

on a satisfactory footing,—presents the same to the Legislative Council for its concurrence."

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I do not wish to make any remarks on this motion, except to point out that the resolution is so worded as to prevent the matter again coming before this House.

THE PRESIDENT: It is only proposed to refer the matter to a joint committee of the two Houses; but before anything can be done it must be agreed to by both Houses.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: As the resolution is worded the joint committee can only send suggestions to the Government.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): The Government has nothing to do with joint committees. When joint committees report, they report to the House.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: The hon. the Colonial Secretary misunderstands me; *Hansard* is not under the control of the House. It is entirely in the hands of the Government, and consequently it is quite competent for the committee to send forward their suggestions direct to the Government.

THE PRESIDENT: I can assure the hon. gentleman that since the Government have taken the course of referring the question of reporting to a joint committee of both Houses, they have passed the matter out of their hands. The Committee must now report to the House.

THE HON. J. A. WRIGHT: The matter having been referred to the House, the House is now master of the situation.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): At present the reporting is in the hands of the Government, and the Premier has come down and asked that the matter might be referred to us, so that some resolution may be arrived at which may be laid before the Government.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: According to this resolution there is no necessity for the House to hear of the matter again.

THE PRESIDENT: The Government, of their own motion, have referred this matter to the Joint Standing Orders

Committee; and this committee, which is responsible only to the House, can only report to the House.

Question—put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 10.10 p.m., adjourned until Friday, 5th February, at 3 o'clock, p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 4th February, 1892.

As to obtaining further advice from Sir John Coode re Fremantle Harbor Works—Appointment of a Commission to inquire into working of Colonial Hospital—Legislation for reducing dangers from Bush Fires—W. A. Turf Club Bill: in committee—Hansard Reporting arrangements referred to Joint Standing Orders Committee—Patent Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Aborigines Protection Act, 1886, Amendment Bill: third reading—Estimates, 1892: adjourned debate on the Treasurer's Financial Statement—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 7.30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

SIR JOHN COODE AND FREMANTLE HARBOR WORKS.

MR. MOLLOY, in accordance with notice, moved, "That in the opinion of this House no further advice from Sir John Coode is needed, and that the Ministry do not further obtain advice from that gentleman in relation to harbor works at Fremantle." He thought it was unnecessary to deal at length with the resolution. For years past they had been receiving reports from this eminent gentleman with respect to these harbor works, and this session they had another one from him as to the Owen Anchorage scheme. It was admitted, he thought, by all parties concerned, that Sir John Coode's reports had been very contradictory, and that what he had advised in one report he contradicted in the next as impracticable; or what he said was impracticable to-day, he recommended in his next report as practicable and feasible.

Therefore, it appeared to him, it was only hindering the settlement of this question to have any further reference to this eminent gentleman, especially when we had now all the knowledge necessary to enable us to come to a conclusion, without any further delay, and a competent adviser in our own Engineer-in-Chief. For this reason he moved the resolution standing in his name.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) thought it would be hardly necessary for him to urge upon members not to vote for this motion about not consulting Sir John Coode any further. It seemed to him that if we agreed to this resolution, we should not be consulting that gentleman, but insulting him. He did not think anything that Sir John Coode had done for this colony deserved from us any such treatment. Whatever that House might say or do would not affect Sir John Coode's reputation in his profession, for they all knew he was at the very summit of his profession as a marine engineer. He did not think it would be becoming on our part to do anything, in any way, to cast any reflection upon a professional man of Sir John Coode's eminence and undoubted ability. The only opinion that could be formed of him by those who had come in contact with him when he was here, or who had read his reports, was that he was a high-minded, conscientious, able man; and whatever his opinions might be, whether we agreed with them or not, we should not find anyone in Sir John Coode's own profession, in any part of the world, who would venture to say anything disparaging of him. They might not agree with him—they would be careful even in saying that they did not agree with him—but you would never find one amongst them who would say anything disparaging of him. They would have more modesty than some people; they would know it would be unbecoming and wrong to disparage the reputation of a man who had done such signal service in the cause of marine engineering throughout the Empire. Sir John Coode had been consulted by all these Australian colonies, and by New Zealand, and his opinion had been sought all over the civilised world. His magnificent marine works at Portland, and also at Colombo, would ever remain a monument of his skill. Apart from these

considerations, what was the position of this Fremantle harbor works question at the present time? The question had been referred to a joint committee of both Houses, and the committee had not yet brought up their report. He hoped it would be such a report as would meet with the approval of Parliament. When they decided what to do in the matter, and on what lines these harbor works should follow, it would then be for the Executive Government to carry out the wishes of the House; and, if it should be necessary, in the opinion of the Executive Government, to consult Sir John Coode or any other eminent engineer, before committing the country to a large expenditure of money, the Executive Government would do so. Hon. members must not confuse Executive functions with Legislative functions—he believed the line was rather difficult to draw. At any rate, it would not be to the interest of the country, at this stage at any rate, that the Government should be prohibited from consulting any particular person, especially when that person was, as he had already said, at the very summit of his profession. Whether it may be necessary to consult Sir John Coode, or any other eminent man, he could not at present say. No doubt, in all their actions in the future, the Government would be guided by the advice of their own resident advisers; but, what position would they be in, if the Engineer-in-Chief required the opinion of Sir John Coode on some important point, and the Government had to tell him, "Oh, we cannot employ Sir John Coode; there is a resolution of the House." He thought, in this matter, the best course to follow was to leave the executive functions to the Executive Government, and let them, as responsible Ministers, decide what opinion they should obtain, and how best to carry out the wishes of the House, once the House decided upon the character of the works which they desired undertaken.

MR. RICHARDSON said it was known to the House that a select committee was now engaged daily in calling evidence on this harbor works question, and that the committee had not yet concluded their labors. It was possible that this committee might recommend the Government to further consult Sir John Coode on

some particular point, and what would be their position then, if such a resolution as this were adopted? He was rather inclined to think that the motion was a decided reflection upon the intelligence of that joint committee, and an unwarrantable attempt to interfere with its deliberations, before it had yet reported to the House.

MR. RANDELL thought the resolution was an unnecessary and uncalled-for interference with the functions and responsibilities of the Ministry of the day, whose duty it would be to control the expenditure of this large amount of money, and not commit the country to such expenditure without obtaining the best advice possible. Whatever their private opinions might be with reference to Sir John Coode's advice, they all held him in the same high estimation as the Premier did—at the head of his profession. It would be decidedly a move in the wrong direction to prohibit the responsible Ministry of the colony from obtaining the best opinion available. Personally he might entertain the idea that our own Engineer-in-Chief was himself quite qualified to carry out any scheme of harbor works at Fremantle, but that was quite a different thing to preventing the Government from obtaining other advice, if necessary. As the Premier very pertinently put it, the Engineer-in-Chief himself might desire to consult Sir John Coode on some particularly important point, and he would be debarred from doing so, in the face of this resolution, which, he thought, was ill-advised, and an improper interference with the functions of the Ministry. For these reasons, he should oppose it.

MR. MOLLOY, in reply, said he could not understand how the Premier could say that he had said anything that was disparaging to this eminent engineer who was at the summit of his profession.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The motion does.

MR. MOLLOY said he had moved it simply because the country had already been put to considerable expense in obtaining the opinion of this eminent authority; and the present Ministry, on his recommendation, had propounded a scheme of harbor works at Owen Anchorage. But the evident disposition of the House was that those works should not be undertaken. Therefore, they were not

accepting the opinion of this eminent authority in respect to that scheme at any rate. The matter was then referred to a Select Committee, with the understanding that the disposition of the House, as evinced in the course of debate, was decidedly in the direction of the river scheme suggested by the Engineer-in-Chief. The House seemed to prefer that gentleman's idea of the matter to the idea of this eminent engineer at the summit of his profession, and whose opinions had cost the colony so much, on many different occasions. How then could it be said that this motion was in any way disparaging to this eminent authority, when the House had already virtually said that it preferred the scheme put forward by the Engineer-in-Chief. The Select Committee was investigating the question merely for the purpose of taking evidence on this river scheme proposal.—[SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: No, no!]
—The question was referred to the Select Committee because it was evident that the House was not prepared to accept the scheme put forward by the Government at Owen Anchorage. When the Government saw what the temper of the House was, and that there was a strong feeling in favor of the river scheme, and that they could not carry out their own scheme, the matter was referred to this Select Committee to report upon. It had been freely mentioned that whatever the report or the recommendations of the Select Committee might be, the Ministry were still so enamoured of their Owen Anchorage scheme, that they were determined to employ Sir John Coode again with the view of getting an opinion from him adverse to this river scheme, and so frighten members into voting against it.

Motion—put, and negatived on the voices.

WORKING OF THE COLONIAL HOSPITAL.

MR. MOLLOY, in accordance with notice, moved, "That a Commission be appointed to investigate the working of the Colonial Hospital, and to report thereon; to call for such evidence and papers as they may think fit, and to suggest improvement, should they think improvement necessary." For a considerable time past there had been a discus-

sion going on, and an impression abroad, especially among medical men, that some improvement in connection with this institution was very necessary. This discussion had become more pronounced lately, in connection with some disturbance with the nurses who were engaged in England recently to come out here to take up a position in this hospital. He was not moving this resolution on account of the complaints of these highly-trained nurses, from whom there were some statements published in yesterday's *Daily News*; in fact he had not yet read the complaints as therein expressed. But he thought, without casting any reflection upon the control of this department, it would be manifest to the majority of the members of that Assembly that some improvement was necessary in the accommodation which the hospital at present afforded. He was one who would not speak disparagingly of the medical officer in control of this department; he had been acquainted with this gentleman for the last nineteen years, and in all his experience of him, he had always found him a thorough gentleman; and he might say that in his humble opinion he was the most competent authority in his profession in this colony. Therefore, when speaking in support of this motion, at any rate, he trusted he should not be accused, as he had been when he brought forward another motion just now, of speaking disparagingly of this gentleman. He thought it was needless for him to occupy the time of the House in proving that some improvement was necessary in the administration of the Colonial Hospital, and in respect to the accommodation it now affords. It had been mentioned to him by many persons outside, who had been patients, that they had suffered considerably from the want of conveniences in this Hospital, and that several of them had been crippled for life owing to the want of that attention which they ought to have received, when they needed it, when an accident threw them into the Hospital. Whether these charges had been brought to the knowledge of the principal medical officer in charge, he was not aware. But there had been instances—and there was one particularly within his own knowledge, where an unfortunate man, admitted into the Hospital with a broken leg,

was, through the negligence of the persons who should have attended him, crippled for life, and who would consequently be for the remainder of his life an encumbrance upon the State. He thought these things wanted remedying, and that it was the business of that House to pay attention to grievances of this kind in connection with a public institution of this character, and to take such action as would bring about the necessary improvements and reforms. With these few words, he had much pleasure in moving the resolution.

After a pause,—

MR. CANNING said he would second the motion *pro forma*; but, in doing so, he wished it to be distinctly understood that he neither expressed nor implied a single word of censure on the principal medical officer in charge. But it seemed to him that the accommodation in this hospital at the present time was scarcely sufficient for the requirements of the place. That, however, was a matter entirely beyond the control of the chief medical officer. It rested with that House and with the Government to provide him with the necessary additional accommodation, and to reorganise the hospital on such a scale as such an institution should be. The chief medical officer, without funds provided by that House and without direction from the Government, could do nothing; and he was quite sure, from his own knowledge of this gentleman, that he would be very glad to do all he possibly could to place this institution on a better footing than it was at present. It simply rested with that House and the Government to do what was necessary in the matter.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said that in the temporary absence of the Premier he might be permitted to say a word in reply to this motion. It would be in the recollection of some members that not many years ago a Commission of this kind was appointed—one, if not two—to inquire into the question of the accommodation at this hospital; and he might say that some of the medical gentlemen of Perth had very lately interviewed the Colonial Secretary, who was the member of the Government who had this department under his control, and they made some suggestions, which the Government were

now considering. In fact, he might say they were pretty ripe for action, and they were now considering the introduction of a bill to place this hospital on the same footing with similar institutions existing elsewhere. If they could possibly manage it—and they hoped they would be able to manage it—that would be the course of action which the Government would take: introduce a bill to place the hospital on a similar footing as hospitals were in other places. He thought he had mentioned this to the House before, and it was known to members that there was a sum of £5,000 on the Estimates for this year for providing additional accommodation at this hospital, thus showing the interest which the Government took in this question and their *bona fides*. In addition to that, there was still an unexpended balance on loan account of £1,300 for this hospital; so that, with the vote on this year's Estimates, there would be a sum of £6,300 available for increasing the present accommodation. He thought that must be regarded as very satisfactory. The Government, in fact, were doing all they possibly could in this direction, and he really could not see that any more light could be thrown on the matter by the appointment of a Commission at this moment.

MR. QUINLAN said he himself had moved in this matter last session, and he then had the assurance of the Government that they would take the necessary steps in the direction he desired. That being so, he could not see the force of bringing the matter before the House again. Of course the hon. member was perfectly at liberty to move in any direction he thought proper; but he (Mr. Quinlan) claimed credit for having already moved in this particular matter. He was sure it was the desire of the country that some steps should be taken to put this institution on a different footing from what it had been in the past, under the old form of Government. But in view of the sum of £5,000 now on the Estimates, and the assurance of the Government that they intended to deal with the matter, he really thought they had all they could fairly expect.

MR. MOLLOY said, that after the assurance of the Attorney General, he

thought he had done all he need do in the matter at present. He was not aware, when he moved the resolution, that the Government had this matter under their consideration; nor had he noticed that there was such a sum as £5,000 on the Estimates for improving the present accommodation. At all events, now that he had the assurance of the Attorney General, that this was the case, and that the Government intended taking action in the matter, he would not press the resolution any further. He begged, with the leave of the House, to withdraw it.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

PREVENTION OF BUSH FIRES.

MR. HARPER, in accordance with notice, moved, "That, in the opinion of this House, further legislation is required for the purpose of reducing the dangers now incurred by farmers and others from bush fires." He need not remind those members of the House who represented country districts, at any rate, that the loss which annually occurred from bush fires was a very serious tax upon the community, and, although we had an Act on the statute-book dealing with this subject, yet experience taught us that it did not have the desired effect. Since that Act was passed another source of very great danger had arisen in the extension of our railways through the country, the number of fires originating from this cause being very serious. Another source of these bush fires was the careless use of tandlestick matches, which readily ignited from the action of the sun upon them. He thought the time had arrived when we should legislate against these dangers, and see if it was not possible in some measure at any rate to reduce the losses caused to the farming community from what might be called avoidable causes. He had drawn his resolution broadly, in general terms, without committing the Government to any particular kind of action. What he would suggest as the best means of attaining the desired result would be for the Government to communicate on the subject, by means of circulars, with the local authorities in the different districts, the Roads Boards or the Agricultural Societies, and ascertain from them what

in their opinion would be the most effectual steps for preventing these bush fires. The members of these bodies were all keenly alive to the dangers and losses resulting from these fires, and the suggestions received from the various bodies would assist the Government in framing the necessary legislation. There was no particular object to be gained in passing an Act this session, for, before it became law, the danger would be nearly passed this season; but he hoped that some steps in this direction would be taken before next summer. With these few words he begged to move the resolution standing in his name.

MR. PIESSE, in seconding the motion, said he considered it a very desirable one. They all knew the deplorable results that had taken place, and which took place every year, from these bush fires in the country. During the past year the losses sustained were very serious indeed. In some of the districts these fires had travelled 80 or 90 miles, and destroyed all the grass in their course. This, it might be said, might be prevented by the residents of the district, but, with our small population, scattered over immense areas of country, it was very difficult to cope with the evil. He thought the motion should receive the support of the Government, and the course suggested by the hon. member who brought it forward was a very good one—that they should obtain suggestions from the various local bodies as to the best way of dealing with the matter in their respective districts. In the other colonies they had provisions for having certain portions of the country cleared and ploughed up, so as to arrest the progress of these fires, and owners of land were compelled to keep the outside of their fences clear from scrub and undergrowth. These were the precautionary measures adopted in some of the other colonies, and no doubt they prevented the fires from travelling as they otherwise do. That some steps should also be taken here was becoming more apparent every year; either by making it compulsory upon the owners of land to assist each other for purposes of mutual protection, or adopting some other preventive measures.

MR. TRAYLEN said that of all the questions that had come before them this session affecting the district he had the

pleasure to represent, this, he thought, was the most prominent one. Being situated so far North, everything was so dry that the whole country was peculiarly liable to these devastations caused by bush fires, and more especially fires arising from sparks from locomotives passing to and fro through the country. He might be allowed to read two or three extracts from letters he had from settlers in the district bearing upon this subject, and showing the great necessity of dealing with it. [*Extracts read.*] This, he was sure, members would admit, was a really serious state of things, and it behoved the Government to cast about for some means of preventing these fires. He might throw out two suggestions for dealing with the evil. One was that it should be compulsory for all locomotives to be provided with something of the nature of a spark-catcher, at any rate during the summer season. He was aware, in making this recommendation, that there might be some difficulty in having it carried out, because it was said that the same amount of power could not be got out of an engine with a spark-catcher as out of an engine without a spark-catcher. But if they bore in mind that these railways were designed for the development of the country and assisting the settlers, and not for the purpose of destroying their crops, their fences, and their property, it was surely worth while expending a little more money in getting a different type of engine, so that the necessary amount of power might be got out of them whilst using these spark-catchers. The other suggestion he had to offer was that it should be made compulsory to burn coal instead of wood on these locomotives.

MR. CLARKSON thought the subject was a very important one indeed, as regards many districts of the colony. In his own district, he was glad to say, every care had been taken to prevent the spread of these bush fires. The settlers generally burnt a strip of land on each side of their properties, and took every precaution; and he was not aware of any fires that had originated from sparks from a passing engine. With regard to ordinary bush fires, the origin of which was very difficult to trace as a rule, he thought the only way to effectually prevent them was to prohibit the im-

portation and use of tandstickor matches. Speaking from his own experience, he might say that he had had as many as five fires in one season in his paddocks, all of which originated from these matches, carelessly dropped during the winter months probably, but which were ignited when the fierce heat of summer set in.

Mr. THROSSELL was understood to say that he thought the only remedy for the evil complained of was to have some restriction as to the use of tandstickor matches, to have a police inquiry into the cause of every bush fire, and to insist upon compulsory clearing. He would also suggest that the Government should communicate on the subject with the various Agricultural Societies, and obtain their views on the subject.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said, as to communicating with the Agricultural Societies, and the Roads Boards, and the Municipal Councils, it was a curious thing that no suggestion whatever had yet been made by these bodies to the Government that would put them on the path which these local authorities considered it desirable to take in this matter. There had been legislation on the subject of these bush fires, with the object of preventing people from setting fire to the bush except at certain seasons of the year, but, beyond this, it was certainly a remarkable thing that no suggestion had been offered to the Government by these local bodies for minimising the danger complained of. If it was desirable to further legislate in the matter, surely one would expect those who are mostly interested to offer some suggestion or recommendation as to the lines upon which further legislation should go. He sympathised entirely with the object in view, and the Government were desirous of obtaining some practical information and suggestions on the subject, with the view of preventing these fires. If they received any practical suggestions, likely to prove effectual, they would only be too glad to act upon them.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said, as to these fires being caused by sparks from passing locomotives, every possible precaution had been taken by him for the

prevention of bush fires, and he thought it was rather a compliment than otherwise to the Government that none of the local bodies referred to by his hon. friend the Commissioner of Crown Lands had any suggestion whatever to make to the Government for assisting them out of their troubles. Having been a practical agricultural man all his life he knew pretty well what precautions were necessary, and, when he entered upon his present official duties, he issued orders that strips of land adjacent to the railway lines should be burnt and cleared, so as to prevent any ignition from any flying sparks. Beyond this, he was informed that there was not an engine that went out of their locomotive workshops now that was not provided with a spark-arrester, so that he might venture to say that no bush fires had recently been caused by sparks flying from the chimney of an engine. Of course it did not necessarily follow that the spark must come out of the chimney and nowhere else, but, so far as that particular danger was concerned, every precaution had been taken. No doubt, it was possible that, in the past, fires had been occasioned by hot ashes dropping from an engine's ash-pan, and the carriages passing over these ashes fanned them into a flame, which ignited the adjacent dry grass; but, as he had said, instructions had of late been issued to all permanent-way men to keep their lines free from combustible rubbish and dry grass, and he had no reason to suppose that these instructions had been neglected in any way. This was corroborated very much by the remarks of the hon. member for Newcastle (Mr. Clarkson), who had told them that in his district every precaution had been taken in this way, and that he knew of no fires having originated from railway engines in that district. The same precaution had been taken by the railway authorities in every district; and, as to putting all these fires down to sparks from locomotives, he did not see what more the Government could do than they had done already. If any further legislation was required, he imagined it should be in the direction of prohibiting the use of dangerous matches that were easily ignited, though he was afraid there would be a difficulty in enforcing such legislation.

MR. TRAYLEN said that when he spoke of fires caused by sparks from locomotives, he did not refer particularly to Government railways; there were other engines, belonging to private companies.

MR. RANDELL reminded the House that a few years ago a bill was passed by the late Legislative Council prohibiting the importation of dangerous matches, but it did not become law. He believed there were difficulties in the way of prohibiting the use or legalising the use of one particular kind of match, as against all other matches. His experience of the so-called safety match was that it was not a reliable match. With regard to fires by sparks from passing engines, he thought the Government should see that the engines of private companies were provided with spark-catchers, as well as the engines on the Government lines. In this way, they would probably minimise the danger from this source.

MR. PARKER thought that before the House debated such a resolution as this they ought to see what was to be gained by legislation on the subject. If it was only to deal with sparks from engines, it appeared to him that no legislation was necessary. So far as the Government lines were concerned, they were told that every precaution was now used, and that every engine had a spark-catcher. With regard to other lines, owned by private companies, it appeared to him that no further legislation was necessary than the common law of the land. He did not suppose the hon. member for Beverley wished to make it a penal offence to run a train without a spark-catcher; but, if any damage was caused from negligence on the part of the company, the sufferers would have their common law remedy. So much for fires caused by engines. With regard to ordinary bush fires, the origin of which was generally a mystery, no doubt it would be advisable for the Government to make some inquiries as to the possibility, if not of preventing these fires, of minimising the dangers arising from them. If farmers would consent to such legislation as would impose upon them some burden and a little expense in the way of clearing or ploughing around their boundaries, no doubt it would help to prevent these fires spreading in the way

they now did. But he doubted whether they would consent; because, if they were willing to take these precautionary measures, they would do so now without the necessity for any compulsory legislation. He was not going to oppose the motion; he hoped it would pass, simply with the view of inducing the Government to inquire into the matter of these ordinary bush fires, and not fires caused by sparks from passing engines, which it appeared to him were already provided for.

MR. PATERSON said although the Government may have taken every precaution so far as their own lines are concerned, to prevent fires, from passing engines, the same precautions had not been taken by private companies. He happened to reside in a part of the colony where there was a private line of railway, and every year he had fires on his property caused by sparks from the engines. Some legislation was necessary to compel these private companies to adopt the same precautions as the Government had adopted.

MR. RICHARDSON would make it compulsory on private companies as well as the Government to carry spark-catchers. Prevention was better than cure in every case, and it would be better to prevent these fires occurring than to prosecute these private companies for injury done, if it could be brought home to them. It might not be better from a lawyer's point of view perhaps, but, from a common-sense point of view, it would.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said he had just been hunting up the history of the bill referred to by the hon. member for the Moore (Mr. Randell), as having been passed by the late Council,—the Dangerous Matches Bill. He found on reference to *Hansard* that it was not introduced by the Government at all, but by a private member. The bill became law, but was repealed almost immediately after it was passed, the repeal bill being carried by a majority of two. There was a great deal of discussion on the subject. It was argued when the first bill was introduced that the only preventive against bush fires was the use of what were called safety matches, but the moment the bill was passed it was found that there was no safety in these matches at all; and there arose such a howl against the bill from

one end of the country to the other that it was repealed. He was afraid they must look to something else than prohibiting the use of this kind of match or that kind of match, if they hoped to prevent the spread of bush fires. There seemed to be a strange unwillingness on the part of country people to take the most simple precautions against fire; you could not get them to burn and clear around their places. He thought if he had a place in the bush, he would not wait until the Government cleared and burned around it. He thought the best thing that could be done was to advise these people to protect themselves. With regard to private railway companies, he was informed that they now did use spark catchers. If so, there was no need for legislation; we could not make it a criminal offence not to carry a spark-catcher. Of course if these companies did not do so, if they did not exercise reasonable precaution, the only way was to bring an action for damages against them, which could be done under the common law.

Motion—put and passed.

W. A. TURF CLUB BILL.

The House, on the motion of Mr. PARKER, went into committee on this bill.

Clause 1—Short title:

Put and passed.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

MR. PARKER moved to insert the words "railways and tramways," between the words "buildings" and "edifice," so as to make the bill apply to any railway or tramway on the Club's property. The amendment was recommended by the select committee who had reported on the bill.

Agreed to.

Clause, as amended, put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 12:

Put and passed.

Clause 13—Committee may make by-laws for the management of the affairs of the club:

MR. PARKER moved to insert the words "and for the working and management of any totalisator or other betting machine." He might say that the introduction of these words would not legalise anything that was not legal under the

Police Act. It simply gave the committee of the Club power to regulate the working and management of these machines on the course, which, he thought, was a very desirable provision.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 14 to 25 were passed *sub silentio*, with some verbal amendments recommended by the select committee. (*Vote "Votes and Proceedings,"* p. 138.)

Clause 26—Borrowing powers of the Club:

MR. PARKER moved to insert "£10,000" as the limit of the Club's borrowing powers. He did not suppose it mattered much what they fixed the amount at; it would depend upon the lenders of money, and not upon the Club, how much they could borrow. It would all depend upon the position of the Club in the money market; but this was the limit suggested by the select committee.

Put and passed.

Clause agreed to.

Clauses 27 to 40:

Put and passed.

Clause 41—Copy of the Club's annual account to be transmitted to the Auditor General, and to be open for the inspection of the public:

MR. PARKER moved to insert "Registrar General" instead of Auditor General. The office of the Registrar was open to the public, whereas the Auditor General's office was not; and, as these accounts were to be open for public inspection, it would be better to have them sent to the Registrar General's office.

Amendment—put and passed.

MR. PARKER, in the same clause, moved to substitute "June" for "May" as the date by which the annual account had to be forwarded to the office of the Registrar General. He did this because it coincided better with the date of the Club's annual meeting.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, adopted.

Clauses 42 to 45:

Put and passed.

Schedules, preamble, and title:

Agreed to.

Bill reported, with amendments.

HANSARD REPORTING ARRANGEMENTS.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), in accordance with notice, moved, "That the question of reporting the debates, the editing and printing of *Hansard*, and the control and superintendence of the reporting staff, be referred to the Joint Standing Orders Committee of both Houses, with the view of their making such suggestions as they may deem advisable to place the *Hansard* reporting on a satisfactory footing." He did not think it was necessary for him to say anything further. It was proposed to refer all matters connected with reporting and printing the Parliamentary Debates to a committee of both Houses, which seemed to him very desirable. At present the reporting was under the control of the Government, but he thought perhaps it would be a good thing to have it placed under the control of officers of both Houses—the Speaker and the President probably. At any rate, he thought if they referred the whole question to this Joint Committee they would be able to make some suggestions, which the House would be able to consider when the committee reported.

Question—put and passed, and the resolution ordered to be transmitted by message to the Legislative Council for its concurrence.

PATENT ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time, and passed.

ABORIGINES PROTECTION ACT, 1886, AMENDMENT BILL.

Read a third time, and passed.

ESTIMATES, 1892.

Resumption of adjourned debate on the Treasurer's Financial Statement:

MR. TRAYLEN: I think it is one of the useful phases of our parliamentary procedure that once during each session we should take an all-round view of the finances of the colony, and that the general opinions expressed by members of this House, viewing the financial state of the country from various points, should form some guide to the Ministry of the day. No doubt, sir, as members rise, one after another, to review the finances of the colony there is some degree of weariness in the reiteration of opinions;

and perhaps I shall give greater pleasure all round if, instead of repeating all the congratulatory phrases that have been indulged in during the course of this somewhat protracted debate, I simply say that I echo them, and in a word or two congratulate the Ministry on the satisfactory statement they are able to make. I conceive it to be my duty to gratefully acknowledge to the Ministry their generous consideration of the claims of the city of Perth; I make this acknowledgment as a councillor of the Municipality. I think the Ministry have been generous towards us, in these Estimates. Higher expectations were formed by some, but when I view the great need there is for expending money in improvements in far-away parts of the colony, and how many conveniences we have that these parts lack, I cannot, consistently with my own conviction, be too strongly desirous that a larger sum of money should be spent in Perth. I think the Ministry are trying to serve us well, and that they deserve this acknowledgment at our hands. Whilst Perth will benefit very considerably by this generosity on the part of the Government, I fear that some of the country towns will suffer in this respect. I am referring now to the proposed endowment of municipalities by a Government grant. But there is one phase of this question which must not be overlooked. These country places have already had almost, if not quite, 10s. per pound on their income granted to them in consideration of the roads running through the various municipalities, whilst Perth has only had an annual grant of £100 towards the upkeep of one main road, that running along Adelaide Terrace and St. George's Terrace, and on towards Fremantle; so that inland towns hitherto have had a very much larger grant, in proportion, than the Perth municipality has. I hope it will be found possible still, in addition to the proposed grant of 10s. in the pound to the municipalities, to allow these country districts something in consideration of the great length of roads they have to maintain outside the towns. Respecting the Agent Generalship, I believe it would be impossible to find a gentleman more fitted for the position—perhaps I ought to have qualified it by saying an available gentleman—than Sir William Robinson, who is

a good all-round man for the post. Although Sir John Forrest and some others may be equally fitted, the fact remains that we cannot spare them from our midst. Whilst I acknowledge the fitness of Sir William Robinson for the position, I shall not go with the Government if they are disposed to give him a five-years tenure of office. My reason for saying that is this: as I understand the position occupied by an Agent General, he should be one who is in complete touch with the colony, and, if he be absent from it for more than three years, it is difficult to see how he can be fairly considered to be in touch with us, in the same sense as one who went fresh from amongst us to take up the office, would be. Some member has remarked in the course of this debate, that it does not look very like business on the part of Sir William Robinson to give up £4,000 a year and accept £1,500. I might here just repeat a question that was put very quietly the other evening—whether there are to be any commissions allowed to the Agent General, that may be sufficient to bring his income quite up to the £4,000 he would receive here as Governor?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): No.

MR. TRAYLEN: That settles that point. With regard to Ministerial salaries, I am fully in accord with the proposed increase. We are not dealing with gentlemen now who are entirely new to the work. For some years past they have been novitiates, in training, so far as the legislative work of the colony is concerned, and they have grown acquainted with the needs, and resources, and capabilities of the country and its people. One at least of them has also been connected for years with the Executive of the colony, and they are all in the position of persons who have gone through a course of professional training. For this reason, if for no other, it appears to me they are entitled to greater remuneration than those who have their apprenticeship to serve; and I believe they are fully entitled to an increase of salary. I am not able, however, to agree with the proposed method of providing these increases, unless indeed it is supplemented by a special bill. I freely confess that when this subject was mentioned in the House the other night

by the hon. member for East Perth, I thought the hon. member was in error as to the necessity of an amending Act; but, on looking at clause 69 of the Constitution Act I find these words: "There shall be payable to Her Majesty in every year, out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, sums not exceeding in the whole £9,850"—"not exceeding" are the words—"for defraying the expenses of the services and purposes set forth in Schedule B. to this Act." Schedule B. deals, *inter alia*, with Ministerial salaries, and it provides £3,200 for the salaries of five Ministers; and I take it that, according to clause 69, that amount cannot be exceeded without amending the Act. This House cannot vote more than £3,200 for this purpose. It will be observed that the clause provides that this sum is to be paid out of the consolidated revenue fund; and we have no other funds, that I know of, from which to vote these salaries. Therefore, I hope the Government will bring in some amendment of the Constitution Act to make it lawful for us to vote for them the enlarged salaries proposed. There was one serious question that arose in my mind whilst the Premier was making his Budget Speech the other evening. He said that our indebtedness per head on that particular evening—I noticed he emphasised that—was only £28, whilst the indebtedness in all the other colonies amounted to over £40, and even over £60, per head of the population. If that goes forward to the world, as it does, I think it scarcely states our case quite fairly. It is perfectly true, as far as it goes; but we are aware that a loan of another million has been agreed to and yet to be raised, and, when that is done, our indebtedness per head will be raised to £48.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The population will be increasing in the meantime.

MR. TRAYLEN: I wish the hon. gentleman when making that statement the other evening, that our present indebtedness was only £28 per head, had added that it was liable to become £48 as soon as we floated the loan already agreed to—

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I do not think so. Our population will have increased by that time.

MR. TRAYLEN: All I want is that we should not mistake our position in any way, and imagine that because we now only owe £28, our position will be as good compared with other colonies in a few months time as it is to-night. The hon. gentleman was good enough to make some reference to some words I used last session, when I said that I might designate the policy of the Government then as a policy of burdening the present population for the sake of attracting others to our shores. I gathered from his remarks the other evening that he intended them to refute this statement of mine, by showing that we were in such an absolutely flourishing condition now that my statement of last year could not have been true. I would reply to that by saying that the hon. gentleman is presenting me with my promissory note before it is due. I do not think I am bound to retire that document at the present moment. I do not think I ever said anything that could be construed to imply that this burden would be felt very seriously so early as this. I take it that the burdensome time is coming; and, if in three or four years time we should each of us be in this House, it will be for the hon. gentleman then to say whether I was a poor prognosticator or a trustworthy one. I would remind him of this, that I had a substantial foundation for what I alleged. I had the experience of the other colonies to refer to. I do not know that any of us are inclined to say that those colonies are in such a prosperous condition now, despite all the moneys raised and expended, as to attract people from this colony to go there; on the contrary, I think it is we who are attracting their population to our shores.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmon): Because we are now doing what they did before.

MR. TRAYLEN: Quite so. They tried to cultivate prosperity by using loans as a fertilising agent. They went in for "rosy" times by resorting to artificial fertilisers. It was all very fine while the bloom on the rose lasted, but when they began to be pricked by the thorns they kicked against it, and some of them are now coming here. I merely held those colonies up as object lessons for our own Government. I will not pursue

the subject any further now. I am in accord with those who have congratulated the Government on their financial statement; all I desire is that we should go on our way very cautiously, and keep a good look-out ahead for some of the dangers that I still fear are before us.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Perhaps it may be that there is little occasion for me to rise this evening to add anything whatever to this debate, inasmuch as the Government have been happy enough to receive a chorus of congratulation all round; and I am sure the Government are very thankful indeed for the approval and confidence that have been expressed in their past administration. I can only trust that we shall be able to deserve that approval and confidence in the future, when we come again to this House with a review of our financial administration for the year. But I propose to deal this evening, in a word or two—I trust to make my observations as short as possible—with some remarks that fell from one hon. member who did not join in the general chorus of congratulation. I shall, also, in a few words, endeavor to dispel one or two fallacies which found support in one or two members who sit on the same side of the House. The hon. member for East Perth, the other evening, in dealing with the Treasurer's statement, set himself the task of showing that the Government spent too much money. I do not think he had arrived at that conclusion from perusing these Estimates; it was a conclusion he had arrived at in his own mind some time ago, for, when the House met, he charged us with being guilty of lavish and almost reckless expenditure. That, I say, was before he knew anything about the expenditure that had taken place during the year, or what was proposed to be done this year, or what the balance to the credit of the colony was. The hon. member was twitted by the Premier with having made this charge of lavish and reckless expenditure; and, being so twitted, and the facts being dead against him in the Budget Speech, the hon. member thought it right to bolster up the statement he had previously made, and, with that object in view, we had the speech he delivered the night before last. He then repeated that the Government

had spent too much money; that there had been lavish and almost reckless expenditure on their part; and that the circumstances of the colony in no way warranted it. He was asked to name some of these items of lavish and reckless expenditure, and, after some demur, and being pressed, he thought he was bound to name something. Let us consider for one moment what these items of lavish expenditure are, and whether there is really anything whatever in the allegation. His first item was the delegation to Sydney to attend the Federal Conference; he said that two members would have been quite sufficient, instead of seven. What are the facts on that point? The Government brought down to the House last year a series of resolutions which had been passed at a previous Conference in Sydney, and in which all the other colonies had joined. One of those resolutions was to the effect that seven members should be sent as delegates from each colony. All the other colonies were going to send seven, and the Government here proposed to do the same, and when the resolution was put to the House no objection whatever was made to the proposal to send seven delegates from this colony, and it was agreed that there should be five sent from this House and two from the other House. The hon. member was in the House at the time, and he gave us the benefit of a speech occupying two and a-half columns in *Hansard*, but not a word was said about two members being sufficient, and not a word about lavish or reckless expenditure.

MR. CANNING: We could not help ourselves.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): That being so, what grounds has he now to say that it was lavish and reckless expenditure, and that two members would have been quite enough to send, when in all that speech of two and a-half columns he never said one word against it. I say, therefore, his first proof falls to the ground completely. Then he says the Census was another lavish expenditure. There was a vote of £1,500 granted for the Census, and it appears that something like £1,900 was actually expended. I have information as to the expenditure

in Queensland in connection with the Census there. I find that the cost per head of the population here was 9½d., and that the cost in Queensland was 1s. per head, and that does not include the cost for printing, which has not yet been ascertained; and we know that printing is a very large item. Even without that, the expenditure in Queensland was 1s. per head of the population, and the expenditure here was 9½d. per head. Therefore, I do not think it can be said that this is a lavish and reckless expenditure, more especially when we bear in mind the enormous extent of our territory, and our very scattered population, extending from Eucla to Wyndham. That was the second item which the hon. member mentioned, and I only point out this fact to show how he was led away to try and bolster up a case which he had nothing in the world to support. If the hon. member, after making this charge of lavish and reckless expenditure, had sat down quietly and taken the rebuke administered to him by the Premier for uttering such extravagant charges against the Government he would have done well; but, to try and bolster up his charges with such flimsy material, was simply to make matters worse, and it is my duty to show that they are absolutely without foundation. Then we come to his third item—the expenditure in connection with the reception of H.M.S. *Katoomba*. I doubt whether the hon. member really knows what that expenditure was. I was not here myself to enjoy the hospitality of the public on that occasion. I believe the hon. member was, and I have not the slightest doubt, knowing how his presence is appreciated at these gatherings, that he received an invitation.

MR. CANNING: I had an invitation, but did not go. I refrained on principle.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I am sorry for that. At any rate, it was an occasion when some hospitality should be set on foot. The vessel was part of what is called the Australian Squadron, and all the vessels had been most hospitably, I may say sumptuously, entertained in all the colonies they had visited; and I cannot think that anyone would say that in this colony an invidious distinction was to be drawn, or contend that the ship should

have been allowed to come here without some notice being taken of her presence. I say it was an occasion for rejoicing, and I cannot think that the expenditure incurred was either lavish or reckless, or begrudged by anyone, unless it is the hon. member himself. His fourth and last item was the large expenditure in connection with the inauguration of Responsible Government. How he can bring this charge against those occupying this bench, who had nothing in the world to do with the inauguration of Responsible Government, I cannot say. We were not in office at the time. Therefore his fourth ground of complaint disappears, and we leave him to the contemplation of the delegation to Sydney, the Census, and the *Katoomba*.

MR. CANNING: I meant the anniversary.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): When an attempt is made to charge a Government with lavish expenditure, it is generally because there has been an expenditure in excess of the vote which Parliament has placed at the service of the Government. I never yet heard of an attack upon a Government for lavish and reckless expenditure when the Government has spent £10,000 less than the Parliamentary vote granted to it for the year. I do not suppose such a thing ever occurred in a Legislative Assembly before. The Government come down here with a thumping surplus, and a flowing revenue, and £10,000 to the good, and we are told we have been lavish and reckless in our expenditure, because we sent seven delegates to Sydney (as we were asked to do), and because our Census cost 9½d. per head, as compared with 1s. in Queensland, and because we spent a few pounds in entertaining the men of the *Katoomba*. We show that we have a balance of £107,000 at the end of the year, and we are to be charged with reckless and lavish expenditure because we spent £400 in taking the Census more than the vote we asked for, and because we gave a lunch or something to one of the vessels of the Australian Squadron. I never heard of such a thing. It is ridiculous. Had we come here with a large deficit and a dwindling revenue, I could understand it. But with a surplus in the Treasury of over £100,000, and an ever-increasing

revenue, such a charge is beyond my comprehension. It only shows the weakness of the cause he set himself to prove when the hon. member has to resort to such arguments as that. The hon. member also made some remarks with regard to the floating of our loan. He said the whole loan might have been raised if the market had been watched. What did the Government do? What steps did they take to watch the market? They sent a member of this House, the Attorney General—I do not say he was the best member to send; perhaps he was the worst—

MR. CANNING: No!

SEVERAL MEMBERS: No, No!

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): At any rate they sent a person to England to watch the market. The Loan Act was passed at the end of January, or some time in February, and what was the condition of the loan market in England at this time, during the first half of the last year? There was the colony of Victoria, and New South Wales already in the market, and immediately before I arrived in England, which was on 1st June, the colony of Queensland went into the market, all eager to borrow. With what result? Their loans were absolute failures, all of them. Telegrams, I know, were sent out to the colonies of a more or less reassuring nature, leading people to think that they were not complete failures; but, being on the spot as I was, I can say that they were failures, utter failures. New South Wales could not get her money, or anything like what she asked for. She had to hunt up every broker and banker and get up a loan syndicate, in order to let the papers have an opportunity of saying that her loan had been covered, and all that is dead stock in the market now. Then there was the loan of Victoria, also a failure. All this happened during the first half of the year. Immediately before my arrival in London—I think it was while I was travelling from Brindisi—out came the Queensland loan. That also was a perfect *fiasco*. It was the talk of London, and the laugh of London. When I arrived in England I went about to see people of influence in financial circles, who I thought could advise me and give me some idea as to the state of the market and the pros-

pects of our own loan, and I was told all round it would be useless attempting it. I daren't open my mouth about it. "You know what happened last week to Queensland," I was told, "even under the shield of the Bank of England, with all its influence. Take our advice: say nothing more about Australian loans, particularly for a colony like yours, that has such a very small amount of inscribed stock in the market." That was what I was told on all hands. I knew that Victoria went to her financial agent and told him of her necessities, and her financial agent went to the Banks about raising more stock—they told me this fact themselves—and they sent him away. They wouldn't even talk to him about it. That was the state of the market when I got home. I was there, and watched the market on the spot, and these are the facts; yet the hon. member has the audacity to say that the whole of our loan might have floated if the market had been watched. I should like him to have uttered that before a London audience. I have shown what was done by others who were trying the market at the time. They all failed, utterly failed; and it was with the greatest difficulty indeed that I induced our financial agents to attempt such a small amount as £250,000, and it was with the greatest difficulty I got them to place it on the market at par. For weeks and weeks they would not rise beyond a fixed minimum of £98, which was the most advantageous terms that any other colony had yet raised money upon. I saw the wisdom of the advice, but I felt it would be preposterous to allow our credit to be lowered in that way. They said that was the best they could do. After a great deal of persuasion they got up to £99, which I refused. So things went on; I was watching and waiting all the time. The first week in July, when dividends are generally paid in England—which is considered a favorable time for operations of this sort—luckily the bank rate fell to 2 per cent., and that was the occasion when another attempt was made. At that moment our financial agents agreed to bring out our loan at par, with what result we all know. We obtained a premium of 10s. 10d. No doubt at this end that was considered by some not a success, and by some a failure altogether.

But I say that the opinion in London—and I know it—was that we had achieved a success, a success that had not been expected. And had it not been that a few days before the tenders were opened a telegram came from Victoria announcing a large deficit in their finances, I was assured that our tenders would have been somewhat higher. I said, "What has Victoria to do with us?" The answer I got—and this, mind you, in well-informed circles—was, "Oh, you are all in the same boat; people here think it is all the same, that it is all one; your colony is not known here except as a part of Australia, and here is a deficit announced in the finances of the greatest colony of all, Victoria, which is bound to affect your prospects." That was the idea. I was assured by the London and Westminster Bank that it seriously affected the amount of the premium we might have obtained for our loan. But the result, even as it was, was considered very satisfactory, and I was congratulated all round, I may say, on the success the issue had achieved. Before I say any more, I should like to say that that issue was not altogether a failure, even compared with the prices which had been obtained by the other colonies at the same figure in former years, when the market was much more favorable. South Australia went in for over a million at 4 per cent., in 1886—and the market was much better then; it is notorious, in fact, that the market never was worse than last year and now. She fixed the minimum at £99, and the issue was floated at an average of £99 6s. Tasmania also floated a million at 4 per cent., the minimum being £99, and it realised, with a premium, £99 17s. 11d. This was when the money market was more favorable than last year. Therefore, when the hon. member says that the whole of our loan might have been floated at the time, if the market had been watched, he says what he knows nothing about. I should have liked to have seen him try it. I should like to see him even at present go into the market to raise a million of money. We all know how the other colonies are trying to put their stock in the market. We know how they are playing with Treasury bills, putting them on the market to-day and withdrawing them to-morrow. What does it

all mean? That it is not a good time for raising money; and I say distinctly that the whole of our loan could not have been floated at the time, and, what is more, was never meant to be floated. Therefore, don't think for a moment that it was any ill success our not floating the whole of it. It was never intended to float the whole of it. The Governor, in his opening speech, last session, told you so. He said: "You will understand, of course, that the money will not all be raised at once, and that the Government, in raising it, will take advantage of the state of the market to do so from time to time, on terms most advantageous to the colony." Therefore, we never intended to raise the whole of the loan at that time. It was stated so by the Governor at the opening of our proceedings, and members had it before them the whole session. The hon. member for East Perth also stated that our financial agents, the London and Westminster Bank, only did comparatively little business with the Australian colonies.

MR. CANNING: No; I certainly did not. I said that the most important part of its business was not with Australia. I said its Australian business did not form the most important part of its business.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I understood him to say—and I saw it in a report of his speech in one of the papers—that the London and Westminster Bank did comparatively little business with these colonies.

MR. CANNING: Not at all. I never said so.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I do not wish to put words into his mouth that he says he did not utter, but he certainly did insinuate that some other financial institutions were better than the London and Westminster Bank.

MR. CANNING: I do not wish to interrupt the hon. member, but I protest against the word "insinuate." I do not insinuate, generally; I assert what I mean. It was distinctly an assertion, and not an insinuation, what I said with regard to that institution.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): It is a disadvantage not to be able to hear what the hon. member says; he speaks in rather a low voice,

and it is difficult to hear what he does say. But I have no wish to put words into his mouth that he did not say. The facts are these: the London and Westminster Bank—who are our financial agents, and who were last year also the agents for Victoria and Tasmania—never yet had a disaster with a loan. What has been the case with the Bank of England? We know the trouble between that Bank and Queensland over their last loan, and we know that the accusations and counter-accusations that passed between the Bank and the Queensland Treasurer has seriously affected the credit of the colony at the present moment. If the London and Westminster Bank is not a good institution to deal with, I ask why did a great colony like Victoria take its business there, and also the colony of Tasmania? I think recent events have shown that even the Bank of England is not such a good institution to do business with as the London and Westminster Bank; and that is the general opinion. The Queensland loan, we know, has been an absolute failure in the hands of the Bank of England. It was placed in the market at their instigation, I believe; or, at any rate, wherever the fault was, the Bank did not succeed in placing that loan. I may say that we saw the Bank of England on the subject of our loan, and we found it was impossible to do business with that Bank; they absolutely declined, in the then state of the market, and with our small population, and the notoriety of the colony. They said that an inscribed stock of only a million was not a saleable commodity; that we should have to wait until our debt amounted to £10,000,000 or £20,000,000, and then they would talk to us. From the advice I had, it was apparent to me that the London and Westminster Bank was the best we could go to. It was recommended by all who knew anything about the matter. Then the hon. member said we ought to have gone to the Associated Banks. Why does not any other colony go to the Associated Banks? I do not wish to disparage the Associated Banks for a moment. But we had to come to some conclusion as to what was most advantageous in the interests of the colony; and we went to the London and Westminster Bank. It is admitted, by all who know anything about it,

that we have not done badly in the interests of the colony during the past year, and it may be that this House will give us credit for dealing with the London and Westminster Bank rather than with the Associated Banks. The hon. member did not show why we should have dealt with the Associated Banks. If we had, we should have had to pay 6 per cent. for accommodation at this end, whereas in England we do not pay anything like that. For advances there we only pay the current Bank rate, which at that time was 2 per cent. For these and other reasons we considered it better to deal with the London and Westminster Bank. Now, who is right, the hon. member for East Perth or the Government; he with his Associated Banks, or we with the London and Westminster? I have shown there is nothing in the hon. member's other assertions; and I ask, what more is there in this. I have shown that his other charges were worth nothing, and what is this worth, or likely to be worth? I understand—I was not in the House at the time—that the hon. member made some reference to the question of Minister's salaries and its bearing upon the Constitution Act. The question has also been referred to by other members, and they are perfectly right with regard to section 69. That section is so worded that it will be necessary for the Government to introduce a bill to give effect to the proposed increase of Ministerial salaries. It is most peculiarly worded that section, and I am pretty confident that the construction of the section was never intended to have that effect. In the old Constitution Act that we had been living under since 1871, there was also a Civil Service schedule, dealing with the salaries of the Governor and the Judges and others, who were secured under the Act and placed beyond the interference of the Legislature. That Act simply said that the sum therein mentioned shall be payable to Her Majesty out of the fund for that purpose mentioned in the schedule. That did not prevent the appropriation of more money out of the fund for that purpose, should it be decided to increase the salaries at any time. But in this 69th section of the present Constitution Act I find the words "sums not

exceeding" so-and-so—the salaries fixed at the time the Act was passed. But I do not think it was ever intended to limit this amount. It is well known that in these colonies the salaries of Ministers and others chargeable to the Consolidated Revenue fund have been raised from time to time; and of course they must be raised as time goes on. Had my attention been drawn to the wording of this section before, I am inclined to think the Government would really not have gone to the trouble of asking for an increase of Ministerial salaries this year, if we had thought it would have involved a bill. We intended, as the necessity for it arrived—we intended, in fact, as promised, next session—to amend the Constitution Act, in another direction, and we could at the same time amend it in this respect, and not have it amended this year and again next year; and, if the thing had been well considered before, possibly this vote would not have been now asked for. The hon. member went on to say that an amendment of the Constitution Act in this respect would occasion a dissolution of Parliament. There I disagree with him. I must say once for all I cannot agree with the hon. member's constitutional law. I think it is very weak. I remember on another occasion he was equally wrong in his constitutional law; and I am sorry I cannot help him in his desire for a dissolution on this occasion. I am afraid, if it should be necessary to pass this bill through Parliament, a dissolution will not follow.

MR. CANNING: So much the better.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): The hon. member then said a few words about the necessity for an enlarged scheme of immigration. The hon. member is always harping on this point. We all of us have something on the brain, we are told; something sitting on the top of our head. The hon. member has got this large immigration scheme sitting on the top of his head, and he cannot get rid of it. What are the facts? We find that last year there was a little debate on the subject of immigration, and almost every member of this House spoke; but not one of them spoke in favor of any large scheme of immigration. On the contrary, they all deprecated any such thing. The Premier, in introducing the subject, said that the Govern-

ment had not quite determined yet the exact lines on which they would spend the money, but that they had put the item on the schedule because they had brought forward a large scheme of public works, and they thought it would be as well to have such a vote at their disposal. The hon. member for the DeGrey hoped the money would be devoted to carrying out the nominated system, which he said was a system that had worked well in the past. He strongly deprecated free and indiscriminate immigration, or anything on a large scale. The hon. member for North Fremantle was of the same opinion, and spoke in favor of the nominated system. Then the hon. member for the Swan spoke, and spoke very strongly indeed, against any large scheme of immigration. He said he was surprised to see an item like this on the schedule, for he would have thought that when the colony was going into the market to borrow a large amount of money for public works, it ought to be sufficient to induce the necessary amount of labor to come to the colony. He also said he had been a member of the Immigration Board for some years, and that as far as his experience went, all the money that had been spent on immigration, outside the nominated system, had been thrown away. That was the opinion of the hon. member for the Swan, and the hon. member moved to reduce the item by £30,000. Other members followed, very much in the same strain. The hon. member for the Gascoyne said we were going in for a large public works policy; that a large amount of private capital was being expended in the colony, and this, he thought, should be sufficient to attract as much population as would be desirable, without taxing the people here to bring out immigrants. He also asked for a reduction of the vote. Nearly every member who spoke deprecated anything like a large scheme of immigration. Therefore on this question we find that the hon. member for East Perth had no following. I think the hon. member found himself in the same position, without any following, on another occasion, during the same session. The hon. member himself does not seem to have said a word about this large scheme of immigration when the item was under discussion. Something has been said with

regard to the right sort of immigrants to bring out here—I hope I am not tiring the House; I do not often have an opportunity of doing so, except on some dry legal question—something has been said about the desirability of getting out the right class of labor. The hon. member for Northam, I think, was particularly strong on that point. The hon. member who has a hobby, like we all have, is always strong on the subject of placing agriculturists on the soil. That is a capital idea in theory, but a most difficult thing in practice. We all know you may take a horse to the water, but you cannot always make him drink. It is the same with the settlement of the land. It is very difficult indeed to get people to settle on the land. The hon. member himself told us of the exodus of all the young men from Northam; he said they left the old folks at home, and went with their teams gold-seeking. They found they could make money easier in other ways than working on the farm, and you cannot get them to settle down. It is a very difficult question indeed. So long as people find they can do better at some other occupation, you cannot compel them to settle on the land, do what you like. You may clear the land for them and encourage them in every way, but if the thing won't pay, or, if something else pays better, off they go, and you cannot stop them. The hon. member says he would like to see agricultural laborers introduced, men who, on landing, would go and work on farms. We all would. But one point strikes me at once in connection with this question of the introduction of agricultural laborers. How long during the year would farmers in this colony be able to employ these men? Have we not reason to know that in many cases work could not be found for them all the year round? They are only wanted during particular portions of the year. It is so in all countries, more or less, where agriculture is carried on. You find the agricultural laborer has to move on, and seek for other occupations when there is not much doing on the farm. And what other occupations are there here that would not wean him altogether away from farm work? Little or none. Therefore, I say if you had the men here it would be most difficult to find them work on the farm all the year round, and it

would be difficult to keep them there at all when they found they could do better with their teams elsewhere and looking for gold. But you have got to get your agricultural laborer first. I may say, from inquiries I made when in England, that is not very easy. I had some experience in this matter. Everywhere you go, you are told they have not men enough for themselves, to till their own soil. I was told on all hands that the only place where such labor might be obtained was somewhere about the border between England and Scotland, so I turned my attention to it. But I found that was a part of the country that had been exploited by immigration agents from Queensland, South Australia, and all the colonies, for years, and that it was pretty well depleted. My efforts, at any rate, did not meet with very much success. I believe the Government after much difficulty have been able to secure something like 60 or 70, who are about to be shipped from London at the present moment. That is the net result of all our endeavors up to now. These farming men, if they have families, the first thing they ask you is what accommodation will they have for the wife and children if they come out here; can they get a cottage for them to live in? How would you answer that question? Where are you going to put these men and their families if they came out here, and went into the country? Where are they going to get any cottages to live in, in the bush? These men have been used to live in little cottages all their lives, and they have no idea of sleeping out in the bush, or in a stable, or a hay shed. They would simply laugh at you if you told them that we don't mind that sort of thing in the colonies. These people have no idea at all of our climate or surroundings. They want to know what the price of coal is here; and, if you told them we make our fires with sticks they wouldn't know what you meant. They would ask you where you got your sticks from; and if you said, "Pick them up," they would simply stare at you. I can assure the House these men, who have lived on small farms in the country, in little cottages, from generation to generation, are very difficult to persuade. They make all sorts of inquiries, and, when you tell them all you have to say,

they simply shake their heads. They think you may be a very good sort of fellow probably, and a bit of a joker; but they prefer to keep what little they have, and it is not at all easy to induce them to come out. I found great difficulty in answering them where they were going to find accommodation if they came here. I do not know that even at Northam they could find enough cottages to house fifty of these laborers. And what would be the result? It would cause disappointment and dissatisfaction at once, and do the colony more harm than good. I am afraid I am detaining the House very long. I do not know that I would have attempted to have made any observations on this occasion had it not been for—I won't say the levity, but the jocoseness of the remarks of the hon. member for East Perth (I think), the hon. member for Perth (I believe), and of the hon. member for Albany, and some other hon. gentlemen who sit on that side of the House, with regard to our imports and exports. The hon. member for East Perth (Mr. Canning) said the Treasurer had shown that the colony was importing more than twice as much as it exported.

MR. CANNING: No, not twice.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Those are the words I took from the newspaper report; I do not want to tie him to them, but his words, as reported, are: "The Treasurer had shown that the colony was importing more than twice as much as it exported; therefore, the colony was like a man who earned £2 a week and spent £5." In other words we are "going to the dogs"—going to ruin, fast. That is his conclusion.

MR. CANNING: That is not what I said at all. I pointed out from the Treasurer's own figures that our exports equalled £22 per head of the population, and our imports only £14 per head, and that according to that we were in the position of a man who was earning £3 and spending £5.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): That does not affect my argument. The hon. member says the position is this: we are earning £3 and spending £5, because for every £3 worth we export, we get back £5 worth of imports. That is his argument. We send home £3 in exports, and for it we get

out £5 in imports, and therefore we are going to the dogs. That seems a very funny thing to me. Then the hon. member for Perth (Mr. Molloy) said that whereas in 1890 our imports exceeded our exports by £25,000, last year our imports exceeded our exports by 50 per cent., and he drew a very long face over it.

MR. MOLLOY: I did not say anything of the kind with respect to an excess of £25,000. What I said was 25 per cent.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I may have made a mistake, but I took it down instantly. At any rate the 50 per cent. is right; and the hon. member said he regretted it, and I think he saw me looking at him, and he fired up in a moment. Then we had the hon. member for Albany, who deplored that the money was going out of the colony in the most disastrous way, because our imports exceeded our exports. So we had three members on that same bench asserting a proposition which is admitted by all political economists to be impossible and an absurdity. There is no doubt about that. I would not have taken the trouble to have imposed myself upon the House but for this. I had heard that argument so often that I thought it was time the other side should be voiced. There is no doubt in the world about the fallacy of the thing. Surely our imports are the result of our trade. We pay for them.

MR. CANNING: Where do you get the money from?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): That's what puzzles them. Where do you get the money from, they ask. They have been wondering all their lives where we get the money. I will show them where we get it. We are earning £3, and get £5 worth for it; and, so long as the colony is prosperous, it will go on doing the same thing. When it ceases to do it, it will go to the dogs. Surely, as I have said, imports are the result of trade; we pay for them somehow or other. How? Not with hard coin. We do not ship our coin to England. We never send a sovereign of it. How is it done? We send a little bit of paper. That little bit of paper does it.

MR. CANNING: That is the way Mr. Micawber settled his accounts.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I say we send no coin at all to settle these bills. Who ever sends coin to England? Who sends coin to the colonies? Nobody. It is simply a barter of goods. Money is simply a counter, for the sake of exchange. Goods are paid for in goods all the world over. The goods we get are paid for by goods we produce—wool, timber; shells, pearls, skins, sandalwood, and so on. The fact that we are importing more than we export shows we are selling our exports at a good figure at the other end, and that we are doing a good trade, and a profitable one. For instance: I send Home a shipment of wool or any other commodity, valued at the Customs here at £10,000—and we are dealing with Customs returns; the charges on which come to, say, £3,000. That cargo I sell at home for, say, £15,000, and I make a net profit of £2,000. After paying all expenses I have a balance of £12,000. This I invest in a return cargo, which I bring to the colony, and the charges on it amount to, say, 10 per cent., so that when it reaches Fremantle as an import it will have cost £13,200. I sell it at a profit of 20 per cent. in the market here, and make £2,400 profit on it; in addition to the £2,000 I made in London. Thus I make a profit at both ends, and it is out of such profits the colony pays for its excess of imports over its exports. That wool when it left here was only valued at £10,000, and with the proceeds of it I buy goods which, when sold here, realise £15,600. The profit in London, after paying all charges was £2,000, so that for my £10,000 I got £12,000, which I spent again and made a further profit. In other words I earn £10, and spend £12, and still make £3 profit. Yet we are told that this is the way the colony is going to the dogs, because our imports exceed our exports. Suppose the ship went down and that cargo was lost altogether, the Customs here would know nothing about it, and their returns would show, "Exports, £10,000; imports, *nil*." A few transactions like that would soon put us on the high road to prosperity, according to the contention of the bench opposite, for our exports would very soon exceed our imports, and we should be doing a magnificent trade. As I have said we do not pay in coin for our imports,

and those who profess this doctrine cannot pretend to show for a moment that we do so. We pay for our imports with our exports, and make a profit on the transaction. If we had actually had to pay for 50 per cent. of imports more than exports—which was the excess of our last year's imports over our exports—if we had to pay that extra 50 per cent. in cash; where would it come from?

MR. CANNING: The money would be borrowed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I am dealing now with the arguments of the other side. I am showing the fallacy of them, and that it is a delusion to suppose that because a country's imports exceed its exports that country must be going to the dogs. While on this subject I will just read what is said on it by an acknowledged authority; it is one of the publications of the Cobden Club. [*Extract read.*] I hope that what I have read will be pondered over by those who profess different opinions, and that they will not seek to contradict me, at any rate until they look a little more closely into the matter. I have now endeavored, at greater length than I intended, to show, in the first instance that there was no ground whatever for the assertion that we have been guilty of any lavish expenditure, nor for the accusation that we might have floated the whole of our loan on good terms in London if we had watched the market. I have also shown that we never intended nor wanted to float the whole of it. I have further shown the fallacies of the arguments of the other side with regard to the balance between our imports and exports, and demonstrated, I think, that they will not hold water, when examined. I hope I have not done so in any discourteous way towards the hon. member for East Perth or other members. I hope I shall always endeavor in this Assembly to keep free from anything of that sort. We can debate these questions without any personal feeling of that kind. Apologising to the committee for taking up what I really think has been an almost unpardonable amount of their time, I now conclude my observations.

MR. CANNING: I think I am entitled to a few words in reply. The argument of the Attorney General has

been put before the committee very fairly indeed, from his point of view, on behalf of the Government. I will follow his remarks as far as I can in the order in which he uttered them. The hon. gentleman has taken *seriatim* some of the allegations I made. As to the question of extravagant expenditure, it must be borne in mind that I was interrupted in the course of the remarks I was making on the general policy of the Government, and asked to name any items of unwarranted expenditure. I did so on the spur of the moment, without time to collect my thoughts or to charge my memory, and I distinctly pointed out that, though the amounts were not very large taken individually, these and many other items amounted to a considerable sum. That was my contention, and I still adhere to it—that the sums expended on these items and other items which I did not particularise were expended unnecessarily, and therefore could have been saved to the country or been employed more advantageously.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): A lavish expenditure?

MR. CANNING: A lavish and unnecessary expenditure.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): How much altogether?

MR. CANNING: I am not prepared to say at present, but a very considerable sum in the aggregate. The Government take great credit for having saved £10,000 on last year's Estimates; but what is the duty of a Government unless it is to manage the business of the country to the best advantage they can? What is our Government for? The Government is simply a certain number of individuals appointed out of the whole mass of the people to conduct the business of the people. It is the duty of every Government, although their requirements may have been over-estimated, if they see any means of saving in certain items, to exercise good judgment and to save on those items. It is their duty to do so, in the interests of the people, whose administrators they are. When the hon. gentleman spoke of the Government having saved £10,000, as if that justified them in expending money unnecessarily in other directions, he reminded me very much of one of Dickens's characters in the celebrated case of

"Jarndyce v. Jarndyce," the well-meaning but impulsive young man who, when he had sixpence to spare, immediately considered himself justified in spending 15s. in treating his lady friends to most expensive luxuries. The hon. gentleman tried to show that because the Government had saved £10,000 on the year's Estimates, they were justified in all their lavish expenditure in other directions. But has he refuted the general principles I put forward with regard to Australian borrowing and the position of this colony? He says that when he reached London he was told—in effect it amounted to this—that the other colonies were in very bad odour in the money market, which justifies what I said, that the day for Australian borrowing has gone by. It is the view held by all political economists with regard to states, as in regard to individuals, that borrowing is not to be their permanent means of existing. It is all very well for a state or an individual to borrow, up to a certain point, for certain legitimate and well-defined objects,—objects likely to be reproductive, and to put the state in a better position to develop its resources, or the individual in a better position to improve and enhance the value of his estate or to develop his business. But when individuals or states come to look upon borrowing as a certain means for supplementing their ordinary income, from proper sources, then financiers begin to reflect, and to set their faces against such a policy as being contrary to sound principles of economy, whether political or domestic. That is the position the Australian Colonies are in at the present time, and, as I said before, I affirm again, there is nothing exceptional in our position to justify us in expecting that the British public will open their purse-strings to us any more than to the other colonies. No doubt the hon. gentleman, when in London, was under obligations to act under the advice of those whom he had to consult,—in fact, had to place himself in their hands; and I do not blame him. It is nothing marvellous that an institution like the London and Westminster Bank should be able to float the small sum of £250,000, with its enormous resources. But that does not justify the belief that there is anything in the position of this colony to warrant our believ-

ing that we shall be able to borrow indefinitely in the future. This was an effort made by that institution under exceptional circumstances. There were exceptional reasons why it should make every effort to help the hon. gentleman in carrying out the object of his mission to England.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): What were they?

MR. CANNING: I distinctly decline to state them. The Treasurer knows them himself.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I do not.

MR. CANNING: Then I will leave him to exercise his ingenuity in endeavoring to find out. It was as certain as that night will follow the day that that first small portion of our loan would be floated. If such a bank as the London and Westminster could not have floated £250,000, under the exceptional circumstances that existed, we might as well say at once that its reputation was a bubble. But, as I stated the other day, and I state it again, the Australian Associated Banks would have done as much, and been of more permanent use to this colony than the London and Westminster Bank.

MR. SIMPSON: Where are your facts?

MR. CANNING: I will leave the hon. member to inquire into these things himself. It is not for me to find the information for him, or to find the intelligence to appreciate it.

MR. SIMPSON: You find the information; I will find the intelligence.

MR. CANNING: I have not the least doubt that the London and Westminster Bank could obtain a further sum of £250,000 for us. I do not despair of that. But, although it may do that, I do not reckon upon that institution, with all its resources, being able to obtain the whole of our loan for us. I think that if the interests of the colony had been confided, not to the Associated Banks, but to the great Australian Banks, at that time, the whole of our loan would have been floated; and I say distinctly that would have been an advantage to the colony, because the position has grown worse as regards borrowing, from day to day, since that time. He must be blind indeed who cannot see that. With regard to immigration, the hon. gentleman told us something about the

difficulties he had to contend with in inducing agricultural laborers to come out here. I can tell him something about the state of affairs he refers to. It is useless going into an agricultural country and putting yourself in communication with landowners and farmers there. You cannot expect these people to encourage the emigration of their own laboring hands. By no means. They do not want to see the population taken away from their districts. The army makes a considerable drain on the population, the navy takes others away, and emigration others, and therefore the landed proprietors are anxious to keep as much of the agricultural population in their counties as they can, otherwise they would have no persons to till the soil. I can, therefore, easily understand that the Attorney General did not meet with any encouragement in the agricultural districts. The result is that we get most of our immigrants from the towns, and when they arrive an outcry is at once raised against them. I do not think that in every case this is warranted, for I have known of many instances of men who have come from the cities, and who have been regarded as useless, turning out, under the altered conditions in which they are placed, good and useful colonists. The hon. member has endeavored to show that my idea that the policy of the country should be a bold and large emigration policy, is a wrong one; but I ask how, if we are not going to get a large population, we are going to make our public works pay? One hon. member told us that it cost 15s. to obtain 10s. worth of produce from the land; but if this be so, what is to be the ultimate result, and how are we to expect our railways to pay? For my part I still hold that the true policy of this country, side by side with a system of public works, is a bold immigration policy. The hon. gentleman has dealt at some length with the question of imports and exports, and endeavored to show by sophistical reasoning that although the exports are considerably less in value than the imports somehow or other matters adjusted themselves. He showed that although there was a difference in the figures in a ratio of 3 to 5, our exports were considerably in excess of the value of the imports.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (HON. S. BURT): I never said that.

MR. CANNING: That was the drift of the argument.

MR. QUINLAN: I desire to call your attention, sir, to the fact that no quorum is present.

A House having been made,—

MR. CANNING said: I was about to say that the hon. gentleman endeavored to show by very peculiar reasoning that if a person exported produce to the value of £10,000, that produce was returned to the colony at a higher value. If that be correct what is the value of the returns? What is the value of them if they show that the exports exceed the imports, and yet in fact the exports are more valuable? In dealing with this question the hon. gentleman cited the state of the imports and exports of England; but we know that there is a vast difference between this country and the mother country. England may be in debt at one time, and at another time there would be an excess of exports, and thus restore the balance; but such is not the case in these colonies. Our trade relations with other countries are not to be compared for one moment with the trade relations between England and other countries. I admit that the hon. gentleman's argument was very good, but it was simply sophistry, and nothing more. Notwithstanding what has been said, we come back to the fact that we are importing more than we are exporting. The hon. gentleman says, if this is so, how do we pay for them? I will tell the hon. gentleman how we pay. We pay out of borrowed money. At one time we paid out of a large Imperial expenditure. When that was withdrawn we produced somewhat more, I admit, but we also commenced to borrow, and that is how we have restored the balance. Borrowing seems to be the whole policy of the present Ministry, and they have not, since they took office, shown the slightest spark of statesmanship. Their idea seems to be to borrow all they can and spend it.

MR. MOLLOY: I do not intend to occupy the House at this late hour at any length. I only rise to take exception to the criticism of the Attorney General on what I said with regard to the imports and exports. Notwithstanding the

lecture of the hon. gentleman on political economy, I still hold the same opinion as I did when I last addressed the House, and I re-assert that it is to be deplored that the imports exceed the exports by a very large amount. The hon. gentleman, by a peculiar process of his own, endeavored to show that the export returns, as made up by the Customs, were really not the actual figures. He says if we export £10,000 worth of produce, we get £13,000 back. I fail to see how that can be. The ten per cent. the hon. member referred to is not added to the cost; it is paid as duty on the invoiced cost on the articles imported, and so that does not alter the position of affairs in any way as the hon. member contends it does. Then, again, what have we to do with the selling of the exports? That is taken into consideration when they are entered at the Customs. The hon. member says that because we import more than we export we are in a good position, and that having paid for all we have received we still have a credit balance at the end of the year. This may be so at the present time; but it cannot continue. If we cannot export as much as we import, we must draw on some other source for the balance. This year, as the hon. member for East Perth has pointed out, we have had the advantage of borrowed money to restore the balance, and this is the only way we can account for our present prosperous condition.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): At this late hour, sir, I do not intend to say very many words. I only rise to express to hon. members my thanks for the manner in which they have criticised the financial estimates of the Government. I feel we are particularly fortunate in receiving so large a share of the approval of hon. members, and I now merely desire to thank them for their generous remarks with reference to the actions of the Government during the past year. I do not propose to ask hon. members to listen to me at any length in reply to the hon. member for East Perth. I feel I would not be justified in asking hon. members to listen to me in doing so. The hon. member does not represent any party, and therefore to reply to his two lengthy speeches does not seem to me to be

worth the powder and shot. As far as I can see, the hon. member represents only himself, and for that reason I think I would not be justified in asking hon. members to listen to me while I reply to the vague statements and the general remarks which he has made. I may, however, say this, that I consider the hon. member has been particularly fortunate since he came into this House, because he has had an amount of prominence given to him for which his position on that side of the House is alone responsible. If the hon. member had sat on this side of the House, I do not suppose any attention whatever would have been paid to any remarks he might have made, and I venture to think that when the time comes for a change of Government, and we have members of the Opposition sitting on this side, he will not be listened to in the way we have been bound to listen to him during the last two sessions of Parliament. I often think that members who sit on this side of the House labor under a disadvantage. Men of ability and men conversant with the affairs of the colony have sat on this side during two sessions, and have given a generous support to the Government without placing themselves in a prominent position—not that they are not entitled to it, but because they have felt it was not in the interest of the country that they should take up the time of the House in discussing, more than was absolutely necessary, matters that were placed before them. Not so, however, with the hon. member for East Perth. By taking up a position on the other side of the House—a position of antagonism to every measure and in fact to everything that has been submitted by the Government, and being alone in most things, with no seconder on some occasions, and no following on any occasion—he has had attention paid to him which I say he was not entitled to, and I wish to tell the hon. member so. He has taken a prominent position upon himself; it has not been given to him, and he is not entitled to it. He has no following and no party, but still he goes on in his own way. But there is a limit to the endurance of hon. members. If the hon. member would only take the hint it would be different; but he will not and therefore I must tell him straight. Just now the

House was nearly counted out, for hon. members will not listen to him, and yet he cannot take the hint, but continues to pursue his course. But let me tell the hon. member that if he continues this course, the toleration of hon. members who sit on this side will come to an end, and we shall have to count him out in order to stop this waste of time from one who is only responsible to himself—one without any following whatever. I can only, in conclusion, thank hon. members again for the generous manner in which they have met the Estimates that have been placed before them by the Government. I can tell them that there has not been a single sixpence spent by this Government during the last year which we are not prepared to give a full account of, and which we can explain even to the greatest detail, and if any hon. member desires any information I can answer for myself and my colleagues that the whole of the facts will be placed before them with the utmost pleasure. I make no exception to this. Any item or any act of the Government we shall be glad to explain freely, and supply all the information we can. The same thing applies to the future in reference to the Estimates we have laid before the House. I can only again thank hon. members.

MR. CANNING: The hon. gentleman has not been satisfied with the legal and constitutional means of asserting his position, but has ventured to utter a threat, which I do not believe any Minister in any part of the British dominions would have dared to utter. He threatens that a member who confines himself to fair, honest, and legitimate criticism will be counted out. It is a gross outrage on parliamentary procedure to dare to utter such a threat. The hon. gentleman has said I stand alone. I will tell him that I stand here as the elected representative of one of the most populous districts in the colony, and if the hon. gentleman will resign, I will do the same and see which of us will be returned again—not for some hole-and-corner constituency, but for a large and important constituency. In addition to this I will tell the hon. member by what right I speak. I am a large taxpayer. I have made this country my country—the country of my children and the country of my children's children,

and I have quite as much right to speak in this House and criticise every measure that concerns the welfare of this colony as any other hon. gentleman.

MR. SIMPSON: As an elector of East Perth, I rise on this occasion in the hope that although—

MR. MOLLOY: Is the hon. member right to express himself as an elector of East Perth?

THE CHAIRMAN: I think the hon. member is out of order.

MR. SIMPSON: Then as a resident of East Perth—

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

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can say "As a member of this House."

MR. SIMPSON: Then, as a member of this House, sir, living in a particular part of Perth on which the sun rises, I must say that I do hope in the interests of the colony, in the interests of common-sense men, and in order that braggadocio may be put down—

MR. CANNING: Do you know what that word means?

MR. SIMPSON: If the hon. gentleman wishes it, I shall be glad to furnish him with one of the dictionaries he referred to the other night, free of charge, and with the word marked, so that perhaps he may ascertain what it conveys. But, to go on, I say in the interests of the colony, in the interest of business men who are spending their precious time in representing the people, debate in this House should not be allowed to degenerate, which it is doing.—[MR. CANNING: Hear, hear.]—I fancy I heard something like a bray.—[MR. CANNING: Hear, hear.]—We have been subjected in this House for some time past to one unceasing wishy-washy flood of harangue.

MR. CANNING: Like a Salvation Army oration.

MR. SIMPSON: The other evening I was subjected to the indignity of being called to order by an hon. gentleman sitting on that side of the House, but I should have thought that an hon. member of mature years and wide experience would have taken the splendid opportunity offered him of setting a young man like myself right by not being out of order himself.

MR. CANNING: You are not so young as you look.

MR. SIMPSON: I am sorry I cannot pay the hon. member the same compliment, for I believe if we only started him out in the Eastern Districts with a scythe we could sell him as old Father Time. It is, however, sir, time that we got to practical business. The country is complaining of the waste of time, and there is no doubt a great deal of truth in the statement; but I do hope that we shall now set ourselves to work to do something practical—something useful to the colony in which we live.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I now move that progress be reported.

Agreed to.

Progress reported.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at twenty minutes past 11 o'clock, p.m.

Legislative Council,

Friday, 5th February, 1892.

Aborigines Protection Act Amendment Bill: first reading—High School Act Amendment Bill: second reading—Police Bill: Legislative Assembly's Amendments—Game Bill: Legislative Assembly's Amendments—Aboriginal Offenders Act Amendment Bill: committee—Patent Act Amendment Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Sir T. Cockburn-Campbell, Bart.) took the chair at 3 o'clock.

PRAYERS.

ABORIGINES PROTECTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly, and was read a first time.

HIGH SCHOOL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): I rise to move the second reading of this bill. I may explain to hon. members that under the original

Act the Legislative Council elected four governors, and four others were appointed by the Governor in Council. That was of course under the old form of Government. The question now arises as to who should make these appointments, the Legislative Council or the Legislative Assembly. It has appeared to the Government that it would simplify matters if all the governors were appointed by the Governor in Council, and this bill is brought in to give the necessary power. It also provides for the retirement from office of governors, and for the filling of vacancies when necessary. Hon. members will see that the governors do not all go out at once; but go out in rotation, and when the terms of two governors expire at the same time, they shall decide by lot as to which of them shall retire.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: I have great pleasure in supporting this bill, which is absolutely necessary, inasmuch as the Board of Governors is now reduced, or will be shortly, by less than one-half the number contemplated.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Shenton): The number is now reduced to four, and the term of one of them expires in August, 1892, and another in November, 1892. Therefore, hon. members will see that, unless some provision is made, there will shortly be only two governors left.

THE HON. J. W. HACKETT: Formerly three governors were elected by Parliament, and four by the Governor in Council. I quite agree with the Government that it is quite impracticable to arrange for the election by Parliament, and the only way is to place the power of selection into the hands of the Government, acting as the representatives of the people. But I am not sure, speaking simply from a casual glance at the Bill, that some change will not be required in the clauses. The principle of the old Act was that the Board should be subject to periodical renewal; that too large a number of appointments should not be placed in the hands of the Legislative Council at any one time, or in the hands of the Governor in Council at any one time. I am afraid, according to the interpretation which I put upon clauses 1 and 2, that now the governors may mostly go out at the same time, and that the