

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Tuesday, 7th August, 1883.

High School, Perth, Mortgage Bill: first reading—
Alteration of hours Telegraph Service—Fremantle
Grammar School Bill: recommitted—Supplement-
ary Estimates: further consideration of—Adjourn-
ment.

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

PRAYERS.

HIGH SCHOOL, PERTH, MORTGAGE BILL.

MR. BURT, in accordance with notice, moved for leave to introduce a Bill to enable the Governors of the High School, Perth, to raise money on mortgage.

Leave given, and Bill read a first time.

TELEGRAPH OFFICE HOURS—
ALTERATION OF.

MR. CAREY, in accordance with notice, drew the attention of the Council to the Postmaster General's Report for 1882, with reference to altering the business hours of the Telegraph Department. He had intended drawing attention to other portions of the report, but for the present would confine himself to this. Everyone, he was sure, recognised the inconvenience of the present hours of business in the telegraph service, which were the same, or very nearly the same, as they were twenty years ago, when the first telegraph line was opened in the colony—the short line between Perth and Fremantle. The hours at that time might have answered every purpose, but the circumstances of the colony had very much improved since then, and its telegraph lines now extended all over the country, and were connected, he might say, with the telegraph service of the whole world. There was no other colony in Australia where the telegraph offices opened at 7 in the morning until 8 o'clock, then closed for two hours, opening again from 10 to 4, and then closing until 7 o'clock in the evening, when they opened again for another hour. The Postmaster General in his report—referring to his recent visit to Adelaide, and to the South Australian telegraph service—said the internal organisation of the department in that colony was

excellent, affording every facility at all times during office hours for the transaction of business. Mr. Helmich said: "The Telegraph Offices are open for twelve hours daily without intermission, and not as with us closed between eight and ten a.m., and between four and seven p.m., which in my opinion is a hindrance to business"; and, having reported the result of his inquiries into the working of the department, the Postmaster General, among other recommendations, submitted the following suggestion as to an alteration in the office hours of the telegraph service in this colony: "*Telegraph Branch—Telegraph hours.*—Hours of business to be from nine (9) a.m. to six (6) p.m., without intermission, for all district offices (Albany, on account of mails, being exceptional, requiring the present irregular attendance, once a week, often till midnight); Perth and Fremantle from eight (8) to seven (7)." He thought this suggestion, if acted upon, would give general satisfaction, and he did not think it would entail any great increase of expenditure, while at the same time it would be a great boon to the public at large. He (Mr. Carey) did not propose that all the offices throughout the colony should be kept open during these hours, only Perth, Fremantle, Albany, Geraldton, York, and Newcastle. He begged to move the following resolution: "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to take the necessary steps to carry out the recommendations of the Postmaster General (Council Paper No. 2, Report dated 5th March, 1883), for increasing the business hours of the Telegraph Service."

The address was agreed to.

FREMANTLE GRAMMAR SCHOOL BILL.

The House then went into committee on this Bill.

Clause 1—Short title:

Agreed to.

Clause 2—Governors of school to be a corporate body, with certain powers, including the right to deal as they please with any lands granted to them for the purposes of the school, except as to a Crown grant of a piece of land lately made by the Government as a site for the school:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. P. Hensman), in order that no doubt might prevail in the mind of anyone as to the meaning of this clause, moved to insert the word "mortgage" between the words "demise" and "alien," in the 15th line of the clause as printed.

MR. STEERE asked whether the amendment would enable the trustees or the governors of the school to mortgage any lands granted to them for the purposes of the school,—for he believed that was a power which the Government had refused to allow the governors of the Perth High School to exercise.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. P. Hensman) said the state of the case was this: a piece of land had been granted by the Crown for a school site, and there was an instruction from the Secretary of State that when land was so granted it shall not be open to the donees to mortgage such land, for reasons which were obvious. The land, if mortgaged, might be seized by the mortgagee and divested from the object or purposes for which it was granted by the Crown. This Bill was originally drafted to prevent this being done as regards any land granted to the governing body of the school, but it had been represented to him that it would be hard upon the trustees if they should not be empowered to mortgage lands which might hereafter be given to them by any benevolent persons, or lands which they themselves might buy, and the Bill as now drafted gave them a general power over all lands, the same as any other persons, except as regards this particular piece of land granted to them by the Crown for a school site.

The clause as amended was then agreed to.

Clause 3—Scheme for the administration of the school:

Agreed to without comment.

Title and preamble agreed to.

Bill reported.

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1883.

The House then went into committee for the further consideration of the Supplementary Estimates, 1883.

Judicial Department, Item "Clerk to Magistrates, Albany, £50."

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL, before going into committee, supported

the proposal to increase the salary of the clerk to the magistrate at Albany, by £50. A recommendation to that effect was made five years ago by a Committee appointed in Governor Ord's time to report upon certain resolutions of the Legislature, and to consider the question of the salaries of Magistrates' clerks; and promises had been made to the officer in question by successive Governors that his claims to promotion would be considered, and the hon. baronet thought these promises ought to be fulfilled, if not by promotion, then by an increase of salary.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said the Committee referred to by the hon. member for Plantagenet had recommended that the fees of the Local Courts be abolished, and that the Magistrates' clerks should receive a fixed salary, and the increase then recommended to this officer was £50 a year. Governor Ord had approved of this Committee's report, yet from that day to this nothing had been done in the matter of giving this increase. It might be asked, whether this officer did not draw some additional emoluments besides his salary as clerk to the Magistrates (£160); he (the Colonial Secretary) had made inquiries and found that, with the exception of a few pounds he received as registrar of births, marriages, and deaths, his salary was only as shown on the Estimates.

MR. STEERE was surprised to hear the Colonial Secretary state that the report of the Committee referred to was approved by Governor Ord. On the contrary, Sir Harry Ord did not approve of the Committee's recommendations in favor of increasing these clerks' salaries, and Sir Harry Ord was not a Governor who was inclined to economise the public funds. Other clerks had received no increase in consequence of these recommendations.

SIR L. S. LEAKE: I am glad that last evening this vote was postponed, for, not being in the House at the time, I had no opportunity of speaking upon it. I do myself sincerely trust this item may be left as it is. Surely it is no reason why, because other officers in the public service do not get £200 a year, this gentleman is not entitled to it. He came here as an officer of the P. and O.

Co., and he left that service to take Government employ—I don't know how many years ago. But I do know that in 1864 he was then clerk to the magistrate at Albany, and, although I cannot say whether or not he has grown grey in the service of his country, I know that, during the time he has been in that office, I myself have grown grey. I remember that in 1864, Sir Alexander Campbell being then the resident magistrate, I had occasion to embark at Albany on a visit to the other colonies, and, at that time, it was considered necessary that I should be armed with a certificate setting forth that I had never been a prisoner of the Crown, for which certificate I had to pay a shilling. This officer, who was then the magistrate's clerk, had to take a complete description of my person—rather a difficult matter for one clerk to tackle—and I remember very well when the certificate was taken to the magistrate for his signature, Sir Alexander pointing out one mistake in it—the only mistake he said he had ever known his clerk to commit. It appeared that, in his description of my person, the clerk had omitted to mention that I had three grey hairs in my beard. Since then, I am sorry to say, those grey hairs have increased and multiplied to a considerable extent; and if time had that effect upon me, we may fairly conclude that this gentleman has before now also grown grey in the service of his country. I really think, bearing in mind that this officer is an educated man, a gentleman by birth, and that after twenty years' servitude in the colony he is only receiving £160 a year—I do think we should be guilty of a very great smallness, if we were to refuse this little addition to his salary.

MR. McRAE did not see why this particular clerk, whose duties had not been shown to be more arduous than the duties of other clerks, should have his salary increased by £50 a year. The clerk at Roebourne, who was also the postmaster, registrar, and land revenue collector, received much less pay than this officer, and was quite as much entitled to favorable consideration, stationed as he was in a very trying climate, where the cost of living was very expensive. If the Government wanted to

show their appreciation of long services, there were plenty of other officers in the public service who were quite as much entitled to receive an increase of pay.

MR. BROWN intended to support the proposed increase because he thought that the gentlemen holding the position of Magistrates' clerks, not only at Albany, but in other parts of the colony, were much underpaid, and that the time had come when we could afford to give them a moderate salary. Some of these clerks were also clerks to the Local Court—a position which in England was filled by barristers of seven years' standing. Other Magistrates' clerks besides this gentleman had been promised promotion—the clerk of Geraldton, for one—and he should be glad to see the Government and the Legislature acting towards these public servants in a fairly liberal way.

MR. CAREY expressed his regret that the Government had not thought of recognising the claims of other clerks besides the clerk to the Magistrates at Albany. He hoped the vote would not be pressed now, but that the whole question of the salaries of Magistrates' clerks should be dealt with when the Estimates proper came before the House.

MR. MARMION said “once a clerk to the Magistrates always a clerk to the Magistrates” appeared to be the principle which guided the Government as regards these appointments. There seemed to be no chance of promotion for these officers like other public servants, and he thought the time had arrived when their claims ought to receive some recognition, and that a system of classification and promotion should be introduced, under which lengthened services might be acknowledged, either by gradual increases of salary up to a certain standard, or by promoting them to district magistracies when a vacancy occurred. The increase asked for in this instance, £50 a year, seemed rather a large increase, and, if granted, no doubt it would create a certain amount of dissatisfaction to others on that account, and, for that reason he thought it would be as well if the increase had been more gradual. At the same time he recognised the claim of this clerk to a higher salary, and if any hon. member could show a similar claim on

the part of any other Magistrates' clerk, he should be happy to support a proposal for a moderate increase in his salary.

MR. RANDELL felt inclined to support the proposed increase. He looked upon it as an instalment of justice towards a very deserving class of officers, who, he considered, were very much underpaid, and he should be happy to give his support to a general increase of pay to these public servants throughout the colony. Since the days when their present salaries were fixed, the cost of living had increased, the duties of their office had expanded, and the country was in a better position to pay them higher salaries.

MR. SHENTON thought the time had come when the Government should see if they could not appoint some of these clerks, the senior clerks, to vacancies caused by the retirement or superannuation of magistrates in the country districts. After the years of training they had received as clerks to the magistrates, they ought to be well qualified to discharge magisterial duties.

MR. STEERE said, if the committee agreed to this increase in the salary of this particular officer, he should move an address to the Governor requesting him to place such a sum on the Estimates as would enable them to increase the salaries of all other Magistrates' clerks throughout the colony.

The proposal to strike out the item of £50 for the clerk at Albany was then put and negated on the voices.

MR. SHENTON, referring to the supplementary vote of £2000 for payment of jurors and witnesses, said the Committee of Advice under the Audit Act had already sanctioned an overdraft of £1500 in connection with the annual vote under this head, and the House was now asked for £2000 more.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) regretted to say that he felt it incumbent upon him to ask the committee to increase this £2000 to £3000, and he was informed it was very doubtful whether even that would suffice to carry us over this year. He deeply regretted to see the public money so applied, but, under the circumstances, he saw no help for it.

MR. SHENTON said no doubt the expenditure in connection with the administration of justice was to a great extent unavoidable, still he thought there had been much money expended which, if due economy had been exercised, need not have been expended. The Albany murder case, for instance, involved the country in a large amount of expenditure which might and ought to have been avoided, had the trial not been unnecessarily delayed.

MR. S. H. PARKER said he noticed in the statement which had been furnished at his request, showing the moneys paid to jurors and witnesses since the 1st of January last, out of the fund for that purpose, that there were some extraordinary charges under that head. In the Albany murder case, for instance, under the head of "payment to jurors and witnesses" was an item "Garraty—gratuity for loss of bullock." There were also some singular charges in connection with the inquiry into the wreck of the s.s. *Macedon*, which certainly had no right to come under this heading, and which ought to have been paid out of some other vote. This fund appeared to be available for all sorts of charges, and when the Government exhausted the votes under the head of "miscellaneous," or "incidentals," they seemed to fall back upon the vote for the "payment of jurors and witnesses." This might be a very convenient arrangement, but, under the circumstances, it was hardly to be wondered at that the vote was a heavy one, and that there should be a necessity for this large supplementary vote, when such items as lost bullocks had to be paid for out of it.

MR. BURT said it was very evident, from the statement furnished, that this vote was misapplied. It would be seen on reference to the opinions of the Committee of Advice that the attention of the Government had already been called to this fact, in connection with the item of costs in the case of *Mills v. Major* (£55 3s. 8d.) and also costs in the case of *Corbett v. Thomas* (£299 0s. 4d.)—neither of which items had any business whatever to be paid out of this vote. In the opinion of the Committee of Advice the whole of the item referred to might have been avoided by the exercise of common prudence, and the Adminis-

trator of the Government himself was forced to admit, in his remarks upon the opinion expressed by the Committee of Advice, that greater care should be taken to save the colony from the cost of contentious legal proceedings. This fund, providing for the payment of jurors and witnesses, appeared to be a sort of *omnibus* fund, into which the Government pitched all the nondescript claims made against it. He hoped that in future greater care would be exercised in the appropriation of this vote, which certainly was becoming a very serious one, being no less than £4500 over the estimated expenditure for the year (£1600). No doubt there had been some very heavy trials of late, but he thought there must be something amiss—he would not say in connection with the administration of justice—but somewhere in the department which was responsible for all this expenditure. The Albany murder case, already referred to, must have cost the colony something like £400 over and above what it need have done, and was so much money needlessly thrown away.

MR. CROWTHER called attention to the enormous allowances granted to some witnesses, which he thought might be considerably reduced. He had known witnesses from his part of the colony receiving from £25 to £30 for a trip to Perth.

The vote was then agreed to, including an additional £1000 under the head of payment of jurors and witnesses.

Goals Department, 1885 :

Agreed to without discussion.

Inspection of Sheep Department—Special inspector, district east of Toodyay, £50:

The item was voted without demur.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said he wished to bring under the consideration of the committee the question whether it was not desirable that provision should be made for the inspection of sheep in the Kimberley district. A report had reached the Government that scab had made its appearance among the flocks in that district, and he would ask the House whether it would not be as well—though he did not think there was a probability of the money being expended—to provide for the payment of an inspector for the remaining four months of the year.

He would move, That a sum of £50 be provided for the salary of such officer, and £33 6s. 8d. forage allowance. Of course, if the money should not be wanted, it would not be expended.

MR. STEERE thought if the money were voted, a contribution ought to be levied upon the sheep in the district, as was done in the other districts provided with inspectors, out of public funds. The only district which had been exempted from the operation of the Act in this respect had been the North district, where the settlers undertook to do the work of inspection themselves, without cost to the Government.

MR. GRANT thought the Kimberley people would prefer to deal with their sheep in the same way as the settlers of the North district. He did not anticipate they would find much difficulty in eradicating the disease, without the aid of a paid inspector.

MR. McRAE concurred. He did not think it would be at all necessary to make any provision on these Estimates for the payment of an inspector for the Kimberley district. If the Government would allow the settlers to appoint their own honorary inspector, they would soon succeed in eradicating what little scab may have got into the district, and prevent its spread.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said if it was the wish of hon. members, and especially those hon. members representing the districts, that no sum should be placed on the Estimates for this purpose, he had no intention to force it upon the committee. At the same time, the responsibility passed from his side of the House to that occupied by hon. members themselves. The Government had done what they considered was right in the matter, and they must not be blamed, in the event of the House endorsing the views of the hon. members for the district.

MR. BURT was surprised to find the Government, after 50 years experience, seeking to perpetuate and to extend a system of dealing with this scab evil which had notoriously failed to accomplish the object in view. The system of inspection had been tried for many years, and been found wanting. Over and over again it had been shown that if afforded little or no protection against

the spread of the disease, and certainly it had proved a complete failure as regards its eradication. The whole Scab Act, in fact, ought to be intitled an Act for the propagation of scab in sheep rather than for its prevention, and the subject was one which, in his opinion, ought to be taken into the consideration of the Legislature during this session, in view of the efforts now being made to open up new territory.

MR. BROWN said the Government had put a very plain issue before hon. members, and he thought very properly so. They said, in effect: "We hear that scab has made its appearance in this new district, and we propose to enforce the provisions of the Scab in Sheep Act within the district; in order to do that we consider it desirable to make provision for the salary and forage allowance of a duly-qualified inspector, and if you do not chose to vote the necessary sum to enable us to do so, you must take the responsibility of not having the Act carried out"—a responsibility which, for his own part, he did not feel inclined to take. He looked upon the question submitted for their consideration, not as a local question but a national one. The whole colony was interested in the opening up and settlement of this Kimberley district, and in keeping scab out of it. As to the steps this colony had taken in its efforts to eradicate the disease, those steps were precisely the same as had been adopted, but with greater success, by our neighbors. He thought, however, it was a question whether the time had not now arrived for even more stringent measures being resorted to, and for providing compensation to sheep owners in respect of sheep destroyed, in order to prevent the spread of the disease, as had been done in the other colonies. In the past our revenue had been too small and the number of sheep infected had been too great to warrant us in adopting this plan of getting rid of the disease, but circumstances had now altered. Our revenue was now very considerable, and the number of infected sheep comparatively few, so that he thought we could now afford to pay for any sheep destroyed under the Act. He thought this was a subject which the House ought to devote its best attention to, before the session closed.

Under any circumstances, he protested against the Government being absolved from carrying out the provisions of the Act in the Kimberley district.

MR. GRANT said no doubt the Scab Act had not produced that salutary effect which might have been expected from it. The only real success that had attended it had been at the North, where the settlers appointed their own inspectors—men who, not being paid for their services, had no interest in perpetuating the disease, and prolonging their term of office. It was not so with the Government paid inspectors; when scab disappeared their occupation was gone. In this respect, at any rate, he was sure the honorary officers were an improvement upon the stipendiary ones.

MR. STEERE expressed his surprise at the marvellous statement put forward by the hon. member for Murray and Williams, that our efforts in past years to eradicate scab had resulted in no good. The hon. member probably was not aware that the total number of infected sheep in the colony at the present time—and this was the season of the year when the disease showed itself most—was only 4000, whereas this time last year there were 24,000 sheep infected. With regard to the proposition made by the Government in respect of providing for the salary of an inspector for the Kimberley district, it certainly was a most extraordinary state of things in that House to find the Government proposing a vote and the members for the district opposing it. He never knew of such a thing before.

MR. GRANT said the members for the North were not like the members for some districts he could mention—they did not want to go in for votes of public money to be spent in their district unless the expenditure was absolutely necessary. This proposed expenditure, in his opinion, was unnecessary, for he was sure the Kimberley settlers would take care that the disease did not spread.

MR. WITTENOOM agreed with the hon. member for the Gascoyne as to the desirability of providing for the destruction of infected sheep. So long as sheep remained in the possession of some people, so long would they remain scabby. The great difficulty to be contended with now was not so much the

prevention of the introduction of infected sheep into the colony as the removal of sheep into clean districts from infected ones.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) again pointed out that, in the event of the vote for Kimberley not being agreed to, the responsibility would rest with the House, and the member representing the district, and not with the Government. If the money should be voted, he need hardly say that every economy would be exercised by the Government in dealing with it, and should it be found that there was no necessity for incurring this expense, the vote would not be expended. But he thought the House would do well to place the money at the disposal of the Government.

MR. GRANT: All that is wanted is for the Government to appoint an honorary inspector from amongst the settlers of the district. I know it would not be acceptable to the Kimberley settlers to have to contribute a tax of £2 a thousand sheep, which is levied in other districts towards paying the inspectors. There are plenty of other obstacles and drawbacks to contend against in the Kimberley district without any such tax as that.

The proposal to add £50 for an inspector for the Kimberley district, and forage allowance, £33 6s. 8d., was then put and negatived.

Works and Buildings, £9,480 17s. 6d.:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) moved that the item "Sand Patch, Albany, £160," be increased by £230. The sum originally asked for (£160) had already been expended, and it was estimated it would take at least another £230 to carry on the work till the end of the year. The sand was gradually drifting into the harbor and silting it up, and it was absolutely necessary that something should be done to prevent the mischief. A considerable sum had already been expended, and the funds at the disposal of the Government for the purpose had been exhausted, and the work brought to a standstill. The Director of Public Works, after consultation with the Government Resident on the spot, came to the conclusion that it would be most dangerous and disastrous if the work were put off until next year, and the Government had no

option but to ask the House to vote a sufficient sum to carry on the reclamation of this Sand Patch during the remainder of the year now running. The work was done by prison labor, but there were certain expenses involved, and it was in order to meet those expenses that this vote of £390 was now asked for, to carry them on to the end of the year. On a future occasion he should have to consult the committee again, as to what was to be done in the matter next year. This Sand Patch was a source of great danger to the harbor, and threatened to render it unavailable for large steamers. He was sure every hon. member would regret if this were suffered to come to pass, without any attempt made on their part to arrest it.

A conversation ensued with reference to a report that the warden in charge of the convict party employed at the Sand Patch had been utilising the labor of the men for his own benefit, in building a house and cultivating a vegetable garden. The Colonial Secretary said the Government Resident had been asked to report on the subject, and had done so, with the result that it appeared nothing had been done but what had met with the approval of the Resident.

MR. STEERE, alluding to the work going on in connection with protecting the harbor at Albany from the drifting of sand from the patch, said he considered the work of such importance as to justify the Government in occasionally despatching the Director of Public Works himself to see what was being done. It must be a work that required some technical knowledge, which the Government Resident could not be expected to possess.

MR. MARMION said £700 was originally voted for this Sand Patch, and it was difficult to say how much more had been expended, and how much it was intended to expend on the work. They might keep going on like this for ever, especially if the warden referred to found it such a pleasant place.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. H. Thomas) said all he could say was, that the money which had been expended had been utterly inadequate to complete the work, but what had been done had been done satisfactorily.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) asked the committee to let the vote pass, on the understanding that before any further sum is expended, it shall devolve upon the Works Department to furnish a report of what had been done and what was required to be done, and how much more money was likely to be wanted. If the work were now stopped, the party would have to be removed, and considerable expense would thus be involved.

The increased vote (£390) was then agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser), referring to the item "Police Station, Chidlow's Springs, £500," said that before the close of the year, it was expected the railway would be opened as far as this place, and it would be necessary for the Government to be prepared to carry on the Royal Mail service to the Eastern Districts until the railway is further extended to York. It was therefore essential that there should be some temporary building put up for the accommodation of the men and horses employed, and he also believed there would be a constable stationed there. The proposed building would be so constructed that when the line is completed the building might be removed elsewhere, if necessary.

MR. STEERE asked under whose authority the railway platform at Subiaco was put up?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. H. Thomas): I really know nothing about it. It was put up whilst I was away, but I must confess it was very necessary, and that it will really pay. The cost of the platform is nothing compared to the revenue we are deriving from the traffic.

MR. S. H. PARKER said he understood there was no made road from York nor Newcastle to the railway terminus at Chidlow's Well. Was no provision made for the construction of a road, for carrying the mails to and from the terminus?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. H. Thomas) said the terminus would be close to the Northam road. All he had to do was to carry the railway as far as a given point; it was no part of his business to find roads for people.

MR. STEERE said he noticed an item "Repairs, Geraldton Residency, £220"—what was proposed to be done with this money?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said the Residency altogether had fallen into a state of disrepair, and the sum asked for was based upon the estimate furnished by a practical man at Geraldton, who had prepared a specification of the repairs which required to be done. (Specification read.)

MR. S. H. PARKER suggested that, in future, there should appear a vote on the Estimates, annually, for the repair and up-keep of public buildings. He thought it was false economy to allow them to fall into this dilapidated state. He had always been under the impression, before, that the vote under the head of "Minor Works" was intended in a great measure for such purposes as these.

MR. CAREY could not help contrasting what the Government could find in its heart to do, in consulting the comfort and convenience of public officials at the North, with what it did for the Southern people. He referred particularly to the Bunbury Court-house. He wished the public at the South could take a leaf out of the book of the Northern people, who had only to ask in order to get all they wanted, even to flagstaffs.

The vote for Works and Buildings was then put and passed.

Roads and Bridges:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) moved that the following new items be added to the Supplementary Estimates, in pursuance of resolutions already adopted by the House: Tone River Bridge, £60; Albany Road *vid* Jayes, £100; Irwin River Bridge, £280; Northampton Roads, £100—Total, £540.

Agreed to.

Miscellaneous, Item £1,664 3s. 4d.:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) moved to add the following item, "Town Hall, Albany—Grant in aid of, £650." The late Governor (Sir William Robinson) gave the Albany Municipality some land as a site for a Town Hall, but as the site was not considered a suitable one for the purpose in view, the Government, at the request of the Municipal Council, put up the land in question for sale by public auction, and it was proposed to give the Municipality

£650 out of the proceeds,—amounting to £687 altogether. In order that the thing might be done properly and openly, the present Governor had deemed it his duty, in justice to the Albany Municipality, to place this sum on the Supplementary Estimates, so that the Government may be in a position to pay over the proceeds of the sale to the Town Council. He might say that Fremantle had been treated in the same way: a site was given by the Government to the Municipality for the purposes of a Town Hall, but the site was found not to be the best that could be found for such a building, and the land was sold, and realised about £900, which would be handed over to the Town Council when they decided upon erecting a hall. That was just what was proposed to be done with the Albany Municipality. It was simply changing the original site, granted to them by the Government, for a better and more suitable site.

Mr. STEERE thought the House should set its face against establishing such a precedent as this, which enabled a Governor to assist any municipality he liked, without reference to the Legislature. A Governor, when asked for assistance, would say, "I cannot give you money, but I will give you as many town allotments as will enable you to raise some funds for your hall; I will put up these allotments for sale, and the proceeds shall be paid into the Treasury, and afterwards I shall get the Council to vote it, and hand it over to you." That was, in effect, what had been done here, and he hoped the House would set its face against it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said one would imagine from what had fallen from the hon. member for the Swan that a Governor had no right to grant land for municipal purposes, or that the specified purpose for which any reserve made might not by order of the Governor be changed, or the land sold, and the proceeds applied to the object in view. Under the Land Regulations, the Governor had power, subject to such conditions and limitations as he thought fit, to sell or to except from sale, or to dispose of in such other manner as he conceived was best for the public interest, any land granted for the "embellishment of towns, or for the

health, recreation, or amusement of the inhabitants, or for the endowment of municipal corporations." Under this regulation, the Governor was clearly entitled to give the municipal council of Albany the money received from the sale of the lands which His Excellency had reserved for the purposes of a town hall. The 32nd clause of the Land Regulations provided that "the special purposes for which any reserve is made may be changed and any such reserve may be leased or sold, either in whole or in part, by order of the Governor." In this case the Governor had ordered that the reserve set apart for a town hall at Albany should be sold. The clause went on to say that "the Governor may order the rents, profits, or proceeds arising from any reserve, or the sale or disposition thereof, to be paid to any person having the management of such reserve." In this case, the management of the reserve in question was in the hands of the Municipal Council, and what the Governor proposed to do was to order the proceeds of the sale to be paid to the municipal authorities. The Governor, as an act of courtesy, had come to the House asking it to accede to this vote, which he (the Colonial Secretary) maintained His Excellency had a perfect right to hand over to the Municipality without coming to that House at all.

Mr. SHENTON said he noticed that these Supplementary Estimates were prepared as long ago as the 24th of July,—why should this new vote be sprung upon the House like this? It appeared to him an attempt was made to screen these extra votes from the observation of hon. members as much as possible, which he considered a very objectionable proceeding.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said the first time this subject was brought before him was on the 27th of July, and he hoped hon. members would acquit him of any desire to omit anything, purposely, from the Estimates, or that there had been any subterfuge on his part.

Mr. MARMION: Is this money to be devoted towards the purchase of a site for the town hall, or towards the building itself? If for the site, what assurance have the Government that the money will be appropriated for such a purpose? If this vote is passed and the

money is intended to go towards purchasing a site, I shall certainly ask that the money lying to the credit of the Fremantle Municipality should, in like manner, be handed over to that body at once, as I have no doubt they could make good use of it.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said he was informed by the hon. member representing the district that the land given in the first instance to the Albany Municipality was given as a site for a town hall, but that the site not being a suitable one, arrangements were subsequently made for the purchase of another site, and the Governor ordered the sale of the original allotments, for the benefit of the Municipality. He believed the whole of the proceeds would go to the vendors of the site which had since been selected, and that it was the intention of the Municipality to proceed at once with the erection of a Town Hall. The Albanians were so far in advance of the Fremantle people that they did not delay in going to work at once. Having secured a site, they did not mean to let it lie idle for years.

A division was then called for, and upon the question being put "That this item be inserted," there appeared—

Ayes	11
Noes	10
Majority for	1

AYES.	NOES.
Hon. A. P. Hensman	Mr. Burt
Hon. J. H. Thomas	Mr. Carey
Hon. J. Forrest	Mr. Grant
Mr. Brown	Sir L. S. Leake
Mr. Crowther	Mr. McEae
Mr. Glyde	Mr. S. H. Parker
Mr. Hamersley	Mr. Shenton
Mr. Higham	Mr. Venn
Mr. Marmion	Mr. Wittenoorn
Mr. Randell	Mr. Steere (Teller.)
Hon. M. Fraser (Teller.)	

The vote was then agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) then moved that item "Travelling expenses, Forest Ranger, £50" be inserted. Last session, on the 18th September, the hon. member for the Vasse moved the following resolution, which was adopted by the House: "That an Humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to take what steps he may deem necessary to prevent, as well as to conserve and protect, as far as possible, our timber forests from the

"great and unnecessary waste and destruction going on now, and for years past, by the holders of timber licenses and leases, teamsters, and others." In pursuance of that good object, His Excellency the Governor took steps to appoint a gentleman to initiate this work of forest conservation, and a very worthy gentleman,—Mr. Harris, of the Vasse, had received the appointment. He had been designated Forest Ranger, and for the present at any rate the office would carry no salary with it, but it was arranged that Mr. Harris should have a forage allowance, and the House was now asked to ratify this vote, for the purpose of carrying out its own resolution. Mr. Harris had been doing good service since his appointment, and he hoped during the year to receive a comprehensive report from him, dealing with the forest resources of the district.

MR. BURT: Is not this gentleman the Mr. Harris whom the Government compelled to resign the office of Resident Magistrate, on account of "infirmity and old age"? This was three years ago, and we are now asked to provide this "infirm and aged" gentleman with an extra forage allowance to enable him to do active work in exploring our forests.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said the gentleman in question was in the full enjoyment of all his faculties, and vigorous enough for the work which he had been selected to perform.

MR. STEERE thought it ought to be understood that, in granting this gentleman a forage allowance, it was expected he should not confine his researches to his own district, and also that he should furnish the Government with an annual report.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser): Quite so. He is now working round the central part of his district, and his peregrinations will extend as necessity arises.

The item was then put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said that anticipating the action of the House with regard to the destruction of those pests, native dogs, the Government proposed to include a sum in these Supplementary Estimates to enable them to carry out the wishes of the House without delay. He had there-

fore to move that the item "Destruction of Native Dogs, £200" be inserted.

Motion agreed to, without comment.

MR. STEERE, referring to the item "Subsidy for extension of steam service to Beagle Bay, £1,576," said it appeared from the correspondence between the contractors and the Government that the owners of the steamers based the amount of the subsidy they asked for this extended service upon the cost of the repairs which they had caused to be effected in the *Otway*. But he now understood that the owners did not intend to run the *Otway* at all to the North-West. Had the Government ascertained whether the vessel which the contractors proposed to send was equal in every respect to the *Otway*? They certainly could not ask for the same subsidy in respect of the *Rob Roy*.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said he had communicated more than once with the agents here as to the necessity of placing a better class of boat in that trade, but he had not yet received an official reply in the matter. He had, however, pointed out to them that in the event of their determining not to send the *Otway* herself to the North-West, they must send some other steamer of a similar character and equal capacity. The matter had not been lost sight of by the Government, and he trusted that when the Estimates proper for next year came under discussion, later in the session, he should be able to assure the House that satisfactory arrangements had been made in this respect.

MR. STEERE said it appeared that Messrs. Lilly & Co., the original contractors with the Government, had become merged in the Adelaide Steamship Co., and that we were now at the entire mercy of that company, who conceived themselves at liberty to send any steamers for our coastal service which were of no use to them in the other colonies. The *Franklin* was considered too good by them for our coastal work, and consequently she had been replaced by a notorious steamer, the *Ferret*—anything being considered good enough for Western Australia. He certainly hoped the Government, when they came before the House with their annual Estimates, will have arrived at some more definite

understanding with the contractors as to what they are prepared to do next year. He did not think the House would be prepared to vote this subsidy for an inferior class of steamer and an inferior service.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser): The intention of the Adelaide Steamship Co. is to run the *Franklin* and the *Otway* alternately between the other colonies and Fremantle, and the *Ferret* between Albany and Champion Bay, until they obtain another steamer. I believe myself that the local agents are alive to the necessity for prompt action in this matter, and I trust the contract will shortly assume a more satisfactory aspect than it does at the present moment.

The matter then dropped.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. Fraser) said he had one more little item to add to the Estimates,—“Clerk to Library Committee, £10 10s.”—to pay a young man for arranging and looking after the books in the Law and Parliamentary Library, during the remainder of the year.

The vote was agreed to.

Estimates to be reported.

The House resumed.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES reported that the committee had considered the Supplementary Estimates for the year 1883, and had agreed to a sum of £24,322 9s. 4d.

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