

Commissioner. The question was not one of engineering skill at all, but simply of common sense.

The amendment was agreed to, and the original amendment, as amended—put and passed.

MR. MARMION moved, That the Select Committee should report to the House next day.

Agreed to.

#### EASTERN RAILWAY EXTENSION BILL.

The House then went into Committee for the further consideration of this Bill, when

MR. SHENTON moved, That Progress be reported, and leave given to sit again on the following day.

The motion was affirmed, and Progress reported accordingly.

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

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#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

*Friday, 25th March, 1881.*

Eastern Railway: Route through Stirling Square, Guildford: Report of Select Committee—Alienation of Waste Lands of the Crown for the purposes of Railway Construction—Eastern Railway Extension: Survey from Chidlow's Well—Concessions to Bunbury Jarrah Timber Co.—Closure of Street in Guildford Bill: second reading; in committee—Messages (Nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8)—Stamp Duties Bill: second reading—Jury Act Amendment Bill: second reading; in committee—Railways Act Amendment Bill: recommitted—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

#### EASTERN RAILWAY: ROUTE THROUGH STIRLING SQUARE.

MR. STEERE brought up the following report of the Select Committee appointed on the 24th March to proceed to

the locality of the proposed deviation of the Eastern Railway at Guildford, and examine the same, with a view of giving further information to the House as to the report of the Director of Public Works, that "grave and all but insurmountable difficulties exist" to making the deviation suggested by the Council: "Your Committee, in accordance with the instructions of Your Honorable House, proceeded to Guildford this day, accompanied by the Commissioner of Railways and the Resident Engineer of the Eastern Railway. We inspected the surveyed route through Stirling Square, and we think the practical value of the square would be destroyed in that portion through which it is proposed to carry the line of railway, as well as that part lying to the South. We also found that this route passes within three feet of the building known as the Colonial Hospital.

"We also carefully inspected an alternative line going through James Street and Mangles Street, a plan of which is attached to this Report, which will, without very materially increasing the cost, inconvenience, or danger, obviate the necessity of going through Stirling Square, whilst, at the same time, compensation will not have to be paid to the owners of Guildford Town Lots 39, 40, 41, 42, and 43, through which the surveyed line now passes, and which would amount to a considerable sum. If the Council adheres to its resolution to deviate from the surveyed line, Your Committee have prepared an amendment to be inserted in the Schedule attached to the Railway Extension Bill.

"The evidence of Mr. Thomas and Mr. Mason is attached herewith. (*Vide* Sessional Paper A 1.)

"Mr. Brown and Mr. Fraser, although agreeing in some portions of the above Report, do not feel justified in stating that grave and insurmountable difficulties do not exist to making the deviation suggested by a majority of the Select Committee,—and are of opinion that the value of Stirling Square, as a recreation ground, would not be 'practically destroyed' by the railway being carried along the line at present surveyed, because a considerable space would still be left on the North side of the railway, as well as one of moderate

"size on the South, which might be utilised in the manner suggested by the Commissioner of Railways. Whilst of opinion that, if the railway is carried along the surveyed line, the utility of the Hospital for the purpose for which it is at present used would be destroyed, they think the fact of little importance in the consideration of the route, as the building is of little value, and a Hospital can be provided elsewhere.

"JAS. G. LEE STEERE,

"Chairman of Select Committee."

MR. STEERE moved, That the Report be printed, with the evidence, and that it be taken into consideration at the next sitting of the House.

Agreed to.

#### ALIENATION OF WASTE LANDS FOR PUBLIC WORKS.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an Humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will take steps to ascertain whether the Imperial Government would be pleased to sanction the alienation of Waste Lands of the Crown in this Colony for the construction of Public Works, and would promote an endeavour on the part of the Local Government to open up the resources of the South Western portion of this Province, by negotiating for the construction of a Railroad between the Eastern Districts and King George's Sound on the Land Grant system." The hon. member said he did not wish to take up the time of the House, seeing that it had other very important business before it; but still he should like to say a few words in submitting this resolution for its affirmation. He dared say some hon. members might think this was scarcely the time to bring forward a motion of this kind,—that, when we were about to commence a railway which would tax our resources for some time to come, another undertaking of even still greater magnitude should be projected. But it seemed to him that this was exactly the time that should be chosen for such a purpose, and for this reason: he feared that in extending this railway to the Eastern Districts we were, so to speak, playing our last card—that when we had

completed the line, not to Chidlow's Springs, but to its eastern terminus, York, it would be almost out of the question, that, with our present resources, we should undertake any other important works necessary for the progress of the Colony. As had been remarked by the hon. member for Fremantle, in moving the Address in Reply, if we wish to have railways and telegraphs, and other luxuries of civilised life, if we desire to carry out all those public works which are necessary for the advancement and welfare of the Colony, we must be prepared to pay for them; and, at present, it seemed to him that, with the revenue we now had, it would be almost impossible for us to take upon ourselves the burden of another loan, after the railway which we were about to commence had been carried to its destination. In order to obtain an additional revenue, it was absolutely necessary that we should have a larger population; and how we were going to do that, he failed at present to see. It was simply impossible for us to endeavour to extract any larger amount of revenue out of our present population than we do already,—probably it was as large a revenue as was extracted in any part of the world from so small a number of people. It might be possible to distribute the incidence of taxation, and to have resort to a more direct system than that at present obtaining; but it appeared to him that it would be futile to attempt to raise any much larger amount of taxation out of our present population than we do now, and, consequently, impossible to further increase our public debt, after we had expended the money which we would have to borrow to complete the railway to the Eastern Districts. He was therefore afraid that unless we adopted some other means towards promoting the progress of the Colony, we should relapse into a state of stagnation. It was for this reason that he wanted the House that evening to affirm the desirability of initiating a policy having for its object the utilisation of the Waste Lands of the Crown, in order to obtain from outside capital those means of progress and development which, without an increase of population and with our own resources, he was afraid it would be

impossible for us to obtain. Most members who had seats in the House during Governor Weld's Administration were aware of the extreme interest which His Excellency took in the welfare and advancement of the Colony; in fact, he might say, it was only under Governor Weld's Administration that the Government of this Colony ever had anything in the shape of a policy at all. Governor Weld, before he went away, took the opportunity of making a personal inspection of the line of country eastward of Kojonup and the Williams, in order to see if something could not be done in the direction contemplated in the motion now before the House; and His Excellency's very last words to him, when quitting our shores, were not to lose sight of this object. Shortly afterwards, when our present Governor had succeeded Mr. Weld, bearing in mind the departed Governor's words, he (the hon. baronet) went and had a look at the country referred to. Of course, in a flying trip like that, he could not expect to obtain much information, but still he had been quite astonished to find such an extensive area of good land. He might say that there was a belt of very useful agricultural land running right through from Beverley past the Williams and Elicup towards the Stirling Range. It was true that there was very little good land beyond the Stirling Range, but still the extent of country available for settlement and cultivation, between the Eastern Districts and the heads of the Gordon, had really astonished him. Governor Weld told him that if he had remained in the Colony, it would have been his policy to endeavour to have a railway carried through this country, and to place a population upon it. He did not know in what way His Excellency proposed to carry out this object, whether by means of the land grant system or otherwise. Regarded from a theoretical point of view, such a project was one that had always commended itself to his mind, but, until lately, he had thought it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to induce capitalists from outside to undertake such a work. Until recently, it was only in America that the system of constructing railways on the land grant system was adopted; in that country many railways had been so constructed.

But the land given there was of a very different character to what we in this Colony have to offer. Lately, as hon. members were aware, the dominion of Canada had been going in for railway construction partly under the system referred to, and partly by money grants. But that, again, did not appear to his mind a fair indication of what Western Australia could expect to do. No doubt hon. members had read Sir Alexander Galt's report on this Canadian project, and the glowing prospects which it presented, by reason of the immense areas of magnificent land which the railway would open up. Of course no such inducement could be offered to capitalists here. But when Queensland went in for the same thing, his hopes began to rise. Although in this Colony we have nothing comparable with the land which Queensland possesses, still the portion of country where it is proposed to have resort to this system of railway construction in Queensland is not largely available for agricultural areas, and the line for some considerable distance would run through extensive table lands subject to severe droughts and floods, which rendered the country unadaptable for agricultural purposes. When, however, he found that South Australia, probably inspired by the practical turn given to this great question by the action of the Queensland Government, also put forward the prospectus of a transcontinental railway on the land grant system, his hopes for the adoption of such a system by this Colony were very considerably heightened, seeing that the country through which it is proposed to carry the South Australian line is country totally unfavorable, so far as he knew, for agricultural purposes. He believed the Government of that Colony had secured nearly the whole of the agricultural areas of the province, so that the projected company would have to depend upon the inland plains, where there certainly was some very fine pastoral country, but very little if any adapted for agriculture. The line, in fact, would have to traverse 200 or 300 miles of an arid and sterile desert. If, then, South Australia, with all these drawbacks, expected to succeed in inducing capitalists to undertake the construction of its transcontinental line, on the land grant system, without any

additional subsidy, he saw no reason whatever why we should despair of getting something done for ourselves, and why the idea of a railway connecting our Eastern Districts with King George's Sound should not be reckoned within the sphere of possibilities. Of the country between Beverley and the Sound, very little was alienated, and, as he had already said, a great deal of it was very good, useful land, fitted for agricultural purposes, possessing a fine climate, and, as a rule, a rainfall which might be depended upon. It was not merely the opening up of new areas which they must look forward to, in connection with this project; as had been pointed out the other day by his hon. friend on the right (Mr. Burt), it was absurd talking about opening up new country for settlement when we had no population to place upon it. That was just what an outside company would do for us. The only way in which a company could hope to make the undertaking a profitable investment would be by introducing people to settle on the land. An enterprising private company could do this in a way which the Government could not. He really despaired of seeing any large increase of population by any means within our power to adopt, without burdening our limited borrowing capacity with an incubus that we could not bear; and he therefore felt, if we could induce outside capitalists to undertake this work for us, and to construct this railway on the land grant system, it would be the grandest stroke of policy we could possibly go in for. He failed to see that the Secretary of State was likely to interpose any obstacle in the way of this project being carried out. As hon. members were aware, the principle had already been affirmed—a large extent of Crown Lands had already been alienated, not exactly for the purposes of public works, but in the case of our timber companies, for a similar purpose; and he felt certain that no obstruction whatever would be placed in the way of the Colony obtaining such a boon as this, if it is found possible to have the scheme carried out. Hon. members might have read the report, the very able report, on this subject, written by our own Commissioner of Railways shortly after his arrival in the Colony, in which he strongly advocated

that this land grant system should be adopted in the construction of our railways. He would not detain the House at this stage by making any further remarks; he hoped hon. members, by voting with him on the present occasion, would show that in their opinion the question was one which merited attention as the right policy for the future—one which if it could be carried into effect would confer very great advantages upon the Colony.

MR. BURT said he rose with very great pleasure to second the motion. In doing so, there was no necessity, after the exhaustive speech of the hon. baronet who introduced it, for him to dilate upon the importance of the subject. If hon. members would look at the wording of the motion, they would see that it did not commit the House to anything beyond asking for the opinion of the Imperial Government on the question involved, and ascertaining whether they would be inclined to sanction the alienation of the Waste Lands of the Crown for the purposes specified. Of course the House was perfectly well aware that, under our present constitution, they must obtain the sanction of the Secretary of State before they proceeded to deal with these lands in the manner here contemplated, and the resolution simply sought to ascertain whether there was a likelihood of that sanction being obtained. The details of the scheme would be a question for after consideration, if the Imperial Government affirmed the principle involved, which he, for one, earnestly hoped they would.

The resolution was then put and carried unanimously.

#### EASTERN RAILWAY EXTENSION: SURVEY FROM CHIDLOW'S WELL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

MR. STEERE, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an Humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to recommend to the Council an appropriation of such a sum of money as will be sufficient to carry out a further survey from the termination of the Second Section of the Eastern Railway, at Chidlow's Well, in accordance with the Resolution adopted

"by the Council on the 23rd March, and also requesting that the necessary arrangements may be made for carrying out the proposed survey without delay." He thought it must be apparent to all hon. members that it is desirable that the question of the ultimate route of the railway, after getting to Chidlow's Well, should be decided upon as soon as possible, and that therefore they would not hesitate to support the present motion. No time was to be lost in getting the necessary survey made, so as to have it completed before the House came to deal with the third section of the line, so as to avoid any unnecessary delay in extending the railway to its intended destination.

MR. SHENTON said he had already given notice of his intention to move some additional words to the resolution submitted by the hon. member for the Swan, to the effect that, while they were about it, it would be a wise plan also to have a preliminary survey made at the same time from some point near Spencer's Brook to Newcastle, in order to ascertain whether a practicable route can be obtained in that direction. As a staff of surveyors would have to be sent to undertake the survey contemplated in the resolution now before the House, he thought it would be a very economical arrangement that they should be also instructed to test the practicability of a line from the neighborhood of Spencer's Brook to Newcastle, for he felt convinced that, if a practicable route existed in that direction, sooner or later a line would have to be constructed to connect Newcastle and the surrounding districts with the proposed line to York.

MR. STEERE said he had no objection to amalgamating the amendment suggested by the hon. member for Toodyay with the original resolution before the Committee.

The following words proposed by Mr. Shenton were then added to the resolution:—"And that a preliminary survey may also be made at the same time from some point near Spencer's Brook to Newcastle, to ascertain whether a practicable route can be obtained."

MR. STONE regretted he was unable to support the additional clause proposed to be inserted by the hon. member for Toodyay. It appeared to him that the

hon. member hardly yet saw the effect of the resolution adopted by the House the other evening in preference to the amendment proposed by himself (Mr. Stone). That resolution had committed the House to have a survey made, not via Spencer's or any other way in particular, and, at present, they did not know whether the line would be carried via Spencer's Brook or some other route. It might go ten, fifteen, twenty, or thirty miles away from the Brook; if so, and the amendment suggested by the hon. member were carried, and acted upon, the money expended in surveying that route would be completely thrown away. If the House had committed itself, as he had desired it should, to a survey from Spencer's Brook or its vicinity to York, then he should have gone most heartily with this amendment, and have the line also surveyed from Spencer's Brook or its vicinity to Newcastle. But, as he had just pointed out, if the House were to affirm this amendment now, the money expended in surveying this line might possibly be money entirely thrown away, and he did not think the Colony was in a position to throw any money away, especially in view of the conditions upon which the Secretary of State would be prepared to sanction the further extension of the line at all. His Lordship's words were: "I trust I may not receive any further proposals for an increase of the debt of Western Australia until the financial equilibrium of the Colony can be shown to be satisfactorily established." He thought that, in the face of that statement, it behoved them to be very careful indeed in not spending more money than was absolutely necessary. For this reason he would move, That all the words after the word "delay," in the original resolution, be struck out.

MR. STEERE: As there seems to be a difference of opinion as to the advisability of incorporating the amendment with the resolution which I submitted, would it not be better, rather than jeopardise the original proposal, to put my motion first?

MR. SHENTON: It is too late to do that now. The hon. member has already accepted my amendment.

MR. BROWN said that, although the House had not in distinct terms committed itself to a survey via Spencer's

Brook to York, still no doubt that was the intention of the Council. The resolution adopted on the subject did not, in so many words, show that to be the case, but he thought that, in effect, it meant precisely that. It was true the Government were not expressly requested to have a survey made from Spencer's Brook to York, but there were words introduced into the resolution which left the Government to adopt any route, which, without any greatly increased cost, would afford greater facilities to the whole of the settlers of the Eastern Districts than the direct line to York. And unless this survey takes place in the vicinity of Spencer's Brook, it would be impossible that the line would be one affording greater facilities than the direct line to all the settlers of the Eastern Districts. That must be manifest, because the majority of the settlers lived at York and to the north of York, and therefore this survey, to fulfil the conditions mentioned, must go in that direction.

MR. BURT viewed this resolution of the hon. member for Swan with some degree of apprehension. He thought the hon. member had lost sight of the result of the traditional policy of that House in allowing the Government to have a longer tether than was absolutely necessary, as regards expenditure; and he hoped some hon. member would introduce an amendment limiting the amount to be spent upon these surveys.

MR. BROWN pointed out that the resolution merely asked the Governor to recommend to the Council an appropriation of such a sum of money as would be sufficient for the object in view. He was not aware from what source the hon. member for the Swan intended this money to come, but, in his (Mr. Brown's) opinion, all expenditure in connection with this railway extension should be provided for out of the loan. This had been adopted on former occasions when the survey expenditure was included in the Loan Bill, and he did not think it would be foreign to the intention of the House if this were done with regard to the present Bill—that a portion of the £100,000 should be appropriated to cover the cost of these further surveys. He believed the Government was already in possession of the balance of a sum appro-

priated for surveys on a former occasion, but he did not suppose there was enough to cover the cost of the surveys now proposed, and he thought the remainder ought to be provided for out of the proposed loan.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) did not see that, on the part of the Government, there could be the slightest objection to the amendment of the hon. member for Toodyay. The address merely asked His Excellency to recommend to the Council a certain appropriation for survey purposes. At the proper time, the Government would come forward and say whether they considered it expedient to make such a recommendation, and would give their reasons for adopting whatever course which to them appeared most desirable to adopt.

MR. STONE said they did not know yet whether the £100,000 which they were allowed to borrow would take the line as far as Chidlow's Springs, to say nothing of appropriating a portion of the money for further surveys. The House should exercise great care and caution in this matter, so as not to jeopardise the completion of the second section of the line to the point indicated.

MR. MARMION thought the hon. member for Toodyay might be very fairly asked to withdraw his amendment, bearing in mind that the House would be in Session again within a few months, and that it would be then quite time enough, if the House considered it necessary, to vote any additional sum for a survey of the line from Spencer's Brook to Newcastle. The House would then be in a position to say whether the line would go to York *via* Spencer's Brook or not. The hon. member had done all he could for his constituents, and, knowing that, and seeing the difference of opinion there existed as to his amendment, he thought the hon. member might be content with the satisfaction of having done his duty towards the district which he represented, and withdraw his amendment.

MR. SHENTON: No, no.

MR. MARMION: Then, I shall feel it my duty to oppose it, at the present time.

MR. SHENTON said if he were to put it off until next Session, the matter might be shelved for two or three years longer. As they were about to under-

take surveys in this locality, he thought the best thing to do was to utilise the survey staff employed by having a preliminary survey made of this other line as well, so as to ascertain the character of the country. If this were done, he thought it would tend in a great measure to allay the agitation now going on in favor of the Chittering line.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow):** It is not my intention to oppose this resolution, which is simply intended to extract an expression of opinion from His Excellency as to whether he is prepared to recommend to the House that a sum of money should be appropriated for certain survey purposes. Far be it from me to say what His Excellency's reply to that will be, but I wish the House to consider, if it passes this resolution, the position it will be in with regard to the resolution adopted the other night. That resolution was very carefully worded, and it was distinctly understood to amount to this and this only—that every penny of the proposed loan shall be expended upon a direct line to York, unless the Secretary of State sanctions a deviation. You cannot get out of that resolution. You cannot twist it into any other shape than that. But what does the hon. member for Toodyay now propose? He does not exactly propose to expend the money upon the construction of a line other than the direct line, but he proposes what is tantamount to it, namely, that a portion of it should be appropriated for the survey of a line other than the direct line.

**MR. SHENTON:** I never said anything about the cost of the survey coming out of the loan money, or from any other source but the general revenue.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow):** The hon. member may show good grounds for incurring this expenditure out of the general revenue; and, if so, my remarks were not to the point; any objection I can see to the resolution disappears, and I, for one, will be happy to see time taken by the forelock as regards these surveys.

**MR. BURT:** My hon. and learned friend on the other side appears in this case on the part of the loan. I appear on behalf of the general revenue. I object to this

sop being thrown to any outside agitators. There is not the slightest chance of carrying this line to Newcastle for the next ten years at the very least, and what is the good of our spending money that we can ill afford in a preliminary survey now?

Mr. Stone's amendment—to strike out the words added to the original resolution by Mr. Shenton—was then put, and, upon a division, there appeared:

Ayes	...	...	14
Noes	...	...	1
Majority for			13

AYES.  
 Lord Gifford  
 The Hon. A. C. Onslow  
 The Hon. M. Fraser  
 Mr. Brown  
 Mr. Burges  
 Mr. Burt  
 Mr. Carey  
 Mr. Higham  
 Mr. Marmion  
 Mr. S. S. Parker  
 Mr. Randell  
 Mr. Steere  
 Mr. Venn  
 Mr. Stone (Teller.)

NOES.  
 Mr. Shenton (Teller.)

The amendment was therefore carried, and the original resolution put and passed.

#### CONCESSIONS TO BUNBURY JARRAH TIMBER COMPANY.

**MR. CAREY,** in accordance with notice, moved, "That an Humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to communicate to the Council what action has been taken with reference to Address No. 10 presented to His Excellency at the last Session of this Council?" It would be in the recollection of hon. members that, last Session, he presented a memorial from the Bunbury Jarrah Timber Company, praying for certain concessions, and at the same time he moved that the prayer of the memorialists be acceded to. That motion was affirmed by the House, but no reply whatever had been received by the Company as to the intentions of the Government in the matter. The present address simply asked His Excellency to communicate to the House what action had been taken by the Government to carry out the prayer of the memorialists, which had been approved by the Legislature.

The motion was carried *nem. con.*

## CLOSURE OF STREET IN GUILDFORD BILL.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) moved the second reading of a Bill to make it lawful to close up a certain street in the town of Guildford. He hoped the Bill would not be sent to a premature grave, or consigned to the limbo of parliamentary abortions, like the Pinjarrah Street Bill, but that the House would accept it without demur. It was but a little one, and the street which it was proposed to close was correspondingly small. In fact it had never existed as a street, except in the records of the Survey Office, but it had been occupied for many years past by a person named Jones, upon some understanding between him and the town trust. Latterly he had refused to pay any rent, and had applied to the Land Office to support his position. As the Government required a portion of the land for railway purposes, and it was desirable that they should have an unalienable right to the same, the present Bill was introduced, enacting that the street in question—that part of Terrace Road from its junction with East Street to the Helena River—should be closed, and cease to be a public street. That was the object now in view.

The Bill was read a second time, and passed through Committee *sub silentio*.

## MESSAGE (No. 5): ATTORNEY GENERAL'S SALARY.

MR. SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:—

"Referring to Sessional Paper No. 8, of 1875, the Governor desires to inform Your Honorable Council, that the Secretary of State believing, not without reason from the tenor of the correspondence, that it was intended to add £100 a year to the Salary of the Attorney General, and not only to that of Mr. Hocking personally, offered the appointment of Attorney General to Mr. Onslow at £600 a year, and Mr. Onslow has accordingly come here in the expectation of receiving that salary. In order not to embarrass the Government in any way Mr. Onslow has drawn salary since his arrival at the rate of £500

"a-year only, but the Governor believes that Your Honorable Council will recognise the propriety of granting him the higher rate, and trust that you will place on record your approval of this recommendation.

"Government House, Perth, 25th March, 1881."

The consideration of the Message was made an Order of the Day for Monday, 28th March.

## MESSAGE (No. 6): "OTWAY" AND "ROB ROY" CONTRACT.

MR. SPEAKER announced the receipt of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:—

"In compliance with the request contained in your Address No. 4, of the 23rd inst., the Governor forwards herewith a copy of the Contract between the Government and the owners of the *Otway and Rob Roy*.

"Government House, Perth, 25th March, 1881."

The consideration of the Message was made an Order of the Day for Monday, 28th March.

## MESSAGE (No. 7): ENCLOSING MEMORANDUM FROM THE HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC.

MR. SPEAKER also notified the receipt of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:—

"With reference to his Message No. 2, of the 22nd instant, the Governor has the honor to forward a copy of a letter which he has received from Her Majesty's High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, enclosing a Memorandum by the High Commissioner on statements contained in the Appendix to the Minutes of the Intercolonial Conference lately held at Sydney.

"Government House, Perth, 25th March, 1881."

## MESSAGE (No. 8): EASTERN RAILWAY EXTENSION.

MR. SPEAKER also announced the receipt of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:—

"The Governor has had under his consideration your Address No. 3, on the subject of the Eastern Railway. The Governor understands Your Honorable



"Council to mean that you wish the line "proceeded with as far as Chidlow's "Spring as the first section of the direct "route approved by the Secretary of "State; that while this section is in progress you would wish fresh surveys to "be made between Chidlow's Spring and "York *via* Spencer's Brook, in order to "ascertain whether any easier and more "practicable route, affording greater "general facilities than the direct one, "could be adopted; and that failing to "discover such preferable alternative "route, or to procure the sanction of the "Secretary of State to deviation from the "line on which the work has been approved, you will still carry out the "original intention of proceeding direct "to York.

"On this understanding, the Government will at once proceed with the Loan "and Railway Bills which are now before "you, and will commence the extension "to Chidlow's Spring with as little delay "as possible.

"Government House, Perth, 25th "March, 1881."

The consideration of this Message was likewise made an Order of the Day for Monday, 28th March.

#### STAMP DUTIES BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford), in accordance with notice, moved the second reading of a Bill to impose certain Stamp Duties. Hon. members were aware that it was resolved last Session, provided railway extension were sanctioned by the Imperial Government, that this Legislature would introduce concurrently with the Loan Bill a Bill to impose Stamp Duties, so as to provide towards payment of the interest on the loan. The computation which the Government had made as to the probable revenue which would be derived under the present Bill was not more than £3,500—of course this was a mere estimate. The Government, however, he might say, had been greatly assisted in forming this estimate, and in the preparation of the schedule of the Bill, by bankers, merchants, and others, and this was the estimate which they had arrived at. The Bill would probably have to be amended in some respects in Committee; it was not regarded by the Government

as altogether perfect, but His Excellency did not feel justified in altering to any great extent the lines of the Bill which was presented to the House during the Session of 1879. They were therefore in this position—they would only be too glad and willing to listen to any amendment calculated to improve the usefulness of the Bill. The Government had no reason to suppose that the measure would press very heavily upon any particular section of the community; its incidence would, it was believed, be pretty evenly distributed among those best able to bear the burden of additional taxation. Probably it would press more heavily upon bankers than upon others, but these gentlemen should not forget that, as a set-off for this, the Bill was calculated to do them an undoubtedly good turn, inasmuch as it was proposed to levy a tax of 1d. upon all cheques drawn upon them, which could not fail to render the drawing of cheques for trifling amounts of less frequent occurrence than was the custom now, and which consequently would relieve the Banks of a considerable amount of trouble. The Bill might appear at first sight a somewhat cumbersome one, but he did not think it would be found so in its operation, especially when the public became used to it. It was not intended to bring the Act into force until the 1st of January next, but that was a question entirely at the option of the House. As soon as the Loan Bill was sanctioned, he could assure hon. members, the Government would only be too happy to see its way clear to get some money to provide for the interest. With regard to the expenses incidental to putting the Bill in motion—the obtaining of the necessary supply of stamps, there were two or three courses open for them. One would be the utilisation of the ordinary postage stamps, to which, however, there was this drawback: these stamps only represented small values, and, in some instances, where the duty to be paid amounted to a considerable sum, a document would have to be completely covered with these stamps before their value represented the amount of duty payable. The other course open was to get revenue stamps made for the purpose, representing the various sums payable under the Act; this, with the necessary plates, it was

estimated would cost altogether about £580. Or, if the House thought fit, they could go in for still more expensive dies, which being more elaborate would offer more serious obstacles in the way of forgers or other dishonest persons. But the more elaborate plates and dies, with all the necessary accessories, it was estimated would involve an outlay of about £2,295. It would be for the House to consider which they would prefer: he would merely point out that if they went in for the more expensive and elaborate sort of stamps the first outlay would make a very big hole in the revenue expected to be derived from the Bill. It was proposed at present that the Colonial Treasurer shall be the only person authorised, in the first instance, to issue the stamps, and a great deal of responsibility was cast upon that officer by the Bill; it would therefore not be surprising that he should also be clothed with a considerable amount of power, for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of the Act. It would be his duty to determine whether certain documents were properly stamped, and also to remit fines if satisfied that the omission to stamp any document was the result of unavoidable accident, or arose from any urgent necessity. The Bill also provided that bankers shall furnish a quarterly return to the Treasurer, showing the value of the notes they had in circulation, and, instead of paying a stamp duty upon these, the Treasurer would be satisfied if they paid every quarter a lump sum representing  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per centum per annum upon the average amount or value of the notes in circulation. Penalties were provided, of various degrees of severity, for breaches of the provisions of the Act, and every information was given as to the proper amount of duty payable upon various kinds of documents. When any doubt existed on this point, a reference could be made to the Colonial Treasurer. He need not enumerate the several sorts of documents or instruments coming under the provisions of the Bill; a reference to the schedule would show hon. members the scale of duties proposed to be imposed. This scale would no doubt require to be amended when the House went into Committee on the Bill, and the Government, he might add, would

be prepared to listen to any reasonable readjustment of the schedule. He did not think it was necessary for him to say any more: the House had, by its resolutions of last year, affirmed the principle of the Bill, the second reading of which he now begged to move.

The Bill was read a second time, without discussion.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) then moved, That it be now considered in Committee of the whole.

MR. BURT opposed the motion on the ground that the House had not had sufficient time to consider the provisions of the Bill, or to gather the opinions of the outside public with reference to it, and more especially the opinions of the banking and commercial sections of the community. A Bill like this required to be very carefully considered in all its bearings, as it very materially interfered with the present system of doing business, and, no doubt, on its first introduction, would be attended by a considerable amount of embarrassment and annoyance to all classes. He did not think the House would be breaking any faith whatever with the Government if—having affirmed the principle of the Bill by agreeing to its second reading—the motion for going into Committee upon it were postponed until the ordinary Session of the Council, which, he supposed, would take place as usual, in the course of three or four months hence. The House, he was aware, had agreed last Session to give its support to a Stamp Duty Bill, if brought forward concurrently with a Railway Loan Bill; but that promise was not made with regard to this particular measure, and the understanding was that such a Bill should be introduced in the event of the Secretary of State sanctioning a loan of £300,000, and not a moiety of that amount. As the Governor was not in a position to introduce such a Loan Bill as the House contemplated when it agreed to support a Stamp Duty Bill, it appeared to him that His Excellency had no right to insist upon the House carrying out its part of the agreement. There was no wish, however, on the part of the House to repudiate its agreement; in fact, it had already, and without a dissentient voice, affirmed the principle of the Bill, and his only objection to going into

Committee upon it now was that no time had been afforded the members of that House or the outside public to consider the scope and the provisions of the Bill in all its bearings. Nothing would be lost by postponing the committal of the Bill until the usual Session of the Council, as the revenue which it was intended to produce would not be required until the interest on the loan would become due. If he thought for a moment that the fate of the Bill would be jeopardised, or that there was any probability of the House repudiating its promise to support such a Bill, he should be the last man to propose that its committal be postponed, as he now suggested; but, as there was no such probability, and as he thought it would be well that hon. members should have more time to consider the provisions of the Bill, and to ascertain the views entertained with regard to it by the commercial and banking community, who would be most deeply affected by it, he thought the Government and the House might fairly be asked to agree to the course which he proposed should be adopted. He understood from the right hon. gentleman, the leader of the Government, who moved the second reading of the Bill, that, in the event of the House resolving upon having a certain class of stamps for the purposes of the Bill, it would entail an expenditure of upwards of £2,000 to obtain the necessary dies and plates for executing the stamps. Inasmuch as some people, who were in a position to form a reliable opinion on the subject, doubted whether the entire revenue which would be derived from the Bill would exceed that amount—its most sanguine friends only anticipated a revenue of about £4,000 a year from it—he thought that an outlay of £2,000 was a very large expenditure to incur for so small a result.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Hon. A. C. Onslow): I would beg to remind the hon. member that, even in the profession of which he is a shining light, special pleading has for some time past been abolished. I say special pleading, for I consider that it is only by such pleading that the hon. member now wishes to persuade this House that it is in no way pledged to give its adherence to the Bill now before it. He has told us that when the House did pledge itself

to support such a measure, it did so on the understanding that we were to receive £300,000 from the Secretary of State, but that, inasmuch as we have not got that sum, we are in no way pledged to support a Stamp Bill. I hope hon. members are not going to be led away by such pleading as that. I conceive that this House, when it affirmed the resolutions of last Session requesting the sanction of the Secretary of State to the introduction of a Loan Bill, and when it expressed its readiness to give its support to a Stamp Bill in order to provide an additional revenue for meeting the expenditure connected with the proposed loan,—I conceive that the House when it did that, pledged itself to introduce, or at any rate to support, a Stamp Bill of some sort, to meet the interest which the Colony is not in a position to pay in respect of this loan without having resort to that means of augmenting the revenue. The Colony is not in a position to pay the interest on a further loan of £150,000 any more than it would be upon £300,000, without a stamp duty or some other additional tax; and although the Secretary of State has only granted one half of our request, as regards the loan, we are just as much pledged to bring in a Stamp Bill to meet the interest on the amount of that loan as if the whole of it had been sanctioned. I cannot see how it can be argued before reasonable men that, because the Secretary of State, for the present, has only sanctioned a moiety of the loan, we are not called upon to do anything to provide for the payment of the interest on that amount. If I call that special pleading, I don't think that I am likely to be contradicted. With reference to the allegation that the House has not had time to consider this Bill sufficiently, the Bill, as was pointed out by my right hon. colleague, when moving its second reading, is identical with that introduced in this House two years ago; and although the present Council was not in existence then, still it cannot be denied that this House last year expressed its willingness to give its support to such a Bill. Hon. members therefore have had all that time to consider the Bill. [Mr. BURT: No, no.] I may be wrong. (Mr. BURT: I never saw the Bill until a few days ago.) Then I beg the hon. member's pardon. At any rate the Bill is not by any means

a novelty in legislation. It has been in existence in the mother country for many years and also in the other colonies and has already been before the public and before the Legislature here; and I put it to the House, as a matter of "common sense"—an argument which I am sure will commend itself to the hon. member for the Murray—whether there is a section or a provision in the whole Bill which men of business in the Colony have not, in the course of their ordinary transactions, come in contact with—if not in connection with this Bill, in connection with Bills of a similar character in operation in countries with which they have commercial relations. I think I may fairly say that all the provisions of the Bill are, more or less, within the knowledge of every man of business in the Colony. And do not hon. members all say that they are men of business? As to the costliness of its provisions, my right hon. friend at the head of the Government has given the House an idea of the expense which the Bill will entail, in case hon. members think it necessary to introduce elaborate and costly plates or dies; but he also explained to the House that we are not bound to provide such expensive implements, and the Bill itself makes provision for the use of ordinary postage stamps for the payment of the duties which it imposes, so that not one penny need necessarily be expended in carrying out the provisions of the Bill in this respect, at present. When we see how it works, and what amount of revenue it brings in, it will then be for the House, by a resolution or otherwise, to determine whether it would be desirable to introduce these dies; but until that occasion arises, you need not spend a penny in plates or dies for expressing or denoting any duty chargeable under the Bill. These, I understand, are the only difficulties which the hon. member has to raise against the consideration of the measure in Committee, and I think I have thrown them to the wind. I must remind the House that the Government does consider that the Legislature is pledged to pass this Bill—I do not say in its integrity—it may be amended in Committee as much as hon. members consider advisable—we do not pledge you to pass it in its present shape; but the Government does consider itself

bound to see that, unless this Stamp Bill shall pass, or some measure be carried to secure the payment of the interest and the expenses of the proposed loan, the Loan Bill itself shall not be proceeded with.

MR. BURT rose to make a personal explanation. The hon. gentleman had not understood him. The contention which he had put forward was this: That between this time and next Session of Council we shall not be called upon to provide a penny of interest on the loan. By that time, probably, we shall not have even raised the loan, and certainly shall not be required to pay a penny of interest upon it. It was upon that ground mainly, and in order to enable hon. members to thoroughly grasp the provisions of the Bill, that he had suggested that its committal be postponed.

MR. MARMION considered that the House was certainly pledged to pass a Stamp Bill, and it had that evening affirmed the principle of the Bill; at the same time, he thought it would be advisable that a further opportunity should be afforded hon. members to consider the details of the measure. They had, on previous occasions, ample evidence of the folly of rushing Bills of this character through the House; they had discovered afterwards that very grave mistakes had been committed, and hon. members had consequently caused themselves to look foolish, not only in the eyes of the public of this Colony, but of outsiders. [MR. BURT: The Match Bill for instance.] He thought, under these circumstances, it would be well if the Government were to consider the suggestions of the hon. member for the Murray, and that the short interval which was likely to occur between this and the next Session should be granted to hon. members—who had already affirmed the principle of the Bill, and, who, consequently, could not consistently depart from the position they had taken up with regard to it—to enable them to consider its details, so that, in the interests of the Colony and of the Legislature, and of the Government itself, they might be in a position next Session to pass a Bill that would be a credit to the House and to the Government.

MR. STONE could not conceive how the Government could act otherwise than

as had been stated by the Attorney General they would act, in the event of this Bill not being passed. It appeared that those hon. members who had spoken in favor of putting off the Bill until a more convenient season, merely desired to have the Loan Bill fixed and secured, without giving the Government any guarantee that they will provide a revenue to meet the interest upon the loan. It was all very well to say "We have passed the second reading of the Bill, and we therefore have affirmed its principle;" but, sir, what about the schedule? What amount of duty is going to be provided by it? What guarantee, in fact, had the Government that the Council would give them a sufficient sum to meet the interest even on a moiety of the loan? It was true that the House might agree to pass a Stamp Bill, but the schedule might be of such insignificant proportions that the Colony would be better without the Bill than with it. He thought that, in the interests of the Colony itself, the Government were bound to oppose the proposition of the hon. member for the Murray.

MR. STEERE meant to vote for going into Committee upon the Bill, for he thought they were pledged to do so. He certainly could not understand the arguments of those hon. members who were opposed to the Bill being committed this Session, and who said that, having agreed to the second reading, we had affirmed the principle involved, and the Government ought to be satisfied. But what was it the House agreed to do when it affirmed the resolutions adopted last Session asking the Secretary of State to sanction another loan? It agreed, not merely to affirm the principle of a Stamp Duty Bill, but to pass it concurrently with the Loan Bill. He therefore considered the House was bound to support the Government in passing this measure, more especially as they had it upon the authority of the Attorney General that His Excellency would not allow the Loan Bill to be proceeded with, unless we were prepared to pass this other Bill in aid of the expenses which the loan would entail. He would ask hon. members to pause and consider how they were jeopardising the interests of the Colony. What would be said by every person in the Colony, if they declined to

pass this Bill? Simply this, that hon. members in that House were afraid to tax themselves or the classes to which they belonged. That would be the cry; and he believed there would be a great deal of truth in it. He would most heartily support the proposition to go into Committee, for he considered that, having been one to support the resolution on the subject adopted last Session, he was in honor bound to do so.

MR. BURGESS also considered the House was bound to pass the Bill. They were honorably pledged, not only to the Governor but also to the Secretary of State to do so. They had induced the Home Government to let us borrow this money, in consideration of our undertaking to bring in a Stamp Bill to pay the interest upon it, and it appeared to him it would savour of something like obtaining money under false pretences if they were now to go back from their pledge, and decline to carry out their part of the agreement. He thought the Secretary of State had acted very wisely in not letting us raise the whole of the loan, as proposed.

MR. BROWN was certainly extremely surprised at the action taken by the hon. member for the Murray, and the support he had received from the hon. member for Fremantle in this matter. He (Mr. Brown) should not have spoken at all on this occasion, were it not that he wished emphatically to record his entire dissent from the views which those hon. members had given utterance to. It was an extremely strange thing to him that he had never heard a breath of an intention on the part of any hon. member to adopt such a course, and he was bound to say that, until the hon. member for the Swan had spoken, he had felt himself in a position of great anxiety with regard to what he conceived to be the honor of the Legislature, and particularly the honor of the elected branch thereof, for he considered they were most solemnly pledged, not merely to affirm the principle of the Bill—a Bill which, notwithstanding such affirmation, they might, in a few months hence, throw out on a question of detail—but to pass it into law.

MR. CROWTHER would be sorry to countenance any step which could be regarded as derogatory to the honor or the dignity of that House, but he really

failed to see that either its dignity or its honor was imperilled in any way by affording hon. members an opportunity of mastering the details of a measure that was calculated to interfere so materially with their commercial system. For himself he might say that he had read the Bill, but he was free to confess that he knew less about it now than he did before he read it. It was in no spirit of opposition, much less of obstruction, that members wished to have the Bill postponed, but in order to afford themselves and the outside public (who were equally interested) an opportunity of carefully considering the whole question, and of making a really good and suitable Bill of it—one that would not require to be amended at the very next Session. There was no object to be gained by rushing the Bill through the House, for as had been pointed out it would not come into operation for nine months yet, and why not afford hon. members and the general public an opportunity of fairly and dispassionately considering the provisions of the Bill. The right hon. gentleman opposite had urged as one argument in favor of the measure as it stood—that it would tend to prevent people from drawing cheques for small amounts; the hon. gentleman was probably not aware that the difficulty here was to find people who were in a position to draw large ones. He did not intend to oppose the discussion of the Bill in Committee that evening, but simply to record his opinion that it would be advantageous to the country if the Bill now merely passed its second reading, and that an opportunity should be afforded for considering its details between this and the next Session.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL moved, as an amendment upon the motion for going into Committee, that the committal of the Bill be made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) said he regretted the course which the hon. member for Murray had thought proper to pursue with regard to this Bill. The hon. member had urged as an argument in favor of postponing the further consideration of the Bill, that it would be very expensive to bring it into practical operation, that the dies

and the plates alone would swallow up nearly all the revenue which they might expect to receive from the Bill. The hon. member had put forward that argument, in the face of his (the Colonial Secretary's) distinct assurance that, unless the House wished it, the Bill would not necessarily involve the expenditure of a single penny for dies or plates—that ordinary postage stamps would, for the present at any rate, answer every purpose. The hon. member also designated the Bill as an unsuitable, ridiculous, and unworkable measure.

MR. BURT: I said nothing of the sort.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford): I have taken down the hon. member's words.

MR. BURT: I never said the Bill would be unworkable, but that we did not know how it would work, or how much it would yield.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford): The hon. member also alleged as a reason for not proceeding with the Bill, that he had not had an opportunity of reading it. The Bill at any rate has been in the possession of hon. members for five or six days, and I think they are doing little justice towards their constituents, if they have not yet read it, for it is a measure that closely affects the interests of the public, and, I may say, is the only measure introduced this Session which has in any way required any great amount of consideration as to its details. We shall certainly want to increase our revenue to meet the expenses connected with the proposed loan, and, if all goes well, we shall have to provide for the interest upon it before the end of the year. All I can say, speaking on behalf of the Government, is, if this Bill is not passed, or some measure analogous to it, we don't go on with the Loan Bill. That's all.

MR. MARMION regretted that the right hon. gentleman should have felt himself called upon to utter what could only be regarded as a threat to the House, that unless it passed this Bill we should get no loan. The noble Lord had also twitted hon. members with not having done justice to their constituents, if they had not already mastered the details of the Bill, which he (Mr. Marmion) thought was going a little too

far. The members of that House had been very fully occupied during the past week in considering other measures of great importance to the Colony, and it must be borne in mind that members had something else to do besides devoting their undivided attention to studying the details of Bills. He thought the right hon. gentleman might have been satisfied with the assurance given by hon. members that they had really not had time to consider the elaborate details of this particular Bill, and that their sole reason in asking for a postponement was to enable them to do so. They had no desire to shirk the responsibility of passing the measure, or to evade the discharge of a duty which they considered they owed to the Government and to the country in supporting a Stamp Bill. The hon. member for Geraldton had, with his usual chivalrous spirit, come to the rescue of the Government in this matter, and expressed his surprise at the attitude assumed by the hon. member for Murray and himself (Mr. Marmion). As for himself, he begged to assure the hon. member that he had no wish whatever to go away from the pledge which he considered he had given on the first day of the Session. Seeing, however, that the Bill, if passed, would not come into operation until the beginning of next year, and that there would be ample time to prepare the necessary machinery for putting it in motion if it were not passed until next Session, which would be about July, he certainly failed to see any great objection to the proposed postponement. At the same time, it was his intention at present to support the amendment of the hon. member for Albany, that the committal of the Bill be postponed until the next sitting of the House. He did this in the hope that the very strong feeling which at present seemed to animate the occupants of the Executive benches might by that time, possibly, be slightly allayed.

MR. RANDELL said it was all very well for hon. members to pledge themselves to pass the Bill next Session, but who was to know whether or not hon. members would be present in that House next Session to fulfil their pledges? No hon. member could guarantee that, or that their place would be occupied by

members favorable to the introduction of such a measure. He could not help thinking that some hon. members' opposition to the motion to go into Committee that evening arose from an indisposition to have a Stamp Act passed at all. As for himself, he certainly felt bound to support the motion to go into Committee on the Bill this Session.

The amendment of the hon. member for Plantagenet was then agreed to, and the committal of the Bill made an Order of the Day for the next sitting of the House.

#### JURY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow), in moving the second reading of this Bill, said: I am glad to have an opportunity of bringing in this little bantling of mine, which I was afraid would be lost sight of in the storm which, happily, has just subsided. Last year, as hon. members are aware, was passed another Jury Act Amendment Bill, one of the provisions of which was to extend the radius within which jurymen should be summoned from twenty-five miles to thirty-five. It was intended that that provision should extend to all courts of general sessions throughout the Colony, and not be limited in its application to Perth alone; but, by some inadvertence, it so happened that the intention of the Legislature in this respect has been spirited out of the Act as it stands upon the Statute Book at present, and the object of the present Bill is to introduce into the Act words which in reality were in it when it came out of Committee last Session, but which somehow or other had disappeared from the copy of the Act which appears in the Statute Book. I may add that, since the Bill was printed, it has been pointed out to me by the hon. member for Geraldton that the town of Northampton is just outside the radius which the Bill proposes to fix as the limit within which jurors may be summoned, the distance from Geraldton, where the Quarter Sessions are held, being thirty-six miles; and as it is desirable that Northampton should be embraced within the jury radius, I shall propose in Committee that the distance be increased from thirty-five to thirty-six miles.

The Bill was then read a second time and committed.

#### IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1.—Repealing first section of "The Jury Act (Amendment) 1880:"

Agreed to.

Clause 2.—"The radius of twenty-five miles of the place of attendance mentioned in the seventh and sixteenth sections of 'The Jury Act, 1871,' shall be thirty-five miles, in all cases where a man shall be summoned to attend at Perth, or at any sitting of the Supreme Court, or of any Court of General or Quarter Sessions of the Peace, on any jury or inquisition."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) moved, That the word "thirty-five" be struck out, and "thirty-six" inserted in lieu thereof.

Agreed to, and clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clause 3.—Short title:

Agreed to.

Preamble and title agreed to.

Bill reported.

#### RAILWAYS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

This Bill was, on the motion of the Attorney General, recommitted, and some verbal alterations effected in the seventeenth clause, which, however, elicited no discussion. (*Vide* "Votes and Proceedings," page 25.)

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

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

*Monday, 28th March, 1881.*

Auctioneers Act, 1873, Amendment Bill: first reading—Eastern Railway: Goods Traffic and Tariff: Late Trains—Eastern Railway: Route through Stirling Square, Guildford: Report of Select Committee—Closure of Street in Guildford Bill: third reading—Stamp Duties Bill: in committee—Jury Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Eastern Railway Extension Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

#### AUCTIONEERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

A Bill was introduced by the ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. A. C. Onslow) to amend the Auctioneers Act.

#### EASTERN RAILWAY—GOODS TRAFFIC AND TARIFF—LATE TRAINS.

MR. SHENTON, in accordance with notice, asked the Honorable the Colonial Secretary, (1.) "When the Commissioner of Railways will be prepared to declare the first section of the Eastern Railway open for the conveyance of Goods Traffic, and to declare the Tariff for the same?" (2.) "Whether arrangements cannot be made for running a train between Fremantle and Perth, starting about 9.30 p.m.?"

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) replied as follows:—

"1. The Commissioner cannot fix the exact time when he will be prepared for working the Goods Traffic, but every exertion is being made to enable him to commence at the earliest possible period. The Tariff will be gazetted previous to the running of Goods Trains."

"2. The Commissioner considers it imprudent, for the present, to run regularly a Night Train, as all those composing the working staff of the Line are not, as yet, well versed in their duties."

#### CONSIDERATION OF MESSAGES POSTPONED.

The consideration of Messages Nos. 5, 6, 7, and 8—the first Order of the Day—was postponed until Wednesday, 30th March.

#### EASTERN RAILWAY: ROUTE THROUGH STIRLING SQUARE, GUILDFORD: REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. STEERE moved the adoption of the report of the Select Committee (*Vide* p. 60, *ante*) appointed to proceed to Guildford to report upon the proposed deviation of the route of the Eastern Railway through Stirling Square. Personally, he had no further information to afford the House on the subject than he had when it was under discussion before. He then said that the question, in his opinion, was not one of engineering at all but of common sense; and, now that he had inspected the locality in