

The minutes of Thursday's proceedings were read and confirmed.

Mr. BERRY stated that he had this morning received the following letter:—

“Colonial Secretary's Office,
“Perth, Western Australia, 27th December, 1880.

“SIR,—
In reply to your letter, No. 7571, of the 8th instant, notifying that the proceedings of the Intercolonial Conference recently held in Melbourne by representatives of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia have been postponed until the 13th January next, then to be resumed at Sydney, I am directed by His Excellency Sir William Robinson, K.C.M.G., to express to you his thanks for the invitation to send a representative of this Government to the Conference.

“2. The Constitution of Western Australia would render it inconvenient to send a representative with full powers to pledge either Her Majesty's Government, which exercises a control over the policy of this colony, or the local Legislature, to abide by the decision of the Conference; but His Excellency, feeling the deepest interest in the important subjects proposed for discussion, will appoint a representative to watch the proceedings on behalf of this colony, and to express an opinion on such points as are proper for consideration by this Government, subject, of course, to the approval of the Home and Colonial Governments.

“Should this proposal meet with the views of the Conference, His Excellency will appoint His Honor Chief Justice Wrenfordsley, who is now on a visit to Melbourne, to join in its further deliberations on all subjects applicable to this colony other than the Chinese question, which is one that the representative of this Government would not be in a position to discuss.

“I have, &c.,

“GIFFORD,

“The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Melbourne, Victoria.”

“Colonial Secretary.”

The letter was considered, and the Conference, having in view the exceptional position in which Mr. Chief Justice Wrenfordsley was placed, determined to leave it to his own discretion as to the course he would pursue in any vote arrived at by the Conference.

INTERCOLONIAL LEGISLATION.

Mr. VALE brought under consideration the Bill which, at a meeting of the Conference held in Melbourne, he had undertaken to have drawn in reference to the establishment of an Australian Court of Final Appeal.

Mr. MORGAN moved (seconded by Mr. WATSON), That a despatch from Lord Kimberley, dated 8th August, 1871, in relation to a “proposed High Court of Appeals,” be read.—Agreed to.

The despatch was read accordingly.

Mr. GIBLIN moved (seconded by Mr. PALMER), That this Conference, having had under consideration the resolutions moved by Mr. Vale on the 29th November in favour of the establishment of an Australian Court of Final Appeal, and also the draft of a Bill submitted for that purpose, concurs in the said resolutions, and agrees to consider a Bill to give effect to the same.—Agreed to.

Mr. MANN moved (seconded by Mr. BERRY), That such Bill be framed so as to carry out the following modification: Any party dissatisfied with the decision of any Supreme Court, where the amount exceeds £500, may appeal therefrom to the Privy Council or the Australian Court of Appeal: Provided that, if the party so dissatisfied desires to appeal to the Australian Court of Appeal, the other party may, on application to the Court whose decision is appealed against, at the discretion of such Court, obtain leave to have such appeal determined by the Privy Council, and not by the Australian Court of Appeal.—Agreed to.

Mr. MOORE moved (seconded by Mr. MOREHEAD), That this Conference concurs in the resolution moved by Mr. Vale on 29th November: “That this Conference is of opinion that warrants for the arrest of offenders issued in one colony should have effect in all, and that provision should be made for anticipating by telegram the effect of such warrants.”—Agreed to.

Mr. GIBLIN moved (seconded by Mr. WATSON), That this Conference—having had under its consideration the following resolution, also moved by Mr. Vale, on the 29th November: “That this Conference concurs in the opinion that all process for the recovery of debts or damages originating in any one colony should have full effect in all the colonies,”—concurs in the object sought to be obtained by that resolution, and agrees to consider a Bill to give effect thereto.—Agreed to.

Mr. PALMER moved (seconded by Mr. MOORE):—That this Conference agrees with the following resolution moved by Mr. Vale on the 29th of November: “That this Conference concurs in the opinion that warrants for the apprehension of men who have deserted wife or child, or both, should have force and effect in all the colonies.”—Agreed to.

Mr. PALMER moved (seconded by Mr. WATSON), That the consideration of the following resolution, also moved by Mr. Vale on the 29th November (on the Notice Paper No. 4), relative to patents, be postponed until the 18th instant.—Agreed to.

RAILWAYS AND INTERCOLONIAL FREE-TRADE.

Mr. MORGAN moved (seconded by Mr. WATSON), That the consideration of the resolutions standing in the name of Mr. Mann, in respect to railways and intercolonial free-trade, be postponed until the 20th instant.—Agreed to.

The Conference then adjourned until Monday, the 17th instant, at half-past 10 o'clock.

HENRY PARKES, Chairman.