

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 1st September, 1880.

Ecclesiastical Grant: How disposed of—Privileges granted to Pastoral Leaseholders—Public Lands held by Government Officials: Adjourned Debate on Message No. 11—Grants to Roads Boards: Adjourned Debate on Message No. 20—Estimates: further consideration of: re-committed—Jury Act, 1871, Amendment Bill: third reading—Supreme Court Bill: third reading—Works and Railways Department: Adjourned Debate—Scab Act, 1879, Amendment Bill—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

ECCLESIASTICAL GRANT: HOW
DISPOSED OF.

MR. RANDELL, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an Humble Address be presented to His Excellency The Governor, praying that he will be pleased to cause to be laid upon the Table of this House a return showing in detail how the Grants to Religious Bodies are apportioned by the heads of such Religious Denominations." The hon. member said, as the House voted the money, he thought it but right and proper that it should be informed how it was distributed.

Agreed to.

PRIVILEGES GRANTED TO PASTORAL
LEASEHOLDERS.

MR. CAREY, in accordance with notice, asked the Honorable the Colonial Secretary, "What steps, if any, have been taken to carry out the recommendations of the Select Committee appointed last Session to consider the advisability of extending the privileges now granted to pastoral leaseholders, to take up land on deferred payment of 5s. per acre to *bonâ fide* cultivators of land, &c., &c." [Vide "Votes and Proceedings," 1879, Council Paper A 4.] He believed the recommendations of the Select Committee as to the privileges of leaseholders under clause 62 of the land regulations were being carried out; but so far as he could find out the recommendation with regard to the privilege to cut timber for general improvements had remained a dead letter.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said he was not pre-

pared to reply to the hon. member then, but would furnish him with the information which he sought, next day.

PUBLIC LANDS HELD BY GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS: ADJOURNED DEBATE ON MESSAGE No. 11.

The House then went into Committee for the resumption of the debate upon Message No. 11 (Vide page 208 ante), relating to public lands held by Government officials.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. CAREY—who had moved the adjournment of the debate on August 30th—said his object in doing so was to enable hon. members to see the reply proposed by Mr. Burt to be made to His Excellency's Message, in print, and be better able to judge of the probable effect of the resolutions. (Vide page 261 ante).

MR. STEERE thought they ought to provide as far as they could against officers of the Survey Department taking undue advantage as to the acquisition of land by reason of the peculiar facilities afforded them for obtaining information relative to the value of new lands surveyed. The regulation recommended for adoption in the reply to His Excellency's Message now under consideration provided that the Governor *may* withhold permission from any public officer purchasing land, until after the publication of any application by him for any such land in the *Government Gazette*. He thought the word "*may*" (italicised)—which left it optional with the Governor to withhold his permission—should be struck out, and the word "*shall*" introduced, so as to render it obligatory upon His Excellency to do so. He would therefore move an amendment to that effect.

Amendment agreed to, *sub silentio*.

MR. STEERE then moved that the words "which application the Governor may direct," at the end of the proposed regulation, be expunged.

Agreed to.

MR. CAREY moved that the following words be added to the resolution:—"and that in each instance a return of the lands held by such applicant be submitted to the Governor." He thought it would be well that His Excellency, before granting permission

for a public officer to acquire land should see what other lands were already held by the same officer. In the other colonies, where public officers were allowed to take up land, a limit was placed upon the extent of their acquisition. In New South Wales, he believed, they were limited to 320 acres of what was designated homestead area. He did not for a moment propose that public officers here should be restricted to 320 acres, but he thought at the same time it would be well that, when application was made by a public officer to purchase or lease Crown Lands, His Excellency should be placed in possession of information showing what extent of land the applicant already held.

MR. BURT could not, at the moment, see the necessity of the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Vasse, nor did he see what object was to be gained by it. He had no wish that the fact of a public officer already holding land should be concealed from the Governor, when such officer's application for more land was under consideration; but, if the application was a *bona fide* one, he failed to see why the fact of a man being in possession of other Crown Lands should prove a bar to his application for more land being entertained. It was importing a new principle into their Land Regulations altogether—a principle which, if adopted at all, should not be limited in its application to one class of persons more than another.

MR. CAREY said he had no particular wish to press his amendment, for he believed himself that the Secretary of State would affirm the proposition submitted to him on this subject by His Excellency the Governor.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The resolution (as amended by Mr. Steere) was then put and passed, and reported to the House.

GRANTS TO ROADS BOARDS: AD- JOURNED DEBATE ON MESSAGE No. 20.

The House then went into Committee for the purpose of resuming the debate on the Governor's Message, of the 30th August (*vide* page 264, *ante*), relating to the Grants to Roads Boards.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. RANDELL—who had moved the adjournment of the debate on August 30th—said his object in doing so was to enable hon. members to have more time to consider His Excellency's Message than they at that time had, so that they might deal with it coolly and dispassionately. When the question of local taxation for road purposes was first submitted, he had voted for that clause in "The District Roads Amendment Act,"—believing that the time had come when those Boards should be compelled to make provision for the upkeep of their roads. But the House was divided in opinion upon that point, and afterwards, on the motion of the hon. member for Swan, the sum of £2,750 placed on the Estimates for Minor Roads was struck out. He then voted that this sum should be retained, for it appeared to him, as no provision was made for imposing local taxation, it would come very hard upon the District Boards to keep up their roads. He should have been quite prepared to have supported the principle of local taxation—indeed, he had voted for it, and that those districts which did tax themselves should be assisted also out of the general revenue. He had not been prepared, however,—the House having failed, as he conceived, in its duty of rendering local taxation compulsory—to find the whole vote for minor roads swept off the Estimates, for it was evident that the Boards would not tax themselves, so long as the question of taxation was permissive and not compulsory. He hoped the Committee that evening would see its way to replace the same in full on the Estimates. Last year the vote for roads was £5,000, and this year the Government themselves had reduced it to a minimum (£3,750); but the House, not content with that, and without making any other provision for the reduction of the vote, struck off £2,750, leaving only £1,000 for the maintenance of roads throughout the Colony (out of general revenue). There was a very large extent of minor roads to be kept up, and how were they going to be maintained without funds to do so? The House should either restore the item to the Estimates, or render the principle of local taxation compulsory. He under-

stood that the object in view was, that a saving might be effected to enable the Council to present as favorable a statement as possible in support of the proposal for railway extension; but he did not think that all other works should be starved, or deprived of the support they were entitled to, in order that this one particular work, however important it might be, should be undertaken.

Cries of "Divide."

Question—That the words of the original resolution proposed to be struck out stand part of the question—put.

Committee divided.

Ayes	...	10
Noes	...	8
		—
Majority for	...	2

AYES.

Mr. Burgess
Mr. Burt
Mr. Crowther
Mr. Grant
Sir L. S. Leake
Mr. Marmion
Mr. S. S. Parker
Mr. Steere
Mr. Stone
Mr. S. H. Parker (Teller.)

NOES.

The Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy
The Hon. G. W. Leake
Mr. Carey
Mr. Hamersley
Mr. Higham
Mr. Randell
Mr. Venn
Mr. Shenton (Teller.)

The amendment moved by Mr. Shenton was therefore negatived.

Question—"That the Council having had under its consideration Message "No. 20 from His Excellency the Governor, with reference to the reduction made in the Estimates for Roads and Bridges for 1881, regrets that it is unable to reverse the decision which has been already arrived at. The Local Road Boards have the power, under 'The District Roads Act, 1871,' to levy a rateable tax upon property for the repair of roads, besides the tax upon carts and carriages which may also be applied to the same purpose, and, under these circumstances, the Council is of opinion, that in the present financial state of the Colony, it is advisable to withhold relief from Public Funds towards the repair of minor roads"—put and passed.

Resolution reported, and report of the Committee adopted.

ESTIMATES: FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF.

The House then went into Committee for the further consideration of the Estimates.

IN COMMITTEE.

Miscellaneous, Item £11,542 2s. 6d. reverted to.

The amendment moved on August 30 by the Colonial Secretary—"That in "item 'Subsidy for Coastal Steamer,' "the figures '£5,000' be struck out, and "the figures '£6,500' be inserted in lieu "thereof"—was, by leave, withdrawn.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) then moved, That item "Subsidy for Coastal Steamer, £5,000," be struck out, and the item "Subsidy for Steamer and extension of Steam Service to Nickol Bay, £6,000," be inserted in lieu thereof.

The motion was agreed to without discussion.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) moved, That in item "Proportion of Subsidy for Duplication of Sea Cable," the figures "£417 2s. 6d." be struck out, and the figures "£513 14s. 8d." be inserted in lieu thereof. This was necessary in consequence of the withdrawal of New Zealand from the arrangement under which each of the colonies contributed a subsidy in proportion to the number of its population. It was, of course, for the House to consider whether it would agree to the proposition.

MR. STEERE: Do those who withdraw from the arrangement lose any privileges or advantages?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): They do. By contributing our share of the subsidy we gain certain advantages with respect to the cost of telegrams, but we have to pay for those advantages.

MR. SHENTON: Is there anything binding upon the Colony that it should continue this subsidy, or can we, on the other hand, withdraw, like some of the other colonies have done? I think, regard being had to the small number of foreign messages from this Colony, we have to pay a very large proportion of the subsidy.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): When the question was first mooted, some years ago, the proposition was cordially agreed to, as nearly all the colonies were joining in the arrangement; but our proportion of the subsidy is increasing every year, in consequence of the defection of some

colony or other, and it is for the House to say whether it will continue the contribution on the part of this Colony. The Government, when it joined in the compact, expressed its readiness to contribute its share of the subsidy; but as it has considerably increased since then, I think we might, if deemed desirable, withdraw from the arrangement.

MR. STONE: What would be the result of our withdrawing? Would we have to pay more for our telegraphic messages?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): Yes.

MR. BROWN regretted that the House had not received some notice of the intention of the Government to move to have this vote increased. He hoped the Committee would not decide, hastily, to strike it out, although it had considerably increased since the arrangement was first agreed upon. He was not in a position to state exactly what advantages the Colony gained by contributing to the subsidy, but he believed the reduction in the cost of messages was very considerable. Moreover he looked upon this agreement as another step towards federation, and, upon these two grounds—the direct advantages we receive, and the indirect effect of the combination in bringing about the federation of the colonies—he should vote for the increase.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said there had been no delay on the part of the Government in acquainting the House of the necessity for increasing the subsidy, for the withdrawal of New Zealand had only been telegraphed since the Estimates had been framed.

MR. STEERE failed to see what necessity there was for this Colony to continue the subsidy at all. Our Press messages came through South Australia, and it appeared to him it would make no difference in the cost of them, if we withdrew from the agreement with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company. It might make a difference in the cost of the Government messages, but he did not think we would lose anything by withdrawing, seeing that our share of the subsidy now amounted to over £500 per annum. Nor was there any knowing where this yearly increase was to stop. By next year, some other contributing

colony might secede, and our share would be correspondingly augmented. He thought they might rest content with leaving the original amount on the Estimates.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said it would be no good leaving that sum on the Estimates. They must either increase the vote or strike it out altogether.

MR. BURT asked the Colonial Secretary if he could inform the House what was about the cost of the Government messages by cable last year?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): I fancy they cost about £250 or £260 per annum.

The amendment was then agreed to, and the item "Miscellaneous," as amended, put and passed.

The Estimates were then reported to the House.

MR. S. H. PARKER moved that the report of the Committee be adopted.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) moved, as an amendment, that the Estimates be recommitted.

The amendment was agreed to.

IN COMMITTEE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said: His Excellency the Governor has received the resolution of this House with reference to the expenditure connected with the Colonial Secretary's Department, and His Excellency is quite prepared, so far as lies in his power, and in justice to the officers concerned, to carry out the recommendations of the Select Committee; consequently, it is his intention to find Mr. Eliot, the late Chief Clerk, other employment. The House is aware that His Excellency has drawn attention to the necessity of having a Book-keeper in the Treasury, and provision will be made for that appointment. I will not, however, ask the House to place any sum on the Estimates this year for that purpose, bearing in mind that, in all probability, the officer referred to (Mr. Eliot) will be available for that office. The reason I have had the Estimates recommitted is, in the first place, to increase a small item in the Postal and Telegraph Department, it being found necessary to make the Postmaster at the Bannister also a Telegraphist. I have therefore to move that

£25 be substituted for £10, in connection with that item.

Agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said he had also an addition to make under the head of "Works and Buildings," with a view to carry out the expressed wish of the House, namely, that the item "Jetty at Shellborough, £300," be added to the vote.

The Committee divided upon the proposition, with the following result:

Ayes	9
Noes	9

Ayes.	Noes.
The Hon. G. W. Leake	Mr. Brown
Mr. Bungee	Mr. Burt
Mr. Carey	Mr. Hamersley
Mr. Crowther	Mr. Higham
Mr. Grant	Sir L. S. Leake
Mr. Maxmion	Mr. S. S. Parker
Mr. Handell	Mr. Steere
Mr. Venn	Mr. Stone
The Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy (Teller.)	Mr. S. H. Parker (Teller.)

The numbers being equal,

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES gave his casting vote with the Noes, explaining as his reason for doing so, that—as he had already stated—in his opinion, no additional sums, not actually necessary, should be placed on the Estimates, in the present financial condition of the Colony, and in view of the proposed public works of greater importance which it was hoped they would be able to carry out.

MR. RANDELL said his reason for voting as he had done, was in order to enter his protest against the action of the House in presenting addresses to the Governor to place sums on the Estimates, when there was no intention to vote for them afterwards.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) then moved that item "Warehouse, Bunbury, £100," be added to the vote.

Agreed to.

The item "Works and Buildings," as amended, was ordered to stand part of the Estimates.

Estimates reported.

Report adopted.

THIRD READINGS.

The Jury Act, 1871, Amendment Bill, and the Supreme Court Bill, were read a third time and passed.

WORKS AND RAILWAYS DEPARTMENT: ADJOURNED DEBATE.

MR. CAREY, with leave of the House, withdrew his previous motion relative to the cost of working the Department of Works and Railways, and moved the following resolution:—"That although the Select Committee on the Works Department did not see its way to recommend any considerable reduction in the expenditure incurred by that Department in carrying out the public works of the Colony, upon the somewhat hurried inquiry which alone it was able to make, this Council is, notwithstanding, of opinion that economy has not been studied as it should have been by the Department in question, and that expenditure has been frequently incurred which, in the present financial circumstances of the Colony, has been wholly unjustifiable; and this Council trusts that the Government will not overlook this expression of opinion on the part of the Legislature." The hon. member said that—before proceeding with his motion—he understood it was the desire of the Colonial Secretary to make a statement with reference to the allegations he had brought forward against the department on Monday last.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said he had made a note of some of the allegations made by the hon. member on the occasion referred to, and had submitted them to the Director of Public Works. The first had reference to the cost of the Northampton railway station, the estimated cost of which the hon. member stated was £400, whereas the actual cost amounted to £2,763. The next allegation of which he had made a note was with reference to the uselessness of a certain turn-table, consequent upon the introduction of the Fairlie engines; also the alterations that would have to be made in the cuttings and the platform on the same line; that £500 extra had already been added to the original estimate of the cost of the railway station at Perth, and the probability that the station would cost the country £5,000 or £6,000 before it was finished; and, finally, the allegation with reference to the cutting and crossing in Beaufort and Stirling streets. With reference to these allegations, hazarded by the hon. member, the Director of

Public Works said there was no truth whatever in any of them.

MR. CAREY: In any other place but this, I would use very few words indeed in replying to that statement.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): I would remind the hon. member, before he proceeds any further, that the Director's answer was merely in reply to the statement made to him by myself, as to what Rumour reported.

MR. CAREY: With regard to the first statement alluded to (the estimated cost and the actual cost of the Northampton Railway), hon. members are as well aware of the facts of the case as I am,—that the Director of Public Works estimated the cost at £400, whereas by returns furnished to the House, the actual cost has been £2,763, as I stated the other day. I therefore cannot see how the Director of Public Works can say that there is no truth in that statement. The next statement contradicted by the hon. gentleman is that with reference to the turn-table. He denies that the turn-table was useless in consequence of the introduction of the Fairlie engines; but what I said was that turn-tables were not required for the Fairlie engines, and I still maintain I was perfectly justified in making that statement. As to the width of cuttings and the alteration necessary in the platform on the Geraldton and Northampton Railway, and the necessity for widening the cuttings to admit of the engines being worked, I am not in a position to say whether that necessity actually exists or not; but I am in a position to speak most positively as to the other matters I have referred to. As to the cost of the retaining wall to the Beaufort bridge, I only stated the opinions of those who profess to know; and as to the crossing in Stirling street, which cost £150, I maintain it could have been done for one-fifth that amount. Earthwork, as a rule, is paid for at the rate of fourpence (4d.) per yard, whereas the earthwork at this cutting must have cost at the rate of about 5s. per yard. I therefore fail to see how it could be said there was no truth in that statement. I would go further with reference to the Perth railway station, and point out to the House that that station is being partly built of stone which is being carted

from Fremantle; and hon. members will guess what that will cost. I am glad that the debate on this question was adjourned the other day; for, yesterday, many hon. members had an opportunity of inspecting a work that is being carried out at Fremantle in connection with this department—the lighthouse keeper's quarters. All I can say with reference to that is, that if I had the means to enable me to live up to a style equal to the style of the building, I should not mind being a lighthouse keeper myself—had it not been for the steps which it is necessary to ascend in order to approach it. I am quite sure anyone who saw the style of building which is being erected will admit that it was designed on a most extravagant scale. I will say nothing about the lighthouse itself (which also was built under the direct supervision of the Director of Public Works)—as to whether such an expensive building is required at Fremantle. That is one of the blessings we have to thank the Director of Public Works for. We were told by that gentleman, in the report which he furnished to the House last year, that he had sent for (for use on the Northern Railway) two Fairlie engines, which would cost £3,000. Those engines by the time they arrived in Fremantle harbor, and before they were ever landed, cost the Colony £6,870 3s. 10d. That's all! I daresay the Commissioner of Railways will say there is no truth in that statement; but it is taken from the returns placed before the House. Hon. members yesterday had the pleasure of travelling on the first section of the Eastern Railway, and then saw an engine quite good enough for our requirements, and which I was informed only cost £1,600, landed at Fremantle. I notice, in a return furnished to the House the other day, and called for by Mr. Marnion, that the Director of Public Works says, with regard to the extra cost of the Northern Railway, that it was found necessary to construct the bridges of stone instead of timber, thus involving an extra expenditure of £700. Now it seems very strange that in the face of the statement of so eminent an authority as Mr. Gregory, the consulting engineer of the Crown Agents, with reference to the use of masonry in the construction of bridges, that the bridges on this line were built

of stone. Mr. Gregory in his report to the Crown Agents says: "On the ground of economy, I do not advise the use of iron and masonry, in place of timber, for the bridges and culverts. The jarrah timber is of a very high character, and although I have heard of some instances where it has been attacked by the teredo, I have no doubt that the Director of Public Works would select such growths as he knows by experience to have stood well." In the face of this statement coming from so eminent an engineer as Mr. Gregory, it does seem strange, if economy is the guiding principle of this department, that stone should have been used for the bridges instead of timber. I myself fail to see the necessity for the extra expenditure which it involved. We are told that "extras" are already creeping up on the Eastern Railway. The crossings and cuttings at Beaufort and Stirling streets, &c., come to £1059 10s., and the boundary street bridge and crossing will probably cost another £500. And no provision was made for these extras in the specifications. (Specifications read.) Yet, the Director, in the paper furnished to the House, says no extras have been incurred beyond some trifling matters, which will be balanced by the deductions that will be made in other directions. But I have mentioned what extras have already been incurred, and the House will be in a position to guess what may be expected hereafter. In the Estimates of expenditure for next year, now before the House, a sum of £3,000 is set down for the working expenses of the Northern Railway, and the Director of Public Works, when examined before the Select Committee appointed to report on the proposed expenditure of the department, said he would not be responsible for the working of the line if this item was reduced. The Committee were also told that no less than twelve men were employed to look after the line,—eleven at 5s. 6d. a day, and one at 8s. 6d., giving a total of £3 9s. a day, independent of the station master, traffic manager, and the other officers. I am told that the contractor of the line kept the permanent way in order with only four men at 7s. a day, equal to £1 8s., compared with £3 9s. which is the present expenditure. More

economy. From a return furnished to the House this Session we are told that the working of this line from June to December, 1879, cost £2,335 and that the receipts for the same period were £1,607—showing a clear loss of £730. A return of the revenue and expenditure on the same line for the six months ending 30th June last shows the revenue to have been £968, and the expenditure £1,763,—another £700 loss, during the half-year, or £1,430 during the time the line has been opened for traffic, which certainly appears to me to be money thrown away. With regard to the system of working in operation in the Works Department, I would refer hon. members to the evidence given by Mr. Jewell before the Select Committee, the other day. Mr. Jewell says: "I have to make all original plans and estimates of works, and generally attend to them while being carried out. When called upon to prepare plans and estimates for public works I am not as a rule, informed of the amount of money available for such works. As a rule I am merely instructed as to the amount of accommodation required. I prepared the plans and specifications for the Northampton Railway Station, but was not told that I was to limit the cost of the Station to any stated amount. I was merely told the extent of accommodation that was to be provided. When I was in sole charge of Public Works, I was in the habit of confining my plans of works to the amounts voted for them by the Legislature." I think it would be a very good thing indeed for this Colony if the gentleman now in sole charge of public works were likewise to confine himself and his plans to the amounts voted by this House. I mentioned an instance the other day showing how expeditious the work of the department was being carried on, by reference to some barrows which Governor Ord gave instructions to be sent down for the use of prison labor to be employed on the streets at Bunbury. They were ordered in October last year, and were sent down in July this year. That's what I call doing things expeditiously. I would also refer to the rails required for the Vasse jetty, tenders for which were invited twelve months ago, but which have not yet been laid down.

We are told in the Director's report for the past year that "the alterations and additions to the Vasse school have been completed." If I am not very much mistaken, the work was completed twelve months previously. The police station at Bridgetown again: the money for it was voted two years ago, and it is not completed yet. Turning again to the Eastern Railway, I find, on reference to the capital account, that the amount of the contract for the construction of the line was £74,591, and that the amount paid to the contractor, up to the 30th June last, was £47,272, leaving a balance of £27,319. On the other side of the ledger, we have a balance unexpended of £48,176. But in addition to the balance due to the contractor, there will be a considerable addition to the £20,000 set down for the purchase of rolling stock, which—with the addition of the cost of the Perth station (£2000)—will leave us on the wrong side of the ledger; no provision being made for Fremantle and Guildford stations, goods sheds, engine sheds, and many other things that will be required. The Director of Public Works in his estimate set down £9000 for rolling stock, which was commented upon adversely by Mr. Gregory, who said £20,000 would be nearer the mark; but it appears from what we are now informed that the amount will be nearer £30,000. The Director estimated the value of the land that would have to be resumed for the first section of the railway at about £2,000. The actual amount paid in compensation was £10,769, being about £8,000 in excess of the Director's estimate. It is right for me to add that by the sale of surplus land and houses, the Director expects that the railway loan will be recouped to the extent of perhaps £2,000. Even then there would be an excess in this item alone of over £8,000. Altogether, the prospect as regards the financial affairs of this line is by no means encouraging, and if the rolling stock will be in proportion to that on the Northern Railway, I am very much afraid indeed that the estimate of the Director of Public Works will fall very far short of the actual requirements. In view of these circumstances, and what I said before, when bringing the subject before the House, I think I may fairly ask the Committee to affirm the present resolution.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said the resolution which the hon. member had now submitted for the affirmation of the House reflected upon the manner in which the Select Committee appointed to inquire into the expenditure connected with the Works Department had discharged its duties. The investigation which the Committee had been entrusted by the House to make was characterised as a "hurried inquiry," and the inference was that the Committee had performed its work in an imperfect and perfunctory manner. The hon. member himself was a member of that Committee, and if he did not agree with the conclusions arrived at, and embodied in the Committee's Report, it would have been quite competent for him to have entered his protest against the conclusion arrived at by the majority of the Committee, which (according to the wording of the hon. member's own resolution) had not seen their way clear to recommend any considerable reduction in the expenditure of the department. The hon. member surely was somewhat inconsistent. Why did he not, if he had the courage of his opinions, enter his protest,—if he did not concur in the Committee's report?

MR. CAREY said the hon. member was evidently laboring under a misapprehension, as to the object for which that Committee had been appointed, which was merely to inquire into the proposed expenditure connected with the department for the ensuing year. It had nothing whatever to do with the general working of the department, or with past expenditure.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) did not think that the House, having adopted the report of the Select Committee, would so far stultify itself as to affirm the resolution now submitted for its approval, and which appeared to him to be nothing more or less than a reflection upon the manner in which the Select Committee had done its work. If one-fourth of the allegations made by the hon. member against the department could be substantiated, he would certainly say the Commissioner of Railways was unfitted for his post. It would be impossible for him (the Colonial Secretary) to reply to those allegations at present, and, in

order that he might have before him the shorthand notes of the official Reporter, he would move that Progress be reported, and leave given to sit again on Friday.

MR. BROWN said if the Select Committee had been appointed to inquire into the working of the Department, and had reported on the question whether or not due economy had been studied, he and the House would have been in a much better position to deal with the resolution. When the subject was first introduced by the hon. member, he (Mr. Brown) said he thought the hon. member had done good service in calling the attention of the Government to it, and that he was pleased to see that the question was raised in a good spirit, and evidently in the interests of the public. The subject was on everybody's lips—"familiar in their mouths as household words"—and although he himself did not believe in many of the allegations which were circulated with respect to the Department, he thought it was highly desirable that the Government should give some reliable information to the House on the subject. The House itself concurred in that opinion, and agreed the other day that Progress should be reported in deference to the expressed views of the Colonial Secretary, so that he might come prepared with the information which the House was anxious to obtain. But what was the information which the Government had vouchsafed that evening? Merely an intimation that the Director of Public Works said there was no truth whatever in the allegations brought forward in that House by one of its members. A mere bare statement of that sort carried with it no weight whatever, but, on the contrary, he thought, rather damaged the case against the Department. The House would like a little more satisfactory information to give a colouring to the Director's simple denial, and he was much disappointed that such information was not given. On the other hand, he did not think the House would be at all warranted in passing this resolution, without some further proof in support of the allegations made against the Department. If the object of the leader of the Government in moving that Progress be again reported was in order that he might furnish the House with some further information, he did not

suppose there would be any opposition to that step being adopted. Surely the House was entitled to further information, and, he believed, if furnished, it would go a great way to refute the allegations made against the Department. He thought, although the hon. member for Vasse had done good service in calling attention to this matter, the hon. member had taken a wrong course in doing so—though he did not think he did it intentionally. He considered that a resolution of this nature should have been referred to a Commission or Select Committee, for it was utterly impossible for them to arrive at a just conclusion upon a subject like this in Committee of the whole House. When he came down to attend the present Session, he called the attention of his fellow members to the great outcry which was being raised throughout the Colony as to the great expense of the Works Department, and he had suggested that they should have a thorough investigation, either in concert with the Government, or by themselves, and, if they found that the public rumours in connection with the Department were correct, that they should take such steps as would prevent the recurrence of any wasteful expenditure, and, if necessary, get rid of the Director of Works. But he was not going to join in any attack such as this upon a public officer, based upon a mere impression, without giving such officer an opportunity of explaining matters which to outsiders appeared almost incapable of explanation. After all that had been said by the hon. member who brought forward the resolution, no proofs were given in support of the allegations which would justify the House in agreeing to such a resolution. Some of the allegations made—as for instance that about the cost of the engine in use by the railway contractor at Fremantle—were not supported by statements which he (Mr. Brown) himself had heard, but he did not wish to deal with the resolution on mere hearsay. He wanted a thorough investigation made before dealing with it; and it was the duty of the Government, if such were taking place as they had been told *were* taking place, to institute the closest inquiry, and, if they discovered, as the Colonial Secretary had stated, that one-fourth of the allegations

made by the hon. member for Vasse were well-founded, it was their bounden duty to remedy the evils complained of, and, if necessary, to get rid of the head of the Department.

Mr. BURT thought that when any member of that House brought charges such as were brought the other evening against any public department, borne out as some of those statements were by facts which were beyond dispute, it was the duty of the Government to pay some heed to them, and to institute an inquiry as to their truth or their falsity. And he regretted to find that the Colonial Secretary had contented himself by merely giving a bare denial of the truth of the allegations. He could have told the hon. gentleman the answer he would receive from the head of the department assailed, before he ever went to him. The House knew, or at any rate he knew, that officer's penchant for indulging in very superlative language indeed, and he had not been at all surprised to hear the Colonial Secretary say that the Director of Public Works stated there was "no truth whatever in any of the allegations from beginning to end." That was exactly the statement he would have expected from the Director. But it must have been evident to the Colonial Secretary that there was some truth in those allegations, and he thought the House was entitled to some explanation on the subject. The object of telling the Council that this or that proposed work would cost so much was to induce the House to sanction that expenditure; but when they came to find afterwards that the work cost three or four times as much as they had been told it would when they approved of its being undertaken, the Government must not be surprised to find the House adopting such proceedings as those which they were now adopting. The Commissioner of Railways in his official report, presented to the House in 1876, on the works then in progress on the Geraldton and Northampton Railway said: "The sums voted by the Legislative Council for a railway and telegraph between Geraldton and Northampton, I am informed by the Auditor General, amount in all to £115,000. Of this, £26,000 has not yet received the sanction of the Secretary of State. Up

"to the end of June there has been expended, including rolling stock, and all other charges against the vote, a sum of £79,601 8s. 9d., leaving a balance available (in the event of the £26,000 being approved) of £35,398 11s. 3d. to complete the railway and telegraph, and cover the amount of the contractor's retention money,—a sum I feel to be amply sufficient to meet all requirements." Now, so far from being amply sufficient, the House knew that an additional sum of £17,000 had been expended on the line, and that £14,000 more was asked for. In 1876, in the same report, Mr. Thomas said, "the railway should not, and would not in all probability, exceed £3,360 per mile—an amount (he adds) which, considering the exceptionally easy country through which by far the greater portion of the line runs, and the total absence of any engineering difficulties, is perhaps in excess of what it should have been." That's what the Commissioner said in 1876. Yet, although a further sum of £31,000 had since been expended on the line, bringing up the cost to £4,312 13s. 9d. per mile, the Commissioner, in his report furnished to the House this Session, asserted, with characteristic modesty—"I venture to assert there has not been a railway in the world of the same gauge and same amount of earth-works, including a telegraph line, made at so low a mileage rate."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy): Can the hon. member disprove it?

Mr. BURT said it was not for him to disprove it. He had merely referred to the Commissioner's own statements. Four years ago, £3,360 per mile was—bearing in mind the exceptionally easy country which the line traversed and the absence of all engineering difficulties—"in excess of what the cost of the line ought to have been"; but now, although the line had cost £4,312 a mile (or about 30 per cent.) more, the Commissioner said there was not a railway in the wide world made at so low a mileage rate. That was a style of argument which he could not understand, and what he meant to say was this—even as regards this single point, it was the duty of the Government to institute a very searching investigation into the working of the

department. If the Government did not choose to make that investigation, he did not see how that House could make them do it; but under a different constitution a ministry that declined to do so, and was not prepared with a satisfactory explanation, would be sent about their business very quickly. But, under our existing form of Government, the resolution before the House was a straining after the impossible—straining at a good object certainly, but at an impossibility. Although there had not been any exhaustive examination into the expenditure connected with this department, quite enough had been stated to lead the House to the conclusion that it had been most extravagant, even according to the Commissioner's own showing.

MR. CAREY said he would be very glad indeed to agree to the motion to report Progress, in order that the Government might have the shorthand Reporter's notes for their guidance in framing an answer to the allegations he had made. If that answer contradicted the statements he had put forward, all he could say was—it would contradict the Commissioner's own figures.

Progress was accordingly reported, and leave given to sit again on Friday..

SCAB ACT, AMENDMENT BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said the Bill, the second reading of which was the next Order of the Day, consisted of only one clause, relating to the contribution leviable under the Scab Act, which, through inadvertence, had been overlooked when the Act was amended last Session. He noticed that the hon. member for the Murray had a new clause which he proposed to add to the Bill, but if it was intended by hon. members to avail themselves of this opportunity—which had arisen merely through an inadvertent omission when the Scab Act was under consideration last Session—to introduce amendments foreign to the scope of the present Bill, he should ask leave to withdraw the Bill altogether. He thought, at this late period of the Session, it would not be advisable to have amendments hurriedly considered, and perhaps spoil the symmetry and usefulness of the Consolidated

Act. If the House was prepared to accept the Bill as it stood, with the new clause proposed by the hon. member for the Murray added to it, he would have no objection; but if any further amendments were going to be introduced he should feel it his duty to ask leave to withdraw the Bill altogether, and not proceed with the motion for the second reading, for the Government had introduced the Bill on the understanding that it should only deal with the question of contribution.

MR. BROWN said if the hon. gentleman did not move the second reading of the Bill, somebody else would do so.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) then formally moved, That the Bill be read a second time.

MR. BROWN said the leader of the Government appeared to have wished that hon. members should pledge themselves that, in the event of this Bill going into Committee, they would not introduce any amendments, beyond that of which the hon. member for Murray had given notice. The hon. gentleman stated that the Government had introduced the Bill on the understanding that there should be no further amendments moved. For his own part he could only say that, if the hon. member for the Swan, who was the recognised agent (if he might use such a term) of the elected members, had entered into any such understanding with the Government, he (Mr. Brown) was prepared to loyally abide by it; but this was the first he had ever heard of such an understanding. He was perfectly content, for his own part, with the amendment in the Act proposed by the Government and the amendment standing in the name of the hon. member for the Murray, without any further attempt at altering the existing Act. At the same time he could not help thinking that—unless there was an understanding to that effect between the leader of the Government and the leader of the elected members—it was a very objectionable proceeding on the part of the Government to come forward and inform the House that no matter how desirable it might consider it necessary to propose further amendments, if such amendments were brought forward the Government would withdraw the Bill altogether. That was a course of action which he personally

objected to very much indeed, and he could only say that any intimidation or threat of that kind would not influence him at all.

MR. STEERE could only say that, so far as he was concerned, he had had nothing whatever to say to the Government, or the Government to him, on the subject referred to by the hon. member for Geraldton, and he considered it would have been most unwise on his part to have entered into any such agreement or understanding, for it was one which he could not enforce upon his fellow-members, who, once a Bill was introduced, would be perfectly at liberty to bring forward any amendments they chose, in spite of any "understanding" to the contrary, entered into between the Government and himself.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. R. T. Goldsworthy) said he had asked the hon. member for the Swan and also the hon. member for Albany if they thought the amendment proposed by the Government would satisfy the House, and he understood that it would. If the Government had thought for a moment that the whole of the Scab Act was going to be raked up again, they would never have introduced this Bill, which, he might say, had been brought forward solely in deference to the opinion expressed in the matter by the members of that House, and the Government were distinctly led to believe that the Bill would satisfy the wishes of hon. members, without any further amendments.

The motion for the second reading of the Bill was then agreed to, and the House went into Committee upon it.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1.—"The contribution mentioned in the 31st section of 'The Scab Act, 1879,' shall be the sum of £2, or such other less sum as the Governor in Executive Council may determine, and as may be notified in the *Government Gazette*."

Agreed to, without discussion.

New clause:

MR. BURT moved, That the following new clause be added, and stand as clause 2:—"Section twenty-five of the said Act is hereby repealed, and in lieu thereof

"be it enacted: Every owner of sheep imported into any seaport, either coastwise or from parts beyond seas, shall report in writing the fact of such importation as soon as practicable after their arrival to some Inspector or Resident Magistrate at or near to such seaport, and shall not remove such sheep from such seaport until they shall have been declared clean by the certificate of an Inspector or of any other person appointed by the Governor for that purpose; nor until they shall have been, to the satisfaction of an Inspector or other person appointed as aforesaid, well and sufficiently dipped in some liquid wash usually deemed sufficient for the eradication of scab; Provided that such dipping may be dispensed with in any case at the discretion of the Inspector or such other person. And every owner, any of whose sheep so imported shall be so removed without the written permission of the Inspector or such other person as aforesaid, shall for every sheep so removed incur a penalty not exceeding Five pounds."

MR. RANDELL asked whether the words "either coastwise" in the fourth line would not interfere with the North-West settlements?

MR. BURT said the clause was, word for word, in this respect, identical with the 25th clause of the existing Act, and the only object of the present clause was to give discretionary power to the Inspector as to dispensing with dipping in certain cases.

The clause was then agreed to.

Preamble and title agreed to, and Bill reported.

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