

that the judge at the trial should certify that he was dissatisfied with the verdict of the jury.

HON. R. S. HAYNES said he was willing to accept any amendment so long as the principle was embodied.

HON. F. M. STONE: It would be better to leave the clause as it stood.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: If it was the wish of the Committee he would withdraw the amendment, so that he could submit another one to the same effect subsequently. He thought it would perhaps be best to report progress.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the House at its rising do adjourn until Tuesday next.

Put and passed.

The House adjourned at 9.15 p.m. until Tuesday, 23rd August.

Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 17th August, 1898.

Notice of Motion: Procedure as to Financial Statement—Motion (urgency): "Hansard" Reports and an Omission—Motion (urgency): Customs and Excise Duties, Suspension of Standing Orders (new Tariff and Beer Duties); in Committee—Papers presented—Question: Davies v. Commissioner of Railways, Damages—Question: Works at Mundaring, Sale of Horses—Question: Tax on Absentee Owners of Lands Unimproved—Fire Brigades Bill, third reading—Warrants for Goods Indorsement Bill, third reading—Lodgers' Goods Protection Bill, third reading—Wines, Beer, and Spirits Sale Amendment Bill, second reading—Motion: Women's Franchise, debate resumed and adjourned—Early Closing Bill, first reading—Local Courts Evidence Bill, first reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

NOTICE OF MOTION: PROCEDURE AS TO FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

The PREMIER having given notice of the Financial Statement for the next day,

MR. LEAKE (Albany): On a point of procedure, it will be recollected that last session the debate on the Financial Statement was carried on in Committee, and I think you, Mr. Speaker, intimated that the debate should take place on the motion for going into Committee. I do not know whether you are prepared, sir, to give any rule on the subject.

THE SPEAKER: The debate should take place in Committee, after I have left the chair. I have looked through the proceedings everywhere else, and I find that is the course pursued.

MR. LEAKE: It was mentioned last session, was it not?

THE SPEAKER: I do not remember it.

THE PREMIER: Members can speak on it as much as they like in Committee.

MOTION (URGENCY): "HANSARD" REPORTS AND AN OMISSION.

MR. GREGORY (North Coolgardie): I desire to move the adjournment of the House, in order that I may draw attention to the omission of certain remarks which were made by the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) in this Assembly on Thursday last, in discussing a clause in the Land Bill relating to the insurance on house properties. The member for North-East Coolgardie, speaking in reference to clause 89, stated that working men, if they insured their houses, would be apt to burn their houses down and rob the insurance companies of the money. This statement has been left out of the *Hansard* report, and I wish to draw attention to the omission, in order that we may understand what should be in the *Hansard* reports and what should not.

MR. LOCKE: I second the motion.

THE SPEAKER: My attention has been drawn to this by the hon. member (Mr. Gregory), and I have communicated with the principal *Hansard* reporter in reference to it; and he informs me that, owing to the very rapid manner in which the member for North-East Coolgardie speaks, and also the low tone in which he speaks, it is sometimes difficult to hear what the hon. member says. But so many members of the House have stated to me

that those words were made use of on the occasion referred to, that I have directed the principal reporter that, in the revised report of the debate, the words which were omitted shall be put in.

MR. GREGORY: After that explanation, I ask leave to withdraw the motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

MOTION (URGENCY): CUSTOMS AND EXCISE DUTIES.

ALTERATION OF TARIFF—STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): As a matter of urgency, I beg to move that the Standing Orders be suspended in order that I may give notice of a motion in regard to certain duties of customs and excise. I beg to move that the Standing Orders be suspended to enable me to do so.

Question put and passed, and the Standing Orders suspended accordingly.

THE PREMIER: I beg to move that this House do now resolve itself into a Committee of the whole, for the purpose of considering certain duties of Customs and Excise.

Question put and passed.

IN COMMITTEE.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I beg to move:

That the Colonial Treasurer be authorised to take such measures as may be necessary for the protection of the revenue with reference to the duties of Customs and Excise, referred to in Schedules of the Bills laid upon the table of the House.

I do not know the exact procedure in this matter, but I am following that laid down in the Parliament of Victoria. The procedure we adopted in 1893 was that a message was sent from the Governor, and thereon a resolution was proposed authorising the Collector of Customs to collect the new duties from that day. It appears that the procedure in Victoria is somewhat different, and I have no doubt they have there had much more experience than we have with regard to this matter. Therefore, after consultation with the hon. the Speaker, I determined to follow the practice in that colony. The object we have in view is that the proposals of the Government, which I am prepared to place on the table at once with the permission of hon. mem-

bers, shall take effect from to-morrow morning; and, in the event of any of the items not being passed by the House, it will, of course, be necessary to make a refund of the duties collected. But I do not think it is usual, nor do I deem it necessary, that there should be any discussion at the present stage of the matter; what I propose to do being to formally make this motion, which will have the effect of protecting the revenue. I do not know that I can place the information upon the table in the ordinary way, because I am not aware that I have sufficient copies of the Bill; but there are enough to afford hon. members the information. If hon. members approve of the motion which I now propose, I intend further to move that the House do resolve itself into Committee on Tuesday next to consider the items. After the items have been considered and passed, either with or without amendments, we must bring down a Bill in the same way as we do the annual Estimates; and that, I think, will be following out the usual procedure. The only object in acting in this urgent way is to try, as well as we can, to protect the revenue with regard to any matters interfered with by the proposed changes. I beg to place the Excise Bill and the Customs Tariff on the table.

MR. LEAKE (Albany): I think I am right in assuming that the real effect of this motion will be to make the Tariff Bill retrospective when passed.

THE PREMIER: Yes; and more than that, it will take effect from to-morrow morning.

MR. LEAKE: Quite so; and the Act, as passed, will date as from to-day; and the collection of Customs duties will go on as if the new tariff had been passed.

THE PREMIER: Exactly. That is the object.

MR. LEAKE: That will not interfere with our right to discuss the matter later?

THE PREMIER: No; not in the slightest.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): The course of action proposed is quite regular and necessary, because the general public will, as soon as they get information of any alterations in the tariff, take goods out of bond and arrange their affairs in such a manner as would affect the revenue; but it is not quite cus-

tomary for the Treasurer to put off the debate. Following the ordinary custom, debate should go on immediately.

THE PREMIER: Hon. members would hardly be prepared to discuss the items at once.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Premier should be in a position to make, at any rate, the first-reading speech on the proposal.

THE PREMIER: If that were the usual course, I should be prepared to do it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I think it is both usual and desirable.

THE PREMIER: It does not seem to be so from the procedure in Victoria.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Debate does occur when the proposals are made; and the proposals, together with the reasons for them, should be stated, because any material alteration in the tariff has a very grave effect upon trade in many directions. For instance, if it were proposed to take a duty off goods, traffic in those goods would be immediately stopped tomorrow, because people would wait to see what the decision of Parliament would be. It is important that, as soon as the information is obtainable, the general public should possess it; and not only should they have the information itself, but they should know the general tone of this House as to the prospects of such legislation being passed. It is, therefore, important that the debate should take place as quickly as possible. I think the Premier is wise in taking this precaution at once, because the intended changes almost invariably leak out, and this course will protect the revenue; but it is also advisable to go on with the introduction of the measure at the present stage, so that the House may be aware what the proposals of the Government are, and commercial men may know what is likely to be the effect upon trade of the alterations submitted. If the Premier is prepared to go on, it would, in my opinion, be very much in the interests of trade to do so.

THE PREMIER: It took several months in Victoria to get such a Bill through.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The tariff itself might take three months.

MR. SOLOMON (South Fremantle): I quite agree with what the hon. member (Mr. Illingworth) has said. The probability is that, as soon as the information

is obtained, the retailers will put on a duty, and, consequently, the general public will suffer, because it will be impossible for them to get back the duty paid on their purchases.

THE PREMIER: I am quite prepared to go on.

MR. A. FORREST (West Kimberley): I think the proper course is being taken, for we want to see the proposals before we can discuss them. I wish to see the items.

MR. LEAKE: Do you not know what they are?

MR. A. FORREST: No. How should I? I am not a member of the Cabinet.

MR. LEAKE: But you might hear suggestions, you know.

MR. A. FORREST: I am surprised at the hon. member suggesting such a thing. I certainly protest against this matter being dealt with to-day. I would not object to the Premier making a statement, but members are not prepared to discuss the matter.

THE PREMIER: I bow to the hon. member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth), as a constitutional authority.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Oh, no.

THE PREMIER: And I shall be glad to have the benefit of his knowledge and experience to help us; but I do not think it is the custom to adopt the course which he suggests. These are matters of urgency, which come on without notice, as a rule, a day being fixed for the discussion. No doubt the discussion ought to take place at an early date.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We do not know what you propose to do.

THE PREMIER: I know that; but, before you are asked to decide anything, you will have an opportunity of hearing an explanation of the whole matter. I do not know that it would be usual to do at the present moment what the hon. member suggests. I know, at any rate, that in 1893 we did not take that course.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Will the Premier allow me to explain? Who is to give authority to the Collector of Customs to collect money on the articles affected?

THE PREMIER: The House will authorise the Treasurer to give instructions.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The House must have a basis for that authority.

THE PREMIER: This resolution will authorise the Treasurer to take such steps as may be necessary to protect the revenue.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It may be proposed to put 50s. a gallon on whisky, for what we know. I am not asking that a discussion should take place now, but that a statement should be made.

MR. LEAKE: We want the Bill.

THE PREMIER: The Bill is on the table, and I shall have something to say about it to-morrow night, when I will refer to it in my Financial Statement. I think the course of procedure now proposed is all right.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Perhaps, as we are so near the Financial Statement, no harm will take place by the discussion being delayed to that time.

Question put and passed.

THE SPEAKER resumed the chair.

Resolution of the Committee reported.

THE PREMIER: I move that the report be adopted. As I understand, the course of procedure is to treat these proposals of the Government in exactly the same way as the Annual Estimates, dealing with them item by item; and, when the House has passed all the items, to introduce a Bill for carrying out the resolutions of the House. That certainly was the practice adopted the other day in Victoria, and it is a good plan, for it affords every opportunity of discussing each item in Committee. In 1893, the Tariff Bill was introduced and discussed, and that seemed to me to be a very good plan; but it does not appear to be the system adopted elsewhere, and it is just as well for us to conform to the practice in other places, which will also, I think, give the House more opportunity of dealing with the matter than the introduction of the Bill at the present time would do.

Question put and passed.

Ordered that the consideration of the resolution be made an order of the day for the next Tuesday.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the **PREMIER:** Bill to amend the Customs Tariff. Bill to impose an Excise Duty on Beer.

Ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION: DAVIES v. COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS, DAMAGES.

MR. KENNY asked the Commissioner of Railways,—1. Why the Government had not paid the judgment given in the Supreme Court in the case of *Davies v. the Commissioner of Railways*. 2. Whether the Commissioner was aware that the solicitors for the plaintiff had threatened to put the bailiff in the railway station till the judgment was paid.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied:—1. The amount has not been paid over, pending an appeal to the Full Court. 2. No such threat has been made.

QUESTION: WORKS AT MUNDARING, SALE OF HORSES.

MR. HOLMES asked the Director of Public Works, how many horses had been sold by the Public Works Department at Mundaring; to whom they were sold, and at what price.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied:—1. Three horses have been removed from Mundaring for sale, but only one has been sold. 2. To Mr. Hooper, of Murray street, Perth, for the sum of seven pounds (£7).

QUESTION: TAX ON ABSENTEE OWNERS OF LANDS UNIMPROVED.

MR. HIGHAM asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands, whether it was his intention to introduce a Bill dealing with taxation of unimproved lands, alienated and owned by absentee owners, such lands being contiguous to, and improved by, our railway system.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell) replied:—That the Government had this matter under consideration.

FIRE BRIGADES BILL.

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

WARRANTS FOR GOODS INDORSEMENT BILL.

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

LODGERS' GOODS PROTECTION BILL.

On the motion of **MR. LEAKE**, the Bill was read a third time, and returned to

the Legislative Council, with a message informing them that the Assembly had agreed to the Bill without amendment.

WINES, BEER, AND SPIRITS SALE
AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

Mr. LOCKE (Sussex): In moving the second reading of this Bill, it is such a small measure that I think hon. members will agree it is very necessary. Under the present Act, a widow can hold a liquor license, but a married woman may not do so. There are plenty of married women who do hold licenses of hotels, and in many cases they have to hold the license in the name of a man other than the husband of the licensee, this nominal holder being on the premises simply as a dummy to comply with that requirement of the Act, which says the licensee shall be on the premises for a certain time. I do not think that is a good provision, for if a woman is capable of holding a liquor license at all, she ought to be able to hold it in her own right. Another reason is that a woman in this position runs a hotel in the name of a man other than her husband; and suppose she had to be prosecuted for selling liquor unlawfully on Sunday, all that could be done by way of punishment would be to take the license from the man as the nominal holder, and the woman could then get some other man to act in the same position, and so carry on the business. A statute which is so easily broken ought to be amended, and at the present time, when women's franchise is coming on and women's rights are being talked of all over the colony, as well as in this House, I think it should be one of the first moves in that direction to amend the Licensing Act in the way this Bill proposes, so that if a married woman carries on a hotel in a proper manner, and inasmuch as she can hold the property in her own right, why should not the license be in her own name? The licensing bench and the police would have a better chance of seeing that the licensed premises were properly carried on, and the holder of the license would be more careful. This is a small alteration and in the right direction, so that those who are so strongly in favor of women's

rights are bound to support the Bill. If a women's husband, having a hotel, goes away to the goldfields, she will have to give up the license, or arrange to carry it on in the name of a dummy to act as the actual licensee, who will be a man other than her husband, and such an arrangement cannot do any good. I think it is a mistake that the present Act operates in this way, and I hope the House will consent to amend it by reading this Bill a second time.

Mr. MORGANS (Coolgardie): I am glad to be able to support the second reading of the Bill, and in doing so, as a supporter of the women's franchise which is about to be discussed again in the House this evening, I am glad to see that the member in charge of this Bill intends to support that measure also. He has brought forward a question in which women's rights should be defended, and I agree that it is only fair that a married woman should have the same privilege as a widow in regard to the holding of a liquor license. In supporting that proposal, I hope I may call on the member in charge of the Bill to give his support when we again discuss the question of extending the franchise to women.

Mr. LEAKE (Albany): The member for Sussex (Mr. Locke) has convinced me of the necessity for this Bill, and particularly when he so capably directed a blow against dunnyming in regard to the practice of the female holder of a license having a man on the premises for a certain time for a certain purpose. I do not think we want these dummies at all, and the hon. member has amply made out his case. Whether the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) will be sufficiently tactful to catch the hon. member's vote on another question is a matter we need not go into; but if the member in charge of this Bill is prompted by that generosity which we believe him to possess, he will respond readily to that appeal. I see no objection to a married woman holding a hotel license, if we recognise the principle that such licenses can be held by a woman at all; and now that the law recognises the rights of married women to hold property, there is no reason why we should refuse assent to this measure.

Mr. SOLOMON (South Fremantle) : I do not intend to oppose the second reading, but I ask the Attorney General whether, if the Bill be passed, it will allow of a dual license being held in the event of the husband and wife agreeing to separate for the purpose of holding licenses in different districts. That is a matter as to which I, being a justice of the peace and member of a licensing board, feel myself in a difficulty, and I think it is an important point which should be settled.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather) : The hon. member for South Fremantle suggests that this Bill might raise a difficulty ; but the hon. member will bear in mind that a licensing bench, no matter whether this Bill passes or not, will still be able to exercise a discretion in granting or refusing the license to a married woman ; therefore I do not think the suggestion will raise any difficulty.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison) : It does seem to me that the difficulty is greater than has been stated, because a husband may be at Coolgardie and may deal with the licensing bench there, or he may be on the Murchison and deal with the bench there, while the wife may be in Fremantle or some other place, and so have to deal with a different licensing bench. If people can hold as many publicans' licenses as they like, that will be a different question. But can any provision be put in the Bill for preventing the husband and wife from applying separately to different licensing benches, for the purpose of obtaining and carrying on more than one business, and thus doing business with the same people out of the same stock? Something might be done to prevent that. As far as the principle of the Bill is concerned I see no objection to it, although I am not in favour of women's rights. I do think that many objectionable things are going on in this country, and in every part of Australia, in which widows and married women are carrying on businesses of a kind which are dangerous for women to carry on, and under circumstances which are calculated to degrade them. A widow may own the capital in a public-house which has been left by her husband, and as she cannot hold the license in her own name she

may employ a barman to hold it on her behalf ; consequently she is placed in a position which is undesirable, and one in which the Bill would give her relief. In that respect I think the Bill is desirable, if this licensing system is to be carried on at all, though I think it is absolutely bad. I should like to call the attention of the House to a fact that has come out recently, and that is that no less than 5,000 persons have been detected going into public-houses on a Sunday in the town of Fremantle. In this we have an instance of Parliament having made statutes which our people are not prepared to obey ; one of those dangerous instances in which Parliament, acting under emotional feeling or pressure, passes certain laws, and within a week or so those laws are flouted by the general public, and therefore cannot be enforced by the State. It does seem that if our police authorities are desirous of carrying out the will of Parliament by giving effect to statutes which it passes, something should be done in regard to this distinct breach of the law which I have mentioned ; and as the Premier is the Minister in charge of the police department, I think it is due to this House and to the colony that he should give some explanation as to why this wholesale breach of the law is permitted, and why the police do not interfere with those licensed victuallers who thus set at defiance a law which precludes the selling of drink on a Sunday. Why is there no attempt made by the police to stop this wholesale selling? I have good authority for saying there is more drink sold in the public-houses on Sunday than on any other day of the week ; and it becomes a question as to whether the laws of this country are to be flouted, and whether the police, who are charged with the care of hotels, are to allow this state of things to go on. I am not saying the police are to blame, because I know the difficulties there are in obtaining convictions for breaches of licenses ; and the whole thing arises from the fact, I am sorry to say, that public opinion is not with the law. That shows the danger of putting on the statute book a law which the strength of public opinion is not prepared to maintain ; but while the law is on the statute book the Pre-

mien, who is in charge of the police department, should surely offer some explanation as to why so grave a breach is allowed to go on continuously, and why no effort is made by the police to stop this Sunday-trading. If the statute is to be broken simply because the police refuse to enforce the powers which are within their control, it becomes a question as to how far Parliament legislates or the Government legislates. I take it that it is the duty of the Government to carry out the will of Parliament, and it is the duty of the Premier, who is in charge of the police, to see that Sunday-trading is not allowed to go on, and that some proper attempt is made to put it down. Nothing has been done, so far as I know, and I call upon the Premier to tell us why.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I am very anxious to give information when I can do so, but I never heard of those thousands of people in Fremantle going into hotels on Sunday, as stated by the hon. member.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I have spoken about it in this House.

THE PREMIER: Some hon. member may have made a speech on the matter, but I did not read the report of his speech, and do not know what was said. It is a curious thing that people are so anxious to break the law in regard to obtaining drink on Sunday, but the same thing is done all over the world. I suppose the fact that people are not allowed to drink on Sunday causes them rather to desire to have a little refreshment.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The law is enforced in Victoria.

THE PREMIER: I do not believe the law against Sunday drinking is in force anywhere. It seems to me that if a person is well off and well dressed, he can go into a hotel on Sunday and get drink anywhere, whereas if a person be poor, or not well dressed, he cannot get served in hotels on Sunday. You may go into any of the hotels in Melbourne on Sunday, and sit down in nice chairs, and have something to drink; but a person cannot do so if he is poor. I remember being in Glasgow some years ago, and I wondered to see so many persons going into and out of hotels. I asked a friend, "What are all those people going in for?" And he said, "They are going in to have a nip." I saw working

people and persons of all sorts, a regular stream of them, some going in and others going out. That was against the law, but it did not seem to matter.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What is the good of the law?

THE PREMIER: I quite agree that it is not a good thing to have a law which is broken in that manner, but this is one of the laws which is broken everywhere. If you go on the goldfield which the hon. member represents, you will find the young men having their football or cricket, and retiring to an hotel to have something to drink.

MR. MORAN: They have to work all the rest of the week.

THE PREMIER: If there is any disturbance in doing this sort of thing, then I think the police should interfere; but where people behave in a respectable manner, I do not think the police should be running after them all day on Sunday.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Why do you not rescind the law, then?

THE PREMIER: Because the hon. member will not allow us to do so. I do not think we should interfere with people, so long as they act respectably. The words of the hon. member (Mr. Illingworth) will be published in the Press, and the Government will make inquiries as to the drinking which he says goes on at Fremantle. We must see that the law is carried out reasonably; but I do not believe in running after persons who are law-abiding, merely because they obtain drink on Sunday. Still, people must not break the law openly.

MR. KENNY (North Murchison): I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, and I feel that it will serve the purpose for which it was introduced. We will all agree that there are women far more suited to hold licenses than many men, and I think the time has come when this disqualification, so far as it affects respectable women, should be removed. Nor can I see anything in the contention that we will be running any greater risk by reason of a woman, instead of a man, holding a license. I am sorry I am unable to see eye to eye with the member for Central Murchison in this matter.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I never said that. I said exactly the opposite.

MR. KENNY: I stand corrected. I should say that we are running a greater risk in having a man there. I trace this Licensing Act back to its natural cause, which is generally known as "the great Australian thirst;" and I think you can no more legislate successfully against the natural thirst of the average Australian than you can compel a man to say his prayers by Act of Parliament. I certainly saw a great deal in the Press about the members of the congregation of a certain church watching at the various hotels in Fremantle for the purpose of detecting Sunday trading and its results. Well, I am sorry to think those really good church-people did not show a better example, and just remain inside the four walls of their edifice and carry out what they profess, instead of bothering their heads about the few men who think fit to slake their thirst on Sunday. It is utterly impossible to enforce that particular section of the Wine, Beer, and Spirits Sale Act; and I quite agree with the Premier in this matter, that as long as the working men or the general public of any town or city do not create a disturbance or make an unseemly display, it will be far better to allow them to go in and have their drinks quietly than attempt to prevent them. In regard to entirely doing away with this Act, I am sure no one would more strongly oppose an attempt to amend the Act in the direction suggested than the member for Central Murchison, and I think he would have a majority of this House with him. None of us would approve of the hotels being opened on Sunday for the purpose of supplying drink to those who wish to take more than is good for them.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: How much is good for them?

MR. KENNY: I invariably allow the individual to settle that question for himself. We had better leave the Act as it is, rather than attempt to improve it in either of the ways suggested. I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill, and hope to see it pass into law.

MR. WALTER JAMES (East Perth): I regret that in this matter I do not agree with the member for North Murchison (Mr. Kenny) or with the Premier. I realise thoroughly that it does not always follow, because you have a law on

your statute-book, you should rigorously enforce it. The value of our laws is largely dependent upon the discretion shown in their administration; it is in the wise administration of an Act that its wisdom very often appears, and it may well be that we are not called upon to rigorously enforce an Act to such an extent as would amount to persecution; but I cannot for a moment admit that such expressions as have fallen from the leader of the Government should be allowed to pass without some protest. I venture to think that, so far as the leader of the Government is concerned, when we discuss such matters as these in Parliament, it should be understood that, while we have laws, they ought to be observed. That, at all events, should be the position hon. members ought to take up; and I venture to think that when, in a comparatively small place like Fremantle, the Act is so outrageously broken that 5,000 people on one Sunday—

MR. VOSPER: Do you think those statistics are reliable?

MR. JAMES: That 5,000 people, at all events, could have been found in such positions as to lead to the inevitable conclusion that they were breaking the Act, that is not by any means a good thing. If the law is broken to that extent, it is openly broken, and such proceedings ought to be checked. These figures are given by people who, I should think, can be trusted. I am prepared to make a good allowance for their enthusiasm.

MR. MORAN: "Cranks."

MR. JAMES: They may be "cranks"—enthusiasts are always so called; but we will make a very considerable allowance, and say they saw double on account of their enthusiasm. Even then, there were 2,500 people in a small place like Fremantle who broke the law on one Sunday. If that be so, the administration of the Act is getting far too lax, and some steps should be taken to amend it. Prevention should not be enforced so as to amount to persecution; but, on the other hand, if the utterances of the Premier are to receive an endorsement from this House, I have no hesitation in saying that, in a month from this date, those provisions which give the Sunday closing will be absolutely a dead letter. The risk we run is that, if expressions of

this sort are made use of in such a quarter, those who are appointed to see that this Act is observed will be encouraged to allow it to be broken, and they will derive their encouragement from the words of the Premier. We must take every possible precaution to check Sunday trading.

MR. A. FORREST: There is Sunday trading in England.

MR. JAMES: There are lots of things in England which we have not here. There is a House of Lords in England, but there is none in this colony. There is a place called Westminster Abbey in England, but there is no such place here.

MR. A. FORREST: That is beside the question.

MR. JAMES: Just like the hon. member's interjection—entirely irrelevant. It is a very much controverted point in England whether the Sunday opening of hotels has not led to a very serious increase of drinking. In our legislation on this question we are moving side by side with the majority of the Australian colonies; and that fact should appeal to us, for their legislation is progressive like ours. We ought to stick to the principle we have already put on the statute book, and insist on the enforcement of the provision for Sunday closing.

MR. LEAKE: That is not in this Bill.

MR. JAMES: And we should not allow the law to be so openly broken as it has been in Fremantle. I quite agree that it is not in the Bill; but the matter has been referred to by previous speakers, and I make these observations because I regret to hear the right hon. gentleman practically state that the publicans are entitled to openly break the law. So far as this Bill is concerned, I am opposed to it. The only object in passing this Bill is to give to a married woman the right of holding a license, and I object to it most strongly. If a married woman is living with her husband, why should not the husband hold the license? But let there be provision that if she has a deed of separation, or has obtained a divorce, and consequently is not living with him, that then she shall have the right to hold a license. If we permit the law to stand as at present we shall be encouraging one of the worst

possible features in connection with the Married Women's Property Act, by affording opportunity for the perpetration of fraud. In England one of the most striking features has been the way in which business people avail themselves of the right the Act gives them to go on trading years and years in their own names, and let the licenses be held in the names of their wives. By passing this legislation you would be simply adding one more inducement to fraud. If the wife and husband are living together, there can be no object for such legislation. Is there an idea that the husband should have a license for one hotel and the wife for another? I submit that there is not. It might very well be that, though a woman is married, she might be divorced or separated, and under those conditions I submit you are placing no limitation upon her freedom; but the only effect of this Bill as it now stands will be that, where the woman and her husband are living together, you will give the woman the right to have the license in her name. I cannot conceive of any reason why that should be done, whilst, on the other hand, there are abundant good reasons why we should insist on the license being in the name of the husband.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Suppose a man is a working miner?

MR. JAMES: If he is a working miner living on the premises, he can still have a license.

MR. A. FORREST: The wife might want a license down here, while her husband is working on the goldfields.

MR. JAMES: She might; but how many cases are there like that? I assert without fear of contradiction that if you allow a married woman to have a license, as you suggest by this Bill as now drawn, it will be used for fraudulent purposes in nine cases out of ten, and I speak with far greater authority than the hon. member for Sussex (Mr. Locke), because I know from my professional experience how these frauds are worked. If the hon. member knew anything about the Married Women's Property Act, he would be aware how often expressions have fallen from the bench of England regarding the grave frauds perpetrated through that Act.

MR. CONOLLY (Dundas): I have great pleasure in supporting the remarks which have fallen from the member for East Perth (Mr. James). I think that the Bill as it now stands might in a great number of cases be open to much abuse. The hon. member for East Perth has mentioned cases that are worthy the consideration of this House, and when this Bill is discussed in committee it will be well for hon. members to consider an amendment which should have for its object the prevention of any woman receiving a license who has a husband residing in the same town and possibly holding a license for another hotel. On the other hand, I am very pleased indeed that this Bill has been submitted to the House, because to my knowledge there are many really hard and harsh clauses affecting women under the present Act. For instance, even in my constituency there is a woman whose husband for the last 10 years has been in a lunatic asylum, and she cannot hold a license in her name, the result being that she has to resort in a measure to some kind of subterfuge to evade the law, so as to carry on what in the eyes of every reasonable and competent person must be a perfectly legitimate trade. There can be no reasonable cause given why she should not possess all the benefits and privileges of the Spirit Sale Act. With some amendments which, no doubt, the hon. member for East Perth, or some other member, will introduce into the Bill, I shall have much pleasure in supporting the second reading.

MR. GEORGE (Murray): This Bill is one which, although very short, requires a great amount of consideration from hon. members. I think that if a woman is married and is living with her husband, he is the person who should have the license.

MR. A. FORREST: He may be in Coolgardie.

MR. GEORGE: He may be in heaven, but we are speaking of Perth. I repeat that where a woman is married and living with her husband, the husband, who has to take the responsibility of all the acts in connection with the house, is the person who should have the license. This case might come about: A man

whose character might not be sufficiently good for him to be able to get a license, might have for his wife one of the best women in the world. The wife could obtain a license, and he could hang about the public-house, throwing all his bad influence over the place; yet scarcely anything could be done to him, because he would be there simply as a lodger and not holding the license. I take it that if hon. members are prepared to pass this clause as it stands, it will be necessary for them, when the Bill for conferring female suffrage comes on this evening, to gracefully concede the matter without any debate whatever. If they assent to the one thing, they must really assent to the other. I have very strong opinions on this matter, not liking to see a woman engaged in a trade of this sort at all. I do not wish to say any word against barmaids as barmaids, or as women, but I would very much prefer they were not behind the bar. There are things connected with the liquor traffic which, to my mind, are not elevating. Language frequently passes in bars which is disgusting enough for men to listen to, and must certainly be equally disgusting to women; and though it may be said they get used to it, and take no notice of it, I assert that it is a bad thing for women as well as men to get accustomed to language of an improper description. If it were a question of the old-fashioned hotel, which people visited for the purpose of getting what hotels were established for, board and residence for themselves, and attention for their horses, it would be a very different matter; but, as far as I can ascertain, the bulk of the hotels in Western Australia in the big towns exist principally for the liquor trade. If you go for a meal, they are bound to give you one; but they would rather that you did not ask for it, as they derive no profit from it. I know that when I am out in the bush, or anywhere of the kind, they do not make any profit out of me, at any rate. They may obtain profit from the liquor, but not the meals. As far as I understand the member for East Perth (Mr. James), I am certainly inclined to go with him this once; and perhaps that will make some little amends for occasions on which I am not

so ready to follow his lead. I presume that it will be possible, when this matter comes into Committee, to deal with section 2 a little more fully. Therefore, I reserve my remarks on this subject until we reach that stage. The business in question is one which, in my opinion, lowers women very considerably. I do not wish to be understood to be casting any reflection upon any ladies behind the bars, or upon publicans' wives, or anything of that sort, for I think they are probably as good and as moral as other women; but, at the same time, the very influence of the place must lower them insensibly.

Mr. MORAN (East Coolgardie): I think I ought to support the second reading of this Bill; for although, perhaps, there is a great deal of truth in what the member for the Murray (Mr. George) has said, it is going rather deep in Western Australia. We have not reached the abolition of barmaids in this colony. The provision enabling a married woman to hold a license ought, however, to be safeguarded in some respects. I am of opinion that the whole of the power should be left in the hands of the licensing bench. I am informed that a widow may hold a license at the present time; therefore, the bill appears to me to be redundant; but I can conceive occasions on which a married woman should be allowed to hold a license, and I do not think the law should be so stringent as to altogether prohibit her from doing so, because she has a husband alive somewhere. And especially does that argument hold good in a colony like this, where we have a large proportion of the male population away perhaps on the goldfields, whilst their wives are endeavouring to support themselves and their families in other parts of the colony. It is not at all a rare occurrence to come across cases in which the wife and family live in some town in Western Australia, whilst the husband is on the goldfields, to which both married and single are drawn. I hope we shall give the concession, but that it will be given in such a way that we shall not have a man as the holder of a license in one street in a town, and his wife as the holder of another license in the same town. That would be going beyond what any of us desire, and, what is more, it

would be giving undue influence, as it would afford an influential publican an opportunity to get a license for his wife, which might shut out someone else from obtaining it. Our legal friends may be able to suggest some safeguards. Before I sit down I would like to say, in reference to Sunday trading, that I hope the remarks of the Premier will not be taken too seriously, but in a jocular sense. I hope that the members for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) and East Perth (Mr. James) will not endeavour to make a law absolutely prohibiting trading on Sundays. The real object of preventing Sunday trading is to keep up a respectable appearance, so that the front door shall not be open, and there shall be no one singing and dancing, and perhaps drinking to excess; but I cannot see much harm in a little Sunday trading, so long as it is conducted in a proper manner. As member for a goldfields constituency, I am representing the largest working population in Western Australia, comprising Kalgoorlie and the Boulder, where, if the hotelkeepers were absolutely compelled to keep their premises closed, a great hardship would be inflicted. Sunday, it appears to me, is a day for all sorts of sports and recreation, but very little drunkenness occurs, and men coming very long distances should have an opportunity of obtaining refreshment. You cannot keep men sober by Act of Parliament, and it is very foolish to prevent them from having any stimulants, especially when they have come a distance. I hope that we shall strike a happy medium, and that, whilst we shall not countenance Sunday trading, we shall not go to the other extreme. I know Brisbane and Adelaide, and can assert that there is no hotel there, as far as I could ascertain, where I could not obtain a drink on a Sunday. I may say candidly that I often have had a drink in a hotel on a Sunday. It consisted of lemonade, or a beverage of that sort, but I could have had something in it if I had chosen. No noise, confusion, or drunkenness existed there, and no one's feelings were offended. The Sunday must be kept sacred, in my opinion; but we know perfectly well that the law should not be pushed to any extreme rigour, whilst it is absolutely unnecessary, I be-

lieve, for anybody in this House to lend his countenance to what would be a breaking of the law.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

MOTION: WOMEN'S FRANCHISE.

Debate resumed on the motion of Mr. JAMES moved on the 10th of August, for extending the political franchise to women.

MR. GEORGE (Murray): It is very difficult to introduce anything new into so old a question as the rights or wrongs of women. This question has been brought up several times by the member for East Perth (Mr. James) in this Assembly, and session after session, undaunted and undismayed, he comes forth with the same old weapons furnished and polished up a little, with perhaps a new shaft put in his broken lance and the dents knocked out of his shield—he comes forward in this House, has another tilt, gets beaten, and retires to come up again. What he is to get this time, the division will tell; but seeing that hon. members have grown a little older, he may say they have grown wiser, and he may be able, with that persuasive tongue of his, to turn them round and induce them to vote for this motion. If he does so, he will deserve that reward, because he has fought strenuously, and fought long to gain his object. My views on the question are pretty well known. The good old-fashioned woman is good enough for me, and I believe she is good enough for the rest of the world. Those who cannot appreciate her in her proper sphere, which is her home, where her influence should reign supreme, where it is far better she should rule rather than seek to exercise an influence on platforms—those who do not appreciate her there have not learnt right lessons from the companionship of the good women they have known. My friend, the member for East Perth (Mr. James), is no doubt very sincere in this movement; but there is such a thing as self-deception, and I believe that, in his desire to please that sex, which has certainly more to do in returning members to Parliament than has the sterner sex, I think the hon. member is deceiving himself. If a candidate puts

up for election, whether for a municipal council or for Parliament, and can get the support of the ladies, it is about the biggest factor he can have for insuring success in his election.

MR. MITCHELL: You should give them the franchise, after that.

MR. GEORGE: I say that in regard to an election, if you can get the ladies on your side, they will do more in canvassing in one half-day than even the most good-looking, youthful, well-dressed, well-sprigged-up young candidate that ever came before a constituency. I have no doubt the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Mergans) is one of the best candidates it is possible to get at an election; but if three candidates were going through a district, having the one object in view, and if one secured the sympathy and support of the ladies and the others did not, that one would be sure to beat the other two. Before I go further, I wish to put myself right with the House. I occasionally, in my hot-headed, bull-at-a-gate style of business, make mistakes, and I did so the other evening, for which I was corrected by my genial friend who represents one of the Murchison districts, the Opposition whip (Mr. Kenny). He said I had stated that Mr. James had never done any work or soiled his hands with hard work; and from what the hon. member (Mr. Kenny) told us, it seems the member for East Perth did once do some work.

MR. A. FORREST: It was work! He was jackarooing in the North.

MR. GEORGE: Well, he is said to have put up a fence; and we know he is expert in another kind of fence, for he knows how to fence in such a way as to induce some persons to deviate from the straight line of argument, and he knows how to use his skill in fencing, so as to induce people to adopt his views. We know that, in putting up a fence, a good deal of smooth fencing-wire is run through the posts; and it may be that in handling the smooth fencing-wire up in the North, where there may have been no barbs in it, he has acquired that large amount of "smoothness" which we notice when he speaks in this House. I hope his experience in fencing did him good; but I do not call that particularly hard work, and if he were to do a little more hard work

he might be able to sympathise more than he does at present with the true class of working men, which he talks so much about, but of whose condition and requirements he knows so little. But we are told that this carb-fencing work was done by one who was born in Western Australia; and I regret very much, in one respect, that a poor unfortunate individual like myself, born in England, was not born in Western Australia, because when I die my end will be very commonplace, and if I get half a line in a newspaper it will be as much as I can expect, being a person who was not born in the colony; whereas if I had been born in Western Australia, it would be said of me, in the language of the hon. member (Mr. Kenny), "He was a native of the colony, and a good fellow, and did work sometimes, and he did some good in the colony." But that will not be said of me because I am not a West Australian, in the sense of not having been born here. The hon. member (Mr. Kenny) also said I was always amusing and not always instructive; but, if I may reply in his own style, I will say he is sometimes instructive and never amusing. I must congratulate the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) on the good, sound, common-sense speech he made the other night on this question of women's franchise; a speech which, if it were possible to carry conviction into the minds of the woman's-righters, would have convinced them right away: but it is impossible to convince them they are wrong, and so he did not succeed in doing it. Still, he made a good, common-sense speech, and appealed to us in a fashion which all could appreciate, for it carried us right away to that most sacred place, the home, where, as he told us, women's rights and duties are in their proper place, and from which we would not willingly see her changed to another more public arena. Such a wish could come only from some blatant sex-representative, who desires to see women on the platform. The hon. member (Mr. Illingworth) also made a good argument when he stated that, before we begin to talk of this extension of the franchise to women, we should give men their electoral rights; for, he said, there are 70,000 men who, by the right of man-

hood, ought to be on the electoral roll, but are not, and we should redress that wrong by giving them the right to say on this question as to whether the suffrage should be granted to women or not.

MR. MORGANS: The men can get on the roll, if they like.

MR. GEORGE: I could tell the hon. member that, when some people are put on the roll, they get knocked off again.

MR. JAMES: That is a question of machinery, and not of principle.

MR. GEORGE: Let us say there are some 60,000 men not on the roll, and as it is said they can get on if they like, I say that although there is the machinery to put them on, yet the machinery is so placed that it is difficult for working men to get enrolled, unless they lose a great deal of time in doing so. I reckon we ought to put that matter right, first of all, and, in the meantime, we can relegate this question of women's suffrage to another session, so that we may discuss it after we have redressed the present wrongs in regard to men not being on the roll who ought to be there, for we cannot say at present that this Assembly thoroughly represents the people of the colony. I feel strongly on this subject, and I say this House is not properly representative of the people, although, as the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) suggests, the members of this House do try their best to fulfil their duty as representatives, and probably they do that as well as any men who could be elected in the colony to be put in their places. That the present members do not fully represent the people is proved by the fact that, even if the 70,000 men who are not on the roll were put there, this House would still not be fully representative, for the simple reason that the constituencies are cut up in such a fashion that they do not give any proper representation on the basis of population.

MR. JAMES: The women are not represented.

MR. GEORGE: We will leave the women alone for a moment, if you please. I am speaking now of the 70,000 men who are not on the roll. One hon. member in this House does his best to represent 32 men and 100,000 sheep or bullocks—one or the other, for I am not par-

ticular to a sheep, or a bullock, or a pig—and do you mean to say that the gentleman who represents those 32 men electors is as fully representative as the member who represents 1,200 voters? Certainly not.

MR. A. FORREST: Perhaps, more so.

MR. GEORGE: The hon. member says "perhaps, more so." I suppose he means "more so" by reason of his money-bags, or because he has more property, or holds a greater number of shares, receives more interest, has bigger overdrafts, or greater influence, or something of that sort; but he does not represent the same number of people; and what we have to face in this colony, as regards electoral matters, is that we are supposed to have practically manhood suffrage, but we have not got it. We have not got manhood suffrage, because we find that the vote of a member in this Chamber, representing only 32 electors, counts for as much as that of a member who represents 1,200 or 2,000 people. I have not the slightest doubt that the Premier can clearly see what I am driving at.

THE PREMIER: Not quite.

MR. GEORGE: You cannot see it? Well, I shall have to commence again. I thought I was carrying conviction to the Treasury benches.

THE PREMIER: I cannot see exactly what you are driving at.

MR. GEORGE: I was endeavouring to explain to the right hon. gentleman and his colleagues the fact that our present House, though it consists of honest, honourable, and true men—as all members are, myself included—nevertheless does not represent the manhood of this colony. My friend, the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest), with whom it is painful for me to differ, says I am mistaken. I put the case of a man who represents 32 men and 100,000 bullocks; and I say that such a member does not represent the manhood of the country to the same extent as he would if he were returned by a constituency having 1,200 voters on the roll.

THE PREMIER: We all represent the whole colony—every one of us.

MR. GEORGE: My hon. friend says we represent the whole of the colony. There is not the slightest doubt we do, or we think we do. At the same time,

when we come to look at the thing, and to consider the class basis upon which our representation is founded, we shall find that we do not represent the whole of the colony, or anything like it. My friend, the Opposition whip (Mr. Kenny), who represents the picks and shovels of the North Murchison, 14,000 or 15,000 miners, represents more men, but has no more power in this House than the hon. member—I do not know where he hails from—who represents only 32 men and 100,000 bullocks. And I say that, so long as there are 70,000 persons who have a right to be on the roll, and are not on the roll, we have no right to branch off from the main subject, and to create a new class of voters. We have no right to do so until we have put those 70,000 men on the roll, and given them proper and fair representation. I know I am a little lame, in my way of explaining it; but I hope hon. members will assist me by thinking the matter out. It seems to me to be clear. I am putting it forward in a very crude fashion, but they can polish it up, and turn it out in proper form. I am not sure whether I have convinced the Premier now.

THE PREMIER: You have done very well.

MR. GEORGE: But the right hon. gentleman should really pay more attention to what I say. I always listen very attentively to his speeches, and I think he should listen to mine. But I am afraid I should be trespassing on the kindness of the House if I were to attempt to go over my arguments again at present. The hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James) lost his temper a little the other evening; and I do not wonder at it, for I know the member for the Murray (Mr. George), and a few other hon. members, were putting in interjections enough to "rile" the most placid of men. But he should not have said the cruel things he did on that occasion. There is no excuse whatever for what he did say. I believe he said something like this, that we have passed an Act by virtue of which a mere dog cannot be hurt without imprisonment following the offence, but that, when legislation is introduced for the purpose of protecting women from cruelty and wrong ten thousand times worse than that inflicted on dogs, the Bill is thrown out with

contumely and insult. I was listening very attentively to the hon. member, and I think, when he gets away from this House and its heated atmosphere, he will say to himself: "There are forty-three gentlemen in that Assembly to whom I owe an apology to-night." There has never been a Bill brought into this House, during the four sessions I have sat here, which has been thrown out with contumely and insult—nothing of the sort. If it were—if any man were brazen enough to get up in this Assembly and attempt to use language which was intended to be insulting to women, I do not think he would go out of the refreshment-room with his bones unbroken. We should not be spoken of in this way merely because we cannot agree with the member for East Perth in his fad. I call it a fad, advisedly; and I hope he will not class that as insult and contumely, or anything of the sort. I call this subject his fad, just in the sense that my fad is the Black Swan Foundry. And my fad, the Black Swan Foundry, is just as respectable as his fad about female suffrage. Is it reasonable that, simply because we cannot agree with the hon. member in his fad about the women's suffrage, we are to be told that we thrust insult and contumely on a sex which we respect as much as, and perhaps a little more, if possible than, does the hon. member himself?

MR. JAMES: I said nothing of the sort. I did not refer to this House at all.

MR. GEORGE: Of course I cannot refer to *transard*, and can only quote from memory. But, as far as my memory is concerned, what I have stated is accurate; and I appeal to hon. members who were present to say if it is not correct.

MR. MORAN: Hear, hear.

MR. GEORGE: And I say the member for East Perth has no right to say such things. He has not the slightest right to come here and lecture us and preach sermons at us in the way he does, or to tell us we are prepared to throw insult and contumely upon what I may fairly term the better half of humanity, because we do not agree with his fad. It is just as well for all of us to look at home, before we go into a matter of this sort. I wonder what sort of a reception I should get, when I went to my little domicile, if I

had been throwing insult and contumely upon the sex to which my wife belongs.

MR. MORAN: You would be received with a brick.

MR. GEORGE: Well, I don't know whether I should be received with a brick or not; and there are bricks and bricks. There are bricks made of sand, and bricks made of clay; there are Melbourne bricks and Perth bricks; but I fancy the sort of brick which would be used in this case would not be a physical-force brick, but that I should be received with some of those calm, quiet remarks which we all get occasionally—even my friend the member for East Perth—from the ladies who rule our homes. Although the old saying that "a man is master in his own house" is all very well for us to say when we are away from home, we know that the mistress has far more power in the house than the master. Therefore I do not thank the hon. member for having insulted forty-three members of this House, who have quite as much respect as he has for the sex of whose cause he is the champion. The hon. member pleaded, as he always does plead—I have not sufficient Latin to put a learned phrase to it—but he always addresses his appeal to our feelings.

A MEMBER: The *argumentum ad hominem*.

MR. GEORGE: And if he cannot conquer our feelings, he irritates them. It is something like giving a man a wound, and then rubbing in Cayenne pepper and salt to irritate it. Inflammation is thus produced, and there is a lot of trouble. The hon. member does that; and I say he has no business to do it. He wants women to have the franchise; and his principal reason for wanting them to have it is because of the mighty influence on social questions they would exercise at the polling booths. Now I would like him to show us where woman's influence comes in. The member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) gave us an example the other day of a case in point, under the auspices of an association against which I have nothing to say, for I have not the slightest doubt they are doing their best according to their lights, and are probably doing better, in some respects, than we could do. But this temperance association called a meeting

to talk on temperance subjects, and they put on a whisky-drinker to make the principal speech, while the cold-water man sat out in the cold.

Mr. VOSPER: Very appropriate, too.

Mr. GEORGE: They put up a whiskey-drinker to make the principal speech: and, without wishing to reflect on the moral character of some of the gentlemen there present—without wishing to make any invidious contrasts—I may say that there were certainly men on that platform who were not whisky-drinkers, and who did drink cold water, whose moral character was perhaps cleaner than that of some of the gentlemen who were called upon to speak that evening. Now let us just look at that from a common-sense point of view. Does it not show that the Women's Christian Temperance Union are just as "fly to business" as any of us? They wanted an attraction; and it did not matter a button to them whether the man was a whisky-drinker or not, so long as his position in society would attract people to the meeting.

Mr. MORAN: With a red nose!

Mr. GEORGE: It is immaterial to my argument whether his nose was red or blue, or whether he had a nose at all. The fact of the matter was that they wished to get an attraction to draw the public to their meeting; they wished to get as many influential people as possible to support their cause, and they would not mind taking—and I would do the same if I were in their position—they would not mind taking the coin that came out of the pocket of the whisky-drinker, and represented, perhaps, the proceeds of whisky-selling, if they thought it would help their objects forward. And I would do just the same thing.

Mr. VOSPER: They would "spoil the Egyptians," I suppose?

Mr. GEORGE: As far as the Egyptians are concerned, my opinion is, if you wish to know it, and if it is relevant to the subject, that I do not think the Israelites were much good, or they would have turned the Egyptians into the Red Sea long before they did so; that is, if the ancient Egyptians were anything like the modern Egyptians, though I think the race is a little worse now than it was in those days. My friend talks about the influence

women would exercise upon the social question, and says they would look to a man's moral character, and would expect from their representatives all the virtues it is possible for man to have. I say their action at the meeting my friend speaks of does not show that they would do so; and I think it is a most conclusive argument that they would not do so, for the simple reason that they are now fighting a battle. They are fighting a battle, in the same way as any of us are doing who are engaged in trade, though I know there are few hon. members engaged in trade with the exception of myself.

Mr. MORAN: We are all in training, at any rate.

Mr. GEORGE: Those of us who are in trade, if we go about to sell our whisky, or to introduce ourselves to a new customer, or anything of that sort, generally try to make things as nice and as smooth as possible—to use as much tact as we are blessed with, and to keep our tempers in the background, as far as may be, until we have made our connection. These ladies, with the aid of the member for East Perth (Mr. James), are trying to bring about a social revolution; and a social revolution which is based upon what?—upon temperance and the possession of all the virtues. And yet, when they are on their preliminary canter, and starting their crusade, instead of calling upon the men who are the practisers of what their union preaches, they call upon men who cannot be included in that category. Now my argument was that, if they will do this at a time when, from a business point of view, if for no other reason, they should have endeavoured to have the cleanest platform they could get, they will act similarly on other occasions. Not that I think whisky is unclean—I like a little myself—but if I were a temperance man I would not take whisky, and if I were going to give a lecture on temperance, I would not have a whisky-drinker on the platform. If I wanted the whisky-drinkers to attend, I would say to them: "Your proper place is down below. Sit there, and I will try to convert you; but on my platform there will be nothing but cold water." If the Women's Christian Temperance Union do these things at the start of their crusade, what guarantee have we that, after they have entered upon this great social revo-

lution, they will exercise those powers of discrimination for which the hon. member wishes us to give them credit? I say the idea will not hold water—not even cold water.

MR. MORAN : It holds a drop of whisky.

MR. GEORGE : No ; I do not think there is much whisky-drinking amongst women. I do not think they drink to anything like the same extent as men ; and I am afraid, if they did, it would be a bad look-out for the race. Now supposing they have got this vote—

A MEMBER : They have got it now.

MR. GEORGE : The hon. member has been checked two or three times for his inexperience with regard to the rules of this House. What is the use of discussing the Bill if it is already law? I say, fearless of contradiction, that it is not law ; that they have not got the vote. If they had it, the member for East Perth would find better material to exercise himself upon than this woman's suffrage question. I hope the hon. gentleman will just think the matter over, and he will then be able to vote intelligently on this motion. I am quite aware that in some matters women have a vote. They have a vote in connection with municipalities ; and how do they use it?

MR. HIGHAM : Well.

MR. GEORGE : If they vote at all, they use it well, and they could not do otherwise ; but how do they use it? What percentage of them votes? This is a very interesting subject. There was a municipal election at Claremont, the other day, and many women there had votes.

MR. HIGHAM : Nearly all of them voted.

MR. GEORGE : I was at the election, and I am told that not more than about 15 per cent. of the female ratepayers voted. My informant may be a liar, but I think he is a fairly honourable and square man. The hon. member says the bulk of them voted, but my informant says only 15 per cent. voted. I may tell the hon. member what I saw at that election. I saw five carriages outside one little cottage, with the object of persuading the lady inside to vote. She had a vote ; it was her dwelling, her land, and her vote ; but she did not want to vote. I tried to persuade her to go to the poll, though I did not tell her whom to vote

for ; but she said, "No, my place is at home, among my children."

MR. WOOD : The same argument applies to men.

MR. GEORGE : No ; the men do not bring up that sort of argument, and the hon. member knows it. This lady said : "My place is at home. I would like my husband"—I think she called him Ted, or something of that sort—"to go and vote" ; but he could not vote, and she wanted to stay at home to see after her children. She has four children—"four woman's rights" at home, and she considered she had quite enough woman's rights to attend to.

MR. JAMES : The right to vote did not demoralise her. That is our case.

MR. GEORGE : I wish the hon. member would not interrupt. I have had a little experience with regard to election matters, as far as Perth is concerned ; and I have often tried to get ladies to vote at municipal elections, and can tell you it is a very difficult matter to get them to come along. I remember going to a school to see the teacher, and she was a strong-minded woman, too ; but she was not married—not she ; and when I ventured to suggest to her, in my persuasive fashion, that it would be as well if she left the youthful intellect to itself for a few minutes while she came to the poll, and did her duty as a man, or as a woman, in the city where her interests lay, she pretty well shoved me out of the place with a broom.

MR. JAMES : She would not trust him.

MR. GEORGE : The hon. member knows that when he was a member of the Perth City Council, and wanted to get votes to put him in, and the other fellow out, he always sent out a reconnoitring party first, in the shape of some ladies ; he got those ladies to talk over the other ladies ; and then clinched the bargain himself with that charming personality which has been redeemed from scorn—I mean the scorn of the worker — by the gentle and kindly efforts of my friend the Opposition whip, who acts as historian for the West Australian. I think I have been able to show the House that the hon. member (Mr. James), in handling his subject, used arguments which, upon calm consideration and reflection, he must regret. He used argu-

ments which certainly surprised me; and, if I had not taken into consideration the fact that he rose under very disadvantageous circumstances to deliver himself of his annual fad, I should have felt inclined to have been a little bit more indignant with him than I have been to-night. But I know he had been waiting very patiently for a long while; and he rose, I think, about ten o'clock at night, to make a speech which he ought to have commenced about half-past seven; consequently we did not hear him to the best advantage under the circumstances.

MR. HIGHAM: He ought to have talked more.

MR. GEORGE: It is not a question of length of argument. That is not the side of the question which appeals to me. It simply meant that the hon. member had been sitting, I might say, with his safety-valve screwed down. Instead of being able to work at 140lb. pressure, he had got the safety-valve screwed down to about 180lbs., and even then the steam was coming out; therefore he was not able to collect himself, and deliver his address in that calm, deliberate fashion which would have been conducive to argument, and perhaps to carrying conviction to the minds of his hearers. I regret that very much, because I have a sincere regard for the member for East Perth. I know that he feels very strongly on these matters, and therefore I am prepared to give him a wide forgiveness for a number of his sins—the sin, for instance, of casting an insult upon 43 members of this House; and I shall be prepared to show, before I sit down, in language perhaps more terse than I have hitherto used in this discussion, the exact arguments which I bring to bear upon this question.

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

At 7.30 p.m. the SPEAKER resumed the chair.

MR. GEORGE: Before the House adjourned I went a little lightly and briefly into the subject, and I will endeavour now to deal with the matter from another aspect, which seems to me to be conclusive to both arguments I placed before the House before the adjournment. Hon. members will remember that I asked how

women would use the vote if they obtained it. My experience is that they would not use it except in a very small degree indeed, and the class of women who would use it, or at any rate the class whom I and those who think with me would use it, are those who are misplaced when they appear upon a public platform to give utterance to words which would be better and more forcibly delivered by a member of the male portion of the population. I stated as clearly as I possibly could that there are sixty thousand or seventy thousand men unrepresented in this colony, and it is premature to attempt to put women on the electoral roll until those men have their votes and are enabled to express their opinion upon such an important matter. I showed, as an argument against women having a vote, the inconsistency of their association, which is at present waging war against that terrible demon, man, seeing that as was explained by the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) a meeting was held, at which the principal speaker was a whisky-drinker, whilst upon the platform were temperance men, whose characters were far more clean than those of some of the whisky-drinkers. I pointed out in a commonplace sort of way that if a great social reform was to be brought about, at any rate the instruments used should be clean, and that, if it is necessary in a surgical operation to see that the knives, forceps, saws and other instruments are perfectly clean, so that there should be no danger of blood-poisoning, certainly in all great social reforms the instruments used should be so, not only so far as public life is concerned, but also as regards private life. Where the instruments used are not perfectly clean, the method adopted is entirely contrary to the principles which should be laid down, and it is dealing with the case in the worst possible way. I may be permitted, perhaps, to refer to a letter which has been circulated amongst members of this House, and in which the following words occur:

That women are not all angels any more than men are all seraphs is not disputed, though it is patent that women are the purest, most moral and law-abiding portion of the community.

My respect for women compels me to say that this is absolutely true, but it goes on

further to say this, and it is here that, if I may use the word, the jesuitry of the matter comes in :

The man who likes to sow his wild oats with the submerged unfortunate, and in after life maintains for his wife the most exclusive seclusion, is quite comprehensible. When, however, his daughter turns out unfortunately he does not accuse himself of having predestined that child's condemnation through her heredity, and she becomes—one of those who are not counted with this world's angels.

That is a nice sentiment for a leader to put forward in the press. What does it mean, reading between the lines, and what does the action of that association mean? It means, as I said a little while ago, with regard to the Divorce Bill, that a man's past career may be such as to cause his unfortunate offspring to be a permanent reproach, and yet he may be sought after in the marriage market. The argument in this letter, in my opinion, is following up the same lines—that of allowing an innocent girl to sink to the position of becoming the wife of a man who can produce nothing but diseased offspring.

MR. JAMES : It is the exact converse.

MR. GEORGE : I believe I am right in what I assert. Suppose we take the social purity question, regarding which a great amount of good can be accomplished. Is this temperance association with its Christianity doing anything in any shape or form to banish the infamous scandal which we have in Perth, there being hardly a street where you do not find the inmates of brothels flaunting their trade before anyone who passes by?

MR. JAMES : Who patronises them?

MR. GEORGE : Men do, naturally. You would not expect women to do so ; but the hon. gentleman interrupts because he is getting the worst of the argument, he invariably does get the worst of the argument and he will do so in this instance. Why do they not deal with these places which are insults to any decent man, woman or child who passes along the street. If they would take up a sphere of influence there, not in a bullying manner or anything of that kind, but in that way by which the greatest effect can be produced, they would be rendering the greatest assistance they possibly could to improve not only the young race springing up about us, but others. I do not wish to speak dis-

respectfully in any way of these ladies, and if I should happen to do so I hope I shall be pardoned, for I have no wish to do it. But if they wish to do a great service in the direction of purity, why do they not adopt that course? Why do they not organise a crusade against this great evil, as has been done by women in various parts of America, who banded together and tried their best by suasion to accomplish what was desired, and when suasion had failed adopted other means.

MR. VOSPER : Woman's suffrage may be one of them.

MR. GEORGE : The hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James) says that they will influence social reforms. Is there a reform which the world has ever seen that has not been influenced by women in the best way? I say it is impossible for anything to occur in our daily life—nay, almost in our business life—in which woman will not make her influence felt. The right kind of influence is that which is gentle and appeals to our better feeling ; women do not appear to the best advantage by going on the platform and saying : "We are equal, except that you wear breeches and we wear a dress." I consider that a woman's proper sphere, first of all, is her home. If she has her children, and has been blessed with them—and I pity a woman if she has not—she has all the sphere which she will want for some time. Moreover, her qualities and faculties are such that even when she has these home responsibilities she is able to perform acts of mercy and love. It is the remembrance of the gentle words which permeated us when children that appeals to us ; and as far as can I will keep woman in her proper place, where she can do, according to my views, at any rate, the best that can be accomplished for the human race. I should like to point out another portion of the letter, which says :

It is the preventive work that women have been doing for centuries past in nursing the sick and performing the still more difficult task of binding up the broken-hearted, that has led women to cry out against the continuance of certain evils.

Well, let them cry out against the continuance of certain evils, and I say they will not have to cry in vain to men who

have been properly brought up, and especially to men who hold representative positions; that they will never have to ask for social legislation of a remedial nature, and find their request refused, for there is not a member of this House, even if he desired, dare refuse to give them what they ask, when a claim of that kind is presented. The letter says:

We are convinced that at the root of those evils lies the abject powerlessness of women. I say that is a libel on the men, and if hon. members will only observe in going amongst their own friends and acquaintances, they will find there are far more happy homes than there are unhappy homes; and when you see a married woman in her home you can readily observe whether she is a happy wife or not. I say, to talk about the abject condition of women is simply rot, cant, humbug. It is simply the demagogue talk which is heard from platforms. The letter further says:—

We want to see intellect and moral force take the ascendant over brute power. We all agree to that. There is not a member here but knows that, even in regard to the question of regulation 103 (alluvial mining), the members representing this part of the colony were prepared to give justice to the men on the goldfields; but we insisted that we would not give way to brute force, but that law and order must be maintained. This letter says also:—

We have no faith in the argument that a woman's goodness must be kept under glass. Who believes that? What man does not wish that, as far as the virtues and qualities of his wife are concerned, they may be seen by anyone who comes within the sphere of her influence? All of us who have wives know that nothing rejoices us more than when we hear from outside of some good or kind thing done by the wife of our bosom. If a woman has not sufficient to keep her attention at home, if she has not her children there, if she has not those claims upon her which will leave her but little leisure, at any rate she can give her aid where it is needed by the churches, and she can give it were no one else can do it so beneficially. Surely, as we know, there are works of mercy in which women can employ themselves better than men can do;

and we know there are people around us who may be starving, or in need of help in other ways, and women can use their gentle influence in such cases without injuring the self-respect of those they try to help. If members of this House relieve distress by giving such help as they can afford, that is good as far as it goes; but there is not a man in a thousand who can bestow charity in so gentle and soothing a way as a woman can, for she knows by her emotional nature and her training, and by her feelings of motherhood, how to deal with those cases in such a way as will not hurt the pride of those she endeavours to relieve. We have also lately had a question discussed in regard to religious education, and we have been told that the clergy cannot get teachers for Sunday schools. Then, I say, one of the things women can do better than men, and which they can do far better than standing on platforms pitching out those tirades about wanting to be on equality with men, will be for the women to go into the Sunday schools and give moral and religious teaching to the young. If women were prepared to take up useful work of that kind, I say we should hear less of this crying out for women's suffrage; and I say also we do not hear the cry for women's suffrage from the class of women who would do that work. I take it that it is man's proper business to fight with physical force when necessary, but especially to provide the means whereby the home is to be maintained; and it is woman's province to make that home so comfortable and so pleasant that a man would not willingly leave it to search for amusement or comforts elsewhere. I say this business of bringing women into our public life, by putting them on platforms and turning them into demagogues and agitators, is the sort of thing that will destroy every home which is worth calling a home, and is likely to be fruitful in producing cases for the divorce court. In my poor way, I have attempted to put the matter as it seems to me; and I do not suppose that I could bring forward arguments that it would not be possible for the member for East Perth, who is a trained lawyer, to knock out in one act; yet in whatever I have said on this question, in this or previous sessions, I have expressed the feeling which has been imbued in me, and

the lessons which have been taught me from my youth up.

MR. LEAKE: I thought so.

MR. GEORGE: If I were to say anything disrespectful about the hon. member's parents, he would be ready to take his coat off and try conclusions with me.

MR. LEAKE: You did not catch what I said. Why do you not say something on the motion before the House?

MR. GEORGE: I have been trying to speak on it, in my own way. As far as I know the opinions of women, as far as I know the views of the sex and can ascertain them from my wife's friends and acquaintances, I am convinced they do not want the women's suffrage; and I believe nothing would have been heard of this cry, had it not been for the visit of a lady who came here to found the Women's Christian Temperance Union, and whose tactics were of such a nature that she got a whisky drinker to take the chair at her meeting. If these are the sort of tactics practised at the opening of the campaign, what may we not expect when the new system comes into operation? I hope the House will reject this motion, and I must apologise for trespassing so long on its attention.

MR. RASON (South Murchison): I have listened to the somewhat lengthy speech of the member for the Murray (Mr. George), with considerable amusement and with some advantage. I heard a great deal from him upon a variety of subjects, but I confess I have heard very little upon the subject before the House. The motion is that, in the opinion of this House, the best interests of the colony justify the extension of the franchise to women. In my opinion, the extension of the franchise to women is justified. Probably the member for the Murray did not attempt to answer the arguments brought forward by the member who introduced this motion, for the simple reason that those arguments are unanswerable. The member for the Murray does what is always done on these occasions: he attempts to ridicule, and that is the only answer that is ever put forward to this question. No one can be found to deny the justice of extending the franchise to women, but you can find a good many who say it is not advisable to give them the franchise; and it is not advisable, it is said, for this

reason, that the proper sphere of woman is her home and her family duties. I cannot imagine that the mere fact of giving women a right to vote is going to make a good woman bad or a bad woman worse. Surely the mere right to vote cannot alter human nature in any way? Surely the member for the Murray cannot attempt to argue that the mere extension of the franchise to women would in any way affect their morals? And would it follow that, because a woman wished to exercise a right to vote, she would have to neglect her family duties? The hon. member says that, in his experience, where women have the right to vote at municipal elections, they rarely use it. My opinion is quite the reverse, and my experience has been quite the reverse. I believe that women exercise the vote at municipal elections; exercise it freely and exercise it well; and, if we are to judge by their conduct at municipal elections of what their conduct would be at elections of another sort, then the verdict is all in favour of women voters as compared with men. The woman voter goes to the polling-booth, records her vote, and returns to her home; but a very different picture can be painted of the conduct of the man at elections. The member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) made his appeal to the House to throw out this motion on the ground of his respect for women. He had such a great respect for women that he did not wish to see their morals lowered.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I did not say their morals.

MR. RASON: Well, you did not wish them to enter into the turmoil of political strife.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is different.

MR. RASON: Surely the hon. member will admit that woman's brain is quite equal to that of man in intellectual ability, that she is quite as well able to judge of political matters, and to distinguish between right and wrong. In my opinion, she is a great deal more likely to do so than man.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Let her keep in her own realm.

MR. RASON: I believe in that, too; but surely the hon. member does not wish to say that a woman should be kept in her

home, and never be allowed to go out of it!

MR. JAMES: That is the Eastern idea.

MR. RASON: The argument is that her sphere is her home; and, if that argument is to be carried to its logical issue, she must stay there.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I never said anything of the kind.

MR. RASON: I do not say the hon. member did; but that is the inference. The appeal he made was that the influence upon woman of the extension of the franchise would be bad. I think quite the contrary, that its influence would be for good; her influence upon man would be good; and it is because I believe woman is entitled to the franchise, and that her exercise of it would be a benefit both to herself and to man, that I intend to support the motion of the member for East Perth. He has been accused of inconsistency; but, if he has been inconsistent in other things, surely he is consistent in this matter; and, whatever may be the fate of his motion to-day, if it is an adverse verdict that the House records, I do trust—nay, I am sure—that the hon. member will persist, again and again, with this motion, in the full and certain knowledge that, in the end, truth will prevail. It will only be a question of time. If he is defeated to-day, I am convinced that he will live to see the victory consummated; and I, so long as I am in this House, shall have very great pleasure in supporting him.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): This matter has been brought before the House on previous occasions; and as I believe this is the fourth time we have had to discuss this motion, it cannot be said this is a matter we are not familiar with. As the years come round, we always find someone ready to move this motion again. The member for East Perth (Mr. James) has done so now, I think, for the second or third time; and, really, I think we had better let him have his way, or say decisively that we are not going to do so.

MR. JAMES: You cannot do that.

THE PREMIER: I have no doubt this is a very good subject for discussion; but, still, it takes up a good deal of time, unless we mean business. I should like to congratulate the hon. member upon

the way he placed the matter before us—I think I may say for the moderate way in which he argued his case. He did not give us so many quotations as on former occasions. We have not had that array of books from far-away parts of the world—from Wyoming and other places in America, for instance.

A MEMBER: And from England.

THE PREMIER: I think the hon. member knew he was addressing a large number of people whom he had addressed before on the subject, and therefore he was satisfied to present his arguments at much shorter length than he has done heretofore. I should like also to congratulate the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) on the very excellent speech he delivered on the other side. I am sure we were all struck by the earnestness of the hon. member. One could not help feeling that, in what he had to say, he was thoroughly in earnest, and was speaking from deep conviction; and, in fact, I never heard the hon. member to greater advantage than I have heard him on this occasion. I should like to say that, whatever other people have done, I have not changed my opinions during the last eight or nine months in regard to this question. If I were to change my opinion so quickly on such an important matter, without any new evidence being brought before me, I think my conviction could not be deep-seated. I say at once that I am not opposed to women exercising the franchise because they are women—I am not opposed to it for that reason, but I am opposed to extending the franchise to women, in the interest of women themselves.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Hear, hear.

THE PREMIER: That may seem a strange statement, because it can be answered by saying: "Why do you not allow women to judge for themselves what is best for them?" I say we have not had the opportunity in this colony of ascertaining what are the views of women on this matter; and I go further, and say it is not a question so much of what the women want as it is a question of what the men want; because, after all, we men have the power, the legislative power in this colony; and when we are asked to introduce a social revolution into our constitution because persons

who have never exercised the franchise in this colony, and who have never exercised it in the great mother country, desire it, I do not think that is a reason why we should at once say, "You shall have it." My contention is that the women have not, by their voices, by their votes, or in any way, shown that they are eager for the extension of the franchise to them. I think it will be difficult to controvert that. Of course it will be said: "Though we cannot prove our case by the votes of women, neither can you prove your case, because they have not had the opportunity of expressing their opinions, as a body, either one way or the other, on this question." But my contention is, too, that this franchise is not necessary; and I go so far as to say, though I know my friend the member for East Perth will not agree with me, that it is not required by the women of the colony. I even go so far as to say they have not thought about it to any great extent, and that the idea, as far as the idea goes, has been put into their minds by a very limited number of people, mostly resident in Perth and Fremantle.

MR. GEORGE: Agitators.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The women never want it.

THE PREMIER: That is all very well; but are we to legislate on an important matter of this sort because there are twenty or thirty persons, prominent in Perth and Fremantle, who are agitating the question? Has there been any demand from the women of the colony as a whole for this concession or this privilege? I believe that the women of the colony, taking them altogether, are indifferent at the present time in regard to it; and, as I said before, the idea has been put into their minds by a few people who have taken the matter up, and who are in earnest—I admit that—as they are also in earnest in a good many other things; but that is no reason why the Legislature of the colony should at once coincide with their views and fall in with their wishes. I agree with a great deal of what was said by the member for the Murray (Mr. George) in regard to this matter. I believe the influence of woman in the world has not been the growth of to-day or yes-

terday, but has been the work of generations, I might almost say of centuries. No one can deny that the place men desire women to shine in, and the place where woman herself desires to excel, is her home—to make that home a place of refinement and a place of comfort not only to those belonging to her, but to all with whom she comes in contact. There is no doubt about this, I think, that new avenues have opened up, and are opening up daily, to women. We see it even in this colony, and it is the same all over the world. I do not know that there is any desire to shut out women from those avenues of employment. On the contrary, I think that men have shown a disposition to encourage the extension of woman's work into new channels. But why is it that a woman is so honoured and respected by men?

A MEMBER: Because she deserves it.

THE PREMIER: Yes; perhaps so; but I will tell you another reason why. It is the natural instinct of man to act chivalrously to woman, because she is weaker than he. She is weaker physically, and man feels it to be his duty to protect her. We all know, as the member for East Perth has told us time after time, what a charm and solace woman is to man in his home.

MR. JAMES: I did not patronise them in that fashion.

THE PREMIER: But there is no doubt she is weaker, physically. There are many respects in which she is not the equal of man, for she cannot toil like him, she cannot endure hardship, she has not the physical strength that man has, and in no way can she compare with him in this respect. She cannot do many things that man has to do; and we all know that woman is unable to take part in the great works we have to undertake in this country, which require endurance and physical strength. She cannot go to work as a navvy, and she cannot even work in the same way as man in the fields; although we know that in some parts of the world women do work in the fields. The laborious duties of life have to be undertaken by the stronger sex. She cannot go to war, and cannot fight for home and country—we all know that. That too, is reserved for man. She does not go to sea and brave the perils of the

deep, as a sailor does. Woman is not able to do the heavy manual labour that man has to do. Then how can you say that woman is in every respect the equal of man? It seems to me there are some people who not only desire that woman shall be man's equal in every respect, but who also desire that she should certainly not be inferior in any way to him in the work of governing the country. Their desire is that she should have a voice in the decision of all political matters; because that is what it comes to. If you place a person in this Legislature, or if you give to a class, to what I may call half of the community, the right to enter this House, you practically say to them, "You shall have equal power with us in the shaping of the destinies of this country; whether for good or ill, for peace or war, you shall be equal in every respect to us." But they have to admit, and the hon. member (Mr. James) will have to admit, that if you go to war, though the woman may have a say in deciding for peace or for war, all the fighting will have to be done by men.

MR. JAMES: They will do the same as we do; they will pay somebody else to do it.

THE PREMIER: No; they will not. There is no question of paying to do it. We men will have to do the fighting, and the women will stop at home and govern the country while we are away. There is no doubt about that. I do not suppose the hon. member, though he does preach the doctrine that men and women are equal, thinks that sitting in this Legislature and having the question of peace or war to decide—because we may have that question to decide, some day—surely he does not mean to say that, if we decide for war, the women are going to fight?

MR. JAMES: They would suffer more in case of war than you would.

THE PREMIER: I do not know about that—that is, if the colony were in danger. I think if we had to march against the foe, the persons who were in the thick of the battle would suffer most. Are we desirous that woman shall occupy a place in this House upon equal terms with man? That is the question. If we are desirous that she shall exercise the franchise as we exercise it, then I do not suppose even the hon. member (Mr.

James) will deny for one moment that the next step will be, if it is not given at once, that women should have the right to sit in the Legislature. I do not know what the hon. member asks; but I suppose he will be like the wise man, and ask for a little at a time. He will ask for the franchise first; but we know well that, the franchise having been obtained, those who use the franchise will certainly never be satisfied until they have the right also to sit in Parliament. What happened in New Zealand? What happened in South Australia? In South Australia women have the right to vote, and they also have the right to a seat in the Legislature. True, they have not yet elected a woman to represent a constituency; but women there have had the franchise for only two or three years.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: They nominated a woman for the Federal Council.

THE PREMIER: What happened in New Zealand? A Bill was passed there something like that which the hon. member desires to introduce here, and its object was simply to give the franchise to women, but they were prohibited from sitting in the Legislature. Yet, only a week ago, a motion was brought forward there—I am not sure it was not in the shape of a Bill, but it was at any rate a motion—that women should be entitled to sit in the Legislative Assembly; and, seeing that there are in New Zealand about as many women as men, what will be the result of that resolution? It was passed on the voices.

MR. JAMES: That shows you they are getting enlightened.

THE PREMIER: No; it shows the power behind the members. The members who were elected by women-voters were bound to support the motion, or else lose their seats.

MR. JAMES: I thought man was never afraid of doing the right.

THE PREMIER: Well, you will always find men willing to do a lot of things that are not to their advantage. At any rate, that is the result, and it throws light on the point I want to make; for I say, let no one in this House suppose that, if you give the franchise to women, you can keep from them the right to sit in the Legislature. Well, then, we get women into the Legislature.

MR. JAMES: Hear, hear.

THE PREMIER: I would like to ask the hon. member, is he prepared to go further, and say that women should have a right to sit as judges and magistrates in the courts, and that they should be eligible for every other civil office? Are they to be allowed to act as lawyers?

MR. JAMES: Undoubtedly, if they are qualified.

THE PREMIER: That is very good; but the hon. member did not tell us that in his speech. I had to drag it from him by a question. He did not tell us that he wished women to occupy all the high offices of State—to act as Ministers, legislators, judges, and magistrates. I do not think the hon. member would go so far as to say that women, if they are competent, should be officers and generals commanding the army.

MR. JAMES: They should be eligible for any post.

THE PREMIER: I want to know exactly what the hon. member advocates, and that is that there shall be perfect equality in regard to eligibility for every office in the State, and that women shall have the same privileges in the Legislature as men.

MR. JAMES: Equality of offices.

THE PREMIER: Perhaps the hon. member will go a little further, and will enact—no, it would be more than enacting, for we must first insert it into the dispositions of people, into their ideas and thoughts—that a woman shall not be dependent on a man, but that man shall be dependent upon her?

MR. JAMES: No—companions.

THE PREMIER: Well, the chief responsibility of maintaining the home, in the opinion of the hon. member, rests on the woman.

MR. JAMES: In a great number of cases, yes; and in an increasing number of cases every year.

THE PREMIER: In a great many, perhaps, but not all; for what do we find in this colony? We find men leaving their homes and wives and families and kindred in other parts of the world, and coming here to seek their fortunes, and sending back to them every sixpence they can save. Will women do that? Will the man stay at home and look after the youngsters, and let the woman

go off to Kalgoorlie, or away up to Niagara, and send back weekly remittances in order to keep him in comfort in the maternal cot?

MR. JAMES: Many a man would go away and booze, while his wife looked after the family and earned the money.

THE PREMIER: Is the woman to be the responsible person, the head of the family, or is it to be the man? I say here that this idea of trying to make people equal who are not equal physically will not work. You will find it will not work. From time immemorial we know that man has been considered to be the head of the family and the breadwinner; that it is the man's first duty to maintain his wife and family, and to keep a home about them. Women may assist, no doubt, and do so very largely; but look around even in this colony, and who are the people who are striving from morning till night in order to keep their homes? We all know they are the men. That must be evident. The responsibility rests upon them, too. I have no doubt the hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James) is waiting for the old-fashioned argument which has often been trotted out, that we should go slowly, and that unless there is great necessity for this legislation we should not embark upon it. When the necessity arises, of course I will be quite willing to deal with it; but on a great question like this, which really means a social revolution, we might certainly be influenced by the fact that the great mother country has not adopted it. Why should we be in such a hurry about it in this colony, where, although we have great ambitions and great hopes, we are still a small community? Why, I ask, do we want to enter upon this legislation when there is no necessity for it, and when no one can say there is any great pressure in favour of it? I say that we are wasting the time of the country, and that we ought not to do it. We really ought not to embark upon this kind of legislation when we have such few examples to guide us, and when there is no necessity for it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And they are all failures, every one of them.

THE PREMIER: I would like to say to the hon. member that, while I give him

credit for the manner in which he has dealt with this question, I am entitled to just as much credit in opposing it, and in fact a little more than he himself is entitled to; and I will tell him why. The hon. member has the great advantage of being considered the friend of the women of the colony, and that is a very nice position for him to occupy. He is a hero amongst them, a sort of cock bird.

MR. MORAN: A general rooster.

THE PREMIER: And he gets an amount of kudos over it from those persons whose friendship and good will he is naturally pleased with. I also should like very much to have the good will and the word of the ladies. If I considered only myself and my political position, it would be altogether to my interest to vote for giving the suffrage to women, because I believe that a great many of them, at any rate, would vote for me. It would have another effect, which certainly would not be to my disadvantage politically, and that is, that it would increase the voters to a very large extent in the older parts of the colony, where I am best known, and where I have perhaps the most influence. That is a matter which is certainly on my side. If I were only looking at it from a personal point of view, that is a matter which would influence me in giving the women a vote. If we gave the vote to women, no doubt the voting power of the settled parts of the colony, the older settlements, would be doubled. The cry for redistribution of seats, which we hear now and again in the different parts of the goldfields, would wax very much fainter if we enfranchised women, because we should have a great many more votes in Perth and Fremantle, and in other parts of the colony, than they would have in the crowded centres at the goldfields. I am certain the effect of extending the franchise to women would be to give more political power to the older parts of the colony.

MR. JAMES: That is not a good argument.

THE PREMIER: I want to use it. I want to show that I am disinterested in this matter, and I think I can prove it. If we enfranchise women we shall, I repeat, be giving a great deal more political power to the older populations and the older centres of the colony, whilst the voting power upon the goldfields will certainly

not be increased to any large extent by it. But I look upon that as a temporary argument which really should not be used. We know that in considering this legislation we are dealing with a great principle, and that is, whether women should take part in the law-making and in the Parliament of this country. I am inclined to think that, as time goes along, women's suffrage will be granted; but that is another reason, if I were only thinking of myself, why I should support it, because it is always best to be on the winning side in politics if you possibly can. Still, as I say, I do not think that it is a good argument at the present time. I do not think that because you think a particular side is going to win, you should therefore join it so as to be in the front rank when the race is over. If the change comes, let it come slowly. I say to myself: "Don't you, by any influence that you may be able to bring, accelerate the speed with which it is to come." If it is to come it will come soon enough, and we will have more experience to guide us. I certainly would not, in my present frame of mind, think of embarking upon it until I had had a good deal more experience. In fact, I should like the mother country to adopt it.

AN HON. MEMBER: They are going to.

THE PREMIER: Then why not wait till they have done so? Then I would say we had a great example there, and that, as the off-shoots of that great empire, we could not be going very far wrong in following the example they have set us.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why not set the example?

THE PREMIER: I say, let us be certain first that the women want it, and let us also be sure that the men of the colony are in favour of it. I do not think that in a great question of this sort, which, as I said before, is a social revolution, this House is in a position to decide it. If there is one question more than another which might fairly be referred to the whole mass of the people, to the voters of the colony, I think this is one; and unless the voters of the colony are in favour of it, we have no right to introduce it. I say again, that this cry for the extension of the franchise to women, as far as this colony is concerned, comes from a few.

The women of the colony have not expressed an opinion with regard to it, nor have the men of the colony done so; and for these reasons and others which I have urged to-night, I hope that the hon. member, having made his eloquent speech, will not press the motion to a division. But if he does, I shall have to do as I did before—vote against it.

MR. EWING (Swan): I was greatly disappointed to-night, chiefly because I expected, after the remarks of the right hon. the Premier when the Divorce Bill was before this House, that we should have had his support to the motion now being considered. The right hon. gentleman upon that occasion said that one of the chief reasons why he opposed the Divorce Bill was that the women had not expressed their opinion upon it, and indicated a desire for the measure. It appears to me that the only possible way we have of getting the opinions of the community, or to gather what is the opinion of any section of the community, upon any political matter, is by their recording their votes through the medium of the ballot-box. Therefore I thought, seeing the Premier considered that before the introduction of a measure so materially affecting women as the Divorce Bill, it was necessary for them to express their opinion on the matter, he would have been prepared to extend the franchise to them in order that they may record their views. The argument has been used that women have not asked for the suffrage, but it appears to me that hon. members who say that must have persistently closed their ears to the remarks of women generally in this colony, and to their public utterances, and must have closed their eyes to the letters which have constantly appeared in the newspapers; otherwise they could not possibly say that women have not asked to have the suffrage extended to them. Further than that, I take it that it is not really a question whether women ask for it; but what we have to consider is whether it will be for the welfare of the community and will have a beneficial effect on legislation. It is argued also, in opposition to the proposition of extending the franchise, that women have sufficient political influence. Hon. members have always expressed the opinion that the influence of

women upon the home is beneficial, and that the influence of women wherever it is found is good. We all find the greatest possible advantage from the influence which women exercise upon us; therefore why not extend the sphere of that influence a little further? If woman exercises individually a beneficial influence on man, then women collectively will exercise a beneficial influence on the community. I also think that women's suffrage is desirable because it will have a steadying effect on legislation. There is no doubt, to my mind, that we in the Australian colonies are always travelling rather quickly; and if we drift towards socialistic legislation too fast, who is the person in the home or in the general life of the community who asks us to hesitate before we step forward? It is always a woman who says: "Hesitate before you take the step you are about to," and it is woman who is always for allowing things to remain as they are until an improvement can be shown.

MR. HIGHAM: She does not say that when you are opposed to her.

MR. EWING: I think I can meet that objection by saying that, unless you can show there will be a better state of affairs, she always urges that things should be left as they are. Women have a steady influence upon legislation; therefore it will be desirable to extend the franchise to them. There is no doubt in my mind that her influence, however exercised, will be good. The further question as to whether women should have a vote is wrapped up in the question as to whether women are materially affected by the laws we pass. Hon. members, almost one and all, when addressing their constituents, say they believe in representative government, and that they are in favour of democratic government and believe in the people governing themselves. We must recognise that an important section of the community are women; and the only logical ground for excluding women from the franchise is to show that, if given the franchise, they will exercise it to the detriment of the community. No hon. member has ever suggested that they will exercise it to the detriment of the community; and if not, I say hon. members must forego the position they take up in opposing women's franchise, or they must estab-

lish the argument that women if admitted to the suffrage will exercise their influence to the detriment of the community. I believe in allowing every man, however poor, to rise to the position which his abilities fit him for, and I say the same right should be extended to every woman. If we exclude men from rising to higher positions which they are qualified to fill, we shall be keeping the results of good opportunities and good energies from the use of the community. If those good opportunities and good energies happen to be centred in women, as I believe they often are, we are doing wrong in shutting women out of politics and depriving the community of the benefit of their good influence and their good opportunities.

MR. MORAN: Would you make Ministers out of women?

MR. EWING: I believe women are fit for most things, and are fit even to be Ministers of the Crown. Another question is how far women are interested in legislation, and how far their rights have been safeguarded and protected by men. Have we done the fair thing by women in the past, and are we doing it in the present? The law of England, and many of the colonies, is that when a man and a woman separate after marriage, the man takes the children from the wife; showing that there is an inequality which is not justified by reason, or humanity, or even by decency. And if men in the past have been doing their duty towards women, why have they not wiped out this awful blot that exists in our legislation? We are told that it is not a woman's sphere. I would ask what is women's sphere in the business world? She has to make her living as a man has to do; and while I believe that, where it is practicable and possible, it is undesirable for women to enter into labourious business, yet women must live, and we must assist them towards earning a living decently and respectably. Men have power to pass Factory Acts which prevent women from working in certain occupations, but the women have no power politically to pass any Act for preventing men from engaging in occupations within woman's sphere. Where is woman's sphere? In my opinion, it is the wide, wide world; but if there is a limit to woman's sphere, it is such a sphere, in a business way, as she is competent to work

in reasonably and profitably. If men had been doing their duty in the past, they would have prevented men from encroaching on the rights of women; but what do we hear in our towns every day?—that women are bringing down the wages and competing with men, and men would prevent them from doing so. This is one instance of the injustice which men do to women; and if men cannot help women in a broader and a better way than they have done in the past, then the sooner we extend the franchise to women, the better it will be for the community. I will support the motion, firstly because I believe it is for the welfare of the community; secondly, because I believe it is for the welfare of women, in that they will be able to look after their rights and be able to protect their interests, and protect their own sphere if it exists; and, thirdly, I will support it because I believe the influence of women on the community is good, wherever you find it, and that the influence of women on politics must in an equal proportion be good.

MR. MORAN (East Coolgardie): I must confess that I am going to use that unfair argument which the Premier referred to this evening, the political argument. Apart from the academic argument, I want to look at this question as it will affect policy, justice, and representation in Western Australia. As far as our goldfields people are concerned, the argument I am using is that of expediency; for if we, as goldfields members, vote for giving the franchise to females in Western Australia, I say we shall have thrown down our own trump card. It may be said it is ungenerous and unfair to use this argument as to political expediency; but I reply that it is very ungenerous and very unfair at the present time to ask one man to represent 25,000 men in the Coolgardie electorate, when at the same time you give to some men an equal voting power, while they represent only 50 or 60 electors in their constituencies. I do not know whether the more plausible arguments are not those put forward by the advocates of female suffrage, which is probably the popular cause; but I say that whilst we have larger evils to remedy and greater questions to study, and our

whole system to perfect, those members who represent goldfields electorates and want to have a fair share in the representation of the colony should hesitate and consider very profoundly, before we consent to double the voting power of Perth and Fremantle as the chief centres of population in the older portions of the colony, while we on the goldfields shall get no corresponding benefit by the change. There is no doubt a great agitation in the larger centres on the goldfields, and a feeling that there is unfair representation and a need for redistribution of seats. We have an adult voting population on the goldfields almost equal to that in the large centres near the coast, while these coast centres have four times at least the representative power which we who represent the goldfields have in Parliament; and if we pass the female suffrage, it will have the effect of immediately enrolling the women in these coastal centres, and not only doubling there the voting power, but increasing the voting power round the capital of the colony by about 110 or 115 per cent. I say there are more women than men in the older portions of the colony at the present time, and the rolls in those electorates would be doubled by this change, whereas the goldfields constituencies would practically be left as they are. Looking at the position in its meaner political aspect, we goldfields representatives would be throwing down our "right bower" and giving you the "joker" in the game.

MR. VOSPER: It is a fine figure, about the "joker."

MR. MORAN: The hon. member has told us he has 20,000 men in his electorate. He has, perhaps, 15,000; and allowing he has 15,000, I ask how many women are there in that electorate?

MR. VOSPER: About 200.

MR. MORAN: Well, I say that a given number of males in the older parts of the colony, especially Perth and Fremantle, would be equalled by a corresponding number of females, on the average; consequently, to give effect to this motion would be doubling their franchise, and leaving the goldfields representation as it is.

MR. MORGANS: It does not alter the representation.

MR. MORAN: But we are going to try in Western Australia to alter the basis of representation, by having it put on the basis of population in a more equitable degree than at present—the basis of adult male suffrage. That question will have to be fought out here as it has been fought in the other colonies, for we have a larger disproportion between the number of voters whom members represent in this House, than has been the case in any other part of Australia. By this change, we should be doing wrong to ourselves, as goldfields representatives, in giving away the power which we have of showing the present injustice which the goldfields suffer in regard to inequality of representation. That is the argument of expediency. But, beyond that, I say the women of the colony have not asked, and do not ask, for the female suffrage, and that to extend it is therefore unnecessary. I make bold to say that seven out of every ten women in Western Australia are opposed to the women's franchise. Each member can speak only from his own experience, and that is the opinion I have formed. From what I know of those women with whom I am acquainted, and those to whom I am related, they are in the main opposed to female suffrage; and of course they take no interest in it, and they look upon it more or less in the light of a fad; and were it not for the member for East Perth, with the able and eloquent assistance of the Reverend Mrs. Clarke, we should not have heard so much about it at present.

MR. VOSPER: It is unworthy, to speak of her in that way.

MR. MORAN: I hope the hon. member will not dictate to me in this way. When I say the Reverend Mrs. Clarke, I presume the lady is reverend, and that she is to be revered for the consistency and honesty with which she puts forward her case. I believe she is revered by a large circle of men and women in this colony, and that it is owing to her powerful and able advocacy of this question that it has been lifted above the faddy talk which some persons connected with it have indulged in, and that it is now raised into a question of fairly lively interest amongst people in Perth and Fremantle. But I still say the major portion of women in the colony have not

asked for the franchise to be extended to them. I shall be told, probably, that it is very unfair to use the argument about not giving away our own power in representation; but I believe the majority of members in this House will pause before they give away the very argument they will have to use so strongly before this Parliament has run its course. One or two of the arguments which have been advanced in this debate I will notice as being rather weak. The member for East Perth (Mr. James) said: "Give equal opportunities to both men and women"—that is the sum total of his argument; and he carried it further and said, "Let them be companions in everything." Now, the meaning of the word "companion" is more applicable to the companionship of men, because you cannot alter the inherent difference between men and women, no matter what opportunities you give them. Men will be men, and will be the stronger vessel of the two, physically, mentally, intellectually; and I maintain he has a greater capacity, and was made for the rougher and more rugged work of building up and developing the nations. Woman was sent to him as a helpmate in her own sphere, and she has been made differently, inasmuch as she is the weaker vessel, and always will remain so. There is a fundamental difference, and it is summed up in this, that man has always been man, and woman has always been woman in the past, and so they will continue. We do not hear of any agitation on the part of men to take over the sphere of women's duties. We never hear the member for East Perth (Mr. James) asking that men should take up dressmaking and cooking, and the looking after children.

MR. JAMES: The man's contract is the best part of it.

MR. MORAN: I am not so foolish as to admit it. We never hear these proposals made. No matter how you legislate, it is impossible to deny that woman is altogether unfitted, physically if not intellectually, for the performance of many duties which devolve on man. I was rather surprised to hear the member for East Perth admit that he wants women to come into this Chamber and, further, to be Ministers of the Crown

and judges of the Supreme Court. Now, here is an argument I want answered. I want every man who is going to vote for female suffrage—including the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans)—to say whether he anticipates that, if women are granted the franchise, they will put up for Parliament, and whether, in that case, he will be prepared to canvass and vote for them. Why, we shall have this Chamber perhaps equally divided as regards men and women. And then arises the question of electing a Ministry. The hon. member for East Perth says he will allow women to become Ministers of the Crown; and, further, he tells us that a Minister who gets £1,000 a year should devote the whole of his time to the interests of the State. Now, would he be able to make this compatible with the ordinary laws of nature? And I maintain that, when you endeavour to shut out such arguments, you are burking the question, which has to be faced in all its nakedness. The truth has to be brought out. You elect female Ministers. Well, if you do that, for goodness' sake keep them single. Keep them spinsters, anyway; for it would be tremendously awkward to have three or four members of the Cabinet women. As I said, hon. members can draw their own inferences. I hope some reply will be made to this argument. Furthermore, take the ordinary members of this Assembly, and suppose half of them are women. We must presume that, as the best of women get married, the married women will come into this Assembly; and, being married, they are married. And Parliament, sitting perhaps for six months in the year, will not wait for time and tide; and it will be very awkward for the lady member for Coolgardie to attend to her duties during the session of this House when, for the sake of respectability, she ought to be at home.

MR. JAMES: Do not the electors realise all that?

MR. MORAN: Sir, we are debating this question now in an honourable, straightforward way, I hope. These are the possibilities—not only the possibilities, but the probabilities, and I may say the absolute certainties by which we are confronted when we push home this theory to its logical issue. If hon. members would

give me a pledge that they are opposed to allowing women to act as members of Parliament ; if they would draw a line at giving them the franchise, and would guarantee that the innovation would go no further, I should not oppose it, possibly, in the future. But we have the member for East Perth to-night actually admitting that he wants to push his theory to its logical conclusion. He cannot deny it. If you give a vote to any man in the country, that man has a right to seek the suffrages of his fellow-voters ; and, if you extend the franchise to women, they will have the undeniable right to return members of their own sex to Parliament. The principle is adopted in New Zealand, where the woman is the equal of the man ; and it simply means that the women voters can, if they choose, return as many female representatives as there are men in the Assembly. I say that if you push the matter far enough you will find yourselves in a most ridiculous and absurd position ; and I have never heard that argument answered yet. Now, to go still further, let us suppose that a Speakeress was chosen from amongst the ladies of the Assembly, it would be very awkward for the House to have to wait a long time—for two or three months at a stretch, perhaps—during her absence, would it not ? These considerations must occur to hon. members ; and, occurring, it is only honest that we should give them due weight. We must push the advocates of this scheme into a corner. We must force them to show their hands, and declare how far they wish to go ; and that is what I am trying to do. If you give women the right to vote, you must allow them to become members of Parliament ; and we know that members of Parliament should be prepared to take a seat in the Ministry. Having taken up this line of argument, I should like to see it answered. Perhaps it would be hard to argue against the extension of the franchise if it were laid down hard and fast in the constitution that it should not be possible for a woman to enter Parliament, but this cannot be done. And, with regard to judicial functions. I am not going to deny that a woman might possibly be as good a judge of a man's case as a man would be ; but that is not the point. Woman has her own sphere of influence. She can influence her husband,

her brothers, and her male acquaintances. Women have their influence. It is felt ; and possibly it would be none the more felt if you gave them the vote. But, once give them the franchise, and we cannot deny them the right to enter this House, unless we put it unalterably in the Constitution that they shall not do so ; and, even if this were done, the female electors could still say to candidates : "If you do not vote to alter the Constitution, we will not vote for you, but will put in a man who believes in female members." This is the position of affairs. I take up this line of argument, and have done so every year. I am a seeker after truth in this matter, apart altogether from the political aspect of the question, which I have now done with, so far as Western Australia is concerned. Let us find what is the truth about the matter. Is it possible to make woman man's equal by giving her equal opportunities ? No ; I say it is impossible, because she cannot take advantage of the opportunities. It is impossible for a woman to fill every position that a man can fill. It has never been intended by Providence that she should. She is a woman ; and that covers everything which is brought before the minds of hon. members. It is useless to give her equal opportunities. To do so would be only to bring women into ridicule, for she cannot take advantage of them. Any of the situations I have instanced to the House to-night would bring a woman into ridicule, and would thus drag her down from her present high position to the laughing-stock of an Assembly which might not be always reverent. We all know perfectly well that man is the stronger, and woman the weaker vessel ; and hers is an influence which is always exercised on the male portion of humanity for good. We know and admit that ; and we know, too, that there is a much larger number of evil-minded men in the world than of evil-minded women. But, at the same time, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that a woman is still a woman, no matter how good, no matter how intellectual she may be. Be she ever so clever, be she ever so enthusiastic, still she cannot, by her ability or her intellectuality, alter the one great fact that Providence has made her a woman and has made us men. And I do

believe that if you gave woman the franchise to-morrow, you would not find any novel legislation brought before this House for the amelioration of woman. I listened with extreme regret to the member for the Swan (Mr. Ewing), when he said to-night that we had always opposed legislation for the good of women in this House. In other words, he is stigmatising his own sex as being cruel monsters, unwilling to give woman any advantage. I took down his words. He said: "We have always been found willing to shut out women from doing good for themselves." And why? Because we were afraid they would enter into competition with us. Now, I do not think that is the idea. The vast majority of women, and nearly all men, think that woman has her sphere, and that it is foolish, to say the least of it, to ask her to go out of it. There is not a man in this Chamber to-night who would like to see his own wife—not even the member for East Perth would like to see the woman of whom he thinks most, in the world—going out every night during a time of political turmoil, sitting in a crowded hall, hooting and howling, and perhaps waving her hat about, if she were inclined to do so.

MR. MORGANS: That is not necessary. She need not be a politician.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member says it is not necessary, but it frequently happens. I am sure no hon. member would like to see his wife do it, and not a single member of this Chamber would care to see his wife appointed on the election committee of Mr. or Mrs. So-and-so to canvass a district. Can any hon. member imagine his wife going round to all the men in the district, and asking for votes? I say, no; nor can we imagine a woman being dragged into this matter in any way whatever. We have to look at these things from an ordinary point of view. I want that argument answered if possible, and I desire to ask every man who speaks to us whether he would confine himself to giving the franchise to women, or whether he would push forward the theory, and assert that, if she wished to use her power, she could push herself into this Assembly. We know perfectly well that in every part of the world where woman has taken an executive

position in any public body, she has decidedly degraded herself. We know of New Zealand's mayoress, and of America's mayoresses. We are aware that in those States in which women have been elected on municipal bodies in company with men, they have without exception been degraded. I cannot imagine any woman being a member of this Assembly and staying here every night till midnight, while her husband is at home—going to the refreshment-room, and perhaps strolling home with the member for West Perth, and all the rest of it. We shall be told it is beneath the dignity of the House to bring forward arguments of this kind. If so, how much more ridiculous and absurd would it be to bring a lady into this Assembly? It is not fitting that women should occupy a place either on a municipal body or legislative body, where men meet together to discuss the affairs of the nation. Had it not been for this "cock-bird," as the Premier called him, of the tea and cackle union, who likes to plume himself before these hen conventions—had it not been for him, and some of the said ladies, who, no doubt, possess great ability, we should never have heard of the question from the women as a body. It is not a question on which the whole of the women have risen up as one body and asked for the franchise, as men have risen in other forward movements. To show how much power and influence a few women may have, I may refer to the number of hon. members who are jealous of the honours of the said cock-bird, and are anxious to plume themselves also at some of these said conventions. The franchise for women has never been asked for, and is not wanted. Is any hon. member willing to bring forward a referendum to deal with the question?

MR. VOSPER: I will bring it forward.

MR. MORAN: If the hon. member will do that, he will be adopting a proper course. We should then get at the truth as to the wishes of the women of Western Australia on this question. Let him ask for a referendum on the question whether they believe in allowing women to enter Parliament, and any of its offices; let him not only ask, "Do you believe in giving the franchise?" but also ask whether they are willing for women

to enter public life in Western Australia, including Attorney Generalships, to be followed up, as they are in most parts of Australia, by the appointment to judge-ships in the colony to which they belong. I can imagine, but the imagination is not a very pleasant one, a lady judge trying in Western Australia a very important divorce case. The imagination presents itself to my mind because the hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James) says he will throw the profession open to the ladies. I can imagine the mother of a large family in Perth filling the position of judge, or a very brilliant spinster trying such a case, or a single lady barrister becoming through her capabilities and legal knowledge a judge of the Supreme Court, and trying a very important divorce case in this colony. You can imagine it, but you would never want to see it realised. We have in every case come to the conclusion that woman was not fitted for certain things; and one of the things for which she is least fitted is entry into public life. I have a certain amount of regret in opposing this proposition which has been so ably brought forward. Several ladies in Perth are no doubt enthusiastic upon this question, and have their hearts set upon it, but they are at war with the majority of their sex in Western Australia, who possibly are not so intellectual, and certainly not so noisy in the matter. I oppose it with the sincere conviction that the world has nothing new to give to woman in this respect. There is nothing new under the sun, and if ever you endeavour to produce something new, and try to make a man out of a woman, you are bucking up against an opossium at once. I have much pleasure in opposing the motion, and I shall do it as strongly as I can. Possibly I should not be so much opposed to it if I thought it would stop at the franchise; but when I find they wish to give women power to belong to the Ministry, Parliament, and everything else, I cannot support it.

AN HON. MEMBER: We will stop at the franchise.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member for East Perth says he will not stop at that. If he can assure this House that, by giving

woman a vote, he will at the same time prevent her from getting into Parliament and the positions associated with Parliament, we shall withdraw our objection; but we know that the leader of this movement is pushing it to its logical conclusion, and urging that not only should the franchise be conferred, but that women should be able to occupy seats in Parliament, and to fill every position in the land. It has reduced itself to an absurdity, and what I say is that we should leave the matter where our common-sense requires us to leave it, and where the women of the colony themselves want it left. Where it has been pushed further in America it has been brought to ridicule, and I feel sure that it would end in bringing ridicule on every part of the world in which it was tried.

MR. QUINLAN (Toodyay): Having voted against the proposal of the hon. member for East Perth in this House some few years ago I feel that, being a convert to the cause, I am justified in offering a few remarks in support of the motion. The arguments that have been raised are as old as the subject itself, which has been before the country and the House on more than one occasion; but I am convinced that we will be justified in granting this privilege, notwithstanding that a few only may have asked or agitated for it, because if that were an argument the same would apply to New Zealand or South Australia. In New Zealand this question was first agitated by a few, and what was the result of the first election? The people took advantage of it to such a degree that almost 90 per cent. of the ladies upon the roll availed themselves of the franchise. I hold that in all probability the same would result in Western Australia; and while it may be argued that there is no immediate hurry for such a reform here, surely, at any rate, we are right in moving in this direction. It is in the direction of progress and prosperity, and the ladies who have now risen to the occasion are willing and ready to avail themselves of the franchise should this House grant it to them. I cannot see any good argument why the ladies should not have the vote when they request it. They have had various concessions given to them even during the

present session. In one Bill, which dealt with divorce, provision was made to place the woman on an equality with the man, which privilege had always hitherto been denied. Another measure which was passed here about three years ago, and would be new to many other countries, was an Act relating to the distribution of estates. It had always been recognised, not only here, but in England and nearly every part of the world, that there was an inequality between the sexes in the distribution of estates. By the enactment to which I refer, that position has been altered so far as this colony is concerned, so that a daughter is now on an equality with a son in the case of the distribution of his or her parents' estate. I think, too, that if the franchise were granted to woman it would have a beneficial effect morally, and that its influence would be for good; and while, in some instances, women may have particular fancies regarding representation, I am sure that in the case of the older ones they would recognise their responsibility, and place in Parliament those whom they thought worthy of their support. The granting of the franchise to women would tend to better protection for them, for they would be more recognised if they had that political power than they are at the present time, and they would, if they thought fit, be able to question the merits of any candidate. I believe that, in considering whether a candidate was worthy of their support, the first point which would be considered by them would be his moral character; and that in itself would be sufficient to warrant the extension of the franchise to the women of this colony. It is desirable that greater opportunities should be given to men and women to meet and discuss any subject, political or otherwise. I admire ladies who are modest, or I may say, perhaps, somewhat shy; but I believe that if they come more into contact with men they would be stronger, and better able to preserve their own interests. The right to vote in municipalities has always been recognised in this colony, and I believe throughout the world; and while I admit that very few ladies care to go to the poll unless they are driven, still I believe it is due to the fact that there are so few of them who have the opportunity, that they

feel somewhat reluctant to vote, seeing the vast number of men there are upon the roll. But let them have the franchise so that they may vote for members of the Assembly, or of the Upper House, and be on an equality with men in the matter, and then see what the result will be. If they do not avail themselves of the privilege given them, then by all means let them be dealt with as the Electoral Act in New Zealand deals with electors who do not avail themselves of the opportunity of voting—strike them off the roll, and let them be politically dead to the world. The same principle should apply to men. I hope that when the question of electoral reform occupies the attention of hon. members, this measure will be adopted in Western Australia. If that principle were carried out with regard to both men and women, it would save a considerable sum to the Government for electoral expenses, and compel those who feel any interest in their country to vote. If they did not do so, you could consider that they were either in their graves or did not take sufficient interest in national affairs to go to the poll. Of course, it may be argued that in country places it will be inconvenient, and I recognise that; but, perhaps, better facilities could be given, because one of the reasons why so few generally record their votes in those localities is the inconvenience of getting to the polling places. Still, I cannot say that, with regard to my own electorate, because at the last election it was, as regards percentage of those who voted, at the top of the list, and it deserves credit for it. It may be argued that if female suffrage were granted, a dual vote would be given in the case of married women. I think that they certainly deserve a dual vote, for married men and women have much greater responsibilities than others, and I do not believe that the dual vote would, as has often been said, lead to quarrels or disputes. I hold that ladies are entitled to their opinions as well as men, and that they should be entitled to vote which way they choose. I admit that, in my own case, my wife probably would not avail herself of the franchise at the present time, but I really believe that if it became the law of the colony she would exercise that right, and also that other ladies would do the same. It is no argument to say that at the pre-

sent time only a few are urging that this privilege should be granted. I know plenty of instances in this colony of widows and widowers, and I make bold to say that in every instance the widow has, so far as I have been able to judge, in business circles, been better able to manage an estate than a widower, notwithstanding the care devoted to her children. Reference was made to the lady who occupied the position of mayoress in New Zealand, but what was the result? That lady was disgraced in the eyes of her own sex, and they did not put her into the same position again, for she was rejected on a subsequent occasion by a large majority. And the same would apply to men. There are men now in responsible positions who are a disgrace to their sex, and the chances are 100 to 1 that, as soon as experience has taught electors the kind of representative they have selected, they will not choose him a second time. All over the British Empire we recognise at our head a woman who is admired all over the world, and she has also the executive or business concerns of the State to conduct, nevertheless she is admired all over the world, and she has fulfilled that high office with dignity, and with credit to herself and her subjects. This question, as hon. members are aware, will not be dealt with offhand if the principle is affirmed; but when electoral reform takes place, let women avail themselves of the opportunity to vote, and then if they do not vote, surely no harm can result from granting the franchise to those who ask for it. I do not think it is the province of this House to refuse what is requested by our equals, if not our superiors, morally, and for the reasons I have mentioned I feel justified in supporting my hon. and worthy friend the member for East Perth. The arguments used by my hon. friend the member for Central Murchison were exceedingly good—so much so that I almost felt inclined to revert to my former opinion; but I should not be justified in returning to the old path, for I feel that I am on the right one now, and I am confident that sooner or later what is proposed will become the law of the land.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Do not get converted too often, or we shall doubt the genuineness of it.

MR. QUINLAN: There is not much fear of it. I congratulate the hon. member on the excellent speech he delivered, and I share the opinion of every member of this Assembly that he deserves the thanks of the community for the arguments he raised against the arguments of my friends; but suffice it to say that my friend's arguments were so strong that I feel justified in supporting him.

MR. MORGANS (Coolgardie): I desire to say on this question that I have never heard any subject debated in this House or outside it with less argument than has been brought forward on the present occasion. The Premier took the opportunity of congratulating the hon. member for Central Murchison upon the splendid speech he made the other night upon this question. There was one point I noticed in that congratulation, which to some extent detracted from its value, because my right hon. friend did not say whether he admired the rhetoric or the argument of that speech. I suppose it was that he recognised in the speech of the hon. member for Central Murchison a very able and eloquent speech, and I have much pleasure also in congratulating the hon. member upon it, but I am obliged to say that in the whole of it I was not able to trace one single argument against the motion now before the House. I followed it with a great deal of interest, as no doubt other members did, and I observed that several members who are frequently opposed to the hon. member for Central Murchison cheerfully responded to his rhetoric. I could not help observing that the member for West Kimberley, for example, kept saying "Hear, hear." When the member for Central Murchison is present in this Assembly, it is quite unusual for me to notice the hon. member for West Kimberley devoting such acclamation to the statements of my friend opposite; but I am bound to say that everything seemed out of gear. I could not understand how it was that the hon. member for Central Murchison had been able to bring such powerful influence to bear on the very refractory member for West Kimberley. I admit that the member for Central Murchison has made a most excellent speech, but, as I have said, I have not up to the present time been able to trace one single argument. One of

the first points the hon. member touched upon was the question of taxation and representation. Well, I think that it is a sound theory that those who pay taxation should have representation; but I contend that a woman contributes as much to the taxes as a man. It appears to me that although a woman may be attending to household duties, she is certainly assisting to develop the interests of the husband in his commercial, or scientific, or any other interests. And if a wife takes a legitimate interest in the development of the destinies of man, it is a proper thing for us to concede that she bears her fair share at least in the taxation of the country. If that be so, the argument of the hon. member, that taxation and representation should go together, simply confirms the position taken up by the member for East Perth in bringing forward this motion, and it is one good reason why the suffrage should be granted to women.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I think you said there were no arguments.

MR. MORGANS: I said you showed none. I am now bringing forward arguments upon points raised by the hon. member, which I hope will have the effect of leading him to vote in a different way from that indicated when he delivered his speech on the subject.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I shall want better arguments than that.

MR. MORGANS: The hon. member stated that women were not bread-earners, but I contend that they are. If you were to see the position of many women in Perth to-day, you would find that there are scores who earn bread not only for themselves but for their husbands and children also. Hundreds of women in this colony are doing that.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And hundreds are not.

MR. MORGANS: That I admit, but I say that in this great colony there are hundreds of women to-day earning bread for themselves and their children, and also for their husbands. I am sure the member for Central Murchison will be one of the first to admit that equality.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I do not admit it at all. It is not the truth.

MR. MORGANS: There is another point, with regard to the position of

widows and unmarried women, and surely the hon. member is prepared to admit there are some such in this colony. I know a great number, and I have the honour of knowing many that are quite as worthy of the privilege of giving a vote as is the hon. member himself; but if the argument of the hon. member is good, he would shut out the widow and the spinster, the unmarried woman. That is not fair, to say the least of it. Then, with regard to those terrible evils and disasters which have been indicated to us by the member for Central Murchison, also by the Premier, and by the member for East Coolgardie: these evils and disasters are going to arise if we allow the women to come out of that ideal sphere which those members have been good enough to present to this House as being women's proper sphere. We have still the unmarried women, who pay a share of taxation but have no right to vote; and if the argument of the member for Central Murchison is correct, surely those persons who are earning their own bread and contributing to the revenue of the colony should have some right in the management of the colony's affairs.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Not one in a hundred is doing it.

MR. MORGANS: There are a great many. The hon. member has brought before us, not the arguments of other men, but their opinions; and he particularly emphasised the opinion of Mr. Bryce on this question. We have all respect for an opinion expressed by Mr. Bryce on a political question; but it must be admitted that he is not infallible, any more than is the member for Central Murchison. We must admit that Mr. Bryce might make a mistake as well as other men; and, in view of the opinions which have been expressed on the other side of the question by men equally as good as Mr. Bryce, it appears to me the opinions of men which have thus been brought before us should have no weight in this House, one way or the other. It is true we may express our opinions on any subject, but it does not follow that our opinions will be right; and the idea of the hon. member bringing forward the opinion of Mr. Bryce, and trying to settle this important question in a certain way merely because Mr.

Bryce has happened to say something which suits the hon. member, and to bring that forward as a conclusive proof that we should not give the vote to women, is an absurd position for any member to take up, and I do submit that the opinion so put forward should not weigh with any member on this great question. Another opinion given to us was that of Mr. Harper, of Melbourne, a gentleman whom I do not know; and it appears that gentleman's investigations have led him to a conclusion against women's suffrage. Still, the opinion quoted to us does not show a single argument, but simply says that Mr. Harper does not believe in women's suffrage; and upon that evidence the member for Central Murchison expects members of this House to follow Mr. Harper, simply because that gentleman has expressed an opinion against female suffrage. I am not prepared to follow the opinions of any man; because, if opinions are produced on one side of a question, I can bring other opinions expressed by men and women of equal note, on the other side, and so we merely get opinions which are opposed to each other. I say this kind of evidence is of no avail. The hon. member referred also to Mr. Gladstone. There is no man in this House who could possibly entertain a greater regard and respect for the reputation of that great statesman than I do, and I will not yield to any man in the admiration I have for that greatest of Britain's sons. But, at the same time, in a question affecting the franchise of women, I am not prepared to accept the views of that great statesman, lately deceased. I know quite well that his views upon social matters in general were perfectly sound, and were views that should call forth the respect of all men; but at the same time I know his opinions and views upon many important questions were not sound, and were not such as many intelligent men were able to accept.

MR. GEORGE: Yet he had a great following.

MR. MORGANS: Yes.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: He was as well able to judge as we are.

MR. MORGANS: I admit that he was quite as able to judge of this question from his point of view as I am to judge of it from my point of view, and I admit his

knowledge and great talents might have enabled him to take a much more intelligent view of the questions than I can; but I cannot yield to his opinion until I am convinced that I am wrong. I am quite prepared to defer to the opinions of greater men, but it does not follow that I must accept these opinions as being true, as gospel; and, notwithstanding the member for Central Murchison is opposed to me in this matter, and that he has quoted the opinions of others much stronger than his own, and although I admit he knows a great deal more about this question than I do, yet I do not see my way clear to agree with him. Various questions were raised by the hon. member. He referred, for instance, to that great writer, "Ouida," and I may congratulate him on having made the first joke I have heard from him since I have been a member of this House; but the joke came badly from the hon. member, because he is not accustomed to joking, and he did not do it well. His joke was in pronouncing the lady's name as "Oh-you-dear." I could not quite catch that for the moment, and I had to refer to a frisky friend in front, the member for Sussex (Mr. Locke), to ask what the hon. member meant by that strange sound; and, after considerable thought, the member for Sussex said—

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I said some people pronounce the name "Oh-you-dear."

MR. MORGANS: Well, it was a very good joke, and I am sorry the hon. member is not accustomed to the pronouncing of jokes, otherwise he would have made it more effective than he did. I do not know much about this lady.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Nor I.

MR. MORGANS: Then the hon. member has not read her works?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: No.

MR. MORGANS: I am delighted to hear him say he has not read the works of that lady, because if he had done so, and knowing the strong religious views of the hon. member, I do not think it would be possible that the views of that lady and the strong views of the member for Central Murchison could correspond in any way, but that the views of "Ouida," as set forth in her novels, would be very repulsive to him. What is the position of this lady, with regard to her-

self and her sex? Her position simply is that "Ouida" is an opponent of the views of her own sex. Accepting as a fact that the views of "Ouida" are generally in opposition to the views held by my hon. friend, I say that is a good reason for not following the dictates of any principle enunciated by her; because anyone who has read the novels of "Ouida" will admit that her views generally are in opposition to those held by the fair sex. There was one point that had some weight, and it was in reference to a petition which the hon. member stated had been presented to the House of Commons against women's suffrage. Some of the names on that petition, I am prepared to admit, deserve the most respectful consideration from every member of this House. There are names in that petition which would cause us to pause before we opposed any principles enunciated in the petition. The hon. member has stated some of the names to this House. I can give some of the principal names, among them being Lady Stanley of Alderley; Lady Randolph Churchill; Mrs. Broadhurst, wife of a labor member and a very able man, too; Professor Huxley, Mrs. Askwith, W. E. Forster, Max Muller, Humphrey Ward, Leslie Stephen, Alma Tadema, J. R. Green, and others. As to Mrs. Askwith, I know she is an intelligent woman, a great artist, and a woman of large information; and her's is one of the names I respect particularly.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There are hundreds more, on the same petition.

MR. MORGANS: I am prepared to admit there are thousands; but what is to be said on the other side, when we have men like the present leader of the House of Commons, Mr. Balfour, who is to-day one of the acknowledged forces of England. We have also Mr. Balfour's sister, who is the principal of Newnham College; probably one of the most intellectual women in England. We have Lord Salisbury, a great statesman. We have Herbert Spencer, and we have a host of men and women of great eminence, whose names can be brought to bear against those names which have been cited on one side, and who hold entirely opposite opinions to any of those eminent persons quoted on that side. I say, in that case, no argument can be based upon the

opinions of any of those eminent persons, nor do those names show the advisableness or otherwise of adopting the principle of this motion; therefore I say the whole of the strong position which the member for Central Murchison was supposed to have established, the other night, crumbles and is of no effect. I am sure the hon. member will admit that the expression of opinion by other people equally good deserves as much consideration at the hands of hon. members of this Assembly, as the opinions of those he brought forward on his side of the question for our edification. I think I have shown that the position taken by the hon. member has no foundation whatever, and should not weigh in any degree with hon. members in coming to a decision on this important question. There was one other point touched on by the hon. member, when he said that women were not angels. I would like to ask if he ever heard a woman say she was an angel. I have had the privilege of coming in contact with a large number of the fair sex during an experience extending over forty years, and during the whole of that time I have never heard a lady suggest that she was an angel, nor have I heard a lady suggest that any one of her own sex was angelic; so the hon. member has set up a position, for the pleasure of knocking it down. No woman has ever been known to assert that she is an angel, whether she be married or unmarried; and yet the hon. member actually put before the House the argument that ladies are not angels. What did he use that argument for?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I did not use it.

MR. MORGANS: You did. You said ladies are not angels.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Oh, yes; I said that.

MR. MORGANS: But whoever said women are angels?

MR. GEORGE: The member for East Perth.

MR. MORGANS: No; that member did not say so; or, if he did, although I have read his speech as reported, I did not observe that expression, unless it has been left out of the *Hansard* report, as another matter was said this afternoon to have been omitted. Why is this question about angels brought up at all?

What is the object of it? What is supposed to be gained by telling this House and the country that women are not angels? What is to be gained by that? Nothing at all, except to throw a slur on women. That is the only object it could have, and, in view of the fact that no woman has ever pretended to be an angel, or thought of asserting her rights as an angel, I contend the use of the term is opprobrious, and intended to be so.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I must rise in explanation. The statement of the hon. member is utterly unfair and utterly untrue. What I stated was that the argument had been raised by the member for East Perth (Mr. James), that women would exercise their influence on the side of righteousness. I then said that all women were not angels, and that some women would not exercise their influence on the side of righteousness. The furthest thing from my thought was to cast any reflection on any lady. I have far too much respect for ladies for that.

MR. JAMES: And yet you will not trust them.

MR. MORGANS: I thought the member for Central Murchison wished to cast a reflection on women. He made use of the argument that women were not angels, and the only inference was that the argument was for the purpose of bringing odium, at least, on women.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is not fair.

MR. MORGANS: If I am wrong I am prepared to withdraw.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You are perfectly unjust.

MR. MORGANS: If the hon. member says he did not intend to cast any reflection on women, I am willing to accept his explanation, and withdraw what I have said. At any rate, I know the statement was made, and had the effect outside of inducing some men, who are only too glad to have an opportunity of saying something unkind of the fairer sex, to believe the opinions they hold are well established. But I am quite prepared to accept the explanation of the hon. member.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If you read the report, you will see it is as I have said.

MR. MORGANS: I have read the report most carefully, and that is the effect it had on my mind. I am perfectly

certain that during the youth of the member for West Kimberley (Mr. Forrest), he called women "angels" many times. And what is more, it is even probable that when my friend the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) was sowing his wild oats in the city of Melbourne, he also many times called the fair sex "angels."

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I did not sow any wild oats.

MR. MORGANS: I do not know that there are two more angelic beings in the House than the two hon. members I have just mentioned, and they seem to be agreed that women shall not have a vote.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Hear, hear! We agree on that.

MR. MORGANS: There was one point suggested by the member for Central Murchison, and I am sure that on this he did not wish to be unfair. I believe that when that hon. member addresses the House he desires to do so in a spirit of fairness at all times. But he referred to a meeting held by the W.C.T.U., and said that at that meeting there was on the platform a gentleman who was not a teetotaler. I am not aware that it is a disgrace for a man not to be a teetotaler.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I never suggested it was.

MR. MORGANS: I regret to say that I am not a teetotaler myself. I am no apostle of lemonade and kolanut; and I object to the inference that, because a man takes a glass of whisky he is not a good man.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That is not to be inferred at all.

MR. MORGANS: I cannot place any other inference upon it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What I urged was that that gentleman was inconsistent.

MR. MORGANS: I am afraid I am again straying from the path of virtue in attacking the hon. member on this point. At any rate, I had the curiosity to ascertain who this creature was—who this man was who, though not a teetotaler, appeared on the platform of the W.C.T.U. It turned out to be none other than the Hon. E. H. Wittenoom, the present Agent General, whom I have the pleasure of counting on the list of my esteemed friends.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: He is also a friend of mine.

MR. MORGANS: I am sorry to find Mr. Wittenoom branded as an unworthy man, because he, though not a teetotaler, sat on the platform of the W.C.T.U.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Nothing of the sort.

MR. MORGANS: Has anybody ever heard such an absurd argument used in the House?

MR. GEORGE: That is not the conclusion to be drawn.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I spoke of the inconsistency.

MR. MORGANS: I do not know that I am wrong, because I am speaking from a knowledge of what I have heard in the House.

MR. GEORGE: The question is one of consistency.

MR. MORGANS: Later on I shall come to the position occupied by the Premier on this question, but I have not quite finished with the member for Central Murchison yet. The latter member told us he was advocating the cause of women, when he urged they should not have a vote. That appears to me to be one of the most extraordinary arguments ever adduced. Women are pleading for what is their undoubted right, and the member for Central Murchison, posing as the friend of women, refuses to give them a vote. Where is the friendliness of the hon. member towards women? Where is his consistency? His position is absolutely inconsistent?

MR. JAMES: If the women had votes, who would sew his buttons on?

MR. MORGANS: I suppose the hon. member would have to sew on the buttons himself. But the member for Central Murchison goes further and tells the House that his mission is to defend woman against herself. Has any statement more offensive than that ever been made? Does woman need the interference of the member for Central Murchison to defend her against herself? What women are there in the country who have invited the hon. member to defend women against themselves? I defy the hon. member to name one respectable woman in the community who has asked him to do that. Women can stand on their own merits, and do not require the championship of the member for Central Murchison to defend them against themselves. The statement of the

hon. member is bordering on the confines of effrontery and impertinence. I do not say it is effrontery, but it is on the border. Neither in the colonies nor in any other part of the world is the championship of the hon. member required, and the position assumed by him is cruel in regard to the fairer sex in W.A.

MR. GEORGE: Have mercy on him.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I do not want his mercy; I want justice.

MR. MORGANS: But the funniest part came at the end of the speech of the member for Central Murchison. The hon. member there said—

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member must not quote from a debate of this session.

MR. MORGANS: I am very sorry. Had I thought of that rule, I should have taken care to copy the lines I was about to quote. At any rate, the member for Central Murchison quoted from a poet, though he did not tell us who that poet was.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It was a woman, anyhow—Mrs. Little.

MR. MORGANS: Well, she is very little indeed, the woman who wrote those lines.

MR. JAMES: She signed a petition against the Bill.

MR. GEORGE: He who does not appreciate those lines is not worthy of the name of man.

MR. MORGANS: The member for Central Murchison read those lines to the House, and now the member for the Murray (Mr. George) does not like my objecting to jingles of the kind. There is no poetry or sense in the lines; there is nothing to appeal to the intelligence of either man or woman. I do not think the lines had the slightest effect on any hon. member when they were read.

MR. JAMES: The member for the Murray was in tears over them.

MR. MORGANS: I do know this, that they had some effect on some members of this House. I saw the hon. member for West Kimberley with tears in his eyes when the hon. member read those lines, and then, in trying to suppress those tears, sobs came into his throat. With regard to the hon. member for the Murray, I could not watch him also, but most likely he had tears and sobs, too.

MR. GEORGE: I would not be ashamed of it, either.

Mr. MORGANS : The hon. member is ashamed of nothing. The effect of that jingle was to carry away the minds of hon. members from the important matter before us. Fortunately for me, I have not sufficient memory to remember those words, but I know they were words devoted to leading us to believe what were the rights that belonged to women ; and after having read them more than once—because I tried to find out that there was some meaning in the jingle, this supposed poem, this jingle I call it—after trying to find some meaning in it, I came to the conclusion that there was nothing in it, and it was intended to make some impression on the minds of members, so that they could not give sufficient attention to the subject under discussion. I think there was something of this kind in this poem—

The rights of women, what are they?
The right to labour and to pray.

What a very generous attitude for mankind, to allow women to labour and to pray! what a generous poet to allow such a thing!

The right to watch while others sleep.

What an advantage—a woman to have the privilege to watch while others sleep! Well, I prefer to leave this right to someone else, to the hon. member for Central Murchison.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH : I will take it ; it is good enough.

Mr. MORGANS :

The right to watch while others sleep,
The right o'er others' woes to weep.

Who wants to weep o'er woes? I do not want to weep over anybody's woes. Let the member for the Murray do it.

The right to succour in reverse,
The right to please while others curse.

Did anybody ever hear such extraordinary jingle. The hon. gentleman tells me that Mrs. Little was the author of this poem. I never read it before ; I have never had the misfortune to read such jingle before, and I hope I never shall. In any case, I say this poem—if the hon. member for Central Murchison had not told me who had written it—I should have taken to be by Mr. Sankey, of Messrs. Sankey and Moody, those religious revivalists who were making an immense fortune in all parts of the world a few years ago. If

any hon. member will take the poem and read it, and study it, and see what there is in it, I say he will always regret that such an honourable, such an able, such an intelligent man as the member for Central Murchison should have inflicted such a jingle on the members of the House. I have nothing more to say about it.

Mr. GEORGE : I should think you have not ; you have said nothing yet.

Mr. MORGANS : We come to the hon. member for the Murray : what does he say? He says that women should not be required to go on the platform. Whoever said they should? I never did. The member for East Perth never said so. The opponents of this motion are always begging the question. They are raising up bogeys, to knock down themselves. I say if it is necessary for the women to go on the platform, they will make a better show than the men who go there. Then the hon. member said that ladies would go round canvassing. Whoever asked a woman, or whoever suggested that a woman should be a canvasser at election times? The giving of a vote to a lady does not mean that she could go and canvass votes. These are the arguments which have been set up for the purpose of being knocked down by the opponents of this question themselves. I never heard, in the course of my experience, any statements so wild as those brought forward in this House against the question of womanhood suffrage. Here, the hon. member says, are 70,000 men in this colony who have not votes, and for that reason we should not give the vote to women.

Mr. GEORGE : I said, put these men on the roll first.

Mr. MORGANS : That is the same thing. I say if there is a man in this colony who has not a vote, it is his own fault. All he has to do is to make an application in the proper quarter to get his name on the roll, and he becomes a voter at once. Therefore, to use such an argument before this Assembly is absolutely unfair.

Mr. GEORGE : What about those whose names were knocked off?

Mr. MORGANS : That is their own fault, through some neglect or mistake on their part. I assert to this House that it is not necessary for any man in

this colony to be without a vote, if he takes the necessary steps to get it. Therefore, all this argument falls to the ground. There was a quotation made from a letter written by a very distinguished lady, Mrs. Clarke, who is the head of the Women's Christian Temperance Union in this colony. I am very sorry to hear any expression from any member of this House which could possibly bring ridicule down upon that very estimable and distinguished lady, and it is unworthy of any member of the House to say one word which would bring ridicule down upon her, and I regret very much that one or two members in this House to-night have done so. I think it is unfair. A member read a letter which was distributed among some of the members of this House. I did not get one, but I have seen it since in the newspaper, and I say that letter does infinite credit to Mrs. Clarke.

MR. MORAN: It lost two votes in the House.

MR. MORGANS: It may have lost fifty votes, but it was a carefully-penned letter, and penned on principles of logic, and was a credit to the lady who wrote it. I am quite prepared to support her views. What I say is this, that the hon. member for the Murray seems to take it for granted that if you give a woman a vote, you absolutely knock her off any other business in life. This seems an absurd position. If women have a vote, that vote can only be used during the period of a general election, or when a Ministry goes out. Women would not be supposed to be going out voting every day of the week. If a woman has a vote, it is unnecessary that she should be out every day and every night voting. Why take this unreasonable view? Why misrepresent the facts to this House? Hon. members are trying to prejudice the case of their opponents. I will not detain the House longer. I have expressed my views about this question, but there is one point which the hon. member for East Coolgardie has reminded me of, about women going into Parliament. I say the logical position of giving women a vote is that they will go to Parliament and occupy any position: but I do not believe that will be the practical result. I do not believe many women will care to

go into Parliament. I believe they look on their sphere of action as cast in other lines, but at the same time there is nothing to prove that if the suffrage were given to women on the lines which they are asking for it, there would be anything to prevent women going into Parliament and occupying the position of Speaker, or Judge of the Supreme Court. I am prepared to admit that the logical sequence of the right to vote, if given to women, is what I have stated, although I do not believe it will come about. In conclusion, I beg to say, much as I regret the unkind words that have been said with reference to women over this debate, the unjust and unpardonable position which some members have taken up in regard to this position, I say that my friend, the member for Central Murchison, in this respect, has been the greatest sinner. We expected something better from him. He is supposed to be a man possessing democratic views, a man of action and progress. But he has stood in this House and given the strongest opposition to the member for East Perth. I regret that, because there is nothing that can damage the position of the member for Central Murchison, politically, socially, and religiously so much as the position he has taken up in reference to this question of womanhood suffrage. There is nothing that can do him so much damage, I repeat. And I regret that there is a tendency in this House on the part of certain members, not to give an unprejudiced consideration to the question. Hon. members go with the Premier, who says that women have not demanded this reform. I deny that. The Premier has no ground for saying so. The Premier used another argument which is absolutely unfounded. He says we should go slowly; we should not take this step, because the mother country has not taken it; that we should not take any steps that the mother country has not taken. The position is inconsistent. This country has gone ahead of the mother country in giving manhood suffrage in this country, and which does not exist in England. The position of the Premier is untenable, and his argument falls to the ground. All these arguments are intended to show the state of discord in the minds of hon. members, and for

the purpose of confusing the great issue before this House. That is the intention of the arguments brought forward; and whatever may be the result of this division, this cause is a great one—this cause of womanhood suffrage, their right to vote and be placed in the same position as men, and their right to occupy the position intended for them in this life. If we fail to-night in the division, I safely predict that in a very short time the member for East Perth will see this question brought forward in this House and carried to victory, and in the Upper House also.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell): I desire, in as few words as possible, to give my support to the member for East Perth, and to heartily congratulate him on the ability displayed in bringing this motion forward; for, although we may be defeated on this occasion, hon. members may rest assured that the time is not far distant when this motion will be carried by a good majority. I find no novelties in the arguments, either for or against the motion. I think we should deal with principles, and not with the measure in detail; and it is enough for me to be satisfied that the principle is a right one. I must confess that I have indeed been disappointed this evening at the arguments that have fallen from the Premier. What does it signify whether woman is able to go out and do battle? History tells us that, if she is not able to fight, she has great influence in making other people do so. I can give you a whole list of names, if necessary, to prove that women of light and leading throughout the old world and throughout Australia, at the present time and in the past, have given their heartiest support to this movement. Some hon. members in this Assembly have not treated the question with that seriousness which has been devoted to it in other places; but during the last few days I, in order to get special information from those colonies where the great principle advocated has been in existence, sent a telegram to South Australia and also one to the Premier of New Zealand, inquiring as to the working of the measure in their colonies; and I have great pleasure in reading a telegram received from the

Premier of New Zealand, which is as follows:—

The extension of franchise to women in our colony has proved beneficial. Taking an active and intelligent interest in political matters has in no way marred their womanhood. If anything, there is an improvement. Only to-night the second reading of a Bill to remove all disabilities and to allow them to become members of Parliament and local bodies has been passed on the voices.—R. J. SEDDON, Premier.

That is from the Premier of a colony where this principle has passed the stage of theory; and in this House, where a short time ago we talked very readily about one people and one destiny, shall we sneer at what has been done in those colonies so close to us? The Premier said to-night he believed the women do not want the franchise; but I assert, advisedly, that any hon. member in this House who says that such is the case is altogether out of touch with what is going on in Western Australia. It is true that the women may not have agitated upon it, but as one closely associated with social reform in this colony for the last 25 years, I venture to say that, if a vote of the women could be taken this evening, it would be found that deep down in the hearts of our most cultured women there is a desire for the right to vote. What is our position now? We give the franchise to every man, however debased, whose only contribution to the taxation of the colony may be the duty on the beer which he swills, yet we deny the franchise to woman simply because she is a woman, whatever her contributions to the State may be. I would ask hon. members to look at their own inconsistency, and consider what we did this afternoon when we passed the second reading of a Bill to enable a woman not under 30 years of age to obtain a license to keep a public-house. We gave her the power to go in and hold a licensed house, and I suppose to pay the taxes; but although we have placed her in that position, and properly so, we refuse to give her a vote. Is that consistency? I say it is not. Hon. members in this House know as well as I do many instances in this colony at the present time where women are employing a large number of men, and during the time of an election the man occupying the lowest position in her employ can vote, whilst she, who

keeps the whole thing in motion, is passed by. I am sure that even hon. members who are opposed to women as a whole having votes would grant it to such as those to whom I have referred, for I have heard them say so. But I maintain that the object of every statesman should be to give every person worthy of it a share in the government of the country through an elective franchise. I am sorry that the Premier did not deal with the principle in the motion, for it has been found worthy of consideration by other statesmen. I feel sure the time is not far distant when it will be deemed worthy of his attention, and he will wake up and wonder at his action and that of others in this Parliament on the present occasion. We are told that women do not care for the franchise and do not want it, and that they take no interest in politics. I do not know how it is in some families, but I have pleasure in saying that in my own and in others, intelligent women display a very deep interest in the affairs of this colony. We have had evidence, during the discussion of the question of divorce and other subjects, of the interest taken by women in politics, and if we need ocular demonstration at the present moment we have only to look at the Ladies' Gallery. The principle advocated is righteous and must be adopted, and it will be the salvation of stable government. What have we to fear from it? Will hon. members presume to get up and say that the vote of woman will be on the wrong side? We know that when the time comes, as come it assuredly will, woman will be found voting for all that is highest and best calculated to minister to the welfare of the country. Woman has not studied politics as man has done, because she has not had an opportunity of so doing; but the experience of South Australia and of New Zealand, and elsewhere, will be that of West Australia, for the reforms she will bring about will not be such as are anticipated by those opposed to the motion. Whatever our misgivings, and whatever our disappointments, it may be said of woman, in this

great question, that she will give her vote for

Men whom the lust of office does not kill;
Men whom the spoils of office cannot buy;
Men who possess opinions and a will;
Men who have honour; men who will not lie.

Do right for right's sake, and not for expediency; and support this motion, because the movement has been proved to the hilt in other places, and because the leading statesmen of other colonies are in favour of the righteous principle, that the taxpayers shall have a voice in the making of the laws.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather): It certainly needs a little courage to attempt to address this House from the opposite point of view from that taken by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, in his rallying and enthusiastic address. The faces of hon. members who have been supporting this motion brightened up with a vitality that has been absent from them for the last hour and a half, and I feel sure they must necessarily have come to the conclusion that, after the address of that hon. gentleman, the battle is won. What is the particular subject we are discussing to-night? I take it to be none other than whether this is the proper time to give the franchise to women. Before saying anything about my opinion on the subject, I cannot help expressing, at this stage, my astonishment at the superlative audacity, as I may term it, of the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans), who accuses every man who has spoken in the House on this side of the question, of not having used an argument. Throughout the whole of his address, I listened for an argument from the hon. member himself, but did not hear one. I must say that the hon. member does credit to himself as a master of circumlocution, for he talked round and round the subject in rings, so that we never knew whether he was going away from the centre or was about to approach it. I like to listen to him, but I think he was rather too severe on the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth). I take it that a party who asserts a proposition should prove it. Throughout the whole of this debate there has been a great deal of misconception caused by statements made, which would conclude the whole of

the arguments if accepted. Men start off with the proposition, "Why deny to women the right of voting?" Deny the right! Let us analyse those words. Denial indicates opposition to a claim. Where is the evidence to satisfy us that the bulk of the women demand the franchise? No such evidence has been furnished to the House.

MR. JAMES: Why deny them the privilege because they do not claim it?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The next thing I would urge is that right necessarily means something to the advantage of the person concerned.

MR. VOSPER: A man might have a right to be hanged, but it would not be for his benefit.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: That would not be a right. That is a misconception of the meaning of the word "right."

MR. LEAKE: Some people would grumble even then.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: They would. "Right" necessarily involves something for the benefit of the person affected. Where, I again ask, is the evidence that the bulk of the women of this community claim the franchise as a right? If, as the challenge was thrown out, the subject were referred by referendum to the bulk of the community, I do not doubt for a moment that the majority of women would say they do not want the franchise.

MR. JAMES: Why not run the risk, and give them a chance?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member knows there is no evidence of the two main factors he wishes to enquire into; firstly, is it a right claimed by the bulk of the women of the community? and, secondly, do the bulk of the women demand it? True it is that there are certain ladies in this city and in the colony generally, who have, by writing up and speaking upon it, raised up a strong belief that they are doing right for the women of the country. I do not doubt their earnestness, but it does not follow that because people are earnest or sincere in a cause, that cause is necessarily a right one. It must be proved, and on this subject I fail to see that the question, why it is a woman should not get the right to vote the same as a man, is suf-

ficiently proved. The first statement is that a woman pays taxes, the same as a man. If that is an argument, then an infant under 18 years of age, who pays taxes, should have a vote. The next point is, is it because woman is inferior to man, that she is denied the vote? Certainly not. No one can make a comparison, because the one is not inferior to the other, but is entirely different, for the woman has qualities that a man does not possess. A woman relies on the strength of the man to protect her, and that relation has existed since civilisation was.

MR. JAMES: To the same extent as now?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Every bit.

MR. JAMES: Rubbish!

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member says "rubbish." It is evident his arguments are not convincing even to his own mind, and he indulges in that sort of language, in the heat of the moment. I do think that, while one is not always wedded to the same opinion, the time may come when I can admit I was wrong on this question to-day; but, up to the present, I have heard no reasons to satisfy me that it is for the benefit, not only of the women, but the true test is whether it is for the benefit of the whole community that women should have a vote. The right to exercise the franchise may bring with it not only corresponding duties, but corresponding degradation of those noble qualities we admire in woman. When you go home after the day's work and have to sit by the fireside and listen to a political discussion, and hear opinions that are, perhaps, opposite to what you hold, you may not be in a humour to listen to such opinions; and if the battle over questions you have to face outside the home is to be renewed at the fireside by a talking woman, who may talk you out of the house, there will probably be ample material, in such a state of things, to keep the courts employed, not solely with questions of judicial separation, but perhaps with questions arising out of more serious offences. We are only a small section of the civilised world, and you can show only two States in America, and only two in these colonies, or in the whole of the British empire; one of these two being marked out as

almost legislative mad. Therefore I decline to follow the lead of New Zealand, or of those two or three other States; and I think the proper course for this House is to abide the time when other and larger communities than ours have shown us the way, by adopting this new principle and working it out beneficially.

MR. HASSELL (Plantagenet): The member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) referred to a certain letter. I may say that letter has totally changed my opinion, and instead of voting for the motion as I had intended to do, I shall certainly vote against it.

MR. WALLACE (Algoon): I move the adjournment of the debate.

Put and passed, and the debate adjourned.

EARLY CLOSING BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and, on the motion of MR. JAMES, read a first time.

LOCAL COURTS EVIDENCE BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and, on the motion of MR. JAMES, read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10.55 p.m. until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 18th August, 1898.

Paper presented—Question: Hospital Patients at Cue and Day Dawn—Question: Railway Officials and Removal from Stations—Tick in East Kimberley: Select Committee's Report—"Hansard" Reports: Personal Explanation (Mr. Vosper)—Health Bill, in Committee, clauses 1 to 47—Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Amendment Bill, in Committee (reported)—Messages: (1) Annual Estimates, (2) Health Bill, and Re-appropriation of Loan Moneys Bill; recommending Appropriations—Return ordered: Official Receiver's Department, Fees and Commissions—Metropolitan Waterworks Board, Select Committee, Change of a Member—Annual Estimates, Committee of Supply—Financial Statement, first item moved, debate adjourned—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: Land Selection, 1898, Report of Department.

Ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION: HOSPITAL PATIENTS AT CUE AND DAY DAWN.

MR. ILLINGWORTH asked the Premier the cost per head of patients in Cue and Day Dawn Hospitals during the last financial year.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied:—1, The cost per head of patients in the Cue Hospital for the last financial year was £20 16s. 7d. As, however, there are yet a few accounts outstanding, this is to some extent approximate. 2, Day Dawn Hospital is not under the control of the Medical Department. It is very much smaller than Cue Hospital. 3, The total expenditure for Cue Hospital during 1897-98 has been £2,395 10s. 2d. Day Dawn has received through the Medical Department £942 6s. 2d.

QUESTION: RAILWAY OFFICIALS AND REMOVAL FROM STATIONS.

MR. LEAKE asked the Commissioner of Railways,—1, Why the guards and other