

officer at any time, and any employer or employee can also inspect any of these books with reference to any matter in which he has been himself concerned. After a third conviction in one year a license can be cancelled. Clause 17 is the one that strikes at the root of the evil, because it provides a penalty if any advertisements are published which are inaccurate and misleading. That has been one of the great troubles people have had to put up with in this business. I beg to move that the Bill be read a second time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### AUCTIONEERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by HON. A. H. HENNING, and read a first time.

#### POLICE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by HON. A. B. KIDSON for Hon. R. S. Haynes. and read a first time.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The Council adjourned at 9:45 p.m. until the next day.

### *Legislative Assembly,*

*Wednesday, 1st December, 1897.*

Papers presented—Question: Acceptance of arrears of mining rents without fines—Question: Excursion railway rates to goldfields during holidays—Question: Storage of gunpowder in a gaol—Question: Publication of import and export statistics—Motion: Papers re Administration of Stock Diseases Act—Motion: Proposed railway from Great Boulder to Bulong—Motion: Proposed boring for subterranean deposits of alluvial gold—Motion: Women's Suffrage; division (negative)—Underground Surveyors Bill: first reading—Motion: Legislation re Mining on Private Property—Imported Labour Registry Bill: third reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

#### QUESTION—ACCEPTANCE OF ARREARS OF MINING RENTS WITHOUT FINES.

MR. A. FORREST, for Mr. Lyall Hall, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier:—(1.) Whether it was a fact that the Mines Department was now accepting all arrears of rent due on gold mining leases without the usual fine. (2.) If such were the case, whether the Minister of Mines intended to refund the amount of such fines to those lease-owners who, since the first of March last, had paid their rents with fines added.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): (1.) No; with exception of leases approved under old Act, in which case no fine is provided for. (2.) Answered by No. 1. The fines imposed are in accordance with the Act—10 per cent. during February, 15 per cent. during March, rents being receivable to 31st January without fine.

#### QUESTION — EXCURSION RAILWAY RATES TO GOLDFIELDS DURING HOLIDAYS.

MR. VOSPER, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways:—(1.) Why no excursion tickets were issued to convey passengers from Perth to the goldfields, as well as from the goldfields to Perth. (2.) Whether it was his intention to grant the coastal population facilities for visiting the goldfields towns during the coming holiday season.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piessé) replied:—1. Tickets at special low fares are issued to residents of the goldfields to enable them to visit the cooler parts of the colony during the exemption period. It is not considered necessary to issue similar tickets from the seaport towns to the goldfields. 2. Yes; holiday excursion tickets will be issued to and from all stations during the coming holiday season. The tickets would begin about the 20th of December.

#### QUESTION—USE OF FREMANTLE GAOL FOR STORAGE OF EXPLOSIVES.

MR. VOSPER, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Treasurer:—1. Whether he was aware that part of Her Majesty's Gaol at Fremantle was being used as a magazine for explosives. 2. Whether it was a fact that there were

or recently had been three cases of dynamite and six kegs of blasting powder stored in a lumber room beneath the prison hospital. 3. Whether, if this were correct, it would not be more conducive to the health of the patients and the safety of Fremantle if such explosives were stored elsewhere. 4. Whether the storage of explosives in Her Majesty's gaols, and in other Government establishments, came under the same regulations as does such storage in private magazines. 5. If not, why not?

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied:—1. I have been informed to-day, for the first time, that such is the case. 2. Yes. 3. The vault, specially constructed for the purpose, has been, so I am informed, used for a magazine for over 20 years; but the practice will be discontinued. 4. Yes.

#### QUESTION—PUBLICATION OF IMPORT AND EXPORT STATISTICS.

MR. VOSPER, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Treasurer:—

1. Whether the complete statistics showing the imports, exports, and shipping of the colony for the year 1896 were issued by the Custom House some six months ago or thereabouts. 2. Whether the same were forwarded to the Government Printer for publication about the period mentioned. 3. If so, why the publication of the said statistics had been so long delayed. 4. Whether there was any reason to hope that the said statistics would make their appearance shortly.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied:—1. Yes. 2. Yes. 3. Shortness of type and materials. 4. Yes; the type and materials having now arrived.

#### MOTION—PAPERS RE ADMINISTRATION OF STOCK DISEASES ACT.

MR. LEAKE, in accordance with notice, moved "That all papers relating to the administration of the Stock Diseases Act, 1895, in the East Kimberley District, including, *inter alia*, instructions to inspectors and inspectors' reports, be laid on the table of the House." He said that certain replies had been given, on the previous day, to questions he had put in the House with regard to the administration of the Stock Diseases Act in the East Kimberley district.

There had been much correspondence in the newspapers regarding the introduction of tick in the East Kimberley district, and the Government had obtained certain reports, though these were not made public. It would be to the interest of all parties that these reports should be laid before this House, showing the advice given and the steps taken for dealing with tick. He had, unfortunately, made a mistake, on the previous day, in putting a question to the Attorney General as to the validity of a particular Order in Council dated the 3rd November last. It had occurred to him that the order was bad, and if the hon. and learned gentleman would favour the House with his opinion it would be an advantage, though such opinion could not be demanded. The reply would assist him (Mr. Leake) in the researches he proposed to make in this direction. It would appear that the Stock Diseases Act of 1895 provided for the total prohibition of stock in certain events. Stock were prohibited from coming across the border into the East Kimberley district by an Order in Council made in January; but, notwithstanding that order, stock had come in, and an order was subsequently made approving practically of the entry of this stock into the colony. In short, that order was retrospective in effect, and evidently framed with that intention. The section of the Act under which the order was promulgated authorised the Governor, if he thought fit, to exempt from the operations of the statute any stock which he might describe by a generic or a particular description. Then the order went on in pursuance of that power to describe the stock. The point he took, and the point on which he wanted the Attorney General to advise them, was whether the stock described in the order was given in either a generic or a particular description. He said the description was not a generic or a particular one within the meaning of the Act, Sections 2 and 5. A generic description would be one something of this kind: Exempt from the operations of the statute, all horned stock, or horses, or sheep. It was not a particular description to describe, as was done in the order, cattle in these words: "a herd of 900 fat cattle depasturing near the border

of the colony and inspected." To be particular, they should be defined. By this so-called particular description he defied anyone, whether a member of the House or an inspector of stock, to go and collect these 900 cattle. These cattle which were admitted should have been particularly defined; their ownership, whence they came, where they were going, their brands, ages, and sexes. That would be a particularisation; but in the Order in Council the cattle had only been generalised, and, in that regard, he submitted the order was a bad one. In moving for these papers he wanted all the official correspondence and reports which led up to the order and the publication. He was asking for what was fair, and he was giving hon. members his reasons for the motion. He asked for the support of hon. members in passing the motion.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he had not the slightest objection to supply the particulars required by the hon. member. There was nothing in regard to the Stock Diseases Act of this colony which should not see the light of day. He would have very much pleasure in complying with the request of the hon. member. The validity of the Order in Council, as far as he was concerned, he was perfectly satisfied with. It had the approval of the law officers, and that was quite enough, as far as the Government were concerned; and he was sure the Attorney General would tell the House that, in his opinion—of course, the Attorney General might be wrong; everybody was liable to err—but the Attorney General would tell the House that the order was quite valid. The question was an important and a serious one in regard to the tick disease in the Kimberley district, but he was not an alarmist; he never had been, and he was never likely to be. He had not yet had evidence placed before him that there had been any mortality—at any rate, any large mortality—in cattle in the Kimberley district in consequence of the tick disease. In the Eastern part of Australia; and in the North-East of Queensland, there was a great mortality amongst cattle, but he (the Premier) was not satisfied at all that the conditions existing there existed on our own North-Western coast. He had travelled over the country himself, and he had

some knowledge of its character, and one of the things that struck him most in travelling in the East and West Kimberley districts of the colony was the dryness of the climate. One would not know in the dry winter months that he was not down on the Gascoyne. From the character of the country it was impossible to say that one was in the tropics, and in 15 or 16 south latitude. One would imagine that he was more likely in 25 south latitude. He was inclined to think that the conditions existing in North-Eastern Australia would not be found to exist in the territory of Western Australia. Those who had not been to the Kimberley district, and who were not familiar with it, might be informed that there was very little tropical country in Western Australia, with the exception of such places as King's Sound and Cambridge Gulf, and a few spots on the eastern shore of King's Sound. He had seen spots in the Kimberley district that actually gave no idea that they were in tropical Australia. Of course there was rich, dense, tropical vegetation along the Fitzroy and Ord Rivers; but, wherever there was this dry country—not at all moist, and having none of the conditions of moisture which were prevalent in the eastern part of Australia—he did not think that the tick disease would thrive. He had not heard of any great mortality from the tick disease, such as they had heard of in the North-Eastern part of Australia. He hoped his opinion might be correct; and, if it was, the Government might be able to deal with the tick question in such a way as to prevent its being disastrous to the colony and those interested in stock. He was not at all satisfied, and he might take steps to satisfy himself and the people of the colony that, if the ticks were introduced into this part of the continent, they would prove as disastrous as they had proved in the North-East of Queensland. He thought they might make experiments with the tick. They had plenty of means of doing it without any danger. They could take a few healthy beasts, put them on an island, such as Rottneest or some other place, and feed them well, and then see what effect the tick would have on them. The people of this colony must not run away with the idea that, because in North-Eastern Queensland, on the low-lying

lands, where there was rich tropical vegetation and the tick flourished, therefore the same result would take place in this part of the continent. He had had some conversation lately with persons who had some knowledge of science, and these views he had expressed had been supported by those gentlemen. In regard to the introduction of these 900 head of cattle, the reports which the Government received showed that the cattle were fat and fit for slaughter. They were reported to have come from clean parts, where there was no tick, and that they were absolutely free from disease. It was also reported that there was no more danger in importing the cattle into the southern parts of the colony than there had been in importing other mobs of cattle which came from Sturt Creek, through the East Kimberley district, and had been sent down here. In these conditions, being satisfied by the reports that these cattle were clean and fat; that they never had disease; that they were not diseased then, he was determined not to let the Act stand in the way of the introduction of them. He was also confronted with the fact that, at the time, meat was scarce. It was very dear here, and it might have been said that he was preventing the introduction of cattle, acting in consort with people to keep up the high price of meat, if he had prevented the introduction of the cattle. Being satisfied as to the cleanliness of the cattle, he took upon himself the responsibility, with the advice of his colleagues, of letting them come in. Four hundred of these cattle had come in, and had gone into consumption. He believed they had been eaten by this time. Two hundred, he believed, went to Coolgardie, and had gone into consumption there, and he had not heard of any disaster occurring through them. These were the reasons which had actuated the Government in the action they had taken. If the Government had erred, they had erred with the best intentions. It had not been proved to him that these cattle had been the means of introducing disease.

A MEMBER: Some of these cattle were at Northam now.

THE PREMIER: They could not be at Northam. They had all gone into consumption. His object in rising was to

try and impress upon hon. members not to be afraid of this tick, or to think that the colony would be ruined because a few ticks had been found in the northern parts of the colony. They would have to be satisfied that the tick disease conduced to mortality in that district. That had to be proved, and it had to be proved that the tick would be disastrous to stock in the North. All these things had to be found out, and they could be found out by making experiments.

MR. LEAKE: The ticks would have to be brought to Perth.

THE PREMIER: The ticks could be brought down and experimented with here. He had been pleased to be able to make these remarks about this disease.

MR. LEAKE (Albany) said he would be sorry to think that the right hon. gentleman did not deserve his thanks for acceding to the principle of his motion. He thanked the Premier for telling the House that he would give us those papers; and he only asked him to let us have them as soon as possible. He was much obliged to the Government for having acceded to the request.

MR. A. FORREST (West Kimberley), before the motion was passed, would like to say he was sorry to find that the Premier intended to experiment down here. He should experiment in the infested country itself.

THE PREMIER: We will do that too.

MR. A. FORREST, as a large cattleholder, hoped they would confine themselves to experimenting on the spot, and not bring the stock here. No one wished to debar our cattle from coming into our own markets; but we must experiment somewhere outside the limits of our large towns.

THE PREMIER: I said on an island.

MR. A. FORREST: We could not afford to run any risks. He did not think the cattle-owners in the Southern districts would like to run any risks whatever. He was told that the cattle introduced were consigned to a firm of butchers in Northam, and were intended for the Coolgardie market. It was a tremendous risk to run. He was sorry indeed that the cattle in that district had met with this mishap; for, as we knew, they were much cheaper than those we could get in the other colonies, and our own people got the benefit of the sales. But he certainly

was opposed to any experiments being tried in these parts of the colony.

Question put and passed.

**MOTION—PROPOSED RAILWAY FROM GREAT BOULDER TO BULONG.**

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie), in accordance with notice, moved: "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the railway system of the colony should be extended by the construction of a line from Great Boulder to Bulong." He said: In bringing this motion before the House, I wish it to be clearly understood that the object I have in view is more to advertise the case mentioned in the motion than to try to force the hand of the Government. I have no intention of that kind. I understand that the funds of the colony have been already allocated to other purposes, and that the chances of getting this railway immediately, as the result of this motion, are very remote indeed. However, it is my duty, in view of the fact that meetings have been held in the district from which resolutions have been transmitted to me asking me to bring this matter under the notice of the House, to do so as soon as possible, with a view of inducing the Government to consider the subject at the earliest opportunity. I would say, first of all, that the size of the district, or rather of the electorate, is about 30,000 square miles; and the population consists of some 8,000 persons. The gold yield of that district has certainly been very large. It is impossible to arrive at any definite figures concerning it, because it is only during the last few months that we have had the returns regularly tabulated by the department, and even now there are very large alluvial yields which, in all probability, do not figure in any export returns, and certainly not in any export returns for North-East Coolgardie in particular. In the town of Bulong, to which it is proposed to construct this line, the crushings are set down by the Department of Mines as being 548ozs. up to the beginning of 1897; whereas in the first six months of 1897 the yield is set down at 3,529ozs., both returns being exclusive of alluvial. This, I think, is sufficient to indicate that the town is in a flourishing condition, comparatively speaking; that the gold is there, and that it only requires

taking out. In that district, which has already added so much to the wealth of the colony, the total length of the lines now in course of construction amounts to only about 40 miles. Out of these, a length of at least 28 miles is part of the railway to Menzies. As regards the electorate itself, it has only one line, of about 12 miles, which can be regarded as constructed directly for its benefit. Now, it can hardly be denied that the district, and the whole colony generally, would be greatly benefited by such a large area being opened up by a railway. My proposal, if carried out, would have the effect of serving directly the gold mining leases at the Corsair—a few miles out of Kalgoorlie—at Ballagundi, and at Bulong, and of serving indirectly the important centres of Mt. Monger, Taurus, Bulong, the Lakes, and Kurnalpi. At Bulong itself, there are over 150 mining leases, and at least 100 more in the outside mining centres. There are some 30 companies in the Bulong district, and about 10 others in the outside districts. The nominal capital, so far as is ascertainable, amounts to about £1,400,000. The quantity of machinery on this goldfield is very small; but it is already sufficient to produce about 3,000ozs. per annum; and in a letter which I have received from the Mayor of Bulong, Mr. Macartney, setting forth the machinery already in the place, he says that at the present time only 15 head of stamps are in a condition to crush ore; and they have, it appears, already yielded these three to four thousand ozs. during the past year. But there are in course of construction about 80 head of stamps in various parts of the Bulong district; and the Mayor says that, if the average value of the ore raised there can be maintained, the district can turn out not less than 4,000ozs. a month.

THE PREMIER: Why do not they have more stamps?

MR. VOSPER: Mainly because a great many mines are without water.

THE PREMIER: Not because of the absence of the railway?

MR. VOSPER: Not in this particular instance. In conclusion, I merely wish to point out that the district generally already supports a large population, has a very fair gold yield, and that it is very probable that, as machinery improves and water is struck in the various mines, the

gold yield will be largely increased; and my sole desire is to bring the subject somewhat within the sphere of what may be termed practical politics. I may say that whatever case can be made out for Kanowna or Broad Arrow, an equally good case can be made out for Bulong. The construction of a railway, by reducing freights and the cost of living generally, would go a long way towards promoting the advancement of the district and of the country generally. I submit the motion to the House, not with any desire of urging the Government to immediate action, but to bring the matter under the attention of the House and the country.

THE SPEAKER: Before I put the motion, I think it is desirable I should read to the House from May's *Parliamentary Practice* what should be done with motions of this kind. May says:—

To a certain extent, evasions are, by usage, permitted of the restriction imposed by the standing orders upon proposals for the expenditure of public money. Bills devising a large scheme for public expenditure, accompanied by provisions for the application of the same, have been brought in upon motion, the money clauses being printed in italics. In such cases, the principle of the Bill is discussed, and, if approved on behalf of the Crown, the necessary pecuniary provision is subsequently made; otherwise further progress of the Bill is prevented by the refusal of the royal recommendation. In like manner, motions advocating public expenditure, or the imposition of a charge, if the motion be framed in sufficiently abstract and general terms, can be entertained, and agreed to by the House. Resolutions of this nature are permissible because, having no operative effect, no grant is made or burthen imposed by their adoption. And although, on one occasion, the House declined to receive a report from a select committee which proposed compensation for losses incurred by certain patentees, because it had not been recommended by the Crown, the precedent has not governed the usage of the House regarding resolutions agreed to by select committees advocating an outlay of public money.

Therefore, hon. members must not think that, even if motions of this kind are carried, the Government are under any obligation whatever to bring forward a motion for granting the necessary funds required to carry out the works advocated in these motions.

THE PREMIER: I should like to ask a question, sir, not with a view of in any way objecting to the hon. member's action,

but in order that we should have your ruling as to whether a motion of this sort, asking the House to say that it is desirable the railway system should be extended and a railway built from the Boulder to Bulong, is not a matter affecting finance, and which, therefore, should be discussed in committee of the whole House, in accordance with Standing Order 361. Although that quotation from May seems pretty clear, still I cannot see that this resolution is wrapped up in such a way as not to mean that it is desired that a railway should be built. It will mean, if passed, that this House approves of a railway being built from the Boulder to Bulong. Well, if this House approves of that, surely hon. members are asking the Government to incur expenditure; and therefore it seems to me this is a subject of finance which should come under the 361st Standing Order.

THE SPEAKER: I am of opinion that this is not a question which requires the House to go into committee to consider it. I have frequently considered the point. This is merely an abstract motion, which does not lead to the expenditure of money, unless the Government choose to bring down a message from the Governor to that effect. Therefore, I think a question of this kind does not necessitate the House going into Committee of Supply to consider it.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): While I of course fully recognise that the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) is acting in a way that is desired by his constituents, at the same time I am glad to know that he does not expect that there is any chance of the Government constructing this line at the present time; nor do I think that, when he comes to consider the whole matter, he himself will desire that this should be done at present. I have explained clearly to hon. members that there are no funds available for this work; that a further authorisation of loan moneys would be necessary; and, seeing that, I cannot make myself believe that this is a matter of urgency. Bulong is situated only some 15 miles from the Boulder, and, if the district is not progressing as fast as the hon. member

would like, and as we would all desire, I do not think it can be said that its slow progress is due to its being in an isolated position. Fifteen miles is a good long way, no doubt; but not so long as the distance of many other places from railways or ports. Hon. members during this session have expressed, in the clearest way, their opinion that the Coolgardie water scheme is a matter of paramount importance to the interests of the Eastern goldfields and also to the colony.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Not as a Government work.

THE PREMIER: Yes; I think they have as a Government work. You, perhaps, have not done so, but you are in a very small minority of perhaps one or two.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We will take a division on the point.

THE PREMIER: If you take a division, you will find you are in a very small minority; but you will not do anything of the kind. This House has decided that the Coolgardie water scheme is a matter of great importance, and the Government fully recognise that all our endeavours, and all our resources, should be devoted to that work; and I strongly advise hon. members, whatever part of the colony they come from, not to try to get moneys expended on other works, for this must have the effect of stopping this great undertaking. We have enough to do in connection with it. Great care and judgment will be necessary in order to pilot that work successfully through the difficulties surrounding financial operations; and, for my own part, I could not assent to a new authorisation for other works, so long as that great work is staring us in the face. As time goes on, and as the means of the colony permit of it, no one will be more glad than myself to see the railway extended to Bulong and to every other good centre on the goldfields. That goes without saying, for it is our policy and desire to do so. But it is impossible for us to do so now; and even the hon. member himself—who, I am sure, is thoroughly in earnest in regard to the matter—will see that I could not bring myself to advocate the expenditure of money in those districts at the present time. I think the object of the motion will be served by having a discussion on this matter, during

which hon. members can express their views in regard to it; and then I should certainly like to advise the hon. member to withdraw it, in the hope that, at some future time, means will be available for carrying out the work. I have not yet visited Bulong, but I hope soon to have an opportunity of doing so; and the hon. member may rest assured that the Government and the House are desirous of extending our railway system wherever we can profitably do so—wherever it will pay; and the only reason why we are not able to do so is that we have other works of great importance which we are desirous of carrying out. If the hon. member follows my suggestion he will have attained his object, and will save myself, and many others in this House who are anxious to help him in every way, the annoyance of having placed upon us the very unpleasant duty of voting against him. I hope that hon. members will express their views on the question, and thus afford information to myself and others, and then probably the mover of the motion will find it in the interest of his district and in that of his friends to withdraw it.

MR. MORAN (East Coolgardie): A session or two ago, or early last session, I mentioned this matter in the House; and later on, the Commissioner of Railways will remember that when the Boulder railway was being made to the lakes we talked the matter over. I very heartily support this motion, because I know the district as well as anybody in the colony. I know not only Bulong and Kurnalpi, but the very large and growing district called the Mount Monger district, where there are at the present time a good many hundreds of prospectors, and several score of mines with good prospects. Altogether the Bulong district, as a radiating centre, might be said to serve 2,000 people. And it is very important to note that, after you pass the lakes, you have only about 14 miles to go to reach Bulong, and there are on the road such districts as the Golden Ridge—a promising mining centre—and the Corsair. The most important of all, however, is Ballagundi, and from that to Bulong is only four miles. Beyond Bulong we have Taurus, a district which has batteries erected at the present time; and further

on again is Kurnalpi. The Mount Monger district is one I have been largely connected with; and I know that some large firms at home have one or two mines there now. I think my friend Mr. Morgans, from Coolgardie, has a very good mine there, from which he is getting splendid ore at the present time. My idea is that it would not be impossible to build the Bulong railway out of revenue for a very small sum. I do not say that it should be done immediately, but some time next year. You have traffic to encourage you all along the road from such places as the Bulong lakes, the Corsair and Ballagundi—together about 14 miles, so that you serve a very large district by means of this route. I do not suppose any of us imagine there is much loan money to spend, and I know that the whole of the attention of the Government is fixed upon the Coolgardie water scheme; but I agree with the Premier that it is just as well to educate the House with regard to the possibilities and probabilities of these mining districts. A great deal depends, however, upon these centres themselves. If they continue to prosper—if Bulong goes ahead, as I believe it will—the necessity for a railway will be forced upon us; but I would not encourage any centre that would not help itself until it got a railway. I think it is wrong to sit down within 18 miles of a railway, and wait until that railway comes. We have a very long line of reef at Bulong, and a great many batteries are going up. I hope that vigorous town will go ahead, and I think they will not be doing badly if they get a railway in a few months' time or even in 12 months. Bulong has turned out alluvial gold second only to Kalgoorlie in quantity. It is my old district—a place which I know very well, and where some of the finest people on the fields are to be found. I do not think there are a nicer lot of people on the gold-fields. I have spent many a pleasant day around that neighbourhood, and I notice that all those who were there in the old days are sticking to the district. Altogether, I sympathise with the hon. member who introduced this motion, and I sympathise with the Premier; and I want to impress upon the right hon. gentleman that I hope to have the plea-

sure of his company at Bulong next year, when he will be able to see for himself that the developments there warrant the expenditure of a few thousand pounds out of revenue for the construction of this line. If a majority in this House believed in private enterprise, as I do myself in such cases as this, I would find a company to-morrow to construct the line very quickly. We could easily find the money to run that little bit of line through; and if private people are willing to do this, it is only fair to suppose that there is business to be done. We must await future developments.

MR. A. FORREST (West Kimberley): My sympathy is altogether with the hon. member who has introduced the motion; but I shall feel bound to vote against it in a division, on the principle that no proposals to build railways to the gold-fields or elsewhere should be introduced into this House until the whole question of railway construction throughout the colony can be considered at the same time. There are hundreds of important places in this country which are far more than 15 miles from the nearest railway. That is not a great distance for people to cart their machinery or bring their goods into town. In the Northern parts of the goldfields, north of Menzies and east of Cue, there are many important centres producing a large quantity of gold, which have to cart their machinery, not for 15 miles, but for hundreds of miles. The hon. member is quite right, however; and if his proposal was brought on at the proper time I would vote for it, for I know Bulong. I know its surroundings, and I know what a bad road it has; and I hope that when the hon. member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) takes the Premier there, he will go in the winter when it is raining, because in summer you can see for miles and miles the dust that rises along the nearly straight road that joins Kalgoorlie to Bulong. I hope he will go there at a time when he will not be liable to be irritated by the dust storms that come over that portion of the district. I am certain, however, that the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) will take the advice which has been tendered to him, and will withdraw this motion. We all believe in giving every facility to the goldfields as well as to every portion of the colony,



and no one will be more ready than I to support this proposal when the proper time arrives and we have the money—it will require another Loan Bill perhaps—to build railways in our back country. The Bulong railway will of course be one of the first works to be undertaken, and by that time it will have grown in importance, and there will be no necessity to have any discussion whatever upon it. We all know that the Government are just about to build a railway to Kanowna. Either through good management or good luck we know that railway will be self-supporting from the first, though hon. members are also aware that the railway, without the late developments in the district, would not have paid for axle grease. We know very well that it does not tap any district, but only one single spot. At the present time I think the hon. member can do nothing better than withdraw the motion. I should be sorry to vote against it, because I believe the railway is necessary, though it is impossible to build it at the present time. As for the remarks of my friend the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran), the idea of building railways by private companies is out of date in this House. He may as well rest assured on that point, because members on this side of the House are not prepared for the carrying out of railways by private enterprise. No doubt a syndicate could be formed on this side of the House to build a railway if they got the chance, but they have not got the chance.

MR. VOSPER (in reply): I must say I am extremely gratified at the friendly manner in which my motion has been received by members of this House, and, in view of the very kindly attitude taken by the Premier, I shall, at the conclusion of my few remarks, ask leave to withdraw the motion. I quite agree with the right hon. gentleman that my object has been served. My excuse for bringing forward the motion is that the district to be served would be greatly improved if a railway were constructed. I believe, as one hon. member pointed out, that this 15 miles of line will pay from the very beginning. With all due deference to the hon. member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest), there is a good deal more to be said of a line of 15 miles which will pay than of a line of 100 or 200 miles, the

payable qualities of which are doubtful. I thank hon. members for the manner in which they have received the motion, and I ask the permission of the House to withdraw it.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### MOTION—BORING FOR SUBTERRANEAN DEPOSITS OF ALLUVIAL GOLD.

MR. VOSPER moved "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the Government should undertake a series of boring operations on the various goldfields of the colony, with the view to proving the existence or otherwise of subterranean deposits of alluvial gold." He said: I shall not occupy the attention of the House long in introducing this motion. It will be within the recollection of hon. members that what is called a deep lead was recently discovered at Kanowna, and that deep lead was discovered under curious circumstances. In the first place there were peculiar geological features attaching to the piece of country now being worked for this alluvial gold. A shaft was sunk four feet deep and bottomed on alluvial wash, and after that the party followed the wash down and they found that the wash was going away too steeply to carry on open work. They sunk the shaft further to get the wash at a greater depth, and they found at 30ft. or 40ft. a valuable wash. Since that time hundreds of shafts have been sunk in the neighbourhood; in what is believed to be an old lake bed an extremely rich alluvial wash is being obtained. Some hon. members could hardly credit the richness of the alluvial unless they saw the stuff. I know parties of prospectors—two or three of them—the members of which were in almost indigent circumstances prior to the discovery of this field, and, for the past few weeks, they have been bagging a thousand pounds worth of gold per week. In addition to the lead being extremely rich, the discovery has come at such a time that it has relieved the labour market, the strain on the local storekeepers and consequently the merchants who serve them, and it has brought the district, which was in a languishing condition, well to the front. It has made the railway pay, which was doubtful before the lead was discovered, and altogether this find has

been of great value to the country. It would be still more valuable if what has occurred at Kanowna occurred at other centres. There are precisely the same geological conditions to be found elsewhere as occur at Kanowna, and the Government should endeavour to take steps to see what districts are affected in the same way as this one. On the surface at Kanowna, except at one particular spot, there was nothing to indicate that there was a deep lead there. There are large areas of country which are precisely similar in appearance to the country around Kanowna, where the lead has been discovered. I do not allude to the physiographical aspects of the country, but to the geological aspects. There are large areas of similar country at Kalgoorlie, Coolgardie, and Hannan's Lake, and when at the Norseman some little time ago, I saw country that I suspect contains deep leads carrying alluvial gold. This find that has been made at Kanowna is not, technically speaking, a deep lead: it is within 30 feet of the surface, and is, therefore, easily worked by the alluvial miners. As the Government Geologist has said, it is not a deep lead in the true meaning of the words. There may be deep leads obtained there, and shortly after I tabled the notice of this motion I received a letter from a gentleman who was one of the members of one of the first prospecting parties which went out to search for gold in New South Wales, shortly after Hargreave made the discovery there, and he has been working at gold-mining ever since, and is a fair geologist; and he, having travelled over the greater portion of the goldfields of this country, has expressed the opinion that other rich subterranean finds will be made. There are portions of the Murchison and places about Cue where it is extremely probable that leads of this kind will be found. It is even more probable that leads will be found at these places than around Coolgardie, because there are rather high hills and mountains and deep gullies at these places; and these mountains more or less are composed of auriferous rock, and the wash from these rocks must have gone somewhere. It is highly probable that deep leads will be found on these goldfields, the accumulations of ages past. It is hard work for

the alluvial digger to go and search for leads of this kind. He may sink five or six feet, but when it comes to a hundred feet it is a serious matter for these alluvial diggers. Large capitalists might undertake it, but they cannot get a sufficient area of ground to make it worth their while to go prospecting. I believe it is the duty of the Government to undertake some work in this respect. I believe the Government are possessed of drills in the colony which have been used ineffectually in the search for artesian water, and these drills might be turned to account by being used in other centres to search for these leads. There is a drill at Coolgardie which is not now being used, and it might be shifted a few hundred yards and taken on to Fly Flat and a bore put down there.

MR. KINGSMILL: You do not want diamond drills for boring for deep leads.

MR. VOSPER: Any kind of drill that will bring a core up will do for this work. I do not think any great expense would be involved, whereas it would be a benefit to the country if we found only one more lead such as has been discovered at Kanowna. It would be a vast benefit to the country generally; it will raise the Government revenue, increase the population, and make Western Australia more attractive. If the Government were to make 50 experiments and only one were successful, that would be a vast benefit to the country. I simply desire to move the motion. I do not wish to suggest to the Government any particular method to adopt to recoup themselves. If one bore is found to be successful, that will be quite sufficient to pay them indirectly for any expense they may be put to. If the Government wish to recoup themselves, I think, on the discovery of gold, the Government might reserve a certain amount of land immediately around the bore and cut it up into blocks and sell it by auction, or the Government could take out the gold themselves. Say, for example, a bore was put down; surrounding that bore the land could be surveyed, and the Government could then dispose of the land according to the value of the lead found. That would undoubtedly recoup the Government for any expense.

THE PREMIER: What do you think your proposal would cost?

MR. VOSPER: I cannot say definitely. I do not think it would cost a great deal. There are one or two hon. members who are practical mining engineers, and are pretty well acquainted with boring operations. The interjection of the hon. member for Pilbarra (Mr. Kingsmill) shows that he could give some information on that point. I am only pointing out the national advantages, and to show the Government the way in which they could directly recoup themselves, or indirectly recoup themselves. I think that, if the Government threw open the whole of the ground to the alluvial digger as soon as an alluvial field was found, a great advantage would accrue to the colony, and the Government would recoup indirectly. Similar discoveries to that made at Kanowna could, I think, be made all over the colony, not only in the South but in the North; and if only one or two such fields were found, there would be no fear of population leaving us, but there would be a new rush to the colony, and we would see something like the good times experienced two years ago.

THE PREMIER: What amount of money do you think it will cost?

MR. VOSPER: The Government might spend £5,000 or £10,000. Supposing that amount was spent, it would be no great speculation. I would like to point out what was said with reference to deep leads by Mr. Pitman, the Government Geologist of New South Wales, and a very high authority on mining of all kinds throughout the world. That gentleman said that deep leads probably existed in all the centres I have mentioned. An opinion such as that is not to be disregarded. I urge the motion on the favourable consideration of the House.

MR. SIMPSON (Geraldton): I have much pleasure in supporting the motion of the hon. member, and I hope the Government will see their way to accept it. I think it will aid in the development of the goldfields of the colony. It has been an idea of mine for many years that mining could be advanced considerably by boring. The Government might extend this boring for alluvial, now that there are diamond drills in the colony. These diamond drills could not be used for boring for alluvial, but they could be used with advantage for deep boring in search of deep lodes.

MR. VOSPER: That is being done in Queensland now.

MR. SIMPSON: The Government have magnificent boring plants, and, if they consider this suggestion—I do not think it will be very expensive—it will come quite within the limits of a reasonable allocation of the money to be granted for the development of the goldfields. I agree with the remarks which have fallen from the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie, that it would be of great value to the colony if gold were discovered at a greater depth than it has been obtained here previously. No doubt, as has been pointed out by Mr. Pitman, we have hundreds of places throughout the colony where gold could be found. I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, and I hope the Government, in its wisdom, will see fit to start operations, which will add to the development of the goldfields in a very important way.

MR. KINGSMILL (Pilbarra): I have the utmost pleasure in supporting the motion of the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie. With regard to the goldfield I have the honour to represent, there is a very ample field for boring operations on that field. I can point out, not one, but half a dozen places where boring operations would result in the discovery of valuable alluvial fields. I would impress on the Government the fact that there is absolutely no industry that benefits the colony so quickly and to such a great extent as alluvial mining. It brings the population that spends the money into the country. There is no money in the shape of dividends going out of the country, the money being circulated in the colony right away. It is a matter for regret that, in the case of many reefing properties at the present time, although Western Australia has the best mining industry in Australia, it derives less benefit from the industry directly. These boring plants which have been spoken of need not necessarily be used for the purpose of boring for deep leads alone. Pretty nearly every water supply office on the goldfields has a boring plant.

MR. MORAN: They would be of no use for the purpose of boring for alluvial. They do not take a core out.

MR. KINGSMILL: They would do a considerable amount of good, even if they

did not extract a core. In the Nullagine district a diamond drill is necessary. Private individuals have sunk 140ft., and are still on the alluvial formation, which carries gold, but it is not payable. Anyone acquainted with alluvial mining knows that until the bed rock has been reached, no one can expect to meet with payable stuff. There is no doubt that, when the deep lead at Nullagine is reached, a discovery will be made that will be of great advantage to the colony.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): It is over three years since I expressed the conviction to a number of mining men that deep leads would be found in this colony. At the last election, a very strong and influential deputation waited on me and urged me to bring this matter before the Government. Hon. members who know the Ballarat district know that, strictly speaking, the deep leads were discovered by boring.

MR. MORAN: They suspected the leads were there before they started boring.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If they knew the leads were there, there would have been no use boring. It was by no means a certainty that the deep leads that crossed from the Band of Hope away to the Madame Berry were there, and it was only by boring that it was absolutely proved to be a fact. I think, with the hon. member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson), that these experiments, if carried out, will materially advance our interest.

THE PREMIER: There is plenty of room for private enterprise.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: At present I think the Government have a pretty large vote for the development of the goldfields, and there is no better way of spending that money than in the direction here indicated. This House has voted in the past, and no doubt will vote this year, a large sum of money for the development of the goldfields, and the Government will do well to use some money in this direction. I do urge that the Government should make a start in some district to prove if any discoveries can be made.

MR. MORAN (East Coolgardie): I am as fully aware as other members of the value of the discovery of the semi-deep alluvial found here. The mode of discovery of that alluvial was encouraging, and it is reasonable to hope that

other leads of a like nature will be discovered without aid. At Kanowna the lead was discovered in the ordinary way: it was simply a surface lead, and the men gradually got deeper and deeper until they got below the ordinary depth, and they did not discover, until they got to this greater depth than usual, that they were on anything new. On Fly Flat in the old days the alluvial digger sunk 12 or 14 feet, and at the present day there are plenty of holes there to indicate this. Miners never called that a deep lead, but for this Kanowna lead the men had to go down below what is generally looked on as bottoming. At present it is not known what this discovery is: it may be an old creek bed or something else. The consensus of opinion is that it is a creek bed. Whilst my sympathies are with the motion, and recognising as I do that the discovery of alluvial gold gives a great impetus to a place for the time being, I am sure there is not a single boring plant in Western Australia that could be used for this kind of boring. To my mind it is ridiculous to set to work with the boring plant they have at Coolgardie to bore 50 or 60 feet. The Government would have to be prepared with a large supply of water to go down to the depth named, so as to get a core out. The best boring plant is the Calyx drill.

THE PREMIER: We have two or three of those.

MR. MORAN: They are the best boring drills that can be used. At the alluvial lead at Kanowna there are 10 shafts sunk for every one that is going to get gold. You might go to a new field and put down half-a-dozen single bores without getting any result. I contend that every lead in Australia has been followed from a known source, and the big leads in Victoria to-day were followed from a known source. They have gone for 40 or 50 miles, but they were followed from a known source. I believe to-day there is no place in Coolgardie where you could put down a bore where there is not a shaft already down. I know, at the present time, of a semi-deep lead that has been discovered on a lease at the Boulder, and gold was discovered, but no one can touch it. I desire to point out to the Government that if they have the Calyx boring drills, which are the best in the world for boring down to

100ft., they should at once utilise them in boring for deep leads. It would be very desirable to send one or two to the Pilbarra fields. I believe there is one of the biggest alluvial deposits in the colony on that field. As to putting down a diamond drill to find alluvial gold, that is useless. If the Government have the Calyx drill they had better use it. Better still, the Government might arrange some sort of a plant on a hand drill, so as to bore to 100ft.: in that way the Government could rig up drills which would do good. I wish to impress on the Government the desirability of offering substantial rewards for the discovery of payable alluvial leads. If the Government were to spend £5,000 or £10,000 in offering rewards to-morrow for alluvial leads, a great stimulus would be given to the gold-mining industry. That is my opinion, and I point this out to the Government: I am not opposing the motion; but I want the Minister of Mines to grasp the question at once, and to offer a good substantial reward—according to the depth, and the difficulties undergone in the search, and according to the richness of the find—for the discovery of fresh alluvial leads. The bonus system appears to be a good one all round. Pay according to results. Encourage men in private enterprise. I will not oppose the motion, but I would point out how many difficulties are in the way of it, and how the same object could be attained on a better principle. I do not know what view the Government will take of the matter.

MR. RASON (South Murchison): I have much pleasure in supporting the motion of the hon. member, and I hope that if it finds favour with the House, the Government will see their way to give effect to it. I do not think the expenditure of a large sum of money is involved; and I am sure from my experience and from the information I have received that the speculative element hardly comes in at all. On very many goldfields the existing indications are so satisfactory that there is little reason to doubt that boring to a comparatively shallow depth would prove the existence of several alluvial leads.

MR. MORAN: I wish I knew them.

MR. RASON: I shall be happy to show the hon. member a place where even

he will be satisfied that alluvial exists. But I would point out, sir, that there is no very great inducement for a private individual to sink for alluvial, for he must incur a considerable expenditure of time and money and, even if he proves its existence, the quantity of ground he receives in return is not sufficient to enable him to continue working to any great depth. There are several goldfields in this colony concerning which everyone who has seen them is of opinion that there is a strong probability of leads of alluvial being found on them. The evidence of Mr. Pitman, the Government Geologist of New South Wales, which has already been referred to, and which came directly before me, was very strong upon the point, as was the evidence of many other scientists. The statement of the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper), that the opinion of experts is in favour of his theory, is amply borne out by almost every expert opinion that has been taken on the subject. I have very great pleasure indeed in supporting this motion. I believe that, if adopted by the Government, it will prove of great benefit to the mining industry; and I sincerely hope that the Government will be able to carry it into effect.

HON. H. W. VENN (Wellington): Unlike the last speaker, I must certainly suggest that the Government should not adopt this principle. The possibility of the Government bores catching alluvial leads seems to me very remote, inasmuch as these patches occur in isolated localities, and may be found 10ft., 20ft., 30ft. or 40ft. apart, and the bore will be very unlikely to touch them. It is quite a different thing to following up a reef, for then there is a possibility of getting it; but for the Government to undertake the problematical and speculative chance of finding leads by means of boring would be to incur an enormous expense for a very small result. This kind of mining will no doubt develop itself. The inducement is there. The impetus has been given by such discoveries as those at the White Feather, and I feel sure that it would not be a wise or a good thing for the Government to accede to this proposal. It had far better be left entirely to private speculation. But there does seem to be something in the idea of the

member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran), when he said it would be well for the Government to offer a bonus. That proposal seems to me to be a reasonable and practical way of doing things; but that course also would open up a fresh field for discussion as to what is the absolute definition of the phrase "alluvial gold." But allowing, for the sake of argument, that this is a small matter, then I say the best course for the Government to adopt would be to give a bonus for the discovery of deep alluvial gold.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): No doubt the motion of the hon. member looks very reasonable—"That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that the Government should undertake a series of boring operations on the various goldfields of the colony, with a view to proving the existence or otherwise of subterranean deposits of alluvial gold." I think everyone will agree that if we could only find some of these subterranean deposits, they would be good things. But I think it is a very large order that the hon. member is going for—"the various goldfields of the colony." I do not know where the money is to come from to carry out this proposal. I could understand it if it was desired that deep bores should be put down at one or two places, at a cost not exceeding a certain amount, say, £10,000; for then we would know what we were undertaking. But a proposal of this kind, though it looks very nice on the surface, seems to me a little bit reckless; and I think—and I say this with the very best intention and in the most friendly way—that if resolutions having such a wide meaning are carried in this House, the result will be that the Government will find themselves very much hampered. The proposal really asks the House to spend an immense sum of money.

MR. VOSPER: It does not bind.

THE PREMIER: No; but you put the Government in the position of appearing to act contrary to the wishes of the House. When the House meets next session, and the Government have done very little under this resolution, what will my friend opposite say? That the Government are flouting this House by doing nothing or next to nothing to give effect to its resolution. We will have to say: "You have certainly passed this resolution, but we

could not possibly carry it out." When the Government bring down proposals of their own and hon. members assent to them, we are bound to carry them out; but the same cannot be said of this proposal, which involves an expenditure of at least £100,000. My friend the member for South Murchison (Mr. Rason) says that he knows a place exactly suitable for boring operations; and the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) knows of another place. My experience of boring is that, by the time you have got your machine to the place, and found water for it, and put down a shaft for the water, it is a very expensive operation; and I do not think there is any provision on the Estimates this year that would provide this amount of money. Provision is made for the allocation of all the amounts asked for in respect of the goldfields water supply, and I know there is no money on the Loan Estimates which has not been allocated; so that there would probably be no money with which to carry out this resolution. Hon. members are aware that our financial arrangements for the year are now practically before them, that is, as far as the consolidated revenue is concerned; and, while I do not like to oppose this motion, knowing that my action in apparently opposing the searching for gold by deep boring will be liable to misrepresentation, I really think that for financial reasons the scheme is impracticable at the present time. Hon. members opposite—at least the hon. members for Albany (Mr. Leake) and for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson)—are always telling us about private enterprise, and what it could do if we only gave it a chance. Now here is a chance for private enterprise to put down some bores.

MR. VOSPER: Please, do not saddle my motion with the opinions of others.

THE PREMIER: The Government will not in any way interfere with private individuals boring down into the earth and finding these deep leads. Therefore, some of those gentlemen who are longing to invest their capital in the colony under the auspices of the hon. members, or, at any rate, with their consent, have in this proposal a splendid opportunity to take some action. I think we are getting into a dangerous path when we pass these general resolutions. Of course, if the

House likes to pass them, we will see what we can do; but I must remind hon. members that we cannot do very much. Of course, we could do this: we could, if it were desirable, remove the splendid boring machine we now have on the Coolgardie goldfields, and put it down in some other place; but I do not think that would meet the wishes of hon. members. It might go down another 300 feet where it is now; but I may tell the House that orders have been given to dismantle the machine, so that it can of course be used elsewhere. It is an expensive machine; still, we know exactly what the expense is, and no doubt funds could be found to make another bore with it.

MR. MORAN: It costs £700 to set it up every time.

THE PREMIER: Certainly it does; but we really have not the funds available to conduct boring operations in the various goldfields all over the colony. I do not propose to divide the House on the question; but I think it my duty to express these views, and I am sure that if we had the views of the hon. the Speaker, he would tell us that such resolutions are subversive of the satisfactory conduct of the financial affairs of this country. If they were passed, I do not know how the Government could be held responsible for maintaining the financial position. I think the hon. member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) will tell you that they are almost unheard of in the other colonies. Why so? Because you cannot have two sets of persons responsible for the finances. You must have a Government, and hold them responsible. Although our Standing Orders are more stringent than those of the Parliaments of the other colonies, still, in those places, resolutions of this kind are nearly a dead letter, because it is found they will not work. I hope hon. members will not press this motion at the present time.

MR. GREGORY (North Murchison): I am sorry that this motion does not propose to set aside a certain sum of money for this purpose. There is no doubt that if one or two leads like that at Kanowna were discovered, they would be of immense direct and indirect benefit to the country. Calyx drills would not cost such a great sum of money; and, by boring

to depths of from 80 to 150 or 200 feet, fresh water might at least be discovered, and that would be of immense value, and would almost repay the cost of the machine. I believe you have several Calyx drills in the country.

THE PREMIER: They will not go through hard rock.

MR. MORAN: They would do very well for this work.

MR. GREGORY: I think if the request were limited to a certain sum, it would meet the views of hon. members; and if a successful result followed, it would be of considerable benefit to the people of the colony.

MR. LEAKE (Albany): It is my intention to support the motion, and I think the information which the Mines Department would gather from work of this description would be most useful, and also of a permanent character. I have always maintained that it is important, in the interests of our mining community, to have a thorough geological survey of the country. Whether the survey is to be merely a surface survey, or whether it is to be carried on in the manner herein indicated, I do not care; but the information to be gained by boring in this manner would be valuable either in its positive or in its negative aspect. As to this motion being subversive of the proper control of the finances, it seems to me that this argument must crop up whenever we have any motion involving directly or indirectly the expenditure of money. But surely no very great expense need be gone to, because the proposer of the motion says that it will be unnecessary to go down more than 200 feet, and very likely not more than 50 feet; and, in the event of anything valuable being discovered, it would pay the Government ten times over. Then we are told by the Premier that this undertaking ought to be left to private enterprise. "Why do you not advocate its being left to private enterprise?" says the right hon. gentleman. Well, we have advocated time after time the leaving of certain works to private enterprise; but we are bound to accept the policy which the Government have forced upon the people and upon Parliament. They will not look at private enterprise; they do everything they can to stifle it, and then they tell us

that private enterprise ought to be employed. They have already told us that they are going to do everything themselves; and yet, when we ask them to do something in this particular direction, they turn round upon us and say: "Why does not private enterprise take it up?" In this instance private enterprise cannot take it up, at any rate so long as the goldfields regulations remain as they are; because, if private enterprise put down a bore on a lease and struck alluvial, what would happen? Why the alluvial diggers would come on the scene and remove the gold. No man is going to put down an expensive bore on an alluvial claim under such conditions. The Government say: "Let private enterprise do it." At the same time they will not protect private enterprise, nor will they do it themselves, because they say they have not got the money or they are afraid they will not have it. Well, they have one million pounds to spend this year in works and buildings. I ask hon. members not to forget that. Can they not spare a few thousand pounds out of that sum to make what is undoubtedly a practical test in this direction? The work itself would employ labour to a certain extent, and, if successful, the number of men to whom it would give employment would be amazing.

MR. VOSPER: It might double the population.

MR. LEAKE: Certainly it might, and not only double our population but scatter it over a very vast area. I cannot see that the motion involves the expenditure of one or two hundred thousand pounds; but even if it did, I would say, spend that money in this way rather than allow the Director of Public Works to spend it in the manner proposed on these Estimates. Do what you can to extend mining enterprise, and to induce people to come to the colony. As for the fact of this motion involving expenditure, it is our duty to suggest to the Government how they can best spend their money. When I was speaking the other night, the right hon. the Premier said, in effect: "If we do not spend the money in works and buildings, how do you suggest we should spend it?" Well, here is a suggestion. But it happens that the suggestion does not come from the Government benches, and,

therefore, it is not appreciated. It is too practical for them to appreciate. I trust hon. members will pass the motion; and, when we do pass a proposal like this, we do not want it to be regarded as mere waste paper. If there is nothing in it, we should not discuss it. I discuss and support it because I believe it is of practical value, and has great possibilities before it. With that view, I say that if it is passed I shall expect the Government to come down with some vote before this session ends to give effect to the resolution; and this they can do when they re-commit their Estimates, because re-committed their Estimates undoubtedly must be. The House, of course, is going to cut these Estimates about a good deal before we finish with them. We are going to take away, as it is, a substantial sum from the Works Department; so let them meet the question with a good grace, and take a little larger slice, and appropriate to work of this description some of the money which the Director of Public Works ought not to have. I shall support the motion with very great pleasure indeed.

THE PREMIER: You have a lot of power to do it! You talk as if you could rule this House!

MR. LEAKE: No; I have not ruled it; but to a certain extent I have been able to control the recklessness and extravagance of the right hon. gentleman and his colleagues.

THE PREMIER: You have not gained much by doing so.

MR. VOSPER (in reply): I must again congratulate myself on the reception this motion has obtained. With all due respect to the Premier, I do not think many very serious objections have been raised to it. As regards those of the hon. member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran), I only say that after all they are mere matters of detail. The upshot is that, if certain drills will do the work, they should be employed; and if they are employed, the hon. gentleman is prepared to vote for the resolution. I have no doubt that, if it is carried, the Government will set to work to find out which drills are suitable, and will employ them; and with regard to offering a reward for the finding of deep leads, I can only say that such deep leads as they have at places like Kanowna



resemble virtue in this respect, that they are their own reward. The right hon. gentleman, in replying to the motion, said it was rather a large order. I would submit that it is no larger than the Government policy of establishing public batteries; and, although I am myself an advocate of public batteries, I must say that the chances of failure are greater with respect to public batteries than they are in connection with mere experiments such as I propose in this motion. [A MEMBER: "Nonsense!"] A member says "Nonsense," but the expenditure on public batteries will amount to £30,000 this year; and later on, it is quite possible that the Government inspectors will put up batteries in wrong places, and make very serious blunders. We know that Governments have a very unfortunate facility for making blunders; and two or three blunders with 10-head batteries would land the country in three or four times the expense which is involved in this proposal. My only desire was to ask the Government to make a few experiments; and, as the hon. the Speaker has pointed out, a resolution of this kind has no binding effect, and merely expresses the opinion of the House that certain works should be done, and the Government can please themselves whether they will do them. The Government may be called to account for not having done it; but they can always offer an explanation for their inaction, and the House, I am sure, would be perfectly willing to accept explanations of that kind. If they try the experiment and it turns out to be a failure, I do not suppose they will be short of excuses. The Premier says that every goldfields member has pointed to some particular spot at which boring ought to be carried on. To my mind that shows a laudable desire on the part of those members to get a share of what is going. At the same time, it does more than that. It illustrates the fact that there is a large number of places in this colony where alluvial gold exists, which are not being worked; and it illustrates the need for experiments of this kind. I do not propose the Government should put down bores all over the place at one and the same time, but at least they should endeavour to find out something; and I contend too that there is nothing more dangerous in this

proposal to expend say £10,000 than in the gigantic drilling works which the Governments of Victoria and Queensland have undertaken. They have proved a success there, after boring very hard rock; and the Governments of those colonies have done that for the benefit of the country, although no direct benefit whatever has been derived from it, so far as actual revenue is concerned. I think, therefore, this Government might very reasonably expend say £10,000 during the present half year, and put down a few experimental bores here and there; and the result, I believe, would be highly beneficial to the colony at large.

Question put and passed.

At 6.30 p.m. the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7.30 p.m. the Speaker resumed the Chair.

#### MOTION—WOMEN'S FRANCHISE.

MR. WALTER JAMES (East Perth), in accordance with notice, moved:—

That in the opinion of this House the best interests of the colony require the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women.

He said: During the course of this session there have been several important motions brought before this House, but I venture to think I shall carry every hon. member with me when I say that no motion has been brought forward which is so important as the one which I have the honour and privilege of submitting to the members of this House. Certainly none of the motions have been so important as this motion; none so far-reaching in their effects as the motion which I place before hon. members. Every motion which has had in view the object of securing electoral reform has met with great resistance, however small the object sought to be obtained was. No reform, so far as I can see, has ever been introduced in a House of Parliamentary Government which can have so far-reaching an effect as the reform of conferring the franchise on the women of the colony, not only on account of the number of the women to be enfranchised, but by reason of the fact that, to a certain extent, that section has never enjoyed the privilege of voting at parliamentary elections. Recognising the

importance of the motion, hon. members will not think that I am taking up too much time when I place before them, as shortly as I can, not the whole of the arguments in favour of the motion, but a few of them. These will be sufficient to show hon. members that the reform demanded is justified, not only by experience in the sister colonies, but by the justice of the cause itself. This is not a matter which is new and has to be discussed according to local conditions. The arguments apply equally in every part of the world where they have parliamentary government. It is not necessary to say what the local conditions are, because the arguments for and against, wherever they are used, are equally arguments for and against the franchise to women in Western Australia. Recognising this, every member must admit that, although this is an important matter, it has none the less been agitating the minds of the public for a great number of years. I do not necessarily mean that the minds of members of this House have been agitated by reason of proposals brought forward, but every person in the House and the country must have had occasion, during the past 10 or 15 years, to think of the matter in a serious light. People have seen dozens of articles in periodicals, and the discussions that have taken place in various Houses of Parliament, and they have heard the matter discussed at public meetings. We know a resolution in favour of this system and a Bill adopting the principle have been passed in the Lower House of New South Wales. We know that a Bill adopting the system was passed in the Lower House in Victoria. We know that the principle is in force in South Australia and in New Zealand, and I think it is in force, or a Bill adopting the principle has passed the Lower House in Tasmania. In addition to that, a motion dealing with this matter was supported in the House of Commons by 152 members against 175. The principle has been supported by many of the great minds, not only in Australia, where we have such men as the late Hon. George Higinbotham, who spoke strongly in favour of the principle, but, in England, there was John Stuart Mill, who supported the cause. I think, important though the question is, there has been sufficient discussion in the

press of this colony, and in the press in other parts of the world, to enable members to make up their minds one way or another. I would not have members think that this motion has been introduced for the purpose of giving immediate legislative sanction to the principle in the motion. I want to avoid that, because, if that were the case, we should have to face the difficulty of having an immediate dissolution. I know that would be one of the reasons, if I did not disclaim it at once, for opposing the motion. I desire to have discussion on the question, and the principle affirmed. I want members to keep perfectly free from all side issues, to keep away from the warping influences which are introduced into discussions when there is the fear of a dissolution hanging over their heads. I venture to think, in dealing with any reform or any measure, one important point is, not whether it is desired, but whether the principle in the measure is a just one. If it is fair and just, the question is not whether the country demands or requires it, but whether the position of the country is such as to make it unjust to introduce such measure. I disapprove of the converse way of stating these matters. In dealing with matters of this kind we must assume that the country wants justice, and, as far as possible, will insist on having fair play. It is for those who admit the principle, and those who say it is a reasonable principle on the face of it, to show that it is desired in the highest and best interests of the country. We often hear the converse proposition by members who oppose motions like this: they say the country does not require it or demand it. That objection is not only used in connection with this matter, but it is frequently used in connection with measures and motions brought before the House. Hon. members say we admit that what you ask and what you suggest is right and just; still, does the country demand it? That is the position which is taken up on a great number of measures; that is the ground which has been taken up in every case where electoral reform has been sought for: the same argument is always used. I venture to think it is a bad argument; it is the argument of procrastination; it is the argument of the men who say "We

admit the justice of the case, but do not do it to-day: do it to-morrow, when the time is more opportune." Sidney Smith, in dealing with this argument, says:

This is the common argument of men who, being in reality hostile to a measure, are ashamed or afraid of appearing to be so. To-day is the plea; external exclusion commonly the object. It is the same sort of quirk as the plea of abatement in law, which is never employed but on the side of a dishonest defendant, whose hope is to obtain an ultimate triumph by overwhelming his adversary with despair, impoverishment, and lassitude. Which is the properest day to do good? Which is the properest day to remove a nuisance? We answer, the very first day a man can be found to propose the removal of it, and whoever opposes the removal of it on that day will (if he dare) oppose it on every other day. There is in the minds of many feeble friends to virtue and improvement an imaginary period for the removal of evils which it would be certainly worth while to wait for, if there was the smallest chance of its ever arriving—a period of unexampled peace and prosperity, when a patriotic king and an enlightened mob united their ardent efforts for the amelioration of human affairs; when the oppressor is as delighted to give up the oppression as the oppressed is to be liberated from it; when the difficulty and the unpopularity would be to continue the evil, not to abolish it.

I venture to think it is a bad argument. I know of few greater dangers in connection with parliamentary government than that desire to keep off reform until those who want reform are knocking at the doors of Parliament. It is idle to wait until public opinion is excited and the people are unable to give a cool and dispassionate voice in this matter. It is not well to wait until people are walking about in processions and are burning effigies. It is not the duty of Parliament to so conduct itself, and only to give way to the people when they show dissatisfaction in a turbulent and more or less unseemly manner. This argument is used with greater force when we remember that the reform applies to a sex which is not characterised by fondness for walking about in processions, or which adopts those tactics that are more or less developed by the aggressiveness of political men. I believe the women look to us for justice. I ask hon. members not to set this important question aside by using the argument of procrastination. If what is asked for is just, the sooner we adopt legislation founded on justice and truth

so much the better for the House and the country in which we live. It has the same effect as this extract from Justin McCarthy's "*History of Our Own Times*:"

If parliamentary institutions do really come to be discredited in the country, as many people love to predict, one especial reason will be this very experience on the part of the public that Parliament has invariably conceded to perseverance the reforms which it persistently denied to justice. A reform is first refused without reason, to be at last conceded without grace.

I hope we shall avoid that position, and deal with the question as far as we can on the merits. I will ask hon. members and myself, what is the position those take up who believe in the extension of the franchise to women? We say this, that the fundamental object of every Parliament is to secure good government; and not only that, but to secure just laws and to see that these laws are justly administered. Public opinion has broadened and widened as we have got more and more democratic. Years ago, Parliament used to be elected by property owners: then we passed away from that stage, and taxpayers were allowed to vote. Then we passed away from that, and still got broader and broader down to the qualification of lodgers; until, in Australia, we have a broader franchise based on the mere individual. Each reform, taken step by step from the inception of parliamentary government to the present day, has been justified. The reasons urged in favour of the taxpayer being represented were not the reasons urged in favour of manhood suffrage. I venture to think the principle we now hold is this: every man subject to and interested in good government should have a voice in making the laws he has to obey. Every man affected by Acts of Parliament should have a voice in making the Parliament. Parliament has to be—it must be—a very good reflex of public opinion and feeling; if it ceases to be that, if it is out of touch with public opinion, it is put out of power very promptly. That is shown by the fact that directly a House is out of touch with public opinion, a dissolution is insisted upon. Public opinion does not consist of those persons only who have votes, or in the views of the members of this House, or of the members of any other House: it consists of the opinion of every individual in the

community; and I do not think any one in this House will shut his eyes to the enormous influence women have in controlling public opinion. I do not say that women go to the press and write letters, as men do, or that they go on to the public platform, but men must recognise the influence of women in public opinion. If this public opinion, that women assist to form, is the standard by which we judge, is it not inconsistent to say that this class of the community which has such a large influence in controlling public opinion has no right to exercise a vote at the ballot-box and say who should be returned to Parliament. Recognising, as we must recognise, that this is the only way in which we can judge of the value of Parliament, and how closely it reflects public opinion, how can we refuse a vote to the numerous class who so largely influence public opinion in the selection of members of Parliament. That is the principle which has been established by a series of reforms ever since the Reform Bill of 1832, reforms which have been carried out more extensively in Australia than in the old country; and if that is a principle, how can hon. members tell me why women should be excluded? I go further than that, and I challenge any member of the House or outside the House to take any qualification that existed from 1832, or prior to that, and tell me why women should be excluded when they equally fulfil the qualifications that the Act lays down. If the qualification is property, and a woman has property, why should she not have a vote? If the qualification is that of a mere lodger, and she happens to be a lodger, why should she not have a vote the same as a male lodger? You are not giving a vote to the individual, when these are the qualifications, but you are giving it to the property owner or to the lodger; therefore why should you refuse to extend the vote to women, when they fall within the four corners of the qualifications which yourselves have placed on the statute book? Surely women are subject to every law you make, and they are affected very closely and seriously by the administration of the laws you make; therefore, the mere fact that now, as year after year rolls on, a greater number of women have to go out to earn their own

living, in the increasing avenues of employment which are being opened to them, is in itself an argument why women should be represented in this House. I do not think any member will say that women have been properly protected by a Parliament of men. If I am right in the principle I adduce as the foundation on which all our electoral reform is based, if I take the individual Acts of electoral reform, and find that women fall within the principle upon which each of these Acts is based, then those opponents who want to disqualify women should justify the onus that is cast upon them. I will refer to a very Conservative writer, Mr. Lecky, who states, in his work on "Democracy and Liberty"—

A ratepaying woman is thus constantly voting at elections, and often at contested elections, conducted for the most part in much the same way as elections for members of Parliament. She votes for parish and district councils, for county councils, for school boards, and poor-law guardians. In nearly all these elections she may be a candidate as well as a voter. Large numbers of women have stood and large numbers have been chosen for such posts. Many of these elections are fought on purely political and party lines; and a vast proportion of the taxation of the country is now levied by bodies which women's votes contribute to elect, and of which women are frequently members. It is surely not too much to say that under such circumstances the *onus probandi* rests upon those who refuse to go one step further and admit them to elections for members of Parliament. It will hardly, however, be seriously contended that the exercise of such exalted powers is required for the average British voter, or that women have not, both in the past and in the present, shown themselves to be largely endowed with capacities that are very useful in political life.

Suppose I desire to go further than that, as I think we might well do, and meet our adversaries at the gate, then, I ask, what are the arguments they use? They tell us constantly that women are sufficiently represented already in Parliament; but does any member of this House think so? [MR. ILLINGWORTH: Yes.] I venture to differ strongly from the hon. member for Central Murchison. We are told by some hon. members that women are sufficiently represented in this Parliament. How can we boast that our women are the same as men in the eye of the law, in connection with property—perhaps some hon. member will tell me how—except that they are subject to the same penal enactments? The law

falls equally on the back of the man and the woman, but the man holds the lash. Take the property rights, and observe how many generations of struggle were necessary before women could acquire even the qualified rights they now have in property. I have myself heard in this House—I think in the year 1892, when the present Property Act in relation to women was introduced, that being the first time that women obtained any property rights in this colony—when that Bill was being discussed in this Chamber, I heard a distinguished member of Parliament at that time state that women had no right in property whatever, that they ought to be kept for the wash tubs. [MR. A. FORREST: Who said that?] Is that the kind of representative who should represent women in Parliament? If a man were to make a statement like that, in connection with men, and if he meant it, he would be howled down by the House; but the member I am referring to was not howled down. His remark was greeted all round by a piece of good humoured laughter. Is that the sort of member of Parliament who correctly represents women? What is the position of women so far as the care of children is concerned? At the present moment, women have no status in dealing with the custody of children. The husband absolutely controls the custody of the child. It is a gross and cruel injustice that this Parliament, although it is said to correctly and thoroughly represent women, keeps the law as it stood a hundred years ago in England, in relation to this matter; although in England that law has been rectified entirely, so that a woman there has the control of her child up to 16 years of age. As the law stands in this colony to-day, a father, on his death bed, can appoint a third person to take charge of his children, out of the hands of his wife. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: Alter that law.] Why does not the hon. member alter it? For five years since the hon. member has been here as a representative, that law has been on the statute book, and the hon. member has not raised a finger to remove that gross blot. It is said that women are represented in Parliament now; but is not every man more or less indirectly represented in this House? Yet that

is never looked upon as a sufficient argument, when we have before us some question of extending a class franchise to other classes of men. If I used that argument, the member for Central Murchison would laugh it to scorn. Passing to another point, what is the position of women with regard to divorce? Is there a just principle recognised in her case? Is it right that a woman should be subject to an action for divorce if she commits the offence of adultery once, whilst a man may commit the offence and go on committing it in the most open and flagrant way, while not subject to the same punishment? Is that right or just? Can any member of this House point out to me why inequality exists in this matter, and why, while the law of England has been rectified, it has not been rectified in the Parliament of this country? Our laws in regard to women are more degrading than are the laws in any other part of Australia, or in any civilised part of the world.

THE PREMIER: That is a very good statement.

MR. JAMES: I challenge the right hon. gentleman to prove I am wrong. It is all rubbish for the right hon. gentleman to make statements like that. If I am wrong, show I am wrong.

THE PREMIER: I say it is not correct. You should not be so dictatorial.

MR. JAMES: I intend to be dictatorial on this point, because I am not speaking now as the member for East Perth, but I am speaking for a principle that is infinitely more important than a mere question of public works or expenditure. There are questions of social legislation in this colony which are more important even than the continued existence of the Premier in office.

THE PREMIER: A very good remark, that. Very polite.

MR. JAMES: In this discussion, it is just as well to serve "tit for tat" in order to stop interruptions in the future. Not only is the claim of women unanswerable in theory; not only is it unanswerable because I am repeating what Mr. Gladstone states, that men have not been true guardians, and have not looked after the interests of women as they ought to have looked after them; not only is the claim of women unanswerable

by way of principle, but looking at the practical effect, we find that in America they have a system of female suffrage which has been in operation since 1869; that in New Zealand the same principle has been in operation since 1893, and in South Australia since 1896. We know how it has worked in New Zealand, for out of 100,000 women who are registered as electors, no less than 90,000 recorded their votes at the last general election. As to America, this is what the Governor of Colorado said in dealing with it:

So far, the objections made to equal suffrage during the campaign preceding the election at which the ballot was given to women, have not been sustained by the facts. The women do take an interest in the questions under discussion, and do take the trouble to vote. The only danger anticipated, and not yet proven not to exist, is that they may be deceived by those having ulterior motives, but professing righteous and disinterested purposes. But they are realising that it is necessary for them to investigate the facts for themselves, and not to believe all that they are told; especially keeping in mind that in politics, as in other matters, the source must be considered. The correctness of their purpose tends to correct their inexperience. There are 80,000 women eligible to vote in Colorado, and about 65,000 voted at the last election.

That is the position, so far as Colorado is concerned. Then we have the Liberal view of a Liberal newspaper in reference to the operation of this principle in Colorado. That paper says:—

Equal suffrage has been the law in Colorado for nearly three years now, and nothing could induce the intelligent people of the State to revoke that Act, if they had the power. Women appear to show as much intelligence, and take as deep an interest in political affairs, especially those that affect the general welfare, as men, and their influence is almost entirely cast for right and decency and good government. In all the elections held since the change was made, women have cast more than 40 per cent. of the total vote; and everybody admits that their presence in politics and at the polls has a purifying and elevating effect on our political methods, and has compelled the nomination and election of a better class of officials than male suffrage ever gave us. No evil effects, either to the women themselves or to our public affairs, are discernable, while the benefits of the equal suffrage law are innumerable.

That is the testimony which comes from a country where they have had the experience of this principle in operation for 30 years, and that is the testimony from

a Liberal point of view. Let us take the testimony of a Conservative organ dealing with the same matter. That newspaper states:—

The result of women suffrage in Colorado is quite up to the expectation of its Conservative friends. In Denver, and most other cities of the State, women have generally voted—it is believed more generally than the men. They mingle at the caucus and at the primaries with men; and it is noticed that, since their advent, these political functions have been far more honest and orderly than of yore. The fact that they have the ballot has secured in Denver a far more rigorous execution of the laws against gambling and other like public delinquencies than was ever before known. On the whole, in my opinion, women suffrage in Colorado has had a healthful and elevating influence upon the public service and municipal morals generally. Don't misunderstand me that it has cured all the ills affecting the body politic. It has cured some serious ones, and is rapidly exterminating others.

We know how it has worked in Wyoming, that it has been thoroughly satisfactory; and only in 1892, when the State of Wyoming ceased to be a territory and became a State, one of the first acts after the adoption of the Constitution was to pass a resolution, expressing thankfulness that women's suffrage had been adopted in that State, and expressing how deep a debt the State owed to that principle. In South Australia, whenever I have spoken to men who have had experience in that colony, and have discussed this matter with them so as to ascertain their private opinion, they have all admitted that the operation of the principle in South Australia has been most beneficial. We have, therefore, not altogether to deal with a totally new experiment, for we have it tried and tested. It is a principle, not only good in theory, but proved to be just in practice. Apart altogether from the instances where women have had the right to vote in connection with Parliamentary elections, look where they have had the right to cast a vote in which were often involved issues of great moment, as in the case of elections for municipal councils. They have that right to vote in those elections, and when the right was given for the first time in England in 1870, its advocates had exactly the same objections to meet that have been made now, for it was then said that women would not vote, that if votes were given them they

would not go to the ballot-box, and that they would lose all their womanliness by taking part in elections. But we know how thoroughly that has been contradicted by experience, and how largely the women have used this power in England. We have the instance of school boards and parish councils in England, dealing with local government, and there you find that after an experience extending over at least 25 years, where women have had the right to vote in connection with municipal corporations, the British Parliament adopted the principle by re-enacting the right of women to vote in the elections of county councils and other local bodies. Will any member of this House say that the London County Council is not almost as important a body as the Parliament of Western Australia? If you look at the *personnel* of the County Council in London, and observe the number of electors they have to appeal to, and the issues they deal with, and the revenue they expend, I venture to think the London County Council is just as important a body as this, if not more important; and yet women have the right to vote in England at those elections, and women have the right to be elected, and some of them are elected as members of the London County Council. It does seem to me that in a country like England, where they do adopt the principle in connection with their county councils, which have far more important matters to deal with than we have, that example is good for us as showing the effect of the principle of admitting women to the franchise. It does seem to me peculiar that we should refuse to hand over to women a trust which is certainly not more important than the right that is given them of voting at such elections as that for the London County Council. At the elections of the London County Council and other local governing bodies in England, you find an enormous amount of work and a great weight of responsibility being undertaken by women; and in every instance in which a Bill is brought forward dealing with local government, women are invariably given a right to a seat on any body that may be appointed, and to a vote at elections in respect of that body. As against these facts, we have some arguments used—or at least I will call them arguments,

for I want to be charitable, and I believe that, in dealing with this matter, every man of us desires to give a conscientious vote. Although I firmly believe in the principle, I am quite satisfied that those hon. members who oppose it are as sincere as I am. But, while recognising that, I venture to say that the so-called arguments which are adduced against the adoption of the female franchise are prompted by a hidden prejudice—not a prejudice of which those who have it are conscious, but an insensible prejudice of which they are not aware. It is the same sort of prejudice which, in the past, has made it necessary, wherever legislation has been brought forward to improve the condition of woman at the expense of man, to fight a hard battle to obtain for her what we now recognise as being her obvious and just rights. We are told there is a danger that women will lose their womanliness if this principle be conceded. Well, I venture to call that an impudent argument. I say it is not through the acts of men—I except, of course, the members of this House—that women have maintained their womanliness; that it is not on account of the way in which men have treated women that we find the other sex occupying the position they hold to-day; nor does it rest in our power to destroy the womanliness which they have; and, when we hear men say that by giving them this right we destroy their womanliness, I say it is a piece of impudence for any individual of our sex to say that anything we can do will have that effect. In the same way, while we cannot point to any one act of ours which has assisted them, we can point to a great many things done by our sex which have tended to degrade women; and, if there be this keen anxiety to assist women, I would ask those who use this argument, what have you ever done to remove the evils of sweating? What have you ever done, say in this colony, to remove the disadvantages to which working women in this colony have to submit? It is very easy, when you are opposing a reform which women want, to say that it will destroy their womanliness; but I can point to occupations in which their womanliness has been altogether destroyed; and I say, what have you done to assist them here? You are obliged to admit that you have done nothing.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Men passed the women's Factory Act.

MR. JAMES: Well, if I as a man could not find something more worthy to boast of than that, I should be ashamed of myself. The idea of a man getting up and saying "I am proud of the fact that I am honest." After years and years of struggling, Factory Acts were passed in various countries; but we have not yet passed a Factory Act in this House. When I talk about legislation, I am referring to this House; and, as I said, what have we done in this House to deal with the matter? Even if we had adopted a Factory Act, which applies just as much to one sex as to the other, why should we be proud of the fact that we sometimes do right? We ought to look round us to see what is not done, and what an enormous time we have had to do it in, and what weak and feeble efforts we make to discharge our duty. I will quote Lecky again:—

It has also been gravely alleged that the whole character of the female sex would be revolutionised, or at least seriously impaired, if they were brought by the suffrage into public life. There is perhaps no subject in which exaggerations so enormous and so grotesque, may be found in the writings of conspicuous men. Considered in itself, the process of voting is now merely that of marking once in five or six years a ballot-paper in a quiet room, and it may be easily accomplished in five minutes. And can it reasonably be said that the time or thought which an average male elector bestows on the formation of his political opinions is such as to interfere in any appreciable degree with the current of his thoughts, with the tendencies of his character or life? Men write on this subject as if public life and interests formed the main occupation of an ordinary voter. It is said that domestic life should be the one sphere of women. Very many women—especially those to whom the vote would be conceded—have no domestic, or but few domestic, duties to attend to, and are compelled, if they are not wholly frivolous or wholly apathetic, to seek spheres of useful activity beyond their homes. Even a full domestic life is scarcely more absorbing to a woman than professional life to a man. Scarcely any woman is so engrossed in it that she cannot bestow on public affairs an amount of time and intelligence equal to that which is bestowed on it by thousands of masculine voters. Nothing can be more fantastic than to argue as if electors in England were a select body, mainly occupied with political studies and public interests.

I venture to think that is so. It is grotesque and fantastic; and I do not think I can appeal to a better authority

than a Conservative writer like Lecky to answer these objections. Of course we shall be told, as we always are told, that women are not trained in politics. I will answer that by asking this question: What training does a man get in politics up to the time he is 21 years of age, and becomes entitled to exercise his vote? Has he had any special training which qualifies him to exercise that vote? And how are women ever to learn how to vote intelligently if this argument holds good? It is the same sort of argument that was used when Gladstone introduced his Bill to enfranchise the agricultural labourers. His opponents said: "These men are not trained, and they do not demand votes." And yet they used their votes, when obtained, to put out Gladstone, who had given them the franchise. If you will not allow women to vote because you say they are not trained, when are they to have an opportunity of being trained? But is it part of a man's qualification to vote that he must be trained to exercise the franchise? When you analyse the qualifications of voters, you will invariably find that any argument propounded against the enfranchisement of women will apply with equal force to men; but this view of the case is glossed over and quietly passed by. True, women differ from each other as much as men do. Some men have red hair and some black; some are clean shaven and some are not; and I think this qualification of sex is just about as reasonable as it would be to allow all the clean-shaved men to be members of Parliament, and to exclude men with beards. I have already dealt in this House, on more occasions than one, with the argument that a reform should not be granted because there is no demand for it; for it has constantly been brought up in connection with matters which I have introduced. It is not a question of whether the reform has been demanded, but of whether it is just. I say that the principle has been adopted elsewhere; and the great fact which shows that it was demanded is that, although there are here, as elsewhere, large numbers of men who have a right to vote, many of them will not take the trouble to get their names on the electoral roll, and many of those who have votes will not go to the trouble of recording them; yet women, wherever they have the right to vote, put



their names on the rolls and record their votes at every election. What better proof can there be that they want the franchise? At every opportunity they exercise it, in most cases to a larger extent than men; and the effect of the change has been to considerably improve the dignity of elections. Here again I say, if we are going to say that it is not demanded, if we are going to wait until women become loud and noisy in their advocacy of this reform, then I should be almost inclined to go with those who refuse to give it. I cannot conceive their taking up the position which men usually assume when their rights are refused them. I venture to think, although there may be some opposition in this House, that when the majority of men are worthy of the trust reposed in them in this connection, they will not require women to go clamouring about this city, holding demonstration meetings with a big drum, but will give them the franchise because it is their right, and will be satisfied that it can do no harm when it is just to give it. Most of the arguments which have been used were brought forward for the purpose of showing that, although the principle is good, it is not required in the interests of the sex. But I should not like to deal with this matter altogether from the point of view of what women want. I always consider that the first and the paramount consideration is what the interest of the State demands; and I say unhesitatingly that the interest of the State demands that women should have the right to vote. I believe, and believe firmly, that the influence of woman is enormous; that it is growing rapidly, and that we cannot suppress it; that it is a factor which has been reckoned with by all of us. It is useless to say that they do not possess this influence, for we all know that they have it; and they ought to be taught that this influence carries with it a certain amount of responsibility; and the only way of doing this is to give them the franchise, so that the recording of their votes may give them that sense of responsibility which the right to exercise power invariably brings with it. They should be taught, as they will be taught, to exercise more deliberation in forming opinions on public matters. No one can deny that,

if you compare a body of men who have no votes with another body—equal to them in every other respect—who have the franchise, you will find that the voters have a sense of responsibility, and are able in 999 cases out of 1,000, to take an abler and a juster view of any particular case than those who have no right to vote, but merely a right to influence public opinion. In dozens of different ways we recognise the principle that every man who has power should have responsibility with that power; and we know that a sense of responsibility involves the discharge of duty; and, in the interests of the State, we ought not to allow this disorganised, irresponsible body, which so materially influences public opinion, to remain in its present state. It is an influence which we sadly want in these days. It is not an easy, happy-go-lucky principle that we have to apply in connection with public matters; and women, I am certain, would be far stricter than we. Those members of this House who believe, as I do, that the future legislation of this colony must be legislation of a social character—that we are bound, if we discharge our duty, to introduce legislation which will remove the social grievances of the day—will recognise that we never can carry out such measures unless we succeed in giving women the franchise, and in bringing to our aid that power which she exercises, which, though full of sympathy, will never tolerate shams or expedients of a dubious character. I do not imagine we are going to have the millenium when we get the women's franchise. I think there are many dangers in connection with this, as with other instances where a great number of new electors are enfranchised. But this principle applies not to this reform only; and I feel that we can rest with confidence in the belief that women, who have done so much for the elevation of mankind, and who form, even now, the most vital, the most moral, and the most religious portion of this community, will not fail, when their day of power comes, to put in practice in the State those virtues which they have so admirably exhibited in domestic life. And I believe that those who argue against this view must think that those features in a woman's character which we admire so much are simply

vener; and that those of us who urge so strongly the necessity of granting this right to women are the persons who believe most thoroughly in the sex. We believe that those elements in the character of woman which have distinguished it for ages past from that of man cannot possibly be eradicated by any legislation of ours; and I would ask hon. members, is it not a gross wrong to cut off from the right to the franchise one-half of the people of this community, possessing three-fourths of its moral force, and at all events one-half of its intelligence? A state of affairs like that is scandalously bad, and the sooner it is rectified the better, not only in the interests of women, but on higher grounds—in the interests of the State, which should have the assistance and co-operation of at least every moral and religious person in the community. I move this motion with very great pleasure; and I am sorry indeed that, in the course of my remarks, I should have become overheated; and I hope the right hon. the Premier will accept my expression of regret for this. Perhaps he does not always give me credit for feeling quite so strongly as I really do on this and kindred subjects; but I regret that I should have allowed my feelings to run away with me, and I hope hon. members will not think any less of the motion on that account. I hope they will bear in mind that I am simply the mouthpiece of that sex to whom they owe so much.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): Any man who has right thoughts and feelings must regret to find himself in opposition to those whom he respects in the highest possible degree, both on this and on the other side of the House; and, knowing as I do that a large number of the world's greatest thinkers are on the side of the hon. member who proposes this motion, it must be understood that I rise with some considerable diffidence to express my convictions upon this question. But, sir, there are certain fundamental truths in this world from which there can be no departure. There are certain fixed axioms in the universe which nothing can set aside. There are laws of nature, such as the law of gravitation, which no amount of voting and of legislation can overcome; and there are principles in the government of this world which the

wisest and the ablest and the strongest men are bound to respect, whatever their feelings may be. When I call to my aid such a name as that of William Ewart Gladstone, who has been quoted in this House to-night, and who has done more in his generation to enfranchise the people of the great nation to which we belong than any other man who has lived during the last 60 years, and who admits, painfully and sadly, that men have not done justice to women, and yet is forced after years of experience and vigorous advocacy of human rights, to oppose the extension of the franchise to women, there must be some sound reason at the base of such thinking. I am quite aware that it is possible to quote Sidney Smith and Lecky, and other men of great worth and ability, on this question, but there are a few things that have to be considered. First of all, take this statement which has been advanced and argued by the hon. member who has proposed this motion. His principal argument is that women possess such a vast amount of influence and intelligence in the world; and because of that, and the influence which she exerts, and which she may always exert, she is entitled to a vote. I fear the hon. member has gone on the wrong track. It is no argument. We have had Christian civilisation in the world for upwards of two thousand years, and in that civilisation there has scarcely been any voice greater in the world than the voice of woman. It is idle to say she has been crushed. No man can escape the influence of woman, no man has ever been able to escape the influence: from the cradle to the grave every man has been all his life working and toiling on the side of women, either for a mother, a sister, or a wife, or a friend. Every law that has been put on the statute book has behind it the influence of women. If it has been admitted that women have been influencing man in all ages, how is it that that influence has not been sufficient to influence right laws on the statute book? We must take it from the admissions made to-night that woman's influence is not crushed; it is not over-ridden; it is not crushed down in the universe of God. She is here with all the force that God gave her, but there is one force she does not possess, and that is physical force. I

want to come to a point here on which the crux of this question depends. If a law cannot be enforced, or is not enforced, you are doing a vast amount of injury in legislation. What, after all, is the principle, the binding principle of law? I affirm, and I ask hon. members to consider, that every law has behind it two forces. One is money, and the other is physical power. If a law were passed to-morrow which was adverse to public opinion, and if Parliament endeavoured to pass a law contrary to public opinion, in order to enforce that law there must be power behind it. It has the power of the policeman; behind the policeman is the power of the army, and behind the army is the power of the fleet. I am speaking of the power of enforcing the law. Suppose, for the sake of illustration, we had the views of womanhood in the world, and suppose those views were adverse to the manhood of the world, I ask how could that law be put in force. There would be no power to put it in force. Man holds the finances and the physical force, and if a law is adverse to the opinion of man, that law could not be put in force. If we are not adverse to the opinion of the manhood of the world, then the manhood possesses the power to put a law in force. It does not require womanhood to put that law on the statute book. It may be said that this is only a technical point. I have given great consideration to this subject all my life. It was among the early political questions brought before my mind, and anyone who knows anything of my life knows that I have always been on the side and interests of those questions on which women are mostly concerned. The consequence is, whatever may be my opinion—granted it may be wrong—it must be accepted as sincere from the standpoint from which I look at it. I have been interested in every question that women have been interested in, fighting on their side all my life, and I cannot be charged with lack of sympathy in reference to the principle which is placed before us. I have just as much respect and affection for women as anyone in the House, and I have the very best reason. I have had what every member in the House has had, and that is the best woman for a mother. I have had the best mother

in the world, and so has every other hon. member. We have to look at the question from another standpoint. The only two arguments which have been used in connection with giving the franchise to women are that the women have to obey the law, and we have the other argument which has been introduced into this discussion, that women have to pay the taxes. In the first place, does she pay them? One of the beliefs that has crept into our civilisation to-day is the fact that women have come into the arena of labour, and, in that sense, have become taxpayers. That is one of the most lamentable things of the world. Because women are coming into competition in the arena of labour is one of the things that must do a terrible injury. I am not speaking particularly of our own nation, but nations like ours; and, without prejudicing the feeling of hon. members, we will go to Germany, and what do we find there? You find the man, the woman, and the child down to three and four years of age, working in the same factory. The children are working for from 4d. to 1s. 4d. a week, making the toys for other children to play with; because the competition of women and children has reduced the standard of the men's wages, and it has become necessary for the whole family to work to support themselves.

MR. SIMPSON: Because the man has the vote that perpetuates the system.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is not the reason. It is easy to say that is the reason, but it is not. When we have had similar conditions, we have had people who have risen up and dismissed the children from the factories. The workers marched in the large town of Bradford, and of Leeds, and they insisted upon a provision being placed on the statute book to reduce the age of children working in factories. What has that done for Great Britain? It has raised the standard of wages. There is one thing on which our nation rests, and I want to enforce this on hon. members, and this is the one thing which makes us a different people from other people on the earth. We have homes, and the moment you tell the wife to go out and earn a living in the factory, and drive children out into the factories, you bring a force in that is destructive to the home and to the weekly

wages of the man. The normal conditions under which we live are that man shall be able to earn by his daily labour of eight hours sufficient to keep himself, his wife and children, educate them, and give them a fair start in life. I quoted before, and I quote again, one of the greatest men who stands on the earth to-day—although I differ from him in my faith—I speak with reverence of the Pope of Rome. What is the standard of labour which he wrote in a paper? He took this position, that a man should work for his own support, the support of his wife and children, and the education of his children. That is the minimum wage, he said, for which a man should work. Whenever you bring in a cheaper kind of labour, it cannot but be destructive to the home, the wife and the family. These are some of the reasons which force me to take up the position I do. If I thought that the idea of giving the women the franchise would be to give her one-tenth of what some hon. members say it would do, I would be the last to oppose the motion. I am convinced that this wave that is going throughout our nation to give women the franchise is the first step to her final degradation. I will fight it for all it is worth, for woman's sake, and for the strength and dignity of our manhood. I know that members differ from me with the same amount of earnestness as I have on this question. I fight this principle because I think it will degrade woman, and is the first downward step in her career. It is the first step in alienating the woman from her home, where the power of God intended her to be. Can we expect to introduce into our social and political life an element that is physically weaker, and expect this to be a force and strength for ourselves? It cannot be. I have spoken of the constitutional phase of the question. I have said that the law has behind it the cash and the force. That may be a very mercenary way of looking at it, but it is a fact. Take a simple illustration. A man comes home, and his wife says she is going to do something. He says, "You are not," and there is an end of it.

MR. EWING: Not always.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I might remind the hon. member for the Swan that I have had more experience than he

has. It comes to this, that the men who are earning money say it shall not be expended in certain directions, and it is not.

A MEMBER: Then there is a row.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There may be a row, and there may be tears. I wish I had with me some quotations of statements made by certain members of an organisation in South Australia. I will not mention the organisation, or the people, but, if the language in these quotations had been used on the floor of this House, something would have to be said about it. But what can you do if a woman abuses you? or if she misrepresents you, what can you do? If it is a man, you know what you can do, but with a woman you can only smile. And if any force comes in, then there is the force of tears, and there is no force like the force of tears. It is a force that will overcome anybody. In conclusion, I am coming to another point. An argument has been used, and apparently it looks a plausible one, that the number of women who have voted during the general elections in New Zealand and in South Australia is very large; but I wish to point out that the operation of this privilege which has been granted is simply that the man has got his day's work before him when an election is on, and being put on the same footing as his wife in respect of voting, and having the same views and interests in common, she votes instead of him. If that be not so, there is no good in the principle, for their votes nullify each other; or, if they vote together, it is a dual vote for the man. The man naturally says: "Jane, I have to work this afternoon: you go and vote." She goes to the poll and votes; and what has happened in New Zealand and South Australia is that the number of men voting has decreased to a large extent in comparison with previous elections, because the women, their wives, have voted instead of the husbands. Further, what have you gained by this concession of the privilege to women? Where they have both voted, you have gained a dual vote for the man; and where they have not both voted, you have got the wife voting as a delegate for her husband. If you are going to introduce into Parliament what is to be adverse to men, you will soon get into trouble. I

will suggest now what is the true solution of this question, as far as I can make it out. If you claim for women that they should have a voice in the government of the nation, then the true and proper solution of the question is to have a woman's suffrage, and a woman's House of Representatives, in which women may assemble to deal with politics, and where you may get the judgment of women on social questions. We have now a House in another place which deals with a certain class of legislation—we do not feel it so much in this colony as it is felt in the other colonies; but hon. members know that the Legislative Council in other colonies essentially represents property, and the voice of property is heard in that Chamber. What I argue for, as a solution of this question, is that there should be a woman's franchise with a woman's roll, and a woman's House of Representatives with a woman president; and then allow social measures passed by that House to come to us, as measures now come from the Legislative Council. Thus you will have the proper voice of the whole nation. [MR. GEORGE: You would have a deadlock.] That is quite possible, if your imagination is keen enough. We know it is an absolute certainty that, if women receive the political franchise, some of them will want to be members; and if they become members, there is no reason why female members should not be Ministers, and so we may have a female Ministry ruling on the Treasury bench, as long perhaps as the present Ministers have been on it; and then where will we be? The whole of our State life will be revolutionised—women will be in Parliament; and what I commend to hon. members is that the principle of representation lies just in this: taxation, representation, power to enforce the law. I say that, by nature, woman has not that power. By all the experience in the world, she has been in subjection; and I will go further and say that the Creator who made her has placed her in subjection; and woe be to the Parliament, or to the men, who place her anywhere else.

MR. LEAKE (Albany): The hon. member who has just spoken has told the House that to pass this motion would be for women the first step towards her final

degradation. It is hardly worth while attempting to seek for the refutation of such a wild statement as that, nor will I delay the House with attempting to deal with such extravagance. I do not propose to quote authority, whether that authority be known as a person so eminent as the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone; and I do not suggest that, after two thousand years of civilisation, we must revert necessarily to mummified arguments; but what I ask of hon. members is to be guided on this question more particularly by their own practical common sense, and the experience of every-day life. It is true that women have been kept in the background for years and years in the past; but whenever any step has been taken, having for its object the amelioration of woman's condition, or the granting to them of exceptional or extra privileges, the inevitable result has been to improve woman herself, and at the same time the moral tone of her surroundings. It is argued that to give woman a vote is to take her out of her proper sphere, or, at any rate, out of her sphere of usefulness; but what greater sphere of usefulness can any woman have than the welfare of herself or her fellow creatures? If the principle of the vote for men holds good, on the ground that it is for the benefit and improvement of civilisation, then why should not that argument apply with equal force to the case of the women?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: "The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world."

MR. LEAKE: That is not a "righteous" remark. Personally, I am influenced by the idea of woman's right to exercise the franchise, by the extension of our civilisation, and by the fact that no longer is woman relegated to the background. Our system of education has had the tendency to equalise everybody, and it has had the tendency of narrowing those class distinctions, as well as equalising the distinctions which were so pronounced in bygone generations; and yet our social civilisation, and our superior ideas of manhood and of right, on the one hand, induce us to give a vote to the immoral man, to the loafer, to the drunkard, to the criminal, and even to the naturalised Chinaman, while we deny the same privilege to the virtuous woman. That is the position which we find ourselves practically face to face

with; and, having seriously considered this question, I cannot persuade myself that there is any consistency in the position which is taken by those who would withhold this natural right. It is only a further recognition or extension of the principle of manhood suffrage, which is the principle also of natural justice. We have recognised the rights of women with regard to property. Women may now hold property in cases where she could not do so years ago; and we have not found that there has been any abuse of that privilege. If there has been any abuse, the abuse has been by the men; for it is the man who has attempted to make use of the woman, in such instances, as a vehicle of convenience to transfer his property to her, not with the idea perhaps of improving her position, but of acting with deceit and dishonesty towards his fellow man. The law now recognises the right of women to hold property; and if a woman has a right to hold property, surely she is entitled to demand the right to protect it; therefore to give her the right to protect it, we simply suggest that you should give her a vote. Let her have a say in the appointment of the representatives of herself and of the guardians of the public purse. Let women be represented in Parliament as much as men. I am not arguing for the further extension of the principle, by granting the right of women to sit in Parliament. One step at a time; and, as I am at present advised, the principle now before the House is sufficient. I do not go to the further extent I have indicated, nor am I certain that the women themselves demand it. We do not want to make amazons of women, nor will the granting of this privilege make them so, and I would remind hon. members that petticoat influence does not necessarily imply petticoat government; so that those gentlemen who have domestic affairs, and who may be frightened of higher influences than those which they themselves command, may take this reflection for their comfort, that if they grant this privilege they run no particular risk of being deprived of their own rights. There are certain disabilities; and this mere granting of the vote will not equalise the position of the sexes, for it merely removes one of the disabilities. As to those gentlemen who do not like removing disabilities from the

women, I would remind them that women enjoy certain immunities; that, for instance, if a woman in company with a man commits a crime, the woman is immuned, because the relation between them implies that she, the weaker vessel, is acting under the influence of the man, and the man has got to bear all that burden. That is a little solace to those men who are afraid of removing this disability; so that they may flatter themselves that, at any rate, they have got some extra responsibility. It is not so long ago that I was not an ardent advocate of this principle. I am not over-zealous now, but I am trying to do what is fair and right, and I am not a faddist. What has influenced me is that it is within comparatively recent times that the women in our community have declared themselves in favour of this principle. When I first considered the question, and I think it was first brought into this House in 1893 or 1894, it had not then been talked about to any extent; and when speaking on the hustings in 1894, I treated the matter with a certain amount of frivolity. But circumstances have since impelled me to the serious consideration of this subject, because there has been a certain amount of discussion—I won't say agitation—in favour of the franchise for women; and having inquired amongst women themselves, amongst my own acquaintances, I am satisfied they are anxious to have the franchise; and not only that, but if they get it, I believe they will exercise it. I will go even a step further, and say, if you have a vote you must exercise it. In fact, I would apply that to every person who has the right to vote. If we compare the position of men and women, taking the average man or the average woman, you will find that the moral tone of women is higher than that of men; and if our legislation and civilisation are to be based on the strong foundation of morality, then we should have, as electors, those who are entitled to be considered most moral, and who have a direct interest in the advancement and maintenance of our civilisation. The hon. member who introduced the motion put it very fairly to us, when he said he was endeavouring to regard this question from the standpoint of State interest, rather than individual interest; and I honestly

think that, to a great extent, the franchise for women would operate to the advantage of the State; that it would operate in the direction of good and moral government; raising the tone of society, and, if not advancing things, at any rate preventing them from retrograding or falling off. Whatever other arguments you may use against the granting of the franchise to women, there can be no debasing or degrading influence in connection with it; and I refute, with all the force at my command, the suggestion made by the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth), that to grant the franchise to women would be the first step towards woman's final degradation. A more rabid or unmanly statement I have seldom heard; and I hope other hon. members in this House will not follow him in the same direction. I am convinced that the granting of the franchise to women would have a steadying, a levelling, and a humanising influence upon our social and political system; and therefore I am impelled to vote for the motion. I am more especially influenced by what I believe to be the honest feeling of all the best-known women in the community. I am influenced by the fact that they desire to have this vote; and when they ask for it, they are also actuated by an honest intention of exercising it when they have it. As regards women not desiring the franchise, and not caring to exercise it if they had it, if I had the time, and a good memory, and perhaps the inclination to detail to hon. members the conversation which I had at home this evening before I came into this House, I think they would be all convinced that this opinion is fallacious. And, after all, that is a fair admission, because home influence is often the very best influence you can have; and, when that influence comes from a quarter you can respect, then it is not for me as a man to disregard it.

MR. GEORGE (the Murray): I am sorry to see that the member for East Perth (Mr. James) has followed his usual tactics this evening of coming into this Assembly, firing a bombshell, shattering us all to pieces, and then going away without helping us out of the difficulty. He will of course be here when the time comes for voting, but he never stops to listen to the arguments of the other side.

I have told him about this before, and I am sorry he is not here to listen to what is said of him.

MR. SIMPSON: There are a good many like him.

MR. GEORGE: That is true. I am quite aware that the hon. member for Geraldton occasionally tells us something that we can really believe. The mover of this motion spoke a great deal about the impudence of the people who ventured to differ from him. As I see the hon. member has returned to the Chamber, I will repeat for his benefit the few remarks which he has not heard. I was regretting very much that the hon. member, following his usual tactics, fired a bombshell, shattered us to pieces, and did not remain to listen to the arguments brought against him. But, as he has returned, possibly he may learn something. He has a great deal to learn about ladies. Only his youth can excuse the rash statements he has made. It is all very well for him to talk about the impudence of people who differ from him on this question of woman suffrage. I do not suppose there is any man in this Assembly who monopolises all the respect for women. I suppose each one of us thinks he had the best woman in the world for a mother. The man who cannot respect his mother is not worth calling a man at all. Some reference was made to agricultural labourers, and the agitation for their enfranchisement some sixteen or eighteen years ago. But I do not know that there was anything approaching to a grave revolution throughout the country. The labourers were listened to fairly and favourably. They had their leaders. Joseph Arch was one of the fairest men I ever met in my life. He was listened to with great attention in all the big cities of the old country; and if a Joseph Arch were to come into this colony on behalf of woman's suffrage, he would receive a respectful hearing. But we do not want to be abused because we cannot swallow all the new-fangled nostrums that appeal to the imagination of the hon. member for East Perth, and those who support him on this question simply for party purposes. The hon. member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) spoke very truly about female labour in the old country. Anyone who has travelled much in the Mid-

land counties of England knows that it is not so many years since women were working in the mines and working as nail-makers; and I am certain that everyone will agree with him that nail-making and coal-hewing, or pushing trucks in the mines, are not proper occupations for women to engage in, and that, since the abolition of female and child labour in those industries, the wages of working men have risen considerably. The member for East Perth spoke about improving women. Well, I have a greater respect for women than to think them capable of improvement. They are just about as perfect as you can make them; and if they were any more perfect they would not be fit mates for men.

MR. JAMES: There are some perfect men, you know.

MR. GEORGE: Yes; I know. They grow them in East Perth. This question can be boiled down into a very small compass. The men in this world are quite sufficient to do its work. Let the women stick to their particular sphere. As for disregarding any home influences, there is not one of us who would be likely to do it. We look with the greatest respect on any advice we may get from our mothers, wives, or sisters, and I believe that most men do so. I shall certainly not give my vote, at any rate, to enable women to enter the arena of politics. I do not think they were ever intended to compete with men in that respect. I think their proper sphere is to be found in their household duties; and anything like a decent, old-fashioned woman will do so. She will not want to be ranting on a platform. I have known a few of these new women who go on the public platform to try to improve men and so forth; and I notice they have got a very long sort of jaw and a very peculiar face. As a rule, they consist of disappointed spinsters, or of ladies to whom, if they are married, the fates have not been kind enough to give them families to look after. I do not think I need say any more. As long as I am in Parliament I intend to vote against this principle at every opportunity.

MR. EWING (the Swan): This question appears to me to be next in importance to the granting of the franchise to every adult male in the community. Our forefathers fought hard

and long in order to establish the principle of manhood suffrage; and I believe that this reform is a logical consequence of manhood suffrage. If we believe that working men, and every section of the community, have a right to vote, we must also recognise that women, who form an important portion of the community, should have the same privilege granted to them.

A MEMBER: You are not long caught.

MR. EWING: They caught me long ago—from the day that I was able to appreciate the beneficial influence they exercise on society. Women ought to catch every man. Women are bound to catch every man who is capable of appreciating the good they do; and the good they do in our political life is nothing short of the good they do in our social life. If we are democrats, and believe in government of the people by the people and for the people, we must recognise, in that women form a portion of the people, they have a right to the suffrage; otherwise, as democrats, we are untrue to our principles, and as advocates of the representation of the people we are in a false position. Some of the arguments adduced against this principle by the hon. member for Central Murchison certainly surprised me. He argued that there was one solution of the difficulty, namely, that as women's interests were different from those of men, they should sit in a separate chamber, and that women should only vote for women. But if this is reasonable, why does he not create a separate chamber for working men, another for professional men, and so on? They have different interests, and are different classes of people. If it is reasonable to separate women from men in the legislature, it is equally reasonable to separate the different classes of men from one another. I say that the interests of men and women are identical. Women are just as deeply interested in the social and general legislation carried on in this and other Legislative Chambers as are the men in the community. It cannot be maintained for one moment that women are not interested in social legislation, and that they have not the greatest interest in the world in laws which affect such matters as divorce, and the custody of their children, and the social conduct of the community. Are not these matters in



which women are deeply interested, and can hon. members say that women who are admittedly interested in certain questions should be debarred the right of saying what direction legislation on such questions should take? The hon. member for Central Murchison also urged that, if women approved of a principle, they would not be able to enforce it, because they had not the force behind them to carry it into effect. Now, I have heard this argument before, but I do not believe there is any logic or reason in it. If a person is weak in body, and has not the ability to knock down and destroy his neighbour, is that any reason why he should be deprived of the right to exercise the parliamentary franchise? We might just as well say that because a man is a cripple he should have no right to vote. It is not a question of bodily strength or of brute force that we are considering; but it is a question of the mental and moral ability of those who exercise the franchise. The hon. member also admitted that he is a great admirer of women, and he has led us to believe that his knowledge of women is very extensive. He says he has always found them exercising a beneficent influence.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: In all cases I know.

MR. EWING: Then how can we understand the attitude adopted by the hon. member, when he admits that the influence of all the women he knows has been for good? How are we to understand him when he deliberately says that he will not allow them to extend that influence for good and bring it into political life?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: To extend it for harm.

MR. EWING: If he really believes the statement he made, that woman's influence was for good wherever he has found it at work, then the sooner he admits her into our public affairs, the better it will be for legislation; and the hon. member can only be logical by voting for the motion, and doing all that he can to support the consummation of the principle of representative government in which he professes to believe, and in which I think he does believe. He will be introducing into our political life an influence which he admits has been for good in our social life; and consequently, following his own argument, I

take it that it will be an influence for good in our political life.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That does not follow.

MR. EWING: The hon. member must admit that the influence of a good person will be exercised for good wherever that person may be; and I believe that if you give women votes, they will exercise them conscientiously and reasonably, and the outcome will be that they will discuss political matters with their husbands and their male friends: and we all know that discussion, as a general rule, leads to sound and reasonable conclusions.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Does it lead to the peace of the home?

MR. EWING: The hon. member is afraid of the peace of the home because the husband and the wife discuss matters. If the home stands on such a rotten foundation as to be broken down or burst up by a little political discussion, then the sooner the parties appear in the divorce court the better. No such place is worthy of the name of a home. I believe that the outcome of it, instead of breaking up the home, would be the discussion of matters which the husband and wife would not otherwise discuss; and they would then give their votes after due consideration, so that the two votes would be used with more discretion than the one vote hitherto has been.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie): I came in too late to hear the address of the proposer of this motion, and I only arrived in the middle of the eloquent speech delivered by the hon. member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth). I was rather astonished to listen to a member of Parliament, in the tenth decade of the 19th century—and a democratic and progressive member too—trying to enforce the heretical doctrine that all law and government rest upon force, and force alone. Such an idea as that would have been very correct in feudal times, or in the old days of barbarism among such people as the ancient Britons. Then force and law were identical; but now they are divorced as much as possible. In those days the practice was to treat women as property merely. Woman held no higher rank than that of a brute beast. Since then her position has evolved into something better; and the

logical outcome of the evolution that is going on, and the improvement of the status of the sex generally, lead inevitably to woman's suffrage and to nothing else. As regards the operation of force on law, I contend that, no matter what force may be exerted for the purpose of carrying out a law, let that law be opposed to public opinion and it becomes absolutely impossible to enforce it. Take the case of Ireland, for example. In Ireland, for the last eight hundred years, the Government has been endeavouring to force British laws down the throats of the people; and it has been well said that the conquest of Ireland commenced eight hundred years ago and is not completed yet; because every attempt to enforce the law has been against the force of public opinion, and those attempts have failed. The same thing applies to every country where an attempt has been made to establish an autocratic Government. In Italy, in France, in Spain, in Germany, and even in Russia itself — the most down-trodden and reactionary country in the whole European group — public opinion has a tremendous weight. Even in Russia, reforms make some degree of progress, and the power of the autocrat is gradually curbing itself and being curbed; and Russia, like other countries, is slowly evolving to a state of freedom. It is doing that in spite of all forms of tradition and want of education and superstition. Public opinion is the force all the world over. The tendency of all civilisation shows that public opinion in all civilised countries is the supreme force. The only countries where public opinion counts for nothing are those under Mahomedan government, or those in the domain of savagery. If you go into Africa, there you will find that force is the power. There you will see force working against force. There is any amount of force. It does not produce civilisation or good government, but it produces a state of armed anarchy. If you want to see the way that force works, go into Central Africa. I contend that physical force is the outcome of barbaric conditions, and only fitted to deal with such conditions. We as civilised people no longer talk of physical force. Take the condition of Australia at the present time. I do not suppose there are twenty thousand militia-

men or soldiers in the whole country, which has a population of four million people. On the coast there is a small fleet, but the people govern themselves, and do precisely what they please. If any Australian Government or Parliament endeavoured to put a law in force by means of this military power at its disposal, against the wish of public opinion, that Government would not last for 24 hours. Or if the Imperial Government wished to enforce any law, it would mean the separation of these colonies from the empire; and every member of the House knows that as well as I do. Here are we, only a small part of that great empire, and yet any endeavour on the part of the Imperial Government to enforce any power would separate us from the empire. The days of force belong to the days of priestcraft and autocracy. I am endeavouring to show that public opinion is the force which is used to-day. The hon. member for Central Murchison wished to draw a herring across the trail. I do not see any reason why women should be compelled to do more work, or alter their duties, because they become possessed of the franchise. The whole of the franchise to-day is in the hands of the men, and in Germany to-day, where female and child labour is employed, the country is governed by a male emperor and male electors. The only persons in that country who are doing anything for womanhood are the socialists, and they hold the same opinions as those who are advocating the female franchise to-day. Does any hon. member suppose that the fact of the House conferring the franchise on women will bring about woman and child labour in factories? That was what the contention of the hon. member seemed to indicate. Are women, as soon as they get the franchise, going to vote for their own enslavement? It is not reasonable to suppose that women will give their vote to make their own sex work in mines or factories in this country. I cannot, for my part, see in what way the fact of women going into public life can prove destructive to her home life. Women, to a considerable extent to-day, do go into public life. True, their sphere is somewhat limited, but they do a lot of good work, and hon. members will agree with me that the influence which they

exercise is for good. I have never known any body of women in public life that have not a tendency for good; and, if women are doing good in the home circle, in the name of common sense will they not equally do good in a public sphere? I am not good at quoting Scripture, but I remember something in one of the gospels in reference to the parable of the talents. Three men were granted an amount of money to invest. One of those persons buried his talents in a napkin, and the other man, who only had one talent, invested it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is the wrong way up.

MR. VOSPER: My Scripture may be loose. I am not an authority on Scripture, but I know that one of these men invested his talent. The man who was better off than the other wasted his opportunities, while the other man, who had one talent, turned it to good account.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That was the man who buried it in the napkin.

MR. VOSPER: Well, I know that one of the persons turned his opportunities to account. The gist of the parable is in the fact that one person made good use of his talent, while the other one did not. And if women in a moderate sphere of public life do good, is it not right to expect that, if we gave them a greater share of public life, they would make good use of it? As far as I am concerned, I would like to see every woman connected with me have a vote; but, as long as I have the power, I will take good care that they do not have to work for a living. It is said that a man and a woman would agree to vote a certain way, and that it would become a dual vote. The only case in which a wife would consult the husband as to her vote would be in the case where the woman did not know enough about politics to enable her to decide for herself, and that is one of the dangers we shall have to face in connection with woman suffrage, that we shall have an ignorant vote at first, because in the past women have had no reason to take an interest in politics; but, if you remove that disability, in the course of a little while women will interest themselves, and they will be able to use their own opinions how to vote.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: They will learn politics, and not cooking.

MR. VOSPER: Some women are as versatile as the hon. member. The hon. member is a good politician, and he is an excellent land agent; and so it is with women. Women may be good in the home, and still they may know how to vote. The old Indian gynnosophists believed that the seat of the brain was in the stomach, so I believe it is with the opponents of woman suffrage. On many occasions the hon. member for Central Murchison has addressed temperance meetings composed chiefly of women. Where can be the difference in women going to these meetings and then going out to vote in accordance with the views they have formed. If women are allowed to go and listen to a John B. Gough or an Illingworth on temperance and then go to the poll to vote, can it be more degrading for a woman to vote at a Parliamentary election. If it is degrading for a woman to vote at a Parliamentary election, it is equally degrading to vote on temperance matters. I do not care to keep on making reference to my hon. friend, but I am obliged to allude to him in consequence of his well-known religious character. It is well known that women do an immense amount of good in connection with religious enterprises. Women are sent as missionaries to China, and I am sure hon. members will agree with me that there are no lower human reptiles than the 400 million people comprised in the empire of China, and yet women are allowed to go and endeavour to teach these degraded people. If it is degrading to vote in a polling booth, what must it be to send young women into China to convert the loathsome heathen there. This is done every day, and is approved of by the hon. member for Central Murchison. If it is wrong to advocate womanhood suffrage, then it is a crime to put women to such work as I have spoken of. Women are engaged in district visiting, and I am sure in this city we come across many scenes which would bring the blush to my cheek, and I can assure hon. members that it takes a great deal to do that. These women go round to such places and carry out their mission. There are the women connected with the Salvation Army and other institutions, who go amongst the most degraded people, and I never saw a woman made any worse by doing that kind of work. Women do all these

things, and come out not only unscathed, but even more refined by reason of having passed through such an ordeal.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I will ask the House to allow me to make an explanation. When I spoke of giving the franchise to women being a step to degradation, I was arguing on the point of her having to earn her own living, and not as to her moral character.

MR. VOSPER: I will leave the hon. member out of it. I do not wish to be unjust. I did not intend to be. If the hon. member did not use the argument in the House to-night, it is an argument which is very frequently used. The theory is that if politics are degrading to women they are equally degrading to man. If it is degrading to a man to exercise his vote as a citizen, how much more degrading then for men to be elected, and what an extremely degraded lot of people we must be for being in existence at all! I am dealing with the argument as it is generally used. The hon. member for Central Murchison concluded with some reference to the Creator. With all due reverence to the Creator and the hon. member, although I may take a large portion of my politics from the hon. member, I must say I cannot for one moment take any portion of my religion from him. I deny that any portion of the Scripture says that women shall be kept in subjection. The Apostle Paul does make some remarks about it, but I deny that it is asserted that women shall be kept in subjection. If such a thing is said, then I protest against that doctrine, and say my conscience teaches me that it is not correct. At all events I am not prepared to submit to any theological view. We are here to discuss the matter from the political standpoint, and as to quoting Scripture as an authority, the Almighty has not been consulted about this matter, and there is considerable doubt as to what He would say if He were. What we have to consider is what we say ourselves, and what the people of the country say. I do not hesitate to say the voice of the people in these things is the voice of God; and, in my opinion, the voice of the people is distinctly in favour of female suffrage. Apart from all questions of expediency, apart from all questions as to whether it is politic to give

the suffrage to women, and apart from all considerations of what the consequence may be, I want to come down to the bed rock of what is right on the question. What is our theory of government? Is it an autocracy, or is it a democracy? What does an autocracy imply? It implies that the whole of a country shall be owned and dominated by one individual, and that any other individual living in that country has got no rights or privileges, except such as the autocrat chooses to bestow. Democracy has come to mean that the whole of the State, as a State, is owned and controlled by the whole of the community, and not by any part of it. Does man claim to hold the whole powers of the State in his hands? Because, if so, as the member for North Perth said, although such person may call himself a democrat, he is to all intents and purposes an autocrat. I say, every person who is disfranchised in any country is practically suffering under autocracy; and that is the case whether it applies to one man or to many men. It does not make a man any less a subject because he has got five million sovereigns in the place of one sovereign to rule over him; and it does not make a woman any less a subject because she has got thousands of masters instead of one master. I say also that if a man claims his right to vote on the ground that he is a co-partner in that great joint-stock company which we call the State, and claims a vote because he is a shareholder, and says the woman has not a vote, although for all practical purposes she is a shareholder in it, then I say he assumes an autocratic position, and is taking away from the woman what is naturally hers. We are here as the representatives of democracy in this colony, and that democracy requires to be either a pure democracy or else to be a contradiction in terms, and be false to itself. I want to bring that democratic idea to its logical conclusion, and say that if we are to have a State in which every integral unit shall have a voice and an opportunity of checking the expenditure, we must give our adherence to a principle like that proposed in the motion. If I were absolutely sure that the result of women's suffrage would be to supplant every man in this Assembly by the women, and thus hand over the State

to the control of women; if I were sure of any such distressing consequences from this connection, I should say, in the name of justice, in the name of democracy, and in the name of right, we should still be bound to vote for such a principle as this. I say this is not a question of politics, nor of expediency, but it is whether we are going to have a true democracy or a false democracy, whether we are going to have the whole country governed by half the community, or the whole country governed by the whole for the benefit of the whole. If it is to be governed by the whole for the benefit of the whole, this cannot be realised until woman suffrage is an accomplished fact.

MR. MORAN (East Coolgardie): We are to have the whole democratic principle or not. We are to have the female suffrage, and carry it to its logical conclusion. If we are going to have every woman in the country voting the same as every man, then every woman has an equal right to come into this Assembly. If women are entitled to vote for members of Parliament, women are entitled to sit in Parliament as members. We carried, the other evening, a resolution affirming the principle that members of Parliament should be paid; therefore all members of the community should be equally entitled to election, and equally entitled to be paid as members of Parliament. It follows also that every member of Parliament should, in theory, be able to take an intelligent part as a Cabinet Minister if called upon to do so; and every woman must in like manner be expected to do the same if elected to Parliament, and be prepared to take her place as a Minister of the Crown, and even to soar as high as the Premiership. That will be admitted, logically. Our democratic friend, the member for East Perth, did not push his argument to its logical conclusion. Why not? When this matter came before the House previously, I instanced one or two interesting events that might take place if we had a women's Cabinet ruling the country. We should have her ladyship the Minister of Mines going for a seven-days spree to the Boulder city, leaving her young family to be looked after by the State. We should have among the Estimates sundry small items for the cost of nurses, etc., for looking after the young

family of her ladyship the Minister of Mines while on tour. Also, at times of election, we should have her ladyship the Minister of Mines touring the goldfields in the interests of those who were supporting her policy. The democratic idea, followed out to its logical conclusion, means that all those who advocate this idea would have to be left at home dangling twins, one on either knee, whilst her ladyship the Minister of Mines toured the Murchison goldfields for six weeks at a time. This is democracy, or rather it is femocracy, a new phase of democracy. If ladies are entitled to all the privileges of representatives, if they are entitled to become members of Parliament, and therefore Cabinet Ministers, then the next thing to be done in this House will be to pass a law shifting maternity from the female to the male, and giving the male a chance of showing how he can run the affairs of the family, while the females run the politics of the country. There are other positions in the land we do not hear mentioned in connection with females. I want to know how it is that females are not appointed as judges of the Supreme Court. As soon as there is a female judge, I shall be ready to listen to a big divorce case, and I should like to see the woman who could sit on the judicial bench while hearing nauseous details given in evidence, as well as listening to a learned and handsome young advocate like the member for the Swan. If ladies are to have the privilege of being members of Parliament, and of filling positions in the Cabinet, then one of the privileges of the Attorney General is that he has a particular right to nominate judges, and we may see that privilege exercised in this colony at no distant date. The Attorney General, in a future Government of lady members, say five years hence, may have an opportunity of filling a vacancy on the judicial bench by nominating herself, as we know has sometimes happened; it being the unwritten law that the Attorney General of a Government has the right to nominate himself to a judgeship when a vacancy occurs. That is Australia's precedent, anyhow.

THE PREMIER: Not at all.

MR. MORAN: I am going to ask, assuming the learned Attorney General appoints herself, some five years hence,

as a judge of the Supreme Court, do the advocates of this motion go so far as to say a lady should be a judge of the Supreme Court?

MR. LEAKE: We have not been asked to express an opinion.

MR. MORAN: But you are ready enough to express opinions upon things you are not asked about. Those warm advocates of female suffrage find it inconvenient to push their theory of democracy to its logical conclusion. We know they, as men, have got their own rights, and know how to protect them. Those who vote against this motion do not think any the less of ladies than do those who advocate the women's cause in this House. We are not going to think less of women because they do not come into Parliament and go on election tours, or "tears," and Ministerial trips, or because they do not belong to Cabinets and sit up the greater part of the night *in camera* with Ministers who may not all be women. Pushed to its logical conclusion, the motion is absurd. It may be said that the motion need not be pushed to its logical conclusion—that women might be given the right to vote, but not the right to sit in Parliament. But that is as ridiculous as the other conclusion. The hon. member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) took the hon. member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) to task for saying that all law depended on might and strength. Those who observe modern events in the world know that all law does depend on might. The talk about the millenium and about arbitration instead of war is the idlest of twaddle, in the face of recent European telegrams. Germany is spending £7,000,000 on the improvement of her navy, and £5,000,000 on her army; and it is ridiculous to suppose that is done simply for the sake of ornament. Is it not the special care and boast of England that her navy should be as strong as the combined navies of all the other Powers? The navy is the strength of Great Britain.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It is the strength of Australia.

MR. MORAN: The British navy is undoubtedly the strength of Australia. The safety and comfort of every person in Australia depend on the might of the nation to which we all belong. The argument now

used by the hon. member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) has been a sound one throughout history. It was sound when the ancient Briton went round, dyed blue, and used his club; and it is sound now that the modern Briton goes round, in a coat dyed red, and uses his gun. Britain does not hesitate to send her soldiers to Northern India to teach a lesson which cannot be inculcated by moral suasion. The male part of humanity was made to govern, and to fight when necessary, and fighting may follow as the natural consequence of the carrying out of any law. Given a perfect state of humanity, when everybody recognises right and obedience to higher dictates than those of humanity, then might would not be right. Up to the present, however, there are no signs that strength, combination, military tactics, and naval supremacy, will not continue "right" as heretofore. Until the physical distinction between the sexes is removed, and maternity can be taken from the one and given to the other, it cannot be argued that men and women are absolutely equal. Had it been intended the sexes should be equal in every respect, only one sex would have been created, and other means devised of keeping the world populated. I am going to appeal to the goldfields members with the ignoble argument of expediency. That argument is not put forward as having any direct bearing on the ethical rights or wrongs of the question. The demand for the franchise is not pushed forward by women. In travelling about I meet with many women of all classes, and have a fair knowledge of the sex; and out of all with whom I have come in contact, I do not know ten who desire to exercise a vote. Women's suffrage, like many other political principles, may be very good in the abstract, and yet it may not be expedient to apply it to every country alike. Having regard to goldfields representation in Western Australia, the application of the principle would certainly not be expedient. In the last Parliament the hon. member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) and myself based our argument for increased representation on the fact that the eligible voters of the goldfields almost equalled the number of voters on the coast. Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie may get their fair share of women in two or three years,

although the outside goldfields will not. This young colony is being opened out by men.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: All of whom have not yet got votes.

MR. MORAN: All of whom have not yet got votes, and members for the goldfields will only cut their own throats if they vote for the motion.

MR. LEAKE: You fear the motion on moral grounds.

MR. MORAN: I do not know there is anything more moral about a goldfields member than about an ordinary member. I do not fear the motion on moral grounds. I put my objections in a plain, straightforward manner. I do not want the coastal districts to have double the voting power of the goldfields electorates. We had a hard enough fight to get fair representation for the goldfields. I do not oppose the motion on ethical grounds, but on the ground that it is inexpedient and bad policy on the part of goldfields members to allow the voting power on the coast to be doubled, while no additional representation is obtained for the goldfields. In a country where everything was equal, where every man did his duty and kept somebody else's daughter, the arguments which have been advanced in favour of women's franchise would carry more weight. This question was discussed at every meeting I held during the elections, and, so far as my own constituency is concerned, the feeling against a motion of this kind is as ten to one. The male population of the colony has not, as yet, got a fair share of representation; and it will be the duty of this Parliament to amend the bad electoral Act now in force. It will be time to consider the women when the men have been granted their fair share of representation. The goldfields members ought not, by supporting this motion, to put a powerful weapon in the hands of the coastal electors. I do not say that weapon would be used; because the people of Perth and Fremantle have shown themselves to be favourably disposed towards the goldfields. The hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James) is inconsistent in submitting this motion. When the House was asked the other night to affirm the principle of payment of members, to which three-fourths of

the members are pledged, the hon. member refused to support the motion because it would be three years before there was a new Parliament by whom a measure embodying the principle could be placed on the statute book. Yet in this short session, when Christmas is near, the hon. member takes up time with his motion, although he knows three years will in all likelihood elapse before the franchise can be extended to women. If every man were in favour of the principle, it would be time enough to enfranchise women when women ask for Parliamentary votes. The hon. member's enthusiasm may be admitted, but his judgment is wrong. Women's franchise has never been dreamt of as a practical political question in this colony. The adoption or rejection of the principle has not influenced the return of a single member to this House. The majority of the women themselves are not agreed on the question. As a matter of expediency I ask hon. members not to vote for this motion; but, beyond expediency, there is an overwhelming majority of the people generally who do not think it fit and proper that woman should be dragged from her high position into the turmoil and wrangling of political life.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I had almost made up my mind not to speak on the question, to which I have addressed myself on two previous occasions in this House. I see no reason for changing the views I have already expressed. I rise to say that the motion deals with one of those social questions which do not come within the scope of any Government measure, and that therefore my colleagues and myself will vote as exactly as we each personally desire. I agree with the hon. member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) that this motion has been brought forward at a very inopportune time. I cannot understand what has actuated the hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James) in now forcing this matter before the House, seeing that, even if the motion be carried, he, according to his own admission, does not desire women's suffrage to become law for a considerable time. This is a very late session, and a great deal of work has to be accomplished before Parliament rises. Legislation on the proposal contained in the motion cannot take place

before next session, if not the session after that; and it would have been better to let the matter rest until then, rather than take up time which is now so precious to Parliament. But as the question has been introduced, I hope we shall go to a division to-night, and have to-morrow clear for other and more pressing business. My objections to the motion are the same as have been expressed by several hon. members. These objections have even been anticipated by the hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James). This legislation has not been asked for by the women of the colony. I am aware there are organisations in Perth and Fremantle which take a great interest in this question: but I do not know that the extension of the franchise to women has ever been discussed as a pressing matter on the hustings, or that the women of the colony have expressed a desire for parliamentary votes. No one can deny, or those who deny it are very inconsistent, that if the franchise were extended to women, it would be impossible for long to withhold from them the right to sit in the Legislature. In South Australia, where the franchise has been extended in the way now proposed, nearly as many women vote as men; and it is unreasonable to suppose that in a very short time women will not demand legislative representation by one of their own sex. It is more reasonable for us to think that women, having been given the franchise here, will become a political power, and that they will desire that their own sex shall take a leading part in the Parliament of the country. The hon. member for East Perth is anxious to give the women the franchise, knowing full well that it must follow that women will demand to take a part in Parliament. I do not say that the hon. member desires that this should follow, but it will follow as certain as the night follows the day. I am opposed altogether to women having seats in the Legislature of the country, and if I am opposed to that, to be consistent, I must be opposed to women having votes. Many hon. members who will vote for the motion to-night are opposed to women becoming members of Parliament, and becoming ministers of the Crown, judges, and filling all other positions.

A MEMBER: We shall not see it.

THE PREMIER: I am very glad of the interjection, as that is a point I want to touch upon. Some hon. members only think of the present—on all occasions in the House they only think of the present. They often try to find fault with me, and place a disability on myself and those associated with me.

MR. LEAKE: And they generally succeed.

THE PREMIER: They generally fall short of their mark. They aim at me, and instead of hitting me they hit the country, which they do not want to hit. Hon. members think only of the present, while we, who belong to the country and desire to see it become a great country, desire to legislate for all time. Everyone must agree, whatever views they hold on the question, that if women are equal to men in their faculties and power of legislation, and if they use the franchise wisely, they are certainly not equal to men in all things. Man is physically stronger than woman: he is more able to undergo privations and difficulties, by reason of his physical strength, than woman. Man is formed by nature to be the breadwinner and protector of woman. The greatest obligation we all feel in our lives is to do what we can to protect and uphold woman, because we recognise she is weaker in physical strength than we are. We recognise that woman is intended as the companion of man, she is the comfort and solace of our homes. I should like to know what would be the feelings of any man who works for his living if, on returning home after a hard day's work, seeking to provide for his wife and family, he found his wife had gone to some political meeting. At the present time many meetings are being held on this question by women.

A MEMBER: The same as the men do.

THE PREMIER: Men are differently placed: they have to provide for the household. If we gave women the vote, the result would be that women would give more attention to politics and political questions, and less attention to their social duties and the comforts of their homes. I should like to be satisfied in my mind that women desire the franchise, and then I should have to satisfy myself that it would be good for the women of this country. I certainly have no hesitation in deciding that



it would not be to the advantage of women; it would not place them in a better position than they are in now, but it would tend to a neglect of their duties. I do not know who are the prime movers in this matter, but I know that there are some ladies in Perth and Fremantle, whom we all respect, who take an interest in this question; but outside these towns, very little interest is taken in the question. I know very well that there are not many ladies who have been in this country for a long time, who take a prominent part in this movement. Those who have taken a deep interest in the movement are those who have only been here a short time, and who have no love for the country. They have no intention of living in it longer than they can help: they are birds of passage, for the most part. They are overflowing with goodwill for the country, but they do not intend to stay here longer than they can possibly help. Coming back to the principle of female franchise, I may say the great mother country has not adopted this franchise.

MR. VOSPER: The House of Commons has passed a motion.

THE PREMIER: Motions may be passed by small Houses. I say the mother country has not adopted the principle. The only two colonies which have adopted the principle are South Australia and New Zealand, and we are not going to take these countries as patterns for this country. It may be right, as one hon. member has said, that the other Australian Premiers are in favour of woman suffrage; but I am not going to take my view of things from the Australian Premiers. At present there are only two colonies in Australia where the franchise has been granted to women, and it has not had a good trial there yet, and, although I am willing to admit that it may come to pass in the other colonies, I am not prepared to follow their lead in this matter at present in Western Australia. I do not think I need say any more. Perhaps I have said more than I ought to have said. I do not think it desirable for us to embark in this legislation. It is so seldom met with in any part of the British dominions. There is no occasion for it. I think it is foolish, certainly unnecessary, for us to try and take a leading part and go ahead of all other British places in these new-fangled notions of legislation. It no

doubt suits the member for East Perth (Mr. James), who has taken the question up as a politician. I have no reason to doubt his earnestness, but he is trying to introduce advanced legislation into this Parliament. I am not with him. There are better things for us to do than to introduce legislation of this character at this juncture of our affairs. We have to try and make two ears of corn and two blades of grass grow where only one grew before: we have to subdue the wilderness and subjugate the forces of nature. But the member for East Perth is anxious to introduce new-fangled notions which no one wants, which no one has asked for, and when he gets them on the statute book, they will have no result. I regret the hon. member brought this question forward. He has no right, considering our circumstances, to bring it forward now. It has taken up a lot of time which the House can ill spare, especially when he does not himself desire that any legislation should take place in regard to this matter for one, two, or three years.

MR. KENNY (North Murchison): I rise in the support of what I consider the most important motion that has been before this House for a long time. I cannot pretend to rival the speeches that have been delivered on the subject this evening, but I wish to give one or two reasons why I take up the position I do on this matter. We have only to look round and see the very great advantages that have accrued to those countries which have already adopted woman suffrage. It has been adopted in America, and we must all admit that in no country in the world do women enjoy a greater measure of liberty than there, and nowhere is she more thoroughly respected. Woman has exercised the franchise in America for years, and it has had the most elevating influence upon woman herself, upon the people as a whole, and upon the politics of the country. Turning to New Zealand, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that the influence exercised by women in New Zealand is decidedly noticeable in the improvement of the Legislative Assembly of late years. The same may be said of South Australia. I was through that colony a few months ago, and discussed the question with many leading politicians in Adelaide, and I was greatly impressed

by the many advantages that have accrued to that colony from the fact that the women have been entrusted with the franchise. When we remember that we have hundreds of women in this colony from both New Zealand and South Australia, we cannot but feel that we ought to endeavour to afford them the same privileges they have enjoyed in the colonies they have left. For my own part, I cannot understand why it is that as a rule we men like to treat women as poor weaklings, creatures not capable of exercising either thought or action. Just now one hon. member referred to them as being naturally very weak. I might remind the hon. member that it does not require a very great amount of strength to place a ballot paper in a box, and I have not the slightest doubt that if the ladies had that right to-morrow they would exercise a beneficial influence on the destinies of this colony. A great deal has been said about what would be the result if we gave women the same rights and liberties as we have ourselves. Judging from my long experience, we have yet to learn that women as a rule are not as trustworthy or as capable of exercising their rights as men. We are quite prepared to give them credit for bearing a share in the burdens of life. We are quite prepared to admit that all that is good and noble and loving in our characters we have derived in a great measure from our mothers or our sisters. We are quite prepared to admit that women fill highly responsible positions as preservers of the human race, but at the same time we positively deny them the same right that we exercise ourselves of making the laws that govern them. One of the goldfields members referred to the fact that if this motion were carried it would to a certain extent give the voting power to the coastal towns. I cannot claim to be an old member, as was the speaker who said that, but as a goldfields member myself I may say that if I never had anything more difficult to explain to my constituents on the North Murchison than my vote on this question, I should have very little to fear from that quarter. Whether we are goldfields members or town members, whether we belong to the coast or inland, matters nothing. The question we have to consider is whether giving the suffrage to women is an act of

justice or no. It is those narrow-minded, parochial ideas of everything—looking at a question only from the standpoint of the particular constituency we represent—that has done so much to make ill-feeling in this House. The more I think over this question, the more I am inclined to congratulate my friend the member for East Perth on the motion, and I wish he may succeed with it. If he is not successful in carrying this motion to-night, I hope the time is not far distant when we shall see it placed on the statute book in the form of an Act.

MR. SIMPSON (Geraldton): I am happy in having a further opportunity of expressing my continued and growing adhesion to this principle; and, if I may take this opportunity, I will congratulate the Premier on having lifted the tone of this debate from the somewhat polluted atmosphere in which the member for East Coolgardie had degraded it. The Premier assumed very much the same attitude as last year, but was not so vehement; and as so much allusion has been made by various members to Biblical incidents, it seems to me that the Premier has adopted the attitude of St. Paul on his journey to Damascus, when he said he was almost ready to be persuaded by the way. So far as I know of the Premier's public career, I believe that if ever he gives his adhesion to the principle of granting the franchise to women, the change will spring from the purity of motive which has marked his public career, and from the patriotism which animates his motives for legislation, although with the methods he adopts in his legislation I am unfortunately sometimes unable to agree. Still, I recognise the principle that animates his conduct. I am sure it will be admitted, by any impartial critic or juror sitting in connection with this debate, that the weight of argument is distinctly with the supporters of this proposal. I think it will be generally admitted that there is a difficulty in finding reasons against the proposal. I have no wish to distort the expressions used by any hon. member or to take any unfair attitude. The member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth), so far as I could form an idea of his meaning, started us away from the base of about 2,000 years ago. The member for North Coolgardie (Mr. Gregory) brought us along by

various easy stages, and I must say he did not seem very happy in his line of argument. The member for East Perth, in introducing the motion, did credit to his intelligence and reputation as a man connected with advanced legislation, and especially with that advanced legislation to which our Premier is so invariably and utterly opposed. I am satisfied that, had we been dealing with the question of a lock-up for Wyndham, or a steeple on a church at Dandalup, the Premier would have spoken with more happiness than he did on this occasion. The Premier takes the position that this question has not been before the public. Surely he is unconsciously endeavouring to mislead the House. Three years ago we had a division in this House, when the numbers were equal, and it rested with the Chairman to give a casting vote. Is that not having the question before the country? In the next session of Parliament there was a majority of one against the principle. A year ago we had a further discussion.

**THE PREMIER:** I think you are not quite correct.

**MR. SIMPSON:** I am always careful to ascertain the exact grounds of my statements, before I oppose the learned doctor's arguments. So when we really face the music, if I may say so, what are the supporters of this measure trying to do? They are trying to secure in our political life an influence that every member in this House recognises as good. That position is never impugned. There is no man in this House who does not greatly honour and grandly respect the magnificent influence for good of women in all forms of activity in the world; and whilst we recognise that principle, why should we fail to give to it its legitimate avenues of influence? The member for Central Murchison, who is absent (though that is not my fault), alluded to one phase of the question raised which was unfortunate, that women were coming into competition with men in the avenues of employment. May I say I welcome the opening of avenues of employment for women. Time was when women, the grown-up daughters of a household, had to wait at home until some long-haired, big-footed, heavy-handed man came along to marry them. Now we are opening up avenues where the women can

be independent, and a father is not now anxious for some sawney to come along and marry his daughter. Woman is stepping into that position where she can earn her own livelihood, and be independent of this wretched patronage of man. I can claim no greater advantages than any other man in this Assembly, in regard to the opportunities I have had of observing the character of woman; but I do say, from a fairly varied experience, I have come to one conclusion, that where I have sought their advice, I invariably failed if I did not follow it. I have no hesitation in saying that, in regard to the serious things of life, I would err did I fail to follow the advice given by the female portion of my acquaintance, when any step I anticipated taking was concerned with the welfare of the human race. In a country with raw resources not yet developed, in a country which has not advanced to the high development of a manufacturing country, there are not the opportunities for woman's higher usefulness which may be found in such places as England. But have we not examples of that higher usefulness? Need I point to woman's work in the fever-stricken hospitals on our goldfields? I am sorry I have not the honour of an audience of goldfields members, in dealing with a question of this sort. I regret to see that the charms of the smoking-room are preferred to the atmosphere of a deliberative Assembly.

**MR. VOSPER:** There are times when the smoking-room is best, you know.

**MR. SIMPSON:** Need I say that I am perfectly satisfied? I need not appeal to them a second time, to ask whether they would be prepared to grant the suffrage to the class to which it is sought to extend it. Need I ask of them a second time, are you worthy of having an opportunity of expressing a public opinion about matters gravely affecting the social and domestic legislation connected with the goldfields? I am sure I need not refer to that. Suppose I turn to the member for North Perth (Mr. Oldham), who represents a crowded part of the capital city of the country, and ask him what good are the Sisters of the People doing in his part of the city? Go to our hospitals on a Sunday afternoon, and whom do you see ministering to the sick and the suffering? Because I

regret to say that we men, with all our friendly instincts, often forget that to some poor old fellow in a hospital it is like a glimpse of sunshine to have a yarn with a man whom he has met in the world outside. But whom do we find doing the kindly work of the world? I think it is the women. Or let us take another avenue of female employment. In our offices you will find women employed as clerks and typewriters; and, speaking to this Assembly of business men, I ask, can you not absolutely depend, for exactness, for punctuality in attendance and for care in their work, on those ladies who are employed in positions of this sort? I wish to appeal to hon. members, in the light of the facts which are visible to us as we walk about the streets, as we speak to the man at the corner, and as we read our newspapers. It has been suggested by an hon. member that the advocacy of this question of woman's rights brings prominently before the public individuals whose appearance does not suggest to many people that the extension of the suffrage would be conducive to the public advantage. But I think that, in this Assembly generally, the subject will be dealt with on a higher platform than that. So far as my reading serves me as to the history of the extension of the franchise since 1832—the date to which the hon. member referred—it has been conferred upon people who were practically inarticulate in the matter of making any attempt to secure this advantage for themselves. To illustrate my argument, if I may do so without wearying the House, who was it granted freedom to the slaves in America? Did the fight for freedom arise amongst the slaves themselves? History proves beyond question that it did not. It came from that great mass of emancipists who have added lustre to the English name—people of a higher caste, who realised the immense injustice done to the subject race. The Premier has suggested that the women have not asked for this. I think the right hon. gentleman has simply used that argument in practically the same way as he would use a heritage that came to him under conditions. We find from *Hansard* that he used the same argument last year, and he has to use it under the conditions imposed by the Legislature last year. The hon. member for Central

Murchison made what to my mind were some exceedingly rash statements in connection with the matter, speaking of it in the light of an economist. If I might compare small things with great, I would suggest to hon. members the consideration of the utterances of John Stuart Mill, whose name, I suppose, outside Australia carries equal weight on matters economic with that of the member for Central Murchison within the boundaries of Western Australia. That great man said—[THE PREMIER: Which?—John Stuart Mill said:

The principle that regulates existing social relations between the two sexes, the legal subordination of one sex to another, is wrong in itself, and is one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and it ought to be replaced by a principle of perfect equality, admitting of no power or progress on the one side or disability on the other.

I approach this question with no higher intelligence than that of other members of the House; but I do think that it has too often been the habit for many years past to regard the matter as one to joke about. We who think seriously and earnestly on the question ask the House to pass the motion and subsequently embody its principle in a legislative measure, in order that better laws may be made and a purer Parliament and a purer public life prevail. I cannot think there is a solid opposition on the Government benches to this motion.

MR. A. FORREST: We are pretty well solid.

MR. SIMPSON: Having received that assurance from the Government whip, I hope it will go forth to the country that there is another essential reform to which the Ministry are opposed. Up to the present, the Ministry have never been connected with any particular reform; and their latest effort in legislation last night, aided by their majority, was to identify Western Australia with nigger labour. To-night they have another opportunity of blocking legislation which is admitted throughout Australia to-day to be distinctly in the interests of the human race. I challenge contradiction when I say that at the Federal Convention all the Premiers of Australia, with the exception of the Premier of Western Australia, were distinctly in favour of the principle of female suffrage. I do not say that fact should absolutely control

the opinions of members of this House, but I suggest it as carrying some weight. Mr. George Reid, Premier of New South Wales and the representative of over a million of people, declared at the Convention that he was prepared to give his adhesion to the principle. Sir George Turner, who is a representative Australian statesman, stated that he was prepared to support the principle, and the Premier of South Australia is in favour of it. This great question has got beyond the stage of silly banter or coarse remark; not that coarse remarks fall from many, or perhaps more than one member on the Government side of the House. I commend a remark which fell from Charles Kingsley, whom we all respect and whom no one is likely to accuse of sickly sentimentality, but whose characteristics are regarded as of the "physical Christianity" crowd. He said:

One principal cause of the failure of so many magnificent schemes—social, political, religious—which have followed each other age after age, has been this, that in almost every case they have ignored the rights and powers of one half the human race, namely, women. I believe that politics will not go right, that society will not go right, that nothing human will ever go right, except in so far as woman goes right; and to make woman go right, she must be put in her place, and she must have her rights.

I have not placed merely my own convictions before the House on this question. I have sought for arguments against it as well as for it. I have also had some experience recently of the working of female suffrage. Less than twelve months ago I was in New Zealand, and had an opportunity of discussing the question with a distinguished lady there, the wife of a man we all respect as one of the ablest democrats—Sir Robert Stout—and I was assured by Lady Stout, as also by several other people connected with the movement, and by members of both Houses of Parliament, that they were perfectly satisfied with the results of female suffrage in that colony, and that so soon as the women electors realised their power it would become an unalloyed good to the community.

THE PREMIER: They will get into Parliament.

MR. SIMPSON: I don't know about that, but here, where they have had the right to exercise the municipal franchise

for 36 years, they have very seldom sought to get elected to the councils. On a recent occasion, of which we are all proud, when the right hon. gentleman opposite brought additional lustre and glory to Western Australia, and when he bent in lowly submission before that great lady who adorns the English throne, and received from her that well-merited and deserved honour, perhaps in his inmost heart he realised the majestic influence of woman in political matters in the British Empire.

MR. DOHERTY (North Fremantle): It is very pleasant to listen to the member for Geraldton, but when he tries to urge the Premier to carry out his high-souled ideas, he places a burden on him which the right hon. gentleman will be unable to bear. Since I have been in the House I have always heard him speak with great care about the rights surrounding the constitution and the social progress that this country ought to make, if the Government would only allow it. I shall be pleased to see the hon. member introduce some of those measures, perhaps not in words but in deeds, to show us that he is in earnest. I also sympathise with the position of the members for the Swan (Mr. Ewing) and North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper). I know it would be treachery on their part to go back on woman's suffrage, as a recent event in their lives would make it very unpleasant for them if they did.

MR. VOSPER: Quite the contrary, I assure you.

MR. DOHERTY: Then the hon. member is putting himself away. I never in my life heard gentlemen exhibit so much knowledge of the ladies as I have heard to-night. I have not had time to study them myself, but some hon. members seem to have a wonderful knowledge of the ladies. The more I see of the ladies the less I know of them. No doubt all of us admit that the influence of the ladies is good in the proper quarter, but when they go on to the platform and become political agitators, their sphere for good in regard to social matters ends. The hon. member for the Murray (Mr. George) spoke of the ladies of the association in a disrespectful way.

MR. GEORGE: I am sure I did not.

MR. DOHERTY: Well, I know what he said was not flattering to them. The ladies of the association must have a wonderful attraction about them, because I see that the hon. member for West Perth, who was an opponent of this movement, has simply gone over to their ranks.

MR. WOOD: I always advocated womanhood suffrage.

MR. DOHERTY: The hon. member for Albany (Mr. Leake) four years ago spoke strongly against the ladies and womanhood suffrage. I do not think it is the salubrious air of Albany which has wrought the change in the hon. member.

MR. SIMPSON: He has grown older and wiser.

MR. DOHERTY: Well, the older the hon. member for Geraldton gets, the less wise he becomes. I know the work which the ladies try to do is most admirable. I came somewhat under the influence of the ladies of the association and was almost going over to their side, but good sense and a little thought kept me on the side I am now.

MR. JAMES (in reply): I do not propose to detain the House, as it is somewhat late. I thank hon. members for discussing the motion so fully as they have done. All sorts of things have been said in the speeches made, and I would have liked to have referred to them; but as it is somewhat late, I am not disposed to lengthen the debate or to tire the patience of hon. members. I regret we have not a full House, or I am sure we, in favour of the motion, would have made a better show in the division.

MR. A. FORREST: They have all paired.

MR. JAMES: The hon. member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans), who is absent, wished me to say he is thoroughly in accord with the motion. The right hon. the Premier suggests the difference that exists between us is that the woman should be the comfort and solace of the home. That is exactly what I do not think. I look on my easy chair as one of the comforts and a solace of my home. That is a part of the furniture of the house, and my wife is not. The duty rests upon me just as much as it does upon my wife to make the home the comfort and solace of both of us. If I may

say it with respect, there are those who think the obligation rests upon one in a contract, and upon one only. As to women being a comfort and a solace, I do not look upon my wife as part of the furniture of the house. The Premier has told us that it is a mistake for us to go ahead of other countries, and that we ought not to have new notions in respect to social legislation, because, he says, there are better things than these. This shows the difference between the Premier and myself. He believes a country can be built up on money alone, whereas I think differently. If men cannot live by bread alone, neither can a nation live on public works alone. However essential it may be to have a borrowing policy, it is not just to have a law on our statute book which disqualifies one-half the community from taking part in public affairs. I believe, not in a public works policy, but in a policy which endeavours to secure justice to the individual. There, again, is an instance in which I disagree with the Premier, and I am glad I do disagree on that point. If we give this concession to women, we shall be doing justice. When public works are introduced into this House, we do not hear then about demands right and left, but the Premier says the work is needed, and that it is right the work should be done. Yet when we approach questions of infinitely more importance than those relating to £ s. d., questions which tend to secure justice to all classes of people in this country, we are then asked to depart from the position as to whether the thing is right, and to give our attention to questions of mere monetary concern. I regret indeed that a position so narrow as that should be taken up, and I do hope that hon. members will not take that position when dealing with this question. I ask, has any argument been adduced to-night to justify the refusal of the extension of the franchise to woman? One argument is that this demand is a mere sentiment; but I appeal to members of this House to say, is it right that women, who constitute practically one-half the community and certainly possess one-half the intelligence of the community, are to be excluded from the franchise on the ground that they are not as fit as men to vote in the election of representatives to Parlia-

ment? I appeal to hon. members to give unanimous support to this motion.

Question put, and division taken with the following result:—

Ayes ...	11
Noes ...	17

Majority against ... 6

AYES.  
Mr. Ewing  
Mr. Higham  
Mr. James  
Mr. Kenny  
Mr. Leake  
Mr. Oldham  
Mr. Simpson  
Mr. Solomon  
Mr. Throssell  
Mr. Wood  
Mr. Vosper (Teller).

NOES.  
Mr. Doherty  
Sir John Forrest  
Mr. A. Forrest  
Mr. George  
Mr. Hall  
Mr. Holmes  
Mr. Hubble  
Mr. Lefroy  
Mr. Locke  
Mr. Mougier  
Mr. Morun  
Mr. Pennefather  
Mr. Phillips  
Mr. Piesse  
Mr. Quinlan  
Mr. Venn  
Mr. Venn (Teller).

Motion thus negatived.

#### UNDERGROUND SURVEYORS BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and read a first time.

#### MOTION—MINING ON PRIVATE PROPERTY.

MR. QUINLAN (Toodyay), according to notice, moved:—

That in the opinion of this House it is desirable, in the best interests of this colony, the Government should, as early this session as possible, introduce the necessary legislation for mining on private property.

He said that, although he had come prepared to support the motion with arguments which he did not think could be refuted, he would content himself with submitting the proposal without further comment.

Put and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11:35 p.m. until the next day.

## Legislative Council,

Thursday, 2nd December, 1897.

Question: Consolidation of the Statutes—Bankruptcy Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Mines Regulation Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Supply Bill, £350,000: first reading: Standing Orders Suspension; second and third readings—Imported Labour Registry Bill: third reading—Employment Brokers Bill: in committee—High School Act Amendment Bill: second reading; in committee—Auctioneers Act Amendment Bill: second reading; in committee—Steam Boilers Bill: in committee; division—Paper presented—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### QUESTION—CONSOLIDATION OF THE STATUTES.

HON. R. S. HAYNES asked the Minister of Mines:—(1) Whether, in view of the unsatisfactory state of the statute law of the colony, owing to numerous amendments, it is the intention of the Government to have the statutes consolidated? (2) If so, when?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) replied: The matter is now under consideration.

HON. R. S. HAYNES asked when the information asked for was likely to be given.

THE MINISTER OF MINES said the matter was now engaging the attention of the Crown Law Officers, as to whether they would have time during the present session to do the work.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Out of session would be a better opportunity.

THE MINISTER OF MINES said he would be glad to let the hon. member know, as soon as the Crown Law Officers arrived at a decision.

#### BANKRUPTCY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time, on the motion of Hon. A. B. KIDSON, and transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

#### MINES REGULATION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration in committee resumed.

Postponed Clause 8—Plans and copies not to be copied or inspected without Minister's permission: