

express my regret that the Government are obliged to ask for another loan; but it appears necessary that we should fulfil our obligations, and carry these works to completion. With regard to the proportion of money expended in the North, there are several members representing Northern constituencies, and I do not know of one who has asked for money without obtaining it, if he showed that the particular work was necessary. I can hardly see where the complaint of the North is. The hon. member for East Kimberley has complained, but he has not suggested any particular work that is wanted in his district.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10.53 p.m.

## Legislative Council,

Thursday, 7th September, 1893.

Removal of Dredge from Albany—Chattels Foreclosure Bill: third reading—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### REMOVAL OF DREDGE FROM ALBANY.

THE HON. E. T. HOOLEY: I have to ask the Colonial Secretary whether it is the intention of the Government to remove the dredge from Albany, and, if so, when; also, whether the dredge will be sent to Carnarvon?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I have to reply that the work the dredge is now engaged upon will take until about the end of the year, and then, in all probability, it will be sent to Champion Bay and Carnarvon. I may say that it is proposed to dredge a channel 600 feet wide at Albany. At present the deepening operations have

only extended to a width of 300 feet, and to do the other 300 feet will take about four months longer. After that the dredge will be free, and will be then employed wherever it is most urgently required; and I imagine Carnarvon and Geraldton will command her first service. My formal answer to the question is: When the work the dredge is now employed upon at Albany is finished, which will be about the end of this year, it will, in all probability, be sent to perform dredging at Champion Bay and Carnarvon; but nothing definite has yet been settled.

#### CHATELS FORECLOSURE BILL.

##### THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time, and passed.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 4.40 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Monday, 11th September, at 8 o'clock p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 7th September, 1893.

Proceedings connected with Magisterial Bench at Perth—Bills assented to—Proposed Abolition of the Aborigines Protection Board—Prevention of Prize Fights under guise of Boxing Contests—Chattels Foreclosure Bill received from Legislative Council—Proposals of Mr. J. S. Reid as to leasing 1,000 acres of Land at Greenbushes Tinfeld—Federal Council: Increased representation—Kensington Lane Closure Bill: third reading—Engine Sparks Fire Prevention Bill: committee's report—Grand Jury Abolition Act Amendment Bill: Consideration of Legislative Council's amendments—Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act Amendment Bill: further considered in committee: third reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### PROCEEDINGS CONNECTED WITH MAGISTERIAL BENCH AT PERTH.

MR. TRAYLEN, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier,—1. What occa-

sion there was for Mr. W. A. Stone, J.P., to leave his office work lately for the purpose of sitting on the bench when the Police Magistrate was present? 2. Whether Mr. Stone attended the Court on Saturday week last at the request of Mr. E. L. Courthope, J.P.? 3. Whether the Police Magistrate left the bench on that day because he considered the dismissal of a charge of larceny against Maloney was a miscarriage of justice?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied, as follows:—1. Mr. W. A. Stone, J.P., informs me in reply,—“His natural desire to learn the duties of a magistrate on the bench.” 2. Yes. 3. The Police Magistrate informs me that he “left the bench feeling there had been a miscarriage of justice.”

#### ASSENT TO BILLS.

The following Message was received from His Excellency the Governor:—

“The Governor has the honour to inform the Legislative Assembly that he has this day assented, in Her Majesty’s name, to the undermentioned Bills:—

“*An Act to provide for the payment of Customs Duty on Certain Live Stock imported into the Colony.*”

“*An Act to consolidate and amend the Law relating to Posts and Telegraphs, and Telephones.*”

“Government House, Perth, 5th September, 1893.”

#### THE ABORIGINES PROTECTION BOARD: MOTION FOR ITS ABOLITION.

MR. SIMPSON: Sir,—In rising to move the motion standing in my name, with reference to the abolition of the Aborigines Protection Board, I have not the faintest intention of dealing with the *personnel* of that Board. I am informed—though I have no exact information—that it is composed of gentlemen long resident in the colony and widely experienced in its development, and men of the highest integrity. I do not know their names, and I do not seek to inquire, because, as I said, I am not dealing with the *personnel* of the Board. The objection I take to the existence of such a Board in this colony, under the present form of Government, is entirely a constitutional objection. The *personnel* of the Board has nothing whatever to do with this

aspect of the question. The main objections that I have to the existence of such a Board, I may say, have been very distinctly pointed out in the correspondence which members have before them, and particularly in the letters of the Hon. the Premier addressed to the Governor. But there are incidents in this correspondence to which I think attention should be drawn in considering this question. In the 4th paragraph of the despatch of the 27th May, 1892, addressed by the Administrator to the Secretary of State, and published among the printed records of this House, it is stated that “By the 70th section of the Constitution Act, 1889, a sum of £5,000 is annually appropriated ‘for the welfare of the aboriginal natives,’ to be expended in their interest ‘in certain ways, which are defined in the same section. This annual sum is ‘issued to the Board by the Treasurer ‘on warrant under the hands of the Governor, and may be expended by the ‘Board ‘at their discretion, under the ‘sole control of the Governor.’” We gather from this that this Board, which has the control of the expenditure of this large sum of money, is distinctly and emphatically an irresponsible Board. Our present form of Government is that which is popularly known as a system of administration which goes by the name of Responsible Government. I think that, perhaps, a more exact term for it would be to describe it as Representative Government. Yet here we have to face the fact that, as an excrescence upon the Constitution of this colony, we have a Board appointed by a gentleman named Saunders, in Downing Street. I had occasion to look through the appointment of the Board the other day, and I think this gentleman is chief clerk at the Colonial Office at Downing Street. So that we have a number of gentlemen, responsible to no one, appointed by a person named Saunders, in Downing Street, entrusted with the administration and expenditure of £5,000 per annum, contributed by the taxpayers of this colony. I think such a principle is utterly alien to any principle existing in any other part of Australia in connection with Representative Government. There is one particular phrase in this despatch of the 27th May, to which I would particularly draw attention, and which to my mind—I

say it with the greatest deference to the source from which it emanated—was entirely gratuitous and uncalled for. I refer to the paragraph where the writer states that this is known as the “native question.” I say from a somewhat intimate knowledge of the colony that there is no such a thing in Western Australia as the “native question,” and there never has been. The statement was purely conjectural, and in no way in accord with a reasonable statement of the position of affairs with regard to this Aborigines Board. In the fourteenth paragraph of the same despatch, we have the following statement, made by the Administrator of the colony at the time: “I have not the slightest hesitation in expressing my own opinion that your lordship might, with perfect security, commit the interests of the aboriginal population to the safe keeping of the present Ministry and the Commissioner of Police, who I am satisfied would do all that lay in their power to protect them against oppression, and to alleviate their sufferings when in want. But a change of Government may ensue, and your lordship can have no security that a treatment of the native question which commends itself to one Government will be acceptable to its successor.” I think when State despatches develop into wanderings into the realms of fancy they assume very dangerous features; and, so far as I have had an opportunity of becoming acquainted with such communications, I think that it is almost unparalleled that such a conjecture should be put forth in a despatch from an Australian Governor to the authorities in London. So much with regard to that particular aspect of the question. In paragraph 18 of the same despatch we are again told that the “native question” must exist in this colony for many years to come. I say it never has existed. I speak as a colonist of some five years, and one born in Australia, and who is acquainted with its traditions, and who has watched the development of the question of the control and protection of the aboriginal races in Australasia,—I say the “native question,” as it is commonly understood, has never existed here. There have been individual instances, exceptional instances, of harsh treatment and hardship; but I

maintain that it is beyond question that the general treatment of the aboriginal races of Australasia since this great country was handed over to those who now control its destinies has been humane and considerate. With regard to the question on this side of Australia, I have moved about this colony a good deal, and I am connected with no old settlers, with no old associations, with no old bickerings, and I have no hesitation in asserting that I have formed only one opinion on the subject of the treatment of the native race in this colony, and that is that considering the circumstances and the surroundings of the question the natives in this colony have invariably been treated with the humanity that always characterises the British race in dealing with the races they have subjugated. Therefore I say that the words I have quoted from the 18th paragraph of this despatch—that the “native question” must exist in this colony for many a year to come—suggest an invidious reproach upon the community, and I may say cast a sinister reflection upon the colony. Sir, I look around this House, which I believe was truly described by the Premier last night as a House representing men of all conditions and all interests, and all the hopes and the future of Western Australia,—I look around me, and I ask the members of this honourable House to-day, have we any “native question” in this colony? [SEVERAL MEMBERS: No.] The very expression, as used in that despatch, distinctly suggests the existence of a deep-rooted antipathy between the native race and the people of the colony. I appeal to the members of this House, is there any such antipathy existing between the dominant and the native races of this colony? I unhesitatingly say no! And for it to have been suggested in a despatch from a gentleman holding the highest position which we have the honour to confer was, to say the least, unwise, and I think unfair towards the people of the colony. But let us go a little further, and look at the aspect of this question from a constitutional point of view. This Aborigines Board, as I have said, is an irresponsible body, appointed by an irresponsible clerk in Downing Street. I say that, under our present form of Government, the five occupants of the Treasury benches are the proper Aborigines Pro-

tection Board of the colony. These are the men who are responsible to this House and to the country for the expenditure of our public funds and the administration of our public affairs; and I say that it is an insult to our constituents, the people of the colony, that we, their representatives in this House, should be called upon to vote £5,000 a year to a Board, the members of which are neither appointed by us nor responsible to us in the slightest degree. I do not know them, and I do not want to know them for the purposes of this motion, but I say that no five men—I do not care if they were angels down from heaven—should be allowed, under the present Constitution, to usurp the functions of the Ministry chosen by the people of the colony to administer the affairs of the colony, and who alone are responsible to the people of the colony. These, the men we entrust with the honoured privilege of administering the affairs of the country, and of governing the race we belong to, are not to be trusted to deal fairly with the natives of the country. To say so of any Administration where representative institutions prevail is to put a blot and to cast a stigma on the clean shield of Australian development. There is another point in connection with this aborigines vote. This House should assert its undoubted right to control the expenditure of every shilling drawn from the pockets of the people of the colony. I am told that these five old gentlemen who constitute this Board meet somewhere occasionally and do something. I do not know whether they do meet or whether they do anything, but I know this: there was recently published in the columns of the public Press a statement of their accounts, and if we may judge of the practical use of the Board from small things—like a straw floating on the stream or a feather in the wind—I should say that this Board is about the last body in the colony who ought to be entrusted with the expenditure of public funds, for, according to that statement published in the newspapers, the members of this precious Board cannot even add up their accounts properly. [AN HON. MEMBER: That's the secretary's fault.] Then I say the Board is wrong in having such a secretary. I am not dealing with individuals but with a principle. I am informed, on what I am compelled to believe

is sound and thoroughly trustworthy authority, that the allocation of the funds entrusted to this Board has been unfair and invidious, has not been characterised by that spirit of equity which is supposed to characterise the distribution of public funds derived from the general revenue of the colony, and administered by the responsible Ministers selected by this House to administer the affairs of the country. But we have to look at this matter in another light. We are told by a gentleman who graces this colony with his accumulated experience, and who is practically the gentleman who is responsible to Downing Street for the administration of the affairs of this Board, we are told by this gentleman, speaking of the Premier of the colony—and our Premier has fought, I will not say a lone hand in this matter, for I believe the whole Ministry are with him in this matter, but if ever the Premier of a colony fought bravely, in the spirit of "I will keep the bridge this day," it has been the Premier of this colony in fighting for the abolition of this Board, for this correspondence shows he has never budged an inch, and never flinched from the position he has taken up—I say we are told in one of the Governor's despatches, with reference to our Premier: "I have repeatedly said to him, both orally and in writing, that if he can put forward any valid constitutional objection to the existence of the Board, and can bring about its abolition on constitutional grounds, his arguments would be entitled to respect." Entitled to respect! I ask hon. members, are we going to allow the head of our Ministry to be talked to in that way? Are we going to allow the Premier of the colony, in this free country, under Representative Government, to be spoken of in that derogatory strain? What is this Board to us that we should entrust it with the expenditure of £5,000 a year out of the public funds? The men who ought to be entrusted with that expenditure are the five Ministers who represent the people of Western Australia on the Treasury benches. It is they who gather the revenue of the colony, it is they who draw the taxes from the pockets of the people; and, if they are guilty of any malfeasance in connection with the administration of these funds, we know and

they know the result. Their public characters, their political reputations, are for ever damned. We are told that the arguments of the Premier of the colony will be entitled to respect, only if he puts forward certain arguments. I submit that the mere fact of a responsible Minister of the colony making any statement with reference to this question not only entitles it to respect, but compels respect; it is absolutely due to him. I am told there are fees paid to the members of this Board, and I am informed that there is a large salary paid by the Board to some man, to travel about the colony, to see whether we, the Parliament, and the Government, and the people of this colony are treating the aboriginal race fairly. The very thing, on the face of it, is an insult to the Ministry, an insult to Parliament, and an insult to the people of the country. We are assured in some of these despatches that the British Parliament would not have granted us Representative Government except on condition that we should not have a voice in nominating the men who were to take care of the aboriginal race. Well, sir, I look around this House and I see men here as independent as you are likely to find in any part of the world, and as honourable; and I ask them would they have taken Responsible Government on such humiliating terms? I say no. Our answer to those who offered them would be: "We are humane, we are considerate, we are inspired by all the instincts of the race we have sprung from, and you may trust us to treat the natives fairly, as you trust us to treat men of our own race fairly." Sir, I do not want to labour this question. Members have had an opportunity of reading the whole of the correspondence, as well as I have, and I feel there is no necessity for me to urge this motion upon them. If I have spoken with some degree of warmth, I beg to be excused; I plead to be excused for this reason, that we in this House and those whom we represent would sooner suffer material damage than have an unmerited stigma cast upon our honour and our humanity. Sir, I beg to move, "That in view of the humane and considerate treatment of the aborigines by the people of the colony, it is desirable, in the opinion of this House, to abolish the Aborigines Protection Board as at present constituted."

MR. MONGER: Sir,—As a West Australian I feel that no subject has ever been brought before the attention of members which has afforded me greater pleasure in according my support to it than this motion introduced by the hon. member for Geraldton. It will, no doubt, be a source of great gratification to the people of Western Australia to know that there are at all events some who represent them who are prepared to stand up in this House and resent what can only be construed into one of the greatest slurs which any country had ever cast upon it upon being allowed to govern itself. I say, as a West Australian, that we are entitled to the consideration asked for in this motion of the hon. member for Geraldton, and to have that slur removed. I feel sure it will receive the unanimous and cordial support of every member of this House. After the very able speech of the Hon. the Premier when introducing his Budget Speech of last session, when he made some very pungent remarks with reference to this Board, I for one felt certain that no gentleman in Western Australia would continue to hold or to accept a seat on a Board which was spoken of in such scathing terms as the Premier of the colony spoke of this Aborigines Board on that occasion. I do not think that men who accept such a position as that, for the sake of the small remuneration they receive for their services, are gentlemen who have the good name of the colony at heart. The Premier, in his remarks on that occasion, distinctly stated that this Board was a slur upon the fair fame of the country, and that he was surprised that any man could be found who would accept a seat upon such a Board, so constituted. How these gentlemen could retain their offices after such remarks, is more than I can understand, and also retain their self-respect. They take care that they receive remuneration for their services, but what have they ever done in the interests of the country? As far as I can judge from a perusal of the balance sheet submitted by the Board for the year ending 31st December last, the bulk of expenditure, or a large portion of it, has gone in salaries, and fees for themselves. The members of this House are prepared to come here for many months in the year to look after

the affairs of the country without any remuneration; yet these gentlemen who constitute this Board, and who we are told are appointed by some official in Downing Street, require to be remunerated from the public funds of this colony for looking after the affairs of the natives of the colony. Really they seem to me to occupy one of the most humble positions that any body of public men could possibly occupy; and how any man can value the paltry services he renders upon such a Board as this is beyond my comprehension. I can only say that no person having the good name of the colony at heart would condescend to occupy such a position. But, sir, who are these gentlemen who hold this position? No doubt they are very worthy gentlemen, but what experience have they had with the aboriginal natives of Western Australia? Since the formation of the Board there has only been one gentleman associated with it who ever had any experience amongst the natives of this colony, and he very sensibly thought fit to tender his resignation. Since then, this £5,000 which this House annually votes for the Board has been left in the hands of gentlemen who have no experience whatever in connection with the aborigines in whose behalf this sum of money is set apart. Not only that, they are in no way responsible to Parliament or to the country for the expenditure of these funds, which at the end of last year amounted to the large sum of £7,300. Thanks to the courtesy of the Governor, the accounts of the Board have been placed before members; had it not been for that courtesy, we who vote the money would not have been able to form any opinion as to the way it was expended by this irresponsible Board. I can only repeat that I consider the existence of such a Board a disgrace to the country, and one which I hope every member of this House will unite in trying to stamp out. Sir, I have much pleasure in seconding the motion.

MR. QUINLAN: Sir, I rise, with a sense of duty to the country, to support the motion, and to express my intense disgust at the treatment which the people of this colony have been subjected to, in thrusting this Board upon them as part and parcel of their Constitution Act. No language can be too strong to condemn the manner in which the Board

have fulfilled the duties which they have taken upon themselves, when there were many others who were ready and willing to discharge them without fear or favour and without partiality, and certainly without any fee or reward. Who are those who constitute the Board? Gentlemen who pretend—I use the word advisedly—who pretend to do justice to all who concern themselves in ameliorating the condition of the aboriginal natives; but I am in a position to show that they have acted in a very partial manner towards these public bodies; and they have put money into their own pockets for fees which they ought to be ashamed to acknowledge. I think anyone who has read the correspondence about this Board between the Premier and the Governor and the Secretary of State must have done so with some degree of disgust, and will heartily join the mover of this motion in blotting it out of existence. I am glad that some other member than myself has moved in this direction. I have been almost tempted to do it myself during the last two or three sessions, but for reasons which I think it advisable to withhold, I refrained from doing so, hoping that some other member would table a motion to this effect. I am sure that the hon. member for Geraldton has been prompted by a sense of duty and a feeling of charity in bringing forward this motion. I never on any occasion felt more in accord, or more in sympathy, with the Hon. the Premier than when I read the correspondence on this subject that is before us. This colony has in the past, and I am sure will in the future, acknowledge with pride—with pride, I say—the position and the stand which the leader of the Government has taken upon this question. He has done his duty manfully, both to his fellowmen, the people of the colony, and also to the natives themselves. If this Board is to be re-constituted, and not abolished altogether, I agree very much in some of the suggestions made by Mr. Nicolay—a gentleman who took the place of one member who resigned, because he felt that the position was one which he could not continue to hold with any feeling of self-respect, and being disgusted with the actions of the Board in dealing with the natives. I agree with Mr. Nicolay to this extent, that

the work of watching over the interests of the natives could be much better performed by the police, at a very small remuneration, instead of paying £500 a year to a gentleman who knows nothing about the habits of the natives, to travel about from one settler's station to another to try and gain some information from the natives as to their requirements. I venture to say this gentleman is not able even to converse with the natives himself; or, if he is, I am afraid that the large salary which he draws from this Board would prevent him from fulfilling the duties required of him, and give information to those who vote the money. I observe in the balance-sheet of the Board that has been presented to us that various sums of money have been distributed by the Board to certain institutions that are connected with the natives, and I think the sums granted to these various institutions help to show that this Board does not act with that impartiality which we have a right to expect from such a body. For instance, for one institution where there are 34 natives, a grant of £900 was made last year; while for another, where there are several hundreds of natives, the grant was only £550; and for another, where there are over 100 natives, the grant was only £100, or less than £1 per head. Let any hon. member put his hand on his heart and tell me if that is justice. I am disgusted to think that we have such men in the community who will carry their prejudices to this extent, while at the same time putting fees into their own pockets. It would be out of place to mention the name of one gentleman who resigned his seat on this precious Board—a gentleman who was well acquainted with the natives, but who resigned, disgusted with the audacious manner in which the Board was treating them. If I had had the framing of this motion, I should have moved for the abolition of the Board in consequence of the inhuman treatment of the natives by the Board itself. I think I have good reason to say that, when, from a return laid on the table of this House last session, at the instance of the hon. member for Albany, showing certain items under the head of "Incidental Expenses," I gather such items as these: Medical attendance to sick natives (refused by the Aborigines Board), £2 2s.; rations to natives

(refused by the Aborigines Board), £3 19s. 11d.; and rations to natives at Mt. Dockrell, £37 11s. It is bad enough to have to provide this Board with money out of public funds, but it is worse still when we have to meet such charges as I have just quoted; although this Board has plenty of funds at its disposal, it actually refuses to help sick natives, but takes precious good care to pocket the fees of its own members. I gather from the correspondence on the table that the Government some time ago had under consideration the question of handing over the Rottnest Native Prison to this Board, but I am glad to learn now that they have withdrawn from that proposal, and, in doing so, they have strengthened their position. It is a source of the greatest gratification to me, and I am sure to all of us, the firm stand which the Premier takes throughout this correspondence. I think not only this House but the whole colony will endorse these words of the Premier, in his letter to the Governor, of the 11th May last: "While the Government would be very pleased if it could see its way to withdraw from the position it has had to take up in regard to this matter, it is quite impossible to do so in the interest of this colony and of the aborigines." It appears from this same letter that, up to that date, this Board had received some £12,000 out of public funds, and had never rendered the slightest account of the expenditure to the Government, nor informed the Government of what they had done for the natives. As pointed out by the Premier, the distribution of blankets and rations to the natives has to be done through the agency of the police and other officers of the Government, the Board being quite helpless. This fact alone shows the utter absurdity of continuing the Board. I am sure that every member on reading this correspondence must, like I was, have been filled with indignation and disgust when they found how this Board was acting in defiance of the Government of the country that provided it with funds, which enabled the members of it to pocket their own fees, though, as I have shown, neglecting sick natives, and dealing with native institutions in the most barefaced and unjust manner. I notice in one part of the correspondence

that the Governor has power to remove the members of the Board. Why he does not do so, knowing that such is the wish of the people of the colony, from the Ministry downwards, I am at a loss to understand. I say it with all due respect, but it certainly seems strange to me, if the Governor has the power to remove the members of this Board from office, that His Excellency does not exercise that power. I venture to say that no act ever done by any Governor would meet with more general approval from the people of this colony. I regret to see that the tone of this correspondence in dealing with the Premier's remarks is, I may say, most insulting, grossly insulting. Those remarks were based on a sound foundation, and they expressed the sentiments of the whole community, except perhaps the members of the Board themselves. I trust that every member in this House will support this motion, to a man, and that this obnoxious Board will be wiped out and be no longer a reproach to the country we live in.

MR. CLARKSON: I do not think there is a single member of the House who will support the existence of this Board. If I am not very much mistaken, this matter has been spoken of in this House before. For my part I always understood that this Board was one of those things that we must accept whether we like it or not, that it is a part and parcel of our Constitution. With regard to the actions of the Board, I really do not know what they do; I don't think anybody does. To-day, for the first time, I have heard that they put large fees into their own pockets. So far as conferring any advantages upon the natives is concerned, I should say it is rather the other way. I know this, that the natives impose very largely upon those who distribute blankets and rations to them. Some of them manage to get three or four blankets, by imposition, and afterwards part with them for a little colonial wine or a drop of spirits. They draw all their rations, and live upon them, instead of doing a day's work. The natives are perfectly useless when they can get hold of Government rations; they look upon them now as part of their rights. I do not think there is a single member of this House who would attempt to support the existence of this Board, on any ground

whatever, as at present constituted; it is a reproach, a standing reproach, upon the people of the colony. It looks as if they were not fit to be trusted with the control and management of the natives. I believe the natives in this colony have been very humanely treated; they have been treated generally with kindness, and there is no real cause for complaint against the settlers so far as their treatment of the blacks goes. This Board, as I have said, is a reproach upon us as a community, and I shall be most happy to see this reproach wiped out, and the good name of the colony vindicated.

MR. A. FORREST: I should like to say a few words in support of this motion. I think the time has arrived when this Aborigines Board should be wiped out. I think it would not be hard to show conclusively that the gentlemen who are entrusted with the expenditure of this £5,000 a year are not gentlemen that the colony would select to control the expenditure of such a large sum of money. I do not question their good intentions, but they know little or nothing about the natives. They are very respectable old gentlemen, no doubt, one of them, I believe, being over seventy years of age. They have never resided in the country, where the natives are, but lived in Perth, and I know that some of them have very peculiar notions about the native question. I have myself heard one of these gentlemen say that he would hang a white man if he interfered with a native. I do not think gentlemen of that kind, with such a strong prejudice, should have the administration of native affairs; and I do not think it is right that the members of this body, or committee,—directors I call them—should put money into their own pockets. I fail to see that they are in any way fit and proper persons to have the control of the aboriginal natives. I understood that this Board, when its establishment was agreed to in this House, was not only to protect the natives but also to do justice to the whites who employ them. But it has turned out to be quite a different thing. Their object seems to be to annoy the settlers. They employ a gentleman in the Northern part of the colony at a large salary, £500 a year, to travel about from station to station, to find out what he can about the natives. I venture



to say we could get as good and a better man for half that money. £500 a year seems a very large salary to pay such a man, when there are police, and stipendiary magistrates, and resident medical officers, all paid by the Government, and who have to do the work themselves, as this Board have not the knowledge nor the means to do it. I see that the members of the Board received £155 for attendance fees last year. I do not know how often they meet,—once a month I believe. Then they have a very old gentleman, a veteran colonel or something of that kind, as secretary at a salary of £150 a year. I ask this House whether it is right that the money of the people of this colony should be spent in that way? I say no, certainly not, and that the time has arrived when this vote of £5,000 for the Aborigines Board should be taken off the Estimates of this colony. Why was it put there at all? Who put it there? It was not put there by this House, but by a gentleman who was then Governor of the colony, and it was objected to most strongly by nearly every member. It was put on by a Governor of the colony when we were a Crown colony, who wished to make capital out of it when he went to England, by being able to point out to people at home, "See how I have looked after and protected the interests of the natives." When this Board was forced upon us, it was said at the time that it would be one of the first things we should wipe out when we got our new Constitution; and I believe it is the unanimous wish not only of this House but of the whole colony that this Board should die a natural death, or, if it won't do that, that we should put an end to it. We have no control whatever over this vote, and we get no information as to how it is spent. Even the natives themselves object to this Board. I know that my old friend King Dower, who is the head of the native population in this part of the colony, says he objects strongly to this Board; he says they are not competent to look after the natives, and that he would much rather be under the old form of Government, when he could go and see the head of the Government and get proper treatment. The Government, through their own officers, are in a much better position than this Board to distribute blankets and rations for the natives.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We have to do it now.

MR. A. FORREST: While the members of this Board put fees into their own pockets, and pay an officer £500 a year for doing nothing at all.

MR. COOKWORTHY: I shall have great pleasure in supporting this motion, and, in doing so, I wish to follow the example of the hon. member who brought it forward, and not deal with personalities. Like him, I really do not know who the members of the Board are, but I understand they are some inoffensive old gentlemen who are appointed to their position by someone in Downing Street, and who no doubt do the best they can, though that best must be a very bad one, as it seems they can do nothing themselves but have to fall back upon the Government officers to do the work which they profess to do, and which they pay themselves for doing. But I object to this Board on another ground,—that it is a slur upon the colony, a slur upon both Houses of Parliament, and a slur upon the Ministry elected to administer the public affairs of the colony. The motion certainly has my hearty support.

MR. SOLOMON: I rise merely to state that I am entirely in accord with the proposition before the House. I always felt when this Board was instituted that it was an insult not alone to the colony but also to the Constitution which was about to be ushered in. I never could understand why the people of the colony, who had always treated the natives well, should not be entrusted with the control of the natives. I fail to understand how the members of this Board, knowing as they do how public opinion resents their existence as a Board, continue to retain their position, when they must be aware that they are looked upon as a reproach to the colony, and resented by the people of the colony and the Government of the colony. I notice from the correspondence before us that the Premier, in one of his letters to the Governor, asks him to inform the Secretary of State what His Excellency's own views were on this point—"What reason is there why the control and care of the aborigines are not entrusted to the people of this colony?" What those views were we have not before us, but I venture to say they

would be very much in accord with the views of the Premier himself. In another paragraph of the same letter the Premier says: "While the Government would be very pleased if it could see its way to withdraw from the position it has had to take up in regard to this matter, it is quite impossible to do so in the interests of this colony and of the aborigines." I think those words cover a great deal, and I believe they will be endorsed by the whole colony. That the time has arrived for the abolition of this Board is a question upon which there cannot be a moment's doubt. I think that were the whole colony canvassed you would not find one individual, apart from the members of the Board themselves, who would uphold the constitution of this Aborigines Board. With these few remarks, I most cordially support the motion before the House.

MR. TRAYLEN: I do not propose to keep the House many moments beyond saying that some four years ago I predicted that there would be a feeling of irritation in the country against the existence of this Board, and, as far as I could, I urged that if possible no such arrangement should be made in the Constitution Bill which was then being formulated. I do not intend to withdraw from the position I took up then—that the responsible Ministry of the day would be able to manage the affairs of the aborigines as well as the other affairs of the colony. I have pleasure in supporting the motion.

MR. H. W. SHOLL: I do not intend to say much, but I must say a few words with reference to the remarks that fell from the hon. member for West Kimberley, as to the gentleman employed by the Aborigines Board at the North doing no good. I know this gentleman and I know what he is doing, and I can say that he is doing a lot of good. I know one station that induced this Board to give them five tons of flour to supply to the natives, and when this gentleman referred to by the hon. member for West Kimberley was travelling about, he found out that the natives for whom this settler wanted the flour were all natives that were under an agreement to him, and the Board's travelling agent recommended the Board not to grant relief to any natives assigned to settlers as servants; and consequently that second shipment of flour

was stopped. This officer, although he is paid a good salary, has to find himself, and find a horse, and to travel about a great deal all over an enormous extent of country. As to the hon. member for West Perth saying that this gentleman knows nothing about natives, I say he knows more about the natives than the hon. member for West Perth by a long way.

MR. QUINLAN: That wouldn't be a great deal.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I do not think the House will expect from me very many words in regard to this matter, because all I have to say up to the present will be found in the correspondence before members. I think that the position taken up by the hon. member for Geraldton in dealing with the subject is the best and wisest course to adopt, and that is to deal with the matter upon main principles, and not as regards the *personnel* or constitution of the Board itself. So far as the actions of the Board are concerned, I think they have pursued a course of what may be called masterly inactivity. They do not do anything except distributing relief to the natives about Perth, and supply the funds for distributing relief to the natives that are elsewhere. I do not know but that they are acting perhaps wisely in restricting their action as they do in this way, because if they were to interfere with native matters in other parts of the colony they would certainly do more harm than good. As I have pointed out in this correspondence, they really have not the means or the machinery for doing it. That is just the position. In my letter to the Governor of the 11th May last, I stated the whole case almost in a very few words. Referring to the Secretary of State's opinion as to the Board, I said: "I can assure His Lordship that the reliance he seems to place in the ability and energy of a Board meeting twice a month in Perth, with one paid secretary and one paid inspector to look after the interests of the aborigines scattered along 3,000 miles of coast line, and extending hundreds of miles into the interior, is quite misplaced. They have not the knowledge or means to do it. It would require a large, well-arranged, and expensive organisation to do the work; and the only competent

"organisation to do it in this colony is the Government, with its magistrates, medical officers, and police stationed in every district." My objections, sir, to the existence of this Board I can sum up in very few words. First of all, I think it is a reproach and a slur upon the good name of the colony, and the Government of the colony, that they could not be trusted with the control of the aboriginal natives of the colony in the same way as they are entrusted with the care and control of the white population. Secondly, I consider that the Board is unnecessary, absolutely unnecessary; and it is only by those who are totally unacquainted with the people of the colony and the circumstances of the colony that it can be argued—I do not think that even they could argue—that this Board is at all necessary. In the correspondence which members have before them it will be seen that I invited the Governor to inform Lord Ripon of his views—the Governor's own views—on three points; but, in his wisdom, the Governor chose to evade the points referred to. I say in his wisdom, because I know very well that the replies he would have to give to those three questions would have put his case, and the case of the Secretary of State, out of court. I asked His Excellency to express an opinion on these three points: firstly, is the Board necessary in order to protect and care for the aborigines of this colony? I know he would have been bound to answer "No" to that question. Secondly: Would the aborigines suffer in any way if the Board was abolished? I know very well he must also have answered "No" to that question. Thirdly, I asked, What reason is there why the control and care of the aborigines are not entrusted to the people of this colony? I know that would be a very difficult question to answer, and certainly it could not be answered in a satisfactory way. These three questions, if answered at all, would have put the case of the Secretary of State, of the Governor, and of the Board completely out of court. But His Excellency did not choose to answer them, but, in his wisdom, evaded them. The next objection I have to the existence of this Board is that it is thoroughly unconstitutional that there should be a Board in the colony, supposed to have the care and control of the aborigines of the country, and independent of the Government of

the colony. It is altogether contrary to the spirit of our Constitution. The Secretary of State, in his despatch of the 3rd February, virtually admits that, for he says: "I regard the provisions of Section 70 of the West Australian Constitution Act, 1890"—the section under which this Board was created—"as of a temporary character, and I look forward to the period when it will be possible to repeal them." There can be no doubt that the provisions of that section are of a very exceptional character, unprecedented I may say,—utterly unknown in Australia, certainly. In no other colony of Australia was the care of the aborigines taken away from the control of the local Government, and I think it is entirely unconstitutional, and a state of things that cannot exist under our present Constitution. My other great reason why this Board should not exist is its inability to carry out the work entrusted to it. It is altogether unable to do the work. I do not care who the men are—they may be the best men in the colony and the most active; but they have not the means, and the power, and the machinery to carry out their duty. What is the case at the present time? The Government have to do all the work, and find the Board in funds as well. As I said in my letter of the 11th May: "I assert that the Board has no power to protect the aborigines, for it has no special means of gaining information in regard to what is going on, and it has no executive power to enforce its views or wishes. It has merely a power to dispense charity in cases that are brought under its notice. This dispensing of food is generally done by the Government for the Board, and the Government acts as agent for the Board, and pays the Board for doing what could be better done without its intervention." That is the whole case. That has never been denied. No one can deny it. I think, too, sir, that the funds of the colony, which are raised under the laws of the colony, should be expended under the supervision of Parliament. I say it is unconstitutional that £5,000 a year—and it will be more soon—of the public funds of the colony should be expended without any supervision or control whatever being exercised over the expenditure by the Parliament

of the country. I was under the impression, from one of the despatches of the Secretary of State, that he said he thought that the Government should be furnished with full details of the mode in which the Board spent its money, and that their accounts should be audited in the usual manner. Members will see that I said in one of my letters to the Governor: "I am glad that Lord Ripon is of opinion that funds supplied by this colony should be duly accounted for and audited in the usual manner." That was taken up at once. Audited in the usual manner? No! That was not what was meant at all. The matter was contested, and referred to the Attorney General; and a remark I made in my minute to the Attorney General, that "this unnecessary Board seems determined to hold on to everything that is possible, so as to make themselves more unpopular than ever"—these words were strongly objected to. But I think what I stated is a fact. If the accounts of the Board were to be audited in the usual manner, we should at any rate have the Auditor General's report, and could see whether the money had been expended legally or not. But, no; this irresponsible Board—irresponsible to the Government, irresponsible to Parliament—is to have the uncontrolled expenditure of the people's money. I think if anyone takes the trouble to read this correspondence, they must come to the conclusion that the Government here approached the matter in a conciliatory spirit, and that all the letters that I addressed to the Governor were written in that spirit, and with a desire that the Governor, without undue pressure, should agree to what I considered was a most reasonable request. But up to the present we have not been met in any way in the spirit in which I think we should have been met. The correspondence, I think, at last, became somewhat curt, so far as the Secretary of State was concerned. I cannot term it otherwise. It certainly altogether evades the main question at issue. I cannot say that I like the way the Government have been treated in this correspondence. I must admit that, and I do so with all due respect. I do not think we have been treated in the way we should have been treated. My opinion is that this Board

should not exist, and that it should be abolished. I make no remark whatever disparagingly of the members of the Board. I believe they are all influential men in the community, and men of high character, and no doubt desirous of doing the best they can. But they have not the means, they have not the power, to carry out their duty. And I will say this: I am surprised that they continue to occupy the position they do. I am really surprised that there could be found in the colony men of high position willing to accept a seat on this Board, which I think casts a disgrace and a slur upon the good name of the colony. I have very much pleasure in supporting the hon. member's motion.

Motion—put and passed.

Ordered—That the foregoing resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Council, and their concurrence desired therein.

#### PREVENTION OF PRIZE FIGHTS.

MR. TRAYLEN: I have a good deal of pleasure in rising to move the motion standing in my name, to the effect "That this House is of the opinion that the Government should take efficient steps to prevent the demoralising prize fights which are conducted in Perth and elsewhere, under the name of 'boxing contests.'" I am sure that the members of this House must be aware that there is a strong feeling of disapprobation existing against such brutal exhibitions as these. I do not know that I need labour the question as to the propriety of a boxing contest properly so-called—that is to say the art or science of boxing. But these exhibitions are nothing of the kind, and I only intend to take up the time of the House for a very few moments while I read five or six extracts from the newspaper report of an eye-witness to show what really takes place at these so-called exhibitions, and to satisfy members that they bear no relation whatever to a boxing contest properly so called. (Extracts read.) Without attempting to labour the question, I submit that this description is in no way the description of a boxing contest, but a true description of a real prize fight, and the law on this question is that if the parties so engage in a fight until one gives in from exhaustion, from any injury received, such a fight is unlawful, whether the combatants

fight with gloves or not. That is the law, as decided in the Court of Criminal Appeal in England. And, further, to support my position, I would point out that if, as sometimes happens, manslaughter takes place, then all who are present are guilty. But, perhaps, it is a little more to my point to say that there is now a man in Perth who can scarcely fail to be thrown upon the charity of the Government, because he has been so injured at one of these so-called boxing contests; in other words, he is the victim of injuries received during a prize fight. I hope that the humane feeling of this House will prompt members to support this resolution, and that it may elicit such an emphatic condemnation of these contests as to induce the Government to take effective steps to suppress such demoralising exhibitions. I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

MR. QUINLAN: In seconding this motion, I will only say that I am not in accord or in sympathy with these sort of things, which I think are degrading, and I am sure the hon. member's intention in bringing the matter before the House is a good one.

MR. MONGER: I really expected some such a resolution as this to emanate from the hon. member who has thought fit to introduce the subject. But, as one who no doubt has paid more visits than the hon. member has to witness these boxing contests since they have been started in Perth, I may, perhaps, to a certain extent, be privileged to reply to the remarks of the hon. member. I may tell him, for his information, that these kind of contests are not peculiar to Western Australia; and, if he is thoroughly sincere in bringing forward such a motion, he might just as well have coupled with it the idea of prohibiting the practice of football and cricket. To my mind, there is no more harm to be derived from taking part in one of these boxing contests than there is in taking part in the innocent game of football. The hon. member gave us some extracts from the report of an eye-witness of one of these boxing contests that took place a couple of months ago. Really, the description, as supplied to the hon. member, is a very meagre one. If he had gone to that well-known paper, the *Sportsman*, and read an account of the

real boxing contests that take place in America or in England, the hon. member would have had a far more vivid and more detailed description to have offered us than that very meagre one given by this eye-witness of this particular fight. I am indeed surprised that a matter such as this should be brought under the notice of the members of this House, and I trust they will treat the resolution in the way it deserves. Here we are, a young colony, with our young men growing up to take their part in the hard struggle necessary to the successful development of the country; and, surely, it is our wish to see them so trained in the art of self-defence as to be able to take proper care of themselves. We do not wish to see the youth of Western Australia who go to other parts of the world being unable to protect themselves; nor do we wish to see the Legislature of the colony attempting to bring in legislation which we know can never possibly be put in force. I give the hon. member who brought this forward every credit for good intentions, and I know he is really sincere and believes that he is doing a right and proper thing. It is simply his ignorance of the matter which he has brought forward that has induced him to take the step that he has. I am certain if the hon. member would only once go and witness one of these boxing contests he would come away with a very different opinion about them from what he has at present. They are not mere exhibitions of brute force or brute strength, but scientific exhibitions of boxing; and I think we would be doing an injustice to the youth of the country if we were to attempt in any way to prevent them from taking an interest in such splendid athletic exercises. I intend to oppose the motion.

MR. A. FORREST: I intend to support the motion. I think the time has arrived when these boxing matches or prize fights should be put a stop to. My attention has been called to them as Mayor of the city, and I intend to take legal opinion to see if we cannot put an end to such exhibitions in public. I have never seen one myself, and I hope I never will; and I am sure if the hon. member for Greenough were to take the advice of my hon. friend the member for York, and go to witness one of these fights, it would be the first and the last time. I hope

the motion will be carried, and that the House will set its face against these boxing exhibitions.

MR. CLARKSON: I think the hon. member for the Greenough takes this matter rather too seriously. I have had, I won't say the pleasure, but the opportunity of being present, and not long ago, at one of these contests in Perth, and it struck me that the whole thing was a farce. It bore no resemblance whatever to a fight; in fact, it was such a sorry exhibition of boxing that I decided in my own mind I would never go to another. I am not prepared to say that I approve of such contests, but, I think, if there is any fault to find with them, the fault is with the gloves used not being up to what they ought to be.

MR. MOLLOY: I think the hon. member who brought forward this motion must be ignorant of the subject he spoke about, or he would never have addressed the House in the language he did. I know that the art of self-defence or boxing is included in the course of instruction which recruits in joining the British Army have to go through, and it is done in order to improve their physique, and to develop their powers of endurance. If we are going to stop boxing contests we may as well stop walking contests, or running contests, or the game of football or cricket, or other tests of physical endurance. Although there is much to be said against actual prize fights, still it must be remembered that a boxing contest, pure and simple, is a very different thing, and I think the most fastidious can have no objection to these contests, so long as they are simply exhibitions of science, and skill, and endurance. So long as the constituted authorities control these contests, and see that proper gloves are used, so that no bodily harm can be done to the contestants, I think that is all we need trouble ourselves about. In the boxing contest alluded to by the hon. member for Greenough, from the report of an eye-witness, I know that five minutes after the contest was over the man who was beaten was no worse than he was at the beginning of the contest. I know him intimately, and had occasion to see him five minutes afterwards, and, although it was true he had dropped on the stage in a state of exhaustion, he was able to walk away from the hall, and was

at his work next day. There is really no more danger about these boxing contests than there is about football, if as much, and we may as well make it illegal to engage in a game of football as in one of these contests which the hon. member for Greenough is so anxious to suppress. A prize fight, of course, is a different thing; it often ends in one or the other of the contestants being injured for life, and generally carries serious consequences with it, and it is quite right that the law should be put in motion when such fights take place.

MR. DEHAMEL: I am very glad indeed that the hon. member for the Greenough has brought this matter before the House. I wonder that the Government themselves have not taken this matter up before. It was only reasonable and right that they should have done so, and I say I am surprised they did not do so. With all the other grandmotherly legislation that they have flooded this House and the country with this session, they might surely, as a natural sequence, have taken up this matter. They legislate against bogus clubs, they legislate against sweeps and consultations, and they legislate against betting and against gambling of any kind. Yet they have not raised a finger against these brutal exhibitions of prize fighting. I believe there is more betting and gambling at these boxing contests than there is in connection with all the sweeps in Western Australia. I think, as the present Government are determined to make us so moral, they ought to have taken some steps to put an end to these boxing exhibitions. But I think that the persons who really ought to be prosecuted for encouraging these contests are those who own and let the halls in which these exhibitions are allowed to take place. I have no doubt that if the Government instructed the Attorney General to proceed against the proprietors of these halls, or to draw up a Bill necessary for effecting that purpose, the hon. and learned gentleman would draw one of so drastic a character that anyone having any interest whatever in any hall where such contests were allowed would render himself liable to some term of imprisonment, at the very least. I really do hope that steps will be taken to put a stop to what I call most degrading and debasing exhibitions.

**MR. THROSSELL:** I feel compelled to support this motion; at the same time I would like to say that I should be reluctant to do anything that would tend to discourage manly sport. I would like to see every boy in the colony trained to be able to take his own part. But, from what I am told outside as to what occurs at these so-called boxing contests, it becomes a very different matter; they simply degenerate into debasing exhibitions of brute force; and if the Government can do anything to put a stop to them, I think they would be acting right in doing so. When we hear of men being knocked senseless after one or two rounds at these contests, simply for the sake of a sum of money, I think the continuance of such exhibitions, and the spirit they encourage, cannot do our young men any good.

**MR. COOKWORTHY:** I am rather surprised that any member should support such a motion as this. Really, if the Government are to be called upon to put down boxing, they should also be called upon to put down football, which, in my opinion, is far more dangerous sport. I do not see how anyone can be injured in a boxing contest, with proper gloves. It is said that these contests cause a lot of betting. Does not football cause betting? Does not cricket and every other contested game, in these days, cause betting? There seems to be a great difference of opinion as to the real character of these boxing contests. Some hon. members who have seen them depict them as very degrading; others say they are simply scientific exhibitions of skill and endurance. I think the best thing the hon. member for Greenough can do is to move for a select committee of the House to go and witness the next exhibition of boxing, and then one might have a practical demonstration as to whether such contests are really scientific exhibitions, or the degrading and debasing exhibitions they have been represented to be.

**MR. R. F. SHOLL:** I intend to support this motion,—

**MR. MONGER:** What!

**MR. R. F. SHOLL:** The hon. member for York seems surprised. I intend to support it because I believe these contests have a demoralising effect upon the rising generation. It has been said that they are necessary in order to develop powers of physical endurance; but I

think they go a great deal further than that. When it is advertised that So-and-So is backed for £50 to knock out So-and-So, in so many rounds, I think we may take it that these boxing contests go a little further than exhibitions of physical endurance, and that, call them what you will, they degenerate into prize fights. I can understand two men, in the heat of temper, or in a quarrel, having a few rounds, but I cannot understand how any two men can, in cool blood, go and attack one another in such a savage way as to render one of them senseless. I am sure that such exhibitions must have a demoralising effect upon the rising generation. I remember, after the last prize fight, passing a school in Perth, and the boys were full of it. Although I agree that it is well to teach youngsters how to defend themselves, that is no reason why they should make a profession of it, or look upon it as something manly to be able to fight. It is nonsense to compare boxing to football or to walking races, which are real tests of physical endurance. If you want to test the physical endurance of the rising generation, let them go into the football field; there is no necessity for them to punch one another, and make brutes of themselves. I hope the Government will take this matter up, and that we shall have inserted in the new Municipal Bill a provision giving the Mayor and the Council power to suppress these contests.

**THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest):** It seems to me that the question we have to consider is,—are these boxing exhibitions illegal? If they are, I suppose the authorities can deal with them; and anyone can inform against any demoralising exhibition. I do not know that this House would wish to put down boxing contests altogether, whether they are conducted properly or not. I think if these contests are conducted under proper rules, with proper gloves, no great harm can be done to either party. Of course if they degenerate into prize fights, I would join with the hon. member and everyone in putting them down; but if they are only exhibitions of skill, with the gloves, then I believe they can do no great harm or injury to those who take part in them. I do not know whether the hon. member intends to put down all boxing contests, whether

they are conducted properly or not; if he does, I think he is going a little bit too far. If, on the other hand, his idea is to put down what are called prize fights, in which one or the other of the contestants is likely to be seriously injured, and which are simply demoralising exhibitions of brute force, I think every right-thinking man would commend him and support him. But the question is, it seems to me, is this: is the law, at present, sufficient to deal with these contests? If it is, this resolution is merely an expression of opinion that the Government should put the law in motion. The police are the guardians of law and order, and they are supposed to put the law in motion now when the law is broken; and I believe it is generally done, when anyone lays an information. On the other hand, unless these exhibitions are contrary to law, this resolution, of itself, will not enable the Government to prevent these contests from taking place. We cannot interfere with people unless they are acting unlawfully. I take it that anything in the nature of a prize fight is unlawful, at the present time, if it is fought in a public place, and I have no doubt the law is strong enough to put a stop to that. But I do not think it is strong enough to put a stop to these glove contests, and, if that is so, this resolution would have no effect, because there would be no law to carry it out, unless we go further, and introduce legislation dealing with these glove contests.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): Allusion was made by one hon. member that he could understand two men in the heat of temper attacking each other and having a few rounds. But I would point out—and it seems somewhat of an anomaly—that if that should happen in the street or public thoroughfare, those two men, acting under the influence of passion, would be liable at once to be locked up, and punished next morning. It has often appeared to me strange that while these boxing contests may take place, with impunity, between two men in cool blood, in a public room, duly advertised, and a price charged for admission; yet if two men, in the heat of temper, give each other a blow or two in the street, they are liable to a heavy punishment. Though I am afraid that these boxing contests

sometimes become rather brutalising in their effect, and demoralising in their influence upon the rising generation, yet, so long as they are carried on within proper limits, and with proper gloves, I think no great amount of mischief is done. But I certainly think they are degenerating into something that may become hurtful and demoralising; and, that being the case—though I do not go so far as to say that the Government should introduce special legislation to deal with them—I think the hon. member for Greenough has done what he conceives to be his duty in the matter, and the Government are fully alive to the necessity of carrying out the law as they find it.

MR. CANNING: I would merely remind members that in England fencing schools exist, and fencing contests are permitted, but duelling is illegal; and if anything approaching duelling were to take place during a fencing contest, the consequences would be something very serious to the parties concerned. In the same way, as the law positively forbids prize-fighting, it seems to me that if the police were instructed to attend at these boxing contests, and to take proceedings against the parties immediately the contest developed into a prize fight or anything approaching it, by laying an information against all concerned, the law would very soon make itself a power felt, and prevent these contests degenerating into exhibitions of brutality. I believe if the law were vigorously administered it is sufficiently powerful to put down anything of the kind such as described by the hon. member for Greenough. At the same time I think the hon. member has done perfectly right in bringing the matter before the House, if it should have the effect of directing the attention of the authorities to any abuse of the privilege conceded to the public to indulge in exhibitions that are not of a brutal character.

MR. TRAYLEN: I am very pleased indeed with the expressions that have fallen from members this afternoon with reference to this subject. All I need say now is that I hope no one will think I am indifferent to the value of athletic exercises, properly so called. Whatever course of training and discipline that will make us athletes is worthy of being encouraged. Forbid that I should despise anything



approaching the cultivation of athleticism! I am not attempting for one moment to do that. I am very well satisfied with the many expressions of accord that have fallen from the members in the course of this discussion; and I think that what has been said on the other side has been of the very lamest.

**THE PREMIER** (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I think the hon. member might now withdraw his motion. I will call the attention of the Colonial Secretary, who has charge of the Police Department, to the matter.

**MR. TRAYLEN**: Under the circumstances, I am quite willing, if the House will permit me, to withdraw my resolution.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### CHATTELS FORECLOSURE BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Council, and read a first time.

At 20 minutes past six o'clock, p.m., **MR. SPEAKER** left the Chair.

At half-past seven o'clock, p.m., the House resumed.

#### PROPOSALS OF MR. J. S. REID FOR LEASING LAND AT GREENBUSHES TINFIELD.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS** (Hon. W. E. Marmion), in accordance with notice, moved, "That the Government be empowered to enter into an agreement with Mr. J. S. Reid upon the basis of his proposals with reference to the leasing of 1,000 acres of land at Greenbushes tinfield." He said: The printed paper which I have placed on the table, for the information of hon. members, contains about as full information as it is possible for me to give on the subject. I have taken some trouble to arrive at a conclusion that would be satisfactory to me before recommending the Government to consider this offer by Mr. Reid, and before asking the Government to suggest to hon. members that the proposal should be agreed to by this House. It will be observed that Mr. Reid's first proposal, which is contained in a letter dated 14th August, 1893, addressed to myself, is that he should be allowed to lease 1,000 acres of land in the Greenbushes tinfield, as per plan which is now

on the table of this House, for a period of 21 years, upon certain terms and conditions stated in the letter. Having looked into the pros and cons, I wrote a memorandum to the Premier, suggesting that the proposal was well worthy the favourable consideration of the Government, and one which, with certain modifications, might be placed before Parliament with a view to the Government being empowered to accept it. It will be seen, from the correspondence, that the first condition is that there is no departure from the statutory rent as laid down in the Act and Regulations, namely, 5s. per acre per annum, the rental to commence from January 1st, 1894. In condition No. 2, he suggests that he or those associated with him will undertake to expend, within two years, "a sum of not less than £20,000, such expenditure to include cost and erection of machinery on main and subsidiary pipe-lines, races, sluices, tanks and dams, tramways, and all works which may be deemed necessary by me for proving and working such lease." Also, in the further conditions, that such expenditure shall commence prior to July 1st, 1894; and that if the rent be not paid before the 1st July, 1894, the concession shall be forfeited. Then, with regard to the labour conditions, it is shown in the letter that, though Mr. Reid considers the labour conditions are wisely inserted in the ordinary mineral leases, yet he says:—"I have the honour to point out that my scheme involves an expenditure of extraordinary magnitude, never provided for or contemplated in such leases; and that the essential conditions of expenditure involved in the terms of the concession for which I am now applying should be allowed by you to take the place of such labour conditions, in order to make the concession of any value to me." Mr. Reid added that this would be absolutely necessary in order to make the concession of any value to him. He further suggested that "the heavy expenditure involved and guaranteed is in itself a surety that a large amount of labour will be employed, but the process and methods will not necessitate the distribution of that labour in the manner contemplated by the Regulations." After considering the proposal thus made, I suggested to

the Premier certain alterations, which were not all of an important character, but were to the effect that in paragraph 2 of the letter, which proposes that £20,000 should be expended in order to supply water to the area which he proposed to lease, the water should be supplied, not only for the purposes of those taking the lease, but also for all those persons who at present hold licenses or leases within that area, and with whose rights it was not intended by Mr. Reid to interfere. The second letter from Mr. Reid, dated the 30th August, states that he agreed to add a condition to paragraph 2, in the following words:—"The owner of any existing claim within my lease on the Greenbushes tinfield, at the date of this letter, shall have the privilege of being supplied with water on their ground, provided that it be treated in a similar manner to that according to which my lease will be worked, at rates to be agreed upon by the parties and the Government." The parties referred to are those having claims or rights within the boundaries of the area applied for; thus meeting the suggestion I had made. I may explain that Mr. Reid and those associated with him have alternative views as to the method by which they may expend the money and may treat the area which they desire to lease; one being that they may carry the water to the tinfield area by a system of pipes, and by raising the water from the Blackwood river to a certain altitude, distribute it over their area from a certain high and fixed point, in such a manner as to wash the earth containing the tin, on the spot; the other alternative method being to make a line of tramway from the tinfield area to the river, and the earth to be there washed for separating the tin. Assuming either course to be carried into effect, the rights of those holding leases within the area would be respected; that is to say, assuming the water is brought to the tinfield, those persons having leases or rights at present will be able to utilise the water, at rates of charge to be fixed by arrangement between the parties and with the approval of the Government; or, as an alternative, assuming it is necessary to carry the soil from the tinfield to the river, along the proposed tramway, there will be a definite arrangement for carrying the soil which is to be treated on be-

half of those who now have rights within the area of the lease. In paragraph 3, it was suggested in the first instance, by Mr. Reid, that the expenditure should commence before July 1st, 1894; but upon that I suggested that it should commence from January 1st, 1894, and he agreed to meet the Government half-way by suggesting that the date should be March 1st, and this seemed to me a fair arrangement. Paragraphs 4 and 5, referring to the rent, are allowed to stand. With regard to paragraph 6, a difficulty arose as to carrying out the labour conditions as required in the Act and the Regulations, namely, that one man to every five acres should be placed on the leased area. As to this I cannot express it more clearly than by reading from my memorandum to the Premier what I said upon paragraph 6, as follows:—"This is one of the greatest difficulties in the way of bringing this proposal under the Mineral Lands Act, and dealing with it in the ordinary course. Assuming that it was possible to grant 1,000 acres in one lease, which it is not, 40 acres being the maximum quantity, and even supposing that the proponent applied for 25 leases, each of 40 acres, and that these leases were afterwards amalgamated as provided by the Act, still the labour conditions, if enforced, would necessitate 200 men being at all times employed upon the lease or leases. It is true that power is given to the Registrar to reduce the quantity of labour if machinery is employed, but not until such machinery is on the land, and then it is at the discretion of the Registrar. Now, I think no capitalist would expend £20,000, if he had either to place 200 men constantly at work, or allow himself to be at the mercy of the Registrar, a Minister, or even of the Government. But I consider that if the matter is arranged by agreement, as suggested by me, a minimum number of men, say at least fifty, should be constantly employed during the period of the lease, and no relaxation of this provision to be allowed without sanction of the Minister or Governor-in-Council." It will be seen that Mr. Reid agreed to accept this condition, for in his letter of August 30th he said:—"In condition 6, I consent to the employment upon my lease of a minimum of 50 men, upon or in con-

"nection with the works after the said "works are completed." Hon. members, who are possibly acquainted with the Mineral Lands Act and Regulations, will be aware that the Registrar has power to diminish the number of men to be employed on any leased area, in proportion to the extent of the machinery which may be utilised upon such lease; but it seemed to Mr. Reid—and in that I am in accord with him—that in expending so large a sum of money as he proposed to do, it would be far better that this agreement should be arranged upon lines perfectly understood by both the parties, rather than that he should be at the mercy of the Registrar, or of the Minister, or of the Government for the time being, so that both parties should be able to understand what duties and what work had to be performed, and so that the Government should know exactly what were the conditions of the contract which each side had to carry out. Another suggestion had been made in a conversation I had with Mr. Reid, and which is alluded to in his letter of the 30th August, namely, the necessity of a substantial amount of money to be deposited as a guarantee of *bona fides*. It will be seen that Mr. Reid agreed to this, in his second letter, in these words:—"I further agree and consent to the deposit by me with the Government of a Bank deposit receipt for the sum of £1,000, in proof of *bona fides*, the said amount to be forfeited should a sum of £10,000 not be expended upon the works, and to be returned to me when it is demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Government that the said amount has been expended." I think that in this last particular Mr. Reid has behaved very fairly, and the Government have no right to complain of the amount which he suggests should be deposited, or the conditions attaching to it. With reference to the scheme itself, if hon. members have read this correspondence they will have noticed that I sought to obtain the opinion of those persons who were most likely to be aware of what might be the good or ill effects of the acceptance by the Government of this proposal; and hon. members will have noticed that the evidence in favour of the acceptance of the proposal far and away counterbalances anything that has been or can be said against it. So far as I am aware, there

has been nothing said against it. What I have stated in the minute which I wrote to the Premier contains in itself evidence which will have been read by hon. members. I may read some of the main points now. In the minute I said:—"I am much impressed with the importance of this proposed scheme, and I think that, if carried successfully into effect, it will revolutionise matters at Greenbushes." I may here tell the House that the fact is that things have been going very slowly at Greenbushes for a considerable time past. The efforts made by those who have been spending their money and endeavouring to develop the field have been attended with only a moderate degree of success, and it is necessary that something should be done to develop the tin-mining industry in a satisfactory manner; and the only way in which that can be done is by the introduction of machinery of the best possible character, and by instituting a system of water supply, or of conveying the soil to the water. In the minute I went on to say:—"If it is successful in its operation, and money is made by the promoters, it will prove a good advertisement for the tin-mining industry of this colony, and add largely to our export of that valuable mineral." Now, I may say this will be difficult to controvert. It may be said we are going to lease a very large area of what may be very rich country; but if Mr. Reid and those associated with him are successful in carrying out this undertaking, they will be taking only a small proportion of the tin-bearing country, and their success will be one of the best advertisements for the colony, and particularly for the tin-mining industry. The export of tin also will be largely increased, because it must be acknowledged that, with a field such as is known to exist at Greenbushes, and which is languishing for the proper means of development, and for a water supply which can be provided only by means of a large expenditure of money, such as Mr. Reid and his associates are prepared to carry out, the tin-mining industry ought to become a very important one in this colony. The minute goes on to say:—"If the promoters are unsuccessful, and money is lost in the effort to develop the Greenbushes field, then the promoters only will be the losers, and the question of the suc-

cess or otherwise of tin-mining at Greenbushes will be definitely settled." Here I may ask, is it better to expend a large sum for testing the working of the Greenbushes tinfeld by Government expenditure, or allowing private enterprise to do it in what seems to be a liberal spirit? I have no doubt that the wisest course is to allow private enterprise to do that which it would not be wise or discreet for the Government to attempt at the present time. The minute further says: "The rights and privileges of the claim-holders upon the area to be leased will be preserved, so that they will suffer no injury; and, if they retain their claims, the lessees will then have to supply them with water under the agreement." Here I draw attention to the fact that, in reference to the persons holding rights or claims within the area of this proposed lease, their rights are preserved as far as is possible, and they will be put in a much better position if this proposal is agreed to, because they have great difficulties to contend with now, as during a large portion of the year they can only dig out the material and stack it, and have to wait until the winter rains enable them to wash it, while there may be a scarcity of water throughout a whole year. Under these conditions the industry is in a languishing condition, and often men are compelled to leave the district because unable to deal with the wash when they are ready. The minute says: "The rent alone proposed to be paid, viz., £250 per annum, is, I believe, nearly as much as the total direct revenue received from the whole of the Greenbushes tinfields, the amount being only about £300." Here I may remark that I took the opportunity of inquiring, and found that, instead of being £300 a year, the total amount received during the last year was £208 16s. from the Greenbushes tinfeld; so that the rent to be derived, under this proposal, will be larger than the amount received from the whole field during the last twelve months. The minute says:—"The area asked for, though large, is only a small portion of the tin-bearing country, and even assuming that it contains some of the richest tin-bearing land, it is now comparatively idle and likely to remain so unless a water supply is provided; and it is hardly likely

"that capitalists would offer to expend £20,000 unless upon lands likely to be productive of profit upon the large outlay made and risk incurred by them." Well, I may say it is hardly likely that men, even if "rolling in wealth," will come here simply from motives of friendliness to expend their wealth in developing our tinfeld, unless they expect the outlay to be productive of profit to themselves; and it would be one of the worst things that could happen to the country if an outlay of £20,000 was made, and proved not to be profitable, whereas, on the contrary, it would be better for the colony if the outlay returned a ten-fold profit to them. The minute further says: "The only other chance of this portion of Greenbushes area being made workable upon any large scale is by the Government undertaking to provide a water supply. The scheme recommended by Mr. Brazier is estimated to cost £25,000, and this does not provide for the distribution of the water. Under existing conditions, I could not recommend a work of so expensive a character being undertaken, and suggest that private enterprise now offering to show us what can be done be allowed to perform this work, and that the proponents have a liberal concession allowed them for doing it." Upon this I may say I have already alluded to this opinion. It was my intention to have laid on the table a plan showing Mr. Brazier's scheme, as explained in his report, which is a lengthy and valuable one. He estimates the cost to be £25,000 for bringing the water to a fixed point on the tinfeld, but this does not provide for the distribution from that fixed point. I say that if we can induce these gentlemen to undertake this large expenditure, in proving to us the possibility either of conveying the water to the Greenbushes tinfeld or conveying the stuff to certain points on the Blackwood River for treatment there, and so testing whether the working of the industry can be carried on profitably or otherwise, it will be a great point gained for us, and I do not think hon. members will disagree with that opinion. I have laid on the table a plan showing the area applied for; also an expression of opinion from the Government Geologist, who was asked certain questions by me with reference to the probable effect of this scheme

being carried out. The first question I asked him was: (1) "Your opinion as to the probable effect of the successful carrying out of the scheme upon the Greenbushes Tinfield?" His reply was: (1) "If properly worked, it would permanently employ a large number of men, encourage other companies to start, and as the lode in all probability passes through this area, it would be thoroughly tested." I asked him: (2) "Your opinion as to the richness or otherwise of the area applied for. Whether you believe lode runs through or into it, and indicate upon plan your idea of course of lode?" He replied: (2) "I believe the area applied for embraces some of the richest portions of the field, and that the lode crosses it on the line indicated on the map." Then it will be seen that I also sent a telegram to the Registrar at Greenbushes, putting certain queries. I asked him, firstly: "The total number of miners now engaged in mining operations upon Greenbushes?" He replied: "One hundred and forty-seven men." I asked, secondly: "Average number that have been so engaged during the year ending 30th June last?" He replied: "About one hundred and ten." I asked, thirdly: "Total mining revenue collected from the field during the above year?" He replied: "Two hundred and eight pounds sixteen shillings." I asked, fourthly: "Do you expect any material increase of development at Greenbushes, unless means are taken to obviate water difficulty; if so, why?" He replied: "No; unless by fresh finds outside present area, which are probable." I asked, fifthly: "What do you consider is the total area of tin-bearing country?" He replied: "Tin-bearing country may be said to extend all over Mineral Area, but surface indications are very slight, so that it is hard to define until tin is actually found. It certainly exists over much larger extent of country than is now worked, and has been found beyond Bridge-town." Among other questions I asked him, eighthly: "What would be the effect of a perfect water scheme being provided for the field?" He replied: "A perfect water scheme would develop field, by enabling washing to be done by all claims at all times of year; also by enabling poorer stuff to be washed

"than will pay at present." Now these may be thought to be trifling matters, but I know that hon. members do not always read the details of reports and correspondence placed before them, and possibly a little reiteration on my part may not have an ill effect in bringing to their attention what may appear to be these somewhat minor points. With regard to my expression of opinion that this would be for the benefit of the Greenbushes area and the tin-mining interest, and for the benefit of the colony as a whole, I may say that all the evidence I have been able to obtain leads me to believe I am correct in the expression of that opinion. Mr. Noel Brazier, the surveyor who had been employed to ascertain the practicability of supplying water to the Greenbushes area, gives his reasons in a report, to which I will now refer. This was my memorandum to him:—"Referring to my interview with you to-day as to water supply to Greenbushes, and certain proposals made to the Government with regard to developing a portion of the field by means of a large outlay, as you have been all over the Greenbushes Tinfield and have interested yourself in considering and recommending a scheme, and preparing plans of same for supplying water to these fields, I would like an expression of your opinion upon the proposals of Mr. J. S. Reid, which please find in letter herewith." His reply was an excellent one, and I will read portions which bear materially on the questions I had put to him. He says:—"The field, in all justice, will never be developed to the extent it should be, and is worthy of, until capitalists are allowed to take up large leases. My reasons for this are—that the development of the field depends upon a water supply; a water supply can only be assured by the expenditure of a large amount of money; this money can only be obtained from either the Government or capitalists, and capitalists will not spend money unless they have a large area granted them in return and which will warrant the primary expenditure. Small holders cannot afford to spend much money in conserving water, inasmuch as they cannot work enough ground to pay for the expenditure, and consequently work in a

"slow way, and are ever likely to, unless water is supplied. Even if water is supplied by the Government, these small holders will want leases of large areas, so that they may confine their operations in one (1) place and work everything in a face. This I gleaned from conversation with miners, who are at present opposed to the granting of leases. It was invariably admitted that with an adequate water supply, it would be necessary to alter the present regulations and grant leases. The effect of granting the lease in question would probably be that the small holders within it would rise up against it, without first reasoning the question out. The granting of the lease could not affect them so far as the taking out of their dirt is concerned, because their operations would be confined within their own areas; but the question of washing must be considered." I may remark, here, that Mr. Brazier had an opportunity of exchanging ideas with the population at the Greenbushes field, while he was there preparing the scheme of water supply; and, having their opinions in view, he goes on to say in his report:—"I consider the questions that are of most importance are:—(1.) What will be the effect on small holders in the lease; and (2) what will be the effect to the field and colony generally? 1st.—The small holders would say that the granting of a large area as a lease would debar them from prospecting for and working the rich patches, and taking up new claims when their present ones were worked out, and would be giving the large holder the monopoly. This would be quite right if the ground were allowed to remain idle, but if the lease be granted on the condition that a certain amount of money be spent on it in a stated time, and at the rate of so much per annum, and the rights of the present small holdings be not interfered with, it would indeed be selfish to prevent a large amount of money from being expended because these men wanted new holdings when their present ones were worked out. 2nd.—I consider the effect on the field, after the first petty jealousies had died away, would be electrical. In order to successfully carry out this work a large number of men would be needed, prob-

ably more than are on the field at present, and not taking into consideration those on the lease itself. Water would have to be provided for working the ground, and it would be probably supplied to those miners who are now wanting it at a cheaper rate than it could be supplied by the Government. Trade would immediately become brisk, and a healthy reaction set in, and be the cause of advertising the mineral wealth of the colony, and show that not only gold and coal were obtainable in large quantities, but that tin also played a large part in the general advancement of this vast rich territory." I need not read any more of this excellent report by Mr. Brazier. All I can say is that, in my opinion, and in that of the Government, the proposal of Mr. Reid—with some modifications which hon. members may suggest, and which the Government will be glad to consider and adopt, if they can do so in the interest of the country—is one that can do no harm if agreed to by the House, even if it be unsuccessful in its operation; and if it be successful, it will be one of the best advertisements the country can have, for I believe it will have the effect of not only inducing capital to be expended by these people, but will cause others to follow their example, and thus attract capital and enterprise for working our tinfeld at Greenbushes. There may be details which are not mentioned in this proposal, but this House may fairly trust the Government to see that the interests of this colony are safeguarded in any agreement that may be entered into. It may be necessary to pass an Act of Parliament, during this session, for giving effect to the proposal. I feel convinced that the majority of hon. members will agree with the Government in thinking that this proposal is worthy of our favourable consideration, and I believe that this large amount of money which it is proposed to expend will be forthcoming at once, so that these people with large means, which they are ready to expend in the colony, may have the opportunity of spending their money, and testing one of our great mineral resources. One point which is in favour of this proposal, and which cannot often be said of proposals that come before the Government, is that it is not made by persons who have no capital,

and who simply want to obtain some concession for the purpose of hawking it about; but I believe these persons have the means of carrying out this project at once, and are prepared to carry it out in its integrity. Therefore, I may safely recommend it to the favourable consideration of hon. members, with much less degree of fear than I should have with reference to proposals of a similar character that have been before the Legislature in the past. I move that the Government be empowered to enter into an agreement with Mr. Reid, on the basis of the foregoing proposal.

MR. THROSSELL: I have read the correspondence carefully, and am glad to hear that, in considering this question, we are dealing with a proposal of a *bona fide* character. I echo the remark that in the past we have been the victim of speculators who were men of straw, with plenty of smartness and knowledge of the world, and who have sought some concession with a view to hawking it about and making money out of it. If the Hon. the Commissioner is assured that Mr. Reid is really a principal in the matter, and has ample means, I think we cannot do better than enter into the agreement on the lines proposed, at the same time being extremely careful. I congratulate the Commissioner of Crown Lands upon the care he has shown in preparing this proposal for submission to the House.

MR. PLESSE: I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, and the colony is fortunate in having such a proposal put forward by such a gentleman as Mr. Reid. From what I know of him, and the reputation he bears, I am sure the proposal he has made will be faithfully carried out. The rich mineral resources which are known to exist at the Greenbushes should be developed, and they cannot be placed in better hands than those of the gentleman named. I hope the result will prove satisfactory to the country. We know many of those leases were taken up in the past by speculators, and many of the areas have been unworked for a length of time. The difficulty in working has, no doubt, been caused by the want of water, and if the proposal now made will, to a certain extent, remove that trouble, we shall find great wealth in the Greenbushes tinfeld. The river is

no great distance away, and, from my knowledge of hydraulics, I can see that persons with capital might easily bring water to the leased areas for washing the soil for tin; and not only will it be an advantage to Mr. Reid and those associated with him, but the water may be supplied to other persons on the field, or the tramway which he suggests may be availed of by other persons, as well as by Mr. Reid, for conveying the stuff to be washed at the river. I hope the motion will be agreed to.

MR. COOKWORTHY: As the representative of a neighbouring district, and having some knowledge of the Greenbushes tinfeld, I have heard from those engaged in tin-mining that it is impossible to develop the tinfeld by the present system of working. The greater portion of those engaged cannot carry on their work successfully for want of water, and they cannot convey water to the field without a large expenditure of money, which is beyond their means. The present proposal will not interfere with their rights, and there is plenty of room for Mr. Reid's operations without interfering with them. I cannot see any objection to the proposal, when we are assured that these gentlemen are in a position to carry it out. It has my cordial approval.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I have nothing to add to what the Commissioner has said. It does seem to me that this is a really good proposal, and one we may safely accept. It will be seen from the papers that this tinfeld, though valuable, cannot be said to be progressing very quickly. In fact the industry is languishing for want of water and want of capital to develop the field. The question we have to consider is whether we should accept an offer of this kind, or whether the Government should do something to provide water. I do not think the colony is in a position to undertake a large expenditure in providing water on the tinfeld, whatever we may be in a position to do in the future. There are only a few over 100 men on the tinfeld, and the persons making this proposal must employ at least 50, under the proposed terms, so that they will be employing on their area half as many as are now engaged on the whole field. There is also this important consideration, that we are dealing with principals, and men of acknow-

ledged wealth, and that this is a *bonâ fide* offer which is certain to be carried out. That should commend itself strongly to hon. members. This is one of the most straightforward and liberal proposals that have been made to us, coming from the source it does; and I cannot but think it must be in our interest to deal with people who are willing to spend their capital in developing the great resources that exist in the different parts of our colony. We shall not be interfering with those already on the field, their interests being protected; therefore no one will have a right to complain of the action of the House in dealing with this matter, and it can never be argued that we should keep the land waiting for persons to take it up. The land is in the possession of the Crown, without any one being in occupation, and we are in a satisfactory position for dealing with this proposal, because no one has any right on the land that we propose to lease. I have looked into this matter a little myself, and I can see no reason whatever, viewing it in the interest of the colony, why we should not deal with the land in the way proposed. We have nothing whatever to lose, but everything to gain, by doing so; and we have a substantial money deposit, which will be forfeited if the conditions are not carried out, though I believe these people are willing and anxious to undertake the work at once. If this proposal is carried in this House and in another place, a small Bill will be introduced, during this session, to legalise the agreement. The proposal is based almost exactly on the requirements of the Mineral Lands Act, except that the condition as to labour will not be exactly the same. Still, even under the Mineral Lands Act, the Registrar has power to waive the labour conditions, if machinery be placed on the land. I have no doubt that if these people carry out their proposals, they will do a great deal more than comply with the Mineral Lands Act as regards labour conditions. Under that Act only 40-acre blocks can be taken up, and these people could have taken up the area they wanted in 40-acre blocks, but this course would have necessitated so many labourers being kept on each block, which would not be so convenient.

MR. SIMPSON: I congratulate the Commissioner of Crown Lands on having

been the recipient of an offer for the investment of capital in this colony, for developing one of our most important mining industries. There are details in connection with it which will, I am sure, be carefully safeguarded by the Government in making an absolute agreement; but it is satisfactory to know we have capitalists coming forward to invest their money in furnishing a water supply to the tinfield at the Greenbushes—for that is what the question really resolves itself into—or, as an alternative, for the building of a tramway to carry the dirt to where the water is. I am sure we all hope these gentlemen will make a big percentage on their investment. The area of 1,000 acres is large. It is unprecedented in Australia. In New South Wales, the largest area which can be taken up is a square mile. But the conditions in this proposal are tempting, and valuable to the country. I am perfectly satisfied, from private information I have, that we are simply in the initiation of our tin industry in this colony; and it will be an advantage to have men of means to develop the industry, because capital is required to do that profitably. The Greenbushes tinfield has been called a poor man's field, and a certain number of men have been getting a decent living out of it, but the field has not gone ahead at the rate it should have done. Three years ago we had the opinion of one of the most experienced tin miners, and he told me himself that we have as valuable a tinfield as there is in the world. Men with capital are now coming forward to develop it, and I am sure we are glad to welcome them. I would suggest that, if this £20,000 is to be spent in machinery, that might not work quite happily; and I see no condition as to who is to determine the value of the machinery, or the value of the work done. These are mere matters of detail, which I suggest to the Minister. Of course there is not a great deal of machinery wanted, for if these investors can get their reservoir, the rest is largely a matter of drainage, and I do not see how they can spend £20,000 in machinery alone. I welcome this proposal, and I believe these capitalists have a fine opportunity of reaping a profit from their investment, and to the advantage of the country in the end.



MR. CLARKSON: This is one of the best proposals I have heard of for a long time. We have plenty of room for such men as Mr. Reid, and he is just the sort of man we want. The area asked for may be rather large, but we have very large areas in this colony not only of tin, but of many other minerals. All we want to develop them is such men as Mr. Reid, with capital, and I should be inclined to offer him most liberal conditions.

MR. A. FORREST: I should like to point out that the concession asked for by Mr. Reid is, to all intents and purposes, a benefit to the men who are now working on the tinfield, as well as a benefit to the colony. He offers to pay more rental than the whole sum now received from the men on the field, and he does not propose to interfere with the rights or claims of the present holders. I should like to ask this House what we are giving him. As far as I can see, we are not giving him anything. But Mr. Reid, with whom I am well acquainted, is of the opinion that this is a great field, and he thinks he can make a lot of money out of it. I think the best plan is to let him go and try, and if he will pay £250 a year rent, and employ 50 men, besides other large expenditure, the scheme is one which must commend itself to the House and the country. The hon. member for Geraldton is a little abroad when he says it would not cost much to pump water up into a reservoir and distribute the water over the tinfield, for he cannot be aware of the character of the country. The river is some 700 feet below the level of Greenbushes, and is some four or five miles distant; so that the water would have to be re-pumped more than once, and no ordinary machinery could do it. Mr. Reid is of opinion that, by building a railway, he can take the stuff to the river, as an alternative scheme, and that is, I think, the more practicable scheme, and the one that will be carried out. Mr. Reid is well known to members of this House as a capitalist. He has also associated with him the Messrs. Millar Brothers, and when these gentlemen are concerned in a scheme like this, we may regard it as *bona fide*. I am sure the scheme must commend itself to this House, and I do not think that the few men who are now engaged on the field

can in any way disagree with the opinion of this House.

MR. TRAYLEN: The hon. member who has just spoken has put the whole thing in a nutshell. We are asked for nothing beyond varying our Mineral Land Regulations slightly. If there were to be any reduction of the statutory rent, we might discuss the matter. But Mr. Reid says: "I will pay the rent in full, and all I ask is to be allowed to take up a larger area than the Regulations allow me to do." This being his offer, I think we should meet him without hesitation, and only require certain conditions as to forfeiture. If it is probable that the mountain will be taken to Mahomet, we should see that the course of the river is not changed.

Motion put and passed.

Ordered—That the foregoing resolution of the House be transmitted to the Legislative Council, and their concurrence desired therein.

#### ADDRESS TO HER MAJESTY, PRAYING FOR INCREASE OF REPRESENTATIVES AT FEDERAL COUNCIL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), in accordance with notice, moved that the following Address be presented to Her Majesty the Queen:—

MOST GRACIOUS SOVEREIGN,—

"We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and "loyal subjects, the Members of the "Legislative Assembly of the Colony of "Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to approach Your "Majesty with feelings of the deepest "loyalty and attachment.

"Whereas the fifth section of an Act "of Your Imperial Parliament, intituled "'An Act to constitute a Federal Council "of Australasia," provides that "each "colony shall be represented in the Council by two members, except in the case of "Crown colonies, which shall be represented by one member each," and also "further provides that Your Majesty, "'at the request of the Legislatures of "the colonies, may by Order in Council "from time to time increase the number "of representatives of each colony":

"And whereas at the session of the "Federal Council held at Hobart, in the "colony of Tasmania, in the months of

"January and February, 1893, a resolution was submitted that—

"Having regard to the importance of matters of federal concern that may require early attention, this Council is of opinion, whilst keeping in view the ultimate establishment of a more perfect system of Federal Union, that the efficiency and influence of the Council could in the meantime be usefully extended by increasing the number of representatives from each colony, except Crown colonies, to five."

"And whereas this resolution was agreed to by the Council:

"Now, therefore, we, the members of the Legislative Assembly of the colony of Western Australia, in Parliament assembled, do humbly pray that Your Majesty will be pleased to make an Order in Council increasing the number of the representatives of each colony in accordance with such resolution."

"We confidently trust that such alteration in the constitution of the Council will result to the benefit of Your Majesty's Australasian colonies; and we humbly pray that Your Majesty may long be spared to continue that benign rule which has contributed so largely to the happiness and prosperity of Your Majesty's subjects."

He said: The address really explains itself. At the last Federal Council meeting, held in Hobart, a resolution was passed affirming the desirability of increasing the number of members to five for each colony, except Crown colonies. That resolution has been presented to the Legislatures of Queensland, Victoria, and Tasmania, by their respective Governments; and in the case of Queensland it has been passed unanimously; in Victoria, I have information that it has passed the Lower House, and that there was no likelihood of its being altered in the Upper House, and probably by this time it has passed that House; in Tasmania, I believe, there will be no opposition whatever; and in the case of South Australia and New South Wales, they were not represented at the Federal Council at the time, but I believe South Australia will pass the resolution, and I hope the mother colony of New South Wales may be induced to do so, although I have no definite information on the point,

as yet. There can be no doubt that the Federal Council, as at present constituted, has too few members. I was struck with the fact myself, when I attended the Council for the first time, a few months ago, that we were too few—only eight or nine persons dealing with important business. Such a number is too few to exercise much influence on public opinion. It was the unanimous opinion of those present that if the Federal Council is to be of any influence in Australia, it must be constituted upon a basis of greater numbers. The resolution was passed unanimously, and there was a unanimous feeling that the least number of representatives, for making the Council efficient and powerful, would be for each colony to send five members. Those representatives who attended the Federal Convention held in Sydney, in 1891, will agree with me as to the influence and power represented on that occasion. There were seven members from each colony on that occasion, and I suppose that never in Australia had there been such a representative gathering in which so many eminent Australians took part. I look forward to these Federal Council meetings, whether held annually or every second year, as comprising men of similar status to that of the men who attended the Federal Convention in Sydney; and if that be so, I feel sure the Federal Council will be very much respected throughout Australia, and in the mother country, and will also be very powerful for good. I do not suppose there is anyone, who has thought over the matter, who does not feel in himself that Australia will federate some day, and that we shall not always be composed of different colonies, having arbitrary lines dividing us, but that the day will come when we shall be a Commonwealth, and be one country, and become—if I may say so—a nation; always, I hope, allied by the bonds of loyalty and affection to the mother country. That being so, we all believe that by and bye, as time goes on, Australia will be federated, and that conditions will be devised which will be fair to all the colonies of the group; that we shall be able to work out some plan which will be fair to each one of the colonies, and that we shall federate on some fair and reasonable terms. That being so, it is but fair and right that we

should preserve and encourage the federal movement, whenever an opportunity occurs, and I believe the Federal Council of Australia, in the manner now constituted, will be productive of great good to the whole of Australia, and will encourage the federal movement, and have a good effect in many ways, besides performing legislative functions. You can hardly over-estimate the influence for good which must result from the principal politicians of each colony meeting together at stated periods. Even the personal intercourse that arises on occasions of that sort is beneficial, for friendships are formed, ideas are exchanged, and the results are very difficult to over-estimate. Therefore, I shall be glad if this House will agree to this address to Her Majesty. I may add that, even as constituted at present, the Federal Council has powers which we have not, for the Council can legislate on subjects which the Legislatures of the several colonies have not the power to deal with; and I think that as the Federal Council becomes larger and more influential, so will it be more respected. I cannot say that, up to the present, the Federal Council has occupied that position in the estimation of the people of Australia that it is entitled to. I do not think it has gained for itself any great position in public estimation, as yet, and I attribute that solely to the smallness of its numbers. It is not likely that a Council consisting of only two members from each colony, and not even all the colonies represented, can attain a position of influence. At the last meeting, only Queensland, Victoria, Tasmania, and Western Australia were represented—eight gentlemen meeting together to discuss important questions in a public manner, with all the forms and ceremonies that are used in this House. You can at once see that the numbers are altogether too small, too insignificant, to have any great power or influence. That was felt very much at the last meeting, and it resulted in this address, which was proposed by our worthy Speaker (Sir J. G. Lee Steere), from his place in the Council, and was unanimously adopted by the members present. If this resolution passes in this colony, as I believe it will, and also passes in the other colonies, and if the mother colony of New South Wales joins

the Federal Council, the meetings of that Council in the future will consist of 35 representatives, and you can well understand the far greater influence that the Council will then have in the estimation of the people of Australia, and also in the estimation of the people of the mother country. I have great pleasure in moving the adoption of this address, for I believe it is a move in the right direction. The representatives of this colony who attended the Federal Convention, in Sydney, were not able to join, heart and soul, in the federal movement as proposed in 1891, because we felt that this colony did not obtain sufficient consideration; but that does not prevent us from joining heartily in this Federal Council movement, and assisting, as far as we can, in encouraging federal opinion and federal action. Looking forward, as I do, to the time when we will be able to federate on principles and conditions that will be just to this colony and to the other colonies of the group, I think I am consistent in encouraging and assisting the Federal Council of Australia, so that it shall become more powerful for good. I have much pleasure in moving that the address be presented to Her Most Gracious Majesty.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: With respect to this motion, there are several points we ought to consider before we agree to it. One is that we are very differently situated as compared with the other colonies. As a rule, the Federal Council meets in Tasmania.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Not necessarily. The question is put to the vote every time as to where the next meeting shall be held.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Well, with Western Australia represented by five members, and each of the other colonies represented by five members, the Federal Council would never meet in Western Australia. As far as Tasmania is concerned, it has a delightful climate, and though it is a very short cry from the other colonies to Tasmania, it is a very long cry from this colony; and considering the expense and time required for the public men of this colony to attend a meeting of the Federal Council in any one of the other colonies, we should consider, before agreeing to this motion, not only the time, but also the expense

to this colony. The expense when two members go is not great, but when we increase the number to five, the expense will mount up to a considerable sum. Taking the federation question, which is the principle that governs this Federal Council, I think that until this colony has split up or divided into two or three colonies, we should gravely consider whether it will suit this colony to join in a federation union. The other colonies have been developing their resources with borrowed money, and have now the obligations of large loans hanging over their heads. The other colonies are all in close proximity, but, as to this colony, though only an imaginary line separates us, a vast space divides this colony from our nearest neighbour. Therefore, I do not think, with regard to the other colonies, that this colony would have the influence to get her just dues in a Federal Council comprised of five members from each of the colonies. For instance, at the last meeting of the Federal Council some question was brought up with reference to the troops at Albany. Our representatives fought manfully, from the point of view of this colony's interests, but what support did they get? It appeared to me, on reading that debate, that it only showed how futile and how one-sided it would be for this colony to join in federal union, where we might be out-numbered and out-voted, and if any sympathy between colonies existed it would exist among those which are closely connected by proximity. I do not think it would be wise for us to increase the number of representatives we send to the Federal Council. It takes a long time to attend the Council meetings, and it would cost a considerable sum of money if we sent five members. I do not think it would suit this colony, with its present small debt, to join in any Australian union until we have had an opportunity of developing our resources, the same as other colonies have been doing. Our debt is small, whereas the debt of the other colonies is large, though, if our present Government remain long in office, no doubt our debt will be increased in proportion to that of the other colonies, and then we will be in a position to join in federation. I hope that when that time comes we will be able to pay the interest on our loans, that our

resources will be fully developed, and that it will suit us then to join in federal union.

**THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest):** It is quite clear that the hon. member has no sympathy at all with the federal movement. He does not believe in the federation of Australia, or in the Federal Council. But surely he wishes to live in sympathy with those that are near him; surely he wishes all the colonies of Australia to be united by bonds of union in every possible manner; and yet he will take away the opportunity of doing it, and would not even allow these federal gatherings. It seems to me that everything we can do to bring together more closely the interests of the people in the different colonies, the better it will be for us and the whole of Australia; and with that view I am sorry that more hon. members have not spoken on the subject, because it is one that is very interesting and important. We should never lose a chance to do what we can to bind more closely the people of Australia. This colony has shown its sympathy with federal union, by joining in almost everything that has been proposed to it by the other colonies. We have contributed a share to various things in the way of postal and telegraph unions and defences; and we have participated to some extent in the advantage of the federal contribution paid by other colonies towards the defences of King George's Sound. [**MR. R. F. SHOLL:** We paid the bulk of it.] The hon. member says we paid the bulk of it; but do we pay the bulk of the upkeep? We pay one-fourth, and the other three-fourths are contributed by the other colonies; so that surely this is a benefit to us. I am not in accord with the hon. member in thinking that no good can come of union. Surely, the more we are united the stronger we shall be; and I am not prepared to join in any federal movement unless we can get some advantage. This resolution merely affirms that the Federal Council already existing shall be enlarged, and it does not bind us to that larger federation to which the hon. member referred. I hope that hon. members will vote for the address, and I should have been glad if more hon. members had expressed their views on this very important question.

**MR. TRAYLEN:** I am going with the Government entirely in this matter. I

sympathise with the Premier very much when he says he looked round on eight or nine gentlemen at the Federal Council meeting, and felt it was not a body that would command so much respect as a larger body would do. We have to look in the face the probable federation of Australia, and it will be wise for us to do whatever we can to bring that about, for if we hold aloof from that movement we shall find ourselves unable to make such good terms—if terms are to be made at all—in our own interest. I regret I was not able to attend the large federation gathering held a few weeks ago in another colony, and to which I received a kind invitation, hoping that I would in some measure represent this colony. I should have been glad to be able to say we are willing to take our position in the united Australia. Although the sending of five representatives instead of two from this colony to the Federal Council may cause an increase of expense, still our wisdom is to take the matter in hand now, and thus pave the way for federation when it does come.

Motion put and passed.

Ordered—That the foregoing address be transmitted to the Legislative Council, and their concurrence desired therein.

#### KENSINGTON LANE CLOSURE BILL.

##### THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### ENGINE SPARKS FIRE PREVENTION BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

The Order of the Day for the consideration of the committee's report having been read,

MR. PIESSE moved that the words "by the Governor-in-Council," be inserted after the word "appointed," in the first line of the new clause.

Amendment put and passed, and the new clause, as amended, agreed to.

Report of committee, with further amendment of the Bill, adopted.

#### GRAND JURY ABOLITION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

The amendment proposed by the Legislative Council in this Bill (*vide* p. 661,

*ante*) was agreed to without comment, and the Bill was reported as amended, and returned to the Legislative Council.

#### WINES, BEER, AND SPIRIT SALE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

This Bill having been recommitted on the previous day,

MR. SIMPSON asked leave to withdraw the amendment which he had moved on the previous day, for the insertion of a new clause, namely, "The provisions of this Act shall come into force on the 1st January, 1894." He said he now understood that provision would be made for the date of the coming into force of the Bill.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The House resumed.

##### THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### ADJOURNMENT

The House adjourned at 9.15 p.m.

### Legislative Council,

Monday, 11th September, 1893.

Legal Practitioners Bill: third reading—Constitution Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Gold Declaration Bill: third reading—Kensington Lane Closure Bill: first reading—Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at 8 o'clock p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### LEGAL PRACTITIONERS BILL.

##### THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time, and passed.