

present Bill, the provisions of which could only be availed of by the public under professional advice. The object of the Bill was to enable the Supreme Court to authorise a tenant for life to make a sale, or grant a lease for twenty-one years at a rack rent.

Bill read a second time, and passed through committee without discussion or amendment.

The House adjourned at 9 o'clock, p.m.

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

*Wednesday, 8th August, 1877.*

Vesting certain powers in Officers of Customs Bill: first reading—Elementary Education Act, 1871, Amendment Bill, 1877: first reading—Paper—Third Readings—Scab in Sheep Ordinance, 1866, Amendment Bill, 1877: second reading; in committee.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 7 p.m.

PRAYERS.

### VESTING CERTAIN POWERS IN OFFICERS OF CUSTOMS BILL.

This Bill was brought in and read a first time.

### ELEMENTARY EDUCATION ACT, 1871, AMENDMENT BILL, 1877.

Read a first time.

### PAPER.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) laid on the Table a Report from the Inspector of Schools having reference to the working of the Education Act.

### THIRD READINGS.

The following Bills were read a third time and passed:—Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act, 1872, Amendment Bill, 1877; Sale and Leasing of Settled Estates Bill.

### SCAB IN SHEEP ORDINANCE, 1866, AMENDMENT BILL, 1877.

MR. STEERE moved the second reading of this Bill, without comment.

Motion agreed to, and the Bill committed, and reported to the House, without discussion.

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

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

*Thursday, 9th August, 1877.*

Absconding Debtors' Act, Repeal Bill: first reading—Estimates: in committee.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

### ABSCONDING DEBTORS' ACT REPEAL BILL.

MR. BURT, in accordance with notice, moved for leave to bring in a Bill to repeal an Act intitled "An Act to facilitate the arrest of Absconding Debtors."

Leave given; bill brought in, and read first time.

### ESTIMATES.

The Order of the Day for the consideration of the Estimates in committee of the whole Council being read,

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) moved, That the Speaker do now leave the Chair.

MR. BROWN moved, as an amendment, "That this House will resolve itself into the said committee when the Government are prepared to authorise the commencement of the Railway to connect the Eastern Districts with the port of Fremantle." The hon. member said the House was aware that pressure had been brought to bear upon the

Government for some time past to induce them to give their sanction to the commencement of this important and necessary undertaking, and he believed he was correct in his impression that the House was exceedingly disappointed to find, on assembling this session, that the Government were not prepared to authorise the undertaking. Since the House had met, hon. members were aware that, on the motion of the hon. member for Wellington, a resolution had been introduced and adopted requesting the Governor to bring in a loan Bill for the construction of a portion of the line, and that they were informed by message that His Excellency must at present decline to introduce such a Bill. It was understood that the reason why His Excellency had refused to give effect to the resolution of the House was that no time would be lost by postponing the introduction of a loan Bill, although it must be apparent that unless such a Bill were passed this session the House would have to be specially summoned for the purpose at a later period. He thought the Government should have sufficient regard for the convenience of hon. members,—some of whom attended the Council from remote country districts, at a considerable sacrifice of time and money—not to call them together when there was no absolute necessity for so doing. With respect to this proposed railway, he saw no necessity whatever why the House should be summoned together for the special purpose of passing a loan Bill for its construction, when such a Bill might be passed at the present session. His Excellency would not necessarily be bound to give his assent to the Bill at present—indeed the House could not expect him to do so. But the House did consider—he himself, at any rate, considered—there was no cause whatever why the Bill should not be passed this session, instead of the House being specially summoned for the purpose a few months hence. The Government might say there were other matters which would necessitate the Council being called together at an early date, but surely if such were the case there was no need for any secrecy and mystery between the Government and the Legislative Council. He would not object to the delay were it shown that it

was really necessary, but he did think the Government should not require hon. members to leave their homes to attend the Council when there was no necessity for it. There was another thing to be considered in connection with this matter,—it might be just possible there was not the slightest intention in the world on the part of the Government to call hon. members together, until the usual time of the House meeting next year; so that, unless the railway loan Bill were passed this session, another twelve months would be thrown away before this very necessary work could be undertaken. If the Government were not prepared to go on with the work, he thought the House should withhold the supplies for next year, by refusing to vote the Estimates until they were assured of the intention of the Government to proceed with the railway, within a reasonable time. If the House had to be summoned again for the purpose of passing a loan Bill, the probability was that this would be some time before the end of the year, when an opportunity would be then afforded to vote the necessary supplies for 1878. He therefore saw no reason why the consideration of the Estimates should not be deferred until the House met again. If the Government had no intention of calling hon. members together at an early date for the purpose of passing a railway loan Bill, then he thought the Council should refuse to vote the supplies to the present Executive. He did not know what amount of support he was likely to get in this proposal; he was aware there existed a general desire on the part of hon. members to work amicably and harmoniously with the Government. Those who were opposed to the existing constitution, and those who were in favor thereof, were equally desirous that no undue pressure should be brought to bear upon the Government in this matter, preferring again to place faith in the good intentions of the head of the Executive, and relying upon his doing all he can to expedite the work, without the House having resort to what might be regarded as extreme steps in postponing the consideration of the Estimates. And, as he had already said, he did not know what amount of support he would have in recommending the

adoption of such steps, but, as he could not get a more influential member of the House to do so, he had taken upon himself the responsibility of moving the amendment which stood in his name.

MR. HAMERSLEY seconded the amendment. He trusted that every independent member in the House would give it his support. A very strong feeling existed in favor of the immediate commencement of this railway, and he thought the Government ought to be very pleased indeed that an opportunity had been given them to show the House and the country that they were in earnest in this matter. The project had been talked about for a long time, but they were no nearer attaining the end in view now than they were two years ago. It appeared to him that by adopting the steps contemplated in the amendment the House would be pursuing a proper course to bring the matter to an early settlement.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) regarded the proposition to postpone the consideration of the Estimates until the Government authorised the commencement of the proposed railway as a most unreasonable suggestion. One would suppose the Government had declared they were opposed to the work being undertaken, and had expressed a strong feeling of aversion to the proposed railway, whereas, in point of fact, as every hon. member must be aware, the Government had manifested every anxiety to have the work carried out as soon as practicable. But reasons—and very good and sufficient reasons—had been given why no further steps could be taken in the matter pending the receipt of certain despatches expected by the Government from the Secretary of State. It appeared to him that the hon. member who had submitted the amendment before the House was desirous that the Government should rush headlong and without due consideration into this large expenditure. It was not with a view to postpone the commencement of the work that the Government had not introduced a loan Bill, but in order to be in a better position to bring the whole matter in a complete and proper form before the House. It appeared to him that the amendment had been brought

forward in the way of pressure upon the Government, and he regarded it as an extreme proposition, and one which he had been astonished to hear the hon. member propose. He hoped the House would regard the position taken up by the Government calmly and dispassionately; they would then see that the action taken by His Excellency in the matter was a very wise and proper course to adopt. There was no disposition on the part of the Government to postpone a work which they regarded as desirable and necessary; on the contrary, they were very anxious that no needless delay should take place, and they were doing all within their power to expedite the matter. Nothing, however, would be gained by rash or precipitant action, and, as His Excellency had clearly shown, the passing of a loan Bill this session would in no way advance the cause they all had at heart. He hoped the amendment, which could serve no good purpose and must retard the business of the House, would find no support.

MR. STEERE said that, looking at the object which the hon. member for Geraldton had in view, namely the early commencement of the proposed line of railway, he regretted he could not support the amendment. He did not, however, think that the adoption of the course suggested by the hon. member would expedite the matter, for it was very clear the line could not be commenced, pending the sanction of the Secretary of State being received. And he ventured to say, that that official would require to be furnished with still further information than had already been furnished him; so that possibly the Council would not have to be called together earlier than usual on account of this railway question. He thought it would be very inconvenient that hon. members should be called together in a month or two again for the mere purpose of passing the Estimates, when there might possibly be no other question for their consideration. Should the Secretary of State, however, without further delay, assent to the undertaking of the railway, he did not think hon. members would complain at being called together to pass the necessary Bill for the construction of the line. He had had private conversations with the

Governor on the subject, and His Excellency was very desirous that the railway should be commenced without any unnecessary delay; but, for reasons which had been conveyed to the House by message, His Excellency had been unable to approve of the introduction of a loan Bill this session. If the commencement of the work rested with the local Government, he would be prepared to support the amendment; but seeing that the matter rested with the Secretary of State, and not with the Executive here, he did not think the House would be justified in adopting the course contemplated in the amendment of the hon. member for Geraldton.

No other hon. member rising, the amendment was then put, and negatived on the voices.

#### IN COMMITTEE.

MR. PADBURY rose to make an observation or two upon the Speech with which His Excellency had opened the session, and upon the Colonial Secretary's budget speech, with reference to the large importations of breadstuffs during the last eighteen months, and the cause that induced it. He thought the hon. gentleman was rather astray in this matter. Everyone who knew the circumstances of this Colony and the circumstances of the other colonies must be well aware that it is folly for us to attempt to compete with them in growing corn as cheap as they can grow it. What had they (the farmers) in South Australia? Railways to their barn doors. In New South Wales, again, and in Queensland, they had steamers running into the very centre of their agricultural districts. It was well known that flour was brought cheaper from Adelaide to Fremantle than from Champion Bay or the Irwin, although Adelaide was over a thousand miles away and Champion Bay only three hundred. He had asked a farmer in South Australia what he paid for the delivery of his corn at Adelaide, and the reply was 3d. a bushel. Here it would cost a half-a-crown a bushel to convey it the same distance. The Government seemed to think it was the sandalwood trade that caused the farmers here to pay so little attention to the cultivation of their land, and hence

the necessity for the large importations of breadstuffs from South Australia. No doubt the sandalwood trade had had something to do with it. Probably the first cause was the prevalence of red rust among the crops from 1868 almost to the present day; but the greatest cause of all was the fact that if our farmers grew wheat they never knew what they would get for it. The hon. gentleman opposite (the Acting Colonial Secretary) had recommended each hon. member on his return home to recommend the farmers in their respective districts to pay more attention to the growing of wheat. What would his constituents say to him were he to give any such advice? That they knew better. Freetraders were beginning to see now that, with all their free trade policy, they had not produced cheap flour, nor benefited the Colony in any way. It was the habit of freetraders to point to the colony of Victoria as rushing headlong into ruin, with her protection policy. What did they see there? Thousands of people employed in manufactories, and a million surplus revenue this year. There was their protective policy!

*H. E. the Governor*, Item £263 16s. 8d.:  
Agreed to.

*Legislative Council*, Item £600:

Item "Cleaning, Lighting, &c., £25":

MR. SHENTON did not think this sum was sufficient to provide for the cleaning and lighting of the Council Chamber.

MR. STEERE thought some slight increase was required in this vote towards looking after the refreshment room during the recess, to see that the cutlery, etc., did not deteriorate from any cause.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) said a further sum of £20 would be added to the vote, in accordance with the wishes of hon. members.

Question—That the item be increased from £25 to £45—put and passed.

The vote for the Legislative Council, as amended, was then agreed to.

*Colonial Secretary*, Item £951:

MR. STEERE asked for some explanation why the vote in connection with this department had been reduced from £1,213 in 1877 to £951 for 1878.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) said

hon. members were aware why the first item on the list—£100 for Colonial Secretary—would not be required next year. One second class clerk, at a salary of £200 had to be employed in the department last year, in consequence of the temporary transfer of the Chief Clerk to the Treasury; but, as soon as the new Colonial Secretary arrived the chief clerk would return to his own department, and the second class clerk employed there in his absence would be no longer required.

The vote was then passed.

*Treasury, Item £580:*

Item "One First Class Clerk and Accountant, £300:"

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) explained why this item was increased from £250 to £300. The officer in question was well known to every hon. member, as was also the efficiency with which he had for many years discharged the duties of Chief Clerk in connection with the Treasury. He had been employed in that office since 1853—nearly twenty-five years' service: and, latterly, not only had he discharged the duties of Chief Clerk, but also the responsible duties of Accountant. The proposed increase to his salary was not regarded as an increase of pay as a First Class Clerk, but in recognition of his long services and his duties as Accountant. The Government would leave the matter entirely in the hands of the House.

MR. SHENTON did not rise in any way to oppose the increase; on the contrary, he was very glad to find that the Government had at last seen their way clear to reward this officer for his lengthened period of service. But he thought it should be thoroughly understood that this was a special case, and that on the retirement of the present chief clerk his successor should not be entitled to this increase of pay.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy): Certainly not. When the present officer retires the salary attaching to the office will revert to the former amount.

MR. STEERE thought the present occupant of the office fully deserved the proposed increase; but the contemplated increase clearly proved that the classification system of the public service was a perfect farce, and he thought the sooner

the better it were done away with, for it acted very injuriously in many instances to the public service.

MR. BURT would be very sorry indeed if hon. members ran away with the idea that either the Government or the House had acted in a very magnanimous spirit in increasing the salary of the Chief Clerk at the Treasury. Some years ago, on the first occasion of his (Mr. Burt) appearing in the House he had proposed such an increase, and although the House and the Government acknowledged the justice of the proposal, three or four years had elapsed before practical effect had been given to it. Now that the officer in question was about to resign, the Government came forward magnanimously with a proposal to increase his salary.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) said he was not aware that the officer in question was about to retire; on the contrary, he hoped he would remain in the Treasury for many years to come.

The item was then agreed to, and the vote for the Treasury passed.

*Surveyor General, Item £7,555:*

Item "Contingencies, £5,000:"

MR. BURGESS moved that this sum be increased to £6,000.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES: No item comprised in a vote can be increased except by an address to the Governor.

MR. BURGESS: Then I move, That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to increase this vote from £5,000 to £6,000. My object in doing so is, that of the sum of £5,000 for contract surveying, labor, and incidental expenses, no less than £1,130 goes to the payment of draftsmen and clerks employed in the Survey Office, who are at present paid out of this contingency vote. This will leave less than £4,000 to be expended on surveys throughout the Colony, a sum which in my opinion is nothing like sufficient. There is a large extent of territory to be surveyed in the Murchison District, in consequence of the extension of settlement, and, unless it is carried out, there will be no end of disputes arising between the settlers. In the same way at Nicol Bay, to say nothing of the surveys required in other parts of the Colony.

Motion postponed.

Item "One Third Class Clerk, £120:"

MR. STEERE asked why it was proposed to deviate, in the case of this clerk, from the usual rate of annual increase, namely £10. This year his salary was £100, and he was set down next year for £120. If any new system of increase had been introduced by the Government, he thought the Legislative Council should have been consulted in the matter. He would move that the sum "£120" be struck out and the sum "£110" be inserted in lieu thereof.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) said it sometimes happened that an officer who was entitled to the usual increase of £10 a year was occasionally promoted to a higher class.

MR. STEERE did not see why any officer elevated to a higher grade should, in addition to the increased salary attached to that higher grade, also receive the regulation £10 increase. It was never intended, under the classification system, that this should be so.

MR. BURT said it appeared to him the Government had taken upon themselves to alter the system of classification—they were, in fact, doing away with the system altogether. He considered that the salary attaching to any office should be given to any clerk appointed to it—if capable of discharging the duties appertaining thereto—no matter to what class in the service he belonged.

MR. CROWTHER said it was clear the Government had departed from the system of classification approved by the House.

MR. SHENTON considered that this was clearly an infringement of the privileges of the House.

MR. BROWN thought the Estimates had been framed in strict accordance with the minute published by Governor Robinson subsequent to the adoption of the classification system, interpreting some of the regulations approved by the House in Governor Weld's time. That was his present impression.

MR. STEERE did not see why the House should accept Governor Robinson's interpretation upon the classification regulations adopted during Governor Weld's administration. He did not think Governor Robinson himself ever contemplated that a clerk on his pro-

motion to a higher grade should, in addition to the higher salary attached to that higher position, also receive the usual £10 a year increase. Such a practice, it appeared to him, was most unjust towards the taxpayers. In a merchant's office, a clerk promoted to a higher position did not immediately on attaining that position receive the same salary as his predecessor, who may have held it for a long period.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) pointed out that in reality there was no increase in the sum voted on the Estimates. The case was simply this: one of the clerks on the classified list had been removed by promotion, and consequently the clerk next on the list became entitled to a step upwards, and to receive the salary belonging to his position, each of the clerks following on the list going up a step, leaving a vacancy at the bottom, which was filled by a clerk coming in at the lowest rate of salary. It was no violation of the principle on which the classification system was based; it was never intended that a clerk should not have the advantage of a step higher where opportunity offered. If the Council refused to allow such, it deprived the classified clerks of that promotion which the Government considered they were justly entitled to, and which did not increase the expenditure. Take away such hope of promotion and immediately they would blight the service.

Question put—"That the sum proposed to be struck out be struck out." A division being called for there appeared

Ayes	...	...	13
Noes	...	...	7
			—
Majority for	...	...	6

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Burt	The Hon. M. Fraser
Mr. Hardey	The Hon. H. H. Hocking
Mr. Pearce	Mr. Glyde
Mr. Marnion	Mr. Parker
Mr. Monger	Mr. Burges
Mr. Shenton	Mr. Brown
Sir L. S. Leake	The Hon. A. O'G. Lefroy
Mr. Gale	(Teller.)
Mr. Crowther	
Mr. Randell	
Mr. Hamersley	
Mr. Padbury	
Mr. Steere (Teller.)	

The question was therefore carried.

Question—That the sum £110 be inserted in lieu thereof—put and passed.

Question—That Surveyor General, Item £7545, stand part of the Estimates—put and passed.

*Office of Works, Item £5740 10s. read:*  
Item "Director of Public Works, £500."

MR. STEERE said he understood that owing to some misunderstanding between the Government and the Director of Public Works, the Colony was likely to be deprived of the services of that officer. He hoped this would not be the case, for the Colony could ill spare those services, and would find some difficulty in replacing the officer in question at the same salary. He was informed that Mr. Thomas came here on the understanding that his salary should be £600 a year, and that his travelling allowances should be paid. He (Mr. Steere) did not think this too much for an officer holding the position of Director of Public Works, especially when the office was so efficiently filled as it was by the gentleman now holding it.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) said it was true there was some misunderstanding between the Government and the Director of Public Works as to that officer's salary, more particularly with regard to his travelling allowance. Mr. Thomas maintained that the amount given him for travelling allowance (£150) should, by right, be added to his present salary (£500), and that the expenses he incurred while travelling on public service should be defrayed out of public expense. The Government had not felt justified in admitting this claim.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) failed to see how the Director of Public Works could have labored under the misapprehension that his travelling allowance should form an integral part of his salary. When allowances were given in addition to an officer's salary they were supposed to involve some expenditure and outlay on the part of the officer receiving the allowance. He quite agreed, however, as to the desirability of retaining the services of efficient officers.

MR. BROWN did not think that £600 was too high a salary for an officer

possessing the attainments and ability of the Director of Public Works. He understood that the reason that officer had not visited Geraldton more frequently than he had, for the purpose of inspecting the railway, was that his travelling allowance did not suffice to cover his expenses. Had he not been limited to a certain allowance for travelling, and been free to visit the district when his presence was required, the Colony would have saved many hundreds of pounds.

MR. SHENTON expressed himself in favor of a fixed salary, in lieu of supplementing an officer's income by travelling allowances, which, in many cases, were not expended, and in reality became a source of profit to the officer who received the allowance.

MR. CROWTHER thought the Government would do well to compromise the dispute which appeared to have arisen between it and the Director of Public Works. The fact of that gentleman's travelling allowance being limited to a fixed sum had prevented him travelling about as he would otherwise have done, and, so far as the Geraldton railway was concerned, the Colony was the greatest sufferer by this parsimony.

MR. STEERE said he would make no definite motion, but he hoped the Colonial Secretary would communicate with the Governor and acquaint His Excellency of the feeling of the House in the matter.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) said he would do so. What he understood the feeling of the House to be was, that the Director of Public Works should receive a fixed salary of £600 per annum, and that his travelling expenses should be paid when on public service.

MR. CROWTHER thought the Public Works' Department ought to be represented in the House by some member of the Executive.

The subject then dropped.

MR. STEERE—alluding to the sums proposed on the Estimates in connection with the working of the Geraldton and Northampton Railway—said he considered the amounts proposed most excessive. They were as follows: one traffic manager and station master, £250; one inspector of permanent ways and

works, £230; one locomotive foreman, £230; one station master, £200; one third class clerk, £90; one clerk and store-keeper, £150; locomotive and traffic expenses, wages of porters, guard, workmen, stores and incidental expenses, £3000." In view of the inevitable reduction which must soon take place in the Police Department, he hoped the Government, in making these appointments, would give them to deserving superannuated police officers. Regard being had to the excessive salaries proposed, and to the fact that the railway was not likely to be opened for several months to come, he would move that this item (£4150) be reduced to £1950. He protested against such a preposterous expenditure, and there would be no breach of faith on his part—if the Government exceeded the sum voted by the House—if he should, as he certainly would, next session, refuse to sanction the excess, and cut down the salaries in accordance with the vote of the House.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) said the figures on the Estimates had been furnished to him by the Director of Public Works.

MR. STEERE said he saw no necessity for making provision for more than six months' supply in connection with the railway department, for it was very evident that the services of the proposed officers would not be required for many months yet.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) was of opinion that the services of these officials would be required sooner than the hon. member for Wellington imagined, and surely the House would not have the event postponed because no provision had been made on the Estimates for the payment of salaries. If the Director of Public Works was wrong in his estimate, and the railway was not opened, the vote, of course, would not be expended. He (the Acting Colonial Secretary) was not in a position to say what was sufficient salary for these men, but was guided entirely by the estimate given him by the Director of Public Works. If the Government could obtain the services of efficient officers at a lower rate, the House might depend that the amounts placed on the Estimates

would not be expended simply because they appeared there. The Government would be only too glad to avail themselves of the services of superannuated constables, if they were fit for the discharge of the duties connected with the railway.

MR. STEERE: Previous to this vote being expended, it is clear that the Council will meet again; and if we are to keep voting these sums every year, and they are not expended—or, rather not expended on the service for which they are voted,—it leads to a wasteful expenditure, in my opinion, of public money.

MR. MARMION said he would support the amendment of the hon. member for Wellington, in the belief that it was quite unnecessary to make such a provision for the payment of the railway officials as was contemplated by the Government. As to the rates of salaries proposed, the moment he saw them he thought they were excessively high. He did not know much about the matter, but, from what traffic they anticipated on this line, he thought there would be competent officers in the Colony to discharge the duties at a much lower salary than was here proposed. He further agreed with the hon. member for Wellington that it was a very bad system this of providing sums of money, one-half of which was not likely to be required.

MR. RANDELL said he also would support the amendment. No doubt the Government manifested a very proper desire to find the ways and means, but he thought it was within the province of the House to form an opinion on the subject. The Director of Public Works had no doubt formed his estimate from the scale in operation in other parts of the world; but whatever might be the rates of salaries paid in other countries, that did not affect us at all. It behoved the Government to exercise the utmost economy in connection with this line. Another reason why he opposed the vote was that he understood it was not likely the railway would be opened before July, 1878.

MR. BURGESS said he also had been struck with the excessive amounts provided in the Estimates, but he could not agree that the services of the officials



provided for would not be required for another year. The House would bear in mind the motion in favor of opening a portion of the line as soon as ready for traffic—a motion which he trusted would be submitted again for the affirmation of the House in the course of the session.

MR. BROWN: If the Government were bound to expend this vote simply because it is placed on the Estimates, I should certainly support the motion of of the hon. member for Wellington, for I am sure the sums here put down will not be required. But it is the duty of the Government to see that not a penny more than actually required shall be expended, and to be responsible to the House for such expenditure. It is difficult to say what amount may be required, and, for that reason, I think it would be wise to let the vote stand as it is. The Director of Public Works is surely an officer who would not recommend the country to expend large salaries where smaller ones would do. His experience in other colonies ought to be of some assistance to him in forming an opinion of what is required here. I hope the House will not reduce the vote, and place the Government in a position to say—they might do so: they set up their backs sometimes—"Well, you have made no provision for the working of the line, and therefore we cannot open it."

MR. CROWTHER said the proposed salaries appeared to him to be excessive. If the House did not meet again until August, and the line opened in July, no hon. member would think of blaming the Government for providing the necessary staff, although no provision was made on the Estimates for the payment of their salaries. He would respectfully suggest that the Government should reconsider this matter, before making any of these appointments. No doubt there were officers in the Colony fully capable of discharging the duties which would devolve on the men employed on the line.

MR. BURGESS: Either fix the salaries, or let the Estimates remain as they are.

Item "One Traffic Manager and Station Master, £250."

MR. STEERE moved, That the sum "£250" be struck out.

Question—put and passed.

MR. STEERE moved, That the sum "£125" be inserted in lieu thereof.

MR. RANDELL moved, as an amendment to the proposed amendment, That the sum "£100" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed.

Item "One Inspector of Permanent Ways and Works, £230."

MR. STEERE moved, That the sum "£230" be struck out, and that the sum "£75" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Agreed to.

Item "One Locomotive Foreman, £230."

MR. STEERE moved, That the sum "£230" be struck out, and that the sum "£100" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Agreed to.

Item "One Station Master, £200."

MR. STEERE moved, That the sum "£200" be struck out, and that the sum "£75" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed.

Item "One Third Class Clerk, £90."

MR. MARMION moved, That the words "Third Class" be struck out.

Motion adopted.

MR. STEERE moved, That the sum "£90" be struck out, and the sum "£40" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Agreed to.

Item "One Clerk and Storekeeper, £150."

MR. STEERE moved, That the sum "£150" be struck out, and that the sum "£60" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question—put and passed.

Item "Locomotive and Traffic expenses, wages of Porters, Guards, Workmen, Stores and Incidental expenses, £3000."

MR. STEERE moved, that the sum "£3000" be struck out, and that the sum "£1500" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Agreed to.

Question—That Office of Works, Item £3540 10s., stand part of the Estimates—put and passed.

*Auditor General*, Item £840 read:

Question—put and passed.

*Land Titles Office*, Item £850 read:

Question—put and passed.

*Registry Office (Deeds, Brands, Births, &c.)* Item £230 read:

Question—put and passed.

*Customs Department*, Item £3401 read:

Item "One Third Class Clerk, £150."

MR. HAMERSLEY asked why there was an increase here of £20 in the salary of this officer?

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy): Because of promotion, as I have already explained.

MR. HAMERSLEY moved "That the sum "£150" be struck out, and the sum "£140" be inserted in lieu thereof."

Agreed to.

Item: "Contingencies (for Revenue and Police Vessel, on the N. W. Coast), £426":

MR. MARMION considered this item excessively high, and thought it might be reduced by about £10 a month. He would therefore move that the sum "£300" be substituted for the sum of "£426." The former amount would be quite ample to cover the necessary expense connected with such a small vessel, and such a small crew.

MR. RANDELL asked if there was any real necessity to maintain this vessel on the N. W. Coast at all?

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. Grady Lefroy) said the cutter on N. W. Coast was the only protection which the Government could now offer to the officers placed on the Lacedpede Islands, who were very badly off for water at times. The vessel was about to visit the islands to make a survey and an examination of the coast, with a view of ascertaining, whether there were any more islands having deposits of guano. With regard to the sum placed on the Estimates under the head of "Contingencies,"—as he had said before—if the whole amount should not be wanted it would not be expended. Did the House propose to maintain the schooner, and not provide the officers and crew with the necessary means of subsistence? If hon. members chose to reduce the amount, of course it was quite competent for them to do so; but, so far as past experience went, the sum placed on the Estimates would not be more than what was required.

MR. MARMION then withdrew his amendment, but at the same time said he still entertained the opinion that the amount was excessive.

The vote for the Customs Department was then agreed to.

*Postal and Telegraph Department, Item £21151 10s. read:*

Item "Forage for Inspector of Telegraphs, £50."

MR. RANDELL moved, That the word "Inspector" be struck out, and that the word "Superintendent" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Agreed to.

Question—That Postal and Telegraph, Item £21151 10s., stand part of the Estimates—put and passed.

Progress reported.

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

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

*Friday, 10th August, 1877.*

Dongarra Jetty and Coal Seam on the Upper Irwin: communication from the Governor in reply to addresses relative thereto—First reading—Vesting Certain Powers in Officers of Customs Bill: second reading: in committee—Ballot Bill: in committee—Estimates: further considered in committee.

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

PRAYERS.

### DONGARRA JETTY AND COAL SEAM ON THE UPPER IRWIN.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. A. O'Grady Lefroy) notified that he was directed by the Governor to inform the House (in reply to addresses relative thereto), that His Excellency had not sufficient information to enable him at present to fix a sum sufficient in either case, but that the matter would be taken into consideration, and the works undertaken if found advisable; and that such sums would be expended as might be found necessary for the same.

#### FIRST READING.

MR. BURT obtained leave to introduce a Bill to amend and extend "The Telegraphic Messages Act, 1874."

#### VESTING CERTAIN POWERS IN OFFICERS OF CUSTOMS BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. H. H. Hocking), in moving the second reading of this Bill, said the object of