

power as regards the electric light were placed in the hands of the same Council, that gas would be the light used in Perth for many years to come. In addition to that, he wished to point out that the gas was deteriorating in quality. There were many reasons, in fact, why it was desirable that the power to control such companies as these electric light companies should be in the hands of the Government, with proper provisions for regulating their operations. He thought the result would be better and more economical in every way, so far as the public were concerned. He had no wish to interfere in any way with vested interests or vested rights, or with any company's dividends and bonuses, but he did think it would be very much wiser and better, in the interests of the citizens, if the power under the contemplated bill were vested in the hands of the Government of the colony, instead of the Municipality of Perth.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the Government would have no objection, as suggested in the motion, to take this proposition into consideration; but, on first looking at the question, it struck him that possibly legislation on this subject should be more of a private character than public. They all knew that Gas Bills—bills enabling gas companies to run their pipes about a town—were as a rule measures of a private nature, and introduced into Parliament by the companies who were seeking to obtain the powers to be conferred by such bills. But he believed that in England the powers granted to Electric Light Companies were granted under a public or general Act that applied to the whole country. Perhaps it was considered better to have one public bill relating to all matters connected with electric lighting, and dealing generally with them, rather than have a private bill in every instance that a private company sought to have these powers. The Government would give the matter their consideration. The House, however, would recognise that the Government had supplied a good number of bills this session already—he believed they had already had nineteen bills before them in the space of a month; and if this bill did not make its appearance as early as members wished, he

trusted they would not think the Government were not giving the subject its consideration.

Motion—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th January, 1892.

New Member—Northam-Southern Cross (Yilgarn) Railway Bill: Select Committee's Report—Supreme Court Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Affirmations Bill: third reading—Harbor Improvements at Fremantle—Police Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

NEW MEMBER.

THE SPEAKER announced that he had, on the twenty-second day of December last, issued a writ for the election of a member to serve for the Electoral District of Perth, in the place of Mr. Edward Scott, resigned; and that by the return thereto it appeared that Mr. Thomas George Molloy, of Perth, had been duly elected in pursuance of the said writ. Mr. Molloy was then introduced, and took and subscribed the oath required by law, and signed the Members' Roll.

NORTHAM-SOUTHERN CROSS (YILGARN) RAILWAY BILL.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) presented the report of the Select Committee on this Bill.

Ordered—That the consideration of the report be made an Order of the Day for 14th January.

SUPREME COURT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council.

AFFIRMATIONS BILL.

Read a third time, and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council.

HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS AT FREMANTLE.

Adjourned debate on the motion of the hon. the Premier,—“That this House approves of the scheme of harbor improvement for the port of Fremantle as proposed by the Government, which includes opening a passage through the Success Bank into Owen Anchorage, the construction of a wharf at or near Catherine Point, and a connection by railway from such wharf to the Custom House and goods shed at Fremantle, in accordance with the plans and sections on the table of the House.”

MR. PEARSE: I moved the adjournment of the debate the other evening, principally with the object of meeting my constituents and obtaining their views on the motion before the House. I have now done so, and to-night I come here for the purpose of asking the House to favor me with a select committee on the subject. I do not intend to take up the time of hon. members by referring to the matter now, as there will be every opportunity afforded of a discussion when the report of the Select Committee is before us. I should prefer a Joint Committee of both Houses, and if I am in order I shall move in that direction.

THE SPEAKER: I do not think there is any objection to that course if the House approves of it.

MR. PEARSE: Then I will move as an amendment that the question be referred to a Joint Committee of both Houses.

MR. SYMON: I second the amendment.

MR. A. FORREST: Before this question is put, I should like to point out to hon. members that we have had no reasons given to us why we should adopt the course suggested by the hon. member. Surely it is necessary for us to know what the hon. member's object is, otherwise we shall not know who to appoint on this

committee; and I would further ask whether the House is going to appoint a committee when we have not yet heard a single word against the proposal of the Government. For my part I shall vote against this committee, unless I hear some substantial reasons why it should be appointed.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): You have heard enough from me.

MR. A. FORREST: We have heard enough from the hon. member ever since he has been in the House on the subject of harbor works; but we have never yet heard anything about Owen Anchorage, and before I vote for this committee, I must hear some substantial reasons assigned for its appointment.

MR. DE HAMEL: Has the amendment been seconded?

THE SPEAKER: Yes.

MR. DE HAMEL: Then, sir, I will make a few remarks. In opening this debate the other night the Premier stated most properly and truly that this was, without exception, one of the most important questions that had come before this House. That is a statement in which I, for one, thoroughly concur, and I consider it is a question which must be dealt with entirely free from petty, local, or personal interests. We must regard it as a great national matter and deal with it on a broad national basis, and treat it in such a way as may be best for the colony at large. Before this debate is concluded this House will be obliged to divide on the resolution of the Government, and every member will be bound to give his reasons for the way in which he will record his vote. I desire to say a few words to show that I have no bias in the matter, although, as the member for Albany, there is an impression that I am working for one part of the colony against another. The reason I have sat on this side of the House is that when the Government brought forward their former proposals for Sir John Coode's larger scheme, I was pledged to oppose it, not because it was a scheme of harbor works for Fremantle, but because it was deemed a bad scheme which would involve a waste of public money, and hence I took my seat on this side of the House. But on the present scheme I am entirely unfettered and unpledged, and

therefore the reasons I give are those of myself as a man, and not as member for Albany. I shall give them as a member of this House, and in the way I consider most beneficial to the country at large. I am not opposed in any way to harbor works at Fremantle, but I desire to see, if harbor works are proceeded with, that the money shall be wisely and judiciously spent, and not be thrown away. This question of harbor works is one which has been discussed time after time. If I were speaking to members who had been in the House since 1875 my remarks might be very few; but I find that the majority of hon. members now here were not in the House when this question was discussed before, and I therefore considered it my duty to look up the facts from its first serious inception to the present time. The date I fix as the first serious inception is 1875. At that time a select committee was appointed to consider the question of harbor works, and that committee consisted of no less than three members of the present House—the Speaker, the hon. the Minister for Crown Lands, and the hon. member for North Fremantle. These are three of the members of the committee, and undoubtedly they worked well. They obtained a vast amount of information and took a great deal of trouble in getting evidence together, and finally they made certain recommendations; for the object for which they were appointed was to consider the whole question of harbor works and to frame some definite proposition. It was thus a very wide commission, and the members carried out their duties well. They made an admirable report, which was subsequently placed before Sir John Coode. I find that having received it, he applied for a mass of further information consisting of no less than 22 questions, many of these containing five or six sub-questions. In answer to these questions the fullest information was obtained by the then Director of Public Works. He worked the matter up well and collated a great deal of information, and much of that which he supplied has formed the basis of every report on harbor works from that day to this. Then Sir John Coode reported; and in taking that report, which he dated 13th November, 1877, I find he laid down one guiding principle, to which I desire to direct the

attention of hon. members. He said that “nothing short of insuperable physical difficulties could warrant the undertaking of harbor works elsewhere than at or immediately adjacent to the Swan River entrance.” That is an axiom with which I am thoroughly in accord. Then he found certain facts which I propose to shortly lay before the House. The first was that Gage Road is open to the full stroke of the seas from north to north-west by west; that from this to south-west they are partially sheltered; and that southward of south-west they are thoroughly protected. He also found not only that the prevailing winds in winter are from the north, but that the heaviest gales commence from north to north north-west and travel westerly, bringing in heavy seas, which are not broken until they come in south or west, and that as the heaviest seas come in from the northward it followed that the prevailing movement of sand is in a southerly direction. And having come to these conclusions he says: “Having regard to these facts, and the necessity for a strong scouring agent to overcome the southerly drift of sand along the coast, I am reluctantly compelled to advise that no steps be taken to improve the river. Any solid structure projecting from the shore would inevitably arrest the sand in its passage southward, and thus cause an accumulation on the weather side, which, after a time, would travel around the end of the work and result in shoaling the sheltered area under its lee.” This is a short epitome of Sir John Coode’s findings, upon which he condemned, in 1877, the river scheme. I now proceed to see what he says with reference to the Success Bank scheme in 1887—ten years later; and that after having had the advantage of a personal visit to Fremantle, where he was engaged for nearly five weeks in making inspections of the coast in the vicinity of the town, in examining Gage Road, Owen Anchorage, and Cockburn Sound, and in investigating the physical characteristics of the River Swan between Perth and the sea. Having completed this examination he prepared a memorandum describing in detail the further particulars he required. I find that in January, 1887, these particulars were furnished by the late Director of Public Works,

and they were evidently highly satisfactory, inasmuch as Sir John Coode says: "Having now (March, 1887) been placed in possession of *full information* on all points, I am in a position to lay before you the following remarks and recommendations with such a degree of confidence as the circumstances of the case demand, and one of the first of such remarks is that the Success and Parmelia Banks are fed by the preponderating southerly movements of sand through Gage Road and along the coast." He still keeps to the theory of this southerly movement of sand, and then he goes on to make this most important statement: He says: "Any channel which might be formed through these shoals (that is the Success and Parmelia Banks) would inevitably necessitate frequent dredging for maintenance, and such an approach would be impracticable and dangerous in a gale from the west, when the wind would be directly across the line of channel, and it would be impossible to confine vessels to the deep-water track." Hence I have thus far shown that in 1877 Sir John Coode condemned the river scheme as impracticable, and in 1887 he condemned the Success Bank scheme, not only as impracticable, but also as dangerous. He then goes on, however, and gives us an essay on the principles which should govern the determination of the position and character of Harbor Works at Fremantle, provided full particulars are at hand, as he admits to be the case here. He therefore proves up to this point (March, 1887) that he had the fullest information any engineer could wish for. He openly admits it and puts it down. He then proceeds to set out what he would advise, and these are the works which the Premier, who is one of Sir John Coode's great admirers, has been compelled to condemn.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Why?

MR. DE HAMEL: I will quote your own words. The hon. the Premier said: "I believe that the scheme he (Sir John Coode) propounded was the very best that could be devised in that locality. It would have made an excellent harbor suitable in every way for the shipping that now comes to the port, but it had one or two defects. It would cost too

much, and another great objection which I entertain myself to it is that even when complete it would not afford a sufficient depth of water to admit in all weathers the large ocean steamers."

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): That is the minor scheme only.

MR. DE HAMEL: It was the scheme before us last session. The Government proposed last session to adopt Sir John Coode's minor scheme, but that having been thrown over by the Premier I need not trouble the House further with it. I have now run shortly through the first two reports, and I now come to the third and last report, and here I find one of the strangest and most incomprehensible statements any man could ever have started a report with. He says: "With reference to your letter of 24th ultimo, upon the practicability and cost of opening and maintaining a passage through Success Bank, having now considered the question as fully as possible (having regard to the somewhat meagre character of the information available)," &c. Now in 1887, he writes: "Having been placed in possession of full information on all points." And yet in 1891 we find him complaining of the meagre character of the information before him!

MR. RICHARDSON: That might mean financial information.

MR. DE HAMEL: We have to take it as it stands, and it shows that he had not that full confidence in what he was going to report upon we have a right to expect. He further shirks the question of sand travel, so all-important in the previous reports of 1877 and 1887, and also shirks the question of the effect of wind and sea on a vessel crossing the bank. I will read exactly what he says, so that hon. members may judge for themselves whether I take a too liberal or a too limited view of it. He says: "I am of opinion that if a channel is to be formed through the bank it should have a bottom width, in the first instance, of not less than 300 feet, and the depth should be 35 feet, in order to allow a sufficient margin for shoaling due to sand and silt being drawn into the cut, which will inevitably arise. I consider it will be possible, by the employment of modern dredging appliances, to make and maintain such a channel. It could, undoubt-

edly, be used under ordinary conditions of weather, and not improbably during strong beam winds, aided by a tug or tugs, long steamers might safely navigate it." And he ventures to make this statement in 1891, in the teeth of his former report in 1887, that such an approach would be impracticable and dangerous. He then proceeds: "On the occurrence of heavy gales from the North-West, a channel of the width named above would not, in all probability, be used by vessels of the Orient class, although possibly the somewhat rare intervals when such a contingency would arise may not be deemed of sufficient importance to justify the condemnation of the work on that head." And this in face of his previous report that unless accommodation and space is provided to enable ocean mail steamers to call *under all conditions of weather*, it would be quite impracticable to create a mail station at this or any other port. These two statements are diametrically opposed to one another. And what was it the Premier said was the object of the Government in laying before us this scheme, except to induce the Orient and P. & O. steamers to come to Fremantle? And yet the object is thus condemned by Sir John Coode, who himself put the words "under all conditions of weather" in italics. He then proceeds: "By increasing the bottom width to say 500 feet, there is every reason to believe that the channel could be navigated with safety in all weathers and under all conditions." I would call the attention of hon. members to the very guarded wording of this paragraph. "There is every reason to believe," he says. Is that sufficient, I ask, to warrant us in voting for and supporting this scheme? Are we to go into it on "every reason to believe," and that the more so when we have direct statements in the previous reports that the approach would be impracticable and dangerous? I say it is impossible for us as sensible men to accept this report. But let me proceed further. Sir John Coode says if a decision were arrived at to proceed with the work (and here again he puts in an "if") the proper course would undoubtedly be to carry out the 300-foot channel and to note the results, subsequently increasing the width if necessary, and to such an extent as may be deemed expedient, judging from the

actual working of the channel as first formed. He says that the expense of dredging this channel 300ft. wide is the moderate sum of £126,000. Therefore we are to spend this sum on the chance of opening up this channel to a width of 300 feet, and as an experiment. If that succeeds we are to increase the bottom width to 500 feet, at a corresponding increased cost, and then we are told we shall have "every reason to believe" that ships will use it. Sir John Coode gives his opinion and I will give mine. He says there is every reason to believe. I say I do not believe. I do not think the P. & O. or Orient steamers would trust themselves down a track 500 feet wide. Put it into yards and see how small it is. Suppose, for instance, one of the steering chains broke in this channel what would be the consequences? We know they seldom break in open sea, and that it is only in the narrows, where the wheel has to be suddenly and quickly worked, that the accidents happen, and I am certain that neither the P. & O. nor Orient steamers would run this risk. In fact I will go as far as to say emphatically that they would not do it; but do we stop even at this expenditure? Sir John Coode says: "It is of course impossible to say, with any degree of certainty, what expenditure would be required in maintaining the channels after their formation. And yet what a grave query this is open to. In his report of November, 1877, Sir John Coode admits that as the heaviest seas come from the North, the prevailing movement of sand is in a southerly direction, and he further points out that during heavy gales sand is disturbed at a great depth. What, then does this mean? I say it means that a channel cut through the sand, as is proposed, would, in a heavy gale, be liable to be half filled. It is proposed, therefore, to have a channel two miles in length, which might be filled up in a day or night, and perhaps with a P. & O. or Orient vessel inside it, which would entail a cost of another £100,000 to dredge her out. And there is very great reason to believe that this channel would be damaged in this way. In his report in 1887 Sir John Coode says: "It will be remarked that the design I have described is practically of the same character as that put forward for adoption in

1877. However, it will be observed that I have found it necessary, in view of my local inspection and inquiry, to provide for a concrete pier throughout, instead of forming the outer portion of piling filled in with rubble, as proposed in 1877. Having now had an opportunity of witnessing the force of the sea which would have to be encountered by these works, I am satisfied that nothing less substantial than structures of solid concrete would meet the conditions of the case in a permanent and satisfactory manner." To deal with this logically we find that in 1877 Sir John Coode condemns a channel through Success Bank, also recommends that it would be sufficient to have part of the pier built of rubble work; but in 1891 he says that the channel would be safe, and that the pier must be built of solid concrete. The result of a comparison of these various reports, therefore, shows them to be so entirely and utterly conflicting in material and important parts that they are, as far as we are concerned, absolutely unreliable and worthless, and I say that that being so is the report on the river scheme any more trustworthy? The main objection to the river scheme was the same as to the Success Bank scheme, namely, on account of the sand travel to the South. I will show this from Sir John Coode's own words. In his report of 1887 he says, on the question of opening the Swan: "But the more serious objections which I have already pointed out in connection with the Rocky Bay project, apply with almost equal force here. I refer to the probability, nay, I might almost say the certainty, that looking at the large quantity of sand in motion, particularly near the coast line, the limited back-water available for scouring purposes would prove insufficient, even when aided by training and protective works, to keep open a deep channel through the rock barrier after the latter had been formed." Thus in 1887 the sand travel was the great objection to both schemes. But in 1891, as regards the Success Bank scheme he has dropped that question altogether, and he has dropped it in such a way that I contend entitles us to drop it in regard to the opening of the river, and in this I am fortunately supported by the authority of the present Engineer-in-Chief. We have a good engineer in Mr. O'Connor—

a man whom I trust more than I do Sir John Coode,—and I therefore hope that this Government will not waste another penny of public money upon getting further advice from him when we have a qualified engineer, who can do all we require, in our midst.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Mr. O'Connor recommends Owen Anchorage.

MR. DE HAMEL: He says he can open up the river. Then, sir, we come to the proposal put forward by the hon. the Premier—one which I am bound to condemn, and which I feel bound to point out to the House is one of the most unstatesman-like and impractical I have listened to for a long time. It is that we should build a line of railway from Fremantle to Owen Anchorage and put out a pier, and then having done that we are to try and cut a channel through a bank. We are to spend £10,000, but the Government say if it then proves to be a failure they will not spend more; but I say if the Government want to try experiments they should come to the House and ask for £10,000 for the purpose of trying experiments, and not ask for £150,000 on the understanding that they would not spend more than £10,000 unless it were justified. To my mind it is putting the cart before the horse, and it seems to me that to put down a railway line and a mole before ascertaining whether this channel can be successfully dredged, and whether, when dredged, it can be maintained, is absurd. Then I would also ask how can an expenditure of £10,000 prove whether it will be a success or not when it is to cost £126,000 to dredge the channel only 300 feet wide? The suggestion of the Premier, therefore, will not, I hope, commend itself to hon. members. For my part, I shall oppose it. The Government brought forward a distinct scheme, and a vote of the House should be taken upon it. As regards the appointment of a select committee, I look upon it simply as a "get out," and a means of delay. There was a select committee as far back as 1875, which did good work, and which work still remains. If you appoint twenty select committees I do not think they will obtain any more information than the Premier has at command at the present time. We have men now in the colony capable of dealing with

this question, and I hope now that such a decision will be come to by the House as will lead to the Owen Anchorage scheme being finally abandoned by the House voting against it, and I also hope that the motion for the appointment of a select committee will be rejected.

MR. RANDELL: I have listened with considerable attention to the remarks of the hon. member for Albany, and it is evident from the speech he has made that he has given some consideration to the reports which have been placed before this House. He has dealt with them very fairly, and the conclusions he has arrived at must, I think, commend themselves to the judgment of hon. members. The Premier, in making an excellent speech the other evening, claimed that the Government were moved only by one object—one in which I am sure every member of this House joins, and that is an earnest desire to provide Fremantle, at the earliest opportunity, with a safe and commodious harbor, the cost of which is within our means. The Ministry are actuated by no other motive, and it is a good thing that the members of this Assembly have no direct personal interest in either scheme. This is a good reason why we should be able to arrive at a sound conclusion on the subject, and with all the information we have been furnished by Sir John Coode and Mr. O'Connor, there is little need, I think, for going to a select committee. The whole question should be debated in the House, and the resolution put forward by the Government should be met. I find there were two or three points in the Premier's speech the other night to which I would like to refer. He said that for £150,000 the works could be completed at Owen Anchorage, and that within twelve months sufficient work could be done to make it available for use. And I think he said whether we dredge Success Bank or not the railway and pier would be ready.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That is as regards the shipping which comes to the port now.

MR. RANDELL: Yes, I understand that. Another point referred to was, that if it were found, after having commenced the scheme, it was likely to prove a failure, and after £8,000 or £10,000 had been expended, it could be retired

from, and the money would not be altogether wasted. Evidently the idea is in the hon. gentleman's mind that it is not quite certain whether the dredging will be a success or not. It is to be a two-mile cutting, and even at the greatest width mentioned by Sir John Coode it would form a difficult passage for very large boats. In regard to this the hon. member for Albany made a very good point, and one which seemed to meet with the approval of the House. He contended that there would be a difficulty in the event of a steamer swerving. It is well known that in shallow water a vessel does not answer her helm as well as she does in deep water. There is more strain on the chains, and consequently there is greater liability to accident, and all this would be taken into account by those in charge of vessels before attempting to navigate a passage such as is proposed. There are several other important objections to the scheme put forward by the Government. The expense of dredging through the bank would be very great, and the sand dredged up could not be availed of for reclamation purposes, but would have to be taken to a deep part of the harbor and deposited there. The effect of this might be to injure the anchorage, owing to the way the sand might shift after having been once disturbed. Then I find that very expensive works must be run out from Catherine Point, to give facilities for the discharge of ships, and that the jetty from the shore must be protected in the same way as the works at Fremantle, by a mole. I find also one feature which Sir John Coode still adheres to, and that is there is to be a certain length of open pile-work, a feature which, in my opinion, is a very bad thing for the scheme, because although it might break up the seas and prevent the full force of the waves coming in, it would have very little effect upon the swell, and ships will scarcely be able to lie and discharge alongside in rough weather, and therefore one of the advantages of a jetty at Catherine Point will be almost immediately lost. Then I think it is unwise that we should go so far away from the established port, where already great expense has been incurred, and where we are still lengthening the jetty for the accommodation of

shipping. No advantage can result from this, as it will be easily understood that even if you carry the jetty out to Rottneest there will be no quicker despatch in removing the block of cargo, without widening the jetty and increasing the number of railway lines. I think it will be apparent to hon. members that if by any means a safe and secure anchorage can be obtained close to Fremantle, that is what is needed in the best interests of the colony; and after reading the report of Mr. O'Connor there can be no difficulty in arriving at the conclusion that we can have all the colony's needs at the entrance of the Swan. After reading the correspondence which is contained in Paper 17 we must arrive at the conclusion that Sir John Coode has been compelled to give an opinion against his will, and that really he is not in favor of Owen Anchorage. He favors Jervoise Bay. I think if we read between the lines of that gentleman's remarks we shall see that he does not entertain the idea that the works will be a success. But I do not think I need labor the question of Owen Anchorage; I would rather address myself to the subject of increasing the harbor accommodation at Fremantle. We have jetties there, and a considerable amount of accommodation has been provided from time to time for vessels frequenting that port. For a long term of years, as the Premier admits, vessels will use it, even although we may construct other accommodation at the point proposed, and therefore I think we should not go to any expense at Owen Anchorage. Certainly for seven or eight months out of the year the shipping will prefer to use the jetty existing at Fremantle. The intercolonial steamers will rather remain there than go to Owen's Anchorage, but I will deal with this point later on. The report furnished by Mr. O'Connor gives us reason to believe that all the colony's needs can be obtained at the river entrance for a comparatively small cost. And, in considering this scheme, we must bear in mind the ground that will be reclaimed, the value of the wharves and the proximity of the already existing Custom House, railway and other conveniences, and set them off against the amount necessary to be expended to give the accommodation. It is said that Owen Anchorage can be made available for

shipping within twelve months, but the same thing might apply to the river, because, as soon as we begin to erect the breakwater we begin to get what we want. Thirty chains out we get five fathoms. From Rous Head we get deeper water quicker than we do from Arthur Head. As soon as we begin the breakwater we begin to shelter the works already in Fremantle, and as we project further we make them more and more safe until finally we get what is called a land-locked harbour. A sum of £80,000 is put down for the completion of this breakwater, and there can be little doubt that a work of this description can be completed for this sum. Then, when the dredging is done, the silt can be used for reclamation purposes, and I want to know why, when we can secure these advantages, and make a secure harbor in all seasons, we should reject it for what, at least, can only be considered an experimental work, for we do not know what will be the result of the dredging at Success Bank.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): Do you know what would be the result of dredging the river?

MR. RANDELL: Yes.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): Who told you?

MR. RANDELL: It is a subject I have given great consideration to for years.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): I beg the hon. member's pardon.

MR. RANDELL: The hon. member always rejects my opinions.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): And you mine.

MR. RANDELL: The hon. member is always ready with a professional opinion; but now at last we have obtained the very thing we needed, and are now able to point to an opinion as valuable as that of Sir John Coode's. No one can read the report of Mr. O'Connor without feeling it is the verdict of a man who can be relied on, and, as the hon. member for Albany has pointed out, Sir John Coode has now abandoned the question of sand travel. I ventured to tell Sir John Coode when he was here that there was not the slightest danger of sand travel, and he has now been bound to admit that it does not exist. It has always been nothing but a

bug-bear, and we now have Mr. O'Connor's opinion stating that there is no reason to believe that any serious inconvenience is likely to arise from the drift of sand. But I contend that if there were any, it would be a benefit rather than a detriment, as it would help to strengthen the mole. To say it would find its way round the mole is nonsense. I have always maintained that the drift sand at the river mouth has come from inside the river. Thousands of tons have been swept down during the last 20 or 30 years from various causes, which is a discredit, not only to former Governments, but to the present Government, for allowing this injury to be done. I have already taken the liberty of pointing out to the Government what might be done with the aid of a little piling, by making a small breakwater from Rous Head, to prevent the ingress of seaweed. By the soundings there appears to be nothing but sand outside and coralline rock inside, which Mr. O'Connor says there will be no difficulty in removing. All this, when taken out, could be used for reclamation purposes, and will thus, to a large extent, recoup the outlay. We need not be so ambitious as the Ministry desire to be, and provide accommodation that will not be needed for many years to come. Our efforts should be directed at the present time to providing Fremantle with a commodious anchorage for vessels drawing from 14 to 18 ft. of water. As to inducing the P. & O. and Orient steamers to come here at the present time, it is out of the question. They will come in the natural order of things, and if we now content ourselves with providing accommodation which is already required, we shall be doing all that is expected of us, and all that is necessary under the circumstances. At the present moment the jetty is being lengthened, which will give still further accommodation for sheds alongside, but notwithstanding this no steps have been taken to do away with the block that exists. The length of the jetty has been increased, but no additional appliances have been provided for removing the cargo. What is wanted are small jetties with sufficient excavation alongside to enable vessels to discharge, and connecting with the railways and Custom House. These are my ideas with regard to the harbor

at Fremantle. If we adopt this plan we can have a dock where any injury to small vessels may be repaired. Outside, exposed to the swell, we could not have conveniences of this description. There is no necessity to undertake any expensive work from Arthur Head. My idea is to start from the furthest extremity of Rous Head and run in a westerly direction, and the work could be carried out as far as was required without too great an expense, and provision could be made by which the stone could be taken there and discharged at a minimum of cost. I believe the excavations can be done at even a smaller sum than the estimate. I agree that Mr. O'Connor is right in taking ample margin, but there is every reason to believe that the making of the channel will not be nearly as expensive as is contemplated. Those are, generally, my ideas of the harbor works, and I think it would be detrimental to the interests of the colony if, having the works we have already at Fremantle, we should be driven to go away two miles for our Custom House and stores, and erect there fresh sheds, a jetty, and a railway. I think the railway is rather a bad feature of the Government scheme, for probably it has not occurred to anyone that it may interfere with the residents in the district through which it will run. It will certainly shut them out from the harbor, and will be otherwise most inconvenient. It will mean an additional two miles of haulage, whereas with the river the goods can be landed at once at the doors of the stores. Hon. members should also take into consideration the vested rights of the people of Fremantle, for there can be no doubt that this Owen Anchorage scheme would inflict a serious injury upon them. And, moreover, whatever may be done now, the river must ultimately be used. The colony will not consent to have this fine estuary remain unutilised for shipping purposes, and then the money it is now proposed to spend will be wasted and lost. We might almost as well go to Rockingham as carry out works at Owen Anchorage. If hon. members have read the reports of Sir John Coode, they will see how reluctantly he favors this scheme, and how he abandons the question of sand travel, and on the other hand they will see how Mr. O'Connor, who is a man of great experience, is opposed to the

sand-travel theory and thinks the harbor should be at the mouth of the river. That gentleman may, perhaps, alter the details of his scheme somewhat, but that is a matter for after consideration. I hope hon. members will go with me in thinking that the scheme proposed by the Government is not the one most suitable in the best interests of the colony, for there are elements in it, I believe, that will be never overcome. I am afraid I have not made myself very clear to hon. members, but still they will, I think, be able to gather the drift of what I intend. I have no interest whatever in the matter. The firm I am connected with would prefer Owen Anchorage, but we must not consider private interest; we must see what is best in the interests of the whole colony. I have favored the opening up of the river for years, and I am now glad to find that my opinion is supported by Mr. O'Connor, and partially also by Sir John Coode, because he now abandons the sand travel theory, which was hitherto his principal objection to it. I have known the river now for forty years, and I say most positively that there has, during that time, been no appreciable difference at any of the various points. My knowledge of the river enables me to speak with authority on this point. I shall therefore vote against the scheme proposed by the Government.

MR. RICHARDSON: I wish, sir, to make a few remarks on this subject, and let me at the outset say that I am glad the Government has not thought fit to make a party question of the motion before the House. I have taken some little trouble to obtain what information I could upon the question now before us. I have gone through the plans that have been laid on the table, and have interrogated anyone I could whom I thought could throw any light upon the subject, and from what I have been able to gather, whatever may have been the hopes of the Government, or however practicable they may think the scheme as regards the means at their disposal, I cannot help thinking that it is not a wise one. The position the Government is in is that they have £150,000 for harbor improvements at Fremantle, and they do not think the country would be willing to provide more. They have therefore endeavored to sug-

gest a scheme the cost of which would be within the limits of the sum; but to my mind they have attempted to bring about an impossible scheme. Whatever may be said about the honesty of intention on the part of the Government, I do not think it is wise policy to initiate a work which I am sure the country will not be satisfied with, for the sake of keeping within the limit of that sum set down for harbor works on the loan schedule, namely £150,000. The Engineer-in-Chief, Mr. O'Connor, as well as putting before us his report on the Owen Anchorage scheme, has also laid before us a well thought out plan of improving the river entrance, and immediately these were available it struck me why we could not undertake that part of the latter scheme which consists of a breakwater from Rous Head, which could be used as a work in common for the protection of the river and for a deep harbor. It seemed to me that such a work could be used for both purposes, and from examining the charts it appears to me that this breakwater from Rous Head would take us into even deeper water than would Sir John Coode's minor scheme, and with less expense. I spoke to the Engineer-in-Chief on the subject, and I put it to him whether this breakwater would not act as a common work for the two purposes, and he said that it would. Another point I was particular in getting full information on was, that while Mr. O'Connor has set out a close breakwater Sir John Coode laid it down as an axiom that the root was to be an open viaduct. I asked Mr. O'Connor whether he was quite satisfied about the sand travel, and his answer was that he was, and he said that not only did he think that this breakwater would protect the river, but that if placed in a much more westerly direction, as Mr. Randell has suggested, it would form the nucleus of a breakwater into deep water. For my part I think, looking at the uncertainty of the Owen Anchorage scheme, that if we do not feel in a position to tackle the great work of opening the river we should wait a few years. It appears now as if we are anxious to spend the money and must get to work on something, and this I do not think is by any means sound statesmanship. With reference to the Owen Anchorage scheme, I should like to know

whether when we have built the railway and the jetty and dredged the channel, we shall then get the Orient and P. & O. steamers to go into it. If there is no certainty of it I fail to see what is the use of spending money there. It may be said that it would be of service to the present shipping but this we can serve with the 16ft. or 17ft. of water that is required for much less money and by a far less problematical scheme. We should be, I think, spending a large sum of money to attain a very small end, and against this we should lose in another direction, for after taking the shipping to Owen Anchorage, which, although only two miles away, we should be interfering with vested interests at an established port and creating others. And again in inducing opposition two miles away we should be doing much to prevent any attempt being made to execute works in the river, and to my mind any scheme which cuts off all hope of opening up this beautiful river is one which cannot recommend itself to us, even from a patriotic point of view. If we have made up our minds to spend £150,000 in harbor improvements, we should spend it, as far as it will go, in carrying out that able scheme which Mr. O'Connor has placed before us. If that were done we should greatly protect the present jetties, besides enabling vessels of 14 ft. or 15 ft. draught to get into the river, and when that be done it will be some inducement for us to spend another £150,000 when our circumstances warrant it. I do not say I should spend more now, because I think that this amount is as much as the country can afford, but if we go on with the scheme at once, perhaps in another five years time we shall be able to spend such further sum as may be required. Although I give the Government all praise and credit for their intentions in this matter, I cannot agree to spend this large amount of money at Owen Anchorage, and at the same time, by doing it, give up all hope, for many years to come, of utilising the river, which is the real and natural harbor of this portion of Western Australia. Therefore, for these reasons, I cannot support the proposal of the Government.

MR. CANNING: When before my constituents I stated that it was a great

pity that this port of the colony could not be used, and Sir John Coode's scheme then seemed to me to be the only possible one; but I have since been led to modify my views, because it does not appear that that scheme would accomplish the object we have in view in getting the ocean steamers to call here. Then again when the present scheme was put forward I was inclined to think that careful consideration had been bestowed upon it, and it has only been since I have heard the opinions of persons, most of whom speak with authority, that it has appeared to me that it is not a proper one. The first consideration is whether there is any certainty that the scheme itself can be carried out successfully. I have always heard that sand is a most difficult matter to deal with in sub-marine engineering, and it is a great question whether any means that may be employed to open a channel through Success Bank, without any means of preventing the action of the elements, would be of permanent utility. The next consideration is that, assuming a permanent channel could be opened, the approach to it, which is so long and tortuous, the ocean steamers would encounter the risk of negotiating it. I think such is very problematical. Then there is the question of vested interests, which of course should not be a very great reason, all other things being equal, which must be considered. For these reasons I do not think the scheme will commend itself to the people of the colony. It seems, on the other hand, from Mr. O'Connor's report that the river scheme, if it could be carried out successfully, would be in a different position. Its advantages are so undoubted that this House would be fairly warranted in incurring some expense upon it. As to the proposal for a joint committee of both Houses, I should like to say a word. I may say at once that I do not think that this is a desirable course to take. To do it we should be dividing the responsibility. Members of this House, who are most of them practical men, should take it upon themselves to form their own opinions. A joint committee may be desirable in certain cases, or a conference may be desirable; but that should only be in cases where a conflict has arisen, and it is necessary that an under-

standing should be arrived at. As to the question of a select committee, I cannot see that the appointment of such would do much good, besides which we are quite able to decide the matter in a committee of the whole, where publicity is given to the utterances of members.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That would apply to every case.

MR. CANNING: The reasons may not always be the same. Here the public should have information as to every step taken. I shall, therefore, vote against both proposals.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I do not rise, sir, with the object of throwing any light on this subject, because I know, from the lengthy time I have been in this House, that every member has an opinion of his own on this question, notwithstanding the plans and reports. In 1878 I find the question of constructing harbor works at Owen Anchorage was before the Legislative Council at the instance of the hon. member who then sat for Toodyay, and on my proposition that scheme was said to be beyond the resources of the colony. I then told hon. members—although my remarks were laughed at at the time—that for some years hence we should be doing nothing but obtaining reports, and this has now been proved to have been a true prophecy. Sir John Coode furnished us with a report; but hon. members would not accept it, and it was suggested that he should personally visit the colony and inspect the various localities. This proposal was accepted, and it was then agreed on all sides that after he had been here and seen for himself we should bow down and accept what he recommended. That being the understanding, the House voted the funds, and Sir John Coode came out and reported again, but the schemes appearing to be too expensive in the then state of the colony's finances the matter was dropped for a time. Then the present Government came into office, and have been forced to the conclusion that Sir John Coode's plans are not, at the present time, within our means. It was not that the Government did not like them, but that we had not the wherewithal to carry them out. It is pretty notorious, I think, that I have favored the opening of the river and the

construction of a breakwater from Rous Head; but we only had £150,000, which was not sufficient to undertake the work with, and finding that the Owen Anchorage scheme could be done for about this amount, we decided to recommend it to the House. It is unnecessary to argue whether the P. and O. or Orient boats could use it, for that is a question only mariners can solve, and they all tell us that large vessels would not dream of going either into Owen Anchorage or the river in anything like rough weather. It is very easy to find fault. The hon. members for the Moore and Albany have been picking Sir John Coode's scheme in regard to Owen Anchorage to pieces, and with regard to that I would just make this one remark: Mr. Randell laid stress on the question of the width of the entrance proposed to be dredged, and pointed out the great danger there would be to large vessels in the event of their being thrown across the bank. No doubt the danger would be great. My own opinion as that if it were blowing hard a ship would not attempt to enter. At the same time to get into the channel suggested by the hon. member at the river mouth would be infinitely worse; for if any accident happened at the river channel the ship would be thrown against rock, while at Owen Anchorage it would only be thrown against sand. Still I am personally pleased to-night to find that there appears to be a consensus of opinion that the proper thing to do is to open up the river, and if the proposal of the Government to do work at Owen Anchorage has only the result of bringing our minds to one object, and thus enabling us to initiate and carry it out, it will have done a great deal of good. Certainly there is a greater consensus of opinion now on this subject of the river scheme than I have seen since 1874, and the idea of building a breakwater from Rous Head seems to be getting common. It is very easy to support an engineer who falls in with our views, and I myself am inclined to do the same thing; but we must look at the matter in a practical way and see what really is proposed. Mr. O'Connor proposes that his mole from Rous Head should go in a north-westerly direction and to face the heavy gales in winter. Why is that? I take it that for one reason he gets into deeper water, and for

another reason that he gets the mole end on to the sea.

MR. RICHARDSON: It is to get what they call the reflex waves.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): That is not the mole the hon. member for DeGrey would support, inasmuch as it would not protect the present wharves or piers. How, I would ask, is this to be a protection against the North-West swell when it itself runs to North-West? It certainly cannot act as a means of protecting the piers, and as a means of entrance to the river as well. Information, however, on this point can be obtained in the select committee. Then, as to getting into the river, it is of course all a matter of expense. We talk glibly in 1892 of beginning a scheme costing £800,000, and costing in the immediate future between £200,000 and £300,000. Last year Parliament sanctioned a loan, and there is no reason why I should not say that we have not been able to raise the amount required on the easy and advantageous terms we wished to, nor probably in the near future shall we be able to get what we want on very advantageous terms. It must be borne in mind that the Australian colonies are about to go into the London market for loans amounting to £7,000,000, and we see by a telegram published recently that one firm alone is saddled with £700,000 of Victorian stock and cannot sell sixpennyworth of it. All this goes to show that it will not be an easy matter to raise money in the immediate future, and it was bearing this in mind that the Government proposed to carry out that scheme which Sir John Coode led them to think could be effected. The Government do not desire to make a party question of this. The Premier said he did not wish to make it so. We are not wedded to the scheme in any way, but we say that looking at the question of ways and means this scheme promises the greatest benefit at the present moment. We should be only too glad for a committee to sit on this matter, and if some scheme can be recommended I believe then that something will be done, after all these years, in connection with harbor works at Fremantle. The issue never looked so promising as it does now. Whatever may be done I shall not pin my faith to it, for in all these matters it

is very difficult to tell what the operations of the sea may do, and any engineer's opinion, to my mind, is not very far removed from speculation. We know what Sir John Coode said about the river, and we know what Mr. O'Connor says. Both hold different opinions, and both are very high up in their professions. One says it cannot be done and the other says it can. Which is it to be? In my opinion the best thing we can do is to appoint this joint committee of both Houses; thresh the matter out; then decide on what we think is the wisest course to pursue; and after that, without asking for any more reports, set about the work. I may say, however, that the Engineer-in-Chief is very far from being opposed to the Owen Anchorage scheme. If this select committee be appointed, the evidence that will be required will be from those who are accustomed to navigation. To my mind it is of very little use to ask an engineer whether shipping will go into a certain channel in a gale of wind. What can he know about it? Something has been said about steering a ship across a narrow channel, but I do not think that an engineer is the person to obtain information of this kind from. And therefore before we begin to talk about P. & O. boats coming in, we should interrogate those skilled in navigation, and ask them whether, if they had 27ft. or 35ft. of water at a given place, it would be sufficient for their purposes. I hope, therefore, that this committee will be appointed, and that information in the direction I have indicated will be obtained.

MR. SHOLL: I believe the motion before the House is with regard to the Owen Anchorage scheme only, and therefore I take it that the functions of this proposed committee will be confined to this scheme only. No other scheme, I presume, will be dealt with. As the matter now stands I do not think the committee would be competent to deal with any other scheme. Without expressing an opinion myself as to whether it is a wise or an unwise one, I would point out to hon. members that in voting for this committee they will do so on the understanding that no consideration will be given to any alternative scheme.

MR. LOTON: I shall say a few words upon this question. The main object of the Government in bringing this subject under the notice of the House is, I take it, for the improvement of the harbor at Fremantle, and the Premier, who spoke at some length in introducing the motion, said that a further object was to induce the ocean steamers to call at Fremantle. If they are to call in, I assume it will be necessary for us to give them absolute protection in all weathers. They will not need it so much in fine summer weather; it will be in stress of weather that they will require a safe harbor. After reading carefully the report of Sir John Coode on the ultimate probability and success of the scheme before us, I have come to the conclusion that the report condemns itself. In the ninth clause of his report I find he says: "I consider it will be possible, by the employment of modern dredging appliances, to make and maintain such a channel. It could undoubtedly be used under ordinary conditions of weather, and not improbably during strong beam winds, aided by a tug or tugs, long steamers might safely navigate it. On the occurrence of heavy gales from the North-West, a channel of the width named above would not in all probability be used by vessels of the Orient class, although possibly the somewhat rare intervals when such a contingency would arise may not be deemed of sufficient importance to justify the condemnation of the work on that head." This is sufficient to condemn it, for we are to spend £150,000 simply to make a harbor for fine weather. The Attorney General, in criticising the remarks of previous speakers with regard to large vessels going through Success Bank, stated that, in his opinion, vessels would not enter; neither would they enter the river. I think his criticisms fell short in this respect, because there is no analogy between a channel protected by a breakwater such as that at the entrance to the river would be and one not so protected. Although at Owen Anchorage there would be a sandy bottom, there would be no breakwater; while at the river, although the bottom was rock, there would be a breakwater. And while, again, at Success Bank vessels would be subject

to strong beam winds, at the river, as soon as they got under the lee of the breakwater, they would get perfect shelter. The only danger would be in the approach when rounding the entrance. To my mind, when undertaking works of this kind, we should consider whether we are likely to be making a permanent harbor for this portion of Western Australia. Even if we fail let us start where there is a probability of success and permanency. We had far better expend £100,000 in experiments at the mouth of the river and fail than spend £50,000 at Owen Anchorage and fail. There are a great number of arguments against undertaking the Success Bank scheme. Take, for instance, its distance from Fremantle. There would be the extra cost of two miles of railway haulage, which would be no small amount in twelve months. There would be the maintenance of lights and buoys and a number of other things, which would involve an extra amount of expense owing to the distance from Fremantle. After Sir John Coode reported in 1888, I said I believed the colony was then in a position to commence an expenditure of £50,000 a year on the commencement of a good harbor, although the then circumstances of the colony were not too rosy. At the present time, with all due deference to the hon. the Attorney General, I think Western Australia is in a position to commence a scheme of harbor works and spend £100,000 a year on them until they are complete. Any reference to a committee will, I think, be waste of time. For these reasons I cannot support the Government in the motion they have brought before the House; although I should feel myself in a position to support them in a scheme for the commencement of works at the mouth of the river.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I did not intend to speak on this subject again this evening, but after the amendment which has been proposed to refer the matter to a joint committee of both Houses, I will say a few words. First, I take exception to what the member for the Gascayne terms our proposal, namely that it is an experimental scheme. He would have the House believe we are trying an experiment of our own; but we are as fully justified in our action on this question as in the case of any pro-

posal that ever came before the Legislature. We are supported by Sir John Coode and supported by the Engineer-in-Chief, who have both approved of the scheme for opening up Owen Anchorage. The Governor's Speech has already stated that the Government are advised that this work can be carried out for the amount voted on the Loan Bill. We are acting entirely on the opinion of Sir John Coode and Mr. O'Connor. If it were not so, we would have had a report from our Engineer-in-Chief adverse to the scheme, and we would have placed it at once before hon. members. I cannot agree with the hon. member for the Swan that it would be a waste of time to refer this matter to a committee of both Houses: because if you do not refer it, and if the resolution goes to a division and is negatived, what would be the position then of the Fremantle harbor works? I will ask hon. members to consider that carefully, because there is only one scheme before the House at present, and that is the scheme put forward by the Government; and if it be negatived, there will then be nothing at all before the House. There is no doubt this river scheme has very many attractions for all of us. We like to picture to ourselves that in the immediate or very near future we will see the river opened up, and very large steamers passing in and out; the wharves at Fremantle studded with shipping, and the whole scene one of bustle and progress; but we have to face the matter from a financial point of view. Not one member to-night, except my hon. colleague the Attorney General has referred to the money question. Anyone would think, from most of the speeches, that the money was most easy to obtain; but we who have the management of the finances of the colony know that the money is not easy to obtain for a large expenditure on this work, nor is it easy to obtain for any other part of Australia. Last year the Government placed £150,000 on the Loan Estimates, and we were pressed—I don't think we volunteered the statement, but it was pressure from hon. members that brought it forth—before we had been in office one month we were pressed to say how we were going to spend it. We then stated that we were going to spend it upon the

scheme recommended by Sir John Coode, and to go upon scientific opinion and place our foot upon a rock of safety, and not go upon any idea of our own unsupported by scientific opinion. Very few hon. members were in accord with the scheme, not because they thought it would not be successful, but because the members of this House and those in another place were not prepared to spend the money in carrying out that scheme. It was not that the scheme would not give a sufficient depth of water—that was the view of the Government, although this House did not say so. The objection of this House and the opinion of another place were that the cost would be too much—over half-a-million—and to provide accommodation for large vessels would cost nearly one million sterling; and it was said that the country was not prepared to spend that large sum in providing harbor works at Fremantle. We then had to consider our position. I was convinced that Sir John Coode's scheme, if carried in this House, would not be carried in another place; and I was impressed with the fact that 26 feet of water was not sufficient to provide such a harbor as I would like to see at Fremantle, a harbor which would accommodate the ocean steamers. We had then to look about and suggest some other scheme, and after consulting the best authorities we had, the Government came before the House and suggested the opening up of Owen Anchorage. We are most surprised to find the temper of the House now is that they are willing to embark upon the expenditure of one million of money in opening up the river. The hon. member for the Moore, who is a most practical man, did not say where the money was to come from.

MR. RANDELL: I said I did not propose to rush into any large expense at present; that it was a work of time, and should be done gradually.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): There is a great difference in the cost as estimated by the present Engineer-in-Chief, in comparison with the estimate of Sir John Coode. These two moles on Mr. O'Connor's plan, which are $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles in length and run out to 30 feet of water, are much longer (speaking from memory) than the mole proposed by Sir John Coode in his smaller scheme.

His scheme was to cost something over £500,000, but if these two moles can be carried out for £160,000, it seems that Sir John Coode's work must have been of too elaborate a character for the circumstances of the place.

MR. RANDALL: Utterly unnecessary.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Therefore, at this rate of construction, it would have been as cheap to undertake Sir John Coode's scheme as to undertake the river scheme as estimated by Mr. O'Connor; and as the matter goes on, I shall consult the Engineer-in-Chief and see what would be his estimate for carrying out Sir John Coode's smaller scheme, so that we may see if his figures are much less than Sir John Coode's estimate. It seems to me that the smaller scheme would give a 26-foot harbor at Fremantle, and I do not think those who have spoken to-night have looked further than to accommodate the ordinary trade at Fremantle, without providing accommodation for the ocean mail boats. Then, in Sir John Coode's scheme, if you were to excavate 700,000 cubic yards of rock, I have no doubt you could make a harbor of 35 feet of water, under the shelter of his breakwater. No one will say that 30 feet will be sufficient for steamers drawing more than 22 feet of water; therefore that depth of harbor would be of no use for the ocean boats. The Government are not in any way wedded to this Owen Anchorage scheme. We do not put it forward as a party measure on which we are prepared to stand or fall. We put it forward because our first scheme was not approved of, and because this was a scheme more in accordance with what we considered to be the desire of the country, and more economical; and it seemed also to be a scheme that had a good chance of success, being supported by the Engineer-in-Chief and by Sir John Coode. And besides that, as far as the proposed jetty and railway are concerned, these works are justified by present requirements, without any idea of opening a channel through the Success Bank. We see every winter a number of ships in Owen Anchorage, and as the building of a railway and a jetty to connect with the Custom House would not cost more than £25,000, both these works are justified by the requirements of the shipping using that anchorage in

winter, under present conditions. The interest on this expenditure would be only £1,000 a year on £25,000, and we think this would be a justifiable work in the present condition of the colony. That is the reason why we have, as is said, put the cart before the horse in proposing to go on with the jetty and railway first; but it would be easy to reverse the operation by not commencing the jetty and railway first. In conclusion, I shall be glad to see this matter go to a select committee, and the more this question is threshed out, the more information is obtained, and the more it is considered the better I shall be pleased. If the opinion of the country is now in favor of a more expensive scheme, I can promise that we will further consider it and see how we can carry it out.

MR. MOLLOY: This is a very important subject, and one in which I have taken considerable interest for some time past, and I now desire to address a few remarks to the House upon it. I have listened attentively to the information which previous speakers have afforded, and especially to the exhaustive criticism of the hon. member for Albany on the various reports that have been laid before the House. He has conclusively shown the inconsistency of this eminent engineer, Sir John Coode, who at one time put forward the idea that no scheme of harbor works could be successfully undertaken under half-a-million of money, and who subsequently, at the suggestion of the Government, who find themselves in a difficulty, they having only £150,000 to spend, comes to the conclusion that this sum may be utilised with complete effect, notwithstanding his previous report that nothing could be done under half-a-million. This inconsistency on the part of this eminent authority should induce us to look with suspicion on his dicta and go to other sources for information and advice. To-night we have had the experience of the hon. member for the Moore, who has studied this question, and who has been well acquainted with the river during the last forty years. I pay great respect to the opinion of this hon. member; and I consider that although he is not an eminent marine engineer, he is a practical authority. Then we have the hon. the Attorney General, who is a bit of an amateur engin-

eer, and who prefers the scheme of opening up the river. The principal reason urged by the Premier for adopting the Success Bank scheme is a financial one, and I would ask what need there is of referring the question to a select committee if we have not the means of carrying out any other scheme that may be advised? Besides this we have all the information that can be gained in the various reports of that eminent authority, Sir John Coode. Therefore I consider that this House is in a position to decide this matter at once without wasting time in a reference to a select committee. We have the opinion of Sir John Coode; we have the opinion of the Hon. J. A. Wright; and we have that of our present Engineer-in-Chief, who tells us that the river can be opened up. The Premier says that this scheme cannot be adopted owing to financial difficulties, but I have failed to notice that any speakers have urged that we should commit ourselves to the whole of this expenditure at once. All those who advocate the river scheme favor making a commencement with the money already provided on the loan schedule. They do not maintain that we should borrow £560,000 at once; they only say that we should commence the river scheme. Therefore I consider the most practical way of dealing with this subject is for the House to come to some conclusion as to whether we shall accept the Government proposal or not. If that be thrown out we can then see whether the House wishes to devote the money available to the commencement of the river or any other scheme.

MR. QUINLAN: I move that the debate be adjourned until Monday next.

Question—put and passed.

Debate adjourned until Monday, 18th January.

POLICE BILL.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I rise to move the second reading of this bill, which, with perhaps one or two exceptions, is a consolidating measure. In the schedule will be seen a list of the many Ordinances and Acts it is proposed to repeal. There is very little new in the bill, although there are some additional provisions as to gaming and the establishment

of sweeps. I have my own opinion as to the evil these sweeps are doing, but whether they will be still sanctioned by the House will be a matter for hon. members to decide when we go into committee. The first part of the bill deals with the appointment of constables and officers. The principal part of the bill, however, is Part V., which deals with the powers of the police. In another part of the bill we provide that certain matters which have been dealt with in municipal towns by by-law are exempt from the provisions of this bill; but as we have to deal with the whole colony the enactments I refer to will be operative, either in municipal towns, where no by-laws have been made, or outside municipalities. I formally move the second reading of the bill.

MR. SIMPSON: I move that the debate be adjourned until Monday evening, 18th January.

Question—put and passed.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10:35 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 14th January, 1892.

Inspection of Pearl Shell Fisheries—Leave of Absence to Hon. J. H. Monger—Expenditure on Sharks Bay Pearl-shell Fishery—Supreme Court Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Affirmations Bill: first reading—First Offenders Bill: third reading—Game Bill: in committee—Settled Land Bill: in committee—Public Officers Bill: second reading—Third Judge Bill: second reading—Municipal Institutions Act Amendment Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir T. Cockburn-Campbell, Bart.) took the chair at 8 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

INSPECTION OF PEARL SHELL FISHERIES.

THE HON. M. GRANT asked, i. Whether the Government have entered into any definite agreement with Mr.