(so to speak), to meet these additional demands, without, as I said before, increasing our indebtedness. But our nest egg has been almost consumed. At the same time, there is no course, sir, I consider, for alarm. Our burdens may be heavy, but I feel confident that our backs will be equal to bear them; and I think there is every reason to hope —although we have, prudently I think, limited our expectations—I think there is every reason to hope that we shall close the year 1887 with a substantial balance. Sir, my task is nearly done. As the various items are considered in detail, I shall be prepared to give further and fuller information to hon. members. But, before sitting down, I would desire to make a few further remarks. I would like to allude to the important measure that this House has been considering for some time past, namely—

The Land Regulations.

I would again repeat, sir, with regard to these land regulations, that I feel confident the deliberations of this House will result in the passing of a measure that will be a lasting benefit to the colony. As affecting our revenue, I have said, sir, that while engaged in floating loans we have been in a measure also floating on them. But I am no pessimist. I believe in the future of Western Australia, and I believe that, when these loan waters subside, Western Australia will continue to float prosperously on more permanent waters, created by the aid of these land regulations, by the expenditure of money judiciously on reproductive works, by the energy and the ability of her people, and by her affairs being administered with a due admixture of caution and enterprise. Sir, I beg to move the first item on the Estimates —"Governor's Establishment, £673 16s. 8d."

MR. SHENTON congratulated the hon. gentleman on the able and lucid speech which he had just delivered, and which took them back to the old days of Mr. Barlee's celebrated budget speeches. A speech of this exhaustive character required very careful consideration, and hon. members would like to see it in print before proceeding to discuss it. He would therefore move that the debate be adjourned until Friday evening.

This was agreed to.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Thursday, 19th August, 1886.

Report of the Commission on the Government Store Department—Well construction between Ashburton and Wooramool—Recommendations of Heads of Departments as to Increases of Salaries—Grants in Aid to Municipalities—Aborigines Protection Bill: referred to select committee—Mr. Dobson's Railway Proposals, Bayswater to Busselton: adjourned debate—Smelting Works, Victoria District: Mr. Trevenack's Proposal; adjourned debate—Closure of Drummond Street Bill: third reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

GOVERNMENT STORE DEPARTMENT: REPORT OF COMMISSION.

MR. SCOTT, in accordance with notice, asked the Acting Colonial Secretary to lay on the table the report of the Commission on the Government Store Department.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said, as the report alluded to by the hon. member was of a semi-confidential nature, the Government did not think it would be expedient to place it on the table of the House; but if the hon. member would call at his office, he should be glad to show it to him.

WELL-CONSTRUCTION BETWEEN ASHBURTON AND WOORAMOOL.

MR. SHOLL, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an humble address "be presented to His Excellency the "Governor, praying that he would be "pleased to place on the Estimates for

"1887 a sum of money sufficient for pro-"viding a supply of water for stock and "travellers along the telegraph line be-"tween the Ashburton and Wooramool "rivers." The hon. member said that he had expected to have had some information to have placed before the House as to the number of wells that would be required and the distance between them, and other information, which he had telegraphed up for: but he had received no reply as yet. No doubt, however, hon. members would recognise the necessity of providing a supply of water for a stock route like this. The price of meat in Perth now was very high, and were it not for these Northern parts people down here would be almost without any at all. It would also be convenient for the Government to have these wells sunk along the telegraph line, so that in the event of any interruption in the middle of summer, the construction party would have a supply of water. He had brought the matter forward mainly in order that the Government might make inquiries during the recess as to the best route, probable cost, and the number of wells required.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said he did not think it was necessary that this address should be presented. As soon as the hon. member obtained the information which he expected, he should be glad to look into the matter. There was a small balance left from the vote for the Northern Telegraph line, and he should be glad to make it available for this purpose.

MR. McRAE was sorry there was no immediate prospect of the work being taken in hand at once; but, in the absence of the necessary information, he did not see how the Government could get on. All must agree that the work was a work of great necessity. Meat was now very scarce about Perth, whereas at this time of the year it was very plentiful in the Northern districts, and the settlers would only be too glad to get rid of it.

MR. SHOLL moved that the Chairman leave the chair.

Agreed to.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS AS TO INCREASES TO SALARIES OF OFFICIALS.

MR. SCOTT, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an humble address be "presented to His Excellency the Gov-"ernor, praying that he will be pleased "to cause to be laid on the table of the "House a statement showing the recom-"mendations of the various Heads of "Departments as to increases of salary, "giving names and amounts of increase "in each case; such statement to com-"prehend the years of 1885 and 1886." In bringing forward this motion he felt that it was quite possible that the Government would have to tell him that it could not be done, for he felt that such recommendations might be of a more or less confidential nature, and be more a matter for the Executive to consider than that House. But he thought that some discussion on such a matter as this would let the outside public see that individual members of that House had absolutely no power over such questions as that of individual salaries. If the Government, on the other hand, could and would place such a return as he asked for on the table, it would be of assistance to the members of that House when dealing with the Estimates, and give them better grounds for supporting or opposing any increases of salary that might be proposed. He felt he could hardly press the matter, and, if the Government replied to him that it was a matter strictly for the Executive, he should feel bound to be satisfied, under the circumstances.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith): The hon. member, in his opening remarks, has anticipated in a measure the reply that he will receive. I think the House will admit that such recommendations as these, emanating from the heads of the various departments of the public service to the Executive Government, are strictly of a confidential nature, and that it would not be right on the part of the Government to make them public. The Government are at all times anxious and ready to give the House every information that they can, but papers of a confidential nature certainly do not admit of being placed upon the table of the House.

MR. SCOTT: Under the circumstances, that satisfies me individually, and, with leave, I would withdraw the motion.

Leave given.

Motion withdrawn.

GRANT-IN-AID TO MUNICIPALITIES.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

MR. SCOTT, by leave of the House, moved the following resolution in lieu of that proposed on the 11th August: "That, in the opinion of this House, it is "desirable that grants-in-aid should be "made to the funds of the various "Municipal Councils of the colony so "soon as the financial position of the "colony permits of it, and that it "should practically affirm this prin-"ciple at as early as possible a date." The hon. member said that when this question was before the House the other day he moved its adjournment in order that they might have the Estimates before them to see what funds there might be available. The House had not yet considered the Estimates, and he did not see that they were in a much better position to deal with the question from a financial point of view now than they were the other day. But it did seem from a cursory glance at the Estimates that it would be impossible for the Government to take any practical steps in this direction during the ensuing year, therefore he had altered the wording of his resolution, and he would feel quite satisfied if the Government could see their way to practically affirm the principle of the desirability of making these grants-in-aid. Since the subject was last before the House, he had turned up the Act brought forward in South Australia last year, in which he found that such grants were recognised, the amount of the subsidy being 15s. for every £1. The amount he asked for was nothing approaching that, and he did not think that what he asked for in the first instance, 50 per cent., was at all too high. But he quite appreciated the suggestion of the hon. member for Fremantle that it would be better not to ask for so much at first, but be content with having the principle affirmed; and, if the Government would do that, so that they might feel sure that, as soon as funds were available, the Government would practically recognise the principle of granting assistance out of public funds to these corporate bodies, he should be satisfied.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said, while not exactly admitting whether the principle involved was a good one or not, he thought it would be almost better to let the question rest until some future period, when, if funds were available, the Government would be in a position to consider the whole question.

MR. WITTENOOM said he intended to support the proposal. He did so last year and he would do so again. He considered the proposal a very fair and proper one, and it was based upon the good old principle of helping those who helped themselves. They all liked to see their towns look nice, with good footpaths and such conveniences; and seeing that the residents in these towns voluntarily taxed themselves in order to keep their streets in order, he thought it was only fair they should get some little aid from the public revenue. It had been said that Perth and Fremantle would get a larger share than the country towns. Of course they would, seeing that the population of those towns was much larger, and their streets more numerous. Nothing could be fairer than that the grant-in-aid should be based upon the rateable value of property in each municipality. He thought the proposal would give great satisfaction, not only to residents in towns but to the colony at large, and he believed it would be carried out before very long.

MR. SCOTT—referring to what had fallen from the Acting Colonial Secretary—said he was afraid they should always find that the finances would not admit of it, unless the Government came to recognise the principle as a legitimate one; and that was the reason why he should like to have the principle formally affirmed.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith): The Government are not prepared to admit the principle at all; but, if at some future date there should be plenty of funds at their disposal, there is no reason why the question should not be brought up again. But at present the Government are not prepared to admit the principle involved.

MR. GRANT said he was quite in opposition to the motion. He thought the condition of our colony did not warrant the adoption of the same principle in this respect as some of our neighbors had adopted. He thought—and he said it with regret—that the country districts

would not have a show if this resolution were agreed to, and he was glad to find that the Government did not acknowledge the principle at all. Why should the towns have so much consideration shown to them? It was said that the residents taxed themselves. But in taxing themselves they did it in order to improve their own property. He did not think this colony was in a sufficiently advanced state of civilisation to go in for such luxuries as these.

Mr. MARMION failed to see the force of the argument of the hon. member for the North. It seemed to him strange that there should be any distinction made between the country and the town. They were all colonists. Whilst the people of the country refused to tax themselves for the support of their roads, the people of the towns did tax themselves to support their streets, of which country people when they came into town availed themselves as well as the local residents. When they found the same principle acknowledged in every other colony, he did not see why it should not be adopted here. He could tell the hon. member for the North this: unless the principle came to be recognised as regards the towns, it might be that town members would be inclined to ask why the same principle, which had been followed for years past as regards the country in the shape of grants for roads, should not be abandoned, and the grants withdrawn. It was all nonsense to say that the town depended upon the country. The town was dependent upon the country just as much as the country was dependent upon the town. They were both inter-dependent upon one another; but, to some extent, the centres of population were more independent of the country than the country was of them—which could be proved, if he thought it was worth while going into the matter, which he didn't, at present. But when he saw there was a probability of the principle being carried out he should give his reasons for saying so, and he thought they would be found to be very good reasons. He did not understand the opposition of the Government to the principle of the thing, when already the same principle was recognised as regards the country. He should recommend country members not to take up a position of hostility to this principle, for such hostility must eventually result prejudicially to their own interests. [Mr. Grant: No, no.] He was positive of it. When the colony was spending hundreds of thousands in providing railways to accommodate the people of the country, he thought it was most unfair and unreasonable to suggest that the towns should not receive some of that assistance at the hands of the Government which had always been extended, and freely extended, and liberally extended, by common consent, to the country districts.

Mr. GRANT thought the towns had no reason to complain. He said so from what came under his own observation. He saw gangs of prisoners working in the towns; and all the improvements and luxuries and signs of progress that were visible supported what he said. Everything was centralised in the towns. They had the best of roads.

Mr. MARMION: Who made them?

Mr. GRANT: Yourselves. But why? Because you could better afford it than people in the country can. I shall resist this proposal until the country districts are more liberally treated.

Mr. MARMION pointed out that next year only a little less than one-fifteenth of the whole revenue of the colony was going to be devoted to roads and bridges in the country, whilst at the same time the residents in the towns had to tax themselves heavily for the upkeep of their roads. He thought the country had but little cause of complaint compared with the towns.

The COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) thought it would be time enough to talk about the principle when we were in a position to vote the money and the public Treasury was overflowing with gold. The mere fact of affirming the principle would not provide the necessary funds; nor would it bind future Legislatures. Personally, he was not very much inclined to support the proposal. He thought the towns were well capable of looking after their own interests; and he thought if a little more care and energy were shown as regards the collection of rates, in Perth and Fremantle at any rate, those towns would have all they required, His own opinion was that the whole system of

rating required looking into, and that there was a great deal, both in Perth and Fremantle—and Perth especially—that required to be done in this direction. Many persons at present paid very little in the shape of rates while others were called upon to pay more than they ought to. There was no system followed at all; and he thought it behoved the ratepayers to look into these matters. But he was afraid they would not. They did not seem to care about it. He thought that with a proper system of rating there would be quite sufficient funds for all improvements, without trenching upon the public revenue. He did not think the colony was in a position to affirm the principle of State aid to Municipalities.

MR. SHENTON said he was rather amused to hear what had fallen from the Surveyor General. He knew the hon. gentleman was very sore on this question of rating. The hon. gentleman was one of those who liked to draw as much as he could out of the colony and pay as little as he could back again. He would say unhesitatingly—and he had some grounds for saying so, in virtue of his position as Mayor—that property in Perth was not assessed above its value; and, if a fresh valuation were made to-morrow by professional valuers, the rates, instead of being decreased, would be increased at least ten per cent.

MR. CROWTHER said he scarcely saw the use of affirming the principle, unless they had the funds to carry it out. He had some doubt in his own mind as to whether the principle was a good one or not. With all due respect to the hon. member for Fremantle he would tell the hon. member this: if those hon. gentlemen who lived in Perth and Fremantle insisted on riding the high horse, and, by intimidation, sought to compel country members to affirm this principle, he thought the hon. member would find it was not at all likely to be carried out.

MR. SCOTT said he had attempted no intimidation at all.

MR. CROWTHER: I never mentioned your name.

MR. SCOTT said all he wanted was to get the Government and the House to affirm a certain principle, so that when the Government had the means to carry that principle into practical effect they might do so. Unless the principle was affirmed—whether it be this year, or next year, or the year after—he was afraid that the scheme would never attain any practical effect. As to waiting until the Treasury was overflowing with gold—was the Treasury of South Australia overflowing with gold? On the contrary, gold was rather scarce with our neighbors just now; still they could afford to grant this assistance to the Municipalities. If the principle were adopted, he should be glad to accept even half-a-crown in the pound—anything to start with. He thought the towns in this colony could not help feeling that they did not get anything like the largest proportion of the public funds expended upon them. All the roads of the colony, which were maintained out of public funds, converged in the towns, and the streets of the towns had to bear the traffic, and the ratepayers had to put their hands in their pockets and pay for their upkeep and repair.

MR. GRANT said it was notorious that the value of property in the towns was increasing very largely, and why was it increasing? At whose expense? Why, at the expense of the large expenditure arising out of public loans, for which the whole colony had to pay. He thought that in this case the Government, being disinterested parties, had taken a very proper view of the hon. member's proposal. While country lands had not increased in value 50 per cent., town property had increased 400 or 500 per cent. in value. In the other colonies they had their Municipalities scattered all over the country, whereas here they were confined to a few centres of population, and this was only another proof of their policy of greedy aggrandisement.

MR. BURGES said they were all agreed to differ on this question; that was very evident. He thought himself there was a great distinction between roads in the country and streets in the town. The value of property in town was very much greater than that which country roads passed through, which was one good reason why the residents in town should tax themselves. The country roads did not benefit the country alone. They were also of benefit to the towns, in the conveyance of merchandise from the towns to the country and the conveyance of produce from the country to the towns.

At any rate, whatever might be said about the principle, they were told that the Government was not in a position to carry out the proposal, and he saw no good in prolonging the discussion.

The ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) thought this was a question that ought not to be looked at from a selfish point of view, or a jealous point of view. It was not a case of Town *v.* Country, nor of Country *v.* Town; for, after all, the town and the country were inter-dependent of each other. The embellishment of our towns and the improvement of our streets were no doubt very proper and desirable things to carry out, when there were means for doing so. But the question here was, whether these embellishments and improvements should be carried out by adding to the burdens of the whole community? So far as the Government was concerned, as he had already said, they were not at present prepared to affirm that proposition. In fact, the question was one that had never been seriously considered by them.

Mr. VENN thought the hon. member who had brought forward the proposal deserved a great deal of sympathy in the matter, and the motion itself deserved more favorable consideration than there was a tendency to give it. As it was now worded there was nothing very formidable about it. It simply sought to affirm a principle. It did not ask the House to pledge itself to vote any money. Whatever the House might choose to say now, it had already affirmed the self-same principle, and affirmed it he might say by general acclamation,—the principle of subsidising Municipalities by a vote of the Legislature. They had done it when they agreed to supplement the amounts raised by the local ratepayers for the erection of Town Halls. [An Hon. Member: No, no.] They had affirmed the principle to this extent: that if these Municipalities raised a certain sum for the erection of a Town Hall the Government would supplement their contributions by a grant out of public funds. They had already done this in the case of Fremantle, Albany, Geraldton, and York. [Mr. McRae: A special grant.] Not at all. The House, by a general concurrence of opinion, agreed that when any Municipality was prepared to raise by local efforts so much for the erection of a Town Hall that House would assist them, in proportion to the amount raised. He saw no difference himself in the principle of the thing.

Mr. PEARSE said the principle had been affirmed in another way besides that referred to by the hon. member for Wellington. Both in Perth and Fremantle the Municipal Cuncils received a grant-in-aid—£100 a year, he believed—from the Government annually towards the upkeep of the main streets.

Mr. RANDELL said he felt certain himself that the principle involved in the resolution before the House would sooner or later assert itself. The hon. member for the North said there was a difference between this colony and South Australia, inasmuch as in South Australia their Municipalities were scattered all over the colony, whereas here there were only a few places that had been declared Municipalities. He would point out to the hon. member that when the inhabitants of any place became sufficiently imbued with public spirit to ask for municipal privileges, it was competent for the Governor at any time to comply with their request. As to public loans and those who paid for them, the inhabitants of towns contributed equally to the revenue with the inhabitants of the country; but the only assistance that came out of the public revenue for roads was for country roads. He was sorry to see the cry of "Town against Country" introduced into the debate, but there was much to be said as to the burdens which townspeople had to bear of which country residents remained in blissful ignorance. The cost of living was a serious item in itself, and there were a great many claims, charitable and otherwise, upon the residents of towns which country people had not.

Captain FAWCETT said, as the cry of "Town against Country" had been raised, he wished to take his stand on the side of the country. Town residents had no idea of the claims upon country people as regards their roads. Country settlers had miles upon miles of roads to keep, towards which not a penny came out of the public Treasury; and if they did not tax themselves in money they taxed themselves in labor.

Mr. SCOTT thought it would be use-

less for him to press the motion, as the sense of the House seemed to be against it.

MR. SHENTON moved that the Chairman leave the chair.

Agreed to.

The House then resumed.

ABORIGINES PROTECTION BILL.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt), in moving the second reading of this bill, said that the Government, apparently, had been making inquiries and obtaining suggestions with regard to legislation affecting the aboriginal natives for some considerable time—for many months before he ever had the honor of having anything to do with the Executive Council, and, he might also say, before any of the agitation which had lately been created by certain persons with regard to the treatment of natives had occurred. Before anything of that kind, the Government had been in communication with the various Resident Magistrates throughout the colony with regard to the law affecting contracts with aborigines. Therefore, this bill was by no means the result of any panic or any desire on the part of the Government to take action in consequence of anything that had been said outside. The measure proceeded, so far as he was aware, from a desire and an intention on the part of the Government for many months back to deal with this subject; and he thought hon. members would see, on a fair and dispassionate consideration of the bill, that the provisions of it were very moderate indeed. They must recognise—all countries recognised—that some special legislation was necessary with regard to the management and treatment of aboriginal natives throughout our colonies. With regard to the treatment of natives in our own colony, he was very glad himself to be in a position to say, from his own observation and experience, and the little knowledge he had gained—when he said little knowledge, perhaps he was rather too modest; he thought he had some considerable knowledge of the treatment of aboriginal natives by the settlers in the outlying districts of this colony; he was personally interested in out-stations in various parts of the colony where the aboriginal natives were found in considerable numbers, and he could say, from his own knowledge and experience, that he believed in no part of Australia had the natives been treated as they had been treated in this colony. He thought that, on a dispassionate inquiry and investigation into the circumstances, it would be found that what he stated was perfectly true—that the natives, as a rule, had been most humanely treated, and well looked after and provided for by the settlers, and especially by the settlers of the Northern district of the colony. On many stations they had been absolutely kept from starving, fed and clothed, and their wants attended to, when otherwise they would have been in a state of starvation. It might be said that this was no more than the settlers ought to do; but, at any rate, whether it was their duty or not, the fact remained that they had done it, and the settlers, as a rule, in the North-West had been at considerable expense in maintaining, out of charity, a great number of these aboriginal natives throughout the winter months when they otherwise would have been unable to obtain a bare subsistence. With regard to the pearl shell fishery, that industry had been an important factor indeed in civilising the native population, in making them useful, and in preventing those outbreaks that might otherwise have occurred between the pioneer settlers and the natives, in the settlement of newly-discovered territory. Their employment in this pearling industry had not only tended to civilise them, but taught them to regard the white man not as an enemy but rather as a friend. He had no hesitation in saying that, from his own knowledge of the circumstances. But of course the law, which affected blacks as well as whites, could not at all times, possibly, be administered in the same manner, and there were some of the provisions of the present law which, it appeared to the Government, might work somewhat hardly in the case of the aboriginal race; and a portion of this bill under the head of "Contracts" sought to deal with and modify that law. He thought, as he had already said, that upon a calm consideration of the provisions embodied in the bill, they would be found to be very mild indeed, and that no objection—no serious

objection—he submitted, ought to be raised to them. If there was any matter of detail which it was considered might be improved upon, he was sure the Government would be happy to listen to any suggestions that might be brought forward in committee, and to deal with them. The bill was divided into four parts, and the first portion contained a provision as to the constitution, powers, and duties of a Native Board and the appointment of Native Protectors. There could be no objection, he thought, to that—the appointment of a Central Board to superintend native affairs throughout the colony. Up to the present time the funds voted by that House for the aborigines, which had been in the shape of an annual grant, had been administered somewhat haphazard, by the Government; and complaints had been annually made,—for instance, that the issue of blankets to these natives had been so ordered, for some reason or the other, that the greater part of the winter was over before these wretched people obtained their blankets. This appeared to have been the case in all the districts, and there was evidently something wanting in the manner of their distribution. This Board would superintend such matters as these, and the application of all the funds voted, and also the distribution of relief amongst such natives as might require it. Some of these natives were old and infirm, and sick, without shelter; and, unless somebody saw that they received some relief, they died. It would be the duty of this Board to look after such people, and generally to exercise supervision over all matters affecting the native race. As regards its constitution and its method of dealing with the finances placed in its hands, the Board would be placed on the same footing as the Board of Immigration, with regard to the moneys voted by that House; and the expenditure of this vote would be subject to the approval of the Legislature. The Board would annually prepare its estimates of expenditure, which would be submitted to the House in the same way as the estimates of the Board of Immigration were submitted. Their accounts would be audited, and their proceedings generally would be similar to those of that Board. It was proposed that every member of the Board should exercise the powers given by this bill to the Native Protectors. That, possibly, was not saying much, for the members of the Board would probably consist of gentlemen living about Perth, who would not have the same opportunity of exercising these powers as the Native Protectors had. At the same time it would be seen that it would be advisable to invest them with the same powers as the Protectors, who, like the members of the Board, would be appointed by the Governor. The bill provided that the duties of the Native Protectors shall be to conform to the instructions received from the Central Board. It would be the duty of these protectors also to supervise the contracts entered into between aborigines and white men, and to see after their welfare, and to enforce the law in their behalf, if the occasion should arise for doing so, under their contract; and generally to put the native in the way of getting his right—and he certainly thought himself, if a native had a right, it was only reasonable and fair that he should be put in the way of enforcing that right. There could be no objection in the world to that. It was not proposed that these Native Protectors should interfere unreasonably between masters and their aboriginal servants, but to allow them sufficient powers to enable them to exercise supervision over the labor contracts of these natives, and to see that they were not harshly dealt with. Then, again, when aborigines were prosecuted in any criminal court, or court of quarter sessions, or elsewhere, it would be their duty, if the Board thought fit, to arrange for the defence of these men. At present, when a native was charged with a capital offence, at the Supreme Court, the Court ordered some counsel who might be in attendance to defend the native; and in the same way it would be the duty of this Board to provide counsel for native prisoners tried elsewhere, and to pay a fee to any counsel so engaged, as the Crown now did in the Supreme Court. He thought that, so far, the House would agree with him that there was nothing at all unreasonable about this portion of the bill. The second part of the bill related to contracts, and what was proposed to do was simply this: to say that no contract shall be enforced against a native unless certain conditions were complied

with before the execution of that contract. The bill did not prevent the settlers in the outlying districts from making any contract they thought fit with a native, but it said they should not be able to enforce it unless it had been made under the terms laid down in this Act,—that was to say, unless it had been attested by a third party, who must be a justice of the peace or a protector of natives. If a justice or a native protector should not happen to be at hand—which probably would often be the case in the outlying parts of a district—the man who wanted to employ a native could do so just the same as at present, and enter into any contract he liked with him, but he could not enforce the terms of the contract unless it had been witnessed and signed by a justice of the peace or a protector. Where there was no justice of the peace nor a native protector accessible, a settler would simply have to make the best agreement he could with his natives, and, so long as everything went on smoothly, there was nothing to be said about it; but, if the native broke the agreement, from any cause, his employer could not compel him to carry it out; or if the native ran away he could not have him arrested. If he could bring him back by persuasion or any fair means and the native consented, well and good; but he could not enforce the contract, and he must take the risk of losing his native, unless the contract had been duly attested. There was nothing very unreasonable about that. Country settlers could not reasonably expect the Government to keep magistrates and constables at hand, all over the colony, hundreds of miles from the coast, to look after their native servants, the one to issue his warrant and the other to catch the runaway native. He thought it was unreasonable to expect the country to do this, and to find policemen to run all over the colony to bring back a native who had broken his engagement—which perhaps he had only entered into a few days previously—and to travel perhaps hundreds of miles trying to catch this black gentleman, who possibly when caught would be found to be as wild as a March hare. He thought that those hon. members who were interested in this subject might well view the question dispassionately, and regard with some consideration and sympathy the endeavors of the Government to put an end to that sort of expenditure. Was it reasonable to ask that the State should provide magistrates to grant warrants, and constables to chase these wild fellows hundreds of miles in order to bring them back, when they absconded? The Government did not say to these outlying settlers that they were not to make any contracts with the natives, or that if the natives broke the contract and went away they should not endeavor to induce them to come back again, by persuasion. What the Government did say was, that they should not be called upon to enforce a contract that had not been duly attested, and that they should not at public expense provide justices and constables to run all over the country after runaway natives, who chose to break their agreements. The settler had only to take care that his contract was properly executed, and these absconding gentlemen could be lawfully recaptured and sentenced to a term of imprisonment: but in those parts where there was not a justice or a native protector available, he must take the risk of his native leaving him. That seemed a very reasonable proposal to make indeed. He would say again it was not because of any belief on the part of the Government of the existence of anything like a general ill-treatment of natives at all, or of any outcry, or of any sensational stories circulated, that the Government had brought forward this bill. For months past it had been a matter of anxious consideration with the Government whether or no they ought not to place the law as regards these native contracts on a somewhat surer footing. Of course there were black sheep in every camp, and undoubtedly the Government were in possession of reports from different settlers in different portions of the colony which disclosed acts that came somewhere near the definition of cruelty to natives. But these were so few and far between, that, viewing the question on a broad basis, he did not wish to introduce into this debate anything affecting the question of the treatment of natives generally. It was known to the Government that the treatment of the natives by the settlers in this colony was most exceptional and most humane. But now that settlement was extending,

it was very desirable to place the law on a more definite basis. There were other provisions in the bill relating to contracts. No contract with an aboriginal native was to be for more than twelve months, and, in the case of females, for more than three months; and it was further provided that, during his period of service, if a native desired to absent himself for a time—in other words, if he wished to have a holiday and take a trip into the bush—he should be allowed to do so. This provision, however, only applied to male aboriginals; it did not apply to women, whose period of service was limited to three months. He believed that this practice of letting natives have a short holiday was already observed by a majority of settlers, and that it was found to have a good effect, and that the natives, after a few days roaming in the bush, very willingly came back of their own accord. Power was also given to justices to cancel a contract, for certain reasons specified in the bill. This was a power now vested in justices under the Masters and Servants Act, and therefore it was no new provision. But clause 23 was new: under this clause it was proposed to allow a justice to cancel a contract in the event of his being satisfied of the physical unfitness or inability of the native to carry it out,—he did not suppose that would affect anybody injuriously—also, in the event of his finding out that the contract was not a real *bonâ fide* affair. It had been the practice in some places to engage these natives, not for *bonâ fide* service at the time, but simply in order to have some hold upon them, and to secure the services of the police to fetch them in when their services might be really required,—perhaps a distance of some hundreds of miles. He did not think that was a reasonable thing for the employers of these natives to expect. If they engaged a native under a *bonâ fide* engagement to do certain work, and they wanted him, they would put him to that work at once. He thought it was unreasonable to engage a man and then let him run wild, and, when you required him some months hence, to invoke the aid of the police to track him up for you. He did not think it was a reasonable thing that the country should be put to the expense of catching these fellows for their masters; and it was with a view to prevent such practices as these—he did not know that they took place to any great extent—that power was given in this bill to any justice to cancel any engagement so made with a native. The clause provided that no native shall be engaged under this Act until after the expiration of a month after the termination of a pearling contract—that was to say, if a native was brought (say) into Cossack or to Ashburton at the close of the pearling season, he should not thereupon be contracted with again for the ensuing term, and then allowed to go back into the bush until he was wanted, and a constable sent after him, some months afterwards, to bring him up to the scratch, according to contract. It was proposed that no contract should be renewed for at least a month after the expiration of the contract that had elapsed. [Mr. Sholl: Is it proposed that the Government should keep the native during that month?] The native would be at liberty to go where he liked, and no one would have any claim upon him. He might be desirous of returning home to his friends, and under this bill he would be at liberty to do so, and his former employer would have no claim upon him. Having said so much he thought he had said all that need be said of that portion of the bill under the head of contracts. No doubt that occasionally a Native Protector would visit the most outlying stations, and the settler could then get a contract with all his natives duly executed, when he would be protected in the event of any breach of that contract; but before he obtained this protection the attesting witness must be satisfied that a native understood the terms of his contract,—understood what he engaged to do. This was what was already done under the Pearl Shell Fishery Act. No native could be taken to sea under that Act unless the magistrate was satisfied that he was a willing agent and that he understood his contract. He did not see why the same provision should not extend to natives employed on land. The third portion of the bill dealt with a subject which would not, perhaps, enlist the same amount of interest as the portions of the bill he had already explained. It referred to the employment by the Government of con-

victed natives, outside the precincts of a gaol. For some years past, he might say, in this respect the Government themselves had been doing what was, perhaps, not strictly legal, taking native prisoners from the penal establishment at Rottnest and employing them in various parts of the colony as police assistants. Certainly it was to the advantage of the native to be so employed, rather than to be confined in prison, and it was now proposed to legalise that, and to allow these natives, when their services were required, to become attached to Government surveys or expeditions proceeding to the Kimberley or other districts. The fourth part of the bill dealt with native apprentices, and he thought the provisions of the bill as to that would be found to supply a felt want. He knew he himself had had applications made to him in his private business for advice as to the law on the subject, where a native or half-caste child had been brought up and trained by a settler, and afterwards, when the girl or the boy began to be of some service, other people enticed them away, and those who had gone to the trouble and expense of bringing up the native had no redress. Under this bill a master or mistress who brought up the native or a half-caste child would be able to exercise a sort of parental control over him until he attained a certain age. He thought the House would see that there was nothing in the world unreasonable or objectionable about that. The last portion of the bill dealt with certain miscellaneous provisions, prohibiting the public from purchasing from the natives their blankets, bedding or clothing, or any other article supplied to them by the Government, or other persons. They often heard the complaint—attention had frequently been called to it in that House—of natives no sooner getting their blankets than they were followed by some of those disreputable loafers who made it a practice of tracking up those whom they thought were not careful or capable of taking care of themselves, and if they could purchase a good blanket from a native for sixpence they would do so, and forthwith that sixpence would probably be converted into grog. This bill it was hoped would put a stop to such practices. These native blankets were to have a distinguishing mark upon them easily recognised; and, as it was not the habit of natives to patronise the shops for their blankets, there would be no excuse at all for the person who purchased a native's blanket, and anyone who did so would be liable to a penalty. Another part of the bill gave power to magistrates to order out of town any natives seen loitering about the streets. Some of these natives were not always even decently covered, and occasionally their presence shocked one's sense of modesty; and it was proposed to empower magistrates to order them to leave the town, and to punish them if they didn't go. Another part of the miscellaneous provisions of the bill was that which provided that for any breach of contract under the Masters and Servants Act a magistrate could only sentence a native to one month's imprisonment, instead of three as at present. All our legislation dealing with the aboriginal race was based upon a reduction of the period of imprisonment to which a native should be subjected as compared with a white man. This was done on humane grounds, as these natives could not stand imprisonment and confinement like a white man could; it soon began to tell upon them. Their constitution could not stand it; and a native who was locked up for a month probably suffered as much as a white person who was locked up for three months, and the Government now asked the House to agree to this modification of the Masters and Servants Act in the case of natives. These were the main provisions of the bill at present before the House. In committee—should the bill reach that stage—he should ask to include a further provision, increasing the penalty for a breach of the 10th section of the Pearl Shell Fishery Act, as regards the punishment in the case of a master holding a native under duresse,—that was to say, holding him forcibly against his will. Under the Act referred to, a master who kept a native under duresse was finable only, but under the present bill it was proposed to increase that penalty to imprisonment, at the discretion of the magistrate. As a matter of fact he doubted whether even under the present law a master who held his native servant under duresse was not guilty of an assault and liable to imprisonment;

at any rate he would have great difficulty in escaping. It was proposed to remove all difficulty on that score, and it was now proposed that, upon conviction, an employer who held a native under duresse, against his will, should suffer imprisonment for a term within the discretion of the magistrate, not exceeding six months—he could give him six months or he could let him off with a day. These were the main provisions which were embodied in the bill which he now asked the House to read a second time.

Mr. WITTENOOM said he had listened very carefully to the remarks made by the Acting Attorney General, and he must say that he was surprised and startled at the very sudden departure in the native policy of the Government which this bill disclosed. Hitherto the cry of the Government had always been that the law applied equally to the blacks as to the whites, and that it knew no distinction of persons; and, having brought the majority of settlers to look at the question from that point of view, which the Government never lost an opportunity of inculcating, he must say he was surprised, and somewhat painfully surprised, at this sudden departure, for, according to this bill, the law in its application to the white was a very different thing from the law in its application to the aboriginal native. He quite admitted there should be a law to regulate native labor as well as white, but he thought the law should be consistent. Possibly there were no very harmful or seriously objectionable features about the present bill, but there were certainly some very impracticable provisions in it, which it would be very difficult indeed to carry out—not more so, perhaps, than was to be expected, when the Government sought to legislate upon a matter they had so very little knowledge about. In the first place it was proposed to appoint a Board, which was to have supervision over all native affairs. This Board, which was to be an all-powerful Board, would possibly—they were told as much—consist of half-a-dozen gentlemen residing in Perth, who had little or no practical knowledge of the management of natives, a Board consisting of amiable doctrinaires, philanthropic theorists, whose knowledge and experience of natives had probably been picked up in the neighborhood of the town. The successful working of this Board would depend altogether upon the wisdom shown in the selection of its members. With regard to that part of the bill dealing with labor contracts, the Attorney General told them that every contract with a native would have to be signed before a justice of the peace, otherwise, the hon. gentleman said (in the most light and airy manner possible), these natives would simply snap their fingers at you. The hon. gentleman said it would be quite competent for the settlers to make any contract they liked with their native servants, but, unless that contract was witnessed by a magistrate or a native protector, it could not be enforced. What would be the good of it, then? The hon. gentleman said they must take the risk of the native running away, and, if he did so, they would have the opportunity of bringing him back again, if they could, by persuasive means. It struck him that a man's persuasive powers must be very great indeed if he could persuade an absconding native to come back again. He apprehended that the most serious difficulties would be experienced by many settlers in getting these contracts signed by a justice of the peace or a native protector,—unless, indeed, the Government were going to increase the number of these gentlemen indefinitely. It was absurd to argue that these natives did not understand the nature of their agreements, yet they were told that unless every agreement, entered into hundreds of miles in the interior, was attested by a magistrate it would have no practical effect. The settlers themselves could not enforce it; they would not be allowed to bring back a native absconder by force; they would not be allowed to give him a thrashing, or to punish him in any way, but be content to remain entirely at the mercy of their natives, who, in this way, would be complete masters of the situation. Then, again, at the termination of a native's engagement, his employer must not re-engage him for at least a month. What was to become of the native in the meantime? Who was to keep him while he remained idle? Everybody who knew anything about these natives were aware that if they were not employed by the

settlers they would simply steal and pilfer anything they could put their hands upon. What was the objection to the system at present prevailing? The Attorney General told them that the Government did not believe there were any abuses practised by the settlers, they acknowledged that the natives were treated most humanely, and that, so far as they were aware, there were no cases of cruelty or coercion. Why then bring forward a bill like this, that was utterly impracticable? No doubt it would be a very good idea if these native protectors could go about, visiting the stations occasionally,—and no one would object to them; but, to say that no contract should have effect unless it was signed by a magistrate or one of these protectors, when there might not be one to be found within hundreds of miles, was simply reducing the labor question to an absurdity. As to keeping a native against his will, he defied anyone to do so, in the bush. It might perhaps be done in a boat, with the water surrounding him, but you couldn't do it on a station; and probably the Government had got this idea into their head from something that had occurred on board some boat engaged in the pearl fishery. But, surely, even the Government must be aware that the conditions on a station, in the far interior, were altogether different from the conditions surrounding the pearling industry on the coast. The hon. and learned gentleman told them it was simply absurd to expect the police to go running all over the country to bring in natives who had absconded from the employment of the settlers. Why was it absurd? They would not allow a settler to have recourse to anything except his powers of persuasion, and, if those failed, he had no redress. Why should they not obtain the assistance of the police? They contributed very considerably to the public revenue, and why should they not have a little police protection, which was about all they expected to get in return for their contributions to the revenue? He thought such an argument as that came with very bad grace from the Government. As to engaging natives and then letting them go away for a month. or two, and sending the police after them when they were wanted, he never heard of such a case himself in his life. He could not imagine any magistrate issuing a warrant under such circumstances; and, if such a thing had ever been done, he should say that the magistrate who did it had very little knowledge of his duties. He was glad to see from the bill that the Government were not extra particular as to the amount of clothing to be supplied to these natives by their employers. So long as they were covered from the neck to the knee, the Government would be satisfied. Well, that certainly was a concession. Settlers would at any rate be relieved of the necessity of bringing their natives into town to a tailor and have them measured for a suit. Hon. members might laugh, but he assured them that with the march of civilisation some of these bush natives were becoming quite fastidious, and it was a relief to find that the Government did not insist upon their being provided with paper collars, a tie, and a bell-topper. Settlers in Western Australia were thankful for very small mercies at the hands of the Government, when this native question was at issue. As to the proposal to reduce the term of imprisonment in the case of natives offending against the Masters and Servants Act it would be found that the result would be, in many cases, that a man's sentence will have expired before he ever reached a lockup. Why should there be a different law, one for the black and one for the white, when they had been taught up to the present that in the eye of the law black and white were equal? Why should the law be strained to favor the black man on the one hand, and strained on the other hand to harass the white man? It was inconsistent, to say the least of it. As to the treatment of natives by the settlers in this colony he was glad to hear the Attorney General bear his testimony to the exceptionally humane treatment which the natives in Western Australia, as a rule, received at the hands of the settlers. He was acquainted or connected with many stations himself in the Northern part of the colony, and he could endorse every word that had been said by the hon. and learned gentleman. The amount of money spent on some stations in maintaining these natives would probably surprise some hon. members—not alone the natives employed on

the stations, but others as well; and how anybody could say that the natives in this colony were badly treated he could not understand. With all the outcry that had recently been made, and all the sensational yarns that had been circulated, he was somewhat astonished that there was not sufficient enterprise among the newspaper press of the colony to send up a special reporter to inquire into the whole subject. He was sure nothing would have given the settlers themselves greater satisfaction, and he was very pleased indeed to learn that there was a probability of the *Australasian* sending a special correspondent to this colony to inquire into this question. He was sure this gentleman, whoever he might be, would receive a most cordial welcome from the settlers, and every opportunity would be afforded him to see how much—or rather how little—truth there was in the scandalous stories which had been circulated to the discredit of the settlers and the defamation of the colony itself. With regard to the present bill, whilst he congratulated the Government upon having taken the subject in hand, and—with their very limited knowledge of it—in not introducing more absurdities and crudities into the bill than they had actually done, he must say again he was afraid that a great deal of the bill would be found impracticable and unworkable. In the hope, however, that there might be some possibility of licking it into better shape in committee, it was not his intention to oppose the second reading of the bill.

Mr. LAYMAN said he rose to support the second reading. He had no doubt that a measure of this sort was needed, and he thought the Government were to be congratulated upon having brought such a comprehensive measure before the House. He had himself intended to have asked the Government to have introduced some such a measure, had they not done so. At the same time, he dared say, the bill would require some alteration.

Mr. SHOLL did not object to the principle of the bill at all. If the Government considered it necessary that these native protectors should be appointed, he did not think anyone need care for that; but there were several clauses in the bill that would act injuriously, he considered, both in the interests of the natives themselves, and of their employers. Clause 18, for instance, provided that "no contract with any aboriginal for any service or employment shall be of any force or validity as against such aboriginal unless the same be in writing, and the aboriginal be of the age of sixteen years and upwards at the time of making such contract." Now anyone that knew anything at all about these natives must know that it was between the ages of ten or twelve and sixteen that they were the most useful. They were then more tractable, more easily taught, and more likely to become habituated to station life. Further than that, these aboriginal natives matured at a much earlier age than whites did; and, at the age of sixteen a native, though a boy in years, was in appearance and manner a man, and he generally considered himself a man, too. He thought the minimum age at which a native could enter into an agreement was too high altogether, and he considered that if the Government adhered to that age they would do a great injury to employers as well as to the natives themselves. Then, again, the same clause contained this provision, without which no contract would be valid. It said: "Nor unless such contract, at the time of the making thereof, be witnessed and truly dated by a third party, being a justice of the peace or a protector of aboriginals, and endorsed by such witness at the same time with a certificate that the contract was fully explained by him to the aboriginal"—and so on. How on earth could settlers at the head of the Gascoyne, or the Murchison, or the De-Grey get their native servants down to a magistrate to get their engagements countersigned? The Attorney General said they could employ the natives without an agreement. No doubt. But what was the good of it? If they ran away, their employer would have no remedy. He could not have his servant punished for absconding or anything else. Let them look at the matter in a common-sense point of view. If a master had no agreement with his servant, black or white, and no remedy in the event of a breach of engagement, he might as well be without any servant at all. These natives were here today and away tomorrow. As

to these aborigines not understanding the nature of an agreement, that was all nonsense; they understood it as well as a white did. It would be impossible for many employers ever to have an agreement with native servants if the provisions in this clause were to be carried out. Why could not these native protectors travel about and visit the settlers' stations? Clause 22, again, said: "It shall be lawful for any justice or justices of the peace, on the hearing of any complaint touching the alleged breach of any contract under this Act, irrespective of any other decision, order, or judgment in the case, to cancel the contract." That seemed to him to amount to this: that a justice could hear a case, that there might be no proof, and yet he could cancel the agreement. He thought there ought to be some proof required. Here was another very objectionable clause: "It shall be lawful for every protector of aborigines to enter into and upon the dwelling-house or premises where any aboriginal engaged under a contract under this Act may be employed or reside . . . . and to ascertain whether the terms of the contract are being fulfilled by the employer of such aboriginal." He thought this was a most objectionable clause to allow these protectors to walk into a man's house when they liked under the pretence of looking after the interest of a native servant. Just fancy an unprincipled and untruthful—yes, he would say untruthful—man, like that man Gribble, having the power to go into settlers' houses. He would have the whole country by the ears in no time. He would do it on purpose in order to annoy people. Clause 27 empowered the Governor to employ native prisoners outside a gaol, and to let them accompany survey parties, or to be otherwise employed under the Government. Some time ago the Surveyor General, he believed, when he went with an expedition to the North, took some of these Rottnest natives with the expedition; and what was the consequence? They ran away from him and attempted to murder one of the settlers, and it was a mercy the man was not killed. He was shot and severely wounded. That was the result in that case of allowing these native prisoners to have their freedom in this way. He thought it would be a most objectionable thing to allow these bad characters to be sent about the country like this. Let them remain in prison until their sentence expired. As for the settlers expecting the police to go hunting up their native servants for them, after they had been discharged, he never heard of such a case himself. The idea was so absurd that it was not worth talking about. The Attorney General said that the provisions of the bill were not different from the provisions of the Pearl Shell Fishery Act, as regards the witnessing of an agreement. He would point out to the hon. gentleman that it was a very different thing indeed in the far interior, where there was no magistrate to witness an agreement within perhaps hundreds of miles. As he had said already, he did not object to the principle of the bill, but he could see that it was liable to do a great deal of injury not only to native employers but also to the natives themselves, unless its provisions were considerably modified. He thought it would be much better, in the first instance, to refer the bill to a select committee; and he would now move, That the bill be referred to a select committee, consisting of the Acting Attorney General, Mr. Grant, Mr. Marmion, Mr. Venn, and the mover, and (with leave) the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Mr. Harper.

Mr. BURGES said the bill was one that certainly required some attention. He disapproved entirely of the provision that every native before he entered upon an agreement should have to be brought before a justice of the peace or a protector, in order to make that agreement binding. He thought that would be very unjust to employers in many instances, and a great hardship to the natives themselves that they should be compelled to travel unreasonably long distances for such a purpose. They all knew that magistrates were not to be found every ten or twenty miles in the far interior. As to native protectors attesting these agreements, he did not know how many protectors it was proposed to appoint. The proposal to reduce the punishment of a native to one month would have this effect in many cases: before the native reached his prison the month will have expired, and he would undergo no imprisonment at all. Then again the bill provided

that no warrant should have effect if a native was twenty miles away—a most absurd provision. Twenty miles was nothing to these natives. He did not object to the principle of the bill, but he thought it would require very careful consideration in committee.

The COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) saw no necessity for referring the bill to a select committee. He thought it was a bill which they might fairly deal with in committee of the whole House.

The motion to refer the bill to a select committee was then put, and a division being called for, the numbers were:

Ayes	... ...	10
Noes	... ...	7
Majority for	...	3

Ayes.	Noes.
Mr. Brockman	Hon. M. S. Smith
Mr. Crowther	Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. Grant	Hon. J. A. Wright
Mr. Harper	Mr. Burges
Mr. Marmion	Capt. Fawcett
Mr. McRae	Mr. Layman
Mr. Pearse	Hon. S. Burt (*Teller*).
Mr. Venn	
Mr. Wittenoom	
Mr. Sholl (*Teller*).	

The ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the select committee be elected by ballot.

Mr. SHOLL moved for leave to increase the number of such committee to seven.

Question—put and passed.

The members having delivered to the Clerk the list of members to serve on such committee, the Clerk reported to the Speaker that the following members had the greatest number of votes:—Hon. S. Burt, Mr. Grant, Mr. Harper, Mr. Marmion, Mr. Sholl, Mr. Venn, and Mr. Wittenoom.

Mr. DOBSON'S PROPOSALS FOR CONSTRUCTION OF RAILWAY FROM BAYSWATER TO BUSSELTON.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

On the order of the day for the resumption of the debate on Mr. Dobson's proposals for the construction of a railway from Bayswater to Busselton,

Mr. MARMION said he understood the debate had been adjourned in order that he might have an opportunity of taking part in it. He felt convinced it would be useless for him to address the House at any length on the subject, and he thought the best thing they could do was to let the matter drop at present, and let it be brought forward in some other form at a future session. It had been said, he believed, that in accepting Mr. Dobson's terms we would be incurring no liability, in the same way as we would if we contracted a loan. He could not admit that at all. He thought himself that we would incur a liability.

Mr. VENN said, as the hon. member who had brought the matter before the House (Mr. Parker) was absent, he thought the debate might be adjourned until next day.

The ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Hon. members have the assurance of the Engineer-in-Chief that the Government will make inquiries into the matter during the recess, and that there are no available funds at present; and I think the House might be content with that.

The COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said he had seen Mr. Keane himself, and he did not object in the slightest degree to the matter standing over until next session.

The motion submitted by Mr. Parker was then put and negatived.

SMELTING WORKS, VICTORIA DISTRICT: Mr. TREVENACK'S OFFER.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

On the order of the day for the resumption of this debate,

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) moved that the following words be added to sub-section (*a*) of the resolution (*vide* p. 358 ante): "or at the rate of £375 for each 100 tons of pig lead so smelted."

Agreed to, without comment.

The DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright), without comment, moved that the following words be added to the resolution:—"That a "site for the works, not to exceed eight "acres in extent, be granted free of "charge on the completion of the en- "gagement, occupancy being allowed "from the commencement of opera- "tions; any land in excess of such quan- "tity being paid for at such rates and "conditions as are current at the date of "the application."

Agreed to, *sub silentio*.

Resolution, as amended, put and passed.

ROADS BILL.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): In the face of the division that took place yesterday upon the motion for the second reading of the Roads Bill, when the Government only carried the second reading by a majority of one, and as most of the elected members have expressed an opinion—although I do not in any way agree with it—that the time is too late now to consider this important measure, the Government have come to the conclusion to withdraw the bill. I therefore move that it be discharged.

Agreed to.

Bill discharged.

CLOSURE OF DRUMMOND STREET BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Friday, 20th August, 1886.

Police Station at Sharks Bay—Message (No. 18): Assenting to Bills—Land Regulations: further consideration of—Estimates, 1887: consideration of—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

POLICE STATION AT SHARKS BAY.

MR. SHOLL, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works if it was a fact that the Government proposed to erect the police station intended for Sharks Bay on Dirk Hartog Island? If so, whether they were aware that the police would be so far removed from the pearling grounds as to be perfectly useless in the event of any disturbance on the grounds? The hon. member said that since he had given notice of this question he had received a letter from Sharks Bay pointing out that a police station on Dirk Hartog Island would be quite useless, as no pearlers would camp on the island, and urging that the proposed station should be erected at Freshwater Camp, as being the most central position.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said it had been suggested to the Government that the police station intended for Sharks Bay should be erected on Dirk Hartog Island; but no decision would be arrived at until the case had been carefully considered, and all the circumstances well weighed.

MESSAGE (No. 18): ASSENTING TO BILLS.

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

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

"19. *An Act to amend the Law relating "to Public Health.*

"20. *An Act to amend an Act passed in "the 6th year of the Reign of Her "Majesty Queen Victoria, No. 5, "intituled 'An Act to provide a "summary remedy in certain cases "of Breach of Contract.'*

"21. *An Act to impose a Duty upon "Gold.*

"22. *An Act to legalise the closure of "Drummond Street, in the town of "Guildford.*

"2. The authenticated copies of the "Acts are returned herewith.

"Government House, Perth, 20th Au"gust, 1886."

LAND REGULATIONS.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of the proposed new Land Regulations.

MR. HARPER moved that the following new clause be added to the Regulations:—"Any land situated in the "Eastern Division, not to the eastward "of the 119th degree of East Longitude, "which shall be proved to the satis"faction of the Commissioner to be so "densely wooded with indigenous Euca-