

ROADS BILL.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): In the face of the division that took place yesterday upon the motion for the second reading of the Roads Bill, when the Government only carried the second reading by a majority of one, and as most of the elected members have expressed an opinion—although I do not in any way agree with it—that the time is too late now to consider this important measure, the Government have come to the conclusion to withdraw the bill. I therefore move that it be discharged.

Agreed to.

Bill discharged.

CLOSURE OF DRUMMOND STREET BILL.

Read a third time and passed.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Friday, 20th August, 1886.

Police Station at Sharks Bay—Message (No. 18) : Assenting to Bills—Land Regulations: further consideration of—Estimates, 1887: consideration of—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

POLICE STATION AT SHARKS BAY.

MR. SHOLL, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works if it was a fact that the Government proposed to erect the police station intended for Sharks Bay on Dirk Hartog Island? If so, whether they were aware that the police would be so far removed from the pearling grounds as to be perfectly useless in the event of any disturbance on the grounds? The hon. member said that since he had given

notice of this question he had received a letter from Sharks Bay pointing out that a police station on Dirk Hartog Island would be quite useless, as no pearlers would camp on the island, and urging that the proposed station should be erected at Freshwater Camp, as being the most central position.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said it had been suggested to the Government that the police station intended for Sharks Bay should be erected on Dirk Hartog Island; but no decision would be arrived at until the case had been carefully considered, and all the circumstances well weighed.

MESSAGE (No. 18): ASSENTING TO BILLS.

THE SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:

"The Governor informs the Honorable the Legislative Council that he has this day assented, in Her Majesty's name, to the undermentioned Bills:—

"19. An Act to amend the Law relating to Public Health.

"20. An Act to amend an Act passed in the 6th year of the Reign of Her Majesty Queen Victoria, No. 5, intituled 'An Act to provide a summary remedy in certain cases of Breach of Contract.'

"21. An Act to impose a Duty upon Gold.

"22. An Act to legalise the closure of Drummond Street, in the town of Guildford.

"2. The authenticated copies of the Acts are returned herewith.

"Government House, Perth, 20th August, 1886."

LAND REGULATIONS.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of the proposed new Land Regulations.

MR. HARPER moved that the following new clause be added to the Regulations:—"Any land situated in the Eastern Division, not to the eastward of the 119th degree of East Longitude, which shall be proved to the satisfaction of the Commissioner to be so densely wooded with indigenous Euca-

“lyptus or other trees or shrubs as to render such land in its present state generally unfit for grazing purposes, may be applied for and may be leased on the same terms and subject to the same conditions prescribed by Clauses 74 to 78 of these Regulations referring to poison land, with the exception that in lieu of the eradication of poisonous indigenous plants, at least nine-tenths of the indigenous Eucalyptus or other trees or shrubs shall be effectually destroyed.” The hon. member said that the area of country embraced in this belt was, as most hon. members would know who had glanced at a chart, practically he might say uninhabitable. It contained very large areas of forest of thick country, with here and there little patches of grazing land dotted through it, some of which had been taken up, but an extremely small proportion of the whole area. Some people were of opinion that by destroying the timber the land might become available for grazing purposes; but at present there were hundreds of thousands—he might say millions of acres of it which was nothing but a complete desert, so far as productiveness was concerned, and very little of it had ever been trod by the foot of man. A great deal of it was waterless; but whether the destruction of the timber would affect that was yet an open question. As the country was situated in the immediate vicinity of some of the settled portions of the South-West division of the colony he thought it was of great importance that they should endeavor to frame some regulations by which the land might possibly be utilised. If the land were opened up, it would undoubtedly have a very important effect upon the traffic of the Eastern Railway, if it could be brought into profitable cultivation; and he thought that was an important point to be considered. This land had been known, and a great deal of it travelled over more or less for the last forty or fifty years, but none of it was held under lease, and it would only be on compulsion that anybody would pay any rent for it. He thought if they could apply the provisions which they had already agreed to with regard to poison land to this belt of country—he entertained sanguine hopes—that people who were residing in the South-West

division adjoining it might be tempted to see whether it was not possible to utilise the land; and he hoped the committee would be inclined to support the proposal now before it in the shape of this clause, and the Government also.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said the Government had no intention of opposing the clause; in fact, they were inclined to support it. At the same time it seemed to him that the conditions proposed were not so stringent as those under the regulations affecting poison land, and that a man would be able more easily to acquire the fee simple of the land under this clause than he would be under the poison regulations. The belt of country referred to would take in a good deal of land eastward of Champion Bay, and a great deal of the acacia thickets might be brought under the clause. But it was a proposal which he thought the House might accept, in view of the possibility of its bringing a large area of land into use that was now lying idle, if the timber upon it were destroyed.

MR. MARMION said the greatest objection he saw to the clause was the fact which he had alluded to with reference to poison land—that a man might apply for this land, and, by merely fencing it, he might hold it practically for the next nineteen years without utilising it in any way. It might be said that land that was kept idle in that way would not pay, and that it was not likely to be of any value for a long time; but events marched quickly in these days, and there was no saying but that we may have a railway running through this land before very long, when its value would be greatly enhanced; and the State might regret having ever agreed to this regulation, which might then be considered too liberal altogether. With conditions as to cultivation, as regards a portion of the land, he would not object to the clause so much; but he thought that in its present form it was too liberal, and that they ought to hesitate before accepting it. At the same time he did not know much of the country.

MR. SHENTON said that the portion of the country referred to that was situated in the district which he represented was, from information he had received, almost impassable, almost

impenetrable, with thickets; and in consequence of the denseness of the land in its natural state it was perfectly useless. But it was believed that if the land were cleared and water could be obtained the land might be utilised, and be made of some value to the country.

MR. HARPER said, with regard to the objections of the hon. member for Fremantle, he should like to explain that the bulk of this country is in an arid region, and the rainfall was so slight that it would be extremely unwise for anyone to attempt to take up the land for purposes of cultivation. It was only for grazing purposes that it could be used.

MR. WITTENOOM said one thing was very certain,—we should never get anybody to go and take up this land unless the regulations applying to it were most liberal ones; in fact, it would be the height of folly. He thought that what was proposed by the hon. member for York was just what ought to be done. As to making cultivation one of the conditions, that would simply be a prohibitory condition; it would preclude anyone from ever attempting to improve the land.

MR. LOTON said the land at present was valueless, and it would take from £5 to £7 or £8 an acre to make it of any use at all; it was so thickly studded with salmon gum trees. But if cleared, and with an ordinary rainfall, it would be some of the best land in the colony for corn-growing. He would point out that there was no limit proposed as to the quantity of land that might be taken up under this clause, and there were people here with their eyes open who would be quite ready to take up this land at £1 an acre and do all this themselves. Very nearly as far eastward as this area there was land now cultivated and returning first rate crops. He thought there would be very great difficulty in working the regulation. How were they going to determine that nine-tenths of the number of trees had been destroyed, unless there were going to the trouble of counting them?

MR. HARPER said the land alluded to by the hon. member Mr. Loton was totally different from the land which this clause referred to, and, so far as he knew, none of it had ever been attempted

to be cultivated. As to the difficulty as regards ascertaining whether nine-tenths of the trees had been destroyed, the "nine-tenths" referred to the area of land and not to the number of the trees. His object was simply to provide that the person taking the land might reserve a sufficient quantity of timber for his own use.

MR. VENN said that the other day the hon. member for York was strongly against the alienation of large areas, but here the hon. member proposed what was practically an unlimited alienation. He did not presume to know much about this land himself; but this he did know, that in the other colonies, land which twenty years ago would be regarded very much in the same light as this land—he was referring to the mallee country—was now considered valuable land. If anybody, twenty years ago, had proposed to invest in this mallee country as agricultural land he would have been looked upon as a madman. But what was the case now? With the extension of railway communication, pretty well the whole of it was coming under cultivation.

MR. HARPER: They have rain there.

MR. VENN: No record of the rainfall in this part of our colony has been kept. If there had been, perhaps it would be found that the rainfall was equal to that of the mallee country.

MR. MARMION said that considering the large areas which had already been set apart for the railway syndicates, and that there were applications on hand now for millions of acres of poison land, they ought to be careful before they practically alienated for the next twenty years all this immense tract of country. They knew what outside speculation had done as regards poison land, and the same might at one fell swoop take up the whole of this area. He hoped the Government would hesitate before they agreed to the proposal, though no doubt the intention of the hon. member who had brought it forward was a good one.

MR. HARPER said, as to speculators, he thought they would have to pay very dearly for their enterprise if they took up this land for speculative purposes, as, he was afraid, they would also have to do as regards the poison land.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said, as there

seemed to be some difference of opinion, perhaps it would be as well to adjourn the debate. He would therefore move that the consideration of the clause be postponed.

Agreed to.

Progress reported.

ESTIMATES, 1887.

On the order of the day for the further consideration of the Estimates,

MR. VENN said he rather regretted to find that no other hon. member seemed inclined to speak to the Budget Speech, but he could not allow the opportunity to pass without saying a few words, with regard to one part of the speech, and that was the part having reference to what he might call the Northern policy of the Government. Seeing that we were not by any means a rich colony, he thought it behoved us to watch with extreme care the expenditure of very large sums of money in these Northern areas. He was afraid the Government were likely to do so without properly feeling their way. He said this with all due deference to our present Executive administration. It was only a week ago that a message came down to the House asking them to divert a very large sum of money for a telegraph line to Kimberley, and he had been very much surprised indeed to find that the House accepted the proposal in the mild and easy-going manner which it did, and without opposition. He thought their great object at present should be, not to spend large sums of money in opening up two rival townships, one at Wyndham and the other at Derby, but to ascertain which was likely in the future to be the principal port of the district, and devote their attention to that particular spot. They were told it was the intention of the Government to start a telegraph line from both Wyndham and Derby to the goldfields. This appeared to him an altogether unnecessary expenditure, so far as the development of the goldfields was concerned. He thought there was a great deal of force in what a gentleman wrote to him from Sydney, that our Government would find it better to their interest to develop Derby than to open up Cambridge Gulf, for, if the latter were made the chief

port of the district, then Perth and the southern portion of the colony would be very much handicapped, commercially, as against Sydney and Brisbane. He thought that in the interests of the North, as well as of the South, we should take immediate steps to ascertain which of the two places, Wyndham or Derby, ought to be the principal port of the goldfields.

The first item on the Estimates—*“Governor’s Establishment, £673 16s. 8d.”* was then put and passed.

Legislative Council, £1,125 :

Agreed to, without comment.

Colonial Secretary’s Department, £1,764 :

Agreed to, without comment.

Treasury Department, £1,340 :

Agreed to, without comment.

Audit Department, £1,330 :

Adopted, without discussion.

Survey Department, £17,731 :

MR. WITTENOOM hoped the Surveyor General had taken the precaution to see that his department had sufficient money on the Estimates to enable it to proceed with the necessary surveys in the settled portions of the colony, where the surveys were a great deal behind hand. Of course they knew this was not the fault of the Commissioner, who was always ready to push on the work as quickly as possible. Still, the fact remained that land purchased two or three years ago had not been surveyed yet; and he hoped the head of the department had taken the precaution to put enough on these Estimates to enable him to pick up all arrears, so that they might start afresh with the new land regulations.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said he had got as much as he could. The hon. member would see that the votes were: Central Districts, £4,000; Kimberley, District, £3,000; North District, £1,000; Eastward of Central District, £2,000,—a total of £10,000. The hon. member knew pretty well how far that would go.

MR. VENN: Not very far.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I will expend the vote as economically as I can.

MR. WITTENOOM: It is not sufficient I think, and it is only right and proper that we should add to it.

THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. member could not do that.

MR. WITTENOOM: Well, I feel satisfied the vote is not sufficient, and the result will be that people who have taken up land will be unable to get a legal title to it.

MR. MARMION, referring to the item "Inspector of Mineral Lands, £100," asked who held this appointment and what his duties were, and why it had been considered desirable to provide a fixed salary for him, instead of letting him be paid by the fees which he received, as had been done heretofore?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said the appointment was held by Capt. Mitchell, who, he believed, was the only competent man in the colony for carrying out the work, and it was only by giving him a temporary appointment and a salary that they could get him to continue to do the work at all.

MR. MARMION asked if the Commissioner could form any idea of the number of applications which the Inspector had to deal with in a year?

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said he did not think there were many. It was only in cases where he refused to grant a non-mineral certificate that the Government paid him; when he granted a certificate, the applicant paid him for the inspection. It was now proposed to charge a fee of £1 in all cases. It was only a temporary appointment.

MR. MARMION was sorry to see it. He thought the old system was a better one.

MR. WITTENOOM said he must protest against a fee of £1 being charged. Whose interest was it that these mineral lands should be looked after, but that of the Government and the public? Why should the inhabitants of this district be handicapped in this way when they wanted to take up land? In every other district the applicant paid 2s. 6d. for his application and 10s. an acre for his land, but, in the Victoria district, because it had the misfortune to be a mineral district, an applicant had to pay £1 simply for protecting the interests of the public. He hoped the House would not be a party to such injustice between one portion of the colony and another.

The matter then dropped.

MR. MARMION thought it was highly desirable that they should know how it was proposed to expend the £10,000 set apart for surveys. He thought it was most necessary that these surveys should be pushed on as much as possible, so that people might know the boundaries of their lands—lands which they had paid for years ago. He did not blame the Commissioner nor his department for this; but if the hon. gentleman thought the vote was not sufficient, there were other votes on these Estimates which in his opinion were not of such pressing necessity; and he hoped the hon. gentleman would not hesitate to ask for a sufficient sum to enable him to overtake the work. He felt sure the hon. gentleman would always find that the members of that House would back him up when he asked for a sufficient sum for these surveys in any district of the colony, for he did not think there was anything upon which the public funds could be more usefully expended than surveys. As they were entering upon a new set of land regulations, most leaseholders would be anxious to come under them, and he thought it was highly desirable that all disputed questions of boundary should if possible be settled before these new regulations came into force.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said the hon. member for Fremantle told them that the members of that House would be always glad to back him in everything he required, but the hon. member must be aware that there were other persons to be consulted before matters came before that House; and, in a colony like this, where so many different things were required, the Government were not always able to place on the Estimates the amounts they would like to place there, and he did not think the Survey Department was any exception to that rule. He felt sure if he could only get the items on the Estimates he might make a good fight with hon. members to keep them there; but the difficulty was to get them on the Estimates at all, there being so many other things required, besides surveys. As to fee simple surveys and the delay referred to by the hon. member for Geraldton, the hon. member must bear

in mind the limited means at their disposal. He did not admit that as a rule the surveys of fee simple lands were in a very backward state. They were in a far better position now than they had been for many years past, and very little in arrear indeed as regards title deeds. As to the difficulty of leaseholders in finding out the whereabouts of their land, he knew that was the case; but they must not be surprised at it, when they bore in mind the small staff which they had in the field, and also the immense extent of our territory. When the surveyors returned from the North he very much doubted whether the work of last year would be out of hand. The triangulation which had been done in the Kimberley district was a very great work in itself, much of it being through unknown country and in advance of settlement—a work rarely attempted in other parts of Australia. They had also completed the triangulation from Rockingham to the DeGrey, and they were extending it this year to the eastward of Champion Bay, and also in the Kimberley district. As to the £4,000 for the Central Districts, that vote would be expended the same as last year, about the settled districts. As to the £3,000 for the Kimberley district he was not prepared at present to say whether that sum would be expended in West Kimberley altogether, or some of it in East Kimberley; they would have to be guided by circumstances. There was plenty of work in either district. The survey party up there this year would not in any way complete the work. The £1,000 for the North District would add to the work done in 1876 and 1878; and the £2,000 for surveys eastward of the Central Districts would be applied to the country eastward of Victoria Plains.

MR. BURGESS said he paid for some land six or seven years ago, and he had not got the title deeds of it yet.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): Where is it?

MR. BURGESS: In the Victoria District. I have heard other parties complain of the same thing. I notice that under the new Land Regulations a great deal more surveys will have to be required than at present, in connection with Agricultural Areas, and I observe that the vote for next year is something

less than the vote for this year. That being the case, it appears to me we shall never get these purchased blocks surveyed at all.

MR. GRANT thought it was surprising the amount of work done with the small staff and with so little money. Looking at the cost of surveys in Victoria and in the other colonies, it showed that the Survey Department here was conducted in a very economical way; and he noticed that the cost of this department was not increasing like other departments did, but was always kept down at a very low figure. He thought however that landowners had no cause for complaint as to the delay they had to put up with, owing perhaps to the too great modesty of the Survey Department.

MR. PARKER said it had often struck him, when he heard complaints from the country, about blocks not being surveyed for years—in one case that had been brought under his notice twenty years had elapsed—that although this delay was very annoying, still we must bear in mind that when persons bought isolated blocks of land in out-of-the-way places, many miles from any other block, it must actually cost the department more to survey the land than the purchase money amounted to. That being the case, he did not think purchasers ought to complain too much. When a purchaser paid his purchase money he obtained a permit to occupy, which, after all, had all the effect of a deed of grant. He could but agree with the hon. member for the North, that the department on the whole was entitled to a great deal of credit.

MR. CROWTHER, whilst agreeing as to every credit being due to the department, said with all due deference to the hon. and learned gentleman who had just sat down, there was this difference between a permit and a deed of grant,—the latter told you exactly where the land was situated, which a permit did not. That made all the difference, and that was why people were anxious to get their title deeds.

MR. WITTENOOM said if the surveys in the Kimberley district were so much in advance of settlement, and on the other hand the surveys in the Central districts were so far behind settlement, he thought the best thing they could do was to take £1,000 from the Kimberley

vote and add it to the sum set apart for the Central Districts. The latter was certainly too small.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) said he could only say again that the matter did not rest altogether with him, nor must they blame him altogether if the votes were inadequate. The Survey Department was not the only department that had to be provided for. It was only an integral portion of the public service, all the branches of which had to be provided for, and the vote for one department must depend in a great degree upon the amount required for other departments. He could not agree to the proposal to take £1,000 from the Kimberley vote and add it to the other vote. Anything less than £3,000 would be useless for the Kimberley district. It would not admit of sending more than one party up there, and it would be useless sending less than two.

The vote was then put and passed.

Customs Department, £7,305:

MR. SHENTON, referring to item "Messenger to Wharfinger, Fremantle, £60," asked whether there was any intention on the part of the Government to make any fresh arrangements for carrying out the wharfinger's duties, or handing over the work to the Railway Department? The present system was not working well at all, and was the source of constant friction between the Customs and the Railway Department. He thought it would be much better if the wharfinger's branch were handed over to the Railway Department.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said the Government had no intention at present to do that. The question had been mooted, but nothing definite had been decided about it.

MR. MARMION did not think himself that any great advantage would be gained by transferring the Wharfinger's Department to the Railway Department. He thought the latter had quite enough to do already, and every year its responsibilities were increasing, and he doubted whether the head of the department would be thankful for the suggestion. It might be a question whether it would not be as well to place the working of the jetties in the hands of a Board. Boards

were very fashionable in these days, and they generally worked very well, in this colony at any rate.

The matter then dropped.

MR. MARMION, referring to the item, "Landing Waiter, Derby, £160," and "Landing Waiter, Wyndham, £160," said this appeared to be a very small staff. Was there any intention of adding to the staff?

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith): No, sir; not at present.

MR. MARMION said it was not the sufficiency of the staff that he was so much afraid of as its efficiency. He feared that the revenue might suffer, and suffer to a very considerable extent, unless the officers were efficient and experienced officers, in places like these, where even the responsible head of the department, the Government Resident, speaking generally, was unacquainted with Customs duties.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said the present Government Resident at Wyndham had had three years experience in the Customs Department, and the officer who had been appointed landing waiter had been reported as an efficient officer by the Collector of Customs.

The departmental vote was then agreed to.

Works and Railways Department, £50,732
11s. 10d.:

MR. WITTENOOM asked what provision was going to be made for working the Greenough line. As regards the engine, he was certain that the present engine would never answer the purpose.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said if the hon. member had taken the trouble of reading his report he would see what was proposed to be done.

MR. MARMION said as the contractor was to keep the line in repair for twelve months after its completion, there seemed to be a very large increase in the proposed expenditure in connection with wages and other items on this Northern Railway. Were the amounts not over-estimated?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright): Not in the slightest degree. What the fact of the contractor having to keep the line in repair has to do with the wages of me-

chanics, laborers, clerks, guards, engine drivers, I don't know. The twelve months maintenance which is part of the contract will probably be over in October, 1887, and provision has been made here for the remainder of the year.

MR. SHOLL said he noticed two new items: "Lodging allowance to Station Master, Perth, £50," and "Lodging allowance to Station Master, Fremantle, £50."

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said it was necessary that the traffic manager at Perth (who was also the station master) should live as near the station as he could, irrespective of house rent; and, as house rent was now getting very dear, and he had to be at the station at all hours, it was proposed to give him a lodging allowance; and the same with the station master at Fremantle. Properly speaking, both these officers ought to reside on the station premises, but at present there was no room for them. When the new buildings had to be erected, quarters would be provided for them on the spot.

The vote was then put and passed.

Postal and Telegraph Department,
£39,338:

MR. MARMION, referring to the item "Postmaster and Telegraph Master, Fremantle, £250," said he regretted that no increase was proposed in this officer's salary. He was a credit to the service, a most industrious, intelligent, civil, and obliging public officer, who discharged his duties to the satisfaction, he was sure, of the Government, and of all who did any business in connection with his department. He was well deserving of £300 a year, and he was sorry that no increase was proposed for him. He was aware that in view of the proposed appointment of a Commission to inquire into the salaries of public officers it might be inadvisable at this stage to point out any particular officer's claims; but he certainly thought if there was an officer in the service who was honestly entitled to an increase, this officer was. He held a very important and responsible position.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith): I can only say that so far as increases of salaries go, the Government would have been only too glad to have met the

claims and acceded to the applications of all who have applied for an increase. But that was out of the question, and, after the most careful consideration, as a rule the increases now made have only been in really urgent cases. While on this point, I would like to remark now, for the information of hon. members, that, as I stated the other evening, it is the intention of the Government to appoint a Committee to inquire into the scale of pay of the civil servants, and, when the Committee have reported, His Excellency proposes to submit their recommendations when the Supplementary Estimates come on next year; so that, although some officers may not be down on the present Estimates for an increase, probably they may find their names down next year, and their salaries would count from the 1st January, if approved by the House.

MR. SHENTON asked whether the Government had received any reply from the Adelaide Steamship Co. as to making their steamers connect with the P. & O. mail steamers at Albany—a subject which he brought before the House the other day.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said the Government had been corresponding with Mr. Lilly, the company's agent, on the subject, but he had not yet been able to give a definite reply, as the matter had been referred to the Board in South Australia.

MR. SHENTON said of course he was aware that nothing could be done this year, with reference to the conveyance of mails between Albany and Fremantle, but he hoped that next year the Government would be prepared to come forward with some other scheme for the conveyance of the coastal mails, by which the present Royal Mail service from Albany might be dispensed with.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) referring to the item "Goldfields Mail Service, £1,000," said the Government had not made any arrangements for this service yet, but it was considered probable that this amount might be found adequate. It would be a horse service, he presumed; but it was impossible to decide yet what it might be. The Government hoped to give them a mail

service in connection with both places—Derby and Wyndham. They expected to have 3,000 or 4,000 people on these goldfields before long, and a mail service would be absolutely necessary.

The departmental vote was then agreed to.

Land Titles Department, £1,275 :

MR. SHOLL, referring to the item "Registrar of Titles and Deeds, £400," said he noticed an increase of £50. Had not this officer an increase last year?

MR. PARKER said he hadn't; and he felt sure no one who knew the officer in question and the way he did his work, would say that the Government proposed to give him at all too much. He should like to say a word as to the two clerkships in this office. Owing to the pressure of work in the office, the Finance Committee agreed to recommend an additional clerk at £120, but the Government kept the office open for some considerable time for the Magistrates' clerk at the Gascoyne—an utterly inexperienced officer. He did not complain so much about that as he did that the senior clerk in the office, a man of experience, able to take the office of Deputy Registrar, was only to receive £10 a year more than this inexperienced novice. He hoped to see the salary of the senior clerk increased, as he was an excellent young officer, who promised uncommonly well, and who in course of time would be quite competent to take the office of Registrar of Titles.

MR. SHENTON said he was able to endorse all that had fallen from the hon. member for Perth. When the Finance Committee agreed to a second clerk they contemplated the appointment of an experienced officer, and not a raw youth. It was appointments of this kind made by the Government that caused dissatisfaction, and brought public opinion so strongly to bear against the Government.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said he was not aware where they were going to get their experienced clerks for some £120 a year. If the hon. member could only give him a list of these prodigies he should be very glad to get it, as he frequently had occasion to fill up these appointments, and he assured hon. members it was the greatest nuisance and difficulty imaginable to find competent clerks for the salaries available. As

to the increase suggested by the hon. member for Perth in the salary of the senior clerk in the Land Titles Office, he was afraid he could do nothing in the matter now, but he could assure the hon. member that the claims of the officer in question would be considered when the Civil Service Commission was appointed.

The departmental vote was then put and passed.

Medical Department, £11,876 13s. :

MR. PARKER—referring to an increase of £25 in the salary of the Colonial Surgeon—asked whether it was not a fact that a *Gazette* notice had recently been issued to the effect that no person entering the civil service after that date would be entitled to medical attendance? If so, it appeared to him that the duties of the Colonial Surgeon would not be increased, but rather the reverse; and he should like to know why it was proposed to increase his salary and at the same time reduce his duties.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said it would be some time at any rate before the duties would be reduced, for there had been a subsequent *Gazette* notice amending the one referred to by the hon. member, and the police and railway employés were still to receive medical attendance. The present Colonial Surgeon was a very old officer, having been in the service a great many years, and it was considered that he was fairly entitled to this small increase.

MR. SHENTON asked for some explanation as to why it was proposed to increase the salary of the Colonial Surgeon at Fremantle to £400 a year.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said the question had been brought before the Finance Committee, and considering that this officer had taken over the Superintendence of the Lunatic Asylum, over which institution he had now full control, since the transfer of the establishment from the Imperial to the Colonial Government, it was felt that he was entitled to this small increase.

MR. SHENTON, referring to the item "Resident Medical Officer, Guildford, £100," asked how it was that the Government proposed to pay a salary to this officer (Mr. Holmes), after the House declining to vote the money last year?

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said the officer referred to had resigned, and another medical gentleman had been appointed.

MR. SHOLL, referring to a new item "Resident Medical Officer, East Kimberley, £300," said he thought it was only in places where there was a sparse population and the private practice was limited that these large supplementary salaries ought to be voted, and not where there was a large population, as was likely to be the case in this district.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said the hon. member must be aware of the difficulty they had in getting any medical man to go to the Gascoyne. They increased the pay to £250, and then he wouldn't go. He was afraid they would experience the same difficulty in getting anyone to go to Wyndham. There was not such a large population there; they were all going or gone to the goldfields.

MR. CROWTHER asked whether the Government had any intention of enlarging and improving the accommodation now provided at the Fremantle Asylum? Was there any chance of making things more comfortable for the wretched inmates of this miserable hovel? If there was any institution connected with the public service of the colony that was a disgrace to the service it was this Asylum. The unfortunates who were confined there were herded together like so many animals, the majority of them through no fault of their own. If they were only a little mad when they were admitted they would soon get mad enough, there being no chance of separating and classifying the patients. Year after year the Surgeon Superintendent urged upon the Government the necessity of some small expenditure being incurred to enable this to be done, so as to add in some little way to the comfort of the inmates, and their prospect of recovery. He hoped the Government would see their way to adopt this recommendation. Nothing very elaborate was wanted; but the present condition of the building was simply disreputable.

MR. BURGESS said he could endorse what had fallen from the hon. member for Greenough. He must say that when he went over this establishment last year

he was horrified, comparing it with similar establishments which he had seen in other parts of the world. It was a disgrace—simply a disgrace to this country having such an establishment, with the meagre accommodation there provided. He did think it was the duty of the Government to devote some of its funds to the improvement of this institution, and that as quickly as possible. As the hon. member for the Greenough had said, if a patient was not very mad at first it was sufficient to make him go mad. He had visited such establishments in other parts of the world and been agreeably surprised to see the accommodation provided, and the care taken of the inmates. Any person who saw the asylum at Fremantle and who said it required no improvement must have very little feeling. He himself saw a young person put in there who was just affected in her mind, and the place he saw her put in was enough to make her a confirmed lunatic for life. He thought it was quite possible that some arrangements might be arrived at for improving the present accommodation. He had a long conversation with the medical officer in charge, and he said he was doing all he could with the means at his command. The place was very nice and clean and well kept, so far as circumstances would allow, but the accommodation was most lamentably deficient—miserable—and he thought it was the duty of the Government to take the matter in hand. If any place above all others required attention it was this lunatic asylum,—much more so than the depôts for paupers, which they talked about.

MR. GRANT thought that no class of the community appealed so much to their sympathy as the unfortunate wretches who were deprived of their reason; and, from what he had heard of the very revolting state of affairs at this Fremantle asylum, he was actually afraid to go to see it. He thought if we professed any feeling of humanity, if we professed any civilisation at all, this establishment should be looked into, for it was no credit to us now.

MR. WITTENOOM said he quite agreed with what had fallen from the hon. member who said that this establishment wanted looking into, and something

done to separate the different classes of patients. There were a good many inmates now, and no doubt there would be many more soon, for he saw it was anticipated by the new land regulations that there would be a great many lunatics whose land would require looking after,—in fact, there was a clause specially dealing with them; and he should not be at all surprised if these land regulations themselves were to send a great many people into the asylum.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith): I can assure hon. members that the Government are quite in accord with them as to the desirability of doing everything that is possible for these lunatics. I have visited this Asylum myself—not recently—and I cannot admit that it is in such a disgraceful state as the hon. member Mr. Burges alleges.

MR. BURGES: I did not say anything about the state of the place, but about the accommodation being very deficient.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith): The hon. member used the words that the whole thing is a disgrace.

MR. BURGES: I did not mean that.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith): I am glad to hear it. The Government have every intention to do all they possibly can—they are quite as much alive to the necessity of it as any hon. member of this House—and as soon as the funds are available they will do what they can to enlarge the present accommodation and to improve the building in every way they can. Hon. members are aware that there are a certain number of Visiting Justices connected with this institution, and, so far as I am aware, no complaints have been received from them. If the state of affairs was such as has been indicated by some hon. members, surely it would have been the duty of these visiting justices to have persisted in bringing the matter before the Government.

MR. SCOTT: I suppose that, as a medical man, I may be presumed to have some knowledge of this institution; and, although, as the Colonial Secretary says, it is kept very clean and all that, the complaint of the medical

officer in charge is that he is unable to separate one class of patients from another. In all Asylums for the insane it is absolutely essential to have some system of separation, and to have the dangerous patients kept apart from the more harmless, and from those whose minds are not so seriously affected; also to separate people who were of decent habits before they went in from those who were the very reverse. Under the present arrangements this is absolutely impossible. I should be glad if the House should see fit to recommend the appointment of a Commission to inquire into this matter during the recess. I think it is urgently required, and, possibly, the question might be dealt with in conjunction with the proposed Benevolent Asylum. The two institutions might be dealt with together. I feel sure, as a medical man—and I have had a good deal of experience now in Perth—that something is required in the direction of enlarging the accommodation and conveniences at this asylum.

MR. LAYMAN said he knew nothing about this lunatic asylum himself, but, if it was true what had fallen from some hon. members, he thought the institution must be a disgrace to the colony.

MR. MARMION said he had the honor of being one of the visiting justices of the Fremantle Lunatic Asylum, and, although he did not pretend that he performed the duties very zealously—or as zealously as some of the other justices—he had frequently visited the institution, and he had never seen any reason to complain either as regards the institution itself or its management. He had always found everything clean, the diet well looked after, the food wholesome, and the officers of the asylum doing their duty properly. The Surgeon Superintendent did all that was possible to be done, with the limited means at his command, and the main cause of complaint was the fact that it was not possible to separate the more dangerous patients from the others. When hon. members talked about this institution, it must not be forgotten that the building was originally built by the Imperial Government for the accommodation of prisoners, and that it had been used as such ever since; and a great proportion of the present inmates were Imperial prisoners; and it

was in consequence of there being no other institution of the kind in the colony that other patients were sent there, and many of these were persons in very humble circumstances of life—very few of them were in a position to pay any large sum for their keep. Therefore he thought, looking at the circumstances under which this institution was originally built and the class of people for whom it was intended, it was hardly fair to compare an institution of this kind with more favorably circumstanced institutions elsewhere. He had heard complaints as to the want of additional accommodation, and no doubt that was wanted,—as had frequently been pointed out by the medical officer in charge. He had sat on one or two commissions and select committees and often heard the Surgeon Superintendent complain of this; so as to enable him to separate the worst patients from those who were only temporarily afflicted, and who under more favorable conditions might have a chance of recovering. No doubt some amount of expenditure in this direction was necessary and advisable; but, until we could afford to go to the expense of building a new asylum of a more suitable character altogether, and expend more money in the management of it, he did not think it would be desirable to make any violent changes in the present institution, except in the direction indicated. Some rather sensational remarks had been made in the course of this discussion, and one would think that the establishment was conducted in a manner that was a discredit to the Government and to those in charge. [SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: No, no.] He should be sorry the impression should go forth outside that such was the case, for really it was not.

THE HON. J. G. LEE-STEERE: I must say it was with great regret that I heard the hon. member opposite (Mr. Burges) making the statements he did with regard to this Asylum; and I cannot help thinking that they were greatly exaggerated, and were likely to bring discredit upon the colony, if the debates that take place in this House are read outside the colony, for certainly the impression which the hon. member's remarks were calculated to create was such as to lead people to believe that we have

a most disgraceful Government here, in allowing such a state of things to exist. I was chairman of the select committee that, two years ago, went down to inspect and report upon this institution, and several other members of this House were on that committee, and certainly the impression we formed of the establishment was very different from the impression which appears to have been made on the hon. member opposite. We found the place conducted with great regularity, the strictest cleanliness prevailed—[Mr. BURGES: I admit all that.] The hon. member, by the words he made use of, did not lead us to believe so. The hon. member talked about the place being in a disgraceful state. All I can say is, we found the place very well conducted; the grounds I thought were very pleasant grounds for the poor people confined there, and there was nothing about the place to lead to the impression conveyed by the hon. member's remarks. The only improvement that I think was suggested by the Surgeon Superintendent was that there should be some extra accommodation provided for those persons of a superior position of life, who were able to pay for such accommodation. I am not aware whether this extra accommodation has been provided; but, even if it has not, there is no reason why the hon. member should speak—as I cannot help thinking he has—in such an exaggerated way; and I hope the impression will not get abroad that this Asylum is in such a disgraceful state as the hon. member's remarks would lead one to suppose.

MR. BURGES again disclaimed any intention of casting any reflections upon the management of the institution; all he complained about was the inadequacy of the accommodation.

CAPTAIN FAWCETT said he had visited this Asylum at Fremantle, and he must say that he was very much struck with the good order and cleanliness that prevailed throughout the entire establishment. We could not afford to have such institutions as those at Colney Hatch or Hanwell; and, from all he could learn, the only reform required in connection with the Fremantle Asylum was improved accommodation for such patients as were in a position to pay for private apartments. It was ridiculous to say that the institution was a disgrace to

the colony, for it was nothing of the kind. It was a very respectable asylum.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the Government having already expressed their views on the subject, and obtained an expression of the general sense of the House, he thought the matter might now be allowed to rest.

The vote was then agreed to.
Progress reported.

The House adjourned at a quarter to eleven o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 23rd August, 1886.

Estimated Revenue for 1887—Reappropriation Bill, 1886: first reading—Appointment of a third Judge of Supreme Court—Vote for survey of a Railway from Geraldton to Mullewa—Refund of duty on steamer imported by James Clarke & Co.—Perth Gas Company Bill: second reading—Admission of Practitioners, Supreme Court—Land Regulations: further consideration of—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

ESTIMATED REVENUE FOR 1887.

MR. PARKER: I wish, sir, with leave, without notice, to ask the Acting Colonial Secretary a question. In the Estimates of revenue for the ensuing year I do not see any special mention of the sums which will be paid to this Government by the Imperial Government in connection with the transfer of the Convict Establishment.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith): The hon. member will find it included under the head of "Reimbursements-in-aid."

MR. PARKER: Will the hon. gentleman inform me what the amount of the reimbursement under this particular head is?

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith): About £5,500.

RE-APPROPRIATION BILL, 1886.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith), with leave, without notice, moved the first reading of a Bill for the Re-appropriation of a portion of certain moneys appropriated for Harbor Works at Fremantle by the Loan Act, 1884.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

APPOINTMENT OF A THIRD JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT.

MR. SHOLL, in accordance with notice, moved the following resolution: "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, informing him that in view of the great increase of business of the Supreme Court, the necessity for holding sittings of the Court in the Northern Districts from time to time, and the advisability of strengthening the Court of Appeal, this House is of opinion that it is expedient to appoint a third Judge to the Court; and this Council respectfully prays His Excellency to be pleased to take the necessary steps to give effect to this address." The hon. member said it would be in the recollection of the House that when the question of the appointment of a second Judge came before it two or three years ago it was then argued that the appointment would save the colony a great deal of money, because the new Judge would be able to go on circuit to the outlying districts, and so save the country the expense of bringing down witnesses and prisoners to Perth from long distances. Since the appointment of a Puisne Judge he believed that His Honor had been on circuit two or three times, but, latterly, owing to the pressure of work in the Supreme Court, he had been unable to do so; and the inconvenience which the appointment was intended to remove appeared now to be as great as ever. He thought that, in justice to the inhabitants of the outlying districts, it was advisable now that there should be a third Judge appointed, who would be able to visit these country districts and