

Whatever difference of opinion there may be on matters of detail, I know every member of this House shares with me the desire to see the ends of justice served in as complete a manner as possible, with every possible advantage to a man to prove his innocence, and with no means, whereby because of this, a guilty man can go free.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved, "That the Bill be referred to the Select Committee consisting of the Attorney-General, Mr. James, Mr. Leake, Mr. Loton and Mr. Randall.

The motion was agreed to.

CONSTRUCTION OF MOUNT-STREET, PARK ROAD.

MR. WOOD said he desired to withdraw the motion standing in his name having reference to this question, the debate upon which had been adjourned; and, by leave of the House, the motion was withdrawn.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House at 10 o'clock adjourned until 4.30 p.m., on Tuesday, the 23rd inst.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 23rd July, 1895.

New Member—Married Women's Property Act Amendment Bill : first reading—Perth Mint Bill : second reading ; Committee—Agent-General Bill : first reading—Justices Appointment Bill : first reading—Supply Bill : first reading : second reading : committee : third reading—Adjournment.

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

NEW MEMBER.

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON, having subscribed the Oaths required by law, took his seat.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of the HON. S. H. PARKER, this Bill was introduced and read a first time.

PERTH MINT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) : In rising to move the second reading of this Bill, I desire to point out that its object is to establish in this colony a branch of the Royal Mint. I feel certain that hon. gentlemen have read the remarks of the Premier in another place, in which he referred in great detail to the advantages of having such an institution in the colony. I may, however, refer to a few matters, if only to refresh the minds of hon. members. The establishment of branches of the Royal Mint has been found to be most advantageous in two of the other colonies, and I do not think we shall go far wrong if we follow them. The advantages which have accrued have been very great, and on the whole, the establishment of the Mints has proved of much service to the people. It is not contended for one moment that when we establish a similar institution here it will be a paying concern, and I do not suppose that any colony ever expected an institution of the kind to pay—at any rate, directly. Still, in New South Wales, where a Mint has been established for a large number of years, the total expenditure is found to be about equal

to the revenue, and beyond this of course, the indirect advantages are many. In Victoria, where a palatial building has been erected and expensive machinery put up, there has been found to be a small loss of £200, taking the expenditure with the revenue; but here again there have been very many indirect advantages. We cannot, as I have said, expect our Mint to pay, at any rate at the outset, although we shall reap many indirect advantages, some of which I may, perhaps, refer to in detail. In the first place, a Mint will make a certain amount of work in proportion to the population. Hon. members will agree that every industry we can establish must be a good thing for us, if it be not done at the expense of the country. Another consideration is, that we should retain a large portion of the gold in the colony. Instead of people sending away their gold to be coined, we could coin it here, and probably, in many cases, persons who owned gold, and who otherwise might go away to have it coined, would be induced to remain and spend it here. Then we would save the exchange, which is a very large and serious item, as well as the freights and other charges which would be cast about the colony, so that all portions of the population would share in the amount saved. Again, a Mint, I consider, will be a first-class advertisement for the colony, because it will show people outside that we not only have a few gold-producing mines, but that our prospects for the future are such that we have thorough confidence in. We who are here know that some of the mines which have been taken to a depth are showing splendid results, and there is no reason why there should not be many others in a similar position. Thus in establishing a Mint, we establish that confidence in others which we possess ourselves. There is another indirect advantage accruing from the increase. It will help to raise the price of shares, and this to the community will far exceed in the shape of benefit any actual loss there may be on the working of the Mint. Hon. members will see by Clause 2 that a sum, which is not to exceed £10,000 a year, is to be appropriated for the purposes of the Mint. The institution is to be worked by the Imperial Government, but the sum we are called upon to provide is not to exceed £10,000. In cases like this the Imperial Government always take care to see that the sum asked for is sufficient to pay the expenses, and, in our instance, they have

named £10,000; but we are in hopes that the actual cost will be not more than £6,000 or £7,000. In New South Wales the stipulated amount was £15,000, and in Victoria it was £20,000. The cost of starting this institution has been estimated at about £15,000, and hon. gentlemen who have taken the trouble to ascertain the cost of similar buildings in the other colonies will see that this amount is a very modest one compared with the expenditure elsewhere. We estimate the cost of the building at £8000 and the machinery and other accessories at from £5,000 to £7,000. Seeing that the cost of the building in Victoria was £100,000, the interest on our undertaking—

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: Where is it proposed to build it? £8,000 does not include the value of the land, does it?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): It will probably be built on Government land. I do not think the Government anticipate having to purchase. I may tell hon. members that the gold exported up to the 30th June last was 563,129oz., which, valued at £3 16s. per oz., gives £2,139,899. I think that is a very creditable production, especially considering that nearly £1,000,000 worth has been produced during the last twelve months. This shows how we are progressing. The cost of the coinage of this at 2d. per ounce would mean to us £4,693. The freight, insurance and exchange comes to about another shilling per ounce, which means £28,158. Nearly the whole of this money would be saved, and a good part of it would be spent in the colony. The adoption of this Bill will not only show that we have thorough confidence in the future, but will provide what some hon. gentleman referred to in the course of the debate in the Address-in-Reply, as a more effective means than we have at present of registering the quantity of gold produced in the colony. One hon. gentleman suggested a tax, but I think the establishment of a Mint would greatly take the place of that, as no one would trouble to take gold away while there was a Mint here; and this is another advantage which will accrue from the establishment of a Mint. Although there are only two Mints in Australia, I believe in the United States there are six or eight such institutions. That shows that the Americans see the advantage of having these institutions, and I feel quite certain hon. members will hardly like to be behind them as regards

the requisites for pushing the country ahead. The clauses of the Bill hardly need reference to. Clause 2 states that there shall be payable to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding £10,000 to defray the expenses of the Mint. Clause 3 states that the money shall be paid by the Treasurer, and shall be accounted for to Her Majesty through the Lords Commissioners. Clause 4 states that all fees received by the Mint on account of work done are to go to the consolidated revenue. Although the expenditure is put down at £10,000, any portion of that sum not used will be returned. I believe there will be some little opposition to this Bill, and I am sorry to hear it. I believe one of the arguments to be brought forward is that we have no right to tax the public to help the miners. It is said that the Mint will only be a means of making a market for the miner in which to sell his gold. I do not consider that even this is a disadvantage, but I do not think it can be said to involve the whole of the people in a tax to help the miner, when we consider the indirect advantages that will accrue will more than counterbalance any loss. Another argument that may be brought forward is that some of the colonies which are more populous, and which produce more gold than we do, have not thought it advisable to establish Mints. I do not see that that is any argument. If it shows anything at all, it shows that they have not been alive to their own interests. It is no argument that because other colonies, which have produced thousands of ounces of gold, have not established Mints, we should not do so. I may say that this Bill has received the concurrence of the other House, and if we now take upon ourselves the responsibility of throwing it out, it will be tantamount to saying we have no confidence in the colony or in our gold prospects. I do not think when the Government undertake works we can always expect to get a return of three-halfpence for every penny expended, because there are the indirect advantages to be considered. The Post and Telegraph Departments are examples. Before concluding I should like to refer to some statements which have been made in the other colonies with regard to the advantages of a Mint. It is stated in a report from the Acting-Deputy Master of the Melbourne Mint, dated as recently as the 25th of April last, that the principal advantage of a branch Mint is that it gives the gold miner a steady market for the

fruits of his labor, and that it is also of value to the whole community, as it sustains the price of gold, and in a very marked degree regulates the rate of exchange with the mother country. It is also mentioned that the presence of a branch of the Royal Mint confers facilities for regulating the general currency and for keeping it in good condition. The Mint authorities also claim that the loss in the working expenses is compensated many times over by the advance in the price of gold since the opening of the Mint, viz., from 76s. to 77s. 8½d. per oz., whereby the colony has gained during a period of 18½ years close on £70,000 per annum. I now move that the Bill be read a second time.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I have listened most carefully to the remarks which have fallen from the Hon. the Minister for Mines, and I have gone into the figures which were laid before another place by the Premier, and it is my intention to support the second reading of the Bill. My greatest objection to the Bill was that it seemed to me to directly tax the ratepayers for the benefit of the successful miner, who can well afford to send his gold out of the colony. Still, having been able to obtain no figures of more recent date than 1885, I have been forced to take the figures of the Premier. These show that, although there was a loss in New South Wales and Victoria, it was only a loss for a time, and that taking the whole period since the establishment of the Mints, the loss has been very small. Even assuming there will be a loss for the present of £2,000 a year, there will be an indirect profit of from £12,000 to £15,000 a year. This is not a profit that will be made only by the successful miner, but a profit every member of the community will indirectly share in. I think the stage of doubt as to our goldfields is passed. So far as I am concerned, I believe in them, and I think that if we do not pass this Bill it will be as good as holding forth to the world that we do not believe in ourselves or in our country. I think the Government are to be congratulated upon getting the concession to establish a Mint, especially as many of the other colonies, which have not been so backward as we have, have not obtained a similar concession. We must bear in mind that we have taken upon ourselves grave responsibilities in building railways and other public works, and if we throw out this Bill it will have a tendency to create an impression in the minds of those who have

lent us the money that we have no confidence in the country or its capabilities. I have weighed the matter as carefully as I can, and I think, under the circumstances, the House will only be doing right if it passes the Bill.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I am sorry to have to oppose this Bill, and I shall be still more sorry if any one imagines that because I do so I have no confidence in the goldfields. I believe I have as much confidence in their future prosperity and development as anyone. Whether we have the largest goldfield in the world or not I am not now prepared to say; but I believe that the discoveries which have been made during recent years are going to bring a vast amount of prosperity to us. Holding that view I have done my utmost to advocate the opening up of the fields by railway communication and by means of water supplies; in fact, my desire has been to advocate every measure that would bring about the rapid development of our fields so that the miners could obtain the largest quantity of gold at the earliest possible time. The fact of opposing the introduction of such a measure as this does not show a want of confidence in the future prosperity of the fields. In other countries where they have enormous goldfields, and where the production has been immense compared to ours up to the present time, we find no Mints established. I will instance New Zealand which, up to now has exported £49,000,000 worth of gold, and which is even now producing more gold than this colony. I say that colony has no Mint. Then again Queensland has no Mint, and I believe she produces more gold than we do. As far as I know South Africa has no Mint and she produces immense quantities of gold. The reason why Mints are not established is that people take an economical view and do not consider it necessary to tax the general community for the benefit of the successful gold miner. Being a property holder in Perth, where I imagine the Mint will be established, it would be more to my particular advantage, and more in the interests of my constituents, were this Bill to pass; but I cannot look upon the interests of my constituents or my own interests before the interests of the whole colony. We must, I think, consider the interests of the struggling farmer and the squatter at the North as well as the interests of the gold-mining industry, and when we find a Bill which will benefit only one industry—one class of persons

—those who have been fortunate in obtaining a quantity of gold,—it is our duty to oppose it, especially when the effect of it is to enable this particular class to realise at a lesser cost than they could if they had to send the gold out of the colony. This Bill will not have the effect of producing a single ounce of gold more than is produced at the present time; it will not benefit the struggling farmer, or the laborer, or the taxpayer generally. On the other hand there can be no question that it involves an extra cost upon the whole community, which means extra taxation for the benefit of whom?—the successful gold miner. We know that few only are successful; the many are unsuccessful. The few who are successful it is proposed, by this Bill, to make still more successful by imposing upon those who are unsuccessful, and upon those who have nothing to do with the industry, a portion of the cost necessary to enable those who are successful to realise more advantageously. The hon. gentleman who introduced this Bill has told us that in Melbourne at the present time the expenditure on the Mint is very little more than the receipts; but we must bear in mind that the Melbourne Mint deals with a quantity of gold which is taken from the soil, not of Victoria alone, but from the soil of other countries, including Western Australia. The amount of gold that will be coined here will necessarily be limited to that which is produced here. Allowing a fair proportion of increase in the production, it will be many years before we shall produce the same quantity of gold that is minted at Melbourne, and consequently the loss here must be greater than at the Mint in question. I find from the figures quoted in the other House that the net cost of the Melbourne Mint between 1872 and 1894 averaged £5,358; that during the ten years between 1884 and 1893 it averaged £4,082, and that during the three years 1891-93 it averaged £2,645.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTECOCK): Whose figures are those?

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: They are the Premier's. They are reported in the daily *Herald*. Between the years 1872 and 1894 the Melbourne Mint coined an immense quantity of gold—a far greater amount than she will average during the next five or ten years. Consequently, if we are to reason by analogy, we must anticipate that if we establish a Mint

the loss will be greater even than £5,000. Take it at £5,000, and I ask why should the general community be taxed even to that extent for the benefit of the successful miner, especially bearing in mind that it will not tend to the production of a single ounce of gold more than is produced at the present time. If we were to build a railway to Menzies, or to the Ninety-Mile, or even from the coast to Pilbarra, we should have something that would pay, besides having something that would tend to increase the production of gold, which this Mint will not do. We are proposing to undertake a work I can see no reason for, except it is that we may be able to say we have a Mint—a work which will not benefit anyone except the successful gold miner. My hon. friend, Mr. Crowder, said the profit would be £12,000 or £15,000. He did not tell us how the amount was to be made up. I have considered the subject, and I fail to see how he is going to prove anything of the kind. True, as my hon. friend who introduced this Bill said, Perth will benefit from the fact that the Mint is here, and that there will be a few officials and others employed at it whose purchases will benefit the people of Perth to some extent; but what will it amount to? It is obvious that the persons employed will be very few, or the cost would be much larger. As I say, the only way anyone can be benefited is from the consumption by these officials, and, as I am sorry to see most of the necessities that will be required by them are at the present time imported, the agriculturist and squatter will gain little or nothing from their presence; and as far as the colony is concerned it can only be the gainer by the small amount of extra Customs duty which these officials will contribute. I listened with some interest to the remarks of my hon. friend, because it struck me that with his logical mind he would not omit to explain how this £12,000 or £15,000 profit was arrived at. However, he will have an opportunity of explaining the matter presently, because I am going to move an amendment which will give him the opportunity of again addressing the House. At present I cannot accept the figures, nor agree that there will be any profit from the establishment of a Mint. My hon. friend the Minister quoted some extracts from the report of the Deputy-Master of the Mint in Melbourne, one of which was for the purpose of showing that the establishment of a Mint had raised the price of gold to the

extent that the colony had been the gainer of £70,000 a year; but does the hon. gentleman for a moment imagine that the establishment of a Mint here is going to raise the price? The price has reached its limit, and it is bound to be regulated, in any case, by the price in Victoria. No miner here can expect to receive more for his gold than he would get in Melbourne.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: But there would be a difference between the Mint price here and the price on the fields.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: No man is obliged to sell on the fields now.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: Sometimes they cannot help it.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: Then they would sell in the same way if the Mint were here. I take it that the majority of persons who have gold, either sell it to the banks or get the banks to advance upon it. If more is advanced than the Mint price, the difference has to be refunded, and if the gold brings more than is advanced, the banks pay the balance, so that those who produce gold are now able to get the Melbourne Mint prices.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: The charges are deducted.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: That is so. The only difference a Mint will make will be that the charges will be saved. I was arguing, however, on the quotation of the Hon. the Minister with regard to the £70,000 which the colony of Victoria gained through the price of gold having been raised, and I would say—

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENBOOM): I quoted that to show the advantage of a Mint.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: They may have gained that in Victoria, but does any one anticipate that the price will be raised here, and that those who have any gold will obtain a greater price for it here than at the Melbourne Mint? The saving will be this: There will be a saving of the insurance and freight.

THE HON. J. C. FOULKES: And interest.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I do not know whether the Banks charge interest or not, but it comes to this, that the saving will be to the men who produce the gold and not to the general community. It is much the same as if the Government were to say there are many charges on wool, and if we establish a market here it will be a good thing for the pastoralists

who would then be able to get the same prices here as they would in London. Of course it would be a grand thing, but what would the rest of the community say if such a proposition as that were made? What would they say if the community generally were called upon to pay the charges so that the pastoralists could get the same price here as in London without incurring any of the expenses or risks?

THE HON. E. H. WITTENOOM: It is not a parallel case.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: It may not be, but I cannot help thinking that it would be of more advantage to the colony at large if the Government were to come down with a proposition such as I have suggested rather than the one in question. I believe a proposition to aid the squatters in the manner I have mentioned would be far more advantageous to the whole community than the establishment of a Mint in Perth. The general public, of course, would scout the idea that any portion of the community should be benefited at the expense of the remainder. My hon. friend the Minister pointed out the advantages, but he admitted the Mint would not pay. He gave several reasons as to why it would be advantageous, and among them he propounded a theory which I am sure the hon. gentlemen will, when I call his attention to it, admit is fallacious. He said the Mint would retain the gold in the colony. I do not pose as a freetrader, but if the hon. gentleman will only converse with one of his colleagues, I am sure he will find more emphatic argument used with regard to the fallacy of Protectionists about retaining gold than I could use. I will not use my own words, but will quote from an article which appeared in the *Hobart Mercury*, and which I extracted in 1894 from the *Daily News*.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM): It is obsolete.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: No; the *Daily News* is not obsolete. I extracted the article, and sent it to the Premier, because I thought it was an uncommonly good one. It says:—

One of the keenest desires of the Australian miner at one time was to keep the gold in the country. He argued entirely to his own satisfaction that it was absurd for men to "delve and moil and pine" to get the precious metal and then to let it go away in order to enrich men on the other side of the world. The argument appeared to be so conclusive to the miners and to the working classes generally, that they never rested until they got a Mint, which was of course to do for them all that they desired, and make all industries prosper by reason of the

great quantity of the money in the country. This subject is worthy of notice at the present time, when the air is full of theories about money, because it affords an object lesson which might be learned with a great deal of advantage by a number of persons who keep on running their heads against financial stone walls, without, apparently, learning anything from this unpleasant process. They, like the miners and their friends, decline to learn from experience or from the reasoning of men who have investigated thoroughly all the aspects of the question. When the miners were raging against the exportation of gold and wanted it stopped, they were referred to Adam Smith, who still remains to most thinking persons an authority, in order to show them that there was no way in which gold can be kept in a country beyond a certain quantity and especially to make them understand that Spain, even with the aid of a host of severe penalties, could not prevent the gold coming away. Moreover, they were asked to consider that if the gold could be kept in the country then it must decline in value, since there would be more than was required, whereas if it was sent away, then the highest possible value was obtained for it. All this seems to be plain and simple enough now, but at that time the miners raged, and popular candidates always ready to adopt the latest craze and pander to it, undertook to keep the gold in the country for the benefit of the people. At last there came one candidate, whether he was sincere or only going one better for fun we shall not undertake to say, who gravely proposed that an export duty of £5 an ounce on gold should be imposed, which would at once put an end to the nefarious business of exporting it, and bringing in a host of goods in return, thus robbing the people of their metal, and giving the products of a freetrade country as value for it. Strange to say, though the candidate had done no more than what many others had practically suggested, his proposed export duty was not at all popular, because the miners began to perceive that if the storekeepers, who were then largely gold buyers, and the banks could never export the gold, the miner would not be able to convert it into food, clothing, and drinks. He declined, therefore, to have anything to do with the £5 an ounce export duty, but he still wanted the gold kept in the country. At this time, too, there arose a genius, strangely enough in the leading Melbourne Free-trade paper, who advocated an export duty on gold—a small one, of course—on the ground that it would be paid by "the foreigner." In other words, this wonderful person declared that an export duty on gold would raise the price by the amount of the duty, as he insisted that the value of gold was not determined, like that of other things by the cost of production. The fallacy into which he fell was obvious, but it is, nevertheless, precisely the same fallacy that is trotted out very frequently in these days, namely, that it is possible to lower or raise the value of the precious metals by passing a law. At all events, the actual imposition as an export duty of 2s. 6d. an ounce on gold practically demonstrated the fact that whatever increased the price of the metal when exported was ultimately paid by the producer, and was, in reality, so much added to the cost of production. In spite of all this the miners and the working-classes never rested till they got their Mint, and the question has risen as to how far they have benefited by it. The notion was intolerable, to more persons than the miners, that New South Wales should have a Mint and not Victoria, and so there was no rest until one was started, but up to this day the Melbourne Mint has never paid

its expenses. At the present day the loss on both the Sydney and Melbourne Mints has been reduced to a little over £1,200 a year, though at one time the annual loss in Melbourne was £20,000. But, the question as to how far the Mint has benefited the gold producer has never been fully decided, and is a very difficult one to decide. In the first place, it is only the large companies which send their gold direct to the Mint, and it is said that they get thereby a somewhat higher return than they used to get from the banks. Taking, however, the general price of gold, there is nothing to show that it is higher now than before the Mint was established, but it seems to be admitted that there is an incidental gain to companies having to deal with a large quantity of gold. Experience in years gone by showed that there was no loss on sending gold from Victoria to the Sydney Mint, but where there is practically no cost of carriage, and no other charges such as insurance, there is said to be a small margin in favor of the Mint prices. The Deputy Master of the Melbourne Mint contends that the cost of the institution is defrayed in the benefits obtained in the exchanges, but we confess that on this point the evidence is not clear. At all events, no one now proposes to keep the gold in the country.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): I do.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: It is only one man's opinion.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: It is not a question of whether it is one man's opinion; we have to analyse the opinion and see whether there is any foundation for it or any logic in it. This writer does not give so much his opinion as facts. I read this article simply as an answer to my hon. friend, who said he desired to keep the gold in the country. I read it to show that if he kept the whole of the gold in the colony it would be of no value, and of no use to the miner or to anyone else. The only advantage of having gold is that it has a ready sale. Supposing we do keep the gold in the colony, what is the good of it except as a circulating medium? What good would it be if we kept it in the Mint or at the Banks? It would certainly be of no advantage. To put an extreme case—and that is the way of testing whether an argument is good or not—suppose all the gold were locked up: Would it not then be absolutely valueless? Should we not have a lot of gold, but nothing with which to buy bread and meat? I feel sure I need say nothing more to show the fallacy of my hon. friend's argument when he says keep the gold in the colony. If we want to keep the gold here, surely there is no occasion to dig and delve for it; let it remain where it is. My hon. friend also said—and I really could not help smiling when he said it—that if we had this Mint here it would act as a means of retaining people in the colony who owned gold.

I suppose if they could not get their gold out of the colony they would stop here and watch it. Exactly what is stated in this article is said here, when it was suggested in Victoria to put an export duty of £5 per oz. on gold, it was thought it would keep the metal in the colony, but it was soon seen that this would not do for the miners because they perceived that as the banks could not export it, it could not be exchanged for food and other necessities. It is absurd to suppose that the establishment of a Mint will keep people in the colony. If we wish to retain people here we must make the colony more healthy and more attractive. Let us remove the unhealthy conditions prevalent in the cities where the people chiefly reside.

THE HON. E. H. WITTENOOM: Is not that done with gold?

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: We must make the place healthy so that the successful miner and the capitalist will settle down among us. If the Government brought forward a proposition to make Perth and its suburbs more healthy and attractive, I should do my utmost to support it. What is the first thing to do to bring this about? Is it not to remove the present insanitary condition of things. I will suggest to my hon. friend if he desires to retain the people that he should take steps to induce the Government to at once begin a system of underground drainage.

THE HON. E. H. WITTENOOM: Is the hon. gentleman in order?

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I think so. I am only dealing with your argument as to keeping people in the colony.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton): I think the hon. member is in order. He is replying to you.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I will not pursue the subject further. What I desire to point out is that the establishment of a Mint will in no way induce people to settle in Western Australia, but on the other hand if the Government do desire to see successful miners and others become permanent settlers, there is a simple and easy means of bringing it about, and that is by making our city more attractive and healthy. Then my hon. friend said the Mint would be a grand advertisement, but he did not tell us how it would advertise us. The advertisements we require are those in London and Paris, for I do not know that many other Continental capitals know much about us. Even in these cities I

doubt whether one person in ten thousand of the general public will ever hear that we have established a Mint. At the present time it is hardly known in London that Victoria and New South Wales each possess a Mint. So far as Western Australia is concerned, perhaps the people, having learnt something about Coolgardie, have been induced to turn their attention slightly to Western Australia, but from my own experience—the experience of five years ago—the average person in London does not know Western Australia from South Australia, Victoria or Queensland. They know Australia, and, possibly, when in conversing with a person you said you came from Perth, you would be met with the answer, "Oh, that is in Queensland," or something to that effect. Again another person would ask you whether you know his friend Brown. You ask where he is, and are told, "In Sydney." When you reply that Sydney is two or three thousand miles from Perth, your friend seems somewhat surprised. I venture to repeat what I said before, that I do not believe one person in ten thousand knows there is a Mint in Victoria or New South Wales even at the present day, and if we establish a Mint here there will be the same result.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): It is because they keep the gold in the colony that people outside do not hear of them.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: The only way this Mint can advertise the colony is from the fact that sovereigns going abroad will be stamped with the design of the colony; but if my hon. friend's argument be correct, that the Mint will keep all the gold in the colony, there will be no sovereigns to go abroad to advertise us with. I will ask hon. members who handle sovereigns whether they take any notice of where they are minted. I have had two sovereigns in my pocket for some time, and I do not know where they were minted. As long as I can get a sovereign, it does not matter to me which Mint it comes from. I venture to say it will be no advertisement to the colony. The advertisement we require is to have some of our companies paying dividends. When the investing public see this they will be induced to buy shares, but the establishment of a Mint will not induce a single person to purchase a share. Companies such as the Great Boulder and Bayley's, which pay dividends, are what we require as an

advertisement. I venture to think that those who do consider the question will say, how foolish are the people of Western Australia when they are going to the expense of thousands of pounds to establish a Mint, simply because they will not be outdone by Victoria and New South Wales! My hon. friend said it would raise the price of shares—

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): I said it would help to do it.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: If it will help to inflate them beyond what they are worth it will have a bad effect. What we desire to see in the interests of the colony is that the shares shall keep at a fair value, and give a fair return on the investment. I think it is the bounden duty of this Council to see that no money is unnecessarily wasted. The hon. gentleman who introduced this Bill said that it had passed through the Lower House without amendment, or without a division being taken. No doubt when a Bill is debated in the other House and a close division takes place, it strengthens the hands of this House if it desires to throw the measure out; but, on the other hand, because the other House does not debate it, it does not follow that we shall pass it if we think it is in the interests of the community to reject it. In the other colonies we have seen Lower Houses pass Railway Bills almost unanimously, and the Upper Houses throw them out because they have come to the conclusion that they are not wanted for the benefit of the community. I think it is one of our duties—in fact it is our peculiar province—to look into matters such as this, and to see that no great public work is initiated unless it is for the benefit of the community generally. My hon. friend told us that the estimated cost of the building was £8,000. Will the hon. gentleman tell us whether that is his estimate, or the estimate of the Works Department?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENOOM): I will reply to you presently.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I only wanted to know, because I am arguing the matter; still, if the hon. gentleman does not wish to answer, I will not press it. He has told us that this £8,000 does not include the value of the land. He said the Government have plenty of land. I know we have been looking about for several years to find land for House of Parliament, a Supreme Court, and other buildings, and it has been found that there is a great absence of land. I regret to say that

this is the case, and I am sorry that the persons who laid out the city neglected to reserve sufficient areas for public purposes. The Government will find that they will have to invest a considerable sum for the purchase of land. My hon. friend says the cost of the building will be £8,000. If that is only the estimate of the Government, my experience tells me that the real amount, when the matter comes into the Public Works Department, will be about three times that sum. If this is the estimate of the unprofessional gentlemen who form the Cabinet, I know it will be considerably exceeded.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Perhaps you are judging from last year's Ministry.

HON. S. H. PARKER: That is quite true. I believe the majority in the Ministry are the same. If we take the additions to the Hospital, which is a comparatively small work, I believe the cost amounts to over £8,000.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): That has nothing to do with the Mint.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: It will be worse when you come to build a Mint, because the first object of the Public Works Department will be to erect a monument to themselves. There was a small addition recently to a building known as the Courthouse and Post Office, Albany. It was a very neat and plain building, and when it was added to one would have thought they would have adopted the same style. Instead of this, they put up a building of a totally distinct character, which makes the old building look like a barn or a stable. The new building provides little accommodation. It has a spiral stone staircase when a jarrah one would have done, and projections at the corners.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Is the hon. member in order in criticising all the buildings of the country?

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I am giving reasons why I do not take these figures to be anything like the correct cost of building the Mint.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Who said it was the estimate of the Works Department?

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I did not. I asked the hon. gentleman whether it was, and he refused to answer. If he will only listen he will see that I am only arguing by analogy to

show that this £8,000 is nothing like what the cost will be.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): You said it was the Works Department estimate.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I did not say so. I asked you, and you would not answer.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): You must not misquote me. I did not say it was the Works Department estimate. I only want to put the hon. gentleman right.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: It is always delightful to be set straight, especially if you have never been wrong. I never said this was an estimate of the Works Department. I said it was an estimate of an unprofessional Ministry, and I pointed out how little we could rely upon such estimates when we have to go to the Works Department to construct the buildings. If it required Sydney stone to make the additions to the Albany Courthouse, we shall want something more elaborate to make the Mint at Perth, and by analogy I say that the cost of the Mint will be far in excess of the amount it is proposed to place on the Estimates for it. We shall probably have to buy land, and we shall have an annual loss of £5,000 for years to come. Bearing in mind that we want new Parliament Houses, which are far more necessary than a Mint, and proper Courthouses, I say we should not agree to this Bill, which will not be for the benefit of the community generally. I therefore move, as an amendment, that it be read a second time this day six months.

Amendment not seconded.

Original question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

The Bill was then considered in Committee, agreed to without amendment, and reported.

AGENT-GENERAL BILL.

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

JUSTICES APPOINTMENT BILL.

This Bill was read from the Legislative Assembly and was read a first time.

SUPPLY BILL.

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

The Standing Orders were suspended.

SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. F. H. Wittenoom): I have to move that this Bill be read a second time. It is necessary for us to pass this measure to enable the Government to pay the salaries of officers and others which are due at the end of the present month.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

The Bill was considered in committee, agreed to without amendment, and reported.

THIRD READING.

The Bill was then read a third time and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House, at 6.10 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, 24th July, at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 23rd July, 1895.

Dredging Across Success and Parmelia Banks—Suppression of Chinese Gambling Dens—Bridge over Greenough River—Reserves for Noxious Trades—Coolgardie-Dundas Telegraph Line—Mount Eliza Park Board—Supply Bill: third reading—Justices Appointment Bill: third reading—Licensed Surveyors Bill—Municipal Institutions Bill—Message from His Excellency the Administrator; Loan Act 1891, Re-appropriation Bill: first reading—Order of Business—Customs Duties Repeal Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

DREDGING ACROSS SUCCESS AND PARMELIA BANKS.

Mr. SOLOMON, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier, whether, in view of the great inconvenience at present experienced by vessels taking in timber at Rockingham, owing to their not being able to load there to a greater draught than 16ft., the Government

would undertake to have the passages across the Success bank and Parmelia bank dredged to a depth of 20ft., which would avoid the long and expensive towage which sailing ships were obliged now to undertake to complete their loading in Gage Roads. If the present 18ft. channel across the Success bank were deepened, it would also greatly facilitate the landing of stock at Robb's Jetty.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied as follows:—The first cost of channel 20ft. deep, and say 300ft. wide, would be, I am informed, at least £35,000; but if a depth of 20ft. is necessary for navigation, the channel should be at least 25ft. deep, and the first cost, on that basis, is estimated to be £80,000. The first cost, however, would be probably but a very small element in the matter, as Sir John Coode's estimate of the least amount that could be expected to maintain a channel through each of these banks (in which the Engineer-in-Chief concurs) would be £8,000 per annum, making £16,000 per annum for the two; and this, capitalised at 4 per cent., would be equivalent to a first cost of £400,000. This is exclusive of the cost of the dredgers which would be required. With one dredge the 25ft. channel would take, so I am informed, ten years.

SUPPRESSION OF CHINESE GAMBLING DENS.

Mr. SIMPSON, for Mr. JAMES, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier,—

1. Whether the police had any instructions to suppress the Chinese gambling dens in Perth.

2. Whether any, and if so what, instructions had been given in connection with these places.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied, as follows:—

1. No serious complaints have been made to the police respecting Chinese gambling in Perth, consequently no special instructions have been given to the police in regard to the matter.

2. No instructions have been issued.

BRIDGE OVER GREENOUGH RIVER.

Mr. TRAYLEN, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works what steps had been taken towards the erection of the bridge over the Greenough River, near Walkaway School, for which the money was