

purpose of taking water to the top of Mt. Burgess. As I understand the scheme, it can only be carried out for the cost named provided the water can be taken to the top of Mount Burgess. Is there no further expense attached to the scheme?

AN HON. MEMBER: Nothing of the sort. For the amount named the water would be taken to the top of Mount Burgess.

MR. OLDHAM: Does the hon. gentleman mean to say that the Engineer is so foolish as to believe he can reticulate, pump water to the top of Mount Burgess, and then over 500 square miles of country, for 2½ millions of money?

AN HON. MEMBER: The Murchison people have their own supply.

MR. OLDHAM: I believe that is the proposal, and that is as far as it goes. Really the proposal is to supply the railways with the water, and is the country prepared to spend two and a-half millions of money? Just one word in conclusion. The hon. member for East Kimberley stated that it was necessary to prove that, in this colony, we had a very high tariff. Just allow me to remind the hon. gentleman of a very eminent authority on agriculture. The hon. member for Beverley stated before his constituents that the price of a sheep at Cossack was 6s., and the amount of duty on that particular sheep coming from another colony would be 2s. 6d. Upon a 50lb. sheep the amount would be 7s. 6d. [MR. SIMPSON: That is if it is dead.] I think you know what I am talking about in this matter. To show whether this tariff is high or not I just mention these facts. The duty on frozen meat is 1½d. per lb. The same thing applies with respect to the price of a bullock. According to the hon. member for Beverley, the price of a bullock is £4 17s. 6d., the duty on that bullock coming from another colony dead would be £5 7s. 6d., and yet we are asked by the hon. member for East Kimberley to believe we are not, in this country, subject to a very high tariff. Allow me to thank the House very sincerely for the kindness and consideration which it has shown me during the course of the few remarks I have made.

MR. RASON moved the adjournment of the debate.

Put and passed, and the debate adjourned until the next day.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved—"That the House, at its rising, do adjourn until 7:30 to-morrow evening."

Put and passed.

The House adjourned at 9:20 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. next day.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 19th August, 1897.

Report on Commonwealth Bill—Question: Loss of Colony's Revenue re Federation—Question: Expedition to Discover Remains of Explorers—Question: Hawking of Goods—Motions: Sessional Committees; Sitting Days of Council—Appointment of Chairman of Committees—Commonwealth Bill: Debate on General Principles—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at 7:30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

REPORT ON COMMONWEALTH BILL.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom), in laying on the table a report re the draft Commonwealth Bill, said: This report will afford hon. members a great deal of valuable information. It has been compiled by an actuary, and it shows the probable loss of revenue that will accrue to Western Australia for several years. It also contains an estimate by the actuary of the probable population for the next seven or eight years. I will not move that it be printed, as hon. members will no doubt like to have it here to refer to it.

QUESTION—LOSS OF COLONY'S REVENUE *RE* FEDERATION.

HON. F. T. CROWDER, in accordance with notice, asked the Minister of Mines: What will be the probable loss to Western Australia for the first five years, providing she joins with the other colonies in federation?

The MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) replied as follows:—

Years.	Total Loss.	Loss per head.
	£	£ s. d.
1897-8	13,920	0 1 8
1898-9	386,865	1 19 4
1899-1900	411,847	1 18 0½
1900-1901	433,975	1 16 9½
1901-1902	452,560	1 15 6½

QUESTION—EXPEDITION TO DISCOVER REMAINS OF EXPLORERS.

HON. F. T. CROWDER, in accordance with notice, asked the Minister of Mines, What was the cost to the Government of Western Australia in connection with their endeavours to discover the remains of Messrs. Jones and Wells.

The MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) replied: I am informed by the Lands Department that the expenditure to date amounts to £1,139 5s. 3d. It should, however, be remembered that a large amount of information, not previously possessed, concerning the physical features of about 23,000 square miles of country travelled by the rescue party has been acquired.

QUESTION—HAWKING OF GOODS.

HON. C. A. PIESSE, in accordance with notice, asked the Minister of Mines, Whether the attention of the Government had been drawn to the letters that had appeared in the newspapers *re* the hawkers' nuisance? And if so, what steps they contemplated taking to prevent it?

The MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) replied, That the attention of the Government had not been specially drawn to the letters referred to, but the matter was one to which the attention of the Government was being given.

MOTION—SESSIONAL COMMITTEES.

On motions by the MINISTER OF MINES, the following standing committees for the session were appointed:—

PRINTING COMMITTEE.—The President, the Hon. F. T. Crowder, and the mover.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE.—The President, Hon. J. W. Hackett, and the mover.

LIBRARY COMMITTEE.—The President, Hons. G. Randell, J. W. Hackett, H. Briggs, and the mover.

HOUSE COMMITTEE.—The President, Hon. F. T. Crowder, Hon. R. S. Haynes, and the mover.

SITTING DAYS OF COUNCIL.

The MINISTER OF MINES, in accordance with notice, moved: "That, unless otherwise ordered, the House do meet for the despatch of business on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays at 4.30 p.m., and shall sit until 6.30 p.m. if necessary, and, if requisite, from 7.30 p.m. onwards."

A short discussion ensued in regard to making the sitting days Wednesdays and Thursdays only, and an amendment to this effect was moved by the Hon. C. A. Piesse; but after an explanation by the Minister, the amendment was withdrawn and the motion agreed to.

APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES.

The MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom), without notice, moved: "That during the present session of the Council, the duties of Chairman of Committees be performed by the President, the Hon. Sir George Shenton." He said: It will be within the recollection, particularly of those members who have belonged to the House for some time past, that the President has always been good enough to take this position, and to carry out the onerous duties attaching to it. He has earned the thanks of the House from time to time, by saving hon. members the trouble and necessity of appointing a Chairman of Committees. He has cheerfully undertaken the duty each year, and I think I only voice the opinion of members of the House when I say that he has carried out the duties to our universal satisfaction. In these circumstances I have much pleasure in asking that the President be good enough to again facilitate the business of the House by taking up the position.

HON. S. J. HAYNES: I have much pleasure in seconding the motion, and

I take this opportunity, on behalf of my fellow members and myself, to welcome you, sir, back. We are all pleased to see you, and we all deeply sympathise with you in your sad bereavement.

Motion put and passed.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton): I may inform members I am only too happy to carry out the duties of Chairman of Committees, as I have done in previous sessions. I am much obliged to the Minister for his kind references to the way in which I have performed the duties in the past. I trust that during the coming session I shall give the same satisfaction that I have given in the past.

COMMONWEALTH BILL.

DEBATE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I have to move, in accordance with notice, "That, in accordance with Section 23 of the Australasian Federation Enabling Act, the Council do now resolve itself into a committee of the whole House to consider the Commonwealth Bill as drafted by the Convention sitting at Adelaide in the months of March and April last, and to suggest amendments to the said Bill." I think hon. members will be aware of the procedure it is proposed to take in connection with this Commonwealth Bill. It is not an ordinary Bill that comes in the usual way from the Legislative Assembly, but it is one that has been submitted for consideration for the purpose of making amendments, so that the delegates from Western Australia may be prepared, at the coming Convention to be held in Sydney, with the amendments which the Parliament of Western Australia desire. Perhaps I shall not be unduly taking up the time of the House if I attempt, to some extent, an explanation of the Bill and its leading features. Before I do so, I take it that the question of federation is one that hardly arises now. It has been, I think, definitely settled and admitted throughout the colonies; therefore, if any hon. member thinks that the time is not ripe for federation, or rather that the time is not ripe that we should be represented at this Convention, it would be wise to take the necessary steps to ascertain the opinion of the House at the earliest period.

From my knowledge of the members of the House and of their patriotic desire to push the colonies of Australia ahead, I feel certain they will not, at all events a majority of them will not, take such a course that will prevent this colony being represented at the Convention by delegates. That being so, I now address myself to the Bill. In moving the motion standing in my name I shall endeavour to try and make the matter a little clearer than it seems to be in the Bill itself. In doing so I recognise I am attempting a feat which very few men have been called upon to attempt. I look upon it as one of the hardest pieces of work which a man can be requested, at the present time, to undertake. You will agree with me that that is so, when you remember that nearly all the leading men of Australia, men of high education and high attainments, have endeavoured to solve the clauses of the Bill, and have not been successful in doing so. Therefore, hon. members must see how difficult it is for us to look into this Bill and to make amendments which will be acceptable for all parties. In addition to the difficulty of explaining a Bill of intricate clauses, I labour under the disadvantage of not having had the opportunity of being at the Convention of 1891 or the more recent Convention in South Australia. You will readily understand that any of the representatives who had attended both the Conventions would have the details of the Bill at their fingers' ends. They would have this advantage, which is a great advantage to all people in discussing a measure of this kind: they would know the intention of the clause, and when men understand the idea intended to be conveyed, it is more easy to explain it to others than when you have to acquire it from the phraseology and technicalities of a Bill. In the first place this is not a party measure, not a question in which the Government are interested in any way. Any member who votes for or supports an amendment will do it entirely on his own responsibility, and whatever he does must be accepted as his individually. The Government do not hold themselves responsible for the effects of any amendment, as all amendments will be decided by a majority of the members, and therefore the responsibility will be taken by the majority of those members who decide

whether the amendments should be carried or not. Last evening I mentioned some of the reasons why I thought it wise that we should be represented at the Convention, and perhaps it would be well to repeat a few of them. Having already taken part in the Convention of 1891 and all other Conventions; having also sent members regularly to the Federal Council; having passed the Federal Enabling Bill, which showed that we were in favour of our being represented at the Convention that is to be held; having also taken up a leading position, and having associated ourselves with the other colonies in the matter, I think it would be very unwise, at this stage, if we stayed from the further deliberations on the same subject. I think it behoves us now when we have carried matters to the stage we have, when we have brought them forward as far as a draft Bill to be submitted to Parliament for its amendment, that we should prepare our amendments and present them to the Convention. If these amendments do not meet with the approbation of the assembled members of the different colonies at that Convention, and if any compromise that is offered is of such a nature that we cannot accept it, we can say, at any rate, that we have done our duty, and we should have nothing to reproach ourselves with in the future on this score. We should be present at every meeting that has for its object the unification of the colonies. We all desire that, and, as I said last night, we have precedents for it of happy augury since. Wherever federation has been accomplished, the results have been most satisfactory. I instanced America, Canada, and Switzerland, none of which countries have receded from the position they have taken up and gone back to their original one. Therefore one would think that the last state of those countries cannot be worse than the first. It seems to me, therefore, to be distinctly our duty to be represented at the Convention, and to see how far measures can be arranged for our admission into the Commonwealth, and whether we can get such terms as would enable us to join the federation to advantage. Before going into the terms of the Bill, there is one amendment which I trust hon. members will support, and that is the intro-

duction of a clause recognising a Supreme Power. A very strong reference to this was made the other day by two deputations consisting of representatives from various denominations of this colony who waited upon me. They comprised, I think, representatives from 8 or 10 denominations, all of them reflective people, people who are endeavouring to do good to the colony. If only in deference to the large number whom these deputations represent, I think this subject should be favourably considered, and that a clause should be inserted recognising a Supreme Ruler. As you are doubtless aware, the general machinery of this Bill is based on the principles of the British constitution. That has evidently been taken as an example and followed out as far as it possibly could be. The Bill containing the constitution of the proposed Commonwealth of Australia makes provision, under the Queen, for two Houses of Parliament. One of these houses is to be called the Senate, and the other the House of Representatives. That comprises the parliament of the country, and I think it is almost on the same lines as the constitution of Great Britain. The Bill also provides for a Governor General, who will represent the Queen in the colonies, and will be paid a salary of £10,000, which, under no circumstances, during the time that he holds office, can be reduced. The seat of the government, before parliament provides otherwise, is to be at that city which is agreed upon by the majority of the Governors of the various colonies, and, in the event of there being an equality in the division, the Governor General is to have a casting vote.

AN HON. MEMBER: Let it be Fremantle.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): There are 8 clauses which practically comprise the constitution, and I expect that it will be necessary to have them adopted by the Imperial Parliament before they can become law. As I said before, there are to be two houses, the senate and the house of representatives. These two houses will represent in some degree, although on a far larger scale, the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly which we have here. It is proposed that this senate should represent State rights, so that the rights of every colony may be protected.

It is consequently proposed that each colony should send the same number of delegates to the senate, that they should have equal representation in the upper house, so that whatever may happen, however small the colony and however small the number of its population, the rights of that State will be protected by an equal representation in the senate. The house of representatives is to be elected on a population basis. A population basis is familiar to us all. When I am going through the clauses *seriatim* I will explain them more clearly, but I am now merely dealing with the machinery of the Bill and showing how it works. The qualification for an elector for the House of Representatives is exactly the same as the qualification for an elector of the Senate, and both of these qualifications are based on the qualification for an elector of what would be called the Legislative Assembly in any of the colonies. The qualification for a member of either of the Houses in the Commonwealth is also very light, and is practically the same as the qualification for a voter. I am trying to explain the provisions of the Bill as they now stand. I am not putting forward anything from an argumentative point of view, but am merely showing what is included in the Bill, so that when we go into committee we can debate it clause by clause. The bill provides that every member of the Commonwealth Parliament is to have a salary of £400 per annum. Part 5, chapter I, deals with the powers of Parliament. They are very numerous and include a very great number of questions. No doubt hon. members have gone through this bill carefully. You will observe that in clause 52 the legislative powers of the Parliament are dealt with. These are concurrent with the legislative powers of any State Legislature. These subjects are such that the State Legislature can deal with as well as the Federal Parliament; but there is a clause providing that if these clash at all, the State Legislature must give way in favour of the Parliament of the Commonwealth. Then we come to the serious question of dealing with the introduction of bills from one House to the other, and particularly those Bills in relation to money. Hon. members will see that the general principle which pervades this question is the same

as is connected with this House and the Assembly. The House of Representatives can introduce Bills, the main object of which is the expenditure of money or the imposition of taxation. But when such Bills are sent to the Senate, the Senate can only deal with them either by rejecting them or approving of them, or sending them back with suggestions, but not with amendments. It was argued very strongly, and a very close division took place on the subject, that the Senate should have the power of amending Bills, but that was lost by two or three or four votes.

AN HON. MEMBER: By two votes only.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (HON. E. H. WITTENDOOM): The Executive Government comes next, and this will be vested in the Governor-General, assisted by a Federal Executive Council of seven members. Of course, the first Executive Council will be appointed by the Governor-General; but a clause is inserted which says that in three months after the elections no person can hold a position as a Minister who has not been elected a member of Parliament. The sum of £12,000 has been set apart for the salaries of these seven Ministers until otherwise provided. Chapter three deals with the Federal judicature. This is one of the most satisfactory parts of the Bill. It provides that there shall be a High Court, consisting of a Chief Justice and not less than four judges, which shall decide all questions of appeal, with a very few exceptions, thus doing away with the appeal to the Privy Council. I admit that, if federation were to come off, this would be very advantageous. It would save the great expense that people labour under now by having to appeal to the Privy Council; and, moreover, I think that we should have the advantage of having an appeal to a court composed of men with a practical knowledge of the requirements of the colonies, whereas at the present moment the knowledge of colonial ways possessed by the gentlemen to whom appeals have now to be made can only be superficial at the best. The remuneration of those gentlemen who form this Federal High Court is to be fixed by Parliament, and one of their duties, among many others, is the dealing with questions with regard to the interpretation of the Commonwealth Act,

which shall be finally settled by them. It must be patent to every hon. member that this is a wise provision, that there should be a body which can decide on all matters affecting the Constitution of the country. This will prevent a repetition of those scenes that have occurred in Johannesburg, where conflicts have arisen as to the interpretation of powers. The Bill also provides that no judge can hold the position of Acting Governor-General. We then come to Chapter 4, dealing with "finance and trade." Clause 84 provides that "The Parliament shall have the sole power and authority, subject to the provisions of this Constitution, to impose Customs duties, to impose duties of Excise, and to grant bounties upon the production or export of goods. But this exclusive power shall not come into force until uniform duties of Customs have been imposed by the Parliament." A section governs this which provides that uniform duties must come into force within two years of the declaration of the Commonwealth. Clause 84 further provides that "Upon the imposition of uniform duties of Customs, all laws of the several States imposing duties of Customs or duties of Excise, and all such laws offering bounties upon the production or export of goods, shall cease to have effect." So that the Federal Parliament will take over all those matters in connection with the collection of taxes, and all imports, exports, and excise, and will control the question of bounties. Clause 84 further provides that "The control and collection of duties of Customs and Excise and the control of the payment of bounties shall nevertheless pass to the Executive Government of the Commonwealth, upon the establishment of the Commonwealth." It will also be noticed that any officers in connection with those duties, Customs or otherwise, who have their services dispensed with owing to the Commonwealth taking over those duties, will be entitled to have any bounties that may be coming to them, or any pension; and in the event of their services being still continued by the Commonwealth, at the end of their time, and on their retirement they shall still be entitled to their pension in the proportion which their services with the State bears to the whole term of their

service under the two different Governments. Accounts shall be kept of the moneys collected from each State. All the moneys collected from all sources by each State will be placed to the credit of that particular State, and the costs of collecting them will be charged against it, and any balance will be left to the credit of that particular State. But before that balance is returned a proportionate amount will be subtracted for the Government of the Commonwealth; that is, a proportionate amount, according to the number of the people. For instance, supposing that the cost of working this Commonwealth amounted to one million sterling. The population of Western Australia being about the 122nd part of the whole, therefore £46,000 would have to be deducted from any balance towards the working of the Commonwealth. Any balance remaining would be handed back to that particular State. This is to be done before the uniform duties are imposed. You will see in Clause 92 that "During the first five years after uniform duties of customs have been imposed the aggregate amount to be paid to the whole of the States for any year shall not be less than the aggregate amount returned to them during the year last before the imposition of such duties." That appears to govern the question. It is a sort of guarantee that at no time during the five years following the two years after the introduction of uniform duties, shall less be handed over to any particular State than was returned to that State in the year preceding the introduction of uniform duties. That seems a sort of guarantee. The following sub-sections in connection with Clause 92 are of a most intricate character, and I do not think I can do better than read to you the paper explaining them as they were explained by the Hon. Edmund Barton, M.L.C., in the Parliament of New South Wales. He found it necessary to reduce his views to writing, and to read them to the House. In order to make the matter quite clear and explicit, and to put it, no doubt, in very much better language and in a much clearer manner than I possibly could, I will read out these remarks. When you have heard them you will agree with me that Mr. Barton has simplified the question al-

most to a nutshell, and there will be no difficulty about understanding it afterwards. The Hon. Edmund Barton spoke as follows in concluding his remarks:

During the time which has to elapse from the establishment of the commonwealth until the uniform tariff is in force—a time which, as I have shown, is not to exceed two years—the federal government is to keep certain special books. Of these books, there is to be a set relating to each state, and they are to show—(a) The revenues collected in that state from customs and excise, and from services transferred from the state to the commonwealth; (b) the federal expenditure for that state in the collection of customs and excise, and in the services transferred from the state to the commonwealth; (c) the monthly balance in favour of that state. From this balance is to be deducted the share of the particular state in the federal expenditure in the exercise of the new or original powers which the constitution gives to the commonwealth. There is, of course, no reason why this share of the expenditure, relating, as it does, to powers which no state at the present time can exercise for itself, should not be calculated according to the number of the people of the particular state. It is, therefore, provided that this share shall be calculated according to numbers, and after its deduction from the surplus already mentioned, which the books show to be due to the state, the balance is to be paid to each state as the balances accrue, month by month. (Section 90.)

Such is the provision made for dealing with the financial relations of the states and the commonwealth up to the passing of the uniform tariff, and as the problem is comparatively simple, so the method proposed for its settlement appears to be simple enough.

But, of course, it is clear that a system of book-keeping of this kind, while tolerable enough during the period preceding uniform tariff legislation, could not be indefinitely prolonged. Upon the abolition of intercolonial customs, which occurs as soon as the federation has fixed its tariff, and system which necessitated a prolonged calculation of this kind would also necessitate an enquiry into the collection and receipt of revenues no longer derivable. The most important and most complex question attending federation is that which is involved in the question of the distribution amongst the states of the federal surplus arising under the uniform tariff law. In dealing with this question it was found necessary to provide for the keeping of certain books, but for one year only, and the books would be different from those I have described as relating to the period antecedent to the federal tariff. For the first year after the imposition of uniform duties of customs the books of the federal treasury are to show the total amount collected in each state from customs and excise; but certain duties not collected in a state are to be deemed to have been collected in it for the purpose of ascertaining its just proportion of customs and

excise revenue, and the following method is adopted:—The state importing dutiable goods for consumption is to be deemed to be entitled to and to have collected the duty upon them. This is, of course, plain enough where the goods are imported directly by sea, and are consumed in the colony importing them; but the difficulty to be dealt with is the case of importation into one state, let us say by sea, of dutiable goods not intended to be consumed in that state, but exported into another for consumption. In that case the state which imports such goods is not to be credited with the duty upon them. The duty passes in the books to that one of the two or more states into which the goods entered for consumption. Thus, merchandise subject to duty and imported during the first year of the uniform tariff into Victoria for consumption in New South Wales will not form the subject of any credit in favour of Victoria; but if during that year they enter New South Wales for consumption New South Wales will receive the credit of the federal duty chargeable upon them. This illustration applies of course to any two colonies. Where it is a question of excise the duty on goods made in one state and imported from it into another state for consumption is to be taken to have been collected in, and is to be credited to what may be called the consuming state. By this process the crediting of duty in each state is to be based upon the question whether the goods are to be consumed by its inhabitants or not. This process having been applied to the ascertainment of the proportionate customs and excise revenue to be credited to each state as if collected therein the total amount of customs and excise collected or estimated in any state for that year is to be repaid to that state after deducting the state's share of the total expenditure of the commonwealth. That deduction of expenditure is to be made in proportion to population, or as it is sometimes called upon a *per capita* basis. And when I speak of the total expenditure of the commonwealth for the purposes of this calculation, I mean the expenditure not provided for by other means of revenue, that is, for instance, the expenditure of the commonwealth upon a service so far as the revenue arising from that service fails to meet the expenditure. When this deduction of expenditure from revenue in respect of each state has taken place, the surplus is to be repaid monthly to each state.

Now the process which I have been describing applies to the first year, as I have already said, following the imposition of the uniform tariff; but for the purpose of dealing with this very difficult question, a five years' period is taken, that is to say, a period of five years including the first year thus provided for. Now, the first year is to be taken as the basis of the distribution of the surplus revenue during the remainder of the five years' period, but it is not the basis in the sense that the distribution is to be equal during the remainder of the period, but only in the sense that the first year's supply is the means of making the neces-

sary computation. And that year has been made the basis for the purpose of doing away with that very disagreeable and irritating necessity which would otherwise arise of keeping up a prolonged system of bookkeeping. At the end of the first year of the uniform tariff, the bookkeeping is done away with, and the calculation becomes a simple one. The process goes on in the following way:—The whole of the customs and excise revenue of the commonwealth during that first year is to be divided by the total population of the commonwealth. The result of this sum is the average collection of custom and excise from each person, and for the purposes of distribution the result of the sum—in other words, the average—is to be deemed to be the amount contributed by each person; but this is subject to some qualification. It is obvious that for some time at least the consumption of imported dutiable articles per head will be in some states much larger and in others diminished; but the operation of a uniform tariff will as time goes on be to lower the rate of consumption of imported dutiable articles in some states, and to raise it in others, and for this reason; the operation of any uniform tariff which may be passed in substitution for the half dozen diverse tariffs, now existing will be that in some colonies importations of such articles will increase, and in others they will diminish. The reason for this is that, as compared with pre-existing tariffs, the new tariff will or may be followed in some colonies by an expansion and in others by a reduction of their foreign trade. Where the uniform tariff is lighter than that previously in existence more dutiable articles will enter and be consumed; where the new tariff is heavier than the old one, it is to be expected that a certain degree of local production will grow up, and the consuming power of the particular colony will apply itself to the articles of local production as well as to those imported. In the one case, therefore, the rate of consumption, and therefore of contribution by way of duty, will increase; in the other case both will diminish. It will follow that as between any two colonies, say A and B, where A finds the federal tariff lighter than its own was, and B finds the federal tariff heavier than its own was, A will be each year paying more per head by way of customs revenue and B will be paying less per head by way of customs revenue; because A will be importing more and B less than they formerly did of the articles which are the subject of the duty. If we call Victoria A and New South Wales B for the mere purpose of this illustration we shall find that at the beginning of the five-year period Victoria would be contributing per head less by way of tariff revenue than New South Wales, and also that the expansion in the one case and the reduction in the other, to which I have adverted, would lead to the average contribution rising each year in Victoria and falling each year in New South Wales. Of course, it is plain that in its operation this process tends to bring the two populations nearer to an equality in their rate

of contributions to the revenue. Now, no one would dream of keeping open a set of books between all the states of the commonwealth for the period that might elapse until something like an equality of contribution per head is reached; and the convention, therefore, fixed the period of five years as one at the expiration of which it might reasonably be considered that an approximation to equality of contribution would be attained. Of course, the fixing of such a period is arbitrary, and so would be the fixing of any other period; and it must always be borne in mind that, in the interests of all concerned, it is desirable that the question of accountancy between the states should not be protracted any longer than is necessary. Well, then, as to this period of five years, the following provision is made for the purpose of operating during the four years following the first or basic year:—"In each of these four years a deduction in account or an increase is to be made in respect of each state. Where the first year shows that the amount credited to a state is in excess of the average amount of contribution per head, which I have mentioned, then this contribution to revenue that I have mentioned, is to be taken to diminish by one-fifth for each of the remaining four years. On the other hand, where the contribution of a state for the first year is under the average per head then its contribution to revenue is to be taken to increase by one-fifth for each of the remaining four years, and the sums ascertained by this procedure in the case of each state are to have deducted from them the average expenditure for commonwealth purposes of the population of that state per head, and the balance is to be the amount to be repaid in each of the four years to the state. (Section 92.) The provisions relating to the five-year period are safeguarded by a direction to which they are all subject. It is this: That in every year of the five the total amount to be paid or returned by the commonwealth to the states as a whole is not to be less than the total amount returned to them during the year immediately preceding the uniform tariff. There is still, however, during the fifth year one-fifth of increase or one-fifth of reduction as the case may be, to be dealt with. This residuum is met by providing that after the expiration of the five years from the imposition of the uniform tariff each state is to be deemed to contribute to the revenue an equal sum per head of its population, so that at the beginning of the sixth year the remaining one-fifth will disappear, and from that time the whole transaction reduces itself to a purely population basis, each state being deemed to contribute an equal sum per head, and each state contributing to the expenditure also an equal sum per head, and in the result the surplus of revenue over expenditure so arrived at is to be distributed month by month to each state on this population basis. (Section 93.)

That has made the matter so perfectly clear to hon. members that there is no

need for comment from me on the subject. I will only say now in regard to the States, that the States will continue to carry on as they do now except in regard to the matters transferred to the Commonwealth. The States will be able to legislate on any subject and their elections will go on in the same way as now. Having said so much, I will take a few clauses of the Bill, and endeavour to explain them and leave the rest to hon. members. The first clause I intend to propose an amendment in is Clause 1. I only gave notice of the amendment this evening; therefore it is not placed on the paper. The clause will then read, "Whereas the people of Western Australia acknowledging God as Ruler of the Supreme Universe," etc. Clause 3 speaks of the power to proclaim the Commonwealth of Australia, and Clause 4 says that it shall be called the Commonwealth of Australia. Each colony that joins in the federation shall be known as a State, that is provided by Clause 5, and Clause 6 provides for the repeal of the Federal Council. Clause 7 is of no particular moment, except the concluding part, which says "and the laws and treaties of the Commonwealth shall be in force on board of all British ships whose last port of clearance or whose port of destination is in the Commonwealth." The only remark I have to make on that is, supposing a sailing vessel cleared out from Western Australia to England, and a murder occurred on board one day before the vessel's arrival in England, the offender would be tried under the laws of this colony. For the sake of convenience the Bill is divided into chapters and parts, and the first chapter deals with the Parliament and is divided into five parts: The Parliament, General, the Senate, the House of Representatives, provisions relating to both Houses, and powers of the Parliament. Clause 1 says, "The legislative powers of the Commonwealth shall be vested in a Federal Parliament, which shall consist of the Queen, a Senate, and a House of Representatives, and which is hereinafter called 'the Parliament.'" Clause 3 states that the Governor General shall have a salary of £10,000 a year, and that it shall not be altered during his continuance in office.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The clause says, "Until the Parliament otherwise provides."

THE MINISTER OF MINES: Clause 4 provides that the Governor General may appoint a deputy, but under no circumstances will he be able to draw more than one salary. That means, in the event of the Governor General appointing a deputy who holds another position, the deputy shall not draw two salaries. Clause 7 provides for a yearly session of Parliament, and Clause 8 deals with the privileges of Parliament, which shall be, until otherwise decided, and other rules made, the same as the usages which prevail in the House of Commons. Now I come to a very important clause which deals with the Senate. It says, "The Senate shall be composed of six senators of each State, and each senator shall have one vote." This is the principle of equal representation in the Senate, and this will be the safeguard of the smaller States. The Bill provides that each colony or State shall have six senators; it is a most important matter, and if ever federation is accepted by this colony this is one of the conditions certain to be insisted upon. It is a principle which is fully recognised in other constitutions. In America there are two senators from each State; it is the same in Switzerland—I think they send two delegates from each canton there, without regard to size or population, so that in both these federations, which appear to be working successfully, this principle of equal representation exists. Sub-section 2 of Clause 9 says, "The senators shall be directly chosen by the people of the State as one electorate." I think hon. members, on reading this clause, will wonder how such a conservative clause got into the Bill. I do not think that such a system would work well. Supposing Western Australia was one electorate, hon. members would at once see the difficulty there would be of canvassing it. Such a system would be all in favour of those who were well known and had a long purse; therefore, I say, it is a conservative clause. The members of the Government and some others have been discussing the question, and it has been decided to submit an amendment to strike out the words "one electorate," and insert "as the Parliament of each State shall determine." We have looked up the Bill of 1891, and it states there that the Senate shall be

chosen by the legislators of each State and not by the people; but in this Bill it distinctly states that they shall be chosen by the people. That will remain; but the Parliament of the State should decide whether the State should be divided into constituencies for the purposes of the election, or in what way the senators shall be elected, always provided that they are elected by the people. We have a precedent for this in other countries, and we have also examples of other ways of election. In America the Senate is elected by the State legislatures; in Canada they have another system—it is a nominated Senate, nominated by the Governor-General and for life. In Switzerland the two delegates sent up from each canton are selected in such a way as is decided by the Government of each canton itself. We are following, to a large extent, the precedents set before us, only ours is a most liberal measure; and we think Parliament should determine how the senators should be elected by the people. They are to be elected for a term of six years. The Bill also provides for one man one vote. Clause 10 refers somewhat to sub-section 2 of Clause 9, because it governs the election of senators somewhat. The sub-section to Clause 10 provides that until a different method of election is decided upon, the method of conducting elections in the different States is to be followed. Clause 13 states that as soon as practicable after the Senate first meets, the senators of each State are to be divided into two sections by lot, and three of the senators are to go out at the end of three years, and the other section at the end of six years. Clause 14 provides that if a vacancy occurs in the Senate at any time, when there is not an election, if Parliament is sitting, the Houses of Parliament of the State sitting and voting together shall fill the vacancy. If Parliament is not sitting, the Governor-in-Council may appoint a person to fill the vacancy until the beginning of the next session of Parliament, or until an election. The qualifications of a senator shall be those of a member of the House of Representatives. The following clauses are unimportant until we come to Clause 23. You will see there it says "Questions arising in the Senate shall be determined by a majority of

"votes, and the President shall in all cases be entitled to a vote; and when the votes are equal the questions shall pass in the negative." The object of giving the President a vote will be readily seen. He would, of course, be one of the representatives of one of the States, and if his right to vote were taken away, the State he represented would be robbed of one vote. In Section 24, it is proposed to make a small amendment. After the word "numbers" it is intended to insert "subject to the provisions of Sub-section 2." Each State shall be entitled to five representatives in the House of Representatives. As I have already said, each State is to have six senators, neither more nor less. The House of Representatives will be the popular House. The number of senators for the six States would be 36, and it has been decided to have the House of Representatives twice the size of the Senate. To find out the quota, the number of the population of Australia must be divided by 72. The present population is about 4,000,000, which would give each colony a vote for every 50,000 people. Western Australia would be entitled to three representatives; but according to sub-section 3, each of the existing colonies of New South Wales, New Zealand, Queensland, Tasmania, Victoria, and Western Australia, and the Province of South Australia shall be entitled to five representatives at the least. Therefore, in spite of the quota being 50,000, we are bound to have five representatives. That will make the number of members a little more than 72; but that is a matter which will not be much grumbled at. The problem is a complicated one, and it is complicated a good deal by the necessity which arises of securing the smaller States from the tyranny of the larger States, which may occur. At the same time, we must give due weight and power to the population and wealth of the larger States. Where Western Australia would have five representatives, Victoria would have 20, I suppose. [A MEMBER: 22.] Unless we are safeguarded in the Senate, it would never do to allow our interests to be settled on a division in which there would be 20 to five. The Bill also says that if, after dividing the number of the people of a State by the quota, there remains a surplus greater than one half

of the quota, the State shall have one more representative. That is to say that if the population of a State was 176,000, as the 26,000 remaining, after dividing the total by 50,000, is more than half of the quota, the State would be entitled to another representative. Clause 29 provides that until Parliament otherwise provides, the Parliaments of the several States shall determine the electoral divisions and the number of members. Clause 30 says: "The qualification of electors of members of the House of Representatives shall be in each State that which is prescribed by the law of the State, as the qualifications of electors of the more numerous House of the Parliament of the State." The term, "more numerous House" simply means the Assembly. The lower house is designated by different titles in different colonies, and the term "more numerous House" is used so as to make it clear that the popular House is intended. Any one who is entitled to vote for a member for the Legislative Assembly in Western Australia will be entitled to vote for the House of Representatives of the Commonwealth. The end of Clause 30 says: "No elector who has at the establishment of the Commonwealth, or who afterwards acquires a right to vote at elections for the more numerous House of the Parliament of the State, shall, whilst the qualification continues, be prevented by any law of the Commonwealth from exercising such right at elections for the House of Representatives." That particularly applies to South Australia, where they have female franchise. The qualifications are that a member of the House of Representatives must be 21 years of age and be entitled to vote in some State at the election of members of the House of Representatives. A naturalised subject must have been naturalised five years before he can be elected, and natural-born subjects must have resided within the limits of the Commonwealth for three years before they can be elected. Clause 40 provides that the duration of the House of Representatives shall be three years, so that hon. members will see that there will be short Parliaments. Clause 44 is an interesting clause for the ambitious members of the House. It provides for an allowance of £400 a year. Clause 45

refers to a "public defaulter." I would like to know what a "public defaulter" means. I have been puzzling it over in my mind, and I cannot quite make out what it means. Clause 47 disqualifies contractors and persons interested in contracts from becoming members of the House, and a sub-section to this clause reads that "Any person being a member of the Senate or of the House of Representatives who, directly or indirectly, accepts or receives any fee or honorarium for work done or services rendered by him for or on behalf of the Commonwealth, whilst sitting as such member, shall thereupon vacate his place." So that if any hon. member desires to be an arbitrator for the Commonwealth, say over some land transaction, and takes a fee for his services, he forfeits his seat, and is liable, after disqualification, to a penalty of £100 for every day on which he sits. Clause 48 says, "No person being a member, or within six months of his ceasing to be a member, shall be qualified or permitted to accept or hold any office, the acceptance or holding of which would, under this section, render a person incapable of being chosen or of sitting as a member." The object I suppose is that any member who has been induced to vote in any particular way by the offer of an appointment, will have to go without that appointment for six months. The powers of the Parliament are dealt with in Clause 52. It is a very important section, and I can explain it to some extent by saying that although the Commonwealth Parliament has powers over its subjects, the States have power as well. If the legislation clashes, the Commonwealth Parliament would have its legislation carried out first. Clause 53 gives the Parliament exclusive powers over certain important matters which no doubt hon. members will study perfectly. Now we come to an important clause. It is Clause 54, and reads: "Proposed laws having for their main object the appropriation of any part of the public revenue or moneys, or the imposition of any tax or impost, shall originate in the House of Representatives." It has been pointed out that the words "main object" if left in will be a fertile source of disagreement between the two Houses. Whilst it is agreed

that the Senate should not introduce money Bills, or Bills imposing taxes, it is thought that the Senate should be allowed to introduce Bills of an important character, in which the imposition of a fee is necessary, but which will not be the main object of the Bill. These words "main object" are put in to allow this to be done. For instance, a Bill might be introduced dealing with timber cutting, in which a fee of half-a-crown might be imposed, and under this clause the Bill would be in order. I understand that one of the colonial legislatures in dealing with this Commonwealth Bill have eliminated these words. Clause 55 says very distinctly "The Senate shall have equal power with the House of Representatives in respect of all proposed laws, except laws imposing taxation and laws appropriating the necessary supplies for the ordinary annual services of the Government, which the Senate may affirm or reject, but may not amend. But the Senate may not amend any proposed law in such a manner as to increase any proposed charge or burden on the people." This clause hon. members will see is almost identical with the laws that govern the relations between this House and the House of Assembly. If the Assembly sent up to us a money Bill, we have no power except to reject or receive it. [A MEMBER: We should have.] That is a question that has been debated so often, but no agreement has ever been come to. We are not empowered under the Commonwealth Bill to amend a money Bill, but we can suggest amendments or omissions and send the Bill back, with these suggestions, for adoption or otherwise. That is exactly what the clause proposes. Clause 56 has to do with the recommendation of money votes. Clause 57 reads as follows:—"When a proposed Law passed by the Houses of the Parliament is presented to the Governor-General for the Queen's assent, he shall declare, according to his discretion, but subject to the provisions of this Constitution, either that he assents to it in the Queen's name, or that he withholds assent, or that he reserves the law for the Queen's pleasure to be made known. The Governor-General may return to the House of the Parliament in which it originated any proposed law so presented to him, and may transmit there-

with any amendments which he may recommend to be made in such law, and the Houses may deal with the proposed amendments as they think fit." That looks almost like an arbitrary measure, but it is a very usual one, and is in existence in this colony already. When a mistake has been unintentionally made by both Houses of Parliament, this clause enables it to be brought before the attention of the Government, who can return the Bill to Parliament in order that the necessary correction may be made. Otherwise the House would have no power to deal with it that session. In clause 58 the words "one year" should be inserted instead of the words "two years." Chapter 2 deals with the Executive Government. Clause 60 provides for the government of the Commonwealth by a Governor General and a Federal Executive Council composed of seven members, who will be appointed by the Governor General, and hold office by his will, much the same as we have at present. Clause 63 has a sub-section which reads as follows:—"After the first general election no Minister of State shall hold office for a longer period than three calendar months, unless he shall be or become a member of one of the Houses of the Parliament." It seems to me it has been considered that it might be possible that the Commonwealth Government might endeavour to have a Ministry composed partly, if not altogether, of officers who were not members of Parliament. Of course when the Government is first initiated it will be necessary for the Governor General to appoint persons not in Parliament, but this clause provides that three months after they must become members of Parliament or cease to hold their positions. The result of this provision will be that all Ministers and all members of this Federal Executive Council will be members of Parliament—that is the intention. In America the Executive is composed of members who have no seats in either House, and are not therefore responsible to Parliament. I have proposed that this clause be struck out, but it is open for further consideration. Clause 69 is an important one, which states that "On the establishment of the Commonwealth the control of the following Departments of the Public Ser-

"vice in each State shall become transferred to the Executive Government of the Commonwealth, that is to say Customs and Excise, Posts and Telegraphs, Military and Naval Defence, Ocean Beacons and Buoys, and Ocean Light-houses and Light-ships, Quarantine. The obligations of each State in respect of the Departments transferred shall thereupon be assumed by the Commonwealth."

HON. G. RANDELL: Will the Minister explain what "ocean lighthouses" are?

THE MINISTER OF MINES: I think the word "ocean" is improperly used. Clause 71 provides for a Judicial Court, which shall be composed of a Chief Justice and four other justices. The judges shall be appointed by the Governor General in Council. Clause 72 deals with the tenure of judges. Sub-section 3 provides that the judges "shall not be removed, except for misbehaviour or incapacity, and then only by the Governor General in Council, upon an address from both Houses of the Parliament in the same session praying for such removal." I understand that one of the Parliaments has omitted in sub-section 3 these words, "except for misbehaviour or incapacity, and then only by the Governor General in Council, upon an address from both Houses of the Parliament." It is considered that it would be very difficult to prove misbehaviour or incapacity. The justices of the High Court will have among other duties that of interpreting this Constitution, and no doubt they will do that in a very lucid way. Clause 74 provides that the High Court shall settle all appeals such as are now taken to the Privy Council. I think that would be very advantageous. The clause goes on to say that in all cases the judgment of the High Court shall be final and conclusive. Clause 75 is as follows: "No appeal shall be allowed to the Queen in Council from any Court of any State or from the High Court or any other Federal Court, except that the Queen may, in any matter in which the public interests of the Commonwealth, or of any State, or of any other part of Her dominions, are concerned, grant leave to appeal to the Queen in Council from the High Court." This does not apply to individuals.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That clause has been amended in Tasmania.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: Clause 80 states that no person holding any judicial office shall occupy the position of Governor-General. I presume this is put in there so that no judges, as heretofore, shall be called upon to take up those duties in addition to their own. The question of finance and trade is next dealt with. Clause 81 reads as follows: "All revenues, raised or received by the Executive Government of the Commonwealth, under the authority of this Constitution, shall form one Consolidated Revenue Fund to be appropriated for the Public Service of the Commonwealth in the manner and subject to the charges provided by this Constitution." Clause 84 is an important clause. It provides that the Commonwealth Parliament shall have sole power and authority over the Customs duties. There is also a provision in Clause 86 that all lands, buildings, and works, or anything taken over by the Commonwealth in connection with the transfer of these offices must be paid for at a fair valuation. Clause 88 provides that "Uniform duties of Customs shall be imposed within two years after the establishment of the Commonwealth." Clause 90 deals with the way in which the accounts are to be kept. Clause 91 it is proposed to strike out altogether as being a very unimportant clause, and it is considered by a good many to be inappropriate. Clause 92 it is proposed to amend by striking out all sub-sections and in the second line to strike out the word "aggregate," also in the second line the words "the whole of," and in the third line to strike out the word "aggregate," and in the fourth line to insert the words "each of." The clause as thus amended will read as follows: "During the first five years after uniform duties of customs have been imposed, the amount to be paid to the States for any year shall not be less than the amount returned to each of them during the year last before the imposition of such duties." That would be a guarantee at all events that we should have a certain amount—that we could not get less than the amount collected during the last year before the imposition of the duties by the Commonwealth. Clause 93 provides that

"After the expiration of five years from the imposition of uniform duties of customs, each State shall be deemed to contribute to the revenue an equal sum per head of its population, and all surplus revenue over the expenditure of the Commonwealth shall be distributed month by month among the several States in proportion to the numbers of their people as shown by the latest statistics of the Commonwealth." It is considered that, after that time, if the colony advances at the rate it is doing now, the production will be of such a nature that a great deal of the receipts from products will be done away with, and we can fairly receive our share under the population basis. Under any circumstances I do not think that any Convention would agree to anything different from that. Clause 98 provides that Parliament may take over the whole or a ratable proportion of the public debts of the States, and the chances are that if there were anything to come back from the returns collected from the different sources, if they took over a ratable proportion of the public debts, the interest required to pay them would swallow up the balance, so that it would not alter our position in any way.

THE HON. G. RANDELL: There seems to be an omission there, that of the words "with the consent of the State," which were inserted in the Bill of 1891.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: That matter will be settled by Parliament. It appears, as you say, that it would be compulsory if Parliament agreed to it. I should think myself that it would not be against our interests to have our debts taken over. Clause 99 provides that "All powers which at the establishment of the Commonwealth are vested in the Parliaments of the several Colonies and which are not by this Constitution exclusively vested in the Parliament of the Commonwealth, or withdrawn from the Parliaments of the several States, are reserved to, and shall remain vested in, the Parliaments of the States respectively." I now come to Clause 106. It may seem from this clause as if it were anticipated that charges would be made for executing the inspection laws of the State. I take it that it means that in case of fruit or stock coming into the State, an inspector is to see that it is healthy, and there will be

some charges for that. If anything was received over and above the expenses, it would be handed over to the Commonwealth. Clause 114 is a most important clause. It is proposed to do away with that clause and adopt those portions that exist in the Bill of 1891, so that it will read in this way: "Any of the existing colonies of (name the existing colonies which have not adopted the Constitution) may, upon adopting this Constitution, be admitted to the Commonwealth, and shall thereupon become and be a State of the Commonwealth." The meaning of that is that if this Convention agreed to a Constitution, this colony might at any time, by adopting that Constitution, become a member of the Commonwealth, and we should then know exactly what we were going to enter into. By the present clause remaining as it is now, it means that any colony joining the federation subsequent to the establishment of the Commonwealth, it will have to enter on such terms as the Commonwealth Parliament may see fit to impose. That Parliament might see fit to admit the smaller States on such terms as they would like, but on the other hand, it might not. I think I have dealt with Clauses 118 and 119. Clause 121 is an important clause, because it provides for the alteration of the Constitution. It says distinctly there that "the provisions of this Constitution shall not be altered except in the following manner: Any proposed law for the alteration thereof must be passed by an absolute majority of the Senate and of the House of Representatives, and shall thereupon be submitted in each State to the electors qualified to vote for the election of Members of the House of Representatives, not less than two nor more than six calendar months after the passage through both Houses of the proposed law. The vote shall be taken in such manner as the Parliament prescribes." I think those are all the clauses I can say anything about. I am afraid I have not been able to put the Bill before you in quite such a lucid manner as I should have liked to have done. I am pleased to be able to say that we have among us a hon. member who will, I think, be able to supplement what I have said, and to correct me where I have made any mistakes. I refer to the Hon. J. W. Hackett, who was one of the delegates to the last Convention, and is, I think, well posted

on this question. If any further information is required, he will be able to give it. When any difficulty occurs, the Hon. J. H. Taylor will also be able to help us. He attended the Convention, and will be able to contribute his share towards the elucidation of this important subject. I have now the honour to submit the motion standing in my name.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: Is the motion properly before the House? Under what rule of the House or under what Standing Order does it come? Is this a new Bill sent up from the Legislative Assembly, or is it introduced by the hon. Minister? Are we to discuss it and send it to the other chamber? It seems to me that we are taking time by the forelock. What is the use of discussing the question in this way until it has been sent to us by the Legislative Assembly. I understand that it is proposed to treat it as a Bill introduced into this House, read a first time, and then taken as a second reading. I do not know by what rule it should be so. I refer you to Rule 229 of the Standing Orders.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton): If the hon. member turns to Clause 23 of the Australasian Federation Enabling Act of 1896, he will find the following:—

As soon as convenient after a draft constitution has been prepared by the Convention, and has been received by the Governor, it should be submitted for consideration to each House of Parliament sitting in committee of the whole, and such amendments as may be desired by either House, together with the draft constitution, should be remitted to the Convention through one of the Western Australian representatives.

We are dealing with the matter under our special legislative powers. I may state for the information of hon. members that every hon. member has now a right to speak to the Bill. This is the time to discuss the Bill.

THE HON. R. S. HAYNES: I move the adjournment of the debate to the next sitting of the House.

Motion put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE MINISTER OF MINES: I move that the House at its rising adjourn to 4-30 to-morrow afternoon.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON: I would like to suggest 7-30 to-morrow evening.

Motion put and passed.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir G. Shenton): The Governor will be prepared to receive the Address-in-Reply at 4-30 p.m. to-morrow, immediately after prayers.

The Council adjourned at 9-15 p.m. until next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 19th August, 1897.

Question: Expenditure re Coolgardie Waterworks Scheme—Address-in-Reply: third day's debate—Government House Ballroom Expenditure: debate resumed and motion withdrawn—Adjournment.

The **SPEAKER** took the Chair at 7-30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—EXPENDITURE RE COOLGARDIE WATERWORKS SCHEME.

MR. ILLINGWORTH, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier what moneys had been expended (if any), or what contracts or agreements (if any) had been entered into in connection with the Coolgardie water scheme.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied:—The expenditure on the Coolgardie water supply scheme is £6,044, which has been chiefly in connection with surveys. No contracts have been entered into.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

THIRD DAY'S DEBATE.

Debate resumed on the motion (by Mr. Kingsmill) for the adoption of the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's opening Speech.