

there should be any objection on the part of members to serve on local roads boards. He himself was a member of the board representing one of the most extensive districts in the Colony, and he certainly did not dread the provisions of the Act in any way,—provisions which tended to ensure the careful and judicious expenditure of the public funds entrusted to the boards.

MR. CROWTHER said that had the present Bill not been brought forward he would not have introduced it himself, but, on the same grounds as he had opposed the existing Act last Session, he now felt bound, now that the Bill had been brought forward, to support it. Members of these boards might be honest and careful to-day, but to-morrow one or more of them might retire, and their successors might not be so honest or careful, and yet the retiring members would be responsible for any irregularity on the part of their successors, provided that irregularity was committed before the audit next ensuing after the retirement of the old members. He was not averse to the adoption of some steps to ensure the careful expenditure by these boards of the public funds, but he thought it was very unfair to make any man responsible for the actions of another.

MR. BROWN would support the motion for the second reading. He thought the fact that the innocent was liable to be made to suffer for the guilty was of itself enough to condemn the present Act. If that was a correct principle to apply to Roads Boards it was equally so to Governments. He did not see why the members of Roads Boards should be made individually liable for the defalcations of other members of the board, when the Government, who was likewise entrusted with public money, was not expected to be so liable for the defalcations of any of its servants. It would be sheer nonsense to apply such a principle to Governments,—and woe betide the Executive if it were—if for instance they were individually liable to be sued for the amount of the annual overdraft.

MR. MARMION said he had voted against the Bill last Session, and for the reasons he had then given he would now vote for the present amendment Bill.

He would vote for the second reading, but not for going into Committee on the Bill that evening; possibly something might be substituted in lieu of the words which it was proposed to strike out, for he could quite see that if the words referred to were expunged they might as well repeal the whole Act. Possibly, if the Government would withdraw their opposition to the second reading, the details of the Bill might be satisfactorily settled in Committee.

MR. CAREY said he would be glad to adopt that course, provided the occupants of the Treasury benches were agreeable.

Cries of "Divide."

Question put—"That the Bill be now read a second time," upon which a division took place, with the following result:—

Ayes	11
Noes	6

Majority for	...	5
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AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Brown	The Hon. E. T. Goldsworthy
Mr. Brockman	The Hon. M. Fraser
Sir T. C. Campbell	Mr. Glyde
Mr. Crowther	Mr. S. S. Parker
Mr. Hamersley	Mr. Shenton
Mr. Harper	The Hon. H. H. Hocking
Mr. Marmion	(Teller.)
Mr. Monger	
Mr. S. H. Parker	
Mr. Pearse	
Mr. Carey (Teller.)	

The amendment was therefore negatived.

Bill read a second time.

The House adjourned at 11 o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Thursday, 4th July, 1878.

Incorporation W.A. Bank Shareholders Bill—Colonial Passengers Amendment Ordinance, 1868, Explanation Bill, 1878: first reading—Duty on furniture and baggage of His Lordship Bishop Parry—Mechanics' Institute, Fremantle—Messages Nos. 1 and 4 (Eastern Railway)—Third Readings—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

INCORPORATION W.A. BANK SHAREHOLDERS BILL.

This Bill passed through Committee without amendment or discussion, the reading of the marginal notes being taken as the reading of the clauses.

COLONIAL PASSENGERS AMENDMENT ORDINANCE, 1868, AMENDMENT BILL, 1878.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. H. H. Hocking) moved the first reading of a Bill to explain "The Colonial Passengers Amendment Ordinance, 1868."

Motion agreed to, and Bill read a first time.

DUTY ON FURNITURE AND BAGGAGE OF HIS LORDSHIP BISHOP PARRY.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL—having elicited from the Colonial Secretary the fact that, on the occasion of the arrival in the Colony of Bishop Parry, his furniture and baggage were admitted, as had been done in the case of his predecessor, without payment of duty, and that His Lordship had since been called upon to pay duty on the same,—moved a resolution to the effect that in view of the exceptional circumstances under which the Bishop had been called upon—twelve months after his arrival in the Colony—to pay the duty, the Council should respectfully suggest to the Government that the payment should not be enforced. Had the duty been collected when the Bishop arrived in the Colony, the hon. baronet said he would not for a moment have asked the House to address the Government on the subject, and he was sure the House would not have supported any such motion; but the circumstances under which the right rev. prelate was now called upon to pay the duty were so exceptional that he (the hon. baronet) thought the House might fairly be asked to agree to the resolution he had submitted for its affirmation. Owing to a misapprehension on the part of the Collector of Customs, the Bishop's furniture and baggage had been admitted free of duty, and he was given to understand that he had nothing to pay in respect thereof. But the Government, twelve months afterwards, finding out their mistake, had called upon His Lordship to pay the duty. The hon. baronet hoped hon. members would give him credit that in bringing forward this reso-

lution he was actuated by no other desire than that the House should thus affirm the principle that when the Government through the *laches* of its own officers omitted to enforce the Customs regulations at the proper time they should not come forward twelve months afterwards to endeavor to rectify the mistake. This was the principle which he asked the House to affirm, in adopting the resolution. He did not bring the motion forward in the interests of the clergy or of the Bishop: had the same error been committed in the case of a layman or anyone else, he would have adopted the same course. No doubt the Bishop was prepared to pay the duty on his arrival in the Colony, but he was then led to believe that he had no duty to pay, but, twelve months afterwards, a sudden and totally unexpected call was made upon him for payment of the duty. This appeared to the hon. baronet to be such an irregular proceeding on the part of the Government officers concerned in the matter, that he thought the House would be quite justified in entering a protest against such irregularities. He was further told that so long a time had elapsed since the Bishop's arrival that there was not the slightest legal claim upon him with respect to the payment of the duty. But, although the payment could not now be enforced, he was sure the Bishop would be the very last person to raise that point, and he thought the House might, under the exceptional circumstances referred to, be fairly asked to affirm the resolution which he had brought forward.

MR. BURT said he would certainly support it. Under the Customs Ordinance the Government was not in a position to enforce a penalty after the lapse of six months; and as twelve months had now elapsed since the Bishop's arrival, he thought the House and the Government might, under the circumstances referred to by the hon. baronet, afford to be magnanimous, seeing there was no legal claim against the Bishop.

MR. CROWTHER, though not intending to oppose the resolution, intimated that in the event of its being affirmed, he would bring forward a similar motion with respect to some articles belonging to the Bishop of New Norcia, who in like

manner had been called upon to pay duty some time after the goods—certain vestments for his own use—had been landed. A minister of the Congregational body who not long ago arrived in the Colony had also been called upon to pay duty on all his baggage, and the same had occurred still more recently in the case of a Wesleyan minister. Personally, he did not care two straws whether the clergy were really entitled to the privilege of having their furniture and baggage admitted duty free; but if the concession was made with regard to the clergy of one denomination it ought to be extended to the ministers of every other religious denomination. If such a privilege really did attach to the clerical office, all he could say was he was sorry he was not a dignitary of the church himself.

MR. CAREY would support the resolution, for it appeared to him very unfair that the Bishop should, after this length of time had elapsed since his arrival in the Colony, be made to pay a duty which he had been led to believe by the Customs authorities he was not liable to pay, and with respect to which the Government had now no legal claim whatever upon the right rev. gentleman.

MR. SHENTON had no intention of opposing the resolution, but if the House affirmed it, he would bring forward a motion to the same effect with respect to some vestments and robes which some time ago he had passed through the Customs for Bishop Salvado, free of duty, but with respect to which he had afterwards been called upon to pay the duty, amounting to £5 or £6, which he certainly thought ought to be refunded, if the House adopted the resolution now before it.

MR. MARMION asked who was responsible for the fact that Bishop Parry's furniture and baggage were admitted duty free, in the first instance?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): I think I may at once say it was an error on the part of the Collector of Customs. The attention of the Government was recently called to the matter, and the whole case was looked into, with the result that the Bishop has been requested to pay the duty. We are told by the hon. member Mr. Burt that, in doing so we are acting *ultra vires*, inasmuch as we have no legal claim upon

His Lordship: be that as it may, the Government has done what it conceived to be its duty in the matter.

MR. MARMION regretted very much that the attention of the House had been called to the matter at all, and thought they were entering upon very dangerous ground. In saying so, he had no intention whatever to oppose the resolution, but he did think it was a pity the subject had come before the House in any way, inasmuch as it would have a tendency to impress upon the minds of many persons outside that there exists in this country what had not existed for many years back—a State Church, and that there were privileges granted to the clergy of that church which were not granted to the clergy of other denominations. He did not make these remarks in any spirit of antagonism, or of hostility towards the resolution before the House, but he considered it was due to the House that they should be made. As stated by the hon. members for Toodyay and for the Greenough, the ministers of other denominations had been called upon to pay duty in respect of their belongings, and it did appear somewhat strange that the same law which applied in the case of Bishop Parry was not made to apply in the case of the other clerical gentlemen alluded to. It was this circumstance—to which he could not help alluding—which he was afraid would tend to create a feeling outside that there had been favoritism shown in this particular instance. For this reason, he regretted very much that the matter had been brought under the notice of the House.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) did not think the hon. member was justified in attributing any favoritism to the Government in this particular instance, for no sooner was the Government made aware of the error committed by the Collector of Customs than steps were taken to rectify the mistake, and to call upon the Bishop to pay the duty.

MR. MARMION replied that he had not charged the Government with favoritism, but that such an impression would very possibly be created in the minds of some persons outside, and it was to be regretted that such an impression, whether unfounded or not, should be created in the public mind.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. H. H. Hocking) said the hon. member for Fremantle was laboring under a misapprehension if he thought there was any favoritism or mystery at all about this matter. How the goods came to be admitted duty free, in the first instance, was thus: Many years ago, an "order" was made—whether under authority or not, he did not know—with regard to public officers coming into the Colony and bringing household furniture with them, that these goods should be admitted free of duty, and the hon. member would be aware that the present Bishop's predecessor was—owing to the relation which then existed between the Church and the State—in a position to be regarded as a public officer. The "order" referred to, and made as long back as twenty years ago, was never revoked, and it was under that "order" that the Collector of Customs had acted in admitting Bishop Parry's furniture duty free, forgetting for the moment the change which had taken place in regard to the relation of the Church of England to the State, and consequently in the official status of the Bishop. When the mistake was discovered a short time ago, the matter was referred to him (the Attorney General), and his reply was that he could in no way justify the course adopted in admitting the Bishop's furniture and baggage duty free. Accordingly steps were at once taken by the Government to apply to the Bishop for payment. He might further say, in explanation of the conduct of the Collector of Customs, that some dozen years ago a clergyman arrived here and was asked to pay duty on his baggage, and some demur being made, the matter was referred to the then Colonial Secretary, who informed the Collector that under the "order" alluded to, the clergyman's baggage should be admitted free of duty. With reference to what had fallen from the hon. member Mr. Burt, as to the Government having no legal claim upon the Bishop,—although quite in accord with the hon. member that the Government could not proceed against the Bishop and exact a penalty from the right rev. prelate for non-payment of the duty,—he did not think the Government were deprived of the legal right to recover the amount.

MR. CAREY asked how it came out that Bishop Parry had not been called upon to pay the duty upon his arrival in the Colony? Who was it that gave the information?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) thought it would be hardly necessary to reply to that question, as to who was the informant. A letter was received by the Government stating that such had been the case, and steps were immediately taken to apply to the Bishop for the payment of the duty. The error in the first instance had arisen entirely out of misapprehension on the part of the Collector of Customs, and there was no shadow of foundation for supposing that there had been any favoritism shown or intended.

MR. CAREY thought the "order" referred to only applied to Imperial officers and not to officers holding colonial appointments. Bishop Hale came out here as an Imperial officer, appointed by the Queen, and as such he was exempted from payment of duty on his furniture and personal baggage by virtue of the "order" in question; but the Church of England being no longer a State church in this Colony, Bishop Parry's position was different in this respect to that held by his predecessor. The Collector of Customs seemed to have lost sight of this distinction, and hence the mistake.

The resolution was then put to the House and carried on the voices.

On the House resuming,

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL said that in explanation, and in justice to Bishop Parry, he would like to say that the Bishop had never said a word to him about this matter, nor was His Lordship aware that he had intended to propose such a resolution.

FREMANTLE MECHANICS' INSTITUTE.

MR. PEARSE'S motion that an address be presented to the Governor, praying His Excellency to place £100 on the Estimates, to assist in the erection of a Mechanics' Institute, or public library, at Fremantle, was postponed until the Estimates were considered in Committee.

FREMANTLE, PERTH, AND GUILDFORD RAILWAY.—MESSAGES NOS. 1 AND 4.

MR. BROWN moved, That the House resolve itself into a Committee of the

whole, for the further consideration of His Excellency's messages relating to the proposed railway between Fremantle, Perth, and Guildford.

The motion was agreed to.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. BROWN moved a resolution to the following effect: "That this Council having given its best attention to the various proposed routes for the first section of the Eastern Railway, as well as to the plans and reports which have been furnished to it, having reference thereto, is of opinion that the route indicated upon the plan accompanying His Excellency the Governor's Message No. 4, and estimated by the Engineer of Railways to cost about £124,000, presents advantages over the Northern route, which more than compensate for its greater cost. The Council would therefore prefer to adopt this route if Her Majesty's Secretary of State would sanction its being proceeded with without undue delay; it therefore prays that His Excellency the Governor will be pleased to communicate immediately by telegraph with Her Majesty's Secretary of State, requesting authority to accede to the wishes of the Council in this matter, and that he will, on the receipt of the reply, notify the same to this Council, when it will be prepared to give further consideration to the subjects embraced by His Excellency's Message before mentioned." He regretted to think there was no probability whatever of his carrying this resolution. The question of pounds, shillings, and pence, involved in the extra expenditure of £37,000 which the southern route would entail had induced several hon. members to pause before adopting that route. As for himself, he must say, if he could view the figures placed before them as approximately correct, he would still be in favor of the railway going on the south, as the advantages on that side would far more than compensate for the increased cost. He still felt bound to reiterate, after twenty four hours' consideration, the statement he had made the night before—that in his opinion the route proposed on the southern side would not cost anything like £37,000 more than that on the north. Although he was aware that the resolution

he had brought forward would not be carried, he was still glad to think that an opportunity had been afforded the Governor to show and prove to the House the *bona fides* of his desire to co-operate with hon. members in measures tending to the promotion of the country's welfare, and to afford them every possible opportunity to press upon him and upon the Secretary of State their views, even when those views were opposed to his own.

MR. SHENTON moved an amendment upon the resolution of the hon. member for Geraldton, as follows:—"That all the words after the word 'That,' be struck out, and the following words be inserted in lieu thereof:—"This House having taken into consideration Messages Nos. 1 and 4 from His Excellency the Governor, and considering the extra cost that would be incurred by taking the Railway on the South side of the river, is now of opinion, that the Railway should be constructed on the North side of the river; and this House prays that His Excellency will take the necessary steps to carry out its wishes." The hon. member said it would be useless on his part to detain the House by entering into any arguments on the subject, which had already been thoroughly ventilated in the House, and with regard to which he was sure every hon. member had made up his mind. Attention had been called to the fact that the consulting engineer Mr. Gregory had estimated the cost of the northern line at considerably in excess of Mr. Thomas' estimate, and an effort had been made to depreciate the value of the figures put forward by the Director of Public Works; but he would remind the House that, in His Excellency the Governor, who endorsed Mr. Thomas' opinion, they had an engineer quite as capable as Mr. Gregory, and quite as well able to estimate the cost of constructing a line of railway. He thought that in a matter of this kind the House should give His Excellency credit that personally he was utterly indifferent whether the line went on the north or on the south, and that he looked at the question from an engineering point of view, and in the interests of the Colony at large, and not of any particular district or locality.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. H. H. Hocking) said that although he

had not yet spoken on the subject under discussion, he had been an attentive listener of what had fallen from hon. members in the course of the debate. He had been much struck by the remark made by the hon. member for Fremantle (Mr. Marmion) in the course of one of his many speeches on the subject—a remark that had been subsequently reiterated by more than one hon. member—namely, that if they could be satisfied that the extra expenditure which the construction of the southern line would entail would be compensated by increased traffic and better returns, they would be prepared to support the claims of that route. This, it appeared to him, was the sum and substance of the whole question. If, by the expenditure of £150,000 on one line they could ensure a return of five per cent. on the outlay, and if, on the other hand, the expenditure of £120,000 on the other line would only yield a revenue of two and a half per cent, the advantages in favor of the larger outlay would be overwhelming, and he, for one, would be sorry to advocate the cheaper route. Looking at the subject in this light, he would like the House to consider whether in incurring the larger outlay they were not likely to secure a larger proportionate return. He was perfectly well aware of the superior advantages offered by the southern route in many respects, and it had struck him as somewhat strange that His Excellency the Governor in his despatch to the Secretary of State on the subject had in the strongest possible way pointed out the various advantages which the southern route possessed over the northern. These advantages were patent to everyone, and were not at all in dispute; but the question was whether they were of such a character and of such importance as to justify the House in incurring the extra outlay which the construction of the line on that side of the river would entail as compared with the rival route on the north. He must say that, from the commencement, he thought this railway had been viewed in a wrong light altogether. He had always been one of the small but sensible minority who would prefer to see the line commenced at Guildford, and he was not by any means satisfied, whatever engineers might say, that this railway, commenced

where it is proposed to commence it, would, for many years to come, pay interest on the capital expended in its construction; he would be very glad to think that it would even pay its working expenses. Nevertheless, although he took that view of the matter, he thought it was a very good thing that railway communication should be initiated, with a view to open up the country and to develop its natural resources—not because of any immediate or direct advantages likely to accrue, but because of the prospective and indirect advantages which a railway would tend to bring about. He could not help smiling the other evening at the figures quoted by the hon. member for Geraldton with a view to show the probable traffic that would be developed by the construction of the line on the Canning side of the river. Among the items referred to was four thousand loads of timber per annum. Now all this timber would presumably come from the one station which the line was calculated to benefit—that belonging to Messrs. Mason, Bird, & Co., and he questioned whether it was at all likely that, in the face of competition with other existing timber companies, the firm referred to would be in a position to send anything like 4000 loads a year by the railway. The Rockingham Jarrah Timber Company already succeeded in conveying their timber from their station to the jetty, ready for shipment, at 15s. per load, and yet they found it very difficult to compete with the W. A. Timber Company. Was it likely, looking at the cost of transit from the hills to the Canning landing, that Messrs. Mason, Bird, & Co. would be in a position to successfully compete with these rival companies? Why, it would cost almost as much to bring the timber down from the hills to the “landing” as it would cost the other companies to convey theirs from their stations to the sea. He would like to know, bearing this competition in mind, what margin the Canning company would have to enable them to pay the cost of transit from their junction to Fremantle, and how they could profitably exist, and leave the Government a reasonable remuneration for carrying their timber by rail? Another thing he would like to know,—how was this timber to be got from the present landing to the proposed junction

—a distance of four, five, or six miles? Possibly the company might extend their tramway—he did not know; but he thought it was very problematical whether four thousand or even four hundred loads would come through annually. There were other very doubtful items alluded to in the estimate of Canning traffic referred to by the hon. member for Geraldton, as, for instance, 300 tons of hay per annum. Where was that hay to come from? He doubted whether that amount was grown in the district; and, if not, was it because there was no market for it? There would be no better market when the railway was opened than there was now. Why was it not grown now, so as to supply Perth with hay, for which there was always a demand. The distance they would have to cart it to Perth was no longer than the distance they would have to transport it to the Canning Bridge, or the railway junction. He did not suppose a dozen tons of hay came down to Perth from the Canning district at present; and, if so, why were they to suppose that there would be 300 tons taken down to Fremantle, if the railway went on the southern side of the river? As to the other commodities referred to by the hon. member for Geraldton, really one would think that this land of the Canning was something like the land of Canaan—a land flowing with milk and honey,—teeming with natural resources which only required a railway on the southern side of the river to develop. The hon. member finished off with twenty tons of hides and bones annually, with respect to which he (the Attorney General) could not help thinking that if the Canning settlers would contribute that quantity of hides and bones they would not only have to kill all their cattle, in the first year, but also have to send down their own hides and bones. He did not see the slightest reason to believe that anything like such a quantity would be forthcoming, or that the glowing expectations of the hon. member with regard to the other items would be realised for the next twenty years. This was the opinion he had formed upon what to this Colony was a very important subject—that the advantages possessed by the southern route over the northern were not commensurate with the increased outlay and

the increased working expenses which a line on the former side of the river would entail.

SIR L. S. LEAKE: I rise to support the amendment of the hon. member for Toodyay, and I regret that this amendment was not put forward as a resolution last night, when His Excellency's message was under consideration. When that message was read to the House, accompanied as it was by the report of the Director of Public Works, I certainly made up my mind, without giving the subject a second thought, that the north was where we should have the railway. I think we have had a most valuable report from the Director of Public Works on this subject. It is not for me to express an opinion whether his estimates are right or wrong: all I can say is, if they are not to be depended upon, it will be a melancholy thing for Western Australia in after-days. But I think we are bound to accept these estimates, and it appears to me it would be unfair towards the Director of Public Works that we should say that, while his estimate of the south side route is a fair estimate, his estimate of the cost of constructing the line on the north is under the mark. If he has underestimated the work on that side, he is quite as liable to make the same mistake with regard to the other side, and I think we may well accept the statement that the southern line will cost £37,000 more than the line on the north. This, to my mind, is a very large sum of money for a Colony like this, and I think that, in view of it, the House should not hesitate to support the amendment. It appears to me just a question of whether we are to have a railroad or no railroad, and I should be sorry to see any doubt thrown on that point, or any obstacle thrown in the way of the introduction of the Bill to authorise the construction of the line. In the course of the debate last night, I could not help remarking the expression made use of that people outside were "howling" for this railway. I have not heard them howl. The people of Perth have respectfully urged the claims of the northern line on the House. I certainly have heard one or two individuals "howl," but that was because their property was on the south side. For that reason they "howled" at every member

of this House—I do not believe there is one who has not been “howled” at—not in the interests of the country, but with a view to increasing the value of private property. Some hon. members seem to think very highly of the Canning district. I have my doubt as to its fertility and capability, and I question if it really would produce the 300 tons of hay referred to by the Attorney General. That hon. and learned gentleman has cut a good deal of ground from under my feet when dealing with this subject, and, as to the expected yield of bones, really the only bones I could think of were the bones of the people who had starved there. In the early days of the Colony, if you look through the names of the owners of land in that district, it will be seen they were all men of the highest standing, not one of whom are now in the land of the living, but they lived long enough to see the end of their money spent on the Canning. Yet some hon. members seem to wish to cover this district with a network of tramways and railways, forgetful of the fact that, as regards the traffic of the Serpentine and the Williams, much greater facilities would be afforded by way of Rockingham than the Canning. I have no hesitation in voting for the amendment, and I do hope that the question will, so far as this House is concerned, be finally settled to-day, and that His Excellency will, as soon as possible, be placed in a position to raise the Colony from its present state of depression and stagnation.

MR. MARMION: After to-night I shall be happy. So also, I trust, will be the hon. the Attorney General, who must be very gratified this evening to witness this my last appearance in public on this much-vexed question of the railway route. A great deal has been said, repeated, and reiterated—and I certainly have contributed my share of speech-making—upon this subject, and it is satisfactory to think that the discussion, so far as this House is concerned, is likely to be brought to a close this evening. The hon. member for Toodyay has objected to this proposed line being regarded in any other light than as a part and parcel of a line to connect the Eastern districts with the port of Fremantle, and that at no very distant

period. I trust the hon. member's anticipation as to the early consummation of our hopes in this respect will be realised; but surely that is no argument why we should not endeavor to make this first section of the contemplated Eastern Districts Railway as remunerative and reproductive as possible. Such an argument appears to me to be equivalent to saying that a man who had £5,000 to invest need not bother his head as to whether the first £200 or £300 invested would yield any profit or not, as the residue would be sure to bring him in good interest on his investment. If we desire to extend this line eastwards, and hereafter to obtain the sanction of the Secretary of State to the proposed extension, I think we would considerably improve our prospect of obtaining that sanction if we were in a position to show that the first section of the line had proved a reproductive work; and this it appears to me can only be secured by having the line on the southern side of the river. The Canning is not the only district which such a line would open up: there are the Williams, the Murray, and Serpentine districts, which are capable of producing a large quantity of cereals and hay, and which in time would contribute largely to the traffic on the southern line. It appears to me that a great deal of influence has been brought to bear on this question, and that a great many difficulties have been interposed in the way of the adoption of the southern line, and that, for that reason, we shall not be able to gratify the desire which is so generally manifested that the line should go on the south. It must however be borne in mind on which side of the House the responsibility rests, and I hope the Government are prepared to accept that responsibility. So far as I am concerned, I am quite prepared, and will hereafter be prepared, to accept the responsibility of my advocacy of the southern route, and I trust that the future will prove that I have been correct in my views. [The Attorney General: No, no: the hon. member surely cannot mean that.] I feel certain that the time will arrive, and before many years have elapsed, when the northern line, if constructed, will be pointed at reproachfully as the “Government” line, and it will then be regretted that the line was not

taken on the south, when it would have been affectionately pointed at as the "People's" line.

MR. HAMERSLEY thought some hon. members were inclined to underestimate the capabilities of the Canning district, which contained thousands of acres of much better land than that on the Swan, and which could be made to carry more stock than the same area of land in any part of the Eastern districts. He believed the time would come when the Canning would be one of the finest districts in the Colony. He had, however, heard such a woful description of the district from the Attorney General, that he really thought they would not be justified in constructing a railway at all, for if things were so bad on the south side of the river, he did not know what they must be on the north. He felt confident that those who advocated the northern route would, in another ten years, regret their advocacy.

MR. BROCKMAN: As I said before, if the decision in this matter were left in the hands of the House, I should be in favor of the south: but, as it is not, and as there is no knowing what time would be wasted by referring the matter home again, I feel inclined to vote for the amendment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): Whatever step we take in this matter it certainly will not be "a leap in the dark." I would, however, once more draw the attention of hon. members to the figures showing the relative cost of the two lines. Is the House prepared to vote for the southern route at an extra cost of £1,600 a mile—for that is what the supporters of that line advocate—and, if so, can they show any corresponding advantages likely to accrue from this large outlay? I should say not, judging from what has fallen from hon. members who are acquainted with the resources and the capabilities of the district which would be specially benefited by the railway going on the south. Nor is it alone the relative cost of construction which should be borne in mind; there is also the maintenance of two or three additional miles of railway which the line on the south side would entail—a very expensive two or three miles, too. The hon. member for Fremantle spoke about one line being likely

to be regarded in future as the "Government line," and the other pointed at as the "People's line." I myself think it is far more likely, if the railway went on the south side, it would hereafter be known as "Mason, Bird, & Co's. line," for, judging from the remarks that have fallen from many hon. members in the course of this debate, the claims of that company are of paramount importance. As already pointed out by the hon. member for Toodyay, the money that will be saved by going on the northern side would be sufficient to construct another ten miles of railway, opening up some first rate timber country, which appears to me a very important consideration, seeing that this would be the first step towards the extension of the railway to the districts eastward, which is the ultimate object we all have in view. As regards the question of whether this railway will prove a reproductive work, my hon. friend the Attorney General seems to take a very gloomy view of the matter; nor do I myself think that at present we may hope for the line to do more than pay its working expenses. But we must look to the future, and at the indirect benefits which must result from railway communication, and its attendant advantages. I may honestly say, that in recording my vote for the northern route, I do so in the firm belief that it will tend more than the other to the advantage of the Colony.

MR. BURT: It strikes me that, inasmuch as the House asked for the advice of the Director of Public Works in this matter, we are bound to accept his figures as conclusive: I feel, myself, that I am bound to accept them. At the same time, I cannot help remarking that last year the Director of Works estimated the cost of a line coming on the southern side of the river and crossing it at the foot of Adelaide Terrace—the line known as the alternative route—at only £108,000, whereas we are told now that a line following the same route, but having the station in William Street, would cost £124,000, being £16,000 in excess of the estimate put forward last year, which excess merely represents the distance between the two sites proposed for a station—a couple of miles. I cannot conceive how those two miles, which is dead-level country, should cost £8,000 per mile, when the line on the

north is only estimated (by Mr. Gregory) to cost £3,500 per mile. But, as I said before, I feel bound to accept the figures of the responsible adviser of the Government in these matters. A good deal has been said as to the inferior capabilities of the land on the Canning side, and a grim joke was made about dead men's bones constituting a portion of the traffic likely to pass along the line; but I would like to know what probability there is of any traffic—even in dead men's bones—on the north side, where there is not even a residence, or ever likely to be. While, however, in favor of the southern line, which appears to me to possess every advantage over the northern route, I am not prepared to carry my opposition to the latter so far as to go right in the face of those who have the ultimate settlement of the question in their hands.

MR. MONGER said he still maintained the same opinion as before, with reference to the superiority of the southern route to that on the north. The hon. the Attorney General seemed inclined to think that the estimated earnings of the southern line had been exaggerated, but he (Mr. Monger) took leave to doubt whether the receipts on the north side would amount to one-half that on the south. There was already a good macadamised road on the former side, and people would not be inclined to patronise the railway, so long as they had such an excellent road available for traffic. The hon. member for Murray had alluded to the question as one in which the House must decide "for better or worse:" in his opinion, if they accepted the northern line, it would be all "for the worse." Of the necessity of coming to a decision on this subject, without further delay, there could, however, be no doubt, for the present stagnation of trade and of the various interests of the Colony demanded some stimulus in the shape of public works; at the same time, he was afraid that to borrow money for the construction of works that would not be of a reproductive character—and the line on the north would certainly not be reproductive—would only cause a greater stagnation when the money borrowed had all been spent.

MR. S. H. PARKER said hon. members would remember that when this

subject was first before the House the Government and himself were quite in accord; subsequently he found himself alone in his advocacy of the northern line, and in opposing any delay by telegraphing to the Secretary of State. Then came the resolution, requesting the Governor to ascertain whether a line could not be found on the south side which would secure a central station in Perth at a cost not incommensurate with the advantages which such a line would give; and that request had been complied with. The House had remitted the subject to the Governor, yet when the Governor expressed an opinion on the subject, supported by the opinion of the Director of Public Works, hon. members said they could not accept the figures placed before them. If the House was not prepared to place reliance on the opinion and on the figures of the Government, why did they remit the subject to the Government with a request to be furnished with information thereon? Although he had once been deserted by the Government and left alone to do battle for the northern route, he was much pleased now to find the occupants of the Treasury returning to their first love.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. H. H. Hocking) moved, That the resolution be now reported.

MR. BROWN moved, as an amendment, That Progress be now reported, and leave asked to sit again to consider other matters contained in the message.

Amendment put and negatived, on the voices.

Resolution reported, and report adopted.

THIRD READINGS.

The following Bills were read a third time and passed: Jetties Regulation Bill, 1878; Municipal Institutions Act, 1876, Amendment Bill, 1878; Transfer of Land Act, 1874, Amendment Bill, 1878; Foreign Seamen Offences Bill, 1878; Transfer Duty Bill.

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