

most careful and favourable consideration. I do hope and believe that it will receive this, at the hands of hon. members. Although I know that some hon. members are strongly opposed to legislation of this kind, I shall respect their opinions to the utmost of my ability.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That is socialistic legislation.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not know that we should be afraid of socialistic legislation. "Socialistic" is a word which is often used in a mistaken manner. The greatest socialist who ever stood on this earth was our Saviour himself, and he has brought into this world of ours the right socialism, a due and proper regard for our fellow-citizens; and I do hope this House, which is supposed to be a calm, dispassionate, and discriminate tribunal, will take this into consideration, and recognise that this measure is for the social well-being and comfort of our fellow-citizens. There are one or two things I should like to be informed upon in this Bill, but I shall defer mentioning them until we get into Committee. I do not propose to say more at the present time. There will be an opportunity of speaking on the different clauses, and of critically and more closely examining the construction of the clauses. My desire in rising was to at once express my hearty concurrence in the Bill, and to ask hon. members to give it their careful and favourable consideration. I appeal to hon. members—more especially to those whose constituents are not affected by the Bill. They may think they are called upon to take what may be called the Conservative side, but I trust they will look on the social side of it and try and meet a demand which is reasonably and fairly made, and which has been clearly put before us by the hon. member in charge of the Bill. I second the motion for the second reading.

On the motion of the Hon. F. T. CROWDER, the debate was adjourned until the next sitting.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that the House, at its rising, do adjourn until Tuesday week.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE moved, as an amendment, that the adjournment be till Tuesday fortnight.

Amendment not seconded.

Motion put and passed.

The House adjourned at 6.20 p.m. until Tuesday afternoon, 26th July.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 13th July, 1898.

Papers presented—Question: German mail steamer calling at Fremantle—Question: Coolgardie Goldfields Water Supply Scheme, Intentions as to Construction—Motion: Financial Year, Date of Closing—Motion: Imported Bricks and Increase of Duty; Point of Order, Speaker's Ruling; Amendment (passed), Division—Motion: Tick in East Kimberley; debate resumed, further adjourned—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Petitions of Right, Correspondence re petition of W.A. Land Company, also re petition of Mr. W. Wilkinson (York). Tick in East Kimberley, Report of Inspector Hancock.

By the MINISTER OF MINES: Government Schools, Irish National School Books, showing Scripture Lessons imparted.

Ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION: GERMAN MAIL STEAMER CALLING AT FREMANTLE.

MR. LEAKE (Albany), without notice, and by leave, asked the Premier, Whether it is true that the German mail steamer arrived at Fremantle last night, and was unable to discharge her cargo.

MR. MORAN: Has she gone on?

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I have not received any official information about it. I believe the German mail steamer did not discharge her cargo. If the hon. member will give notice, I shall be glad to give information on the subject.

MR. LEAKE: I understand the steamer had to take her cargo on to Albany.

THE PREMIER: The report I received was that she took it on to Adelaide.

QUESTION: COOLGARDIE GOLDFIELDS WATER SUPPLY SCHEME.

INTENTIONS AS TO CONSTRUCTION.

MR. MORAN asked the Premier:—(1) Whether he intended to accept the lowest tender for the construction of the pipes for the Goldfields Water Works Scheme when the tenders were in, if the price were reasonable. (2) If so, whether he would stipulate for an immediate commencement of the works on a thoroughly comprehensive and vigorous scale, so as to complete within two years from 1st January, 1899. (3) Whether he intended to proceed with the construction of the headworks at the Helena River by day labour under the departmental officers, and if so,—(a) When it was intended to proceed vigorously with this work. (b) When the work was expected to be finished. (4) Whether the Government were favourable to the construction of the works by private enterprise entirely, or in part, if it should offer. (5) Whether it had been decided to lay the pipes under or above ground. (6) Whether any decision had been come to in reference to service tanks at the fields. If so,—(a) Whether the large centres would have independent service tanks. (b) What centres it was proposed to serve.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied:—1, Not necessarily the lowest tender for the whole quantity, but it is intended to accept a tender, or a number of tenders, covering the whole quantity of pipes required. If prices are moderate, preference will be given to tenderers offering to construct the pipes in the colony. 2, The benching and formation for pipes, and all other work necessary for laying pipes, will be proceeded with as rapidly as there is any justification for proceeding with it: that is to say, sufficiently rapidly to ensure that it is at

all times well ahead of the pipe-laying which the supply of pipes will admit of, and the same applies to reservoirs and engine sheds at pumping stations. 3, It is proposed to do the work by day labour. (a) The placing of concrete will be vigorously proceeded with, as soon as the foundations are fully excavated. (b) It is expected that the work will be finished in about two years from now, but water will be available for pumping some considerable time before that. 4, The Government is not in favour of the construction of the work by private enterprise, as that would mean placing the mining community to a great extent at the mercy of the company undertaking the work, both as regards the price to be charged for the water and also as regards the regularity and adequacy of the supply, and there is also the possibility that what has occurred in other cases might occur in this case—that the company undertaking the work might be unable to complete it. It is, however, as already stated, intended to let contracts for the supply of the pipes in 28 feet lengths at Midland Junction, and also for the supply and erection of the pumps at the various pumping stations, and for the working thereof for 12 months after their erection, which covers a large proportion of the total undertaking; and it is also intended to let contracts for the benching and formation work, and also for the intermediate reservoirs and engine sheds at pumping stations, and also for felling and clearing timber and fencing, and in this connection I may mention that in this respect the Government is pursuing the same course as it does in the case of railways, where we provide the rails and fastenings and the rolling-stock, and let contracts for the work to be done in the colony, the only important exception in the case of the Coolgardie Water Supply work being the construction of the Helena Reservoir, which is a very special case. 5, The pipes may, in some cases, be laid underground, but in most cases, and especially where crossing salt lakes and along ground containing a great deal of salt, it is intended to lay them above the ground, and in this connection I may mention that the allegation that the range of temperature that the pipes would thus be subject to had not been disclosed to

the Commission of Engineers in England, and fully considered by them, is altogether foundationless, as the statement of facts, dated 11th December, 1896, and which the Commissioners based their conclusions upon, contained a distinct statement that the pipes, when empty, if laid above the ground, would be subject to a range of temperature of 150deg., and it was with this statement fully before them that the Commissioners nevertheless recommended, for various reasons, that they should be laid above the ground. 6. The exact location of service tanks on the fields has not, as yet, been determined upon, but—*(a)* The large centres, so far as it is necessary to meet requirements, will have independent service tanks. *(b)* It is proposed to serve the principal centres so far as the water will go.

MOTION: FINANCIAL YEAR, DATE OF CLOSING.

MR. SIMPSON (Geraldton) moved :

That, in the opinion of this House, it is expedient and convenient, in the best interests of the administration of public business and in order to secure to Parliament the fullest information, that arrangements be made for the termination of the financial year on the 31st March annually, and that the Departmental Reports be furnished for the concurrent periods.

It would be a reasonable thing, he said, to urge on hon. members the inconvenience all had suffered for years from what might be called the inaccessibility of exact information. In making that remark, he implied nothing suggesting any intention of the Government departments to withhold information. Every member of the House had found a difficulty in ascertaining exact facts on which to come to a conclusion in regard to matters mentioned in the Governor's opening Speech, for the consideration of Parliament. At present some departments furnished annual reports up to the 31st of December, and these were received fairly early after the meeting of Parliament; but the reports of other departments, including the great money-spending departments, were not received for months after the opening of the session; and it would not be unreasonable to suggest the improbability of receiving the report of the Railways and Works Depart-

ments for last year before September next. The Director of Public Works had been good enough to say he would, if possible, let the Parliament have the report in August, but from previous experience it was reasonable to suppose that the report would not be forthcoming before September. If, without trespassing on the work of the departments, Parliament could be furnished with reports made up to the 31st of March, and the present procedure of calling Parliament together at the end of June were continued, it would very much aid every member in arriving at legitimate conclusions in regard to matters dealt with in the Governor's Speech. The date of the closing of the financial year opened up questions for very grave consideration. One great feature which must always be borne in mind was that, even to meet the convenience of members of this House, no possible restriction must be suggested or implied which would interfere with the due and proper course of the Treasury administration. But in New Zealand, there was the system he now proposed, and it worked happily and with great advantage. He had before him the Acts and Regulations which governed the departments in that colony; and he submitted the motion with the one object of securing to the Western Australian Parliament the most exact and fullest information on the public matters with which members were called upon to deal. It would, no doubt, be asked by the Colonial Treasurer, what would the Government do for funds in the interval of three months or so until Parliament met, should the financial year terminate on the 31st March? But in New Zealand and other places provision was made for that interval by statute. The Administration there were given power to spend at the same rate as money had been spent in the previous months of the financial year, and, in addition, £100,000 was placed at their disposal during the interval of three months for any unforeseen circumstances which might occur. He had just suggested the outlines of the alteration, which, he hoped, would commend itself to members as more convenient and as providing more trustworthy sources of information than the present system.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he was quite in accord with the hon. member (Mr. Simpson) in his desire that full information should be before the Assembly when Parliament met; but, whatever plan was adopted, a good deal would be left to be desired. The old plan which was in force in the colony years ago had its advantages and its drawbacks. When the financial year ended on the 31st December, Parliament met in June or July, and there was time for all the departments to get their reports ready to be laid on the table at the commencement of the session. But there was also the great disadvantage that, as Parliament met in June and the Treasurer made his statement usually in August or September, he had to prepare his Estimates, not for the current year, but for the year that was to commence on the 1st of January following. That was considered very unsatisfactory. To pass Estimates six months at least before they were required was working a great deal in the dark; but that was the system in force when this colony came under Responsible Government. The Treasurer had then not only to anticipate what would be the revenue of the current year for three or four months or more ahead, but had also to submit Estimates for the following year; and the result was that the Treasurer had to estimate practically for eighteen months ahead. That was considered very objectionable, and not at all conducive to the framing of Estimates with any precision. The end of the financial year was altered to the 30th June, which was the date in most of the colonies, with the exception of New Zealand and Tasmania. But difficulties were found again under the new plan. The Government were able very shortly after Parliament met to let members know the exact state of the finances of the past year and to estimate for the coming year, but the reports of the Auditor-General and other departments were always a long way behind. It was apparent that if the financial year did not end until the 30th June, the Treasury could not submit accounts, nor could the Auditor-General report for a considerable time afterwards. Parliament had found itself

in some little difficulty in this respect, but not so much difficulty as some members would lead the House to suppose. The year ending on the 30th June, and the Estimates not being submitted to the House until about a month or six weeks afterwards at the earliest, the Treasurer was able to insert in the Estimates not only the total expenditure for the past year, but the expenditure under every single item of the Estimates. The present system showed not only the vote approved by Parliament, but the expenditure under that vote, and the expenditure under every one of the thousands and thousands of items, in addition to the vote for the coming year. That was a very great advantage to hon. members. Members sometimes told the Government, and would no doubt continue to do so, that they were amazed when they saw the Excess Bill some time after the Estimates. But, as a matter of fact, the Estimates showed the excess of expenditure—the underdrafts and the excess on every single item. That was not the case in any of the other colonies. That again was of great assistance to every member of the House, and also to himself, in dealing with the finances of the country. Members now knew exactly what was spent on each vote in the previous year, and how much was going to be spent the following year. It could be seen at a glance whether there was an excess or a decrease in the expenditure under any particular vote. In the Estimates for 1897-8, the first item he saw under the vote for "Miscellaneous services" was for "destruction of wild dogs." The amount voted for 1896-7 was £1,400, and the expenditure was £1,466 13s., showing an excess in expenditure of £66 13s. The estimate for 1897-8 was shown as £1,400. That principle went through all the Estimates. Another item he saw was "Maintenance of garrison at Albany, contribution towards, £1,100." Of this sum £892 4s. 10d was expended, and for 1897-98 £1,250 was estimated as necessary. The Estimates were prepared with much more information and were much more complete than were the Estimates of any other colony in Australasia. The reason was that in Western Australia the financial proposals were not submitted so

early as was the case in the other colonies. It was the custom in other colonies, as soon as Parliament met, or very shortly afterwards, to submit the financial proposals and make the financial statement. If that were done here the information he had spoken of would not be available. For several weeks, until the 11th or 12th July, the Treasury Department were occupied in preparing the information necessary for the Estimates; and even under the present system there was considerable inconvenience at the Treasury, inconvenience which, no doubt, was experienced in all the colonies. In colonies or countries where the Estimates were placed on the table almost immediately Parliament met, the inconvenience was not so great as where there was a little delay in order to get further information. In the latter case the Treasurer had to carry on the financial business in the colony without Estimates. Last year in this colony was, in this respect, a most unfortunate one. The Estimates were not dealt with until about the end of the year, and that meant that the Treasurer had to carry on for six months without regular Estimates. Accounts had to be kept, and afterwards transcribed into the books, which were the foundation of the Estimates. If the motion now before the House were passed, and Parliament were to meet at the beginning of June, there would be no Estimates to work on for several months, and the inconvenience would be worse than that now experienced. The business of the country would have to be carried on for six months without Estimates.

MR. SIMPSON: How did the right. hon. gentleman make that out?

THE PREMIER: Parliament would not meet on the 31st March.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: But Parliament would be ready to meet then.

MR. SIMPSON: Surely the Estimates could be got ready in three months.

THE PREMIER: That was so, but the Estimates would not be passed. It took about three months to pass the Estimates, so there would be six months without Estimates as against three months now. The whole question was surrounded with difficulty, and he was scarcely prepared to say which was the best method. Under

one method the Treasury would suffer; on the other hand, if only the convenience of the Treasury were looked at, the Estimates had to be made too far ahead, as in the olden time. For the purpose of statistical returns, the year was taken to end on 31st December. At the same time he agreed with the hon. member that this was an important matter, requiring much consideration. As far as departmental returns and annual reports generally were concerned, we got them now nearly six months after the close of the financial year. If those returns were brought up to the 31st of March as the close of the financial year, they would be all ready to place on the table when Parliament met, say in June; but still, the 31st March would be an awkward time for closing the financial year and making up the statistics of the colony.

MR. SIMPSON: All the financial companies in Australia did it.

THE PREMIER: If the financial year for Government accounts were made to end on the 31st March, Parliament would have to meet earlier than was the practice at present, because no Government would carry on the expenditure of the country, dealing with large sums, without Parliamentary sanction. There were always new works to be undertaken and new obligations to be provided for, and in those colonies where the Governments were allowed to work upon an interim vote for a period of two or three months, those Governments would have liberty to do pretty much as they liked during that period. He understood they were allowed to carry on the departmental expenditure upon the scale of the previous year, but not to enter upon new works, so far as he was aware. That system would not be satisfactory in this colony. Still, if hon. members would express their opinions in regard to the motion, perhaps the mover might consider he had done sufficient for the present in having drawn attention to this important matter, and we could give it further consideration. His own desire, like that of the hon. member, was that full information should be presented to Parliament as early as possible, particularly the Treasury returns and the report of the Auditor General upon the previous year's expenditure. According to the pre-

sent practice, the probability was that the Auditor General's report would not be presented to Parliament until near the close of the session, and then the principal part of the financial work of the session would have been done. There were difficulties surrounding the question, and he appreciated the motives which actuated the hon. member in bringing this matter under notice.

MR. SIMPSON (in reply) thanked the Premier for the manner in which he had treated the motion, which, so far as he (Mr. Simpson) had had anything to do in framing it, was intended to obtain information for the convenience of members all round, and put the House in closer touch with the exact financial position of the colony at the time when members were called upon to legislate. Of course the basis of all our legislation must be sound finance, and at present, what was the value of the Auditor General's report? It was presented to Parliament months after the items with which it dealt had almost passed out of sight. Speaking as a member who desired to have exact information, and as a representative of the people, he thought the Auditor General's report for practical purposes was almost valueless, almost waste paper, when presented at so late a date.

THE PREMIER: It was earlier last time.

MR. SIMPSON: Yes; a special effort was made on the last occasion. He could understand the objections urged by the Premier as to the necessity of providing for new works, and of having ample funds to carry on the business of the country; but the plan he had proposed in the motion would, if adopted, put members in the position that when the Governor's Speech at the opening of the session was delivered, there would be laid upon the table at the same time the Estimates for the coming year, and the reports of all the departments for the past year. Then the House could start away fully informed with exact information on every detail. There were businesses in Australia which required just as much care and attention as the business of this Government, although we had magnificent hopes and great resources, and were only beginning to develop them.

THE PREMIER: Not many business

firms in Australia had so much to spend.

MR. SIMPSON: Having submitted the motion for the consideration of the House, he thanked hon. members for the reception they had given it.

Question put and negatived.

MOTION: IMPORTED BRICKS AND INCREASE OF DUTY.

MR. LYALL HALL (Perth) moved:—

That, in view of the proposed importation of bricks from Victoria, for the building of a large edifice in St. George's Terrace, and in consideration of the fact that good bricks are available in quantity in this colony, this House is of opinion that the Government should consider the advisability of at once considerably increasing the duty on imported bricks.

My reason for submitting this motion is that, as one who has the best interests of the country at heart, and who has the greatest faith in the continued progress of this country, I desire to help in every possible way the progress of the colony. This is a matter which does not involve any complicated principle. It is a matter of protecting one of the industries of the colony, the manufacture of bricks; and I have yet to learn that the finest quality of bricks cannot be manufactured in this colony. I have it on the authority of the City Engineer that the samples of bricks submitted to him for use in connection with the city sewerage were of the finest quality that he had seen in any of the colonies. In a growing colony like this, the industry of brickmaking will be an important one for many years to come. Large sums of money have been invested in the erection of machinery and works in connection with brick manufacture, and the persons who have invested their money in this way require adequate protection. I would not go so far as to say that the imported article should be prohibited altogether, because prohibition is the extreme of protection; but I would like to see some increased duty put on the article, so as to make the use of imported bricks an expensive luxury. It was, I think, only a matter of sentiment, after all, which led the representatives of the particular institution I refer to, to import bricks from another colony for their new building in St. George's Terrace; and probably that sentiment was

accentuated by the Victorian tendencies of the architect employed on that work. It is quite likely that the representative of that institution have not given the matter the serious consideration which its importance demands, and, no doubt, they desired to get only the very best article obtainable in sending out of the colony for it. Yet, considering the fact that this colony is able to produce a brick as durable, as hard, and as cheap as any that can be imported from the eastern colonies, I think we would do well to endeavour to make, as far as possible, builders, and those responsible for the erection of buildings, use the home-made article. Therefore, I hope that the House will move in the direction I indicate, and will put such a duty on the imported article as will tend to the development of this industry in the colony. The Premier has always been a strong and generous supporter of those who have evidenced their faith in the colony by sinking their money in its industries, and he has always favourably considered the claims of the producer. Therefore, I claim his sympathy, and the sympathy of this House, in endeavouring to prevent, as much as possible, the influence of certain people in the community who would endeavour to belittle the products of this colony, as some of them do by sending away from the colony for almost every article they require. I do not think I need say more on this subject. I am aware there might be some little trouble in connection with the contracts which have been entered into; but I am given to understand that the managers of the institution for whom this building is being erected have to buy the bricks themselves. That being so, no injustice and no injury would fall on the contractor. I would not press my motion, if it would have such an effect. Therefore I leave the motion in the hands of the House, and hope it will be favourably considered.

MR. A. FORREST (West Kimberley): I have great pleasure indeed in seconding this motion, having believed, ever since I have had the honour of sitting in this House, in protecting as far as possible the interests of the people of the colony. I think it is a disgrace to the country that a financial institution, the

profits of which are made in this country, should send out of the colony for material which can be procured here for the purpose of erecting a building. The present duty on bricks is, I believe, 20 per cent. The imported bricks will be invoiced at a very small rate in Victoria, so that 20 per cent. will not be a large item in the cost. They will be put down at the actual cost price there, and the duty cannot be reckoned as adding much to the freight and other charges connected with their importation. A large number of brick factories here turn out an admirable article. The proprietors have spent large sums of money on machinery and the construction of sidings to our railways at their works; and, as they employ a large amount of labour, they do an immense amount of good to the country.

A MEMBER: What about the foundries?

MR. A. FORREST: I do not propose to deal with foundries at the present time; but I say our brick manufacturers have built these works, and it is the duty of this House to see that the article made from our clay, of which we have such large quantities, should not have to compete with importations from the other colonies. It seems to me that a great many people, rather than buy anything that is made here, prefer to send their money out of the country. They object to help those who have put their money in factories such as these brickworks. I know well, as has been stated by the member for Perth (Mr. Hall), that our local bricks are of first-class quality. I am sorry the hon. member did not bring some of them from the City Council office to show the House what can be produced in this colony. I would go further than the hon. member in his motion, as I think this is a question of urgency. We should show the financial institutions that this country is not going to allow them to import bricks at a low rate of duty, to the disadvantage of our own people, who have come here to earn a living, and many of whom will be thrown out of work as soon as bricks are allowed to be imported in large quantities from the eastern colonies. I would suggest to the Premier that, this being a question of urgency, he should bring down a message from the Governor to the effect that the duty on

bricks from this time forth shall be £1 per thousand. I think such a proceeding would be hailed by the people of this country with universal satisfaction. Bricks are now made locally at a very low price, and many of the brickwork are idle. Why? Because these large institutions prefer to send out of the colony for their bricks, on the plea that they can get a better article, which I very much doubt. I do not think I need do more than appeal to the Government, on behalf of the large number of men who are engaged in this industry, to bring down a message without delay to put the impost I have suggested on this institution, or on any other institution that goes out of its way to defraud the working people in this colony of their just rights.

POINT OF ORDER—SPEAKER'S RULING.

MR. LEAKE (Albany): Is this motion in order, seeing that it proposes, I submit, to increase the burden of taxation?

THE SPEAKER: I do not think it does propose to do that. It proposes to ask the Government to consider the advisability of so doing. It is an abstract resolution, which, I think, comes within the practice of the Imperial Parliament. I have read this extract from *May* pretty often in this House, but members seem to forget it, and, if the hon. member will permit me, I will read it again. It says:—

To a certain extent, evasions are, by usage, permitted of the restriction imposed by the Standing Orders upon proposals for the expenditure of public money. Bills devising a large scheme for public expenditure, accompanied by provisions for the application of the same, have been brought in upon motion, the money clauses being printed in italics. In such cases, the principle of the Bill is discussed, and, if approved on behalf of the Crown, the necessary pecuniary provision is subsequently made; otherwise further progress of the Bill is prevented by the refusal of the Royal recommendation. In like manner, motions advocating public expenditure, or the imposition of a charge, if the motion be framed in sufficiently abstract and general terms, can be entertained, and agreed to by the House. Resolutions of this nature are permissible, because, having no operative effect, no grant is made or burthen imposed by their adoption.

I consider this is one of the resolutions referred to in that passage. This is an abstract resolution, and does not commit the House to anything.

DEBATE RESUMED.

MR. MONGER (York): I am one of the strongest advocates for protection in this House; but in a matter like this, I am of opinion that very little good would follow from carrying out the motion now before hon. members. According to the last report from the Collector of Customs, there was only £1,389 worth of bricks imported into this colony last year; and if an *ad valorem* duty of 20 per cent., and the cost of the freight from the other colonies, be not enough protection, I cannot see what would be. If this House were to carry the motion in its present form, it would mean that the brick companies of this colony would have a certain monopoly, and up would go the price of bricks immediately. If our local manufacturers cannot compete against the other colonies with the freight and the 20 per cent. duty added to the cost, then I fail to see what further concession they can ask the Government to give. I intend to oppose this motion.

MR. SOLOMON (South Fremantle): Before passing a motion like this, the House should take many things into consideration. We must consider whether action of this kind would not prevent people from building, whether it would not prevent them from putting up such improved structures as we see around us now, if they were not certain of the quality of bricks they would be obliged to use in the event of this proposal being adopted. I can speak for myself with regard to a three-storey building which I put up in Fremantle some two years ago. At that time the bricks in this colony were some £2 per thousand—in fact, it was difficult to get them at that price, and I had to import bricks at a cost, landed here, of £5 per thousand.

MR. HALL: That is not the case now.

MR. SOLOMON: Well, I have been building lately, and have been buying local bricks at £2 16s. delivered. They suited me for the class of building I was putting up, and that is the amount I have been paying. But the point is whether or not, if a monopoly in this article be allowed, we are likely to be placed in the same position again as we occupied some two or three years ago. I admit that the locally-made bricks have improved very much in

quality, and I feel sure that, so long as the people of the colony can get good bricks here, they will not import them. In importing bricks, there is not only the freight to be considered, but there is the disadvantage that bricks are not easily handled, and at the port of shipment several men must handle them. The bricks have to be thrown into the ship, and one man has to throw them on board, another has to catch them, and a third man down the hold has to stow them; also a similar process has to be gone through when the bricks arrive in this colony. If that is not sufficient protection for anyone, I do not know what is, for it means an increase at the rate of 70 to 80 per cent. on the original cost of the article.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie : When the hon. member for Perth (Mr. Hall) rose to move this motion, I heard him inform the House that this question was not an involved one: and I at that statement was a trifle surprised, for, to my mind, this question involves the whole fiscal issue, the whole question of protection *versus* free trade, and it might be made the subject of a debate of considerable length. I notice, further, that the hon. member, in advocating the passing of this motion, alluded to the excellent quality, the durability, the hardness, and the low price of locally-manufactured bricks. All these things should constitute in themselves a powerful protection to the local article. If the quality is high, if the price is low, and if the durability and hardness are all that can be desired, there can be very little cause for our worrying about protecting the colony against a foreign article of the same kind. It seems to me, too, to be a vicious principle to suggest that, because a limited number of people have invested their capital in a local industry, we must therefore tax the rest of the community in order to afford them a profit. I mean if we do so that we are giving them a profit, not out of the fruits of their enterprise, but out of a direct impost levied on the rest of the population. Personally, I believe in the principle of freetrade. In a small community like this, it does seem to me to be going too far to say that everybody who wants to build shall have to pay a

tax, in order that a few brickmakers may be permitted to make a higher profit than they could make without the tax. That they do make a profit is, to my mind, demonstrated by the fact that they make bricks; for if they did not make a profit, the work must soon cease. The seconder of this motion, the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest), appeared tonight in an entirely new character, as a protector and supporter of the working man.

MR. WOON: He does not merely pretend to do it.

MR. VOSPER: It was a new pretence for the member for West Kimberley. I say, and there are some grounds for my contention, that even if the member for West Kimberley is correct, and if the increase in the duty on bricks would have the effect of employing a few extra hands, there is still the possibility suggested by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Solomon), that it would have the effect of checking the building trade, and in that way throwing out of work as many hands, if not more, as would be employed in the making of bricks locally, in consequence of the Government giving effect to this proposal. Another feature is that certain classes of brick are required for certain purposes on the goldfields and elsewhere, and those bricks have hitherto had to be imported. Take, for instance, the kind of firebrick which is used in the erection of furnaces, and in smelting works generally. The gold-mining industry, in the course of time, will have to establish large smelting and roasting works of various kinds: and at the present time there is no great sign of the production of these bricks locally. We have heard there is a good clay for firebricks in the colony; but I think that almost everything that emanates from the colony is more or less of a delusion. We were told, years ago, that there would soon be an enormous output of coal; and yet there is not a mine now in the colony which is capable of turning out twenty tons of coal per day. They have neither the hauling machinery, the craning machinery, the pumps, nor anything that is required for their proper development. The enormous deposits of fireclay may be there, but they are undeveloped resources.

MR. A. FORREST: Some people do not want them to be there.

MR. VOSPER: It is not a question of whether we want them or not; Nature has not developed them for us; and, until some tangible reason for placing this heavy duty on bricks is made manifest—until we are sure that the class of brick to which I have referred can be made in the colony—it will be ruinous to risk the checking of our mining industry by placing such a prohibitive tariff on the article as has been suggested by the member for Perth. I look on this as an example of protection run mad. Although I am a freetrader, I might give my vote in this House in favour of maintaining or imposing certain tariff duties. I am by no means bigoted in my views on the fiscal question. I have been furnished with some figures prepared by a member of this House, who is a builder and contractor, and knows what he is speaking about. That member tells me that locally-made bricks can be delivered for £2 6s. per thousand. On the other hand, Melbourne bricks f.o.b. cost £1 10s. per thousand, shipping freight £2 per thousand, railway freight from Fremantle to Perth 6s., duty 6s., or 20 per cent., cartage 5s., insurance 4s., and wharfage 6s.; making the total cost of Melbourne bricks delivered here £4 17s. per thousand, or within 3s. of the £5 mentioned by the member for South Fremantle (Mr. Solomon).

MR. MORAN: Whose figures are those?

MR. VOSPER: They are supplied by the member for North Perth (Mr. Oldham), and we see that the locally made article is protected to the extent of over 100 per cent. Surely it cannot be urged that any better protection is required. If the brickmaking industry in this colony has evidence of permanent success, the persons engaged in it should be ashamed to come to Parliament and ask for more protection. If they have the excellent clay and economical production which the member for Perth (Mr. Hall) alleges, and, in addition, 100 per cent. protection, what more can they ask for? To pass this motion would be inviting the Government to put on a heavy impost which would press heavily and severely on building enterprise of all kinds, on the

goldfields and throughout the colony generally.

THE PREMIER: No man could afford to build with bricks at £4 17s. per thousand.

MR. VOSPER: Quite so, and it is there the argument of the member for York (Mr. Monger) comes in very properly. So long as the duty is left where it is, there is a chance of getting bricks at a normal price.

MR. SIMPSON: I paid £4 per thousand for bricks in Melbourne two years ago.

MR. VOSPER: I am speaking of the argument which has been used here. If we retain the existing duty, there is a reasonable chance of getting bricks at a normal and fair price, but if the duty is increased the result will be to create a monopoly and very probably greatly increase the price of bricks. There is not much fear of any small builder or any considerable number of large builders going in for importing bricks at the present time; but the importation of bricks has its advantage, inasmuch as competition prevents the price rising too high. I have had a conversation with the manager of the Bank of New South Wales, for the erection of which building not only brick but stone is being imported.

MR. SIMPSON: And stone is imported by the Government, too.

MR. VOSPER: And by the Government, too. The manager told me the fact simply was the proper kind of stone for facing could not be procured in the colony. I told him such stone could be procured at Meckering, and that at Coolgardie there was stone which seemed likely to answer the purpose as well; and the reply he made was that the railway rates were so high that it would be just as cheap to import from Victoria. I do not know whether that statement is correct or not. It seems to me that no institution, wealthy or poor, would dream of paying £4 17s. per thousand for bricks, if the class of bricks required could be got for £2 6s. per thousand. The mere fact that such a heavy price is paid is proof that the class of brick required cannot be obtained in the colony. I would ask hon. members to be careful before they pass a motion which will do a great deal of harm and only effect a very small amount of good, even

looking at the matter from the very best possible point of view.

MR. CONOLLY (Dundas): I cannot agree with the member for Perth (Mr. Hall) as to the desirability of raising the duty on bricks. The present duty is quite sufficient protection for all the brick producers in the colony. The duty is 20 per cent., *plus* freight and charges, which very materially increase the cost of the imported article delivered in Perth. Further than that, it appears from last year's statistics that the importation of bricks even then was very small. Whatever the number of bricks imported was, the value only amounted to £1,389. That surely cannot be considered extreme importation, or in any way alarming. As the local brick manufacturers increase their energy and enterprise we may fairly suppose, as in all other industries, importation will largely diminish this year, and will still further diminish later on. An increased duty is totally unnecessary, and in all probability would have the results which the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) has very ably placed before the House. A monopoly would be created, enabling producers to raise their prices and possibly obtain high profits at the cost of the builders and other people who are showing enterprise in building up our towns.

MR. JAMES: That is the old freetrade gag.

MR. CONOLLY: I dare say it is the old freetrade gag, but I think the argument can be applied very aptly in this case. A duty of 20 per cent. on bricks, with all the other charges, is ample protection for the local producer.

MR. JAMES: Speak like a protectionist, and not like an exploded freetrader.

MR. CONOLLY: I must thank the hon. member for his last remark. Under existing conditions an increased duty on bricks is neither necessary nor desirable.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): The only object the member for Perth (Mr. Hall) can possibly have is to stop, if possible, the importation of bricks to be used in the erection of the new building for the Bank of New South Wales. If that institution or its architect has decided that it cannot locally get the quality of bricks required, bricks will be imported whatever the duty. I

understand that this new building is to be one of the best yet erected in Perth, and the mere cost of the bricks required in a building of that character is a very small proportion of the total cost. Supposing the hon. member succeeded in inducing the Government to put an additional £1 per thousand on the import duty on bricks, the only effect would be that the Government would collect the revenue on the imported bricks for this building, and the local producers would not be benefited one iota. The revenue would be only a matter of £300; and depend upon it, when an architect has decided that he will pay a duty of £2 per thousand for the imported brick rather than use the local brick, he has fully discussed the question of quality. The durability of bricks is a very material question, far more important than a mere additional £1 per thousand. The hon. member for Perth (Mr. Hall) has not quite told us what his purpose is. That purpose is either to put a penalty on the bank for importing bricks, or to prevent the importation of bricks in order to allow the local manufacturers to have the trade. But the hon. member cannot succeed in preventing the bricks being imported. The probability is the bricks are already ordered, and some of them here, or on the way. The local working man, or producer, would not get any advantage from this particular lot of bricks. But what about the contractor who has taken the contract? He has already undertaken to do certain work in a certain time.

MR. MORAN: The bank would find the bricks.

MR. A. FORREST: They would have to pay the difference, anyhow.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The bricks are supplied on table at a certain price.

MR. SIMPSON: Let us stop the bricks, and build the bank of jarrah.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The object the member for Perth has cannot possibly be attained in this particular case. As to encouraging the manufacture of bricks in this country, it is no use living in a fool's paradise. Anybody who understands bricks knows very well that nine-tenths of the bricks made in Western Australia are in no degree equal to the imported bricks. The reason people prefer to pay £4 17s. instead of £2 6s. per 1,000 is their

knowledge of the difference in quality. As soon as local brickmakers can produce bricks approaching the quality of imported bricks, they will get, at least, £1 10s. per thousand. The object of the local manufacturer should be better quality, and I am glad to say there has been a great improvement in that respect, brought about by suitable machinery, and more skilful men.

MR. GEORGE: At starvation wages.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Starvation wages might, perhaps, be thought by some people to produce a better article at the same price. At the present moment the Bank of New South Wales could not get 300,000 bricks of the quality they require in the colony, even if they gave £10 a thousand for them.

MR. GEORGE: Nonsense.

MR. SIMPSON: The Director of Public Works knows the truth of the statement.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Some bricks of the quality required might be got, but for good or evil the bank has decided to import bricks. All that would happen after the passing of this motion would be a transfer of some £300 by the bank to the Treasurer of the country.

MR. JAMES: The bank could well afford that.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Perhaps the bank could, but I question whether this House is going to pass a motion for that purpose and nothing more. If the public good were to be secured by this attack on an individual institution, members might all support the motion; but to make an individual personal attack on one institution, more in revenge than anything else, seems beneath the dignity of the House and beneath the dignity of the fiscal question involved. If there is anything in the motion at all, the hon. member for Perth should bring it up when a Tariff Amendment Bill is before the House, when it could be dealt with amongst other questions of the kind. A personal and individual attack on an institution is a course of action I cannot lend myself to.

MR. LOCKE (Sussex): I rise with much pleasure to support the motion of the member for Perth (Mr. Hall). All industries and manufactures that tend to employ labour and develop the country, particularly at the present time, ought to be encouraged. I will go one step further,

and urge the prohibition of the importation of these bricks. Good bricks can be made, and are made, in this colony. There is any amount of fireclay in the colony, even further down than the Collie, and any number of men are anxious for work. The brick manufacturers in this country ought to be protected, and not only brick manufacturers but people engaged in all industries. The Bank of New South Wales was established here in order to make money out of us, and it ought to spend its money amongst us. I hope the motion will be carried, and that no more bricks will be imported.

MR. HIGHAM (Fremantle): It is not my intention to support this motion. As a protectionist I rank myself second to no member of the House, but I do not feel I can support legislation levelled at one institution or one individual. It is the intention of the Government to deal with the tariff in a comprehensive manner in a short time, and this matter might well be left over until then. Any industry that will support the labouring population of this colony should be protected, but not on the lines of this motion.

MR. GEORGE (Murray): I regret I was not here earlier to hear the arguments of the different speakers on this motion. I am pleased that this question has been raised. The Government this session will have to make up their minds decisively what they are going to do in regard to the important question of freetrade and protection? It is about time that we had done with shilly-shallying, giving way in some instances to try and catch a vote, and in other instances attempting to put on duties for the same honourable purpose. The importation of the bricks in this particular instance is simply a peg on which we can hang arguments, if we have any, and put them before the House. I say unhesitatingly that there can be as good a brick made in Western Australia to-day as ever was made in Melbourne.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: But such bricks are not being made here.

MR. GEORGE: I suppose there can be as good Christians made in Western Australia as were ever made in Palestine. According to the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth), good Christians are not being made in Western Australia.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: They are being made here.

MR. GEORGE: That is news, and perhaps the hon. member will forgive my illustration. He knows more about Christians than I do, but he knows less than I do about bricks. Good bricks could be made in the colony if people would only be prepared to pay anything like the price they pay for the imported article. People want bricks at 37s. or 38s. a thousand, but will pay close on £5 for imported bricks, not because it is proved the latter are the better article, but because they are believed to be the better article. It is the same way in regard to the trade I represent.

MR. SIMPSON: The Black Swan Foundry.

MR. GEORGE: That is a fact I have no reason to be ashamed of. If I had any reason to be ashamed of it, the hon. member would be the first to come forward in a kindly manner, pat me on the back, and try to cheer me up. In the foundries of this colony can be made an article as good as can be imported, but the argument used by people who come to buy is that they can import at a certain price, and they grind the poor manufacturer down as much as possible. For local bricks people will not come near the price they are willing to pay for bricks made in Victoria at starvation wages.

MR. JAMES: The freetrader likes starvation wages.

MR. GEORGE: It has been proved there is suitable clay in the colony, and that bricks can be made here. Within the last year or two, at any rate, machinery for turning the clay into bricks has been brought into the colony, but that machinery was made in Melbourne.

MR. SIMPSON: Do the manufacturers not make a mistake in importing their own machinery?

MR. GEORGE: That is where I flourish. One gentleman belonging to the Legislature bought a cheap plant from Victoria, and he had the distinguished pleasure of paying me £300 for repairing it. I do not mind how many such plants are imported. There are in this colony at least six plants capable of turning the clay into good bricks. If we have the clay and we have the machinery and the men who know how to turn the clay into

bricks, let us protect the brick-making industry. On my part there is no aiming at the Bank of New South Wales, which is nothing to me. This discussion will show the Government how necessary it is this industry should be supported. If the Government are not prepared to support industries, let them say at once there must be freetrade for everybody, farmers as well. It is no use protecting one class of people and neglecting another. The action of the Government in taking the duty off machinery has shaken the foundry business here, and pretty well destroyed it; and if the brick-making industry is not protected the same results will follow there.

MR. SIMPSON: Did protection build up the foundry industry in Melbourne?

MR. GEORGE: Yes, certainly.

MR. SIMPSON: Where are the foundry proprietors now?

MR. GEORGE: Pretty nearly all in the bankruptcy court, and that is where we shall be if we do not mend our ways. The member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson) knows as well as I do that if we go on bringing people here and flooding Perth, Fremantle, and the goldfields with them, we shall not only have the cry of the unemployed, but the cry of hungry people as well.

MR. VOSPER: Do you think that protecting machinery would not hurt the goldfields?

MR. GEORGE: If a tax were put on newspapers we might save the intellects of people a little bit. I can only speak from my own experience. If the country is going in entirely for a freetrade policy, wages will come down, and if wages come down here, then God help the colony! I never knew a contented people under low wages. Only a few weeks ago there was a pretty good example at Menzies, where, when the railway was opened, an immediate desire was shown to lower wages, on the ground that food had been made cheaper by the improved means of communication. I do not desire to weary the House, and only speak out what seems to me to be right. I should certainly be prepared to protect the brick industry thoroughly, and not half do it. If the Government intend to do anything in the way of tariff reform this session, let them put their

shoulders to the wheel and do it properly. A brick to be a good brick must be well burned. Let the Government well burn their measure, and it will prove a good one.

Mr. HUBBLE (Gascoyne): No doubt the majority of members are much against bricks being imported for a particular institution when there are manufacturers here able to turn out a good article. But I fail to see why we should place a restriction in regard to this one particular institution. The proper time for such a motion will be when the Tariff Bill comes before the House. I shall certainly oppose the motion.

Mr. WALTER JAMES (East Perth): On more than one occasion I have protested in this House against the gross injustice on the part of members who, when motions are brought forward, delight themselves in criticising, not the principle involved, but the mere wording of the propositions. Members who take up that position are trying to find some cloak under which to hide that flaccidity which invariably characterises them when dealing with such a question as is now before the House. When a man wants to get out of responsibility and find some opportunity of avoiding a decision in accordance with oft-expressed convictions of this House—I will take the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) as an illustration—instead of saying, "I am a protectionist, and as the motion tends in the direction of protection, I intend to support it," he says "Oh no, I cannot do that; I know it is brought forward by a member who believes in the same principle as myself, but still I want to avoid giving an honest vote, and I cannot vote for this because the 'i' is not dotted or the 't' not crossed."

Mr. ILLINGWORTH: I am protesting against an unjust motion.

Mr. JAMES: The hon. member in his righteous indignation—I think "righteous" is an apt word—will not vote for the principle if he can, by means of a side issue, possibly avoid committing himself. That does not harmonise with my idea of political independence.

Mr. SIMPSON: Now what about bricks?

Mr. JAMES: That is what I want to come to. I want to keep the minds of hon. members to bricks, and not to allow

them to go on side issues about the crossing of the "t" or the dotting of the "i." Members are apt to do that to avoid the responsibility of giving their honest vote. The principle on which the motion is based is this: It has been proved by the importation of this large number of bricks for the Bank of New South Wales that the present protection is insufficient, and this opportunity to bring the question before the House is taken when the fact is fresh in the minds of members and of the community generally. We should be as childish as the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) if this matter were left over for discussion until a tariff amendment Bill is before the House. We should then have no right to propose increased taxation, because any such proposal must be introduced by the Government themselves. The member for Perth (Mr. Hall) is quite right in submitting the motion, with the object of showing the Government what is the wish and opinion of the House, so that when the Government are dealing with the question of tariff reform they may be able to consider that opinion. If we are to wait, as is suggested, until the tariff Bill comes before us we shall be too late, and that would appear to be the position desired by the member for Central Murchison in avoiding the giving of a straight-out vote now. The hon. member says he can do it in the future, knowing that he cannot give it in the particular future at which he aims. That is very adroit on the part of the hon. member, and I wish to expose his adroitness; for although as a rule it is my privilege, sitting on this (the Opposition) side of the House, to hide our adroitness, yet on this occasion it is not. I submit that we can produce bricks here quite good enough to build any institution; and, judging from the practical testimony of the member for the Murray, we are doing it. The member for the Murray (Mr. George) is far better qualified to express an opinion in this connection than is the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth). We know that during the past 12 or 18 months improved machinery has been introduced into this colony for making bricks, and by means of that machinery we know that good bricks are being made. The member for Central Murchison says we should not have an in-

creased duty on bricks until the locally-produced article is sufficiently good to compete with imported bricks.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I never said anything of the kind.

MR. JAMES: The hon. member said, and I have his words here—"until the local article is improved in quality." If the member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson), who is an avowed freetrader, had used that argument he would have been consistent, or if it had been used by the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper), who is also a freetrader—these hon. members being consistent in their very errors; but when the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth), who talks about being a protectionist, yet votes against protection—

THE PREMIER: Changes his spots.

MR. JAMES: His reasons go to this extent, that we should have no protection in this colony for assisting the brick-making industry until the local article is sufficiently improved in quality and price to enable it to compete with the imported article. The hon. member now objects to that; and the incident shows that when he departs from principle he does not know where he stands.

MR. SIMPSON: What are the views of the chairman of the Federation League on bricks?

MR. JAMES: The hon. member (Mr. Illingworth) asks why the Bank of New South Wales, if it can obtain bricks from Victoria as good as bricks obtainable here, may not import them at a higher price, if it chooses to do so. There are one or two reasons which may be influencing the bank in this matter. There are some banks doing business in Victoria which may have brickfields as bad assets, and such banks may wish those brickfields to be worked. It is possible the Bank of New South Wales may have a brickfield in Victoria as a bad asset, and may wish to make it work. I suggest this only as a possibility, because numbers of banks have securities of a similar nature, and they naturally want to work their securities. In addition to that, we find that the architect of this new bank is one who has been in this colony only a short time, and he came here with all the intense narrow-mindedness and prejudice against local produc-

tions which are so glibly attributed to West Australians, but are nevertheless practised very largely by persons who come here with strong prejudices in favour of some other place as against this colony.

MR. SIMPSON: That architect has been in the Government service eighteen months.

MR. JAMES: Even so, I say that during that time he has exhibited that prejudice against locally-made articles which he and others so freely attribute to West Australians. Why cannot the Bank of New South Wales, if its directors have any desire to assist this colony, do so by building their new bank with local stone or locally-made bricks? I do not think it is right to discuss this question entirely in connection with the Bank of New South Wales, and I agree that any alteration in the tariff should not be made with the object of affecting specially the Bank of New South Wales; although, if such alteration did affect that bank at all, the bank could well afford it. I do not want to apply this legislation so that it shall interfere with the rights of any particular bank or any contractor, in regard to engagements into which parties may have entered. I want to look at the principle involved in the motion; and when we know that we have in this colony an enormous number of bricks being produced, and know also that bricks of the best quality are being produced, as was stated by the member for the Murray, who says they are as good as any which can be imported, or almost as good; then I venture to think this is largely a question of prejudice in favour of imported bricks as against bricks produced here. Even if it be not so, we should try to give to those who are carrying on the brick industry here an opportunity of supplying bricks for local buildings; and they will not have that opportunity if we are always to have these so-called superior bricks imported from other colonies. If the present protection is not sufficient, we ought to increase the amount of it, so as to make it operate in favour of locally-made bricks; for, after all, a duty of 20 per cent. on imported bricks is not much, when the cost of the article is comparatively small.

MR. GEORGE: The same make of brick was recently sold at £1 a thousand.

MR. JAMES: If the fact is established in favour of the good quality of locally-made bricks, then we ought, as protectionists, to vote for an increase in the duty on imported bricks. When we find that an enormous number of bricks is being introduced into the colony from outside, while most of our brickfields are idle, or not doing much business on account of the sudden cessation of building operations; when we find that those engaged in the brick-making industry in this colony are prepared to produce bricks cheaply, and of good quality; and when we know that the most modern machinery has been introduced in the last twelve months for making bricks of the best quality, I say we ought to assist our local industry by increasing the duty on imported bricks, if that is shown to be necessary.

MR. VOSPER: You have Sir Robert Giffen and other economists against you on that principle.

MR. JAMES: If some members want to follow the fallacies of those who have so blindly followed the Manchester school in their theories of political economy, and if some members want those authorities—Sir Robert Giffen and others—to lead this country in its legislation on questions of this kind, then, I say, follow them; but if, on the other hand, the majority of members want to do the best they can for the country in which they live, they will not follow Sir Robert Giffen and those who think with him on questions of this kind. There are experiences to be gained out of England, to which Sir Robert Giffen shuts his eyes; and if you take the intellect of America, of Germany, of France, and of all those countries which have followed protection—

MR. SIMPSON: And Cuba, too.

MR. JAMES: And Cuba, too, then I think we may say that in those countries there is to be found as much intellect as is possessed by Sir Robert Giffen, and I will say, in addition, by the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper). Let us make up our minds as to whether we are protectionists or freetraders: and if the duty on imported bricks is not sufficient to operate in favour of the local

article, let us, as protectionists, vote for an increase, and let us avoid this too frequent habit of endeavouring to get away from the principle and turning to some side issue, when any motion of this kind is before us. I have great pleasure in supporting, not the mere wording of the motion, but the principle which underlies it; providing that whatever measure is introduced shall not affect present obligations.

MR. GREGORY (North Coolgardie): I have listened with some surprise to the hon. member who has just spoken, and I think his remarks are due to the fact that he was not present in the earlier part of the debate. We are asked to pass this motion deliberately for the purpose of doing an injury to a public institution, after contracts have been entered into for importing bricks from another colony; and the motion asks, in effect, that a special Bill shall be introduced for further protecting local bricks. The principle involved is that certain persons have entered into contracts, and have decided to import certain articles required for their new building; yet it is now proposed that we should fine them for daring to bring imported bricks into the colony. I say the proper time to deal with this question will be when the Tariff Bill is before the House; and if it can then be shown that a duty of 20 per cent. on imported bricks is not sufficient to protect this industry, the House can then consider if it is desirable to increase the duty on imported bricks. To pass this motion would be exhibiting a certain amount of spleen, because it would appear to be aimed directly at an institution which is putting up a certain building.

MR. SIMPSON: That is the only way you can knock anything out of them, I believe.

MR. GREGORY: When the Tariff Bill comes before the House, hon. members will have an opportunity of showing, if they can, that the duty on bricks is not sufficient, and that persons in Victoria can send bricks into this colony and compete with the locally-made article. When that is shown, I think it will be only wise and right that we increase the duty, so that the locally-made article may be more generally used in the colony; and I

think that is the opinion also of the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth). He is a protectionist, so am I, and I am quite willing to deal with this question on its merits when it comes before us at the proper time. There are other articles on our tariff list which need revising; and when the Tariff Bill comes before us, I shall be only too pleased to support the mover of this motion, if he can make out a good case.

Mr. KINGSMILL (Pilbarra): I intend to support the motion, and I do so on the same line as the member for East Perth, that is, on the question of principle. Rather too much stress has been laid on the circumstance which has evidently given rise to this motion, that the Bank of New South Wales is importing at the present time 300,000 bricks for its new building; and even if this motion were carried, I do not think it is within the bounds of possibility that a special Bill would be brought in at once to increase the duty on imported bricks. Even if such a Bill were brought in, I do not think it could come into operation at once. Therefore, if the institution in question understands its own business, I take it that by the time the tariff is amended in the direction proposed by this motion, those 300,000 bricks will have been safely landed in this colony, and the motion will practically fail in its effect as against that institution. In the second place, I support the motion because, in my opinion, the incidence of the proposed taxation is a fair one; because it will affect people who will be able to bear it, and it will not affect the great bulk of the population of Western Australia, because the people cannot eat bricks, even if they are as salt as the member for Central Murchison would lead us to believe.

Mr. SIMPSON: How does that affect the question of high rents?

Mr. KINGSMILL: I do not think it affects that question at all. For the reasons I have stated I will support the motion.

Mr. HOLMES (East Fremantle): I desire to say I am going to oppose the motion, but I am not going to do it as some hon. members do in this House, by claiming to be protectionists, and acting as freetraders. I shall leave this House

to decide by my action as to whether I am a freetrader or a protectionist. My reason for voting against the motion is that I do object to this legislating for one particular class, or for an individual interest. If in the making of bricks it is found necessary to increase the duty on imported bricks, then I take it that when the Tariff Bill comes down will be the proper time for dealing with that matter. At present there is a difference of 20 per cent. on the imported as compared with locally-made bricks; and if with freight, duty, and other charges added, the protection is not sufficient, the question of increasing the duty can be considered when we deal with the Tariff Bill. The member for East Perth (Mr. James) referred to the Bank of New South Wales in reference to running a brick-making business in Victoria. From what I know of the manner in which contracts are made and the building business is conducted, I think the bank in this case will probably have nothing to do with buying the bricks, as the contractor will have to get them in the best way he can. My reason for opposing the motion is that I see no necessity for this legislating for one industry. We know that iron foundries do exist in this colony, and have managed to compete against articles imported from other colonies without any duty at all. If so, surely the brick-making business can exist with a duty of 20 per cent. in its favour. It has been argued that there has been a desire to use the imported article, and to ignore the locally-made article; but I do not think there is any truth in that. In my own dealings, I always give preference to the local article; but, like others in our business, I am compelled to get an imported article when it is not obtainable locally. There is no foundation for the statement that there is a desire to import articles and to ignore articles locally produced, as will be found when we get down to actual facts. Apart from that, it is unreasonable to argue that the bank or the contractor in this case should not be allowed to pay £4 a thousand for bricks, when local bricks equal in quality can be got for £2 a thousand. I know the Bank of New South Wales is not likely to pay £1 a thousand for bricks, when the bank

can get equally good bricks for £2 a thousand. With these facts before me, I must oppose the motion.

Mr. QUINLAN (Toodyay): In rising to speak on this question, I do so for the reason that a bad effect on the colony is produced by statements going forth, especially from this House, that the colony cannot or does not produce bricks or stone of good quality. I have had to purchase in the past Melbourne bricks for building purposes in Perth, and I have done so at nearly £1 less per thousand than the price now stated for bricks obtained in the colony, the price being then 77s. a thousand; but that is nearly three years ago. I know that good bricks are obtainable in this colony now, and that machinery has been imported for the purpose of making bricks of the best quality. I have seen bricks produced in the colony recently equal to the Melbourne article; and I think the time has arrived when a further impost should be placed on imported bricks. This will give a large amount of employment, and tend to open up some brick-yards which are now closed for want of business. It is true that my friend, the member for York (Mr. Monger), referred to the small amount paid for duty on bricks imported in the year 1897; but if he had looked at the figures for the year preceding, he would have found a considerable increase. Reference has been made also to Meckering stone as not being so good as the Melbourne blue stone; but I am in a position to say, upon the authority of a large contractor here who has built large premises for myself and others, that the Meckering stone is better and cheaper than Melbourne bluestone, and there is proof of this in more than one building in this city. These facts ought to be made known; and I think it comes with bad grace for any hon. member in the House to decry the products of the colony, and especially when these statements go forth as having been said in Parliament. With regard to the amount of duty on bricks, I do not think it is sufficient to operate in favour of locally-made bricks, notwithstanding that we are able to make an equally good article. I do not think 20 per cent. is sufficient: and although the member who has proposed

this motion is moving in the matter somewhat early, having regard to the Tariff Bill which is about to be introduced, nevertheless the debate upon this motion will elicit an expression of opinion from members of this House as to the necessity for amending the tariff in this particular, so that the Government, when they do bring in their Tariff Bill, will have before them the views of members upon this question as a guide in dealing with this item in the tariff. I intend to move an amendment on the motion, as I do not like the wording of it; and although I do not believe it was in the mind of the mover to refer to any particular institution, nevertheless reference has been made to it in the debate, and the motion has some appearance of having been directed against that institution. For that reason I think an amendment will be acceptable to the House, as it will not bind members to anything beyond the mere expression of opinion as to the desirability of increasing the duty on imported bricks. I now move, as an amendment, that the words, "in view of the proposed importation of bricks from Victoria, for the building of a large edifice in St. George's Terrace," and also the words "at once considerably," be struck out. The motion will then read:—

That, in consideration of the fact that good bricks are available in quantity in this colony, this House is of opinion that the Government should consider the advisability of increasing the duty on imported bricks.

Mr. WOOD (West Perth): I second the amendment, as it appears to me a good way out of the difficulty which is created by the wording of the motion. I feel sure the mover does not want to penalise the Bank of New South Wales, and I believe the contractor is the man who will be affected in this instance if anyone is. I am in favour of putting on a sufficient duty to protect the local industries of the colony. No doubt at present the cost and charges of imported bricks are a considerable protection. The contractor informed me yesterday that these bricks are standing him £4 17s. 6d. a thousand, and that the locally made bricks would be £2 6s. to £2 10s. a thousand, delivered on the job. It is a question whether we

should increase this duty, and I think the matter might be left until the Government bring in the Tariff Bill. During the debate reference has been made by some hon. members, who talk as if there were nothing good in Western Australia. As regards the making of good bricks, even before the improved machinery was produced for brick-making, I ask hon. members to look at our Town Hall, and say whether there are any better bricks than those. That building has been up since 1866. Then look at the large new building at the corner of Barrack-street and St. George's Terrace, Moir's Chambers; also look at the Western Australian Bank, the Union Bank, the National Bank, and other large buildings in the Terrace. Moir's Chambers are a good example of locally-made bricks.

MR. SIMPSON: There is a lot of imported stuff in that building.

MR. WOOD: I do not know about Eagle Chambers in Hay-street, but there is also Crossland's Chambers in Barrack-street; and we should not forget that large old building at the top of St. George's Terrace, the Barracks. Therefore, for people to say in this House that we have no good bricks, and that we have nothing good that is locally produced—

A MEMBER: Who said that?

MR. WOOD: The member for North-East Coolgardie said so.

MR. VOSPER: No. I was quoting remarks made by the member for Perth himself. He said the bricks were of a very superior quality, and I said if they were so, their quality was their own best protection, and that the fact of the Bank of New South Wales importing bricks showed that some persons did not consider local bricks were equal in quality.

MR. WOOD: I intend to support the amendment as a good way out of the difficulty, and I hope the member for Perth will accept it; for, if his motion were carried, it could have no real effect, because the question will have to be dealt with when the Tariff Bill comes on, as it must do in a short time.

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

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

THE SPEAKER again stated the question, by reading the motion (Mr. Hall's), and the amendment (Mr. Quinlan's).

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The proposal to amend this motion should commend itself to hon. members—at any rate, to those who are in favour of an increased duty on bricks; because I cannot think it would be advisable for this House to pass a resolution dealing with one commodity, at a time when it is expected that the whole tariff will soon be under consideration. We must also recollect that, even if the duty were increased by 10s. or even 20s. per thousand, the amount of that increase on the 300,000 bricks which it is proposed to import for the new building would not be more than £100 or £200 to the Government, or to the individual importing the bricks; so that it is really not a matter of sufficient importance to be dealt with by the motion in its original shape. If, however, hon. members like to pass the motion as it is proposed to be amended by the member for Toodyay (Mr. Quinlan), it will only mean that this House is of opinion that the Government should consider the advisability of increasing the duty on bricks; that is to say, it might even be said that the amendment would not be a direction to the Government, although I think it would be taken as a direction by the Government, in regard to this matter. I should have no personal objection to place in the new tariff a duty on bricks which would be charged in a different way—a specific duty rather than an *ad valorem* duty—which would, I think, be more certain in its operation, and perhaps have the desired effect. I am firmly of opinion that there is not the slightest reason why we should import bricks from anywhere. We can make bricks in this colony sufficient for all our purposes, and unless for some very special work I cannot understand anyone importing at something like £5 per thousand, when the local article can be obtained for £2 6s. per thousand. Persons must be very flush of money, and anxious to spend more than necessary if they purchase at such a price. When more bricks were required than were forthcoming, as was the case a year or two ago, when there was urgency to erect buildings, I could understand some necessity for such importa-

tion; but under existing circumstances I should say few people would care to import at the price mentioned. I am borne out by returns from the Collector of Customs, which show that a very small quantity of bricks were imported during last year. The only reason this motion has been submitted—in fact, the motion says so—is that some financial institution in the city is importing bricks to build a large place in St. George's Terrace. I cannot myself understand how that financial institution can do such a thing, seeing that it must lose money by the transaction; unless, as the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) said, the local bricks are no good, or at any rate are not nearly so good as those imported.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Anyhow, the importers think so, or they would not pay the price.

THE PREMIER: For my own part, I cannot have much sympathy with people who, while living in the colony and making their money here, are not willing to give to the working people here a share of the business when buildings are erected or enlarged.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: No one else can understand it.

MR. GEORGE: I think you (Mr. Illingworth) understand it, anyhow.

THE PREMIER: It is the duty of everyone of us to encourage and help the people who dwell with us in this colony. It looks very bad for a large institution doing business and making money here not to give our own workers a share of the business, but to go to foreign countries for articles which could be obtained here. Such an action is not patriotic.

MR. GEORGE: Withdraw the Government account from the New South Wales Bank.

THE PREMIER: If the amendment of the member for Toodyay (Mr. Quinlan) is carried, the effect will be that the Government will consider the question. We will advise this House to put a specific duty on bricks rather than an *ad valorem* duty. So far as I am concerned I have no objection to the motion in its amended form.

MR. GEORGE: What about other industries?

MR. WALLACE (Yalgoo): I oppose the amendment of the hon. member for

Toodyay. There is no member of the House, or resident of the country, who is not proud of the buildings which have been erected in Perth. When a person calls for tenders for the erection of a building, it is not necessary he should be an architect or a judge of building operations. We usually apply to architects to give us the quantities and the materials required for the construction. If this motion is carried it will tend to depreciate the class of buildings we desire to see erected in Perth and in the various centres.

THE PREMIER: How is that?

MR. WALLACE: The local bricks are said to be good bricks for certain purposes. Moir's Buildings, which have been mentioned, are about as ornamental and useful a set of buildings as any in the city, and the owner of that would not for one moment have thought of putting in bricks not sufficiently burnt or not of sufficiently good quality to ensure the permanence desired.

THE PREMIER: Moir's Buildings are of local bricks, I think.

MR. WALLACE: In the last couple of years there has been great improvement in local bricks; but in the opinion of those who are authorities, the local bricks are not such as should be put into buildings of the sort we desire to see. The member for South Fremantle (Mr. Solomon) has told us that he finds the local bricks very useful and suitable for small classes of buildings, such as cottages; but there is other evidence that local bricks are not at all suitable for carrying heavy weights and giving permanence generally. We have had the evidence of the member for the Murray (Mr. George), and other gentlemen interested in the brick industry.

MR. GEORGE: I am not interested in the brick industry. I gave it up eleven years ago, when I had too much of it.

MR. WALLACE: We have evidence that bricks can be produced in the colony. If that be so, why do we not produce them?

THE PREMIER: So we do.

MR. WALLACE: Why ask for the protection mentioned in this motion, if manufacturers in this colony are prepared to compete in quality with the imported article? Sufficient protection is

given to the brick industry by the present duty, *plus* freights and the loss caused in the extra handling. If the bricks burned in the colony were suitable for such buildings as I have indicated, would anyone pay £2 per thousand more for imported bricks? It is idle for members to tell us local bricks here are quite as suitable as imported bricks for the large buildings which have been singled out for remark.

MR. GEORGE: We are all out of work, you know.

MR. WALLACE: I can see the desire is to protect industries at any cost. I am not a protectionist, but a freetrader. The best protection an industry can have is competition. Where there is competition, an article suitable for the market must be produced. If there be every appliance for burning bricks in this colony, and those engaged in the industry will not produce an article of a proper quality, it is time to encourage others who are enterprising enough to import the proper article and erect such buildings as are desired in the city and in other places in the colony. I hope members will consider that point before voting with the motion as now amended. I should like to express my appreciation of the action of the member for Toodyay (Mr. Quinlan) in moving that certain words be struck out. It was rather bad policy on the part of the member for Perth (Mr. Lyall Hall) to mention a particular building. I hope members will not support any proposal to increase the duty on bricks. The excessive price paid for imported bricks shows the desirability of competition in order to get a local article of the required quality.

MR. LEAKE (Albany): I hope the House will pass neither the motion nor the amendment. The occasion is not a fitting one for debating at length the relative merits of freetrade and protection. But taking this motion by itself I have not heard any arguments, so far, sufficiently convincing to cause me to support the motion. If there is one article the price of which is regulated by supply and demand, I suppose bricks must be considered in the first rank. It is admitted by those in favour of this motion that whereas the imported article costs £4 17s. per thousand landed

in Perth, the locally made article can be purchased for £2 6s.

MR. HALL: That has not been proved. It has only been stated.

MR. LEAKE: It has not been contradicted.

MR. HALL: I contradict it, anyhow.

MR. LEAKE: What does the mover say Melbourne bricks cost when landed in Perth? We will say the imported bricks cost £4 per thousand—that will not be disputed—and that the local article can be purchased at £2 6s. I am prepared to go with those members who say that a good brick can be produced here; and I have had a little experience myself in the matter lately. Surely there is ample protection at the present moment even for the most rabid protectionist, in the difference between the price of the local article and that of the imported article. It seems to me absurd to ask for a further duty. The argument is that when you encourage one industry you possibly harass another. On that principle what effect would there be on the building trade if the importation of bricks were further restricted? That certainly would not encourage the building trade, and would most probably harass it. Further restrictions would do a certain amount of harm and damage to the shipping trade; and if it harassed the building trade the only result would be increased rents.

MR. GEORGE: Where does the harassing come in?

MR. LEAKE: Oh, listen!

MR. GEORGE: I am listening; make it clear.

MR. LEAKE: Listen, and I will make it clear. I will tell you something which will perhaps interest you. A discussion like this brings out all the peculiar traits of political character—the dogmatism of the protectionist, the stupidity of the prohibitionist, and the moderation of the freetrader. I confess that I am a freetrader. Then, a fourth party has sprung up, influenced no doubt by the moderation of the freetrader, and that is the federationist. What is there to justify a general increase in the duty on bricks? If we are trying to forward the brick trade, the building trade, or the bootmaking trade, why not also endeavour to favour other

trades? Take the bootmaking industry, for instance, or the tanning industry.

THE PREMIER: That is protected.

MR. LEAKE: We know perfectly well that the tanner cries out for a duty on leather, and, on the other hand, the boot-maker wants leather in free. We find ourselves at once in all sorts of difficulty and trouble.

MR. VOSPER: And both trades want machinery in free.

MR. LEAKE: Here is another practical test: If we carry this motion, what difference will it make to the revenue? How many people can afford now to build with imported bricks? I take it that only a bank can afford to do it. If I am properly informed, these bricks are required for a special purpose. Banks have to use strong-rooms, and they have to use specially-made bricks for the purpose, and very likely these bricks are to be imported with that object. One member argued that if a bank could obtain a local article for £2 6s. which is alleged to be equal to the imported article at £4 17s., then the bank must be a fool to buy at the higher price. There is no doubt about that; but if people like to do foolish things, it is hardly worth our while to bring in the whole force of the Legislature to cure their complaint. I do not propose to debate this question at any great length, but merely to express my views and give my reasons for voting against the motion. If members really wish to raise this question of free-trade or protection, let them do it in a proper and legitimate way. Let us vote against the motion, and decide once and for all what the policy is going to be. Are we going in for protection, free-trade, or prohibition? It seems to me that prohibition is the aim of most members. I repeat that if an industry cannot stand with 20 per cent. protection and the additional cost of handling, haulage and ferriage—which latter means about £1 a ton—then there is not much in that industry. For these reasons I intend to vote against both the motion and the amendment.

MR. HALL (in reply): I am glad that I introduced this motion, for the purpose of finding out who are the protectionists in reality, and who are what I may call word-of-mouth protectionists. I wish

to protest in the strongest possible manner against certain insinuations thrown out by some members, and especially the member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth). I have no connection whatever with the Bank of New South Wales, having dealt entirely with the Commercial Bank since I came to the colony; and I have no connection whatever with any brick company. The insinuations thrown out by the hon. member are, I think, unworthy of him.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I never made any such statement.

MR. HALL: You did. You inferred that my reason for bringing this motion forward was that I had some particular animus against this bank.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I never gave the hon. member any reason for supposing I had any such thought. I said that the motion appeared to be directed against this particular bank, and that I was opposed to class legislation.

MR. HALL: The impression which hon. members in this House would receive from the speech of the hon. member was that I was actuated by some other motive than a desire to simply get an increase of duty.

MR. LEAKE: We accept the explanation.

MR. HALL: I may also say that I am rather surprised at the gentleman who professes so much departing from one of those doctrines which he is so fond of preaching, "Judge not that ye be not judged." I am also surprised at the hon. member advocating one set of opinions in private and another set in this House. When I spoke to him privately about this matter he said he was in perfect accord with me, but as he has told us himself he has since had a chat with the manager of this particular bank, and—

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I never made any such statement, and I have never seen the manager of the bank since I spoke to the hon. member.

MR. HALL: I was under the impression that it was the member for Central Murchison who said he had seen the bank manager. My sole object in bringing this motion forward was, if possible, to check the tendency of some people to import every possible thing, instead of using the local article.

A MEMBER: What about the Government buildings?

MR. HALL: I believe every brick used in the Government buildings has been locally made. I do not believe there is an imported article used in the Government buildings. My sole object in bringing this motion forward was to try to check the tendency of some people to belittle the products of this colony, and to import every possible thing they can. I well remember how for many, many years in Victoria some old English people would not have, on any account, anything that was "colonial," and the only surprise to my mind was that they would even allow their children to be born in the colony. I question the figures given by the hon. member for North-East Collogardie (Mr. Vosper) on the authority of the hon. member for North Perth (Mr. Oldham), to the effect that the imported bricks cost something like £5.

MR. VOSPER: £4 15s.

MR. HALL: I know of my own knowledge that bricks have been imported here and sold at £3 per thousand, and the member for Toodyay (Mr. Quinlan) tells me that three years ago he imported bricks at £3 17s. a thousand, at a time when everyone expected to get the utmost possible interest for his money. With regard to the cry that we cannot make good bricks in this colony, I need only refer members to such buildings as St. George's Cathedral, the St. George's Buildings, the present Town Hall, and several banks, and I think, had this particular bank liked to have made certain enquiries into the matter, they would have found they could have obtained just as good bricks here as there are in the other colonies. In this particular instance, the idea of importing was probably accentuated by the fact that the architect came quite recently from Victoria. The fact that it is a bank that is importing these bricks did not prompt me in any way to move in this matter. I should have taken just the same action had it been a charitable institution or a private person. Had a private person, instead of a bank, been in question, there would possibly have been a different feeling in this House towards the motion. The object which I had in drawing attention to this matter has been achieved,

and I will, therefore, fall in with the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Toodyay, the more so in view of the sentiments expressed by the Premier; therefore, with the permission of my seconder, I will ask leave to withdraw my motion.

THE SPEAKER: Does the hon. member wish to withdraw the motion altogether, or does he wish it to be put as an amendment?

MR. HALL: I wish the amendment to be put.

MR. EWING (Swan): We ought not to look at this question narrowly, but to apply to it the principle that would actuate us if we were considering the general question of imposing, increasing, or abolishing a tax. There are three reasons which would impel me to vote against the amendment. The first is, if good bricks could not be purchased here. Experience has shown us that good bricks can be manufactured here. If edifices such as we have in Perth can be built of bricks manufactured in this colony, then we have ample evidence that so far as being able to manufacture a good article is concerned we are in a fairly good position. The next reason that would cause me to vote against the amendment is that injustice would be done to the community or the producers of the bricks, or that by increasing the duty we should be harassing the trade. I fail to see that any of these contentions is established. I fail to see that the increase in the duty will do either the consumer or the producers any harm. Where we can produce an article well and cheaply we can even go so far as to prohibit the importation of the foreign-made article altogether. Therefore I am in favour of the motion before the House.

MR. GEORGE (Murray): While the member for Albany (Mr. Leake) was speaking—I regret he is not here, though I do not intend to make a violent attack upon him, but only to correct a few false impressions which he evidently has got—he said that if the motion were passed, it meant harassing the builders and raising rents. He has told us that the bricks made in this colony are usually used for building small cottages and that sort of thing. Therefore if we raise the duty on bricks I

do not see where his argument comes in as relating to rents, because the bricks made in this colony are only used for small cottages. The hon. member for Albany seemed to belittle the brickmaking industry here, and to make out that it was hardly worth a moment's thought. If all the brickyards of this colony were full of orders, as they were about eight or nine months ago, I do not think it would be a large estimate to say that over 500 men would be working in those brickyards, and any industry that will employ even 100 men is worthy of the consideration of this House. A good deal has been said about the question of freight. If hon. members had had much to do with importing from the other colonies they would know this, that the freights are up and down in the most eccentric way. Not long ago I had to import pig iron from Victoria, and I paid 6s. a ton as freight for this iron; two months before that I had to pay 25s. a ton for freight for pig iron, and my agents on the other side would not pay a single penny more than they were obliged to pay. There may come a time when it will cost less to bring bricks here than it does at the present time. It is nonsense for the hon. gentleman to suppose that it is impossible to make good bricks here. We have the machinery here and we know that we have clay, and the only question is, have the people in the colony sufficient patriotism, to use a word which is a favourite with the right hon. the Premier. Because an article is made in Western Australia it is not necessarily a bad article; because four or five years ago the bricks made here were bad, it is not for us to say that it is impossible to get a good brick here now. There are good bricks in this colony, and the hon. member for North Perth (Mr. Oldham), who has used a considerable quantity of bricks, can speak with authority on this point, and I do not think he will say that it is impossible to get a good brick in Western Australia. The hon. member for Yalgoo (Mr. Wallace) spoke about this matter, and from his speech I should imagine that he would like to see Western Australia turned into a paradise for commission agents. There seems to be a regular army of these commission agents on the goldfields now. If a man can manage to get hold of a place to write

a letter in, and a 2d. stamp, he will endeavour to earn some commission on something. I will just give you a little illustration of that. A little while ago I had a battery for sale, and I sent out a circular which went over the goldfields. I had 15 inquiries about this battery, and when the man who wanted the battery came down he brought with him all those letters to me. That shows that there are men in this colony who do not give any employment whatever. The man who gives employment is worth all the commission agents put together. I am very pleased to see that the Premier is beginning to have a little consideration for native industries, and when he says that as soon as the tariff is brought down he will be prepared to consider the imposition of a specific duty in regard to bricks, I hope he will also consider those who are represented in this House by myself.

MR. WILSON (Canning): I venture to say the question of duty does not affect the matter of using bricks in the construction of the building mentioned in the motion. It does not matter what duty is put upon bricks, it will not prevent the owners of the building importing the bricks to be used in the construction of that building. At the present time the bricks to be used in the construction of the Bank of New South Wales will cost from 70s. to 80s. per thousand, and we can get as good a brick in this colony for 35s. per thousand. And if 35s. per thousand will not protect the native industry, then the only thing is to go in for prohibition. The case in point is merely a fad, I take it. The architect on the job happens to be a gentleman who has lately come from another colony, and he believes he can get better bricks made in the other colonies. The head office of the bank is in one of the other colonies, and the directors, I believe, are influenced by the architect and think that the bricks made in another colony are better than can be obtained here. I believe the stone for this building is to be imported from New South Wales. In that I know a mistake is being made. I know we can get bricks in this colony as good as those we can import, if a fair price is paid for them. There is no reason why this motion or amendment

should be passed, and therefore I shall oppose both.

MR. OLDHAM (North Perth): Whilst I recognise the object which the hon. member for Perth has in view in moving the motion, I think there is absolutely no necessity for it. The figures I have before me—and I think I know what I am talking about on this occasion—show that it will cost the contractor of the building £4 17s. per thousand to land the bricks on the job of the Bank of New South Wales. The building which I am erecting at the present time is not more than two and a half minutes' walk from the building which is now being constructed for the Bank of New South Wales, and the bricks are being delivered—and they are very good bricks—on my contract at less than half the price I have mentioned. Surely, when we take into consideration that there is £2, at any rate, difference between the price of the imported brick and the price of the local brick, that goes to show that there is no necessity for any further protection. I take it that this is one of those special cases which we shall always come across, no matter what tariff we bring into existence. The directors of the Bank of New South Wales will possibly pay any price for the article that is wanted, and I believe that the directors of the Bank of New South Wales in the other colonies distinctly specified that these imported bricks were to be used, probably being under the impression that good bricks were not obtainable in this colony. Good bricks can be obtained here, not as good as those made in Melbourne, but as time goes on we shall be able to make as good bricks here as are manufactured in Melbourne at the present time. Certainly up to the present time the bricks manufactured here are not as good. Let me give hon. members a case in point. I know of a strong-room in a large financial house in this town which was built with local bricks, and I will guarantee to get into that strong-room inside of a quarter of an hour—that is a fact. If that strong-room had been built of Melbourne bricks I certainly could not do that.

THE PREMIER: It all depends upon what tools you use.

MR. OLDHAM: With ordinary tools I could get inside that building in a quarter of an hour.

MR. HALL: I admit that some bad bricks are used here.

MR. OLDHAM: And some good ones too. It is no use talking about protection. Either we must go in for absolute prohibition, or let the bricks come in on payment of a fairly reasonable duty. Surely a difference of over £2 per thousand is sufficient duty. There is a freight of about £2 per thousand on bricks.

MR. HUBBLE: Not necessarily. Bricks often come over as ballast.

MR. OLDHAM: The hon gentleman does not exactly know what he is talking about. Bricks are very difficult to handle. The cost of handling is sufficient duty in itself. Then there are wharfage and all other charges, and bricks at the present time are being bought in Melbourne for 30s. per thousand, and the cost in Perth of those bricks is £4 17s. per thousand. We can buy in the home market a good brick from £2 5s. to £2 7s. a thousand. There is absolutely no necessity, so far as protection is concerned, to prevent the importation of these goods. I hope the hon. member for Perth (Mr. Hall) will see his way to withdraw the motion. There are certain articles in the building trade which need protecting. The stone for this particular bank can be worked in this colony. If the hon. member had brought forward a motion that the duty on stone was insufficient, then I should certainly have supported him.

MR. A. FORREST: On what grounds would you do that?

MR. OLDHAM: Because we have men here to work the stone, and the duty on the unworked article and the manufactured article is not a large one. Stone can be bought in Melbourne at 3s. 6d. per cubic foot unworked. If there was a duty of 7s. 6d. on the Melbourne stone, then the stone would be worked in this colony.

MR. A. FORREST: Would not the freight make some difference?

MR. OLDHAM: Stone at 3s. 6d. per cubic foot is not on the same footing as an article which costs only 30s. a thousand. The smallness of the bulk of stone, and the difference in the weight, preclude

the question of freight being taken into consideration.

MR. HUBBLE: Stone is as heavy as bricks are.

MR. OLDHAM: It does not take the same bulk. No person imports worked stone into this colony. Persons import large stones which are capable of being worked. If the hon. member had seen his way to introduce a motion in reference to stone, he would have had my strong support. As for bricks, there is absolutely no necessity for an increased duty.

MR. KENNY (North Murchison): I have listened with considerable interest to the debate on the question of bricks; and there is one quality, evidently, in Melbourne bricks—they can build a pretty solid debate. I was rather surprised to find that institutions, persons, and private affairs were brought into this debate. For my own part, I cannot forget that I have come here to advocate measures, not men nor institutions. I am a protectionist; I believe in protecting our local industries; and when the motion was tabled I made up my mind to vote in favour of it. But, after listening to the member for North Perth (Mr. Oldham), who showed clearly that there is a difference of almost £2 per thousand on the imported bricks and in favour of local bricks, I think that is a very fair amount of protection; and, while I believe in protecting local industries, I certainly do not believe in prohibition. It appears to me that to add anything further to the duty on imported bricks would amount to prohibition. I shall vote against the amendment.

Amendment (Mr. Quinlan's) put and passed.

Main question—that the motion as amended be agreed to—put, and division taken with the following result:—

Ayes 15

Noes 14

Majority for 1

Ayes.

Mr. Ewing
Sir John Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. George
Mr. Hall
Mr. Higham
Mr. Hooley
Mr. Hubble
Mr. Kingsmill
Mr. Lefroy
Mr. Locke
Mr. Pennefather
Mr. Venn
Mr. Wood
Mr. Quinlan

(Teller.)

Noes.

Mr. Conolly
Mr. Gregory
Mr. Harper
Mr. Holmes
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Leake
Mr. Monger
Mr. Oldham
Mr. Simpson
Mr. Solomon
Mr. Vosper
Mr. Wallace
Mr. Wilson
Mr. Kenny

(Teller.)

Motion as amended thus passed.

MOTION—TICK IN EAST KIMBERLEY DISTRICT.

REMOVAL OF RESTRICTIONS.

Debate resumed on the motion of Mr. MONGER, moved on the previous day:

That, owing to the absence of any sickness or mortality in East Kimberley cattle, the restrictions now existing be removed, so that the consumers, as well as the producers, may benefit by the large number of fat stock available there.

Also on the amendment moved by Mr. Harper, that the subject matter of the motion be referred to a Select Committee.

MR. SIMPSON (Geraldton): I am sure the transfer of our attention from bricks to ticks will be recognised by the country as rather important. We have now to deal with the question of a big national industry, the pastoral industry, the development of the cattle industry; and I do not think there is a member of this House who does not regret the terrible position which that industry has got into, the ruin which is impending over it. I hope no member will fail to bear in mind the exact details of the introduction of the tick question into this colony, the careful nurture it has had, and the aid that has been given to it by the Government. Last year the Treasury benches ventured to say there was no tick in the country; and one of the most remarkable incidents in the development of this question was that, within three months, one of the newspapers reported that the Premier had his portmanteau packed full of ticks which he was taking to Melbourne for identification. They were identified all right as tick, the true tick, the tick which

has decimated the flocks and herds of Queensland, the tick which is menacing the cattle industry of New South Wales, and the tick which is looked at with fear and trembling by cattle breeders in Victoria. Now that it is identified as the true tick, the Treasury benches say: "We admit it is the true tick, but it is harmless to Western Australia." Looking at one aspect of this question, and the fact that the quarantine at present existing does act with extreme hardship on a very much respected member of this House, I am sure his position has the sympathy of every other member, and it has mine distinctly; and if I could, consistently with my duty to the country in conserving its interests, do anything to remove any possible regulation that interfered with his private fortune, I should consider it my duty to do it. But, when I am asked to support a motion such as that introduced by the member for York (Mr. Monger), I must express my agreement with what was said by the member for the Ashburton (Mr. Burt), that had the member for York been in possession of the report that has since been laid on the table of this House—

MR. MONGER: I said I was in possession of a telegraphed version.

MR. SIMPSON: Then your action is a flat contradiction of the expert's report. You ask this House to say that, after the Government of Western Australia, representing the people of the colony, have made a request to the Government of Queensland to send here a thoroughly qualified, competent, upright man to investigate this question in our northern districts, you ask this House to say that our opinion on this question is against the judgment of that expert.

MR. MONGER: I say there is no evidence of mortality in East Kimberley from the tick.

MR. SIMPSON: Then my intelligence impels me to support the judgment of the man who was sent here by the Government of Queensland, at the expense of the Government of Western Australia, to investigate and report upon the existence of tick in this colony. To hear the breezy way in which the Premier speaks of this question to the House, one almost trembles at the way in which this great industry is being dealt with. I do not

believe the Premier recognises the terrible injury it is possible for the tick to inflict upon this colony. I said last night, when a certain telegram was read in this House, that it came from Mr. Lumley Hill; and I believe so still, for if it were not so, my suggestion would have been contradicted at the time. I will give this House a little more of Mr. Lumley Hill's opinion on the tick question, and the menace it is to the cattle industry of this colony and to the flocks and herds of Australia. In a letter to the *West Australian* newspaper, Mr. Lumley Hill says:—

I will now relate some cases that have come under my notice. Mr. Beauchamp Cameron, of the Magoura, where he had a herd of 16,000 cattle, assured me that he had lost 40 per cent. of his whole herd; "and now," he said, "I am tick-proof—it has gone right through them." Two thousand seven hundred bullocks were brought down from northern stations to Airdmillan Estate, on the Burdekin delta, near Townsville, belonging to the Australian and New Zealand Mortgage Company, with the purpose of fattening for the Ross River freezing works. The cattle arrived about Christmas, 1894, and were in the interval perfectly healthy and thriving well till August, 1895, just as the tops of them were getting prime fat and fit for slaughter, the ticks got into them, and in three weeks 1,200 of them were dead, and the balance were so reduced in condition that they would take another year to fatten up again.

These are plain facts, and yet the Premier says we have no tick in Western Australia.

THE PREMIER: I did not say Western Australia. What I did say was "down here."

MR. SIMPSON: Then you want to draw a straight line, and neglect the herds between here and Kimberley.

THE PREMIER: I was only correcting you in your mistake.

MR. SIMPSON: I accept the correction, and I ask you whether I am representing you improperly now. Do you propose to neglect the herds between here and Kimberley? The letter goes on:

Messrs. Uhr and Co., large shipping butchers at Townsville, who own a run called Wandavale, about 120 miles from Townsville, with a herd of 14,000, told me that last September they started a draft of 220 head of prime bullocks from Wandavale for the shop. These cattle were perfectly healthy, and the run they left was perfectly free from ticks, but when they arrived within 28 miles of Townsville, the ticks appeared on them.

Townsville, as members know, is on the coast. The letter proceeds:

Messrs. Uhr and Co. only succeeded in putting 70 through the shop.

They only lost 150, for which I suppose they were duly thankful. The letter further states:—

Eighty they put through their boiling pots at their butchering establishment, and 70 died before they could kill them to save their hides or their lives.

These are statements by Mr. Lumley Hill, and not my assertions. Now I will give Mr. Lumley Hill's views in regard to the danger to the industry. That gentleman says:

Under these circumstances I would respectfully point out to the Government of West Australia that it behoves them to take every possible precaution against the introduction of such a scourge, and that more especially into the Kimberley districts.

Mind you, that was information available to the Government years ago. Mr Hill goes on:

It may shortly be expected to arrive there from the Northern Territory of South Australia, which we believe to be its habitat, one rather generally-accepted theory being that it originated with the buffaloes about Port Essington.

MR. CONNOR: What has eventuated?

MR. SIMPSON: I will come to that later on, but in my opinion what has eventuated is Mr. Hancock's report.

MR. CONNOR: That is all.

MR. SIMPSON: And the statement of a competent man, experienced and credible, is that Kimberley is "hopelessly ticked up."

MR. CONNOR: There is no mortality or disease.

MR. SIMPSON: Mr. Hill goes on:

I have recently heard that a mob of cattle from the Berkeley Tableland, purchased by one Mr. Muggleton, are expected to arrive on the Ord River, where Mr. Muggleton has a run. Now these cattle must pass through tick-infested country, and the chances are much in favour of their bringing the tick with them. Moreover, as the shipping trade of cattle at Wyndham develops, cattle are certain to be drawn in from the Northern Territory, as the road to Wyndham is much better for travelling stock than the road to Port Darwin, and the facilities for shipping the stock are also better at Wyndham than Port Darwin.

That is Mr. Lumley Hill's opinion as to what ought to have been done some time ago.

MR. CONNOR: He has altered, then.

MR. SIMPSON: I do not believe I am suggesting anything adverse when I say that Mr. Hill is interested in the cattle trade of this colony, and we are glad to welcome the investor and his capital. Last year this question was before the House on a vote of want of confidence. The cattle bell was rung to spur us up, but the motion was defeated. What I consider a much more extreme, and more exact, and more incisive motion of want of confidence, was moved by a member on the Government side of the House, namely, the member for the Ashburton (Mr. Burt). That motion was, of course, carried, although it conveyed much more condemnation, coming from the source it did, than could any motion from the Opposition. With truth or without truth, any motion of the kind coming from the Opposition would be regarded by the Government side as purely political. It is written on the pages of *Hansard*, and has gone out to the country, that for the preservation of the herds of the colony from disease and disaster, there are no conflicting interests on the Opposition side of the House.

MR. A. FORREST: You have no cattle; you have nothing.

MR. SIMPSON: The interjections of the hon. member are so apt, I shall ask him to continue interjecting. The appointment of an expert was secured, and I think I would be right in saying that no gentlemen connected with the motion or amendment deliberately wish to discredit that gentleman. That his integrity can be discredited I cannot imagine. He has no object to serve in not speaking the truth. But certain parts of his report are questioned. I do not know whether members have read the questions which were submitted to the expert by the department. But reference has been made to his assertion in regard to the 80 head of cattle which died, and it was said they were only 50. But question No. 6 put to Mr. Hancock was "What do you consider, from the information contained in the accompanying report, caused the deaths of the 80 head of bullocks near the Red Butts in 1896?" That was the question which Mr. Hancock replied to, and he makes no assertion on his own account. And now we have to deal with his report. It is taken for granted, I suppose, that

he is an honest, upright, and competent man, and what does he say? He identifies beyond the shadow of doubt the tick as the true cattle tick. In reply to question No. 2, he says: "The whole of the Ord River Valley, which is the cream of the district, is, with the exception of some patches of down, typical tick country." There is no hesitation, doubt, or vacillation about his reply, which is given as the absolute judgment of an experienced and careful man, exact in his conclusions. Then, his replies to the questions as to the presence of tick fever, and the microscopic examination of blood, are just as exact and positive. Mr. Hancock then comes to the question of the prevention of the spread of the disease. It has been suggested that this tick question should be referred to a Select Committee. I hope the question will not be so referred, but that every detail will be thoroughly threshed out in this House, and that every report and every piece of evidence that can be produced by the Government will become known to every man in the land. There are surroundings of the tick question which do not suggest the wisdom of holding secret committee meetings to enquire into detail. The more ventilation and the more light there is let in, the better for the reputation of Parliament, and everybody connected with the discussion. In nine times out of ten select committees, as an influence on legislation on general questions, are absolute failures. The mover of the amendment that a Select Committee should be appointed, suggested no reason for that course, and no one can say that the appointment of such a committee has any connection whatever with the statements in the motion. The motion says that there is no disease or mortality in East Kimberley.

MR. MONGER: I contend that still.

MR. SIMPSON: I know that you are not easily moved in your opinions. When one refers to some of the remarks of the member for Beverley (Mr. Harper) last session, one is still further inclined to wonder why this Select Committee is proposed at the present time. Speaking last session the hon. member said:—

Shortly before the Acting Premier instructed Mr. Craig to visit the Kimberley district, I had a conversation with him, in the course of

which he told me that he sent Mr. Craig there to get a full and accurate report of the conditions prevalent in that district. I said, "I think you are on perfectly sound ground in doing so, and you should be guided by the result."

Will Mr. Harper come to the same conclusion now, and abide by the result of the last inspection? Is he prepared to start throughout the length and breadth of the land, and have every beast south of Kimberley inoculated immediately? We have the tick pest here, and now what are we going to do? Are we going to sit still, and let it devastate the herds? A butter factory has been established down south to encourage the dairying industry, and are we going to refuse to keep the herds healthy, safe, and sound? No, sir. If this matter be referred to a Select Committee it will be deferred indefinitely, and the conclusions come to by the committee will be paid very little attention to by this House if anything is suggested in support of the motion submitted by the member for York (Mr. Monger). My personal opinion is that when extending State aid to the dairying industry in the south, it is necessary we should also extend aid to the cattle industry in the north. If the Government lend money at long terms and low interest to encourage the butter factories, facilities ought to be given to the cattle trade in the way of establishing freezing works and subsidising boats to bring down the meat quickly.

THE PREMIER: The committee may recommend all that.

MR. SIMPSON: But what connection have such recommendations with the motion? Why is it proposed to appoint a Select Committee? To deny the report? That cannot be denied, because it is as true as holy writ.

MR. CONNOR: That is not true.

MR. SIMPSON: The hon. member is like the man who, when ill, sent for the most accomplished physician who could be got, and because that physician recommended nasty medicine, condemned the learned man as no good. That is not the action of an intelligent man in connection with a great industry like this. Last year an endeavour was made to prove there was no tick, but the "proofs" advanced were in the form of wild assertions. Now it is admitted that

tick is there, but it is contended that it will not hurt Western Australia.

THE PREMIER: I did not say that.

MR. SIMPSON: That is paltering with a matter which is likely at any moment to develop into the ruin of one of our greatest industries. I have sympathised with every word of the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) when he has spoken of the hardships and risks both to the cattle and to the men who are opening up the Kimberley country. But it is no use talking idle sympathy. My sympathies are with the splendid band of men who are making Kimberley part of this country; but I want to help them in a way that will redound to my intelligence as well as to my good intentions. It is no use saying there is no disease in East Kimberley.

MR. CONNOR: The disease is not there.

MR. SIMPSON: I cannot accept wild assertions, even from a member of Parliament, in the face of a report like that of Mr. Hancock's.

MR. CONNOR: That report does not say there is any mortality. Show us there is any mortality, and we will commence to believe you.

MR. SIMPSON: I do not ask the hon. members to believe me. I only ask them to listen to me, although I have not any hope of convincing them.

MR. CONNOR: Show us where there is any mortality. We have had this tick for 13 years, and now show us where the mortality is.

MR. SIMPSON: I think I will show the hon. member where the mortality is. Paragraph 6 of Mr. Hancock's report says:—"The alleged overdriving as the cause must be given up as untenable."

MR. CONNOR: Read paragraph 3 first.

MR. SIMPSON: You must not drag me all through the paragraphs. You have asked me to prove mortality from this disease. You have been in Kimberley, and you know tick is there, and that cattle have died from it. You know that, as sure as you sit in your seat there.

MR. CONNOR: I do not.

MR. SIMPSON: It is true.

MR. CONNOR: I challenge—

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member must not interrupt the member while speaking; and he must not challenge the

hon. member now. He can speak afterwards.

MR. SIMPSON: The hon. member can challenge me till he is blue. I have founded my statements on the report laid before the House, and I say the wildest assertions and the most misleading statements have been made that have ever been made about the development of any big industry in Australia. The opening of the East Kimberley district to cattle from the Northern Territory of S.A. was a political sop. It was done to secure political support. Once that course was entered upon it had to be supported. What has been the result? The result has been that we have the report—you cannot get over it—which has been presented by the expert. I did not speak on this question before.

THE PREMIER: You never do till the last.

MR. SIMPSON: I have my reasons for it.

THE PREMIER: I do not believe in dodgery.

MR. SIMPSON: The right hon. gentleman treated us last night, as he always does when the member for Albany or myself are concerned, with abuse. We have got used to it now, and enjoy it. I suppose it was a continuation of that vulgar exhibition of abuse which took place at the Osborne Hotel on Saturday. We say to the Government, "Do your duty to the country; do not ruin the men who put their capital in it." In what position are the cattle-growers in East Kimberley today? They do not know which way to turn. Their market has gone, simply because we have had to take these precautions. I say to the Premier, "What do you propose to do now?" The right hon. gentleman is satisfied that the tick is there, but he wishes to induce the House and the country to believe that it will not hurt us. The report of the Chief Inspector of the Stock Department for the present year reads as follows:—"When the outbreak was reported at Fremantle, doubt was expressed in some directions as to whether the geological and climatic conditions would be favourable to the propagation of the parasite." These are charming phrases. The right hon. gentleman is an F.R.G.S. He stands up and tells us, "believe that the geological and climatic

conditions are against the continued life of the tick in this part of Australia."

THE PREMIER: I never said anything of the sort.

MR. SIMPSON: I desire to draw attention to the wretched way in which the Cabinet Ministers of this country have deliberately gone back on the Stock Department. The Minister who represents the department is absent through illness, which we all regret; but knowing the head of that department is one of the most fearless officers who ever graced any department in Australasia, I say that it is a shame that the department he administers is not supported by the Government. I know why the Premier does not like the head of that department.

THE PREMIER: Tell us all about it.

MR. SIMPSON: I do not wish to give the reasons why the Premier does not like the officer in question.

THE PREMIER: I defy the hon. member to state them.

MR. SIMPSON: Well, I will do so. The reason for the Premier's dislike of that gentleman is because there were certain financial obligations between him and that civil servant, and because that civil servant would not bend in the matter of percentage, the right hon. gentleman got a down on him.

THE PREMIER: It is absolutely false.

MR. SIMPSON: In every detail? If I state that a certain sum of money was borrowed at 10 per cent. to be repaid within a certain term—answer me if you like, one or altogether, I am not particular. I am informed by a credible authority that the member for West Kimberley and the Premier borrowed money from that civil servant at 10 per cent. for a certain term. Before the term expired, it was proposed to pay it back, because the money could be obtained elsewhere for a lower rate of interest.

THE SPEAKER: I do not think this has anything to do with the question before the House.

MR. SIMPSON: I am speaking of circumstances in connection with the Stock Department, but I bow to the ruling of the chair. I have said all I wanted to say about it. I never make assertions here that I am not open to prove. I have explained the reason why the Stock Department does not get on

well. It has no friend in the Premier. The paragraph which I commenced to quote just now from the Stock Department's report goes on to say:—

When the outbreak was reported at Fremantle, doubt was expressed in some directions as to whether the geological and climatic conditions would be favourable to the propagation of the parasite; but all speculation on this point was set at rest by the report of Mr. E. T. Hancock, the expert specially engaged from Queensland to report on the subject and recommend the best line of action for dealing with the pest. Mr. Hancock's report stated that he could advance no reason why the tick will not flourish in the vicinity of Fremantle; on the contrary, he is of opinion that, given its natural host, it may be quite as fatal to the bovine race in that locality as it has proved in other countries.

I oppose the appointment of a Select Committee because it can accomplish no public good. It can furnish us with no additional information how to deal with this disease, this admitted infestation of our northern districts.

MR. CONNOR: Read the expert's report again.

MR. SIMPSON: On looking over the report I see the phrase "hopelessly ticked up." I cannot get into the definition of red-water and tick. I leave that to the expert. The expert, in dealing with the question of how to prevent the spread of the disease, does not suggest that we should do anything likely to hurt the capital of the men interested in the business. He suggests inoculation. I ask the House not to bother about this Select Committee. not to waste its time in appointing one, but to adopt such means as will enable the recommendation of the expert for the inoculation of the cattle to be carried out, so that we may do away with the wretched quarantine which is jeopardising the country. That seems to me to be the practical thing to do. To delay action, to wait for the deliberations of the Select Committee, cannot possibly do any good. The Government, I am informed, are to-night in possession of information about mortality in East Kimberley since the stock inspector left there.

MR. MONGER: I do not think they can produce it.

MR. SIMPSON: We cannot be too urgent in dealing with this matter. No

good can be accomplished by appointing a Select Committee. The Government should support the consistent action taken by their Stock Department right through. I do not think that the motion by the member for York can commend itself to any hon. member. Such a deliberate attempt to shut our eyes to what is palpably visible to every person in the colony cannot accomplish any good. I have expressed my views on this question. If we had an impartial man to write the history of the tick question in this colony, and to tell the country to whom should be ascribed the introduction of the tick, I have no hesitation in saying that that impartial man would turn to the Premier and say, "Thou art the man." The Premier is distinctly responsible for the whole position which exists, much to our regret, in this colony to-day.

MR. WALLACE (Yalgoo): I have a few remarks I would like to make on this question, but before going into details I would like to make some observations on the manner in which the Leader of the Government, who is responsible for the administration of this Department, has treated this House. Up to the present, all that we have been aware of, as to reports in connection with this important matter, has been the information appearing in the local newspapers. Although the inspector's report has been in the hands of the department some ten or twelve days it was only this evening that the report was placed in the hands of hon. members.

THE PREMIER: I do not think that I am to be blamed for that. The Minister is away ill.

MR. WALLACE: The right hon. gentleman is responsible in the absence of the Commissioner of Crown Lands. The right hon. gentleman is also to be blamed for not giving to the House all the information he has in his possession, to date. We had it first from the hon. member for the Gascoyne that certain information was in the hands of the department.

THE PREMIER: What is it then? I do not know. A telegram came to me to-day. It did not say anything about mortality. It said something about fever.

MR. HUBBLE: I deny that I said that I had the information. I only asked if the Government had any information.

THE PREMIER: I have no information. You had better adjourn the debate, and I will put the telegram on the table to-morrow.

MR. LEAKE: We are satisfied with your information that fever is there.

MR. WALLACE: There has been sufficient time, I think, between the receipt of the information to enable it to be placed on the table of the House.

THE PREMIER: I do not think so; the telegram is not much.

MR. WALLACE: In the absence of the Commissioner of Lands the Premier ought to have placed this telegram before the House. Here we are asked to discuss and debate a question of the greatest importance to the whole colony, on what we read in the local newspapers. Again, in answer to a question put by me to the Commissioner of Crown Lands last week as to the instructions given to Mr. Hancock, the reply was that Mr. Hancock had been ordered to Kimberley. On looking over the reports before the House I see that Mr. Hancock has confined the whole of his researches to East Kimberley. Somebody is to blame in connection with this matter. Either Mr. Hancock has been shirking his duty, or the reply given to me last week was not correct. Kimberley has not been inspected, because I take it that Kimberley is the whole of the northern portion of the colony. I ask whether Mr. Hancock's attention has been confined solely to East Kimberley? It appears to me there is some motive in this which we cannot get to the bottom of. The whole of the transaction is surrounded by circumstances that leads us to suspect that attention which is necessary in the interests of the country has not been given to this matter. I do not say that there is tick in other parts of the colony, but I do say that from past experience in other diseases in this colony where a district has been found to be infected, the neighbouring districts have been suspected, and in that case an inspection has been ordered of the surrounding districts. I do not know why the same rule was not applied in regard to this tick disease. I have been told on certain good authority that there are great barriers between the East and West Kimberley, and I am told that one of these great barriers is the

blacks. We are told that the blacks are very accurate in spearing bullocks, but I question their accuracy in spearing ticks. I am indeed sorry that the gentleman entrusted with the work of inspecting the East Kimberley District has not been instructed to make full inquiries, and if necessary to ascertain if the adjoining districts are infected. We have had an expression of opinion from the right hon. gentleman as to the danger attendant on this tick disease. If I recollect aright the right hon. gentleman expressed the opinion that he was not an alarmist, and that we had nothing to fear, that there was nothing to show that the tick which infested the cattle in Kimberley was the dangerous Queensland cattle tick. I have read a portion of the report of the Chief Inspector of stock, and his remarks are endorsed by the Entomologist, and he definitely states that the ticks were the true Queensland cattle ticks. During the debate last session the right hon. gentleman and some of his supporters treated the matter lightly, and would have led us to believe that it was not the tick which infested the cattle of Kimberley, but some mosquito pest which would do no harm. Members of this House urged the question and forced the hands of the right hon. gentleman to cause an inspection of the Kimberley district. It was asked that if the districts were to be inspected were our own stock inspectors capable of making a report? We finally decided that an expert should be obtained. The Government sent to Queensland, the colony which has paid a very high price indeed for its information in connection with the tick question. We obtained the services of Mr. Hancock on the recommendation of the Queensland Government. Mr. Hancock did not come here as an ordinary stock inspector to look for pleuro or some other disease, but he came here as an expert in a particular line, to discover if the tick disease was present in our cattle. I take it that no member of this House will refute the report given by Mr. Hancock. In Mr. Hancock we have a man whose recommendations are sufficiently good for us to accept him as an authority on this question. He was instructed to proceed to Kimberley, and his report is now before us. No

doubt that report is unpleasant reading for every member of this House. We were all anxious to see this gentleman's report, and we all hoped the report would be, that the tick did not exist in Kimberley. Nor was there any fear of the cattle suffering from ticks or Texas fever. But what do we find? An honest, upright, straightforward report, given by one whose ability and integrity are undoubted, and whose experience has been gained in a long and careful watching of the development of this disease. Hon. members can see that the report is a fearless and unbiassed one. It states the real facts, and sets at rest the mind of the numerous tick experts in this Assembly. The experts would no doubt bow down to the report of Mr. Hancock. I have it from people in Queensland—stock owners and others—that we were very fortunate in getting Mr. Hancock, who is a man who carried with him the respect of the pastoralists of Queensland, and everyone with whom he came into contact. I have seen letters on various inspections made by Mr. Hancock in what I may call the central eastern districts of Queensland, and some advice given by this gentleman to the pastoralists has been followed out successfully. I do hope that the Government which carefully handles and nurses the administration of this colony will take advantage of this valuable report and of the presence of Mr. Hancock to get further particulars in reference to this disease.

THE PREMIER: We want the Select Committee to do that.

MR. WALLACE: I am not favourably impressed with select committees, but I think, as the right hon. the Premier has said, it would be a good idea to have this matter thoroughly threshed out.

THE PREMIER: We can thresh it out after we get the committee's report.

MR. WALLACE: We have read various discussions and lectures in connection with this pest in the local papers of late, and no doubt this information has influenced many hon. members. The tick question is not a subject upon which every member is conversant. I understand it is the wish of every hon. member to take advantage of the rich pastoral country in East Kimberley. We know that from this district meat has been sent to mar-

ket, the quality of which was equal to any imported meat. We are now dealing with the question of how it is possible to turn the cattle in this district to good account. We desire to have the meat brought to our market for consumption, and I ask hon. members to consider how best we can bring that meat to our market? Mr. Hancock, in his report, sets forth a scheme whereby the Kimberley cattle can be sent to market for consumption. Some hon. members do not agree with Mr. Hancock's scheme, but there are some members who will agree to nothing. I do not stand here as an expert in stock, but I do not say I know nothing about stock. Still I am going to give way to a man who knows better than myself. I bow to the report made by Mr. Hancock. This gentleman mentions the establishment of chilling works. He does not mean the erection of freezing works, and I may point out to hon. members that there is a difference between chilled meat and frozen meat. Anyone who has tasted or handled meat that has been frozen and meat which has been chilled, must have discovered the difference between the two, and have come to the conclusion that the chilled meat is the better. An estimate is given in one of the reports as to the cost of erecting a chilling plant, and in addition to the chilling plant Mr. Hancock suggests that an extract plant should be combined. I take it that in connection with chilling works an extract plant would naturally be erected. I did not expect hon. members would agree that all the available cattle in the East Kimberley district could be chilled in a month. If we do establish chilling works at Wyndham, not only shall we be able to rely on cattle from East Kimberley, but also from West Kimberley, and a portion of the North-West coast.

MR. MONGER: You do not know the geography of that country.

MR. WALLACE: Oh yes, I do. We have also in the eastern portion of the colony a large number of cattle which are unfortunately in the same position as the East Kimberley herds, and I say that, if chilling works are started in the North, we can draw supplies not only from the Kimberleys, but from a portion of the North-West coast. But I see no reason why we should not throw off the prohibi-

tion, both as to stock in East Kimberley and in the Northern Territory of South Australia. Tick in the early stage is not detrimental to the quality of the meat, so far as I am aware; and if chilling works were established in the colony, it would be necessary to throw off the prohibition because, during the time the cattle were prohibited from being sent out of East Kimberley to the southern markets, the owners of herds there would be giving attention to increasing their stock.

THE PREMIER: Would not they all die from tick?

MR. WALLACE: No, I do not think they would, provided those precautions were taken which are recommended in the expert's report. He recommends both precaution and inoculation. By establishing chilling works we would be enabled to make use of one of the best grazing portions of Western Australia; we should be aiding those owners of stock who are now seriously handicapped; and we should also give them an opportunity of increasing their herds while they were prohibited from sending cattle to the southern markets. Assuming that we could command a large supply of cattle for chilling works at Kimberley, then if the meat did not find a ready market in our own colony, what is there to prevent us from establishing markets, say, at Singapore, or other places adjacent to Australia? I think we could open very good markets for our chilled meat in that direction. This leads to the question of inoculation, which is so strongly recommended by Mr. Hancock. I have correspondence from Queensland on the question of inoculation, and, strange to say, one of these letters is in reference to cases of inoculation performed by Mr. Hancock himself when in Queensland. I have seen the instruments used for inoculation, and I may tell hon. members that, even in a couple of days or less, two or three men about a station can be taught to prepare the blood and the virus almost as speedily as the most expert men can do it. The small cost of inoculation has not been questioned by hon. members. The member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) said inoculation could be done at a cost of 2d. per head of cattle; but I can show that the cost is much less than 2d., and that one man on a station, after

a little experience, may be capable of putting through, with the necessary appliances, from 1,500 to 2,000 head of cattle per day. Surely when that assertion is made in this House—and it can be verified by evidence—I think that no pastoralist in the country need be afraid of the introduction of compulsory inoculation. I am glad to hear the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor) giving me a little encouragement about inoculation, by his interjections, because I know the hon. member feels that this House could not ask for a removal of the prohibition, but is in a position to give him valuable assistance, which he deserves, and, as I contend, all his fellow-pastoralists deserve. I do hope that inoculation will be made compulsory, not only for East and West Kimberley, but for the whole of Western Australia, and that it should apply to infected, or suspected, or any other cattle, including dairy herds. By inoculation, we may not prevent the introduction of tick into the herd, but inoculation will prevent to a great extent the introduction of Texas fever. Many members have referred to Mr. Hancock's assertion as to the cause of the death of the Wave Hill cattle; but I do say that an expert who has the experience and the scientific knowledge of Mr. Hancock, such as no one in this House or in Queensland can dispute, is in the same position as an ordinary surgeon or physician would be to make diagnosis of a case from the symptoms reported to him. It may be questioned as to how he got his information. I do not know the authorities from whom he obtained it, but from what I have read of Mr. Hancock, and from what I have seen of him, I know he would not send a report to this House—having his reputation at stake, because he has only been lent from Queensland to this colony, and I do not think Queensland would be induced to part with him—and make such a statement as is made in his report, unless it were founded on reliable facts, obtained by him after proper inquiry. We have heard the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran), in giving us some of his funicularisms, tell the House that in one case all that was left of the beast was the hide, which had long since been converted into a bullock whip. We take that sort of thing in the spirit in which it is given ;

and I have often been relieved to hear such funny remarks, although not inclined that way myself.

MR. MORAN: You never say anything funny.

MR. WALLACE: I am not a funny man.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There must be some solid men in the House.

MR. WALLACE: As to what reasons Mr. Hancock has for his opinion concerning the death of the Wave Hill cattle, I have no doubt the evidence is clear to him, and if it could be put to every member of the House as it was given to Mr. Hancock, I dare say we would all conclude that, with the experience he has to guide him in this matter, he has made a true and accurate diagnosis of the case.

MR. MORAN: What was the evidence?

MR. WALLACE: I do not know; but when scab was raging in this colony, I know that if a shepherd gave to the stock inspector certain information which the inspector was seeking about scab, that shepherd was dismissed, and he was so branded in the district that he could not obtain further employment there. I contend that in the present case Mr. Hancock probably does not care to give the name of his authority, because he has respect for the man's position, and knows the consequences to that man if the name were divulged.

MR. MORAN: That is a poor excuse for damaging a big industry.

MR. WALLACE: I take it that the report was not given with that view. I wish hon. members would always deal with matters in a fair way, instead of trying to talk to the gallery and make an impression outside the House. I do not come here with that intention. I come here to speak my opinion, whether there be one or a dozen present to hear them. Probably before the whole of the matter is threshed out, further light will be thrown on this question as to how the cattle died, where they died, and why they died. It has been alleged by some parties interested in cattle in East Kimberley that these cattle died from over-driving. I was not one to accept that at first, but on reading Mr. Durack's letter, and knowing as I do that the Durack brothers and those they employ are capable of handling a mob of cattle—as I

know from experience, having myself handled cattle—I feel satisfied that if Mr. Durack or any of his men had to drive cattle from one place to another, and knowing the route, they would know the regular distances which they could drive the cattle without hurting them.

MR. MORAN: They must drive them according to the supplies of water.

MR. WALLACE: I have gone 43 miles with stock myself across the Leichardt in Queensland, and I know what it means. The alleged overdriving has all been exploded, for Mr. Durack points out, in a letter, that the longest daily stage was, I think, 14 miles. Allowing even 16 or 18 miles as a daily stage, I say that cattle can be taken that distance without over-driving. I do not say that distance can be kept up for two or three days in succession; but it certainly can be done in one day, keeping the animals' heads up, and allowing them to walk along. It is not the custom to drive cattle, especially if fat, but to allow them to walk, and simply follow them.

MR. MORAN: Could you stop them rushing to water?

MR. WALLACE: No; I could not.

MR. MORAN: Then these cattle might have died from over-rushing.

MR. WALLACE: I do not think so. The first intimation we had of over-driving was from some persons interested in the cattle trade. In answer to that, there is the statement of the gentleman whom I have just quoted; so that this allegation as to the cattle having died from over-driving may be put aside. This brings me to some remarks made as to the number of cattle in East Kimberley. The member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) attributed the present increase in the price of meat to the prohibition of the importation of cattle from that district. We are told by all authorities that the total number of cattle in East Kimberley is under 100,000. I have not the figures at hand to tell me how many cattle there are in West Kimberley; but there has been an attempt to flout the House with the statement that if the 100,000 head of cattle in East Kimberley continue to be locked up, our meat supply will be cut off. One member representing a southern district has stated outside this House that there are no cattle in the South-Western

district, and that it is impossible to raise cattle here.

MR. MORAN: Well, he ought to know.

MR. WALLACE: No doubt the gentleman ought to know; but I am taking the figures of the Premier, backed up by the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest), who also ought to know; and I say that this representative of a southern constituency was wrong in his assertion, and knew it at the time. The assertion was simply made with the view of influencing people to assist in removing the prohibition on the cattle in East Kimberley.

MR. MORAN: Why should he assist in doing that?

MR. WALLACE: I do not say why he should assist. Perhaps he may have an interest in the cattle trade.

MR. MORAN: You are now quoting as against yourself.

MR. WALLACE: I am saying that there are hon. members who contend that, if East Kimberley be shut up, the meat supply will be cut off. It is folly to contend that, for a moment.

MR. MORAN: The South-Western districts never sent a beast to market.

MR. WALLACE: We do not live entirely on beef; and, if East Kimberley be shut up, I say we will not suffer at all so far as our meat supply is concerned. If the pastoral land in the Kimberley is looked at on the map, it will be seen that this little spot which the tick pest has compelled the authorities to lock up is a "flea-bite" as compared to the whole area of the pastoral districts. Why should we be asked to remove this prohibition even for the sake of the 25,000 people the member for East Coolgardie represents, or the few hundred people I represent, and who desire cheap meat, and to allow the infected cattle to come down here and get among the dairy herds, the raising of which the Government are doing their utmost to encourage? No member of this House could, after consideration, justly ask for the prohibition to be removed. The only means of having the prohibition removed is by inoculation; and I hope my remarks will have inoculated members of this House, and led them to that opinion. The member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) made some sensible remarks, if I may be permitted to make such a refer-

ence to him. It has been suggested that boats should be subsidised to carry live stock from Wyndham to Fremantle; and the member for West Kimberley very wisely said that these boats, if used for that purpose, should not be allowed to touch other ports of the colony. I am very glad to hear one interested in the meat trade speak that way. I presume he had decided to allow the matter to be referred to a select committee, because he said he would impress on that body the necessity of providing that these subsidised vessels should not call at any of the other ports of the colony, or, further, any ports of the other colonies.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member must not read from the report of a debate that has taken place this session.

MR. WALLACE: If the suggestion to allow our own stock to be brought here from East Kimberley be carried out, it will probably be gladly welcomed by Queensland. If we admit our own tick-infested stock into Fremantle, why should not Queensland and the other tick-infested colonies ask to be allowed to do the same? I hope the idea will be abandoned of allowing live stock to come in from infected districts. The member for York (Mr. Monger) has said the settlers in our eastern districts do not fear the tick disease.

MR. MONGER: They do not, either.

MR. WALLACE: If that be so, the hon. member had better get back to York as quickly as possible and give his constituents some lectures on tick, and instil facts into them. If they follow his present advice, they will have to close the door after the horse is gone. The hon. member ought, in the interests of his own district, to warn his constituents to take all precautions to guard against the invasion of the tick. The member for East Fremantle (Mr. Holmes) very clearly put before the House facts as to the cost of transport, which will be worthy of consideration when the question of the increased price of meat comes up for discussion. In regard to Fremantle and Perth, there has been no increase in the price of meat since this prohibition on East Kimberley.

MR. MONGER: The price has not come down, though.

MR. WALLACE: If the price has not come down, it, at any rate, has not increased. The removal of the prohibition on East Kimberley would not very materially benefit the consumer. It may be that the member for West Kimberley can sell cattle in that district for £2 per head; but we all know that cattle cannot be landed at Fremantle under £4 or £5 per head. I have not ascertained the exact cost of the freight. If an 800lb. beast—at which weight the member for West Kimberley averages his cattle—is killed and chilled in that district, that 800lbs., or very nearly, would be sold on the market in Fremantle; but when cattle are removed from their run, if they are not carefully handled and fed on good grass, they begin to fret, and the result is a loss of condition. I would be safe in saying that an 800lb. bullock shipped from Wyndham and landed at Fremantle would, after slaughter, be found to have lost 150lbs. I am not defending the butchers; but I would point out to the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) in particular, that those in the butchering trade are not making excessive profits.

MR. MORAN: I never said they were.

MR. WALLACE: The assertion of excessive profits might apply to the meat ring, if one exists, and I believe one or more do exist. The loss the butchers have to bear by the decrease in weight in the cattle from the time of purchase till the time of cutting up on the blocks, is more than many members of the House would be prepared to believe. I speak with authority as one who has had butchering experience. If we had our markets fully supplied with stock, I do not believe it would make any difference in the retail price of meat. The member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) supports the removal of the prohibition for the sole purpose of bringing down the price of meat; but he would not gain his end by that means. Mr. Hancock suggests many other remedies worthy of notice. Should this matter be considered by a select committee, I hope every clause in the report will be discussed, and that the committee will go so far as to make suggestions for the alteration of the mail service, so as not to admit tick on the mail horses to West

Kimberley. That suggestion is one for which we ought to give Mr. Hancock every credit. It shows that that gentleman went into East Kimberley, not only to discover tick, but to give his whole attention to means of eradication or prevention of the spread of the disease. He has gone out of the latitude suggested by the department, and has pointed out this desirable alteration in the mail service. He has also suggested that working bullocks should not be allowed to pass out of quarantine, and has gone into every possible detail. That shows Mr. Hancock has honestly investigated the question, and given us the benefit of his experience in Queensland. He speaks from the experience he has gained, and on which he is an authority. It does seem a little strange that a gentleman who was brought over here as an expert on tick should be asked to give his opinion on such a question as to how long it would take to erect suitable chilling works at Wyndham for the establishment of a chilled meat trade. Mr. Hancock replied that the question should be referred to the Colonial Architect. It was one on which he would not hazard an opinion, except that the works ought to be completed within 12 months. This reply will commend Mr. Hancock to hon. members as an honourable, a faithful and a trustworthy officer, who confines himself to matters on which he is an expert, and does not attempt to pose as an architect. There are one or two matters which I would like to point out to sceptics and those who are doubtful as to the existence of tick. The report of the Chief Inspector of Stock, dated September, 1897, states that "26,000 head of the infested herd (Ord River Downs) were inspected, and only one bullock found to be infected." In June, 1898, we find from the report of the expert that not only was there one bullock infected, but that the whole district had been taken up with tick. There is no use in saying that because we have no tick at Fremantle, therefore tick cannot travel sufficiently far to find a natural host. Hon. members must not forget that the progeny of the tick increases very fast, and though it may not find a natural host immediately, its life still remains, and it only waits the

finding of a natural host to increase in numbers. We have evidence also that tick fever does exist. The Premier made some allusion to the geological conditions of the colony as being unfavorable to tick. I have heard him say since then that he referred to the geological conditions surrounding Fremantle or Perth, but not to the colony as a whole. Last session, however, when the tick question came up for discussion the Premier did say that the conditions were not favourable to the development of tick in West Australia. I am quite satisfied he has banished that idea altogether now in view of the report made by Mr. Hancock, who has been in both Queensland and this colony and writes as follows:—

There seem to be no special conditions, climatic, geological, or otherwise, that will militate against the tick invading all the coast country of Western Australia, given its opportunity of doing so, that is, being carried and nourished by its natural hosts, or by other mechanical means; and it has been demonstrated that the tick will live and mature at Fremantle, nearly 2,000 miles further south than East Kimberley.

I am very sorry to see, from Mr. Hancock's report, that the tick question is so serious in East Kimberley, and I hope some legislation will be introduced whereby the settlers in that district will be assisted if possible, and allowed to introduce cattle from the northern portion of South Australia with a view of increasing the number of their herds. Before resuming my seat, I would like to commend the report of the expert to every member of the House. I have not the slightest hesitation in saying that Mr. Hancock is an expert as high in the opinion of the Queensland pastoralists as any in this colony. In one letter I have received, the writer went so far as to say that he was a better man than Mr. Pound. At any rate I have good authority for saying that Mr. Hancock's opinion on stock in Queensland is accepted as that of an indisputable authority, and I hope that members will give his report fair and earnest consideration. Let us legislate for the best interests of the colony, not forgetting to assist those in East Kimberley, who are heavy losers from the action we have been obliged to take. I am not going, in response to the wishes

of some hon. members, to advocate the introduction of disease for the sole purpose of giving the miners cheap meat. I have had many years experience in these matters, and I don't think anyone can object if we follow the recommendation of the expert, and have the compulsory inoculation of the whole of the herds.

Mr. CONNOR (East Kimberley): I would not be saying what is absolutely untrue if I asserted that I have given a large amount of study to this question. I think I have a fairly good grasp of it, and as the member for the district most interested, I intend, when the proper time comes, to place my views clearly before the House. But in view of the fact that there is an amendment before the House to refer the question to a Select Committee, I do not propose to go into any details at this stage. When the time comes to deal with the report from the so-called tick expert from Queensland, I shall prove from that report that it is not reliable, but until the time comes when it is necessary to do that I will not criticise his report any further. When that time comes I shall hold myself bound, as the representative of the people who are most concerned in this matter—the settlers of East Kimberley, the people who went there years ago, probably before many hon. members in this House ever thought of Western Australia—to protect their interests to the best of my ability. Until the report of the Select Committee is laid on the table—supposing the House in its wisdom sees fit to appoint a committee—I will not say anything, because whatever I say will be discounted to a certain extent from the alleged reason that I am personally interested. I am personally interested, and every one of my constituents is personally interested in this question. I will only say for the present that when that committee's report is presented I shall be prepared to go fully into the whole subject. I am going to support the amendment, but before doing so I must refer to the statement made by the member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson). I took the words down as he uttered them, and I absolutely refute what he said. The hon. member had no right to say what he did. The member for Geraldton said that I knew that cattle died of tick fever in East Kimberley. I

say that is not true. I think I know a great deal about the cattle business. From the time I was able to walk I was brought up to the business. My father and my grandfather were in the business before me, and they taught me. I was in East Kimberley on the occasion when the 50, not 80, cattle died, and I say it was over-driving that killed them. I shall not go into details: I give my word to hon. members. I sometimes get the credit of being excitable, but I do not think I ever got the credit of saying anything which I did not believe to be true. I say distinctly that, in my opinion—I ought to be as good a judge as any member of this House—the cattle did not die from tick fever, but from over-driving. If I do not know, then no member here knows. That is my reply to the hon. member for Geraldton when he says I knew that cattle died of tick fever. I shall support the amendment.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): As Mr. Hancock's report has only recently been laid upon the table, and I believe the Government has other information—

THE PREMIER: There is nothing in the hands of the Government that will influence the debate.

Mr. ILLINGWORTH: I move that the debate be adjourned.

Motion negatived, and the debate continued.

Mr. CONOLLY (Dundas): It appears that this question of tick fever is one on which contention exists, not only among pastoralists, but among experts also—men who have made a special study of this disease and its evil results; and taking this into account, I think it is a question on which the greatest amount of information and the greatest amount of ventilation should be allowed, permitted and encouraged, before inflicting the drastic remedy which the colony would have to enforce in the event of the tick and its resulting evils proving so serious, as many of us have good reasons for believing it will. Still there are certain matters in reference to the question, and with reference to its introduction into the East Kimberley district, which I cannot understand, and there are many hon. members in the same position as myself. I noted with some interest the speech and many of the facts adduced by the hon.

member for Geraldton. Among them I noted a statement made by Mr. Lumley Hill, a gentleman well qualified to express an opinion on this disease. That gentleman referred to the drastic effects of ticks in cattle, and not only the severity and far-reaching nature of that evil, but also the sudden manner in which it affects cattle. It was stated that cattle were started to be driven to Townsville for the purpose of being slaughtered, and they were free from tick, in fact they were in a healthy state within a few days of their arrival. In a short time they were attacked by tick, and before they could be slaughtered they actually died from this disease. I have no reason to doubt the statement of Mr. Lumley Hill. It serves to prove the manner in which ticks affect cattle very suddenly, as well as in a drastic manner. Keeping this question in view, it appears to me to be somewhat inconsistent that when these cattle were introduced from the Northern Territory just about two years ago, in this same mob, there were fifty head which died, and we are informed that they died from the tick disease. Yet we have no evidence that any cattle in the Kimberley district have died from that disease since. That is a question which I would like to raise—not from any desire to influence this debate one way or another, but from a desire to get information on the subject. With reference to the contention which exists, even among experts, there are two very distinctive opinions which are expressed by gentlemen who claim to know, and have investigated equally into this question. One is that the evil resulting from the tick, which is generally known as red-water fever, actually does result, and is caused by the tick; and the other is, that in the same country in which ticks thrive, and in which many other insects thrive—moist, steamy, feverish country—malarial fever is also prevalent, and this fever attacks cattle. This fever being present in the same localities as the tick disease, it is erroneously attributed to that insect. I am not capable of expressing an opinion on this matter, but I wish to place before the House this fact, that there are two sections even among experts who claim this contention, each on their side, and each equal in the assurance that they are

in the right. Another reason for which I would favour the appointment of a Select Committee, and the further ventilation of this question, is owing to the very drastic effect which must inevitably occur if the restriction is carried out. If the restriction is carried out, one firm alone, I believe, will have to import from New South Wales cattle for many months of the year—I believe for nine months—to the value of £12,000 per month, and this amount would aggregate something from £96,000 to £100,000 a year. This money would be sent out of the country, which, I think, all would like to see circulated and remain here. Then there is the question of the price of meat rising. One hon. member says that will not affect the question. It has been stated that since the restriction has been in force, the price of meat has risen. I do not know whether the increase in price has been caused by the restriction, or whether it was caused by some extraneous influence occurring at the same time. Still the fact is nevertheless here. I should like to say a few words in reference to the manner in which some hon. members on this side of the House have alluded to Mr. Hancock. He has been alluded to as a “supposed expert.” I do not think this is either a fair or a generous way of speaking of that gentleman, who has achieved, I believe deservedly so in the colony in which he has lived, the reputation of being an expert, and who is well known, respected, and believed in Queensland. He came here with a good reputation, which, no doubt, has cost him a life-long study to attain, and I do not think it is generous to refer to this gentleman in a disrespectful way after he has given us an opinion, which, in the minds of some, may not be in accordance with their liking. I would like to say, that whatever opinions we hold on this question, it is only fair and reasonable that at least Mr. Hancock should receive due credit, not only for the reputation he holds, but for the report which he has placed before the House. There are two questions I should very much like to ask Mr. Hancock. One is whether there are ticks at the present moment in the vicinity or in and around Perth and Fremantle? Are there ticks here?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There are.

MR. CONOLLY: If tick are here, what is the object in preventing the cattle from coming down? If the ticks are already here, if the evil is already existent, what object can there be in preventing these cattle coming here for our use?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We do not want to increase the evil.

MR. CONOLLY: Can you diminish it?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Yes, according to this report.

MR. CONOLLY: That is open to a great deal of question. The second question is, if the tick are here, how long have they been here, and if they have been here for a considerable time, how is it we have no red water fever here?

MR. HUBBLE: There are no tick here.

MR. CONNOR: The department says there are. I would like to ask Mr. Hancock how he can account for the fact that two years ago fifty head of cattle are said to have died from this tick disease and red water fever, and yet since then no cattle have died up there that we know of from this disease.

MR. OLDHAM: There were no tick in Queensland thirteen or fourteen years ago, and that colony is just feeling the effects of the disease.

MR. CONOLLY: This all points to the fact that this disease which is known as "red-water" is due to fever, and this fever is brought on by climatic influence, as well as by localities. In these circumstances I should like to hear the question ventilated, and for this purpose I shall support the appointment of a select committee.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): I would much prefer that the Government should allow this debate to be adjourned for the purpose of obtaining further information. I look upon the subject itself as one of vast importance. I cannot speak with any experience whatever on the question of cattle. All my experience amounts to my having had one lot of cattle which died with pleuro, and another lot of cattle which were stores, and after being fattened, were sold for less than they cost as stores; consequently I cannot speak as one having experience on this subject. But I

do want to call attention to some things which, during this debate, have been missed. I am credibly informed—and the information comes from the Stock Department, which ought to know—that there is tick in Fremantle, that there is tick at the Canning, and that there is tick at York. Whether that be so or not, I simply cannot say.

MR. MONGER: Kangaroo tick, perhaps.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What I would like to impress on the House is that we have one gentleman who has been employed by the State for a number of years, and has given a report which I have carefully studied, and on which I have formed some conclusions. We have a report from the Chief Inspector of Stock, Mr. Craig; and we have just received a report from Mr. Hancock, the Queensland expert, which report this House has hardly been able to study. It seems to me that, in a matter of such vast importance, it is desirable that all the information which can possibly be obtained should be placed before us; and for that reason I think the motion for a Select Committee is a most desirable one in the particular case. I do not approve, as a general rule, of transferring the business of this House to select committees, and I am adverse to it on most occasions; but I do think that, when we have experts here who can throw a good deal of light on the subject, a Select Committee might obtain valuable information which would guide us in coming to a decision. Without casting any disrespect on any member of this House, I do not think we are personally quite in a position to decide the question. Perhaps it is because, knowing nothing about it myself, I imagine other members also know little or nothing. Whenever we do decide this question, it ought to be on the reports of those who do know. One question appears on the surface of these reports, and it is that there has been no considerable mortality in the East Kimberley district consequent on tick. There is a doubt expressed in reference to the death of 70 head of cattle; and I would like to say, in justice to Mr. Hancock, that it is an unfair thing to judge and condemn him from a lot of information and Press correspondence that is going on, when we know that he, in his official position,

is unable to reply in the Press to this kind of criticism. I think that, in fairness to him, which is something, also in justice to this House and the country, and in justice to the great importance of this question, we ought to have Mr. Hancock before some Committee of this House, who will be able to judge and present further light on this subject. As the matter stands at present, from the report of our Chief Inspector of Stock to the end of December, 1897, in clause 1, page 7, a very important statement is made which has not been alluded to by any member of the House, for in it the Chief Inspector says :—

I can only assume that they have not caused heavy loss in Kimberley for two reasons: (a) that, as stated by Mr. Helms last year, they were introduced into Kimberley on horses, and have lost their fever-producing power; (b) or that the cattle with which the Kimberley was originally stocked were brought over from Queensland, and passed over the worst tick-infested districts of the Northern Territory (the Roper River), where each herd was subjected to heavy losses from red-water, and probably the balance which arrived at Kimberley were immune.

He says that although the tick exists and is the true tick, yet it has not caused much mortality. Mr. Hancock was asked to state, on certain evidence which was placed before him, whether the death of the Wave Hill cattle was caused by tick or red-water, or by over-driving. We have the opinion of the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor), who says he was present on the occasion, and who, having been present, will probably have more light than was possessed by Mr. Hancock when this question was asked. Mr. Hancock says undoubtedly that those cattle did die from the effects of tick. But, on looking into the question, it will be seen that the Chief Inspector gives a very clear reason, in the passage I have quoted, as to how it is that, with tick existing, there is no considerable mortality, for he says the balance of the cattle, after the experiences they had gone through, were probably immune. To my mind, this is the secret of the whole question. It appears that, though tick-infested, the cattle at East Kimberley are not materially suffering from the effect of tick; and the reason is, as is suggested by Mr. Craig, that they have been made immune by passing through an experience in which there was a consider-

able amount of loss. When Mr. Hancock is asked as to whether tick is likely to become serious, he at once and without hesitation avers that, if tick is conveyed to other cattle that are not immune in this colony, then the mortality is likely to be great. Also when asked, "Will tick affect cattle in the South?" he affirms that it will, and that the mortality is likely to be great. There is only one answer to the whole question, and that is, inoculation. Cure is the only thing suggested by Mr. Hancock. Prevention, he says, is impossible. Quarantine the East Kimberley cattle, and inoculate the balance of your stock—that is his recommendation. If there is any truth in the suggestion thrown out by Mr. Hancock and supported by Mr. Craig, that the only reason why these cattle in East Kimberley are immune is because they are inoculated, and that the only means of cure is to inoculate other cattle and so protect them and make them immune, then there is nothing before this House but to follow the advice here given for protecting the other herds of the colony; and I cannot understand on what grounds this House can lay aside what is here recommended. Are we in a position to lay aside such evidence as we have from experts of undoubted character? And shall we run such risk that, in a few years, there may not be a milch cow in the southern part of the colony; that we may have to import all our milk, and may not have even milk for our children or our patients in hospitals? Yet all this is possible, and is indicated as the danger which besets this country at the present moment. I say it is not possible to exaggerate the danger; and the report distinctly states that there is only one way out of the difficulty, and that is to inoculate, and so make our herds immune. Mr. Hancock suggests, and wisely so, that in order to assist those persons who are suffering from having their herds locked up in East Kimberley—and I regret it as much as anyone in this House, and regret that any portion of this colony should suffer from any calamity, for I look upon it as a disaster that some persons in this colony are in a position in which they are prevented from sending their stock to market—I say that if, as he suggests, the erection of chilling works in the North will provide relief in that part of the

colony, I think it is the duty of this House to do it. When one class is called upon to suffer for the sake of the other parts of the colony, the least that the other parts can do is to provide some protection for those who are suffering.

MR. MONGER: It will take twelve or eighteen months to erect chilling works; and what are we to do in the meantime?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We must put up these works as soon as we can, if it is deemed desirable to put them up; but our first duty is to protect our own stock and herds in other parts of the colony, by inoculating them as quickly as possible. Personally, I do not know anything about tick, but I am able to judge of what these reports say; and the inference is that East Kimberley is infected with tick; that the cattle there do not die with tick because they are already inoculated and immune; that the only way of preventing tick from spreading is by inoculation; and that the only assistance we can give to those people in the North who are suffering from having their cattle locked up is by the erection of chilling works. I do hope the House will carry the amendment, and let us have more light thrown on the subject by a Select Committee. The tick cannot be kept in East Kimberley, but is liable to spread, if it has not spread already. To prevent disaster, which according to Mr. Hancock's report is imminent, it is recommended that stock should be inoculated. That course and the erection of chilling works are suggested in order to give some assistance to East Kimberley, and to benefit the community generally. There ought to be more light on the subject, and, therefore, I intend to vote for the appointment of a Select Committee.

MR. KINGSMILL (Pilbarra): In explaining my reasons for supporting the appointment of a Select Committee, I shall not keep the House more than a minute. In the first place, I support the amendment because of the great diversity of opinion on the matter. On the one hand, Mr. Hancock states that 50 or 70 head of cattle, or whatever may be the number, have died from tick fever or red-water; and, on the other hand, a member, in whom we all have reason to have confidence, says the cause

of death was over-driving. In the second place, I think this House ought to give Mr. Hancock the right of reply. Mr. Hancock has been placed in an altogether disadvantageous position. As pointed out by the hon. member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth), Mr. Hancock has had to listen and be dumb. The appointment of a Select Committee would enable Mr. Hancock to give evidence, and afford him an opportunity of rebutting many of the accusations and insinuations made against him in the House.

MR. WILSON (Canning): I move that the debate be adjourned until tomorrow.

Put and passed, and debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10.50 p.m. until the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 14th July, 1898.

Papers Presented—Question: Small-pox on Steamer, and Landing of a Medical Officer—Question: South Wharf at Fremantle, Increased Facilities—Question: Immature Fish, Protection in Swan River—Question: Sheep Yards at East Fremantle—Question: Railway Material exposed at Fremantle—Shipping Casualties Inquiry Bill, in Committee—Interpretation Bill, in Committee—Motion: Tick in East Kimberley, Removal of Restrictions; Amendment (passed)—Crown Suits Bill, in Committee—Divorce Amendment and Extension Bill, second reading (moved); Amendment (debate adjourned)—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.