

THREATENED WINDING UP OF YORK CONVICT DEPOT. *Perth Gazette* 20 Mar 1874.

The inhabitants of York are naturally dissatisfied at the proposal of the Government to close the Convict Depot, and to with-draw the only convict road party now employed, in their district. The source of their dissatisfaction is increased by the fact of labor of any kind being unprocurable in the neighborhood, and much inconvenience will inevitably result if the Government carry out its intention. A public meeting of settlers was held on Wednesday to take into consideration the desirability of adopting some steps to endeavor to dissuade the authorities from carrying out the order for closing the depot and withdrawing all convict labor from the district. Mr. Monger, M.L.C. presided, and there was a numerous and influential assemblage of settlers and others. Resolutions were unanimously adopted, expressive of the universal dissatisfaction felt at the intention of the Government, and a memorial was prepared for presentation to His Excellency the Governor praying the postponement of the closing of the depot and of the removal of the only road party in the district.

The following is a copy of the memorial :-To His Excellency Frederick Aloysius Weld, Esq. Governor and Commander in Chief of Western Australia, &c, &c, &c. The Memorial of the Settlers of the York and Beverley Districts, humbly sheweth, that we earnestly pray Your Excellency will reconsider your order for the closing of the Depot at York and for removing the Road Party from the district for the following reasons, viz.

-That the great scarcity of labor in the districts is a very serious drawback and greatly interferes with the successful carrying on of agricultural and other pursuits, and your memorialists feel sure that the closing of the Depot would have the effect of depriving the districts of most of the present available labor.

-That the traffic between York and Guildford is very considerable and is greatly on the increase, and that the withdrawal of the Road Party will add very much to the difficulty of keeping the roads in proper repair.

-That a large quantity of wheat is accumulating in York to be ground for consumption in Perth and Fremantle, the conveyance of which will be rendered very difficult, if by the withdrawal of the Road Party the roads get into bad order, whilst the difficulty of transit will necessarily enhance the price of flour.

-That your memorialists consider that the available convict labor should be employed on the main lines of communication in the colony, the keeping in good repair of which is so necessary to the development of the material interest of the colony.

-That the petition of the Home Government (which emanated from this district) praying that convicts might be sent to the colony, expressly desired that they might be employed in the construction of roads and bridges.

We, therefore, humbly submit for the consideration of Your Excellency our claim for the continuance of the Depot and Road Party in this district. And your memorialists will ever pray, &c.

(Signed) J. H. Monger, on behalf of the meeting.