

result that all other interests would be unrepresented. He did not know whether members would consider that a desirable thing. He did not object at all to the *bonâ fide* miner having a vote, so long as it was limited to the goldfield on which he resided, and did not interfere with the householder vote, in the way he had indicated. But the question was—how were we going to provide the necessary machinery? He did not see how it could be done unless they gave the goldfields a separate member, and let the miner's vote be given for his own representative. He did not think it would be at all a desirable thing to throw all these miners' votes into the balance with the householder votes, in the same district. But that would be the effect of this amendment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said that everyone who knew anything about goldfields must know that when miners were admitted into the franchise, it was in order that they might be able to return their own member for their own goldfields; and he did not think anyone would venture to say that our goldfields had yet attained that importance that they ought to have the right of returning their own member. He could not imagine that anyone would agree to allow the holders of miners' rights, obtainable at any time for £1, to completely swamp the genuine £10 household electors of the district, which, as his hon. friend had pointed out, might be the case if this amendment became law.

MR. RICHARDSON said he did like to hear things called by their proper names—a spade a spade, and not an agricultural implement. If members wanted manhood suffrage why not go in for it, and call it by its proper name, instead of seeking to introduce it by these side winds. It appeared to him that this would be simply manhood suffrage under another name, and manhood suffrage in a very objectionable and one-sided form,—manhood suffrage extended to those districts only in which there happened to be a goldfield. It appeared to him it was all humbug talking about the hardship of miners not having a vote, in the present stage of the development of our goldfields. It was no more hardship for the man who worked with his pick and shovel down a mine than the

man who worked with his pick and shovel down a well. One had no more right to a vote simply because he called himself a miner, than the other had; unless he also had the necessary qualification as a householder.

Amendment put, and negatived on the voices.

Clause 40:

Agreed to, *sub silentio*.

Clause 41.—Electoral lists:

THE HON. SIR J. G. LEE STEERE pointed out that these lists, according to the clause, were to be made out according to the Electoral Acts now in force. He thought it would be as well if the Attorney General were to consider how far this provision would affect the making up of the lists in the event of a new Electoral Act being introduced.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): There may be something in that.

MR. SHENTON moved that progress be reported.

Agreed to.

Progress reported.

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

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## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 27th March, 1889.

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Geraldton Jetty Extension: How vote of £2,000 expended—Recognition of past services of John and Henry Chipper, mail drivers—Bonus for establishment of Roller Flour Mill—Message (No. 6): Replying to Address re Schedule D (Pensions) of the Constitution Bill—Roads Act, 1888, Amendment Bill: first reading—Constitution Bill: further considered in committee—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

# GERALDTON JETTY EXTENSION: HOW VOTE OF £2,000 EXPENDED.

MR. GRANT asked the Director of Public Works how the sum of £2,000 voted for the extension of the Geraldton Jetty had been expended, and when was the jetty to be extended so that steamers could come alongside?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright) replied: Of the sum of £2,000 on the schedule of the Loan Act, 1884—"Geraldton Jetty Extension and Goods Shed"—the sum of £614 10s. 5d. was expended in making the surveys, soundings, and borings at Geraldton, required by Sir John Coode to enable him to report on the most advisable work. A further sum of £161 10s. was paid to Sir John Coode by the Crown Agents for the Colonies, for expenses contingent on his report. There is still an available balance of £1,223 9s. 7d. on this vote, but this amount is useless towards any practical extension of the Jetty, and if so expended would, in my opinion, make matters worse than at present.

# RECOGNITION OF SERVICES OF J. AND H. CHIPPER.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL asked the Colonial Secretary whether it was the intention of the Government to make any special recognition of the excellent services of John and Henry Chipper, during the many years they had acted as drivers of the overland mail between Perth and Albany?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said the services of these two faithful officers were recognised, and employment had been found for them in the Police Department; and they would be advanced in the service as opportunity occurred.

# BONUS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A ROLLER FLOUR MILL.

MR. HARPER: Before moving the resolution standing in my name, I should like to call the attention of the House to the present position of agriculture, and especially corn-growing, in this colony. When the Eastern Districts Railway was in course of construction it was considered that a very considerable development of corn-growing would be the result; and I think I may fairly say that a good

deal of preparation, if not of actual cultivation, has taken place in those districts. A very considerable increase of land has been cleared and got ready for corn-growing during the last two or three years, and it is hoped that shortly there will be a large increase in production. But it appears that a state of things has come about which is calculated very much to retard this development of the corn-growing industry, caused by the improved system of grinding flour that has been introduced into the sister colonies. I am informed that flour made by that process is so superior to that produced by the ordinary stone grinding that the latter cannot compete with it. Even the very best superfine flour made by the old process is almost unsaleable, in competition with the roller make. The result is that the old-fashioned process is falling into disrepute, and only roller made flour finds a market. It appears that the cost of establishing one of these roller mills is very considerable; and local mill-owners who might otherwise be willing to embark in the purchase and erection of the necessary machinery are deterred by the fact that the amount of corn required to keep one of these mills at work profitably is much larger than any district in the colony at present produces, and it must be a year or two at least before sufficient could be grown. The position at present is this: our mill-owners are extremely loth to purchase colonial-made flour which they find cannot compete with the imported roller-made article, and the result is that the home-made flour is a drug in the market. It must be obvious that, such being the case, the Government must suffer through the absence of traffic on its railway; and my object in moving in the matter is to see whether this House might not be induced to offer a bonus for the establishment of a roller mill in the colony, so as to enable our mill-owners and corn-growers to some extent to tide over the interim that must elapse between the present insufficient production of corn and the time when sufficient will be produced to keep a mill profitably at work. The agriculturist at present will tell you that he is in this position: he is not going to expend his time and his labor and money in preparing land for cultivation when he finds

that the corn he grows is almost unsaleable; and, that being so, it appears to me it becomes a question whether the Legislature might not with some public benefit step in and offer a bonus for the establishment of a roller mill, which would convert colonial grown wheat into a saleable article, and enable our local producers to compete with the producers in the other colonies. There is abundance of land more or less prepared for cultivation; and, no doubt, if the necessary machinery were available for producing first class flour a great deal of this land would be put into cultivation, and our farmers would go to work with a will and an energy that cannot be expected from them under present circumstances. Having placed before the House as simply as I can my reason for moving in this matter, I should like to point out why it is that I have suggested the locality I have done as the most desirable site for this mill, if established, and a bonus were offered as I propose. If a bonus were offered for establishing it in any particular district—say York, or Northam, or the Greenough, our principal wheat growing districts—it would only benefit that particular district; whereas if the site fixed upon were to be some spot on the Eastern line, between the Midland junction and Fremantle, it would to a certain extent serve one and all of these districts. Wheat could be brought from the Greenough, or any other district tapped by a railway, connecting with the Eastern line; or it could be brought by sea to Fremantle, and forwarded to the mill. We are told that there is going to be considerable outlay of capital made in the development of agriculture along the Great Southern line, and the probability is that, unless steps are taken to establish this mill and so secure the trade for the Government, we may find these capitalists starting a mill of their own, and drawing to it all the wheat grown in the adjacent districts, to the serious loss of the revenue. I am not aware that I need say any more in support of the resolution, which I now move: "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that a bonus of £500 be offered by the Government to any person or persons who should first establish a complete Roller Flour Mill on the Eastern Railway, at any spot

"between the Midland Junction and Fremantle; provided that such bonus would not be payable until not less than 200 tons of first-class flour shall have been produced from the said mill; and further provided that such mill shall be in working order on or before March 1st, 1890."

MR. RASON: I rise to second the resolution of the hon. member for York. In doing so, I trust that members will bear patiently with me while I give them a few figures taken from the Blue Book, showing the immense extent of the imports of flour made to this colony from abroad, and the consequent loss to our farmers. I find that from 1884 to 1887, inclusive, we have sent out of the colony no less a sum than £112,314 for flour alone. These figures are certainly appalling, when we consider that we have any quantity of land in the colony capable of growing wheat, and which ought to be growing wheat. There is no question that, while this state of things continues, Western Australia must go to the wall. These figures show that a sum equal to one-eighth of the whole of the Customs revenue of the colony goes out every year for the purchase of the first necessary of life, whilst we have the land here upon which we could ourselves produce it. The question is, how can we grapple with this serious drawback to our prosperity. We have done all we could to encourage our farmers to grow more wheat; we have striven our utmost to give them every facility for the production of wheat, and what has been the outcome of it? We have not a mill in the colony that can in the slightest measure compete with the mills of the other colonies. Our farmers say, and with some measure of justice, "What is the good of our producing more wheat, when by doing so we only lessen the demand, and lower the price?" It is obvious that, under present conditions, the more wheat they produce the less price per bushel will they get for it. At present, they say, our wheat is a drug in the market, because our millers cannot produce flour that will compare or compete with imported flour, and, if we produce more, the result will be that the market would be completely glutted, and we should have no sale at all for it. What we want, they say, is a mill

capable of doing justice to our wheat when it is produced, and so shut out the imported article; we should then have some encouragement for extending our operations. That is what our farmers say, and, it seems to me, with some show of justice. If such a mill were established, I have no doubt that the farmers of this colony would produce sufficient wheat to supply the requirements of the colony. We know that during the last few years there has been a great revolution and improvement in the milling industry. Some ten or twenty years ago any man could be a miller. A man whom Providence had destined to be a blacksmith might defy Providence and decide to become a miller. It was only necessary to spend a small sum of money in procuring some very primitive machinery, and the man became a miller at once. Although the flour he turned out might be very bad, it was as good as his neighbor turned out; and no one could complain. But we have changed all that. Science has stepped in, and improved machinery has become a necessity, and it is only by the application of skill and of capital combined that flour can be produced to-day which people will condescend to consume; and unless our millers keep pace with the times they must be content to be left behind in the race. That appears to be the position now. The farmer says he cannot grow more wheat—[The ATTORNEY GENERAL: Why?] It is not to his advantage to do so, until he has a ready market to dispose of it. There will always be a very large demand for flour of first-class quality; but, for flour as produced by the Western Australian mills of to-day there is very little demand indeed, and a demand which is very soon supplied. If the granting of the bonus now suggested would, in any way, tend to the erection of a proper rolling mill, it would be £500 spent to the greatest advantage that the Government of this colony ever spent.

MR. A. FORREST: I think the hon. member for York should amend his motion, so that if this House agrees to offer a bonus it should be offered for the erection of a mill on any existing line of railway, and not the Eastern Railway only. I fail to see why a roller mill erected between Guildford and

Fremantle should have the monopoly. We all know that the greater portion of the wheat grown in this colony is grown in the Eastern Districts, and the Greenough, and the Irwin Districts up in the North. At first blush I thought it strange that the hon. member for York should not have fixed upon York as the site for this mill, York being a purely agricultural district; but, wherever it is built, it ought to be so located that the other wheat growing districts should also have a show. [MR. HARPER: That is my object.] That's all right. We all know this colony is capable of producing as good wheat as any other part of Australia is, but, unfortunately, the mills of the colony are not quite up to the mark; and the owners have not seen their way to erect a better class of machinery, and the consequence is our flour is at a discount. People prefer the imported article, made with improved machinery; and I really believe, myself, that it is a better article than our millers can produce at present. But that is not the fault of the wheat; it is the fault of the machinery; it is the want of proper machinery to convert it into flour. If the hon. member will amend his motion, leaving the locality of the mill open, so long as it is on any existing line of railway, I shall heartily support it.

MR. SHENTON: If something could be done to induce some company or companies to erect these roller mills in the colony, not only in the Eastern Districts but also in the Greenough district, which is a very large corn-producing district, no doubt it would be a very good thing. At the present time, no matter how good the wheat may be, there is a strong desire on the part of a large section of the community—the consumers of flour—for roller-made flour; and the result is, large quantities of flour are imported which might otherwise be produced here. It may be said, perhaps, that at the present time the supply of wheat grown in the colony is not sufficient to meet the demand for local consumption, even if we had roller mills. But the supply is increasing every year; the quantity of land under cultivation is increasing every year; and, if we have a favorable season this year, there is every reason to hope that the local supply will be equal to the demand. No doubt all that is required

to convert this wheat into first-class flour is proper machinery, and, if we could induce some company or companies to introduce these roller mills, it would be a very good thing for this colony at the present time.

MR. LOTON: As I represent a country district, and one that for some years past, when blessed with anything like moderate seasons, has contributed as large a proportion of wheat as the Eastern Districts of the colony, in the interests of which, I suppose, the hon. member for York has moved in this matter, I think it behoves me to say a few words with reference to this motion,—I do not intend to say many; but I think what I do say will be open and straightforward, and it is this: I am totally opposed to the motion before the House. I think, sir, when the Government of the colony have gone to the expense of constructing railways to various parts of the colony to open up the country for agricultural purposes, and to give the settlers improved facilities for the conveyance of their produce to market, it is for the settlers themselves to do the rest. With regard to the milling industry, there is no doubt a difficulty; but it is only within the last few years that these roller mills have come into operation, and we always found it necessary to import flour before. The hon. member for the Swan has quoted some figures as to the quantity of flour imported during the last three or four years; but I may tell the hon. member this,—if we had had, during the time he has referred to, not one but half a dozen of these roller mills we should still have had to import the same quantity of flour, for this reason: the quantity of wheat grown in the colony was not sufficient to supply the demand. It must be self-evident to every person who considers the question that, after all, this is merely a question of supply and demand. Where the supply is sufficient, the necessary machinery for grinding will be found to be forthcoming. Further than this, I would point out that to offer this subsidy—if it were offered—would be really to offer a monopoly. It would be offering a monopoly to the first person who erected one of these mills; to the disadvantage of all other comers. And why should we give a bonus to the first one alone? It would merely pay the inter-

est on the outlay for one year,—on the machinery alone. I do hope there are millers in the colony possessed of sufficient public spirit and commercial enterprise to go into this paying speculation—for I believe it would be a paying speculation—without calling upon the country to pay this bonus. Let it but be shown that the supply of wheat would be equal to the demand, and I think we might trust to private enterprise to establish one of these mills.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): It must be remembered that the growth of wheat in the colony is already stimulated by a bonus of £1 a ton, in the shape of a duty on the exported article—equal to sixpence a bushel; and, as the hon. member for Greenough has said, we have built railways in all directions to open up the country, and to give our farmers those facilities of transport which they said were all they required to place them on a level with their neighbors in the other colonies; and my hon. friend the Commissioner will inform you of the very low rates at which wheat is carried on our railways. All this encouragement has been given to the agricultural interest at the public expense, and I think the time has come when any further encouragement from this source should be given very cautiously. I maintain that this would be an undue interference with private enterprise at the expense of the State; and I do not think this House has any right to be expected to assist what is legitimately within the province of private enterprise. Of course, under that new *régime* which we are looking forward to, it will be competent for the Legislature to make a fresh departure if it wishes, and to offer bonuses not only for the encouragement of milling interest but also for every other interest or industry in the colony, for it cannot be said that the miller alone is the only man who ought to be taken under the protecting wing of the Legislature. I hope that the result of this discussion, which has shown the necessity for establishing improved milling machinery, will be that some enterprising persons may come forward to provide this acknowledged want. I cannot but think, myself, that if only £500 is necessary to induce this to be done, it will be done without

State aid at all, if it is such a good thing as it has been represented.

MR. MARMION: There can be no doubt, I think, as to the desirability of improving our milling appliances, but whether it is desirable to offer this bonus, and whether to do so would not be an undue interference with private enterprise, is quite another thing. It certainly appears to me that a small bonus like this is not likely to induce anyone to establish a roller mill, unless he is satisfied that it would be a profitable concern; and, if it would be a profitable concern, I do not see, myself, why the State should be asked to give a bonus at all. It is said that one of these roller mills would cost £8,000 or £10,000; if so, the small sum of £500 by way of a bonus is not likely to have much effect in inducing anybody to incur such an outlay. Surely the colony is not in such a position, surely our people are not so lacking in enterprise, that if it is shown that there is a legitimate opening for investment, and a profitable investment, they will hold back for the sake of this paltry bonus. Certain figures have been quoted in support of this proposal, by the hon. member for the Swan; but the hon. member knows perfectly well it is not only during the last few years that this large quantity of foreign flour has been introduced into the colony; the same thing took place long before these roller mills were ever heard of. It cannot be said that the roller mills have been the cause of it. There was the same difference between the flour produced in this colony and the flour produced in South Australia, before this improved machinery was ever introduced into that colony as there is now; and no one can say that the same difference would not exist if we had a roller mill here to-morrow. If the same class of machinery in this colony produced an inferior article before, what proof is there that the same class of improved machinery would make any difference in the comparative quality of South Australian flour and our own? I think, as to this resolution, it would be a most unfair thing to the other corn-growing districts of the colony, if this mill were erected at some particular spot, as is here proposed. If the House intends to offer a bonus at all, it ought to be applicable to

the whole colony. The resolution, too, is somewhat ambiguous. It says a bonus should be offered for the first establishment of "a complete roller flour mill." What is a "complete" roller mill? What is its capacity to be? Is it to be a mere toy? My own impression as to offering this bonus is that possibly it would do very little harm, but I am fully convinced it would do no good. It is not sufficient of itself to induce anybody to embark in such an enterprise; it would never lead anyone to erect a mill capable of grinding all the wheat produced within the districts embraced in this motion, and, on the other hand, I believe it might have the effect of interfering with legitimate private enterprise. There is nothing to show that even if we had such mills here, they would have the effect of preventing large importations of flour from South Australia, any more than at present. The great cry among our farmers some years ago was for railway communication. "Give us a railway," they said, "give us facilities for getting our wheat into market, and we will produce all the corn and flour you require." We have given them these facilities; we have given them cheap means of transport, and we have given them a protective duty on flour, and still they are not satisfied. I think, sir, the State has done all that is necessary, all that can reasonably be asked of it to do, for our agricultural interest; and it is for private energy and private enterprise now to come to the rescue.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I should be sorry indeed to see this resolution pass, for I think it would be an advertisement of our poverty, more than anything else. It seems to me absurd that, with an enormous territory like this, after sixty years of settlement, we should let it go forth to the world that we are dependent for a good flour mill upon a bonus of £500 from the Government; and I hope, for the sake of the colony, such an advertisement of its poverty will not be allowed to go forth. As soon as the wheat is produced in sufficient quantity, depend upon it people will be found ready with the necessary machinery for grinding it. As to the importations that take place from the other colonies, what is the cause of it? Is it not because the local supply is not sufficient to meet the

local demand? What becomes of the wheat that is grown here, and the flour that is made here? Is it thrown away, or is it exported out of the colony, or is it consumed in the colony? We know it is consumed in the colony; and, if the colony produced more, there is nothing to show that private enterprise would not be equal to providing the necessary machinery for grinding it. If we have not the people in the colony who would be prepared to do so, there are those outside the colony who would soon come here and do it for us, if it were shown that it would be a profitable investment. If it would not be a profitable investment, I am quite certain that £500 would not induce anyone to embark in such an enterprise involving as we are told an outlay of some £8,000 or £10,000. What would £500 do, after all? It would only be £40 a year, at eight per cent., and will anyone tell me that anybody would establish a roller flour mill for the sake of securing £40 a year in the shape of Government subsidy? The thing is utterly ridiculous. If the main industry of the colony, the agricultural industry, is to be dependent upon its development, upon a bonus of £40 a year, all I can say is it is not worthy of the name of an industry at all, and the sooner the better it is abandoned as such.

**MR. MORRISON:** I quite believe that a good roller mill would be an excellent thing for the colony, but I do object to these bonuses being given to foster what ought to be the work of private enterprise. I have no objection to giving a bonus to the first man who will establish some entirely new industry, that would benefit the country generally; but, if our millers are not enterprising and public spirited enough to keep pace with the times, I don't think it is the duty or the province of this House to help them. If we do this, we shall have every man engaged in any business or trade coming to the Government for assistance; and I do not see how we could consistently refuse it.

**MR. RICHARDSON:** I have come to the conclusion that I ought to support the resolution, and I do so most heartily. This is one of those questions of which, no doubt, as a matter of general principle, a great deal might be said against it.

But I think it is an exceptional case; we are suffering under exceptional difficulties at present. The hon. member for Fremantle says that the State has done all it could be reasonably expected to do in the way of encouraging the agricultural industry. To my mind the State has done a great deal more than she ought to have done in that way, but she has done it in the wrong direction. Hon. members are well aware that I am no protectionist, and it may be said that this resolution has an element of protection about it, and, in supporting it, I may be charged with deserting my free trade principles, and advocating what appears on the face of it a protective principle. But I think I can show it is exactly the converse of that principle. When we put an embargo on flour in the shape of a duty of £1 a ton, we by that means increased the cost of every pound of flour to every man in the colony who consumed flour; which I do not think was a wise thing to do, nor a proper thing to do, and I strenuously opposed it. But what would this bonus do? The effect of this would be actually the reverse. It would have the result—or we hope it may have the result—of introducing improved machinery, which, though not increasing the price of flour to the consumer, would give him a superior article, and in that sense cheapen it; and at the same time it would help to keep the imported article out of the market. When we imposed a duty of £1 a ton on imported flour we simply levied a tax of over £6,000 a year upon the whole community, to benefit a comparatively small section of the community. But we did that without a blush; at any rate it received the support of a majority of the members of this House. They could swallow that at a gulp; but when they are asked to give this small bonus, in the interest of the agricultural community, and, indirectly, of the whole consuming population—when they are asked to give not £6,000 a year, but (at 5 per cent.) £25 a year—they put up their backs at once. They swallow the camel without any compunction, but they strain at the gnat, and make very wry faces over it. It may be said that the result of the one is not so good as the result of the other. I think it is better. I think it is better in this way: it is creating more competition,

it is stimulating and fostering local industry, it is encouraging production, without at the same time increasing the price to the consumer. It is said this would be interfering with private enterprise. I cannot see it; I think it is encouraging private enterprise. It is said it is only the first man who happens to put up a mill that will be able to claim the bonus. Of course it is. Is it not the same in every competition? It is only the first who gets the prize in every race; you cannot give a prize to everyone. Another hon. member remarked that it would be an advertisement of our poverty, and that it would show the world that we were destitute of all enterprise when we had to ask the State to give a bonus for a flour mill. If it is an evidence of poverty to find the State assisting and protecting local industries, all I can say is Victoria must be a very poverty-stricken colony, for she goes in very largely for these bonuses to the agricultural industry. Another argument used was that it would be establishing a bad precedent—that every other industry or manufacture in the colony would be asking for a bonus. I do not see that it follows at all. I consider that in this colony the agricultural interest stands pre-eminently above all others,—it is said to be the backbone of the colony; and what may be fair and just in one case is not necessarily fair and just in every case,—in fact it may be very improper in some cases; and surely this House would have the moral courage to distinguish between what was fair and what was unfair. We need not be slaves to principle. It appears to me that things have got to that state in this colony now that we must take some steps to provide for the very unfortunate state of affairs now existing. We have now a sufficient quantity of land ready for growing all the wheat we require; there is absolutely no necessity whatever to import any wheat or flour when the land now ready for cultivation has been brought in. But at present wheat is unsaleable, positively unsaleable, simply because the flour ground from it is unsaleable. People actually prefer to give 10s. a bag, to export it from Adelaide, than buy local-made flour, simply because they regard roller mill flour superior; and it appears to me

that if such a small bonus as £500 is likely to effect the object in view, it is worthy of a trial. If it does not do so, we shall have lost nothing. Another argument urged against the resolution is as to the proposed site. I rather object to that myself,—not that I think it would have any injurious effect upon other localities; for I think the result would be the same whether we fix the locality or not. Any person or company building a mill would naturally choose this very locality. I object to its being specified simply because it rather tends to encourage local jealousy. That is all. I think the House in dealing with this question should regard it as an exceptional case, calling for exceptional consideration, rather than as a question of principle or precedent.

MR. KEANE: I have great pleasure in supporting the motion, though I think, perhaps, it would be well if the site or locality were left out, and the bonus offered for the first roller mill established in the colony. I am sorry to see the House so empty, when a question like this is before it. I have noticed that when anything in the shape of a bonus or any project calculated to advance the colony is brought forward, members clear out. They make a few remarks, and then leave the House. For my own part, I think the establishment of a roller mill is one of those things that would tend to advance the colony, perhaps, more than anything else. [MR. RICHARDSON: More than Responsible Government?] A long way. I can speak from my own experience of the prejudice that now exists against colonial-made flour. I have employed many hundreds of men in this colony, and I know they would prefer to give £15 and upwards for a ton of Adelaide flour rather than pay £10 for flour made in this colony. This is one reason why so many thousands of pounds are sent out of the colony every year for imported flour; instead of the money being kept in the colony. No wonder our farmers are disheartened and the agricultural industry does not prosper. It is said that the bonus is too small to induce anybody to go in for a roller mill. I don't know so much about that. You will generally find, no matter how small the prize offered, that there are people who will compete for it. It



is said it would interfere with private enterprise; I don't see it. I think it would encourage private enterprise, and that is all that we wish to do. If the State cannot afford to give £500 towards the establishment of a roller flour mill in this colony—whether it is in the Eastern, the Northern, or the Southern districts it matters not—all I can say is, I am very sorry for the country. I think the State would be perfectly justified in offering this small bonus,—quite as much justified as in offering a bonus of £5,000 for the discovery of a payable goldfield.

**MR. CONGDON:** I am quite in accord with the object in view, and I shall certainly support the motion of the hon. member for York. So far as my own knowledge and convictions are concerned, I can quite understand that the establishment of a mill of this description would bring about a revolution in the flour trade of this colony, and do much to put a stop to that large amount of money now sent out of the colony for foreign flour. If we can only retain that money in the colony, this bonus would be an excellent thing for the country.

**MR. A. FORREST:** Will the hon. member for York alter his resolution?

**THE SPEAKER:** The hon. member cannot alter it.

**MR. HARPER:** I understand the hon. member for Kimberley to say that he cannot support the resolution unless the locality is altered. I may say that I had an object in fixing the locality as I have done; and I thought I had explained it, when I moved the resolution. If this bonus were offered for the whole colony it might operate adversely to the interest of the State. If this mill, for instance, were established in the vicinity of Albany, a large proportion of the wheat grown in these parts of the colony would be taken by the Great Southern Railway, a private company's line; and the State railway would suffer, through this diversion of traffic. I am surprised that some hon. members appear to be under the impression that I was moving in this matter in the interests of the millers. I must protest against that. I have brought it forward in the interests of corn-growers only. Our present millers would probably object to it. Of one thing I am certain,—unless something is done in this

direction, agriculture will suffer, and the State railways will suffer, and suffer very seriously. They are suffering already; and unless some means are found for the establishment of a roller flour mill in our midst there will be little or no progress made in the production of corn, but probably a decrease. We shall then have the cry that our railways are not paying, and that farming is not paying, and whose fault will it be? I take it that we, in this House, represent the consumers of flour as well as the producers, and I submit that the whole community would benefit more or less by the establishment of one of these mills.

The House divided upon the motion, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	10
Noes	...	...	...	13

Majority against ... 3

AYES.	NOES.
Sir T. C. Campbell, Bart.	Mr. De Hamel
Mr. Congdon	Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest	Hon. Sir M. Fraser, K.C.M.G.
Mr. Keane	Mr. Grant
Mr. Paterson	Mr. Loton
Mr. Rason	Mr. Marmion
Mr. Richardson	Mr. Morrison
Mr. Shenton	Mr. Pearce
Mr. Venn	Mr. Randell
Mr. Harper (Teller.)	Mr. Scott
	Mr. Sholl
	Hon. C. N. Warton
	Hon. J. A. Wright (Teller.)

The motion was therefore negatived.

#### MESSAGE (No. 6): PENSIONS INCLUDED IN SCHEDULE "D" OF CONSTITUTION BILL.

**THE SPEAKER** notified the receipt of the following Message from His Excellency the Governor:

"In reply to Address No. 4, of the 25th instant, the Governor has the honor to inform the Honorable the Legislative Council that the sums appearing in Schedule D. of the Constitution Bill have not been calculated with reference to the clauses in the Pension Act relating to abolition of office, but with reference to the special circumstance of a change of the political Constitution of the colony.

"The Executive offices affected by this change will not be abolished, and, practically, are not liable to abolition. Nor can it be said that any officer will be removed for the purpose of facilitating

"improvements in the organisation of the 'Department.'

"The Governor is advised that the 'clauses of the Pension Act relating to 'abolition of office do not in any way 'apply to officers retiring from office 'on political grounds owing to a change 'of Constitution. The pensions of such 'officers are a matter of special arrange- 'ment between the Colonial Legislature 'and the Secretary of State, and this 'view has been expressed, as regards this 'Colony, in the Earl of Kimberley's 'despatch of the 24th of March, 1871, as 'follows:—

"'I approve also of your proposal that 'notice should be given to any persons 'who may hereafter be appointed to the 'chief offices, that they will be liable 'to displacement in the event of Re- 'sponsible Government being intro- 'duced, upon such terms as the Secre- 'tary of State may sanction as equitable.'

"The whole question is one for the 'Legislative Council to deal with upon a 'careful consideration of the grounds 'and reasons stated by the Governor in 'paragraph 35 of his Despatch No. 139, 'of the 28th of May last, printed at page '5 of Council Paper No. 18 of 1888.

"Government House, 27th March, '1889."

#### ROADS ACT, 1888, AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. DE HAMEL moved for leave to introduce a bill to amend the Roads Act, 1888, with a view to reducing the statutory quorum at meetings of the Road Boards from four to three.

Leave given, and bill read a first time.

#### CONSTITUTION BILL.

The House went into committee for the further consideration of this bill.

Clause 41.—Electoral lists: (adjourned debate.)

MR. PARKER said it would be observed that this clause provided that these electoral lists were to be made up in the way prescribed in the Electoral Acts "now in force." With a view of making it clear that the Council reserved to itself the right to pass the amended electoral law hereafter, if necessary, prior to the coming into force of the new Constitution he proposed to strike out the words "now in force," and to insert the

words "for the time being;" so that these lists might be made up in the way prescribed by the law in operation at the time they were made up, rather than in the way prescribed by the Acts now in force, which might not be applicable to the circumstances.

Amendment agreed to, *nem. con.*, and other verbal consequential amendments. (*Vide "Votes and Proceedings," p. 42.*)

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

*When elected Upper House to come into existence.*

Clause 42.—"When six years shall 'have elapsed from the date of the first 'summoning, under section six of this 'Act, of persons to the Legislative 'Council, or when the Registrar General 'of the Colony shall have certified, by 'writing under his hand to be published 'in the *Government Gazette*, that the 'population of the Colony has, to the 'best of his knowledge and belief, ex- 'clusive of aboriginal natives, attained 'to Sixty thousand souls, whichever 'event shall first happen, this Part shall 'come into operation, provided that the 'Governor in Council shall have power, 'by proclamation in the *Government Gazette*, to further postpone the opera- 'tion of this Part for any period not 'exceeding six months.'

MR. DE HAMEL said that in this clause there was an alternative given, as to the time when the elective principle should come into operation.—one being at the expiration of a given time, namely six years, and the other being when the population of the colony numbered 60,000 souls. He had been looking at the correspondence between the Governor and the Secretary of State on this subject, and it seemed to him that the matter was not made very clear. In his despatch No. 301, of the 6th November, 1888, paragraph 7, the Governor, writing to Lord Knutsford, said: "I will there- fore ask for a telegram on the subject, 'my respectful recommendation being 'that Her Majesty's Government shall 'consent to the Upper Chamber under 'the new Constitution becoming elective, 'either (a) after six years, or (b) when 'the population of the colony, now 'estimated at 42,043 souls, shall have 'increased to 60,000 souls." It would be seen there was not a word said there

as to "whichever event shall first happen" (as was mentioned in this clause); and it appeared to him open to doubt whether it was intended that an alternative should be offered, "whichever event shall first happen," or whether the suggestion of the Governor was that the Secretary of State should decide which of the two alternatives should be fixed upon—whether the elective principle should come into force within six years, or whether it should come into force when the population shall have increased to 60,000. The Secretary of State, in replying by telegraph to that suggestion of the Governor's, simply said: "I have no objection to your proposal contained in paragraph 7, in your despatch of 6th November." It did not appear to him that the Secretary of State intended that this House should have the power to insert in the Constitution Bill either alternative, but that they should decide which of the two they should adopt. No doubt the members of the Government might be able to make this point clear to the House, and he thought they ought to have some information upon it, otherwise the passage of the bill might be hereafter delayed. It had just been pointed out to him that the Secretary of State's words were "your proposal"—not "your proposals," which implied that Lord Knutsford intended to give us either alternative. He thought it would be better to adopt a fixed date, six years, rather than leave it contingent upon the population increasing to 60,000.

MR. MARMION said that when speaking to the second reading of the bill, he drew attention to what he thought had been an oversight in this particular clause. He thought all hon. members wished that when this bill passed there should be some finality about it, and that there should be no room for any doubt as to any part of it. He agreed very much with what had just fallen from the hon. member for Plantagenet. There seemed to him to be too much chance work about this clause as it stood, and that they ought to declare for one or the other of the two alternatives, either the six years, or the population test; and, for his own part, he preferred the six years.

MR. KEANE failed to see the force of the argument, as to there being any

doubt about this matter. The clause distinctly said "whichever event shall first happen." It appeared to him to give them an element of safety rather than of uncertainty.

MR. SHOLL presumed that what the hon. member for Plantagenet meant was, that as the reply of the Secretary of State to the Governor's suggestion was merely a telegram, it might be open to misconstruction, and that the Secretary of State did not intend that we should have the alternative, but that we should choose for ourselves which of the two events we desired to stand upon.

MR. PARKER asked the Attorney General whether he thought this clause as it was here worded, carried out the intention of the Secretary of State? The idea was that we should have an elected Upper House in six years, or when the colony had attained a population of 60,000 souls. This clause made it perfectly clear as regards the six years, but did it make it clear as to the population test? The clause said: "or when the Registrar General of the colony shall have certified, by writing under his hand to be published in the *Government Gazette*, that the population of the colony has, to the best of his knowledge and belief, exclusive of aboriginal natives, attained to 60,000 souls." There was no provision for a census being taken, or anything else; it was to be dependent simply upon the Registrar General certifying that in his belief the population had reached that number,—not by a statutory declaration, but a mere statement to that effect in the *Government Gazette*. Unless this statement was made—no matter what the population might be—the elective principle would not come into operation. Or, on the other hand, a statement to that effect might be published the very next day after the bill became law. He doubted, himself, whether the Secretary of State would regard this as carrying out the proposal he agreed to when he sent that telegram. It must be borne in mind that this was a part of the bill which the Secretary of State had not had an opportunity of perusing. This was not a mere quibble. This certificate might be given at any time—when the actual population was not more than 45,000—and we should at once have an

election for the Upper House, although the nominated House had only been in existence a week.

**MR. MARMION:** What would become of his office, if a Registrar General made a false declaration?

**MR. PARKER** said that was not the question. He had merely drawn attention to the matter, so that the Attorney General might say whether he thought the clause, as worded, would satisfy the Secretary of State.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Hon. C. N. Warton) said he should say in the first place that the clause belonged to that part of the bill which the Secretary of State had not yet seen; the other parts of the bill were substantially the same as approved by the Secretary of State; and he (the Attorney General) had always, for that reason, drawn a distinction between this particular part of the bill and the other parts. With regard to the words "whichever event shall first happen," it was perfectly true, as the hon. member for Plantagenet said, that those words did not appear in the Governor's despatch to the Secretary of State, and he must honestly say that the wording of His Excellency's despatch on this particular point was somewhat ambiguous. But it would not do to import any ambiguity into an Act of Parliament if they could avoid it, and therefore the words "whichever event shall first happen" were introduced, to make the point perfectly clear. He quite admitted the force of the remarks of the hon. and learned member for Sussex,—that we ought to have some mode of determining when the number of the population had attained to 60,000; but, after all, this was a mere detail; and many small alterations which did not interfere with the principle of the bill would be made wholesale, when the bill appeared as a schedule to the Enabling Act.

**MR. RICHARDSON** thought it would be better to strike out the alternative as to the population, which, after all, would require some proof; and it seemed to him a very unsatisfactory way of deciding the matter.

**MR. MARMION:** Supposing one portion of the colony were to be cut off from the other, what would this clause mean then?

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Hon. C. N. Warton): It would mean what it says. If the hon. member had his leg cut off he would still be member for Fremantle; and if any portion of the colony hereafter were cut off, this clause would still apply to the remaining portion, where Responsible Government operated.

The clause was then put and passed.

Clauses 43 to 51:

Agreed to, *sub silentio*.

Clause 52.—Colony to be divided into five electoral divisions:

**MR. SHENTON** moved that the word "division" be struck out and "provinces" inserted in lieu thereof. He thought "provinces" was a better word than "divisions" to apply to these Upper House electorates.

**MR. RANDELL** said "province" was no doubt a more ambitious word than the other, but it seemed that "division" was the more proper word in this connection. The colony was simply divided into five electorates, each returning three members for the Upper House.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Hon. C. N. Warton) said that for his own part he preferred the language of the bill. "Province" seemed to him too ambitious, too grand, a word to apply to merely an electoral division of the colony. The whole colony of South Australia was designated a province, and would it not be somewhat presumptuous on our part to call one-fifth part of Western Australia a province, and have five provinces within one colony? It was a matter of taste, and nothing more.

**THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES** remarked that, as a matter of fact, in nearly all the other colonies "province" was the word applied to the Upper House electorates, and "divisions" to the Lower House electorates.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Hon. C. N. Warton) said that might be so; but we were not necessarily guided by the other colonies in everything.

**MR. KEANE** thought it would be better to follow the practice of the other colonies than doing what the Attorney General was always dinning into their ears—following the practice of the House of Commons, and the mother country.

**MR. PARKER** said that he preferred the word "division" to the word "province" in this connection. The whole

colony might be called a province, but here it was proposed to have five provinces within one colony. After all, it was a matter of very little importance.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) thought "province" was too high-sounding a word for an electorate. In South Australia and in Tasmania they called them electoral "districts"—both for the Upper and Lower House. The only Australian colony that used the term "province" was Victoria. In New Zealand they called them "provinces," but in that colony they had a provincial form of Government; and it was the same in Canada. He thought it would be misleading to call these electoral divisions "provinces" in this colony. Under the Land Regulations a combination of districts took the name of a "division," and he thought it would be more appropriate to apply the same term to a combination of electorates.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 52 agreed to.

Clause 53.—Qualification of electors for Legislative Council:

MR. DE HAMEL said a notice of an amendment appeared in his name to strike out the sub-section requiring an elector to have been possessed of his property qualification for at least one year before he was registered; but, as a similar amendment as regards the qualification of electors for the Assembly had been rejected, he did not propose to proceed with this other amendment.

MR. RANDELL said he had intended to move to strike out the provision in a preceding clause, as to payment of rates, in connection with the qualification of electors for the Lower House; but, somehow or other, the notice of his amendment did not find its way into the notice paper, and the opportunity was lost. He thought it was purely a municipal matter, the payment or non-payment of rates, and should not affect a man's right to a parliamentary vote. When the bill came to be recommitted, he might avail himself of the opportunity of moving to strike out that provision relating to rates.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 54 to 58:

Agreed to, *sub silentio*.

*Custom Duties may be imposed not differential.*

Clause 59.—"It shall be lawful for the Legislature of the colony, subject to the provisions of this Act, to impose and levy such duties of Customs as to it may seem fit, on the importation into the colony of any goods whatsoever, whether the produce of or exported from the United Kingdom or any of the Colonies or Dependencies of the United Kingdom or any Foreign Country. Provided always, that, except as authorised by the Imperial Act known as the Australian Colonies Duties Act, 1873, no new duty shall be imposed upon the importation into the colony of any article the produce or manufacture of or imported from any particular country or place which shall not be equally imposed on the importation into the colony of the like article the produce or manufacture of or exported from all other countries and places whatsoever."

MR. RICHARDSON hoped some hon. member would move some amendment in this clause; if not, he must do so himself, on recommitment of the bill. He considered the latter part of the clause unnecessarily binding. It prohibited us from entering into any reciprocal treaty with any colony for the free interchange of commodities, however beneficial it might be to both colonies. It was done between Victoria and Tasmania to their mutual advantage; and it might be necessary, hereafter, that this colony should have the same right to enter into a reciprocal agreement with, say, South Australia.

THE HON. SIR J. G. LEE STEERE pointed out that the clause under review would not operate in the way which the hon. member for the North apprehended it would. According to this clause it would be lawful for the colony, subject to the provisions of the Imperial Act known as the Australian Colonies Duties Act, to enter into a reciprocal treaty with any other Australian colony, as regards the free interchange of commodities. The Imperial Act referred to authorised us to do the very thing which the hon. member wished.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 60 to 62:

Agreed to, *sub silentio*.

*Liability of separated portion of Colony  
for public debt.*

Clause 63.—“Whenever any portion of the colony is about to be separated therefrom the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty’s Treasury may if requested by the Governor in Council, on report and accounts furnished by him, declare what portion of the public debt of the colony has been expended within the territory about to be separated, and the interest and sinking fund, if any, upon the portion of the public debt mentioned in any such declaration shall be a reserved charge payable to the Government of Western Australia by the Government of the separated territory, and due provision for such reserved charge shall be made in any Act regulating the constitution of the separated territory. Provided always, that nothing herein contained, and no declaration or provision as aforesaid, shall in any way prejudice or affect the security of any debentures which may have been issued by the Government of Western Australia before the separation of any such territory.”

MR. MARMION thought this was a very important clause, and one that ought not to be allowed to pass without due consideration. He thought the clause did not go far enough; it was hardly sufficient to make provision for refunding the amount expended out of public loans only, in the event of any portion of the colony becoming a separate territory. Of course the clause referred particularly to the Northern division of the colony. He thought that in addition to the amounts expended out of public loans in that part of the colony, a great deal more had also been expended there out of general revenue than had been received into the public Treasury. He thought the clause as it stood—making provision only for a refund of the sums expended out of public loans—would be detrimental to the interests of the North itself, for the result would be that in future no expenditure out of current revenue would be incurred in that part of the colony beyond the amount contributed from that part to the general revenue. No doubt there was a difficulty in ascertaining now how much had been expended out of

general revenue in these Northern districts in excess of the revenue received from them; still, he thought the clause might be made to apply to expenditure out of revenue as well as expenditure out of loan.

MR. SHOLL said it must be borne in mind that these Northern people were contributing towards the payment of loans expended in this part of the colony, and had been doing so for years.

MR. A. FORREST dared say that the hon. member for Fremantle would like to see the greater portion of the public debt of the colony thrown upon the shoulders of the Northern districts, in the event of separation. But he thought we had been well repaid for any expenditure made at the North by the revenues received from that part of the colony, and that the South was largely indebted to the revenues of the North.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said it might be taken for granted that moneys expended out of general revenue would be expended by common consent of the Legislature, and, once expended, there was an end of the matter. But not so with regard to loan money; and, if any part of the colony should hereafter seek to become separated from this part, it was only reasonable that some provision should be made, either on the basis of population or revenue, or on some other basis, whereby the separated portion should be chargeable with the amount of loan moneys expended in that portion.

MR. GRANT thought this was a very difficult clause to deal with, and a very important clause; and, how the difficulties were going to be settled hereafter, in fairness to all parties, was more than he was at present prepared to say.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 64 to 68:

Agreed to, *sub silentio*.

Clause 69—Civil List (£9,850):

MR. SHENTON: I presume if there is any alteration made in this amount, it will be dealt with when we come to “Schedule B.”; and this clause may be amended accordingly, on recommitment of the bill.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): Certainly.

Clause agreed to.

*Sums payable to Aborigines Protection Board.*

Clause 70—"There shall be payable to Her Majesty, in every year, out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the sum of Five thousand pounds mentioned in Schedule C. to this Act to be appropriated to the welfare of the Aboriginal Natives, and expended in providing them with food and clothing when they would otherwise be destitute, in promoting the education of Aboriginal children (including half-castes), and in assisting generally to promote the preservation and well-being of the Aborigines. The said annual sum shall be issued to the Aborigines Protection Board by the Treasurer on warrants under the hand of the Governor, and may be expended by the said Board at their discretion, under the sole control of the Governor, anything in the Aborigines Protection Act, 1886, to the contrary notwithstanding. Provided always, that if and when the gross revenue of the colony shall exceed Five hundred thousand pounds in any financial year, an amount equal to one per centum on such gross revenue shall, for the purposes of this section, be substituted for the said sum of Five thousand pounds in and for the financial year next ensuing.

"If in any year the whole of the said annual sum shall not be expended, the unexpended balance thereof shall be retained by the said Board, and expended in the manner and for the purposes aforesaid in any subsequent year."

MR. SCOTT moved that the following words be struck out: "Provided always that if and when the gross revenue of the colony shall exceed £500,000 in any financial year, an amount equal to one per centum on such gross revenue shall, for the purposes of this section, be substituted for the said sum of £5,000 in and for the financial year next ensuing." This amendment, the hon. member said, went somewhat further than the one of which the hon. member for the Vasse had given notice, and that hon. member had suggested that he should move this amendment instead of the one standing in his name. He had, therefore, done so. It appeared to him that the financial prosperity of the colony would not depend upon the population

altogether, nor would it depend necessarily upon the amount of money we could afford to spend upon the natives, or upon any other philanthropic object; and he did not see why the colony should be bound in this way to contribute more and more towards the native population as its revenue increased. There would be other demands upon the revenue; we might be sure of that—demands which we should have to meet in the interests of the colony. We might have to borrow large sums for the development of our natural resources, and so increase our financial liabilities; and we should want all our spare revenue to meet those liabilities. Not only that, it must be acknowledged that as time went on the number of the aboriginal natives would diminish rather than increase; and, if £5,000 was considered sufficient to set apart for their benefit now, surely it would be sufficient in years to come, when their numbers had dwindled down. It seemed to him preposterous that the colony should be called upon to increase this sum as the revenue increased, while at the same time the number of natives to participate in it were diminishing every year. He also noticed that this clause included the maintenance of half-castes, which really seemed to him a sort of premium or encouragement for breeding half-castes. There was another preposterous provision in the clause—that the unexpended balance of this money, year after year, should be retained by the Board, instead of reverting to the colonial revenue.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said he should, of course, resist this amendment, to the utmost of his power. Could it be said with any sense of justice that to set apart one per cent. of the public revenue for the benefit of the aboriginal possessors of the soil was anything unreasonable? The hon. member, and other hon. members, when referring to our natives, and talking about their gradual disappearance, seemed to think that the natives were to be found only in the settled districts of the colony. Surely they must be aware that natives probably existed by thousands, if not tens of thousands, in the unsettled and unexplored portions of the colony; and no one could say that it was not our duty to aid them, and to do what we could for them, as the opportunity offered. As to

making provision for the wretched half-castes, we already recognised our liability in that way, for we now contributed £750 annually for that purpose. As to the future there would be charges accruing in connection with providing reserves and other institutions for the natives; and he thought it showed a miserly spirit on the part of the Legislature to begrudge the necessary provision for meeting this expenditure. As to the natives decreasing in number, all he could say was, the more shame to the settlers that they allowed them to decrease, and to disappear off the face of the earth. He thought it was our duty to do everything in our power to aid and protect these wretched natives, whom we had despoiled of their land; and the least we could do was to set apart a certain portion of the public revenue for that purpose. He should feel it his duty to divide the House on this question, feeling confident that he should have every right-minded man in the House with him.

MR. KEANE said that, in his opinion, this clause was simply what he might call an Exeter Hall fad, and, as such, it was bound to receive the support of the Government benches. Perhaps it would be well, too, for the House to pass it, for this reason: if we declined or refused to do so, it would be looked upon with suspicion by these Exeter Hall gentlemen, as if we had some sinister design against the poor black. This native question was regarded as a very important one in some quarters at Home, where a great deal more was thought of the benighted native than of our own race. He would remind the House that under Clause 73 the Legislature here would have power hereafter to alter any of the provisions of this bill.

MR. MARMION said that whatever the members of that House might think of this clause, whether it was a "fad" or whether it was all "preposterous," there were those outside the colony who thought a great deal of it; and, for that reason, he agreed with the hon. member who had last spoken that it would be wise for the House to pass the clause. For years past we had been voting £3,000 a year for these natives, and it was only proposed to set apart £5,000 a year, until such time as the public revenue

reached £500,000 a year. Even then it would only increase at the rate of £1,000 for every £100,000 of the public revenue, which, after all, was not a very large sum,—certainly it was not worth while making much bother about it.

MR. A. FORREST said, notwithstanding what had fallen from the Colonial Secretary, he believed our natives were dying out very fast, and he considered this clause a great blot on the bill; he meant that part of it which compelled us to increase the sum to be provided for the natives as the revenue increased. He did not object so much to the £5,000, though the necessity for it was getting less every year, as the number of natives decreased. That they did decrease was beyond doubt, as must be known to every living authority on the subject, residing outside Perth and Fremantle. It was not a question of theory at all, but a well-known fact. He, himself, knew for a fact that in some of the Northern districts, the Roebourne and the De Grey districts, where ten years ago you saw twenty natives, you did not see more than two now. He did not think this clause was necessary at all. He was sure that if Parliament were asked by the Government of the day to provide the funds necessary for maintaining these natives, Parliament would do so, in every reasonable way. He thought if the clause passed at all, the grant should not exceed £5,000, without a direct vote from the House.

MR. SHENTON said that so long as the *personnel* of the House remained as at present, no doubt the natives would be well looked after; but we did not know what change there might be in the *personnel* of Parliament under the new form of Government, or what the native policy of the future Government might be. He thought that, in common justice to the native population, £5,000 a year was the very least that Parliament should grant for this purpose, under present circumstances; and, if our revenue expanded beyond £500,000, surely we could afford one per cent. out of it for the native race. It was a principle that guided people in private life, as their income increased so, generally, did their contributions towards benevolent objects increase.

MR. RICHARDSON thought it was



more as a protest against the principle underlying this clause, than anything else, that members generally disapproved of this clause. It set forth to the world that, in the opinion of the Imperial Government, the Parliament of Western Australia could not be trusted to deal fairly with the natives of the colony, unless the natives were placed altogether beyond the control of Parliament. That was where the sting of the clause lay. It went further than that: it was tantamount to saying that not only could the Parliament of the colony not be trusted, but also that this Aborigines Protection Board itself could not be trusted, for the clause provided that no unexpended balance of the grant should revert to the revenue—which was tantamount to saying that, if the Board had their own way, they would spend very little of this money on the natives, but let it go back to the revenue. That was the objection he had to the clause: it threw a sort of slur upon the colony; and, whatever view the Home Government might take of the clause, he thought that House ought to make some sort of protest against this slur. Unless it did so, he thought it would show that they were made of very base stuff, and very poor stuff, if they submitted tamely to this insinuation. He gave in to no one—not even the Commissioner of Crown Lands himself—as to the desire to treat the natives properly; but he did object to this slur being cast upon the colony in the face of the whole civilised world.

Mr. PARKER said that at first he thought this was such an important provision of the bill, and one so closely affecting our future interests, that it would be desirable to repeal this proviso with regard to increasing this native fund as our revenue increased, after it reached £500,000. But, on looking at the matter a second time, it seemed to him it would be unwise for them to interfere with the clause, for various reasons. In the first place, it was looked upon as a very important feature of the bill by the Secretary of State, and probably by an influential party in the mother country; and the Secretary of State might deem it necessary to insist upon it as a *sine quâ non* to the granting of Responsible Government. Therefore, he thought it would be impolitic to strike out this proviso,

more especially in view of the further amendment which it was proposed to move, namely, the striking out of that part of the clause which provided that the unexpended balance shall not revert to the revenue. It appeared to him that if they made provision to the effect that all the unexpended balance of the annual grant shall revert to the general revenue, it would not matter much how large the amount of the grant might be. It was not likely that the Board would spend the money merely for the sake of spending it. The Government surely were not going to appoint men to seats on this Aborigines Protection Board who were wholly irresponsible and wholly unreasonable; they knew that at present the members of this Board were amongst the best men in the colony, men who were acquainted with the circumstances and requirements of the native population, and men in whom the country had every confidence. It might well be supposed that this Board would always be composed of such men; and it was not likely they would waste this money, or throw it away recklessly, just for the sake of getting rid of it. Under these circumstances he hoped the committee would not divide upon this amendment, but would reserve its opposition to the other portion of the clause which provided that the unexpended balance shall always be retained by the Board, and not revert to the revenue.

Mr. SHOLL said that was his main objection to the clause—the latter part of it, which provided that if in any year the whole of the sum voted should not be expended, the balance, instead of being refunded to the revenue, was to be retained by the Board, whether they wanted it or not. That money might be required for other purposes; but it could not be made use of. That was his strongest objection to the clause. At the same time he thought the whole clause was a downright insult to the colony. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: No, no.] Hon. members might say, “No, no”; they might be more thick-skinned than he was. When they found the Secretary of State insisting that this Board should be independent of the Legislature of the colony, was it not tantamount to saying that the Legislature was not to be trusted? This provision in the clause as to unexpended

balances was altogether contrary to the whole spirit of the Audit Act, which provided that all unexpended balances should revert to the revenue. Why there should be an exception made to that rule in this particular instance he certainly could not see.

MR. SCOTT said that, with the leave of the committee, he would withdraw his present amendment.

MR. GRANT wished to state that he was not at all in favor of increasing this grant beyond £5,000, as the revenue increased. He was sure that those who drew up this clause must have been totally unacquainted with the state of our native population. It was well known to all who knew anything about the natives that their number was gradually decreasing, all over Australia; and he really could not understand why it should be considered necessary to make this extra provision for them. He thought it would always be a disgrace to the colony that we had been an exception to all the other colonies in this way, especially when it was a well-known fact that more care was taken of the natives in this colony than in any of the other colonies. He believed in treating the natives well—he had employed some hundreds of them; but he thought it was a great mistake to pamper them, instead of getting them to work. This clause, after all, was nothing but the outcome of that ignorance and prejudice which existed in England with regard to native affairs.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. SCOTT then moved that in the last paragraph of the clause (commencing "If in any year," &c.) the following words be inserted between "be" and "retained"—"returned to Consolidated Revenue Fund." The object of this amendment, as the committee would see, was to provide that the unexpended balance of the grant, instead of being retained by the Board, should be returned to the general revenue of the colony.

MR. PEARSE thought it would be a great pity to jeopardise the whole bill by inserting amendments in this clause, which they all knew was thought a great deal of at Home. He thought it was a very wise provision to make sure that the natives of the colony should be well looked after, under any form of Govern-

ment. He considered the country had done very little for the native population in the past, especially in the more settled parts.

MR. VENN said he should support the Government in this matter. If this amendment were carried it would defeat in a great measure the object which the Home Government had in view. It was all very well for members in that House, who knew the character of those who comprised this Aborigines Protection Board, to say that they were men who could be trusted, and that there was no necessity to surround them with all these safeguards. The English people and the English Government might think otherwise, and we had to humor the prejudices of these people. He did not consider it in the light of any reflection upon the colony, that we should be asked to make some definite provision for the welfare of the native population. Nor did it matter about this native fund accumulating, so far as he could see. Why should they force the Board to spend the whole of the grant every year, whether the money was wanted or not, or whether there was any immediate necessity for its expenditure? Why not allow the Board to make provision for future contingencies, in the case of this miserable remnant of the native race. If the natives some day disappeared altogether off the face of the earth, the necessity for this Board would no longer exist; and this Act was not like the laws of the Medes and the Persians, unalterable or irrevocable. He hoped the committee would leave the clause as it now stood. They were dealing with a very tender point, as those who knew English feeling on the subject must be aware.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) asked members to consider very carefully indeed before adopting this amendment, and taking away the very substance of the clause, which was that this Board should be independent of parliamentary control. If the unexpended balance had to be returned to the general revenue, what guarantee had we that anything would be spent at all for native purposes, or, at any rate, anything beyond a nominal sum? One would imagine from some hon. members that the Imperial Government had no responsibilities or duties at all

towards the native population of her Australian colonies. It was true that no provision for this had been made in the Constitution Act of the other colonies, but it was now acknowledged by Imperial statesmen that a great mistake had been committed in not making this or some other provision in the interest of the aboriginal race. As to the native population dying out, there were thousands upon thousands of natives in the interior of our territory who had never seen a white man and this clause was intended for the benefit of all these natives hereafter. It must be remembered that we had only settled about one-fourth of our territory yet, and that three-fourths of it was almost unknown. He thought the Home Government, if he might be allowed to say so, was only doing its duty, and doing what was right, towards the aborigines, when it insisted upon some provision being made for their future welfare and protection. He thought there was every necessity for making such a provision, for, although the treatment of the natives in this colony, as a rule, had been a humane treatment, there were exceptions to that rule, and he believed there were many cases of great cruelty towards natives. [Mr. RICHARDSON: By the Government?] No; by individual settlers, pioneer settlers. He had never, himself, been one who admitted that the natives had been treated with uniform kindness; and he thought it was very desirable that there should be an Aboriginal Protection Board, to watch over their interests, especially on the outskirts of civilisation. As to its being a slur upon the colony, he considered it no slur at all, but a very reasonable provision on the part of the Home Government, when handing over this vast territory to us. Although the Board would be a statutory body, and, in a sense, independent of Parliament and of the Government, practically it would not be so. We might depend upon it, the Board would act in concert with the Ministry of the day and the Governor of the colony; and it was preposterous to suppose that it would work contrary to the interests of the colony. He was sorry that any opposition had been shown to this clause, as it might lead the Home Government to imagine that we really did intend to act

unfairly towards the natives, if we got our own way.

MR. MARMION thought the Legislature might be always trusted to vote what was necessary for this Board, in the event of the unexpended balance in any year reverting to the consolidated revenue. He did not think there need be any apprehension on that score, and that it would be only justice to ourselves to insert these words.

Question put—that the words proposed by Mr. Scott be inserted:

The committee divided, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	10
Noes	...	...	...	12

Majority against ... 2

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. De Hamel	Mr. Congdon
Mr. A. Forrest	Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. Grant	Mr. Keane
Mr. Loton	Mr. Morrison
Mr. Marmion	Mr. Pearce
Mr. Parker	Mr. Randall
Mr. Paterson	Mr. Shenton
Mr. Richardson	Hon. Sir J. G. Les Steere, Kt.
Mr. Skoll	Mr. Venn
Mr. Scott (Teller.)	Hon. C. N. Warton
	Hon. J. A. Wright
	Hon. Sir M. Fraser, <i>s.c.m.c.</i> (Teller.)

Clause 70 was then agreed to.

Clause 71:

Adopted without comment.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

The House adjourned at a quarter to eleven o'clock, p.m.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Thursday, 28th March, 1889.

Removal of Railway locomotive from Bunbury—Constitution Bill: further considered in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.