

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 24th February, 1891.

Harbor Dues at Albany—"Truck" system in connection with Public Works—Alleged intemperance in the Locomotive Department, Fremantle—Reward for Discovery of Yulgarn Goldfield—Petition: Increase of Duty on Unmanufactured Tobacco—Tobacco (unmanufactured) Duty Bill: in committee—Public Health Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Joint Standing Rules and Orders relating to Private Bills—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 2:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

## HARBOR DUES AT ALBANY.

MR. DEHAMEL: I beg to ask the Premier the questions standing in my name—

"1. Whether there is any difference in the scale of Harbor dues chargeable on vessels entering Princess Royal Harbor and those anchoring in King George's Sound; and, if so,

"2. What is the difference in the dues so leviable.

"3. What are the dues payable by the P. & O., Orient, and Messageries s.s. Companies respectively.

"4. Whether the Government will consider a revision of the scale, with a view to equalising the dues, so that the inducement for steamers to anchor in the outer harbor may be removed."

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): In reply to the first three questions, I will read a telegram I have received to-day from the Chief Harbor Master, who says: "P. & O. and Orient steamers £30 per entry, including everything. Messageries Maritimes steamers £20 per entry. No charge King George's Sound for shelter only. Charge for all steamships calling Princess Royal Harbor for coal or supplies, £15, including pilotage." In reply to the 4th question I may state that when the question of a revision of this scale of charges is brought before us by the steamship companies themselves, we shall be glad to consider it. The present scale was fixed by the late Government, and we have not heard anything from the steamship companies themselves as to their not being satisfied, though I believe there is some local feeling of dissatisfaction. But, if a revision of the

scale is considered necessary, application should be made to the Government by the steamship companies concerned.

## PUBLIC WORKS CONTRACTS AND THE "TRUCK" SYSTEM.

MR. TRAYLEN: I wish to ask the Commissioner of Railways the question standing in my name,—“Whether it is his intention to insert, in all contracts for public works, a clause prohibiting the contractors from resorting to the ‘truck’ system?”

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): In the absence of any definition of what the hon. member means by the “truck system” it is impossible for me to answer him in any way. I would suggest that he should put his question in the form of a motion, so that we might better understand it.

MR. TRAYLEN: I made use of a phrase which I find in the contract for the construction of the Eastern Railway, and I presumed it would be known in the Railway Department.

## ALLEGED IRREGULARITIES AND INTemperance IN THE RAILWAY (LOCOMOTIVE) DEPARTMENT AT FREMANTLE.

MR. TRAYLEN: Sir,—It is with very great reluctance that I rise to make the motion standing in my name, “That, in the opinion of this House, a complete reform in the several branches of the Railway Department at Fremantle is necessary to the safety of travellers and the economical working of the Eastern Railway.” I thought that, probably, having called attention to this subject earlier in the session, it would have been within the power of the Commissioner of Railways to initiate and carry into execution such reforms as would place these several branches of the Railway Department at Fremantle on a more satisfactory footing; but I am surprised to hear that it is his intention to send two persons to Bunbury who are involved in the allegations that have been made; and it seems to me that nothing that has previously been said on the subject in this House has borne that fruit it might have been expected to bear. Let me again express my sympathy with the difficulties surrounding the Commissioner of Railways in dealing with these allegations. He is

not, like a select committee, able to summon this person and that person to give evidence; he is compelled to ascertain his facts through certain definite channels, and in this particular case the parties themselves, through whom the information must come, are more or less concerned in the wrong-doing; and it seems hardly to be expected that he would get at the true facts of the case by the ordinary methods that are open to him. To begin at the beginning: it is alleged that the Superintendent of the Locomotive Department is very seldom at his post, or that he is very frequently away from his post. [The COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Where is his post?] His post is certainly in or about the workshops, or upon the railway line. When it is asked, "Where is the Superintendent?" it ought not to be the common and popular saying in Fremantle, "He is, as usual, at the 'cockpit.'" That may be an elegant phrase to express some delightful place at Fremantle; but that is the usual answer, I understand, when inquiries are made for the Superintendent,—“You will find him in the ‘cockpit,’ or ‘behind that sign’”; or, failing that, “You may find him at the Club.” If this is true, it may be expected that the service will suffer. And I shall quote an instance to show that the service has suffered, in consequence, I believe, of the frequent absences of Mr. Mather from his proper post. On one occasion—I cannot say just now how long since—but on one occasion a railway official, who was travelling in a train, observed one of the coaches oscillating or rocking from side to side; happily, he was able to communicate with the engine-driver and cause him to go slowly, for, on their arrival at Fremantle, it was found that the carriage had been sent out as part of the train without the frame being bolted to the under-carriage, so that the whole train in going round a curve might have been wrecked through this oversight on the part of someone; and I should think it was surely the duty of the Superintendent to satisfy himself that each coach or carriage was fit for service on its leaving the workshops. Then it is also alleged that this gentleman has a yacht and a boat, and that his boat takes shelter under the Government shed, while some of the Government material

lies exposed to the weather. This may or may not be true, but seeing that these rumours are persistently circulated—and they reach me from various sources; some of them may, perhaps, be regarded as interested channels; but some are certainly disinterested—and seeing that they all point in the same direction, I am led to conclude that where there is so much smoke there must be some fire, or, in other words, that there is some truth in the numerous allegations made that the Superintendent does not generally perform or attend to his duties as I think he should do. Now we come to his son. Of him, it is stated, that he works about two or three days in the month, generally contriving that they shall be at the end of the month, so that he may draw his pay. This may not be true; but it ought not to be said with such persistency if it is false, and something should be done to clear this young man's character, or to clear him out of the service. I hardly thought it worth my while to put this motion in the form of a question. If I had done so, I might have asked the Commissioner of Railways, “Has Mr. Byron Mather been dismissed for intemperate habits, or has he been reprimanded for such habits; if so, how often?” If I had put that question to the Commissioner, I believe he would have been bound to have answered something like this: “That several times this young gentleman has been dismissed, or been reprimanded, as the case may be.” The question suggests itself: has this young man's conduct led to any difficulties or danger in connection with the working of the railway? I have the fact from an eye-witness that this Mr. Byron Mather was so intoxicated on one occasion whilst upon an engine that the then Commissioner, the Hon. J. Arthur Wright, in his indignation, pulled him from the footplate of the engine. Surely the Commissioner did not pull him off the engine unless there was very good ground for it. He was not actually driving the engine; he was foreman of the driver, and therefore in some respects more responsible for the safety of the engine than the driver himself, and he went with the engine for the express purpose of taking extra care of it, for the Governor was a passenger by that train and some other

prominent persons. Then we come to another gentleman, one who figures on that document that was presented to the Commissioner of Railways a few days ago by a deputation of employes, and which document was very properly presented to this House. In Fremantle they give the snap of a finger as the value of that document, because they say that two of the persons connected with that deputation were away from their duties, one for two weeks and one for three weeks at Christmas time,—and of course they are models of sobriety, I know. One of these is to be sent to Bunbury; I presume to take charge of the engineering department there. This gentleman is sometimes a total abstainer, but one of the last things I heard of him was that he had delirium tremens. Sir, if I am saying what is at all approaching the truth—and I am giving what are common rumours; if these rumours even approach the truth, I think I have said sufficient to show that there is urgent need for a complete reform. I can cite yet another instance of the disorganised state of this department at Fremantle. Not very long ago there was something like a strike on a small scale amongst the engine-cleaners in this Locomotive Department. I commented at the time on the action of the then Commissioner of Railways in taking what I thought were necessary prompt measures in connection with the matter; but I am assured, and by more than one authority, that the strike amongst those men was mainly due to, I will say, the ultra sobriety of their foreman; in other words, that he is so often inebriated that they were annoyed and indignant, and that as an expression of their indignation they struck work on that particular occasion. Of course that was not a sufficient justification for their action; still, I am assured, that was mainly the cause of it. Now if the names of those who represent the existence of such irregularities to the heads of departments, whether political or otherwise, are to be published to the world, as the name of Mr. Lewis Hasluck was the other evening—I think that was a slip on the part of my hon. friend the Commissioner of Railways—but if the names of private persons who make these representations as to irregularities in the service are to be published to the world, then it is

“good-bye” to these irregularities being exposed through such channels. That being so, I find it imperative, in the interests of the travelling public and of the economical working of the railway, that I should call attention, and in unmistakable language, to what is alleged to be going on. As to the men—the general body of workmen—I am told that they are as sober, and a little more so than is usually found in large workshops. That must be said to their credit; but I should like to know whether it can be expected that if the foreman of the establishment only presents himself now and again during the month, and if the Superintendent himself is not often on the works, and their foreman is away—can it be expected that the men themselves will work as industriously as they ought to work? Surely no one who knows how much of human nature there is in man will expect anything of the kind; and, probably, if I could get at the secrets of the department more than I can, I should find out that the cause of the many complaints we hear as to the lack of haulage power upon the Eastern Railway is to be traced to this inattention on the part of the Locomotive Department to the requirements of the traffic. If proper attention and proper celerity is not generally shown in getting engines “out of hospital” (I think that is the correct term), and if this be one cause of the insufficiency of haulage power, of which we have heard so many complaints lately, then I think this is another reason why I may fairly ask members to support me in this expression of opinion as to the urgent need of a complete reform in the several branches of the Railway Department at Fremantle. So far I have not mentioned the case of the permanent-way men; but there is one so glaring an instance of irregularity there that I think I ought to refer to it before I sit down. Members, many of them, will remember with regret that some few months ago a person named Mansell, connected with the permanent way—I think he was a gatekeeper near to Bullen’s—was cut to pieces by an engine on the line. It came out at the inquest that the man himself was intoxicated at the time, and that, therefore, it might be said that his death lay at his own door, and no one else’s. But before we say no one else’s in addition

to his own, we ought to know that the ganger and his gang were all away drinking that day, and that when the notice in proper course was sent down to this gang that a special engine would run at that particular hour, there was no one—not even the ganger—there to receive the notice. It would also appear that the Inspector of Permanent Way, who was only a mile or two away—so far as I know in his office, though I believe he is not a very frequent visitor at his office—was not at work, though nothing of the sort came to light at the inquest, until people began to talk amongst themselves. When these things come to be discovered, and it only comes out at the inquest that the man himself was not sober, I do not know that it is right to say that the man's death lay at his own door, and no one else's. Sir, I do not pledge myself that all these allegations are exact representations of the facts; but they are representations in common circulation; they are common report, and they are given to me by persons who see these identical officers, and given to me by persons who have little or nothing to do with Fremantle; and I am obliged to think that there is a large substratum of truth in them, and that they ought to come to the knowledge of the Commissioner of Railways. Hence it is that I move the motion standing in my name.

MR. A. FORREST: In seconding the motion of the hon. member for Greenough, I think it is due to the Commissioner of Railways, and due to the officers of his department, that some inquiry should be made into this matter. The allegations made by the hon. member are of a very serious nature, and I am sure that the whole House must view these charges in a very grave manner indeed. I, myself, have informed the Commissioner of Railways, during this session, of the rumours that have been put about as to the disorganisation of the Railway Department. One of the reasons why we desired a change in the form of Government was the necessity for a reform in the system of working our railways. We know that the railways for a number of years have been grossly mismanaged, and that the department has been overmanned; and the charges that have been brought forward by my hon. friend the

member for Greenough are, I believe, in the main, a great many of them, true. I, myself, am not going to particularise any individual in the service, but I say that the present Commissioner has a very difficult task to perform in dealing with these matters. He should not be satisfied with the reports of the heads of the different branches of his Department, but also visit and find out for himself whether there is not a leak in some of these branches. I think the hon. member for Greenough deserves the thanks of this House for having brought this matter so prominently before hon. members and the Government. It is not a pleasant thing for any member in this House to bring charges of this kind against any individuals in the public service, and very few members would care to do it. But I think the hon. member for Greenough has taken the proper course, and I intend to support him, because I know that a great deal he says is true. I have every confidence in the present Commissioner of Railways, and I look forward to great reforms in this Department, and great reductions when we have next year's Estimates put before us. It is well known that some branches of the Department are overmanned, especially the Permanent Way Branch. We know the inspectors are not kept constantly at work, and that the men under them are not very hard worked either. These inspectors draw a large salary, and many members of this House consider they are not necessary. I myself could bring very grave charges against them, if I liked; but I do not feel called upon to do so. But I say an inquiry should be held, and I hope the present Commissioner will see into it himself. Perhaps it may not be necessary to press this resolution, now that the attention of the Commissioner has been brought so prominently to this matter. I think we may leave it to the present Commissioner. We cannot blame him for what has occurred in the past, and I have every confidence that he will see what can be done to reform his department. If he doesn't, we shall be able to deal with him, when this House meets again, which I suppose will be in June or July.

MR. THROSSELL: I think the hon. member for the Greenough is to be congratulated upon having the courage of

his opinion, and that he deserves the thanks of this House and of the community for bringing this very grave matter under the notice of the Government. I know nothing myself about the allegations brought forward, but I think they are sufficiently serious to demand a searching inquiry. The hon. member has not minced the matter; he has mentioned names and made specific charges; and, in the interests of the general public, I think the matter ought to receive the serious consideration of the authorities. Therefore, I shall give the motion my cordial support.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS** (Hon. W. E. Marmion): It seems to me that this is one of those occasions when people, instead of making sweeping assertions, should be prepared to make definite charges; I think my hon. friend, the member for Greenough, should be prepared to place his finger upon those whom he accuses, and say, "I charge this man with so and so." When he does not do that, in a case of this kind, I think he commits a very grave mistake. That is my view. Perhaps, for the time being, I am taking the position of my hon. colleague the Commissioner of Railways, but I am prepared to accept the responsibility of doing so; and I say, as a resident of Fremantle, and knowing a little about what is going on at Fremantle,—I say that in all probability the assertions made by the hon. member for Greenough could not be borne out by fact. At any rate, the hon. member should go further than simply making sweeping assertions; he should be prepared to lay his hand on each individual officer of the department, and say, "I charge this man with 'drunkenness,' or 'I charge this man 'with neglecting his duty; I charge him 'with being absent from his work, and 'with being in the 'cockpit' of a public 'house when he ought to be in the 'Locomotive Workshop.'" Unless the hon. member is in a position to do that, I think he has no right to come here and make sweeping assertions which damage the character of men connected with the public service,—I will not say knowingly. But let him come forward with some definite charges against this officer or that, and be prepared to substantiate his charges. If he does that, I can promise

him that, so far as I am concerned, as a member of the Government, those charges will have my serious consideration.

**MR. RICHARDSON:** I would hardly be inclined to go as far as the Commissioner of Crown Lands in this matter, and insist that when a member of this House becomes aware of the existence of certain irregularities or abuses in a public department, he should be prepared to formulate definite charges against individual officers. If that is to be expected, all I can say is we are never likely to have abuses exposed. You will never get a member who will take upon himself the very disagreeable task of fixing definite charges upon any public officer. I think if any member lays statements before this House based upon what he conceives to be reliable rumours, or upon information furnished to him privately by persons whom he believes to be stating the truth—I think if a member does that, it is the duty of those in authority to inquire into these allegations, and, if they find there is any truth in them, to sheet the charges home to the guilty parties. I am not saying anything about the irregularities to which attention has been called in this instance; I know nothing about them. I merely say that the hon. member for Greenough has brought under our attention what he believes in his heart to be very serious abuses in an important branch of a public department, involving the most gross negligence and irregularities; and I only hope that on these grounds, the Commissioner of Railways, or whosoever's duty it is, will take the most stringent steps to probe these charges to the bottom, and see if there is any truth in them; and, if so, that he will not be particularly sparing upon the offenders. As a private individual, I have heard some of these rumours myself, but not from sources that I thought were very reliable, so I did not take the trouble that the hon. member for Greenough has of probing them out. I know it is a matter of current report, whether false or true I cannot say; but I have this much confidence in my hon. friend, the Commissioner of Railways, that he will take no small trouble to find out whether these rumours are true, or whether they are false. No doubt, as has been pointed out, he labors under a disadvantage in having to make his inquiries through

some of the very people who are more or less implicated in these charges. Therefore, I hope he will endeavor to get some other independent evidence, from extraneous sources, and not entirely confine himself to official sources of information. I think, perhaps, it would be desirable that the hon. member for Greenough, having provoked this discussion, and forcibly drawn the attention of the Government to this matter, should now withdraw his motion, being thoroughly satisfied that the Commissioner will make a thorough inquiry into the matter.

MR. KEANE: I do not see, myself, that we can blame the hon. member for the Greenough for having brought forward this motion, for I am perfectly satisfied he would not have done so unless he had good grounds. I really fail to see why any member of this House who calls attention to abuses of this kind should be expected to bring forward definite charges against individual officers; I think that is for the Government to do, if they find there is any truth in the statements made. Of course, we all know that the present Government have had very little time to inquire into anything, as yet; and we must give them time to find out the truth of these things. The only fault I find is, I should have liked the Commissioner of Railways to have replied to these charges, and not the Commissioner of Crown Lands; I fail to see what the Commissioner of Crown Lands has to do with it. No doubt, under the old form of Government, matters were allowed to be carried on in a very different way from what they would be if they were conducted by a private firm; but, under the new Constitution, we look to the various heads of departments to carry on the business of the country, not in the slipshod way it used to be carried on in the olden days, but as it ought to be carried on. I think we may look to this from the Commissioner of Railways, and, therefore, I hope that the hon. member for Greenough having called attention to this matter—not, I am sure, in any antagonistic spirit towards the Government, or with any desire of causing unnecessary friction in the department, but purely and simply in the interests of the public—having done this, I hope he will now withdraw this motion for we may be sure the matter will be thoroughly

sifted by the present Commissioner. From what I have seen of the Locomotive Department, considering all the difficulties and disadvantages they have to contend with—that is, the head of this department—I think you might go a long way further and fare worse. If this House will only vote the money, and give the department the assistance that is required, I feel sure that with the help of our friend, the present Commissioner, we shall find at the end of 1891 a very different state of affairs from what we have at the present time.

MR. CLARKSON: I think the thanks of the members of this House and of the whole community are due to the hon. member for Greenough for bringing this matter before the House. It is a matter of common report outside, and I think that in the interests of those concerned some inquiry should be made. It would be most unfair that such reports should have credence outside this House if there is no foundation for them. I can only say for my own part that I have frequently heard of these things, and I feel confident that the hon. member for Greenough would not have brought the matter forward unless he had some good foundation for doing so. I can hardly agree with the Commissioner of Crown Lands when he says that any member mentioning these charges in his place in the House should be prepared to substantiate specific charges against any individual. I think all he has to do is to bring the matter before the House in the form the hon. member for Greenough has done.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I think that in this matter the House will recognise that the Commissioner of Railways has already given evidence that he intends to deal very summarily and severely with any officers of his department who obtain their chief sustenance by suction,—I do not wish to use a harder word than that; and, I am sure, after what has fallen from the hon. member for Greenough, we shall find that the Commissioner will express himself to that effect, and that he will feel himself bound to make inquiries into these charges; and that, if they are true, the officers concerned will be dealt with as they deserve, without the necessity for this motion.

MR. TRAYLEN: I am greatly obliged to those members who have expressed their firm persuasion that I am only actuated by proper motives in bringing this question forward, because it might be said, with some show of reason perhaps, that this question of intemperance is just a hobby which I ride. I must compliment the hon. member for Fremantle (Mr. Marmion) for having, on this occasion, shown wisdom in his parliamentary career; the hon. gentleman only spoke a few words! But he has suggested that I should formulate specific charges against specific officers. I thought I had already mentioned these officers specifically enough, so that those who are not guilty should not suffer. I particularly observed that the hon. gentleman said nothing as to my being wrong in what I stated. He said he ought to know what is going on at Fremantle; but he did not say, "I know that the member for Greenough is asserting that which is not true." I congratulate him upon once having exhibited a little parliamentary wisdom. I should be very glad indeed to withdraw this motion, if I have the assurance of the head of the department that the matter will be sifted in such a manner as will enable him to get at the truth. If he is going to sift it through the ordinary official channels, then I despair of the truth being reached. Of course, in so saying, I am not reflecting in any way upon the present Commissioner; he cannot help it, if these things have been going on before he assumed office. All I ask is that he will make his inquiries through some other channel than the officers of his own department, who may be interested in concealing the true state of affairs; and if the late Commissioner is going to be the medium through which the inquiry is to be made, I despair of the truth being fully and fairly reached. But if the present Commissioner will take independent steps to enable him to find out the truth of these allegations, and will adopt such means as will effect a reform, I shall be glad to withdraw this motion.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): I rise to make a few remarks upon what has been said. I did not think it well at an earlier part of the debate to rise to make any

observation until I heard what other members had to say; and, when the Commissioner of Crown Lands rose to reply, he did not do so as representing the Commissioner of Railways; for, I can assure the House that the Commissioner of Railways is quite able to represent himself. I think hon. members will credit me with this—I have been known to them for a number of years publicly and socially, and I think they will credit me with this: that if there is any little trait in my character more pronounced than another, it is a determination to do that which I believe is right. A great deal that has been said has come upon me as a revelation; I can say that candidly and truthfully. If it had not come upon me as a revelation, and I had not taken any steps in the matter, I should have felt I was no longer fit to occupy the position I do. The hon. member who moved the resolution has made very grave assertions. They are not his own opinions, but the opinions of others, which he believes to be true, or if not true, that there is a sufficient amount of truth behind them to warrant him in the action he has taken. I may say I thank the hon. member for the action he has taken; it will certainly strengthen me to do what I consider is right and necessary to do under the circumstances—to find out, myself, the truth or otherwise of these allegations. But if he wants an assurance from me that my inquiries shall not pass through the medium of the late Commissioner, I do not know what the late Commissioner had to do with the matter at all. The late Commissioner of Railways has been chosen by the Upper House as a delegate to the Convention—[MR. TRAYLEN: I did not refer to Mr. Wright; but to the late Acting Commissioner.] Then I beg your pardon. With regard to any investigation that will be made I shall take that course which would suggest itself to any individual member of us, and to the hon. member for Greenough himself,—I shall see for myself, and so be able to form an opinion as to whether these assertions or remarks are correct or not; and I can assure the hon. member that if I can put my finger upon a blot I shall not swerve in any degree from doing what I consider is right in the interest of the service. The Attorney General has

said that I have already taken some steps which go to show that I will not tolerate any abuses in the department over which I preside. I think, as has already been suggested, the hon. member's purpose will be best served now by withdrawing this motion. I have no objection, however, if he proceeds with it, though I can tell him this: it will not stimulate me to do more than my own conscience would do, to do that which I believe is right. He may rely that whatever charges are made, or whenever they are made, they will receive my careful attention. There is one remark which the hon. member made to which I must take exception, namely, that I have given to the world the name of a gentleman I ought not to have done, in connection with some of these charges. When charges are publicly made against a public servant, I think the public should know from whom they emanate. I was addressed, in the instance referred to, as the Commissioner of Railways, and I gave the information as the Commissioner of Railways. I had no idea he wished his name to be reserved. Any individual member may come to my office, and say such and such a thing is the case, and this or that abuse exists in your department; and if he comes to me publicly, as the Commissioner of Railways and makes these assertions, I think I have a perfect right, as Commissioner of Railways, to refer to it publicly, and to mention the name of my informant, and let him stand by it and prove what he says. If I did wrong in giving this gentleman's name, I can only say I would do wrong again, as I am at present advised. Had he written to me as a private individual, giving me some information for my own private ear, I should have respected it as private, and kept it to myself. But when he addressed me as a public servant, as Commissioner of Railways, in my official capacity, and charging a public officer with certain abuses, I think it is due to the public that there should be no such reservation. I did not do so to blame him, but simply to say who my authority was. The hon. member for Greenough, at all events, is not ashamed in his public position to give the names of individuals. I do not blame him for it; in fact, I commend him for having the courage of his opinions. But I do

not like the low informer; that is a class of persons I shun.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### REWARD FOR DISCOVERY OF YILGARN GOLDFIELD.

MR. KEANE: I beg to move,—“That, in the opinion of this House, the reply of the Commissioner of Crown Lands to the question of the honorable member for Greenough, with respect to the awards to be paid for the discovery of a payable goldfield at Yilgarn, is not satisfactory; and that the claims of the present claimants to the award should be settled without any unnecessary delay.” I do not think the answer given by the Commissioner the other day, when he was asked about the paying of this reward, was at all satisfactory, and that is the reason why I have brought forward this motion. We all know that these goldfields at Yilgarn were discovered three years ago—three years ago this month—by two gentlemen named Colreavy and Huggins. A short time afterwards Southern Cross was discovered by Mr. Riseley and others; yet here we are, with three years gone by, and the Government not yet come to a decision as to the reward which they offered for the discovery of a payable goldfield? I would ask the House what inducement is this for men to go out prospecting the country? If we want the colony prospected—and I don't suppose Yilgarn is the only place in the colony where there is gold—surely to goodness we can only expect it to be done by the Government promptly paying any reward they may offer for the discovery of a goldfield. We cannot expect men to go out prospecting unknown country, spending their money and risking their lives, if they have to wait for years before they receive the reward they are entitled to. I do not blame the present Government in this matter; far from it, for we know they have only been a few weeks in office; but surely this reward for the discovery of Yilgarn ought to have been paid long ago. Surely it cannot be denied that we have a payable goldfield at Yilgarn—if ever there was a payable goldfield in the world; why then should there be all this delay? I do not mention any names in this resolution of mine. I believe there are several claims; it is for the Government to decide who are the men



who are entitled to this reward, and I consider it is high time they did come to a decision upon these claims, and the money paid. If this reward had been promptly paid it might have been some inducement for others to go out prospecting, and perhaps we might have had another Yilgarn before now. I do not believe the country would lose a single sixpence if the Government were to deal as liberally as the regulations will allow with these prospectors. When the Government make an offer of a reward on certain conditions, and these conditions are fulfilled, the least they can do is to carry out their promise. Why should they not fulfil their promise, like any private individual? If I offer £5 to anybody who discovers a ballast pit for me, and I do not pay the £5 when it is fairly earned, that man would very soon put me in the Local Court; and I should like to see these gentlemen put the Government in the Local Court.

AN HON. MEMBER: They cannot do it.

MR. KEANE: Why? Because the Government surround themselves with a lot of red tape, and take advantage of any quibbling point they can. But what good does it do for the Government to shirk the payment of what is honestly due? It would be better for the country if there was less red tape about the Government. So far as I am concerned, I do not care a sixpence who gets this reward, but I do care about the interests of the country; and I say the interests of the country have suffered, and are likely to suffer, if prospectors are to be deprived of what is due to them, when they spend their time and money, and suffer a lot of hardship, in trying to discover fresh goldfields. I hope the present Government will lose no time in settling this reward. If it had been settled some time ago, several thousands of pounds and probably hundreds of thousands would have been brought in for the development of these mines. I think all members will bear me out that it is quite time this matter was decided. If the Government consider that these goldfields are not "payable" goldfields, let them say so; then these men will know what they have to expect. They have now been waiting patiently for the last two years, and they are still in the same state of anxiety. I hope the

matter will now be brought to an issue one way or the other; then prospectors in the future will know what to expect from the Western Australian Government.

MR. A. FORREST: In seconding the motion I do so with a great deal of pleasure. I think this is a matter which the new Government might really take in hand without further delay. There has been too much delay already.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): We have had lots of time, of course, to settle this and every other question, during the few weeks we have been in office.

MR. A. FORREST: The late Government had plenty of time to settle it,—two years. The sooner the claims of the discoverers of these goldfields are paid the better will it be for the country. I do not know, myself, who it is that is entitled to this reward. Some people say it is a gentleman living in the South, others say it is a gentleman living at the North, and others say it is a gentleman living towards the East. It is for the Government to decide the question, and the sooner they do so the better. I recollect that the reward originally offered for the discovery of a payable goldfield was £5,000, but, afterwards, owing to the likelihood of so many goldfields being discovered in various parts of the colony, the reward was reduced to £1,000 for each district. Surely, everybody must agree that this £1,000 has been well earned, so far as Yilgarn is concerned. Whoever is entitled to it ought to be paid, whether it is one, two, three, or any number of applicants. Let the Government decide who ought to have the reward, and let them pay it, and be done with it. Who do they think is going to do any more prospecting, if they are to be deprived of their reward for two or three years? I look to the present Government to settle this matter without further delay.

THE PREMIER (Hon. J. Forrest): The hon. member evidently has great confidence in the present Government. He expects we can do a great deal in a very short time. I may say that this matter has not been brought before the Government since we are in office. Although I believe there are many claimants, not one of them has ever interviewed or addressed the present

Government on the subject. Considering that during the few weeks we have been in office we have had lots of other things to do, we have not yet had an opportunity of looking into this matter. I know it was under the consideration of the late Government some time ago, and the decision they arrived at was that it should be left over; and, if they had remained in office, the course they probably would have pursued would have been to send it down to this House to settle it, and so relieve themselves of all responsibility in the matter. But we do not do things like that now. That state of affairs is past. The present Government are quite prepared to accept the responsibility of dealing with this and all other matters within their province, and they will settle this question as soon as they have an opportunity for considering it, which they have not had yet. It is rather hard that the Government should be blamed in the matter, when those who are interested have not moved a finger. We are not anxious to create more business than we already have on our hands. I know there are several applicants for this reward,—there are four at any rate; and it will be a matter for consideration whether the reward of £1,000 shall go to one, or be divided between more of them. The hon. member for Geraldton said it is three years since this reward was offered. No doubt this goldfield was first discovered three years ago, but the conditions surrounding the offer of a reward were not fulfilled three years ago. The terms of the award as advertised in the *Gazette* were that "a reward of not less than £500 and not more than £1,000 shall be paid to any person or persons who shall discover a goldfield, deemed by the Governor in Executive Council to be a payable goldfield." No one will deny that for some time after gold was first discovered on this area it was difficult for the Governor in Council to say whether it was "payable" and a permanent field or not. I believe some people, even now, are doubtful about it, although I am not one of them. All I can say at present is that there are several claimants for this reward,—Mr. Anstey, Mr. Colreavy, Mr. Huggins, Mr. Riseley, and Mr. William Parker, and, I believe, some others, whose names I do not now remember. The

Government are very willing to consider the matter and to decide it, and to do so as quickly as possible. But we cannot do everything at once. The reason we did not move in the matter before was because the matter was never brought to our notice, even by those interested in the reward.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): I think it will be admitted that whatever delay there has been in settling this matter, the present Government are not to blame. If it took the late Government a couple of years before they could arrive at a decision in the matter, surely to goodness the present Government may be allowed as many months. I may inform the hon. member for Geraldton that a few days ago a communication reached me on the subject; but, prior to that, I had heard nothing at all about it. I can promise the hon. member that we will endeavor to arrive at a conclusion on the subject as soon as possible, and if our decision should not be satisfactory to all parties, it will, in our opinion, do justice to those who have a claim to the reward.

MR. KEANE: In reply to what has fallen from the Premier and the Commissioner of Crown Lands, I stated very plainly that I found no fault with the present Government; all I asked was that they would take the matter into their consideration. The Commissioner of Crown Lands now acknowledges that he has received a communication. [MR. MARMION: Only a few days ago.] All I ask is that the Government will settle the claims of the various applicants without further delay. We know that some members of the Government are about to go away to the other colonies to enjoy themselves; and possibly they may be away for two or three months, and these unfortunate men will probably have to wait until they come back without knowing whether they are going to get any of this money or not. If the Commissioner of Crown Lands will give us an assurance that the reward shall be settled with as little delay as possible, that is all I ask. Let us show to the world at large that if the Government of Western Australia offer a reward, they will pay it when it is fairly earned. The Government admit that we have a payable and a permanent goldfield at Yilgarn, or they

would not propose to build a railway to the field. Surely to goodness they are not going to spend £300,000 on this railway if they do not think they have a permanent goldfield at Yilgarn. If so, why don't they pay this reward?

MR. CANNING: I think the hon. member for Geraldton has made out a very good case for the claimants of this reward. The Government should bear in mind that nothing gives confidence and satisfaction more than a prompt and cheerful recognition of what is right. No doubt, now that the matter has been fully discussed, the present Government will take steps to satisfy the claims of the applicants for this reward, and so remove all causes of dissatisfaction.

Motion—put and passed.

#### PETITION—DUTY ON UNMANUFACTURED TOBACCO.

MR. SYMON presented a petition, signed by 440 residents of Fremantle, praying that the Assembly would cause the present differential duties on raw and manufactured tobacco to be retained as at present until the tobacco industry had been fairly established; and suggesting that, if revenue were urgently required, an increase should be imposed upon the manufactured article corresponding with that now proposed to be levied upon the raw material.

Petition received, read, and ordered to lie upon the table.

#### TOBACCO (UNMANUFACTURED) DUTY BILL.

The House went into committee on this bill.

Clause 1.—“From and after the passing of this Act, in lieu of the duty of one shilling per pound payable on unmanufactured tobacco under the provisions of ‘The Tariff Act, 1888,’ there shall be charged, raised, collected, and levied on unmanufactured tobacco a duty of two shillings per pound.”

THE TREASURER (Hon. J. Forrest) said that members, no doubt, would expect him to give them some information with reference to the proposed increase of duty, though he thought he had already explained the action of the Government in the matter. When the question was before the House on the second

reading of the bill, a suggestion was made that the Government should make independent inquiries as to the increase gained in weight between the unmanufactured leaf and the manufactured article. He had since communicated with persons in the other Australian colonies on that point, and he had their telegrams in reply now before him. Roughly, the general result of his inquiries appeared to show that one pound of the unmanufactured or raw material produced about one and a quarter pound—certainly not more—of manufactured tobacco. The Collector of Customs at Adelaide said that one pound of leaf tobacco made about 1lb. 4oz. of manufactured tobacco. That was the maximum. Messrs. Cameron & Co., who were large tobacco manufacturers in Adelaide, said the increase was not more than about 7 per cent. The Collector of Trade and Customs at Melbourne said that 1lb. of leaf tobacco, without stems, would only give about an equal weight of manufactured tobacco. The other authority he had consulted, Baron von Müller, said the increase, without stalks, was about 7 per cent.; but with stalks there was a difference of about 25 per cent. Having considered these answers, the conclusion he came to was that there was no great gain in weight,—that the maximum, under the most favorable conditions, was not more than 4oz. in the pound. The reason why the Government had moved in this matter, as he had said on a former occasion, was simply to protect the revenue. The revenue received last year from manufactured tobacco was £22,506, while the amount received from unmanufactured tobacco was only £408 14s. Assuming that the local factory established at Fremantle, by placing their tobacco on the market at a lower rate than the imported article, commanded one half the trade of the colony—and he thought they would be in a position to do that, very shortly—there would be a loss to the revenue of £11,253 (taking the revenue of last year as a basis). But, in view of the increased introduction of the unmanufactured leaf by the local factory, they might reckon on receiving, on the same basis of calculation, £3,751 from the duty on the unmanufactured article, so that there would be a dead loss

to the revenue of £7,502. That was calculating the duty on the unmanufactured leaf as it now stood, and presuming that the local factory only commanded one half the local trade in this article. Even if they increased the duty on unmanufactured tobacco, as now proposed, there would be a dead loss to the colony of £3,751 annually. That was a considerable sum for this colony to pay for the protection of this one industry. Of course it was an advantage to the colony to have a manufactory established here that employed a considerable amount of labor. All local industries were more or less to the advantage of the colony, and the Government desired to encourage them. But as to this particular industry, he did not see what the colony would gain from it, beyond that it would give employment to some additional labor. And in order to encourage it, the Government foresaw an annual loss to the revenue—even supposing the consumption of tobacco did not increase beyond what it was last year—of £3,750, with this additional duty imposed on the unmanufactured article. He thought the House would agree with him that that was quite as much as this colony could afford to lose, in encouraging one local industry. He had taken the trouble to inquire as to the amount of leaf tobacco the local manufacturers had warehoused at Fremantle, and he found that on the 31st December last they had 102,105 lbs. Since then they had withdrawn 7,290 lbs., which would leave them with a stock of 94,815 lbs., at present in bond. The present duty on that would yield £4,740, whereas with the proposed increase the amount of duty would be £9,480. This was a very considerable quantity of leaf tobacco to have on hand, and, if it had not been the practice to alter the tariff without previous notice, members would see that all this stock might have been cleared, and the direct loss to the colony would have been between £4,000 and £5,000 at one stroke. As he had already said, the Government had no wish to inflict any hardship upon anyone, and they desired to encourage all local industries so far as they legitimately could; but their primary duty was to the colony, and the revenue must be protected. If any member could show him that he was wrong in his calculations, wrong in his

figures or his facts, and that the revenue would not lose anything if the duty on unmanufactured tobacco was allowed to remain as at present, the Government would be very glad not resort to this increased duty. But that was impossible; and, unless the House was prepared to show how the loss in the revenue was going to be made up, unless they were prepared to tax some other industry, he did not see what other course was open to them.

MR. SYMON did not know that he would be able to convince the Premier that his figures were wrong. [THE PREMIER: Try.] The hon. gentleman put down the duty received from tobacco last year at £22,506. He would take that for granted. But he would start by saying that he did not think this local factory was likely to command anything like the whole of the trade of the colony; it would be impracticable for them to do that. [THE PREMIER: One-half of the trade, I said.] It would take them some years to get their tobacco well into the market. He had taken the trouble that morning of going through this factory, and he had the whole process explained to him; and he thought it would have been a good thing if the members of the Ministry had taken the same trouble. He found that the gain in weight between the manufactured and the unmanufactured article was only something about 5 per cent.—not 25 per cent., as stated by the Premier; and to prove it he had brought up some samples for the benefit of hon. members. At the present time this factory's output of tobacco was about 1,500lbs. a week, and to do this they had to keep their men working up to half past 10, and later, at night. If they kept up this supply for twelve months—an output of 1,500lbs. a week—they would only produce 75,000lbs.; so that even allowing the duties on the unmanufactured and the manufactured articles to remain as at present, the Government could not lose more than about £7,000 at the end of the year. Against this they must set the increase which the revenue would derive from the employment of a large number of factory hands, and the consumption of dutiable articles by their families. They had about 40 men now employed, at high wages, the majority of

whom had been brought over here from the other colonies under an engagement. The firm had spent about £12,000 in establishing their business here, and they did so on the assumption—as they were led to believe—that the Government and the Legislature here were in favor of protecting local industries, and that there would be no interference with the tariff until, at any rate, they had established this tobacco industry. He thought the Government, if they felt themselves bound to increase the duty on the unmanufactured article, should have been satisfied with something less than 100 per cent. The Premier the other day referred to the differential duties in force in the other colonies, as showing the margin of profit in favor of the local manufacturers in those colonies; but the hon. gentleman omitted to say that in those colonies, especially in Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia, the manufacturers were much better off than in this colony as there was colonial leaf tobacco to work upon, and therefore they could afford to pay a higher duty than here, where they had to import all their leaf tobacco. He thought these gentlemen were entitled to some consideration at the hands of the Government; they deserved to be treated in a more rational way than was now proposed. Why should this particular industry be selected by the Government if they only wanted to protect the revenue? There were other articles besides tobacco which would cause the revenue to suffer. They all knew that the establishment of roller flour mills in the colony would largely affect the importation of flour, and the revenue would suffer accordingly; it would suffer to the extent of £1 per ton, and there would probably be thousands of tons less flour imported into the colony than there used to be. Yet they did not hear of the Government putting on any extra duty to make up for that loss to the revenue. Why should they single out this one industry any more than another? Seeing that this factory had only been started a few months ago, he thought the Government might have given them a chance to establish themselves. They might, at any rate, be satisfied with increasing the duty from 1s. to 1s. 3d. to start with, and increase it to 1s. 6d., say in six

months. That would be a fair thing to do. If they persisted in increasing the duty to 2s. at one stroke, they would find they would not have a tobacco factory in Western Australia long. They would simply strangle this industry at its birth; and he did not think any of them would like that.

MR. RICHARDSON quite believed that the only object the Government had in view was to protect the revenue; but he thought there was a feeling abroad among many people, and also among many legislators, that this question of protecting the revenue was not a matter that concerned them at all. The idea seemed to be that a loss of a few thousand pounds of revenue would not hurt anybody very much. Very few seemed to realise the importance of the question as affecting the revenue. Looking at the fact that we were about to borrow a large sum of money and increase our liabilities to the extent of between £60,000 and £70,000 a year, and looking at the fact that in the opinion of many members increased taxation was inevitable, in order to meet these additional charges—looking at all the circumstances of the case, he would ask members and the country to consider whether we could afford to surrender a large item of our present revenue; or whether, if we did so, they were prepared to make up the deficiency in some other way. It had been proposed that we should increase the duty on the manufactured article—which was the true protection theory—thus making the consumer to suffer and not the revenue. He thought that all consumers of tobacco, before they censured the Government for their action in this matter, should be prepared to pay an increased duty on the imported manufactured article. He was not prepared to say whether it would stand any further increase; he thought, perhaps, it was high enough already. But tobacco and spirits had always been looked upon, by all Governments, as among the most legitimate sources of revenue, apart from any policy of free-trade or protection. They could, in no sense, be regarded as among the absolute necessities of life; they were luxuries, pure and simple. And if manufacturers invaded these sources of a country's revenue, they must expect the country to protect itself against that

invasion. He thought their duty in this matter was not to unduly lean either way, but hold the scale equally between the manufacturer on the one hand, and the country on the other. It was their duty to foster local industries in every legitimate way; and on the other hand they were equally concerned in protecting the revenue. If (as the Premier had shown), even with this increased duty, there would be a dead loss to the colony of between £3,000 and £4,000 a year, estimated on the present consumption of tobacco, and allowing nothing for an increased consumption with an increase of population; if we were going to lose between £3,000 and £4,000 from this one industry, he would point out that it would only require the establishment of thirty or forty similar industries and the whole of our Customs revenue would be gone. He hardly thought that would be a wise or legitimate policy on the part of any Government. It had been said that, against this loss of £4,000 a year, there was a set-off in the way of the labor employed at this factory. He understood they employed 30 or 40 hands; and he believed it was generally admitted that the gain to the revenue by the introduction of every fresh consumer was about £4 per annum. Even allowing that there were 60 people dependent for their living on this factory, the net gain to the revenue would only be £240 per annum. That would hardly compensate us for the loss of between £3,000 and £4,000 per annum. He simply wished to point out that the Government were not endeavoring to harshly crush out this industry; they were simply acting as the guardians of the public revenue. The Government, he was sure, were glad to find men of capital and enterprise coming amongst us. So were they all; but we could not afford to pay too liberally for these things; we must look at the question from a practical and business point of view.

MR. R. F. SHOLL did not think the Government wished in any way to injure this new industry; but the Government and that House must see that the proprietors of this factory did not derive more profit out of us than the country could afford. We desired to encourage as much as possible every local industry; but there must be some limit. No doubt if it could be shown to the Government

that a margin of 1s. per lb. in favor of the local manufacturer was not a sufficient margin to leave him a fair profit, the Government might be induced to increase it, and to reduce the proposed duty. But if the margin of profit at present was such as to give the local manufacturer something more than a fair and reasonable profit, and the revenue was likely to suffer in consequence, then he thought it was the duty of the Government to protect the revenue. That was the way he looked at it. He felt that those who had started this industry deserved every reasonable encouragement, even if we sacrificed a little of our revenue in doing so. And the Government had shown themselves ready to do this; for, even with the proposed increase of duty, the State would lose between £3,000 and £4,000 a year by it. He thought that was as much sacrifice as they could be expected to make in favor of any industry.

MR. SYMON said that for the information of members who thought that Messrs. Dixon & Sons were making a very large profit out of this industry, he might state that they were selling the tobacco manufactured here at a considerably lower price than the imported article.

MR. THROSSELL said this question like all others had two sides to it. From the point of view of the manufacturer it was only natural that he should endeavor to get as good terms as he possibly could from the Government; and, on the other hand, from the point of view of the Government, as the guardians of the public revenue, it was only right and proper that they should protect the revenue from being unfairly encroached upon. They were desirous of doing all they could to support and protect native industries, but he did not see how the Government could afford to lose such a large slice of the revenue, nor how the House could assent to it, unless hon. members were prepared to show the Ministry in what other way this deficiency was to be made up. If they sacrificed this amount of duty, from what other articles did members propose to recoup the revenue? He fully admitted that the Messrs. Dixon, and every other firm who established new industries in our midst, were entitled to every consideration, within reason, at the hands of the Government, and he fully recog-

nised the desire of the Government to give every legitimate encouragement to new industries; still they had to study the public interests and protect the revenue of the colony. He had it on very good authority that the Messrs. Dixon would be satisfied if they were to be allowed to clear out their present stock of unmanufactured tobacco at 1s. 6d. per lb. He did not vouch for it; but, if so, and seeing that we had taxed every piece of machinery they had introduced into the colony—and he, for his part, was strongly opposed to taxing machinery required for any new industry—he thought the Government might fairly take into consideration whether they might not allow the firm to clear some portion of their present stock at a reduced rate. He would not go so far as to allow them to clear the whole of it, if, as they were told, they had over 90,000 lbs.; but he thought they might be allowed to clear say 10,000 lbs. at 1s. 6d. per lb., which would be allowing them a bonus of £500, and which would show that the Government were prepared to do everything they could reasonably be expected to, to encourage local industries. That would not be a great sacrifice on the part of the colony, but it would be £500 in the pockets of the manufacturers. In other words we should be giving them a bonus of £500 to encourage this local industry, which he thought would be fair and liberal treatment; or, at any rate, as much as we could afford, seeing that we were going to lose £3,000 or £4,000 a year by this factory, even with the proposed increase of duty.

MR. A. FORREST said it must be a source of satisfaction to the Government to find members so anxious to see the revenue protected. Of course they were all pleased to see local factories started in the colony and local industries established; but they must also see that the Ministry had enough funds to carry on the government of the country. As to this firm having had to pay duty on their machinery, they were not the only people who had had to do that. Duty had to be paid on all the machinery for the Yilgarn goldfields, besides very high rates for freight. He did not see how the colony could afford to lose £7,000 of its revenue when we were just going to borrow £1,336,000. As had been said,

a duty on tobacco and on spirits was a most legitimate duty, and he did not think that anyone who indulged in one or the other should object to it. Personally, he should like to see a small additional duty placed on the imported manufactured article, and charge 2s. on the unmanufactured article. He did not think 3s. 6d., instead of 3s. on manufactured tobacco would hurt anybody very much. If the price of tobacco was 20s. a lb., people would still smoke. Many of them would sooner have their pipe than their breakfast. But it was too much to ask the Government to sacrifice £7,000 a year for the benefit of this one firm. He would ask the hon. member for South Fremantle (Mr. Symon), whether, if he was running the colony, he would be prepared to lose £7,000 a year for the sake of keeping 40 people in it?

MR. SYMON said that if he were running the colony, he would go in for a revision of the whole of the tariff, which sadly wanted revising, and not pick upon one particular item. If he had a couple of hours with the hon. member for Kimberley he would convince him he would be able to make up for this loss of revenue by taxing other luxuries, such as champagne.

MR. KEANE said he must acknowledge he had not given much attention to this matter; at the same time he must say that Mr. Dixon came to him when he first came to the colony with the intention of starting this factory, and he believed he went to other members of the House and also members of the old Government; and he understood he had every reason to believe from the late Government that there would be no alteration in the tariff, if they established a factory here. He thought that that was what induced the firm, in a great measure, to erect this factory. At the same time, he agreed with what had fallen from other members, that the colony could not afford to lose £7,000 a year for the sake of keeping 30 or 40 people in the country. It was with very great regret, so far as he was personally concerned, that he could not support any amendment upon the Government proposal. If we were going to borrow money, as we were, we must find the means to pay the interest on it. He agreed with the hon. member for Northam

that we should try to meet people who established industries here, as much as we could; and he thought if the Government could see their way to accept the hon. member's suggestion, and allow this firm to clear some of their stock out of bond at a reduced rate, it would be as much as the colony could be expected to do.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said a great deal had been said by many members in the way of calling this tobacco factory at Fremantle a local industry. For his part, he could not recognise it as a colonial industry at all. If it were a factory to work up some of our own products, it would be a different thing. If it were a factory to work up wool, produced in the colony, or even tobacco leaf produced in the colony, it might be said by those who believed in the principle of protection that it deserved to be encouraged. But as it was not an industry that dealt in any way with any products of the colony, he submitted it demanded no encouragement whatever at our hands. At present it was a perfect stranger to us and our products. It did no good in the world to assist in the development of the production of our soil. The raw material was brought here from other countries, simply to be converted into an article of commerce, in this factory at Fremantle. It had been said that these gentlemen had been dealt with harshly; that it was a case of "the old Government again." He did not want to say a word about the late lamented Government, but he did not think the late Government held out any hope to this firm other than there would probably be an increase of duty if the revenue was likely to suffer; and he believed they established this factory at their own risk. The mere fact that they had 102,000 lbs. of this raw article in their private bond, ready to be cleared at a moment's notice, showed that they were prepared for any emergency. If they only turned out 1,500 lbs. a week, what did they want with all that quantity of leaf in stock? What was it all boarded up there for? Simply in order that they might clear it, on the merest hint of an increase of duty. They were not simpletons. Nor did he hope were the Government simpletons. They were not going to bruit it abroad that they were going

to alter the tariff, and let everybody clear their goods beforehand. That was not the way business was done. The simple fact that the firm had this large quantity of tobacco leaf in reserve showed that they were on the *qui vive* to clear it, on the slightest indication that the duty was going to be increased. They knew it had been increased in the other colonies, and could they think we were such simpletons as to go and leave the duty as it was, and lose thousands of pounds a year? It would be an insult to the intelligence of these gentlemen to think so. He maintained it was no hardship whatever on this firm. It had been said that they turned out 1,500 lbs. of tobacco a week. That, at 3s. a lb. (the duty on the imported article) represented a loss to the colony of £225 a week, as against £75 a week, at 1s. a lb., the present duty on the unmanufactured article. Could they expect the colony to lose £150 a week, and let them pocket the profit? He did not blame them for trying to make out a good case; but he asked members not to be deceived by the petition that had just been laid on the table, and their plea that they had received no notice. That was only another way of saying, "You did not give us a chance to clear our 102,000 lbs." The profit of this concern would be simply enormous, if they were allowed to import their raw material at the present rate of duty, at a dead loss to the revenue of the colony of from £7,000 to £10,000 a year. They never could have expected such a thing. We were doing nothing harsh whatever, and he asked members to impose this duty without more ado. We were leaving them a margin of 1s. a lb. to work upon. By and bye, they would probably be supplying the whole requirements of the colony, and there was ample room for them to make annual profits of thousands and thousands of pounds.

MR. KEANE could not agree with the Attorney General that this firm had imported 102,000 lbs. of leaf tobacco simply in order to be ready to evade this duty. The arrival of vessels here from America, where this leaf was imported from, was few and far between,—not more than one or two in twelve months; and they were bound to import their leaf tobacco in large quantities to keep them going. He



had it on the best authority that this was the reason why they had such a large stock in bond, and not for the purpose of evading the Customs duty should it be increased.

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE said he should just like to say a few words, principally in order to refute an erroneous statement made by the hon. member for Geraldton—he was quite certain unintentionally; and that was, that this firm of manufacturers were allured here under false pretences, by the late Government leading them to believe that if they established a tobacco factory here there would be no alteration of the tariff. The members of the firm did not interview him on the occasion referred to,—he wished they had; but he might state that the members of the late Government never made any such statement. That was the information he received from members of the late Government themselves. He thought one of the first duties of the Legislature was to look after the finances of the country, and see that sufficient revenue was raised to meet all its liabilities. He considered they were bound, in this instance, to support the Government in their proposal to increase this duty; in fact, he was not quite certain whether they ought not to make it more. The Colonial Treasurer said that, even with this extra duty, we shall lose about £4,000 a year. Was that fair to the country? Was it fair to their constituents that they should have to make up this deficiency—for that was what it would amount to—in order to encourage this one firm? The Government had come forward with certain schemes, involving a certain amount of estimated expenditure, relying upon the revenue which they expected to receive to enable them to meet these charges; and the House was bound to support them.

MR. PEARSE moved, as an amendment, that the words "two shillings" be struck out of the clause, and the words "one shilling and ninepence" inserted in lieu thereof. He thought it was the duty of the Government to look after the revenue, but, at the same time, to foster local industries. They all knew the great difficulty and expense there was in establishing an industry like this. This firm had spent a large amount of capital in buildings and machinery, and the least

the Government could do was to give them a fair start. He thought, looking at all the circumstances, if they added 9d. to the present duty it would be a fair thing, all round. If the Government found at the end of the year that the revenue had suffered a great loss, they could then further increase the duty.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said if the hon. member for North Fremantle would guarantee to make up any loss which the revenue might sustain, he might agree to his amendment; but he presumed the hon. member was not prepared to do that. Another member, the hon. member for South Fremantle, had presented a petition against this increase of duty, signed by 400 residents of the town, many of whom were among his (Mr. Marmion's) own constituents; and he would like members to consider the position in which he found himself with regard to this question, in his dual capacity of a member of the Government and one of the representatives of the town where this factory had been established. He felt that his primary duty in a case like this was to the Government of the country, and so long as he had the honor of occupying a position in that Government it would always have his first consideration. They had staring them in the face the fact that, unless they increased this duty on unmanufactured tobacco, they would lose, in the course of 1891, a sum variously estimated at between £7,000 and £10,000; and members must be prepared to make up that deficiency from some other source of revenue. Were they prepared to do so? He did not think so. He had every sympathy with those who started fresh industries in the colony, but his duty as a member of the Government, and the duty of every representative man in that House, was to consider not what would benefit their friends Messrs. Dixon & Sons or anyone else, but the public interests. Their first duty was to the country itself, and he felt bound to support the Government in this matter.

MR. KEANE said, as to what had fallen from the hon. member for Nelson (Sir J. G. Lee Steere), he might say that Mr. Dixon called upon him when he first came to the colony with the view of establishing this factory, and he told him

(Mr. Keane) that he had received every encouragement from the late Government. His reply was "If you are resting on the present Government, I think you are resting upon a very rotten reed, for the present Government cannot bind any future Government." That remark of his had come true. At the same time he agreed that in matters of this kind, where the revenue was concerned, they must not think of individuals but of the country.

MR. QUINLAN thought it incumbent upon him to say a few words, inasmuch as he had been asked and consented to introduce a deputation that waited upon the Premier, asking him not to increase this duty as proposed. He took it that it was the duty of any member when asked to do so, to fulfil that obligation towards any section of the community who had a grievance, whether he sympathised with their grievance or not. He told this deputation when they asked him to introduce them to the Premier, that he would not like to venture an opinion on the subject just then, but that he thought probably the proposed increase might be modified a little. Since then he had entered into figures and discovered the amount of revenue which the colony would lose if this extra duty were not imposed, and, representing, as he did, a large majority of the taxpayers of Perth, he felt that he would not be doing justice to them to allow the revenue to lose some thousands a year, which would have to be made up from the pockets of the general body of taxpayers. He was a protectionist in principle, and in this particular case he was a protectionist to this extent,—he would favor the suggestion of the hon. member for Northam, that this firm should have a rebate of £500, in the shape of a bonus. It did not follow that because they gave a bonus of £500 to this firm they were going to do the same with everyone who came here to start industries of this kind. This appeared to him an exceptional case. He understood the firm had introduced about 90 persons into the colony (including women and children), which at the rate of £4 per head—which was generally reckoned the amount that each individual contributed to the Customs revenue—would represent about £360 a year; and he thought if they allowed the firm a rebate of £500

on the leaf tobacco they had now in bond, they would be doing what was fair towards all parties. He hoped that in course of time the establishment of this factory would lead to the cultivation of leaf tobacco in the colony, which would be a gain, not only to this firm, but also to the colony itself.

MR. CLARKSON would support the Government in this matter. They all ought to do all they could to increase the sources of revenue rather than curtail them. They were pledged to a very large expenditure of money on public works, and this was not the time to throw away any source of revenue. He did not believe for a moment that the Messrs. Dixon ever had any idea, when they imported that large stock of leaf tobacco, that they would be able to clear it all at the existing rate of duty; and he felt convinced that, as reasonable men, they would be prepared to accept any fair and equitable increase. Tobacco was to a certain extent a luxury—he was a smoker himself—and he thought a very legitimate source of revenue.

Question put (Mr. Pearse's amendment)—That the words proposed to be struck out stand part of the clause.

The Committee divided, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	20
Noes	...	...	2
—			
Majority for	...	...	18

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Baker	Mr. Symon
Mr. Burt	Mr. Pearse (Teller.)
Mr. Canning	
Mr. Cookworthy	
Mr. Darlot	
Mr. De Hamel	
Mr. A. Forrest	
Mr. Harper	
Mr. Keane	
Mr. Marmon	
Mr. Paterson	
Mr. Phillips	
Mr. Quinlan	
Mr. Richardson	
Mr. Sholl	
Sir J. G. Lee Steere	
Mr. Throssell	
Mr. Traylen	
Mr. Venn	
Mr. Forrest (Teller.)	

Amendment—put and negatived.

Question—put and passed.

Clauses 2 and 3 agreed to, without discussion.

Preamble and title agreed to.

Bill reported, and report adopted.

# PUBLIC HEALTH ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The House went into Committee for the consideration of this bill in detail.

Clauses 1 to 5 were agreed to without discussion.

Clause 6—"Each Local Board shall, "from time to time, appoint one of their "number to be Chairman of such Board. "In the event of the absence of the "Chairman from any meeting, the mem- "bers present shall elect one of their "number to be Chairman of such meet- "ing, and at all meetings of the Local "Board the Chairman shall have a vote, "and in case of an equality of votes shall "have a casting vote; and during any "vacancy in the Local Board, whether of "the office of Chairman or not, the con- "tinuing members may act as if no "vacancy had occurred, and at all meet- "ings of the Local Board all questions "shall be decided by a majority of the "votes of the members present. Each "Local Board may make, alter, and re- "scind rules for regulating their own "proceedings."

MR. TRAYLEN moved, as an amend- ment, that the clause be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof:— "All duties imposed by the Public Health "Act, 1886, upon Local Boards, and all "business relating to the public health, "shall form part of the duties and busi- "ness of the Municipal Council of any city "or town to which the provisions of the "Principal Act are applied, or may here- "after be extended, and may be perform- "ed and transacted as ordinary business "at any monthly or other meeting of such "Council: Provided that nothing herein "contained shall prevent any Municipal "Council from making by-laws for the "conduct of this branch of its duties." According to the clause, as printed (the hon. member said), it would be necessary for the Municipal Council to meet twice for the transaction of their business—once for the transaction of their ordinary municipal business, and then as a Health Board; so that one of the advantages sought to be obtained by the hon. member for Albany, namely, a reduction in the number of officers and a lessening of trouble and expense, would scarcely be secured if Municipal Councils had to hold separate meetings as Health Boards,

altogether apart from the meetings for the transaction of ordinary business. He saw no necessity for this. He thought all business connected with the Public Health Act might be transacted as ordinary business at the monthly meetings of the Council, or any other meeting; which was the object of his amendment.

MR. DE HAMEL said this amendment was one which, to his mind, did not affect the principle of the bill in any way, and it was one that he was prepared not to oppose, if the House itself considered it a wise clause to substitute in lieu of the original clause; but he should like to hear what the Attorney General had to say on the subject.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) believed the amendment established that position in this matter which was usually taken up under all Public Health Acts he had seen, so far as these colonies were concerned. The Municipal Councils simply sat and dealt with public health matters just as they sat and dealt with other municipal matters. At the same time, if he had any preference, he thought he should have preferred the original proposition to the amendment, though he had no particular views one way or the other in the matter.

Amendment—put and passed.

MR. TRAYLEN said he had an additional clause to move, one that would give power to a Municipal Council, acting as the Local Health Board, to raise loans for the purposes of the Public Health Act. Very briefly he might relate the reason for this proposition. Somewhat recently there had been sitting in Perth a committee of inquiry into the working of that portion of the Act relating to the removal and disposal of night soil. The problem presented for their solution was how to remove the night soil of the city and render it innocuous, also how to render the removal both inexpensive and inoffensive. The conclusions reached by that committee—which consisted of members of the Local Board of Health, assisted by sundry other gentlemen of experience in municipal and sanitary affairs—were briefly these: that the character of the present receptacles should in some respects be changed, and that instead of having a small area within which the bucket system should be compulsory, the area

should be extended so as to embrace all the denser parts of the city, and that there should be duplicate buckets for every closet. It was also suggested that instead of emptying the buckets of their contents, as at present, in the yard or in the street, into the receptacle for it, and creating a very unpleasant odour, the bucket and its contents should be taken away in an air-tight cart or waggon, suitably constructed for the purpose, and that a clean and deodorised bucket should be left in place of the one taken away. Members would agree that this would be a vast improvement on the plan that obtained at present. It was also considered essential by the committee that the nightsoil of the city should be removed, in the manner indicated, to some place distant from the more densely populated parts of the town—preferably outside the town altogether—and buried in shallow trenches, and the ground used for growing plants of some kind. It would be seen at once that more money than could be raised by a 3d. rate would be required to carry out this proposed new system of dealing with nightsoil. It was estimated that to furnish the necessary plant, including duplicate buckets, horses, carts, harness, &c., would require about £2,500, and that after the original outlay there would be the expense of working the system, estimated at about £1,500 annually; and, in order to enable the board to raise the necessary funds for this purpose, he proposed this new clause.

**THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES:** I think the hon. member will not be able, under our new Standing Orders, to move this clause, inasmuch as the effect of it is to impose an additional tax upon the community. It is not competent for a private member to do so; it must be done by the Government, and I believe it should come before the House as a Message from the Governor.

**MR. TRAYLEN:** Do you rule against it then?

**THE CHAIRMAN:** I do. I think it is only within the province of the Government to introduce such a clause. The hon. member had better consult the Government in the matter.

Preamble and title agreed to.

Bill reported.

#### PRIVATE BILLS—JOINT STANDING ORDERS.

On the Order of the Day for the consideration of the Joint Standing Rules and Orders of the Houses of Parliament relating to Private Bills.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** (Hon. S. Burt) moved, without comment, that the rules be adopted.

The House adjourned at forty minutes past 5 o'clock.

#### Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 25th February, 1891.

Message from the Governor; approval of Joint Standing Rules and Orders—Printing Committee; appointment of—Appropriation Bill; first reading; Suspension of Standing Orders; second reading; committee; third reading—Public Health Act, 1886, Amendment Bill; first reading; second reading; Bill thrown out—Tobacco (unmanufactured) Duty Bill; first reading; Suspension of Standing Orders; second reading; committee; third reading—Railway Construction and Timber Concession, Darling Range; Contract with Mr. E. V. H. Keane—Scab Bill; Message from the Legislative Assembly disagreeing with Council's amendments; committee; Message to Legislative Assembly; reasons for insisting on amendments; Message from Legislative Assembly consenting to same—Adjournment.

**THE PRESIDENT** (Sir T. C. Campbell, Bart.) took the chair at 8 o'clock.

#### PRAYERS.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR—APPROVAL OF JOINT STANDING RULES AND ORDERS.

**THE PRESIDENT** announced the receipt of a Message from His Excellency the Governor, approving of the Joint Standing Rules and Orders relating to Private Bills.

#### PRINTING COMMITTEE.

The following members were appointed a Printing Committee:—The President, the Hon. G. W. Leake, and the Colonial Secretary (Hon. G. Shenton).