

**CONFIRMATION OF EXPENDITURE
BILL.**

In Committee.

The Bill passed through Committee without discussion.

The Council adjourned at 5 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,
Friday, 10th July, 1874.

Sunday Trading—Stipend of Resident Medical Officer, Murray District—Financial Statement: in committee.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 6 p.m.

PRAYERS.

SUNDAY TRADING.

Mr. BIRCH, in accordance with notice, asked the Acting Attorney General whether there was any Act in the colony to prevent Sunday trading; and, if there was, why it was not enforced.

The ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. G. W. Leake) said that the enactments in force in the colony, on this subject, were the Imperial Acts 1 Charles I., cap. 1; 3 Charles I., cap. 1; 27 Charles II., cap. 7. He said the law is not enforced only because, so far as he knew, no complaints had been made to magistrates of its infraction.

**STIPEND OF RESIDENT MEDICAL
OFFICER, MURRAY DISTRICT.**

Mr. HAMERSLEY, in accordance with notice, asked why the resident medical officer at the Murray received this year a stipend of only £50, while others holding the same position in other districts received more.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. P. Barlee) said the reason was that the Legislative Council had voted the sum of £50 per annum only for this service.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

In Committee.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. F. P. Barlee), having moved the House into a Committee of the whole to consider questions of finance, said—Mr. Carey, it was my desire to bring forward, at the earliest possible opportunity after the commencement of the session,

those questions of finance which it is my duty this evening to submit, on behalf of the Government, for the consideration of the House; and I was actuated in so doing by a feeling that,—in a small assembly such as this, representing, as it does, a very large extent of country over which the population is so widely scattered, and where everything must hinge on questions of finance—by a feeling that business would be greatly simplified, and that the way would I hope be paved by the programme I shall submit to you this evening for the better and more speedy consideration of those important matters which will have to be discussed during the session, and which have been shadowed forth in the Speech delivered by His Excellency the Governor at the opening of the session, and which it will be my duty now to place before you more fully than could be done in a speech of that nature. Sir, it has been my lot to address this House on questions of finance in times, I may say, of very great distress, when the savings of former years had been absorbed in making up a deficiency of revenue and in palliating the distress which specially affected some districts, and which was more or less prevalent throughout the colony. It is my more fortunate and far more pleasing task this evening to speak to you of a better state of things, of the prosperous—I think I may say without fear of contradiction—condition of the country and the healthy state of every industry; to dilate no longer on an empty treasury, but to speak of an increasing revenue; and it will be my duty tonight to submit for the decision of this Council the expenditure of a far larger sum of money than ever before fell to the lot of, if I may use the expression, a Western Australian Chancellor of the Exchequer to deal with. When I say that all the industries of the colony are in a healthy state; when I say—and I believe I may fairly say it—that the colony generally is in a prosperous condition, I am of opinion that I speak no idle words, that I speak what all here, or nearly all, will allow to be true. If anyone wishes to combat my views or to argue whether what I say is right or not, I will simply ask him to consult those who are intimately acquainted with the individual pecuniary interests of persons throughout the colony, and I am sure that, without any breach of confidence on their part, they will admit that with regard to the ways and means of the generality of people—I say of the generality, because there are exceptions of course; but such exceptions prove the rule—that they are better off than they were two or three years ago. If we want to go a little further, let

us glance at the various industries which may be considered of the most importance in the colony. Take for instance the squatting interest. It is a well-known fact, of which every member of this House is cognizant; it is a fact palpable to every member of the community that, for some time, indeed some two or three years, the price of wool has kept up steadily, and that notwithstanding a stationary population the price of market stock has ruled higher than it has done for years previously. Look again at the grazier. With an increased number of cattle in the colony we still see the price of meat increasing, and likely to increase. These two facts, coupled as they are with the less encouraging fact, a fact which we all deplore,—a stationary population,—speak volumes to the thinking mind. If, again, we turn our attention to another interest, which has been at considerable discount for some time past—the farming interest, what do we find? I think we must all agree that brighter days have at last dawned upon that interest, and I believe I may venture to say without fear of contradiction that there is not a farmer in the colony who need fear that for all he grows he will find a good market. Had it not been for that universal and crying want—the want of suitable labor, a want we must manage to provide for before we close our deliberations, I have no hesitation in saying there would have been a greater area of land put under cultivation this year, and under a belief that the return would prove remunerative, than was ever before in the history of the colony. Turn we again to another side and look at that interest that has been fostered in this colony by the granting of considerable concessions of land, which concessions of land, I firmly believe, have produced all that was expected from them—the timber trade, and what do we find? All that is now wanting to despoil our splendid forests of our jarrah is that want which is crippling every other industry amongst us—the want of labor to cut it down, and the want of ships to carry it away. We know that the companies now established in the colony have spread the fame of our jarrah to such an extent that the demand for it is far in excess of the means of supply, and a demand, too, at prices that a few years ago would have been considered fabulous. We know that the companies who have introduced capital into the colony to establish the timber trade are extending their operations, and expending large sums in the introduction of additional machinery; and I think all must now recognize that all that is required thoroughly to establish the industry on a sound footing—and some of the companies are taking steps to supply the

want—is labor. Let us now turn our attention from this part of the colony to our more distant settlements. On the north west coast, what do we see? All those industries which we thought, at one time, that district was only adapted for, are in a flourishing condition; the sheepowner, the cattle dealer, the horse breeder, are all doing well, while our pearling industry, which had already attained very considerable importance and dimensions, gives every promise of being carried on with still greater activity, and with a corresponding degree of success, attracting capital not only from hence but from places beyond the colony. Then, again, from that part of the colony we also hear,—and it does one good to hear it—of the discovery of lodes of copper and lead, and not only of copper and lead but of gold; and there is every reason to believe that the precious metal is found there not only in copper but in quartz. Specimens have been sent for analysis and the reports received of the result have been most satisfactory. Having mentioned the subject of gold, I may go a little further, and I may express my belief that the sum of money voted by this Council for gold-prospecting purposes has resulted in good to the colony, and I firmly believe that, at no distant day, we may look upon that vote as one of the best investments ever made with the public funds of this colony. I may fairly say that the question of the presence in this colony in more than one district, of payable quartz reefs has been settled almost beyond a doubt; and what is more, there is strong reason for the belief that gold in payable quantities will be found in alluvial soil. At all events, I am well convinced that the sum of £1,000 voted by this House for the purpose of prospecting for gold, though spread over an immense and widely-scattered area of country, is money well spent. We could not expect any very startling results from such a trifling expenditure devoted to the prospecting of such an enormous tract of country, but this much it has done for us—it has placed beyond doubt the existence of gold in the colony. This question is so far and so satisfactorily settled that I am quite satisfied to let it rest, confident that it will attract the attention of capitalists elsewhere, if not here, and that the great question of gold or no gold will be finally settled. Again, as another proof of the sound condition of the colony, I would invite attention to the strong faith that is shown by the settlers themselves—a faith all the stronger in the face of a stationary population—in the future of the colony, as evinced in the unprecedented demand for land. This fact, above all others, (it appears to me) tends to show that, whatever other people may say

of the colony's prospects, the settlers have a firm faith in its future. We are told, and told periodically, that the colony is being ruined, that the Government is all that is bad, that people have no faith in the country, that they are going away from it as fast as they can, that everyone would go were it not that they would have to sell out at a sacrifice; but I ask you to contrast these statements, which are periodically put forth, with the statement I make tonight, and I will leave you to say which carries with it the most unmistakeable stamp of truth. As to the purchases of land, to which I have alluded as manifesting the lively faith which our settlers entertain in the future progress of the colony, I may here state that the revenue from that source during the first six months of the current year has very nearly reached the estimated revenue for the whole year; and if all the applications for land made before the 30th June last had been settled, a revenue much in excess of the estimated revenue for the whole of the year would have been derived therefrom. With regard to the returns accruing from leases of land, all I can say is that the estimated revenue for the whole year was received within the first six months, with an amount in excess of nearly £2,000; and this I consider a very satisfactory statement to make. One of the steps taken by this Council last year was to offer encouragement for the discovery of good water in the vicinity of Eucla harbor, and a sum of £100 was voted for that purpose. I am glad to state to this House, and to the colony at large, that a claim has been put in for the reward by those very deserving settlers, the Messrs. Muir, of Albany, who report having discovered two wells affording an ample supply of splendid water now available for the general public. The money, of course, will not be paid until the report is verified; and if it be true—and I have no reason to disbelieve it—then, I have no hesitation in saying that the greatest obstacle to the settlement of that country, of the beautiful pastures of which we hear such glowing accounts, will have been surmounted, and we shall soon see it covered with stock. I would ask the House again to contrast the picture I have put before it—and it is a faithful one,—with the statements that are periodically promulgated,—and circulated, too, by persons who are in a position to know better, with regard to the condition of the colony. I make no statement here tonight which I am not prepared to substantiate by figures or facts. I have no interest whatever in showing the bright side of the picture, the silver lining to the cloud, alone, and conceal the dark side from your gaze. I put plain facts before you—and facts are stubborn things—and

I ask you to "look at this picture and on that," and judge for yourselves which is the more faithful representation of the state of the colony. When I assert that it is in a prosperous condition, I do not mean to say that we have no wants, because we have an enormous number of them. Some of the most pressing of these were brought under your notice in His Excellency's opening Speech: in those paragraphs relating to immigration, harbor improvements, railway and telegraph extension, all of which I shall shortly touch upon. But in spite of all these wants I repeat that the colony has progressed, and is undoubtedly progressing; and I date the commencement of that progress—I say it without any intention to flatter anyone—from the time when representative institutions were first introduced into the colony from the time of the formation of this Assembly, and the progressive measures that have been brought forward by the Government and carried out by this Council. It is well known that the majority of the measures must, under the existing form of Government, emanate from the Governor, but he could not have accomplished anything without the assistance and co-operation of the Council; and the time will come when the people of Western Australia will bear in general recollection the memory of that Governor who first introduced representative institutions. I repeat that since the introduction of representative institutions among us, this colony has made great strides, notwithstanding the many drawbacks to which I have alluded, the many wants from which we are suffering. Now, Sir, these wants cannot all be supplied at once; and what we have to do is to decide which want ought to be first provided for. In a colony like our own, possessing a small revenue and a large extent of country, it is quite impossible that all we require can be accomplished at once. Having determined what we most stand in need of, having decided which is our most pressing want, let us go about to supply it in earnest. Let us do what we have to do well, and we may be quite certain if we do one thing well it will help us to attain another. If we could use the magician's wand and help ourselves I doubt if we should be better off; and whether or not we should be happier I am satisfied and I hope you will all be satisfied to do our best each year to supply those wants, because I have that belief in the colony which persuades me that though we are only creeping now, we shall each year proceed with more rapid strides,—that we shall gather impetus as we go on. The foundation of our prosperity is laid, and the superstructure we must be content to raise stone by stone. Having got

our foot on one round of the ladder whereby we hope to attain greater eminence, we must make that the lever for raising ourselves to the next round, and so on until we reach the very top. But, Sir, I have a great deal to say tonight before I resume my seat, and I must not trespass on your patience by dwelling any longer on theoretical matters, however agreeable the theories may be. I will, therefore, now ask your attention to sober facts and figures, which it will be my endeavor to place before you in as simple a manner as possible. Sir, when I first considered how best to put forward the financial statement which it is my duty to submit to this House tonight, it was my desire to have taken a retrospect of the history of the colony during the past 10 years; but I thought afterwards that, inasmuch as it was within the power of every hon. member, by means of the Blue Books and other statistical information periodically placed on the Table of the House for the information of the Legislature, to trace that history with as much fidelity as I, with the same information at my command, could have done, and as hon. members are equally capable with myself of drawing their own conclusions from the facts and figures placed before them, I abandoned my original intention and deemed it better to confine myself to a review of the past year only, and having shown the exact financial condition of the colony at that time and during the present year, to indicate generally what the estimated expenditure for the coming year would be, and to give a general idea of how the money is proposed to be spent. The estimated revenue for the year 1873, the accounts of which I may say we only closed yesterday, was £109,487; the estimated expenditure for the same period was £108,542. Now, that is the starting point which I take, and I now propose to glance at the actual state of facts in connection with that year. And first of all, there was a balance in the Treasury on the 1st January, 1873, of £2,732. The total receipts that passed through the Treasurer's books throughout the year—I am not speaking only of the revenue now, but of all the receipts entered in the Treasury accounts throughout the year—amounted to £140,586, which sum, coupled with the balance in hand on the 1st January, gives £143,418. The total amount of payments, of all kinds, that passed through the Treasurer's books during the same period amounted to £119,751. Deducting the one sum from the other, it will be found that there was a balance on the 1st January this year, or, more properly speaking, on the 31st December last, of £23,567. Now, Sir, I estimate, as far as I am able to do so with the information at my command, that the revenue from all sources for

the year 1875 will amount to £132,829—a far larger sum than the estimated revenue of any previous year. If to that sum is added the balance available at the end of the year, £23,567, there will be a sum of £156,396 available for expenditure in the ensuing year, and I can only repeat that that amount is a larger sum than this Council has ever before been called to deal with from current funds. Before I sit down I shall cause to be placed in the hands of hon. members the Estimates for 1875, from which it will be seen that the proposals which I shall make to this House, and which I shall ask hon. members to agree to, will involve an estimated expenditure of £155,861 or a sum within £500 of the whole amount available for expenditure. Now, Sir, comes the question of, how is this large sum to be expended? I can assure the House that the consideration of the best way to lay it out for the general good has involved no small degree of patient labor and consideration on the part of those whose duty it has been to submit the propositions entrusted to me to lay before you tonight. It was not because there existed any difficulty in respect of spending the money; if we had 10 times the amount at our disposal than is now available we should experience no difficulty in spending it, and spending it in supplying those wants that the colony stands in need of. The difficulty was to decide which of these wants should be first supplied, and which would be most conducive to the general welfare of the colony; and however hon. members may approve or disapprove of the propositions which it is my duty tonight to submit to the House, I think they will, one and all, give the Government credit at all events for having given the matter full and careful consideration. I shall, at any rate, be able to give the House very good reasons why the Government was induced to give precedence to this or that project before another. But, before I enter further into these projects, there is one subject with reference to which I should like to say a few words, which may tend to pave the way to a consideration of other matters. It may be in the recollection of hon. members that one of the last things done in the general session of this Council last year was to affirm a resolution relating to the transfer of the Convict Department, with the view of strengthening His Excellency's hands in the negotiations pending between the Imperial and the Colonial Governments in the matter, regarding the transfer of that department into our hands. In accordance with that resolution His Excellency submitted a scheme for the consideration of the Home Government, which presented great advantages to the Home Government and to this colony, and as answer was only received by the mail that

came in a few days ago, I may say in general terms that the Imperial Government has not thought right to give up the entire control of the Convict Department, but that some very important changes are contemplated. It may also be borne in mind,—I know some hon. members are aware of it, and I think I hinted at the matter at the time—that very heavy demands had been made on this colony for the maintenance of a large number of prisoners who had hitherto been maintained out of Imperial funds—the rule proposed to be enforced here being the same as had been in operation in Tasmania under a similar system, namely, that all convicts who had received conditional pardons, or become free by servitude, if re-convicted after the expiration of one year from such date, became chargeable to colonial funds. I need not say that there are a great number of men who have been re-convicted within a period of very little beyond 12 months after their liberation, and that the maintenance of them involves a very large expenditure of money—a much larger sum than this colony could afford to pay. The annual cost of maintenance and supervision alone would be about £6,000 or £8,000. The question of the maintenance of this class has been persistently—I will not say fought, that is perhaps an improper term, but—argued over and over again by His Excellency the Governor, and I am glad to be able to say here tonight that His Excellency has at last succeeded in relieving the colony from that charge. It is contemplated now by the Imperial Government to confine the Convict Department to the Convict Prison at Fremantle, and arrangements are pending with the view of transferring to the colony the other portions of the department. Propositions will be submitted to the Secretary of State with a view to one general payment being made to the colony in respect of all services, outside Fremantle Prison, connected with the department; by this I mean the police, magistracy, clergy, and the Medical Department, so that, in fact, the Convict Department itself shall be confined entirely to the prison at Fremantle. Having been relieved from the claim for the payment of the large sum for the maintenance of the men to whom I have just alluded, I think hon. members agree with me in acknowledging the liberal spirit in which Lord Carnarvon is prepared to deal with his colony in respect of the same class of persons for the future, when I state that his lordship has relaxed the rule which obtained in Tasmania, and which has been in force here; and that with reference to the maintenance by the colonial Government of all prisoners re-convicted subsequent to 12 months after their liberation

no charge will be made till after the 1st April, 1875. From that date the term is to be extended to three years. The effect of this liberal concession,—and I am sure the House will agree with me in the propriety of that term,—will be that a convict, whose sentence expires in 1875, will not, even if re-convicted, become chargeable to colonial funds until the year 1878. By that year it may be presumed the number will have so dwindled down as to be of very little burden to the colony, and I look upon this arrangement on the part of the Imperial Government as almost a virtual abandonment of their claim. I repeat I am sure all will acknowledge the liberality of the noble lord at the head of the Colonial Office, Earl Carnarvon, and I also think you will agree with me when I say that much is due to Governor Weld for his persistent efforts on behalf of the colony with regard to this convict question,—efforts which at last have resulted in the abandonment of a very heavy claim upon the colony. I may also say that a portion of the cost of the families of convicts who may become burdens on public funds will be paid by the Imperial Government. Sir, it is not my intention tonight to enter into details in connection with the Estimates for 1875—hon. members will have an opportunity of obtaining all the information they wish on every item when we go into Committee upon them; I will simply content myself this evening by stating that I think the expenditure connected with all the general services throughout the colony may be fairly laid down at £100,000. This leaves a surplus revenue of £50,000 or £56,000, and it is in regard to that sum—which I shall designate the surplus revenue—that I intend to address this House tonight. And, first of all, I will turn to that question which I conceive is, at the present moment, most important—the want of labor. I am not this evening going to express any opinion that I may hold, or that the Government may hold, with reference to this question, because I conceive that the matter having been referred to a select committee of this House, it would be improper on my part to enter into debate on the subject; but when the time arrives for the consideration of the question by this Council I shall have an opportunity to express my opinions and no doubt every hon. member will likewise have much to say. Tonight I shall content myself by saying, that the Government are prepared to place a sum of £10,000 on next year's Estimates for immigration purposes and I think that sum will suffice to carry out, for the period of one year at any rate, any scheme of immigration which may be recommended by the select committee, or which this House

may recommend for adoption, after that very careful consideration which I am sure hon. members will give so important a question. Sir, the next subject is that of harbor improvements, and with respect to this question I am afraid I shall disappoint one hon. member at least—the hon. member for Swan; and possibly I may cause disappointment to other hon. members, when I state that nothing has been provided on the Estimates for this service. But I think I can give very good and very cogent reasons why this very important work is not provided for. In the first place, I do not think that anything could be accomplished in the way of really useful harbor improvements at anything like the sum we can afford to spend; and when we arrive at any decision as to the best plan for adoption, the carrying out of it must be a question for a separate loan. I have already laid on the table the correspondence on this subject between the engineers of the Victorian Government and our own Surveyor General; and as this question has also been referred to a select committee I will not enter any further into details. I have, however, one suggestion to offer, and I do so with the view of saving time, for I am sure that every hon. member is anxious that some practical solution of this all-important question should be arrived at with as little delay as possible—the Government, I can assure you is very anxious on this point. Should it be the desire of the select committee, and of this House, to induce one or more of the engineers of the Victorian Government to come over and make a personal examination of the locality of the proposed works, it is possible, they might be enabled to visit the colony at once and some delay would be obviated if the House arrived at a decision on the point before the departure of the next outgoing colonial mail. I need not say that before any financial measures with regard to such works can be initiated, we must in the first place decide upon some fixed plan, and we must then get the opinion of some competent authority as to the result of such an undertaking. We must know the approximate cost, and be able to afford every possible information concerning it. To do this, I think every hon. member will agree with me, we must obtain some more reliable and authoritative opinion than we can get here. It is impossible to overrate the importance to the colony of this question, and I can only echo the hope expressed by His Excellency in the opening Speech of this session, that the Council before it brings its deliberations to a close will arrive at some practical solution of the question. That done, then and not till then, will come the question of the amount to be

expended, the mode of raising it, and the extra taxation to be imposed, and I hold that it would be at the present moment premature to take those matters into consideration. Sir, I turn next to the question of railways, with regard to which I have already placed some information on the table in the shape of a report and plans of a railway from Fremantle to Perth, Perth to Guildford, Guildford to Newcastle, and from thence to York. These plans and reports are merely of a preliminary nature, but they render it apparent that a line of railway to the eastern districts, through Guildford and Toodyay to York, and constructed on the narrowest gauge almost practicable, with very light iron rails, without the purchase of a single acre of land, and without the erection of a single station, or providing for rolling-stock would involve an expenditure of £465,000, or nearly half a million of money. No doubt if the price of iron, which now runs very high, were reduced, there might be some considerable reduction in the amount of this estimate; but I do not speak wide of the mark when I say that a railway from Fremantle to York would cost £500,000; on the contrary, I believe I am far within the mark when I mention that sum. Let us just see for one moment what the borrowing of that amount would involve. We may borrow money at 5 per cent, and there will be an additional 2 per cent for a sinking-fund, which would make the interest on the borrowed sum £35,000. To this must be added something like 10 to 12 per cent for working expenses, making another £50,000 or £60,000; so that the borrowing of a sufficient sum to construct such a railway as I have referred to would, in interest and working expenses alone, absorb nearly the whole of the revenue of the colony. It is a question for this House to consider whether the construction of such a line and the contraction of such a loan would be justifiable in the present state of the colony. I may here again point out, as in the case of the harbor works, that nothing can be done in the matter until we, in the first place, decide upon the route of the proposed railway; we would in the next place have to make a practical survey of the line at a cost of £50 per mile before the line could be undertaken, and, lastly, I think,—indeed I am certain—that Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, with the statistics that would be placed before him—statistics relative not only to the probable cost, but likewise the traffic, in however glowing a form those statistics might be prepared—would not dream of sanctioning such a loan for such a purpose. But some may argue that it may so happen that changes will take place in the Constitution of this colony which would render it unnecessary to refer the

matter of a loan to the Home Government, and under those circumstances I at once reply that the cost of borrowing would be greater than it is at present. The very fact of the Imperial Government according its assent to the contraction of a loan by the colony, under its present Constitution, is a guarantee to capitalists that the work upon which it is proposed to expend the borrowed money is a work that has been carefully considered upon reliable data, and a work likely to prove reproductive. The fact that our loans are authorised by the Imperial Government is in itself a sort of pledge that, come what may the interest and principal of the debentures will be duly provided for. I need not say that the question of borrowing money in large sums for public works in regard to which the fullest information is not forthcoming is not so easy a matter as some people may think. It is true that at present we are enabled, with the sanction of the Home Government, to borrow at 5 per cent; but it is equally certain that, were we independent tomorrow, capitalists would think twice before entrusting their money to us till they had thoroughly satisfied themselves that the work on which their capital was to be employed was a reproductive work and one that the colony was justified in undertaking. I may, however, repeat that the Local Government fully recognises the importance of railway communication; and I believe changes will in due time take place which will enable us to undertake works of this magnitude, not perhaps altogether with money, but in part with what I may almost term the capital of the country—its land; that immense extent of unoccupied territory which might be utilised for that purpose, but which we at present are not empowered to deal with. For the reasons I have alluded to, the Government do not intend to place any sum on the Estimates for 1875 for undertaking anything in the shape of railways. Sir, I next come to the question of telegraphic communication, and on that question I am in a position to make more definite proposals for the consideration of the House; at all events I am not going to say that no provision for it is made on the Estimates which this evening will be placed in the hands of hon. members. It is not my intention tonight to expatiate on the benefit and the advantages which this colony would derive from being placed in instantaneous communication by means of the telegraph with the outside world, for I can hardly conceive there can be any difference of opinion on that point. I may, however, state that it is my intention to ask for a decision on this subject at a very early date, and on Monday night I will ask for a special vote of the House

for carrying out the project of uniting this colony with South Australia, and with the telegraph system of the world. On that occasion I hope to adduce such arguments in favor of the proposed undertaking as will induce hon. members to accord their support to the scheme. I will content myself tonight by placing on the Table of the House the correspondence that has taken place, relative to the proposal, between this Government and that of South Australia and Victoria. I shall also beg to lay on the table plans and specifications of the portion of the work proposed to be undertaken by this colony, namely, the construction of a line overland from Albany to Eucla. Whatever hon. members may think of the contemplated undertaking, I am sure they will readily recognize that public spirit of our South Australian neighbors which has induced them—believing as they evidently do in the future of this colony—to carry a line through 700 miles of their territory to meet us at Port Eucla. And I am equally sure all will as readily acknowledge the liberal spirit of the Victorian Government in promising to bring the question of a subsidy to our line before the Parliament of that colony. I may here state that one of the reasons why the Government ask for an early decision of this House in respect of this proposal is the fact that the Parliaments of both colonies are now in session and it is very desirable that the vote of this Council should be given before the departure of the outgoing mail. For that reason it is my intention, on Monday night, to resolve the House into a Committee of the whole to consider the matter. Some few years ago we missed a chance that was afforded this colony of joining in the construction of a line of telegraph to connect us with the outside world, but we were not then in a position to avail ourselves of the opportunity. We have now another afforded us, and if we let this opportunity slip by, we shall, in all probability, never get another. I am aware that it is the opinion of some hon. members that the proposed undertaking is a work that will not pay, and that it is beyond the means of this colony, and that, therefore, the House would not be justified in sanctioning it. But I think I can prove a very different state of facts and on Monday night I shall be prepared to show what I believe will be the result to this colony of the expenditure which the project would involve. I will show that the cost can be defrayed out of the current revenue of the colony, without borrowing a single sixpence for the purpose, and that the work can be completed within 18 months from the date of its commencement; or at all events, if undertaken without delay, it can be finished, and the line

be open by the middle of 1876. I do not of course propose to place the estimates of the work on the Table of the House, because once placed there they become open to public inspection, and as the undertaking will probably enough be tendered for by local contractors there are obvious reasons why the detailed estimates should not be published. I may, however, state that the total cost of the whole line, from Albany to Eucla, including the erection of stations on the route, and every conceivable expense of every nature, will be covered by £28,500; and I conceive that the expenditure of that sum on the proposed work would be one of the very best possible outlays the colony could make. Of course all this sum will not be required during the first year of the construction of the line, as the work will extend over a period of 18 months, or, possibly, two years. A sum of £15,000 is, therefore, only proposed to be placed on the Estimates for next year for this public undertaking; and I can only say, from my own knowledge, and from the way in which the revenue has kept up this year, that there will be no difficulty whatever—even if Victoria should not subsidise the line—in providing the remainder of the amount out of the surplus revenue of the current year. This amount, coupled with the previous sum devoted for immigration, will make £25,000, or nearly one half the surplus revenue available. A sum of £10,000 will have to be provided towards the payment of the existing loans, and that, of course, for many years to come, will be an annual charge upon the revenue of the colony. Then, it is proposed to spend a sum of £10,000 on public works, and plans of those several works will be placed before you. The first work to which I will allude relates to certain additions to the public offices, which are absolutely necessary. A Bill is now before the House, dealing with the registration of land, which, if adopted by the House, will necessitate the erection of buildings that will cost at least £2,000. It is also proposed to build a new police court, which, like the proposed Office of Titles, will be erected on land set apart for that purpose by the Government extending from the Main Guard House in Barrack Street and from thence to this Chamber, three sides of a square, to the spot on which the General Post Office now stands. Plans of these buildings will be laid on the table, and from them it will be seen that it is intended, in course of time, as the exigencies of the Public Service demand and the revenue will admit of, to erect, on one uniform plan, a line of public offices. At present, it is not intended to build more than absolutely necessary, and that includes the buildings I have alluded to. The present

police court, as suggested in the House last session, will be utilised for refreshment and committee rooms in connection with this Chamber. The total cost of the proposed new police court will not, I hope, exceed £500. I had hoped that these additions to this Chamber would have been completed by the present session but it was found to be impossible to get workmen to undertake it within the time. A sum of £2,000 is placed on the Estimates for the extension of various jetties throughout the colony. I am quite aware that to accomplish all that is necessary in this direction would require a much larger sum than that, but, as I said before, we must be content to get on gradually, and bit by bit; and the most important works must be taken in hand first. The survey made by the Admiralty surveyors shows the necessity—if we desire to make use of Garden Island as a shelter place for shipping during the winter months—of properly buoying the Challenger Passage, and also the entrance to Rockingham Harbor. It is estimated that about £400 to £500 will be required for this service. The necessity for some means of supplying water to the shipping at Fremantle, to which one of the hon. members for that town has referred this evening, is a matter that demands serious consideration, inasmuch as at present there are no means at all for supplying vessels with water, the old watering jetty having been destroyed during a severe gale, and the well in the pump-house having become dry. Plans will be placed before the House tonight, showing that, by the erection of a tank in the Convict Prison and laying down pipes leading therefrom to the jetty, an ample and never-failing supply of excellent water may be provided, and at a very moderate cost, calculated at about £500, which will repay itself in a very short time by the dues chargeable for water. There are also expenses in connection with the erection of certain public buildings required on the north-west coast, such as hospitals, police stations, &c., and another £500 will be placed on the Estimates for this purpose. The sums which I have enumerated amount in the aggregate to about £6,000. Then there comes one item of £4,000 which I know will be a source of much gratification to the hon. member for Greenough; and I must allude to this item at greater length than those I have just enumerated. I refer to the question of a lighthouse at Champion Bay—a work already provided for in the Loan Act of 1872. In alluding to this subject, I have on the part of the Government, to confess a grave error, inasmuch as I have to stand here tonight and admit that the work which was done has had to be undone, and to be commenced afresh,

and carried out on a different and larger and a more costly scale. For once, your slow and obstructive Government has been too quick and hasty, and it has learnt a lesson. The error committed was in commencing the work before the completion of the survey of the bay—a survey the results of which have shown what we did not fully understand before, though perhaps we should have done so. I can only express a hope—and in this, hon. members may possibly agree with me—that no graver error may be committed by this or any succeeding Government. It is not a very costly error, and the worst feature in it is the delay, the pecuniary loss is small, and hardly worth thinking seriously about. The Government, when it erected the lighthouse was under the impression that a third class light would have sufficed for the purpose, but it has subsequently been found that a higher class light, will be requisite; the third class light, however, that was procured is urgently required, and will be available for another lighthouse. We are now informed by the Admiralty surveyor, not only that the tower was erected in a wrong position, but that a second class light will be required which, of course, will be more expensive than a third class light. The quarters erected for the lighthouse keeper will be available for public offices, or may be disposed of for the full value. The sole pecuniary loss arising out of the error will be the cost of the light tower, which was built at an expense of about £400; but arrangements have been made by which the stone work of which it was constructed can be utilised for other buildings, at a saving of about £100 as also the doors, frames, &c., so that the money loss will not exceed £300. The truth of the old adage "the more haste the less speed" has been realised, and not only the Government, but hon. members may learn a lesson—to look before we leap into expenditure in connection with harbor improvements and railways before obtaining that reliable and full information so necessary before one expends borrowed capital. On this question also—the question of a lighthouse for Champion Bay—I shall ask for a special vote on Monday night, in order that we may send home by the next mail for the necessary articles without further delay. Sir, I have enumerated, altogether, works that will absorb about £45,000 out of the £50,000 or £55,000 available surplus; but I have still some further matters to refer to, which I, however, will do very shortly. First comes the question of continuing the services of the Admiralty surveyor on our coast. Provisions for this service were made on the Estimates for 1872, to extend over a period of two years, and the

sum voted will be exhausted at the end of this year. As, however, it will be necessary for these surveys to be extended—and all will acknowledge their utility—it will be essential that we provide our moiety of the cost, which is altogether calculated at £3,000. One half of that sum, however, is defrayed by the Imperial Government, so that only £1,500 will be placed on next year's Estimates for this service. I have here in possession numerous memorials from various purposes, such as jetties, roads, and bridges. In regard to roads one district alone makes the modest demand of £2,500, and, of course, if this were acceded to every other district would make a corresponding application, and I am afraid all the available revenue would be thus expended if the prayers of all the memorialists were granted. There is one application, however, for a road to be made in a new district which I think should receive the serious consideration of the House. We are all sorry, I am sure, that we have no member actually representing the north-west district, but applications have been received from the inhabitants of that distant settlement, and here is a memorial setting forth the enormous expense entailed for want of means of communication between Port Cossack and the town of Roebourne. The prayer of the memorialists is that the sum of £2,000 may be voted for constructing a road through a marsh separating those two places; and it will be my duty to ask you for a vote of £1,000 for that purpose. I will not now enter into details with reference to this proposed undertaking which like every other proposal will be thoroughly discussed in Committee. There is also the cost of manning and provisioning, and the payment for the officers of the Revenue and Police cutter ordered to be built, during the last session, and now in course of construction. This will involve an outlay of about £700. There are also considerable increases in connection with the postal and mail services which will have to be provided for. The postal service under the new contract will cost considerably more than was contemplated, and placed on the Estimates for that purpose; and the extension of the telegraph must of course necessitate increased expenditure. So that a very considerable sum in excess of last year will be required for these two departments, and I shall have to ask—and I am sure hon. members will admit the necessity for an increased vote—for a sum of no less than £1,700. There is another department—the Harbor Master's—in connection with which increased expenditure will be occasioned by the necessity of purchasing a new buoy boat, to replace that in use the last 10 years; and the

question of increased wages to the men employed in the boats. The increase of seamen's pay here and elsewhere has been so great that it is found impossible to man the boats of this department with an effective class of men without an increase of wages. This will necessitate altogether a further sum of about £500. Then in connection with the Police Department, more especially on the north-west coast, an additional expenditure of about £1,000 will have to be provided. With respect to roads, the same sum as last year will be placed on the Estimates for 1875, with the addition of £1,000 for the purpose of forming the road already alluded to between Cossack and Roebourne, and a sum of £150 will be asked for a service for the performance of which I shall now place a tender on the table—making a road and sinking wells between the Murchison and Shark's Bay, without which communication between these two places will be stopped during certain seasons of the year. This work, when performed, will enable a monthly mail to be carried between the Murchison and Shark's Bay. Of course, when we come to a consideration of the Estimates, there are several small matters which it will be found necessary to provide for but to which I need not now allude. There is, however, one other subject involving a small additional cost, to which I may direct the attention of the House in connection with the Department of Public Works. It must be apparent to every hon. member that the many works of importance which it is contemplated to undertake throughout the colony will require more supervision than can be given by one Clerk of Works, and perhaps the most desirable thing to do would be to institute a Department of Works, and to engage at its head some first-class engineer. But that proposal would involve very considerable expense, because a really useful man who thoroughly understood his work could not be got for anything like the salary which we could afford to pay at the present time; and with that wholesome horror which the Government has of increasing departmental expenditure—a feeling in which I am satisfied every hon. member will agree,—it is not proposed to do this. But late events have shown, and indeed it is being demonstrated every day, that it is necessary that all correspondence with reference to public works should centre in one office, under one responsible head, so that mistakes may not in future occur. In considering this question, I may say that the attention of the Governor was called to the report of the select committee of last year on departmental expenditure, one of the numerous recommendations embodied in that report being to the

effect that whenever any vacancies occurred in the Works Department the whole department should be transferred to the Survey Department, and that the head of the united departments should be styled Commissioner of Lands and Works. Following out that suggestion, it will be my duty to submit for the consideration of the House a proposition, which is made with the entire concurrence of the gentleman who now presides over the Survey Department, namely, to place the Public Works department under his sole charge, and to style him in the future Commissioner of Lands and Works. It is proposed to give him such actual clerical assistance as the exigencies of the service may render necessary, and also to provide such a sum on the Estimates as may be essential for professional supervision of public works, until some further arrangement can be made. I think the hon. members of this House will recognize that it would be hardly fair to saddle an officer with such heavy additional duties and such grave responsibility, without giving him some remuneration for the same, and you will be asked to vote an additional sum of £100 to the commissioner to cover all costs in connection with those duties. Sir, I think I have now shown the House how it is proposed to expend what I have called the surplus revenue of £50,000 which is at our command, and before I resume my seat I will recapitulate the various proposals which I have submitted for the consideration of the House:—immigration, £10,000; telegraph extension, £15,000; interest on Public Loan, £10,000; public works, £10,000; and miscellaneous services (as enumerated), £7,500; making altogether a sum of £52,500. The Estimates will be placed in the hands of hon. members at once, and, that I may not sit down after so long a speech without making some motion, I shall now, Sir, merely in order to place myself in order, and only as a matter of form, move the first item on the Estimates.

Mr. STEERE moved that the House resume, and the Committee obtain leave to sit again.

Progress reported, and leave obtained to sit again.

The Council adjourned at 7.30 p.m.
