

school buildings erected would not be on the same extravagant scale as their railway stations.

Item agreed to.

Item 13.—“*Charges and Expenses of raising Loans, £25,000.*”

Agreed to.

Preamble and title:

Agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and report adopted.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at six minutes past 5 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th September, 1893.

East Perth Brickfields: Motion for Adjournment—Fremantle Water Supply Bill: third reading—Loan Bill, 1893: third reading—Chinese Immigration Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Legal Practitioners Bill: consideration of Legislative Council's amendments—Tariff Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

EAST PERTH BRICKFIELDS.

MOTION FOR ADJOURNMENT.

MR. CANNING: I wish to move the adjournment of the House to debate a matter of urgent importance; that is, the present condition of the old brickfields in the Eastern part of the city. Their condition, at present, is a danger to people going about after dark. The excavations are nearly full of water, and they are for the most part unprotected. A serious accident may occur there at any time. Moreover, their condition, at present, is a source of danger to the public health. When the hot weather sets in we shall have large pools of stagnant water, that

will drain away very slowly, and, whilst evaporating, disease might germinate there, and be carried all over the town. In any case, these brickfields, in their present condition, are a source of great inconvenience and discomfort to the residents of the neighbourhood, being a hot-bed for mosquitoes. But a graver reason for some action being taken in order to rectify the present state of things is the menace to the public health. If disease arose in that part of the town, the probability is it would spread all over the town. Although the origin of disease is somewhat obscure, it is generally conceded that stagnant water is one very serious source of disease. Moreover, the present appearance of this spot is a blot upon the appearance of the town. But that, perhaps, would not be considered a sufficient reason for incurring any considerable expense in filling up these excavations.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): What are the City Council about?

MR. CANNING: I am now drawing attention to a matter that concerns the whole community. If the City Council fails to do its duty, it is the duty of the Government to step in.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): No representations have been made to the Government on the subject by anybody.

MR. CANNING: There are general complaints ever since the brickfields have been deserted; and I think that immediate steps should be taken, firstly, to enclose the land with a sufficient fence, and to drain it, which, I suppose, would not be a very difficult matter—it must be on a somewhat higher level than the river. Probably the work of filling it up would be a more costly operation; but against that we may place the value of the land that would be made available for sale, and for building and other purposes. I think, having called attention to the matter, the Government might very fairly send some competent official from the Works Department to report upon it; and, if they take action forthwith, they will give general satisfaction to the people residing in that part of the city.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): It is not very long ago since the hon. member himself came with a deputation to the Government asking us to keep these very brickfields open; and the Government, at their request, kept them open

for six months. No representations have been made to us since they have been closed, by those who have the care of the city—the Municipal Council, or by the Local Board of Health—that these brickfields are unhealthy, and I very much question if they are. As for stagnant water creating disease, I am very much surprised, if that be so, that people are not poisoned every day, all over the colony. No doubt it would be a good thing if these holes were filled up, but I am not prepared to fill them up at the present moment. When we are approached on the subject by those who are responsible for the care of the city or the public health, we will be glad to listen to what they have to say, and to meet them as far as we can.

MR. CANNING: It is true I did introduce a deputation some time ago, and the object of the deputation was to induce the Government to keep the brickfields open a short time longer, before closing them. These brickfields had been in existence for something like 20 years, and the only reason for keeping them open a little longer was that it would be a great inconvenience to the building trade, and would throw a lot of people out of employment, if they were suddenly closed up. But some time has elapsed since then, and the fields, having been closed, now lie unprotected, a source of danger and a great nuisance.

MR. TRAYLEN: It would ill become me to speak slightly of any real danger to the health of the inhabitants of the city, but has the hon. member not made the case somewhat stronger than it is? He has referred, in the abstract, to stagnant water being a source of disease. But surely that depends upon the conditions. Stagnant water in a swamp is, no doubt, productive of malarial fever, but stagnant water in a clay pan is a very different thing; so that I do not think the case is so dangerous as has been represented by the hon. member. As for danger from accidents, because the place is unfenced, it has been in the same unprotected state in the past, and I have never heard of an accident there. At the same time, I hope that the Government will be in a position to protect the place with a fence, and get rid of these stagnant pools.

Question put and negatived.

FREMANTLE WATER SUPPLY BILL,

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

LOAN BILL, 1893.

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

CHINESE IMMIGRATION BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1.—“Repeal of certain sections of existing Acts”:

Put and passed.

Clause 2.—“Exemption of naturalised Chinese”:

Put and passed.

Clause 3.—“No labourer of the Chinese race shall be imported or brought into the colony under the provisions of the Imported Labour Registry Act, 1884, in contravention of any of the provisions of the principal Act”:

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), without comment, moved, as an amendment, that the following words be added at the end of the clause: “Nor shall any such labourer be imported or brought into the colony by any person of the Chinese race.”

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 4, 5, and 6:

Agreed to, without discussion.

New clause:

MR. RICHARDSON moved that the following new clause be added to the Bill: “The word ‘one,’ in the second line of the eighth section of the principal Act, is hereby repealed, and the word ‘two’ shall be read in lieu thereof.” The effect of this would be to allow two Chinamen instead of one to be introduced for every 500 tons of a vessel's tonnage.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he might suggest to the hon. member, in his own interest, he thought, that he should move to report progress, in order that the amended Imported Labour Registry Bill, which was about to be introduced, might be on the table. He thought the hon. member would be in a better position to deal with the question then.

MR. RICHARDSON thereupon moved that progress be reported, and leave asked to sit again.

Question put and passed.

Progress reported.

LEGAL PRACTITIONERS BILL.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

The House went into committee to consider the amendments made by the Legislative Council in this Bill. The amendments were as follows:—

"No. 1.—On page 6, Clause 15, sub-clause (d), line 7, between the words 'board' and 'his,' insert 'constituted by the Acts hereby repealed, or any of them.'"

"No. 2.—On page 6, Clause 15, add the following words to the end of the clause: 'and is admitted a practitioner within twelve months thereafter.'"

"No. 3.—On page 7, Clause 23, line 7, strike out the words 'the same penalty and process of attachment,' and insert 'in the same manner' in lieu thereof."

"No. 4.—On page 7, Clause 27, lines 1 and 2, strike out the words 'the last preceding section,' and insert 'this Act' in lieu thereof."

"No. 5.—On page 8, Clause 31, line 3, between the words 'act' and 'or,' insert '(unless such incapacity is caused by the practitioner being struck off the roll or suspended from practice).'"

Amendments Nos. 1 to 4 inclusive:

Put and passed.

MR. RICHARDSON, referring to the fifth amendment, said he understood that the effect of this amendment would be to limit a solicitor's right to fall back upon the usual scale of charges, instead of a contract price, in the event of that solicitor being struck off the roll or suspended from practice. He could not let the clause go again without expressing regret that the committee had not agreed to strike out the clause altogether. He believed it was a clause that was absolutely unknown in any other business arrangement—where a man entered into a contract to do a thing for a certain lump sum, that he should afterwards be allowed to fall back upon a higher scale of charges. A solicitor might only have done one-third of the work he agreed to do, and yet the charges for that one-third might exceed the contract price for the whole job.

MR. R. F. SHOLL thought the Legislative Council's amendment was an im-

provement to the Bill, so far as it went, but he was sorry the clause was not struck out when he moved it. It only showed how members were prepared to swallow any Bill, so long as it was introduced by the present Government.

Amendment agreed to.

Ordered—That a Message be transmitted to the Legislative Council, informing them that the Assembly had agreed to the amendments made by them in the Bill.

TARIFF BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Sir, in rising to move the second reading of this Bill, I may remind members that, at the end of last session, almost the last day of the session, a resolution was carried in this House asking the Government to appoint a Commission to deal with this matter of the amendment of the tariff. The Government opposed that motion. I do not think I happened to be in the House, myself, at the time, but my hon. friend the Attorney General opposed it, on the ground that it was undesirable that a Commission should be appointed, and that it would be better for the Government to deal with the question, thereby throwing the whole responsibility upon the Government. The House, however, on that occasion, did not agree with that, and the resolution was passed that a Commission be appointed to deal with the matter. The Government, acting in accordance with the wishes of the House, appointed a Commission; and, in appointing gentlemen to sit on that Commission, we were fortunate, I think, in securing men of considerable experience and ability, and who were well acquainted with the subject they had to deal with. The report of the Commission was received in due course by the Government, and we found ourselves in somewhat of a dilemma. A Commission, appointed at the desire of this House, by the Government, brought up certain recommendations, and we found ourselves in this position: we either had to agree with the recommendations of the Commission, and altogether sink our own views, or else we had to ignore, to some extent, the decision arrived at by the gentlemen appointed by the Government to deal with this very important question. In the end, we decided to almost follow

the conclusions arrived at by the Commission, and we started upon our work with a desire to alter as little as possible the conclusions they arrived at. I do not know whether this statement of mine will be coincided in by the members of the Commission, some of them being also members of this House; but we strove not to alter their recommendations when we could avoid it. The result of the deliberations of the Commission, as altered by the Government, is to be found in the Schedule attached to this Bill. I am sure that not only the Government but the colony at large will be grateful to these gentlemen who gave so much attention and went to so much trouble in dealing with this important question. They had a very difficult task—a very difficult task indeed—to perform, and a task which they knew well when they began it could not result in giving satisfaction to everyone. Everyone wants as much as he can get for himself, there is no doubt whatever. In reading the evidence of the witnesses, or in speaking on the subject with anyone, you will find that everyone has a desire to get as much as he can for the industry he represents or is connected with. It is therefore impossible that the result of the deliberations of any set of men, however able and however competent, could result in giving satisfaction to everyone. There is one point that we have to keep always before us in dealing with the tariff—and I am glad to say that the members of the Commission kept it before them—and that is to take care that the revenue of the colony is not seriously interfered with. The terms of the Commission appointing them, and also the exigencies of the position, required that to be kept steadily in view. While we are engaged in constructing public works and incurring large liabilities, everyone knows and feels that we must have revenue to meet those liabilities and to carry on the government of the country. If we take away that source of revenue which the Government derive through the Customs, the only alternative is that revenue must be provided from some other source. The Government must be provided with the necessary funds somehow. I do not think that anyone who goes through the schedules of this Bill will be able to say that it is either a Free Trade tariff or a Protection tariff. I

think everyone will admit that it is a revenue tariff, but with a good savouring of protection in many particulars. I can inform members that the duties proposed in the six schedules of the Bill, if they had been in force during last year, would not have resulted in any loss to the revenue, calculated on the basis of the existing tariff. On the contrary, there would have been a slight addition to the revenue. I am not in a position to say exactly how much, but, I think, from £10,000 to £20,000. Probably about £15,000 more revenue would have been derived last year if the proposed duties had then been in force, and if the same class of goods and the same quantities were imported. Members will notice that there is one important omission in the proposals of the Government, which was recommended by the Commission, and that is an excise duty upon colonial beer. The Government came to the conclusion that it was not an opportune time at present to deal with that matter, and that it would require a considerable amount of machinery and a big Act of Parliament in order to effectually deal with that question. Considering all the circumstances, and the position we are in at the present moment, Parliament having been already a considerable time in session, and also considering the difficulties surrounding the administration of excise duties, we decided we would not deal with the matter at the present time. Under the Constitution Act, as members are aware, it is not possible for anyone in this House to propose any addition to the duties that are named in the schedules of this Bill. No tax, no impost, or extra taxation can be dealt with in this House, under our Constitution Act, unless it is recommended to the House by a Message from the Governor. Therefore I can well understand that members feel themselves in a difficulty in dealing with this question, because, although they have power to reduce, they have no power to increase the duties mentioned in these schedules. I can only promise members this: that if there is a strong opinion expressed that there should be an increase upon any item in this Bill, the Government will carefully consider the matter. I will now proceed to deal with a few of the items contained in the schedules of the Bill, more particularly referring in the first place to those

items in respect of which the Government have not agreed to the recommendation of the Commission. I am glad to say, although there are some of them very important, still they are not very numerous. The first item is "Ale, Beer, and Stout, in wood," on which the Commission recommended a duty of 1s. 6d. per gallon. The Government have reduced that, and made it 1s. 3d. In regard to "Ale, Beer, and Stout, in bottles," the Commission recommended a duty of 2s. a gallon, and the Government have fixed it at 1s. 6d. In the late or existing tariff the duty was 1s. a gallon all round, and I think if we put 1s. 3d. upon ale and beer in wood, and 1s. 6d. upon bottled beer we are putting as big a duty as is reasonable at the present time. In the case of "Cement," the Commission proposed to reduce the duty to 1s., but the Government propose to leave it at 2s., which is the present duty. We see no reason why we should reduce the duty on cement. It may be said it will interfere with the building trade; but I do not see why those who build should not contribute to the revenue as well as other people. The next item I come to, as to which the Government have not been able to agree with the Commission, is a very important one, and that is "Flour." The Commission proposed a duty of 30s. per ton, whereas the Government recommend that it should only be 20s. per ton, the same as under the former tariff. Speaking for myself, I do not attach much importance to the proposed increase, as some members do. I do not think it matters very much whether the duty is 20s. or 30s.; it certainly would not matter much to the consumer, although I am aware that many people think it would. I find the increased duty of 10s. per ton recommended by the Commission would only amount to 1d. on eight loaves of bread. In my own establishment in Perth, I do not believe we eat eight loaves a week, and this increase would not be more than 1d. per week, so far as my own house is concerned. Still, there are many people who place a great deal of importance upon this extra duty, and they have to be considered—especially the Northern people, who have to buy the whole of their flour, and go to great expense in getting it up. We have to consider the wishes of these Northern people in the same way as we

consider the wishes of people in other parts of the colony. There seems to be a general impression abroad that the duty on this article, which is called the "staff of life," and which I believe is a very good thing—although personally I do not eat very much of it—should not be increased; and for that reason the Government have decided to leave the duty on flour at 20s., as it is at present. The next item is "Gram." The Commission proposed that the duty on gram should be reduced to 4d., whereas the Government think it may be left as it is, at 6d. "Maize," again; the Commission proposed to reduce the duty on maize from 6d. to 4d., but the Government see no reason for it. Then I come to "Pollard," the duty on which the Commission reduced from 20s. to 10s., but the Government think the duty might be fairly left as it is in the present tariff. We are always talking about encouraging the agriculturist, whom some people call the "backbone of the colony"—though others say not. For my part I think he deserves every consideration. He is engaged in hard and laborious work, and has a great many difficulties to contend with, in turning the wilderness into a cultivated place; and I have always, whenever I had an opportunity of dealing with the question, had my sympathies with the producer, who ought to be protected so far as we can. Therefore I think there is no good reason for reducing the duty on pollard from 20s. to 10s. In regard to the next item, "Spirits," the Government have adhered to the recommendations of the Commission, but have added the definition (omitted by the Commission) that it shall be proof spirits. Anything in addition should pay an extra duty. In regard to "Wool Bales," the Commission proposed a reduction from 4d. to 2d.; but the Government consider it better to leave the duty as it is. A wool bale holds a good deal of wool—£7 or £8 worth—and 4d. a bale is not such a large duty, and I do not see why we should reduce it to 2d.

MR. RICHARDSON: We wanted to put them on about the same footing as sacks.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I now come to the Second Schedule (5 per cent.); and here again we had to make a few alterations from the recommendations of the Commission. The first item is "Boards (planed, tongued, and

grooved)," which the Commission have put on the 5 per cent. list. I see no reason why these worked boards should come in at such a low rate; I would rather see them come in in the rough, and worked up in the colony. So we have put them on the 20 per cent. list, in the same category as "Architraves, Mouldings, and Skirting Boards." We have also removed "Books" from the 5 per cent. list to the free list, where they were before, and always have been, I believe. It seems to me we should encourage, in every way we can, the introduction of literature for the people of the colony.

MR. RICHARDSON: Can you keep out the rubbish?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I do not believe that a 5 per cent. duty would keep out rubbish. There is one very important matter we have done in connection with this schedule. We have removed from the 5 per cent. list, where the Commission had placed them, the following goods: "Calicoes," "Clothing, piece goods," "Cotton, piece goods," and "Textile, piece goods,"—these we have removed to the 10 per cent. list. This, I believe, will give rise to a certain amount of irritation to those who are engaged in the tailoring business in the colony. But I would point out that at present there is no difference whatever made between the raw material (as we may call them) and the made-up goods,—they both bear an *ad valorem* duty of $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; whereas, in the proposition of the Government, the raw material for working up in the colony only pays 10 per cent., while the made-up goods will have to pay 15 per cent. That was the recommendation of the Commission,—that "Apparel and Slops" should be introduced at 15 per cent. I have taken some trouble, in the short time at my disposal, to look into this matter, to see how it is dealt with in the other colonies, and whether any great difference is made between unmade goods and those that are made up. I find there is no difference whatever made in New South Wales, where both apparel and slops and these piece goods have to pay 10 per cent. There is no difference made in favour of the man who works up the piece goods in the colony. In Queensland and South Australia a difference of 10 per cent. is made between the unmade article and the made-up article. In Tas-

mania there is only a difference of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; while in Victoria, the most protective colony, having as much as from 40 to 50 per cent. duty upon this class of goods, the only difference made between the unmade article and that made up is from 5 to 10 per cent. I could not find out what the duty on calicoes is in Victoria, but in dealing with cloth piece goods and textile piece goods, the facts are as I have stated. If we were to follow the report of the Commission on all these goods—calicoes, clothing, piece goods, cotton piece goods, and textile piece goods—and place them on the 5 per cent. list, we would reduce them from the $12\frac{1}{2}$ per cent., where they are now, and the colony would lose between £6,000 and £7,000 a year.

MR. RICHARDSON: We made it up by the excise duty on beer.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I do not think we are in a position at the present time to lose between £6,000 and £7,000 a year under this head. Considering that, hitherto, the raw material and the made up article both had to bear the same duty, with no margin whatever in favour of the local manufacturer, I think, if we allow a margin of 5 per cent., we are at any rate doing something to assist those who make up clothes in the colony. I think I may say more, too. We must look at our circumstances as they are at present—though I hope they may be different some day; a great many of the poorer classes of people depend very much, if not entirely, upon the imported made-up goods for their children, as they get them very cheap. I think some time must elapse before we can get these slop goods for children, or even for men, made up here and sold at a price anything like so cheap as the imported article. The Government must always have their eyes on the Treasury chest in dealing with these matters, and I think we have gone as far as we can do in this direction, unless there is some other means found for raising this revenue. For my own part, I do not think it is advisable to allow all these goods to come in at as low a rate as proposed by the Commission. I now come to another matter not dealt with by the Commission at all; and, as I see there is on the Notice Paper a proposal by the hon. member for South Fremantle relating to the same subject—the duty on unmanufactured leaf tobacco—I will take this

opportunity of dealing with that article. I have no doubt that before the hon. member gave notice of his intention to move for a reduction in the duty on this article, which affects the revenue so largely, he looked into the question very carefully, otherwise he would not have moved in the direction he intends to move, being a business man, and a man who always thinks before he acts. But I must say that the data he has before him must be different altogether from what I have. I think if the hon. member had the information which I have, he would never have proposed to move in the direction he has; and I take it that when that information is given to him, and to this House, the hon. member will not proceed with his motion. I assure him that his proposal to reduce the duty on unmanufactured tobacco would never do. What are the figures? In 1890, when the tobacco factory was started at Fremantle, the duty upon manufactured tobacco imported into the colony amounted to £22,506, and the duty on the unmanufactured article was £408, making together the sum of £22,915. There was also a sum of £2,354 received in duty upon imported cigars, which made the total from tobacco and cigars during the year 1890 amount to £25,269. In the following year, 1891—which was the first year really that this factory was in full swing, for it could not have imported any unmanufactured tobacco before—the amount of duty received from the manufactured article fell from £22,506 to £15,882. On the other hand, the duty upon the unmanufactured article amounted to £9,890, or a total of £25,742. In the same year the duty received from cigars—people seem to have got a greater liking for cigars after the introduction of Responsible Government—amounted to £4,134; which brought up the total to £29,876. In 1892, although the population of the colony was increasing very largely—I think they must have all been non-smokers, or else all had taken to smoke cigars—the revenue received from manufactured tobacco fell to £15,702, as compared with £22,506 in 1890; while the duty on the unmanufactured leaf amounted to £7,589, making the total duty for tobacco during 1892 of £23,291, as against £25,742 in the previous year. There was an increase in cigars of about

£1,300, but the total revenue from tobacco during 1892, although the population had largely increased, was less than for 1891, by about £1,000. I investigated the matter with the Collector of Customs some time ago, as I could not make out how it was that, although our population, as I say, was increasing, and it was a good year for spending money, the total revenue received from the manufactured and unmanufactured article in 1892 was less than in 1891. After investigating the whole business as well as I could, with the assistance of the Collector of Customs, we came to the conclusion that, in 1891, the colony lost £5,680 in revenue through the establishment of this factory at Fremantle, and that in 1892 we lost £3,794; so that in two years the colony lost £9,474 through this factory. We took it that the leaf tobacco produced 11b. weight for weight with the manufactured article, and, if introduced as made tobacco, it would have paid 1s. higher rate. I think that £9,474 is a considerable amount for this colony to lose in two years upon one article. In the report of the Collector of Customs sent to me, writing on this subject, he says: "The accompanying table, showing the operation of the local tobacco factory upon the importation of manufactured leaf, shows that where the revenue has actually suffered is in the difference of duty between the manufactured and unmanufactured article, this difference, it may be observed, practically going from the 'Treasury chest into the manufacturers' pockets." A great deal has been said by members about encouraging native industries. I call it a native industry where the raw material is grown in the colony, and can be manufactured for use in the colony and for export. But where the raw material has all to be imported, purchased in another country, and the revenue of the colony sustains a large loss, I really cannot see that there is any advantage in having an industry of that kind. I make these observations so as to anticipate the motion of which the hon. member for South Fremantle has given notice, and in order that the hon. member may be in possession of the views of the Government on the subject, and be able to argue his case more forcibly when he is moving that the duty upon unmanufactured tobacco be reduced. In the Third

Schedule (10 per cent.) no great deviations have been made by the Government from the recommendation of the Commission. The principal alteration, probably, will be found in the item "Timber (sawn, rough or hewn)"—in other words, unworked timber—which the Commission placed on the 5 per cent. list, and which we have removed to the 10 per cent. list. The Government have dealt with the timber business in this way: timber in baulk, of any kind, introduced into the colony, we propose shall pay a duty of 5 per cent. The Commission, I believe, proposed that kauri pine should be admitted duty free; but I do not see why kauri pine should be admitted free any more than North American pine?

MR. RICHARDSON: It is used for boat-building.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): At any rate we see no reason why all imported timber should not pay the same duty. If the timber is unworked timber, that is, timber cut into slabs or planks, we propose to charge a duty of 10 per cent. upon it; and if it is worked up into furniture or anything else, we propose to charge a 20 per cent. duty. That is the proposal of the Government: timber in baulk, 5 per cent.; timber, 10 per cent.; and worked timber, 20 per cent. In doing that we think we shall be acting consistently throughout. In fixing the duty on baulk timber at 5 per cent., there is a margin of 5 per cent. in favour of those who may wish to cut it up into slabs or planks; and there is a margin of 15 per cent. if they like to work that timber up. We hope by that means to encourage local manufacture. In the item, "Wheels for Carts, Carriages, and Wagons," the Government propose to make a difference between carriage wheels and cart or wagon wheels. The Commission have included all wheels in the 20 per cent. list, but we propose to remove carriages to the 10 per cent. list. They are almost all imported, and very few are made in the colony, and for that reason we do not think they should bear too high a duty, seeing that it would confer little or no benefit upon local manufacturers. But with regard to cart and wagon wheels, we propose to leave a duty of 20 per cent. on these, as recommended by the Commission, because they can be made, and are made, in the colony. Then

I come to the Fourth Schedule (15 per cent.), which is an important one, being the schedule that covers all articles that are not otherwise enumerated. Here again there are very few alterations in the proposals of the Commission. The first item altered is "Tanks," which the Government have removed to the 10 per cent. list. The next is "Plated Ware," which we have put on the 15 per cent. list. We have done so for this reason: everyone uses platedware now-a-days. The old steel fork is altogether out of date, and everyone uses the plated article in these days. The Government have inserted in this 15 per cent. schedule the following item: "Printed, lithographed, or otherwise mechanically produced Forms, Circulars, and Prospectuses," which we think can be very well produced in the colony. Those are the only changes we have made in the 15 per cent. Schedule. In the Fifth Schedule (20 per cent.) we have made one very important alteration, and that is in regard to the item "Perambulators." The Commission proposed a duty of 20 per cent. on perambulators. [MR. RICHARDSON: Because they obstruct the footpaths.] The Government think that is too much, and we propose to reduce it to 10 per cent. The only other schedule I have to refer to is the Free List. We have added "Books, printed, for reading," to this list; the Commission proposed a duty of 5 per cent. on them. We have also put "Copybooks and Slates for Schools" on the free list; and "Printing Paper," which the Commission had placed on the 5 per cent. list; it was on the free list before, and we see no reason why it should be removed. With regard to "Immigrants' Tools and Effects," the Commission increased the value that could be admitted free of duty from £10 to £100. We think that is too high a jump, and we propose to make it £50, which we consider a reasonable amount to admit duty free. I am afraid that if we left it at £100 it would lead to attempts to evade the Customs, and I think that for all practical purposes a £50 limit will be found to answer satisfactorily. We have also inserted in the free list "Specie, Bullion, and Coin;" also "Stones and Slates for Municipalities," which were formerly on the free list. We have also included "Uniforms, Defence Forces," in this list. They are imported on behalf of

the Government, and therefore come in free of duty, as they did before. Even uniforms for Government officials were admitted free before, but the Government do not propose that now, but only uniforms for members of the Defence Forces. All other kind of uniforms will have to pay. As I have already said, we have struck out "Kauri pine" from the free list, and put it on the 5 per cent. "Poultry" we have also struck out, and put on the 10 per cent. list; and "Sheathing" we have removed to the 5 per cent. Schedule. I have now gone through all the items that have occurred to me, where the Government have made any changes in the proposals of the Commission. When we go into committee, members will have an opportunity of discussing every single item, and dealing with it separately. I feel somewhat in an awkward position in dealing with this tariff, because, as I have already said, it is not our tariff; it is not a tariff which the Government have brought in of their own accord. It is a tariff which has been compiled by a Commission appointed by this House, and which the Government have merely adopted and altered in a few particulars. We, perhaps, did not feel so much attached to it as if it were our own child. I say that, not because I am not thoroughly thankful to the Commission for their great labour, but because I do not think it is quite the right way of dealing with the question. We have done the best we could in the circumstances. We have availed ourselves of the knowledge and experience of the Commission, and we have also brought to bear on the subject any knowledge we have ourselves as members of the Government. I can only say, in conclusion, that if there is any strong expression of opinion on the part of the House that the duty on any item should be raised, I will not make any promise as to what action the Government may take, beyond this: that we shall give it our very grave and careful consideration. I beg to move the second reading.

MR. RICHARDSON: As my hon. friend the Chairman of the Commission that was appointed to inquire into this tariff does not seem very anxious to rush into the breach, perhaps it is only fitting that some member of the Commission should deal, to some extent, with the

alterations which the Government, in their wisdom, have introduced, and with some of the arguments of the Premier in their defence. No doubt the Government will take in all good part any criticism that members may make with reference to their alterations. The Premier told us, on behalf of the Government, that this tariff is not their own child, but a child of their adoption, and that, therefore, they were not so much attached to it. Perhaps the members of the Commission feel that it is their offspring, and, therefore, feel a little more concerned about its limbs being mutilated in the way they have been. It does appear to me that the Government, in interfering with this offspring of the Commission, have subjected it to a treatment which can be described by no other term than absolute mutilation. It does not appear to me that the alterations made have been made upon any principle at all. It looks more like tinkering with it than anything else. Whatever might be said about the tariff being a bastard one, and being neither a protective tariff nor a free trade tariff, there is this to be said: that the Commission had a tariff already before them to deal with, and that tariff was, to a certain extent, a protective tariff, and our instructions were that we must not interfere with the revenue, and we had to keep that fact strongly before us. I do not mean to say that many members of the Commission would have been in favour of an absolute protective tariff. It must be borne in mind that an absolute protective duty slates the revenue, and were told not to interfere with the revenue. Therefore the Commission decided they could not entertain anything in the nature of an absolutely protective tariff; and there is no duty in this revised tariff beyond 20 per cent., which was the maximum of the old tariff. The Commission took another line in favour of encouraging local industries, and that was, to make such a difference as they could between the imported article and the raw material—that is to say, to reduce the duty on the raw material required by the local manufacturer, so as to leave him a fair margin to work upon. I mean to say that—so far as you can go; I do not mean to say you can go very far—but, so far as you can go, I mean to say that it is a preferable way of doing

it, and for this reason: it does not increase the cost to the consumer, while at the same time it is giving very valuable help to the manufacturer. Furthermore, there is this to be said: the Commission kept largely in view that very important consideration, the cost of living to the community. It must be remembered that to a married man, living on wages, and bringing up a family, and in whose households certain articles are largely consumed, it is a very important matter indeed that those articles—consistently with the revenue being kept up—should be made as cheap as possible. And it will be found, in the recommendations of the Commission, that a great many of those articles were brought into the 5 per cent. list, and, where specific duties were levied, a great slice of the duty was struck off. I may further say that, in order to adjust the revenue, we proposed to make up any deficiency caused by this reduction in the duties upon the necessities of life from other sources, and one source was a little increased duty on beer and spirits and an excise duty on beer. We proposed to ease off the duties upon the daily requirements of families, and to make it up to the revenue by increasing the duties upon articles of luxury, such as champagne, beer, and spirits, which can well afford to pay a high duty without pressing upon the general community. But the Government have completely capsize that principle, and left the recommendation of the Commission utterly stranded, without any sound or consistent principle running through them at all. We have some difficulty in arriving at the reason why the Government should have been so very tender and timid about an excise duty on colonial beer. We cannot divine the reason. Possibly there may be something beyond our ken, and which we cannot get at. I do not think it is sufficient to say that there would be a difficulty in levying the duty. There is another thing: if we had attempted to increase the duty on imported beer, and, on the other hand, levying no excise duty on the colonial article, we would have been playing straight into the pockets of the local brewers. I maintain it is an absolute necessity, as a matter of justice, that we should keep the balance by the imposition of an excise duty. The Government have split the difference by not

placing such a high duty on imported beer as the Commission recommended, and leaving out the excise duty altogether. It is no compromise at all, because whatever extra duty they put on the imported article must go into the pockets of the local brewers. The Commission, from the evidence we had before us, were satisfied that the local brewers were prepared to accept an excise duty; in fact, we had an admission from one of the witnesses that an excise duty of 2d. a gallon would not be received with any great amount of antagonism or opposition, provided the duty on the imported article was increased. Therefore, I cannot help expressing regret that the Government did not preserve intact that portion of the recommendations of the Commission, because I maintain it would have resulted in maintaining the balance of the revenue, and enable us at the same time to reduce the duties upon the necessities of life. We will allow that the Government have accepted our recommendation as regards the reduction on the sugar duty—a recommendation which had a double-barrelled application; because sugar may be said to be one of the necessities of life, and at the same time the reduction encourages the production of some of our local industries, and particularly the preserving of our fruits. We believe, or say, that we are going to be a large fruit-producing country. I think, myself, it will be a disgrace to us in future years if we import anything in the shape of bottled fruits or jams. Hitherto it has been a great hindrance to the development of that industry, this duty on sugar. Then I come to another necessity of life—kerosene. The duty at present is absolutely absurd, being about 100 per cent. on the first cost of the article where it is produced.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): It is very cheap now.

MR. RICHARDSON: It is not cheap compared with the price it is bought at in the countries where it is produced. There is another unanswerable argument for reducing the duty upon kerosene, and that is: it is a useful motive power; and there is no place in the country that does not use it largely. This is the point that we insist upon: when we have a Commission recommending changes the net result of which would not only have produced no

loss in the revenue but absolutely increased it, I maintain that the Government (I will almost say) had no right to interfere in the reductions that were so largely desired.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Who desired them?

MR. RICHARDSON: The whole community. Surely the community desire to live as cheap as they can.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): Why did you put an increased duty on flour then?

MR. RICHARDSON: Personally, I would prefer it to be off; but we had the interests of all parts of the community to consider, and not one section. We felt there is a large farming interest which is entitled to some consideration, and so we proposed a slight increase in that particular article. But it cannot fairly be said that it is likely to be much felt by the consuming community. Then, again, there are all these reductions which the Commission proposed in piece goods, calicoes, and other textiles, which are so largely used in every family, and which would have encouraged the making up of these things in the colony. The duty on these we brought down to 5 per cent., but the Government, in their wisdom, have doubled it. Then there is cement, which we reduced to 1s., but which the Government have made 2s. I maintain that we ought, as far as possible, to encourage the building trade. We want people to build houses, and to build them well.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Plenty of good lime.

MR. RICHARDSON: That does not serve the purpose of cement.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We cannot stand all these reductions; that is the reason. You put it all on beer.

MR. RICHARDSON: Not all on beer, but other luxuries as well. Then we come to agricultural produce. The Premier argued on one side when talking about flour, but on a different side when talking about pollard. Why we reduced the duty a little on bran and pollard was because they are most valuable and necessary articles required in the production of butter and other dairy purposes. Oats, again: the Commission reduced the duty to 3d., but the Government

put it back to 4d. The Premier, when arguing against the increase of duty on flour, said we must consider the claims of our Northern people. Of course we must. But surely, if we have no right to put on any duties that are against the interests of the Northern community, we had a right to consider them when we came to deal with what is the chief fodder for their horses, namely, oats and bran. Yet the Premier will not allow them a little concession of 1d. a bushel on their oats. If there is one agricultural product that cannot be successfully produced in this country, as against importations, it is oats. Our climate is not suitable, and the Commission thought, as they were increasing the duty on flour, they would make it up a little to the Northern people by reducing the duty on oats and bran. The Premier has made some allusion to wool bales, which he thought could stand a duty of 4d. The Commission considered this point when dealing with bags and sacks, a very important item for the agricultural community. We thought it desirable to have bags and sacks put on the 5 per cent. list, and, to keep up some sort of consistency, to reduce the duty on wool bales, in the interests of the pastoral community. As we proposed it, the duty would have been about the same on both. Then there is copper sheathing, which we put on the free list, but upon which the Government propose to charge 5 per cent. I think if there is one local industry we want to keep up it is the boat-building trade. We particularly recommended that kauri pine should also be put on the free list, to encourage this industry. It was in evidence before us that the duty on this wood militated very seriously against the success of our boat-building industry. Our builders find it impossible to compete with the Singapore builders, for the want of some soft wood suitable for boat-building; and an instance was quoted where boats had gone away to Singapore and even to New Zealand to be repaired, because they could be done cheaper there than here, because our builders are handicapped with the duty on this kauri pine, which seems to be the favourite wood for this purpose. So we thought that in the interests of boat-building, and to prevent the trade running away from Fremantle, we would let it in free. But

the Government have put it back, and, in doing so, have done a lot of injury to a deserving industry. In fact, our 5 per cent. list has been the most seriously mutilated of the lot. Then again, we come to explosives. These also we put on the 5 per cent. list; but the Government have removed them to the 10 per cent. Yet, what is there that is more universally used in our mining industry than explosives? Glass in sheets, again, they have put back to the 10 per cent. list, whereas the Commission had included it in the 5 per cent. The same with other articles. Grates, stoves, etc., we put on the 5 per cent. list, but the Government have removed them to the 10 per cent. schedule. Timber, of all kinds, unworked,—that was another item we wished to see inserted in the 5 per cent. schedule, whereas the Government intend imposing a 10 per cent. duty. The Commission reduced all these things with the view of helping desirable industries; but the Government, in their wisdom, put them all back on the 10 per cent. list. We maintain that, on the score of revenue, there is no necessity for it.

THE PREMIER: Only because of the beer duty.

MR. RICHARDSON: I am at a loss to know why that, of all other things, should be regarded with such tender regard by the Government. There is another thing: the Government were not in a position to deal with the tariff as the members of the Commission were; they had not the evidence before them that we had. If we had compiled our tariff right off the reel, without any evidence to guide us, we might have made as much a hash of it as the Government. I am not referring to the printed evidence so much as evidence of a conversational nature which the Government had not before them. Therefore, I say they were not in as good a position as the Commission were to settle these points. There is only one more matter that I will deal with, and that is immigrants' kits. We threshed that question out very carefully. At first we had the maximum at £50, as the Government propose to have it; but we thought it was desirable to give every encouragement and every assistance to all good settlers coming here and bringing their tools, or their implements, their bag and baggage, with the view of settling down

in the colony. We thought we would not be going far astray if we allowed them a margin of £100 which they could get admitted free of duty. We thought we would not pounce upon them the moment they reached our shores, and mulct them in heavy duties upon their kits. We looked at New Zealand—the colony of all others, perhaps, which seeks to encourage immigration of the right stamp—and we found that in that colony the maximum is £100; and we thought we could not do better than follow their example. We thought we could trust to the vigilance of the Collector of Customs who, we know, is a very vigilant officer, to see that the revenue was not imposed upon; and I believe our confidence would not have been misplaced. If the privilege is not likely to be abused with the maximum at £50, I do not see that it is more likely to be abused if we raise it to £100. I maintain that, altogether, however good their intentions may have been—and no doubt they were quite as good and quite as sincere as our intentions were—but I believe they were very misguided; and that the alterations they have made, so far from improving the recommendations of the Commission, go a long way to mar them, and interfere seriously with their efficacy, so far as doing good to the country is concerned.

At eighteen minutes past 6 o'clock **MR. SPEAKER** left the chair.

At 7:30 p.m. **MR. SPEAKER** resumed the chair.

MR. MONGER: While I do not intend to oppose this Bill, I see very little in it to congratulate the Government upon. I have taken some trouble to examine the report of the Commission which was appointed by the Government to inquire into the supposed anomalies of the old tariff; and while I consider the thanks of this House and the country are due to those gentlemen for the careful way in which they appear to have considered the various questions at issue, I must say I am not entirely in accord with their recommendations. It is well known that there is no more difficult question to deal with than that of the tariff. We naturally expect that the banking and other commercial institutions, which are interested in any alteration of the tariff,

should make a point of placing their views before such a Commission, and should also be allowed an opportunity of being heard in evidence; and I am somewhat surprised that those bodies, which are supposed to represent commercial interests, and especially the Chambers of Commerce in Perth and Fremantle, have not, up to the present time, made known their views on this very important question. It is a shame that, in a city like Perth, there is no better institution of that kind; and, as for Fremantle, the commercial men there appear to have left this question entirely in the hands of the body known as the Chamber of Manufactures, and no doubt that body has given its views to the Tariff Commission. Yet the Chambers of Commerce have not thought fit to take the slightest notice of this very important question, while it was before the Commission. In referring to the items in the Bill, I will deal only with the more important changes, and the items which will make the most difference in the revenue. I cannot but smile at the first item on the proposed new tariff—the duty on ale, beer, and stout, in wood and bottle. I do not intend to figure as the champion of the working man's beer; but it appears that, in increasing the duty on these beverages, we are taxing the working man somewhat unnecessarily. If such a difference was considered advisable, and according to the recommendations of the Commission, we should have gone about the increase in a genuine sort of way, by imposing an Excise duty as recommended by the Commission. The duty as it now stands will affect two or three local breweries; and I do not think it is in the interest of the country that, for the sake of protecting two or three local breweries, the working men and the public generally should have an unnecessary tax put on their beer. As to the interests of those concerned in breweries, I am a shareholder myself, but after hearing the arguments of others who have larger interests in them than I have, and their complaint of the proposed duty on malt, I came here this evening intending to support any reduction that may be proposed in this new tariff. Their contention is that, owing to the proposed increase in the duty on malt, the brewers will be taxed heavily.

I cannot see how they arrive at that conclusion. They are protected sufficiently, and yet they want protection all round, while giving to the public as little as possible. They admit that the reduction in sugar will be a small benefit to them, yet they have a grievance against the malt duty. For my part, I would like to see the duty on bottled beer reduced, or see an excise duty put on locally manufactured beer, as recommended by the Commission. The next important item in the First Schedule is boots, and I must compliment the hon. member for North Fremantle (Mr. Pearse), who sits on the Government side and is largely interested in this trade, upon having induced the Commission to recommend, and the Government to carry out, the sole object that hon. gentleman had in view. I should not object to this so much if the Government had been more consistent in fixing the duties upon leather. If this Bill becomes law, we will be placed in this position, that on a pair of 5s. blucher boots the working man will have to pay a duty of 1s. 6d., as compared with 7½d. under the old tariff, and that used to be considered an ample protection to local makers of boots. Even if cheaper boots were imported, and there are cheaper boots, the duty would still be 1s. 6d. per pair. But, on the other hand, in the case of the leather which has to be imported for the making up of these cheap boots, we do not see a similar increase in this tariff. The old rate was 12½ per cent., and it is now to be raised only to 15 per cent., on the recommendation of the Commission, and accepted by the Government; but, in the case of common boots, the increase of duty is nearly three times the previous amount. This large difference seems to be inconsistent with the object the Commission and the Government have in view. The next item to which I take exception is the duty on tinned meats. The mining community, an important section, have to depend solely on tinned meats during many months in the year as a means of subsistence. The Bill proposes to increase the duty from 7d. per dozen of 2-lb. tins to 3s. per dozen. I would not object to this heavy tax if we were in a position to supply tinned meats as a local industry; but we are not, and many years must elapse before we shall be

in a position to supply the local demand for meat in tins. I am surprised that a Government, which always pleads its intention to assist the mining industry and those people who are compelled to spend long periods in the bush, are now proposing to tax tinned meats at such a heavy rate as this.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): You must put some duty on tinned meats, and not admit them free.

MR. MONGER: The Premier's argument is altogether different. We have the fresh meat in the colony, but it is impossible for us to form an establishment for tinning meats. The Government do not accept the recommendation of this Commission, but make an increase in the duty. I am sorry the Government have not given us some reason for this course. However, in committee I shall propose a reduction of this duty.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Reduce salt meat also, then.

MR. MONGER: There is no comparison between the two cases. The next important item is one in which I am somewhat interested, and that is flour. The Commission recommended an increase of 10s. per ton upon flour. The Government—I presume in their wisdom—have taken no notice of that recommendation, but have allowed the item to remain as before, at £1 per ton. In asking the Government to place a higher duty on one of the most necessary articles of life, I may hear from some hon. members the old cry of "taxing the poor man's loaf;" but to me it does not seem to be anything of the sort. I feel confident that a further duty of 10s. per ton on flour would not increase the price of the poor man's, or the rich man's, loaf.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): What about the poor miner you mentioned just now?

MR. MONGER: The miner is not, as a rule, supplied with bread from imported flour. The few persons who would be affected by an increase in the duty on flour would be those who own stations in the North; but, as one who is interested in that direction almost as much as any other hon. member, I would suffer equally with them; yet I consider that, in the interest of agriculture, it is absolutely necessary that further protection should be given to the farmer by increasing the

duty on imported flour. I would like to read a few lines from an extract which appeared in the *Mark Lane Express* of the 27th March last, about the price of flour going down, yet the price of bread remaining unaltered. The passage is as follows:—

A market report such as this would seem remarkable, yet it is a literally true statement of relative prices in the thriving little town of York, Western Australia. Last year at this time wheat was worth 5s. to 5s. 6d. per bushel, and best roller flour £14 to £14 10s. per ton. Wheat is now 3s. 6d. to 3s. 8d., flour £10, and bread unaltered! York has the advantage of a fine newly-erected mill, full of the latest and best appliances for producing the best flour, which mill has to compete with similar flour dumped down from Adelaide and Melbourne at small cost for freight, and subject to a comparatively trifling revenue duty. We see the result of good harvests in the eastern colonies in the shape of a 30 per cent. reduction in the price of breadstuffs, yet the selling price of bread remains as before, with three bakers in this little town! Is there in this anything like taxing the food of the people?

That is an extract from a letter which appeared in a London trade newspaper, and the same remark that applied to York, in that case, would apply also to Perth, Fremantle, and other towns. Notwithstanding the reduction in the price of flour, only recently the bakers in these towns did not think it necessary to reduce the price of bread; and it seems strange to me that anyone can argue that by placing a higher duty on flour, we would be unnecessarily taxing the working man. It was not my intention to refer to the duties on tobacco, but after the remarks of the Premier, I think it necessary, in the interest of a large manufacturing industry, to explain to the House the exact position which that industry occupies. The Premier informed us that during the years 1891 and 1892 it was estimated that there was a loss to the revenue, through the starting of this manufactory, of about £9,400, and he gave us an idea of the way in which he arrived at those figures. But the Premier did not take into consideration the good which an industry such as this does to the country, in other directions.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I put that against the £9,000.

MR. MONGER: It has to be remembered that when, some three or four years ago, the head of that manufacturing firm

visited Western Australia, there was a duty of 1s. per pound on imported leaf tobacco, and a duty of 3s. per pound on the manufactured article; also that before he began the erection of a tobacco factory in Fremantle, he interviewed the head of the Government in office at the time, and I believe he also interviewed one gentleman who at present holds a position in the Government, and received from them an assurance that no further duty would be placed on the leaf tobacco for at least two or three years.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) : Who had power to promise that ?

MR. MONGER : It was greatly on the strength of those promises that something like £17,000 was brought to this colony and invested in buildings for the purpose of manufacturing tobacco at Fremantle. Shortly after the industry got into full swing the Government, without the slightest warning—and I do not blame them for not giving warning—raised the duty on imported leaf tobacco from 1s. to 2s. a pound. The Government do not appear to have considered the circumstances under which this firm had been partly induced to invest this large amount of capital, nor do they appear to have considered the position as regards the other colonies. In New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland the tobacco leaf is grown locally; the only colonies which do not grow tobacco being South Australia and Western Australia. The duty on the manufactured article in South Australia is 2s. 9d. per pound, and on leaf tobacco 1s. 7½d., or a difference of 1s. 1½d. between the made and the unmade article. In this colony the Government and Parliament have thought fit to make a distinction of only 1s. per pound between the made and unmade article. I assume that the politicians who introduced the tobacco duty in the South Australian Parliament were as conversant with the business as were the members of our Government when they proposed the alteration of the tobacco duty; so that if, in South Australia, it is necessary that there should be a difference of 1s. 1½d. between the made and unmade article, I really think that we in this colony will not be granting too great a concession to the new industry if we make the duty the amount which will be proposed by the hon. member for South

Fremantle. That will meet the difficulty, if there is to be any loss of revenue, by giving to the unmanufactured article a greater difference than exists at present. The treatment which this firm has received from the Government of this colony is likely to retard other firms from coming here to invest, and while the members of the Government are always advocating the increase of population and capital, they, on the other hand, place some fresh obstacle in the way of those capitalists who do come here, as soon as operations are commenced. I appeal to hon. members to say whether the treatment of this firm has been fair. I have it from the manager of that firm, that if the Government think they are making such a big amount of money, he will be only too pleased to submit to the consideration of Ministers a copy of the balance-sheet of that firm, showing exactly what profits are made, in the present position of the business.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) : We know the Government are losing. I don't know what the manufacturers are making.

MR. MONGER : I say that if the Government are losing, let them increase the duty on the manufactured article. I can show, in Perth, samples of the tobacco which is imported into this colony, and which has to be sent to this firm to clean before it is saleable. That is the sort of stuff we have to smoke at the present time. This inferior stuff, which is produced by negro labour in America, comes here in a damaged condition, and is placed in competition with our own manufactures; and I say it is the duty of the Government to assist in building up what must be a very valuable industry in the future, and this can be done by placing a heavier duty on imported tobacco. I notice that the Government have been good enough to propose a reduction of £2 per ton in the duty on sugar, and a reduction of 1d. per pound on tea. No doubt they thought these reductions would be an assistance to the community at large; but I should like to point out that they never made a bigger mistake, if they think such reduction will have any appreciable effect. It will not be the consumer who will reap this benefit; it will be the retailer or the importer. The man who buys one or two pounds of tea or sugar at a time will

not get any benefit in price from the reduction of duty. These were two items which the Commission and the Government would have done better to leave as before, as they produce a considerable revenue to the Government. To tax beer, and reduce the duties on tea and sugar, was a mistake; and if it were competent for a member to propose an increase, nothing would give me greater pleasure than to move that the duties on tea and sugar should remain at the higher rates, as before. I repeat that these reductions will be of no advantage to the retail consumer, and will simply increase the profits of the importer and retailer. No doubt the petition which has been presented by the Master Tailors' and Foremen's Association has been seen by every member of this House, and I certainly think that some of the remarks in it call for the consideration of hon. members. I was surprised to see on the free list the item of "Uniforms and appointments for Defence Forces" imported into the colony; and I certainly think that if any gentleman wishes to import anything in the shape of uniforms for the game of playing at soldiers, the least he can do is to pay some duty, because such articles can be made in the colony, and any such industry should be assisted by the tariff. The petition refers to piece and woollen goods, on which the Commission recommended a duty of only 5 per cent., but which the Government—again in their greater wisdom—have thought fit to increase to 10 per cent. I think this higher duty will throw an obstacle in the way of making up our own clothing, and we should carefully consider that. As to the last part of the petition, a request is made for a 20 per cent. duty, instead of 15, to be put on slop clothing; but I really think this is carrying protection too far. If, with a 15 per cent. duty, a person can buy anything in the shape of slop clothing at a cheaper rate than local tailors can make them, we would be giving a sufficient protection with a 15 per cent. duty. I have always advocated protection, and in doing so I have met with the support of the constituency which sent me here. I contend that in the new tariff sufficient support is not given to our local manufactures, and to the agricultural interests of the colony, these being the main indus-

tries of Western Australia; and I say that anything operating to the advantage of these industries should have received every consideration at the hands of the Commission and of the Government. I regret that the Government have not duly considered all the facts in connection with these industries, for carrying out the wishes of the people; but I hope that, before the Bill has gone through its various stages, it will be so altered in committee as to render that assistance which the public consider necessary to these valuable industries.

MR. QUINLAN: I take it that, on the second reading, the object of discussion is to elicit the opinions of members on the question generally. The Premier referred at some length to the item of beer, and I may say, as one having some knowledge of the brewing industry, that it is true, as has been stated, that the brewery companies have not objected to an excise duty on local beer, provided the duty on imported beer is increased proportionately. The Government appear to have had in view the necessity of appointing an excise officer for carrying out this portion of the Bill, and have therefore adopted the wiser course of not imposing an excise duty, and not increasing the duty on imported beer to the amount recommended by the Commission, but only to 1s. 3d. a gallon for beer in bulk. As to the protection this increase will give to those interested in local breweries, I would like to point out that the duty on malting barley has been increased from 4d. to 6d. a bushel; and notwithstanding that the duty on sugar is reduced from £4 to £2 per ton, yet the duty on malt has been raised from 2s. to 3s. a bushel. I know that one brewery company, with only a small capital, will have to pay £300 a year more in duty on malt; so that the additional duty to be paid by a company having a capital of £75,000, and employing many hands, must be very large indeed. I mention these facts to show what the breweries will have to pay, through the imposition of such an outrageous duty as 3s. a bushel on malt. A medium increase of 6d. a bushel, instead of 1s., would have been a sufficient encouragement to our farmers, without becoming oppressive to others. In reference to flour, the principal article of food, I think the duty of

£1 per ton proposed by the Government is ample. I know this will not satisfy wheat growers and millers generally, but considering the enormous quantity of flour used in the colony, I think the duty of £1 a ton, with cost of freight and other charges added, should be a sufficient protection, and if farmers cannot grow wheat profitably with that amount of protection, they should grow something else. I would like to have seen the duty on bran and pollard increased, as a compensation to growers and millers for not getting a higher duty on flour. With respect to clothing, and the petition from the tailors, I have always held the opinion that made-up goods should be taxed more than is proposed in this Bill. It is true there is a slight increase in the Bill, but I say it is not a sufficient protection on locally-made clothing, and I should like to see such protection given to the tailoring industry as would provide a large amount of employment for the boys and girls who are growing up, and who would be better employed in this industry than in some other kinds of work for which they are less fitted. I refer particularly to the printing trade, and the female labour employed in it. I am pleased that the hon. member for York mentioned the high duty on tinned meats, and I shall be one to move for a reduction, as we are taxed sufficiently in the Stock Tax. I will refer also to cheese, as one of the chief articles of food in this colony, and, having a knowledge of the provision business, I know the large amount of cheese that is imported and consumed. I do not believe there is half a ton of cheese produced annually in this colony; therefore, as cheese must be imported, the increase of duty is excessive and I shall move for a reduction. I say that rather than tax the necessaries of life, put duties on anything else that will bear taxation. Every member of the community knows how costly is living in this colony, and we should not make it more so. As to the increase on boots, I have made it my business to obtain some information, and have heard many opinions to the effect that the proposed increase will not be a sufficient protection. The tanning industry is also an important one, and I find that the oil used in tanning, which was formerly admitted free, is to be taxed

under this Bill; and I hope that in committee this item will be put in the free list, because of the enormous number of hides produced in this colony. I am prepared to say there is an over-supply of hides, and not a sufficient local demand, in consequence of the large amount of leather that is introduced in the colony. Tea and sugar are among the chief articles of consumption, and I must differ from the hon. member for York in his objection to the reductions proposed in the Bill. There is this objection, that persons who purchase a first-class tea, retail, have to pay only the same duty per pound as the buyers of the cheapest tea; but the reduction of duty will help in inducing people to use tea in preference to beer, and I would like to see the duty reduced another penny per pound. The reduction on sugar will also be beneficial, especially to the jam-making and confectionery industries. I am glad to support the increased duty on spirits and wine, and the effect may be to change the threepenny "nobbler" to sixpence a glass. I think the duty on wine should be heavy, as wine is becoming a local product, and a heavy duty would largely promote this local industry. I am aware that vineyards and wine-making are largely represented in the Legislature, and I hope that if the duty on imported beer is to be further increased, that on wine will also be increased.

MR. PIESSE: Referring to the Premier's opening speech, and some criticisms on the action of the Government in reference to the recommendations of the Commission, I would like to say that, before condemning the Government for having brought in this Bill, we should remember that pressure was brought to bear on the Government, and a resolution in favour of amending the tariff was carried in this House. The thanks of the House are due to the members of the Tariff Commission, for the manner in which they have carried out their duties. Their report has met with general approval, as to the ability shown in it, but exception must be taken to many of the changes which they recommend. My long connection with mercantile pursuits enables me to understand the importance of the subject of tariff changes. As to beer, I say let the working man have it as cheaply and as good in quality as possible. The items I intend to deal with are those I

know something about. The first is in the First Schedule: "Essences, being spirituous compounds, 16s. per gallon." This high specific duty on essences and oils will play into the hands of the chemists, and I shall propose amendments in committee. With regard to preserved beef, a specific duty of 1½d. a pound is put on, equal to 3s. per dozen of 2lb. tins; and I agree with the suggestion that this article should be admitted at 10 to 15 per cent. *ad valorem*, as preserved beef must be largely used in places far from the seaboard, and can be carried more easily than the ordinary salt beef. I do not wish to pander to the desires of the miner, who is treated very well already; for we voted £40,000 last year for the development of the goldfields, and we also provide railways and water supply and everything for the miners' convenience, and we may be asked, in the end, to let him have everything free. No doubt the State is paying more towards the mining industry than to anything else; but our goldfields are attracting a large population, and the miners may lift the colony out of despair into prosperity. While I do not despise the miner, I hope his success is not going to be built up at the expense of those who have had to work hard within the colony, in the past. With regard to tea, the reduction of 1d. per pound in the duty is a mistake, as the reduction will be no advantage whatever to the retail consumer. As one who has a thorough knowledge of business, I say the consumer will not obtain the slightest advantage. The wholesale man may benefit, but the retail buyer will not, and the price to him will remain the same as before. How are you going to split up the penny? It will not work. With regard to sugar, the reduction may help things along, but I am doubtful about that also, for the reduction means only a farthing per pound. I would prefer to see the sugar duty remain at £4 per ton, and allow to the manufacturer who uses sugar a drawback of £2 or £3 a ton. The station-owners will benefit by the reduction, because they buy wholesale, but the retail consumers will not benefit. With regard to the duty on tobacco, I regret that I was not in the House when the increase was made, as I thought, at the time, that it was unfair to the new

factory at Fremantle. That industry has been an immense advantage to the town of Fremantle and the colony generally. All credit is due to the firm for the excellent productions, which are turned out in a marketable form, and meet with a ready sale, so that the imported tobacco is fast being beaten out of the colony. Much of the cheap tobacco imported is not worth the duty of 3s. a pound charged on it. As to the duty on spirits of wine, this is an article that enters largely into manufactures, and ought to be admitted on a system of drawback, as I suggested in the case of sugar. Although spirits of wine have been used to fortify or build up inferior brands of spirits, yet a good deal of it is used for other purposes than building up bad spirits. Something must be done to introduce it for the purpose of certain manufactures; for, if we do not introduce it, and at the same time provide for infringements which are likely to occur, we shall damage a great many industries that have grown up. I notice that bedsteads, which formerly were in the 20 per cent. schedule, are now placed in the 5 per cent. schedule, and I think this is a step in the right direction. For years past people have been imposed on to a monstrous extent, and this change will meet with approval among the public. As to belting, although all machinery is to be admitted at 5 per cent., still belting is not included as machinery, although it is largely used with machinery. I shall ask, in committee, to have belting included with machinery, and to be defined more explicitly, so as not to be left to the discretion of a Customs officer. Timber for cases and boxes not made up should come in free, for we must have suitable packages in which to send away our various exports, and there is no timber in the colony suitable. Fruit packing for export will soon be necessary. Matchboarding: this is used everywhere, especially by farmers and settlers in pioneer districts, and it ought to be admitted at 5 per cent. instead of 15. The Commission recommended 5 per cent. Slop clothing are put in the 15 per cent. list, and although the tailors have made out a strong case for protection, yet I cannot see why slops should be taxed so highly as 15 per cent. Large quantities are imported, and although the cheap stuff may be rubbish, yet you cannot

expect a working man with small wages to pay £3 or £4 for a suit of clothes made up by a local tailor. If he can obtain a slop suit for 35s., that price is quite enough for his means. Lime-juice is in the 20 per cent. list; but how are you going to help the local man who manufactures lime-juice cordials? What he wants is the pure lime-juice, and I say it ought to be admitted at a cheaper rate, so that made-up rubbish may not be sent here to poison people. One-half the stuff that does come into the country is manufactured to sell; and I know more about these things than I know about beer. I know that in making lime-juice and other cordials, if the pure materials are taxed up to 20 per cent., cheaper substitutes will be used. The Commission did not understand these details when they recommended 20 per cent. on lime-juice. Tarpaulins are put in the 20 per cent. list, and by doing so you will give all the profit to the man who makes up the tarpaulins. Wheat: we have £35,000 invested in roller flour mills, in this colony, and there are about nine mills; we know the agricultural industry is extending daily; and I say we should help it by giving protection to the farmer and miller to the extent of 10s. a ton more duty on imported flour. The Premier said this increase would be equal to 1d. more for every eight loaves taken by a family. If the Northern settlers will only give the local millers a trial, I do not see why the local demand should not be fully supplied from the colony's produce. Last year I imported 10,000 bags of wheat from South Australia, and the result in milling was far below that of the West Australian wheat; for we took 4lbs. to 5lbs. of waste from a South Australian bag, as compared with only 2lbs. of waste from local wheat. We have also to pay 6d. a bushel duty on wheat for milling, and yet the duty on imported flour is only £1 a ton. To obtain a ton of flour we have to pay £1 5s. for wheat. I say that when there is a scarcity of wheat in the colony, the imported wheat should come in, and the millers who import it for grinding should be allowed a drawback on it. Why should not I come here, as a representative of the milling industry, and say I want this concession of a drawback for my industry? What I do ask is that hon. members will help for-

ward a deserving industry. The pioneer settlers who have to occupy new districts and develop our lands must have strong nerves, and a good heart, and a fixed determination to succeed; and they have none of the advantages of life which are enjoyed by the people in towns; they have not even the social advantages which some miners have. The agriculturists deserve every encouragement, for it is they who are going to turn our forest lands into cultivated homesteads, and to change the face of the country; and if you do not help them in a kindly way, you will throw them back for years; but, with all that, the agriculturist will rise like the phoenix from its ashes. It is no use talking of party interests. We should sink all these personal interests and motives. I do not expect to make one sixpence out of this, but I hope we shall introduce our products into the market, and that we shall have work for the mills which are now all standing idle because you won't give us a show at all. The people of the North condemn our Southern flour, because many of them won't try our products. The inconsistency of some people astonishes me. The member for West Perth (Mr. Quinlan) talks about what he is going to do for the working man, and in the next breath he would put the working man out of existence altogether. That is because we look at the question from interested points of view. I am sorry the Government could not see their way clear to place before us these schedules as recommended by the Commission, because they would have been better understood; still, we must give to the Government the credit of having brought in a Tariff Bill. If the House will help me with my amendments in committee, for increasing the duties on certain things and reducing them on others, I shall be glad of the support. It is no use trying to force upon the country a schedule of duties which may not meet with the approval of the people. If we go to consult the people outside, we shall find the same diversity of opinions as we have here, and the best course to take is to deal with the tariff ourselves to the best of our ability. I hope that, in committee, the Government and the House will consent to put an extra 10s. of duty on flour; and I believe that this action will perpetuate your fame, in the agricultural districts,

and that hon. members will be met with joyous faces, and the farmers will bless you.

MR. LOTON: I had not an opportunity of seeing the Tariff Bill or the report of the Commission before coming into the House to-day, as I have been away from Perth for some short time; therefore my remarks now must be brief. The Premier stated that the Government found themselves in a somewhat strange position, because, after a certain resolution had been carried in the House last session, they felt it necessary to appoint a Commission to consider the tariff. It was pointed out, at that time, that they had the right and the opportunity of selecting the best men they could find in the country for this purpose. I find that the instructions to the Commission were briefly these: "To inquire into the operation of the existing Customs Tariff of the colony, with the view of considering whether, without inflicting any serious loss upon the revenue, any alterations may be made therein which would be likely to further promote the trade, settlement, and production of the colony." The Commissioners took evidence, I assume, with these objects in view; and their conclusions have been placed before Parliament. The Government, after mature consideration, found they could not follow, in full detail, the recommendations of the Commission. I have not had time to ascertain how far the Government have seen fit to deviate from those suggestions. The result of the Commission's recommendations is that, if adopted, the Customs revenue would not be very largely affected, and that, if anything, a slight increase would accrue. Now the Commission, with the view of not reducing the revenue, had the object of so re-arranging the revenue that it should, if possible, promote trade and settlement, and increase the production of the country. The Premier did not tell us what were his calculations of the result of the Commission's recommendations, if carried into effect; but he told us the estimate of the result of the tariff which the Government have placed before us, supposing it to have been in operation during the past year. Taking the volume of last year's imports as the basis of calculation, he said we should have an increased Customs revenue of about £15,000 for the year. So that whereas

the Commission did not intend to increase the taxation at all, the Government now come forward and say, "We intend to increase the Customs revenue by our proposals, to the extent of about £15,000 a year." Well, we have had it drummed into us on various occasions that, although the Government were borrowing money in the London market and carrying out large public works, yet they never came to this House to ask for any increase of taxation.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That is only an approximate estimate. The difference in the revenue won't be less than that, anyway, but the actual amount is hard to get at.

MR. LOTON: I suppose we are all here with one object. We know we cannot do without a tariff for revenue purposes, and for revenue purposes only; and if we reduce the Customs tariff, we must go into direct taxation in other directions. But those who frame the tariff for revenue purposes should endeavour to so fix the taxation that it shall be lightest upon those who are least able to pay, and that the increases shall fall on those who are best able to pay. That is my idea of a Customs tariff. [MR. CANNING: Who are they?] They are generally supposed to live in the towns, where the public works and the public expenditure are mainly going on. The persons who are least able to pay are the masses of the community; and the wealthy people are those best able to pay. The people who have to work for daily bread and other necessities, and for their wives and families, are least able to pay. I ask whether the increased taxation of this Bill is in the direction I have indicated?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I think so.

MR. LOTON: I think I will be able to show the hon. gentleman it is not so. In the first place, as to ale, beer, and stout, it was proposed to increase the import duty on these by 6d. a gallon in bulk, and the Commission further recommended, very wisely, an excise duty on beer made in the colony, so as not to decrease the revenue. I go with the Commission, to this extent, that if we are not to have an excise duty we should not raise the duty on imported beer at present. The Government have not fol-

lowed that recommendation, but have said, "We will raise the duty on the imported article 3d. a gallon." Now, to raise the duty 12s. 6d. a hogshead simply means protecting the manufacture of local beer to that extent. The Commission also recommended that the duty on sugar should be reduced 2s. per hundredweight, equal to a farthing per pound, and the effect would be to further protect the local maker of beer to the extent of another 2s. or 2s. 6d. per hogshead. Against that the Government raise the duty on malting barley, but how much malt is the local brewer going to use to make a hogshead of ale? The Government are protecting him, under this Bill, to the extent of about 15s. a hogshead, and taxing him an extra 1s. per bushel on malt, which may amount to 2s. or 2s. 6d. per hogshead of beer; therefore the brewer will get protection to the amount of about 12s. a hogshead net. How much are the mass of the people going to get? They will get it in sugar.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): Will they get sugar cheaper, with the present duty on it?

MR. LOTON: No; but I say, what advantage are the mass of the people to have? The whole of this benefit is going to the local brewers, and not to the working people at all. I do not know that there is anything much better for a man who works hard and is healthy, than a good glass of honestly made beer. It is just as good, to a certain extent, as the food he eats; but I have shown that the working man will not get any advantage with regard to beer. I will now name something he cannot well do without. I will go to his clothing. In the Fourth Schedule (15 per cent.), apparel and slops are increased from 12½ to 15 per cent. Is that helping the mass of the people? No; you are raising the duty 2½ per cent.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Take tea and sugar. Go into the 5 per cent. list. You are going to the end of the schedules.

MR. LOTON: Apparel and slops are the ordinary clothing which working men wear; and will the hon. gentleman, or his colleagues, or any member of this Assembly, tell me the tailors in this colony are going to make up moleskin in

the piece at a price within 50 per cent. of the price that the imported clothing can be sold at?

MR. HARPER: We have not got the paupers to make up this cheap clothing.

MR. LOTON: I am glad that our people are not reduced to that condition. A pair of moleskin trousers can be bought here for about 8s. 6d., and if you were to get twenty pairs made up by a local tailor he would charge about 6s. a pair for the making. Boots are put in the 15 per cent. list, and again, in the Table of Specific Duties, we find boots for working people are charged at a high rate. Why should we increase the duty on those boots which cannot be made in the colony? I say the boots which can be made and are made in the colony are the blucher and lace-up boots. Why should we increase the duty on the cheap imported boots which cannot be made in the colony, unless we are bound to obtain more revenue through the Customs?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That is the recommendation of the Commission.

MR. LOTON: Boots are also in the list of specific duties, and I cannot see why boots should be divided and put into different schedules. In the specific list are men's leather boots, 18s. per dozen.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Those are the superior kind of boots.

MR. LOTON: Very few men will buy imported blucher boots; and I say, from practical experience, that 80 per cent. of ordinary working-men's boots, such as bluchers and lace-ups, have been made in the colony for years past; but when you go into the higher classes of leather boots—I have a pair on myself which cost about a guinea—the duty on them will be about 1s. 6d. per pair, whereas on working-men's boots costing 8s. or 10s. a pair, the duty is to be the same amount.

MR. HARPER: Which you say are made in the colony, and don't pay duty.

MR. LOTON: I do not see why you should have boots in two different schedules. It is done, no doubt, to meet the views of the local bootmakers, who want as much duty as possible to be put on imported boots, and if they cannot get it in one schedule they will try in another schedule, or get it in both. When you talk about protecting these local manu-

facturers by taxing the million through the nose, then I have done with protection; for if this local industry cannot stand on its own bottom, it should wait until the growing population increases the demand for boots. I think I have shown conclusively that, under this Bill, it is proposed to increase the taxation on articles which men and their families require, at the rate of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on boots. Coming to haberdashery, you increase the duty on the working-man's cotton pocket handkerchief from $12\frac{1}{2}$ to 15 per cent.; and if he is a bit hungry, and has to tighten his belt because he has not enough to fill it, you increase the duty on this also. Coming to hosiery, on a pair of socks, or an under-shirt, or pair of pants, or a woollen vest, he has to pay $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more; and the same all through, both for the working man and his family. There is scarcely an article on which you have not increased the duty by $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. On stationery also there is $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more; and even on the pipe a smoker uses he has to pay $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. more duty. There is a set-off against all this. But the fact of lowering the duty on tea 1d. per pound will not give to one consumer in this colony any appreciable proportion of the reduction in this revenue.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That is the recommendation of the Commission.

MR. LOTON: I have always stated that tea in this colony is cheap enough. You can get a good tea at 2s. per pound, and I have never heard people complain of the price of tea in the whole of my experience in this colony. So that the fact of reducing the duty on tea, which is an important item and brings in a considerable revenue, will make a material reduction in the revenue, and not benefit the consumers at all, as the retail buyers will not feel the difference. You had better put it on some other things.

MR. RICHARDSON: You have deserted the consumer, and gone on to the revenue, now.

MR. LOTON: We have no right to increase the taxation on the majority of the people, unless there is absolute necessity for it. In the 10 per cent. schedule I see there are carpets, mats, matting, and floor-cloths, which would be much better placed in the 15 per cent. schedule, and you might remove other articles to

the 10 per cent. schedule, because the articles I have named are more in the nature of luxuries. The working man has to do without a carpet, generally.

MR. RICHARDSON: Carpets are necessities, to families.

MR. LOTON: The hon. member will not find many carpets on the floors in the Northern District which he represents, even amongst the wealthy squatters.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): What about flour?

MR. LOTON: I do not think there is the importance to be attached to flour that many persons think. My idea is that if there were a duty of £2 per ton on flour, instead of £1, the people in the centres of population would get a better article than they do now. The effect of a low duty on flour is to cause the millers in the other colonies to send you household flour, which is little better than pollard; whereas an extra £1 of duty would keep that inferior flour out. Two-thirds of it is used by the bakers, and palmed off as the best. I have seen it used to a considerable extent. I think, however, that the duty of £1 per ton is sufficient, unless the local wheat-growers and millers demonstrate that they can produce sufficient for local consumption; and, if they can do that, we shall be justified in putting an extra duty on flour. South Australia puts a duty of £2 a ton on imported flour. The chief reason why the people in the North of this colony cry out against an extra duty on flour is that we cannot obtain a white, good, sound household second-quality flour from the roller mills of this colony. They are not up to date. If millers try to produce this quality, it is something like a mixture of bran and pollard. South Australian millers pass the flour through, not once only, but several times. If the local millers made an ordinary sound flour, at a fair price in comparison with the fine flour, there would be no crying out against it in the North-West. I have sent flour to the North-West for some years past, and have also sent some West Australian flour; and I say there is no reason why we cannot produce, with proper milling, a good, sound, household flour at 30s. a ton less than the superfine flour we send there. I shall not be satisfied with the Tariff Bill when finished, because I can see there will be no reduction in regard

to taxation, and I do say the taxation through the Customs in this colony is already too high—too high in a great number of instances; and, instead of reducing it, this Bill will increase the taxation.

MR. CANNING: At the close of last session, a resolution was carried in this House, affirming that a Commission should be appointed to examine the Customs tariff, and report upon it, and make suggestions with a view to a revision of the tariff. I was under the impression that those suggestions would be more for the purpose of helping the Government at some future time in propounding a general scheme of taxation. I repeat what I have said on former occasions, that the time is not far distant when the Government of the day will have to propound a general scheme of taxation. But I did not think the Government would have felt under the necessity of bringing forward a measure for the revision of the tariff, this session. Perhaps I was wrong, and probably it was incumbent on them to do so. However, the Government having undertaken the task, their labours may serve as a preparation for forming, in the future, a comprehensive scheme of taxation. The task they have attempted is one that no Government has ever succeeded in accomplishing—that is, in framing a tariff which will satisfy every class in the community. Considering the short time the Government have had for preparing this Bill, after receiving the recommendations of the Commission, I do not think there is much to complain of in the Bill. I have listened at length to the observations which have been made upon various items, and I cannot say that, in one single instance, has a good case been made for altering the particular item. With regard to the duty on shop clothing, I think it is a reasonable duty, and instead of bearing hardly on working men it is very much more to their advantage that they should have comfortable and decent clothing made up within the colony, even if they pay a little more, than wear the slops and trash imported from other countries, because by wearing clothing made in the colony they will be giving employment to a large number of fellow colonists. The trades of tailoring and shoe-making, and other like industries, must be carried

on in every community, and if we can have a reasonable proportion of people employed in them, we shall only be following the same course as has been followed by every civilised people. We cannot expect that the great majority of the community should be agriculturists, or miners, or that we should all be producers; we must also have those who are consumers. It is desirable to encourage such trades. I have been, for many years past, inclined to favour a free trade policy; but the extreme free trade policy is certainly not applicable to the circumstances of this colony. That we must all admit. And, in framing a tariff, the Government should see that it gives fair encouragement to certain branches of industry, and see, at the same time, that it does not increase the burdens upon the people generally, unless some immediate necessity forces that increase. I hope the day may be a long way off when our Government will feel the necessity of resorting to other means for increasing the revenue besides the Customs tariff, and I should not advocate the imposing of taxation until it becomes necessary. I cannot find fault with any special items in this Bill. With regard to tinned meats and other things spoken of, it is reasonable that a certain duty should be put on them; for our resources in sheep and cattle are sufficient for supplying meat to all the people in the colony, and it is to the advantage of the consumers as well as the producers that they should look to our natural supply for these necessities. I have no doubt this Bill will pass. After carefully reading it over, I cannot find any item to which I might take exception. It is desirable, in the interest of certain trades, that there should be a modification in some of the import duties.

MR. LEFROY: This question of the tariff seems to appeal to the hearts of all hon. members—[An Hon. Member: Their pockets; that is where their hearts are]—because, as I was going to say, it appeals to their pockets. This is a question on which a great many hon. members are inclined to think more about self than they ought to do. I intend to deal with the question, not on behalf of any particular industry, but merely as a citizen of Western Australia. We must raise a revenue through the Customs, and

it appears to me that the Customs is the fairest way of getting a revenue. If we could have a perfect free-trade policy, I am sure every hon. member would be delighted; but, until we reach the millennium, I am afraid there is little chance of our having an altogether free-trade policy. I cannot imagine where our revenue is to come from, unless from taxation, and the Customs is the fairest way of getting it, and also the simplest and most inexpensive to work. In taxing the community, the proper way to look at the question is not to tax the wealthy people instead of those who are supposed to be poorer, because few men will admit that they are wealthy. Not many men in Western Australia will admit that they are wealthy. We should tax luxuries as much as possible—articles which the people, if they have not sufficient means, can do without. Among the fairest articles to tax are beer and spirits. A great many persons may say these are not luxuries, but necessities. I say they are luxuries, and that it is not necessary for any working man to drink beer or spirits in order to keep up his strength for work. There are country districts where men work as hard as the men in towns, and certainly longer hours; they do this without drinking; and therefore I look on beer and spirits as luxuries. The Government propose to increase the duty on imported beer and also on spirits. If it were necessary to increase the revenue, I should go for increasing the duty on spirits up to £1 per gallon, if necessary; and I maintain that the people would miss the money less in that way than in any other kind of tax. The man who drinks 20 glasses a day would be much better off if he drank only one.

THE PREMIER (HON. SIR J. FORREST): We would not get the revenue if men did not drink the liquor.

MR. LEFROY: I know it is necessary that a revenue should be raised in this way, while the drinking habit only injures the individual, who would be better off without the liquor. I do not believe the increase of the duty will stop men from drinking, but I believe that those who spend their money in that way will have the liquor, even if it is taxed up to £1 per gallon. The thanks of this House and the colony are due to the members of the Commission, for the

work they have done, at a loss to themselves, and without remuneration; and they have shown that there are men in the colony of a very public-spirited character. They have endeavoured to place this matter before us in the best light, and the Government also have made alterations from the recommendations according to their view of the requirements of the revenue. I regret to find that some anomalies, untouched by these changes, will still remain in the tariff. The cry from different industries for protection must, in the long run, damage them, because as soon as one industry obtains protection another industry comes up and claims protection also. I have been urging on producers that if they want protection for what they produce, the people in the towns will try to get it out of them in other ways; consequently I cannot see what advantage there is to the community in putting an increased duty on flour. There must be "something wrong in the state of Denmark," if, after this country has been in occupation 60 years, and we have been producing corn and flour in the colony all these years, we cannot now produce flour in competition with the outside world. The fault cannot be in the land, because it will produce as many bushels of wheat to the acre as any other part of Australia, and I believe it will produce more than the land in South Australia, on the average. I know land in this colony that will produce 30 bushels to the acre, and there is not much land in Australia which will produce more than that. The fact is that we have not got the people, or they will not go on to the land and cultivate it. People are now giving more attention to the growing of cereals, and I hope that before long we shall raise sufficient to reduce very largely the importations now brought into the country. If the corn-growers cry out for protection, other people will want protection also. With regard to jams and other articles, it is an extraordinary thing that in this colony we imported in one year £11,755 worth of jam, and it is strange that some industry does not start here for converting the local fruit into jam. That fact should be sufficient inducement, and no doubt as our consuming population increases there will be jam factories started here. In committee I hope we shall keep in view that we should

tax articles that are luxuries, and relieve those that are necessities. It does seem strange that an increased duty on imported clothing is proposed in the Bill, but I suppose it is done for the purpose of getting sufficient revenue. We find silks, satins, and so on, charged at 15 per cent.—in the same category as cheap slop clothing. I think silks and satins, even in the piece, may be regarded as luxuries, and charged at a higher rate. Some hon. members appear to have had briefs on behalf of certain manufacturers. The hon. member for York has usually got a brief, in this way, from some one or other; and the best thing the Government can do will be to employ the hon. member as an assistant Attorney General. I do not know whether those hon. members who hold these briefs are employed in any way, but one hon. member does the work most ably, and I am not surprised at his being asked to come forward in this capacity. Some hon. members have briefs, not only for others, but for themselves.

MR. A. FORREST: That is a grave charge against members of the House.

MR. LEFROY: As regards tobacco, it is one of the articles that produce a large revenue, and I hope the day will come when it will not be necessary for local manufacturers to pay 2s. a pound for tobacco leaf, but that it will be grown in the colony, as I know it can be grown, and it is wonderful that some persons do not try it. I have seen it growing here luxuriantly, and apparently without much trouble, and I think there is a great opening here for persons who understand the production of tobacco leaf, there being a manufactory in the place. In reducing the duty on tea, which represents a considerable revenue, I am afraid the Government have had to put the difference on other things. I think tea would bear an increase better than some other articles that are increased in the Bill; and it is an anomaly that the best quality of tea should pay only the same duty as inferior qualities. Some hon. members object to military uniforms being admitted free, but if the local tailors cannot make uniforms properly, they must be imported, and we know that our soldiers must be made to look smart and attractive. It is a wise thing to reduce the duty on perambulators, as proposed in the Bill. In

committee I shall support amendments for reducing the duties on the necessities of life, although it will be difficult to make any large alterations, because the Government must obtain sufficient revenue.

On the motion of MR. HARPER, the debate was adjourned until Monday, the 18th September.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 18 minutes past 10 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 14th September, 1893.

Kensington Lane Closure Bill: committee—Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act Amendment Bill: second reading; adjourned debate—Fremantle Water Supply Bill: first reading—Loan Bill, 1893: first reading—Aborigines Protection Board: proposed abolition of—Greenbushes Tinfield: proposed lease to Mr. Reid—Engine Sparks Fire Prevention Bill: second reading—Federal Council: Increase of Representatives to—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the chair at half-past four o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

KENSINGTON LANE CLOSURE BILL. IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.—“Closure of Kensington Lane”:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): On the second reading of this Bill hon. members referred to the drain which has been constructed by the Commissioner of Railways. I believe that the drain is a cemented one, and the effect of its construction is that the drainage which ran in from the sides is now held back. I understand from the Commissioner of Railways that this matter