

The Weekly Register

OF POLITICS, FACTS, AND GENERAL LITERATURE.

"BE JUST AND FEAR NOT."

VOL. V.

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THE POLITICAL REGISTER.

"It is of great importance in a state—not only to guard Society against the oppression of its rulers, but to guard one part of Society against the injustice of the other part. Justice is the end of Government.—It is the end of civil Society."—HAMILTON.

POLITICS OF THE WEEK.

We are happy to say that nothing has occurred during the present week to interrupt the harmony of our Legislative Council, or to call for special animadversion.

On Tuesday the Colonial Secretary, in reply to Mr. Cowper, gave an outline of the intentions of the Government with respect to the new Squatting Regulations, so far as they could be formed previously to the receipt of the answer of her Majesty's Government to the address from the Council of last session. It will be seen that every effort is being made to conciliate and accommodate the squatters, so far as the law will permit. Complaints having been made of the hardship of being obliged to purchase 320 acres as a homestead, it is under consideration to reduce the quantity, charging the purchaser with the expenses of the survey. In addition to this the present occupants will have four years given them to complete their present purchases; which purchases will secure them the possession of their respective runs for eight years, thus giving them a lease of twelve years, of a station sufficient for 4000 sheep, at a rent of £10 per annum. The funds derived from the sale of homesteads to be appropriated under the provisions of the Land Act, to immigration and internal improvements; the revenue from rents to be expended under the direction of the Lords of the Treasury—in all probability, on emigration also.

The Colonial Secretary further announced that in October last the Governor had written a despatch to Lord Stanley, in which while his Excellency declared his opinion to be unchanged as to the right of pre-emption contended for, he withdrew all active opposition to it.

If there is any sense of honesty or justice to be found among the squatters, such concessions must disarm their hostility, for it is clearly impossible that the local government could go further to meet their reasonable wishes. It will be well if, after the suicidal proceedings of last year, the home government shall display an equally conciliatory spirit. It is, indeed, manifest that Lord

Stanley is anxious to make every fair concession. This appears, not only from the despatches on the squatting question, but also from his recent intimation to the Governor that the surplus in any of the schedules of the Constitutional Act should be disposed of as recommended by the Legislative Council.

If then, after the receipt of the despatch, referred to by the Colonial Secretary, in which his Excellency withdraws his opposition to the right of pre-emption demanded by the squatters, the home government should extend that right to them, we think they will have much more cause to be grateful to their supposed enemy, than to their too zealous friends; who if they have impressed upon her Majesty's ministers a sense of the squatters' power and importance, have also proved that they are a body to be watched while they are conciliated.

Mr. Cowper's annual motion for the appointment of a chaplain to the Legislative Council was thrown out for the third—and, we trust, for the last—time. It must now be clear to every one that, however laudable the honourable member's object may be in itself, it is impracticable, without entailing greater evils than follow from an omission which involves no principle whatever.

We are glad to learn that the Tariff Bill, which imposed a protective duty on wheat and flour, and which was reserved for the royal pleasure, will be disallowed by her Majesty's government. The supporters of that Bill themselves, if they have been at all diligent in improving their information, in the interim, must be thankful that this specimen of their juvenile work is to be forgotten.

We cannot say that we enter so fully into Lord Stanley's objections to the Lien on Wool Act. Undoubtedly that Bill from its novelty, and from its being introduced in connexion with a series of measures of the most reckless nature, was calculated to alarm the Secretary of State. Taken however upon its own merits, without reference to these circumstances, we see little objection to it; and there can be no doubt it has enabled many of our stockholders to struggle through and overcome their difficulties. We would permit the capitalist to lend money on any security that he may deem sufficient; and he would probably seldom err to his own prejudice. If, however, the principle of the

measure is good, we do not see why its benefits should be confined to *one class* of producers; or why it should not be as easy for an agriculturist to mortgage his crop, a manufacturer his steam engines, or a printer his press and types, as it is for a squatter to mortgage his clip of wool. If moveable security is to be legalised, why should the capitalist be told that he may lend on this description of property, but not upon that? We think then that the principle of the Lien on Wool Act may be safely embodied in a permanent measure; but we protest against its being a measure for the sole benefit of the wool-growers, thereby giving them a monopoly of the money market to the prejudice of the agriculturist, merchant, and manufacturer. If it confers an advantage without any danger of fraud, that advantage should be to all alike; for if honorable members have been forgetful of their Smith and Ricardo, they must have learnt that "what is sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander," let their measure then, if passed at all, be comprehensive accordingly.

Among the notices of motion, we observe one by Mr. Lamb, to enquire whether any directions have been given to Customs or other officers to ascertain the number of persons arriving here from Van Diemen's Land under the new system of pardons—and whether or not it is intended that these persons should register their names and residences with the police as is required from persons returning after the expiration of sentence from Norfolk Island.

This is a subject to which we have repeatedly alluded, and we feel that it is one requiring immediate attention and constant vigilance, if, indeed this colony is doomed to be made a receptacle for such persons. But it would be well to proceed still further and pray the Home Government to devise some other means of disposing of their criminals.

We see Mr. Cowper proposes the re-appointment of the Committee of Correspondence with the Hon. Francis Scott, M.P. We wish some honourable member would ask the Committee to favour the public with copies of the correspondence that has already taken place, in order that the colonists might see what value they are to receive for their first annual payment of £500 to that honourable gentleman. For our own part we look upon Mr. Scott's ap-

pointment as a mere job, and we would prefer that the money should be added to the sum moved for by Mr. Bradley for repairing the great southern road.

THE SYDNEY DISTRICT COUNCIL.

If we had to regret the spectacle which the District Council of Sydney made of themselves in reducing to practice the worst principles taught in the disloyal *Atlas*, by an endeavour to subvert their constitution; appointing a committee to pour out a torrent of groundless abuse upon their Warden and the Governor of the colony, it gives us pleasure to record this day that a majority of them at least have retraced their steps, and have thrown out the outrageous document presented to them under the title of a Report. In determining to submit their Charter to legal authority, they have taken the precise course which should have been taken from the first; and if the Charter should prove defective, they may then apply to the Legislative Council for a remedy as pointed out in the Constitutional Act. If, as the Report says, it was void from the beginning, it will be only necessary for the Governor to issue a new Charter.

The Australian Odd Fellows' Quarterly Magazine, for July, 1845. Sydney, Statham and Forster.

THIS is the first number of a new periodical got up by the Odd Fellows of Sydney. It is neatly printed, and though it does not yet exhibit any high literary pretensions, it may become, with due care, a vehicle for communicating much useful and entertaining knowledge, as well as amusement to the members of the association under whose patronage it is issued.

NEW MUSIC.

The Banner of Old England, a Song dedicated to the Blue and Red Jackets, by an Old Soldier. Sydney: G. Hudson, 1845.

THIS is an exceedingly warlike production, as respects the words; so much so, that if it attain popularity, it will go further to induce England to declare war with France, than all the articles which recently appeared in the *Morning Herald* upon the same subject! The melody is pleasing, but seems in some degree founded on Braham's Death of Nelson. The harmony is very good, and proves that Captain Nagel has made some progress since we last met him in this department.

PORT PHILLIP.

LIBEL—Mr. Wilkinson, the editor of the *Portland Guardian*, has been committed to stand his trial for an alleged libel on Mr. J. Blair, the resident Portland Police Magistrate. The proceedings are by indictment, and the defendant was ordered to find bail to answer the charge at the Supreme Court, Melbourne, himself in £100 and two sureties of £50. He declined to comply in this particular, and consequently has been incarcerated until he should think better of it, or until the ensuing Criminal Sessions.—*P.P. Standard.*

TREASURY INVESTIGATION.—We understand a board of inquiry, consisting of Messrs. Commissary Erskine, Sub-Collector Caseels,

James Smith and Archibald M'Lachlan, J. P. sat on Thursday last at the office of the Sub-Treasurer, to audit the colonial accounts, as well as to report to the Executive the manner in which they have been hitherto kept. The establishment of this board has been occasioned in consequence of the recent disclosures on the trial of Mr. M'Vitie, and their report is intended for head quarters.—*P. P. Herald.*

VAN DIEMEN'S LAND.

PUBLIC meetings had been held at Hobart Town to protest against "taxation" by the proposed corporation, and also to petition for the gradual abolition of transportation to Van Diemen's Land. On the former subject the Tasmanians are nearly as violent as the Sydney landlords were on a similar occasion some three years ago. The *Colonial Times* republishes the late correspondence between Lord Stanley and Sir George Gipps, and adds—"The struggle so successfully made by Sir George Gipps has had the effect of obtaining for his Excellency the warm approbation of his Sovereign—the entire support of the Secretary of State, and a renewal of his six years' term of government. The despatches have also this further important effect—they tend essentially to strengthen Sir Eardley Wilmot's government, and to confirm his Excellency in his determination to maintain the constitutional rights of the crown of England against any attempts of the disappointed or envious to excite difficulties and disloyalty here."

A melancholy case of suicide had occurred at Port Arthur, under the following circumstances. A Mr. Alexander Miller, after a whaling trip came to Hobart Town, where he was, what is termed, "hoccused." The effect of this abominable act was partial insanity, and the deceased was residing with his family at Port Arthur for change of air and scene. On the 26th July, however, without any apparent cause, Mr. Miller went into a bedroom, where a brace of loaded pistols and a blunderbuss were suspended over the mantelpiece: he then deliberately took down one of the pistols, and shot himself through the head, the ball penetrating the one side, and passing out at the other: it is needless to say he died instantly.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

A PUBLIC meeting was held at Adelaide on the 12th July, the Sheriff in the chair, at which the following address to the Governor was adopted:—

To his Excellency George Grey, Esquire, Governor and Commander-in-Chief of her Majesty's province of South Australia and Vice-Admiral of the same.

May it please your Excellency—

We, the undersigned, citizens and provincial settlers of the above mentioned British colony, approach your Excellency for the purpose of expressing our deep sense of the benefit conferred upon the colony by your able, zealous, and diligent administration of the public affairs, and more especially in spontaneously conceding the abolition of all harbour rates, and port dues and charges, on the 3rd July instant, whereby the ports of the province have not only become freely open to British commerce, but to the ships of all other friendly nations.

Seeing the eminent success which has attended similar colonial administrative measures in other parts of the globe, particularly in the British colonies of Singapore and the Cape of Good Hope, we fully anticipate for your Excellency's recent act the entire approval and gracious confirmation of our beloved Sovereign, whilst we are firmly persuaded that, as respects the influence of your Excellency's highly popular measure of fiscal enfranchisement upon the colonial finances, the results will be fully confirmatory of the soundness of your policy.

Blessed with a plentiful soil, a genial climate, incalculable natural abilities, with moral elements and powers, and peculiar constitutional exemptions, for which the colonists cannot be sufficiently thankful, the province of South Australia is at length fulfilling the fond predictions of its founders and friends, and will indeed become "one of the brightest gems in the imperial diadem of Britain"—an object worthy of a pure and exalted ambition.

Whilst we thus think and contemplate your Excellency's high position in the honorable appointment to which you have been elected by our gracious Sovereign, we would not forget the cares, anxieties, and responsibilities which are inseparable from a conscientious discharge of the functions of a Governor, or the duties of cheerful obedience and zealous co-operation which (as far as in us lies) we are bound to manifest towards you as the worthy delegate of sovereign power.

We respectfully offer to your Excellency our grateful acknowledgments and hearty congratulations upon the new era which has commenced in your Excellency's administrative progress, and to assure you of our sincere desire to promote your honorable exertions, to strengthen your Excellency's hands, and zealously to co-operate in all your virtuous efforts to ensure the enduring welfare of our newly adopted and beloved country.

The fate of Captain Sturt appears still uncertain. "The natives assert that at the travelling distance of two moons from Moorunde, there exists a numerous and savage tribe of copper-coloured and gigantic natives, with little, if any, hair upon their heads; and that Captain Sturt has come into fearful collision with this tribe—with what precise results can only be ascertained by the visit of an ample force—which some of the Moorunda natives offer to conduct to the reported scene of encounter, described by them as a perilous pass or defile flanked by stony precipices, in which native assailants would have an immense advantage over any force the expedition could bring to bear against them. Mr Hall adds, that the settlers in the neighbourhood of Moorunde appear to credit the story of the blacks as to the death of Captain Sturt, and are equally surprised with them that no steps have been taken by the authorities to ascertain its truth."

Domestic Intelligence.

EXECUTION.—The execution of the man Ahern, for the murder of his niece, Mary Ann Clarke, has been fixed by the Executive to take place on Tuesday next, the 12th inst., at the New Gaol, Darlinghurst.

THE BANKS' CASE.—This long pending case was brought to a termination on Monday. His Honor the Chief Justice, in addressing the Jury said, the question was, whether the loan was the result of unauthorised acts of the directors, or the act of the company. The majority of the Court were in favor of the defendants, for it appeared that the plaintiffs knew of the existence of the deed of settlement; they were, therefore, bound to look to it, and not to the usages of banking business. A presumed authority was in this case unnecessary, as the Bank of Australasia knew, or had the means of knowing, the actual powers of the directors. It was next a question whether the directors had a power under the deed to borrow. Two of the Judges were of opinion that they had not; moreover, that even if they had, the conditions involved an excess of power which vitiated and rendered void the whole transaction. For himself, he dissented from his learned colleagues. He was of opinion, that in the event of the establishment being exposed to difficulties, there was an implied, though not an expressed, power to borrow—a power necessarily included in carrying on the ordinary business of banking. There was no provision made in the deed for borrowing, because probably no emergency requiring such a step was contemplated; but when loss of capital or other accident occurred, borrowing was the proper and appropriate remedy. Such a power was, therefore, in his opinion, essential; his only doubt was as to the conditions of the loan; but he looked on them as separable therefrom. He had no doubt the directors had the power to borrow to any extent, and to accept drafts on the company. The power of borrowing was, in fact, incidental, unless it were specially provided against by the deed. This was, however, his single opinion—that of the majority of the Court was opposed to it, and by that majority the Jury must be governed. He would recommend them to find a special verdict as to the facts, leaving the law to be decided by the Court; but if they found a general verdict, it must be for the defendant on both the issues. The Jury found for the plaintiffs on the 7th and 8th issues, for £175,703 18s. 7d., subject to the opinion of the Court, whether, on the facts proved, they were entitled to recover on that verdict; if not, the Court would direct a verdict to be entered for the defendants forthwith. The Jury further found for the plaintiffs on the 9th and 10th issues, damages one shilling; and for the defendants, on all the first six issues. The Court then ordered a verdict to be entered for the defendants on the 7th and 8th issues.

NEW INSOLVENT.—James Clough, of No. 504, George-street, Sydney, of the firm of Lamont and Clough, hairdressers, &c: debts, £210 18s. 7d.; assets, personal property, £45; outstanding debts, £2 17s. 6d.; balance deficiency, £163 1s. 1d.; Edward Knox, official assignee.

LOCK PICKING.—Between ten and twelve o'clock on Saturday night last, the shop of Mr. Mathews, leather cutter, George-street opposite the Royal Hotel, was entered by a master key, and an iron safe being opened in a similar manner, the following property was abstracted from it, namely, a check for two pounds ten shillings, ten £1 notes, and about thirty-five pounds in silver; with which the thieves got clear off.

APPOINTMENTS.—His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint the under-mentioned gentlemen to be Magistrates of the Territory and its Dependencies, viz.:—Lieutenant William Hobart Seymour, of Her Majesty's 99th Regiment of Foot, in command of the detachment at Moreton Bay, and Samuel Wright, Esq., of Quisquisana.

FIRE.—On Saturday afternoon, a pretty dense volume of smoke was observed rising from the roof of the premises No. 73, George-street, at present occupied as a grocery establishment by Mr. Edward Campbell; an alarm of fire being given, several men from the surrounding establishments made their way to the roof, where they found a considerable portion of the shingles burning fiercely, these they immediately commenced to strip off, and to cut away such of the rafters as they were in contact with; within five minutes after the fire had been observed a body of the police were on the spot, and took the necessary steps to preserve order, and were speedily followed by the city fire engines, one of which immediately set to work, so as to drench not only that part of the roof where the fire was, but also those individuals who were on the top of the house cutting off the burning materials. A few minutes after the engine had begun to play, all the disposable military in the barracks were marched up at a quick step, accompanied by the fire engines from the engine room in the barrack square; a number of convicts from Hyde Park Barracks were also sent down to assist in working the engines. As the men on the roof were plentifully supplied with water in buckets, which they poured on every part where the least symptoms of fire were observable, the whole premises were placed in a state of safety within less than twenty minutes of the time when the danger was first perceived. There was but little damage done to the premises.

HACKNEY COACHES.—The following is an abstract of the by-law, proposed in the City Council, for the regulation of coaches plying for hire in the city of Sydney. The 1st clause prohibits any vehicle from plying without a license by the City Council. The 2nd clause gives power to the Council to suspend or revoke the license in cases of misconduct. The 3rd clause describes the form of application for a license. The 4th clause describes the form of the license. The 5th provides that a fee of £7 shall be paid to the city funds for every license granted. The 6th directs the proprietors of coaches to give notice to the Town Clerk of their change of abode, and provides a penalty of £2 in case of failure. The 7th subjects any person plying for hire, with an unlicensed carriage, to a penalty of £5. The 8th directs that all drivers shall be licensed, paying for the same a fee of £2. The 9th directs that drivers' licences shall be numbered consecutively, and duplicate signed by the Town Clerk. The 10th provides a penalty of £5 for any driver acting without a license. The 11th directs that the proprietor shall retain the license of the driver in his possession so long as such driver remains in his employ, and shall be required to produce the same in all cases of complaint. The 12th directs the proprietor to return the license to the driver on leaving his employ, unless such driver has been con-

victed of misconduct. The 13th gives power to Justices of suspending or revoking the driver's license in certain cases. The 14th directs that any driver wilfully damaging the person or property of any one, or being guilty of a breach of the peace or misbehaviour in his employment, shall pay a fine of £5. The 15th provides a penalty of £2 for driving on the wrong side of the street. The 16th provides a penalty of £1 for standing in the street longer than may be necessary for the taking up and setting down of passengers, &c, except when standing at an appointed place for hire. The 18th provides that every driver using threatening, abusive, or obscene language, shall be fined a sum not exceeding £5. The 19th directs that the owner's name shall be on each carriage. The 20th directs that the number of license shall be painted on each carriage. The 21st directs that the number and a table of fares shall be placed inside of each carriage. The 22nd provides that the carriages shall be held in readiness to take fares from seven o'clock in the morning until twelve o'clock at night, and, if practicable, on being called upon after the latter hour, under a penalty, in case of default, of £2 for the first offence, £3 for the second, and £5 for every subsequent offence. The 23rd directs that every carriage shall be kept in good repair, providing similar penalties, in case of default, to those mentioned in clause 22. The 24th provides that there shall be a check-string, which the driver, upon being required, shall fasten to his hand or arm when driving; the penalty for non-compliance being £1 for a first offence, £2 for a second offence, and £3 for every subsequent offence. The 25th declares the fares which may be demanded, viz., for carriages drawn by one horse, first 1000 yards, 6d.; every 700 yards beyond, 3d.; for carriages drawn by two or more horses, first 1000 yards, 8d.; every 700 yards beyond, 4d. The 26th directs that an additional charge of half the regular fare will be made between the hours of twelve at night and seven in the morning. The 27th directs that there shall be an additional charge for luggage exceeding 20 lbs. weight. The 28th directs that the distance shall be computed from the place where the carriage is hired. The 29th allows a charge to every car of 3d. for every quarter of an hour's detention, and to every carriage a similar allowance of 6d. The 30th directs that a person hiring a carriage or car may detain the same and return therein at half price in the following cases, namely, first, when the hire of a carriage shall amount to 3s., or a car to 2s., and the detention shall not exceed one hour; secondly, where the hire of a carriage shall amount to 2s. and a car to 1s. 6d., and the detention shall not exceed half an hour; thirdly, where the hire of a carriage shall amount to 1s. 6d. or a cab to 1s., and the detention shall not exceed a quarter of an hour. The 31st declares that a vehicle of four wheels and two horses shall be regarded by this by-law as a carriage, and a vehicle having either two horses and two wheels, or one horse or four wheels, shall be considered as a car. The 32nd declares that the hire of every carriage by time shall be fifteen shillings per day, or if by the hour, at the rate of 2s. for the first hour, and 1s. 3d. for every subsequent hour. The hire of a car to be 10s. for the day, and if by the hour 1s. 4d. for the first hour, and 1s. for every subsequent hour. The 33rd provides

that it shall be optional with the owner or driver to charge either by time or distance. The 34th declares that a carriage may be required to convey 5, and a car 3 passengers, and provides whenever an additional passenger shall be required to be conveyed, the driver may charge for the additional passenger in a certain ratio beyond the usual fare. The 35th declares that a child in the lap or under seven years of age shall not be regarded as a passenger; but that if there be more than one not in the lap, but under seven years of age, two of such children may be regarded as one passenger. The 36th declares that any owner or driver refusing to take a fare shall pay a fine of 10s. for the first offence, 20s. for the second offence, and 40s. for every subsequent offence. The 37th provides that any person calling or sending for a carriage or car, and not afterwards using the same, shall pay for a carriage so called 1s., a car 8d., or the proper fare either from the stand or the extent of detention. The 38th declares that any owner or driver demanding unauthorised fares shall be subject to a penalty of 20s. for the first offence, 40s. for the second offence, and £5 for every subsequent offence. The 39th declares in what places public stands may be held. The 40th declares the number of carriages which may be allowed to remain on each stand at any one time. The 41st directs that all carriages shall take their places on the stand in the order of their arrival, under a penalty in case of default of 10s. for the first offence, 20s. for the second offence, and 40s. for every subsequent offence. The 42nd declares that every driver shall be constantly attendant on his carriage when plying for hire, or in case of default shall pay for the first offence 10s., for the second offence 20s., and for every subsequent offence 40s. The 43rd imposes a fine not exceeding 40s. upon any driver who shall smoke while in the act of driving. The 44th clause directs that there shall be left a space of eight feet for foot passengers between every fourth carriage on the stands, and imposes a penalty of 20s. upon any one neglecting or refusing to comply with this provision. The 45th imposes a fine, not to exceed £5, upon the driver of any carriage travelling after nightfall without lights, except on moonlight nights. The 46th and last clause declares that nothing within the by-law shall extend to any vehicle licensed as a stage-carriage under the Act of Council 6 William IV., intitled an Act for Regulating Stage Carriages in New South Wales.

Legislative Council.

TUESDAY.

Messages were received from His Excellency the Governor, presenting a Bill to authorise the Trustees of the Savings' Bank to lend a portion of their funds to the Corporation of Sydney, and a Bill modelled on the Act of the Imperial Parliament, passed in the year 1835, for the Abolition of Oaths in various departments of the Government, and for the suppression of voluntary and extra-judicial oaths.

Also a message communicating the substance of a despatch from Lord Stanley in reply to a resolution passed by the Council that in the opinion of the Council the excess in any one of the schedules in the Act of Parliament, 5 and 6 Victoria, c. 76, should be

applied to make good the deficiency in any of the schedules before any application should in future be made to the Council for any sum in aid of such deficient schedule. His Lordship's answer is that "As Parliament has confided to Her Majesty the discretionary authority to determine how the amount of any saving which may accrue from either of the schedules A or B., should be appropriated to purposes connected with the administration of the Government of New South Wales, Her Majesty cannot be advised to divest herself of that power. As long as the Act of Parliament shall not be in this respect altered, so long it will be necessary that the Queen should retain the exercise of the right vested in Her Majesty. But I have to signify to you Her Majesty's pleasure, that in the absence of any commands from Her Majesty to the contrary, the course recommended by the Council should be pursued; though subject to any change which further experience may point out, of being in Her Majesty's judgment more conducive to the welfare of the colony, and therefore more consistent with the intentions of Parliament."

Also, a message communicating Lord Stanley's reply to an Address of the Council, relative to the upset price of land.

Also, a message submitting the Council the estimates for 1846.

Dr. Nicholson presented a petition from the Squatters of the District of Grant, against taxation by the District Council.

Dr. Lang enquired of the Colonial Secretary what part of the fund voted during past session of Council for the purpose of erecting or constructing certain public works of general utility, and of affording temporary employment to the mechanics and labourers then unemployed had been expended, and which or what part of these works had been completed.

The Colonial Secretary said, the question of the learned and reverend member for Port Phillip was so indefinite, that he was unable to discover what information was really desired. If the hon. and rev. gentlemen would shape his question in a more definite form, the fullest information which could be obtained he would be readily furnished.

Dr. Lang enquired of the Colonial Secretary, whether the Government had any measure in contemplation with a view to secure the seaworthiness of ships carrying passengers on long voyages from this port.

The Colonial Secretary replied, that the subject was one which had been under the consideration of the Government; but he was not at present prepared to propose any specific measure.

Mr. Cowper would beg leave to ask the Colonial Secretary what were the intentions of the Government with reference to the adoption of any premanent system for the occupation of Crown lands.

The Colonial Secretary replied as follows:—I regret that it is not in my power at this present moment to make the full and unreserved communication to the Council of the intention of the Government respecting the squatting regulations, which I could have desired. There are many important points yet to be definitely settled, and some important considerations arise which render it unadvisable immediately to promulgate any regulations of a permanent character. The

whole question of the administration of the Crown lands has been formally brought under the consideration of Her Majesty's Government by an address from this House. It is very desirable, therefore, that the reply of Her Majesty's Government to that address should be known before any permanent regulations are established and made public. It is also essential in a matter of such vital importance to the interests of the colony, that the Executive Government should not be hurried into a premature decision upon points of such great magnitude, not only to the present occupant but to future emigrants, But so desirous am I of communicating as much as possible, that I think it right to give the following outline of the general principles which will probably guide the Government in framing permanent regulations, if the matter should on the ultimate decision of the Home Government be left to the local authorities. And I trust that the House and the colony at large will be encouraged by that which I now communicate, and not discouraged by the silence which on many points I am compelled to observe. The chief points upon which I understand that the Council is desirous of receiving information may be briefly stated to be, the quantity of lands to constitute a homestead, the nature and duration of the tenure, the mode of sale, and the application of the fund. With respect to the quantity of land to constitute a homestead, the government has as yet arrived at no decision; but in the event of the quantity being materially reduced below that originally proposed, the expenses of the survey will be charged upon the purchaser. It is intended that the purchase of a homestead shall secure to the purchaser an assured occupancy of a sufficient extent of land for pasturing 4000 sheep for eight years, which will be converted into a lease for that time, in the event of the power to grant leases for periods of years being conferred on the local government. In addition to this, the present occupant will be allowed four years, from the 1st July last, to purchase his homestead, thereby securing to the occupier, if he purchases an occupancy for twelve years from that date. The yearly charge for such occupancy will be £10. The question of estimating the grazier's capability of any extent of country is surrounded with difficulties entirely of a practical nature. This point is still under the consideration of the local government. The application of the funds derived from the sale of homesteads will be made under the provisions of Lord Stanley's Act; but the proceeds of the annual rental will be expended under the directions of the Lords of the Treasury, it being understood that the main object in raising a revenue from the waste lands of the crown is to create a fund for the promotion of emigration. In the present state of the law, the mode and terms of sale must be in accordance with Lord Stanley's Act. But I am authorised to state to you, that though the Governor remains unaltered in his opinion, that the granting of pre-emption would probably involve the government (at no distant period) in various difficulties, yet seeing how urgently pre-emption is desired in the colony, and that many people of influence in England desire also to see it granted, the Governor did, in the month of October last, signify to the Secretary of State his wish not to be considered the only person opposed to