

"We desire to express to Your Excellency our appreciation of the able and timely efforts you have made to further the cause of Self-Government.

"It is satisfactory to know that active preparations are in progress for working our deposits of gold, of tin, and of coal, and we share in the hope that in a short time the mines will be yielding a rich result.

"The opening of the Great Southern Railway is a source of gratification to all, and must result in promoting settlement and the progress of the Colony.

"We rejoice in the prospect of a good season to the various interests of the Colony, and we trust with Your Excellency that our labors may, under Providence, promote the general welfare."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) moved that the Address, as read, be now adopted.

Agreed to.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) moved that the Address-in-reply be presented to His Excellency by Mr. Speaker and other members, on Thursday, 25th July, at a quarter past twelve o'clock.

Agreed to.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past eight o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Thursday, 25th July, 1889.

Presentation of the Address-in-Reply.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

PRESENTATION OF THE ADDRESS-
IN-REPLY.

THE SPEAKER and other members of the House proceeded to Government

House, in order to present the Address-in-reply to His Excellency the Governor.

Upon their return,

THE SPEAKER informed the House that he had presented the Address, to which His Excellency had been pleased to reply as follows: "Mr. Speaker, and Gentlemen of the Legislative Council: I beg to thank you for your cordial Address in reply to my Speech."

The House adjourned at half-past twelve o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Friday, 26th July, 1889.

Mr. J. J. Harwood engaged in doing private work—Kimberley Mail Services: Correspondence relating to—Leave of Absence to Mr. Shenton—Accident on the Eastern Railway: "Woods v. Commissioner of Railways": Commission to inquire into—Consideration of Message No. 1: Passage of Constitution Bill through the House of Commons—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

MR. HARWOOD DOING PRIVATE WORK.

MR. KEANE, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works, whether the statement which had appeared in the public press, to the effect that "Mr. J. J. Harwood, of the Public Works Office, is now engaged upon preparing plans for a large bonded warehouse for a private firm or company at Fremantle," is correct; and, if such was the case, what had become of the instructions given by the Governor after a deputation of local architects had waited upon His Excellency?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. J. A. Wright): Mr. Harwood is engaged in preparing plans for a warehouse at Fremantle. The in-

structions given by His Excellency on the 3rd December, 1888, have been strictly complied with.

MAIL SERVICES, KIMBERLEY GOLDFIELDS.

MR. A. FORREST moved that a copy of all correspondence with reference to certain alterations as to mail services between Derby and the goldfields, and Wyndham and the goldfields, be laid on the table. He moved for the correspondence because he intended to move a resolution on the subject.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said there would be no objection to lay the correspondence on the table, as soon as the mail from Kimberley arrived.

Motion put and passed.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE FOR MR. SHENTON.

On the motion of Mr. VENN, leave of absence was granted to Mr. Shenton.

ACCIDENT ON EASTERN RAILWAY: (WOODS v. WRIGHT).

MR. KEANE, in accordance with notice, moved that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, requesting him to appoint an independent Commission to inquire into the cause of the late accident on the Eastern Railway, owing to which the plaintiff Woods obtained £800 damages and costs in the Supreme Court; such inquiry being deemed necessary in the interests of the public as of the Railway Department. The hon. member said that in moving this motion he should like to state that he did so as much in the interests of the Railway Department as in the interests of the general public; and he was sure that members would agree with him that it was very necessary that this inquiry should be made. He also thought the Commissioner of Railways would agree with him that it was usual in cases of this kind where an accident had occurred that when an official inquiry had been made, the result of that inquiry should be made known, so that the public might know who was responsible for the accident, and whether it had been caused through neglect or was simply unavoidable. The public in the case of the late accident

were left in ignorance as to the cause, as no witnesses for the defence were called during the action in the Supreme Court, and the public were naturally anxious to know how the accident had come to happen, and, if there was blame, that the blame should be placed on the right shoulders; if it was the fault of any officer of the Railway Department, that the officer who was responsible, whether he was an officer of high degree or of low degree, should bear the blame. He thought it was very necessary that the public should know whether there was any blame at all attached to the officers of the department, or whether the accident was a pure misadventure. He did not bring the motion forward in any spirit of hostility against the Railway Department, but simply as a public duty.

MR. VENN seconded the motion.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. J. A. Wright) said he had no objection whatever to the address being presented; and, in the event of any inquiry being directed, he should be happy to do his utmost to throw any light he could upon the unfortunate circumstances.

Motion put and passed.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT: DELAY IN PASSING THE BILL THROUGH THE HOUSE OF COMMONS (MESSAGE No. 1).

MR. BURT: Sir—On consideration of this order of the day, I desire to say a few words, and to move a resolution which I trust will meet with acceptance on all sides of the House. The Message from His Excellency the Governor, it will be recollected, informed this House that he had received a telegraphic despatch from the Secretary of State, in reference to the Constitution Bill, in these words: "In view of opposition to Western Australian Responsible Government Bill on both sides of the House, and period of session as well as necessary work to be accomplished, much regret that impossible to pass Bill before prorogation; but still hope that second reading can be got later, so as to affirm principle of constitutional change." It will be seen from that that the Secretary of State gives three reasons for its being impossible to pass the bill before the prorogation. In

the first place, he says that in view of opposition on both sides of the House of Commons it will be impossible to do so; in the second place, he alleges the late period of the session; and in the third place, the pressure of other work to be accomplished. These are the reasons he seems to have for saying that he regrets it will not be possible for him to pass the bill before the prorogation of the present session. He says he still thinks he may be able to get the second reading carried at a later period: but there is not much comfort in that; it is a mere expression of a hope that possibly the second reading may be got through. I do not see that from this telegram we are justified in coming to the conclusion that the second reading will be taken before the prorogation; Lord Knutsford merely says he hopes the second reading may be got at a later period. Of course this question affects us very nearly indeed; and it behoves this House, I think, now to take such steps as it may think may possibly expedite matters and induce the Government to press the bill forward perhaps a little more earnestly and determinedly, so as at any rate to get the second reading passed, if not the remaining stages, this session. The great question now for our consideration is, what is the best step for this House to take? For my own part, as I said before, I am inclined to think that in view of the late period of the session and the necessary work remaining to be accomplished it is almost hopeless to expect that the bill will be carried through all its stages this session, and we are not likely to get more than the second reading this session. All this is very disappointing to our hopes, no doubt; and it seems to be considered in a great many quarters, inside this House and outside, that it is impossible to obtain what we desire this year. But I think that in view of this telegram some decided and earnest representation ought to be made, and that it ought to go forth, for what it is worth at any rate, that we are not sitting down calmly under such news as this; and that we ought to do something, and say something in the form of a resolution expressing the opinion of the House and a sense of its feeling,—something to show that we are very much in earnest in this matter, and that we view this discomfiture (so

to speak) as a very serious blow to our hopes. And I think we ought to so express ourselves as to show those who are interested in this question in England, through the press, and also to show the Secretary of State that we consider it of great moment indeed that our rights as regards this matter should be accorded us as soon as possible, or at any rate without any unnecessary delay. In the resolution that I have to submit to the House, which has been printed and, I believe, is before hon. members, it will be seen that for my part I am not in favor of surrendering in any way anything that we have up to the present sent forward in connection with the land or anything else. I may be wrong in that; but I am not at all sure that it would be of any service for us in any way to abandon the position we have taken up so far; on the contrary, I think if we abandon anything it would be a sign of weakness. I think further: for aught we know we may be weakening the hands of the Secretary of State also. We are not aware at present of the contents of this Enabling Bill; we are not aware in what form Lord Knutsford may have ultimately decided to present in that Enabling Bill; the manner in which it is proposed to give the Legislature of this colony the control of the lands,—whether he is asking the House of Commons to leave the matter to the Secretary of State to make regulations, or whether he is asking the House of Commons to allow the Legislature of the colony to make the regulations. We have no information to guide us in the matter in any way; and it appears to me that if we were to telegraph to the Secretary of State and say that we are prepared to abandon this, that, or the other, so as to allow the bill to pass without opposition, we may find that we are not only weakening our own position but also weakening the hands of the Secretary of State in this very matter. It may be that when the Cabinet came to consider the introduction of the Enabling Bill, and the history of previous legislation on the subject, when they came to examine precedents and see what was done in the cases of all the other colonies to whom a similar form of Government had been granted,—it may be that when they came to do this, they

found that in every single instance a certain amount of control over the Crown lands was provided for in the Enabling Bill; and they may, for all we know, in our case also be proposing to give us rather more than we anticipated from the telegrams received from the Secretary of State when we were discussing this question last session. Therefore, if we directly or indirectly hint at our readiness to surrender anything relating to this matter of the lands, we may find that we are doing something that may tend to weaken the hands of the Imperial Government, and cut the ground (so to speak) from under their feet, when this question comes before the House of Commons. Besides that, I think it would be a sign of weakness in this way: it would lead people who are interesting themselves in this question at Home to ask, "What on earth are these people in such a hurry to obtain Responsible Government for, that they cannot wait three months for it?" They will naturally say that, when they find us ready to sacrifice the essential principles of the bill, simply in order that we may get it passed through this session, rather than wait a few months, abandoning principles that we contended so strongly for only a few months ago when this House was in session before. I do not propose to stand up here now to twit members with the opinions they expressed then, or to revert to any difference of opinion that may have taken place; all that sort of thing is past and gone: I am speaking now of the opinion that the House itself arrived at, and without reference to my own personal opinions. Hon. members will remember that we did throw out of the bill many matters that we thought of great moment; and we did so in order to help the Secretary of State to arrive at a decision, and to facilitate the passage of the bill. Having done that, I think we certainly ought to adhere to what was left in the bill, and not surrender any more; because in doing so, we may not only weaken our own case but also weaken the hands of the Imperial Cabinet in dealing with the Enabling Bill which they have introduced into the Imperial Parliament, and the provisions of which are at present unknown to us. It is not at all clear to my mind what this opposition that we hear of to the bill is based upon. We find a

great deal is apparently said in the Home press as to what is called "land-grabbing"—whatever that may mean. I fail to understand what is meant by it, in England. From the illustrations that have been given in the telegrams that have reached us, so far as I can judge, there seems to be some kind of connection, in the minds of those who make these allegations of "land-grabbing," between land-grabbing and the gentleman whose name has been mentioned in the telegrams. Anything of that sort certainly must be based upon the grossest ignorance of the facts of the case. I cannot see that because our worthy Commissioner of Crown Lands had a grant of land made to him by the Government in recognition of the services he did to the colony as an explorer,—I cannot see with what reason that could be brought forward as an instance of so-called "land-grabbing." I say it simply shows the gross ignorance that exists in the minds of those who make such allegations; and, in the face of such ignorance one can perhaps understand why these people should imagine that if we got Responsible Government the first thing we would do with the land would be to distribute it amongst ourselves, give it away all round, and especially among public officers. Surely they must know that that grant of land made by the Government to the Commissioner of Crown Lands some years ago was a grant that was well deserved, and that was well earned, and that it was voted to him by the Legislature of the colony in recognition of his services to the colony, and that it was done with the approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. They must well know, I should say, that the Commissioner of Crown Lands is quite incapable of doing anything of the sort that is insinuated against him in these telegrams or of doing anything that would lead to the slightest suspicion of anything in the shape of land-grabbing. It simply shows the utter carelessness and the perfect ignorance of those who put forward such an argument as a reason for withholding from the Legislature of the colony the power to control the Crown Lands. I say, therefore, we hardly know to what point to direct our rebuttal of the objections that are being raised to the passage of this bill. Moreover, the Sec-

retary of State tells us that not only does the threatened opposition to the bill prevent the Government from carrying it through this session, but that they are also precluded from doing so by reason of the late period of the session and the pressure of other work to be accomplished before the prorogation. These are matters, of course, over which he has no control. Therefore, in my opinion, what some weak-kneed members of the House—if I may so speak without offence—may presently try to persuade us to do, to surrender everything for the sake of getting the bill through this session, cannot be of much avail. To throw anything more out of the bill would not overcome these two main obstacles,—the late period of the session and the pressure of other necessary work to be accomplished. What I think we ought to do is to pass some resolution expressive of our disappointment at the rebuff we have received, and of our hope that some pressure may yet be brought to bear to have the bill pushed through; something that will show the Home authorities that we are in earnest about this matter, and that we are not going to stand still and allow the prejudices and the ignorance of our opponents to bar the way to our obtaining the right that has been granted to all the other Australian colonies,—the right to manage our own affairs in the same way as they do. I will now read the resolution which I am about to move. It is this: "That this House desires to express its strong and unalterable opinion that the colony has now reached a stage of development when the present Constitution is no longer adapted to its circumstances, and that the anticipated delay in the passing of the Enabling Bill will most seriously affect its material prospects, will give rise to universal irritation, and deal a fatal blow at that trustful confidence in the fair dealing and justice of the House of Commons which has hitherto been reposed in a body credited throughout the civilised world with a reputation for sympathy with and active support of the principles of self-government, which is enjoyed by every other colony of Australia, and which is now demanded by Western Australia in accordance with the provisions of the 32nd section of the Imperial Statute, 13

and 14 Vict., c. 59. The Legislature earnestly requests that the Imperial Government will reconsider their position in regard to the Enabling Bill, and, in the interests of this Colony, so seriously menaced by any further delay in the introduction of self-government, will still endeavor to pass the measure during the current session of Parliament." I have mentioned the section of the Imperial Act which gives us this right of self-government, so as to draw attention to the section as well as the Act, in order that those who are interested in the question at Home may see for themselves that we have a right to demand this privilege, and this right which was given by the Imperial Parliament itself. I propose to add another paragraph to the resolution, in these words: "There is but one opinion throughout the whole of Australia as to the extreme unwisdom and injustice of shelving the Western Australian Constitution Bill for another year." Should this resolution meet with support, I shall be prepared to move an humble address to the Governor, informing him of the resolution arrived at, and asking him to telegraph the effect of it to the Secretary of State at once. I also think the sense of the House ought to be taken as to the desirability of telegraphing the purport of the resolution and the sense of the House to the press in England, as well as to the Secretary of State, so that those parties who may be acting in opposition to the bill at Home may know at any rate the strong feeling that their opposition has evoked in the Legislature of Western Australia.

Mr. VIENN: I rise with a considerable amount of pleasure to second the resolution submitted to the House by the hon. member who has just sat down. I shall cordially support that resolution because, in my opinion, it expresses the sentiments and feelings not only of the Legislature but also of the people of this colony: and I venture to say it expresses those feelings in a politic, in a firm, and in a dignified way. I look upon it as the voice of the people speaking through its Legislature; and, while it so echoes the heart of the community, it also appeals to the good sense, to the justice, and the patriotism of the House of Commons. It asks the Imperial Government in a courteous way to reconsider its decision,

and to carry through the Commons, if possible, the Enabling Bill this session. It also strikes a keynote of warning, by showing what effect delay might have on the colony in the present juncture; and I cannot but think that this message to the Secretary of State must elicit a reply at once. If, as we all hope, it will have the effect of urging the Home Government to carry the Enabling Bill through the House of Commons this session, then this Legislature will have done its duty, and we may reasonably hope that, so far, the cloud which at the present time hangs about the horizon may clear away. If, on the other hand, a message like this does not succeed and the passage of the bill is delayed, the Legislature and the people of the colony will then be able to take a well-digested course of action, to meet events at the next opening of the House of Commons, early next year. Sir, no one felt a keener sense of disappointment than I did, when a few days ago our unfortunate position as regards this bill was cabled to us. When, at the opening of this session, I moved the Address in reply to the Speech of His Excellency the Governor I felt that a crisis in our history had arrived, and that it behoved us as men, as reflective careful men, to think before we moved or spoke—to think together, to act together, to speak together, as one voice, as the voice not only of one state in Australia, but as the voice of Australia itself. I must say I am pleased and proud to think when I look round these benches to see and feel that the high estimate I have always held of our Legislature has been realised, and that when trouble threatens our colony, our common loyalty and patriotism make us act together as one man, and that man a careful and sensible one. It is an axiom among Englishmen never to know defeat. The same mistake that individuals make is often made by nations. At first I am afraid we were wont to underestimate the strength of our foes, and it required a rebuff or a smack in the face to steady us. Then we show that we are capable of rising equal to the occasion. At the last session when we considered the Constitution Bill, we had some very important amendments to make to the original bill—amendments that came mainly from the Home

Government—and we delayed the bill to a late time before it reached Home; but, late as it was, we all, with reason or without reason, fully expected that the Imperial Government would take up the measure at once, and carry it through the Commons without delay. I say we expected that to happen, because every circumstance surrounding the bill led us to suppose such a course would be adopted. The main and most cogent reason was that the bill we passed had already met the approval of the Imperial Government; and we naturally felt that a measure having that approval and support was safe in its passage through the Commons at any time. Again, our hopes and aspirations were fed the other day when we learnt that the Enabling Bill had been introduced in the House of Lords, and was afterwards passed through all its stages. We also heard at the same time that no colonial measure had ever met with such universal support and sympathy. These circumstances led us all, in spite of any secret misgivings we might have felt—led us all to think that our Constitution Bill was safe to pass through the House of Commons this session. Therefore, I think I was right in stating that all the surrounding circumstances led us to that conclusion; and it seemed clear that the Imperial Government also had an intention of passing the bill through the Commons. It was not considered, I take it, that there would be no time to push it through this session because, having introduced it, we must suppose they fully intended to carry it through; and something must have arisen since, outside the question of time, which has induced the Home Government not to press the bill this session beyond a second reading, which would simply affirm the abstract principle. We do not require that affirmed. It has been affirmed long ago. It is not a question of abstract principle, but a question of statutory right. We have been led to believe that there is a general opposition to the bill—an opposition inspired by misconception and fed by doubt, and want of knowledge: but yet sufficiently strong to misdirect the intention of the Home Government, and for a moment make them forget the importance of the question to this colony. No doubt we could urge many reasons for not forcing

an important measure in the Commons at so late a period of the session. A hundred of these would crop up in argument; but, as colonists, we have to look to the actual history of this bill. We were led to suppose that no delay would take place, because nothing had previously been said to the contrary; and, consequently, Lord Knutsford's telegram of the 23rd July, came upon us as a bitter disappointment. To us our affairs, unimportant as they may seem to people in England, are of the first magnitude and concern. In the House of Commons our affairs are not so viewed; and our Constitution Bill would simply be regarded, like other Imperial questions, as simply routine business, without there was special cause shown to the contrary. It is not difficult to imagine that the Imperial Parliament in dealing with other great questions of the British Empire, did not regard the affairs of Western Australia, individually, as of pressing importance; but, when such a resolution as is now before the House is brought under their notice, we may reasonably hope that such a protest coming from the Legislature of the colony at this stage, will be sure to accentuate the importance of the question, in our position, and let us hope induce them to carry on the measure this session. Some hon. members perhaps may suggest some compromising course of action, amounting to an acceptance of Responsible Government at any price. If so I can only hope that no such resolution will pass the House. It was only after the most mature deliberation that we passed a Constitution Bill; it was no hasty, ill-considered measure, but one the provisions of which had been submitted to the country and approved by them. It was also a bill that had met the approval of the Home Government; it was modified and mutilated from its original form to suit the wishes, soothe the prejudices, and correct the mistakes of the Home Government. Such as it was, we, as a Legislature and people, should now be prepared to stand by it, without further compromise. When a body of men, after mature deliberation, send forth their ultimatum, they do violence to their manhood and their intelligence, if, on the very first check they receive, they retreat from that ultimatum, and take up another position. Nothing is so demoralising or

so weakening to any cause as such a course of action; and I feel sure that such a course in this instance will not effect the object we have in view. On the other hand it would show a weakness, and a division of opinion, unworthy of the occasion. If such a course of action should be in the minds of any hon. members, I would ask them to reflect; I would ask them to ponder over the fact that the opposition to the Enabling Bill does not proceed from the Home Government, who know exactly the rights and privileges our Bill should carry; but from a section of the House of Commons laboring under mistaken impressions. We should therefore rather seek to sweep away these impressions from the Commons than retreat from a position we have taken, and which after all is simply a position of right, and, as such, an unassailable position. If we had taken up a false position, if we demanded something from the Commons in the shape of a novelty, we might perhaps with some reason shelter ourselves under the plea that half a loaf was better than none. But we have no such excuse nor did we want any. We ask for local self-government in accordance with the Imperial Statute 13 and 14 Victoria; it is a privilege to which we have a legitimate and statutory right. We have already agreed to the terms, and we ask for the verdict,—not as a concession or a favor, not as abject supplicants, but on principles that are dear to us as Englishmen and British subjects. If there is to be no finality in our legislation, if we are never to know our own minds in this matter, it appears to me we are not fit for that higher form of Government to which we aspire. I believe, myself, it requires united action only to enable us to attain the end we desire; and the resolution now before the House is one which this House may well and confidently support. His Excellency the Governor has shown a keen and active interest in this matter; and dealing with this point in his despatch of the 29th April last, His Excellency points out that Responsible Government without the control of the lands would be merely a shadow that would lead to perpetual irritation and I cannot do better than quote His Excellency's own words. He says: "Should any difficulty arise in Parliament connected with the promised transfer to

"the local Government and Legislature of the complete control of the Crown lands south of latitude 26 degs., it will doubtless be explained, not only that this transfer is absolutely necessary if Responsible Government is to be established on the usual and recognised basis, in Western Australia, and if the colonists are not to be kept in a perpetual state of discontent and irritation, but that these lands have recently been under regulations of long currency, and have for many years been virtually controlled by the Legislative Council. It can be pointed out that even the existing form of Government, still less the new Constitution, could hardly go on were such control now attempted to be set aside." Those are His Excellency's own words. And what does he further say in this same despatch, sent Home with our Constitution Bill, only a few months ago? Dealing with the land question, His Excellency says: "As to the handing over to the local Legislature of the complete control of the lands south of the line, this had been already promised; Responsible Government could hardly work, and would not be acceptable without such control, and there seemed no valid reason why the proviso should not remain in the bill. No doubt, the anticipation of some parliamentary misapprehension and opposition has moved Your Lordship to insist upon the excision of the proviso and of course it does not really matter whether it be in or out of the bill, so long as the land settlement to which it refers is given effect to in some manner. If the passage of the bill through Parliament will be in any way facilitated by the absence of this proviso from the bill, and by making the necessary legal arrangements in any other way, so much the better." We all know that was the very reason that induced us to agree to the elimination of that proviso in the Constitution Bill—simply to facilitate the passage of the bill. We did not care a rap how we obtained the power to control the land, whether it appeared in the Constitution Bill or not. What we wanted was, and what we want is, the power to deal with the waste lands of the colony. I take it there is not a man in this House who would have the hardihood to say that

he would wish for Responsible Government without the right to control the land. It would simply lead to everlasting friction; and why would it do so? Because the position of the colony and of the Government would be a humiliating one, subservient as it would be to another power, outside the colony. What we want is not only that we should have control over the lands of the colony, but that we should guard against any meddling with them at the other end. It might be said that, practically, for the last twenty years the Legislature has had complete control over the lands, inasmuch as the Home Government has never interfered with the action of the Legislature in this matter. But it must be remembered that under the present Constitution we had no right of this sort. It has simply been an act of sufferance on the part of the Home Government that they allowed us free action; and I think it is the very best recommendation in our favor that we have administered those lands so well, and so free from abuse, and without the necessity for correction. But, under Responsible Government, it would be our right, and we should have it as a right—not as a favor, or on sufferance. To carry on Responsible Government under any other conditions would lead to friction, irritation, and discontent. For anyone to venture the assertion that, because it might be possible to give up this control over the lands and still carry on Responsible Government, we should do so, is absurd. If we carried the same principle through our daily life and avocations, by relinquishing our rights, and doing without them, our lives would simply end in disaster, because we would eventually find ourselves possessed of no rights whatever. As men and legislators of this colony we would be doing violence to our better nature to allow even such a thought to enter our minds. It is not to be supposed that because we intend to fight for this right, we wish in any way to juggle with the lands, when we get them under our control. As our actions in the past have been above suspicion, so would our course be in the future also. For years past I have identified myself with this question—from the time when the division list showed only 5 members, up to the time when the whole colony supported it; but, sir, I hope never to

be placed in the position of accepting Responsible Government, without all the privileges and all the freedom which the meaning of the term conveys. I have fought for what I understand by Responsible Government, but I have never fought for this other thing; and if it was presented to me in that form I would say I did not know it. While on this subject I should like to draw attention to the fact that no such proposition has ever come from the Secretary of State. It never occurred to the Home Government to grant us Responsible Government save under conditions that were usual, and with all the rights and privileges that form of Government should carry. It never occurred to the Secretary of State to hint at such a thing as Responsible Government without the control of the land, because it would be unusual, novel, and insulting to the community. And I have yet to learn that as a section of Australia, we, in this colony, are less to be trusted than our brothers over the border. What is of greater moment, our neighbors over the border do not think so. They think that as an integral part of the great Federal Australia, we should enjoy the same privileges as they do; and I feel sure we shall have their cordial sympathy and support in the action we may take to secure our rights. Again, there has really been no tangible reason why we should make any compromise, or suggest any. Beyond certain vague slanders that had appeared in the papers,—slanders which could be cleared away on proper representation, there has been nothing that should suggest to us to surrender one jot of our rights. As to these misrepresentations and these false impressions which have been put forward by the English press, I should like to say that in the event of this resolution not having the effect of altering the decision of the Home Government in regard to further action this session, I would suggest that two or more delegates accredited from this House should be sent Home before the next session of the House of Commons, with instructions from the House to advocate and urge the passing of the bill,—representatives to whom people in England could go for reliable information, and men who could and would correct false impressions as they arose. These delegates would be

backed up by the voice of Australia as a whole, and not merely echo the voice of this colony. If this were done, I feel sure the demands of Western Australia would be recognised. Sir, I feel that I have trespassed very considerably upon the time of the House; but this is a question I feel very strongly upon. As I said the other day, it is a question upon which we should speak and act with unanimity; and, in seconding the resolution now before the House, I do so in the hope that it may meet not only with the hearty but also with the unanimous approval of the House.

SIR T. COCKBURN-CAMPBELL: Sir,—After the speeches we have just heard—very admirable speeches in their way—I must say I rise with a feeling of considerable diffidence, for my views do not exactly coincide with those of the hon. members who have just sat down. I am afraid that by one of them I may be called “unworthy,” and by the other one I may be called “weak-kneed.” However, I know what I think myself, after very careful consideration, is best in the interests of the colony; it is only my opinion, and I must ask the House to take it for what it is worth. I have a slight amendment to move in the resolution, which I greatly fear will not meet with general acceptance, but which, nevertheless, I feel it my duty to bring forward. The resolution which has been moved and seconded just now is, I think, in its way, a very admirable resolution. It embodies the feeling of indignation and disappointment which we cannot help entertaining at the delay which is likely to take place in the passage of the Enabling Bill, and it also seems to invite that which we desire,—an answer from Lord Knutsford as to whether or no he cannot by some means in his power manage to press the bill through this session. But, sir, I think it is requisite to recollect that Lord Knutsford is decidedly tied in his action as regards this bill: I take it his hands are tied by the promises he has made to us. These promises, I am afraid, are such that if he adheres to them he cannot favorably answer this resolution. I cannot see how he can, if he feels bound to adhere to his promise, and to the terms of the memorial we sent to him last session; and it seems to me if we have any real desire

and consider it a matter of any real consequence that the bill should pass the Imperial Parliament this session, we must go a little further than the resolution now before us. Of course, that is the question we have now to determine—whether it is of vital consequence that the bill should pass this session, or whether we should leave it, and take further steps next session? In determining that question, it seems to me we have to consider what will be the result of delay. Now I must say I do not view the result with the confidence expressed by some other members, and some other gentlemen we have lately heard speaking outside this House. I do not view it with the same sort of equanimity as they do. I have heard many gentlemen lately, connected with politics or addressing themselves to politics, saying that this is only a matter of a few months, that the House of Commons will meet again at the commencement of next year, and that a sense of justice will before then overcome any prejudice that may now exist, and that all will be right. I must say I do not take that view at all. In the first place, the Imperial Government tell us that the opposition which now exists to the bill is so strong that they do not care to tackle it at present; and I ask members whether they think the Government will be in a stronger position next year than they are now to withstand opposition? Anybody who knows anything about Governments knows that the older it grows the weaker it becomes; the nearer its term of existence draws to a close the less hold it has upon Parliament. That is universally the case; and we may take it as a matter of course that the Home Government will be less able next session to get this bill through in the face of opposition than they are now. We do not know when next session will open. [The ATTORNEY GENERAL: The first week in February.] We don't know that, nor what events may occur between this and then. There might be a European war, or there might be a ministerial crisis, which would place our affairs out of court entirely for months and months to come. It was said in the presence of most of us yesterday that our Government had carried on very well for a great many years, and that we could manage to get

along under it for a few months longer. That is all right enough. I give every credit to the Government for the way they carried on until recently, when it became necessary to change the constitution. But what is the attitude they take up now? If they were willing to go on as formerly, well and good; there would be no reason why we should not continue a little longer at present without any serious trouble to ourselves or to the interests of the colony. But we all know that the Government of late have taken up a different attitude altogether. They consider now that they can do nothing except what is absolutely necessary to keep the country going. Here we are—I don't know really where we are; so many contradictory statements are made, I cannot say what the exact position of the colony is; but I am given to understand by many people for whose opinion I have a considerable amount of respect, that the country is in a very serious position—a position which, unless our mineral resources, which are very great no doubt, are energetically developed—may result in a grave crisis. In these circumstances it seems to me a very serious thing that we should have to continue indefinitely to carry on with a Government which professes itself unable to do anything but retrench. I must say I cannot help looking forward to any indefinite delay in the introduction of Responsible Government as nothing less than a calamity for this colony. If our bill does not pass through the House of Commons during the present session, members must recollect, whatever may be said to the contrary, that the delay will be indefinite; we have not the slightest idea when it would be brought forward again. Such being the case, if members are of the same opinion as I am—that it is a matter of very great consequence, and that we may be very seriously injured by the bill not passing this session—I ask whether it is not worth while to make a really earnest and efficient effort to get the bill passed? We find there is strong opposition to it now; but, if we could convert an opposed measure to one that would not be opposed, the mere fact of its being a late period of the session would be no obstacle to the passing of the bill. In order to effect that purpose, we have to con-

sider what the objection to the bill is. My hon. friend on my left (Mr. Burt) seems to be not very clear in his mind what the real objection is; but I think the hon. member who seconded the motion is pretty well of my opinion—there can be no doubt, I think—anybody who has carefully read all that has taken place, all that has been written and said about Western Australia and her claims to Responsible Government can have no other opinion than that the only objection is to the one question of the land. I have noticed all through that there has not been the slightest objection to the granting of Responsible Government to this colony: they do not care at Home under what system we are governed, whether we are governed under this system or any other system we like. That is not the objection they have. Whenever they speak about this subject they invariably say,—I have noticed that, in all the speeches on the subject from the Prime Minister's downwards: "We don't object to their having Responsible Government, only mind when you do give it to them do not make the same fatal mistake which you made with the other colonies in allowing them to have the waste lands under their absolute control." We here know that the ground of this objection is all bunkum; but such is the fact. They have no objection to giving us autonomous institutions, but they think that having made a mistake in giving the other colonies complete control of the lands, they ought to take care not to make the same mistake with us. I think, myself,—I have been under that impression for some time before the present crisis arose,—that we made a very great blunder in dealing with this land question from the first,—not from the first, perhaps, for it was quite right and proper, and the country expected it from us, that we should have tried to get the same control over our lands as the other colonies had got,—that is, obtain it in the same manner; but I think, after carefully reviewing and considering the subject, that finding this question was such a great obstacle to our obtaining Responsible Government, we should have shown wisdom if we had let it alone for a time. I am perfectly aware that most of us—the lawyers in the House I know were not of that opinion—

but I, myself, and many other members had a sort of hazy notion last session that the lands were a kind of "asset" we should have to use as security for obtaining loans. I have often heard members speaking of having the lands of the colony at our backs when talking about loans for public works; and I know that was the general impression. This notion, too, had been fostered by the manner in which the question had always been dealt with, not only here but also in the other colonies,—a notion that the lands themselves constituted a sort of security upon which the colony could operate when it wanted to borrow money. But, when we came to look into the matter, as we were obliged to do last session, we found this was utter nonsense, a complete fallacy. In the case of none of the other colonies was the land vested in the local Legislature, but merely the management of the land. If it were really necessary to possess land as a security it could only be the unalienated Crown lands that could be so regarded; and we know that in Victoria, which has greater borrowing power than any other of these colonies, there is scarcely any unalienated Crown land except of the more worthless kind. We also know that if the Crown lands were the security which a country had to offer for its loans, some European and other states would have little or no security to offer. The credit of a colony for borrowing purposes does not depend upon its unalienated land; so far as its borrowing powers are concerned it does not matter whether the land belongs to the Crown, or to syndicates, to which a great deal of our lands belong, or to private individuals. The credit of a colony depends upon its public revenue, upon its natural resources, upon the industries and the prosperity of its people. There is not the slightest doubt about that. The revenue derived from the land is of course part of the security that a country has to offer; but it is clear that the public credit does not depend upon the extent of a colony's possession of unalienated soil; so that really the only reason we need trouble ourselves about the land is simply that we may be able to deal with it in such a way as we require. That is desirable, no doubt. But we have got our regulations,—regulations which a gentleman yesterday, who is a

very good judge, said are the very best land regulations that any Australian colony possesses. No doubt these regulations would be sufficient without any material alteration for a very considerable time; and, in these circumstances, knowing as we do that we practically have the control of our lands, I do not think we need trouble ourselves about this matter at the present time. I have heard it said that there might be a difference under Responsible Government, and that we might find our progress impeded if we did not secure complete control of the lands. But all sensible human action must be based upon the balance of probability, and that balance in this case is that we would not find ourselves impeded, and that eventually we should have the same control over our lands as the other colonies have. I remember reading an article in the *Argus* not long ago, on this very question, a very sensible article, in which after discussing the trouble we were in over this land question, the writer went on to ask what on earth we were troubling ourselves about the lands, and advising us to leave the question of the land alone as one which, when we had got Responsible Government, would soon settle itself. As a fact our object in desiring to obtain Responsible Government at present has nothing to do with this land question, our object is to be better able to develop the resources of the colony, and to push forward the colony without encountering the obstacles now placed in our way, and to free ourselves from a system of Government which is now obsolete. It seems to me that the eagerness we have displayed over this land question has, to a great extent, aroused and crystallised this opposition that we hear of in the Imperial Parliament. These people have been told—here is a despatch from the Governor telling them—that for many years we have virtually had the control of our lands; and they will naturally ask, “If they have had this virtual control, why are they so dreadfully eager and so determined to do away with that little mild control which the Imperial Government holds, and have everything in their own hands?” Surely it must appear somewhat suspicious to persons, who have such very extraordinary notions about us. It seems to me, as I have said, that

we have made a mistake in making such a fuss over this question, and that when we found that it was likely to be so great an obstacle, we should have given way and left our land legislation for the time being as it was. If we had done so, I am sure we should not have had the same opposition to encounter in the House of Commons as we are likely to do now. The hon. member for Wellington has told us that such a thing was unheard of as a colony taking Responsible Government without the control of the land, and that the Secretary of State himself never suggested such a thing. I cannot understand the hon. member saying that, when the Secretary of State has all along insisted that as regards the Northern half of the colony we should not have the control of the lands; though, in order to humor us, he said he would endeavor to get the consent of Parliament to give us the control over the Southern portion of the colony. I believe, myself, if we had only shown our willingness to abandon this claim about the land we should have met with no opposition, our bill would have been perfectly safe, and we should have had Responsible Government by this time. It may not be too late, perhaps, to recede from the position now. It may be said that it would be humiliating to yield on this point, after having made such a stand about it. I do not feel in the least humiliated, if I find I have made a mistake, in trying to repair that mistake. But I am aware that everyone does not go with me in this. If I thought that a majority of members of this House were prepared to join me, I would move a different resolution from what I am about to move: I would move a direct suggestion to the Secretary of State that we should give way on the land question if he thought that by that means he could press the bill through this session. But I fear it would be utterly useless to do so; therefore, I have another amendment to move, which I think the House may very well accept, and which may have the effect of extracting from the Secretary of State himself some suggestion that would enable him to push the bill through,—a suggestion to which the House, however, would be in no way committed, but which, on the other hand, might be something which the House

might consider desirable to agree to. The amendment I have to move is to add the following words to the original resolution: "If by any immediate action on the part of this House the hands of the Imperial Government could be strengthened, and the opposition with which the Enabling Bill is confronted be lessened or removed, the Legislature trusts that Lord Knutsford will at once communicate to it any suggestion the adoption of which he may consider likely to secure that object." We do not humiliate ourselves, as some members think, if we ask the Secretary of State to do this. We do not suggest anything ourselves; we leave it to Lord Knutsford to suggest, if he can, without committing ourselves in any way to accept his suggestion. If he says there is no immediate action that we could take which would remove the opposition at present felt, we shall know how we stand. On the other hand if he should suggest some course of action which in his opinion would enable him to get the bill through, we could either act upon his suggestion or not, as we might think best. If we do this, and an appeal is made—as I understand is proposed to be made—to the Legislatures of the other colonies, we shall have done all that can be expected of us, we shall have done our duty to the colony. Of course we may fail; but, at any rate, it devolves upon us in the present circumstances to make the very best effort we can; and, if the House agrees to this resolution as amended, it may elicit such a suggestion from the Secretary of State that if acted upon may remove all further opposition to the bill and allow it to pass through the House of Commons this session. I feel sure that in that case no sense of pride will be allowed to interfere with what all must consider the vital interests of the colony.

MR. SCOTT: As nobody seems to rise to second this amendment of the hon. baronet, and as I feel it comes nearer to my own feeling in respect to this crisis than anything else, I shall second it myself. The more I have thought over this land question the more I have come to the conclusion that it really does not make very much difference to us. I am of the hon. baronet's opinion that it will not interfere with our borrowing powers; and, inasmuch as there seems to

be this very serious opposition in the House of Commons to the passing of the bill giving us the control of the lands, I think we would do well to let this matter rest in abeyance (as it were), and to invite some suggestion from the Secretary of State himself. It is quite possible that Lord Knutsford will not ask us to give up all control of the lands. I don't suppose he would; but he may say, "Leave the land question in my hands to deal with it for you, and I think we can get the bill through." If he does that, I think it would be a good thing for this colony. I am inclined to think with the hon. baronet that the position of affairs in the colony at the present time is very serious, and that it would be well, for the sake of getting the bill through, at once, to allow this question to be modified. I had formulated a telegram myself, for forwarding to the Secretary of State, which I thought would have met the case; but I don't know that I need read it now. Certainly the first portion of the resolution of the hon. member for the North cannot, I think, be improved upon, except, perhaps, that we might say to the Home Government that this House appreciates the endeavor made by the Cabinet to get this bill through. The amendment proposed by the hon. member, Sir Thomas Campbell, would give us the one chance that we have of getting the bill pushed through this session, and I cordially agree with him that we should do all in our power to have this done by removing any opposition there may be to the bill at Home. It seems to me that our chance next session will not be half so good as at present; and we do not know how long the thing may be delayed if we do not get it through now. It is not as if the Government here felt themselves free to initiate some active policy of public works; we are told that they are not in a position to do anything while things remain in their present state. That being so, it appears to me we should leave no stone unturned to get the colony out of its present difficulties. I think that in the best interests of the colony we should do everything we possibly can to force forward this measure through the House of Commons this session; therefore, I have very much pleasure in seconding this amendment.

MR. PARKER: I regret that I feel compelled to oppose the introduction of these words, because it appears to me that if we add these words to the resolution we shall be virtually surrendering everything. I do not mind, myself, any more than the hon. baronet does, to admit having made a mistake if I consider that a mistake has been made; but I cannot for a moment admit that we have made any mistake whatever when we asked the Secretary of State to carry out the pledge he had given us, that he would vest the land south of the 26th parallel of latitude, in the Legislature of the colony. Are we not borne out in our views on that point by what His Excellency himself says in his despatch, which was read just now by the hon. member for Wellington? His Excellency there tells the Secretary of State that it is an unknown thing for a colony to take Responsible Government without the lands; and, referring to the proposed transfer of the lands south of the 26th parallel, His Excellency says that this transfer is absolutely necessary if Responsible Government is to be established on the usual and recognised basis. The Home Government, in fact, never dreamt of granting us Responsible Government without the control of these lands. Do we find that the Secretary of State ever contemplates in any of his despatches that we should take upon ourselves the responsibilities of self-government without getting the land under our control? No. From the very first, without our ever even asking him to pledge the Home Government to that effect, he always led us to understand that it was his intention to introduce a clause in the Enabling Bill which would have the effect of vesting the lands I have mentioned in the Legislature of the colony. We all know, and we admit, as the hon. baronet has said, that the great opposition in the House of Commons and the London press to our having Responsible Government, is not to Responsible Government itself; there can be no objection amongst the English people to their fellow-subjects abroad exercising the right of self-government. What some of them do object to is to our having the control of these lands, which they look upon as part of the heritage of the British people, of British paupers,—the

heritage of British paupers, in fact. If Lord Knutsford or his Ministry thought it was right and proper that we should take Responsible Government without the lands, would he not have telegraphed to the Governor saying that if the Legislature would submit to self-government without the lands he could pass the bill without any difficulty this session? If the Secretary of State had thought it reasonable or fair or that it would be just to the colony that it should take Responsible Government without the Crown lands, no doubt he would have proposed such a thing himself before now. I have not the slightest doubt that if we were to pass a resolution and transmit it to the Secretary of State, agreeing to the withdrawal from the Enabling Bill of all allusion to the control of the lands, the bill would pass without any opposition on the part of the House of Commons. We are told by the hon. baronet that there is very strong reason for passing this measure into law at once; but the hon. baronet does not for a moment pretend that it would be a wise thing or a proper thing for the colony to take it without the control of the lands; the hon. baronet's contention is—and I regret to say that the hon. member for Perth (Dr. Scott) seems to take the same view—the hon. baronet's contention is that the present position of the colony's affairs is such that we should sacrifice everything for the sake of being allowed to govern ourselves. I must say I do not look at it in that light; I think the position of the colony at present is a very good one indeed: I think it is in a very much more prosperous state now than it has been in for years. Some three or four years ago there was a great land boom, and the price of land went up to a fictitious value,—it was not legitimate trade; the thing was overdone; and the result was—there was a reaction, and the price of land in the market became very low, and no doubt there was a good deal of depression. But the value of land is again gradually rising, and is beginning to realise what is its fair and legitimate value. And, outside the value of land, what do we find? Have we not a magnificent season, both for the agriculturist and the pastoralist? Do we not know that the flocks of the colony are increasing very

largely? Do we not know that the production of wool—the great staple product of the colony—increased immensely last year, and gives every promise of increasing more largely this year? Do we not know that our sandalwood trade is in a most prosperous condition, and that the export of sandalwood this year will amount to thousands of pounds, as well as our exports of timber, and our exports of pearls and pearlshells, which promise to be very large indeed? Do we not know that we have not only a silver lining to our cloud but a golden lining, that we have gold at the North, at Kimberley, at Pilbarra, and gold in our Eastern districts, besides other minerals in other parts of the colony? Sir, I venture to say that never at any time in the history of the colony had we such a glorious prospect before us as we have at the present time. It appears to me that it is quite absurd and ridiculous for anyone to say that the condition of this colony is so serious and so desperate that we must have Responsible Government at any price, to save us I don't know from what. The idea of the hon. baronet and of the hon. member for Perth, apparently, is to save us from absolute ruin. [Mr. SCOTT: No, no.] Sir, I have contended for Responsible Government for the last ten years, but I never dreamt of asking for it at any price. I always thought it should be granted to us on the same terms as it had been granted to the other colonies; and I never was prepared to accept it at any other price. Nor am I prepared now to go one step further than we have already gone in the matter of the land and the Enabling Bill. I venture to say it would be better for us to continue for the next two or three years under the present form of Government than to take Responsible Government without the lands. I think also that the condition of the colony would be better at the expiration of three or four years time under the present Constitution than it would be if we got Responsible Government tomorrow without the lands to back us up. It is all very well for the hon. baronet to say that the lands are of no value to us as a means of obtaining loans. It is all very well to point to other countries, and to point to Victoria as a colony with large borrowing powers and little or no Crown lands at its back. Of course

we all know that in older countries, and also in the colony referred to, most of the land has been bought up and alienated from the State; but I would point out that in those countries they have large and thriving populations, flourishing industries, and large revenues from other sources, which serve them as security for their loans. But in a colony like this, as in all new and undeveloped colonies, the great backbone of the country is its land, its public estate. The land is the lever by means of which it hopes to be able to obtain the means for developing its resources and for undertaking progressive public works. The land is the great lever of progress for the Government of a colony like this; and a Government that had no land at its back would have a poor chance of doing anything in the way of developing the resources of the country. At present we have not the large populations and the flourishing industries of Victoria, and if we are to be deprived of our Crown lands, I think Responsible Government would be a very poor thing for the colony. If the resolution of the hon. member for the North is carried, without this amendment, it is my intention to move an addendum to it in the shape of another resolution, invoking the aid of the neighboring colonies to bring pressure to bear upon the Home authorities to get this bill of ours passed, if possible, this session. I think we may rely upon the assistance of our neighbors in this matter; I think they are inclined to look at this question as a national or Australian question, a question affecting the federation of these colonies; and that we may rely upon their help if we appeal to them. But I certainly am not prepared to ask them to assist us in obtaining Responsible Government if this amendment is agreed to. I am not going to ask them to aid us in getting Responsible Government without the lands. What I intended to move was this: That the Speaker be requested to telegraph to the Governments and the Legislatures of the other colonies to this effect: "The Legislative Council of Western Australia, finding the passing of the Enabling Bill introduced in the Imperial Parliament with a view of granting Responsible Government to this colony, increased by serious opposition, and likely for the present to be withdrawn, earnestly appeals

for your assistance, and trusts that the Agent General of your colony may be instructed to press upon the Cabinet of Great Britain the necessity in the interest both of Western Australia, and of the Australasian group generally, for the passing of the measure before the approaching prorogation." That is the resolution I had intended to have proposed; but, if this amendment of the hon. baronet is added to the resolution now before the House, I should not dream of proposing such a resolution, because I do not desire to have such a bill at all unless it gives us the control of the land; and I should be very glad indeed if the Legislatures of the other colonies took the same view as I do, and would refrain from advocating the passing of any such measure. It is all very well for the hon. baronet to say that his amendment does not suggest to the Secretary of State that we refer to the lands; but I would ask, if it does not refer to the lands, to what does it refer? The hon. baronet has himself told us that the only objection there can be to our bill is as to giving us the control of the land; therefore, it seems to me that if we ask the Secretary of State to remove any objection which in his opinion operates against the passage of the bill, we shall simply ask him to strike the land clause out of the bill? I don't know what Lord Knutsford would think of us if we did do that. He would probably say: "These Western Australians do not seem to know their own minds for a week together. Here is a Legislature that stood out for weeks last session on this point of the land, and who sent me a memorial telling me that they were relying upon my pledge to them to get the land vested in them, that they would not have passed the Constitution Bill only in the faith that I would do this for them; here is this Legislature now telegraphing to me to say that they are prepared to give up all claims to the land or anything else so long as they get the bill passed this session; that all they want is Responsible Government, and so long as they get that, they are prepared to give up everything else." I can hardly conceive anything more ridiculous than our placing ourselves in such a position as that. I cannot imagine anything that would make the Secretary of

State and the House of Commons consider us as utterly unfit for the assumption of self-government. After all the fighting and all the negotiating last session over this question of the land, it is now proposed, and without a single argument to support the proposition, that we should quietly knuckle down to the opposition in the House of Commons, and say, "So anxious are we for the honor and glory of governing ourselves that we give you leave to strike out of the bill all reference to the lands; we will take Responsible Government at any price you like to give it to us." I can hardly imagine a more humiliating admission to make. I can hardly imagine anything better calculated to impress upon the English people the idea that we are utterly unfit to be trusted with this right of governing ourselves. All I can say is, sooner than vote for such an amendment I would cease to remain a member of this House. On the very last day of the session held in this House only three months ago, we agreed to a memorial put forward by the hon. baronet himself, a memorial addressed to the Secretary of State. In that memorial I find the following paragraph: "From 'Your Lordship's Despatch of the 12th December, 1887, Your Memorialists were left under the impression that the 'management of the Lands South of the '26th parallel of latitude, or some other 'line to be agreed upon, would be vested 'in the local Legislature of the Colony, 'which would be empowered to regulate 'for their control 'by Act passed in the 'usual way.' They therefore added a 'proviso to Clause 76 of the Bill, limiting its effect until such vesting should 'have taken place. Your Memorialists 'subsequently learned with regret that 'Your Lordship proposed to proceed in 'another way, and to give the Legislature 'power merely to pass Regulations for 'the management of the Lands; and, 'further, that Your Lordship required 'that all reference to the Crown Lands 'should be eliminated from the Bill 'before you could undertake to introduce 'it during the current session of the 'Imperial Parliament. It is with great 'reluctance that Your Memorialists have 'given way upon this latter point, the 'country being entirely with them in 'their previous action. They have done

"so only on the understanding and in full confidence that Your Lordship—in procuring the passing of the Bill through the Imperial Parliament—will concurrently take such steps as may ensure the carrying out of the proposal contained in your Despatch No. 69, of the 30th July, 1888, in which Your Lordship expresses it as your intention to vest in the Legislature of Western Australia the sale, letting, and other disposal of Waste Lands of the Crown South of latitude 26." That was agreed to by this House last session, and forwarded to the Secretary of State, backed up by the Governor; and now, because we find a slight opposition in the House of Commons, it is proposed to rescind all we did last session, and say, "Oh, we did not mean anything by it; we were only joking; it was a mere farce on our part; we are prepared to take anything you like to give us." I think that would be a most humiliating position for this House to place itself in; and not only humiliating, but a ridiculous position before the whole world. What would the House of Commons say to a Legislature capable of so stultifying itself? What would they really think of us? Would they not say, "Why, these men don't know their own minds; these people are absolutely unfit for self-government. In the course of three short months they have completely changed their minds as to the most vital principle of their bill: one minute they say they do not intend to take Responsible Government without the land, and they actually memorialise the Secretary of State on the subject; and now, simply for the sake of getting the bill through this session, they are prepared to sacrifice its most vital principle, and to take anything we like to give them, so long as we call it Responsible Government." I don't think we could furnish the House of Commons with a stronger argument against granting us self-government.

MR. RICHARDSON: It appears to me that this question resolves itself into one of expediency. I think in justice to the hon. member who has moved the amendment we must admit that the question is not whether we expect or whether we wish Lord Knutsford to do this, that, or the other, but whether it is possible that Lord Knutsford may not

find himself powerless to carry out what he promised, and what he still wishes to carry out. Some members, and amongst them the hon. baronet, think that the Secretary of State may have found that he has not a sufficient majority in the House of Commons to enable him to carry out what he has promised to do for us, and has tried to do; and that it would be better to release him from that promise, if by doing so he thinks he will be able to pass the bill this session. I have been one of those who have thought all along that Responsible Government without the land would be of very little value, and I still think so; and the question to my mind is whether it would not be better to wait a little while longer and get what we want, rather than endeavor to force the bill through, for the sake of a few months, and go without what we want. We have fought so manfully and so bravely for our rights hitherto that I think it would be better to wait a little longer and see whether we cannot still secure a victory, rather than that we should haul our flag down in the face of the opposition we are told is likely to be shown to the bill as it stands. I would point out that there is this danger in the action which some members desire to take; if we show ourselves too ready to give up the control of the lands in the hope that by so doing we may enable this bill to be passed this session, and we find afterwards that there are other objections—such as the late period of the session and the pressure of other work which still make it impossible to get the bill through this session,—if we find, after abandoning the land clause, that we shall be no nearer the object in view after all, it seems to me that we should find ourselves in rather an awkward position. We should be in the position of having shown our hand, and shown our weakness to these malcontents in the House of Commons, and, after all, we should not attain our object; and having once given up our right to the land, we should find it very difficult to retrieve our position. Those who are now opposing us would say at once: "These people are quite willing to take Responsible Government without that land,—why give it to them." Therefore, it appears to me it would be better for us to wait a little longer and see whether we cannot

get all we want. If we show ourselves in earnest and remain firm, and take proper steps to enlist the sympathy and the assistance of the other colonies, and if we appoint delegates (as I hope we will) to represent our case, armed with all the necessary information for removing the erroneous impressions which prevail in the minds of people at Home at present as to the colony and as to our intentions; if we do all this, I think we may rest pretty sure that we shall get what we want in the end. The hon. baronet has pointed out that between this and the next session of the Imperial Parliament there may be a European war or a ministerial crisis, that will put our little affair out of court, and that there will be no chance of the bill passing through. But there is another way of looking at that contingency. It is an argument that cuts both ways. If the British Cabinet should be so absorbed with other and to them more important matters, it is just possible that they might manage to slip our little bill through without any opposition, and without any notice being taken of it. I think it is very desirable that we should take some steps to enlighten the people in England as to the real position of affairs as to this land question. We are told that the great opposition is to the land being handed over to us; and the reason for this is the strange hallucination which seems to have got hold of their minds that we are a community of land-grabbers, and that we have been doing all sorts of things in the past with our lands. They seem to be under the impression that the lands which are leased have been alienated from the Crown for ever, instead of being simply leased under the Land Regulations of the colony, as approved by the Imperial Government itself. All this might be pointed out, if we had representatives on the spot. It might also be pointed out that this land which has been leased in such large areas is nearly all situated in the Northern portion of the colony, over which we seek no control, but which we propose to leave under Imperial control. It might also be pointed out, as the resolution of my hon. colleague points out, that in asking for Responsible Government we are simply asking for our statutory right, a right promised by an Imperial statute to all

British colonies that have reached that stage of development, and a right which the House of Commons has no power to withhold from us. People have come to the colony with the assurance of that statute that they should have the right of self-government whenever they felt that they were in a position to undertake the responsibilities of that form of Government. It is not a mere act of grace, but a statutory right possessed by this colony in common with other British colonies. We claim it as a right by virtue of that Imperial statute under which we have settled the colony as a part of the British Empire; and the Imperial Parliament cannot deny us our right without falsifying that trustful confidence which we have hitherto felt in the fair dealing and the justice of the Parliament of the Empire. The hon. baronet alluded to the fact that the British Government appear to have suddenly woke up to the fact that they had made a fatal error in the past in handing over the control of the Crown lands to the other colonies. I should like to know what it is that has convinced them of having made any error in this respect. It cannot be that the other colonies have sought to exclude British emigrants from coming to settle on the lands. Has the land in Victoria ever been shut against British emigrants? Has not the colony passed land laws which favor the small holder as against the "land-grabber?" All of us who know anything about the land regulations of that colony know that such is the case; and that the same may be said as to the other colonies. In New South Wales they have lately resumed vast areas of land from the squatters and pastoralists, in order to throw them open to small settlers, and they are inviting colonists from all parts of the world to come and settle on these lands. I cannot conceive how the British people, if they had any knowledge of these facts, could by any force of reasoning come to any logical conclusion that they had made any mistake in handing over the lands of these colonies to their Legislatures, or that they would make any mistake if they did so in our case. Certainly the facts of the case do not bear out the allegation in any way whatever. These are some of the false impressions which we have to dispel from the minds of the English people; and

the sooner it is done the better, and the sooner we are likely to obtain that which we wish from the Imperial Parliament. Although the hon. baronet may seek to disparage the value of the land as a means of enabling the colony to raise loans, although he may regard this point as a mere bagatelle which may be given up without a struggle, I cannot but think, myself, that the control of the land is worth something to the colony, and that it would be worth our waiting a few months longer to get it. I really do not think that the colony is in that dreadful state of semi-bankruptcy which some members seem to think it is, and that we ought to accept Responsible Government at any price if we want to save it from ruin. I have a better opinion of the prospects of the colony, and a stronger hope in its future, than to believe that we are reduced to that condition of affairs. I think the present prospects of the colony are bright, and that if only a fourth of the present promise is realised the position of the colony will not be so desperate that we need sacrifice it for the sake of waiting a few months for what we desire in the matter of Responsible Government. No doubt the present Government is not so active and energetic as it was in former years; the very fact that it is on the eve of being swept away has no doubt to a great extent paralysed its efforts. But, if nature is kind, if the seasons which give such bright promise of abundance, realise present expectations, if our agricultural and pastoral industries prosper as we hope they may, and if our mineral deposits are developed, I think, myself, it is quite possible that in a few months we may almost forget that we have been kept without this boon of self-government a few months longer than we expected to be. We shall be glad then that we did not sacrifice any portion of the bill for the sake of waiting a few months longer and getting a complete measure, and getting Responsible Government with none of its privileges curtailed. I hope therefore that members will remain firm, and will not repeat the policy which we have been too ready to adopt in the past, of yielding up everything in the face of a little opposition. Little by little we have given up this and that principle of the bill; and if we are going to give up this last point, it

appears to me that the bill will not really be worth having. I hope members will not be carried away by the eloquence of the hon. baronet, who has moved the amendment; no doubt there is a good deal of force in some of the hon. member's remarks; no doubt, too, the hon. member is in earnest, and that he sincerely believes it would be best for us to do that which he recommends us to do, best for the colony; but I cannot help thinking, myself, that it would be wiser on our part to wait a little longer, and take other steps for obtaining what we wish, rather than we should sacrifice a vital principle of the bill for the sake of getting Responsible Government a few months sooner than we may otherwise get it. I hope the House will remain firm, and I believe that by doing so we shall obtain all we desire.

MR. RASON: Sir, the time has arrived when the country looks to us to do our duty towards it; and we owe it to the country to make some determined effort to obtain justice for it in its present crisis. His Excellency the Governor has done all that he could do—no man could have done more; very few probably would have done as much—and it is now for us, the representatives of the people, to do something to obtain justice for the colony. I say to obtain justice; but I am told that is not the right word. It seems to me, sir, that there is no other word to designate that which we are asking for; for it is manifestly unfair and unjust to deny to an individual what is morally and legally his own; and if that is true of the individual, it is equally true of the colony. In asking for self-government we are asking only for that which is our due; and, in order to ascertain what is best to be done under the circumstances, it is necessary for us to look back a little at the past. The Constitution Bill was brought before us, and it received very earnest consideration on our part. We were told that we must give way on certain points, that it was absolutely necessary we should give way; and that if we did so, the measure would receive that support from the Imperial Government as would ensure its safe passage through the House of Commons. That was the inducement that was held out to us. Well, sir, we did give way; and what has been the result? The

assurance given to us has not been fulfilled. The measure has not met with that support which would ensure its safe passage through the House. We gave way; and it appears we gave way in vain. Sir, it appears to me that we have given way too much already, and that we ought not to give way any more. We have to look at the nature of the opposition we have to contend with, and to ask ourselves what is that opposition grounded upon? It is asserted that if we get Responsible Government we shall become, not a large and populous and prosperous community, but a community of land-grabbers, that we shall develop not the natural resources of the country, but a wholesale system of what is called "land-grabbing." That is the accusation. That is the ground of the opposition. Sir, I think it is our duty both to ourselves and to the country to give that assertion our most unqualified and indignant denial. There is no evidence to support this accusation. The only instance which our traducers have given is an imaginary instance. They have instanced the case of an honorable and respected member of this House, the Commissioner of Crown Lands. Well, sir, had it not been for the most lamentable ignorance on the part of our accusers in the Imperial Parliament they would have known that the land granted to Mr. John Forrest was granted to him in return for services rendered to the colony, services for which he only received his just due, and services which, if rendered to the mother country, I have no hesitation in saying, would have obtained for him at the hands of the Imperial Parliament a more substantial reward than he received at the hands of this House. This, sir, is the only instance of land-grabbing which our accusers have put forward in support of the absurd allegation I have referred to. Such ignorance is simply lamentable; but there it is, and we have to combat it. We are also told that it would be wrong to give us self-government because we are "a handful of squatters and shopkeepers." It is easy to imagine the condition of ignorance in which the person who made that remark must be in; but it is not so easy to imagine what was the exact intention of the remark,—whether it was intended as an insult. Probably it was. Probably it

was intended to illustrate our very degraded condition,—a "handful of squatters and shopkeepers." Even if it were true, I do not know that there is anything to be ashamed of in being a squatter or a shopkeeper. Even if we are a handful of squatters and shopkeepers, if squatters and shopkeepers have not obtained a monopoly of all the virtues, I do not think they can be said to monopolise all the vices of humanity. I have no doubt they are quite as good, quite as honest, quite as sincere in their desire to do their duty, as any other body of men, even members of the House of Commons. Sir, I think we must seek for the real secret of the opposition to this bill, not because it proposes to give us the control of the land, or because of anything Western Australian at all. We must, to a great extent, seek for the secret of this opposition in the anxiety of a certain section in the Imperial Parliament to seize any and every opportunity of trying to secure a ministerial defeat; and they seem to think that there is a chance of causing the present Ministry a considerable amount of trouble upon this question of granting Responsible Government to this colony. We must not forget, too, that the opposition comes from the Radical section of the Imperial Parliament, and from the Radical press chiefly, and that these are the very people who are seeking to obtain Home Rule for Ireland. How they can consistently advocate Home Rule for Ireland and deny it to Western Australia is a matter which, perhaps, they can explain to the satisfaction of their own consciences better than I can. I mention this to indicate one possible source of the opposition that is offered to our little bill. It seems to me that the only course now open for us is to make a firm and determined effort to enlist the sympathy and the support of the other colonies, and to make our cause the cause of all Australia. It is useless to suggest or to hint at our giving way any further. We have given way too much already. We have certain ideas as to what are our rights; let us maintain them. I know full well that delay in the settlement of this question is a serious thing for this colony; but it is not so serious that we should agree to haul down our flag, and sur-

render everything, give way on every point, and say to the House of Commons, "Do just what you like with us, impose any conditions you like, only give us Responsible Government, even though it be so in name only." I think we owe it to ourselves, we owe it to our own sense of self-respect, to make some little effort, and to make a firm stand. I have no doubt whatever that if the other colonies do assist us, as they seem only too ready to do,—I have no doubt whatever that if we secure the combined assistance of all the Australian colonies, the error we have committed in the past will not be repeated. In the past we seem to have relied too much upon the assurance of the Home authorities that the bill would receive their most earnest support, and that this support would alone be sufficient to carry it through. That was an error on our part. We know it now. It is manifest that we must bring pressure to bear,—all the pressure we can; and this we can do if we secure the support of all the other colonies. If we do that, no doubt we shall find the Home Government awaking to the fact that this is not a question merely affecting "a handful of squatters and shopkeepers," but a question of Australian interest. So long as they regard it as a question affecting this colony only, they thought they could afford to despise it; but when they find that it is a question that concerns the whole of Australia they will be bound to pay attention to it, and to respect our demands.

MR. KEANE: I shall not go over ground already gone over by so many hon. members, for in my humble opinion if we were to sit here until to-morrow morning and pass as many resolutions as we like, it would have no effect whatever upon the present state of affairs at Home. We have been distinctly told in a telegram from Lord Knutsford that owing to the opposition to our bill on both sides of the House, and the late period of the session and the pressure of other work, it will be impossible to pass the bill through this session; and I think we shall find it impossible to change the position of the Cabinet on that point. Is it likely that they are going to upset the whole of their arrangements and their programme just for the sake of getting our bill passed this session? But I do think that if

this resolution of the hon. member for the North is carried by this House unanimously — none of your half-and-half support—but by the unanimous voice of all sides of the House, it will have a good effect when the bill is brought on again next session. In the meantime we could not do anything better than try and induce the Ministries of the other Australian colonies to help us; and to bring pressure to bear upon the Imperial Parliament in the name of the whole of Australia. If we do that I think we shall stand a good chance of getting this business safely through. A great deal has been said about the necessity of our having the land in our own hands for enabling us to borrow money, but I hear it said on the other hand that we do not want the land for that purpose, and that we can borrow money just as well without the land. So much that is contradictory has been said on this point, that I should be very glad if someone would get up and tell us what is really the fact—whether we can raise loans without the land at our back or whether we cannot? One member tells us one thing, and another tells us quite the reverse; and when doctors differ who shall decide? I should not like to risk any opinion myself; but I should like to know what is really the fact. It has been said this evening, by more than one hon. member, I think, that it is absolutely necessary for this bill to pass through this session, if the colony is to be saved from going to the dogs. I do not think, myself, that things are so bad that a delay of three or four months is likely to make things worse than they are at present, or that the position of the colony is so desperate as all that. I do not think that the position of the colony is so bad as that,—far from it. I think our prospects are better just now than they have been for many years, so far as the colony is concerned; and I think that by pressing this matter too far we may do ourselves more injury than good. It is my intention to vote for the resolution of the hon. member for the North, though I should have liked it so worded as to show that it would cause irritation not only in this colony but throughout all Australia if our demands are not granted. I believe we shall find all the other colonies ready to aid us; we hear of the South Australian Minis-

try already taking action, Dr. Cockburn having brought the matter before his Government; and, no doubt, the other colonies will do the same if we ask them.

MR. A. FORREST: I have no intention of detaining the House but a very short time. I shall very strongly support the amendment of the hon. baronet; and, in doing so, I think members will give me credit not for self-interest but for acting in the interest of the colony at large. As a representative of a Northern constituency, this question of the control of the land cannot possibly affect the people of that part of the colony which I have the honor to represent. But I go further than that: I ask what good can it do the people of this colony to have any more control of the land than we have now? I say that during the last forty years we have had full control of the lands of this colony; we have made our own land laws; we have lived so far under these land laws, and I, for one, am prepared to continue to live under them. As we heard from a gentleman, outside this House, yesterday, a gentleman who has had a large experience of the other Australian colonies, our land laws are by far the best land laws of those of any colony in Australia; they are even better than those of New Zealand. What is the good of our asking for anything more than we have already got? We do not want more than is already granted to us, and I think we can very well afford to let this land question go. We do not want to interfere with the lands at the North; there are no large owners there; they are only leaseholders, and we cannot interfere with their leases; nor do we want to interfere with them. I think the amendment is a very good one; it does not pledge the House to anything; all it seeks is to get some suggestion from the Secretary of State as to what, in his opinion, would help to pass the bill through this session. We would then know what is in the way, whether it is the land, or not; and if it is, we would then know what to do, and see who it is that want Responsible Government and who don't. I think, myself, this land question is only a matter of sentiment with all of us, or we would not have given way as we did as to the

lands at the North. I believe it would be a good thing if we did not get the control of the lands at present—any more than we now possess—and that we should continue under the present regulations; I, for one, do not wish to see any change whatever in those regulations; and I should be very sorry if I thought that the first thing that would be done under Responsible Government was to alter our land laws. If that is the object of getting Responsible Government, I for one would be sorry to see Responsible Government adopted. Those are my feelings; but from the feeling of the House on this question I am afraid the amendment will not be carried, though I am sure it has been brought forward in the interest of the colony at large, and for no other object than to facilitate the passage of the bill through the House of Commons. If members would only agree to it, I believe that in the course of a very few days we should get an answer from the Secretary of State to this effect: "If you will only consent to erase out of the bill the portion relating to the lands, we will pass it through for you."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): Sir,—some hon. members apparently seem to think that the Constitution Bill that this House has sent Home contains a provision that the lands of a certain section of the colony should be handed over to the local Legislature. But it is not so. There is no mention in the Constitution Bill about the lands, or anything in connection with the control of the lands. Members seem to have forgotten that. When the hon. baronet moved this amendment, I think he must have forgotten the action of the House in the past. It is now some twelve months since this question of Responsible Government came before this Council in what I may call a definite and substantial form. Lord Knutsford then insisted that the Legislature, under the new régime, should only have the management of so much land as remained to the south of a certain boundary line. There was a good deal of discussion as to where the boundary line should be; but, after a great deal of negotiating and a great deal of debating, the question was finally settled as I thought, and it was agreed that all mention of the lands should be eliminated from the bill. The

Secretary of State has had the provisions of that bill before him now for nearly three months; for, although the bill itself only reached Home a few weeks ago, it will be remembered that all the material alterations made in the bill by this House were telegraphed Home at the time, and Lord Knutsford was able to see what the amendments agreed to were, so that he knew perfectly well what the provisions of the bill were three months ago. Has he ever raised any objection to any of those provisions since the bill passed this House? None; and there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that our Constitution Bill is before the House of Commons now, and that in the Enabling Bill provision has been made to give us what Lord Knutsford promised to give us. But, owing to the advanced stage of the session, and the pressure of other work that must be got through, Lord Knutsford tells us that it will be impracticable to press the bill beyond its second reading this session. The desire of the Secretary of State, and his intention, is to get the principle of the bill affirmed this session, and, that being done, the remaining stages will be all plain sailing, for, with the fresh facts and the fresh information that will be forthcoming between this and the next session of the Imperial Parliament, I have no doubt the bill will glide through the House of Commons with very little obstacle in its way. I think a large majority of members will agree with me that it would be undesirable and impolitic in the extreme to take such action as the hon. member, Sir Thomas Campbell, would urge us to take. On an occasion like this, I think it is very desirable that, whatever action the House agrees upon, there should be unanimity of feeling amongst all sides of the House, and the resolution should be so worded that we could all give it our support. I may say as to the resolution of the hon. member for the North that the only objection which I see to it is as to the wording of that part of it where it assails the House of Commons as a body, rather than that particular section of it which is showing so much opposition to the bill. I think the language of the resolution is scarcely courteous to the House of Commons, when it talks about the action of the Commons as regards this

little bill as "dealing a fatal blow at that confidence in the fair dealing and justice" of that distinguished assembly which has hitherto been reposed in it. I think it would be more diplomatic and more politic if the rough edges of these assertions were rubbed off, and that we should approach them with more of the velvet hand. There is too much of the iron hand here. I propose to modify the wording of the resolution, and to render it less harsh and at the same time a little more diplomatic, if I may say so. As I said before, I think it is very desirable that there should be unanimity of feeling and harmonious action on the part of the House on this occasion, and that there should be nothing of a contentious nature introduced. I trust the hon. baronet will not press his amendment for I am quite sure it will not meet with that support which would cause it to be adopted; therefore, I hope the hon. member will consent to withdraw it, and allow me to move the verbal amendments which I feel it my duty to do in the resolution as it now stands.

MR. LOTON: We have before us a telegram which has exercised the minds of members very considerably, and will no doubt exercise the minds of all colonists when they come to read it. After a long fight over the Constitution Bill, a few months ago, and after giving way on many points so as to get the bill passed as we hoped it would during this session, we are now told that it is not the intention of the Home Government to go on with the bill this session beyond a certain stage. This message has naturally disconcerted us very considerably. We are told that there is a strong opposition to the bill in the House of Commons, but we are not told what the nature of this opposition is; we are not told that it is because we wish to have the control of the lands, nor what it is. That being the case, I do not see why we should raise this question of the land at all, and, therefore, I am opposed to this amendment. I do not see why we should raise or suggest any difficulty as to the land. I think all we ought to do in the circumstances is to address the Home Government in firm but unmistakable language, expressing our disappointment and hoping that the bill may be yet passed through. I think the resolution

of the hon. member for the North is about as strong as we need make it, and not too strong. We do not want anything weak on an occasion like this: we want to show what we feel, and we want to show that we are unanimous. I think we are all unanimous about getting Responsible Government, because we believe it will be to the advantage of the colony; and by Responsible Government I mean Responsible Government with the control of the lands vested in the Legislature of the colony. I must say I am somewhat surprised at the hon. baronet having the face to put forward such an amendment as he has done on the present occasion. He has had a large experience in political life in this colony, and he aspires no doubt to a longer period of political activity, and, possibly, to a higher position; and about the only conclusion one can reasonably arrive at, as his object in moving this amendment, is that he is anxious to hasten the advent of that form of Government under which he aspires to a higher position. But, to my mind, if we were to accept the hon. baronet's amendment, it would not favor our chance of getting the bill passed, or bring about that which we want at all. I think it would damage our position rather than otherwise; because, although the hon. baronet says there is no reference to the land question in it, he has told us in the same breath that it is the land question and nothing else that is causing the opposition to the bill; so that if we ask Lord Knutsford to suggest what would have the effect of removing the opposition, his only answer would be to strike out all reference to the land; and that is probably what the result would be. That would not suit us, I think; I know it would not suit me. This question of the land was fully argued last session, and there is no need to go over it again. But I may be allowed to repeat now what I said then: that so long as I have a seat in this House I shall not be willing to accept Responsible Government without the land, that is, without the land south of a certain latitude, as has been promised us. To my mind it would be nothing more than Responsible Government in name without the land being given to the Legislature of the colony. The hon. member for Kimberley said he did not see what advantage it would be for us to

have the control of the lands more than we have at present. If the hon. member would consider the converse of that proposition he might as well ask why should it be to the advantage of the Imperial Government to retain the control of the land in their own hands, which is what they seem to want. The hon. member also says he would be willing to live under the present Land Regulations, and that he has no desire to see them altered. But I take it that the hon. member, when he says that, only refers to the regulations affecting the Northern portions of the colony, and not to the regulations dealing with that part of the colony which it is proposed to place under our control. We do not seek to control the Northern lands; and we have been told all along that it was the intention of the Imperial Government to reserve that portion of the colony even if it did grant us the control of the Southern portion of the colony. That is the reason that no strong effort has been made to have the control of the Northern lands. But with regard to the existing regulations as affecting this part of the colony, possibly the hon. member has not thought about them; but it is more than likely, I take it, that in a very short time after we get Responsible Government we shall find an agitation for a change in the land laws affecting the Southern portions of the colony: and there is no doubt that an alteration will be required after a very short trial. I do not think it would be difficult for the Commissioner of Crown Lands, if the hon. gentleman were here, to put his finger upon some clauses of the present regulations which he could easily amend; and other members of this House could do the same,—amendments which would benefit the colony and tend to its advancement. Allusion has been made to the difficulty the present Government have in carrying on the administration of the colony under present circumstances, and I think allowance should be made for that. They are in a position in which they find their hands tied; they are on the eve of a change and in a state of transition, and they can hardly be expected to show any great activity. But I am not afraid, if we have to wait a few months longer as we are, that they will not be able to carry on. If they are

afraid to do so, I hope this House will compel them to carry on.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): Oh, we'll carry on right enough.

MR. LOTON: No doubt. All that is wanted is to provide the sinews of war. It is said on one side that the prospects of the colony are such that unless we get Responsible Government at once it will come to ruin. It is said on the other hand that the prospects of the colony are particularly bright, and that they are very encouraging. For my own part I think the material prospects of the colony at present are encouraging enough; but the finances of the colony are not in a good position. They are in a very unsound condition, and have been for some time. And what is the reason? It is not far to seek. The Government of the day was forced on by the Legislature a few years ago to incur expenditure in all directions, and they have been too lavish in their expenditure. Latterly they have had to retrace their steps, and they find themselves in a position that they must exercise the closest economy to make both ends meet. It has been dinned into our ears on several occasions lately by His Excellency that it is necessary to practise the most rigid economy. Sir, it was pointed out in this House years ago that economy ought to be exercised; and if the voice of those who then preached the necessity of economy had been listened to, there would have been no necessity now for all this rigid economy that we hear of now. But I am not one of the faint-hearted ones. I believe there is a good time coming; and I believe it is close at hand. Although I am not one of those who think that the new Constitution we are looking forward to is going to do all for us that some people imagine, still I think that with our present prospects, and under a new régime, the colony has every prospect of making substantial progress. I shall support the resolution of the hon. member for the North, and support it as it stands.

MR. MARMION: It is not my intention to address the House at any length upon this very important subject,—I do not see that there is anything to be gained by going over the old ground. I will simply say that it

is my intention to support the resolution of the hon. member for the North. I have no doubt if the wording of it can be improved the hon. member will be ready to accept any improvement; but I do not see that any good will result from discussing the question at any length. What is required is that we should take some immediate action. My opinion as to the lands is not at all altered. I think it essential that we should have the control of the lands if we are going to adopt Responsible Government at all. I am not likely to alter my opinion on that subject; and I see no good in inviting any suggestion from the Secretary of State that would have the effect of taking from us the control of the lands. Therefore, I hope the hon. baronet will withdraw his amendment. I feel sure it will not meet with much support, and the only effect of it would be to create a sort of dissension when there ought to be nothing but unanimity in our ranks. I understand it is the intention of the hon. member for the Vasse to move another resolution, inviting the coöperation of the Legislatures of the other colonies. I think that is very desirable; and I think that if we pass these two resolutions we can do very little more, but trust to the Secretary of State—if there is any possibility or chance of doing so—to get the bill through for us this session. If that cannot be managed, I think our action now will have the effect of facilitating the passage of the bill when the Imperial Parliament meets again.

MR. BURT: I should like to say a word or two in reply to one or two observations that have fallen from previous speakers. It seems to be asserted on more sides than one that in regard to the question of the land it is quite immaterial whether we have the control of it or not. It is said that we have good and sufficient Land Regulations now, and that we intend to remain under them, and that it will make no difference whether any provision is made for giving us the control of the lands under another form of Government. I think if this question were thoroughly understood it would be seen that there is a great deal in it,—a great deal more than some hon. members seem to realise. How are the Land Regulations framed now? They are framed

under the provisions of an Imperial Act, the 13th and 14th Vic., chapter 59, which empowers the Secretary of State to make regulations. But the power is in the Secretary of State and not in the Legislature of the colony, though the Secretary of State has allowed us to frame regulations for the management of the lands, for the very natural reason that we had the settlement of the lands, and knew what was likely to suit the colony, as to which the English Parliament knew nothing whatever. But the right is still vested in the Secretary of State under the Imperial statute. The Constitution Bill that we sent Home last session repealed that statute which gives the Secretary of State the power to make these regulations, and under which it has been the practice to allow us to frame the regulations. That being so, what is to be substituted for that statute, and how is the colony going to get on as to its regulations when that power is taken away? It will be remembered that it was suggested by Lord Knutsford that he would find some other way of doing it; in the first place he proposed to do it by means of another Act,—he was going to put a clause in the Enabling Act, or some way. Afterwards he retired from that position and said he would do it in another form; and the end of it was—as members will recollect—the Governor sent a telegram to Lord Knutsford, saying that if he would agree to add to Act of Parliament a clause ensuring the validity of any regulations that we might frame, it would facilitate matters, so far as this House was concerned. It will be remembered that it had been argued in this House that the Secretary of State had no power to delegate his statutory powers to this Legislature without the consent of Parliament, and that was the reason why we wanted to know if he was going to introduce a clause in an Act to give validity to the regulations. Lord Knutsford's reply to the Governor's Message was that he would insert a clause, thus obtaining parliamentary authority for the regulation by which it was intended to transfer to the colonial Legislature the control of the lands south of a certain latitude. That, it seems to me, is what is causing the trouble,—that little clause which Lord Knutsford promised to insert in the Act. Now if that

clause were to be struck out—which is the suggestion that has been made in some quarters—what would be the position of this colony as regards the control of its lands? How would they be regulated? The Imperial statute under which it is done now being repealed, and this little clause not in the Enabling Act, under what control would our lands be? It is ridiculous to say that we would remain as we are. We would do nothing of the kind. What these people in England want is to have the control of our lands themselves, or to have a voice in it. That is where the trouble is; and if that is allowed it may affect us very seriously. Therefore, it is absurd to say that this question is of no importance; on the contrary it is of the utmost moment and importance. It is said that we do not require the land for the purpose of enabling us to obtain loans, that other countries obtain loans without any land to offer as a security. But what have they to offer besides land? Have they not a large population, who pay taxes and contribute to the revenue and to the substantial prosperity of the country? This is their security. Their lands have been settled, and are contributing to the wealth and prosperity of the country. But that is not the position of this colony. Our lands have yet to be settled; our population is small, and if we have no power to deal with our lands, what is to become of them? Who is going to control them? Who is going to manage them, and assist in settling and developing them? Are we going to have this done by people in England who know nothing about the colony? Are these people to regulate the management of our lands, even to our auriferous lands? Is it of no importance to us what becomes of our lands, or who controls them? Some hon. members seem to be of that opinion. I think it is of very great importance. What power in the world would the first Ministry under Responsible Government have to deal with the lands in the event of this little clause being swept away, and also the present power of regulating the lands? Supposing the Ministry and the Legislature wanted to alter the present regulations with the view of further promoting settlement, what power would they have of speedily, or at all, altering them? We should be without any power

in the matter, and these worthies at Home, who call us names, and who say we are a community of squatters and shopkeepers, without any energy or activity, these worthies who call us "land-grabbers" and other names, they would be the people who would have the power to regulate our lands. These are the gentlemen who want to have the power of controlling our lands. Do we not hear of colonization schemes and emigration schemes, and all sorts of philanthropic movements in England, put forward by people who have an eye on Western Australia as their field of operation—land-grabbers on a proper scale,—these are the people who are making all the trouble about our lands, and these are the people who want to have a finger in controlling our lands, and who will get it, too, if we don't mind what we are about. It is not the Ministry, it is not the Secretary of State that is making this trouble. They do not want to have the control and management of our lands. It is these other people, who have their own fads and schemes which they are anxious to carry out at the expense of this colony. These are the gentlemen who object to the colonial Legislature and a colonial Ministry having the power of controlling the lands. These are the people who want to be allowed to dictate our land policy,—people who until a few years ago thought Perth was the principal seaport of the colony, and who talked about a man-of-war coming up to Government House. It seems to me that these are the gentlemen who want to control the lands of Western Australia, and who object to this bill passing through the Imperial Parliament, because of that little clause I have referred to. Therefore, I say it is a very important question for us to consider; it is quite a fallacy to suppose for a moment that things would remain as they are now if the Imperial statute were repealed and nothing substituted in lieu of it. As to the amendment, I, for one, am not going to give up anything more. I am not going to lighten the ship any more. I think we have thrown quite enough overboard already. I think it would be foolish to send a message to the Secretary of State asking him to suggest what we should do in order to get the bill passed. We don't know what he might suggest.

It might not be the land at all. He might say if we agreed to throwing one out of the two chambers overboard, he may be able to get the ship into port. Or he might say if you agree to a nominated Upper House I may be able to get the bill through. We don't know what he may suggest, and I think we had better not ask him to suggest anything, or we may find that we may have to sacrifice all those principles that we fought so much over last session, at a great expenditure of time and patience. As for giving way on the land question, I hope this House is not going to stultify itself on that point. I hope we are not going to give over the lands of the colony to these gentlemen who have their eyes on Western Australia as a very desirable rubbish heap for the sweepings of the gutters and alleys of the old country. That is the idea. Are we not told and do we not read of their vast schemes for providing an outlet for the overcrowded population of the mother country; and do we not know that the class of people that would be sent to flood the colony are the very class that would neither do themselves or the colony any good, the most worthless and the most helpless among the crowded populations of their large cities. The other colonies know this, and they can see that this is the real danger we have to guard against. They can see that this is the object of these misguided philanthropists at Home; and for this reason we may depend upon the support of our neighbors in this matter. There is no objection to the right class of emigrants—all these colonies are only too glad to see a desirable class of emigrants coming here, and they are always welcome. But they do object to the sweepings of the old country; and they know very well that it is from that class that these colonization associations propose to draw their emigrants; they simply want to shoot rubbish here which they cannot shoot anywhere else. As a fact, it would not affect us in this colony so much as it would our neighbors; for we know that the rascally population, the sweepings of the large towns, who would be sent here under the auspices of these philanthropic associations, would very soon trip it off to the big city of Melbourne, or the big city of Sydney, and would not stop in the uncongenial atmosphere of a small city

like Perth. As to the proposal of the Colonial Secretary to modify the wording of this resolution, I do not think that the resolution is over strong. It is firm, and perhaps the language is strong; but this is an occasion when we ought to speak out strongly. I think there is nothing disrespectful in the resolution towards the House of Commons; if I thought there was, I would be the first to alter it. But I do not think it is in any way disrespectful, nor too strongly worded; and for my part I do not propose to agree to any alteration in the wording of it.

Amendment put, and negatived on the voices.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) then moved to omit the words "and deal a fatal blow at that trustful confidence in the fair dealing and justice of the House of Commons which has hitherto been reposed in it." As he had already said, he thought it was desirable that they should rub off the rough edges of the resolution. To his mind it was rather rash for 26 men, representing 40,000 people, to hurl a resolution like this at 670 men, representing 40,000,000. He thought the object we had in view was more likely to be attained by using respectful and courteous language as by using strong language which the circumstances did not warrant. He thought a great deal more was done in this world by patience and conciliation than by showing any degree of temper. Bearing this in mind, and looking at the fact that the opposition in the House of Commons was not from that House as a body but from a section of it, he thought it would be impolitic to send such a resolution as this Home without toning it down a little.

MR. RICHARDSON: I think the amendment is no improvement upon the original resolution; I think it is quite the contrary. I do not see that we have any reason to be too punctilious as to the language we use; we all know we have been called some hard names at Home.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): Not by the English Parliament; by a wretched paper, the "*Pall Mall Gazette*."

MR. RICHARDSON: I think the resolution is a very mild one, under the circumstances. It cannot be gainsaid that the news received a few days

ago was a "fatal blow" to our hopes and to our "trustful confidence;" I know it was a fatal blow to mine; and I believe it will have that effect upon the colony at large.

MR. BURT: Does the Attorney General expect us to say that we repose every confidence in the House of Commons in the face of all we hear? Our case is that these people who oppose the bill have not got a leg to stand upon for delaying the passage of the bill or refusing us the control of the land, as was given to the other colonies,—a lot of people who call us names, and want the land for themselves to make money out of it with their colonization and their emigration schemes. Yet we are asked to say that we repose every confidence in these gentlemen, who call us "land-grabbers" and I don't know what. I am not going to do it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): Why should we insult the House of Commons because a black-guardly paper like the *Pall Mall* calls us names. [AN HON. MEMBER: And the *Times*.] Or even the *Times*. Why should we insult a body like the House of Commons?

MR. RASON: It is not what the Attorney General chooses to style a "wretched paper" that has called us "land-grabbers;" I can produce chapter and verse to prove that the term "land-grabber" has been used in the House of Commons itself with regard to this very question.

MR. MARMION: It may not be necessary, perhaps, to say that we repose every confidence in the House of Commons; but, on the other hand, I do not think it is necessary to say that we do not repose any confidence in the House of Commons, especially as we are asking them to do us a good turn.

MR. RANDELL: I shall support the amendment; I think it is the best course we can pursue. We want at the present moment to conciliate the House of Commons and not to alienate its sympathy; and I think it would be very impolitic to use any language towards it that could be construed as being offensive. We have no reason yet for saying that the House of Commons will refuse to do us justice, and I think it would be injudicious on our part to give them any handle for taking up an attitude of hostility towards us. The House of Commons

after all is the seat of supreme power of the British Empire, and for my part I have still some confidence in the ultimate result of our cause, and that we shall obtain justice at the hands of the House of Commons, if not this session, at the next session. The records of our own House show us that many measures have met with very strong opposition at first, and eventually have triumphed over all opposition. Although there was a feeling of opposition when they first came before the House, and although that opposition took some time to allay it, victory was eventually achieved. The Roads Act is a case in point. I have no doubt, myself, that when the House of Commons has had time to consider this question in the light of further information, any strong opposition to the bill will be removed, and there will be no difficulty about passing it. I think that during the discussion that has taken place this evening justice has hardly been done to the Secretary of State. The impression created on my mind after reading all that has passed on the subject is that the Secretary of State has been a most loyal friend to the colony; and I think it is very desirable that we should approach him in language which cannot by any possible means be regarded by him as offensive. I think our language should be firm and even strong; but I think there is no necessity for making it too strong. I think there is always more to be gained in this world by using temperate and conciliatory language than by resorting to violent and intemperate language. We see that illustrated in the newspaper press; if we see an article couched in violent and extravagant language, it loses its effect at once. I had intended, myself, to have objected to the word "fatal" in this resolution; I think it is a very strong word indeed; and I think the substitution of the words proposed by the Colonial Secretary would be equally effective, while at the same time they would not be likely to give offence. Speaking for myself, I repose every confidence in the ultimate sense of justice of the House of Commons; and for that reason I should be very sorry to see these words, which can very easily be construed in an offensive sense, and are calculated to do us a great deal of harm in my opinion,—I

should be very sorry to see them left in the resolution which it is proposed to telegraph Home.

MR. SCOTT: I certainly think the words referred to are somewhat too strong, and that they may give rise to a feeling of irritation in the minds of those who are disposed to do all they can for us in this matter.

Amendment put, and negatived on the voices.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said he had no wish to press the matter to a division, for he thought it was very desirable that we should show some unanimity. At the same time, he only hoped it might not be found hereafter that the resolution had injured rather than assisted our cause.

Resolution put and passed.

MR. BURT moved an address to the Governor, requesting His Excellency to telegraph the resolution to the Secretary of State as early as possible.

Agreed to.

MR. PARKER: I rise for the purpose of moving a resolution, with leave, without notice. It is: "That the Speaker be requested to telegraph to the Governments and the Presidents and Speakers of the Legislatures of the Eastern Colonies, as follows:—'The Legislative Council of Western Australia, finding the passing of the Enabling Bill introduced in the Imperial Parliament, with a view of granting Responsible Government to this colony, menaced by serious opposition, and likely for the present to be withdrawn, earnestly appeals for your assistance, and trusts that the Agent General of your Colony may be instructed to press upon the Cabinet of Great Britain the necessity, in the interest both of Western Australia and of the Australasian group generally, for the passing of the measure before the approaching prorogation'; and that the Speaker at the same time be requested to forward a copy of the Resolution already adopted in reply to His Excellency's Message No. 1.' It has been most gratifying, I think, not only to the members of this House but to the colony at large to find so great and I may say sympathetic an interest evoked in this question of Responsible Government in the neighboring colonies. We find that some months ago the Govern-

ments of the various colonies expressing themselves as quite prepared to do their utmost to support us in our endeavors to obtain free and autonomous institutions: but we found that they were somewhat damped by the correspondence that took place between their Governments and that of this colony. I am not saying that I, in any way, blame the Government here for the course of action they felt called upon to adopt on that occasion. In the position this Government is placed I do not see very well how they could have adopted any other course in the circumstances. This House separated at the close of last session without proposing any action in the direction of seeking the aid of the sister colonies; and I think it would have been the proper thing to have done if we wished to ensure their assistance. I think it was more the province of this House to do so than that of the Government. Now, I think the time has arrived when we may well ask our neighbors to assist us in this matter, and solicit their influence with the Imperial Government, through their Agents General, or otherwise, as they may deem advisable, so as to endeavor to ensure the passage of the Constitution Bill through the House of Commons this session. I do not know that, even with the aid of the neighboring colonies, we shall see the bill through this session; I fear that, owing to the late period of the session—Parliament will probably not sit more than another three weeks or so—and the pressure of other work, it will be found impossible for the Government to do more than get the bill read a second time this session. But I think it is bound to have a beneficial effect when it is found that we have the sympathy of all the Australian colonies in our present position; and that when the Imperial Parliament discovers that this is not a question affecting Western Australia alone, but one in which the whole of Australia is interested, it will be more likely to accede to our demands than it is at present. I feel certain that in Lord Knutsford, himself, and in his colleagues, we have very warm friends and advocates. We know that the Secretary of State has, so far as he is concerned, carried out his pledges, and that he is prepared, apparently, to do his utmost to see that the colony ob-

tains Responsible Government on the same terms as it was granted to the other colonies; and I think it would certainly be gratifying to him to find that all the other colonies are in accord with us in this matter. I should imagine it would be of vast assistance to him in passing the bill through the House of Commons to be able to point out that the whole of Australia joins in supporting the measure to give this colony the privilege of self-government. My object in moving this resolution is to secure that support which we have every reason to believe our neighbors are ready to extend to us, and I cannot help thinking that such support would be very useful to us at the present juncture.

Resolution put, and passed unanimously.

The House adjourned at twenty-five minutes past ten o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 29th July, 1889.

Constitution Bill: Replies to telegrams sent to the other Colonies—Stock Route between Dongara and Perth—Further Re-Appropriation Bill: first reading—Message (No. 3): Coded Telegram sent to the Secretary of State—Electoral Bill: second reading; referred to select committee—Railways Act Amendment Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

CONSTITUTION BILL: TELEGRAMS.

THE SPEAKER announced that he had received the following telegrams from the Premiers of New South Wales and Tasmania, in reply to the Resolution adopted by the House on Friday evening, with reference to the Constitution Bill:

*To the Honorable Sir J. G. Lee Steere, Speaker
Legislative Council.*

Your telegram received. This Government fully sympathises with the Legislature and