

ADJOURNMENT.

At 10.45 p.m. the House adjourned until 4.30 p.m. on Thursday, July 25th.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 25th July, 1895.

Petition of John Maher—Appointment, Salary etc. of Mr. Edwards as veterinary surgeon—Loan Act, 1891, Re-Appropriation Bill; third reading—Municipal Institutions Bill: Committee's report; New Sub-clause—Customs Duties Repeal Bill: in Committee; Committee's Report—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PETITION OF JOHN MAHER.

MR. WOOD: I would like to ask, Mr. Speaker, whether this is the proper time for me to present a petition given into my hands.

THE SPEAKER: Yes; but may I ask whether the petition is the one the hon. member spoke to me about the other day, and which I told him could not be received because it was not in order.

MR. WOOD: It is on the same subject, Sir, but the objectionable portions have been taken out. The petition does not now contain any reflection upon the Legislature.

THE SPEAKER: It was distinctly out of order.

MR. WOOD: I have seen to that, Mr. Speaker. The petition is from John Maher, and I move that it be read.

The motion being agreed to, the Clerk read the petition, which prayed for redress for loss sustained in connection with the contract for the Government buildings, and asked for an enquiry into the alleged unfair treatment meted out to petitioner by the supervisor of the said contract.

THE SPEAKER: This petition is most distinctly not in order, for the simple reason

that the only redress the petitioner prayed for would be the granting of some monetary compensation. I can see no other form of redress he could have. I am decidedly of opinion that the petition cannot be received by this House.

MR. WOOD: He could obtain some redress on a report from a committee.

THE SPEAKER: Only as a recommendation from the Governor. It would have to be brought before the House in the same way as any ordinary vote.

MR. MORAN: I know a little about this petition—

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member cannot be in order in speaking on the petition now. It appears to me that all the petitioner can be seeking for is a monetary compensation; that is all he can be wanting. This may be an attempt to obtain a monetary compensation by a side wind.

MR. WOOD: The petition speaks for itself.

THE SPEAKER: What result can the petitioner possibly want unless it is monetary compensation.

MR. WOOD: That will rest with a committee.

THE SPEAKER: A committee should not recommend monetary compensation being given him without the recommendation of the Governor.

MR. MORAN: I do not think he wants a monetary compensation.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): He may only want this man dismissed.

THE SPEAKER: I believe the man has been dismissed already.

THE PREMIER: I have not heard of him before.

MR. WOOD: I believe this is really a hard case. I had a deputation from the Contractor's Association to-day, and from what I was informed the contractor who now petitions this House did suffer greatly from the general tyranny exercised over him by this official. There is no doubt also that he suffered considerable monetary loss.

THE PREMIER: Is the man complained of in the service at the present time?

MR. WOOD: I do not know.

THE SPEAKER: This petition does seem to me to be an attempt to obtain by a side wind what the petitioner could not obtain if he proceeded openly.

MR. WOOD: You will recollect, Mr. Speaker, that I showed you the draft of this petition.

THE SPEAKER: Yes, and I said that it could not be received. To my mind it is an endeavor to secure, by a side wind, compensation, when the proper course to pursue would be to obtain a recommendation from the Governor that the matter should be considered. There should be no difficulty in getting this if the facts of the case are as stated.

MR. WOOD: I am entirely in the hands of the House.

THE SPEAKER: The man has his remedy if he has suffered an injustice. He can bring an action.

MR. WOOD: The terms of the contract would prevent him doing that. Besides that, the Engineer-in-Chief has to give a final decision, and I need not say that decision was not likely to be adverse to the department. The only way to get the grievance discussed is by bringing it before the House.

THE SPEAKER: If the petitioner sought for no compensation it might be a different thing, but his petition, in the present form, cannot be allowed.

MR. WOOD: I presume that the present informality will not prevent my bringing the matter up on another occasion.

THE SPEAKER: Certainly not, so long as the redress sought is not a monetary compensation.

MR. WOOD: I will bow to the decision and let the matter stand over, but I do not propose to let it rest.

THE SPEAKER: The petition, as it is at present, is not only against the Parliamentary practice but the Standing Orders as well.

THE GOVERNMENT VETERINARY SURGEON.

MR. MOSS, for MR. GEORGE, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier.—

(a) What was the nature of the appointment held by Mr. H. H. Edwards, Government Veterinary Surgeon.

(b) Whether such appointment was gazetted and when.

(c) What were the duties of the position.

(d) What was the salary attached to the position, and what were the privileges, if any,

(e) Whether private practice was permitted.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied as follows:—

(a) Mr. H. H. Edwards has been appointed Government Veterinary Surgeon for two years from 1st April, 1895, with salary at rate of £300 a year, and an allowance of 15s. a day

and transport while travelling on duty, except between Perth and Fremantle, and Guildford, when he receives 2s. 6d. a day and actual rail fare. Mr. Edwards has to reside in Perth, and to perform all Government business for his salary.

(b) No.

(c) Answered in reply to (a.)

(d) Answered in reply to (a.)

(e) Private practice is permitted.

LOAN ACT 1891 RE-APPROPRIATION BILL.

Bill read a third time and ordered to be transmitted to the Legislative Council.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS BILL.

The Committee's report, on this Bill was received, the amendments made in committee agreed to, and the report was adopted.

New sub-clause.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved "That the following sub-clause be added to Clause 146:—"(2) Nothing in "The Roads Act, 1888," or any By-laws made "thereunder, before or after the passing of "this Act, shall interfere with or restrict the "exercise by a Municipal Council as a Local "Board of Health of the powers conferred by "Section 94 of "the Public Health Act, 1886." The hon. gentleman explained that the only reason for the proposal consisted in the fact that some of the Roads Boards were preventing municipalities from proceeding over the Roads under the control of the Board in order to deposit night soil at places fixed by the Central Board of Health. Some municipalities had to go out of their own boundaries to deposit nightsoil, and were often met with difficulties placed in their way by the Roads Boards. This sub-section would take away any power to interfere with municipalities in this direction. The grounds upon which the Roads Boards interfered were generally that the depositing of night soil in places under their control was likely to prove a nuisance, but when it was recollected that the sites were approved of by the Governor-in-Council it could easily be seen that no real nuisance could exist.

MR. RANDELL said he was glad the proposal had been made. It was possible that at some time the City of Perth would be surrounded by municipalities and, in the absence of some provision such as this, would be unable to obtain any means of getting out of their boundaries to nightsoil depôts.

MR. A. FORREST thought the proposal a good one. The necessity for it was shown in the case of the City Council of Perth. There two different Roads Boards actually refused to allow the Corporation carts to travel over their roads with the refuse, although it was not to be deposited in any place where it could possibly prove a nuisance.

Question put and passed, and the sub-clause added to the Bill.

CUSTOMS DUTIES REPEAL BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration in committee was resumed.

Schedule :

MR. RANDELL wished to know when he could move that "axles" be placed on the free list? He found the word was in the tariff list, but not in the schedule as furnished by the Collector of Customs.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) pointed out there were many items in the Customs list that were not in the Tariff Act.

MR. RANDELL said he might move to include "axles" in the free list under "Carriage-makers' materials."

MR. A. FORREST suggested that the Schedule of the Bill should be dealt with first, and any additions could be considered afterwards.

Item—Arrowroot, sago, tapioca, cornflour, and other farinaceous foods, N.O.E. :

Agreed to.

Item—Atlases, Maps, Charts, and Globes :

MR. RANDELL asked how much revenue these items realized last year.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied about one pound.

Agreed to.

Item—Bags and sacks, including corn and flour sacks, gunny bags, ore bags, and bagging in the piece for wool bales and sacks. Blankets and rugs :

Agreed to.

Item—Cocoa and Chocolate, N.O.E. :

MR. ILLINGWORTH said these things should not be placed on the free list, because they were matters of absolute luxury. It was not in the interests of the community to place them there. The committee had to deal with matters of absolute necessity, and should be prepared to strike off items of absolute luxury.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he had not regarded them as items of luxury ;

they were in common use among the people. The object of the Government had been to enable the people to enjoy these things.

MR. LEAKE said cocoa and chocolate were used a great deal in the country, and particularly on the goldfields. He had never heard of a man having a carousal on cocoa. He regarded it rather as a necessity than a luxury, and, as the duty was very small, he thought they might place these articles on the free list.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson) said they were not luxuries. People in a delicate state of health used them as matters of diet, because they were so easily digested. Those persons who could not take tea at all, found these things a necessity, and not a luxury.

MR. LEFROY said there might be a distinction made, and duty could be charged where chocolate was used as confectionery. If it were right to take the duty off tea, it was also right to take it off cocoa.

MR. PIESSE said that in placing cocoa and chocolate upon the schedule the Government had acted very wisely. They should encourage the use of these things. He did not believe they were mere luxuries, and they were certainly used very largely at present. He would support all the items on the schedule that tended to give a useful article of food to the people cheaply.

MR. WOOD objected to these things being put on the free list, because he knew a factory was about to be started in Perth within a few days.

MR. CLARKSON said if the hon. member for Nannine travelled a little more about the country he would see that the people drank cocoa rather than tea. He was surprised that the hon. member, who was a teetotaller, did not encourage the use of these articles.

MR. GEORGE said cocoa was an absolute necessity and not a luxury. Chocolate, which was a sort of confection, might be a luxury, but not so cocoa. He hoped that if chocolate was struck off, cocoa would be put on the free list.

MR. JAMES did not agree with the arguments of the hon. member for the Murrumbidgee. Hon. members knew very well the cocoa consumed in the colony was not made in the finished state where it was grown. He saw no reason why cocoa manufactories should not be established in the colony. He knew, on the best authority, that machinery was

already on its way out for the establishment of a factory in the colony. Cocoa nibs were imported into England for manufacture, and he did not see why the nibs could not be imported here for use in a factory. It was wiser to protect an industry in its inception than to do it afterwards. As there were so many items that might be included in the list, upon which they could all agree, he did not see why any should be inserted upon which there was a dissentient voice.

MR. SIMPSON hoped the Ministry would stick to their proposal, and put cocoa upon the free list. The proposal should recommend itself to every member of the House. It would be time enough to talk about protecting industries when they were actually established.

MR. HASSELL said these articles were not luxuries, and he would vote for their being put in the free list.

MR. ILLINGWORTH contended that as the nibs were grown in Ceylon, a distance of only ten days' sail, the finished product could easily be manufactured in this colony.

Question put and passed.

Item—Cocoa in slabs—coffee, raw :

Agreed to.

Item—Copper—wire, rod and sheet :

MR. GEORGE moved as an amendment that the words "and ingot" be added to the item. If the manufactured article were admitted free, it would be inconsistent to tax the raw material.

Amendment put and passed.

Item as amended agreed to.

Item—Cream separators :

MR. GEORGE asked if this item included the useful article commonly called a "churn."

THE PREMIER : No.

MR. GEORGE pointed out that a cream separator was only an improved kind of churn. He did not see why a churn should have to be paid for at the rate of 15 per cent. duty, when agricultural implements were admitted at 5 per cent. He hoped the anomaly would be explained.

MR. HARPER moved, as an amendment, that the words "and parts thereof" be added to the item. He said parts of separators were in constant demand, as they needed renewal very frequently. If separators were admitted free, the parts should also be admitted free. He supported the hon. member for the Murray, because the modern improved separators embraced the idea of a churn. The whole operation of butter-making would soon

be done in one act; and so it was quite possible that, before long, the churn would become practically obsolete. He hoped the Government would accept the amendment.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he had no objection to add the words "and parts thereof," but he did not think they needed to add the word "churn." Churns had been made in the colony, so his friend the Commissioner of Railways told him, and they were not difficult to make. He saw not the slightest reason why churns should not be made in the colony.

MR. GEORGE asked who in the colony could make churns? He had tried for years, and could not find one solitary cooper in the place. He did not think there was one in Perth.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said he had had them made on his own premises. Any ordinary carpenter could make a churn. He thought the item should be left as it was, as churns could easily be manufactured in the colony.

MR. HARPER said the churns now in use were only employed in cottage dairies. Two brands of churns were now coming into universal use, which were made on a greatly improved scale, and combined a cream separator in their construction. These might be brought in as cream separators, and it was therefore desirable to guard against any anomaly.

The amendment to add "and parts thereof" was agreed to.

THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. member could move the addition of the word "churn" to the item when the schedule was passed.

Item—Iron wire netting, iron and steel fencing wire, standards and staples :

MR. GEORGE moved the omission of the word "standards," as those articles could be manufactured in the colony, and at his foundry. The Committee should support a local industry by striking the word "standards" out.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he was inclined to think that the hon. member for the Murray was using his position as a member of the House to advertise his foundry. Very little fencing would be done if the hon. member's firm had to be depended upon to make standards, as they had not the machinery to do the work.

MR. GEORGE said he objected to the hon. member posing as an authority on this subject.

There were several manufacturers in this city who could supply this article.

MR. CONNOR said he thought it was possibly to raise a revenue on cheap advertisements in this House.

MR. JAMES said a revenue could also be derived from attempted jokes, as well as from cheap advertisements. It must be recognised that in order to foster local industries at first, a little more would have to be paid for the articles. At present there was a very heavy duty on flour, and also a Stock Tax, and he supposed as much was paid for flour and meat as would be paid were the duty not imposed on those articles. Iron and wire netting were allowed to go on the free list. So why should not standards go on? He wanted to arrive at some principle that would be a guide in dealing with the flour tax and the Stock Tax. To be a consistent Protectionist he was prepared to support that on flour, and, in the same way, he favored the retention of the tax on standards in order not to injure any industry.

MR. HOOLEY said he was satisfied that the hon. member for the Murray could not compete with the foreign market in the manufacture of standards, and it would require a 20 per cent. duty to properly protect the industry. Some few years ago a local firm imported a number of standards, and on their arrival it was found that they required to be punched with extra holes. No firm in Fremantle could be found to do the work, which would have cost more to do than to import a fresh lot.

MR. MARMION said he could endorse what the hon. member for the Murchison had said.

MR. CLARKSON said too much time had been wasted over this paltry matter.

MR. GEORGE said the difficulty referred to by the hon. member for the Murchison and the hon. member for Fremantle was caused through local firms not having been encouraged in the industry. Skilled labor was not required for the work of punching standards, as it could be done by boys.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson) said the duty of 5 per cent. at present chargeable on standards would never assist the industry in this colony. The hon. member's proposal was meant simply to hamper the industry, without doing his own firm any good. The object in taking off the duty on standards was to encourage the improvement and cultivation of the land by

fencing. He knew from experience that the articles could be imported cheaper than they could be produced in the colony.

MR. LOTON said it was strange, if standards could be produced here, that some manufacturers did not start to do so. The whole of the items used for fencing, including wire netting, &c., only contributed about £700 to the revenue in duty last year. A 5 per cent. duty would not protect local industries, and he would rather see the items remain in the Tariff.

MR. SOLOMON said that as only £700 was collected in duty on these articles last year, the hon. member should allow them to go on the free list.

MR. CLARKSON said he desired to ask if the hon. member for the Murray was right in using his position in the House as a means of advancing his business.

THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. member's conduct had not been unparliamentary.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. LOTON moved to add the word "droppers" after the word "standards." He said his object was to prevent certain articles from being imported under another name, in order to evade the duty.

Amendment agreed to.

MR. GEORGE moved to add the words "for fencing only" at the end of the item. He said he was anxious not to afford any opportunity for any ingenious evasions of the Act.

Amendment agreed to.

MR. RANDELL said he thought the words just added would apply to the other items of a similar character. It was surely not intended that wire netting should be invoiced as for fencing.

MR. LEFROY moved to insert after the words "steel fencing wire" the words "and also."

THE CHAIRMAN said that strictly speaking the words could not now be added, but as a matter of explanation he could put them in.

The item as amended so as to read "Iron wire netting, iron and steel fencing wire, and also standards, droppers and staples for fencing only," was put and passed.

Lead—sheet and pig:

MR. GEORGE suggested that lead piping should also be placed on the free list, as it was not likely to be manufactured in the colony.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the desire of the Government was to admit raw materials free, but that piping was a

manufactured article. If lead piping were admitted free, other kinds of piping should also be admitted free.

MR. ILLINGWORTH moved, as an amendment, that the words "tin, lead, and scrap" be inserted after the word "sheet." He said a large quantity was imported, and the duty doubled the price.

Amendment put and passed, and the item, as amended, agreed to.

Molasses and golden syrup :

Agreed to.

Oil, mineral :

MR. JAMES moved, as an amendment, that the words "and cocoanut" be added to the item. Several soap and candle factories used cocoanut oil, and would use it more largely if admitted free of duty, because this oil would then be used for making a superior kind of soap and candles.

MR. CLARKSON objected to any increase in the schedule, because this was not an opportune time for reducing the duty on cocoanut oil, or any article in the schedule. The Government had made a mistake in bringing in this Bill.

MR. RANDELL, replying to an inquiry from Mr. James, said cocoanut oil was largely used for lubricating machinery, and was a good oil for the purpose.

MR. PIESSE supported the amendment, as a desirable assistance to a local industry.

MR. GEORGE said several struggling industries would benefit by the admission of cocoanut oil free of duty. The term "mineral oil" should also be defined more exactly.

MR. MARMION said if one kind of oil were admitted free, all kinds should be admitted free.

MR. WOOD said the amendment might well be withdrawn, because if cocoa-nut oil were admitted free no other kind would be used for machinery.

MR. MOSS supported the amendment as admitting raw material for a local industry.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said too much was said about the quantity of cocoa-nut oil used for soap and candle making. Having been a good deal in communication, lately, with persons engaged in this industry, it was remarkable that, if this oil were much used by them, no one had made a request for the oil to be admitted free. Their demand had been for an increased import duty on the manufactured article. There should be some good reason

shown for treating this oil differently from other oils in the tariff, and no sufficient reason had been given. When he was a boy, cocoanut oil was used for machinery, and was considered the best for lubrication. He regretted to have to oppose the amendment.

Amendment put and negatived.

Item agreed to.

Items—Paraffine wax; Photographs; Picture Cards for school use :

Agreed to.

Rice—paddy, ground and meal :

MR. JAMES moved, as an amendment, that the item be struck out. This colony was maintaining a few thousand Chinese and Afghans. He did not like these Asiatics as colonists, because they did not pay their fair share of taxation; and, as the only way of taxing these persons was to charge a duty on the particular articles they imported, why should their rice be admitted duty free, while the flour used by Europeans was subject to a duty? If the Government were actuated in these matters mainly by pressure from outside, he hoped that in this case they were not actuated to put rice on the free list by pressure from Asiatics in the colony.

MR. CLARKSON said he was pleased to support the amendment, as the Chinese should be made to contribute something towards the expenses of the Government.

MR. CONNOR supported the amendment of the hon. member, just for once, by way of a change. Having lived in a northern district he knew that nearly the only articles the Chinese there imported for their own use were rice and opium. The rice they had to pay duty on. The opium they smuggled.

MR. MARMION could not agree with the amendment. He knew that a large quantity of rice was used by the European population in this colony, and to benefit them the duty might well be taken off, as rice was generally used by the poorer portion of the white population. The reason why rice should be treated differently from flour was that rice was not grown here, whereas flour was a local product.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said rice was an article on which Europeans could afford to pay the necessary duty, whereas the Afghans and Chinese in the colony subsisted almost entirely on rice, and a duty on it would be a means of taxing them to some extent.

At 6.30 p.m. the Chairman left the chair.

At 7.30 p.m. the Chairman resumed the chair.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said that whilst rice was used largely by Europeans it was not amongst one of the absolute necessities of life, and they were well able and willing to pay the duty. It was almost the only food of the Chinaman and the Asiatic, and, while the white man was taxed in all manners of ways, the colored people, who were sharing in the prosperity of the country, did not share in the burden of taxation. He would support the amendment.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the proposal to retain the duty on rice was an electioneering cry. Most of the Chinaman in the country were the servants of Europeans.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What about Asiatics.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he was not aware to what extent the Asiatics used rice, but it was used throughout the country as an article of food, and in many instances replaced vegetables; and the remission of the duty would afford some little relief to the poorer classes of the people. It was an article of food in general use not capable of being produced in the colony, and that was why the Government proposed to take off the duty upon it.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the revenue derived from the duty on rice last year was £1,500, and he certainly thought the arguments were all in favour of removing it to the free list. It was the staple food of Chinamen and Asiatics, who were, in his opinion, a persecuted people.

MR. LEFROY said that while the hon. member for Nannine found that rice was used as food by the Asiatics, he did not recognise the fact that it was also used by his own countrymen. To say that it was not a necessary of life, showed that the hon. member had not moved about the country, where it was looked upon as a real necessity by the people. As rice was a necessary of life that could not be produced in the country, he was unable to support the amendment.

MR. SOLOMON said cocoa and chocolate should be taxed in preference to rice. The proportion of Asiatics in the colony's population of 30,000 was very small, and they had to consider the interests of the majority and take the duty off rice, which was largely consumed as an article of food.

MR. LOTON said he did not believe it was right to introduce class legislation into the discussion. He was not in favor of legislating against the colored races in any particular way. On those grounds, if on no other, he

was inclined to favor the placing of rice on the free list. Apart from that, the article was in general use all over the colony.

MR. MORAN said that although he was in favor of the agitation against the influx of Asiatics, he thought the idea of dealing a blow to those people through their daily food, was not a good one. Besides, rice was in daily use on the goldfields where it was used as a preventative of sickness by the miners who had to eat so much tinned meat. A farthing per lb. duty on rice would not stop the influx of either Chinamen or Asiatics. He therefore would stick to Free-trade principles as near as he could.

MR. JAMES said he would respectfully ask the Premier not to impute electioneering motives to him in the action he had taken. To talk about class legislation, too, was raising a bogie. The position he took up was that flour, which was the staple of the white man, should not be taxed, while rice, the staple food of the colored man, was being placed on the free list. It could not be said that the duty was to be remitted because the article was not in general use, for it would follow that butter, bacon and flour should be allowed in free of duty.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I said rice was not produced in the colony.

MR. JAMES said that the statement that standards could be made in the colony had not been questioned; but it was in that case, as well as in the case of the other articles he had mentioned, a question of price.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson) said he denied that rice was the staple food of the Asiatics, for soon after they arrived in the country they insisted upon having all the luxuries of food that the white men enjoyed. Such being the case, the hon. member's arguments failed. To poor people rice was an absolute necessity.

MR. HOOLEY said that rice was used on every station, and at every camp in the country. Wherever flour was found rice was found also, for it was necessary as a preventive of the injurious effects of eating too much tinned meat. So far as rice being the staple food of Chinamen was concerned, he once offered a Chinaman a plate of the article, which he refused, and was highly insulted at the offer. They worked like the white man, and wanted his food. Even in Perth he thought rice was used in every house.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said if the Chinamen cooked the rice themselves they would eat it. He hoped hon. members who had strong feelings in regard to the abolition of the duty on rice, would support the remission of the duty on flour.

MR. RANDELL said he was indifferent whether the duty was removed or not, but so far as it was used as an article of food, he was in favour of rice being placed on the free list. The duty on the article last year, at 20 per cent, only amounted to about £1,600, and he would like to know where the rice that had come into the colony had gone to, if it was not an article of food. Cheese, he thought, was a far more general article of diet than rice, and should be placed on the free list as well.

MR. CONNOR said he wished to explain his action in supporting the amendment, and in doing so he would be "honest" than some hon. members.

THE CHAIRMAN: Did I understand the hon. member to say he will be more honest than other hon. members?

MR. CONNOR: No, I said "honest," but I withdraw the word. He would support the amendment because he objected to any Asiatics having cheaper facilities of living than the European had. In the Northern Territory, South Australia, there were 800 Europeans to 6,000 Chinamen when he was there, and the latter lived absolutely on rice. The result was that, by cheap living, they dragged the guts out of the country—forcible terms were wanted when speaking on this question—and sent all the money they made in the country over to China. As to the miners, he was of opinion that if they were given a choice they would rather pay duty on rice than allow the Asiatics to come into the country.

MR. A. FORBEST said he did not think the people who used rice very largely would care to pay the duty, especially those in the Northern districts.

MR. JAMES: Take it off flour.

MR. A. FORREST said he would gladly do that, but flour could be ground here and rice could not. The reason why the Chinese were so plentiful in the North was that their labor was much cheaper than that of the white man. He did not think the Chinaman used so much rice as the European did, for the latter would not work unless given meat.

Amendment put and negatived.

Items—Sheep dip, sugar, sulphur, and tea, agreed to.

Item: Tin-block and plate.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he desired to ask if it was the intention of the Government to take the duty off block tin, which was produced in the country.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Yes; we do not make it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he had been in the trade for 30 years, and was in a position to explain what block tin was. It was smelted ore in ingots or strips. The expression "block tin" was a wrong one. What was called block tin was tinned iron, known in the trade as tinplates, the qualities being known as coke or charcoal: as for instance I.C. coke or I.C. charcoal; I.X. coke or I.X. charcoal, and so on. That was imported in boxes, the sheets being 10 x 14 and 20 x 14 inches, and doubles 18 x 12½ inches.

MR. GEORGE said the hon. member for Nannine was correct. The term "block tin" was a vulgar error. It arose in the early days of the industry, when a certain "block" was used in working iron. In the Customs Tariff "block tin" and "tin ingots" were fixed at 5 per cent.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: They are the same.

MR. MARMION said that whatever block tin was, it was an article not produced in the country.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the reason why block tin appeared in the schedule was because it was in the Tariff Act of 1893. He confessed that he had always been under a wrong impression as to what it was. The Government intended that the manufactured article, which could not be produced in the country, should be admitted free of duty. There was a tinfield at Greenbushes, and, therefore, they did not want to import the smelted article.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said the article which the Government wished to admit free of duty was known in the trade as "tinplates," literally "tinned plates." Another equally absurd mistake appeared in the schedule.

MR. MARMION said he would like to see tin foil put on the free list.

MR. ILLINGWORTH moved, as an amendment, that the item be struck out, and that the item "tinplates" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Question put and passed.

Amendment agreed to.

MR. LOFON said he thought the term

"tinplates" would apply to an ordinary tin plate, and that was not what was intended.

MR. GEORGE moved to add the words "tinned sheet iron" to the item. He said it was necessary, in order to foster the industry, to admit that article free of duty.

MR. WOOD said he thought tinned sheet iron was the same as galvanised iron.

MR. GEORGE: No, it is not.

Amendment agreed to, and the item as amended so as to read "tinplates and tinned sheet iron" was passed.

Item—Wool bales:

Agreed to.

Item—Zinc—sheet and plain:

MR. ILLINGWORTH pointed out that the words "sheet" and "plain" referred to the same thing. What was wanted was the word "perforated," as a distinction.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved, as an amendment, that the word "perforated" be inserted after the word "sheet."

Amendment put and passed.

MR. GEORGE moved, as a further amendment, that the words "and ingot" be added to the item. Zinc ingots were used in local workshops, yet they could not be produced in the colony.

Amendment put and passed.

Item, as amended, agreed to.

New items:

MR. HARPER moved that the items "galvanised iron (corrugated and plain)" and "explosives of all kinds, not including powder (gun and sporting), ammunition and fireworks," be added to the schedule.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Government were willing to meet the views of the hon. members with regard to these two items. The Government had considered the matter a good deal, before submitting the schedule to the House, and they eventually decided to leave galvanised iron out. There was something to be said upon both sides of the question. He knew that galvanised iron was very much used in inland towns, and on the goldfields, but for himself, as this was a timber producing country, he would prefer to see roofing done with timber. He knew that the weight of hardwood timber had a great deal to do with its not being used for roofing to a greater extent. There was a good deal to be said in favor of placing explosives on the free list. One reason was because of the large expense

in importing them, as well as the cost of transporting them within the colony. This was, no doubt, a very heavy tax in itself, to those using explosives. He was sorry to say he could not agree to any other item being placed upon the free list. They had gone far enough; and he must say, although every hon. member had a perfect right—as the Hon. the Speaker had told them—to propose items, still there would be great inconvenience if they did so. There would be very great inconvenience from the reduction of taxation, and consequent reduction of revenue. He assured the Committee that although the revenue would be large, and there would be a considerable balance from last year, yet the revenue for this year would not be sufficient to meet all the demands that would be made upon it. The Government desired to charge against current revenue what had previously been charged to loans, but they could not do it, if the demands for reduction of taxation were persisted in. The list of reductions suggested by the hon. member for Perth would mean a loss of another £50,000.

MR. RANDELL said he did not intend to move them all.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he was glad to hear it. The Government thought they were doing a great deal in giving up £50,000 upon the present schedule, a reduction equal to one-tenth of the whole of the revenue received through the Customs. If the hon. member's proposals were carried, it would mean the giving up of one-fifth of the whole of the revenue received through the Customs. He thought they had made a good start, and, so far as the Government were concerned, they could not agree to any further attack upon the Customs revenue. He very much regretted it, because it would have been so much more pleasant to the Government to have met the wishes of the hon. member for Perth, who had always been fair and reasonable, and even generous towards them. He asked that hon. member to postpone his motion to some other time, and, if the revenue would then allow it, no one would be more pleased to support further reductions than he would himself.

MR. MARMION said he wanted to have no misunderstanding. He found that, by looking at the schedule, powder for sporting purposes was charged a duty of fourpence a pound. He understood it was not the intention of the Government to admit powder free.

THE PREMIER: No.

MR. MARMION said he understood also that ammunition was not included. He thought the explosives referred to were blasting powder, dynamite, and such things as were needed for quarrying or mining.

MR. ILLINGWORTH suggested that the words referring to powder should be "except gunpowder, sporting, and ammunition."

MR. GEORGE wanted to know whether "explosives" would include what was called "rackarock." He said rackarock came into the colony in two forms—one a liquid, and the other a solid—and was not an explosive until these were united. Under the present schedule the solid would come in, and be charged as any other chemical, while the liquid would come in free, as an alloy. The idea of the committee evidently was to admit explosives free; but he wanted to know how they would deal with rackarock.

MR. ILLINGWORTH suggested that the Government would only need to say, in the Customs list, "explosives including rackarock."

MR. GEORGE said the solid was simply chlorate of potash; and the liquid was oil myrbaue, the crude product of petroleum mines.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said it would not be wise to insert any definition of explosives; because they were of various kinds, and were being manufactured in forms nearly akin to each other. He thought the term "explosives" would cover all that the committee desired.

Amendment put and passed, and the item added to the schedule.

New item:

MR. RANDELL said he was glad the Government had seen their way clear to reduce the duty on so many articles of consumption; but there were other articles that might have been included. Some of the articles of which he himself had given notice were used by the people of the whole colony.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he had dealt with things that could not be produced in the colony.

MR. RANDELL said a considerable number of the items in the list of which he had given notice could not be produced in the colony, or they would not be imported in such large quantities. He did not propose to deal with bran and pollard, or baking powder, or hay and chaff, and several other things in his list,

because all he desired was to get them put upon the schedule at a lower rate; but he found he was precluded by the rules of the House from doing that. The first item he did want to press was that of tinned or preserved meat, which was the term employed in the Tariff. There were £41,000 worth of those preserved meats imported into the colony last year; and the duty amounted to £6,254. They were used in every household in the colony, and probably on the stations away in the North-West.

MR. A. FORREST: No, no.

MR. RANDELL said they were used at all the mines and in surveyors' camps, also in every town and city in the colony, and were items of absolute necessity in very many cases, because fresh meat could not possibly be obtained. He hoped the Government would see their way clear not to oppose this item, particularly as it would not materially affect the revenue. He had already referred to cheese, which was an important article of food, and was most nutritious—far more so than meat. No one could pretend that cheese was likely to be produced in the colony, although it had been done in the early days. He hoped those engaged in farming and dairying pursuits would seek to overtake the demand for butter. He thought it was not to the credit of the colony to have to import £56,000 worth of butter in one year, although the duty was only one penny a pound. He moved that the item "preserved meats" be added to the schedule.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he regretted he was not able to meet the wishes of the hon. member for Perth. He thought this was rather a large item to wipe off, when it produced last year a revenue of £6,254. He knew the argument that was used was that preserved meat was so largely used on the goldfields, as well as in other parts of the colony. He admitted the argument, but believed that the people would not use this kind of meat if they could help it. He thought the principal place where it was used was the goldfields, but the people there did not want the Government to do everything for them and they themselves do nothing. He believed the people of the goldfields were willing to do something towards the upkeep of the Government of the colony. He had travelled about the goldfields a good deal, and no one had ever mentioned to him that they were heavily taxed in this matter. A large number of

questions were brought before him at Cue, at the Murchison, and at Coolgardie, but not one word was spoken with regard to the duty on preserved meat. On the Murchison goldfields it was not largely used, and certainly it was not largely used in the centres of population. Meat was sold at Cue and Nannine at about fourpence a pound, and there was no lack of it at all. At Coolgardie, he was informed upon the best authority, they could buy fresh meat at ninepence a pound. The colony could produce beef and mutton, and, if the Committee did away with the duty on preserved meat, they would not only be injuring the revenue, but would be relieving the population of the colony of what they had never asked for.

MR. MORAN said the people on goldfields had asked for it.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that as the hon. member stated they had asked for it, perhaps he could tell them when and where?

MR. ILLINGWORTH said they never asked for the duty to be taken off explosives.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he did not believe the best people on the goldfields wanted this reduction. What they wanted on the goldfields was good telegraphic and railway communication, and facilities of that sort; and he believed they were willing to pay something towards the revenue, and would not object to pay the duty on preserved meat. So far as the central parts of the colony were concerned, he did not believe there was any demand for such a reduction. As a rule, there was plenty of fresh meat in Perth, and he did not believe there was any large quantity of preserved meat used in the city. He thought people would prefer to have salt meat, if they could not get fresh. So far as the people on the goldfields were concerned, he believed they would prefer to pay the duty they were paying now, and have the facilities the Government were giving and intended to give.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said, although he represented a pastoral district, he would support the reduction on preserved meat, because he did not believe it would materially affect the pastoral industry of the colony. There was a good deal of travelling done, and preserved meats were easily and conveniently packed for travelling. He knew very well that people would prefer fresh meat if they could get it, and the reduction asked for would neither affect the production nor the consumption of fresh meat.

It would be an advantage to the whole of the people of the colony, and he should therefore support the reduction.

MR. MORAN said they heard some peculiar doctrines sometimes in that Committee. The Hon. the Premier had said that the people of the goldfields had never asked for the reduction of the duty on preserved meats. If the Government were willing to give the people of the goldfields what they asked for, he reminded them they were asking for three or four more representatives, and he hoped the Government would grant them that request. He denied entirely that the people of the goldfields had never asked for that reduction. He affirmed they had, and other representatives of goldfields affirmed the same thing, and he thought the Committee should give them credence. He wanted to know whom the Hon. the Premier referred to, when speaking of the best people on the goldfields. There were no "best people" there. They were all on an equality, and they all asked for this reduction. He had pledged himself to his constituents to try and do all he could to secure this reduction. It was all nonsense for the Premier to say the retention of the duty would assist the production of fresh meat. There were many who were not able to buy fresh meat, because they were so far removed from the places where it could be brought. He considered an able-bodied man could eat two pounds of meat a day, and it was too much to expect such men to pay eighteenpence a day for meat alone. There was not an item on the whole of the schedule that the people of the goldfields had so cried out against as that one. There was a very strong feeling of discontent with the Government on that point, because it was absolutely impossible to get fresh meat. In view of the progress the colony had made, and was making, he could not see there was any earthly reason why the Government should make such a song about losing £6,000, particularly when the surplus revenue was over £200,000. The revenue during the last eighteen months had more than doubled, and that largely on account of the people on the goldfields, and it was simply ridiculous to think that a loss of £6,000 to the revenue was going to ruin the colony. The people of the goldfields had to pay double rates for railway carriage, and double rates for nearly everything else, and he thought it was unreasonable to refuse to them a slight

concession like that. The mining people of the colony had raised the revenue more than a hundred per cent. above what it was a couple of years ago. He had pleasure in supporting the leader of the Opposition, and hoped that all who were arguing for the admission of raw materials free would also support him. He wished the Premier to bear in mind that the mining people never asked anything for nothing; but they always gave a good return for what they got. Mining had given a great impetus to the other colonies, and had done so here; therefore this industry should have some consideration in a matter like that.

MR. CLARKSON said it seemed to him that the strongest argument for placing preserved meats upon the free list was that the hon. member for Yilgarn had given a promise to his constituents that he would do all he could to get them placed there. He (Mr. Clarkson) regarded the people of the goldfields as a large acquisition to the colony, but thought they should contribute something to the revenue of the colony.

MR. MORAN: Stuff and nonsense.

MR. CLARKSON said the hon. member cried "stuff and nonsense," but it seemed to him that revenue must be raised somehow, and as the committee had already made reductions amounting to £50,000 he intended to oppose every other item, particularly in view of the fact that the estimated revenue would not be sufficient to meet the expenditure. He was strongly opposed to further reducing the revenue.

MR. MARMION said one would imagine, from the remarks of the hon. member for Yilgarn, that the miners in the colony came here purely for the benefit of the country, and not for the benefit of themselves. He presumed that, when they came here, they intended to abide by the laws of the colony. Everyone in the colony who used preserved meats, had to pay his proportion of duty, equally with the miners. Was there any reason why the worker on the goldfields should not pay for that, the same as he did for everything else he ate, wore, or used, except perhaps the water, which was provided by a kind-hearted Government. There was scarcely a day passed in which they were not, in that House, doing something for the miners. Look at the railways, telegraphs, and roads into the interior that were being constructed in order that they might travel about with safety. Then, too, they were providing

water throughout the length and breadth of the goldfields. The hon. member for Yilgarn complained that the man with an appetite equal to two pounds of meat a day, had to pay an extra three-halfpence a day for duty, and that this was a hardship upon the miners. He did not believe the miners themselves cared anything at all about it. He claimed to know as much about miners as the hon. member for Yilgarn, and yet he did not intend to reduce the duty on preserved meat, if that could possibly be avoided. The goldfields representatives were trying to save the miners three-halfpence a day, and if he believed the miners cared anything about it he would support the reduction; but he did not believe they did care. He did not see why the Government should lose the amount of revenue involved, unless it would inflict a hardship, which he was sure it would not.

MR. LEAKE noticed that during the course of the last hon. member's remarks there was a continual use of the personal pronoun "we." It was really difficult to understand what was meant by this term.

MR. CLARKSON: He meant this side of the House.

MR. LEAKE: Of course if the term "we" applied to the hon. member who used it and the hon. member for Toodyay, it was easily understood. A good deal had been said recently on the question of consistency. Perhaps the use of the word had better be avoided to prevent mutual recrimination, but there was one thing he felt should be noticed during the course of this debate on the Customs. The Acting-Governor in his Speech to Parliament, said, on behalf of the Government, "The large increase in the revenue, and the consequent flourishing condition of our finances, have given my Ministers the welcome opportunity of considering whether some of the duties now chargeable under the Tariff Act 1893, might not with advantage be abolished, especially those on articles of food in general use, and not capable of being produced in the colony." He quoted this to show that hon. members on the Government side of the House, in voting for further reductions, would be only following out the policy of the Government as indicated in the Governor's Speech. Personally, he was in favor of reducing the duties, not only on the particular articles now before the committee, but upon articles of food in general use and not capable of being produced in the

colony to any extent. It appeared that if the suggestion for these further reductions had come from the Government side of the House they would have been permitted to pass, but because they were proposed by the Opposition it became quite a different matter. Now that was not proper by any means. It was to be hoped that the proposals would be carefully considered, and that sight would not be lost of the fact that by giving effect to the desires of the hon. member for Perth, the Government would be only following their own policy, as announced in the Speech of the Governor at the beginning of the session. Possibly the proper thing for the Government to do in order to prevent their own policy being carried out, would be for the Premier to inform his friends and supporters that unless the proposals were rejected he would resign. This was a very useful and favorite "gag" of the Hon. the Premier.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Oh, the Premier has never done that in his life.

THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think it is in order for the hon. member to use the word "gag."

MR. LEAKE: I would like to know why, Sir. I do not want to use any expression not strictly Parliamentary, or out of order, but I fail to see how this can be either.

MR. SIMPSON: It is merely stage play—melodrama.

MR. LEAKE: Well, Mr. Traylen, if I cannot use the word "gag," I will have to use a simile. It is a fact that the miners of this country and a number of people who are not miners have to use these preserved meats.

THE PREMIER: Oh, they can get fresh meat.

MR. LEAKE: In Perth and Fremantle perhaps, but not in the back country. The cost of living in this country should be reduced as much as possible. There had grown up a practice in this House that when members in a minority attempted to bring any proposal forward, they were informed that they were attempting to deal with something of which they knew nothing. The Premier, too, was getting too fond of personalities instead of restricting himself to solid argument. It was clearly evident from the Acting-Governor's Speech that the policy of the Government at the beginning of the session was to be in the direction sought by the hon. member for Perth, and it was noticeable that both the mover and seconder of the Address-in-Reply had congratulated the Ministry upon its determination to

let the people of this country enjoy a free breakfast table. Now was the time for the Government to carry out its professions.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt), said that as he, too, represented one of the goldfields, he had a right to express an opinion on the matter before the Committee. The miners on the Ashburton field were entitled to as much consideration as the miners elsewhere, and they were just as ready to get all they could as was any other section of the community. The miners on the field had to use tinned meats like any other miner, but it went without saying that they would excuse him in not supporting the present proposal to admit the preserved meats duty free. This country could not give the miner everything. They had to consider what had been given to him already. He would already benefit very largely from the reductions made by the Government that evening. The miner benefited as much as anybody else by the free admission of rice, blankets, rugs, and galvanised iron.

MR. MORAN: The miner does not eat galvanised iron.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): No, but he benefited largely by the reductions. Who but the miner would benefit by the duty being taken off explosives? In fact, the miner benefited largely by most of the items in the schedule. The Government also proposed to reduce the cost of a miner's right to 10s. a year. It was not likely that proposal would meet with opposition from the other goldfields members.

MR. MORAN: All of the miners do not have miner's rights.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Most of them did. At present the cost of a miner's right was £1, and a reduction to half meant a distinct gift to every miner on the field of 10s. a year. The Government had done everything possible for the miner, and if the duty was taken off tinned meat that class of the community would really pay nothing in the shape of Customs duties. Upon every article in the schedule the miner gained a distinct benefit, and he could not ask for more. It could not be denied that the Government had given the miner a great deal in the shape of postal facilities, telegraphs, railways, roads, and water.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The miner pays for it.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL said he knew who paid for it more, and that it was the

general public of this country. Thousands and thousands of pounds were being contributed out of the revenue of the country in order to advance the mining interests. The Government now wanted something on the other side. The colony must have a revenue, and it was only just that the miner should bear some proportion of the contribution. The hon. member for Yilgarn had said that the miner of to-day was the millionaire of to-morrow, and if that were the case he would be well able to afford a small duty on preserved meat. As was said before, if the duty were taken off this article the miner would pay nothing.

MR. CO 'NOR said he also represented a goldfields' constituency in this House, and might be looked upon as an authority.

MR. MORAN: You are also a butcher.

MR. GEORGE: He's another expert.

MR. CONNOR said he had to acknowledge, as a goldfields' member, that the Government was doing everything it possibly could at the present time to advance the mining interests. Every facility had been provided for getting to the fields, and so that when people got on to the fields they would be able to work them properly, the Government had provided roads and railways and water; everything that could be done by the Government had been, or was being, done, and he, as a goldfields' representative, had to say he was fully satisfied with what the Government were doing to advance the mining interests. Personally, he (Mr. Connor) saw nothing to blame the Government for. It was necessary that the public works throughout the colony should be carried on, and it could not very well be done without revenue. It was possible that some time later on the Opposition would be able to propose some scheme whereby the revenue to provide the cost of Government would come from the land, and when a practical scheme was brought forward he would support it. However it had not been advanced yet and in the meantime every class in the community should bear its fair share of the burden of taxation. It was said that the Government were placing prohibitive duties upon some articles and, at the same time, the mining representatives were daily asking for public works to be carried on in the interests of the mining districts. These could not be done without money, and the only way to obtain the necessary revenue was through the Customs House.

The hon. member for Nannine posed as a Protectionist, and yet was doing his utmost to take the duties away. At present there was no factory for preserved meats here, but he hoped to see one soon.

MR. MORAN: You will never have a tinning factory.

MR. CONNOR said he only wished they could tin Moran. It was impossible to carry on a vigorous public works policy without revenue.

MR. MORAN complained that the goldfields' members had been twitted by the Premier and others with coming forward and asking for works on the goldfields. At the same time it was suggested that the representatives of the mining districts did not know what they were talking about. Members knew the story where one lord said to another lord "Young fools are better than old fools, because a young fool will have time to learn sense and an old one will not." There were young fools and old fools in this House. The principal goldfields' members were young politicians.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member is not in order. He must not refer to any section of the committee as "old fools." It is not Parliamentary.

MR. MORAN said he had pleasure in withdrawing the expression. It was used in the House of Commons, but of course members were far in advance of them here. Several members who had spoken on this subject were most peculiarly situated. The hon. member for Ashburton held a proprietary interest in half the stations, the member for West Kimberley owned half the cattle, and this was the sort of thing that accounted for the milk in the cocoanut.

THE CHAIRMAN: I must beg the hon. member not to impute motives in this way.

MR. MORAN said there was still another member who had spoken and who showed the cloven hoof—a bullock's hoof. There was good reason why some members did not want the duties brought down, and that was because it would interfere with their own living.

MR. MARMION: Imputing motives again.

MR. MORAN desired to point out that to admit preserved meats free would mean a loss to the revenue of only £6,000. The Government said this was too much and that it could not be done. Such a suggestion was utter rot. What was a small loss like that compared to all the miner had done for the country. The member for Fremantle himself had told the House on one occasion that he did not know

what the country would have done had it not been for the gold discoveries.

MR. MARMION: True, but we discovered the gold.

MR. MORAN denied that, for the gold was found by the prospector, and others took it from him as quick as possible. A lot had been said of what had been done for the miner in the shape of railways. What actually was the case was that the mining railways paid double freights, and were required to pay handsomely, in order to meet the loss on duller agricultural lines. Every fibre of trade, commerce, and manufacture in this colony had been strengthened by the mining industry. It was on behalf of the working miner that he pleaded, for many of them were in a state of absolute poverty. Coolgardie had not been a lucky field for the man without means. It was not fair that the miner should be heavily taxed in order to bolster up the pastoral industry, even if it were to the interests of some members in the House. If the Opposition proposed a no confidence motion on this very question he would willingly vote with them.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon A. R. Richardson): I rise to a point of order, Mr. Chairman. Surely the hon. member has no right to impute motives.

THE CHAIRMAN: No he has not. I am sorry that I have had to call the hon. member for Yilgarn to order several times this evening. He has no right to impute motives.

MR. SIMPSON remarked that during recent debates in the House they had frequently heard the word consistency used. It was a term initiated by the Premier and other Government supporters had run the gauntlet of the expression during the debate and had voiced the sentiment wherever possible. The hon. member for Toodyay was one of those who wanted consistency. Now that hon. member when speaking to this question had uttered sentiments which showed that he really ought to pay a little more attention to that strong plea of consistency. It was only twelve months ago that the hon. member had said the colony was not in a position to supply tinned meat and that the duty should be abolished.

MR. CLARKSON: Surely one may change his mind.

MR. SIMPSON: Oh, Jim Crow again. He believed there was one industry where tinned meat was used where it was really a necessity of life and it was among the men employed in the pearling industry. Those men he had

been informed were largely dependent on it. All through the country, and he (Mr. Simpson) did travel about a good deal, he had heard this matter of the duty on preserved meats spoken of as being a real grievance and an injustice. It should be recollected that every tin of meat cost the miner 3d. for cartage in addition to all the other charges, and the duty meant that each miner paid on this article alone a sum of £2 5s. a year through the Customs. That was by taking the average consumption as stated by the hon. member for Yilgarn. Even the Premier himself should see that this was an extreme case, and one of grave injustice. It was a grave injustice that an absolute necessity of life should be so heavily taxed.

MR. MARMION: If there are 6,000 miners they would pay over £12,000 a year. Your figures are wrong.

MR. SIMPSON said he had never yet attempted to understand the arithmetical calculations of the hon. member for Fremantle, nor did he know any one who did. It did appear to him very reasonable to suppose that a miner who could not obtain other necessities of life should consume 2 lbs. of meat a day, and, if so, he would pay in duty between £2 and £2 10s. every year. Such a duty was not just to those who were really developing the industries of the country, for it affected every man who was engaged in working any raw product, gold or otherwise. In a season of drought the people on goldfields would not be able to use anything else but this tinned meat. Of course no man would use preserved meat who could obtain fresh meat, but this luxury was not possible in the back country where hundreds of men were engaged in developing the resources of the colony. The item of £6,000 was not a very great one to add to the free list. It was curious to note that when the Tariff Board presented its report, its suggestions were treated with scorn and contempt, but very singular, indeed, was it now to find the Premier following every suggestion contained in the report. He was glad to recognise the wisdom of the Premier in altering his mind.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Times have changed a good deal since that report was presented.

MR. SIMPSON would press upon the Premier that it would be very desirable for this small request on the part of the mining community to be complied with. With such a bounding

revenue as they possessed at the present, now was the time for them to make these necessary reductions in the Tariff. The duty on preserved meats was a distinct injustice to people who were doing more than anyone else to open up the great resources of the country.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson) said he only desired to question the figures presented by the hon. member for Geraldton. These preserved meats were not used only by the mining community, but by all sections. It was very reasonable indeed to suppose that 12,000 at least used those meats, and as the duty collected was only £6,000, it was a maximum allowance to make that the duty amounted to only 10s. per head for those concerned. Now, so far as the miner was concerned, the miners' rights were to be reduced by 10s. a year, and that would square the account.

MR. THROSSELL quite agreed that in the past the miner had been the most heavily taxed man in the community, but this was not so much due to Customs duties as it was to the conditions in which he lived, and all this was being rapidly altered. In a little while by the completion of railways the cost of carriage would be reduced from 2d. per lb. to ½d. In the present alterations in the Tariff the miner was receiving very large benefits, and he could not ask for more. He had free sugar, free tea, free galvanised iron, and now he wanted free meat. That was not reasonable. From the goods which left the Northam station every week for the goldfields it was estimated that the cost of carriage each week to the consumers was £20,000. Well, by Christmas it would be reduced to £5,000 a week, or a clear gain to the people of the goldfields of £15,000 every week. It was the Government who gave the facilities which made this tremendous reduction possible. At one time the cost of carriage to Southern Cross was £18 a ton. With the railway it was reduced to £3, and now it had fallen to 30s. This was a big saving to the working man in his cost of living, and the wages remained the same as they were when he had to pay 2d. a pound on everything he required. When the railways were completed the miner would have got everything he could reasonably expect, and he had been most generously treated.

MR. ILLINGWORTH thought he could safely say that he did know something of the opinions prevailing in the goldfields' districts

on this question, and speaking as a goldfields' member, he believed that as to the whole schedule the Ministry had brought in, the mining districts would much rather not have seen it at all. The miner did not thank the Government for this schedule.

THE PREMIER: You are ungrateful.

MR. ILLINGWORTH did not think it was a question of gratitude, but one of wise administration. When he spoke to the House he endeavored to meet the interests of the whole country. He did not believe in parochial politics. It was quite possible that when he quoted facts some members would not believe them; but they must recollect that when a truth was spoken and someone did not believe it was the truth, that circumstance did not militate much against the truth. However, coming down to the position where the Ministry proposed to make certain reductions, what he complained of was that these reductions would not be felt by the people who were most in need of them. When he (Mr. Illingworth) opposed the remission of the duty on cocoa and chocolate, the Premier said these were necessities of life.

THE PREMIER: I did not say that.

MR. ILLINGWORTH understood it that way; but, at any rate, it still stood that while this reduction was made, the remission of duty on what was actually an essential of life on the goldfields was refused. If there was any foundation for the arguments used by the Premier when he brought this schedule forward, then most undoubtedly the duty on such a necessity of life as tinned meat should be removed. He would press upon the Government the hardship this duty entailed upon the poorer classes of the community, and the fact that the man who went prospecting—the real pioneer of the goldfields, the one who shouldered his "bluey" and went into the interior—could not exist without this particular article. It was the man in the back country, and that back country included the miner and the man in the jarrah mills, who was forced of necessity to use this preserved meat. It was not required where fresh meat was obtainable. Personally he had been unable to enter into the complex calculations of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, but he (Mr. Illingworth) would take the hon. member's own figures, and show a different side to them. The aver-

age per head of population in the Customs revenue was £5. The Commissioner of Crown Lands and other members had freely admitted that the duty paid by those who used this tinned meat amounted to 10s. per head per annum. In other words, one-tenth of the whole taxation on a resident of the goldfields was obtained from the duty on preserved meats. Where could such a glaring inequality be shown as affecting any other class of the community? This question of the duty on preserved meats was a genuine grievance. It could be heard of on every goldfield. If the duty on cocoa had been left alone, no goldfields' member would have objected, neither would he have objected if the House had not touched the duty on tea or sugar, or even if it increased the duty on whisky. The miner was quite prepared to pay his share of the cost of Government. In fact, if the Tariff Question had not been raised at all, the miner would not have objected, but it having been raised, he did want to be consulted as to what would be most beneficial to him. The miner had had to pay 1s. a gallon for his water, and double rates over the railway, and he had never objected. At the same time, when the duties were being altered, the miner did say that on the question of preserved meats he had a real grievance. It was one of the most elementary principles of political economy, that where revenue was raised through the Customs the articles that could not be produced in the country, and which were the necessities of life, should, if possible, enter free of duty. He (Mr. Illingworth) did not suppose, if the duty were taken off tinned meats, those who used them would feel any benefit, but it would remove a substantial grievance and one of the duties which were of a particularly annoying and irritating character. Personally, he believed his own opinion was shared in by the miner, and that was that it would have been far better to continue the collection of all the duties taken off, so that the Government would have been able to carry out the great schemes for developing the resources of the country which they believed the Premier was anxious to bring forward. The remission of the duty asked for would remove what was a substantial grievance, and the Premier would be acting in accord with the interests of the country if he agreed to include it in the list of articles to be admitted free of duty.

MR. LEFROY said he was not surprised at

the hon. member for Nannine advocating the abolition of duty on tinned meat, when the electors had told the hon. member that this was the only duty they wanted taken off. But this discussion had disclosed the fact that miners were like other men in their natural instincts, and not the superior beings they were sometimes said to be. All persons longed naturally for that which they could not get, and often it was the very thing they went for. Tinned meat could be largely produced in this country, and the imported article should therefore be charged with a fair share of taxation. When this question came before the House two years ago, the duty was then reduced in amount, and he (Mr. Lefroy) joined in helping to reduce it. If the Government were now proposing to further reduce the duty to a half-penny per pound, he would support that; but there should be some duty on imported meat, and the duty ought to be a fair amount. As to the complaint that this duty irritated the miners, there would be irritation among the stock growers if this duty were taken off tinned meat; therefore, as one or other section had to bear the irritation, it should be left where it was. Other duties on food might equally cause irritation, such as those on jam, tinned fish, pickles, and various other things which hon. members did not propose to put in the free list. The only tangible reason given for desiring to take the duty off tinned meat was that, by doing so, some hon. members hoped to deal a blow at another industry in the colony which at present was struggling against adverse circumstances, in many parts.

MR. WOOD said this discussion had at least supplied opportunities for the hon. members for Yilgarn and Nannine, as goldfields' representatives, to make a couple of forcible speeches, which might serve some purpose if telegraphed to the newspapers on the goldfields. But the duty on tinned meat was not heavy. Calculating it in proportion to the invoice value of a case of tinned meat, the duty would be only about 15 per cent. Such a duty as that was not even protective in its effect on the price of local meat, and the mining population could well afford to pay that amount on imported tinned meat. Of course tinned meat was used in a larger proportion on goldfields than in towns; but in fact tinned meat was the most abominable form of food for housekeepers in towns to put on a table where other meat was obtainable,

though there was not the same choice of food on a goldfield.

Mr. RANDELL, referring to Mr. Marmion's remarks on the annual report of the Collector of Customs, said the return showed that the amounts of duty received for the year 1894 were—on hams, £1,347; on bacon, £7,605; and the duties received on some other necessities brought up the total to about £10,000, this sum being in addition to the £6,254 received on preserved meats. Remembering also that bran, pollard, hay, chaff, and other articles were taxed to a considerable extent, and that some articles enumerated in his list were taxed to the extent of 100 per cent., the Government should consider seriously whether those taxes which had been described as irritating to the mining population, while also affecting other portions of the community who ought not to have these taxes inflicted upon them, could be taken off at the present time, as proposed in his motion. As to the struggling industry referred to by the member for the Moore and others, it was a necessary thing in the circumstances of the colony that preserved meats should be imported to a considerable extent, and this was shown by the enormous amounts of money paid away for these importations. In the interest of right and justice to the community at large, the duty on tinned meat should be removed, as being of more importance than some duties which affected a larger number of people. It was not only the three farthings a pound that had to be paid by the consumers, but the merchants' percentage would probably bring up the amount to a penny per pound.

Mr. LOTON said he would like to see a reduction of taxation, not only on articles enumerated in the motion, but on a great many more. But there was another side to that question, namely, how far, in present circumstances, were the committee prepared to go in reducing the revenue? The line must be drawn somewhere, unless the revenue was to be very seriously reduced; and if so reduced, he thought the public works policy that had been inaugurated and not yet completed could not be safely carried on. The argument of the hon. member for Nannine came to this, on his own admission: that if the duty on tinned meat were taken off, the relief to miners would be so small as not to be appreciable. Therefore there was not so much in the objection to this duty as some

members had attempted to make out. If the miner wanted relief from taxation, and did not get it on tinned meat, he would get it in other ways, and get it more amply, under this schedule—particularly in the remission of duties on tea and sugar, because the miner paid more duty in a year on tea and sugar than on tinned meat. Assuming, for the sake of argument, that the people on goldfields paid the whole of the duty that was collected on the importation of tinned meat, how many persons were residing on and about the goldfields? [The PREMIER: Twenty thousand.] Yes, quite that number; and what was the average amount of duty per head paid on imported tinned meat—assuming, as he had said, that the whole of it was imported for the mining population? The average would be 6s. 8d. a head per annum. He did not think the miners would complain at all of so small a proportion of taxation as that, though they did not pay it all. As to this duty being an irritating grievance among the miners, he did not think there was any such grievance, and, in fact, the only complaints came from two or three members of this House. Certainly this duty was not a grievance, and was not excessive, in comparison with the duty on some other items in the Tariff—on butter and cheese, for instance. Those members who had advocated the entire removal of certain items from the Tariff had not convinced a majority that there was a reasonable necessity for the removal; therefore he was not prepared to support the motion.

Question put, and division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes...	9
Noes	17

Majority against 8

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. George	Mr. Burt
Mr. Illingworth	Mr. Clarkson
Mr. Keep	Mr. Connor
Mr. Leake	Sir John Forrest
Mr. Randell	Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. R. F. Sholl	Mr. Harper
Mr. Simpson	Mr. Hassell
Mr. Solomon	Mr. Loton
Mr. Moran (Teller.)	Mr. Marmion
	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Richardson
	Mr. H. W. Sholl
	Sir J. G. Lee-Steere
	Mr. Throssell
	Mr. Venn
	Mr. Wood
	Mr. Lefroy (Teller.)

Motion negatived.

New item :

MR. RANDELL moved that the item "cheese" be added to the schedule.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the amount of duty received last year was £1,170. He hoped the motion would not be supported.

Question put, and division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes	9
Noes	15
Majority against	6

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. George	Mr. Burt
Mr. Illingworth	Sir John Forrest
Mr. Keep	Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Moran	Mr. Harper
Mr. Randall	Mr. Hassell
Mr. R. F. Sholl	Mr. Lefroy
Mr. H. W. Sholl	Mr. Loton
Mr. Simpson	Mr. Marmion
Mr. Leake (<i>Teller.</i>)	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Richardson
	Sir J. G. Lee-Steere
	Mr. Throssell
	Mr. Venn
	Mr. Wood
	Mr. Clarkson (<i>Teller.</i>)

Motion negatived.

New item:

MR. RANDELL said that, as the Government were determined to resist any additions to the free list, he intended only to propose one more item, and it was one on which he felt very strongly, on which some hon. members upon the same side felt very strongly, and on which the population in towns felt strongly. He moved that the item "horned cattle and sheep for slaughter" be added to the schedule.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said there was evidently a desire to have protective duties in this colony, and the only protection which the pastoral interests in the North had got, was the duty on imported live stock and the duty on tinned meat. As hon. members generally were not prepared to do away with the duties on flour, chaff, and other articles which were necessities in the North, and could not be raised locally, he was not prepared to vote for the abolition of the only duties on imports which were produced in the North. He was going to vote, therefore, for protection against the abolition of the duty on imported live stock.

MR. RANDELL said he might explain that he was perfectly in accord with the hon. member's contention, except that he (Mr. Randall) would have liked to reduce these duties in amount, instead of removing them to the free list; but the forms of the House

precluded him from moving to reduce any duty in a schedule that was not before the committee. As there was now only the free list before the committee, he could not deal with any *ad valorem* or specific duties, except by moving to transfer particular articles to the free list. He would like to see the duty on flour reduced to £1 a ton, and the duties on chaff, bran, and pollard also reduced. He felt it was imperative on him, in the interest of the consumers in towns, to propose the abolition of the duty on imported live stock, this being the only form in which he could move at present.

Question put and division taken, with the following result:—

Ayes... ..	8
Noes... ..	15
Majority against	7

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. George	Mr. Burt
Mr. Illingworth	Mr. Clarkson
Mr. James	Sir John Forrest
Mr. Leake	Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Moran	Mr. Harper
Mr. Randall	Mr. Hassell
Mr. Wood	Mr. Lefroy
Mr. Simpson (<i>Teller.</i>)	Mr. Loton
	Mr. Piesse
	Mr. Richardson
	Mr. R. F. Sholl
	Mr. H. W. Sholl
	Sir J. G. Lee Steere
	Mr. Venn
	Mr. Throssell (<i>Teller.</i>)

Motion negatived.

New item:

MR. JAMES moved that the item "coconuts" be added to the schedule. He said the amount received from this duty was not much, and by admitting this article free as a raw material, a local industry for the manufacture of cocoa might be stimulated. He believed such an industry would be started, with this encouragement.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Government would not object to the motion.

Question put and passed, and the item added to the schedule.

New item:

MR. GEORGE moved that the item "churns" be added to the schedule.

Question put and negatived.

New item:

MR. JAMES said two or three small items which were not covered specifically by the present Tariff Act, were used as raw materials in the manufacture of soap and candles. The duties on these articles did not realise much,

but the articles were somewhat important in the expense of working a comparatively small industry, which he hoped to see extended in this colony. Candle casing wrappers now came in under the definition of "cardboard," and subject to duty. Another article required in this industry was soft wood for the making of candle and soap boxes, and there being no local wood suitable, the duty on imported wood was a charge on the industry.

THE PREMIER said deal in bulk was charged only 5 per cent.

MR. JAMES said the amount was small, but it would be a help to this industry if soft wood for these purposes were admitted free. Another raw material required in this industry was candle wick. He moved, in the first instance, that the item "candle wick" be added to the schedule.

MR. GEORGE supported this, and the other items mentioned, as being raw materials, which should be admitted free. It was no argument that because such an item appeared small, it was not important to a struggling local industry. Persons engaged in soap and candle making had not asked for a bonus, and they should have the help which was now proposed. He knew that in Victoria the class of candles which were being exported to Western Australia at 4d. a pound, under the bonus system, were sold in Victoria to storekeepers at 6d. a pound. On a small matter like that in the motion, the Government might reasonably give up the amount of revenue, and help a local industry.

MR. CLARKSON said the Committee had heard quite enough about candle wicks. All the concessions which that side of the House intended to make had been made.

Question put and negatived.

MR. JAMES said he had intended to move on the other items already suggested, but after the utterance just made from a back bench, which he took to be a sort of Ministerial utterance, he would not move further.

Schedule as amended, agreed to.

New clause :

MR. LEAKE said he had given notice of his intention to propose the addition of a new clause, with the object of reducing the general *ad valorem* duty from 15 to 10 per cent.

POINT OF ORDER.

THE ATTORNEY - GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) rose to a point of order, and asked for the Chairman's ruling as to whether it was com-

petent for the proposed new clause to be put. If it could be put, in accordance with the Standing Orders, the better course would be, at that late hour, to adjourn and have the discussion at another sitting.

MR. LEAKE moved that the following be added to the Bill as a new clause:—"That the Fourth Schedule to the 'Tariff Act, 1893, is hereby amended by striking out the words '15 per cent.,' in the fourth line thereof, and inserting in lieu thereof the words, 10 per cent."

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said this proposal would reduce the revenue by about £15,000. The amount received last year was not so much as might be expected for the present year.

THE CHAIRMAN, referring to the point of order, said: Hon. members will please notice that the Bill committed to us is one for repealing certain duties. There is nothing about reducing; the Bill is simply one for repealing. Before I can put this proposed new clause to the committee, I apprehend it will be necessary for an instruction to come from the House to the committee to that effect, because this motion, if carried, would lead to the alteration of the title of the Bill; and, as far as I understand the matter, it is entirely foreign to the principle of the Bill, which is one of absolute repeal. We can only consider the proposal in committee on receiving instructions from the House to that effect.

MR. LEAKE: I wish to question your ruling, Sir, and to take the Speaker's ruling on the subject. I understood the Speaker to say that when a Bill had been read a second time, it was not necessary for a recommendation from His Excellency to come down, before an addition could be made to it such as I now propose.

[Objection in writing handed in.]

The Speaker resumed the chair.

THE CHAIRMAN stated the point of order as follows:—According to Standing Order 142 (Order read), I have ruled that the hon. member for Albany cannot propose this motion, because its object is to reduce, whereas the Bill committed to our consideration is one for the absolute repeal of certain duties. The hon. member has objected to my ruling.

THE SPEAKER: I am certainly of opinion that the ruling of the Chairman of Committees is right. No amendment can be made in Committee adverse to the principle of a

Bill agreed on by the House upon the second reading; and there is no doubt the principle of this Bill is to repeal the duty on certain articles in the Tariff Act of 1893. I think the hon. member for Albany, in his remarks, has misquoted what I had said previously, in stating that I said a proposed addition to the Bill need not come down as a recommendation from His Excellency the Governor. What I did say was that this House could deal with this Bill exactly as it could deal with any Bill which did not require a recommendation from the Governor.

The Speaker left the chair.

IN COMMITTEE.

THE CHAIRMAN said another proposed new Clause had been placed in his hand, to which the same ruling would apply.

MR. LEAKE asked whether the same objection would hold good against a proposal to reduce the tobacco duties.

THE CHAIRMAN: Yes.

Preamble:

Agreed to.

Title:

MR. LEAKE asked whether it was competent to alter the title.

THE CHAIRMAN said that, as the substance of the Bill had not been altered, the title could not be altered without an instruction from the House to the Committee being first obtained.

Title agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11.22 o'clock, p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 30th July, 1895.

Municipal Institutions Bill: third reading—Depositing Stone, etc., in River at Rocky Bay: Legislative Council's Message; in committee—Medical Act Amendment Bill: second reading—Select Committees: extension of powers—Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill: second reading—Free Use of Telegraphs by Members of Parliament: Notice of Motion discharged—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

DEPOSITING OF STONE, &c., IN RIVER AT ROCKY BAY.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S MESSAGE.

IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration of MR. ILLINGWORTH's motion—namely, that the resolution of the Legislative Council, contained in its Message No. 1, be referred to a Select Committee—was resumed.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said that since this matter was under discussion in the previous week he had laid on the table a drawing made to scale, which had been prepared for the information of hon. members, showing exactly the position of the quarry face at Rocky Bay, and the amount of encroachment already made by the tide. Those hon. members who had lately visited the works, or had examined the drawing, would see how very small was the amount of encroachment as compared with the original water line, and how little cause there was for alarm at present. The yellow line on the drawing showed the possible amount of encroachment which might be expected when the two moles in course of construction were completed; and even if the water line should reach the yellow mark as shown on the drawing, the encroachment would still bear such a small proportion to the whole of the river space available for navigation as not to excite any fear of inconvenience resulting to the river traffic. Outside the question of immediate traffic on the river