

THE HON. J. A. WRIGHT: You called five witnesses for jarrah and one for karri.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: You were at liberty to call others.

THE HON. J. A. WRIGHT: I did not nominate any.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. G. Shenton): The hon. member must not refer to what took place in select committee.

THE HON. J. G. H. AMHERST: The hon. gentleman opposite is, I think, answered by the evidence taken by the select committee, and this is all I have to say on this question.

Amendment—put and passed. Bill laid aside.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 4:30 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, 21st December, at 8 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 20th December, 1892.

Midland Railway Company's Proposals: Report of Joint Parliamentary Committee—Sums paid by Government to Newspaper Proprietors—Return asked for by Mr. Monger—Industrial and Reformatory Schools Bill: Legislative Council's Amendments—Manufacture of Wines Bill: thrown out, on motion for going into committee—Company's Bill: in committee—Message from Legislative Council assenting to Bills—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 2:30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

MIDLAND RAILWAY COMPANY'S PROPOSALS.

REPORT OF JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) brought up the report of the select committee of the Legislative Assembly appointed to confer with a similar committee of the Legislative Council upon the proposals of the Midland Railway Company.

Ordered—That the report be printed and lie upon the table.

SUMS PAID BY GOVERNMENT TO NEWSPAPER PROPRIETORS.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): With regard to the first question on the Notice Paper, in the name of the hon. member for Gascoyne—asking if the returns laid upon the table of the House showing moneys paid by the Government to newspaper proprietors included all moneys so paid, for all services rendered, whether by advertisement or otherwise—I am not prepared at the present moment to lay this information before the House, as the return is not ready, but I am informed by the Audit office that so far as they have gone, there does not appear to have been anything paid, in addition to the sums paid for advertisements, except for subscriptions. Those amounts will be found in the return asked for the other day by the hon. member for Albany under the head of Miscellaneous and Incidental expenses during 1891 and 1892. I am now able to lay on the table the return under the head of incidental expenses for 1891, and to-morrow I shall probably be able to lay the return for this year on the table. These returns will of course include the subscriptions to newspapers. So far as I can gather from the Audit Office, there does not appear to be anything else; but the return will speak for itself. As to job printing, I do not think that either of the two local journals do any job printing; that is generally done by Sands & McDougall and other private firms. Perhaps this information will satisfy the hon. member.

RETURN ASKED FOR BY MR. MONGER RE PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT.

MR. MONGER, without notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways when the return he had moved for some days ago, relating to the staff employed in the Public Works Department, would be laid on the table?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) said the document was being prepared, and would be laid on the table as soon as it was ready.

INDUSTRIAL AND REFORMATORY SCHOOLS BILL.

The schedule of amendments (*vide p. 454, ante*) made by the Legislative Council in this Bill agreed to, without comment.

MANUFACTURE OF WINES BILL.

On the Order of the Day for going into committee on this Bill,

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt), moved that the Speaker do now leave the chair.

MR. SIMPSON: Sir, I beg to move as an amendment that you do leave the chair this day six months. I should be extremely sorry if my motion should interfere with your Honor so far as your personal convenience is concerned, but I have been induced to make this formal motion for shelving this Bill at the request of those who are engaged in this industry, and who, perhaps, are the main producers of wine in this colony. I have it, sir, from some of the principal wine-growers in this country, that this Bill has been sprung upon them, and that they have not had time to consider it, nor its likely effect on the industry in which they are engaged, within the short time it has been before the public. In saying this, I do not mean to imply that it has been sprung upon the country by the Government, because, so far as I have been able to trace the origin of the measure, it is due to a resolution passed by this House last session; but I am given to understand that the Bill in its present form is not likely to be acceptable to those who are largely interested in such a measure. I understand that efforts have been made to form in this colony a Wine Grower's Association, and that these efforts are likely to meet with success. I think that all of us who are acquainted with this country know that the production of wine must eventually become one of its main industries. We have it on the assurance of the most experienced experts engaged in this industry that our soil and our climate are possibly the most perfect in Australia for the production of good wine; therefore it becomes us to be careful that we do nothing that may be calculated to injure this industry. The great opposition that is manifested by wine-growers to this particular measure is that it does not do so much to conserve the interests of wine growers as it does the interests of those who are expert in chemistry. I understand that under the Distillation Act of 1871 it is now possible for vigneron to obtain all the spirits they require for fortifying their wines by manufacturing

their own spirits for that purpose, and that there is no necessity for this Bill, so far as that is concerned. I should like to read to the House some information which has been forwarded to a gentleman in Perth on this subject. It is contained in a letter from Mr. Kelso, of Newcastle. Writing under date of the 18th December, a few days ago, Mr. Kelso says: "I went over to Bull and Stephens to-day, and met there Mr. C. Ferguson, of the Swan. We talked over the questions of Associations and of the new Bill which has been so suddenly sprung upon the trade, and I have their entire approbation of the following reply to your inquiry, of which reply I read them a copy." He then points out the danger of vine-growers in this colony drifting into the errors committed in the other colonies, and which in some of them reduced the acreage under vines very considerably. He also points out the advantages our own colony possesses in point of soil and climate, but deprecates the absence of anything like scientific care in the selection of the proper sort of grapes for wine purposes. He says: "I shall have great trouble in finding 20 tons of grapes in this district of a sufficiently reliable quality to make a wine such as we shall want for export. Any soil, any elevation, any aspect, any sort of grapes, are considered good enough. A man gets a lot of cuttings of any mixed or unknown sorts, trenches a flat or swamp at great expense to make his vines grow luxuriantly, and then cuts them down to feed cattle with, and thinks he has done the right thing." Mr. Kelso then goes on to speak of the Bill before the House, and says: "With regard to the Act to encourage the Manufacture of Wine, I must begin to say that we don't want to 'manufacture' our wines at all; we want to make a good, honest wine out of our grapes, and, if by chance a cask of a vintage goes wrong, through imperfect fermentation, an unclean cask, or any such blunder, better roll it out in the sun and make good vinegar of it than put all this cumbrous and expensive machinery in motion to get a quart of 60 overproof German potato spirit and try to put it right again." That is the view of a thoroughly practical and intelligent vigneron. I should not for one moment attempt to pose as an expert in wines, myself, but I

have had opportunities of coming in contact with men largely engaged in the industry, and animated by an honest spirit to develop one of the most important resources of our colony, and an honest desire to produce a sound, wholesome wine that will win its reputation in the market, and establish the reputation of Western Australian wine as a pure and unadulterated article. Mr. Kelso concludes by saying: "We—Bull and Stephens, Ferguson, and myself—are afraid that this Bill has been invented by some Perth or Fremantle house, who want to make 10 gallons of wine into 15 gallons of wine-and-water, fake it up with spirits to bring up the strength, salicylic acid to make it keep, and then ship it as West Australian wine. They could do that well down there and make it pay, both for export and home consumption; but it would ruin us here in the country for the latter, and, as for the export trade, it would damn us to all eternity." Members will observe that the gentleman is fairly emphatic, and does not mince matters. I may also mention, in connection with the introduction of this acid or spirit into wine, what is an absolute fact, and that is, that in the country to which we look for our most perfect wines, it is a criminal offence to fortify wines, as proposed in this Bill, for consumption by Frenchmen in France. They are indifferent to what happens to people abroad who buy French wines, but they make it a criminal offence to fortify wines for home consumption. A document particularly interesting in connection with this question is the official report on the wines exhibited at the International Exhibition of 1862, reported upon by Mr. Prestwich, one of the highest authorities in England. Referring to the importation of European wines into that country, he says: "A considerable quantity of white, and some red wines (so-called) have, however, been sent during the last few years from Northern Germany. They show a marked improvement in applied chemistry, but are not encouraging as showing an improved taste in this country for pure wines." That is the opinion of a man whose reputation and whose knowledge of what he is talking about are beyond question. I do not think we want to resort to "applied chemistry" in the manufacture of our wines; what we want is to produce

a sound, wholesome article that will establish the reputation of the colony as a wine-producing country. I think if we postpone the consideration of this Bill for some time it will give us all an opportunity of becoming better informed as to the requirements of what I look upon as one of the most important industries of this colony,—at present a nascent industry, but one which, by tender care and fostering legislation in these, its early days, we may establish on a firm basis as one of the most useful and valuable industries connected with the country. Sir, I beg to move that we go into committee on this Bill this day six months.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I think it would be well not to pass this Bill at the present time. There seems to be a doubt and a difference of opinion amongst people who are interested in the question as to whether it would be wise to have such a measure as this, some being in favor of it and some being opposed to it. Therefore I think it would be better for the Government and this House to postpone legislation on the subject, so as to allow those who are engaged in this industry an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the matter.

MR. HARPER: I have much pleasure in supporting the amendment of the hon. member for Geraldton. But I cannot say that I regret this measure has come before the House, because I think that the result of it will call a good deal of attention to what has been described as a very important industry in the future of this colony. It will also show our vineyard proprietors the necessity of united action amongst themselves, in their own interests, in the direction of suggesting any alteration of the law which they consider may tend to develop this industry. I hope they will unite during the recess and discuss this matter, and be prepared by the next session of the House to recommend such legislation as in their opinion will prove beneficial to the industry. I am sure it only requires united efforts on their part to give this industry a great impetus. There is no reason why it should not be one of the leading industries connected with the cultivation of the land, in this colony, but this can only be attained by united and intelligent action on the part of those concerned in it.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): Before the debate closes I should like to say a few words in reply to one or two remarks that fell from the hon. member for Geraldton in the course of his neat little speech. Of course the hon. member is not in any way responsible for the opinions of others, and I am aware that the sentiments to which he gave utterance were not his own, but—

MR. SIMPSON: I accept the responsibility of them.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion): Then the hon. member can take my remarks and apply them to himself, if he thinks proper. I have yet to learn that the manufacturers of wine in Perth and Fremantle are any more wicked, or have any stronger disposition to poison, or to injure the health, or to destroy the lives, of their fellow-creatures, either in this colony or out of it, than those engaged in the same industry on the Swan, or at Northam or Newcastle, or any other part of the colony; and I think that the aspersions or reflections conveyed in the letter read by the hon. member were unjustifiable, uncalled for, and unwarranted. Nor were they necessary to prove or to emphasise the hon. member's argument, if he desired to emphasise it. Although it is true there are so-called manufacturers of wine—I used the term manufacturers of wine because it is the term commonly used, though I think producers of wine would be more appropriate—although it is true we have in Perth and Fremantle persons who are engaged in this industry, I do not think anyone has a right to suggest, as is done in that letter, that they are disposed to adulterate their wines with salicylic acid, or any other acid, while those virtuous people who live out of Perth and Fremantle never dream of doing anything of the sort, poor little innocents! I resent such an insinuation. I resent it on behalf of those in Perth and Fremantle with whom I have the honor of being acquainted, who are concerned in the manufacture of wines. Even assuming—which I am not prepared to assume myself, for I know nothing about the origin of this Bill—but even assuming that the necessity of a measure of this kind was suggested by some persons in

Perth or Fremantle, there is no ground whatever for the unwarrantable insinuation that these persons have any intention of carrying out such a diabolical (I call it) scheme as seems to have originated in the minds of the virtuous and honest gentlemen who wrote that letter. It must have been well known to the authors of that letter that in the vicinity of Perth and Fremantle vine-growing is only carried on on a small scale, and that those who do grow grapes do not, as a rule, convert them into wine themselves, but dispose of them to others who do so. What may be the quality of that wine I am not prepared to say; but we all know that those who make it make it to sell, and that they find people who purchase it, and I have never yet heard that it has been the cause of these people dying or suffering any severe illness so long as they consume it in moderate quantities. I presume, if anyone drank the wines of these virtuous and innocent gentlemen who wrote that letter, in immoderate quantities, it would result in temporary inconvenience and probably produce the usual ill effects. I always think it is a pity that people, in referring to matters of this kind, should attempt to hurt the feelings of others who perhaps are quite as virtuous as themselves, and whose intentions are equally as good. I would not have risen on this occasion but for the unwarrantable reflections contained in the letter just read by the hon. member for Geraldton, and which, on behalf of the people of Fremantle, I indignantly resent. I have no wish to hurt the feelings of the writers of that letter, nor the feelings of the hon. member for Geraldton, but I regret that such a letter should have been written and that it should have been read in this House, and will appear in *Hansard* and perhaps in the public Press. I think people should be cautious in writing things which may rebound upon themselves, and should hesitate before levelling uncalled for charges against people who are quite as much disposed to do what is right as they are.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): The history of this Bill is very short. I think I explained, on its second reading, that the Government had introduced it in response to a resolution adopted by both Houses of Parliament.

last session. The motion, as it was made in this House, was in these words: "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable, during the recess, that the Government consider the question of amending the Distilleries Act, 35 Vic., No. 6, or otherwise, to facilitate the distillation of spirits to be used for the general purposes of wine-making, and thus to prevent the waste that now occurs in an industry which is rapidly becoming of great importance to the colony." The House passed that resolution without a dissentient voice, though I thought at the time that members let it go simply because someone had moved it. But both Houses passed a resolution to the same effect last session, and they gave the Government the trouble of compiling and introducing this Bill. This House now says it doesn't want it. Well, all I can say is, I hope that process will not be repeated very much. Personally, I think there is a great deal to be said against the proposition of adulterating our wines with spirits. But I understood the House last session thought otherwise, and that this measure was required for that purpose. Therefore, the House has no one to blame in this matter but itself. If it is now desired to give members time to consider that question which they apparently put on record last session before considering it—I do not think the Government will make any objection. It cannot be said that the Bill was sprung on the House or on the country, because it was brought in simply in response to the resolution of the House passed on the 8th March, and the country had full notice of that resolution. The Government thought it was their duty to carry out what might be said to be an order of the House, and that is all we did, or desire to do. If members now wish to postpone it the Government have no desire to oppose their wish. There is a good deal to be considered, no doubt. It is true that under the present Distillation Act vineyard proprietors may obtain a license to work their own still, and make their own spirits for fortifying their wines; but it was in order to avoid the expense and trouble of having stills of their own, and to enable them to obtain their spirits out of bond, free of duty, that this Bill was brought in, and brought in, as I have already said, at the request of both Houses of Parliament. For my part

I have always thought our colonial wine had enough spirit in it, and, had I not been a member of the Government, I would probably have taken a strong stand last session against that resolution.

MR. PATERSON: Being responsible for the resolution passed by the House last session, I should like to ask the Attorney General whether this Bill is in any way like the South Australian Act?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): On just the same lines; on the same principle.

MR. PATERSON: When I moved that resolution, I was informed by wine manufacturers in this colony that wine cannot be sent in good condition out of the colony to a foreign country without being first fortified with spirits. It was said it would not keep, and that some legislation was necessary if we intended going in for an export trade. That was the reason why I moved the resolution I did last session, so that we should be prepared beforehand, should an export trade spring up. I have no objection whatever to the amendment, so that the wine-growers of the colony may have an opportunity of expressing their views on the subject before the Bill becomes law.

Amendment—put and passed, and Bill consequently thrown out.

COMPANIES BILL, 1892.

IN COMMITTEE.

THE CHAIRMAN consulted the committee as to whether it was their desire that the marginal notes of the clauses should be read, or simply the numbers of the clauses.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it was a very long Bill, and he did not suppose it was likely to elicit much discussion.

MR. SIMPSON asked whether it would be in order to pass the clauses without reading the marginal notes?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said they had passed another big Bill, the Land Transfer Bill, without reading the marginal notes.

MR. LOTON said if there was a particular desire to get through the Bill quickly, it might be taken as read.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that, according to the Standing Orders, both the numbers of the clauses and the

marginal notes should be read, unless it was otherwise ordered.

The Bill was then proceeded with, the marginal notes being read.

Clauses 1 to 11:

Put and passed, *seriatim*, without comment.

Clause 12.—“No company shall be registered as a no-liability company until it is proved by statutory declaration to the satisfaction of the Registrar that five per cent. of the nominal capital of the company has been paid up and lodged to the credit of the company in some bank approved by the Registrar.”

MR. SIMPSON moved that this clause be omitted. He understood the clause was not in the original Bill introduced by the Government, but had been inserted when the Bill was under consideration in another place. To his mind the introduction of the clause would not have the result contemplated. The statement that five per cent. of a company's capital had been subscribed was simply an indication to the public that the company had a certain amount of money, which might not always be the case. His strong conviction, the result of some experience, was that the general public in trading with these no-liability companies should distinctly insist upon cash on delivery as the basis of the transaction. But, under this declaration, about five per cent. having been paid up, the public were led to believe that they were dealing with a company which had a certain amount of money, and were lulled into a sense of false security; and he thought it would be better for the company and better for the public that no such clause should be in the Bill. So long as a company was simply registered as a no-liability company, the public understood that no one was responsible for the company's liabilities, and would take care not to give the company any credit at all. He knew for a fact—and there were members in that House who could corroborate him—that this five per cent. declaration was simply a farce. It was no guarantee that the cash had been paid up. He had seen it paid in picks and shovels. The whole thing could be so hoaxed that it was no protection whatever to the public; and seeing that, to his mind at any rate, this no-liability was a wise

form of mining—of gold-mining, certainly—he thought it would be better that the public should understand that in dealing with such companies they were dealing with people who were not responsible for the company's liabilities, and that they should not be misled by this 5 per cent. declaration, which was a myth. What was the position of some of our no-liability companies to-day? Their joint and several guarantees were all over the country, and counsel's opinion was that they had the first claim on the company's assets. It might be said that it was well to protect the workmen on these mines, so that they might be sure of their wages at least. But that was provided for under the Goldfields Regulations; the miner who sued the company for wages had a charge upon the property of the company. But this clause, as it stood, was simply misleading, and would accomplish no good purpose. For that reason he moved that it be struck out.

MR. SOLOMON pointed out that, according to this clause, not only must there be a declaration that five per cent. of the capital had been paid up, but the money had to be lodged in some bank approved by the Registrar.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he should be very sorry to see the clause struck out. He was aware that this 5 per cent. business had been a dead letter under the existing Act, but in this Bill it was pretty well surrounded with safeguards which would prevent an evasion of the law in the future. He thought it was due, not only to people having dealings with these no-liability companies, but also to people who invested their capital in such companies, that this 5 per cent. of the nominal capital should be actually paid up, and that people should not be deceived with it as they had been in the past.

Question—That the clause be omitted—put and negatived, and clause passed.

Clauses 13 to 38:

Put and passed.

Clause 39.—Registered office of company:

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that according to sub-section 2 of this clause, notice of the situation of a company's registered office had to be inserted in the *Government Gazette*, “and in one daily paper published in Perth.” The registered office of a company might be in some

district far away from Perth, and he thought it would be well that this notice should be inserted in a paper published in the district where the office was situated. Why should a company, whose registered office was at Geraldton, or Albany, or the Murchison, or some other distant part of the colony, have this notice published in a Perth paper instead of in a local paper? If the company considered it necessary to publish an advertisement in a Perth paper as well, it could do so, but he did not think it should be made obligatory.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said whatever might be done with regard to publishing these notices in the local paper of the district where the offices were situated, they should also be published in Perth, as the probability was that the majority of the shareholders would be residents of this part of the colony, especially as regards mining companies.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said these notices had also to be inserted in the *Government Gazette*, which was published in Perth, and he did not see why it should be obligatory on all companies, no matter where their business office was, to advertise in a Perth paper, perhaps hundreds of miles away. This Act did not apply to mining companies alone. He moved that, after the word "Perth," the following words should be inserted, "or in any district in which such office is situated."

Amendment—put and passed, and clause, as amended, agreed to.

MR. MONGER, at this stage, said he did not think any member had any further amendment to offer, and he thought the remainder of the Bill might be taken as read.

THE CHAIRMAN said that could not be done unless the Standing Orders were suspended.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the Standing Rules and Orders be suspended, and that the Bill be put to the committee in parts instead of clause by clause.

Agreed to.

Clauses 40 to 249 were then put in that form, and agreed to, *sub silentio*.

Schedules 1 to 7:

Put and passed.

Preamble and title:

Put and passed.

Bill reported.

MESSAGE FROM LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL. ASSENT TO BILLS.

The following Message was received from the Legislative Council:—

"Mr. Speaker,

"The Legislative Council acquaints the Legislative Assembly that it has agreed to the undermentioned Bills, without amendment:—

"1. A Bill intituled 'An Act to authorise the closing of all rights-of-way across the railway in Beaufort Street and Stirling Street respectively, in the City of Perth.'

"2. A Bill intituled 'An Act to vest in the Diocesan Trustees of the Church of England in Western Australia, Perth Building Lots Nos. 1 and 2, Section E, and to empower the said Trustees to sell the said lands, and for other purposes.'

"GEO. SHENTON,

"President.

"Legislative Council Chamber,

"Perth, December 20th, 1892."

COASTAL STEAM SERVICE CONTRACT: CONTINUATION OF.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Sir, the motion standing in my name—"That in the opinion of this House it is desirable before the 1st of August next, when the present contract expires, to provide for the continuation of the coastal steam service between Fremantle and Wyndham for the purpose of carrying mails, passengers, and other traffic, with a time table not less favorable to the public than at present"—is brought forward with the view of obtaining the authority of this House for the Government to take the necessary steps for continuing steam communication between Fremantle and our Northern ports, on the expiration of the present contract, on the 1st August next. No doubt some members may think that the time has arrived, or nearly arrived, when we could do altogether without offering subsidies for steam services on our coast; but I regret to say I have not myself come to that conclusion, because, although we may be able to provide steam communication with some parts of the colony,

I do not think we would be able to get anyone willing to undertake a regular steam service to our far distant Northern districts, without some subsidy. Therefore the Government now ask the House to empower them to do the best they can to provide a continuance of the present service between Fremantle and Wyndham, and the other Northern ports of the colony. If we can secure this without any subsidy, of course we shall only be too glad; but, as I said, I do not think we shall be able to do so at the present time. The present contract provides for a steam service to the Vasse at the South, and as far as Wyndham at the North; but, in regard to the service to Bunbury and the Vasse, the Government think we need not provide any further for that, because there will very soon be railway communication. I have no doubt that steam-boat proprietors will still find it convenient to run steamers between Fremantle and the Vasse; but, even if they do not do so, it will be no hardship upon the people of those districts, as they will have railway communication provided for them. But, in regard to the Northern parts of the colony, it is altogether different. We might perhaps be justified in thinking that steam companies might be found to run their steamers as far as Broome at regular intervals, but we could not, I am sure, reckon upon being able to have certain and regular communication with all the Northern ports of the colony. However, in moving this resolution, all the Government wish is to be authorised by this House to enter into negotiations, to call for tenders—I take it that will be the fairest way—for the service we require, and see what offers we receive. It is important, of course, as I think everyone will admit, that we should have regular steam communication between Fremantle and the Northern parts of the colony. We must have it, if we intend to do what is right and proper with regard to those portions of our territory. I have heard people say that this place or that place is not a source of revenue to the colony, and therefore should be left to shift for itself, in the way of mail communication and in the way of providing facilities of transit for those who live there, or who wish to go there, or to send goods there, or to bring stock

from those parts down here. I am altogether of a different opinion. I think, if we desire to retain these remote districts as an integral part of this great colony, we should do all we can to connect them with the central parts of the colony, and give them facilities of transit to enable them to come here, and to enable those who wish to go there to do so, and to do it at regular intervals. Therefore, I hope that the idea which is sometimes expressed, that because a place is a long way off, and not so profitable to us as some desire, the claims of that place are to be disregarded, and it ought to be allowed to look after itself,—I hope that idea will have no support in this House. It was said by some members who pretend to take a considerable interest in the Northern parts of the colony, and who owe a great deal to those parts, that we should—I believe I am right in saying—have left the telegraph line, which is now about completed between Derby and Wyndham, in an uncompleted condition, a monument of our want of capacity and administration. I opposed that idea most strongly, for we had expended a considerable amount in building it. Although a mistake had been made in placing an inferior wire upon the line, and disasters had occurred on account of the natives, still, I thought it was desirable we should complete the work, having entered upon it, and so place every part of the colony in telegraphic communication. I am very glad to say that the views which the Government then expressed, through me, were supported by members in this House, and the result is to-day that we have almost, if not altogether, completed that telegraph line, and we have now a means of communication by wire from one end of the colony to the other. In the same way as I urged that we should provide telegraphic communication to those parts of the colony, I now ask that the steam communication which those districts have enjoyed for a considerable time past should not in any way be interfered with. It would be a backward move, a retrograde movement for us to adopt, to give fewer and lesser facilities of transit and of communication between the Northern parts of the colony than have existed for many years; and I hope it will not be done in my time, at any rate while I am

a member of the Government, that we should adopt a policy which will give less facilities of transit and less means of communication to those who reside in the far distant parts of the colony than they at present enjoy. As I said in the beginning, the only object which the Government have in bringing this motion forward is that they may be authorised to make the best bargain they can to provide these facilities. I only hope that the arrangement we may be able to make will be entirely satisfactory to us, and that we shall not have to pay very much for it. However that may be, we hope we shall be able to continue to provide certain and regular means of communication with all those places we are in communication with at the present time. I beg to move the motion standing in my name.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I have very much pleasure in supporting this resolution, as I consider it is absolutely necessary that steam communication should be continued on our coast. But I hope that the Government will not make any private arrangements with any company, and that tenders will be invited, and pretty well circulated throughout the colonies. The present service is not carried on so satisfactorily as it used to be years ago; the accommodation is not what used to be; and the liquors (or medical comforts I believe they are called) have not been up to the highest standard. I have not travelled myself of late by these steamers, but I have heard that the table on board is nothing approaching what it used to be. Perhaps a little change may do some good, or a little competition; and I hope the Government will invite tenders for this service, and let different steamboat proprietors have an opportunity of competing for this subsidy. I would also like to mention a fact in connection with the freight rates to these Northern ports, and especially those ports where the steamers used to go alongside the jetties to land their cargo, such as Cossack and places of that description. When the last, or rather the present contract was entered into, the Company reduced their freight rates, but made it a condition that they should not be compelled to go alongside jetties or land cargo at Cossack if the captain was of opinion that it

was not safe to do so because of the weather. That seemed at the time a very reasonable condition. But the result has been that this condition of the contract has been taken advantage of in this way: these steamers never by any chance now go alongside the jetty or into the creeks at all; and the result is that all cargo has to be lightered, at the expense of the consignees of the goods, which makes the freight come to as much as it was formerly, although the Company agreed to reduce them. And I am credibly informed that the lighters belong to the Company, so that they not only get the steamer freight but also the lighterage charges. What they take off at one end of the contract they add on at the other end. That is a concession with a vengeance. I hope the Government, when they make any agreement with any company hereafter, will remember this, and try to make as reasonable and as fair a bargain as they can, and look as carefully as they can after the interests of the people in those parts of the colony.

Motion—put and passed.

SUMS PAID BY THE GOVERNMENT FOR NEWSPAPER ADVERTISEMENTS.

MR. DEHAMEL—who had tabled the following notice of motion: "That in the opinion of this House the amounts paid annually by the Government for advertising in the *West Australian* and *Daily News* respectively are excessive, and that in future the particulars of all tenders invited be advertised (unless under special circumstances) in the *Government Gazette* only"—said: I do not intend to proceed with this motion pending the reply of the Premier to the other question I have asked, as to whether the return laid on the table includes all the sums paid to newspaper proprietors, for advertising or otherwise.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I have already replied to it to-day.

MR. DEHAMEL: He has not given me a categorical reply; and I ask leave to postpone this motion until that reply is furnished.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I say I have given a reply to the hon. member's question. I have told him that, so far as I can gather, there have been no other sums paid to newspaper proprietors beyond what appear in the

return already furnished, except for subscriptions. I went further and said I would lay a return on the table with the information he asked for, which is now being prepared by the Audit office. The hon. member is simply delaying this matter for some purpose of his own. Let him deal with it.

MR. DEHAMEL: There can be no difficulty in his finding at once, from the proper authorities, whether any further sums have been paid than are shown as having been paid for advertisements.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I have answered that. I said I did not believe there was anything else but subscriptions paid.

MR. DEHAMEL: We have only the hon. gentleman's statement that he does not believe there is anything else. I want a definite answer. I think the House is entitled to be treated with proper respect even by the Premier. I think we are entitled to a direct answer to a direct question, and, until this is given, I ask leave of the House to postpone this motion until to-morrow.

Leave given, and motion postponed accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at ten minutes past 4 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 21st December, 1892.

Scab Act Amendment Bill: first reading—West Australian Trustee, Executor, and Agency Company (Limited) Bill: first reading—Jury Exemption Bill: third reading—Transfer of Land Bill: second reading; committee—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. G. Shenton) took the chair at 3 o'clock.

PRAYERS.

SCAB ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

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

WEST AUSTRALIAN TRUSTEE, EXECUTOR, AND AGENCY COMPANY (LIMITED) BILL.

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

JURY EXEMPTION BILL.

This Bill was read a third time, and *passed.*

TRANSFER OF LAND BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker): This Bill, which has been transmitted to us from the Legislative Assembly, has been prepared by the Commissioner of Titles, and revised by the Attorney General. The object of it is to consolidate the law relating to land transfers, and also to make some additional provisions which are considered necessary for the proper working of the department. It must be borne in mind that the Commissioner of Titles has been at the head of his department for a period of about 17 years, and has consequently had a large experience in the working of the present law, and the amendments contained in this Bill are his recommendations. It is also to be borne in mind that the Attorney General has for many years been working for his clients under the present Act, and, like the Commissioner of Titles, he is consequently well acquainted with its deficiencies, and is aware of the requirements necessary to make the law as workable as possible. I myself have also had considerable experience in this work, and as far as I can see the amendments contained in this Bill are admirable ones, and are such as will conduce to the better working of the Land Titles Department. The object of the original Land Transfer Act was to simplify the mode of dealing with the transfer of land and to render dealing with land less costly. This was carried into effect by the establishment of a public department with a legal officer at its head, and by means of registers all transfers, mortgages, and other dealings with land are given validity to by the registration of the documents. This Bill is brought in, as I have said, mainly to consolidate the present law; but there are some few alterations, the