely alluded to the Southern portion of the country, undoubtedly he was right. He did not wish to hurt the feelings of the South, but, let them say what they liked, he would ask them this—could they stand any more taxation than they had to bear now, even with the liberal assistance of the North to help them to bear it? And what would become of them, if that assistance was withdrawn? He had heard a great deal said, as he had already mentioned, about the fostering care bestowed by the South upon the North, which, it was said, ought to make the latter cling to the present seat of Government rather than seek for separation; but he ventured to say the day was not far distant when this order of things would be reversed,—when the South would need the fostering care of the North. When that came to pass, when the North took its sister South under its fostering care, the Colony, instead of borrowing its hundred thousands, would

be in a position to borrow its millions, without overreaching the limits of its borrowing powers. Another very important subject referred to in His Excellency's Speech was the steam service on our coast. No doubt it was very gratifying to have the assurances of the contractors that the poor old *Rob Roy* was undergoing repair, and that there was some prospect of regular monthly communication with the North being restored. But it was very unfortunate that this service had been interrupted as it had been, and that no effort had been made to continue it,—the present contractors it appeared being masters of the situation, with the Government and the Colony at their tender mercies. When steam communication with the North was established, with much flourish of trumpets, it had the result of driving away the coasters which used to trade between that part of the Colony and the Nor' West, and now the people at the North had no means of communication at all for months together, which, to say the least of it, was a most unfortunate state of things; and he could not help thinking it was a state of things which might have been avoided, by the exercise of a little more precaution on the part of the owners of the steamer, and a little more forethought, and a little more determination on the part of the Government to secure the Colony its lawful rights. He should have more to say on this subject on a future occasion, and consequently he would let it drop for the present, with the simple expression of a hope that, in any future contract entered into, the Colony would not again be made to suffer from the imbecility and the bungling incompetency shown in connection with its unhappy guano contracts. It remained to be seen, at a future stage of the Session, whether this cruelty towards the taxpayers of the Colony had not been again perpetrated upon our long-suffering public in connection with our steam service contract. It afforded him much pleasure to second the motion of his friend the hon. member for York, that a respectful Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor in reply to the Speech which the House had just heard from him.

On the motion of Mr. STEERE, the

debate was adjourned until Friday, July 28th.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Friday, 28th July, 1882.

Tariff Bill: first reading—Hawkers Bill: first reading—Width of Tires Bill: first reading—Statutes (Errors) Amendment Bill: first reading—Law and Parliamentary Library Committee—Poor Houses Discipline Bill: second reading; in committee—Address in Reply: adjourned debate—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

TARIFF BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) moved the first reading of a Bill for imposing duties on imported goods and for the exemption of certain goods from duties.

The motion was agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

HAWKERS BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) moved the first reading of a Bill to repeal the present law relating to hawkers and pedlars, and to substitute other provisions in lieu thereof.

The motion was agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

WIDTH OF TIRES BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) moved the first reading of a Bill to regulate the breadth of wheels on certain vehicles, and the weights to be carried thereon, and for other purposes.

The motion was agreed to.

Bill read a first time.