

**Legislative Assembly.***Thursday, 8th August, 1896.*

*Arbitration Bill: third reading—Partnership Bill: third reading—Criminal Evidence Bill: third reading—Justices Appointment Bill: Legislative Council's Amendments—Appointment of Joint Committee re Mines Regulation Bill: Legislative Council's Message.—Duties on Estates of Deceased Persons Bill; second reading—Licensed Surveyors Bill; Legislative Council's amendments—Married Women's Property Bill; first reading—Estimates, 1895-6; Message from his Excellency the Administrator—Financial Statement—Medical Act Amendment Bill; in committee—Tariff Act Amendment Bill; motion for leave to introduce—Adjournment.*

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

PRAYERS.

**ARBITRATION BILL.****THIRD READING.**

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

**PARTNERSHIP BILL.****THIRD READING.**

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

**CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.****THIRD READING.**

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

**JUSTICES APPOINTMENT BILL.****LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.****IN COMMITTEE.**

The ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that all the amendments made in the Bill by the Legislative Council, as contained in the revised print of the Bill before hon. members, be agreed to. He explained that the amendments were, in each case, merely verbal, without changing the meaning, and were unobjectionable.

Question put and passed.

Resolution of Committee reported.

Report adopted.

Ordered, that the resolution be transmitted by message to the Legislative Council.

**APPOINTMENT OF JOINT COMMITTEE  
re MINES REGULATION BILL.****LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S MESSAGE.  
IN COMMITTEE.**

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the Legislative Council had asked for the appointment of a Select Committee of both Houses to consider the provisions of the Mines Regulation Bill. He had no doubt but the Bill would provoke a good deal of discussion, and possibly some little excitement. The Bill was one that sought to do justice to the miners on the goldfields who had to work underground, and was devoted almost wholly to the protection of life, and the prevention of injury to the workmen. The Bill was on the same lines as that in force in Queensland, and although some of the provisions were rather advanced, he thought the Government might be trusted not to bring anything forward that was too advanced. There was no ground for the capitalist, nor anyone else, to be alarmed at the provisions of the Bill, because they would really do no harm. He considered human life should be above all other considerations. A Committee of both Houses would be able to give the question fair consideration, and take evidence from people who knew more about the matter than the Government could possibly do. He did not think any time would be lost by complying with the request, and therefore he moved that the request of the Legislative Council be complied with.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he had no objection to referring the question to a joint select committee, but he did hope, when they brought up their report, they would give the reasons for their conclusions, and not present such documents as had lately been presented as the reports of certain Select Committees. He objected to the system into which they had drifted. The House had a right to know the reasons that led committees to certain conclusions, and those reasons should be stated in the report. He contended they should insist upon such a course being followed.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he wished to draw the attention of the Hon. the Attorney-General to the fact that the Bill had never been before hon. members of the Assembly. It struck him as being a very peculiar thing that a Bill should be introduced into the

Legislative Council, and then that the Assembly should be asked to appoint a committee to consider a Bill they had never seen. Such a thing was unheard of, and he should therefore oppose the resolution of the Attorney-General.

MR. SIMPSON said, that without being deeply read in constitutional law and procedure, he thought the course they were asked to adopt was unparalleled. The Bill had been introduced into the Legislative Council—and he spoke of that Council with great respect—and it had only reached a preliminary stage when they were asked to appoint a Joint Committee to consider it. Such a course had never before been adopted. The action was tantamount to asking the Assembly to give expert evidence upon the Bill. If such a Committee were appointed, he doubted whether their report could be received by the House, seeing they have never had the Bill before them. He appreciated the Bill heartily, but deprecated the departure from Parliamentary practice.

MR. LEAKE asked for a ruling upon a point of order as to whether that committee could appoint a Select Committee upon a Bill that had never been before them.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said before the Chairman gave his ruling he wished to point out, that if the Legislative Council had its own Select Committee, and came to its own conclusions upon the matter, apart from any conference with members of the Assembly, it would be all the more difficult afterwards to move them from their conclusions, or to convince them of their error. He considered it would facilitate the passing of the Bill if both Houses could consider it at the same time. If they did not do so, the Bill would come to them with all the amendments made in another place, and the Assembly could not then ask for a Joint Committee, because the Legislative Council would then have considered and passed it. He did not think that the course suggested was any departure from Parliamentary practice, and he could not see how otherwise they could get the advantage of having the measure considered by both Houses at the same time.

THE CHAIRMAN, in reply to the hon. member, said that Standing Order 238 provided for intercourse between the two Houses. "Communication with the Legislative Council may be by message, or by conference, or by Select Committees to confer with each other." It was evident from that Standing Order that select

committees conferring with each other were contemplated. Standing Order 253 provides, "No select committee shall confer with a select committee of the Legislative Council without an order of the Legislative Assembly made on motion." That pre-supposed select committees appointed by the two Houses, and that some communication might be held between them. A conference was named when a Bill had passed one House, but there were two methods pre-supposed as means of communication under the Standing Orders—one was by a joint Committee, and the other by a conference of hon. members of the two Houses. He therefore held it to be quite Parliamentary to proceed with this resolution.

MR. SIMPSON said he did not see any necessity in this particular Bill to depart from the ordinary procedure. Supposing the Legislative Council passed a Bill, and it was introduced into that House, and in its wisdom the House made further alterations, then they might have a conference as to their differences. But this case was different. He knew unofficially that the Bill in the Legislative Council was only in its preliminary stage, and he did not think there was sufficient ground to warrant a departure from the ordinary practice. The Standing Orders implied or suggested that the Bill should have passed the second reading stage before it was referred to a Select Committee.

MR. JAMES said he thought it would be much better if the Legislative Council would discuss the measure in the usual way. He did not see how they could appoint a Select Committee to represent them upon a question that had not been before the House, and upon which no expression of opinion had been heard. A Select Committee was representative of the views of hon. members, as they had been expressed, the expression of opinion being used as a guide in the appointment of the individual members of any Select Committee. He thought they would be doing wrong if they delegated to any Select Committee such power as was asked for by that resolution.

MR. RANDELL said he wished to draw attention to Standing Order 127, which seemed to have some bearing upon the question. Taking that Standing Order into consideration, they could not possibly appoint a Select Committee, as requested by the Legislative Council. That Standing Order said "No hon. member shall allude to any debate in either

House, or to any measure impending therein." It seemed to be a necessary condition to the appointment of any Select Committee that they should have the Bill before them. He was not quite sure whether Bills had ever been introduced into both Houses simultaneously. The proper way was for the Bill to go through, and if the necessity arose afterwards, then a conference could be held.

MR. MARMION said he understood the request of the Legislative Council was for that House to confer with them through the medium of a Select Committee. If hon. members referred to Standing Order 246 they would find it said "No conference shall be requested by the Legislative Assembly upon the subject of any Bill or motion of which the Legislative Council is at the same time in possession."

THE CHAIRMAN said he had referred to the Standing Orders bearing upon the matter of who should take the initiative in the matter.

MR. SIMPSON asked if it were possible for them to appoint a Select Committee upon a Bill, of which they knew nothing, because it had not been tabled in the House.

MR. MARMION called the Chairman's attention to Standing Order 245, which said "During any conference the business of the Legislative Assembly shall be suspended," and the same referred to the Legislative Council.

THE CHAIRMAN said that two distinct things were contemplated by the Standing Orders, and he did not see any reason to depart from his previously expressed opinion.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said, apart from the question of whether the resolution was in order or not, it was altogether inexpedient for that House to appoint a Joint Committee upon a subject that had not been discussed by them. So far as he knew, no argument had been advanced as a reason why that question should be referred to a Select Committee, and to so refer it would be adopting a very dangerous precedent. Upon so important a matter there should be ample discussion in both Houses. It had been rightly said by the hon. member for East Perth that members of Select Committees were appointed according to the views they expressed upon the question at issue. He hoped the House would not agree to the request contained in the resolution. The measure was a most important one, but he considered there had been sound

reasons given why they should not comply with the request.

THE CHAIRMAN said on page 398 of *May* it was stated that Joint Committees were originated by the House of Commons. [MR. SIMPSON: Originated by the Commons.] He had given his ruling, and he adhered to it, that the procedure was parliamentary, and sanctioned by the Standing Orders.

SIR JAS. LEE-STEELE said he could not say he thought the appointment of a Joint Committee of both Houses was altogether out of order, but it was to him very objectionable for the reason that, in theory, one House was not supposed to know what was going on in the other House. They knew nothing except by report. They did not know that any such Bill had been introduced into the other House. They had received a message asking for a Joint Committee, and the committee had to report on August 28th. They did not know upon what the Joint Committee was going to report, except that it was upon a Bill of which they (the Assembly) had no knowledge whatever, because it had never been before them. In theory they did not know that it was before the Legislative Council, and he opposed the appointment of any such Joint Committee.

THE CHAIRMAN said hon. members would understand he had said nothing about the propriety of the proceeding.

MR. CONNOR said he objected to the resolution because it asked them to appoint a committee to consider something of which the House was not cognisant. It would form a precedent for which they would be sorry afterwards.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he wished to emphasize the fact that such a practice as was contemplated by the resolution had never before occurred in his recollection, and he had never read of any such occurrence. They, no doubt, had a perfect right to confer with the the Legislative Council, and they had a perfect right to appoint a Joint Committee, but not upon a measure that had never been submitted to that House. He wished to know what was the object in that particular case. Supposing they had a Bill in hand, and it was in jeopardy, it would be a proper thing for anyone desiring to save the Bill to ask for a Select Committee to consider it; so that they might come to some unanimity upon it, but it would not be wise to ask hon. members in the Legislative Council to appoint a commit-

tee to confer with them to help them to pass the Bill. If the Bill were not sufficiently good on its merits it should be mended or ended. He did not see how anything would be gained by pursuing such an irregular and unwise course as to appoint a joint committee to confer with a Committee of the Legislative Council. It would be a grave departure from Parliamentary practice, and he hoped the resolution would be rejected.

MR. LOTON said the earliest time at which that House could appoint a Select Committee was upon the second reading of the Bill, but up to that time the Bill had not been before them. He did not think it wise to appoint any five hon. members of that House to consider a matter upon which no opinion had been expressed by the other hon. members. To entertain the resolution would be to enter upon a series of difficulties that need not be encountered. The hon. members of the Legislative Council were surely competent to deal with the Bill in all its stages. If they were not then they should throw it out. After they had dealt with it in the Council, and the Bill came before them there, if difficulty arose, then, they might ask for a committee. So far as he was concerned he was anxious to do all he possibly could for the measure, but he could not see his way clear to support the resolution.

MR. CLARKSON said he had heard no reason advanced why the committee should depart from the usual course. He suggested that as the Legislative Council had so much legal talent, they (the Assembly) might invite some of them to come there and discuss the matter with them.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the only object the Government had was to save time. He admitted there were grave objections and the Government did not wish to press the matter. He asked leave to withdraw the resolution.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved "That the Legislative Assembly regrets, inasmuch as the Mines Regulation Bill is not, and has never been, before this House, that the Legislative Assembly is unable to agree to appoint a select Committee to enquire into its provisions."

Question put and passed.

Resolution reported.

Report adopted.

Ordered that the resolution be transmitted by message to the Legislative Council.

### GOLDFIELDS BILL.

#### SECOND READING: ADJOURNED DEBATE.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I move to postpone this debate until after the consideration of motion No. 2. My object is to defer it until after the delivery of the Budget Speech. It is not desirable to discuss so important a question as this at so late an hour. Besides which, we are waiting the arrival of certain information which is already *en route*, and it is desirable we should have all the information possible in discussing the question.

MR. MORAN: I have much pleasure in assenting to the proposition. I do not think any remarks I have to make would take very long, but, at the same time, it is not the slightest use to hurry an important measure of this kind, or rush it through the House.

Question put and passed.

Debate further postponed.

### DUTIES ON ESTATES OF DECEASED PERSONS BILL.

#### SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I rise to ask the House to agree to the second reading of this Bill, which imposes duties upon the estates of deceased persons. The Bill has been very much talked about in the country for some considerable time past. Since the Government have been in office we have hesitated to introduce a measure of this description, because we thought the amount to be collected under it would be rather small, and up to this year that the Bill would be premature. Now that people are growing richer, and have money to leave behind them, it may be well to try and get a little revenue. The hon. member for Fremantle need not fear any alarm, because those who are making fortunes on the goldfields and elsewhere would not refuse to allow us a percentage of revenue after they are gone, so long as we leave them alone while they are living. The Government has remitted a very large amount of duties that affected all parties, and we now propose to get a little of it back by the means of this Bill. The Bill only applies to those who leave money behind them after they are dead. It refers to what is called the final balance, after paying all debts. That being so, hon. members will not expect us to receive a very large revenue

from this source. The amount to be collected will be levied upon the final balance, after deducting £500. In the case of an estatesay of £1,500, duty would be levied upon £1,000. If an estate exceeds £1,500 then the whole amount, after deducting debts, will be taxed. That is a principle that is applied everywhere in Bills of this description. No doubt the amounts left in this colony by will, or in care of an intestacy, will be small, and therefore we have made the amounts small which are to be deducted. We have only exempted estates under £500—for anything over that, up to £1,500 there is an allowance of £500 free, and over £1,500, the payment will have to be on the full amount. The rate of duty will be seen by reference to the second schedule. It ranges from one per cent. up to ten per cent. In the case of estates over the value of £100,000 we propose to take the maximum amount of 10 per cent. No one leaving a sum of that kind could have the slightest objection to such an arrangement as that. There is nothing new in the Bill. It is the law in England, and in all the other colonies, and the only reason why it has not been introduced in this colony before, is because of the small amount that was likely to be collected under it. There are no provisions in the Bill calling for special remark. Upon money that is left to certain members of the family, duty is to be chargeable at one-half the rate set out in the schedule. That would come under section 10, or the third schedule. Any case of settlement is to come under this Act just as if it had been duly willed.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What about marriage settlements?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): That is exempted by Clause 7. Provision is made in the Bill whereby the Master of the Supreme Court can secure full payment if too little has been paid, and also refund amounts if too much has been charged. It is necessary, perhaps, to say a word or two upon Clause 23. It may be in the recollection of some hon. members that in 1894 the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced into the House of Commons what was called "The Finance Bill." It caused some excitement at the time by providing for the levying of duty upon the estates of deceased persons, after the manner of this Bill. If a colonist died in England, and had property in Western Australia, the Government of the United Kingdom would deduct any amount

of duty that had been paid in this colony provided this colony did likewise. That is a compromise that was provided in the twentieth section of the Finance Bill of 1894. It is a sort of reciprocal arrangement. Clause 23 says "Where the Master is satisfied that duty is payable in the United Kingdom, he shall allow a sum equal to the amount of that duty to be deducted for the duty payable in Western Australia under this Act, in respect of that property, on the same death." The idea is that the same property shall not pay duty twice, or in two countries. We are not able to say what the Bill will produce. It may be said, now that our finances are flourishing, why introduce it at all? I think it should be placed upon our statute book, because we do not know when any rich estate may fall in, and there is no reason why this particular revenue should not be reaped. If we can reap anything appreciable, it will make it all the more easy to reduce other taxation. I think I am right in saying that at present there is no necessity to set out what is the value of a deceased person's estate. There is no rule of Court, though it is generally done. From what I can ascertain of the value of the estates which have been declared in the Supreme Court, the duty that would have been payable this last year, calculated upon the basis of the second Schedule, would have been about £1,500. That is not a large sum, but I am persuaded that when a person has to state in detail what the estate consists of, and under the supervision of the Master, that amount would be doubled within 12 months after the Bill comes into force. I think it is right that we should lay our hands upon this revenue. It is right and just, and can create no grievance. I move the second reading of the Bill.

MR. LOTON: I rise, Sir, simply to say I am glad the Government have thought well to bring in a measure of this kind, and I shall support the principle of the Bill, leaving the details to be dealt with in Committee. I am a firm believer in the principle that we should raise taxation from the capital people leave behind them at their decease. It is a step in the direction of doing away with the system of taxation as it is applied through the Custom House, and such an alteration is very much wanted. Of course the start may be a small one, but big results sometimes follow small beginnings, and it is probable, in the times of prosperity this colony is enjoying some people will accumulate fortunes during

the next ten or fifteen years, to such an extent that the duties on their estates when they die will prove a most acceptable addition to the revenue. I have very much pleasure in supporting the second reading of this Bill.

MR. WOOD: I have very much pleasure also, Mr. Speaker, in supporting the second reading of this Bill. I think such Bills as these are very good indeed, both in principle as well as effect. It is a right principle that people who are able to pay should be those made to pay, and the burden of taxation should fall on those best able to bear it. I regard this measure with the same favor as I would a Stamp Act, or an Income Tax. The principle is a good one, and is one of the steps in the direction of carrying taxation into the proper channels for raising the revenue of the country. I heartily support the second reading.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I certainly disagree with the remarks that have fallen from the hon. members who have just spoken. I believe this is not the time to increase the taxation in any form whatever. We are reducing it at one time, and putting it on at another. In a time of prosperity such as we are now enjoying, we do not want a tax such as is proposed. It should be kept back until further taxation is required. It appears to me that as the Government have reduced taxation through the Custom House, they are merely bringing in these measures to make up for it. We should not impose taxation of this character until a time of adversity, and when we may require the revenue. I would like to draw attention to the first paragraph of the second schedule, which states that "where the total value of such estates, after deducting all debts, exceeds £500 and does not exceed £1,500, on the excess over £500—1 per cent." To my mind, the Government has not made the minimum sufficiently high. I do not think we have any right to tax an estate which realises only £500, even to the extent of one per cent.

THE ATTORNEY - GENERAL (HON. S. BURT): Estates are exempt up to £500.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I still do not believe that we should tax an estate of £1,000. Personally, I would like to see the minimum raised to over £10,000; for 5 per cent. on such an estate as that would only give £500 per annum to the legatees. I think we should make every effort to reduce taxation, unless we are forced to do otherwise in a time of ad-

versity. I am certainly in sympathy with the principles of the Bill, but do not think it is necessary at the present time.

MR. SOLOMON: I have much pleasure in supporting this Bill. I agree with the hon. members who regard the Bill as being a step in the right direction. The tendency of such a Bill is to reduce the taxation through the Custom House, and that is a thing very much to be desired. There are various clauses of the Bill which may stand a little alteration, but the principle is a good one, and the measure can be turned out in a satisfactory form. I am very glad indeed that it has been brought forward, and it will have my most hearty support.

MR. CONNOR: I would also wish, Mr. Speaker, to say that I thoroughly approve of this Bill, and have much pleasure in supporting the second reading. I believe the measure will be one of the best this House will have passed. I would have said nothing further excepting for references of the hon. member for Gascoyne. He has informed us that he disagrees with the Bill, because it does not reduce taxation. Now, Sir, hon. members of this House will have a very clear recollection of a time when the hon. member voted against the reduction of the duty on a particular class of imports. For my part I think the Government are now proceeding in the proper way in order to collect the revenue of the country, and I regret that the hon. member for the Gascoyne does not still hold the principles he did when he voted against the abolition of the Stock Tax.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I rise to explain, Sir, that at the time I voted on that matter I clearly explained myself. I did not oppose the principle of the reduction, but voted against it because reductions desired by the districts I represent were refused by hon. members who were supporting the other proposal. I protest against the hon. member misrepresenting me.

MR. CONNOR: Then you did not vote against the principle of the Bill, but only against the Bill itself. I am satisfied in my own mind that in such methods of taxation as that in the Bill, the Government are taking the legitimate steps for raising the revenue of the country, and the effect must eventually be to still further reduce the burden of taxation on the people.

MR. MARMION: I am delighted at the light-hearted way in which members are approaching this subject. No doubt there are few

of us who do not wish we had to pay the sum of £10,000 into the Treasury, because we had been left a legacy of £100,000, or perhaps hon. members are looking forward to the time when they will shuffle off this mortal coil and leave this handsome sum for others to pay. I am entirely in favor of the Bill, and I regard it as a means whereby we shall possibly be able to reduce the taxation on other articles. Some hon. members are looking towards these measures as being a step towards Free Trade, but I would advise them to first catch their fish before they cook it. As revenue is raised in this way, taxation through the Custom House can be reduced, but only to the equivalent of what is raised by the new form of taxation. The measure is a popular one, and I congratulate the Government on introducing it. I believe that this class of taxation was introduced in the other colonies in hard times, and when they greatly required the money. At the same time the Bill is a good one, and so is the principle. It is only proper that people who have made money in the colony and have accumulated wealth under the wise and liberal laws passed by this House, should contribute something towards the cost of Government of the country out of their estate.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH: I am entirely in favor of the principle of this Bill, but I would like to ask the Attorney-General a question as to Clause 7. I would suggest in connection with that clause that there is a great difference between a sum of money which comes from the result of an insurance policy, and any money which comes as accumulated wealth. The object of the Bill, I take it, is to tax accumulated wealth, but when a man pays for a policy of life insurance he is doing so the greater part of his life, and can only pay by his own personal savings and those of his family as well. His family are deprived of whatever portion of their income is necessary to provide the payments on his policy, and it certainly appears to me that there should be added to the list of exemptions money which comes through a life policy. The tax we want is not one on this class of investment, but on accumulated wealth. I would ask the Attorney-General to consider the point. I am sure he is in sympathy with it, and will draw up whatever amendment may be necessary. In every other respect I have much pleasure in supporting the Bill. I would only like to say one word with regard to the remarks made by the hon. member for Fremantle. The tax was imposed

in Victoria at the time of her greatest prosperity—in the height of the boom, and when that colony was supposed to have a surplus of a million and a half. The individual wealth of a man which comes to him unearned by the decease of some person of accumulated wealth should be taxed, but not any money which comes to a widow or family after they have been assisting for many years to keep in force the life policy of which it is the result.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I think there is a very great deal in what the hon. member for Nannine has said and I will consider the matter. There is certainly a very great difference between the two classes of wealth, and I agree with him that money, the result of a life insurance policy, should be exempt within certain limits. I know he would not wish to see an exemption in a case where a person was insured one year, and died the next year. That is not the class of case he refers to.

Mr. LEAKE moved that the debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

#### LICENSED SURVEYORS BILL.

##### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENT.

A message was received from the Legislative Council, reporting that the Bill to create an Act for the licensing of land surveyors had been agreed to, with an amendment. On the motion of the Attorney-General the consideration of the message in committee was made an order of the day for the following Tuesday.

#### MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY BILL.

A Bill to amend the Married Women's Property Act, 1892, was received from the Legislative Council and read a first time.

At 6.20 p.m. the Speaker left the chair.

At 7.30 the Speaker resumed the chair.

#### THE ESTIMATES, 1895-96.

A message from His Excellency the Administrator, transmitting the Estimates of Revenue and Expenditure for the financial year 1895-96, was presented by the Treasurer, and read.

#### FINANCIAL STATEMENT.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

THE TREASURER (Hon. Sir John Forrest), having read the House into a Committee of move

Supply, to consider the Estimates of Expenditure for the financial year ending 30th June, 1896, said:—This is the sixth occasion on which I have had the honor to introduce to this House the Estimates for the year. To-night I do not think I have anything very startling to communicate to this House. I have an "unvarnished tale to deliver," and that is about all. I will not, to-night, be able to introduce to your notice anything that is startling or very new, but my object will be to place before this House and the people of the colony the financial position of the country, and the condition of the many interests in it. Not only will I have to show the condition of the affairs of the colony to this House and the people of this country, but, as we all know, and as I am glad to say, we have now a very much extended audience beyond this colony, as compared with anything we have been accustomed to in years past. The affairs of this colony have now an interest not only for the people who live in it, but also for many who reside in other parts of the world. We have had self-government for about four and a half years, and they have been very eventful years, in the history of the colony. From having been unknown and isolated as a colony, we have become known all over the world. From having been the least important and the least known of all the Australian Colonies, we have now certainly outrun one, at any rate, of those colonies; so that we are not now either the least important or the least known of the colonies in the Australian group. For the present year our revenue will exceed the revenue of the colony of Tasmania by more than half a million sterling, while our expenditure from current revenue will be double that of Tasmania. Then, further, while in that colony there is an estimated deficit of over £400,000, we in this colony estimate to have a good credit balance. The public debt of Tasmania is considerably more than double the amount of our public debt. While in the year 1890 the revenue of Tasmania nearly doubled the amount of our revenue, yet in this year, 1895, our revenue nearly doubles that of Tasmania. Comparing therefore, this colony with another important colony in the group, shows there has been a great change, indeed, within these few years.

#### *Population of the Colony.*

Following out the plan I have adopted in pre-

vious years, the first question I propose to deal with is that of population. A country must have population before it can be of very much importance. As you are all aware, this colony has not embarked on an immigration policy by direct subsidies for the payment of passages. We have rather striven to encourage people to come to this colony by inaugurating a system of public works, and opening up the natural resources of the country. Our gold discoveries have been our best friend in regard to encouraging people to come to this colony. The desire of the Government, and the desire of this House, has always been to induce people to come to the colony of their own accord. I think a man who comes here of his own accord, willing and anxious to throw in his lot with the people here and help us to build up a great country, is far more likely to be satisfied and far more likely to do well, than one who is brought here at the public expense. We have no reason to be dissatisfied, I think, with the increase that has taken place in our population. It has not been too rapid, nor has it been by great fits and starts, but the increase has been fairly regular and certain, from the day we obtained self-government up to the present time. On the 30th June, 1890, just a short time before the present Government took office, the population of the colony was 44,758 persons. On the 30th June, 1895, the population was estimated to be 89,550 persons; an increase during these five years, of 44,792. During the past twelve months the increase has been 13,631, or over 1,000 persons a month; and looking back over the figures for the last few years, the population has been increasing at the rate of nearly one thousand a month—a fairly regular increase, as I am very pleased to be able to note and to say. To this satisfactory state of affairs I am pleased to be able to add that many of the best men in the Eastern colonies, and even in other parts of the world, have turned their attention to this country, and that a large amount of capital is being introduced into the colony. As far as I am able to judge, population is only beginning to come here, and I think therefore that there is every reason to be fairly satisfied.

#### *The Public Indebtedness.*

The next subject I will deal with is the public debt of the colony—a very important



subject indeed, but, I am very glad to say, not one that gives me or the Government at the present time any anxiety. The total amount of the public debt on the 30th June last was £3,992,681. But, in order to arrive at the true indebtedness of the colony at that date, I think everyone will admit and allow that we must deduct from that amount the cash we have in hand from those loans that have been raised. We had in hand on the 30th June from the 1884, 1888, and 1891 loan accounts £123,345—that is from the old loan accounts. The balance of the first moiety of £750,000 raised of the 1894 loan in hand and unspent on the 30th June was £520,314; and there was the Sinking Fund in hand amounting to £154,784; making together a total on account of loan moneys in the hands of the Government, and not expended on the 30th June last of £798,443. If we deduct that amount from the total amount of debt on the 30th June, then we have, as the actual debt of the colony at that date, the amount of £3,194,238, being less than £36 per head of the population. Last year, in introducing the "Loan Act of 1894," I attempted to make out as good a case as I could, in order to prove to hon. members that we were in a position to borrow the million and a half the Government were recommending; and I then estimated our indebtedness at £41 a head of the population. Instead of the ratio increasing since that date, it has decreased, although in the meantime we have borrowed three-quarters of a million at  $3\frac{1}{2}$  per cent., obtaining it on very advantageous terms, for we received a premium of over £3 per cent. In 1891, when I first had the honor of introducing the annual Estimates to this House, I estimated the indebtedness at £28 a head, and the total of the public debt at £1,284,079. In 1894 I estimated the debt per head at £41, and we then owed £3,128,808. At the present time we owe £3,194,238, or less than £36 a head—far less per head than any other colony in Australia.

#### *Loan Expenditure.*

The expenditure of loan money during the year will be of interest to hon. members. On the 30th June last there were balances amounting to a total of £123,345 from the loans of 1884, 1888, 1891 and 1893. During the past year we expended a total of £595,535 from loan moneys, made up as follows:—From the

loan of 1884, £488; from the loan of 1888, £1,234; from the loan of 1891, £185,810; from the loan of 1893, £178,317; and from the loan of 1894, £229,686; making, as I have said, a total of £595,535. Of this amount, £463,800 was expended in the colony, and £131,735 was expended in London. The works included in the loan of 1894 will be pushed on during the year as fast as it is possible for the Government to do it; and as far as I am concerned, and as far as the Government are concerned, our desire is to complete all these works as quickly as we can. In a very short time, not only will the railway from Mullewa to Cue be commenced, but it will be pushed on with the greatest possible speed; and, in regard to all the other works authorised, the desire of the Government is that they should be completed as quickly as possible. As you are all aware, the railway to Southern Cross, the railway to Mullewa, and the railways to Bunbury, Busselton and Donnybrook have all been completed; and it now remains for us to carry out as quickly as we can the railways to Coolgardie, the contract for which has been already let, and the railway to Cue. We also intend to submit for the approval of Parliament Bills for the other railways named in the schedule of the Loan Act of 1894.

#### *Fremantle Harbor Works.*

Another great work has been going on satisfactorily, though, perhaps, not so fast—as some of us would like. The Fremantle harbor works have been prosecuted with a considerable amount of energy, I think, and at considerable expense. There has been expended on the Fremantle harbor works, up to the 30th June last, a sum of £197,776. As you are aware, we have allotted for these works already—and it is not the last that will require to be allotted, as we all know—a total of £350,000, being £150,000 by the loan of 1891, and £200,000 by the loan of 1894. Out of these two sums, amounting to £350,000, there is a balance of £152,224 available at the present time for continuing these works. As every one who has been to see the work must admit and acknowledge, it is a very great work indeed. It is also a very long and a very tedious work. It is on so great a scale that one is apt to be wearied with its apparently slow progress. As the years roll on, we realise that while the works are really going ahead, the great desire we all have, the goal for which we are all

striving, does not seem so near attainment as we would wish. Those of us who look forward to making Fremantle a good and commodious harbor for all classes of ocean vessels trading from the mother country or elsewhere to this continent, look forward anxiously to time when this great work will be accomplished. No doubt that time will come. I have the greatest confidence myself in the ultimate success of these works, and already the progress that has been made is very considerable. At the same time, we have to hope on and to wait sometime longer before our anxious desire can be accomplished.

*The Midland Railway and Land Grant Railways.*

Another important project which has been completed during the year, as I am glad to inform hon. members, is the construction of the Midland railway. The expenditure on that work during the year has been £114,215, and out of that sum £103,068 has been expended in the colony and £11,147 has been expended in London. The work has at length been accomplished; the trains now run regularly; and, for my own part, and for every one in this House, I am sure I may say we desire to see that railway a success. The Midland Company owe to the Government a sum of £7,235 on account of interest paid, but I am glad to inform the House that the whole of the interest due on the 30th June last, amounting to £10,000, was paid by the Midland Company, without any appeal to the Government. While on this point, I must say that there is throughout the country, and especially in the various districts traversed by the two railways which have been built on the land-grant system, great cause and good reason for dissatisfaction as to the way in which the Great Southern Railway Company and the Midland Railway Company are carrying out their land policy in regard to settlement. For my own part and that of the Government, I have no hesitation in saying we regret we ever saw either of these companies in this country; and, at any rate, I hope one result will be—and I especially refer to the land policy of those companies—that this experience will make us wiser in the future. The present Government, as you are all aware, have made up their minds, and have stated their views in no uncertain language that in future we will have no more land grant or privately owned railways

in this country, and that the promoters of any such projects will have to wait until the hon. member for Albany and the hon. member for Nannine are able to carry out what they so much desired in the last session of Parliament, when they advocated so strongly that those railways which we had recommended to this House—the railway to Coolgardie and the railway to Cue—should be made by private individuals and not by the Government. However, I am sure of this, that we have heard the last for some time, even from those two hon. members, in regard to advocating the private ownership of railways in this colony. The country is with us on that question, and I would like to see those hon. members or any one else go throughout this country and advocate that private Companies should build our railways and not the Government. They would soon be assured that the country was against them.

*Expenditure on Goldfields Development.*

During the year the Government have expended on goldfields, out of loan funds, principally on water supply, a sum of £66,205, and from revenue a further sum of £36,075; making a total expenditure during the past year on works of goldfields' development, principally water supply, amounting to £102,280. I may here refer to the total expenditure from the loan item, "Development of goldfields and mineral resources." It has been, up to the present time, £167,980. The expenditure from revenue last year, under this heading was £36,075, for water supply and some few buildings; the amounts making together a total of £204,055. I would like to point out to hon. members that this total of £204,055 which has been expended in the development of goldfields, under that heading, does not include railway construction, or the expenditure on working railways, nor does it include expenses of goldfields administration, or the Postal services, or working telegraphs, or police, or hospitals, or the hundreds of charges against current revenue. This immense expenditure for the development of goldfields—not only the loan expenditure, but also all the expenditure on the items and services I have referred to from current Revenue—I am pleased now to be able to say has been cheerfully approved of by this House and by Parliament; and has also

been gratefully acknowledged by the people on the goldfields, as we are assured both by the representatives of those constituencies in this House, and by the people themselves.

#### *Banking Institutions and Deposits.*

A close scrutiny in regard to the deposits in our local banking institutions has always had a reference from the Treasurer, in dealing with the financial position of the colony. On the 30th June of this year there was deposited at call and at fixed deposit at the banks in this colony, a total sum of £2,272,827; an increase as compared with the previous year of £726,889, or of about 47 per cent. in the amount of deposits at banks in this colony in one year. This amount in the banks on the 30th June last was one and one-third millions more than the amount in the banks four years ago. The reason why I have, in this and other instances, referred to a period four or four and a half years ago, is because the present Government commenced their administration of the affairs of this colony at that period; and, in judging whether the administration has been successful under our guidance, it is only reasonable to refer to the time when we took over the management of the affairs of the country, and compare that period with the present. I may mention that of the amount in the banks in this colony on the 30th June last the Government had to their credit £455,826. I think these figures give room for considerable investigation and for critical scrutiny. They show that there is a different state of affairs existing now as compared even with last year, and certainly every year that you carry the comparison back the difference is greater. These figures show, at anyrate, that the volume of trade and business done is large by comparison, and is now very considerable; and, at anyrate, the figures substantiate what we know from other sources to be the rapid increase in the state of business affairs in this colony.

#### *The Savings Bank and Deposits.*

I will now refer to an institution very popular in this House, and in the colony, and a reference to its operations will be interesting as showing that there is a large increase in the savings from the thrift of many people in this colony. The Post Office Savings Bank is a very important institution, and is largely

availed of by the people. It is carried on in connection with the Post office department at a very small cost indeed for administration. There is a head office in Perth, and there are 23 branch offices in connection with post offices throughout this colony. During the financial year ended 30th June last, there were 27,700 deposits, as compared with 17,287 in the previous year; and the number of people who are depositors at the present time is 8,323, as compared with 6,310 last year; showing an increase of 2,013. The amounts due by the Savings Bank to depositors at the present time that is the 30th June last, was £221,815, as compared with £141,319 on the 30th June last year, showing an increase during the year of £80,496 in the amount due to depositors. Hon. members will notice that this is becoming a big institution, and I hope it will get bigger and that its advantages will be extended to the people in many other parts of the colony. One third of the amount of deposits in the hands of the Government is invested in mortgages on freehold estate, and the other two-thirds are placed either in Government securities, or at fixed deposits, or at call at the local banks. Last year I informed the House that it was the intention of the Government to use some of the funds of the Savings Bank for the purposes of the Agricultural Bank. We have not done so yet, but we intend to do so as soon as the volume of business done through the Agricultural Bank increases to such an extent as to require funds from this source.

#### *Shipping and Trade.*

Reference to the shipping returns of the colony, as shown by the imports and exports, is a great index of the increase of trade. During the year ended December 31st, 1894, the ships coming to the ports of this colony were 372, the total tonnage being 675,775 tons, and in the previous year, 1893, the ships arriving were 293, with a total tonnage of 539,953 tons; so that there was an increase of 79 ships, and an increase in tonnage of 135,822 tons during the twelve months ended December last. I must explain to hon. members that, in dealing with financial matters, the financial year ends on the 30th June; but in dealing with the statistical matters, such as shipping and the imports and exports, the Collector of Customs makes up his return to the 31st December in each year. It is not always convenient to have this difference; but, after

all, it is perhaps more convenient than if all the returns were made up to the end of June. In most other countries the statistics are for the year from January to December in regard to shipping and the imports and exports; and in this colony, although the financial year now ends on the 30th June, as in other colonies, it has not been thought advisable to make a further change by altering the established practice in regard to shipping and trade statistics.

#### *The Imports.*

During the year ended December 31st, 1894, we imported into this colony goods to the value of £2,114,414, as compared with £1,494,438 in the previous year; showing an increase in imports to the value of £619,976. Hon. members will be glad to know that the largest item of imports, in value, was gold coin, the amount imported being £227,900. We sent away the gold raised in the colony, and received back some of it in the form of coined sovereigns. When we have got the Mint established here, we shall, as a colony, become exporters of the gold coin itself, and in this way we shall save some of the expenses now incidental to exchange. Hon. members will notice that our imports have increased to an enormous extent.

#### *The Exports.*

Our exports, although not so satisfactory, at any rate are not very unsatisfactory. During the year ended December last we exported to the value of £1,251,406, as compared with £918,147 in the previous year; showing an increase of £333,259. The exports were made up as follows:—Gold, the largest item, £787,099; wool, £232,201; timber, £74,804; pearls and pearl shells, £62,805; sandalwood, £23,430; tin, £15,270. Tin is an important export and has been so, for many years. Guano, £3,919; sandalwood oil, £2,103. Sandalwood oil is a new export, and I am very glad to see it—not a very large item, but important, as showing that this oil is a marketable product. Last year the value exported was about the same amount as the year. Skins, £14,775; miscellaneous, £34,996. These items of export make a total value of £1,251,406. Hon. members will notice that more than half the value of our exports is made up of gold; but, after all, gold is a splendid export, because it has a fixed value all over the world.

#### *Pastoral and Agricultural Settlement.*

I now wish to deal with some of the items connected with the pastoral and agricultural settlement of the country. I think that in a financial statement like this, dealing with the affairs of the country generally, it should embrace a review of the resources of the country in all important particulars—and should deal also with the stock returns, with the land development, with agriculture, and with the pastoral interests. An investigation of the stock returns of the colony during the last few years, is worth the time of anyone to look into. It will be found very interesting, though not too satisfactory. There are at the present time, hopeful signs which makes one more satisfied at the end than at the beginning of the investigation. In 1890, there were 130,970 cattle in the colony, and 2,524,913 sheep. In 1892, only two years afterwards, the number of cattle had increased—and I may say, in passing, that cattle have increased in number all along—the number in 1892 being 162,886. The cattle do not seem to have suffered by the drought in the way that sheep have suffered; for in 1892 while cattle had increased, sheep had decreased, the number of sheep in that year being 1,685,500, showing a decrease of 839,413 during those two years of terrible drought. We have gradually recovered from the effects of that disaster, although our sheep number less to-day—and this is a very important point—than they did in the year 1889, and during the last year have decreased by 88,331. The number of cattle at the end of 1894 was 187,214, and the number of sheep was 2,132,311. The number of horses in the colony at the end of 1894 was 50,001.

#### *Agricultural Interests.*

I will deal further with pastoral affairs a little later on; but before I do I should like to deal with the agricultural interest, and I may say at once that the present Government do not consider that the agricultural interests or pastoral interests either, are subsidiary to any other interest in this colony. I regret that we have still to import a large quantity of agricultural and dairy produce, and I regret also to see that these imports are increasing. In 1893, we imported £46,120 worth of flour. In 1894 we did not import quite so much, the amount being £44,300 worth. Of grain, hay,

chaff, potatoes, and onions, in 1893 we imported £43,578 worth, but in 1894 the importations were valued at £104,698. Of butter, bacon, hams, cheese, eggs, &c.; in 1893 the imports were £66,803, and in 1894, £102,344, so that taking these items, which constitute the main agricultural produce of the colony—articles we can so well grow in this country—we find that in 1893 we imported £156,501 worth, and in 1894, £251,342 worth, or an increase during the latter year of £94,841 worth. That is not, perhaps, very encouraging, but when we consider the large increase of population—the large adult population who are all consumers of these articles—when we consider the great attractions there have been in this colony for people to leave the soil and go to the gold-fields—I do not think there is any real cause for disappointment, and I will prove as I go on further, that, notwithstanding all the counter attractions and inducements, the settlement of the land has been going on at a fairly satisfactory rate.

#### *Land Settlement.*

In looking through the Crown Lands Report which hon. members have before them, they will find that on the 31st December last year there was held under conditional purchase an area of 485,947 acres, as against 409,298 acres in 1893, or an increase of land held under conditional purchase of 76,649 acres. I may point out that all this land is held upon terms of improvement. The Crown grants cannot be obtained, and will not be issued, until the improvements are completed. The revenue from conditional purchases has increased slightly. In 1893 it was £11,622, and in 1894 £12,532, or an increase of £910. We thus see (leaving out of the account 6,000,000 acres of land alienated from the Crown, 4,000,000 acres of which have gone to the land grant railway companies—3,000,000 acres to the Great Southern Railway Company, and 647,000 acres to the Midland Company), there were at the end of 1894, 485,947 acres under conditional purchase, 137,035 acres held under special occupation lease, and 11,583 acres as Free Homestead Farms or a total area of 634,565 acres of land held by people in the colony, altogether leaving out of account that held in fee simple. As you are aware some years ago we introduced, and I had something to do with it, a system of

agricultural areas, and survey before selection as part of our land system, allowing free selection to continue as heretofore. I have always been in favor of survey before selection in the interest of the selector and of the settlement of the colony; and I think that an investigation of the system of survey before selection will prove to anyone who takes the trouble to go into it, that it has worked well, is capable of working well and is doing all that is necessary in regard to survey to encourage settlement on the land. In regard to agricultural areas, about one million acres have been declared and set apart. Out of this million acres there have been surveyed and laid out, 3,072 lots, or blocks, with an acreage of 546,446 acres. Of these there are 396 lots with an aggregate area of 127,514 acres selected, or about 23 per cent. of the whole of the areas surveyed. I may mention a few of the areas which have been most largely selected from. In the Katanning area, 19,707 acres have been selected; in the much despised Meckering area, 19,459 acres, and the Jandakot area, which lots of people sneer at, 16,539 acres are held under the land regulations. On some of the other areas the selections have been as follows:—Harvey, 9,871 acres; Tweed, on the Blackwood, 8,929 acres; Narrogin, on the Great Southern Railway, 6,666 acres; Preston, beyond Donnybrook, 5,626 acres, Wickepin 5,539 acres, and there are many other areas with smaller quantities to which I need not now refer. I think this looks well for these areas, and for the system of survey before selection. Although the farmer has during the last few years had very low prices to contend with he has had a very good market and that is a great consideration. Even if prices are low it is worse with no market than with a certain market for all we have to sell. It is a fact that wheat and flour have been lower in price in this colony during the past year than in any other period. The reason I mention it is to show how little inducement there has been for people to go on the land. Notwithstanding all these adverse influences, however, I have shown that a great deal of land has been taken up, and that settlement has been going on rapidly. It comes back to the old idea that the people who come into this new land—have innate in them the idea of occupying some land,

making a home upon it for themselves, and eventually becoming independent. After all I do not suppose anyone has such an independent life as the man who is occupying his own land and tilling it himself. It may be a hard life, but compare it with that of the ordinary working men in the towns who earn from six shillings to 10s. a day and who live in hired cottages. I say, Sir, the position of the man in the country who builds a home for himself and his family and has his spring cart to drive about in, or his horse to ride—things unknown to the poor man working in town for wages—is by far the preferable of the two. For my part I certainly prefer a life of independence. A home of my own and hope in the future, rather than a weekly wage, not knowing how long it may continue, with little hope for the future and no permanent home. That is the reason, notwithstanding these adverse influences, so many desire to get a home of their own—a piece of land which belongs to them and which they can improve. The Homestead Act is now beginning to be availed of. I knew it would be. This Act is a standing advertisement on the wharfs at Albany, Fremantle and other ports. I do not say it is printed in words there, but every man who comes to this country knows that there are 160 acres of land waiting for him in the settled portions of the colony which he can occupy and make a home upon without any payment whatever. At the present time there are 81 free farms in the colony, comprising 11,583 acres under the Homesteads' Act, which means that there are 81 new homes in the country. This Act is therefore fulfilling the hopes we had of it when we introduced it, and side by side with it is

#### *The Agricultural Bank,*

which is just beginning to be availed of and to do the work that was intended of it. What is that work? It is to help those who desire to make homes for themselves and an independence for themselves in this country to subjugate the forces of nature, and to turn the wilderness into a smiling plain. That is really the object of both the Acts. The Homesteads' Act is to give every man who wishes to go out into the country a home, and the Agricultural Bank Act is to assist him in making that home and in improving his land. As I have indicated, the Agricultural Bank Act is a fit-

ting sequel to the Homesteads' Act. On the 1st of this month loans had been approved by the Agricultural Bank to the extent of £7,425. This means that double that amount has to be expended on the land in clearing, cultivating, and ring-barking. The result of this, under careful supervision, will be that 3,398 acres will be cleared and cultivated and 606 acres ringbarked. Surely we cannot invest £7,425 of the monies of the country in a better way than in helping to convert the wilderness into productive places, especially when we bear in mind that the security is good, inasmuch as every man who obtains money from the Bank has to spend an amount equal to that which he borrows. There can be no two opinions about this, and there is nothing I look upon with more satisfaction than I do upon my action with regard to the Homestead Act and the Agricultural Bank Act. I am sure we are moving in the right direction, and I believe that both these Acts will keep their places on the Statute Book for many a long day, with the result that they will prove of vast benefit to the country both as regards the settlement of the land and the improvement of it. The total area of cultivated land at the end of 1894 was 193,197 acres. In 1893 it was 176,578 acres, so that there has been an increase during the 12 months, notwithstanding all the adverse influences, low prices and the counter attractions, of 16,619 acres; and I believe we shall have a large increase during the year before us. Thus, with the assured market on the Eastern goldfields, and the wise encouragement that is being given to those who are willing to enter upon the land, we shall soon be able to produce sufficient to meet our local requirements. I now wish to say a few words in regard to

#### *Our Pastoral Interests.*

I can only say "what a falling off was there." In 1893 we had 92½ million acres of land leased to pastoral tenants producing a revenue of £41,076. In 1894 we only had 88 million acres under lease producing a revenue of £38,398. If we go back 11 years in the history of the past we shall find that we then had 160 million acres leased by pastoral tenants, producing a revenue in 1883 of £62,575. While in that year 35 million acres of pastoral leases were applied for, there were, in 1894, only 6 million acres applied for. Since 1883 the pastoral industry has been gradually going

down until the area under lease is only half what it was 11 years ago, and the revenue about on the same proportion. These figures not only give cause for reflection, but show that something of serious importance has taken place. Last year we exported 9½ million pounds weight of wool, valued at £232,201, the least amount received for wool during the past 14 years. It is a very serious matter that we have to go back to 1880 to find a period at which the export of wool was so small. In that year—nearly fifteen years ago—the quantity of wool exported was less than half the amount exported for last year, although the value of it was greater. The wool exported during 1894 was 1½ million pounds weight less than in 1893, and the number of sheep had decreased during the same period by 88,331. The position of the pastoral tenants of the Crown, owing to the drought of 1890-91, and the low prices of wool—which, I am sorry to say, have been going lower and lower—has given the Government great anxiety. One thing, I think I will say here is, that the policy of the financial institutions in continuing the high rate of interest, and in heaping up interest on interest half-yearly, is both harsh and suicidal. These institutions should, I think, either remit the interest altogether, or reduce it by one half, so as to give the pastoral tenants a chance. They should remember that financial institutions in Australia have had their day of trouble and humiliation, and what is more, that they received sympathy and assistance from everyone. If they act wisely and generously it will pay them in the end, but if they continue, as I am sorry to say they seem inclined to, their present tactics, by heaping up the interest upon interest half-yearly, I can only say they will bring ruin on many good and true men in this country, and will eventually injure themselves also.

MR. MONGER: They will own all the stations.

THE TREASURER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): If they do bring ruin on the pastoralists and injure themselves, they will only have themselves to blame for not showing sufficient consideration for the men who are able and willing to work, and who, if but given a chance, I believe will be willing to say, like Sir Walter Scott, "God grant me health and strength and I will yet pay every man his due." As far as the Government is concerned, we have the greatest sympathy

with the pastoral tenants, and we will assist them in every way we can. No reasonable thing shall be proposed to assist this deserving class—a class which has suffered so much of late, through no fault of their own—that we will not do if we are able to do it consistently with our duty to the whole of the colony. This Government has been called on many occasions the squatters and farmers' friend. I am proud of that, although, at the same time, I hope we shall always be the friend not only of the squatter and farmer, but also of the miner and the pearler, and every other producer in the colony. I now come to

#### *The Revenue for the Past Year.*

The estimated revenue for the past year was £873,650, but the actual amount received was £1,125,940, showing an excess over the estimate of £252,290. No doubt I shall be told by that great financier, the hon. member for Nannine, that this was a terribly bad estimate.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: So it was.

THE TREASURER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): It may have been, but still I am very well satisfied with it; and next year, if it is found I have erred in the same way, I shall not grumble. We have been told that it is an easy matter to calculate the revenue, but I have found a great difficulty in doing it, owing to the great and rapid movements which are taking place, and the difficulty is to judge how great or how rapid the movements will be. Still, the fact remains that I estimated the revenue last year at a quarter of a million less than was actually realised. This increase was made up of the following items:—£99,808 Customs, £14,720 Lands, £17,669 Mining, £6,429 Postages, £13,246 Telegraphs, £73,485 Railways, £8,303 water receipts, £10,759 Stamps, £8,771 from other sources, making a total increase of £252,290 over the estimate. Every one of these items is worth studying, so as to realise the progress that has been going on. If we compare the past year with the year preceding—the increase is even more extraordinary, amounting, as it does, to £444,695. The revenue has trebled since the present Government have been in office, and this seems to me to be very satisfactory, notwithstanding that my estimate for last year was not as good as it might have been. Still, as I have said, it was on the right side. Now, with regard to

*The Expenditure for the Past Year,*

I am pleased to say that it was kept within reasonable bounds. Our policy being bold, yet cautious, has kept us within bounds. We have spent less than the estimate. The estimated expenditure for the year ending 30th June last was £954,465 and the actual expenditure £936,728; therefore we spent during last year £17,737 less than the estimate. The revenue exceeded the estimate by £252,290, and the expenditure was less than the estimate by £17,737. It therefore appears that while the revenue exceeded that of the previous year by £444,695, the expenditure for the past year only exceeded that of the preceding year by £280,371. This I think shows a most satisfactory state of affairs. I estimated the credit balance on the 30th June last at £7,205 but the actual balance was £277,232 so that there was a balance on the 30th June of £270,027 more than I estimated. This is made up in the following way: there was a balance from the 30th June 1894 of £88,020, which added to the savings on the year's transactions, £189,212, makes the balance on the 30th June last £277,232—a very nice respectable sum to commence the present year with. We used to be told by the hon. member for the Gascoyne that we were spending more than we received. I used to try and convince him in a simple way but still for some reason or other he held to his opinion. I used to show that we had a greater balance in hand than when we took over the affairs of the colony; and that being so how could we be said to be spending more than we received when our credit balance was greater than when we commenced. We began in 1891 with a balance of £45,600 and after 4½ years we have £277,232 credit. Surely that shows that we have expended less than we have received. If therefore any hon. member wishes to attack us by saying that we have been living beyond our means he must do it on better grounds than the old ones, which were never available and which are less so now. Having dealt with the past and having tried to place before hon. members the condition of affairs that existed up to the end of last year, I am very glad to turn away from the past and deal with

*The Future Revenue for 1895-6.*

I may tell hon. members, although no doubt they are as well aware of it as I am, that the future is bright and promising, and that as far

as any labor I have had in estimating the future is concerned I can assure them that it has given me a great deal of pleasure. As I have said we began the year with a credit balance of £277,232. I estimate the revenue for the coming year at £1,291,150 being £165,210 more than was received last year. If we had not abolished the duties under the Tariff Act Amendment Bill there would have been £50,000 more, and therefore the estimated increase in the revenue for this year over last would have been £215,000. Now, Sir, I believe that this estimate will be considered by most persons as a moderate one, and yet an increase of £215,000 which is the amount it would have been, had we not remitted duties to the extent of £50,000, can not be considered a very small increase. I cannot see that any good is to be gained by being too sanguine in estimating our revenue so long as we have enough for ordinary purposes and pressing requirements. It is very easy for the Treasurer to estimate his revenue at a sanguine rate, but it comes back upon him in a short time and therefore it seems to me that the wiser and better course is to be moderate. My estimate I think is a fairly reasonable one, and it will, I believe, be realised. My estimates provide for the following increases on the revenue received last year: Customs £46,492—the estimated revenue from the Customs is £560,000 and it would have been £610,000 had not we remitted taxation to the extent of £50,000—Mining, £27,751—the estimated revenue being £78,800, as against receipts for 1895, £51,049—Telegrams, £7,212—the estimate being £45,500, as against £38,288 received in 1895—Railways, £66,515—the estimate being £360,000 as against £293,485 for 1895—Stamp revenue, £7,241—the estimate being £30,000 as against £22,759 received in 1895 and increases in other items amounting to £10,000. Having a balance of £277,232 at the end of last year, and an estimated revenue for the current year of £1,291,150 hon. members will see that we shall have available for the services of the year ending 30th June, 1896, no less a sum than £1,568,382. I think this is a very wonderful statement to be able to make—over one and a half millions of money available for the year before us. Last year I estimated that there would be available £961,670, so that our resources appear to be at this moment better than they



were last year by £606,712. These figures are quite astounding, but still they are very satisfactory, and what is still better they are likely to be realised. They have not been put into this statement to create any more favorable impression than actually exists. The chances are they will be largely exceeded, although it seems to me that my duty is to be moderate and not to anticipate the future too much. I now come to the

*Proposed Expenditure for 1895-6.*

I estimate the expenditure at £1,537,496, and that there will be a credit balance on the 30th June, 1896, of £30,886. I think that is a reasonable balance to leave. It is quite close enough for us to go, but even this may be reduced, because there are generally some additional items placed on the Estimates before Parliament prorogues, although I hope that may not be so this year. This expenditure includes for interest on Loans and Treasury Bills £187,866, including £26,250 interest on the first moiety of £750,000 of the loan of 1894. The expenditure also includes £17,715 first payment on account of the Ecclesiastical Grant, £40,000 improvements to open railways, £40,000 additional rolling stock. Then we provide £25,000 for the telegraph line to Eucla *via* Dundas. The estimated cost is £35,000, but we do not think the whole of it will be required this year, although Parliament will be asked to approve of the cost at that sum. Then various sums are provided for harbor improvements at Carnarvon, Ashburton, Cossack, Port Hedland, Broome, and other ports along our coast. Provision is also made for various works and buildings, a few of which I may refer to. We propose to build a new Supreme Courthouse at Perth and £4,000 is set apart for the work. The estimated cost of the building when complete is £25,000, but we only propose to make a beginning during this year. Then there is provision for Court-houses at Cossack, Beverley, Geraldton, Newcastle, Northam and York, and for public offices at Geraldton. We are providing Hospitals all over the colony, and a commencement is to be made with a new lunatic asylum which is estimated to cost £30,000. We propose to provide police stations in many places and to erect 22 post offices at a cost of £20,380. Buildings will be erected for the Mint, the Observatory and the Public Library and Museum. A new wing to the public offices is

also provided for, as well as a number of buildings on the goldfields, schools are provided throughout the colony costing £23,850, besides municipal buildings, agricultural halls, reclamation of South Beach, Fremantle, reclamation in Perth, and other works, to which it is unnecessary for me to refer in detail. The total estimated expenditure on works and buildings is £423,639, and those works and buildings are scattered all over the colony. Last year we expended about £70,000 on works and buildings, and this year we propose to expend over £400,000. On roads and bridges last year we expended £31,892, and this year we propose spending £67,750. The expenditure on administration of the Mines Department cost last year £17,156. This year we propose to expend £25,205, being an increase of £8,139. In regard to water supply, last year we spent £15,812, and this year we propose to spend £47,861, but of this amount £26,511 has already been expended by the authority of a Resolution of this House. On the post and telegraph department last year we expended £86,800, and this year the estimated expenditure reaches £119,415—an increase of £32,615—caused by the extensive settlement that is going on, principally on the goldfields. The Government are determined to give postal and telegraphic facilities to every important centre of settlement. For development of our goldfields and mineral resources the Government have placed £30,000 on the Estimates, and a sum of £6,000 for the purchase of Point Walter—an estate of 200 acres beautifully situated on the Swan river—for the use and enjoyment of the citizens of Perth and Fremantle. The subsidy of £1 for £1 collected on the general rate is to be continued to Municipalities. This will involve an expenditure of £12,000. We are glad to be able to do this, because it is only right that we should help those who are helping themselves.

*The Ecclesiastical Grant.*

Provision has been made by the Government for carrying out the objects of a Bill it is proposed to be introduced shortly for commutating the Annual Ecclesiastical Grant. This Bill will provide for a ten years' purchase based on the present payment of £3,543 per annum, and will involve a total payment of £35,430. This we propose to pay to the churches in two

instalments, and provision is made for the first, viz., £17,715, on these Estimates. We have also provided a sum of £1,771 odd, which will also be paid this year to the churches, so as to enable them to make their arrangements without any unnecessary trouble. This sum is half the present grant, and will enable these religious bodies to carry on until the 31st December next before making new arrangements.

#### *The Aborigines Protection Board.*

We have also to provide, although I have not much pleasure in doing so, a sum on these Estimates of £11,259, being one per cent. on the revenue of last year, for the purpose of the Aborigines Protection Board. A few years ago when we got our Constitution, we had to pay £5,000 a year; but now we have to pay this large sum of £11,259 to be expended by the few gentlemen who constitute the Board, but who are responsible to no one—at any rate not to the Parliament of this country. The Bill passed unanimously by both Houses of Parliament for repealing the Clause of the Constitution Act under which this Board exists has been sent to England, but up to the present no reply has been received. I have sent a cablegram to the Agent-General asking him to call upon the new Secretary of State for the Colonies and urge that the wishes—the unanimous wishes of the people of this colony that the Royal Assent should be given to this Bill, might be at once given effect to. (Hear, hear.) During the past year I have tried my best to get rid of this Board. I have told the members of it that they should resign, that they are unpatriotic and all sorts of things, but it has been of no use, they still hold on. I think they draw certain fees and I should not be surprised if later on an application were made to us to pension them off. However, we have to provide this £11,259 and hand it over to these irresponsible gentlemen to, as far as we are concerned, spend as they like. I now come to a most important question, that of

#### *The Railways of the Colony.*

I think that the success which has attended the efforts of the Government and Parliament in giving cheap and rapid means of communication to so many parts of the colony, is a fact which is most encouraging and satisfactory. Our railways are turning out a great success, and this, I think, should dispel all those fears and doubts that so many had, as to the

probable success, or rather wisdom of constructing railways throughout this vast colony. I think these fears and doubts have, to a large extent at any rate, been removed. We find, I am pleased to say, that the railways to agricultural districts, if worked economically, and with care, can be made to pay directly, or, at any rate, can be worked without loss to the country. That is a fact, I think, we cannot too often bring our minds to dwell upon, because it shows that we need not be afraid to extend the facilities of transit to other agricultural centres similarly situated. In 1890 there were only 183 miles of Government railways constructed, and only 15 miles under construction. In 1895 we had 570 miles constructed and 392 miles under construction or about to be constructed. That is surely a splendid record for four years, and that, too, does not include 243 miles of the W.A. Land Co.'s railway, nor the 276 miles of the Midland Co.'s railway. In the first Financial Statement which I made to this House on the 4th February, 1891, I expressed much surprise that the revenue from our railways had reached £53,000. It seemed to me then that the amount was enormous, but to-night I find myself face to face with the gratifying fact that the revenue from our railways for the year ended 30th June last, amounted to £295,732. This is surely good enough; but best of all I find that the expenditure for the year was only £183,940, thus showing a saving on the year's transactions of £111,792, an amount sufficient to pay the interest and sinking fund on a sum of two and a half millions of money, which is more than our railways have cost. These facts are most encouraging and satisfactory. The revenue for the coming year is estimated at £360,000, and I think we may take it that the estimate will be reached, because the estimates of the Railway Department have always been very reliable, and I feel confident that they will prove so again. This Estimated Revenue is made up as follows:—Eastern Railway, £153,000; South Western Railway, £229,000; Yilgarn Railway, £136,000, and Northern Railway (including Northampton, Walkaway, and Murchison) £42,000, making a total of £360,000. The estimated expenditure to produce the estimated revenue of £360,000 is £226,900, so that it is estimated that the receipts will exceed the outgoings by £133,100. Here I must say—and I do this only

in common justice—my thanks and the thanks of the country are due to the Commissioner of Railways and to the General Traffic Manager for the way they have managed our railways in regard to the receipts and expenditure. It seems to me that great things have been accomplished. What pleases me most is the fact that our railways earned £295,732 with an outlay of only £183,940. I am delighted with these facts and hon. members will be delighted with them also. It is only an indication of what we shall be able to do in the future, and it shows what we may do in regard to railway extension throughout the country in the future.

MR. MONGER: What about the rates?

THE TREASURER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Well, it seems to me that the rates are not too high. Some items on the railway tariff are perhaps a little out of proportion, but time will alter that. And this brings me to another point. I do not like to say to anyone who finds himself in the wrong: "Now what have you got to say for yourself," because I feel sure his own feelings and good sense must be a sufficient condemnation. But I do feel inclined to-night to ask: What is to be said for those who opposed the policy of the Government in regard to railway construction? What do they think now, and what have they to say for themselves. I ask, would not the progress of the colony have been retarded if the opposite policy to that proposed and urged by the Government, had been adopted? The Government have been all along firm in their proposals, and we now rejoice to think that our views with regard to the desirability of opening up this country by railway communication have proved to be correct.

MR. LEAKE: It is a wonder you did not treat the Commissioner of Railways differently then.

THE TREASURER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The result I have referred to gives me great confidence for the future in dealing with this question. If we can build our railways as we have been building them, and have them managed carefully and economically, then there is plenty of room to extend the system and open up those parts of the colony which can be profitably developed. I can assure this House that I do not want to build and make railways in places where they are likely to become a burden upon us. My idea is to build railways to the settled parts of the country where they will pay, otherwise they

will only mean failure to the Government that proposed them and also to everyone connected with them. That of course I do not want.

#### *The Mint.*

I congratulate the colony and this House on the prospect of the early establishment of a branch of the Royal Mint in Perth. The Government will lose no time in communicating with the Imperial Government on this subject, and urge upon them to establish the Mint as soon as possible. When it is complete it will prove a worthy cap to the great gold structure which we have been raising up for some time past in the colony. The House will be asked for a sum of £7,500 for the cost of the buildings in connection with this Mint. There will also be an expenditure of £4,500 for the machinery. £3,000 will be spent on beginning the building this year. Not only will we be able to say that we are raising large quantities of gold, but very soon I hope we shall be able to coin it as well. This is a matter I feel very pleased about and it is, I think, a matter satisfactory to everyone.

#### *The Observatory.*

It will be remembered that last year this House voted a sum of money for the establishment of an observatory in the colony. I have myself always advocated this most strongly ever since I took office, and I was very glad when the House, last year, granted a vote for the purpose. The instruments have already been ordered through the Astronomer Royal, and I have been greatly assisted by my friend Sir Charles Todd, of Adelaide, in preparing the plans and cost of the instruments. The cost of the instruments will be about £3,000, and the building will cost about £3,000. It is worthy of note that whilst we are materially progressing, we are also doing something to promote the interests of science, and I am sure everyone will admit that this can be done in no better way than by establishing an observatory.

#### *Museum and Library.*

Another matter I take a great interest in is the erection of a museum and library in Perth. As members are aware, the Government propose to place the museum and library on the same site, and with this object in view we have placed them under one committee, so that the same board may manage the two institutions, and that they may be on the same ground and adjoining one another. For this purpose we have provided on the

Estimates a sum of £6,000, of which £3,000 is to be expended this year. I feel sure that in these times of progress this House and Parliament will be anxious to do all in their power to provide a museum and public library for the colony, because they will not only be scientific institutions, but also educational institutions.

#### *New Lighthouses.*

Another matter I am pleased to inform the House of is that the Rottneest and Cape Leeuwin lighthouses are in course of construction, and when these works are completed I venture to think they will be worthy of any country. When we look back on the times that are gone and see how little we were able to do, it is pleasing to think that we are now able to contribute so much towards the trade and commerce of the world, for this we are doing in placing such beacons of light to guide the mariner on his way and those who visit our shores into havens of safety. This makes us feel that we are trying to do something to assist those who are seeking our shores from across the sea. I think we may rest assured of this, that in these two works we will deserve, and we will obtain the thanks of many for the great, and I might say noble, work we are carrying out. I now come to what I consider is our chief export and the main factor of our progress—

#### *Our Gold Export.*

The discovery of the goldfields and the introduction of Responsible Government came almost together. It was a happy alliance, I think, and it has had far reaching influences. From that date till now our progress has been great indeed, and no one, however far he may think himself capable of judging of the future, can give a reliable estimate of what it is likely to be. The total value of the export of gold from the colony through the Customs to the 30th June, 1895, was £2,139,889, and for the past twelve months alone we have exported gold to the value of £910,456. As I just now said what our possibilities or probabilities are in regard to the goldfields, no one can at the present moment, rightly estimate. During the past four and a half years we have increased our export of gold from £86,664 in 1890 to £2,139,889 in 1895. Only think for a moment if for the next four and a half years we are as successful as for the four and a half years that have past, and I know no reason why it should not be so,

what must then be the position of the colony? I am not going to prophesy what it would be. If hon. members will look into these figures for themselves, if they do but think that in the past we have only been going about scratching the ground, with but little machinery and no deep sinking, when we consider these things, I ask what will be the export of gold when every good reef has crushing machinery upon it? It gives us every hope for the future, although it is hard to realise what that great future may be. I have now nearly come to the end of what I have to say. I feel I must have wearied hon. members somewhat—(No, no)—in placing before them so many details, but I feel in making the statement that I have had to make to-night, that it was necessary for me to review all the interests that are prominent in the colony. I could not, therefore, easily curtail what I had to say.

#### *A Retrospect.*

I will now in conclusion take a short retrospect of what we have been doing during the last four and a half years—what the present Government have been doing with the assistance of Parliament, in trying to assist the producer, whether he be the man who "makes two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only one grew before," or the miner, or the pastoralist, or the pearl diver, or any other producer,—for if the producer flourishes, all others will do well. (Hear, hear). It may be asked, how have we been trying to assist the producer? My answer is, By giving cheap, rapid and easy means of transit by railways, by roads and bridges, by jetties, by harbor improvements, and by water supply on roads. By taking off the duties on pearl shells and sandalwood. By establishing a Mint and thus affecting a saving to the miner. By giving land free to those willing to live upon it and improve it. By lending the agriculturist money on easy terms and at a low rate of interest, to improve his homestead, and thus enable him to become a permanent settler. By abolishing Customs duties on many articles of food in general use, and not capable of being produced in the colony. By giving postal and telegraph facilities to all important centres,—by providing security to life and property,—by establishing the machinery of Government to the remotest confines of our territory, and by many other means with the same object

in view. With the assistance of members of this House and Parliament we wish to continue our efforts gradually and surely. Our object in all these cases has been to make this colony the happy and prosperous home of many thousands of our race by improving and cultivating land that is now lying unutilised and unproductive and making it produce food and sustenance for ourselves and for others.

#### Conclusion.

Sir, I have now finished my task. I thank hon. members for the attention they have given to my remarks. It has been an easy and pleasing duty to me, feeling, as I do, that we are only beginning our onward career. (Hear, hear.) The future appears bright and full of hope, but I need not tell hon. members we have a great responsibility cast upon us. That responsibility is to shape and fashion the legislation of this country and the institutions and industries of this country in such a way that not only the present, but also future generations will benefit by our labors and bless us. (Hear, hear.) For myself I have no fear for the future. I believe that the patriotism and wisdom of the people of this country will provide for a course in the future which will be honorable and prosperous to us and to those who come after us. I thank hon. members most heartily on behalf of myself and my colleagues for the generous support they have given us for so many years. I thank hon. members of the Upper House for their generous support also, because, I say most heartily and truly that they have given us a generous support from the day we took office up to the present time. I rejoice when I look round this House and see so many who claim this colony as the land of their birth. Many, too, I see who are her sons by adoption, and all I hope and believe are devoted to her service. I pray that in the future this land of ours may always be able to secure the best service of her sons as well in the time of trouble as in the day of prosperity. (Hear, hear.) I beg now, Sir, to move the first item on the Estimates.

MR. LEAKE: I beg to move that progress be reported, and leave given to sit again on Tuesday next.

Question put and passed.

Progress reported.

#### MEDICAL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Bill passed without amendment, and reported to the House. Third reading made an order of the day for Tuesday, August 13.

#### TARIFF ACT 1893 AMENDMENT BILL.

MR. LEAKE moved for leave to introduce a Bill to amend the Tariff Act of 1893.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Sir, I have not had time to give full attention to this matter, but I would be glad if at this stage you would give an opinion as to what is the rule in regard to private members moving for leave to introduce Bills, the sole effect of which, if carried, would be to interfere with the financial arrangements of the Government. The hon. member who has presented this motion heard what I have said to-night as to the financial proposals of the Government, and what I have to ask, Sir, is whether, when the financial arrangements of the Government have really been completed, it is competent for any private member of this House to bring forward a motion of this sort. I do not think any Government could be satisfactorily carried on if such interferences as the one proposed are possible. I say, Sir, that such a movement as that of the hon. member for Albany is unheard of in any country. It is altogether an unheard of thing for a private member to attempt to interfere with the financial arrangements of the Government so far as they are contained in the Tariff. The Tariff is a question of money, and one of carrying on the business of the country. It is one of the questions which must solely belong to the Executive. I do not think a private member can introduce a Bill to deal with the Tariff. Of course, I know he could not introduce a Loan Bill, for the reason that he would require a message from the Governor, but he might as well attempt to deal with any matter of internal government as attempt to deal with the Tariff. I cannot possibly conceive how the hon. member can be in order, unless his proposal is to reduce duties.

MR. LEAKE: That is what it is.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Well, whatever it is does not very clearly appear. I think, Sir, that in connection with this motion, it is proper I should inform the House that I intend to resist it as forcibly as I can, in every shape and form. I propose to

resist the most unusual course attempted by the hon. member for Albany. It is a most extraordinary thing that he has only given notice of this Bill now, when the Government, as he well knows, have made all their financial arrangements.

MR. SIMPSON: But they are not carried yet.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That may be so. At any rate, what I consider should be emphasised is that the House is absolutely getting tired of this sort of motion. They are tantamount to want of confidence motions. The Government accepts the responsibility of its financial arrangements, and it would not be right to let the hon. member or anyone else interfere in the way he proposes. He desires to interfere with the work which is of all things, more particularly that of the Executive. It appears to me that the hon. member has only just now thought of this motion. He has had two or three weeks in which to bring the matter forward, and yet has never suggested to this House that the matter was one that should be dealt with. I say again that it is unheard of in the history of any Constitutional Government for a private member to try and deal with such a question as the Tariff. I have said that I intend to resist the attempt of the hon. member in every way, and I trust that the hon. members of this House will support me in that resistance. I would like you, Mr. Speaker, to favor this House with an opinion as to whether it is competent for any private member to bring in such a Bill as that proposed by the hon. member for Albany.

THE SPEAKER: I have been asked whether the hon. member for Albany is in order in seeking to introduce a Bill to deal with the Tariff. I think that I cannot do better than quote the remarks of a recognised authority on Parliamentary Government. Todd, in dealing with this subject, says: "The introduction of a Bill or resolution for the reduction or repeal of an existing rate of taxation, whether for fiscal purposes or for the regulation of trade, is a Parliamentary question, in which the Crown has no direct concern. The strict right of a private member to take the initiative in such a proceeding cannot, therefore, be denied, and has been acknowledged of late years by leading statesmen. It is, nevertheless, in the highest degree inexpedient under Parliamentary Government for private mem-

bers to assume the responsibility of proposing such questions to Parliament." It will be seen from this that I cannot say that I am in a position to interfere with the hon. member, but I feel it to be my duty to inform the House that in my opinion it would be most impolitic for private members to attempt to interfere with the financial arrangements of the Government.

MR. LEAKE: In consequence of the Hon. the Premier having lashed himself into a state of great excitement with regard to this notice of mine, I should like to explain to the House that it is not a new matter by any means. If the Premier will take the trouble to look at the Votes and Proceedings of this House of only a few days ago, he will see that a notice was placed on the notice paper by myself, having for its object the reduction of the *ad valorem* duties from 20 per cent. and 15 per cent. to 10 per cent. On that occasion I was, as you, Sir, are doubtless aware, ruled out of order in trying to propose a new clause having for its object the very object of the Bill I am now endeavoring to bring before the House. I say, further, that the suggestion of the Hon. the Premier that this is a new matter and that it is only the action of a private member to interfere with the financial arrangements of the Government is not supported by the facts of the situation. I want to protest against the Hon. the Premier's insinuations and put myself right with the hon. members of this House. I desire to test in a proper and formal manner the feeling of the House on this question of the reduction of these particular duties. I am asking to-night for leave to introduce a Bill, and if the action of a private member in attempting to do this is unusual, how much more unusual must it be to seek to interfere with Tariff proposals of a Government when they are brought in, and again how unusual must it be for a Premier to oppose the introduction of a Bill. I would ask the hon. gentleman whether, if he seeks to be guided by Parliamentary custom, as I do—and I am sure he should be actuated by the same motives—he is doing the proper thing in refusing leave to introduce a Bill rather than follow the Parliamentary usage and practice of allowing the Bill to come forward in the ordinary course and then opposing it on its second reading. I shall certainly not withdraw the notice, because I have not gone out of my way in bringing it forward

but have done so to test the feeling of the House on a question not really tested before. When the Hon. the Premier implies that the notice has just been given and is a new matter, he is either mistaken or forgetful, and he was certainly most mistaken in the observations he has made to-night.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): It has taken you a long time to bring the matter forward, at any rate. Why could not we have had it weeks ago?

Motion put and negatived.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House at 10:15 p.m. adjourned until Tuesday, August 13th, at 4.30 p.m.

## Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 13th August, 1896.

*Prepayment of Press Messages—Station and Goods Shed at Midland Junction—Tenders for New Court House at Northam—Esperance Bay Jetty Addition—Post and Telegraph Office at Norsemannton—Posting Late Letters at Railway Stations—Public Buildings at Kalgoorlie—Quarantine Station at Albany—Improvements to Police Buildings at Albany—Albany Hospital—Depositing of Stone, &c., in river at Rocky Bay; Select Committee's report—Medical Act Amendment Bill: third reading—Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill: third reading—Railway and Refreshment Rooms Licensing Bill; in committee—Duties on Estates of Deceased Persons Bill: second reading—Licensed Surveyors Bill; Legislative Council's amendment—Married Women's Property Bill: second reading—Goldfields Bill: resumed debate; second reading—Estimates; in committee—Adjournment.*

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

PRAYERS..

#### PREPAYMENT OF PRESS MESSAGES.

MR. LEAKE, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier whether it was true that

the Telegraph Department had declined to deliver Press messages from the other colonies unless prepaid; and, if so, what was the reason.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied that there had been a difference between the Telegraph Department and one of the newspapers in Perth, but that the difference had been amicably arranged.

#### STATION AND GOODS SHED AT MIDLAND JUNCTION.

MR. LOTON, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways whether the Government intended to provide suitable station and goods shed accommodation at the junction of the Midland and Eastern Railways. If so, when tenders would be called for the work.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied in the affirmative to the first part of the question; and, as to the second part, said plans were in hand, and, when funds were available, tenders would be called for the work as early as possible.

#### TENDERS FOR NEW COURTHOUSE AT NORTHAM.

MR. PIESSE (for Mr. THROSELL), in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works when tenders for the erection of a new courthouse at Northam were likely to be called for.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied that tenders would be called for after the Estimates were passed.

#### ESPERANCE BAY JETTY ADDITION.

MR. HASSELL, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works when the addition to the Esperance Bay Jetty was likely to be finished.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied that the timber for the addition to the Esperance Bay Jetty was now ready for shipment at Bunbury, and the work should be completed in four months.

#### POST AND TELEGRAPH OFFICE AT NORSEMANNTON.

MR. HASSELL, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works whether the Government intended to place a sum on the Estimates to build a post and telegraph office at Norsemannton.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS