

## Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 11th October, 1899.

The House met at 7-30 o'clock, p.m.

The CLERK reported that the hon. the Speaker (who had gone to Northam, with other members, to visit the annual agricultural show) was unable to be present at the time for commencing the business of the House, but would arrive in a short time.

The DEPUTY SPEAKER (Mr. Harper) took the Chair.

## WANT OF QUORUM—ADJOURNMENT.

At 7-45 o'clock (the interval of 15 minutes having elapsed), there not being a quorum present, the DEPUTY SPEAKER declared the House adjourned until the next day.

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 12th October, 1899.

Question: Geological Survey of the Colony Papers presented Motion (urgency): Want of Quorum on previous day (withdrawn)—Supply Bill (No. 2), second reading, in Committee, reported—Roads and Streets Closure Bill, Legislative Council's Amendment—Permanent Reserves Bill, Legislative Council's Amendments—Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act Amendment Bill, Assembly's Amendment, Council's Message—Motion: Commonwealth Draft Bill and Joint Committee's Recommendations, debate resumed, third day (adjourned)—Mines Regulation Amendment Bill, in Committee, new clause further considered, progress—Totalisator Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Motion: Albany Harbour, to remove Restriction (withdrawn)—Adjournment.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4-30 o'clock, p.m.

## PRAYERS.

## QUESTION—GEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF THE COLONY.

MR. MORAN, without notice, asked the Minister of Mines, When the report

of the Government Geologist on the Geological Survey of the colony would be laid on the table of the House.

THE MINISTER OF MINES replied:—The geological report was in the hands of the Government Printer, who had a great pressure of work; but the report would be got out as quickly as possible.

## PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: 1, Report of Metropolitan Waterworks Board, 1898-9; 2, Opinion of Harbour Master at Albany on draught of vessels entering Princess Royal Harbour; 3, Sale of working plant and transfer of plant from one Loan Work to another, Opinion of the Premier thereon.

Ordered to lie on the table.

## MOTION (URGENCY)—WANT OF QUORUM ON PREVIOUS DAY.

MR. LEAKE moved the adjournment of the House, to draw attention to a certain procedure. As Mr. Speaker was aware, there was no sitting of the House on Wednesday night, owing to the want of a quorum, caused by a number of members not having returned from visiting the annual show at Northam. No intimation of an intention to adjourn the House till half-past 7 on Wednesday night, was given to members until very late on Tuesday night; and it would be in the interest of Parliamentary procedure, whenever there was an intention to adjourn the House for any public or quasi-public function, for the Premier at least to intimate his view or his wish to members who sit on this (Opposition) side. Had that been done, perhaps not only might other arrangements have been made, but members on this side of the House might have had an opportunity of visiting Northam. No mention was made of this intended visit, nor were we told there would be a special train to Northam. It was the custom, he believed, of the Administration to reserve to themselves the privilege of addressing the public on these occasions, generally to the exclusion of members of the Opposition.

THE PREMIER: That was not fair.

MR. LEAKE: From this morning's report in the Press, he noticed that the right hon. gentleman took advantage of the opportunity to say some nice, kind things in his usual strain about the mem-

bers of the Opposition, knowing full well that none of them were there to take their part.

MR. ROBSON : An endeavour was made by himself.

MR. LEAKE : The right hon. gentleman claimed the hon. member as one of his own supporters.

MR. ROBSON : Quite so.

MR. LEAKE : Owing to what happened, some members on the Opposition side of the House were prevented from taking part in another function last evening, which they might have taken part in had they been aware of the intention of the Government on this occasion.

MR. GEORGE : We (manufacturers) were only sorry the hon. member was not there.

MR. LEAKE : Had it not been for the fact that he thought the House was going to sit, he would have been there; but he was in this House instead.

A MEMBER : There was not a quorum.

THE PREMIER : The hon. member (Mr. Leake) went away on purpose, and said so.

MR. LEAKE : The right hon. gentleman was not in the House, and did not know what happened. He (Mr. Leake) was in the House, and was perfectly willing for the House to sit.

THE PREMIER : But the hon. member would not help to make a House when here. That was about his usual tactics, too.

MR. LEAKE : What he wished to point out was that on all important occasions when the right hon. gentleman desired the adjournment of the House for his own convenience, or the convenience of hon. members, he should be at least guided by the ordinary rules of courtesy, and ask members who sat on the Opposition side whether it suited their convenience; and he (Mr. Leake) might very well reply to an observation the Premier made to him the other day, by saying that if the right hon. gentleman were to attend to his business instead of careering about the country, it would be better. One must emphatically protest against the right hon. gentleman taking advantage of these quasi-public occasions to indulge his political venom with regard to the Opposition, particularly when he knew there were no persons in the

neighbourhood representing views opposite to those entertained by himself.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : An unfair attack was made.

THE PREMIER : The hon. member (Mr. Leake) would do the same at Kalgoorlie.

MR. LEAKE : It would not be good taste.

THE PREMIER : Very good taste, the hon. member showed!

MR. LEAKE : If the right hon. gentleman would try to be guided by those little conventional rules of courtesy which existed, he would not find it very difficult to comply with them. He (Mr. Leake) did not wish to say more, but formally moved the adjournment of the House.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) : The hon. member (Mr. Leake), in making the remarks he did with regard to what the Government intended to do, was really off the track. It was certainly the intention of the Premier, and the other members who accompanied him, to be here last night at the opening of the House; and no one regretted more than he that they were not able to be here, because he had assured the hon. the Speaker (when leaving) that they must be back here by 7-15, the time the train was due to arrive in Perth on Wednesday evening. But unfortunately, owing to circumstances which were unavoidable, in consequence of another train being ahead of them on the line, they were not able to get back in time for the meeting of the House at 7-30. Opportunity was taken at Guildford to telephone to the Clerk of the House, stating the members returning by train would be here in a few minutes. Hon. members who accompanied the Premier and himself would shortly have been in the House to take their places, and there would have been sufficient members to form a quorum.

MR. LEAKE : Why did not the hon. member, the evening before, inform members on this side of what was going to be done?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS : The hon. member knew the House adjourned till 7-30. Members who went to Northam would have returned in time to be present but for the circumstance he had mentioned; and had it not been for the member for Albany (Mr. Leake), who was seen about

the time fixed for the meeting of the House or shortly afterwards, and said it was not his intention to make a House, it would have been possible to have had a meeting of the House last night. He hoped that when the Government were in opposition, they would act in a different way from that in which the hon. member acted.

**MR. LEAKE:** The assertion was not true.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** According to what he was told, such was the case. In deference to Mr. Speaker, who was anxious to be present when the House met, members should have helped to keep the House together and carry on the business of the country. In a measure, the train was accountable for what had occurred.

**MR. LEAKE:** There were not in the precincts of the House sufficient members to form a quorum.

**THE PREMIER:** The hon. member would not help to make a quorum, anyhow.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** The Premier having another engagement, he (the Commissioner) would have taken his place, and there would have been sufficient members to form a quorum. In regard to observations which had been made concerning the train arrangement, he might say that invitations had been sent by the committee of the Northam Agricultural Show to certain members of the House, and he (the Commissioner) took the opportunity of going round the House when the arrangement was made at a quarter-past 8, and mentioning the matter to several members, asking them if they would go. Almost everyone seemed to think they did not care about going, and the result was that on the next morning, instead of a good number of members turning up, there were only six or seven.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH** (Central Murchison): Since this question had come up, he wished to say he was pretty regular in attending the sittings of the House. When he left on Tuesday night, he thought the business was about over, and he had no knowledge of the intended adjournment.

**THE PREMIER:** The member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) was speaking when the member for Central Murchison left.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** The time he left was 25 minutes to 12.

**THE PREMIER:** The speech was not over, at any rate.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Nothing was known by him of the adjournment of the House for this Northam festivity, neither did he receive any invitation to go to it.

**MR. GEORGE** and **SEVERAL MEMBERS:** Nor I.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** The hon. member said that all had had invitations.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** That was not correct. He said "some members."

**THE PREMIER:** The hon. member (Mr. Illingworth) was mistaken.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** The assertion he had made was correct. Up to the time of the adjournment on Wednesday evening, as far as he knew, no message had come to hand as to members returning from Northam, nor were there sufficient members in the precincts of the House to make a quorum. If the Standing Orders were to be carried out, there was no help for what took place.

**THE PREMIER:** It was not the first time members of the Opposition had stayed outside rather than make a House. What had occurred was not extraordinary, and this was not the first time it had happened.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Charges were made against members on the Opposition side of the House of not assisting to make a quorum; but as far as he knew, if all the members in the precincts of the House had been in their seats, there would not have been a quorum. Consequently, what had occurred was one of those unfortunate circumstances which could not be helped.

**THE PREMIER:** What was all this about, then?

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** If members on the Government side of the House desired to go to a festivity of this kind, they should take Opposition members into their confidence and let them understand what the position was.

**MR. GEORGE** (Murray): This appeared to be a great storm in a particularly small teacup. It was owing to an accident that some members were not present. Boiled down, the fact was that because the train was late the House could not be kept; and he thought it came with a bad grace

from the member for Albany (Mr. Leake) to kick up this quarrel, and that hon. member might be rebuked for wasting the time of the country. The other night the hon. member and some of his followers marched out of the House, not for the purpose of doing any good to the country, but to try to defeat a Constitution Bill because they could not get their own ends; and he considered that mean.

MR. MORAN (East Coolgardie): The House ought to pass a vote of censure on the shareholders of the Northam Agricultural Society. He did not know whether he would be in order in moving that they should be censured because they did not see fit to ask the member for Albany and others to their show, possibly because they did not want them.

A MEMBER: On account of the Goomalling railway.

MR. MORAN: Yes; possibly. If people wished to exercise their discretion in this way, and only asked those they liked to be there, ought we to show our indignation?

MR. ROBSON (Geraldton): It was somewhat unreasonable that this matter should be brought forward. Being a somewhat young member, he did not know what the term "the precincts of this House" might mean. He knew there was a refreshment room, and perhaps that was not within the precincts of the House. Members who did attempt to reach the House soon enough to have a quorum and hold a sitting, arrived about two minutes beyond the time; and they met the leader of the Opposition coming out of the refreshment room with a smile on his face, telling them there was no quorum. Many other members who sat on the Opposition side of the House were smiling and chuckling--absolutely chuckling! Members who went to Northam had their day out; other members were invited to the dinner of the Chamber of Manufactures, and members of the Opposition were going to have their day out. Members who came down from Northam full speed ahead, and dashed from the station in cabs to the danger of the lives of pedestrians, found on arriving at the House that all other members had gone. They, too, were delighted, and took advantage of the opportunity to go to see "A Stranger in New York." The objection now raised by the

leader on the Opposition side of the House was purely factious and inopportune.

MR. KINGSMILL: The Premier might, as a matter of courtesy, on future occasions give a little more notice of any adjournment of the House about to take place.

THE PREMIER: It seemed to have been very convenient to hon. members opposite.

MR. KINGSMILL said he did not wish to indulge in a personal view of the matter.

THE PREMIER: Fuss was being made out of nothing.

MR. A. FORREST: The House would have sat last night, but for the action of the Opposition.

MR. KINGSMILL: The request which had been made was not unreasonable, and he asked the Premier courteously, hoping to be treated with the same courtesy, whether on future occasions, when an adjournment of the House was likely to take place, he would let members know at least more than a few hours before the adjournment did take place.

MR. A. FORREST (West Kimberley): As one of the members who was present on the previous evening, he would like to say that the member for Albany (Mr. Leake), the member for East Perth (Mr. James), he thought the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper), and others were outside with the Deputy Speaker.

MR. VOSPER: It was just too late, when he arrived.

MR. A. FORREST: At any rate the member for North-East Coolgardie was in evening dress. The Deputy Speaker was in the Chair a few minutes before a quarter to 8, and there would have been no difficulty if the Opposition had helped to make a House, because a telephone message was received, stating that members returning from Northam would arrive in a few minutes; but the member for Albany (Mr. Leake) distinctly said he would not help to form a quorum. Members on the Government side were not asked by the Commissioner of Railways to go to Northam, until very late on Tuesday evening, and many of them found it impossible to accept the invitation. Besides, no invitation came to those members from the Northam people. The Commissioner of Railways asked hon.

members at a late hour whether they would be prepared to go : and, as a matter of fact, the blame lay with the Opposition and not with the Government. It was the Opposition who prevented a House being made, and the action was certainly not respectful to the Speaker, because the proper course would have been to make a House, and then ask for an adjournment.

MR. KINGSMILL : This was a question of principle.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) : It was extraordinary that hon. members who had on two previous occasions absented themselves from the House in order to prevent a quorum, with the object of humiliating or trying to humiliate the Government—(MR. LEAKE : Hear, hear)—should make a fuss about this matter. There was evidence that last night the leader of the Opposition had said he would not do anything in the way of trying to form a quorum ; and surely that was not the proper spirit to be shown by a gentleman in his position. A little courtesy was due to the Speaker, who by unforeseen circumstances was prevented from being present at the hour fixed for the opening of the House, and in this he (the Premier) could sympathise with the Speaker, who was always so punctilious about being in his place. The Northam trip was not decided on until half-past 8 on Tuesday evening, when the disposal of the Constitution Act Amendment Bill and the Electoral Bill made it possible for himself and others to attend the show ; and the Commissioner of Railways then asked hon. members whom he met whether they could leave for Northam next morning. Some members agreed to go, and others were unable to leave town ; but any idea of inviting particular persons was furthest from the intention of both the Commissioner of Railways and himself. On Tuesday evening the Opposition benches were empty for an hour or two before the House adjourned. The leader of the Opposition was certainly in his place for a while, twisting and turning, sometimes leaving his seat, going outside and returning, apparently very uncomfortable, and not knowing what to do ; but generally, the Opposition benches were empty, notwithstanding that the House was dealing with one of the most important subjects that had ever come before

members, and listening to one of the most able speeches we had ever had an opportunity of listening to, whatever members might think in regard to the matter. The member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth) went away before the speech was finished.

MR. ILLINGWORTH : It was half-past 11 when he left.

THE PREMIER : That was before the adjournment of the House, and at a time when the House was in full work. There were no members of the Opposition in their places when he had moved the adjournment until half-past 7 on the following evening. There were other circumstances connected with the adjournment besides the trip to Northam on Wednesday, because there was a meeting of the Chamber of Manufactures followed by a dinner, and seeing that it was private members' night, it was considered that the Opposition would try to make a House.

MR. LEAKE : " Private members " did not mean the Opposition.

THE PREMIER : The leader of the Opposition had himself several matters on the Notice Paper, which might have been dealt with, but he went to the opera or somewhere else, and probably intended to do so before he came to the House at half-past 7. He (the Premier) had not been guilty of any want of courtesy, nor had he any desire to be discourteous. He was always glad to consult the Opposition in regard to any adjournment, and the only reason for his not doing so on this occasion was that he had no opportunity, as it was late in the evening before he was able to make up his mind in regard to the trip. There was nobody present but the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) on the Opposition side, when the House adjourned.

MR. WILSON : Yes ; he was present.

THE PREMIER : If the member for the Canning was present at the adjournment, he had his opportunity then of objecting. The hon. member had himself to leave town next day, and was not in the House at half-past 7 the following evening. It was easy to find fault with others, but the best way was not to do anything that could be found fault with ; and this was " a storm in a tea-cup," the only object of which was to

make reference to a remark of his (the Premier's) at the luncheon in Northam, when he said the Opposition were weak and discredited. Because he told the truth on that occasion, the Opposition raised all this fuss!

MR. LEAKE: The right hon. gentleman generally stabbed in the back.

MR. WILSON (Canning): When moving the adjournment, the Premier gave no reason for the change of the hour of meeting, although it was believed he had consulted the Commissioner of Railways.

THE PREMIER: The Speaker and one or two others were consulted before the adjournment was moved.

MR. WILSON: Possibly; but the member for Albany (Mr. Leake) was perfectly in order in protesting against the procedure. The Opposition were too little consulted as to the manner in which business was carried on, and it was only due to Opposition members, and especially to the leader of the Opposition, that they should be consulted in regard to important adjournments. The Northam Show had really nothing to do with the question before the House.

THE PREMIER: Where was the hon. member yesterday?

MR. WILSON: At Gooseberry Hill, where he had a pleasant afternoon. Opposition members had no invitation to Northam, but for that the Premier was in no way responsible.

THE PREMIER: It would have been a pleasure to see the hon. member present.

MR. WILSON: That was to be believed; but when it was proposed to adjourn for a certain purpose, it was only right the leader of the Opposition should be consulted.

THE PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition was not present.

MR. WILSON: The Premier had admitted that the leader of the Opposition was in and out of the House. There was no desire to be offensive, but the Premier ought to be a little more careful in the speeches he made at social gatherings. Ever since he (Mr. Wilson) had been connected with public life, he noticed that the Premier at any social gathering, whether a marriage or a birth or an agricultural show, took the opportunity of finding fault with the members of the Opposition.

THE PREMIER: The Opposition found fault with the Government; and the hon. member at Kalgoorlie the other day said the conduct of the Government had been "shameful."

MR. WILSON: Similar language had been used in the House many a time.

THE PREMIER: But the hon. member used the language at a social gathering.

MR. WILSON: No; it was at a political gathering, at which members could say what they liked. But the Premier took advantage of the absence of members of the Opposition at social gatherings, whereas the leader of the Opposition ought to have an opportunity of being present, to reply if necessary. The Premier had so big a personality, and had so long controlled the affairs of the colony, perhaps, that he looked on members of the Opposition with some contempt and scorn.

THE PREMIER: No; it was the other way.

MR. WILSON expressed the hope that in the future the Opposition would be consulted in these matters, and that there would be a cessation of the practice of referring at social gatherings to matters totally outside social life.

MR. RASON (South Murchison): The debate was not calculated to add to the dignity of the House, in the estimation of the public, and it reminded him more of his school-days than of proceedings in a deliberative Assembly. Yesterday was a private members' day, and it could not be supposed to be the duty of the Government or of Government members to make a special point of keeping a quorum on that day. But it would have been an easy matter to make a quorum if assistance, which might reasonably be expected, had been forthcoming from the Opposition. That assistance was not forthcoming; on the contrary, there were decided expressions from a responsible member of the Opposition to the effect that he would do his best to prevent a quorum being formed.

MR. LEAKE: It was a pity the hon. member could not adhere to the truth. He was not bound to, but he might have tried.

MR. RASON: If the hon. member wished to insinuate that he (Mr. Rason) was not telling the truth, he would give

the exact words the hon. member made use of, and other hon. members could bear him out in what was said.

MR. LEAKE: Was it customary to drag private conversations into the House?

MR. RASON: It had been forced upon him.

MR. LEAKE: The hon. member could repeat the conversation.

MR. RASON: It had been forced upon him, by his being accused of telling an untruth. He would give the exact words used. The member for Albany said: "I will guarantee there is not a quorum to-night, and I am going to leave the House now." After the exhibition made by the member for Albany, one must say that lessons as to how members of the House should behave would come with far better grace from an hon. gentleman who did not accuse, on the floor of the House, another member of telling an untruth. He left it to the House to judge who on this occasion had been telling the truth.

MR. LEAKE (in reply): It was not necessary to force this question to a division. At the same time, he did not regard this as a "storm in a tea cup," from his point of view. He had raised the question with the idea of protesting against the procedure of the Government. And, in justice to Mr. Speaker, there should be some understanding, because he recognised the Speaker was placed in a very awkward position on Wednesday night. In consequence of the train being late, the Speaker was not able to take his place in the House; and the Standing Orders provided that a quarter of an hour after the time for meeting, the House must adjourn if there was no quorum. There was no quorum at a quarter to 8, and consequently the House adjourned. He (Mr. Leake) was aware that the Speaker and other hon. members came to the House a few minutes afterwards. It was not merely a question of keeping a quorum in the House, but that no intimation of the intention to depart from the ordinary course of procedure was expressed by the Premier. Had the Premier told him (Mr. Leake) that he desired to adjourn until half-past 7 on Wednesday, it might easily have been done.

THE PREMIER: Until a late hour, he and others did not make up our minds to that course.

MR. LEAKE: If the Premier had not made up his mind until the last moment, the Premier was to blame in that; for these things ought not to be left until the last moment, merely to suit a whim or fancy on the part of the Premier. There was no doubt the Premier did treat the House with studied discourtesy, on questions of procedure and other matters; and he (Mr. Leake) only asked the Premier to try and reform in that direction. As to the imputation made at Northam, that was altogether beyond the question. He (Mr. Leake) was not aware that a show was being held at Northam, until late in the afternoon. He might perhaps have arranged to go to Northam if he had known of the show a day or so before. He had been accused of not keeping a House on a private members' night and on other occasions. He did not want to sail under false colours, and he might tell the Premier that it was never his intention to keep a House for the Government. Let that be understood.

THE PREMIER: What was that for?

MR. LEAKE: It was not his duty, and he was not going to worry about it. He would take his chance.

THE PREMIER: When the hon. member was about the House, it was not too much to ask him to come into the Chamber.

MR. LEAKE: Private members' day did not mean that it was an Opposition day. It was not incumbent on a member of the Opposition to keep a House because it was private members' day. There was nothing, as far as he was concerned, on the Notice Paper that could not have stood over for a few days, and he did not feel it incumbent on him to keep a House for hon. members opposite. If there was no House, well and good: he was glad there was not, for it emphasised the position forced on us by the conduct of the Premier. In the circumstances, he would ask leave to withdraw the motion.

MR. QUINLAN (Toodyay): Before the motion was withdrawn, perhaps he was entitled to say a word or two, because he was one of the delinquents. Without fear of contradiction, he might say he was

one of the most frequent attendants amongst private members, and was one of those who spoke least. He came to the House last evening expecting to be in his place, and if necessary to do his duty; and what had been said by the Commissioner of Railways was perfectly correct. Everything that could possibly be done was done to facilitate the business of the session, and he heard the Commissioner of Railways offer an apology to the Speaker for having been the means of delaying him. He for one would not have gone away on Wednesday, if he had thought it would have been the means of interfering with the business of the session, seeing that the session had lasted long enough, and was likely to last another month or two, so far as he could see. So far as the visit to Northam was concerned, hon. members need not expect written invitations. Members were always welcome in that district, and he took upon himself to say that, because he represented an adjoining district and knew the hospitality of the Northam people. He would invite hon. members on Wednesday next to the annual show in his district, where they would find plenty to eat and drink, and it would do members good to shake off business for the day, though he hoped it would not retard the business of the country. It did members good to visit the different parts of the country, and he hoped the invitation he had given would be accepted as general. The member for York (Mr. Monger) would indorse his remarks, so far as the York district show was concerned. It was the duty of public men to make themselves acquainted with the various parts of the colony when an opportunity was given them, and an opportunity had been given yesterday. It was the duty of public men to avail themselves of opportunities of visiting country districts. He gave his own time entirely to public matters; and although he was not often heard, he was present to exercise his right for those who sent him there.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### SUPPLY BILL (No. 2).

##### SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I beg to move that this Bill be read a second time.

MR. LEAKE (Albany): Before this Bill is read a second time, do I understand from the right hon. gentleman that this is only a month's supply?

THE PREMIER: The supply previously granted is not exhausted yet. This Bill is for one month's supply.

MR. LEAKE: The idea is that this should be temporary supply, in order that the functions of Government may proceed until the passage of the Estimates and the Appropriation Bill. I am not going to oppose this Bill, but I want to urge on the right hon. gentleman, as we do not intend to oppose the Bill and as the Estimates are before the House, also the Excess Bill, that the Premier should take the earliest opportunity of informing the House when he intends to bring down the Loan Estimates and the other financial measures, such as those foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech, particularly those dealing with the railway policy. I urge the right hon. gentleman to give the House that information as soon as possible. I do not wish to hold out any threat, but I can assure the right hon. gentleman that, unless we get the information of the kind I have asked for, and I think we have a perfect right to ask for it, the passage of the Estimates must necessarily be delayed, because we cannot discuss the Estimates of expenditure until we know exactly and fully what the expenditure is going to be.

THE PREMIER: Why not?

MR. LEAKE: We know the question of loans, the old loans and the new loans, is intimately connected with the financial position of the colony, as well as with the financial position of the Government; and before we pass the financial Bills or the Estimates, I think we have a perfect right to ask, and indeed to demand if necessary, that this information should be given to the House. I do not intend to oppose the passage of the Bill, because if it is not passed it will necessarily hamper the Government's operations during this month; but I do tell the right hon. gentleman that members on this side require more information with regard to our finances than we have at present.

THE PREMIER: What particularly do you want to know?

MR. LEAKE: We want particularly to know the position in regard to the loans.

THE PREMIER: I have told you that already.

MR. LEAKE: In the so-called Budget speech the right hon. gentleman was very careful to avoid saying anything in regard to present and future loans, or anything under that head.

THE PREMIER: I told you exactly the position of the colony.

MR. LEAKE: I am asking for this information, and I give fair warning.

THE PREMIER: I do not care for your warning.

MR. LEAKE: You, Mr. Speaker, are perfectly well aware of that: you know the right hon. gentleman does not care for my warning, nor anything said on this side of the House, or the rules of the House, or perhaps constitutional procedure generally.

MR. GEORGE: Hear, hear.

MR. LEAKE: But there is no reason why we should not urge on the right hon. gentleman to follow as closely as possible, or as he conveniently can, constitutional procedure. I am only saying that before he can hope to get these financial matters through the House, he should give us all available information connected with finance.

THE PREMIER: I have done so. If you cannot appreciate the information given I cannot make you do so.

MR. LEAKE: I do not know whether it is within the province of the Premier to address me personally in this way. It is very disconcerting, and I can hardly proceed with my remarks if the Premier will persist in making these observations to me. I thought it was the custom to address the Chair. I say I shall not oppose the passage of this Supply Bill, and I am merely hinting that we shall not be able thoroughly and exhaustively to discuss the Estimates, until we get the information I suggest we ought to have.

THE PREMIER: Better give notice and ask for the information, and I will give it to you.

MR. LEAKE: You will get no more notice than you have had already.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—Issue and application of £250,000:

MR. LEAKE: Referring to what had just been said, would the Premier tell

the Committee what he proposed to do, and accede to the request made?

THE PREMIER: What request?

MR. LEAKE: As to giving full particulars of the colony's position in connection with loans unraised and loans proposed?

THE PREMIER: Certainly; but how was it that the hon. member had been living here and did not know the state of the loan accounts? The figures were published every quarter.

MR. LEAKE: All the loans authorised had not been raised. When did the Premier propose to raise additional loans?

THE PREMIER: When it suited the Government to do so.

MR. LEAKE: Not when it suited the House?

THE PREMIER: No. The House had nothing to do with raising loans. Was the House to say when the Government should put a loan on the market, or was such a matter to be subject to the hon. member's dictation? The Government, so long as they enjoyed the confidence of the House, were entrusted with the raising of loans.

MR. GEORGE: Would not the Premier take the advice of his financial advisers? All hon. members were financiers.

THE PREMIER: Speaking from memory, there was about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  millions of loan authorisation unraised, or, to be very accurate, £1,450,000; there were £1,550,000 of Treasury bills; and all the rest of the loan was in inscribed stock or debentures. Surely everyone knew this, seeing that the figures were published in the quarterly returns, and that the indebtedness of the colony had been set forth in the financial statement at £10,062,451. The figures regarding loan expenditure on works already authorised would be placed before hon. members when the Loan Estimates were on the table. The expenditure on those items was also published quarterly, and there was nothing new to be said in regard to loan expenditure. Most of the works had been completed. With the exception of the Fremantle harbour works and the Coolgardie gold-fields water scheme, all the other works were nearing completion or were now in hand. Full information would be found in the quarterly statement published last July, and in that for the September

quarter which would be published in a few days, so that the hon. member would have no lack of information regarding authorised loan expenditure. As to new works to be constructed, the policy of the Government had been foreshadowed in the Governor's Speech, and it was hardly in accordance with that Constitutional procedure to which the hon. member seemed to pin his faith that the Government should bring that matter before the House at the hon. member's bidding. The Government must be allowed their own time in which to make and to bring before the House their proposals. However, he intended to bring those proposals before the House as soon as possible. The hon. member, who seemed to know more than he about this matter, had recently written a letter to a friend of his (the Premier's) up country, telling that gentleman of something which the Government were or were not going to do. That was not a courteous act, considering the hon. member's desire to be always treated with courtesy.

MR. LEAKE: Would the Premier deny that statement in the letter?

THE PREMIER: Without arguing or denying anything, the hon. member was not quite accurate in the statement, nor had he any ground for making the statement. In fact, the statement was deliberately inaccurate, and had been made without any knowledge whatever.

MR. LEAKE: What was the statement?

THE PREMIER: The hon. member had said the Government did not propose to proceed with a certain work this session.

MR. LEAKE said he had written to the effect that he believed the Government did not so propose.

THE PREMIER: The written statement was that the hon. member had heard or had good grounds, or something of that sort. He (the Premier) could not remember the exact words, but knew that the hon. member had no right whatever to send such a letter, and his doing so was not a courteous act, nor an act which a member of Parliament occupying the position of the hon. member should commit. In fact, it was an improper act.

MR. LEAKE: There was no discourtesy, but merely criticism.

THE PREMIER: It was not criticism. The statement made had not been based on knowledge, and was a misrepresentation designed to injure him (the Premier) and the Government. It was not obvious why such controversies as this should take place, and the course the hon. member had been pursuing lately seemed to be designed to irritate and annoy the Government, and to make public life unbearable. One did not wish to be in controversy with the hon. member, for we had been friends all our lives. He hoped he had always respected the hon. member, personally and publicly; but the course the hon. member was lately pursuing apparently showed an intention to divide them, not only as politicians, but even as personal friends. What had he (the Premier) done that the hon. member should pursue this course? The tactics lately pursued by the hon. member really seemed to have a personal significance, and to evince a personal hatred to himself (the Premier) and towards Government supporters. The hon. member might rest assured that he (the Premier) had never misrepresented the hon. member, or done anything to injure him except in a political sense. Sometimes he did disparage the Opposition, who in turn disparaged the Government; and none could object to that, so long as it was done in a reasonable way. All could understand that it was not the duty of the Opposition to sing the praises of the Government, nor *vice versa*. The Opposition had one set of views and the Government another; therefore hon. members sometimes said hard things of one another which would have been better left unsaid; but that was no reason why such feelings should be pushed to the verge of malignity. There was growing up in the House a state of affairs altogether due to the hon. member's personal animosity towards him (the Premier), which really made one sick and tired of political life. He (the Premier) wished to pursue his political career in harmony with those about him. The course pursued this session by the hon. member was inexplicable in its exhibition of personal animosity, not only in the House, but he might almost say outside of it. He (the Premier) regretted this very much, and would do anything in his power to restore a better feeling in the House. Let public

business be properly carried on; let hard things be said when necessary, but let them not be said maliciously or in a spirit of personal animosity: then hon. members could do their duty to the country, and could carry on public business with satisfaction to themselves.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Did the Premier estimate that the supply granted by the Bill would be sufficient for the period mentioned?

THE PREMIER: That was not certain; but what could the Government do? If they asked for too much, the Opposition would not be pleased.

MR. LEAKE assured the Committee and the Premier that he was not actuated by any malignant or personal feeling. He was at peace, and hoped to continue at peace, with every hon. member; but he was surely at liberty to criticise the public acts of the Government. In reply to an invitation to examine the proposed Goomalling railway route, he had written to a Mr. Morrell that it would be impossible for him to attend on the date mentioned, as Parliament would be sitting, and that moreover he did not see that any good end could be served, as he perceived no chance of the question being considered during this Parliament, and that he believed the Government had no intention of asking the House to consent to the construction of the Goomalling line. Such was the letter he had written. He still believed that the Government had no intention of passing the Goomalling line in the House this session. True, in the Governor's Speech there was a railway policy, and the Leonora and Norseman railways had been mentioned as being about to be built. The Premier had said there was about 1½ millions of loan authorisation not yet raised; and the Opposition had a right, in the absence of a definite statement from the Government, to assume that the proposed railways would cost another million. Was it not his duty to ask the leader of the Government how he proposed to raise the money, and when? In view of the right hon. gentleman's pronouncements of last year and the year before, that he did not propose to go into the loan market again until the existing authorisations had been expended, surely he (Mr. Leake) was entitled to know from him what his intentions were in regard to the raising

of this money. Nothing was said in the Budget, and this was what he complained of, about the Treasury bills, or how the Premier proposed to redeem them when they fell due, which he thought was stated to be at the end of September.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Thirtieth September, £300,000.

THE PREMIER: They were the Savings Bank bills.

MR. LEAKE: We were entitled to know whether the bills had been redeemed.

THE PREMIER: They were renewed last week, from the same source.

MR. LEAKE: Then we ought to have known it at the time of the Budget statement. That bit of information was one good resulting from this desultory conversation this afternoon. We ought not to be asked to pass Bills of this kind until we had full information with regard to the financial position of the colony. We did not possess that until we were told how and when it was proposed to raise the balance of the present authorisations on loans, or how and when it was proposed to raise the loans for the proposed new works. He was of opinion that when the right hon. gentleman became calmer he would not think there was anything spiteful or malignant in what he (Mr. Leake) had said. In case there should be such a thing, he unhesitatingly withdrew, and said nothing was further from his thoughts. He wanted information which he thought was for the benefit of the country at large. He did not consider it consonant with the right hon. gentleman's position to say he (Mr. Leake) was forcing his hand. Nearly four months had elapsed since the right hon. gentleman had announced his intention to build new railways. He (Mr. Leake) was not going to block the passage of this Bill; he did not want to hamper administration with regard to the payment of salaries or anything else; and while not speaking for anyone who sat on this (Opposition) side, yet as far as he could he would insist on the fullest information upon these points being given before the Estimates were passed.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 2—agreed to.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, and report adopted.

## ROADS AND STREETS CLOSURE BILL.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENT.

Amendment made by the Legislative Council considered.

## IN COMMITTEE.

Schedule.—After "North Fremantle," add the following:—In Gingin.—All that portion of a public street, one chain wide, situate south of Robinson Street, and being bounded on the west by Gingin Suburban Lot 14, and on the east by Suburban Lots 12 and 13.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Put and passed.

Resolution reported, report adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Legislative Council.

## PERMANENT RESERVES BILL.

## LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENTS.

Schedule of five amendments made by the Legislative Council considered.

## IN COMMITTEE.

Amendment No. 1.—Clause 2, strike out the whole.

THE PREMIER moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Put and passed.

No. 2.—Add the following, to stand as Clause 2:

2. Notwithstanding anything contained in the Land Act, 1898, or any other Act dealing with lands of the Crown, it is hereby provided—

*Classification of certain Reserves.*

1. Whenever the Governor has reserved, or may hereafter reserve to Her Majesty, any lands of the Crown for the purpose of parks, squares, or otherwise for the embellishment of towns, or for the recreation or amusement of the inhabitants, or for cemeteries, or for any other public purpose, the Governor may, by the notice of reservation published in the *Government Gazette*, or by any subsequent notice so published, and subject to such conditions as may be expressed therein, classify such lands as of Class A, and if so classified, such land shall for ever remain dedicated to the purpose declared in such notice, until by an Act in which such lands respectively are specified it is otherwise provided.
2. Whenever the Governor has reserved or may hereafter reserve to Her Majesty any lands of the Crown, and such lands are not classified as Class A, he may, at any time he may think fit, classify such lands as of Class B, and on notifying such classification in the *Government Gazette*, such lands shall remain reserved from

alienation or from being otherwise dealt with, unless, and until the Governor shall cancel such reservation by notice in the *Government Gazette*; but in such case the Minister of Lands shall present a special report to both Houses of Parliament, setting forth the reasons for such cancellation and the purposes to which it is intended to devote the said lands, and such report shall be made to both Houses of Parliament within 14 days from the cancellation thereof if Parliament be then in session, and if not, then within 14 days after the commencement of the next session.

3. All other reserves made under the provisions of Part III. of the Land Act, 1898, shall be classified as of Class C.

THE PREMIER moved that the amendment be agreed to. The reason for the amendment was that it was thought the clause in the Bill as it left the Assembly was of perhaps too sweeping a character in a colony like this, where many reserves were made almost temporarily in the first instance. After consultation, he came to the conclusion that the clause as amended would better meet the case. Class A had reference to reserves of a permanent character used as parks and squares, and so on, and from the time such reserves were gazetted they could not be interfered with except by Act of Parliament.

MR. GEORGE: What about the reserve at Subiaco?

THE PREMIER: That reserve was vested in the municipal council, having been granted in fee simple, he thought. The council could not sell it. Reserves in Class B were to remain reserved from alienation or from being otherwise dealt with, unless and until the Governor cancelled such reservation by notice in the *Government Gazette*; but in such case the Minister of Lands would present a special report to both Houses of Parliament, setting forth the reasons for such cancellation and the purposes to which it was intended to devote the land. Class C would consist of all other reserves under the ordinary reservations in the land regulations. He thought that would meet the case. The principal object of the Government was to secure for ever, for the use of the people, all reserves set aside for watering-places, parks, squares, in towns and suburbs. As he had taken a great interest in the matter, and the Bill was the outcome of his own

action, he could assure hon. members he would take great care the intention of the Bill was carried out immediately it became law.

Question put and passed.

No. 3—Page 2, Clause 3, strike out the whole.

THE PREMIER moved that the amendment be agreed to.

Put and passed.

No. 4—Add the following, to stand as Clause 3:

Nothing in this Act shall prevent the survey and declaration by the Governor of any necessary roads and streets through or over any such reserve; or in the case of any such reserve being made before the land is surveyed, shall prevent the amendment of the boundaries and area in such manner as may be found necessary on survey, but so that the total area shall not be reduced by more than one-twentieth part thereof.

THE PREMIER moved, as an amendment, that in line 2 the word "such" be struck out, and that the words "classified as Class B or Class C" be inserted after "reserve." While it was quite right that the Governor-in-Council should have power to declare all necessary roads and streets through reserves, he ought not to have the same power in regard to reserves classified A in the Bill. In the case of Perth Park, for instance, it would not be right or advisable to give this power. He therefore proposed to exempt parks, squares, and similar reserves classified as A, and to confine the clause to reserves classified as B and C.

HON. W. H. VENN: Would that prevent the Government resuming land for railway purposes?

THE PREMIER: No. That power was governed by special Act. If this clause were passed as drawn, the Government or a Minister, if urged by a roads board for instance, could make roads through a park set apart for the recreation of the people, and that would be most undesirable.

Amendment put and passed.

MR. GEORGE moved that in line 2, after "Class C," the words "but only after the matter has been submitted to the Houses of Legislature and their concurrence has been obtained" be inserted. Parliament ought to be jealous of any encroachment on reserves set apart not merely for the present, but for future generations. In the old country he had

seen commons land filched away under the rights of a lord of the manor or the decision of a municipal corporation, and he knew that in one large town such land had to be repurchased for public use, at a big price. On the Esplanade in Perth, for instance, encroachment had been permitted in the shape of a bowling green. Bowling, no doubt, was a desirable recreation, and though that enclosure added to the beauty of the reserve, yet the ground had been practically taken from public use. Some little time ago there was a proposition, which he thought was being carried out, to set apart a portion of the Perth Park as tennis courts, for the use of one class of people; and, while he did not wish to speak disrespectfully of people connected with the Bowling Club or the Tennis Club, he gave these instances to show the danger of reserves being diverted from their original purpose. Even in the matter of roads, proper safeguards should be provided to prevent these being made a means of encroachment on reserves.

THE PREMIER: The desire to preserve these public grounds for ever, for the purpose for which they were set apart, could be quite appreciated; but there were many kinds of reserve, and there was no law whatever to prevent the Governor-in-Council changing the purpose of a reserve, or even selling it.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What title had the Tennis Club?

THE PREMIER: The Tennis Club were only tenants-at-will.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: But the Tennis Club could exclude the public from the ground.

THE PREMIER said he did not think the club could do that, although they were putting a much higher fence round the ground than originally intended.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That fence was intended to exclude the public.

THE PREMIER: It was not to be apprehended that this was the object.

MR. GEORGE: But that was what it was practically coming to.

THE PREMIER: It was not likely the public would want to go into that small fenced-off portion.

MR. GEORGE: That was not the question. This was taking away part of the inheritance of the people.

MR. VOSPER: Part of the rights of the people.

THE PREMIER: The Bill was a step in the right direction, and in future public reserves would be classified as A, B, or C, as already explained. The only difficulty was as to the parks and reserves already in existence, which would have to be scrutinised and classified, and hon. members knew that on land classified as B and C it was not proposed to place any restrictions, further than that a report must be made to the House in regard to them every year, and that would be a check to some extent. Class A could not be touched at all, except by Act of Parliament; but in regard to other reserves, if the Governor-in-Council were given power to cancel a reserve altogether, he might fairly be trusted with the formation of roads. There were many hundreds of reserves in the colony that would be classified B, through which a road might be desirable, and it would be burdensome to have to come to the House for an Act of Parliament on every occasion of the sort. It would be better not to press the amendment, because a good beginning had been made in regard to the control of reserves, and as time went on, if the Bill did not meet all requirements, the provisions might be extended.

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. H. B. Lefroy): Under the Goldfields Act all lands dedicated to public purposes were exempt from leases or claims. There were many large reserves on the goldfields of a temporary character, reserves for health purposes and for parks: these would come under this Bill. He understood the member for the Murray desired that none of these lands should be alienated without the House being first consulted. Under the Goldfields Act machinery was provided for acquiring this land for gold-mining purposes, therefore all land on the goldfields of this character should be placed under Class B. It would be very inconvenient for such land to be locked up from gold-mining. In many instances the use of this land would not affect the public, because only underground work would be going on.

MR. VOSPER: It would be well if the member for the Ashburton (Hon. S. Burt) gave the Committee his view in regard to the encroachment on lands in parks. Take the case of the bowling

green on the Esplanade. No one begrudged people having a bowling green, and those who used this land had beautified and improved it; but the very fact of beautifying the land, putting a fence round it, and erecting a large building on the ground, seemed to him to be an objection, because if these people were ordered to leave, they might demand compensation from the Government.

THE PREMIER: It was the municipal council, not the Government, who granted leave.

MR. VOSPER: If the persons who had made the bowling green were allowed to remain for years and pay no rent, after being in possession for so many years there might be some difficulty in ejecting them. A claim might be set up to the ground, and there would be a danger of the encroachment becoming permanent.

HON. S. BURT: The member for North-East Coolgardie was quite right in his judgment, as there was an element of danger in what one might call the secret appropriations of open park lands. Personally, he very much objected to these secret appropriations, and he had always done everything in his power to discourage the municipal council allowing private clubs of any description having any specified portion of recreation grounds. The bowling green was a case in point. If those using it did not pay for the ground, in course of time the question of title might undoubtedly arise, and it was quite open to those who had made this bowling green to say in the future that they had been in possession for a certain number of years and acquired a title. That being so, unless the municipal council had taken precautions to see that these people paid some rent, trouble might arise. No doubt the bowling green looked very nice; it was well kept and rather an ornament; but there was no reason why the City Council should not give to himself, for instance, a tennis ground alongside, give to another man a football ground, and no doubt there were many clubs that would try to get a piece of land for a cricket ground. When he was in the City Council, he set his face against any portions of the reserve being used for cricket matches; but since that time portions of the ground had been fenced off and belonged to certain clubs. If persons walked into the kiosk belong-

ing to the bowling green and asked for a cup of tea, what would be the position ?

MR. GEORGE: The public could not do that.

HON. S. BURT: It would not be nice for the public to intrude, but if such a thing happened, we would soon see whether the ground belonged to these clubs. There was a piece of ground in the Park which had been alienated for tennis purposes; and if a piece of land was granted to a tennis club, why not grant land to other persons for other purposes? He maintained that if people wanted a tennis court, they should get it somewhere else; for they had no right to go on land belonging to the people and establish a tennis court there.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Government should be impressed with the absolute necessity of taking steps to protect the piece of ground in the public park.

MR. GEORGE: In the Perth Park?

THE PREMIER: There was nothing yet. The Park had only been commenced.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: People should not have the right of enclosing land which would prevent the public from entering. If clubs expended a certain amount of money in improving a piece of land, only persons belonging to the club which had contributed would have the right of entry.

THE PREMIER: That was not so.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What title had the club to this land? The Perth City Council should protect the rights of the public. On the Melbourne racecourse there were certain parts of the ground which the club could enclose, charging an entrance fee, and there were other parts which the public could go to without paying an entrance fee. Such encroachments went on day after day. Supposing the Tennis Club he had referred to, in addition to making the necessary improvements, put up a large pavilion costing some hundreds of pounds, there would be a delicacy on the part of Parliament in depriving them of it, and by and by this club would establish its right by occupancy and claim a title to the land. Afterwards, the club might call a general meeting of members, and decide to build a terrace of houses on the land; and so the thing would go on! It was a good time to start at the beginning, and he desired the Government to

take the necessary steps. He was sure they would, now it had been pointed out to them, endeavour to protect the rights of the public in the reserves, so that no precedent should be established. All he asked was that the Government should take steps to preserve the rights of the public to this particular piece of ground, so that a precedent would be established in dealing with other applications for pieces of ground. By and by cricket clubs would want to locate themselves in this park, and there might be very good reasons why they should be permitted to locate themselves in such places, but the Government should take care to protect the rights of the public not only as to the fee simple, but in regard to the right of entrance. Cases had been tested over and over again, and there were instances in which cricket clubs had enclosed pieces of land by fences 20 or 30 feet high, to prevent people looking over and watching the game. If we began right and went on in the right way, then we should end right.

MR. SOLOMON: Under the Fremantle Municipal Act, the council might lease for three years any portion of the Fremantle Park, with the consent of the Governor-in-Council. Portion of the Fremantle Park had been leased for the purpose of a bowling green, on condition that the persons spent so much money on the land, which was only let for three years.

THE PREMIER: But at Fremantle the council had the fee simple of the land.

MR. SOLOMON: Yes.

THE PREMIER: Then this Bill would not apply to that case.

MR. GEORGE: The bowling green in Perth was granted by the City Council, and it was promised that it would always be open for people to go through, that the public would be invited to go in, and that the gates would not be locked against the public. He (Mr. George) was in the City Council at the time, and asked that instead of the usual wicket gate being erected, a swing gate should be placed there; but that was not done. A short time after the place was enclosed, he noticed that the gates were fastened by a chain and a padlock, and he (Mr. George) made a statement in the council that the bowling green people had locked the gates, but he was told the gates were

not locked, that the key had not been turned in the lock. He only mentioned this to show that in a short time persons got so many friends in the council or in the Government that they obtained what was not intended in the first instance. These encroachments should be safeguarded in every way possible. Having gained his point, he asked leave to withdraw his amendment.

Amendment (Mr. George's), by leave, withdrawn.

At 6-30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7-30, Chair resumed.

MR. VOSPER: Some time ago the Bowling Club using a portion of the Perth Esplanade had applied for a club license to sell liquor, thus indicating a desire to establish a proprietary right to the land.

MR. A. FORREST: The club had no such right.

MR. VOSPER: No; but it had been suggested that they might become possessed of such a right, and that contention was upheld by the member for the Ashburton (Hon. S. Burt). What right had the public in regard to the Observatory grounds, on which a notice had recently been posted excluding the public?

THE PREMIER: The public had no rights there.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It was a public reserve.

THE PREMIER: A reserve only for an Observatory.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Not originally.

THE PREMIER: No; but since.

MR. VOSPER said he understood people living in the neighbourhood were anxious to cross the reserve, when going from their houses to Brooking street.

THE PREMIER: The distance would not thereby be shortened.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: The reserve was closed, and the public ought not to walk there. It was like a railway reserve, and with such reserves his department had more trouble than with anything else.

MR. VOSPER: Had the public any right of access?

THE PREMIER: Surely access was not necessary.

MR. VOSPER: The tramway company would soon run a line through Brooking Street, and then those living behind the reserve would find it convenient to cross that ground to reach the trams.

THE PREMIER: No time would thus be saved.

MR. VOSPER: The discussion should cause the Government and the Perth Municipality to exercise all possible vigilance in the future for conserving to the people unlimited right of access to public property.

Council's amendment, as amended, put and passed.

Amendment No. 5—agreed to.

Resolutions reported, report adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### WINES, BEER, AND SPIRIT SALE AMENDMENT BILL.

##### LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL'S AMENDMENT.

The Assembly having amended the Bill, and the Council disagreeing to one amendment, the Council's reason for such dissent was now considered.

Amendment No. 6—Add the following new clause, to stand as Clause 3:

*See South Australian Act, 43 and 44 Vict., No. 191.*—The delivery to any person of any liquor by a licensed or unlicensed person, or by the owner or occupier of any licensed or unlicensed house or place, or by his or her servant or other person in any licensed or unlicensed house or place, shall be deemed to be sufficient *prima facie* evidence of money or other consideration having been given or exchanged for such liquor so as to support a conviction, unless satisfactory proof to the contrary be given.

Reason for disagreeing:—"The proposed new clause is already enacted by Section 78 of the principal Act."

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The hon. member in another place at whose instance this new clause had been referred back to the Assembly had been under the impression that Section 78 of the principal Act covered all requirements; but he (Mr. Illingworth) had spoken to that hon. member and to the Attorney General and other legal members, and had ascertained that Section 78 did not cover sly grog-shops—places where proof of delivery was important, and in respect of which there should be every facility for proving the matters originally covered by

the section. There would be no difficulty in retaining the new clause, and the Council's reason for disagreeing was not acceptable. He therefore moved that the Assembly's amendment be insisted on.

MR. LOCKE: The Committee would not, be hoped, enforce the amendment, which would harass the publicans. The Bill as it stood would answer all the purposes necessary.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Bill would not harass the publicans, but only the sly grog-sellers.

MR. LOCKE: It included licensed and unlicensed.

MR. LEAKE: The present law had reference to licensed houses.

MR. LOCKE: The publicans in his part of the country had as much as they could do to keep within the bounds of the law at present. He had his name taken the other day, and was threatened to be "run in." It appeared this law had been copied from a South Australian Act, but we knew South Australian people were particularly abstemious. He believed the law now proposed was not in operation anywhere else.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It was.

MR. LOCKE: The other House considered the clause unnecessary and uncalled for.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The reason given by the Legislative Council for disagreeing to the clause was that Section 78 of the existing Act already met the object of the clause; but that section only reached licensed victuallers. It was necessary to recast the clause, and the Attorney General, whom he had consulted, agreed with him on that point.

MR. LOCKE: Under this Bill it would be impossible, in his opinion, to keep a hotel at all.

MR. VOSPER: Apparently the new clause did not impose any extra obligation upon licensees. It might be a redundancy, but no more than that.

MR. LOCKE: Why not strike out the words "licensed or"? He did not mind that part of the clause relating to unlicensed persons.

MR. LEAKE: The proper way would be to repeal Clause 78 of the existing Act.

THE PREMIER: It appeared the Legislative Council had dealt with the matter under the impression that what was proposed was already provided for. Doubt-

less they had done that in error. Section 78 of the old Act might be taken to refer to licensed persons, although it did not say so. He thought the easiest way would be to make the clause applicable to licensed persons. We did not want to lose the clause, which was very important in catching sly grog-sellers.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Section 78, as at present worded, always failed, he understood; and the police could not get the convictions they desired, the wording not being sufficiently clear.

MR. LEAKE: If it could be done, the easiest way out of the difficulty would be to repeal Section 78; or the striking out of the words "licensed or" in the first, second, and third lines of the clause, would put the clause in order.

MR. ROBSON: If the words "licensed or" were struck out, the matter would be left very open as to what were and what were not unlicensed houses. If a person asked another to have a drink in his house, no money being passed, it would be a question whether he could not be brought up before a magistrate for keeping an unlicensed house.

THE PREMIER: It could soon be ascertained whether the house was unlicensed or not.

MR. ROBSON: The house of every ordinary individual was an unlicensed house, and we were going to deal with unlicensed houses.

MR. LEAKE: What the hon. member said was correct; but the difficulty was met by the fact that the delivery of liquor was only *prima facie* evidence of sale. If the hon. member had something at his house, and he (Mr. Leake) were charged with selling the stuff, the delivery would be *prima facie* evidence; but he could easily meet the charge by making a statement and getting the hon. member to support it, that the liquor was given and not sold.

MR. VOSPER: In the same way, the sly grog-seller might escape.

THE PREMIER: We must either insist upon the amendment or not. He did not think the clause would do any harm.

MR. LEAKE: If there was any doubt about it, we had better pass the clause as it stood. The time had arrived for a consolidation of the Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Acts.

MR. LOCKE: It would be within the power of the Committee to strike out the words "licensed or."

THE PREMIER: The Committee could not alter that now. We must either take the clause or leave it.

MR. LEAKE: Then the Committee should not insist on the clause.

Question—that the Assembly's amendment be insisted on—put and passed.

Resolution reported, report adopted, and a message accordingly transmitted to the Legislative Council.

**MOTION — DRAFT COMMONWEALTH BILL, JOINT COMMITTEE'S RECOMMENDATIONS.**

**THIRD DAY OF DEBATE.**

Debate resumed on motion by the Premier (5th October), for referring to electors the Bill as amended at the Conference of Premiers, and the Bill as amended in the Joint Committee's report.

MR. GEORGE (Murray): The subject of the debate is about the most important which this Parliament is likely to have to consider, inasmuch as it really is a question of the ushering in of a new life for Australasia, whether the people of this colony join the federation or whether they do not. If we join federation with the whole of the colonies, we certainly enter into a new life of union, which may or may not be good for us; and if we do not enter federation, we shall be separated from the Eastern colonists, which in birth and language are our brethren. The member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) the other evening gave a most exhaustive review of the Commonwealth Bill, and imparted to the question an aspect altogether different from that to which hon. members had been accustomed. I do not propose to follow in the footsteps of that hon. member, for the simple reason that I do not think I possess the ability; and I can simply bring to bear on the question such arguments as life and experience suggest to me as fitting to lay before hon. members. A Joint Select Committee of Parliament was appointed to inquire into the Commonwealth Bill, and, after calling and examining such witnesses as might be thought able to throw a light on the question in a fair and impartial manner, to draw up a report for presentation to Parliament.

All that the Committee were appointed to do has been done. The election of the members of that Committee has not been questioned, because it was by ballot, conducted on what cannot be considered other than fair lines. It may be an accident that there were not an equal number of what I may call federalists and anti-federalists elected, and it is unfortunate that out of the fourteen members there were only three of pronounced federal views, the other eleven being gentlemen who were either in favour of federation on what they called a fair basis, and possibly one or two who were against federation at any price. However that may be, I wish to point out that the duty of members who are appointed to a committee on such an important matter is to sink, as far as possible, their own individual opinions; and it is unfair for any member of the Committee to bring the charge against the majority, that it was really a farce to hold an inquiry, inasmuch as the conclusion was arrived at before the Committee met. We know perfectly well there were three of the Committee at least who acted as if they looked on the proceeding as nothing but a farce; and I ask those gentlemen, with all due respect, whether they think that attitude was fair to either the country of their birth or the country of their adoption, and especially would I ask them whether it was fair or respectful to the members who elected them to the Committee. Whatever our views for or against the Bill might be, it was our distinct and clear duty to make the inquiry in a fair and equitable manner, and after evidence had been taken, to argue the matter in whatever way we chose. But what was the attitude of those three gentlemen? The attitude of the leader of the Opposition from the start showed he regarded it as a wearying of the flesh to be present at the sittings of the Committee; and so far was that feeling carried, that remarks were made about the number of witnesses who were absolutely opposed to federation. But it is entirely contrary to fact that there was no opportunity given for calling witnesses who were as much pronounced federalists as others were alleged to be anti-federalists. I trust that in this matter we shall endeavour not to have regard to mere party triumph, but will do our

plain duty, irrespective altogether of what votes there are on this side or the other side of the House. The Joint Select Committee called a number of witnesses, and from the *Hansard* records of the evidence, hon. members may form their own conclusions as to whether the examinations were fair or unfair. Though some of the witnesses were, perhaps, in some directions a little more biased than may have been desired, there was, taking the whole of the evidence and putting bias on one side, a consensus of opinion that the prosperity of Western Australia is grievously imperilled. If those members of the Committee who were asked to produce witnesses favourable to federation on the lines of the Federal Bill, had been sincere and were looking at the matter from the high standpoint they wish us to believe, namely that of binding together the different States of Australasia, why did they not bring forward those witnesses in order to convince the Committee? I take it the great bulk of the members of the Committee desired to ascertain the whole truth and nothing but the truth, and were quite as willing to accept evidence from those in favour of federation as from those who were opposed to the union, because that is the proper state of mind in which a Committee should approach so important a trust as that of examining the Commonwealth Bill. Having examined witnesses, the Committee made certain recommendations. We have been told by the leader of the Opposition as to how that report was drawn up; but with that matter, although I differ from the leader of the Opposition in his conclusions, I do not propose to deal. I propose, however, to deal as briefly as I can with the recommendations made by the Committee, and to urge that these recommendations are not only reasonable, but equitable. They are reasonable because we in Western Australia, with our immense area but comparatively small population, have a right before we enter a partnership to have something to say as to the terms of the union. It has been said by hon. members that this should have been done when our delegates were sent to the Conventions. Probably that is correct. With much that has been said on that point I entirely agree, but it is never too late, and never should be too late in the

history of a nation, to pause before taking what may be a fatal and false step. One of the important recommendations made by the Committee has reference to the means which should be taken for the election of senators to the Federal Parliament. For reasons which have been pointed out by the Premier, it is necessary in a State like this, if we are to have fair representation, that our senators, to be of any service whatever, must represent as many interests as possible. It would not be fair to a great portion of the colony if, by means of the ticket system, it were possible to send representatives of one interest only, while the representatives of other interests were entirely shut out. We have to consider that what the Committee recommend should be conceded to Western Australia, has been conceded to Queensland; and if to Queensland, why not to this colony? What is there in Queensland which deserves recognition more than in the land in which we live? If the concession be right and just for Queensland, it cannot be wrong for Western Australia, and it cannot be unreasonable or regarded as threatening the federal spirit, because we are simply asking to be allowed to provide that machinery which will give the best representation of the interests of this colony. Is there anything in the recommendation calculated to "cut the silver cord" of friendship as between colony and colony, or which would tend in any way to intensify the danger of civil war? Not at all. It is almost the same sort of thing as a man claiming to wear a black coat or a white coat, as he thinks fit, provided he pays for it. Those who tell us that this recommendation will cause us to be cast outside the holy pale of federation, can have but few arguments if they have any faith in so broken a reed. Again, we ask the Federal Parliament to reserve the right to construct a transcontinental railway. We have been told *ad nauseam* during the last three or four years that one of the principal reasons for federation is that it will result in more effective defence and intercommunication between the colonies. It has been urged that it is impossible that defence can be perfected until we have some means of rapid and safe transit for military forces from one side of the continent to the other. It is true that we have a fleet to bring soldiers to

Western Australia from the Eastern colonies; but we must remember that while war of itself might be a very delightful pastime to those engaged in it, the most important consideration, so far as this or any Australian State is concerned, is that the forces must be conveyed to the point where they have to do their fighting, without having to do any intermediate fighting on the passage. If soldiers are transported from one part of the colonies to the other by sea, they may be cut off from their base of operations by an enemy's fleet, whereas if we had a transcontinental railway we could transport army after army in safety to any point where they were required. It seems to me that to ask the Federal Parliament to reserve the right to authorise the construction of a transcontinental railway is not unreasonable or unjust, but is, on the other hand, a request equitable not only to this but to the other colonies. What are the motives which actuate opposition to a transcontinental railway? Are they fraternal or federal reasons? No; they are nothing of the kind. Any reasons which South Australia may have for opposing the construction of this railway are not fraternal but selfish reasons, which have been explained in this House and on the platform. We have been told, as a threat, that unless we agree to the Bill and enter federation, South Australia will construct a railway to Port Darwin. So far as the interests of that colony are concerned, a railway to Port Darwin is perhaps more important than a railway from Fremantle; because once we have a transcontinental railway running from Fremantle right across the continent, Western Australia will have the leading port of the Commonwealth. If South Australia is not prepared to accept this amendment—and we have been told by the leader of the Opposition that South Australia is not prepared—and if we must trust to its generosity, surely there can be nothing unjust or unreasonable in asking that colony to give a pledge which can cost her nothing, and which, if she really means to have a railway, she might just as well give, and fight the question out hereafter. What is there in this colony retaining our customs duties which is inequitable to the other colonies? Is there anything inequitable in retaining our tariff for, say, five years without alteration? We

know perfectly well that this colony has afforded a market to Victoria and South Australia, and in a lesser degree to New South Wales, for a number of years. Not having manufacturing industries ourselves, the other colonies have had the benefit of the requirements of this colony. We did not grudge them our market, seeing they have been able to produce what we require; but we say, although these other colonies have been able to supply this colony with manufactures during the past few years, there is no bar to their supplying us for the next few years, except that in this colony there will be a growth of manufactories, and we shall be endeavouring to manufacture for ourselves. We cannot be accused of being individually selfish if we wish to create within our own shores those sources of production in the articles we need. The other colonies know perfectly well that we are scarcely likely to manufacture many things which they can manufacture. We know very well the other colonies hardly need a tariff. The removal of the duties will make very little difference to New South Wales, for that colony has practically no tariff at the present time; and as far as Victoria is concerned, that colony has already built up her manufactures by means of bonuses and a protective system for years, so that she can not only supply her own needs, but can export to the other colonies. Where is there any generosity on the part of those colonies in giving away a tariff they no longer need? They have kept on a high tariff for the time they have needed it, and by that means the other colonies have been raised from the position in which we are to-day into the position we intend to occupy when we have had fair play. We are asking for a tariff that will not disorganise trade, but which will protect our industries for a space of, say, five years, until we get ourselves more forward than we are to-day. If we were asking to keep our tariff for an unlimited period, if we were asking to increase our tariff from what it is at the present time, then the other colonies might fairly say, "These people are unreasonable; they are not fair; they desire absolutely to shut us out." But we are only asking for a fair thing, and if the other colonies cannot see that, and will not admit us on these terms, then I can only say I am sorry to

feel this "blow" about brotherly feeling is all gas, and there is no solidity in it. I would point out again, if the other colonies concede the right to have a tariff for five years, it does not follow that the duties will remain on for five years. It does not take away from this Parliament or any subsequent Parliament the right to revise these duties; it does not take away from us the right to reduce them or to abolish them. I think the hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James), speaking throughout the colony, said in one speech that if we did not enter into federation he would become a free-trader, and that the clamour of the people would demand that the whole of the duties should be swept away. What is to prevent the people demanding that the whole of the duties should be swept away? To my mind it seems clear that the freedom of action so far as the people of this colony are concerned, and as far as the representatives of the people are concerned, is still reserved to them; not, as we are sometimes told, that it is absolutely impossible for these things to be altered. We are first told by one that the clamour of the people will demand an alteration of the duties, and then we are told by other members that if we do not enter into federation, and if the amendments of the Select Committee are passed, the duties cannot be altered. I think I am correct in saying that it would be open and free for the Parliament to deal with the tariff as they think fit, on any occasion and in any constitutional manner. I would urge, in support of the recommendations of the Select Committee, that there are none of us in our ordinary business life who would enter into a partnership with another man or any body of men without counting the cost. None of us would enter into a partnership of that sort without seeing that the conditions of the partnership were fair, because we know that if they are unfair the duration of that partnership will be very short. We know that instead of having peace in connection with that business it will be war; instead of working together, the partners will be warring amongst one another. What partnership can be so great as the federation of the Australian colonies? We have a right to see that the conditions upon which we join are equitable all round. As I have said, this

is the only colony of the group which will suffer from an open port to the other colonies. The Premier and others have pointed out the effect federation will have on the financial position of affairs, but I prefer to deal with this matter as it affects those who have to obtain their living by the productions of their brain and the work of their hands. We are manufacturing in this colony a considerable number of articles. The reproach has been hurled against us of having repairing shops, being a "tin-pot" people, and all that sort of thing, but I take it that if the gentleman who is responsible for that inelegant phrase only visited the Exhibition of Manufactures now being held in the Queen's Hall, and visited it as a native of the colony, as he is, he should be proud that within the boundaries of the land in which he was born there are infant manufactures which have been started by the pluck and energy, not of great capitalists, but of men whose greatest capital consists in their brain and their muscle. If I were a native of this colony, I should be proud to find in that Exhibition the nucleus of huge industries; and if the hon. gentleman to whom I refer would visit the Queen's Hall, he would see the exhibits of 150 manufacturers who are showing their work, which is fit to compare with the manufactures of any of the Australasian colonies, and I may say will compare with some of the manufactures of the old country. If the hon. gentleman visited this Exhibition, he would feel that he owed an apology to those manufactories which he called repairing shops, and to those people whom he referred to as "tin-pot."

MR. WILSON: Are there no repairing shops?

MR. GEORGE: We must have repairing shops, but all are not repairing shops. There are manufactories here just as sure as there are manufactories in the old country; and I may inform the hon. member who interjected that, until the Exhibition opened, I was unaware that in this colony the whole of the articles required for the manufacture of boots and shoes were made here, except the brass eyelets, the laces, and of course the nails, which are not made here yet.

MR. LEAKE: What about the leather?

MR. GEORGE : The leather, of course, is made in the colony ; and if the hon. member had been at the Manufacturers' Conference yesterday he would have met a gentleman from York who was anxious that, if the duty was taken off the raw material, it should be retained on leather. This gentleman told me, I do not know how many thousand pounds of leather he turned out in a year ; but whether the quantity is large or small, the manufactories which are started here should not be belittled, but encouraged. To those born in Western Australia I should say it is a matter of considerable pride and gratification that men have sought out this fair country to bring their plant here to establish their industries. I have said that New South Wales will not suffer from an open port, because she has an open port already ; free-trade will not make any difference to Victoria, because Victoria is an exporter. We would only like to have the same protection which Victoria had, but we know perfectly well we could not get it if we asked for it ; we could not get a prohibitive tariff on any goods ; therefore we are not such fools as to ask for it, but we ask for a fair tariff. South Australia has also established her industries, and an open port will do her no harm. Queensland is almost in the same position, only there is this difference, that as soon as federation is accomplished on the lines of the original Bill, and as soon as the new tariff is fixed upon, Queensland will immediately obtain for her sugar a far higher price than she gets now. Probably there are other articles manufactured in the other colonies which will become enhanced in price, and probably there are articles which are now on the free list here which will become higher in price in this colony. I point these things out to show what to my mind is a fair argument, and to show that what the other colonies have enjoyed so long we should attempt to enjoy for a limited period. Unless we do that, we shall be entering into a partnership in which the benefits will be all on one side and the disadvantages on ours. There may be some sentiment in this question, and sentiment may appeal to some people ; it does appeal to myself ; but the argument that appeals to me most is that in this colony

there are a great number of artisans—if in the compilation of the returns which the Registrar General has given us there are errors, still there is a large number of artisans in this colony—and I desire that these men shall have for their wives and families the security of their homes and their living. I would point out to hon. members we should retain the duties for the purpose of assisting our industries. The avenues of employment in this country are not many ; and during the last few years what was there for us to put our boys to, if we were fortunate enough to have boys ? They might become timber-getters, or porters on the railway, or we could send them to sea, or make them general loafers ; but we want something more for them than that. I am not speaking of the aristocratic portion of the community, because for them there are always the professions ; the aristocratic people can make their sons lawyers and doctors, or they can get them into other professions ; but I want to show hon. members that for the bulk of the population there are only three or four avenues of employment open for their boys. We all know in connection with trades that you may find in one family three or four boys : one will go to one trade, but another will have none of it ; another member of the family will go to another trade, while another will have none of it ; but we all know that what as parents we have to do—and even if we are not parents we have some depending upon us for whom we are responsible—that what we have to do is to try to find some employment in which we can place those youngsters, where they will learn to be good tradesmen, and honest and capable citizens. What will be the outlook in this colony if we can get our manufactures properly established ? Instead of having only four or five avenues in which our boys can be employed, we can give them perhaps a hundred different choices. If a boy does not care to be a timber-getter, he can become an engineer ; if he does not care to be an engineer, he can become an iron-founder ; if he does not care to be an iron-founder, he can become a smelter ; if he does not care for that he can turn his attention to printing or bootmaking : he can go to any of those fifty or a hundred trades which are so

well represented in Queen's Hall at the present time.

MR. LEAKE: Will federation prevent that?

MR. GEORGE: I will tell the hon. member plainly what I think federation will do. Unless we have that opportunity of protecting our industries in their infancy which we are pleading for at the present time, we shall find that the great bulk of those industries will be transferred to the larger capitals of the other colonies. I know the hon. member will not agree with me, but I tell him that the great trend of industrial legislation for many years has been to concentrate industries in the older countries of the world into large combinations and gigantic trusts. And what is the result of that system? It simply means that whereas industrial legislation was originally supposed by the working man to be really doing good for him, it is slowly and surely driving him back, until he has become simply the slave of huge combinations and huge trusts which have no heart to feel for a man nor a soul to care for him. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.]

MR. LEAKE: What is the period of "infancy?"

MR. GEORGE: Oh! Some men never attain full age. To illustrate that point, I might show how, in one trade in England, a boy can be employed in filing nuts during the whole five years of his apprenticeship.

MR. LEAKE: I was speaking of the industry, not of youth. What is the period of "infancy" of an industry?

MR. GEORGE: The bulk of the industries in this colony have been established during the last four or five years. Timber-getting, however, has been established ever since the foundation of the colony; and again there is no "infancy" in turning out gentlemen for learned professions. A man can become a lawyer almost after a week's study; but a longer time is required to make a mechanic.

MR. LEAKE: No; the would-be lawyer has to serve for five years.

MR. VOSPER: And some of them want five years badly.

MR. GEORGE: Yes; and an extra 14 days on top of that.

MR. LEAKE: For how long do you want protection?

MR. GEORGE: As regards my own trade, I do not care whether I have protection or not. [MR. LEAKE: Oh!] As to others in my trade, I do not know what are their views. Some of them, I dare say, want a long period of protection; but, personally, I do not care whether I am protected or not, for the simple reason that, if I found I could not carry on my trade profitably, I should shut up and transfer it to those quarters where I could carry it on profitably; and that is what I am afraid the result will be if we enter into federation without the fullest protection we can get.

MR. LEAKE: Are you a federalist?

MR. GEORGE: Never mind whether I am or not. You must remember that I am here not only as a private individual, but as the member for the Murray. We are asking for these five years of full protection. Whatever the tariff is, it can be altered, if hon. members choose, in the next Parliament; but we ask for these five years, so that we may feel some little encouragement. We manufacturers have come here to stay, if you allow us; if you do not drive us out of the country, we will not go; but surely, having come here, we may fairly ask you to give us, in some degree, the same protection and the same help which the other colonies gave their manufacturers in a large degree for many years, until the industries of those colonies became permanently established. I pointed out to the member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) that as regards the boot trade, I had not been aware, until these last few days, that boot-uppers were made in this colony. From my previous experience I thought the manufacture of boot-uppers was confined to France, some portions of Germany, and to parts of England; that the uppers were brought into the colony ready made, and that the rest of the boot was built up here; but I find that there have been men who during the last 12 months have imported to this colony, not only machinery, but also workmen, to make these boot-uppers; and in the Exhibition in the Queen's Hall hon. members will find as good-looking and as durable boots, made entirely in this colony, as can be got in any part of the world; and when the hon. member thinks of this, I am quite sure he will be at one with me in the desire to have the

artisans here. All I am trying to do is to persuade him, and those who think with him, that if he and they will aid me and those on my side in the representations we intend to make, we shall surely achieve our object; and it certainly must be for the benefit of the colony that we should get these concessions rather than that we should have to do without them.

MR. LEAKE: But those artisans, according to you, will be hunted away in five years' time.

MR. GEORGE: I say nothing of the kind. It is easy to stifle an infant in its birth: it is not so easy to do so when it has grown up, and has acquired some strength and muscle. It is easy to stifle a manufacture in the first year or two after it has started: it is not so easy to do so when once a man and his machinery are settled in the colony and have, as it were, got their roots in the ground. That is the exact point I wish to make. The hon. member knows that no end of people have come to this colony, as I came myself, under an agreement for three years to do the work for which I was engaged; and I, at the end of that period, intended to go away. But I found the country was a goodly country, quite good enough for me; and I stopped here, and I intend to stop here as long as I am allowed. [THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.] And I say that if men come here from the other colonies, from Europe or from America, and get encouragement to enable them to settle in our midst, every day that such men stay here adds to the security and to the strength of the bond which holds them to this country. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.]

MR. LEAKE: Then five years would be sufficient?

MR. GEORGE: Well, the hon. member, of course, is too clever for me. I can only give utterance to the views of an ordinary man. I think that five years' protection will help us. I dare say I should like a little more, if I could get it; but if I cannot get it, I will take five years; and if we manufacturers do not get five years, we will make the best fight we can. But we say, to enable us to make a better fight, help us to obtain some of the same sort of security as has been given to the manufacturers in the other colonies. There protection was

given by bonuses: we do not ask for bonuses, but give us a little protection in the ordinary way. The Premier, in speaking the other night, made use of words to the effect that, as far as federation was concerned, it would give us a higher political life and higher political ambitions. I do not care very much for those things; it does not seem to me that there is much in them; and I take it that is hardly the sort of argument I should like to hear used, because all the high political life and the high political ambitions it is possible to obtain only affect a few of us. What is wanted is food for the population; the main thing is to find employment for the people who are here, and with that employment to give them the means of obtaining food and clothing. That is the end we have to consider. We are not here, or we ought not to be here, for the purpose of aspiring either to the Treasury bench or even to the leadership of the Opposition, with all its great dignity. Our duty in this Chamber is to try to do the best we can for the colony in which we live, and to remember that we are here simply as trustees for the great bulk of the people whom this colony supports. It is our duty to bring in legislation, and to pass it through this Chamber, with the idea of doing the greatest good to the greatest number; and it is not a question of personal ambition or of a higher political life. Of course I know the Premier is a gentleman who has given up a great portion of his life to this colony; and to him, perhaps, there are charms in such prospects as he has mentioned; but I would ask him to reflect that there is something more worthy of his pride and ambition than the fact of his being Premier of this colony, and that is the fact that he may make life in his native land better worth living for the people who have had the courage to settle down in this colony. Of course I know there may be, in connection with the Federal Government, some plums for the few, for those who desire them; but that will be no satisfaction to us, to the great majority of the people; and I say, give us every possible aid you can to do good to the people who are within our shores. I have also to speak with reference to the doings at the Conventions, and I suppose there is hardly a delegate who went

over to those Conventions who is not now better seized of the high duty which was then cast upon him than he was when he went there. I have no doubt the Premier, if he had an opportunity of going to those Conventions again, would feel it his duty to do what I am sorry he did not do at the Conventions, as we have heard from the leader of the Opposition. I am sure, if the Premier were going to another Convention with the delegates of this colony, he would call those gentlemen together day by day at the Convention, so that they might discuss matters which affect their native country, and might do the best thing for it at the time when it was best for that thing to be done.

THE PREMIER: There was a rule of that sort, but no one attended.

MR. GEORGE: It is all very well to be wise after the event, but there is the fact. The Premier has been more fully aroused to this fact since this federal controversy has been going on here than he ever was before; and I say that, when the Premier rises in his place and tells us, as he has told us frankly, openly, honestly, and like a man, that he did not then see things as he sees them now, then what we should do, or at any rate what I intend to do, is to try to help that gentleman, not to cast him down on the stool of repentance, but to help him to help the country along in the course we think it ought to pursue. The leader of the Opposition made one slight mistake when speaking the other evening, which mistake I have pointed out to him, and I shall briefly point it out to hon. members. He spoke about a breach of confidence—I think that was the term used—on the part of someone in this House in connection with the *Morning Herald*; that is to say, the *Morning Herald* had published an article which practically disclosed the recommendations of the Joint Select Committee long before that Committee had any right to have framed their recommendations even in their own minds. The leader of the Opposition stated that at that time there had only been nine witnesses examined by the Committee. As I pointed out, that statement is an error, for 25 out of the 38 witnesses had then been examined. At the same time, how the *Morning Herald* got that information I do not know: if the *Herald* got it from the Premier, then I say the Pre-

mier did not do his duty. He was a member of that Committee, and if he did give that information he had no right to have done so; and I think the Premier will acknowledge that. I do not think he did give the information.

MR. MORGANS: Could not the editor have thought it out for himself?

MR. GEORGE: I do not know; he might.

MR. LEAKE: The *West Australian* says he did not.

MR. GEORGE: I cannot tell hon. members how the oracle was worked; and I am merely pointing out that the member for Albany made a little mistake there, and that if the Premier is answerable for the information leaking out, he ought not to have divulged that information.

MR. LEAKE: There is no mistake on my part.

MR. GEORGE: However, that is as it may be. In connection with this federal campaign, I regret very much that the question seems to be taking, or to be at present assuming, far more of a party character than I think it has any right to assume. We find as a rule, almost without exception, that those who are in favour of federation are sitting on the Opposition benches, and that those opposed to federation, or who are in favour of federation upon the lines of the Select Committee's report, are nearly all sitting on the Government side of the House. It seems to me that on a matter of this sort we should put party tactics on one side. We should not allow so important a subject as this to be even thought of as a question of "chucking" the Government out, or putting another Government in.

MR. LEAKE: There are at least three anti-federalists on this (Opposition) side. Four, with you.

MR. GEORGE: I am glad to hear it, and I wish there were seven. I am sure that the seven now on this side of the House would look much better as Western Australian federalists than as Eastern States federalists against their own country. The member for Albany read us a letter he sent to Eastern Statesmen in reference to these amendments, and I say, with all respect to the hon. member, that I consider the letter he sent was what I may call the "straight tip"

to give us "no." If we get "no," and "no" written very big, it will be through our own doing; not that they in the other States would not grant the amendments if we were united, but that we are so split up into parties on this side and parties on that side, that we do not know exactly where we are, and the other States may intend as far as possible to avoid complicating the matter, in their opinion, by not granting what we have a right to have. The hon. member said he believed the federal tariff would be a revenue tariff, and not a prohibitive tariff. He cannot be much acquainted with tariffs if he holds views of that kind. What would be the use of a revenue tariff against the world?

MR. LEAKE: To raise revenue.

MR. GEORGE: Yes; exactly: that is plain enough; but what would he call a revenue tariff: 5 per cent., 10 per cent., 15 per cent., or 30 per cent.? All the money that is received by the operation of the tariff is revenue, whether the tariff be 5 per cent. or 30 per cent. But let me ask the hon. member, what is the idea of raising a tariff which is practically to be prohibitive against the world? Does he call £5 per ton on sugar a revenue tariff?

MR. LEAKE: I object to a prohibitive tariff and to a protective tariff.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You are getting mixed.

MR. GEORGE: No; I am not getting mixed. Gentlemen on your side are getting mixed.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: We are not mixed.

MR. GEORGE: Then the hon. member (Mr. Leake) does not desire that a federal tariff should be such as to conserve the federal trade to its own markets. Would he advocate then, if he had the power, free-trade in connection with the federal tariff? Would he go in for a  $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. or 5 per cent. tariff for revenue? If that is what he means, I can understand his position: he cares nothing for the artisan and nothing for the worker, provided that he can get articles in as cheaply as possible; forgetting the fact that if he has to live in the country, other people must live as well. That seems to be as clear as the sun at noon.

MR. LEAKE: Including the sweater.

MR. GEORGE: I do not exactly understand where the sweating comes in. There is no sweating, as far as I know,

in this colony, and I hope there never will be. I will bet the hon. member never learned to "sweat" when he was in the civil service. I have myself thought, when some members in the House have been talking about "sweating," that if they actually had sweated by hard work they would have a little more sympathy for those whose good fortune enables them to earn their living not only by the strength of their brains, but the strength of their muscles. The hon. member made use of these words: "Even Victoria may contribute more, because she will have a revenue instead of a protective tariff." Probably the hon. member will explain that more clearly to me; but, at any rate, my reply to that will be that if she does raise more by her revenue, it will be only at the expense of her industries. Victoria has industries which would march well side by side with many of the industries of the old country; and if she is simply to have a revenue tariff, and have poured in things at present kept out, what will be the result? Her industries will be practically stifled. Does the hon. member believe that would go down in Victoria? Nothing of the kind. The people of Victoria have gone for federation because they believe it will throw open to them a larger market than they have at the present time, and, furthermore, because they believe that market will be conserved to them by the fact that the tariff will be sufficiently large to shut out competition from America, Europe, and other parts of the world as much as possible. If that is not the case, I cannot understand it.

THE PREMIER: It is the case.

MR. GEORGE: It is the case; absolutely the case.

MR. LEAKE: What about New South Wales?

MR. GEORGE: New South Wales cannot keep Victorian goods out now.

MR. LEAKE: She has not tried to.

MR. GEORGE: If the hon. member were engaged in a trade similar to mine, and he had a contract in New South Wales, he would find that he could send to Victoria and get considerable portions of constructive ironwork cheaper there than they are manufactured at under free-trade in New South Wales.

MR. LEAKE: Yours is rather in the nature of a repairing shop.

MR. GEORGE: Oh, yes; we will repair you if you come down. I should like to have an opportunity of putting a little more brass on your cheeks, and I would take care it did not come off.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: He is very modest.

MR. GEORGE: I think I stated a little while ago that, as far as I am concerned, and I am speaking with perfect sincerity, I do not care whether there is a duty on it or not. If I find I can manage to make a profit in my own business, I will carry on, and when I cannot I will shut up. I have not to ask anyone's permission to do that, either. I want to point out to the hon. member that he is doing his cause no good by belittling the Black Swan Foundry, but he is doing me good, because he is advertising me. He has given me the opportunity of again introducing the world-wide name of the Black Swan Foundry, and I thank him. It is not often that I have the opportunity of advertising myself, and I am awfully sorry he does not give me more opportunities. I promise him that whenever he does, I will avail myself of them. In conclusion I have only to say this, that as far as my own position is concerned, as far as the representative of the Murray district is concerned, I do not feel myself inclined at all to run any risks in this matter. I feel inclined to tread on clear ground under my feet as far as I can; to clear away the brushwood and get a plain path. I make bold to say there will be no good in the federation of the Australian colonies, if the limbs of the infant Western Australia are swathed by bonds which have no right to be placed upon it. It seems to me that if we ask for reasonable matters—they seem reasonable to me, but they may not to other hon. members—and we are to be told we shall be shut out because we ask for those things, then I say it is a farce to talk about the sentimental business of fraternal love, and all that sort of thing. As grown men, we ought to tear away the blind and see the thing as it stands. If they will not give us these reasonable concessions at the present moment, what earthly chance have we of obtaining them after? Our few delegates would go to the other side, and we hope the representatives of the other States would listen to them courteously. They did not always do that at the Convention, for I

remember one passage in the Convention debates where the Premier stood up and hit out straight when Mr. Reid did not speak courteously of this colony. But are we sure that all the delegates we send there will hit out straight, and are we sure that they will meet with the consideration we have a right to demand? Our delegates would be few amongst the great number there. The position of the other colonies is: "Federation spells good to us." They tell us it spells good for us in Western Australia; but we believe there is some portion not good, and have we any guarantee that we shall have fair consideration? If they do not give it before we join, will they give it afterwards? The hon. member must know, in connection with his own profession, that the bulk of the business of those associated with it comes from difference of opinion on things not properly understood. If a man signs a letter, it is understood that so and so will be done, and that "understanding" becomes misunderstanding, the consequence being that there is a fruitful trade for gentlemen belonging to the honourable profession of the law. We ask, in connection with this matter, that having seen risks we shall try to provide against them. We know that as far as the provision in the original Bill is concerned, there is no assurance fund that will provide for any losses or damages we may have. It is a marriage where there can be no divorce; it is a union which we hope will never become a disunion, but there will be very great heart-burnings, and there will be, for some time at any rate, a retarding of the progress of this colony. It is because we feel this—at any rate I feel it myself—and because we want the colony to go forward, we are taking our present stand. I believe well enough in Western Australia to cast my lot in it. My children have been born in this colony, and I do not think they will have any reason to be ashamed of it. I want to see the colony which I have made my home, march forward and go far beyond any hopes and ideas I may in my fancy have indulged.

MR. ROBSON (Geraldton): In dealing with this motion, the Premier himself and other members supporting the motion have brought forward the most

indisputable arguments that can be brought by any member of the House against this colony joining the Commonwealth. They have almost, I think, taken all the ground from under one's feet, and left little for a young member to say. Still, there are some few points with which they have not dealt, and upon which I would like to trench. First I would like to explain to the House my position with regard to the Bill. I think I am the only member who has faced a contested election upon the question of the Commonwealth Bill, and I have been returned here to oppose the Bill. I have been returned to, if possible, prevent this colony from joining the federation, and with a pledge to, if possible, prevent the Bill from going to the people. It may be a somewhat extraordinary position to be in, and though I stand alone in the House in that position I am proud to do so, and to have it recorded in *Hansard* that I stand here to oppose this Bill from becoming law at the present time.

MR. LEAKE: Not going to the people.

MR. ROBSON: I am here as an Englishman, I am here as an Imperialist, and I contend there is no greater Imperialist in the colony than myself. But the question of federation for Australia at the present time becomes another matter, with which we must deal cautiously and quietly. We all hope federation will come within our own time, not only the federation of Australia, but the federation of the Empire; but, at any rate I hope we shall see the federation of Australia. Federation to-day for the Eastern colonies is all right, but I cannot think that Western Australia is in a position to take the same step at present. As has been ably stated by the member for the Murray (Mr. George) Western Australia would be a very junior partner in a big firm, and it is only with the greatest caution that anybody should enter such a partnership. I, in a small way, went into a partnership of that nature in Australia, and I must say I "went to the wall," and now I look before I leap. Before we leap into the Commonwealth, we must look, and look again, for once we join, we cannot get out except by means of civil war. This motion deals with only two problems, namely, the Bill as amended by the Conference of Premiers,

and the Bill with suggested amendments by the Joint Select Committee. But there is another question, namely, that of no Bill at all, of no federation at all; and if hon. members pass the motion as at present worded, I would submit they are giving a vast part of the population of the colony no voice as to what this colony should do. I am no great believer in the principle of the referendum, which is a new thing; but as the question whether the people will accept the original Bill, or the Bill as amended, is going to be submitted, those who favour the referendum should have no hesitation in giving a third class of people an opportunity of saying whether they will have a Bill or no Bill. I trust that as the debate progresses, this branch of the subject will be dealt with more fully, and that an amendment to have this third question submitted will be moved. Hon. members have dealt largely with federation as it affects the trades and manufactures of the colony, and have done so most ably. The question of the duties has also been touched on, and I would say that the sliding scale is absolutely impracticable, and would in no way meet the wishes of anybody. Up to the present no hon. members have dealt with federation as it affects the land question, and in this connection, I would ask what was it that made Victoria and New South Wales, and what settled the land in those colonies? Do those colonies not owe all their industries, and all their land settlement, originally to the discovery of gold, and the development of the gold industry? If that be so, having discovered the goldfields and developed them, should we, for the shadow of federation, throw away our chances of settling the land in this colony? It is only fair, that having now the chance to build ourselves up as a country and become part of a great nation in time, we should take the best means we have at hand to develop our resources. It is a well-established maxim brought forward by that prominent European statesman, Prince Krapotkin, that the country which sends money out to bring in that which can be produced within, is taking the road to ruin, not to success; and if we continue to send money out by thousands of pounds for produce which we know we can produce

ourselves, what chance have we of being successful or of settling the land, or of building ourselves into a nation? Who are they who are raising this cry of federation and of "the Bill to the people"? The cry comes to a large extent from people who have come here somewhat recently. It is always undesirable in the House to refer to the feeling there is between the people on the coast and the people on the goldfields, but we cannot help seeing every day, that this cry comes from the people on the goldfields alone, though why they raise that cry it is difficult to tell. The older settlers of the country have treated the goldfields people well, in borrowing money to the extent of 10 million pounds, to build railways, make roads and other works of development; and even now the Government are constructing great water-works solely for the benefit of the goldfields. The people on the goldfields have threatened that if they cannot get federation they will have separation, and the leader of the Opposition, I regret to say, has told us he feels somewhat inclined, in the event of federation not being granted, to support this cry. Indeed, he has told us he feels inclined to become a rebel.

MR. LEAKE: No, no.

MR. ROBSON: Apparently the leader of the Opposition would rather be one in the great Australian Commonwealth than a pure native of Western Australia, which I believe he is. In the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of Wednesday last there was a column article headed "West Australia separation; proposed new colony, with Kalgoorlie as the capital"; and I was surprised to find that in that article my constituency, Geraldton, was mentioned as a port of the new colony.

A MEMBER: Were you consulted about it?

MR. ROBSON: Not at all; and Geraldton is not anxious to be the port of a new colony with Kalgoorlie as the capital, although we are always glad to earn an honest penny and do a bit of trade down there. We have sufficient common sense to know that it would not pay, and that this proposal is only thrown as a sop to Geraldton, and that having secured their ends they would throw us over at once. There are people who are never satisfied, as shown by the alluvial troubles

on the goldfields. I have no hesitation in saying that the alluvial diggers are entirely in the wrong, and it is to be regretted the Government have not already suppressed those people who kick up these little bobberies. The cry of "the Bill to the people" originated with an hon. member who is no longer in the House, and it has been made use of purely as an election cry. It is used as a sop to the people by hon. members who ought to know better, and who ought to have more sense than "play to the gallery"; but the cry is used with an eye to the main chance and future political power. I regret those members have not the courage of their political convictions, for they, of all people, do not believe in federation or in sending the Bill to the people; because there are few more conservative men in the House than those raising this so-called democratic cry.

MR. GREGORY: Do you not think the people should be consulted on such a great national question as this?

MR. ROBSON: I do not think the people should be consulted on a question of this sort, and in this I am, perhaps, like the member for the Murray (Mr. George), and represent a party of one. Why should we send the Bill to the people? What are we members here for? We are returned by the electors to do the best we can for the country, and why should we rush into a referendum, which is an entirely new thing, to which I regret very much the Premier is consenting. On this point I might refer hon. member to the simile drawn by Professor Huxley, as to a ship captain at sea who, when his ship gets into trouble, resigns the command, goes into his cabin and throws the onus on the crew, saying "I cannot do any more; I do not know what will happen; I do the best you can for yourselves, and I take no blame." It seems to me that in referring the Bill to the people, the Premier takes up a somewhat similar position to that of the captain in the simile, retiring to his cabin and leaving the electors to do the best they can.

THE PREMIER: No doubt the referendum is an innovation.

MR. ROBSON: It is an absolute innovation. I know my political opinions are absolutely contrary to those of many hon. members, and the newspapers in my dis-

trict, which are no great friends of mine, brand me as a "hide-bound conservative." But I think a little conservatism in a matter of this sort is good. In a young country like this, where we are liable to rush into democratic and experimental legislation, a little brake on the wheel is good, and he who can pull the brake and check immature legislation may, perhaps, do a great deal more for his country, although he must put up with considerable abuse, than one who promulgates that legislation. A great advocate of the Bill to the people like the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) gave us many quotations from Australian politicians, and I have given one or two extracts from European philosophers. I will now give you an opinion expressed by Ruskin on government, though I dare say this will not meet with the approbation of all hon. members. Ruskin says that it is good to be governed by the wise, and I take it that on that point we are all agreed; but he goes further and says it is good to be governed by the wise, be the wise in a majority or be they in a minority—that it is good for the majority to be governed by the minority, if the minority be the wiser. I go even further, and say it is good for a country to be governed by one man, if he be wiser than all; an absolute autocracy; and I have no hesitation in saying the people who desire to block federation for the time being are wiser than those fools who "rush in where angels fear to tread."

MR. RASON (South Murchison): As one who supported the motion for referring the consideration of the Commonwealth Bill to the Select Committee, I wish to record my opinion that the work of that Committee has fully justified their appointment. I think the Committee, for the manner in which they discharged the highly important and difficult task allotted to them, deserve the thanks of the country and this House. The question before the House is the consideration of the Committee's report, with a view to its adoption or rejection; and the Premier has submitted a motion which asks the House to adopt the suggestions of the Committee, and proposes that the original Bill and the Bill containing the amendments of the Committee shall be sent to the electors of the colony. The choice

between the two Bills or the choice of neither Bill rests entirely with the people. I rejoice that the Premier has adopted such a statesmanlike and fair course of action, which in itself contains an utter and complete refutation of the unwarranted misrepresentations which have been made as to his intention and attitude on the question of federation; and I take this opportunity of protesting myself against the position which has been taken up on this question by the leader of the Opposition and some of his colleagues. That gentleman has persisted in referring to himself and some of his immediate followers as "we who are federalists," and has described everyone who is not prepared to swallow the original Bill "holus-bolus" as anti-federalist. To my mind, there is just as little justification for one description as for the other, and I do not think the past history of federation, or the federal movement, or the federal Conventions, justify the hon. member in taking up the position as the all-time champion of federation; and I think the future history of this movement will show that the best friends of federation may be the anti-federalists. The question before the House will in no way restrict the debate, but I wish to try and avoid going through the Commonwealth Bill. We are enabled to somewhat abridge the debatable matter, but on a subject of such great importance and of such magnitude as the federal interests to the colony I am afraid the question almost abridges the abridger. I purpose, as briefly as possible, to consider the Bill from the following standpoints: first, is it desirable that Western Australia should join federation? Can we do so without undue loss in the terms of the original Bill, or is it more advisable that we should join federation under the Bill containing the amendments of the Select Committee? As to the desirability of Western Australia joining the other colonies in a federated Commonwealth, there can only be one answer to that question: "Yes; if it can be accomplished without too great a sacrifice." And I think everyone will admit that at the Conventions, every statesman of the other colonies has there admitted that the losses to this colony would be very, very great—the financial loss consequent on Western Australia entering into the federation

would be very severe. In return for the losses, it was decided that Western Australia was entitled to some small compensation. The leading politicians of the other colonies, actuated by what some people call the true federal spirit, or a sense of justice, or a general desire to gain the markets of Western Australia for the produce of the rest of Australia—actuated by one or all three of these motives, they were agreed that some special concession was due to Western Australia. Upon that point there was actually no dispute, but so pronounced were opinions on that point that I wish to give the House a few extracts from some of the speeches made at the different Conventions. I have avoided those admirable speeches to which the Premier called attention the other evening, and I hope I shall not weary the House. Mr. Reid says:

But on the facts of the case I see it is absolutely impossible to ask Western Australia to come in with us unless that colony is secured against a financial crisis.

Mr. Solomon said:

Everyone recognises and has recognised from the inception of this Convention that in dealing with these commercial questions and with the finances of the colonies, it is absolutely necessary to make a special exception in regard to Western Australia. Every hon. member recognises that if there is one colony of the group which the older colonies specially desire to see in the federation—perhaps because of their selfish wish to extend the markets of their own producers—it is Western Australia. Western Australia with its growing population and its immense demand for colonial produce, is the market we all desire to open up for our general trade.

Mr. Holder on the same subject says:

I believe that, just as these colonies, one after another, have become independent of middle houses in respect of importations from abroad, and just as they have gone to the cheapest rather than the nearest markets, one by one, so Western Australia will come to the same stage, probably until her own producers, whom she is encouraging wisely and well, will meet her needs. Very many of the goods which Western Australia has up to now obtained from these colonies . . . . . will in the near future be obtained from abroad, unless we retain the market of Western Australia for our own products and manufactures by some such means as these. We are gaining something very material by bringing Western Australia into the Commonwealth and getting her ports free and open to the goods of our producers and manufacturers. When Western Australia has her ports free to all the colonies

and closed more or less according to the nature of the tariff to all other parts of the world, there will be no fear that the whole of Australia will not always possess her trade.

That is how federation is regarded by some of the leading politicians of the other colonies.

MR. VOSPER: It is not all sentiment with them then?

MR. RASON: It is not all sentiment. I said hon. members may draw their own reasons as to what actuated them. Sir P. Fysh said:

I am aware that Western Australia cannot come in at present. Special arrangements would have to be made for Western Australia. Another view was put forward by Mr. Dobson, who said:

There is the loss by intercolonial free-trade and I understand that behind that there is the loss, I begin to think though I may be wrong, the greater loss, that Western Australia will not have the advantage which the other colonies have had for a quarter of a century of putting her settlers on the land and rearing her industries under a protective policy.

Similar expressions to those I have quoted could be multiplied almost *ad infinitum*. All the politicians of repute hold similar views, but there is one speech from which I took an extract, which seems to me so exactly to describe this colony's position that, at the risk of wearying the House, I will read it to hon. members. The late Premier of New South Wales, Mr. Reid, said:

I recognise that Western Australia will have to give up one-third of its revenue on colonial produce, and that it is in a peculiar position amongst the other colonies, because whilst the other colonies will have an increasingly valuable market for their exports opened to them, Western Australia for years to come, will receive no corresponding benefits from us, because her main product—gold—goes through every country in the world free. We are only too glad to get it. Western Australia is in a peculiar position all round. It does not come into this projected Federal Union with any strong necessity from the facts of trade, impelling it to make sacrifices to join us in order to get the run of our markets. It has no pressure of that sort, and that is one of the difficulties of my right honourable friend. If the exports of Western Australia were of a character fitted for the other Australian markets, then my right honourable friend could go to the electors of Western Australia and say—"Look what we are doing. We are opening to the producers of Western Australia a grand market in the adjoining colonies." But my friend from Western Australia has not that argument to use. It is very likely that in years to come this union will prove of inestim-

able advantage to Western Australia, and that she will then have a magnificent intercolonial trade. But that is in the future, and does not apply to the electors of to-day.

In these admirably expressed sentences of Mr. Reid's, we have the position of Western Australia in regard to federation accurately defined by an independent witness. I think I have demonstrated that Western Australia was considered to be entitled to some special consideration, and the nature of that compensation I intend to analyse for a moment. As members are aware the special terms to Western Australia are contained in Clause 95 of the original Bill. The special terms amount to this: subject to certain restrictions Western Australia for five years after the adoption of uniform duties may still impose duties of customs on goods entering the State, subject to an annual reduction of those duties by 20 per cent. I think anyone who has even a rudimentary knowledge of politics must recognise that such a scheme as that is impracticable; anyone must see that such a scheme as that will totally disorganise the trade of this or any colony, and that such a scheme must be unfeasible and impracticable. It was never looked upon as a very great concession by those who granted it.

HON. W. H. VENN: Oh, yes; it was at the time.

MR. RASON: At the risk of openly contradicting the hon. member, I will quote to him Mr. Reid's views about the concession. He said:

But we are not giving this concession to Western Australia to make up out of the Commonwealth exchequer a single penny of the loss which Western Australia will suffer from intercolonial free-trade. She has simply obtained power to get the money out of her own people, to make up the gap in her finances, whatever it may be.

And again:

We have given to Western Australia the concession to tax herself in order to make up her deficiency, by taxing her own people, by increasing duties which are not increased in other parts of the Commonwealth.

Forsooth, a very great concession! I submit, then, that it would be utter folly for Western Australia to dream of entering the Commonwealth under the original Bill, if only for the reason that, though it was admitted this colony was entitled to some special compensation for the loss

which it was recognised it would suffer, the compensation awarded under the Bill is both impracticable and valueless. I now come to the recommendations of the Select Committee, and firstly to the proposed amendment as to the power to divide the colony into electorates for the purpose of electing senators, instead of having the whole colony voting as one electorate as is proposed under the Bill. I venture to think that the majority of the electors of this colony will infinitely prefer the course suggested by the Committee, for the reason that, if the colony vote as one electorate, there is the risk, so great as to amount to a moral certainty, that the united vote of either the gold-fields districts or of the metropolitan districts—probably the latter—would elect the whole six senators; and I think the collective representation of six senators elected by the colony divided into electorates would be more truly representative of the State as a State than would be the case if the whole six senators were elected by one portion of the colony to the total exclusion of the voice of every other part of the colony. I would point out that this question has really been settled in this House before, and the clause in the Bill originally said this: "Senators shall be distinctly chosen by the people of the States as one electorate." But at the Sydney Convention, the delegates of each of the five colonies interested moved amendments with a view of striking out the words "as one electorate." Each of the five colonies interested wished to have each State split up into two or more electorates; and in deference to that united expression of opinion, the clause was altered to read, "chosen by the people of the States voting, until the Parliament otherwise provides, as one electorate"; thus giving to the Federal Parliament the power to divide a State into one or more electorates. The Legislature of this colony had previously decided that it is advisable to divide the State into two electorates; and I see no reason to alter that. The liberty we ask for was freely granted to Queensland; and the reasons which prompted Queensland to ask for that liberty are exactly the same reasons which prompt us in seeking it. I now come to the second amendment of the committee, dealing with the transcontinental railway. We

all know that under Sub-clause 34 of Clause 51 of the draft Bill, it is within the power of South Australia absolutely to prevent and prohibit the construction within her territory of the portion of the railway which must necessarily be made in order to connect this colony with the railway systems of the other colonies. It is all very well to say that South Australia will not exercise that power. The power is there; and seeing the importance of such a railway as that to this colony, can anyone hesitate to say such a power should not exist? Surely, it is not too much to ask that, if the Federal Parliament decide upon the construction of a railway that we all so ardently desire to see—the construction of a railway connecting the capital of this colony with the railways of the other States—surely it is not too much to say that it shall not be in the power of any one State to absolutely prohibit that construction; and there is that power in South Australia under the original Bill. I have no wish to insinuate that South Australia would ever be anything but generous; but were Western Australia safely within the federal fold, would it not be possible for South Australia to say, “You chose to enter the federation, knowing that we had this power; you never sought to alter it: now you must abide by the consequences?” We cannot be blind, either, to the fact that it has been the ambition of South Australia for years to make Port Darwin the main port of call for the whole of Australia. The extension of the South Australian railway system from Quorn to Oodnadatta, from Oodnadatta to Alice Springs, and from Palmerston to Pine Creek and Catherine—all these are steps in that direction, and are all taken with that one motive in view; and I say that the risk is too great a risk to run; that a question so vast as this, of such great import to the future of this colony, should never be left to the tender mercies of any other State. I have already dealt, to some extent, with the third amendment of the Select Committee, proposing that this colony should be allowed a free hand for five years in regard to our customs duties; but I wish to add that although I think the period of five years all too short, I am disposed to accept that term in the cause of federation. Nevertheless, I wish to point out that our

agricultural development, and indeed the development of any of our industries, is of recent date; that it is only within the last few years that we have witnessed any great development in the progress of agriculture in this colony; and yet we propose that in five or six years to come, our producers and our manufacturers shall compete against the whole of Australia! We propose that our producers and manufacturers shall accomplish in one decade, working under great disadvantages and practically unassisted, what it has taken the producers and the manufacturers of the other colonies, assisted by huge bonuses, encouraged in every possible way by the Government—what it has taken them half a century to accomplish. Can we hope, in the face of that disadvantage, that there will be any great future development of land settlement in this colony? Can we hope that there will be any further great settlement upon the soil? I am very much afraid that the most we can hope for is that the present producers will be able to struggle on, probably for the reason that, having invested their all in the land, there will be no other course open to them. [MR. MORGANS: Hear, hear.] But I am afraid to study the interest of our own people, afraid to question the advisableness of admitting duty free into this colony those goods which we ourselves can produce, which we ought to produce, and which in many cases we are producing already. To question the wisdom of such a policy is to be, according to the dicta of hon. members opposite, narrow-minded and parochial; whilst to increase customs taxation upon those goods which we cannot produce, which we never shall produce, to increase customs taxation upon goods we obtain from the mother country, is to possess the true federal spirit and a practical monopoly of all the virtues! The leading statesmen of England have welcomed this proposal for the federation of the Australian colonies, with the idea that it was a step in the direction of the still greater federation which they are so anxious to witness, the federation of the Empire. I wonder how those statesmen will reconcile that idea with the working of a uniform tariff. The member for Albany said there was no reason and no ground for assuming that the uniform tariff under federation would

be either a protectionist or a high revenue tariff; that on the contrary it would probably be a revenue tariff with a distinct leaning to free-trade. I contend that on this point the hon. member was, unintentionally no doubt, misleading the House. The most casual view of the aspect of federation from a financial standpoint enables one to come to no other conclusion than that the uniform tariff will be, must of necessity be, at least such a high revenue tariff as to verge upon the border of a protectionist tariff. I am supported in this statement by the highest authorities, and I cannot imagine how the hon. member opposite, in the face of expressions of opinion from leading politicians who attended the Conventions at which the hon. member was himself so distinguished a member, can justify the opinion he expresses.

MR. LEAKE: Gentlemen like Mr. Barton and Mr. Reid are opposed to your view.

MR. RASON: I presume the hon. member will respect the opinion of the Treasurer of South Australia. Mr. Holder said:

I think we may assume, for practical purposes, that the uniform tariff will be a protectionist tariff as against the outside world.

MR. LEAKE: No doubt he said that.

MR. RASON: And Mr. Holder went on:

If it be not, it will at least be a high revenue tariff upon foreign goods.

Sir P. Fysh said:

None of the colonies can presume to expect that under the uniform tariff of the Commonwealth they will import machinery, tea, sugar, and various other important articles free as is at present done in Western Australia; and if Victoria, Tasmania, and Queensland only imposed duties of 12½ per cent. *ad valorem*, like Western Australia on many other imports, it would land all those colonies in bankruptcy.

Mr. Glynn said:

How can you with any degree of approximation ascertain beforehand what the general character of the federal tariff will be, beyond that it will probably be protective?

To which Sir P. Fysh interjected:

You may take that as a certainty.

These and similar statements were never contradicted at the Convention, nor have they been contradicted by any authority on finance until we had the very recent contradiction by the member for Albany.

MR. LEAKE: You are quite wrong, but that does not matter.

MR. RASON: This is the second time in the course of the evening that the hon. member has suggested that I am quite wrong. On the previous occasion I think I demonstrated to the House that I was quite right; and with little difficulty I have no doubt I can demonstrate the same fact on this occasion.

MR. LEAKE: You said I was the first authority to make that statement. I say you are quite wrong there.

MR. RASON: I never accused the hon. member of having made those statements. I was quoting the statements as made by very high authorities on finance. I never connected the hon. member with the statements in any way.

MR. LEAKE: No; you said that I said the opposite.

MR. MORAN: You never accused the hon. member of having said anything original?

MR. RASON: Not that I am aware of. If I have done so, I am sure I withdraw the accusation. Taking the amendments of the Select Committee as a whole, I think those who are studying the interests of the colony, and who are yet prepared to accept those amendments, are giving up a great deal as a compromise in the cause of federation. Even the leader of the Opposition (Mr. Leake) refers to these amendments as being few and unimportant. I and others think that at all events anything less favourable than these amendments it would be absolutely suicidal for Western Australia to adopt. The hon. member says any alteration of the Bill means that this colony will not be able to join the Commonwealth as an original State. I am not prepared to accept that statement, but I am confident it would be far better for Western Australia never to enter federation than to enter on the terms of the original Bill. Are we to be wholly unmindful of the interests of this colony, are we to be wholly neglectful of the interests of those round about us, in order that Western Australia shall enter as an original State? "Original State!" We have this dinned into our ears wherever we go.

MR. LEAKE: Because you do not understand it.

MR. RASON: I think I do, and I will show how much I understand it when I say that if some members had their way, "original state" would very soon correctly describe the condition of a large portion of this colony. Is it necessary to appeal to some hon. members to let this colony be their first thought, to sink personal and party feelings, hopes of political grandeur, hopes of future glory, to put aside all those considerations, and to think only of the welfare of this colony, whose interests it is our duty to study. Let us have federation, if we can obtain it on fair terms, but let it be federation that will be regarded as a blessing and not as a curse; federation that will inflict no hardship, no injustice upon any people in this colony or any other colony. Such a federation it is possible to obtain; such a federation I desire most ardently to see; and such a federation I earnestly trust it will be our privilege to enter.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): I think we have nearly had enough federation for to-night, and I move the adjournment of the debate.

Put and passed, and the debate adjourned until the next sitting.

#### PETITION OF FEDERAL LEAGUE.

Order read for resuming debate on motion by MR. LEAKE, that the prayer of the petition of the Western Australian Federal League be acceded to.

MR. LEAKE moved that the order be adjourned. He said an amendment would be proposed.

Motion put and passed, and the order adjourned until the next sitting.

#### MINES REGULATION AMENDMENT BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration resumed from 28th September, on new clause moved by Mr. Vosper:

No mine owner or company owning a mine, or manager managing such mine, shall permit or allow, or cause to be placed in any mine or workings thereof, open surface workings excepted, any tailings, sludge, or *débris* which contains cyanide of potassium or other metallic cyanide, or any form of chlorine, or any other chemical resulting from the treatment of such *débris*.

MR. VOSPER: Some time had elapsed since the Bill was dealt with, and at the

last sitting on the Bill he moved the new clause. It was suggested by the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) that the consideration might be postponed with a view of seeing if the clause could be put in some other shape. All mining members would agree as to the necessity of a clause of the kind, and he was also of opinion that other members would agree to it when once they understood the effect of the use of cyanide of potassium. Certain mine managers had found it convenient at times to use tailings which had been treated with cyanide of potassium. The stuff contained hydro-cyanic acid, which went off in the form of a vapour, being highly poisonous and having a very injurious effect on health. He believed the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) would do something in the direction of altering the clause, so that this dangerous stuff might be used after exposure to the air for a certain time. With wet and fresh tailings, the effects might be very serious indeed, and a case occurred only a little while ago where a man at Broad Arrow died from the effects of this vapour in a mine. The mere fact that one death had occurred should be sufficient proof of the necessity for some legislation of the kind. He would be happy to accept the amendment referred to in conversation with the member for Coolgardie, all he desired being to preserve the health of miners, and to put mining companies to as little inconvenience as possible.

MR. MORAN: Before the member for Coolgardie introduced his amendment, he wanted to ask the House to be very careful in dealing with the matter. He had himself spoken to the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) as to the necessity for something being done in relation to using wet tailings which contained sulphurous matter and were just fresh from the chemical process. He could not forget that he represented such an important centre as the Boulder and Kalgoorlie, where practically nine-tenths of this kind of thing was carried on. If Parliament absolutely precluded the use of tailings for filling up stopes and double-banking, they would be putting a tremendous incubus upon mining. There would be no tailings presently, except those that had gone through the process of chlorination or oxidation.

This matter had not been laid before the proper authority yet, and a fortnight was hardly long enough for dealing with a subject of the kind. It affected a tremendously big branch of the industry of gold extraction—a branch whose abolition meant using he could not say how many more times the quantity of timber than was utilised at present. There was nothing else to fill the space up with, and if there was a mine a thousand feet deep, and there were great cracks, it would be a serious matter to prevent this stuff from being used. Legislation of this kind must be passed very guardedly, and he was not in favour of its being placed on the Statute Book yet. We might well leave it for discussion, and have the opinions of the Kalgoorlie Chamber of Commerce, the Mine Managers Association, and the Amalgamated Workers Association. That tailings must be used must be admitted. He did not speak with the knowledge of an expert, but he thought that if the tailings were allowed to dry in the air for some time, these noxious gases would escape from them. He would not like to see any hard and fast amendment dealing with the matter just now. It would be tampering too quickly, without due consideration, with the largest and most important part of that branch of industry. If the stopes could not be filled up with tailings, what would it mean? It would entail timber, labour and expense.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It would not involve twice handling.

MR. MORAN: The House should be very guarded about letting this stuff go straight down from the battery, but he did not think we were competent now to frame an amendment of a serious character like that proposed. He hoped the matter would become one for conference and consideration, and that we should adopt some wise and safe amendments next year when dealing with a Mines Bill.

MR. VOSPER: That could not be consented to by him, when men were dying.

THE PREMIER: Had anyone died?

MR. VOSPER: There was, as he had said, a case of death at Broad Arrow the other day.

MR. MORAN: Men were dying all over the world in consequence of being engaged in smelting works and other industries, which were ten times more

dangerous than working in mines; but the law could not stop the carrying on of these industries.

MR. LEAKE: There was not much objection to the clause, which merely threw on the mine-owner the responsibility of seeing that poisonous stuff was not put into the mine.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member surely did not know the importance of the matter.

MR. LEAKE did not recognise the member for East Coolgardie as a conclusive authority on the question; but even that hon. member said the stuff was poisonous when it went in fresh from the vats. The only desire was to throw the responsibility on the person who put this stuff back. He understood that if it were exposed for some time to the action of the atmosphere it became harmless, and if the inspector were satisfied that the stuff had been thoroughly cleansed, there was no reason why it should not be returned to the mine. It was the mine-owner who made the stuff poisonous, and consequently he must make it innocuous.

MR. MORGANS: There was no objection whatever to the Legislature taking steps to protect the lives of the miners, but the amendment was of a very sweeping nature, and really meant, if carried out in its entirety, that, as no mine owner could put down tailings which had been so treated, the mines in Kalgoorlie and everywhere else would have to close. It was absolutely impossible to work mines unless the stopes were filled with tailings, because no amount of timbering would hold up the land.

MR. VOSPER: What about mullock?

MR. MORGANS: It would be difficult, if not impossible, to get mullock. There was no reason why the Government should not take some steps to protect men working in stopes, when the tailings were put back. The proportion of cyanide potassium in the tailings after treatment was very small indeed, because the cyanide was very expensive, about 1s. 2d. a pound in Kalgoorlie, and, therefore, great care was taken to get every trace of it out. The tailings, after being treated with the solution of cyanide of potassium, were treated with a weaker solution of only one-tenth of one per cent., and even after that, in order to recover as much as possible of the cyanide

of potassium, the tailings were treated with pure water. When tailings were properly treated and washed there was a very small proportion of potassium left; and if some Act of Parliament could be passed providing that these tailings must be properly treated before being put back into the mine, and the stopes properly ventilated, there would be no difficulty in carrying out such a law. But this was a matter which involved serious consequences, and, as suggested, it might be left in the hands of the Minister to consult with the Amalgamated Workers Association, the Miners Association and kindred bodies, when no doubt a satisfactory arrangement would result.

**MR. VOSPER:** It was rather surprising to hear hon. members, usually so solicitous for the welfare of the miners, so indifferent to their interests in this particular matter.

**MR. MORAN:** That was an unfair way of putting it.

**MR. VOSPER:** It was not suggested that was the intention, but it was the effect, of the discussion. The object was not to save the companies' pockets, but to save men's lives, and he quite agreed with the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) that if mine-owners would take the trouble to thoroughly sluice tailings, it would not only pay them to do so, but would also prevent miners being poisoned. There was a considerable difference between the conditions of the men employed in smelting works, and those employed in mines. A man when he went into smelting works knew the risks he ran, and was paid in proportion, and, moreover, laws were passed and special regulations made to prevent loss of life in such industries. Mining was not, in itself, a dangerous occupation, but a careless mine manager who wanted to do things cheaply, might deliberately set to work and make the industry dangerous. There was the choice between falling ground and putting poisonous tailings into stopes. Where was the difference as far as the miner was concerned? If tailings were exposed for any length of time before being put in a mine to fill up, the effect of the hot sun would be to dry the tailings rapidly, and the cyanide of potassium became hydro-cyanic acid, which went off into the air, leaving carbonate of potassium, a really harmless

powder. All he was asking for was that the tailings should be thoroughly sluiced, or, failing that, that the tailings should be exposed for such a length of time as to render them innocuous. He would report progress if the Minister promised that in the meantime he would write to the Chamber of Mines and the various associations on the goldfields, asking them what they thought of a clause giving the Minister or the Governor-in-Council power to make such regulations as was thought fit from time to time in regard to the use of dangerous materials in mines.

**MR. MORGANS** said he did not yield to the member for North-East Coolgardie or anyone else in his desire to protect the lives of the working men. He had always done so, and he would rather see a dozen mines fall in than one man killed. No one desired more than himself that some arrangement should be come to to protect the lives of miners. This matter could be got over satisfactorily if it was dealt with by regulations. The Minister and we in this House must be satisfied that the tailings could be safely put back into the mine, and if that was done without interfering with the operations of the mine there was nothing more to be said about the matter.

**MR. MORAN:** The member for North-East Coolgardie was scarcely fair in insinuating that he or the member for Coolgardie (Mr. Morgans) had no consideration for the life of the working miner. He had the most heartfelt desire for the comfort of every man working on the fields; but people working in foundaries or in lead mines, or in many other vocations in life, worked under dangers; the man who worked by the side of a threshing machine, swallowing the fine particles of stuff, was laying up for himself trouble; and the man who walked over the dusty streets on the goldfields was doing more harm to himself than a man who worked in a mine. We must not stop an industry because there was a little danger in it. He hoped the Minister of Mines would be very deliberate in the action he would take in this matter. He (Mr. Moran) represented the gold-mines where nine-tenths of this cyanide was used, and there had been no great outcry against the use of this material. The Miners' Association had

not approached the House on the matter, and miners were not backward in airing their grievances. There was nothing to justify the Committee in doing anything except asking the Minister to communicate with the associations and bodies interested in this matter.

**THE MINISTER OF MINES** (Hon. H. B. Lefroy): This Bill was framed for the purpose of protecting life in mines, and the regulations under this Bill would be framed as much for the protection of the manager as the miner. The member for North-East Coolgardie only wished to deal fairly with this matter. His object had been to draw attention to the fact that men had suffered from the fumes arising from tailings deposited to fill up stopes in mines. The matter had been brought under his (the Minister's) notice, and the hon. member was quite correct in saying that a man had died from the effects of the fumes.

**MR. MORAN**: Two men died at Kalgoorlie: they fell into the vat.

**THE MINISTER OF MINES**: The man he referred to died from inhaling the fumes arising from tailings deposited in the mine, and the verdict of the coroner's jury was that this man had been suffocated by the fumes from the tailings; but the jury added that if the mine had been properly ventilated, the man's life would not have been lost. He (the Minister) had made inquiry into this matter, and believed that if mines were properly ventilated there would be no danger. He believed that on other occasions men had been brought from mines in a fainting condition. This matter had been brought under his notice by the workers, and while dealing with the Mines Regulation Act it was a very good time to consider this matter. It was necessary that something should be done, although he was certain that the mine managers themselves were quite as anxious for the safety of the men as we were. Where it was found that there was risk to life owing to the tailings being put in the stopes to fill up, the mine managers saw that such a thing did not occur again. It would be a wise thing to have regulations passed dealing with this matter. The amendment proposed by the member for North-East Coolgardie was too sweeping, and he

understood it was only brought forward for the purpose of raising this question. He was pleased that the question had been raised; at the same time he did not think the Committee were prepared to deal altogether with this subject. As more information was required, the immediate settlement of the question was not desirable, and the passage of the Bill might well be delayed for a week.

**MR. VOSPER**: Or a fortnight.

**THE MINISTER OF MINES**: A week should be sufficient.

**MR. MORAN**: More than a week would be required to collect the necessary evidence.

**THE MINISTER OF MINES**: Hon. members might rely on his making thorough inquiry, and on his bringing forward a clause which would meet their wishes. He had thought of moving to the effect that no cyanide tailings should be used for mullocking in any mine, unless such mine were ventilated to the satisfaction of the inspector, or be used in any case unless the tailings had been lying on the surface exposed to the air for a given time, such length of time to be decided by the Committee. However, it was desirable to consult the Mine Managers and the Workers' Associations; and he would at once submit the matter to the Chamber of Mines for their opinion. He would be pleased to accept a proposal to report progress, and ask leave to sit again in a fortnight.

**MR. VOSPER** moved that progress be reported, and leave asked to sit again.

Motion put and passed. Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

#### TOTALISATOR ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by **MR. MONGER**, and read a first time.

#### MOTION—ALBANY HARBOUR, TO REMOVE RESTRICTION.

**MR. LEAKE** (Albany) moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the restrictions upon vessels entering Princess Royal Harbour, when drawing more than 26½ ft. of water, should be removed.

As member for Albany, he had been informed that the Harbour Master had given instructions not to bring inside Princess Royal Harbour vessels drawing more than 26½ ft. This was extraordinary, because the Government ad-

mitted that there was 30ft. of water in the channel, and that depth ought to be sufficient to enable skilled pilots to bring in vessels drawing even 27 or 28ft. The Albany Chamber of Commerce, in a letter they had sent him, maintained that the restriction made interfered with the interests of the port, and that it was unnecessary. It appeared that the last chart of the harbour was made in November, 1895, which represented only part of the dredging, for dredging had been proceeded with to September, 1896, and thus nearly 12 months' dredging was unaccounted for and the area dredged was uncharted. One of the mail steamers the other day, when entering the harbour, had been drawing nearly 27ft., and it had been questioned whether that vessel could be brought in; but as vessels of similar size and draught had previously entered the port, there was no reason for the recent alteration in the rule.

**THE PREMIER** (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The desire of the hon. member, that all vessels coming to Albany should be enabled to enter Princess Royal Harbour, was one with which he was quite in accord. In regard to the statement in the letter just read, he thought there was some misunderstanding. The entrance to the channel of Princess Royal Harbour was 30ft. deep, and the general depth that had been dredged was 27ft. inside; that was at low water. There was an anchor area which had been dredged to some 34ft., and he believed the existing chart did not show the full limit of that anchor area. He thought that was some 7ft. deeper, over a considerable area, than the surrounding depth of the harbour. He believed that at Albany, and in fact all ports, the harbour pilots knew exactly the state of the tide by a register upon the jetty. If the water was high, of course they would bring in a steamer even when the draught was more than 26½ft.

**MR. LEAKE:** The restriction appeared to be in any case against vessels drawing more than 26½ft.

**THE PREMIER:** That was not known to him. A great deal was left to the discretion of the Harbour Master, but as far as the Government were concerned they had never issued any instructions with regard to the matter.

**MR. LEAKE:** No; it was the Chief Harbour Master.

**THE PREMIER:** No directions had ever been given by him (the Premier) with regard to the draught of ships entering any harbours of the colony, and he thought that it would not matter much if he did issue instructions. If it was likely a ship would touch the ground, the captain could not allow a pilot to bring her in, even if the pilot desired to do so. It was a matter for the pilots and harbour authorities themselves. He should say it seldom happened that a ship drew more than 26½ft. of water. He had never seen a ship drawing more than that, and he had been on some of the largest. There might be some drawing 27ft., but it was very seldom that ships drew more than 26½ft. A paper was laid upon the table of the House from Captain Irvine, who, for a long time, had been chief pilot at Albany. It was dated 4th October, and was addressed to the Chief Harbour Master, Fremantle. It contained the following:

In answer to your request for my opinion of what the draught limit should be for vessels entering Princess Royal Harbour, I beg to state that I think 26ft. 6in. a fair maximum draught, seeing that there is only 27ft. to be relied on in the Anchorage at low water. When anchoring a mail steamer in Princess Royal Harbour it is necessary to anchor so that the vessel can swing clear all round; the length of the average mail steamer, with 30 fathoms cable added, is 700ft., which means she will require a circle with a diameter of 1,400ft. to swing in; two such circles taking up the whole of the deep water anchorage, in which the latest chart shows patches of 28ft. I may state I was pilot at Albany the whole time the dredging was carried on, and the officer in charge gave the Harbour Master and myself a depth of 27ft. only to be relied on after the work was finished.

The House might pass 50 resolutions, and he might give instructions, but they would not get the harbour authorities to bring a ship in unless there was sufficient water. He should hesitate to give any directions with regard to this matter, seeing the great responsibility that rested on harbour masters. It was said that at Challenger Pass there was 18ft. or more of water, but we knew that the Admiralty reckoned it at only 16ft., or 16½ft. It seemed to him altogether outside the province of the Government, or the House, to give directions with regard to the draught of ships coming to Princess

Royal harbour. All the Government could do was to dredge the harbour, and it was then for the harbour authorities to say what ships could come in with safety. He hoped the hon. member would withdraw his motion. He (the Premier) would not take the responsibility of giving any directions to the Harbour Master with reference to the draught of ships coming to Princess Royal Harbour at Albany.

MR. LEAKE: If the right hon. gentleman would make inquiries, he (Mr Leake) would be satisfied.

THE PREMIER: Inquiry had been made with a desire to help the hon. member, and he wished the Harbour Master would make an increase regarding the draught of ships that could come into the harbour; but the only way the Government could do it was by dredging, and that he hoped to be able to do as soon as we had some dredge available.

MR. LEAKE (in reply): The right hon. gentleman did not quite appreciate the motion. If the restriction were not general, perhaps it would not do very much harm; that was to say, assuming there was sufficient water in the harbour, the Harbour Master would permit those ships to come in. Suppose that at high water he would allow a ship drawing 27ft. to come in, well and good; but as the matter was represented to him, in no case would he allow a ship drawing over 26½ft. to enter, no matter what water was in.

THE PREMIER: Supposing the captain would not come in?

MR. LEAKE: But when captains wanted to come in, the Harbour Master would not allow them, even though there might be 32ft. or 33ft. of water. He did not want the Premier to make any order upon the Chief Harbour Master; but he knew that in Albany they said the pilot was perfectly willing to bring these ships into the harbour, but he must not do so because of the instructions issued by the Chief Harbour Master at Fremantle.

THE PREMIER: The instructions were suggested to the Chief Harbour Master by the Harbour Master at Albany.

MR. LEAKE: There was no desire to create difficulty or unpleasantness; and, having brought the matter before the House, he asked leave to withdraw the motion.

THE PREMIER: The matter would be further inquired into.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10-50 p.m., until the next Tuesday.

### Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 17th October, 1899.

Papers presented—Harbour and Pilot Services, Report of Joint Committee—Midland Railway Company, Joint Committee, discharge of order—Destruction of Kangaroos, notice of motion withdrawn—Motion: Australian Contingent, Transvaal—Messages: Assent to Bills—Divorce Bill, postponement (two months)—Patents, Designs, and Trade Marks Bill, in Committee, postponed clauses, reported—Electoral Bill, first reading—Constitution Acts Amendment Bill, first reading—Supply Bill (No. 2), all stages—Agricultural Bank Act Amendment Bill, first reading—Public Service Bill, second reading (moved)—Bank Note Protection Bill, second reading—Adjournment.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4-30 o'clock, p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY:—1, Agricultural Bank, Interim Report, year ending 30th June, 1899; 2, By-laws, Coolgardie Roads Board; 3, Correspondence, establishment of Naval Station at King George's Sound; 4, Gold Mining Statistics, 1898; 5, Geological Survey, Report for 1898; 6, Metropolitan Waterworks Board, Report of Works carried out to 30th June, 1899; 7, Meteorological Observations, Perth Observatory and other places, 1898.

Ordered to lie on the table.