

made here rather than the imported article.

THE HON. R. W. HARDEY: I am glad to find such a clause as this in the Bill. In the other colonies there are numbers of wine shops, which are nicely kept, and where good wine is sold. In South Australia, I believe, Mr. Hardy has half-a-dozen places. There is no use, it seems to me, in people planting vineyards if they have no means of disposing of their products.

THE HON. J. G. H. AMHERST: This is the first time that any legislation has been proposed dealing with wine shops, and I think it right that it should be limited to the towns first. If we start in the country as well, many difficulties may arise.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): Under this clause whist clubs will be able to take out a colonial wine license.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

The remaining clauses were passed.

New clause, to stand as Clause 6:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I have to move the following new clause:—"Upon such proof as 'aforesaid being made to their satisfaction, the licensing magistrates shall, on 'payment of a fee of five pounds, deliver 'to the secretary of the club a certificate 'according to the Form B in the Schedule 'to this Act." In the Bill, as it came to this House, the fee of £5 appears, although I do not know what the object of making it so heavy is. Our desire is to prevent the establishment of bogus clubs. This fee will not do it, and I shall be glad, therefore, if some hon. member will move to reduce it or strike it out altogether.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I shall certainly move that the words "on payment of a fee of five pounds" be struck out. When a Newspaper Bill was brought in by a distinguished Attorney General, it was proposed to levy an annual registration fee of £10, but, at the instance of another member of the House, it was reduced to 2s. 6d., for the reason that if newspapers were to be taxed it should be done directly. On the same principle we should deal with clubs.

Amendment put and agreed to.

New clause, to stand as Clause 19:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): I have to move that the following new clause be added to the

Bill:—"Nothing in the principal Act contained shall apply to any person who "(a) sells liquor in a refreshment room "at either House of Parliament by the "permission or under the control of such "House; or (b) causes to be sold by the "holder of a spirit merchant's license "any liquor before it is landed in the "colony, or while it is under the control "of the Customs." A considerable quantity of liquor comes to this colony hypothecated, either to a merchant or a bank, and if the consignee does not meet the draft the liquor has to be sold. It is questionable whether there is any such power, and we propose to make the matter certain.

Clause agreed to.

Schedules:

Two new Schedules were added to the Bill. (*Vide "Council Minutes," 1893, p. 81.*)

The Bill was then reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 10:40 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, 19th September, at 2:30 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Monday, 18th September, 1893.

Proposed Appointment of a Water Supply and Sewerage Board—Width of Tires Bill: first reading—Tariff Bill: adjourned debate on second reading—Message from the Legislative Council: Mr. J. S. Reid's concession—Message from the Legislative Council: concurrence in Bills—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

WATER SUPPLY AND SEWERAGE BOARD.

IN COMMITTEE.

MR. TRAYLEN: Mr. Canning—Sir, I rise to move, "That in the opinion of this committee it is expedient to make

other provision for supplying with water the city of Perth and its suburbs, and for the sewerage thereof; and for these purposes it is desirable to create a statutory Board of Water Supply and Sewerage for the purchase or construction, maintenance, and general administration of such works, and for the acquisition of land for such purposes; and that the Government should obtain a message from His Excellency the Governor, authorising the introduction of a Bill for these purposes, and to provide for the loan of funds from the Consolidated Revenue for the first year's expenses." If, sir, this subject is written somewhat largely before me it is because I have been connected for some time past with the Local Board of Health for the city of Perth, a position that has brought this matter into prominence before me; and if it more especially obtrudes itself just now I think the reason is to be found in the fact that my recent visit to the Eastern colonies brought me into contact with a number of able and earnest men, who themselves felt the importance of these subjects, and who were earnestly carrying out their duties in connection therewith. If I need offer an apology for moving so prominently in this matter, I think I must plead what was stated to us a few evenings ago by the Attorney General, who ventured to suggest that it was the duty of private members to take a fair share of the responsibility of introducing legislation into this House. I therefore plead his dictum, a dictum which goes to show that it is a proper thing for me to do, and that, if special circumstances so indicate, it then becomes not only my privilege but my duty to ask this House to give its attention to this important question. The main reason, however, that prompts me just now is this: that if we do not take action at once we can do nothing for almost another year; and, whilst in some matters that may not be of very much importance, in this one it may be fraught with considerable importance. At the best of times, under the most favourable circumstances, there must always be a long time between the inception of a scheme of sewerage and the actual execution of the work. More particularly now do I need to urge, in connection with the water supply of the City of Perth, that there is an opportunity for the Govern-

ment now to acquire the Water Works in the Darling Range, on terms that may not, perhaps, be open to us at any subsequent period, and to place these works in the hands of a Board, if that was considered the best means for administering such works. If I have to offer a further reason for making the proposal in the form in which it now appears before the House, I would refer to the experience of other large cities of Australia. In whatever way they commenced their arrangements for water supply and sewerage, I find that they have all gravitated to the one thing: that these undertakings must either be in the hands of the Commissioner of Public Works or in the hands of a Board. It has been found expedient to remove these works from the control of the local authorities, and to place them in the hands of the Minister of Works or in the hands of a Board created by statute, and specially appointed for that purpose. So that, if it be said to me, why not seek to introduce such legislation as will enable the City Council to acquire these Water Works, and to carry out its own system of sewerage, my response is that we ought to start at once from the point that these other large cities, capital cities, have already reached, without going through their expensive experience. But to give a further reason beyond the mere fact that other cities have come round to this system of administration: I would like to intimate that the area of Perth is four times as great as that of either Adelaide proper or Melbourne city, that it is twice as large as both of them put together. This fact goes to explain why those cities have numerous suburban municipalities sprung up around them, whilst we have but one Municipality for Perth, with no adjacent ones. It can hardly be expected, however, that this state of things will continue very much longer. Already several different estates have been sold on the margin of the city, on its municipal borders; and the time will come—and perhaps that will be at an early date—when it will be absolutely necessary for their and our sakes, when these estates become populated, that they shall be declared separate municipalities, and have the privileges and advantages of self-government. So soon as that time arrives, it will be found that in some

respects these adjacent municipalities will have diverse and even clashing interests. For example: what good argument could be adduced against the Leeder Estate residents, or the Victoria Park residents, when those estates become municipalities, if they urge that the water from the Darling Range ought to be just as free for them as it is to residents within the Municipality of Perth? I do not know that any very good answer could be given to them in such an argument. I think they might fairly say it is the duty of the Government to provide water for us as much as it is for them to provide water for the central Municipality of Perth. When we come also to the question of sewerage it will be found that there again there will be somewhat clashing interests, unless the sewers be in the hands of one central authority. There are other respects in which municipalities can act independently of each other, and I think it would be wrong on my part to disturb their rights of local self-government in all these respects, which they could exercise better independently than by being part of a group. But in these two other respects, water supply and sewerage, I do honestly believe that a group of municipalities could have the two schemes carried out better as a whole than as disjointed and separate municipalities. I propose then, by statute, to create a Board, which will be a corporate body, having perpetual succession. I propose that three persons on this Board shall be appointed by the Government, and be called official members; and then that each Municipality placed under the control of the Board shall elect for itself a representative to sit on that Board. In that way we should secure men who were especially fitted for this work; and the Government on the one hand, and the Municipalities on the other, would each have a direct voice in all the doings of the Board. If we create a Board of this character it will be at once a central authority. The whole of the work performed by it will be done very much more economically than if several Municipalities each undertook for itself the respective duties of sewerage and water supply only for its own subjects. I would point out, sir, that the City Council has an interest in those who live upon the margins of the Municipality, but it

has no control over them. There may be many things done that would be injurious to Perth, and yet the Municipality itself has no control over them in their so doing; whereas, if a central authority be created that would have control over each Municipality, this peculiarity would be obviated. I propose that this Board shall be a responsible Board. We were discussing not very long ago in this House the existence of a Board that was said to be irresponsible, and that does not refer any of its actions to Parliament in any way, but yet comes to us with a direct and statutory claim for money to carry on its operations, while at the same time in no way bound to tell us what is done with that money. I do not propose to create any such irresponsible Board as this. The Government having the appointment of several of its members would of course choose, in their wisdom—and they would have the whole colony to select from—men who would be fitted for such work, and who if they should in any way jeopardise the interests of the Government—for it will be shown presently that the Government will have an interest at stake—it would be within the province of the Ministry of the day to remove them. They would be directly responsible to the Ministry. With regard to those members to be elected by the several Municipalities, if their term of office be short, they also would be responsible. And so it would come about that the whole of the members of this Board, those appointed and those elected, would be alike morally responsible to those who placed them in their position. The powers that I propose to give to the Board would be to acquire, or to construct, and maintain water works, over whatever jurisdiction might be allotted to it. This would probably involve, as one of the first considerations, the acquisition of the rights of the existing Perth Water Supply Company. I propose that a duly constituted Board should have all the rights, powers, benefits, and privileges belonging to the Council or the contractor under that agreement. I would give them also power to make preliminary surveys, for ascertaining levels, and possible outlets, and of making estimates of the cost of any system of sewerage; also power to appoint the officers required to carry out their work; also power to enter upon

lands for purposes of survey, and so on; and a power, ultimately, to construct and work a system of sewerage. I would suggest that the Board should be compelled by statute to meet not less often than once a week. The special duty of the Board for the ensuing twelve months, I suggest, should be this: to arrange terms for the purchase of the Perth Water Works, with all the privileges and rights attaching thereto; to formulate a scheme of sewerage for the City of Perth; and also to prepare a Bill for the forthcoming session of Parliament for conferring upon the Board the requisite power for its own efficient working. I put this in because it is hardly likely that we can now, the session approaching to a close, think of all the various sections that ought to be inserted in such a Bill as this. If we create this Board, and clothe it with the necessary powers for twelve months' work, and ask it to come forward next session with a complete Bill, I think that would be a very proper function to impose upon it, and that great good would result. Lastly, I would require the Board to report periodically to the Minister who may have charge of the department. We have already a Water Works Act in force, and, when this Board is first constituted it would have this Act to work upon. That Act would clothe it with considerable powers, impose upon it certain duties, and give it certain rights and privileges. If I might here interpose a little to show how needful it is we should have a change as regards our present municipal water works, I might point out that every plug in the place is a source of a danger to the inhabitants who obtain their water in that neighbourhood. The box above these plugs is a filthy receptacle, and when the pressure is reduced, as it has to be, the accumulated filth falls into the main, and becomes a menace to the health of all in the vicinity. I am not merely speaking of what *may* happen; I can refer to exact facts which occurred not very long since in Melbourne, and which go to show the absolute truth of what I say,—that every fire plug of the kind we have in Perth now is a menace to the health of those who live near it. We cannot now go to the owners of the Water Works and compel them to change these plugs; but a Board, acting under

the Government and clothed with statutory powers, would be able to insist upon a change being made for the better, with respect to this particular matter of the fire plugs. With respect to funds, all members are aware that the Perth Water Works are under offer to the City Council, on the condition of their being paid for in 4 per cent. bonds, having a Government guarantee. This then almost disposes of the financial aspect of the question. This is not coming and asking the Government to increase its burdens in any appreciable way. It is true that a bond is asked for, but that bond is of so slight importance that it must be years before there is any risk of its coming into force, inasmuch as the vendors are to place a sum of money at the disposal of the purchasers to meet all deficiencies in the matter of interest and working expenses, thus virtually guaranteeing these expenses for several years hence. So that I do not think the Government need be apprehensive or diffident in entering into a bond like this. Then some money would be required to extend the present mains, when necessary, and for salaries, and for fees, and preliminary surveys, and so on. I do not know whether I can suggest a very good method for raising this money,—one that cannot be open to objection. The best that occurs to me is not quite embodied in the language of my resolution, but rather that the Board should have power to issue a greater number of bonds than may be required for the purchase of the Water Works, and, with the surplus, should obtain advances from the Banks, until the Board has sufficient income of its own to meet these expenses. It would perhaps be a good thing if the statute provided that any expenditure above a certain sum shall require the approval of the Minister before it shall be incurred by the Board. A sinking fund need not be provided for some time to come. I think it would be injudicious to place away funds as soon as they were borrowed, for the purpose of repaying what will not become due for twenty or more years hence. Let me place before the Government, as a consideration for coming to our help in this matter, the fact that one-sixth of the population over whom they rule is to be found in the city of Perth; and it surely must be

worth their while to provide these conveniences for this large section of their subjects, when to do so is attended with such little risk to themselves, as I have indicated. When they think well, it will be in the power of the Governor-in-Council to extend the jurisdiction of this Board, just the same as power is given to extend the operation of the Public Health Act. When that Act first became law, it merely applied to some two or three spots, but it was possible to extend its provisions according to certain conditions contained within one of its own sections. Such might be the case here. As it appears desirable, the jurisdiction of the Board may be extended to Fremantle or elsewhere. I may point out that the city of Hobart, some two or three years ago, asked for the same kind of legislation that I am urging at the present moment, something that for the first year should be of a preliminary character, allowing all the necessary details to be worked out more fully at a subsequent date. If this resolution of mine should meet the approval of members, as I trust it will, it will be necessary for the Government, to enable me to give effect to it, to ask His Excellency to send a Message to the House authorising the introduction of a Bill for this purpose, because money is involved therein. These proposals—not to weary the committee—make it possible to confer a lasting benefit upon Perth and its neighbourhood. We have now an opportunity of doing that which will redound to our credit, and which will tend, I am quite sure, to make Perth a desirable place to live in. [MR. MONGER: It is so now.] This will make it more so. As Perth grows, unless something of this kind is done, it will become a less and less desirable place to live in, until it may eventually emulate that wonderful city of the South, "Marvellous Smellbourne" (as it has been nicknamed), in reference to its insanitary state. I ask, therefore, for the generous support of the Government and of the members of this House in my humble effort to avert that calamity.

MR. A. FORREST: I am very sorry indeed I am not able to support this motion, and I will give several reasons why, at this stage of the proceedings, this House should not ask the Government to bring down a Bill for the purpose of

providing a loan fund out of the Consolidated Revenue of the country. The hon. member who brought forward this motion is as well aware as I am that the City Council has been for some considerable time past negotiating for the purchase of these Water Works. I do not think, myself, knowing as I do the feelings of the gentlemen comprising the City Council, they would have thought of purchasing these works if the control of them is to be taken away from them and vested in a Board. There is no body so well able to manage these Water Works and other affairs of the city as that body, the members of which are elected to that position by their brother ratepayers. If it were otherwise, we might as well transfer all the affairs of the city to my friend the Director of Public Works, who, no doubt, would work it as well as he possibly could; but he could not be in touch with the wishes of the ratepayers. Besides that, it is the City Council that has to levy and collect the rates, and be responsible for their expenditure; and why should they transfer their powers to a Board? The hon. member is also well aware, because he is a member of it, that a special meeting of the City Council is called for to-morrow night to consider this very question of the purchase of the Water Works; and, until I came here to-night, I knew nothing, and the Council knew nothing, about this resolution going to be brought forward. I think the least he might have done was to have consulted with his fellow-councillors before rushing to Parliament with a resolution like this. Members from the country, perhaps, who are not acquainted with the circumstances, might be inclined to support this proposal, without thinking of the expense it might entail upon the ratepayers of Perth. It might result in the appointment of an expensive Board, like they have in Melbourne, with a chairman at a salary perhaps of £1,000 a year, and directors at £800 each. The City Council has worked hard in this matter, and they have been unanimous in trying to get the Government to agree to the purchase of these Water Works at a price that will leave a margin of profit and upon conditions that would not put the Government to any risk of having to pay anything at all.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Question.

MR. A. FORREST: I will explain. The interest on the bonds would be £7,000 a year, and at present the City Council is paying something between £4,000 and £5,000 towards this object already, and, for a reason well known to the hon. member, they are not able to increase their present rates, in a satisfactory way, unless they have these works in their own hands. We do not feel justified in striking a rate that would take the money out of the pockets of the ratepayers and put it in the pockets of the contractors for these Water Works. But if we had the works in our own hands we might increase the present rates, so as to enable us to meet the interest on these bonds; and, if we did not raise enough, the vendors have offered to deposit a sufficient sum of money to meet any deficiency for years to come, so that the Government would be running no risk at all in guaranteeing these bonds. I think the hon. member is premature in bringing such a resolution as this before the House, knowing as he does that the City Council are still moving in the matter, and without consulting them in any way. I am surprised at the hon. member. I think the least he might have done was to have consulted his brother councillors. I am aware that such a system as he proposes has been adopted in some of the cities of the other colonies, but not until they became very largely populated. I do not think it was ever adopted by any of them when they only had a population of 8,000 or 10,000 people. We can quite understand cities like Melbourne and Sydney, with their half a million inhabitants, requiring a Board like this, because there must be a great deal of work to do in connection with the water supply and sewerage of large cities like that; and probably the City Council is not able to give up its time for such a purpose. But it is very different here. I cannot see the necessity of a Board of this kind, working independently of the representatives of the ratepayers, in a place like Perth, with a population of 8,000 or 10,000. And this resolution is only meant for Perth, for it is hardly probable it could affect any other town in the colony for years to come. I do not think this House would agree to every Municipality having a Board of this kind, with its highly paid

officers, surveyors, engineers, and so on, all of whom would have to be paid from the rates that come out of the pockets of the poor ratepayers. I say this is a matter entirely for the ratepayers of Perth, and, before the hon. member brought down such a resolution as this to this House, he ought to have called a public meeting, and asked the ratepayers whether they agreed with this grand scheme which he has propounded here to-night. I am sure the House will not at this stage of the proceedings listen to any such proposal as this, which may lead to the creating of an expensive department. The time may arrive some day, when we have 100,000 people in Perth, when an expensive scheme of this kind may become necessary. At present I say we have no right to create an expensive department to do work that can be satisfactorily performed by the City Council itself, without the assistance of any such Board. I shall oppose the motion, and, if necessary, I shall divide the House upon it.

MR. MOLLOY: I really was surprised to see this resolution on the notice paper this evening. Like the hon. member for West Kimberley, I was unaware that the matter was going to be discussed in this House to-night, until I saw the notice paper. I am the more surprised because the mover is himself a member of the City Council, and is well aware that a meeting of the Council has been called for to-morrow evening to consider this subject. Surely he might have consulted the wishes of his fellow councillors before placing this motion upon the paper. It is true that we—that is, the City Council—have had this question of the purchase of the Water Works under our consideration for some time past. We are very anxious to come to terms, because we are anxious to revise the rates, but do not care to do so when the extra revenue derived therefrom is liable to go into the pockets of the contractor for these works. After a good deal of negotiation a price was ultimately agreed upon, £160,000, which were the best terms we could get, the contractor agreeing to accept 4 per cent. bonds guaranteed by the Government in payment of the purchase money. The City Council approached the Premier on the subject of this guarantee, and, as I said, a meeting

is to be held again to-morrow evening to further discuss the question. Under the circumstances, I cannot but think it was premature, to say the least of it, for the hon. member to have brought forward this motion this evening, more especially when I believe that his views would not meet the wishes or the approval of the ratepayers, and I am certain not of his fellow-councillors. Therefore I feel bound to oppose the motion.

MR. TRAYLEN: I rise at this stage to say that the two hon. members who have last spoken have been beating the air. They assume that it had been decided, when I gave notice of this motion, that a special meeting of the City Council was to be held to-morrow evening, when, as a matter of fact, there was nothing of the kind decided upon. My notice was given in open meeting of the House last Wednesday—it is now Monday—and it is not my fault if the hon. members referred to knew nothing about it. After all, how does this affect the question? The Government is asked by the Council to give a guarantee to a body that is irresponsible to itself; I propose that the Government should give a guarantee to a body that is responsible to the guarantors. It has been assumed that if the Water Works were owned by the Municipality, the ratepayers would derive immediate and considerable advantages. I know of no advantage they will derive that would not be derived by the creation of this Board. These Boards in the other colonies have actually reduced the rates, as fast as the expenses allowed them to do; and the City Council could do no more. The hon. member for West Kimberley said we ought not to have this Board until our population reaches 100,000. Does he know that Melbourne had such a Board when the population was only 70,000? All the other colonies, after trying the municipal system of control, have come to this point that I am now asking that we should start from. I should have thought that members of the City Council would have been thankful that I brought the matter to this issue,—that we should start from the point of vantage which the other colonies have reached, after costly experiments in other directions. I want to avoid the unpleasant friction that must arise, some

day, when the Government step in and become the owners of these Water Works. The hon. member for Kimberley speaks about high-salaried officials and an expensive department. All I have to say is, it will be the fault of the Government if there is any high-salaried officials. I never contemplated a chairman with his £1,000 a year, and directors at £800 a year, nor anything so monstrous, in connection with this Board. There would be no necessity for any expensive department that I can see, and it would be entirely the fault of the Government if any unnecessary expenditure at all were incurred in connection with the work of this Board.

MR. SIMPSON: I am entirely in favour of what I conceive to be the spirit of the resolution. We have heard the hon. member who brought it forward censured to-night because he did not wait for some particular meeting of the City Council, for them to determine whether he should move his motion. I imagine the hon. member sits here as a member of the Legislature, and not as a member of the City Council; and any motion he chooses to submit to this House he has a perfect right to submit, without even asking the permission of that august body, the City Council. If we take the actions of the City Council, so far as we have been able to discover them, in connection with this Water Works, during the last few months, as a criterion of what we may expect from them, I do not know that we are likely to become lost in admiration of their collective business capacity. We have read of a kind of deputation that waited upon the Premier, headed by His Worship the Mayor, asking the Government to guarantee the sum of £180,000; and, from what I can recollect of the newspaper account of the interview, what took place was this: The Premier asked, "What do you want £180,000 for?" The answer was, "To purchase the water works." "How much did they originally cost," pertinently queried the Premier. His Worship the Mayor, with the simplest air of innocence, replied, "That is just what we cannot find out." Yet they offer to give £180,000 for works of the original cost of which they say they know nothing. In addition to that, we are perfectly well aware that, from the beginning to

the end of this agreement between the Council and the Water Works Company, there has grown a doubt in the mind of the public as to whether the agreement ought ever to have been made, and whether, so far as the Council is concerned, it is not a very foolish and very silly agreement. As a ratepayer, I am utterly dissatisfied with the action of the City Council as regards that agreement. First of all, they did not know where they were; they did not know whether they had to strike a shilling rate or not. Then they were threatened with proceedings, and they found out that they had to strike a shilling rate. Then they go to the Government and say, "If you guarantee these bonds there will only be a loss of about £1,500 a year" (I believe).

MR. A. FORREST: That is guaranteed by the vendors' fixed deposit.

MR. SIMPSON: Only for seven years. We shall be a larger population then, we hope. But the City Council has no right to enter into an agreement based upon hopes and expectations. I think, seeing that other cities of Australia were compelled, absolutely compelled, to adopt this independent Board system, because of the corruption that gathered about their institutions in dealing with these matters, I think it would be wise on our part to profit by their experience, and a prudent step in advance if we adopted this resolution. I entirely agree with the spirit of it, and I fail to see any necessity for any extreme expenditure in connection with the administration of the Board. I think if the Government were to agree to the spirit or the principle of the resolution—they need not give it practical effect immediately—they would be doing what would be of great advantage and benefit to the metropolis of the colony.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I think it is only due to the representatives of the city, if they are going to discuss the question to-morrow evening, that this debate be adjourned. I therefore move that progress be now reported, and leave given to sit again.

Question put and passed.

Progress reported.

WIDTH OF TIRES BILL.

Introduced by MR. RICHARDSON, and read a first time.

TARIFF BILL.

SECOND READING—ADJOURNED DEBATE.

MR. HARPER: Sir, in rising to address myself to this subject, I should like to say, first of all, that I felt some trepidation when the report of the Commission of which I had the honour to be chairman was placed before the country, for I felt that this subject of the tariff was a subject that a person might study for twenty or thirty years, and not get to the bottom of it. Although we spent as much time and labour upon it as we possibly could do, in the time at our disposal, it would have been extraordinary if some anomaly should not have proved to have been the result; and I am agreeably surprised to find that, so far, no greater anomalies have been discovered than what we heard of the other evening. I should like to make a few remarks with regard to the alterations proposed by the Government in the recommendations of the Commission. The first item I shall take is that of beer. It will be observed that the Commission recommended an increase of duty upon imported ales and beer, and, as that would be conferring a great advantage upon the local brewers by giving them an enhanced price, and, what was as great a consideration, an enlarged trade, we thought it only fair that they should concede something in return; and I can only express my surprise at the action of the Government in this matter—bearing in mind that the Attorney General poses in this House as the cast-iron freetrader. [MR. A. FORREST: Not always.] From information we were able to glean, it appeared to us that the production of local beer for the year would be somewhere about 400,000 gallons under present conditions, but by offering them the advantages of the increased duty upon the imported article, as recommended by the Commission, we might allow for a considerably increased output. By way of a *quid pro quo* the Commission proposed an excise duty upon colonial beer, a duty which the brewers themselves were not unwilling to put up with, provided we gave them the advantages of an extra duty on imported beer. But the Government have refused to accept that suggestion, while at the same time increasing the duty upon imported beer, the result of which will be to hand over to the local brewers a

sum of between £5,000 and £6,000 annually.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): There is the same margin as before.

MR. HARPER: The effect of the extra duty will be to check importation, and consequently to increase the volume of the local trade.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): And cause a loss to the revenue.

MR. HARPER: Because the Government have not followed the recommendation of the Commission. The Premier said there would be a difficulty in levying or collecting this excise duty, but, from the information we had, it would be one of the easiest and cheapest of all duties to collect. The next item as regards which the Government have not adopted the recommendation of the Commission is that of flour. The Premier, the other night, said that the extra duty of 10s. a ton proposed by the Commission only amounted to 1d. on eight loaves, and that therefore it would not affect the consumer very much one way or the other. But the Commission looked at it from a very much broader view than that; and I think if people will look carefully into the matter they will see that this is not a question that should be considered simply in the light of Protection and Free-trade. There is something much more behind it than that. The Government being the largest landlord in the country, it is of the greatest importance to it that the value of its land should not only be maintained but enhanced, which can only be done by converting it into profitable use by means of cultivation. It also has to be borne in mind that our railways are not yet paying the interest on their capital cost, and one of the best and surest ways of overcoming that loss will be by the developing agriculture throughout the colony. Therefore it is desirable that every encouragement should be given to the cultivator of the soil; for, if our people do not contribute to the revenue to a greater extent than they now do, by means of the agricultural produce grown in the colony, they will have to make it up by providing for the interest on loan and railway expenditure. The flour that is imported into the colony—bankrupt stock, sold at a loss to the grower—operates against local production, and

consequently against the traffic receipts upon our railways. Therefore, if the masses of the people look at this question from that point of view, they will see that the slight increase in the duty on flour recommended by the Commission, as a stimulus to local production and also as a check upon the importation of bankrupt stocks, would have lessened the contribution required from them to make up the present deficiency in the railway revenue. As there is a considerable section of the community, particularly at the North, who have no opportunity of reaping any direct benefit from the local production of flour, and who would not benefit by this increased duty, the Commission thought it would be only fair to that section of the community to equalise the impost in another way; and we did it by recommending a reduction in the duty on oats, gram, bran, and pollard. The effect of that would have been that those people living in other than agricultural districts would have these articles which they required for their horses and their cattle at a reduced rate, which, we thought, would counterbalance the benefit we were conferring upon the corn-grower. Timber is another item in which the Government have thought proper to make very material alterations upon the recommendations of the Commission. The Commission looked upon iron and timber very much in the same light as articles coming into general consumption, as the foundation of local trades and occupations, providing employment to a number of people, and we thought that every encouragement should be given to those who embarked in these local industries. For this reason we recommended that one class of timber, kauri pine, should be admitted duty free, as it enters largely into a great many trades, and particularly the boat-building trade, which has languished very much of late years. There is no class of timber growing in the colony that can be substituted for it, and we thought, under the circumstances, it might be placed on the free list. But the Government thought otherwise, and have set aside the recommendation of the Commission. We also recommended that match-board timber should be introduced at 5 per cent., which would have put it on the same footing as other raw produce required for

manufacturing or building purposes; but the Government have classed it with architraves, mouldings, and other worked timber.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We left it where it was.

MR. HARPER: I am now alluding to the alterations made by the Government in the recommendations of the Commission. Match-board is very largely used in building, and especially in the building of cheap cottages for working men; and the Commission thought that this and other proposals of theirs would have operated in favour of the masses, who, in some respects, were subjected to heavier imports. Then we come to the item of boots. Several members spoke of the recommendations of the Commission as a tax upon the "poor man's" boots. I think it is a habit which is growing with a great many members in this House, not to read the reports which are presented to them, but to jump at conclusions of their own, without even glancing at the reports submitted to them, or they must be charged with failing to grasp the meaning of them. This seems to be a case in point. The report of the Commission points out clearly that although the proposed duty on boots appeared to be a heavy increase, yet, as a matter of fact, the stronger class of boot, the poor man's boot, is the very class of boot that is made in the colony, and which this duty will the least interfere with. But it was pointed out to the Commission that a very cheap and inferior class of boots of other descriptions are imported at prices which operate very prejudicially against the local trade; and the effect of the Commission's recommendation is to tax this higher class of boots, generally worn by people in a better position in life, and not by the industrial classes. Slops and apparel are other articles which have been alluded to by several members, and by the Premier also. It may appear on the face of it that the recommendations of the Commission in respect of these articles would have increased the tax on the masses of the people, but it must be borne in mind that under this head a number of articles came in that are not worn by the masses; and the small amount of extra duty which the Commission recommended was more than compensated by the adoption

of lower rates of duty upon piece goods. Tobacco is another item referred to by the Premier. He said the revenue lost very considerably by a reduction in the duty on the manufactured leaf. I cannot help thinking from that, and from the information that is given by those who are interested, that, with the present rate of duty, the local manufacturers also must be losing money.

MR. MONGER: No one has said so here.

MR. HARPER: I have heard it stated, outside the House; and, if that is the case, it would appear that both the country and the manufacturers are losing money. That being so, I should think the best thing the Government could do would be to buy this factory, and have it closed. As to its being a beneficial industry to the country, I think that is open to doubt. Then I come to tinned meat. The hon. member for York made some point when dealing with this item, when he said that the proposed duty would be a direct tax upon the miner, and he appeared to think that was a most injudicious proceeding—although the hon. member did not think the same about flour. Another interesting point with regard to this, is that these miners who, we are told, will protest against this duty upon tinned meat, come from some of the other Australian colonies, where these meats are subjected to a higher duty than we propose. As a matter of fact the duty which the Commission recommended is equal to the lowest rate in Australia—not in Australasia; and if the miner will only take the trouble to look into the matter, he will find that our tariff is as low as that of any of the other colonies, and lower than most of them. A point was made by the hon. member for the Williams, and the hon. member for the Swan, and also the hon. member for York, who all alluded to the reduction recommended in the duty on tea. They all, with one accord, said the consumer would not get the benefit of the reduction, but the trade. I do not know whether we are justified in taking that view. It comes, it must be borne in mind, from the representatives of a section of the community whom I may describe as merchant retailers. The same question arose in England, a few years ago, when the Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed a reduction on tea; the

opposition raised was that the poorer class of people would not benefit by it. But there was very much more truth in the argument there than here, because, as was pointed out at the time, many poor people in England buy their tea in very small quantities, even in penny-worths and halfpenny-worths; and, of course, when sold in such small quantities as that, they were not likely to benefit much by a reduction of 1d. or 2d. in the pound in the duty. But we know that people here, even the poorest classes, do not buy their tea in such small quantities; and it must be self-evident that, with so many cash stores as we now have entering so largely into competition, the price of tea, like all other commodities, will be cut as fine as possible, and we may be sure that the consumer will get the benefit of the reduced rate. If there is any force in the argument of those hon. members, we might just as well have added another penny to the present duty. With regard to sugar, the hon. member for the Williams suggested that, instead of reducing the duty, there should be a drawback, when required for manufacturing purposes. That point came before the Commission, and it was found that the expense of following the sugar from the Customs through the manufactory would be a very expensive process indeed. One or two members, and notably the hon. member for the Swan, stated the other evening—certainly it must have been after a very hasty reading of the report of the Commission, and a very hasty comparison of the recommendations of the Commission and the Government proposals—that, taken altogether, the duties were increased to the masses, more than they were upon luxuries. That is a statement I must take the most strenuous objection to; and I think I can prove that it is altogether fallacious, so far as the recommendations of the Commission are concerned. Take an artisan's cottage, for instance. We proposed a reduction of 50 per cent. on galvanised iron; a reduction of 15 per cent. on matchboard; a reduction of 20 per cent. on kauri pine for his furniture; a reduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on his grate, or stove, or oven; a reduction of 15 per cent. on his bedstead; a reduction of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on his spade or other tool; and a reduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. on his hat and his shirts. That is a pretty good all

round reduction, I submit. Then we come to the wife's department. On bed clothing, carpeting, lamps, brooms, calico, flannel, prints, stuff, shawls, and goods in the piece, we made a reduction of $2\frac{1}{2}$ per cent. all round. On sewing machines we made a reduction of $7\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.; on sugar and kerosene we made a reduction of 50 per cent.; on oatmeal, 33 per cent.; on bran and pollard, 50 per cent.; and on tea, 25 per cent. These are some of the reductions recommended by the Commission in the interests of the masses. How it can be said, in the face of these reductions, that the result of the report of the Commission is to increase the duties upon necessities, rather than upon luxuries, I am at a loss to understand, except that those members who made the statement must have, as I have said, read the report very hastily, or did not take the trouble to compare our recommendations with the existing tariff. There are one or two things which I think should be more specifically mentioned in the schedules, one being leather belting. It was intended by the Commission that leather belting should come in as part of machinery; but the Collector of Customs, in his anxiety to protect the revenue, will probably interpret it, and has interpreted it, as an article that should come in under a higher duty. Another article that ought to be specifically mentioned is timber for cases, which the Commission thought should come in free; and I think there is very strong reason for it. Cases that come here with goods in them are admitted free, and I think it is only right, by way of encouraging local industry, that timber for cases should also come in free. I do not intend at this stage to offer any other remarks, but will reserve any further comments until we get into committee on the Bill.

MR. A. FORREST: I should like to detain the House a short time, to give my idea of what the tariff should be. Before dealing with the subject, I must say I was very much pleased with the selection made by the Government of the gentlemen who sat on this Commission,—all good, and true, and worthy men, I believe; but their known views on the tariff question are so far divergent that the wonder is how they agreed at all. There was the hon. member for North Fremantle,

for one; we all know he is one of the greatest Protectionists we have, yet we find him agreeing to all sorts of things in the way of reducing duties. Then there is the hon. member for the DeGrey, who poses as the champion freetrader in this House; we find him agreeing to all kinds of protective duties. Then there is the hon. member for Geraldton, who also poses as a freetrader, although representing a district that requires a great deal of protection. It certainly surprises me how the members of this Commission agreed upon any point. It must have been simply a question of compromise between them, a sort of give-and-take principle. I do not think that is exactly what we want in framing a tariff. But you can see it, right away all through their report. Take wool bales, for instance; why should they be reduced to 2d.? The hon. member for the DeGrey told us why; it was because they had reduced the duty on bags and sacks for the farmers. I represent a district where they grow wool, but I would not agree to bales being brought down to 2d.; because I think the general run of people who have wool to pack can afford to pay the present rate, 4d. I understand that some of the members of the Commission were not even satisfied with bringing the duty down to 2d.; they wanted wool bales put on the free list. Then there is ale, beer, and stout, in wood. The Commission proposed a duty of 1s. 6d. a gallon; but the Government say, "No, that won't do." I say the Commission there was right. They had a perfect right to increase the price of imported beer, but they should have gone further and put an excise duty of 3d. on the colonial article.

MR. RICHARDSON: We did so. You have not read our report.

MR. A. FORREST: That is all right then; for I do not think they should compel everyone to drink colonial beer. It is not quite good enough. I do not think it would be fair to the community that they should be called upon to pay this large extra duty on imported beer, and let the whole of the money go into the pockets of the local brewers. For that reason, I think there should be an excise duty on the colonial article. I find there was not a single member on

this Commission who is interested in the timber trade. You can see all through their report that the interests of that important industry were entirely disregarded. All the timber mills in the colony, which generally employ a large amount of labour, are idle for want of custom, while shipload after shipload of timber is brought here from other countries, free, and allowed to compete against our own industries.

MR. RICHARDSON: Do you want a bonus?

MR. A. FORREST: No; but a fair and reasonable duty, unless you want to see all the saw mills shut up. If I had been on the Commission, you would have seen some difference in this item of timber; and I am glad that the Government did not agree with the recommendations of the Commission. Calico and other piece goods: I think they are very cheap at the present time, but the Commission want to make them a little cheaper. So far as I know, I do not think the present duty bears very hard upon any portion of the community, as these goods are selling at a very low price. But this further reduction will make a considerable difference in the revenue. Then there is chaff: the Commission recommend a duty of 30s. a ton on chaff. I buy as much chaff as most people, and I do not object to the extra duty myself, though others may. I see the Commission has reduced the duty on currants from 3d. to 2d.,—I don't know why I'm sure. I do not think that currants are a very good thing for anyone to eat. Members may laugh; but I am the father of a very large family, and I do the best I can to keep them from eating currants, because I think they are very indigestible. Yet we find the Commission reducing the duty on them. I regret my hon. friend the Attorney General was not on this Commission; we know he is very fond of dogs; and I see the Commission have put a duty of 20s. on every dog imported into the colony. Coming to flour, which plays a very important part among the industries of the colony, I regret that the Government did not accept the recommendation of the Commission to put an extra duty on the imported article. Considering the glut there is in the local market, and the very low price of the article thrown upon

the market from the Eastern colonies, I regret the action of the Government in this matter. The farming class in this colony is one of the hardest worked and worst paid class in the country, and they deserve all the encouragement we can give them. I am sure the extra duty would have made no difference to the consumer; but, on the other hand, it would have been a great benefit to the farming community. I next come to hides and skins. The Commission recommend a duty of 5 per cent. *ad valorem*; I think green hides could stand 20 per cent. Our local tanneries are full of leather; and I trust the Government will see their way to increase this duty. I was very glad to find the Commission recommending a duty on preserved meat and fresh meat, and that the Government have gone a little further than the Commission in that direction. At the present time we find our own markets full of stock, and it is impossible to sell them; therefore, I think it is quite right that our own people should be protected, both as regards salt, and fresh, and tinned meat, which are driving our own meat out of the market. As to oats: I think it is a pity, when oats can be bought at 2s. 2d. a bushel, that the Commission should have reduced the duty by a 1d. per bushel. The Government have, in this instance, acted wisely, in keeping the duty as it was before. Then we come to perambulators, which is a most necessary article in a man's household. The Commission doubled the duty—I think they must all be bachelors—and I am glad that the Government have reduced it one-half. Another increase which I am glad to see is the increase of 1d. a lb. on salt pork. At present we get a lot of wretched American pork sent here to compete with the local article; and I am glad that the Government have agreed to the recommendation of the Commission to increase the duty. I also notice a slight increase in the duty on snuff. I do not suppose this is an article that produces much revenue; but I think, if we had had our old friend the late Attorney General here, he would have protested very strongly against this increase. As to sugar and tea, I strongly agree with the hon. member for Williams and the hon. member for York, that it was unnecessary to reduce the duties on

these articles, and I am sure the small reduction made will not benefit the consumer. I don't think the revenue can stand all these reductions, in view of the extensive public works which the colony is pledged to. The reduction in the duty on sugar will simply benefit the brewers and the confectioners, but the ordinary consumer will not get a fraction of reduction; and I hope the Government will put this article back in its old position. I am glad to see the Commission recommending an increase in the duty upon sparkling wines; I myself tried to increase it some years ago, and I hope it will be carried. The whole report of the Commission is sparkling with the views of its own members, and their efforts to protect their own interests. Take, for instance, the proposal to reduce the duty on wool bales. Five out of the six members of the Commission are men engaged in, or connected with, pastoral pursuits.

MR. RICHARDSON: Is the hon. member in order?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must not attribute motives.

MR. A. FORREST: Then I will say no more.

MR. DEHAMEL: The tariff of a country is undoubtedly one of the most difficult questions which Parliament can be called upon to deal with. Customs duties are imposed either for revenue purposes, or for purposes of protection. We, in this colony, have very few industries to protect, and therefore duties here are imposed mainly for revenue purposes. I have always held that, in a young country, Free Trade is the best policy; but that, as industries are established, giving employment to a large number of people, it is desirable to have resort to protective duties, but not otherwise. In a few words, what I would like to see is the raw material, that can be manufactured into saleable articles here, introduced into the colony free; and all goods that cannot be produced or manufactured here, and all the necessities of life, admitted at as low an *ad valorem* duty as possible. Unfortunately, however, owing to the loan policy of the Government, we have to raise a large amount of money in order to meet the interest on borrowed capital; and the result is, we must have a revenue from somewhere. The people must be taxed; and the one great object of mem-

bers should be to see that this taxation falls as lightly upon the masses as possible. I have, therefore, to commend, and strongly commend, the policy of the Government in resisting the extra duty of 10s. per ton, recommended by the Commission, on flour. It is quite true that this 10s. a ton may only equal one penny per eight 2lb. loaves, as the Premier told us. But who is to pay this extra duty? You cannot divide that penny for eight loaves into a single loaf, and you do not find the masses buying eight loaves at once, but a single or a couple of loaves, as they require them, paying cash for them. How then is that extra duty going to be paid? Farthings are unknown here, and they cannot be availed of, and the result would be this: the bakers cannot suffer, because the price of bread is very low now, and they could not afford to pay this extra duty; therefore the consumers would have to pay it, and the result would be an increase of a halfpenny in the price of the 2lb. loaf; so that, instead of a penny on eight loaves, the poor man would find it would be 4d. As to the duty on sugar, I certainly agree with the hon. member for the Williams that sugar is an item which could have been better met by giving a drawback to those using it for manufacturing purposes than a reduction in the duty to the extent proposed, because this reduction will not benefit the consumer the least bit in the world. Sugar at present is very cheap indeed. I believe it is sold, practically, at no profit at all, at all the stores, and particularly the cash stores. The few, and not the many, therefore, will be those who will gain by this reduction. But what does it mean, on the other hand? It means a loss to the revenue of no less than £4,300 a year. Therefore I think that in this direction the advice of the Commission was a mistake. Practically, very much the same remarks apply to this vexed question of tea. We heard from the hon. member for Beverley that there was a similar agitation or discussion about the matter when the duty was reduced on tea in the old country, but the hon. member forgot one most important particular; he forgot to tell us how much was taken off. Was it 1d., or 4d., or 6d.? My impression is that it was 6d., but I am only speaking from bare recollection. But here we only propose to re-

duce it by a penny; and I say that won't really benefit people a little bit. Take a pound of tea, and see how long it will last one person, and what would it amount to in a whole year? A mere trifle. But it will amount in a loss to the revenue of £2,500 a year. Another, what I consider a very important item, is leather. I am sorry to say that the leather produced here is of a very inferior description; in fact, it may be pronounced as bad. There is no wear in it; whereas English and colonial leather—that is leather from the other colonies—is good. What is really the most expensive item, whether in the rich or the poor man's household? Boots, without doubt, in this colony. The duty on leather, therefore, in my opinion—following the principle I laid down in opening—should be reduced, instead of being raised as it has been. The boot manufacturers here can turn out as good an article as in any part of the world, if they like; but, the leather being so bad, these boots do not wear well. But, if they are made of imported leather, you will find your boots will wear a long time. Therefore, I say that by reducing, instead of increasing, the duty on leather we should bring about a larger importation of good, durable leather into the colony, to be manufactured into boots; and we should be encouraging a most important industry. What are these imported boots upon which it is proposed to put this duty on? Boots made in Northampton, where the most wretched rubbish in the world are made. Yet this is what we are encouraging by keeping to this ridiculous duty on leather, instead of admitting it duty free, and offering an incentive to the local manufacturers to make really good, serviceable boots. Then I come to textile and woollen piece goods. I consider these also to be a necessity of life; where there are families, you cannot get on without them, and I consider they ought to be introduced at as low an *ad valorem* duty as possible. With regard to preserved meat, some members seem to think that no one but the miner consumes this class of meat. I think I know of someone more important than even the miner in this connection. Are we in earnest in trying to induce settlement? If so, why tax one of the most necessary articles that a pioneer settler must have, in order to carry on his work of pioneering.

MR. RICHARDSON: Nonsense, when he has live sheep.

MR. DEHAMEL: How is the small homesteader, for whom we are making provision this session, to provide himself with sheep? He is a man coming here with little or nothing, and his land will be unfenced, and how is that man to keep sheep to supply himself and his family with meat in the bush? It is absolutely necessary that he should keep his strength up, to enable him to grapple with the trees on his land, and, to do that, he must have meat, and the only meat he can really find within his reach is preserved meat, and on that we are putting a heavy tax. I think this is a duty which ought certainly to be struck off. It is a duty upon a positive necessity to a large portion of the community. Then we come to beer. If we increase the duty on English beer, and give a drawback on sugar to the local brewer, I agree with the Commission that there ought to be an excise duty on the locally produced article. In England, people would not drink the beer that is sent out here; it is specially prepared for exportation. It would not keep otherwise, but it would not be touched in the old country, and I am certain that good colonial beer is far more wholesome and far better for the people than this specially prepared beer brewed in England for exportation. I therefore think we might well encourage the production of colonial beer by increasing the tax on the English article, coupled with an excise duty on the colonial article. There is one point upon which no member has touched, and I am somewhat surprised at it, that is, spirits. I have a very grave objection to this proposed increase of 1s. a gallon on spirits. The duty now, nominally, is 15s., but in reality it is 17s. I will show you how. Spirits under proof and up to proof pays 15s., but spirits over proof pays a percentage over in accordance with its strength. Case spirits is usually introduced into this colony 14 per cent. over proof, so that the duty in reality is one-seventh more than it appears to be on these case spirits. I say we ought to encourage the introduction of these case spirits, which are the purest introduced, being untampered with. But by putting on this extra duty we are shutting out the best article for the consumer, whose interests it is our duty to protect. At

present nine-tenths of the spirits sold here is simply "doctored," and I think if the Government had appointed an inspector to test the spirits sold by publicans they would have done the public a good service. If tested, and found not to be the genuine article, the publican should be prosecuted; and serve him right. There are only two other items I wish to refer to. I am glad to see that the Government have accepted the recommendation of the Commission to reduce the duty on corrugated iron and fencing wire; and that they propose to admit immigrants' baggage and effects duty free, up to £50. I have long urged this in this House, and I am very glad it has at last been done. I am only sorry that the Government did not find their backs strong enough to have adopted the recommendation of the Commission in full, and increase the amount to £100. I can only say, in conclusion, that I trust the efforts of the committee will be turned in the direction I have indicated, particularly as regards reducing the duties upon the actual necessities of life. We are undoubtedly a heavily taxed community, and it is our duty to alleviate this taxation, by reducing the prices of necessities as far as it is possible.

MR. SOLOMON: The object of the Commission appointed to deal with this question was of a two-fold character: in the first place, it was to alter the tariff so as to remove certain anomalies, and, in the next place, it was to provide a tariff that would encourage local industry, and so keep money from going out of the colony, as it has been going for years past, to our serious loss. In all efforts at adjusting fiscal duties there are bound to be some anomalies, and it is impossible to please everybody; but I think the members of the Commission, so far as their work is concerned, are to be congratulated, on the whole, upon the result of their labours. It is not my intention to go into all the items at the present stage, as they will all come before us again in committee; but there are one or two which I should like to refer to, as they appear to me an anomaly. I notice that some classes of boots are placed on the specific list, while others are liable to an *ad valorem* duty of 15 per cent. I think disputes will probably arise when importers are clearing these goods, owing

to this distinction. While men's leather boots are to pay 18s. per dozen, and women's 10s., and children's 6s., and all other boots, shoes, and slippers are to pay 15 per cent. *ad valorem*, it occurs to me that these differential rates will only lead to confusion. We know that a great number of the better class of boots are not made entirely of leather, the uppers being of cloth; and it may be a nice question for the Collector of Customs to decide to what category boots of that class belong. I notice that men's leather boots, working-men's boots, are taxed to the extent of 1s. 6d. a pair, whereas a better class of boot, coming under the *ad valorem* list, invoiced at 10s., would only have to pay a duty of 1s. 3d., according to this tariff. I think that is an anomaly. It is not fair to the working man, on the one hand, and it will not tend to encourage the manufacture in this colony of the better class of boots, on the other. The same with saddles. There is a duty of 15s. each on one line of saddles; then, lower down on the list, we come to saddlery and harness, on which the duty is 15 per cent. *ad valorem*. What is the difference between harness made out of the colony and saddles made out of the colony, and why should not the same amount of protection be provided in one case as well as the other? Some of the commoner saddles are invoiced at from 25s. and upwards, others are invoiced at £5 or £6; yet there is a duty of 15s. on each saddle, irrespective of the invoice cost. That also seems an anomaly. Then I come to the item of tinned meat. This is an article universally used, not alone by the miner, but also by the teamster and everyone who has occasion to travel about.

MR. A. FORREST: The hospitals are full of people who eat tinned meat.

MR. SOLOMON: People who travel in the bush cannot carry fresh meat with them, and they must fall back upon preserved meat. It is a very necessary article of consumption in a country like this, and I think it is a mistake to tax it too heavily. With regard to piece goods, I think every encouragement should be given to those who make up, and employ labour, in the colony, and that there should be a wider margin in favour of the manufacturer. I think these might fairly go on the 5 per cent. list, as re-

commended by the Commission, instead of the 10 per cent. list as proposed by the Government. As to spirits of wine, I am glad this has received the attention of the Commission, and that the Government have accepted the recommendation of the Commission. I asked for a return the other day showing the quantity of spirits of wine that had been cleared at the Customs during last year, and up to the present time in this year, the return to show how much was cleared for "medicinal purposes," and how much for "other purposes." Members are aware that under the existing tariff spirits of wine imported for medicinal purposes is only liable to a duty of 12½ per cent. *ad valorem*, while if imported for other purposes the duty is 20s. a gallon. I had been led to believe that a large quantity was cleared as for medicinal purposes which was never intended for medicinal purposes, and that in this way the revenue was considerably defrauded. The return laid on the table the other day shows that, during 1892, the quantity cleared for "medicinal purposes" was 79 casks of 35 gallons each, or 2,765 gallons, valued at £344, upon which the duty, at 12½ per cent., amounted to £43. During the same period the quantity cleared for other or ordinary purposes was only 330 gallons, which, at 20s. per gallon, amounted to £330. From the 1st January to the 29th August this year, the quantity cleared for "medicinal purposes" was 34 casks, equal to 1,190 gallons, the duty paid upon which, at 12½ per cent., was £22 2s. 2d., while the quantity cleared for ordinary purposes was 30 gallons, the duty upon which, at 20s. a gallon, was £30. The total amount of duty paid upon spirits of wine during the twenty months referred to was £65 2s. 2d. for medicinal purposes, and £360 for other purposes, or £425 in all. The total quantity cleared was 4,315 gallons, which, if it had paid the ordinary duty of 20s. a gallon, would have yielded a revenue of £4,315, so that was a loss to the revenue of £3,889 17s. 10d. Under the new tariff the duty is to be 20s. all round, and I trust the Government will make the alteration at once, for there can be no doubt that the revenue has been largely defrauded in the past. I now come to the item of tobacco. I have no wish to pose as the champion of any

particular industry, or to interfere unduly with any source of revenue; but, if the House will allow me, I will make a few remarks upon the duty upon unmanufactured tobacco, in reply to the observations that were made by the Premier when dealing with this question, more particularly in reference to the tobacco factory established at Fremantle. This factory was started in 1890, and was in full swing in the following year. It required a large amount of capital to start it, what with the purchase of land, the erection of buildings and machinery, the payment of wages, the duty on the unmanufactured leaf, and other expenses incidental to the establishment of a new industry; and I am credibly informed that no less than £17,000 was expended in this way by the owners of this factory. They employed a considerable number of hands—over 40, with their families—who, in their turn also contributed to the revenue. Everything was done that could be done to show that the owners of this factory had come here to settle, and to establish an important local industry in our midst. They did so in the belief that the duty upon the unmanufactured article, which was then 1s. per lb., would not be interfered with; but, after three months starting, this duty was suddenly raised to 2s. a lb., which, of course, made a vast difference to the manufacturers. [THE PREMIER: No doubt.] The annual expenditure of the firm at that time, in the way of workmen and their wages, was about £5,000, but, as the result of the increased duty, and its effect upon the business of the firm, they now only employ about one-half the number they formerly employed. There is another thing to be considered: the price of tobacco was considerably reduced by this factory, which would tend to increase the consumption. They reduced the price 6d. a lb., in view of the promise that there would be no increase in the duty on leaf tobacco. But in that they were disappointed. I do not think such treatment as that, before even the industry was well started, is any encouragement to capitalists. I could have understood such action, after two or three years, when the factory was firmly established and a flourishing concern. In Victoria and New South Wales, and also in Queensland, the tobacco leaf is grown, and it is used in the local

factories, thus giving the manufacturers there a great advantage, even where they pay excise duty. In South Australia, as in this colony, only the imported leaf is used, so that it will be fairer to make a comparison between these two colonies than the others. Although the manufacturing industry has been established for many years in Adelaide, the difference in the duty between the raw leaf and the manufactured article at present is 1s. 1½d.; it is 1s. 7½d. on the raw material and 2s. 9d. on the made tobacco. For several years, while the industry was in its infancy, the difference in favour of the manufacturer was much larger. Here the heavy duty is simply crushing this young industry. I am informed that the nett profit last year was only £280, so that the Premier must have been in error when he talked about thousands of pounds going into the pockets of the manufacturers that ought to go into the public chest. The Premier referred to the falling off in the revenue in 1892, but that was not due to this factory. The increase of consumption of the imported article in 1892 should have been quite 10 per cent., because the sales at the factory that year decreased considerably. The Premier made out that the loss to the revenue that year was £9,474; but, surely, this factory can only be responsible for what it uses itself. The quantity of leaf cleared in 1891 and 1892 was 165,202 lbs., of which 9,659 lbs. paid 1s. duty (which was the duty when the factory started), and the balance paid a duty of 2s., or a total of £16,037 5s., as against £24,780 6s., which would have been received if the full duty of 3s. had been paid, as on manufactured tobacco. This shows a loss to the revenue of £8,743, instead of £9,474, or a difference of £731, so far as the factory is concerned. But the factory paid duties on other lines, such as machinery and materials, which, including the duties on local purchases, amounted to about £3,050. During those two years the firm also paid £7,250 in wages. They also reduced the price of tobacco by 6d. a lb., which was a gain to the smoking community of about £4,000. I do not think it is right to charge this factory with the apparent decrease in importations, during those years, to the extent mentioned by the Premier. I think

there must be a screw loose somewhere. It looks to me very much as if there was a good deal of smuggling going on. We know there was a large increase of population, about 5,000, during that period, yet the sales at the factory decreased, and the importations also fell off. I have heard of tobacco being sold at Bunbury at 2s. 9d. a lb. in wholesale quantities. I hope the Premier is not going to blame this factory for that. It seems to me that the Government should look somewhere else than to this factory for the loss in the revenue on the imported article. The Premier told us that he does not look upon tobacco manufacturing as a local industry; he said he called an industry a local industry when the raw material was grown in the colony. I may point out that the establishment of factories has led to the growth of leaf tobacco in the other colonies and elsewhere; and, until they are established, it is not much use attempting to grow the raw material. I am informed that a reduction in the duty on leaf tobacco would, so far as this one factory is concerned, result in the immediate introduction of at least 15 more workmen, with their families, which would be a welcome addition to our population. I hope when we get into committee on this Bill there will be a desire shown to encourage this local factory to a larger extent than it has been encouraged in the past. I do not know that I have any further remarks to offer on the Tariff at the present stage; when in committee I may have something further to say.

MR. MOLLOY: After all the eloquent speeches we have heard this evening, and also the other evening, I do not intend to weary the House by detaining it at any length, at this late hour. But I may say that, on this subject, I am in accord with the main principles laid down by the hon. member for Albany (Mr. DeHamel): I consider that the raw material required for the purpose of protecting local industries should be admitted as near duty free as possible.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We must have revenue.

MR. MOLLOY: I am quite aware that it is necessary, for purposes of revenue, that we should derive so much annually from Customs receipts. I do not object to taxation through the Customs; what I complain about is the incidence of that

taxation. I think the burden of taxation should be distributed as equitably as possible amongst all classes, and that the least burden should fall upon those who are the least able to bear it. I notice from this tariff that butter, cheese and potatoes—items of everyday consumption—are as heavily taxed as ever; yet I have heard no protest on this score from those who pose here as the “poor man’s friend.” If it were not for the imported articles, we should often be actually in want of these articles of daily consumption. Although there has been a protective duty on potatoes for many years, it has not had the effect of hindering or checking importations, and, as I have said, if it were not for these importations, we should often have been actually left in want of these necessities. In regard to butter, it is notorious that even at the present time this article is not available from local production, and we have to depend principally upon the imported article. With regard to cheese, it is also notorious that nearly all that is consumed in the colony has to be imported. All these are what may be called necessities of life, especially with the poorer classes of the community; and it is a heavy tax upon the people of the colony that there should be these high duties upon such articles of consumption. Piece goods for clothing: the Commission recommended that these should be placed on the 5 per cent. list, but the Government have put them on the 10 per cent. list. If there is any need of protection at all for those who make up these things in the colony, and if it is the wish of the Government to encourage the industries of the colony, so as to create employment, they should have adopted the Commission’s recommendation. I notice, on the other hand, that the Government propose to admit uniforms duty free. If they are in earnest, I think the Government ought to lead in this matter, and encourage the manufacture of this line of goods in the colony, instead of importing them duty free. I think the proposed duty of 20 per cent. on wagons is too high, and also the proposed duty of 15s. each on riding saddles. I do not consider that such heavy duties upon such articles as these, in a community like ours, can be productive of any benefit; I think it is carrying the

principle of protection too far, as regards both these items. The different duties on leather appear to me anomalous, to say the least. It is the avowed intention of the Government to protect local industries as far as possible, yet they allow uppers for boots to come in at 10 per cent., while they impose a duty of 15 per cent. upon the manufactured leather from which these uppers are made. It is said this is required in the interests of the tanners; but the shoemakers say it is taxing them for a class of leather that cannot be made in the colony. With regard to flour, the Commission proposed a higher duty than at present, but the Government propose to leave the duty as it is, and I think they are to be commended for it. This duty was only levied, some years ago, for the purpose of revenue, when there was a deficiency to be made up in the public revenue, and it was only intended to remain in force for three years; but it has never been reduced from that day to this. At that time we were paying £3 a ton for cartage from York to Perth, but, since then, we have provided our farmers with improved facilities for sending their produce to market. It was said that when we did this, our farmers would be able to compete with the South Australian farmers, and that there would be no further need for a protective duty on flour. But such has not been the case. The freight was reduced from £3 to £1 or 15s. per ton, and yet we find the same duty in force; and they are not satisfied with that, but want to increase it, and this Commission actually proposed that there should be a higher duty than there was before we provided our farmers with railway facilities. I admit it is necessary that revenue should be produced—apart from the principles of Free Trade and Protection—for the purposes of the Government of the country; but, as I said before, we should see that the incidence of taxation is equally distributed, and not be made to press unduly upon the consuming portion of the population. Articles of daily consumption among the masses of the people should be taxed as lightly as possible, and articles of luxury taxed correspondingly higher. With regard to imported beer, I notice it is proposed to increase the duty upon this article. I do not complain particularly myself about this increase, but I

may point out that draught English beer is an article of daily consumption amongst the poorer classes—perhaps more so than with the richer classes; and I think this extra duty will press somewhat heavily upon the industrial classes of the community. It is true it is said that the colonial article is more wholesome. As to that, I am not competent to express any opinion; but this I do know that it is not fair that one particular industry, the local brewing industry, should have such an advantage at the expense and to the detriment of a large portion of the population. If it is necessary that the local brewers should be protected by having an extra duty on imported beer, and also a reduction of £2 per ton on sugar, I think it is only fair that the revenue should derive some equivalent for these concessions, in the shape of an excise duty. In fact, I am opposed to this wholesale reduction in the duty on sugar, because I do not think it will benefit the ordinary consumer in any way.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I think that one of the most difficult things for any Government to deal with is an alteration of the tariff of the country. The Commission appointed to deal with this vexed question are entitled to all credit for the time and labour they bestowed upon the work entrusted to them. They have taken great pains, and endeavoured to place before the Government and before Parliament a tariff which, according to their views, would meet all conflicting interests. But, as neither the Commission nor the Government have dealt with the question either from a Free Trade point of view or a Protectionist point of view, I am afraid the result will be that they will give satisfaction to no party. If they had dealt with it from one point of view they would at any rate have given satisfaction to one party. That is my main objection to this report of the Commission. I say that as a free trader. I cannot help thinking that when we are dealing with the question of the tariff, we are too much inclined to deal with it from our personal point of view—that is, where it affects our own pockets—rather than upon broad principles. We may not intend to do so, but self-interest always creeps in more or less. I notice by the evidence taken before the Commission that certain recommendations were made by the representatives of

certain industries in favour of protection—that is, the protection of their own particular industries—to the extent of from 20 to 75 per cent. Some of them thought if a duty of 70 per cent. were imposed, they might be able to hold their own. That certainly was a modest admission. I am afraid that the Commission gave too much weight to these representations. For instance, if a bootmaker or a tanner came before them and acknowledged that he could not produce or obtain leather in the colony as good as the imported leather, yet that man wanted protection for the colonial-made article. And so it went on, all through the piece. The fact of the matter is, many of these industries, and particularly the tanning industry, from some reason or other, cannot produce an article equal to the imported article; and unless they can do that, it is preposterous to ask that a heavy protective duty should be imposed upon the imported article, especially, as in the case of the better class of leather, when that article cannot be produced in the colony. As I have already said, there is a great tendency when dealing with this tariff question to consider our own interests first, and the interests of the public afterwards. That is why we have such differences of opinion in dealing with these items. One member says there ought not to be such a high duty on essences; another says that lime juice ought to be protected; another wants a duty on timber; another objects to a duty on wool-bales; another wants a heavier duty on flour; and so it goes on. I am not going to say whether any of these members are in any way interested in these articles; I am only saying that it is very difficult to divest yourself of self-interest in these matters. A great deal has been said about the tax on flour, and the proposal of the Commission to make it 30s. instead of 20s. For my own part, I am very pleased that the Government in their wisdom reduced it to 20s. Until our millers, like our tanners, can produce an article that is as wholesome and will keep as well as the imported article, I think it would be better they should have no protection at all. I say that in the interests of the consumers, the great bulk of the community. If we really want to assist the farming industry, we should do so by allowing them to im-

port all their agricultural machinery free of duty, and give them low freight rates on our railways, and help them in that way, and every other legitimate way that is possible, without taxing the whole community for their benefit. If we assist them by giving them railway facilities, and there is a loss in working those railways, they will have to pay their share of that loss. But to go and put a heavy duty on flour, and make the entire population suffer for their benefit, is neither fair nor just. It has been proved that the flour produced here will not keep at the North, like the imported flour.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is not correct.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I am in a position to prove that it is correct. I know an instance where a local roller mill sent up two bags to the DeGrey station, and asked them to give it a fair trial. Those two bags were put side by side with some Adelaide flour; and, in six months, the local flour was unfit for consumption, while the Adelaide flour was good and sound. Then there is a very large consuming population on our goldfields, men who go out prospecting for months at a time; why should these men be compelled to take with them flour that will not keep? It is not a question of whether the duty is £1 per ton or £2 per ton; these men want something they can rely upon keeping sound and sweet. I hope and trust that in a short time our local mills will prove that they can produce flour that will keep for any time, in any part of the colony. When they do that, and the local supply is equal to the demand, there can be no objection to a protective duty in their favour. I notice that though the Commission and the Government have endeavoured in every instance to protect the farmer at the expense of the consumer, they have done very little for the pastoral industry. I do not want to pit one against the other, but I cannot help pointing out one inconsistency, and that is with regard to wool bales. We find corn sacks reduced to 5 per cent., while the tax on wool bales is equivalent to 20 per cent. When I purchase chaff, I have to pay 6d. each for the bags, or return them; but the pastoralist gets no returns whatever for his wool bales. Notwithstanding the assistance we have already given our farmers

in the way of railway facilities and a duty on all farm produce, they are still dissatisfied, and their cry is for still more protection. I think we have protected them very well so far, and it is about time that we protected the general public. With regard to the increased duty on imported beer, I cannot agree with the necessity for this extra duty. According to the evidence of the manager of one brewery, their output of colonial beer has increased 100 per cent. during the last twelve months, and is likely to increase still more. That being the case, where is the necessity for further protection? Another brewery, we know, has been paying dividends for years past, high dividends too, so that there is really no necessity for protecting the local brewing industry; and I hope that when this item comes before the committee, a majority will strike out this extra duty on imported beer. I think it is a pity that the Commission and the Government did not give less consideration to industries that really did not require it, and consider the revenue a little more than they did. I think, so far as the consumer is concerned, that the reduction in sugar and tea will make very little difference to the individual consumer, while, on the other hand, it will make a great deal of difference to the revenue. A quarter of a pound of tea a week for each individual—which is a fair allowance—will only make a difference of one farthing to the individual; it will make no perceptible difference in fact. But, taking the whole consuming population of the colony, it will be found that this reduction in the tea duty will make a difference of some thousands of pounds to the revenue. The same with regard to sugar, which is very cheap at present, and not likely to be any cheaper for the consumer notwithstanding the reduction in the duty. It will be a benefit to the brewers, no doubt, but to the ordinary consumer it will make no difference whatever, while at the same time the revenue must suffer very considerably. In fact, if it were not for the alteration made in the tariff as regards spirits of wine, I should like to see this Bill put in the waste-paper basket, for I do not think it is any improvement upon the old tariff. I feel certain it will give satisfaction to no one, except a favoured few. My principal objection to it is that it aims at pro-

tecting industries whose products are not in any way equal to the imported article, and yet the public have to put up with it. There is not a tailor in the colony capable of making an article that will compete with the imported; the same with the shoemaker, and the tanner, the same with our foundries, and the same with our flour. Yet all these are protected at the expense of the general body of the community. That seems to me to be the nett result of this new tariff.

MR. SIMPSON: I had a seat on this Commission. Some people might prefer to live under a benevolent despot like the hon. member who has just spoken, when we see the result of the deliberations of the Commission, which has exhibited a careful knowledge of economy, and has presented a revised tariff—admittedly an expediency tariff—treated as we find the Government have done in this Bill. We have had political economy in various forms, to-night. One hon. member would compel a man to line his house with jarrah. I entirely agree with the hon. member for the Swan, in saying we are taking too much money out of the pockets of the people at the present time. The Premier has said this is not his child, that it belongs to the Commission; but he took the brains out of the child and then turned it adrift in the Assembly, a brainless thing. We say that such articles as clothing and cotton piece goods should be admitted at 5 per cent., yet the Government have not accepted that recommendation, but have placed them in the 10 per cent. schedule, while at the same time they would admit such goods as forfars, dowlas, and flax sheeting at 5 per cent.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): They are used in saddlery, I expect.

MR. SIMPSON: That shows the exact knowledge the Government have exercised in dealing with the suggestions made by the Commission. The Premier also told us this was an unconstitutional way of dealing with alterations in the tariff. I say the Government put into the instruction which they gave to the Commission a condition for which they had no authority from this House, namely, that the revision should be made "with due regard to the revenue." We also find that the new proposals of the Government in this Bill will impose on the

people thousands of pounds of additional taxation. I am inclined to think that the Government, after receiving the recommendations of the Commission, called in the assistance of the Collector of Customs, and have added to some of the duties and altered others, upon no basis of political economy, and without cogent reasons. It has been stated that the reduction on sugar, as recommended, will be of no benefit to the retail consumer; but if it be admitted that duties are paid eventually by the consumer—and that is the keystone of the arch—then if the duty on sugar be reduced, it is logical to conclude that the consumer must eventually get the benefit. We have had orations on the tobacco industry; but I have heard the same tobacco manufacturing firm ask for concessions in New South Wales, crave for pity in Victoria, cry about their grievances in South Australia, and then they come to Western Australia and point out that the tariff is going to ruin them. I can remember the head of the firm beginning in a small way; now the same firm can afford to build large tobacco factories in Sydney and Melbourne on land worth £2,000 a foot frontage. This question of tariff revision largely resolves itself into one of beer and boots; and I say that wherever the Government have altered the recommendations of the Commission, they have altered them for the worse. They would have secured revenue sufficient, from the import and excise duties on beer, to make up the losses on other articles which the Commission recommended for reduction. The reduction on kerosene oil which was recommended would appreciably affect the household expenses in all parts of the colony. As to jarrah timber, the member for the Murray is desirous that it should be branded for export; and the member for West Kimberley wants only jarrah to be used, branded or unbranded. We have heard much about local flour not being serviceable in the North-West; but I have tried to find out, and am assured that our flour is as good as any imported flour. My objection to any increased duty on flour is that the local farmer will never see a shilling of the increase.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): But the Commission recommended the increase.

MR. SIMPSON: My objection to the increase is, that it will be a miller's profit. I say there is more Adelaide wheat ground in Bunbury than there is wheat of this colony's growth; and recently wheat has been obtained from Dongarra, to grind in Bunbury. This beneficent Government has thought well to reduce the duty to a bare revenue tariff, on all the tools of trade, but when it comes to the explosive materials used by miners, you must charge as high as 10 per cent. This is an alteration made by the Ministry, and why? The question of the duty on tinned meats is a grave one for people living on the back blocks, because they cannot obtain fresh meat. Do we realise how much the duty is increased? It is increased from 7d. to 3s. per dozen 2lb. tins—an increase of 500 per cent.! Men in the back country cannot get fresh vegetables, and must use preserved vegetables; and we find the Government have increased the duty on them from 5 to 10 per cent. I am sorry to see that, whenever the Government have departed from the recommendations of the Commission, they have discarded the incidence of taxation—that is to say, the population of the colony should contribute towards the cost of government in proportion to their means. As to boots—

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): We don't touch them; they are the same as the Commission recommended.

MR. SIMPSON: Men's boots from 6s. to 9s. a pair, and men's superior boots that cost up to a guinea, have to pay the same duty—is that putting the incidence of the tax on a sound basis? An *ad valorem* duty on boots would be a great deal better, and I do not agree with the Government proposal on this item. I shall support, with two exceptions, the recommendations of the Commission.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): In his usual oracular manner, which is so becoming, the hon. member for Geraldton, with the wisdom which always characterises his utterances, has twitted the Government with want of knowledge in dealing with the tariff. He denies to members of the Government, some of whom have had ten times more experience of these matters than he has had, that commercial knowledge of tariffs which is desirable when dealing with

alterations. The utterances of the hon. member may be worth a great deal, in his own estimation, but will hardly be so in the estimation of hon. members who have had more experience in tariff matters. It was interesting to hear the hon. member allude to beer, and he would lead us to believe that the duty on this article is a light one, in comparison with the duty in the whole of Australia; but the fact is that in no other part of Australia is the duty so high as 1s. 6d. a gallon on beer. I find, elsewhere, the duty is 1s. and 1s. 3d., but in no single instance is it as high as 1s. 6d.

MR. RICHARDSON: In Victoria and Tasmania it is 1s. 6d.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): The duty here will be the highest in the colonies, if the Government proposal is carried. To carry out a system of excise would require officers and expensive machinery; therefore the Government have thought it better to increase the import duty to a moderate extent, and not to impose an excise duty on beer. This import duty will give a certain amount of assistance to the local breweries. [MR. RICHARDSON: They don't require it.] If they don't require it, we had better bring down the duty to the old rate. Why did the Commission recommend a still further increase? [MR. HAEFER: For revenue purposes.] A great deal has been said about the principles which actuated the Commission in making their recommendations, and especially those which the Government have not adopted; but what principle actuated them in proposing to increase the duty on flour by 10s. a ton, and reducing the duty on pollard and bran by 10s. a ton? The principle came in thus: flour was food for men and masses; bran and pollard, for beasts and asses. Passing now to boots, the recommendations of the Commission display a great amount of wisdom, and especially on the part of the hon. member for Geraldton as a member of the Commission. I understand him to say now that he did not agree to their recommendations as to boots; but if he disagreed with the majority, why not add a rider to the report? He talked to-night as a member representing Geraldton, and not as a Commissioner entirely in accord with the report which bears his name as

one of those recommending it. Well, in the case of boots, the duty is heavy on the low class boots used principally by labouring men, and the higher priced boots are to be admitted at a less duty than before. In the other colonies it will be found that certain classes of boots are admitted at certain rates. In this colony, the duty on low class boots is to be 1s. 6d. a pair, and the same on gentlemen's riding boots. I do think it would be better to have a high *ad valorem* duty on boots. As to women's boots, those persons who are engaged in the local manufacture of these articles are also engaged in importing them, because ladies' boots cannot be made well in this colony. The Government have been twitted all round with having departed from some of the recommendations of the Commission which the Government had appointed; but surely the Commission was not appointed to override the responsibility of the Government in bringing in a Tariff Bill! Who will have to bear the responsibility of the working of the tariff, after it is adopted? We are twitted with making alterations in some cases, and twitted for not making alterations in other cases. It is difficult to revise a tariff in such a manner as to please every person or every class, because each man wants to have everything he produces taxed to the highest extent, and everything he uses should be admitted at the lowest rate. Referring now to sugar and tea, if I had been on the Commission I would have opposed any reduction of duty on sugar and tea, because the reduction in price to the consumer will be very slight, while the loss of revenue will be considerable. In order to assist one or two comparatively petty industries—[MR. RICHARDSON: No; the consumers only]—the Commission have reduced the duty on sugar £2 a ton, making a difference of about £5,000 a year to the revenue; and the loss of revenue caused by the reduction on tea will be something like £2,500 a year. There has not been any public outcry for these reductions on sugar and tea. It was a gratuitous thing on the part of the Commission to recommend the reduction on these two items, which will cause a loss of revenue to the amount of over £7,000 a year, and this large loss has to be made up in other ways. If you do not get the difference through the Customs,

you will have to get it by taxing land or property or incomes. It is unfair for an hon. member to twit the Government with ignorance on the subject, an ignorance which cannot be proved. I think the local tailors will have some cause of complaint, for you have assisted the shoemaker, the saddler, the carpenter, and the cabinetmaker; therefore why not the tailor? The tailoring industry should receive some encouragement in this tariff. It is a misfortune of the system that when once you commence protection, you do not know where to draw the line in order to make everything consistent. I give all credit to the Commission for the manner in which they have done their work, which, on the whole, reflects credit upon them. Spirits: in all the other colonies, the duty is 14s. or 15s. a gallon, and I say that 16s. a gallon, as proposed here, is very high. The person who retails the spirit will give you an inferior quality or a reduced quantity. Those persons who think they are putting down drunkenness and promoting a higher morality by putting an extra duty on spirits are going the wrong way about it, and I say they lack experience. My opinion is that very high duties on spirits will either tend to encourage smuggling, or cause the quality of liquor to be adulterated by the retailer, or the quantity will be reduced. I do not object to the increase on imported wines.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11-26 p.m.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 19th September, 1893.

Spirituous Liquors: analysis of—Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act Amendment Bill: recommitment—Engine Sparks Fire Prevention Bill: committee—Fremantle Water Supply Bill: second reading—Loan Bill: second reading: committee—Hon. J. A. Wright: Leave of Absence to—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

SPIRITUOUS LIQUORS—ANALYSIS OF.

THE HON. J. MORRISON asked the Colonial Secretary whether the Government ever have analyses made of the wines and spirituous liquors sold in the various hotels, public-houses, clubs, &c.; if so, when the last analyses were made, and what was the result?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) replied:—Last year analyses of the fermented and spirituous liquors sold in the publichouses in Perth were made by the Government Analyst, and in many cases the liquor was found to be adulterated; but owing to the small quantities analysed, and to the fact that the samples had not been taken in such a way as to allow of a comparison after analysis, the Government did not deem it advisable to take any steps to prosecute. I may add, for the information of the hon. member, that a discussion on this subject took place in the Legislative Assembly last year, and he will find the debate at page 186 of *Hansard*.

WINES, BEER, AND SPIRIT SALE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Order of the Day for the consideration of the committee's report on this Bill having been read, the Colonial Secretary (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the Order of the Day be discharged, and that the Bill be recommitted.

Question put and passed.

IN COMMITTEE.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that the word "notice," in the eighth line of clause 4,