

been most generously, most handsomely treated.

Schedule D., as amended, agreed to.

Bill reported to the House, with amendments.

The House adjourned at a quarter to eleven o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 1st April, 1889.

Return of Revenue and Expenditure, Kimberley District—Colonel Angelo's "bund" across the Harding River—Water supply for the city of Perth—Varying the s.s. *Australind* contract—Contract for working Bunbury-Blackwood Railway—Increased representation, Federal Council: Address to Her Majesty—Conveniences for Spencer's Brook station—Aborigines Bill: in committee—Defence of Fremantle (Message No. 3)—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

RETURN OF REVENUE AND EXPENDITURE, KIMBERLEY DISTRICT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) said he desired to make an explanation with reference to a return moved for by the hon. member for Geraldton, on the 23rd March, with reference to the revenue and expenditure in the Kimberley district up to date. Immediately upon the motion for these returns being carried, he placed himself in communication with both the Treasury and the Audit Department, and endeavored to get that which the hon. member desired. He had received a memorandum from the Colonial Treasurer and from the Auditor General on the subject, which he would read. (Read.) The hon. member would see that all the cash accounts of the colony would have to be examined, voucher by voucher, for six or seven years, as the revenue and expenditure of the Kimberley district had for

years been incorporated with the general accounts, and not kept separately. The return asked for would entail immense labor, and extra clerical assistance in the Audit Department; and he would ask the hon. member if he would not mind meeting him (the Colonial Secretary) at his office, and see whether such information as could there be furnished would satisfy him, as he believed it would take months to elaborate these returns.

COLONEL ANGELO'S "BUND" ACROSS THE RIVER HARDING.

MR. RICHARDSON: I wish to ask the Colonial Secretary,—(1.)—Whether a certain bund, or weir, constructed across the River Harding, at Roebourne, under the direction of the Government Resident, Col. Angelo, and lately washed away by floods, was constructed with the sanction and approval of the Government?

2nd. If any plans, drawings, or specifications were obtained from the Works Department for the said work, or any professional supervision employed on it—if not, why not?

3rd. From what fund the cost of its construction was drawn, and what description of labor was employed?

4th. Whether they intend allowing further outlay for its repair?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) replied:—

1st. It was constructed by the Government Resident without sanction.

2nd. None were prepared by the Works Department; nor has any professional supervision been exercised, for the reason above given.

3rd. Tools and some timber were supplied by the Gaols and Works Departments; the labor used was prisoners.

4th. The Resident Engineer has been ordered to report on the whole work.

WATER SUPPLY FOR THE CITY OF PERTH.

MR. SCOTT: The motion I am about to move is one in which I confidently hope the Government will do their best to assist me. I appeal with some confidence in this matter to the Government benches, knowing the interest that the Government has always taken in the question of the sanitary improvement of

this city; as well as of the town of Fremantle. Probably the House is aware that certain steps were recently taken by the City Council with the view of ascertaining the willingness of the citizens to consent to a special rate being levied for the purpose of obtaining a pure water supply; the City Council went to a great deal of trouble in the matter, and a plebiscite of the ratepayers was taken on the question of whether, in the event of water works being started, they would be willing to submit to a water rate not exceeding 1s. in the pound. The result of this appeal was that a large majority expressed their willingness to do so, and they appeared to be anxious to obtain this great boon. It will also be within the memory of this House that this question of a supply of pure water for the city of Perth has been a prominent question for some years past, and that the necessity of it has been urged upon the Government, by the Colonial Surgeon, year after year, in his official reports. It was also urged upon the Government by a special Sanitary Commission appointed by the Government a few years ago; and we know, as a fact, that the greatest necessity exists for taking steps to provide this great boon of a wholesome water supply. The citizens themselves, as I have said, are perfectly willing to pay a reasonable rate for this boon, and the question now is, how best to provide them with it, and what is the most advisable scheme of water supply to adopt. In this the City Council and the citizens feel that they must appeal to the Government to help them, and I have every reason to believe that our able Director of Public Works is prepared to give us the assistance of his professional knowledge in the matter. I believe that gentleman—who, I am sorry, is absent from the House—has had a considerable amount of experience in connection with water supply schemes; therefore, in asking that His Excellency may be pleased to instruct him to take such steps as he may deem necessary to determine the best scheme of water supply for this city, I think I am moving in the right direction. I do not know that I need detain the House by going at any great length into this question, but I may remind the House that the income we esti-

mate upon receiving from water rates would be something like £3,000 a year. That is from rates alone. To that we may add the meter charges; and also the saving to the municipal revenue, in connection with street watering, which, I expect, would bring up the receipts to about £4,000 a year. That is calculating upon the present basis of the population and the present number of ratepayers. In the course of another two years—if we may judge of the future increase by recent circumstances—I believe we may reckon upon a revenue of £5,000—that is to say, before we have this water scheme in operation. At any rate we may rest assured of an income of about £4,000, based upon our present estimate; so that it will be seen we are not unprepared to meet the necessary expense that will fall upon the city. In any case, the resolution I am about to move can do no harm; it simply requests the assistance of the Public Works Department in determining the best scheme for carrying out the object in view. Of course it will be necessary to encroach upon the public funds to some extent, but I apprehend it will not be such a sum as this House is likely to cavil at, looking at the great importance of this question. I now move—"That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to instruct the Honorable Director of Public Works to take such steps as he may deem necessary to determine the best scheme for supplying the city of Perth with good potable water."

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): I may say at once that the Government are quite ready to meet the views of the hon. member.

Motion put and passed.

THE "AUSTRALIND" CONTRACT: (PROPOSAL TO VARY).

MR. GRANT moved: "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, that in the opinion of this Council the offer of the owners of the s.s. *Australind* (as contained in their letter of the 17th November, 1888) should be accepted." The people at the North who were interested in the movements of this steamer—and, he thought, people down here, too—would prefer that she should make an extra trip to Singapore, and

avoid calling at Wyndham; and the owners had expressed themselves willing to vary their contract in that way. Her cargo to Wyndham was, he believed, a mere nothing, and he had not heard of any passengers; in fact her voyage there was comparatively useless. It would be far more advantageous to the colony generally that she should be allowed to make a quicker voyage to Singapore.

MR. SHENTON said members were aware that when the present contract was made with the owners of the *Australind*, it was stipulated that she should make five trips in the year between Fremantle and Singapore, and, on the downward trip, call at Wyndham. Now the owners (as would be seen from the correspondence laid on the table) made an offer, or suggested, that if they were relieved from the Wyndham trip coming down they would make an extra trip to Singapore, thus making six trips between Fremantle and Singapore instead of five, every year. Since the present contract had been entered into, he might state that the only cargo the steamer had brought down from Singapore to Wyndham had been Government telegraph material chiefly; she had not brought a single passenger. He might point out that if the contract were varied as now proposed, there would still be steam communication, between this part of the colony and Wyndham, by the *Otway*.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser) asked the House to consider, firstly, our position with regard to this contract. It was only entered into on the 1st January last year, and it was for a term of three years. She was to make five voyages annually to Singapore, calling at Wyndham upon each downward trip. It was thought at that time, and a great deal was made of the argument, that it was a matter of necessity we should establish more frequent communication with Wyndham, and the owners of this steamer were quite willing to accede to the proposal. Why should we now interfere with this contract? If we did so, the Adelaide Steamship Company might reasonably come to the House and say: "As you have relieved the owners of the *Australind* from performing a certain part of her engagement, we may fairly assume that you will treat

us with equal liberality." He could not see why we should relinquish this part of the agreement for the remainder of the three years, seeing that it was put in the contract at the express desire of the House. He thought, himself, it would be a great disadvantage to agree to this deviation from the contract, at present, at any rate. They were told that another line of steamers, commonly known as the "Blue Funnel" line, proposed to establish a service between Singapore and this colony, calling at our northern ports, including Wyndham. Of course, when we had this additional service, there might be no necessity then to insist upon the *Australind* also calling at Wyndham. But at present, and until this new service was established, he thought it would be a great risk to run to deviate from the present contract as proposed. The result might be that we might find Wyndham left out altogether, if we relaxed the terms of this contract as proposed.

MR. A. FORREST said he was one of the select committee who went into this subject of our Northern service, and the hon. member for Toodyay was one of that committee, and he was surprised to find the hon. member supporting this proposal to run away from the contract then agreed upon. Wyndham was a very important port; it was the mail port for the goldfields; and he was very much surprised that such a motion should have been brought forward. He thought the hon. member for Toodyay was wrong in saying that the steamer could make an extra trip a year to Singapore by not calling at Wyndham. They would only save four days each trip, which would be twenty days in the five trips; and he did not think an extra trip to Singapore could be performed in twenty days, at any rate at the steamer's present rate of travelling. As the representative of the district, he protested against this motion, and he hoped the Government would do all they could to carry out the original agreement, which was entered into at the unanimous wish of the House, and with the full sanction of the steamer's company and their agents here. Now, it appeared, the company found that calling at Wyndham did not pay them, and they wanted to get out of it; but he did not see why that House should interfere.

MR. SHOLL thought that what they ought to consider was whether it would be to the advantage of the community, generally, that this alteration in the contract should be made; and he thought, himself, it would be a very great advantage both to the northern and southern parts of the colony—Wyndham excepted—if this company agreed to make another trip to Singapore.

MR. RICHARDSON said it might be doing a little injustice to Wyndham itself, but he thought that looking at the matter from a Northern point of view, generally, it would be an advantage to have an extra trip made to Singapore. The question resolved itself into a question of the advantages gained by Carnarvon, Ashburton, Cossack, Derby, and Roebuck Bay *versus* the disadvantages suffered by Wyndham only.

MR. RASON thought it would be a considerable advantage to the whole colony to have this extra service between Fremantle and Singapore. This Wyndham trip, it appeared, had never been of any benefit whatever, so far. They were told that Wyndham was the port for the goldfields' mails; but the hon. member who said that must have forgotten that the regular mail service between Wyndham and the goldfields had been abolished months ago. On the other hand, the whole colony south of Wyndham would benefit by the proposed change.

MR. LOTON thought there could be but one opinion as to the advantage of an extra trip annually to Singapore. Our northern settlements were advancing rapidly, and at present the only outlet for their surplus stock was Fremantle or Perth, where the consumption at present was very small; and, no doubt, it was very desirable that other outlets should be provided. At the same time, when a contract like this was entered into—unless there was very strong and sufficient grounds for varying it—it was not, to his mind, desirable to interfere with it. It would be easily seen that it would be very inconvenient if this Wyndham, or any other service, were done away with, after being once established, and he thought the desire was to increase the communication with our distant ports rather than reduce it. It had been said that another service was likely to be established; but that was no reason why

we should relax the terms of this contract at the present time.

MR. RANDELL would be sorry to stand in the way of anything that he thought would tend to the advantage of the colony, generally, or of any particular portion of it, but, so far as he could see, it had hardly been made out yet that it would be to the advantage of the colony to depart from this contract as proposed. It was not long ago since the contract was entered into, upon the recommendation of a select committee of the House; and he thought the House should be very careful before attempting to interfere with an established contract, and established for the particular object of giving Wyndham all the assistance we could towards the development of the district. Possibly some persons might have settled in the neighborhood of Wyndham in consequence of the establishment of this service, and the interests of these persons would certainly suffer if the agreement entered into were now departed from. He understood that the real secret of this movement in favor of relaxing the conditions of the contract was that the downward trip to Wyndham did not pay the contractors; but he did not see why that House should sacrifice the interests of Wyndham for that reason,—at any rate until we gave the Wyndham people an opportunity of being heard in the matter.

Motion put and negatived on the voices.

CONTRACT FOR WORKING THE BUNBURY-BLACKWOOD RAILWAY.

MR. VENN moved that a copy of the contract made between the Government and certain parties for working the first section of the Bunbury-Blackwood Railway be laid on the table of the House. He did so in order that members might acquaint themselves with the terms of the contract, in view of a resolution on the subject which he proposed to move hereafter.

Motion put and passed.

FEDERAL COUNCIL: INCREASE OF REPRESENTATION (MESSAGE No. 1.)

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): I rise to move an address to Her Majesty the Queen, praying

that an Order-in-Council may be passed increasing the number of representatives for each of these colonies in the Federal Council of Australasia. The House is aware that at the recent session of that body the expediency of amending its constitution, by increasing the number of its members, was brought forward, and that a select committee was appointed to consider and report upon the subject. The report of that select committee is among the printed papers presented to this House, attached to His Excellency's Message (No. 1). Members will no doubt have carefully perused that report, and also the covering letter of the Premier of Victoria (Mr. Gillies) who, as chairman of the standing committee of the Federal Council, has addressed this Government in the following terms:

Premier's Office, Melbourne,
22nd February, 1889.

Srs,
I have the honor to inform you that, at the recent Session of the Federal Council of Australasia, held in Hobart, the question of amending the Constitution of the Council was referred to a Select Committee for consideration and report.

The Select Committee, after careful deliberation, brought up the Report, copy of which is enclosed, recommending an increase on the basis of population, in the number of Members of the Council, in cases of Colonies other than Crown Colonies.

This Report was unanimously adopted by the Council on the 4th instant, and instructions were given to the Standing Committee to take the necessary steps to give effect thereto.

I have, accordingly, to invite your earnest attention to the matter, and to express the hope that, at the earliest date practicable, you will move the Legislature of your colony to adopt, in accordance with section 5 of the "Federal Council of Australasia Act, 1885" (48 and 49 Vict., ch. 60) an Address to Her Majesty praying that an Order-in-Council may be passed increasing the number of representatives for each colony in the manner proposed.

I have, &c.,

D. GILLIES,

Chairman of the Standing Committee of the
Federal Council of Australasia.

The Honorable the
Colonial Secretary, Perth.

It is in pursuance of the request contained in that letter that I now move this House to adopt the address which I am about to move. The address itself, I think, embodies all that is necessary to be said on the subject, and I am not

aware that I need add anything beyond an expression of gratification at the movement now being made to increase the efficiency and usefulness of the Federal Council. With regard to the manner of selecting their representatives by the different colonies, it will be seen that the select committee were unable to arrive at any unanimous system of selection, and it was left to each colony to determine its own method of selection. On this subject they say in their report: "The Committee have carefully deliberated on the question of a uniform system for the selection of representatives by the different colonies, but are at present unable to recommend any such system for adoption. Considerable advantages would probably result from uniformity on the subject, but differences in the constitutions of the Parliaments of the various colonies render objectionable a uniform system of election by members of Parliament, and, in the opinion of the Committee, it is not yet expedient to require the election of the representatives by constituencies of the people. Moreover, as the chief object of any system would be to secure the representation in the Council of each colony in the manner most satisfactory to its people, it appears to the Committee that this object can well be attained by continuing the present unrestricted right of the people of each colony to decide this matter for themselves through the local Legislature." The House is aware that, under the proposed increased representation, this colony at present will be entitled to send two representatives, instead of one, to what I may call this National Assembly, the proposal being that the representation should proceed on the basis of population. I am sure it will require no words of mine to ensure the loyal support of this House to the proposition I am about to make, which is this: That the following resolution in reply to His Excellency's Message (No. 1) be adopted:

To Her Most Gracious Majesty the Queen.

We, Your Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects, the Members of the Legislative Council of Western Australia, beg to assure Your Majesty of our continued

loyalty to Your Majesty's Throne and Person.

We have learnt with satisfaction that the Federal Council of Australasia during its recent Session, holden at Hobart, in the Colony of Tasmania, unanimously adopted the following Resolutions:—

- (a) The number of the Members of the Council should be increased.
- (b) The increase of the number of the Members of the Council should be limited to the cases of Colonies other than Crown Colonies, and should proceed on the basis of population as follows:—
 - i. Every Colony having a population of not more than 100,000 should be entitled to Two Representatives.
 - ii. Every Colony having a population of more than 100,000 and not more than 300,000 should be entitled to Four Representatives.
 - iii. Every Colony having a population of more than 300,000 and not more than 700,000 should be entitled to Five Representatives.
 - iv. Every Colony having a population of more than 700,000 should be entitled to Six Representatives.
- (c) For the purpose of ascertaining the number of Representatives to which each Colony shall be entitled, the Governor in Council of each Colony should cause the numbers of the population of such Colony to be annually estimated and certified to the Governor of the Colony in which the Session of the Council is appointed to be held.

We humbly pray that Your Majesty may be graciously pleased to cause an Order-in-Council to be passed for the purpose of giving the necessary effect to the said resolutions.

MR. PARKER moved the adjournment of the debate until Wednesday.

Agreed to.

Debate adjourned.

CONVENIENCES AT SPENCER'S BROOK STATION.

MR. SHENTON called the attention of the Commissioner of Railways to the

want of necessary conveniences at the Spencer's Brook station.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser)—on behalf of the Commissioner of Railways—said that the necessary work was in progress.

ABORIGINES BILL.

The House went into committee on this bill.

Clause 1—"This Act may be cited as the Aborigines Act, 1889."

MR. PARKER said he was not aware that there was any other Aborigines Act besides this one, and, as it might possibly not be assented to and come into operation during 1889, it would be better to leave out the year.

Agreed to.

Clauses 2 to 7, inclusive, were adopted *sub silentio*.

Clause 8—"Any lands, being Crown Lands within the meaning of the Land Regulations proclaimed on the second day of March, One thousand eight hundred and eighty-seven, may be reserved and set apart by the Governor, as he may think fit, for the use and benefit of the aboriginal inhabitants of this colony, including half-castes. Any lands so reserved shall, on and from the date of such reservation, vest and be vested in the Aborigines Protection Board."

MR. SHOLL: I notice that this clause provides that all lands reserved for the use of the natives may be set apart by the Governor. I propose to alter that, and let this power vest in the Governor in Council. My reason for doing this is that, according to the Constitution Bill as now passed, the lands of the colony, south of a certain parallel, are to be vested in the Legislature of the colony; and, if any of these lands are to be set apart for the natives, I think the Legislature, or, at any rate, the Ministry of the day,—which would be the Governor in Council—should have some voice in the matter. I think it would be inconsistent with the Constitution Bill, as amended the other day, if this amendment were not made in this bill. I, therefore, move that the words "in Council" be inserted after the word "Governor" in the sixth line.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I wish to

point out that if that were carried it would destroy the effect of the 3rd clause of the bill, already passed. That clause provides that the word "Governor" throughout this Act shall mean the person for the time being administering the Government, acting alone, and without the advice of the Executive Council. Members ought to know by this time that the object of this bill is to place the aborigines under the care of a board, to be appointed by the Governor of the colony, without reference to any Ministry in power,—in fact a board removed entirely from political influence or control. I, myself, do not fear, as some hon. members seem to do, that we shall ever have a Governor who will act otherwise in this matter than in the best interests of the colony, as well as of the natives. The whole question was thoroughly discussed last session on the occasion of the second reading of the same bill as that now before the committee, and I see no use in reopening the question at this stage. It is not unusual, even under Responsible Government, to have these statutory boards dealing with public matters. We know that in the other colonies they have their Railway Commissioners and their Civil Service Commissioners,—boards who exercise their powers, and very large powers too, under a statute, and independent of the Ministers of the day and of all political influences. If the hon. member who has moved this amendment had been consistent, he would have moved that as regards the lands south of the tropic of Capricorn the reserves for natives should be set apart by the Governor in Council, but that as regards the lands north of that line they should be set apart by the Governor alone, without the advice of the Executive Council. But, really, I see no use in reopening this question, which was completely threshed out last session.

MR. PARKER: I fail to see the force of the argument that this amendment would clash with Clause 3 of the bill, because we can easily amend that clause hereafter. I believe the committee is perfectly willing that as regards all other matters dealt with in this bill, except the lands, the Governor acting alone should have full power; but that, as regards the land, the committee think that no Governor acting alone should have power to

reserve these lands for native purposes, without, at any rate, taking the advice of his responsible Ministers. I cannot, myself, see the slightest objection to this amendment. The Commissioner of Crown Lands says there is no probability of any Governor acting otherwise than in the interests of the colony. Neither do I think there is any probability of any Ministry doing so. It must be borne in mind that we propose to give £5,000 a year to this board, absolutely to do what they think proper with it; and that if the revenue of the colony increases, this grant shall increase proportionately. The House has agreed to that. But we say if you want also to take any of our lands for the natives, we think the least you can do is to ask the consent of the Ministry representing the people of the country. We have provided in our Constitution Act that all lands south of a certain line shall be vested in the Legislature of the colony, but this clause provides that the Governor of the colony for the time being shall override and supersede the Legislature, without even mentioning the subject to his Executive Council. I think it is unreasonable on the part of the Government to expect this House to pass such a clause. If we had passed the Constitution Bill as submitted to us by the Government, containing no provision at all as regards the Crown lands, it would have been a different thing; but, having inserted that provision in the Constitution Bill, vesting the lands of the colony in the Legislature, I think we cannot now, with any consistency, allow the Governor, of his own mere motion, to override the Legislature, and to set apart from time to time as much land as he likes for the natives without any reference whatever to the Ministry representing the Legislature and the people of the colony. We know that Governors, generally, are reasonable men, and, no doubt, the members of this board will be reasonable men; but we also know that some Governors come out to colonies imbued with extraordinary views with regard to the rights of the natives, views which are commonly regarded as "Exeter Hall" views, very sentimental but utterly impracticable. And a Governor imbued with such views as those might take it into his head to set apart large areas

of the very best lands of the colony for the native population, and we should have no voice whatever in the matter. And let us look what becomes of this land. Immediately these areas are set apart for native purposes they are absolutely vested in this Aborigines Board. The board would take these lands, clothed with no trust at all. They might sell them or dispose of them as they please, without even the control of the Governor for the time being. In these circumstances it seems to me only right that the people of the colony, through their Ministers, should have some voice in the matter.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): Reading this clause calmly, and looking at it temperately, I see no grounds for objection to it. Is it likely that the Governor of the colony, whatever his own views or idiosyncracies may be, will act in this matter without the concurrence of his responsible Ministers, or of this Board? The members of this Board, which is already in existence, are colonists of standing and intelligence; they are reasonable men, and we may take it that the Board will always consist of such men. Has the present Board shown any inclination to abuse its powers in any way? I believe this Board could now recommend the Governor to set apart millions of acres of land, under our present Land Regulations, for native purposes, if they liked. But have they ever shown any such inclination? Have they shown any desire to do anything of the kind? These reserves, if set apart, would not be in the settled parts of the colony, where, as members are never tired of saying, there are few, if any, natives left; they would be set apart in the interior, where the natives most do congregate,—in the far North, where they are most numerous; and it is not likely that settlement would be interfered with in any way, or that land required for European occupation would be appropriated for native purposes.

MR. RICHARDSON: It would be refreshing indeed if the Government could be found to place some little trust, some little confidence, in the people of this colony, as represented in the Legislature and in the Ministry, under this Act, and not limit their trust entirely to the

Governor and this Board, and nobody else. We are asked to place a great deal of trust on our part, a very large amount of trust, in this Board and in the Governor; and although at present we have every confidence in the good sense of the members of the Board and in the Governor, there is no knowing what influence "Exeter Hall" may be able to bring to bear at some future time. I hope the House will have more sense, more spirit, and more consistency than to pass this clause as it stands.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): The House may have as much sense and as much spirit as it likes, but, whether it may be agreeable to us or not, this is part of the bargain we have made with the Imperial Government, and the House should not lose sight of that fact.

MR. PARKER: I am not aware that it is part of any bargain. If it is, we won't accept it; that's all.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): I apprehend it is one of the conditions or points insisted upon by the Secretary of State, and anyone acquainted with English feeling on the subject knows that it is a point which the Secretary of State will adhere to, and upon which he is not likely to give way one jot.

MR. PARKER: Then we won't give way, either.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): I will say nothing on that subject. Whether it is politic on the part of the House to accept the condition or not is not for me to say. But all along it has been one of the conditions insisted upon by the Secretary of State. If the hon. member will look at the 70th Clause of the Constitution Bill, which deals with the powers of the Aborigines Board, he will see that the annual grant is to be expended at the discretion of the Board "under the sole control of the Governor." I do not say whether that is a good idea or not, or that I do not sympathise with members as to this policy. But it is part of the whole scheme. What is the dominant idea with regard to the control of the aborigines? Certain provisions are to be made, partly in money, partly in land, without any reference to the political changes of the day, or to the Ministry, who may come into office to-day and go out to-morrow. We

have already provided that as regards the monetary provision to be made it shall be under the sole control of the Governor; why should we be inconsistent, and seek to introduce into this other provision, as regards the land, a political element, the ministerial element, an element of change and uncertainty? The hon. and learned member for Sussex very pointedly observed that this Board is clothed with no trust, and probably it might be desirable to make a similar provision as regards the land given to the Board as has already been made in Clause 70 as to the annual sum payable to the Board, namely, that it shall be appropriated to the welfare of the aboriginal natives, and to the promotion and preservation of their well-being. I would suggest whether, for the sake of consistency, some trust of that kind should not be indicated in the clause dealing with the land.

MR. DE HAMEL: I do not agree with the learned Attorney General that exactly the same provision as is embodied in the 70th Clause of the Constitution Bill should be applied to this clause. The 70th Clause relates to a definite sum of money which is to be set apart annually by the Legislature, whereas here we have something quite different. Here we have no fixed quantity of land set apart, but unlimited power to set apart any quantity of land, and that, too, not only by the Governor acting alone but also by any deputy Governor acting alone; for the definition of "Governor" in the 3rd Clause applies to the Governor's deputy as well.

MR. A. FORREST: I think the amendment a very important one, and it should be inserted. It is well known that in the Gascoyne large native reserves have already been made by the Government, and up to the present they are useless, and, instead of bringing in a revenue to the colony, the land is simply lying idle. On the Murchison, too, I believe the Bishop of Perth obtained a large area for a mission, but up to the present nothing has been done with it. I believe the present Government would be quite ready to give away large tracts of land for the aborigines. I believe, myself, these missions do more harm than good. They make native labor entirely useless, and, in the course of time, my belief is that these native missions will

become a great tax upon the country, as the natives will become too idle to do any work. I think this Aborigines Board will have quite enough given to it when it gets its £5,000 a year, without giving it large areas of land, on which it might raise more money. I hope the committee will put its foot down at once upon this.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): Anybody would think that the Home Government was forcing upon this colony this change in its Constitution, when we hear members saying that they won't accept this and won't accept that. I believe I am right in saying that there is no particular desire on the part of the Home Government to press this change upon us; therefore, the remarks of the hon. member for Sussex were uncalled for. I think if members begin to threaten and say we won't have this, and we won't stand that, it may reasonably be concluded that we are not very much in earnest in this matter, and that we do not care whether we get Responsible Government, or not. That will be the impression created in the minds of everybody, if they find members ready to jeopardise the whole Constitution Bill for the sake of the introduction of these two little words, "in Council." It seems to me that some members would like to see every inch of land in the colony kept for sheep-farmers, and not an inch granted for the use of the poor natives whom we have despoiled of their happy hunting grounds. I am afraid members do not look at this question in the right light. Those who ought to be the best friends of the natives—those who owe most to them—seem to be the least inclined to grant anything for them. It seems to me that in the eyes of the hon. member for Kimberley these poor blackfellows are mere machines, and that all the philanthropic efforts of the missionary are directed to make them less useful as working machines. It is absurd to suppose that any Governor would set apart immense areas of land for native purposes simply for the sake of affording gratification to what members called "Exeter Hall." We have had many Governors in the colony during the past sixty years, with unlimited powers over the waste lands of the colony, and who might have turned the whole country into native reserves if they had liked;

but have they done so? Has any Governor ever done anything so outrageous in that way? Or is it likely that any Governor ever will?

MR. MARMION: It is all very well to talk about the necessity of setting apart reserves for the natives; no one knows better than the Commissioner of Crown Lands that it is ridiculous to expect the natives of this colony, with their nomadic instincts, to stop on these reserves. Surely we, in this colony, have the same right to be trusted in this matter as the other colonies had, when they took upon themselves the reins of self-government. Why should any exception be made in the case of Western Australia, which, I venture to say, has done more for its natives than any other colony has ever done, in the way of humane treatment.

MR. PARKER: The Attorney General has referred us to the 70th Clause of the Constitution Bill, and says that if we desire to take exception to the present bill as regards native reserves we ought to have objected to giving the Governor sole control over the expenditure of the money grant for natives, and that we are acting inconsistently. I see no inconsistency at all. The 70th Clause provides that "there shall be payable to Her Majesty, in every year, out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, the sum of £5,000, to be appropriated to the welfare of the aboriginal natives," and that this money shall be expended at the discretion of the Board, "under the sole control of the Governor," without the interference of the Legislature or the Ministry. In other words, we virtually vote £5,000 a year for this Board, and they can spend it as they like. But, having granted them this £5,000, they now ask that the Governor may have this power of giving away the whole colony if he likes. We have agreed to go thus far; but I do not think we ought to go any further, without, at any rate, our own Ministers being consulted in the matter. The Commissioner of Crown Lands says we ought not to say we won't take this and we won't take that. What I said was that we would not accept such a bargain as this. The Attorney General said it was part of the bargain which the Home Government made with us, and that the Secretary of State would adhere to

his side of the bargain, and that we ought to do the same. The Government members have told us over and over again in effect that if we do not pass the Constitution Bill, as the Secretary of State desires, we shall not get Responsible Government at all. But we are prepared to run that risk. We feel we have a duty to perform towards the colony, as well as towards the Secretary of State, and that we would be unworthy of ourselves if we accepted Responsible Government without full control of the lands. We would be getting the mere shadow, and not the substance of Responsible Government, if we left the lands of the colony vested in the Secretary of State instead of in the Legislature of the colony. That is the matter we are virtually now discussing—whether the Governor, acting alone, independent of the Legislature, shall apportion our lands among the aboriginal natives, or whether the colonial Ministry shall also have a voice in the matter. The Commissioner of Crown Lands says it will be said that we are not in earnest if we run the risk of not getting Responsible Government at all for the sake of this little amendment. I assure the hon. gentleman I am very much in earnest in obtaining Responsible Government on what I consider fair terms, but not on any terms which hon. gentlemen opposite may choose to thrust upon us.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I did not say the hon. member was not in earnest.

MR. PARKER: I am so far in earnest that I am not going to sacrifice the interests of the colony simply for the sake of a sentimental idea entertained by hon. gentlemen opposite—that we may jeopardise the Constitution Bill if we do not swallow the whole bill as they would wish us. The Commissioner of Crown Lands always takes credit for taking a great interest in the aborigines, as if no one else cared anything for them. I believe we take quite as much interest in the natives as he does. The difference is that we take a practical interest, and not a mere sentimental interest. We know it is ridiculous to talk about setting apart reserves for the natives of this colony. We have been told that these native reserves will be set apart in the interior, where the land will not be re-

quired by the settlers, or for European occupation. If so, what necessity is there for setting them apart at all; the natives will have the run of the whole country.

MR. BURT: Representing as I do a district where there are a number of these natives,—

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): You have never been there, I suppose?

MR. BURT: For all that, I claim to know something about it. At the present moment there is no need of setting apart any native reserves,—that is a proposition which cannot be denied; otherwise the Government convict themselves of having neglected the welfare of the natives, so far. I would ask what necessity will there be in the future for any reserves any more than at present? We all know that, unfortunately, our aborigines are dying out very rapidly; and, certainly, as regards the Southern portions of the colony there will be no necessity in the future to set an acre of land apart for the natives. That is a fact, however much it is to be regretted. It cannot be gainsaid that the natives in this part of the colony have dwindled away to a mere handful. As to this amendment, my idea is that we ought to keep this bill on a par with the Constitution Bill. They were brought in together by the Government, and have been dealt with stage by stage, and gone hand in hand, together. The other evening we inserted a clause in the Constitution Bill giving the Legislature of the colony control of the land, and I think we would be inconsistent now if we gave the Governor, without the advice of his Council, power to deal with the land in the manner proposed in this bill, otherwise we shall have two different constituted authorities, an *imperium in imperio* dealing with the lands of the colony, and possibly coming into conflict at once. For my own part, however, I think it would be unwise for us to claim this power as regards the Northern parts of the colony; but, as regards the land south of the dividing line, I think no *bond fide* objection could really be made to this proposition. It strikes me very much that with all these bulwarks which the Government are seeking to erect about the natives, they will find the natives thrown on their own hands.

The settlers who now employ them may become so disgusted with the action of the Board and the Government that they will cease to have anything to do with natives, and the Board will have to keep them. The Commissioner of Crown Lands knows perfectly well it is quite impracticable to keep these natives on reserves.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): It has been done in the other colonies.

MR. BURT: Then the Executive in this colony has been neglecting its duty for the last fifty years, for they have not established a single native reserve in Western Australia—not a single area. We know very well that no encouragement whatever has been afforded to the efforts of philanthropy in this direction. The Government know better than to try it. They know as well as we do that the natives are better looked after in the service of the settlers. I think the Government ought to leave well alone, as regards the relations between the settlers and the natives in this colony, rather than run away with this impracticable sentimental idea of establishing them on native reserves, just for the sake of giving this Board something to do, and some excuse for spending their £5,000 a year.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I would just like to point out that (as I understand the Secretary of State) the whole of the lands of the colony are to be vested in the Legislature and not merely one portion of the colony, but that a separate account has to be kept as regards any sales of land in the Northern portion. That is how I understand it. I think if the hon. and learned member for the North sticks to law we shall be very glad to listen to him, but I would ask him to take his law as to the habits of aboriginal natives from myself, or someone who has some practical knowledge of them.

MR. SHOLL: I do not think the Commissioner of Crown Lands has, himself, had any practical experience with natives. He has only seen those who are in a miserable half-starved condition about this part of the colony, and the few he has met in his exploring expeditions, one or two of whom he had to demolish in self-defence. It is really sickening to

hear him lecturing the members of this House, as if he knew anything about the natives.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I have not been a pearler.

MR. SHOLL: If he had known anything about the natives he would have known that you could not possibly keep the natives belonging to different tribes on these reserves that he talks about. They would simply slaughter each other or starve,—unless the hon. gentleman also intends to provide them with a flock or two of sheep. We all know—all who know anything about these natives—that their nature is to wander and roam about the country at their will, searching for fresh fields and pastures new. The Commissioner of Crown Lands ought to contrast the condition of the natives at the North, where they are employed by the settlers, with the wretched miserable condition of the natives in this part of the colony under the very eyes of the authorities, including the Commissioner of Crown Lands himself. I think, until the Northern part of the colony is separated from this, that no land should be set apart for native reserves, North or South, without the advice of the Governor in Council, and, for that reason, I prefer my own amendment; and I shall divide the committee upon it.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): The hon. member charges me with lecturing the House. I deny that I have ever lectured the House, on the question of the natives, or any other question. By virtue of my official position I have the conduct of measures relating to the aborigines and the land, and it is my duty to marshal all the arguments I can in support of those measures; and I may add that in doing so I generally meet with the opposition of those who I should have expected to support me. The hon. member for Gascoyne says I know nothing about natives. What has been his experience? It has been narrowed down to a small part of the colony, while I have gained my experience from one end of the colony to the other, from Dan to Beersheba. I spent twenty years of my life in exploring the country, or otherwise being connected with natives. What

does his experience amount to? Very little, I think; only what he gained on a pearling boat for a year or two. All he knows is a little about Roebourne and the pearling fleet; he knows nothing about his own district even. I am glad to stand up here and bear my testimony to the way in which the settlers of the colony, as a rule, have treated the natives. We have one of them in this House, the hon. member for Geraldton, who is an honorable example of the humane relations that generally exist between the settlers and the natives. Anyone can go to the DeGrey station and see how the natives are treated; the official reports are full of it, and I know it. It is most unfair to accuse me of lecturing or casting any reflection upon the members of this House; I simply try to do my duty to the best of my ability.

Question put—that the words of the amendment be inserted.

Upon a division, the numbers were—

Ayes 16

Noes 4

Majority for ... 12

AYES.

Mr. Burt
Mr. De Hamel
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Grant
Mr. Harper
Mr. Keane
Mr. Loton
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Parker
Mr. Paterson
Mr. Pearce
Mr. Rason
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Scott
Mr. Venn
Mr. Sholl (Teller.)

NOES.

Mr. Congdon
Hon. Sir M. Fraser, K.C.M.G.
Hon. C. N. Warton
Hon. J. Forrest (Teller.)

Clause 8, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 9 agreed to, without comment.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I have to move that the following new clause be added to the bill: "Every bill amending or repealing this Act or any portion thereof shall be reserved by the Governor for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure thereon." The object which the Government have in moving this clause is so as to place this bill as nearly as possible on the same lines as the Constitution Bill, as both bills seem to go hand in hand. By Clause 73 of the Constitution

Bill it is provided that certain matters of legislation shall be reserved by the Governor for Her Majesty's assent before they become law, and it is proposed to place this bill in the same category.

MR. BURP: Is this, too, a part of the contract entered into with the Secretary of State?

MR. MARMION: It is another of those little side thrusts made at us by the bench opposite—I do not know whether they have been asked to do it or not. At any rate, they lose no opportunity of doing it, and of showing their want of confidence in the people of this colony under another form of Government, as regards the treatment of the natives. For my part I shall vote against it. By degrees our hands are being tied up, and, if we do not mind what we are about, we shall have very little more power under Responsible Government than under the present Constitution. I consider it an insult to the people of this colony to say they are not to be trusted even to legislate for the natives, without having their legislation reserved for the review of the Home Government. Whatever may be the Commissioner of Crown Lands' experience of natives, he has no right to imagine or to sleep on the idea that the Executive Government, or himself, takes any greater interest in the welfare of the natives than we on this side do, and I ask members to show their sense of the indignity, the unjust reflection, sought to be cast upon them by this clause, and reject it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton): The question is not that of hon. member's experience among natives, or their knowledge of native customs, but whether this exceptional legislation we are now engaged in is to be extended to the provisions of the Aborigines Bill, providing the same protection against changes in the law as we have already provided as regards the Civil List and one or two other matters, in the Constitution Bill. It is all very well to talk about being the representatives of the people, and about Ministers responsible to the people, and all that; members must be content to take these political privileges clogged with certain conditions, which, perhaps, are not altogether pleasant. Perhaps, if I were on the same side, I would think so. But we must face cir-

cumstances as we find them, and, if possible, do so without losing our tempers. This is simply carrying out the provisions of a clause in the Constitution Bill, the principle of which has already been affirmed, and, in reality, the two bills are one. It is not a threat at all that has been expressed from this bench as to jeopardising the passage of the bill; it is simply a warning.

MR. SHOLL: I see nothing in this but another slur, another insult, cast upon the people of this colony and their representatives in this Legislature, or any future Legislature. But for that reason, I do not see that it matters much whether these matters are to be reserved or not. The sting of it lies in the fact that the Legislature and the Ministries of Western Australia are held up to the world as people who are not fit to be trusted to legislate in native affairs. You can't get over that, smooth it over as you may.

MR. MARMION: I must again protest against this further indication of want of confidence in the people of Western Australia and their parliamentary representatives,—shown not by the Home Government, mind you, but by the Executive of the colony, against some of whom this will yet be remembered at a future day, when they come forward to seek the suffrages of the people.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest): I must deprecate any personal reference to members of the Executive in this matter, who have no right to be twitted with a desire to cast any reflections upon the people of the colony. I disclaim any such intention. After all, the Governor of the colony already has the power, under the present Constitution, to reserve any bills he may think proper for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure thereon. That being the case, where is the slur, and where is the insult contained in this clause? It simply provides that the Governor shall do what he now has the power to do. I must again protest against members of the Executive in this House being charged with personal prejudices when called upon to advocate Government measures in this Council. In any action I take, I feel that I am only carrying out my duty, and I shall always be prepared to do so, to the best of my ability.

The new clause was then put and passed.

Preamble and title, agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

DEFENCE OF FREMANTLE (MESSAGE No. 3).

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): I rise, sir, to move the consideration of the important subject embodied in the Message sent down to this House a few days ago—the defence of Fremantle, a subject which I may say has already been well considered by this House, not this session, but three or four years ago. As His Excellency points out in his Message, the question of the construction and maintenance of a defence battery at Fremantle was approved by a resolution adopted by this House on the 16th September, 1885. The subject was debated at some length on that occasion, as will be seen on reference to the official record.* Let me first draw the attention of members to what we did on that occasion. What we had before us then was a despatch from Lord Derby, relating to the measures to be taken for the defence of King George's Sound and the town and port of Fremantle. In that despatch, after dealing with the defence of King George's Sound, Lord Derby said: "The port of Fremantle stands on a different footing, and Her Majesty's Government are of opinion that its defence should be undertaken by the Government of Western Australia. Her Majesty's Government being, however, most anxious to encourage the colonial authorities in such a necessary and important undertaking, are willing to give their assistance by presenting the Government of the colony with a sufficient armament, and delivering it free of cost, on the understanding that an efficient force of Artillery is maintained, and that all expenses connected with the construction and maintenance of the necessary works of defence are borne by the colony. In the absence of information as to the ground, and the price of labour and materials, it is impossible to estimate, with any approach to accuracy, the cost of these works. Should, however, the site selected present no special engineering difficulties, it is believed

"that the expense of construction would not exceed from £3000 to £4000." The House appointed a select committee to consider the subject, and that committee in their report expressed the opinion that the offer of the Imperial Government should be accepted, as regards the port of Fremantle; but they considered that the position of the fortification should not be determined until Sir John Coode's project for harbor works had been decided upon, and the best position ascertained for protecting the harbor. The committee considered that the officer in command of our defences at Fremantle should be an artillery officer, well acquainted with the latest field tactics, and that probably it would be necessary to reorganise the Volunteer force of the colony, so as to provide a body of artillery men to work the guns. The committee also were of opinion that the requisite funds to carry out their recommendations should be provided out of current revenue. I find that the report of the select committee was adopted by the House on the 16th September, 1885, and that following upon that, an address was presented to the Governor informing him of the decision of the House in the matter. This is what His Excellency refers to in his Message now under consideration. In that Message the Governor goes into figures, which, doubtlessly, are correct, as to the probable expenditure, which he thinks ought not to exceed £4,000, which might be spread over two years; but that there would be the additional cost of maintaining the battery in order, and of instructing the local artillery force by whom the guns would have to be worked. These expenses are estimated at £500 a year. Then there is the further question raised in His Excellency's Message—whether the colony is willing to pay £500 (per gun) for certain improved mountings recommended for the two 7-inch guns presented to us by the Imperial Government,—that would be an additional £1,000; and also to purchase two quick-firing Maxim guns as part of the equipment of the Volunteer infantry. These guns, which are recommended by the military advisers, would cost about £360 each. His Excellency informs us in his Message that the immediate occasion for his communicating with the House is that he has been requested by Lord

* *Hansard* Vol. X., pp. 51; 67; 304.

Knutsford to advise him by telegraph, when the vote for the construction of the battery and for the improved gun-mountings,—if required—are passed; and, as the question of the defence of the chief port of the colony is of such paramount importance, His Excellency thought it only right that he should communicate with the House on the subject during this special session. I have already shown that this House was plainly of opinion, in 1885, that the question was one of the gravest importance, and I am sure we are all still impressed with the necessity of affording Fremantle adequate protection, so that the inhabitants may feel secure in the event of a hostile invasion. It really is an important matter, and I trust hon. members have been able to give their careful attention to His Excellency's Message, though, perhaps, they may not be prepared to come to a conclusion upon it to-night. My object has been to bring the matter prominently before them, and to remind them of the action taken by the House some three or four years since, feeling sure that they will be prepared now to advise that the necessary funds should be provided for the carrying out of these necessary defensive works. It will be seen by His Excellency's Message that it is desirable we should come to some immediate decision, so that the Governor may be in a position to telegraph the result to the Imperial authorities as he has been requested to do. I may say that I have no intention at present to proceed with Message (No. 4) relating to the defences of King George's Sound, as Lord Knutsford, it will be seen, hopes to be able in a short time to address the Australian Governments fully on that subject. I have no definite resolution prepared, but, with a view of putting myself in order I shall conclude by moving: "That it is desirable that the defence of Fremantle, as typified in His Excellency's Message (No. 3) should be proceeded with."

MR. PARKER: Will the hon. gentleman inform us what would be the probable cost of keeping up these guns?

MR. MARMION: And where the money is to come from?

MR. BURT: The Colonial Secretary has taken some trouble in placing this matter before us, and I am sure I thank him for doing so; at the same time I

hope he will not run away with the idea that all of us have yet had an opportunity of studying these papers. I have tried to do so. I believe I am right in saying that this Government is altogether without advice as to any particular system which should be adopted—whether the guns ought to be placed on the mainland for the protection of the town, or whether it would be more advisable to construct forts in the harbor itself. It seems to me possible, considering the range of ocean we have between Fremantle and the islands opposite, it might be a matter worthy of consideration whether outlying forts constructed in the harbor would not suggest themselves as more efficient defensive works than anything we may hope to construct on the mainland. But I believe the Government have had no advice from any military expert on the subject.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): Will the hon. member look at paragraph 4 of His Excellency's Message? Perhaps I had better read it: "The position of the battery, the details of its construction, and a revised estimate of the cost, must necessarily be determined after examination of the site by an officer of the Royal Engineers, whose services, for this purpose, might probably be procured from one of the neighboring colonies."

MR. BURT: Yes, that is all right. He has yet to come. But I want him to come before we pledge ourselves to this expenditure. We are asked this evening to commit ourselves to a statement that we are willing to place on the Estimates for next year the sum necessary for the purchase of certain guns, and the construction of certain works, for what purpose? We have no idea for what purpose. We have only a vague idea that it is to protect Fremantle, but I say we have no idea what system of defence would best answer that purpose. I am not hostile to the proposition put before us, I only question whether it is wise at this moment to take action in front of the advice we are about to obtain, or whether we should first obtain the advice and then take action. We are told that an estimate, recently prepared, fixes the cost of the proposed battery at £4,066. Then we are to obtain an officer of the Royal Engineers to report, and I pre-

sume we shall have to pay him a pretty handsome salary, especially if he be an eminent engineer, coming here for such an important object. Then again it is suggested that not only shall we guarantee the cost of the construction of these works, but also undertake the expense of maintaining the battery in proper order, and also the cost of instructing the artillery force by whom the guns are to be worked. These are items of expenditure which we shall necessarily have to undertake. Then it is suggested that we should expend £1,000 in improved mountings for the two guns we already possess, and that we should also purchase two Maxim guns, which would cost another £700 or £800. I merely wish to point out that if we commit ourselves to this resolution the consequence may be this: when this officer of the Royal Engineers who is to advise us comes, it may be found that in lieu of £4,000 or £5,000, the present estimate, the necessary works may cost us double that amount, or that it may be found impracticable to adequately defend Fremantle under anything less than £20,000 or £30,000. I submit it would be distinctly a leap in the dark if we voted for this resolution at present. I think the matter might safely be postponed until we place the money on the Estimates to enable the Government to obtain the services and the report of a military expert.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. Sir M. Fraser): I may say that I have had an opportunity of referring to the Commandant, and that this estimate of £4,066 was prepared by the Commandant in conjunction with the Chief Harbor Master and the Works Department.

MR. KEANE: I am sure that neither of the members for Fremantle will think that I intend to oppose anything that I thought would be for the benefit of that town; but I am sure both those hon. members, as practical men, will agree with the practical remarks that have fallen from the hon. member for the North, when he suggests that we should not commit ourselves to an expenditure which we have no idea what it may amount to. I believe, myself, that the sum mentioned here will not be a quarter enough for the effectual defence of Fremantle. I think before we do anything

at all we ought to get the practical advice of some competent authority, who should come here and lay down some systematic plan of defence, which we could carry out by degrees, as they did at Adelaide, where they got Sir William Jervois, when he was Governor of the colony, to prepare a plan of defence for that port. Although the South Australians were not in a position at the time to vote the whole of the money, they were able to start the works, and to complete them by degrees; and I think that is the action we ought to take.

MR. A. FORREST: So far as I am concerned I shall not support the resolution for introducing any eminent authority to report on the fortification of Fremantle. I don't think we want Fremantle defended at all; therefore, I do not intend to vote for any expenditure at all. Fremantle is already very well defended by its harbor. It is only during a few months in summer that it would be safe for any man-of-war to come in there. Fremantle is not a rich port, with a large amount of shipping or specie to tempt an enemy to venture inside that harbor. We have run the risk for the last sixty years, and can well afford to wait for a few more years. If we do get this eminent authority he will be like a good many more eminent authorities we have had. What has Sir John Coode done for us? He has given a very elaborate report, and recommended harbor works which would cost a sum altogether beyond our means; and it will be the same with this other eminent authority on defence. I want to know what have we got to defend. I do not think any foreign Power would ever waste their time to come out of their way to bombard a small insignificant town like Fremantle, and waste powder and shot upon it. I think we have wasted enough on our Volunteer force as it is, and I don't intend to agree to spend another penny, for mounting guns merely to look at. I can hardly bring myself to think that the members for Fremantle themselves will support it.

MR. PEARSE: Notwithstanding the remarks of the hon. member for Kimberley, I think it is very desirable that Fremantle should be protected; at the same time I am not one to vote for any unnecessary waste of money, in this or

any other way. I think before anything is done in this direction we should first have some systematic line of action laid down, and have the opinion of a military expert to guide us, and point out the best plan for properly defending the place. The time will come when we shall have to do so, and I think we would do well to take time by the forelock; but let us proceed on some systematic line of action. If we cannot afford to do all that is necessary at once, let us do it by degrees.

MR. RICHARDSON: I agree very much with the hon. member for the North that this is altogether a leap in the dark we are asked to take. We have no reliable information before us, to guide us as to the cost of proper defence works; and, I think, before we commit ourselves to this or any other scheme, we should get the opinion of some authority competent to advise us upon the question of fortification. We may spend thousands of pounds, and then find ourselves as unprotected, practically, as we are now. I think we ought to wait before committing ourselves to this expenditure.

MR. MARMION moved the adjournment of the debate.

Agreed to.

Debate adjourned.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Tuesday, 2nd April, 1889.

Electoral Bill, 1889: 1st reading—Geraldton Jetty: Sums paid to Sir John Coode in connection with Harbor Works—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

ELECTORAL BILL, 1889.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. C. N. Warton) introduced and moved the first reading of a Bill to provide for the Registration of certain Electors.

Motion agreed to.

Bill read a first time.

GERALDTON JETTY EXTENSION, AND SUMS PAID TO SIR JOHN COODE.

MR. GRANT, in accordance with notice, moved that an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying he would be pleased to lay on the table—

1. A Return showing all moneys paid to Sir John Coode in connection with Harbor Works in this colony.

2. If such sums paid were authorised by the Government of this colony?

3. If the Crown Agents have ever disbursed moneys belonging to this colony without the authority of the Government; if so, in what instances and by whose authority?

The hon. member said he should like to explain why he moved for this information. Out of the last loan raised a sum of £2,000 was appropriated for jetty extension, and other works at Geraldton, connected with the harbor. If the jetty had been extended as it ought to have been, it would have now been available for the steamers plying along the coast to have come alongside. Instead of that the money had been diverted out of its proper course, and a great deal of it had been spent in surveys of the harbor. The condition of the jetty at the present time was very bad indeed; only one of our coasting steamers, the little *Rob Roy*, could come up to it; the others had to lie out in the harbor, which was very inconvenient for loading and unloading cargo, and particularly stock shipped for Perth market. The result was that the Northern people suffered a good deal in their trade, as it cost them an extra 7s. or 8s. a ton to ship their goods in lighters. The shipping trade at Champion Bay was very considerable; there was more wool exported from there, twice over, than any other port in the colony, and it cost about 2s. 6d. a bale more for shipping it than it need do, simply because the jetty had not been extended as it ought to have