

that I have long been a supporter of women's suffrage. It seems to me that the line we have to take is that indicated by the Hon. Mr. Randell. We have to say whether the right time has come, not only to give women votes, but also for this House to express itself on the subject in an affirmative sense. The issues of this question may run very much beyond what we see at present. This may be only the first step to opening the door into the Legislature to the female sex. If women are entitled to vote, it seems to me they are also entitled to a seat. Then, again, I do not think this House ought to take the initiative. I have often heard it said that it is the duty of this House to check hasty legislation; that the members should act in a judicial capacity, and that in no sense should they attempt to force forward legislation of a premature character. Is it wise, then, for us to divest ourselves of our proper character? It seems to me that the time for us to consider the matter is after that body which is supposed to represent more truly the wishes of the people has sent the subject to us in the form of a Bill. While quite in favour of the principle, yet, on this occasion, I must vote against the amendment.

THE HON. J. MORRISON: The Hon. the Colonial Secretary has spoken very cautiously on this subject, and his chief reason for opposing this amendment, at the present time, is that nothing has been asked for. Are we going to legislate only for what is asked for? But I say there is one reason why now is the proper time. We are bringing in a new Electoral Bill, and we might as well provide the machinery in it for women to vote as well as men, instead of later on having a second Bill.

Question—That the word proposed to be struck out stand part of the clause—put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) moved that progress be reported, and leave asked to sit again.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 9.45 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 31st August, at 4.30 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 30th August, 1893.

Establishment of Experimental Farm—Medical Grant to Mr. Wilkins—Timber stacked on Fremantle Jetty—Wines, Beer, and Spirit Sale Act Amendment Bill: adjourned debate—Message from His Excellency the Governor: Loan Bill, 1893—Messages from the Legislative Council: Concurrence in Bill—Real Estates Administration Bill: first reading—Messages from Legislative Council: Inspection of Steam Boilers; Concurrence in Amendment upon Amendment in Stock Tax Bill; Not insisting upon Amendment in Post and Telegraph Bill—Fremantle Gas and Coke Company's Act, 1886, Amendment (Private) Bill: in committee—Municipal Institutions Bill: second reading—Width of Roads crossed by Railways: in committee—Estimates 1893-4: in Committee of Supply—Fremantle Water Supply Bill: first reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4.30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

ESTABLISHMENT OF EXPERIMENTAL FARM.

MR. THROSSELL, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands whether it was the intention of the Government to make provision for the establishment of an Experimental Farm, in accordance with motion approved last session of Parliament.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) replied: The Government are not in a position to do anything in this matter at present.

MEDICAL GRANT TO MR. WILKINS.

MR. TRAYLEN, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier whether the Government could give to Mr. Wilkins, as an honorarium, the sum placed upon the Estimates for 1892 and 1893 for a medical officer at the Greenough, Mr. Wilkins having performed the duties of such an officer during the past two years.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied: The Government have no funds available, except the salary for a duly qualified practitioner. I fear it is impossible to meet the hon. member's wishes.

TIMBER STACKED ON FREMANTLE JETTY.

MR. PEARSE, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works if his attention had been called to a large quantity of timber stacked on the Fremantle Sea Jetty, causing great in-

convenience to vessels discharging; and whether he would take the necessary steps to have it removed.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied: My attention had not previously been drawn to this matter, but I have, since the notice was given, made inquiries, and am informed that no inconvenience has yet been caused to shippers. The timber is in process of being shipped to Geraldton.

WINES, BEER, AND SPIRIT SALE ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING—ADJOURNED DEBATE.

The Order of the Day for the resumption of the adjourned debate on the motion of the Attorney General for the second reading of this Bill having been read,

MR. MONGER said: Unlike some of the hon. members who have spoken on this Bill, I am unable to congratulate the Attorney General on having produced the Bill in its present shape. I have no doubt whatever that the hon. gentleman had only the best interests of the country at heart, and of the particular people and institutions affected by it, in framing the Bill; but that part of it which relates to clubs is, in its present state, somewhat harsh. In the first place, it will entirely prevent the keeping open of such institutions as the present Perth Club and the Albany Club, and I believe it will also operate against the Masonic Club, in Perth, the Exchange Club, and Tattersall's Club. I have looked through the legislation of other colonies, on this question, but cannot find any provision in those statutes for the keeping open of proprietary clubs. The local institutions I have mentioned may be looked upon as proprietary clubs, and it appears that in none of the other Australian colonies are they permitted. But now that we are about to change the law here, it is rather hard upon these persons who have formed these institutions that they should at once be compelled to entirely remodel their present mode of working. In certain of these institutions, the proprietor has expended a considerable amount of money, and it seems to me, and I think hon. members will agree in this, that it is rather hard to compel the proprietor

either to lose the amount of capital he has invested, or remodel his club in accordance with the provisions of this Bill. It will not be asking too much to ask the Government to make some provision which will enable institutions that have hitherto been conducted on the very best principles to still remain open, even if the proprietors of them have to pay a small annual fee by way of license. Then I notice that, as far as the larger and more important clubs of the colony are concerned, provision is made that they shall pay only one amount, upon making application for a license in the form prescribed in the Bill. I really think—and I am re-echoing the sentiments of a majority of the members when I say—that the general feeling is that all clubs should be required to pay an annual licensing fee. It is so in some other of the colonies, where the principal clubs are all compelled to pay an annual licensing fee, the same as is charged to the licensees of public-houses. It is so in South Australia, and I do not think we would be going outside of Australian legislation if we were to make such a provision in this Bill. As to the minimum annual subscription which shall be paid by members of these clubs, I think the limit is too high. It is all very well for persons who belong to the larger and more influential clubs to pay an annual subscription such as this Bill requires, but this high limit will take away from working men, or the poorer class, the privileges of any club, and, as far as I am personally concerned, I am of opinion that the working men have as much right to use clubs as the men in a higher sphere of life. At the present moment, I know of one such institution in Perth which, as far as I can ascertain, has hitherto been conducted in the most gentlemanly style—at all events, if it has not been so, no complaint has come before the public in reference to it. I understand its principal objects are political, for improving the minds of working men, by means of holding regular meetings for the reading of papers, or hearing addresses on political questions, such as appear to them to be of most importance to the colony at large, and on which they hold debates. If those working men were to be compelled by this Bill to pay an annual subscription of two guineas, I think the club would soon

collapse. Now I think the working men have as much right as any other class to possess the conveniences of a club, to carry them on in their own way, to provide refreshments, and to have opportunities for discussing the questions of the day among themselves. When this clause requiring an annual subscription of two guineas comes before us in committee, I shall certainly move that the amount be reduced considerably. The provisions for constituting the licensing bench are all that could be desired. I have no wish to cast reflections on any justice of the peace, for I believe the gentlemen holding that position throughout the colony have only the best interests of the colony at heart; but it only stands to reason that a justice of the peace who is manifestly interested, either for or against the liquor trade, should stand aside on licensing day, and not attempt to sit as a licensing justice. I should like to have seen a number of other clauses introduced, particularly as to Sunday trading. I intend to propose the repeal of those sections in the principal Act referring to Sunday trading, and to insert, in lieu thereof, a clause making it necessary for any person who requires liquor refreshment on Sunday, to sign his name in a book to be kept in each public house for the purpose, stating where he comes from, and his proper name and address; and, in the event of his giving a false name or wrong address, he shall be liable to a penalty stated in the clause. I shall further propose that any person who receives drink from a publican, on a Sunday, shall be held responsible in the same way as the publican who supplies it. There is in the Victorian Act a provision permitting the sale, in bottle, of wine or spirits, by any grocer, provided he takes out a license in the form prescribed; and I intend to move that a similar provision shall be inserted in this Bill. I hope that when these new clauses are proposed, the Attorney General will be good enough to advise his colleagues to accept them.

MR. A. FORREST: I should like to compliment the Government on having brought in this Bill, and it is not before such a Bill is wanted. There are many important clauses in it which will be supported by nearly every member of this House. There is a very important clause

dealing with the licensing bench. It has been a growing evil for many years, that when a man was applying for a license he went round amongst the justices and tried to get as many of them as were friendly to him to sit on the licensing bench, for the occasion. I think the Attorney General has done quite right in providing for a bench which will deal with these applications on their merits; and I believe this clause will be supported by those members of this House who have the honour of being justices of the peace, so that they may not be called on, in future, by any of their friends, to sit on the bench for the purpose of granting a license. It is well known that in and about Perth there have been refusals to grant licenses for large premises on which thousands of pounds have been spent in making them suitable for the purpose of a public-house, while in other cases of a less deserving nature the license has been granted—in fact, cases in which the bench were not justified in granting any license. Clause 12 is also important, in providing that justices who are interested, directly or indirectly, shall not sit on the licensing bench. One justice might perhaps think that the drink traffic should be stopped altogether; and certainly a justice holding that opinion should not sit to hear applications for licenses, when he is opposed to licenses altogether. No doubt his intention is good, but he is against all licenses. As to the licensing of clubs, and the provisions against proprietary clubs, and other so-called clubs, the multiplication of these so-called clubs is a growing evil. Such clubs are started by very few persons, and the object is to evade the licensing law, and to be able to sell liquor on Sunday or any other day. These provisions as to clubs are very sweeping in their present shape; and tact and forbearance will be necessary, on the part of hon. members, in distinguishing what is and what is not a club. There are several clubs which are connected with hotels, and are a great convenience. There is such a club in Albany; I believe there is one in Geraldton [An Hon. MEMBER: No.]; they are to be found in Perth. Clubs of that kind, though very convenient for the members, do not provide beds, nor have they stabling for putting up horses, whereas this Bill requires that every club

shall provide certain specified accommodation and refreshments. There is also the Masonic Club, which has been in existence in Perth about twenty years, and is open only in the evenings from 7 till 11 o'clock, and only for members of the Masonic fraternity. The subscription is nothing, but the profits on the sale of refreshments go to the benefit of the Masonic body. It would be a great hardship to have this club shut up. There are other clubs which, I believe, are conducted on sound principles. I am not going into the question of private proprietary clubs, for I think the time has come to stop them altogether. As to clubs for working men, I think the subscription of two guineas per annum is beyond their means, and the amount might be reduced to £1 per annum. When dealing with the clauses in committee, we must be careful not to interfere with those clubs in which large expense has taken place for furnishing the premises, and which are well conducted, for if we wipe them out they will be a great loss to those persons who have expended money upon them. We should not press unduly on those clubs which are existing, and which are properly conducted. I would suggest that all clubs should pay an annual fee to the Government, and that no further clubs should be licensed without requiring this annual fee, and it should be for the licensing bench to say, every year, whether they will license any more clubs. In the case of the Perth Club, which provides for its members meat and drink and beds, why should it not be allowed to continue on condition of paying an annual fee, say about half the amount which is required for a publican's general license? I ask whether it is not better that our young men should be able to go into nice rooms, at their club, where they can meet company and enjoy intercourse without being under any obligation to call for drink, as they are supposed to do in hotels. We know that drink is the object for which they go into hotels, whereas in a club the members can sit down and smoke, or play billiards or cards. We should pause before we wipe out all clubs of this kind. If this Bill be carried in its present form, only two clubs in the colony will be left as lawful clubs—the Weld Club and the Fremantle Club.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): And the Geraldton Club.

MR. A. FORREST: Subject to these remarks, I congratulate the Attorney General on the Bill, which contains many important provisions that will be beneficial; although as to some other provisions, we must pause before we interfere unduly with existing clubs that are well conducted.

MR. TRAYLEN: Not only the members of this House, but the greater portion of the inhabitants of this colony, feel that they owe a debt of gratitude to the Attorney General, for his ability and readiness to prepare legislation for this House. At the same time, when we read the Bill and analyse it, we shall be apt to feel he has somewhat thrown away his prestige over it; for, this time, he has brought us the rough-hewn block of granite, and we have to dress it into shape. Each member of the House who has spoken has picked out some conspicuous flaw, and said the Bill must be altered in this particular, or must be added to in that direction. So that, in this instance, the Attorney General has not risen to the level of his usual self. I am sorry that I cannot congratulate him more fully than I am able to do in language like this. He has not said to the working man, in so many words, "Thou shalt not have a club;" but, in effect, that is what he says in this Bill. That is the consideration which the Government have for the working man and his club.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): How is that?

MR. TRAYLEN: This assumes, of course, that a club is a benefit. When I stand here, I am at liberty to state my personal opinions on a Bill; but when I sit on the bench as a justice of the peace, I have to carry out an Act of Parliament. In saying a club is a benefit to the working man, I am asking the Government to state why they consider it is not a benefit; but if the Government admit it to be a benefit at all, why deprive the poor man of that benefit? I ask whether any solitary member of this House believes that fifty working men are to be found in Perth who will be likely to subscribe two guineas a year for the benefits of a club. If the Bill can be altered, it is, as I say, a rough-hewn block of granite that we have to trim into shape. Nor is the Attorney

General more happy in his mode of dealing with the composition of the licensing bench. I know the hon. gentleman has had this in his mind. Some years ago it was desired to get a license for the Occidental Hotel, in Perth, and an applicant for the license approached those justices who, as he thought, might sit on the licensing bench for the occasion, and induced them to visit the Occidental Hotel and see for themselves what a highly respectable place it would be if a license were granted. But after he had taken them through the building and obtained the license he wanted, he carted away the fine furniture and put some inferior things in their place, and we have had the Occidental Hotel without the fine furniture ever since. But if there were a number of justices so gullibly inclined at that time, does it follow that such is the character of justices of the peace in this colony? That, surely, must be a wrong deduction. There may be some who are bad enough, but surely they are not all of such a character as that. I would prefer to think that many of them are like the hon. member for the Gascoyne, who, having been applied to once, are not usually applied to a second time by the same person to sit upon the bench on licensing day. The Attorney General has found some *rara avis* in the person of an officer or agent of a temperance society, and, in order to justify himself in the course he was taking, he waded through the statutes of other colonies, and discovered there was someone with a similar funniosity in his eye, who had put it into a Bill, and it became a statute. This Assembly contains, to the best of my knowledge, some six or seven total abstinents, and I am not counting the hon. member for Fremantle, for I am doubtful whether he does belong to the Hibernian Society. I believe there is no hon. member who has once tried total abstinence, and failed. I understand there are six or seven of us now, out of thirty members of this House, and so the Attorney General kindly says to one-fifth or one-sixth of this body, "You are not to be considered in the least; it is to be taken that there is a bend somewhere in your spinal column, and you are not sufficiently upright to be placed in a position of so much importance and authority as to consider whether certain persons applying for licenses in accordance

with a statute are, or are not, to have a license." And, in order to make this matter all right, the Governor in Executive Council is to choose out some appropriate persons who will be able to administer the statute with very great impartiality. Well, I am amazed, I am simply amazed, at the strange blindness of the Attorney General in this respect. So far as the actual licensing bench is concerned, no one who happens conscientiously to believe in total abstinence is to have an influence on the bench; he is not to come within arm's length of the licensing bench.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): What about the brewer?

MR. TRAYLEN: The brewer is shut out; but the Executive Council is to be at liberty to choose the men who are to approve of the others. Now how is the Executive Council made up? There is the chairman of a brewery company as one of the members of the Council. I forbear to mention all the others, but I give this as a sample. Now look at the manifest inconsistency of this Bill. The choice of the licensing bench is to be made by the chairman of a brewery company, and some others who are more or less interested in that industry. Need I go on? No; I have said enough. I cannot trust myself to comment on such inconsistency.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): The hon. member who has just spoken has given us a test, and has tried to show that he has great regard for the poor man, and that the Government have not any regard for the poor man, because we have brought in a Bill for excluding the poor man from enjoying privileges which those who are better off would be able to obtain. It seems to me that the object of this Bill is to prevent what has been a growing evil in this colony, that is the evasion of the law by setting up what are generally known as bogus clubs, without paying a licensing fee, and without being under the supervision which is entailed upon licensed victuallers; in fact, setting up a place where drink may be supplied, without any supervision by the police, and without paying any licensing fee. That is really the reason why this Bill is introduced; and, in order to give effect to the intention, certain provisions have to be made in the clauses. If you leave

the door wide enough open for all the exceptional cases that have been mentioned by the hon. member for West Kimberley and others, you will not be able to prevent the existence of bogus clubs. There is nothing whatever, in the Bill, to prevent the poor man from having his club, in Perth or anywhere else. He can have his club, and enjoy it to his heart's content, without coming under the Bill, unless drink is sold on the premises; for this Bill will not in any way affect the poor man who wants his club, unless drink is sold in it. The hon. member for the Greenough (Mr. Traylen) wants to make this Bill fit in, so that drink may be supplied in the poor man's club; and so that the poor man may not be prevented from obtaining drink in his club. Well, if drink is not sold in the club, there is not the slightest reason why any small community of persons in this colony should not have their club, under this Bill. The hon. member also objects to the clause which prevents any officer or agent of a temperance society from sitting on the licensing bench, as if that were a terrible calamity and injustice. But what about those who happen to have interests in hotels, or breweries, or such like? I happen, myself, to have a collateral interest, not a direct one, in a brewery. I have been a justice of the peace for many years, but I have not been able to sit on the licensing bench, for that very reason, although I have never taken any part in the management of the brewery; but having an interest in the freehold on which that brewery is situated, I am debarred from sitting on the licensing bench. And why should it be more of a hardship in the case of a justice of the peace who is an officer or agent of a temperance society to be excluded from the licensing bench than it is for me? I have never considered it any hardship whatever. I think it is but reasonable, when persons become officers of a society whose object is the entire prevention of the sale of drink, that they, of their own accord, and without any force of law, should not go on the bench to decide whether licenses should be granted or not. Of course they do not want any drinking licenses at all; and although their principle might be good, if the public would adopt it, yet that principle is not the law of the land.

I am not prepared to say that, if we were to do away with the use of intoxicating liquors, we would not be a better community than we are; but it is not the law, and we have not all come to that way of thinking. We are not singular in that, for all over the world, with very few exceptions, drink is sold to persons who desire it, and it has been found generally necessary to place the sale of drink under restrictions and liabilities. In regard to choosing the justices who are to form the licensing bench, I admit there will be a difficulty; for the Government will find great difficulty in obtaining the services of suitable gentlemen to occupy the position, when they are not to receive any pay for it. I believe, however, that when the licensing bench is formed, it will command greater respect and confidence than the present system, in which justices are hunted up and approached for the purpose of sitting on licensing day, although some of them are never seen on the bench at any other time. I think that in the same way as the greatest confidence is reposed in the stipendiary magistrates throughout the colony, so the greatest confidence will be reposed in those gentlemen who may accept the duties of this important position as licensing justices, under this Bill; and when once we obtain suitable gentlemen to occupy the position, the system now proposed will be found to work very well. As to the Executive Council being composed of the chairman of a brewery company and some others, I think that is altogether beside the question; for when persons occupy the position of advisers to the Governor, they are equal to the responsibility cast upon them, and the fact that one or other of them may be a director of a brewery company does not enter into the question. If that were the only interest one had in the world, it might have some operation; but it is out of place for the hon. member for the Greenough to refer particularly to the Attorney General, because he happens, amongst his multifarious positions, to occupy a small position in connection with a brewery company, along with other directors.

MR. TRAYLEN: I simply desired to point out the inconsistency.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I say the hon. member went out of his way, in referring as he did to the Attorney General;

for in a set speech, and in a dramatic manner, he stated that he would desist from going on. I wish he had gone on. It was a very good piece of acting, to say he would not go any further. I say he did not intend to go any further when he started.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: There is no dignity on that bench.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): In regard now to the main question as to this Bill interfering with existing institutions, it seems to me that the members of proprietary clubs can put themselves outside of the Bill by not dealing in drink, or they can come under the Bill in an easy way. The only point is that some individual is running a club as a business, and making a profit for himself, instead of the members making the profit jointly. What is to prevent the members of the Perth Club or of Tattersall's Club from putting themselves under this Bill? They are all persons in a fairly good position in the place, and capable of holding or carrying on a club jointly, in the proper manner of a club, under the conditions of this Bill, and they are quite capable of conforming to its regulations. The difficulty in framing the Bill has been to make it stringent enough for preventing bogus clubs being continued under its provisions. I am well aware that the Bill will interfere temporarily with some clubs, but it is much better for us to legislate so as to put them on a proper footing. I think that this Bill, with some alterations, will meet the existing circumstances. As to making a charge upon all clubs annually, that is not the object of the Bill, for we are not seeking to obtain a revenue from clubs, although I should like to see the revenue come in. Our object is to put the clubs on a satisfactory footing, and to prevent persons from evading the law. I think the Attorney General was right in providing that clubs should be registered, and that, if they do not conform to the rules and regulations, the chairman or committee of any club may be summoned to show cause why the certificate should not be cancelled. The question of taxing the clubs is not a material part of this Bill.

MR. RICHARDSON: The question of requiring clubs to pay an annual licensing fee may as well be considered in connection with this Bill, and such a provision would be a good way out of the difficulty.

Objections are taken, and I do not say they are not justly taken, that the entrance and subscription fees are pitched rather high—so much so that, with regard to the poor man, they will be somewhat prohibitive. We cannot get away from the fact that it is so; but whether the Premier's reply that the clubs for working men can put themselves outside the Bill by not dealing in drink, is a sufficient answer, I am not prepared to say. There is the danger that, if we make the fees too easy, too low, there will be nothing to prevent all men who have any desire to associate together for any purpose forming clubs all over the place, and then there may be no requirement for the publican, and the revenue now derived from publican's licenses may disappear, unless a licensing fee be charged to the clubs. It would be equitable to reduce the entrance and subscription fees, and to require all clubs to pay an annual license fee. As to the composition of the Executive Council, and consequently the licensing bench, objection has been taken by the hon. member for the Greenough against the disqualification of justices who are officers or agents of temperance societies. It cannot be denied that, hitherto, licenses have been obtained much too easily. Whoever the licensing magistrates may have been, the licenses have been too easily obtainable, by a number of business people signing an application, and then the thing goes through slick. The true principle of choice by election would be to introduce local option. That principle is sound and unanswerable. If the neighbours in a district do not desire to have a public-house placed amongst them, they can, by a majority, forbid it, where local option prevails; for the people in the neighbourhood are the judges, and ought to be the best judges, as to whether they want a public-house or not. I should like to see the principle tried here; it has worked altogether admirably where it has been tried, and has given satisfaction, and I think the day has arrived when it should be tried here.

MR. SOLOMON: The Government are to be congratulated on having introduced this Bill, which will receive the support of this community, at any rate in the central districts, where many of these clubs have been outnumbering the public-houses. I am fully in accord with the

principles of the Bill, but there are certain details on which I may propose amendments, in committee. I do not see any provision for the quarterly or annual sittings of the magistrates. I am told the principal Act provides for this, but I cannot find that it does. If this is a Bill for the licensing of clubs, it will be necessary to provide in the Bill for the meetings of licensing justices for that purpose. There is also the importation of bulk spirits and wine, for I find that if a person receives a consignment in bulk, unless the bill of exchange drawn against it is hypothecated, he will have to take out a special license for the sale of the consignment. Perhaps the Attorney General will consider whether that can be amended.

MR. CANNING: The main purpose of the Bill is very clear, and I do not think that much exception can be taken to it. The object is to prevent the evasion of the law by any person who, under the guise of keeping a club, disposes of liquor under much more favourable conditions than the licensed publican is allowed to do. But while that is commendable and quite unexceptionable, yet some of the provisions of the Bill call for amendment. The provision requiring that a club in Perth shall consist of not less than fifty members, and that each member shall pay an entrance fee and a subscription of two guineas, will work very oppressively in regard to the greater number of the people. It is reasonable and in accordance with the practice of every civilised community that every class of persons shall be able to have a club, and enjoy all the advantages that may not be obtainable in any other way. The objects of clubs, generally, are twofold, being either for social purposes or for political purposes, or they may be for both. The laws which prevail in every British community permit the existence of clubs for political as well as social purposes, and it is rather an advantage when both can be combined. The law permits the sale of liquor, in clubs, and it would be very hard if persons forming a club for political purposes were debarred from obtaining such refreshments as they require. The abuse of the privilege should be guarded against; and, while the law exists, there should be no evasion permitted. As to the proposal in this Bill that clubs shall be regularly registered, and that the

number of members shall not be less than a certain minimum, I think the limit fixed is too high, and that thirty members would be a reasonable minimum for a town; and if the subscription were reduced to one guinea a year it would meet all the purposes desired by the framers of the Bill. It is not probable that, for the purpose of evading the law, a number of men of any class would join together and subscribe a guinea a year; for a guinea is an appreciable sum to many persons, for such a purpose, and that sum would be sufficient to meet the purpose desired. I trust these provisions will be modified in the directions I have mentioned. With these changes, the Bill would meet with general acceptance. As to an annual licensing fee for clubs, I am inclined to think that if the management of an institution fell into the hands of a certain set of people, and they were forced to pay the license fee, and if the subscriptions were waived, this would open the door to a certain amount of evasion of the license.

MR. CLARKSON: The Attorney General is to be congratulated on introducing a measure which is so much needed. The hon. gentleman introduced a measure, which passed through this House yesterday, in the interest of one section of the community, and at first sight it seems as if this Bill were in the interest of another section; but I think it is a most useful measure, though it does not go far enough. I am sorry that local option is not provided for, in some way, for I can see we have too many public-houses for the requirements of the community, and though it is often said that competition is good for trade, yet it does not seem to be so in this case, for our publicans have so much competition that they cannot afford to keep up a sufficient staff of servants, and their customers must suffer. One clause in the Bill deals with wayside licenses. Wherever there is a congregation of a score or two of navvies, up goes a tent shanty, and there is a sign, almost as large as the building, informing the traveller that he may obtain anything he requires. This usually consists of sour bread and pork, washed down with beer. The place is nothing but a trap to catch the navy who may have a cheque or a few pounds to his credit; and I should be pleased to see this class of hotel wiped out

altogether. One point to which the hon. member for Northam and the hon. member for the Greenough took exception was the composition of the proposed licensing bench. I think that in the case of a justice of the peace who is pledged to oppose the sale of spirituous liquors, it would be highly improper for him to sit on the licensing bench, for I do not see how he could give an impartial opinion upon any application for a liquor license. With regard to the clubs that have been springing up, I do not believe in them at all. They are simply bogus clubs, where people drink and gamble together, and pay no license; and it is most unfair to publicans that such places should be licensed, and I should like to see them done away with altogether.

MR. COOKWORTHY: We may congratulate the Attorney General and the Government on introducing this Bill, but the principal clause has been omitted, and that should be a provision for taxing these clubs, which would obviate a great deal of grumbling and dissatisfaction, especially in country districts; and though it is true that clubs are not taxed in the old country, yet Mr. Goschen, the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, said he intended to apply a tax to all the clubs in England. Therefore, it would be nothing outrageously new if this colony attempted to do the same thing. The subscription of two guineas a year is rather high. As regards local option, if the licensing bench did their duty, they would, to a large extent, carry out local option. When I have had the honour of sitting on the licensing bench, those nearest to the house for which a license was asked were first considered; so that if a man residing a long distance from the house signed his name in favour of a license being granted to that house, he was considered to be out of it, and only those immediately affected were considered to have a voice in the question. If that method of dealing with applications is not carrying out local option, I don't know what is.

MR. SIMPSON: This Bill contains one of the funniest provisions ever put before a House in the world. Recently we had an opportunity of listening to remarks on legal definitions, from one who graces the House and supports the Ministry with his legal knowledge, and who was at the time asking what was

meant by the words "*feme sole*," in a certain amendment. Well, now, I find in Clause 16 of this Bill that "No person of the female sex who is a widow of the age of thirty years," and so on, shall be disqualified by reason only of her sex from holding a publican's license. I do not know whether any other sex could be a widow, and I think the language of this clause will need amendment in committee. When we come back to what, perhaps, we may call the great principles that underlie this Bill, we find that in this colony, as in other parts of the world, the Government have licensed certain persons to sell liquor—they have made the liquor trade a monopoly—and they permit certain men, who satisfy their representatives as to character and the accommodation provided for customers, to sell liquor on condition that they, as licensees, pay a certain amount of money. Now, I do think that, when the Government take these steps for requiring that the liquor shall be supplied to the public under decent conditions, and that those who make a profit by selling liquor shall contribute a certain amount to the revenue, the Government should at the same time protect those licensees from illicit competition. I think that every club in the country should pay a licensing fee. If some people choose to combine and say, "We are not content to obtain liquor from an ordinary hotel, but will subscribe so much each to support a certain establishment, and will contribute so much annually, and sell the liquor to one another"—if they do that, then, in justice to the publican who has to pay a licensing fee, every club should be required to pay for a license. I think that would assist our publicans. So far as I know the basis on which the Licensed Victuallers' Association has been formed, it is to assist in putting on the Statute-book a measure that will be of use to the country; and I had the pleasure of attending one of their meetings, when the association was inaugurated, and I said then that if the association was to endeavour to control the liquor traffic, and to keep the trade to respectable men, I felt sure they would have the hearty support of every reasonable man in the country. This Bill appears to be a move in that direction, but in committee very considerable alteration will have to be

made in the clauses. These rules that are suggested as necessary for each club will have to be very stringent, for my experience in clubs leads me to believe that the "visitors' room" business is very largely overdone in these clubs, and that there is a large amount of hotel business carried on under that name. I take strong objection to Clause 12. I am content to leave to the Executive Council, as representing the whole population, the selection of the gentlemen who shall sit on the licensing bench, and who are to deal with the applications for licenses; but I think that, in Clause 12, the Executive are practically burking their powers and responsibilities. Clause 9 provides that the Governor-in-Council may, from time to time, appoint two justices to be, with the Resident Magistrate of the district, the licensing magistrates for any other licensing district in the colony. When I remember who are the five gentlemen who sit on the Treasury benches and advise the Governor, I say: "Upon you we place the responsibility; for you have the honour, the emoluments, the work, and the dignity of Ministers of the Crown; do your duty, and do it right up to the hilt; we will take none of it from your shoulders." In addition to that, is it wise to say that neither brewers nor teetotallers shall sit on the licensing bench? It is better to keep clear of that principle altogether. I have always thought that a bad law well administered is better than a good law badly administered. I believe, also, that it will conduce largely to the efficiency of the colony if Civil servants occupy their time mainly with their duties, and do not act as magistrates on the bench, particularly in Perth and Fremantle. The Bill, as a whole, will meet a distinct public requirement. The way clubs have been springing up must indeed be a menace to the livelihood of the licensed victuallers of the colony; and if we wish to keep our hotels respectable and decent, we will prevent their being interfered with unduly, or their profits trespassed upon by what are, in effect, sly grog shops. I shall support the Bill, subject to amendments in committee.

MR. LEFROY: Persons who are required to pay for a license for selling liquor should be protected in every way by the law under which they are supposed

to work; and the Government may be congratulated upon having introduced this Bill. The Attorney General cannot possibly divine the opinions of every member of this House, and embody in one Bill all the different views that hon. members may hold on a particular question; but, under the circumstances, we may compliment the Attorney General and the Government on the framing of a Bill which has been much required. It has always appeared to me extraordinary that certain persons should be allowed to sell liquor without holding a license, while other persons had to pay for a license; therefore, if any proposal be made for requiring clubs to pay for a license, I shall be glad to support it as a just thing. The provisions in the Bill will meet most of the reasonable requirements, if the amount of subscription be reduced. Any body of men will be able to form a club of their own. Certain persons think a club is no good to them unless they can obtain liquors in it; and even those who have clubs in a small way should not be prevented from having their beer or wine in their club, if they choose to have it. The question of temperance appears to have been in the minds of the framers of the Bill. I do not think total abstinence is a necessity, but under temperance properly carried out we are likely to have a stronger and better people than under total abstinence. Because some gentlemen may carry their enthusiasm a little too far, I am sorry to see they are to be, to a certain extent, ostracised, by this Bill. It appears to me quite enough to say the Governor-in-Council shall appoint the licensing bench; and I am quite willing to leave the choice to the Government of the day, for I believe any Government is always ready to do, to the best of its ability, what is best for the people which the Government represents, although a Government may occasionally err. It will be sufficient, without pointing at particular persons, to leave it to the Governor-in-Council to elect the licensing bench; and, if they choose to appoint a temperance advocate as one of the bench, I do not see why they should not do so. The object of the Bill is to prevent the illicit sale of liquor, and it is not altogether to induce temperance; therefore it is not necessary to bring these persons into the question at all. I believe the temper-

ance people do more moral good than the brewers and wine-growers, and soon; and I will support an amendment for omitting from the Bill all reference to them. When I saw the hon. member for Geraldton get up, I knew the discussion was nearly at an end.

MR. PEARSE: As a member representing an important constituency, I desire to say a few words. I congratulate the Attorney General on the introduction of a very useful measure. In most large towns we find that when a man is unsuccessful in obtaining a publican's license, he opens a club, and it is generally known that the affair is a bogus club. I do think that licensed victuallers have a right to protection in their business, for which they pay a large annual fee in obtaining a license. There are several clauses in the Bill which I should like to see amended.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): The hon. member for the Greenough took the opportunity of saying the Government had quite overlooked the argument that the working man had as much right to form a club as persons in a higher social position. But, inasmuch as the Government do not propose a large licensing fee annually for clubs, this fact will show that we desire to place the working man on an equality with the men above him, and to enable him to have a club in the same way as clubs are formed by those who are not working men. If the Government had suggested an annual fee, say of £25 a year, it would have been said at once that well-to-do persons might be able to pay that and think nothing of it, but how about the poor man who wants his club—he cannot pay £25 a year? The Government have proposed virtually no fee; for after a club pays £5 for a certificate, an annual fee would be a heavy charge on those desiring to have a club. The hon. member referred also to the entrance fee and subscription; but it will be seen that a working man's club can comply with every condition in the Bill which is necessary for the obtaining of a certificate, equally as well as the club of the rich man. There is nothing in any one of the conditions that cannot be complied with by the poorest set of people who want a club. Can you establish a club for less than a yearly subscription of two guineas per member?

The Government are of opinion that if you lower the fee of two guineas, you cannot carry on a *bonâ fide* club. The Government may be wrong in that; and I said, on moving the second reading, that the Government were ready to reconsider this matter in committee. The question does arise as to whether you can maintain even a working man's club, as one should be maintained, for a less subscription than two guineas per member annually. You may have a drinking caboose for less than that, but that is not what we want to see. You might have a working man's club, such as we had in Perth some months ago, and which was a disgrace to civilisation, for it was used chiefly as a drinking place, and was kept open till all hours at night, and on Sunday too. If such a club as that is one that some hon. members want to support, that is not the kind of club the Government are thinking of. I would like to see working men's clubs established, if they carry out the purposes of a club, under proper rules. If hon. members think the fee is a little too high, I am sure the Government will listen to any arguments that may be addressed to them, in committee, upon that point. The hon. members for the Greenough and Northam took exception to Clause 12, which disqualifies any officer or agent of a temperance society from being appointed to the licensing bench. If that provision be considered dispassionately, it will be seen there is no slur on any justices of the peace. Any person who enters into a contract with the Government is thereby disqualified by the law from being a member of Parliament; and what is the reason for that? It is because, on principle, we say that a man who is concerned personally in a matter of this nature cannot be above suspicion. He may be the best of men. We know there are men who would be above anything shady or questionable, and we might safely appoint them to any position; but you must have regard to public opinion. The Constitution Act is most strict in keeping out of Parliament any person who is in any sense interested in arrangements or contracts with the Government; and when we come to the Licensing Act, and prepare a Bill for amending it, we find that persons connected with vineyards are debarred from sitting on the licensing bench, and there are many

gentlemen in Perth and Guildford who have been debarred from sitting on the bench because they are interested in vineyards. If I mentioned the names of some of them, it would be seen that there is not the slightest occasion for keeping those gentlemen off the bench; but the law has kept them off the bench. When we are providing for the same class of cases in this Bill, is it desired that we should not apply the existing disqualification to persons who are officers or agents of temperance societies, or persons interested in breweries? We do not say they are not just as fit as other gentlemen to sit on the bench, but on the principle which pervades our law throughout we say they are interested for or against licensing, and should not be eligible to sit on the licensing bench. I should like to know what would be said now, if the Government were to appoint the hon. member for the Greenough a member of the licensing bench. Would any Government do it? If my personal views were to prevail, I should consider him the best of the justices to be appointed as the sole licensing justice; and I believe he would act as honestly and uprightly and according to the law as any other justice. I say here that I had no intention of reflecting on that hon. member as a justice, nor on any other who holds similar opinions. It was simply because we found all these disqualifications in the existing law, and also I saw that in Queensland the same provision exists; therefore I thought it best to take the opinion of this House on the question. The hon. member for South Fremantle said there appeared to be only one licensing meeting provided for in the Bill; but he will see that Clause 2 provides that the certificate shall be granted at a special meeting to be held in October next, or at any succeeding quarterly meeting of the justices. It is not provided, in this Bill, that the justices shall meet quarterly, because this Bill is to be incorporated with the principal Act, which provides for the quarterly meetings. Consequently, the magistrates will continue to meet as they do now, quarterly. The only thing we have done, with regard to the licensing bench, is to provide for special licensing magistrates in certain cases.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR *RE* LOAN BILL, 1893.

The following Message from His Excellency the Governor was delivered to and read by Mr. Speaker:—

“In accordance with the requirements of Section 67 of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends to the Legislative Assembly that an appropriation be made out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, for the purposes of a Bill intituled ‘An Act to authorise the raising of a sum of Five hundred and forty thousand pounds, by Loan, for the construction of certain public works, and for other purposes.’

“Government House, Perth,

“30th August, 1893.”

MESSAGE FROM THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

CONCURRENCE IN BILL.

The following Message was delivered to and read by Mr. Speaker:—

“*Mr. Speaker,*

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

“‘An Act to amend the Law relating to Appeals in Criminal Cases.’

“GEO. SHENTON,

“President.

“Legislative Council Chamber,

“Perth, August 29th, 1893.”

REAL ESTATES ADMINISTRATION BILL.

Received from Legislative Council.

Read a first time.

MESSAGES FROM LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

INSPECTION OF STEAM BOILERS.

The following Message was delivered to and read by Mr. Speaker:—

“*Mr. Speaker,*

“The Legislative Council having this day passed the following Resolution,—

“‘That in the opinion of this House it is advisable either to amend the Boat Licensing Act, or by special legislation to make the inspection of steam boilers, at least once a year compulsory,’ presents

"the same to the Legislative Assembly for
"its concurrence.

"GEO. SHENTON,
"President.

"Legislative Council Chamber,
"Perth, August 30th, 1893."

Ordered—That the consideration in
committee of the Legislative Council's
Message be made an order of the day for
the next sitting of the House.

CONCURRENCE IN AMENDMENT UPON
AMENDMENT IN STOCK TAX BILL.

The following Message was delivered to
and read by Mr. Speaker:—

"Mr. Speaker,

"In reply to Message No. 12 of the
"Legislative Assembly, the Legislative
"Council acquaints the Assembly that it
"has this day agreed to the Amendment
"made by the Legislative Assembly on
"the amendment made by the Legislative
"Council in the 'Stock Tax Bill.'

"GEO. SHENTON,
"President.

"Legislative Council Chamber,
"Perth, August 30th, 1893."

NOT INSISTING UPON AMENDMENT IN
POST AND TELEGRAPH BILL.

The following Message was delivered to
and read by Mr. Speaker:—

"Mr. Speaker,

"With reference to Message No. 13 of
"the Legislative Assembly, the Legislative
"Council informs the Legislative As-
"sembly that it does not insist on its
"Amendment No. 3 in the 'Post and
"Telegraph Bill,' with which the Legisla-
"tive Assembly has disagreed.

"GEO. SHENTON,
"President.

"Legislative Council Chamber,
"Perth, August 30th, 1893."

The SPEAKER left the chair at 6:20 p.m.

The SPEAKER resumed the chair at 7:30
p.m.

FREMANTLE GAS AND COKE COM-
PANY'S ACT, 1886, AMENDMENT (PRI-
VATE) BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Bill passed through committee, without
comment, and reported.

Report adopted.

MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS BILL.

SECOND READING—ADJOURNED DEBATE.

The adjourned debate, upon the motion
of the Attorney General for the second
reading, was resumed.

MR. A. FORREST: I moved the ad-
journalment of the debate at a previous
sitting, in order to give the various
Municipal Councils in the colony an op-
portunity of looking through the Bill,
and seeing whether it requires amending.
I believe the Bill is generally considered
to be a good one, and will meet the re-
quirements of the municipalities. The
Municipal Council of Perth has not yet
considered the clauses, and I, as Mayor of
Perth, am not in a position to speak upon
the details.

MR. SOLOMON: I am in a similar
position. The Fremantle Council has not
yet had an opportunity of discussing the
clauses of the Bill, and I cannot offer re-
marks on the provisions at present.

MR. QUINLAN: I cannot say I am
like the two previous speakers, for I have
taken considerable trouble in going
through the Bill, and have no hesitation
in saying it is one that will commend
itself to the community generally. The
Perth Council have dealt with the subject
in the draft Bill which they prepared two
years ago, and I observe that many of
those clauses have been copied into this
Bill, particularly the provision as to the
system of rating, which is a wise one. It
will be generally admitted that the present
system of rating is most inequitable. The
new provision for requiring the rates to be
paid at the council office, instead of being
collected by calling on each ratepayer, is
a step in the right direction, saving con-
siderable trouble and expense in the col-
lection. As to the time allowed for a per-
son to appeal against the amount of
rating, I think it should be extended from
30 to 60 days after the making up of the
rate-book. The clause requiring notice of
sale or transfer of any property to be
given to the local council, in order that
the list of property-owners may be kept
up to date, is very requisite, as in the past
the Perth Council has been put to con-
siderable expense in searching, in the
Land Titles Office, for the names of pro-
perty-owners, consequent on the numerous
sales and sub-divisions of land, in recent
years; and it has been difficult to trace
the owners, especially in the suburbs,

where estates have been cut into small sections. The Bill provides that the mayor shall be elected by the ratepayers, as is the practice in Perth, and I think this is desirable, as it allows a larger choice than if the mayor were elected by the council. I am in favour of plural voting for the election of mayor, though the number of votes might well be restricted to three, as a maximum, instead of four; but for the election of councillors I think each elector should only have one vote, and I believe that is the opinion of the Perth Council. I believe plural voting for the office of mayor is general throughout the world. This Bill, with a few amendments in minor details, will be suitable and acceptable throughout the colony; and its preparation reflects credit on the Attorney General.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

WIDTH OF ROADS CROSSED BY RAILWAYS.

IN COMMITTEE.

The resolution received from the Legislative Council—"That, in the opinion of this House, it is necessary that, wherever railways cross main roads or streets, the full width of the said road or streets shall be maintained"—having been read,

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) moved that the resolution be not agreed to. He said the width of roads at the level crossings over railways, throughout the colony, had been designed and fixed after much consideration, on the most economical principle, and the best calculated for the safety of the public. If an alteration were now required to be made, by taking in the full width of the road or street at every crossing, the space of danger at the crossings would be increased, and there would be less opportunity of seeing an approaching train. The principle adopted had been well thought out, and was followed on railways in all parts of the world. The adoption of this resolution would not only reduce the safety to the public, but also involve the expenditure of many thousands of pounds of public money in altering all the present crossings. The other House had not given that amount of consideration to this subject which it required; and he would

simply move that this House do not agree to the resolution.

MR. A. FORREST said that ordinary common sense should have prevented the other House from passing such a resolution. Narrow crossings over railways were safer than broad ones, for if a large flock of sheep were at a crossing two or three chains wide, when a train was approaching, there would be a smash-up, because a large number could not be controlled. They should send the resolution back to the Upper House, and ask those hon. members to use their common sense on this subject.

MR. CLARKSON said the resolution was the most ridiculous thing he had ever heard of, because the full width of road would allow the whole of a travelling mob of sheep to be on the railway line at one time, whereas now they could easily be shut off when a train was coming.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said there was a good deal more common sense in the other House than in this one. He had great respect for the other House, and could not see any logic in the arguments which had been used in this House against the resolution. A flock of sheep would be more likely to get across a railway quickly through a wide space than through a narrow one. He believed that if the railway crossings in Perth had been the full width, there would not have been such disastrous accidents as had happened through trains coming suddenly on carts and other vehicles. He supported the resolution, and believed it had been well considered by the members of the other House.

MR. RICHARDSON said the hon. member for the Gascoyne was getting under a new flag, for he was now recommending a needless expenditure of public money, whereas he generally sought to check needless expenditure. There was no necessity to spend thousands of pounds in widening all the railway crossings in the colony.

MR. TRAYLEN suggested that the resolution might be made to refer to future crossings over railways, without altering those already constructed. The crossing in William Street, Perth, was the full width, and he was not able to see that it increased the danger to the public. There were loud complaints, some years ago, about the crossing in William Street

being so restricted; and the Government removed the gates. He could not agree with the argument that sheep would be safer in a narrow crossing than in a wide one. He would vote for the resolution.

MR. LEFROY said the resolution of the Upper House should not be treated with discourtesy. He believed there would be more danger in a wide crossing than in a narrow one.

Question put and passed.

Resolution of committee reported.

Report adopted.

Ordered—That a message be transmitted to the Legislative Council, informing them that the Legislative Assembly had disagreed with the resolution contained in the Council's Message.

ANNUAL ESTIMATES, 1893-94.

ADJOURNED DEBATE.

IN COMMITTEE.

The adjourned debate upon the motion of the Premier—That the first vote, "His Excellency the Governor," stand at £1,315—was resumed.

MR. TRAYLEN: My few sentences will be words of unqualified praise to the Government for having placed before us Estimates which do not propose very largely to increase the salaries of Civil servants.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn): Not one increase.

MR. TRAYLEN: I think I have seen one. I express my pleasure at this, not that it is a matter of congratulation that we cannot afford to give higher salaries, but our circumstances are such that there is no necessity for us to give higher stipends, nor do our funds permit us to do so. The other colonies have suffered severely through going on, year after year, increasing salaries, and though it may have been very nice at the time, they have brought upon themselves such an amount of suffering that now hundreds upon hundreds of discharged Civil Servants are without employment of any kind. I am glad the Government are not carrying us on to such a state of things in this colony.

MR. A. FORREST: I wish to draw particular attention to the estimate of expenditure for Lands and Surveys. The amount proposed for the year is £20,101, and out of that sum only £4,000 is

proposed for Surveys, and £2,000 for labour and incidental expenses connected therewith, thus leaving nearly £13,000 for departmental salaries. No doubt the Lands Department does its work well; but I cannot understand why it requires such a large expenditure of money in the head office and branch offices, as compared with such a small amount of work to be done in the field. If no great amount of surveying is to be done, a large staff cannot be required for completing the survey work and entering it in the books of the office. I hope the Commissioner will take what I say in the way I mean it, but I do regret to see such a large expenditure in the department, and such a small amount to be expended on surveys in the field.

MR. RICHARDSON: I endorse the regret just expressed, as to the small amount to be devoted to the cost of surveys of the land, because survey work is synonymous with settlement, and I take it that if we are not to have lands surveyed we cannot have much increase of settlement. I imagine it will be necessary that during the next nine or ten months there shall be considerable preparation in surveys for the new Homesteads Bill, provided it does not suffer the same fate in another place as certain other bills have done. If we have any great increase of settlement resulting from that measure, it should entail a considerable amount of field work; and, on the other hand, if there is to be no survey work, there will be no great amount of settlement resulting from the Bill. Therefore I cannot help regretting that the amount put down is so small for such a useful vote. The expenditure for surveys, and for roads and bridges, is next to railways in importance—perhaps more important than railways—for the advancement of settlement. Otherwise, there is much on which to congratulate the Government for bringing down such a flourishing financial statement. I doubt whether the Premier of any other colony in Australia is able to bring down a budget and show an absolute credit balance on the year's estimates. The one word which is heard in budget speeches in all the other colonies is the word "deficit," and the increasing deficits are assuming large proportions. When the Treasurer of this colony is able to show a credit bal-

ance of £63,000 in the Treasury chest, besides a balance on the year's operations, he occupies a unique position among treasurers in Australia. But while so congratulating ourselves, it is well also to be very careful, and watch everything in the way of public expenditure, so that we may not be ultimately plunged into that unenviable embarrassment from which so many Australian colonies are at present suffering. Warning ought to be unnecessary to any Government at the present day from members of the Legislature, but, nevertheless, it is well to understand that representatives of the people are jealous, and very watchful, over every item of public expenditure. I think it is better to err on the side of being perhaps too much objective, as the member for the Gascoyne is sometimes accused of being. Of all our Loan expenditure, we should be careful that not a pound is expended in works that are not reproductive, directly or indirectly. It is not so much the amount of the borrowing, that is causing the trouble and downfall in the other colonies, for I am not afraid of borrowing for the development of our resources, so long as the money is expended wisely and in a right direction. But I am extremely jealous of seeing borrowed money expended on mere bricks and mortar, which are unproductive. It is sometimes very necessary to have conveniences, and there must be exceptions to every rule; but, while keeping that clearly in view, in the main we need not fear the consequences; and for that reason I join in congratulating our Treasurer and the Government on being able to show such a healthy balance-sheet, and on the progress and state of the finances of the colony.

MR. SIMPSON: It is a pleasant and usual thing to congratulate our Treasurer on his Financial Statements. I have never heard from him any other than a satisfactory Financial Statement of the affairs of the colony. I congratulate him particularly on the care, tact, and level-headed judgment he has exhibited during the last six months. Distressing as the period has been in this and other colonies to private men, it must have been distressing also to the Premier and Treasurer in a young colony which has just reached the stage of Responsible Government. Without reviewing the State-

ment, I would congratulate him on the modest tone in which it was submitted to us; and we can all congratulate ourselves that this particular part of Australia will endeavour to retain those conditions which have ever surrounded Australian progress, and that there is yet a big part which is still carrying onward the conditions of Australian progress of the Anglo-Saxon race in the Southern Seas. Coming now to the details of the Estimates, the first particular department is that of the Colonial Secretary. I wish to direct attention to the Medical branch, Item 1, Principal Medical Officer and Colonial Surgeon, £475; Item 2, Resident Medical Officer and Assistant to Superintendent of Vaccination, £200. These items open up the whole question of the recent introduction of small-pox into this colony. It has been my misfortune to discover—and I believe my figures are exactly correct—that in Perth and Fremantle, during the recent epidemic, there were not 40 per cent. of the infant population in these two towns who had been vaccinated. I have been a little careful to get at the details in the best way I could, and that is what I find. I have the greatest regard for the experience and the ability of the gentleman who holds the position of Colonial Surgeon; but, speaking as a public man, I say that gentleman has drawn a salary from this colony to superintend the infant vaccination, and that vaccination has not been carried out. I blame very much the want of that vaccination for the spread of the epidemic. It is to my mind absolutely necessary that there should be an exact and detailed inquiry into the whole working of the Medical Department. That inquiry should extend also to our hospitals; and I believe such an inquiry would redound to the advantage of the public. There is a great feeling of dissatisfaction throughout the population, with regard to our Government medical officers, our system of vaccination, and the administration of our hospitals; therefore the wisest thing we can do will be to sift the whole matter to the bottom. If the position of these public institutions is sound and unassailable, the gentlemen connected with them will be only too glad to have the inquiry made. If the position is unsound, the sooner we discover it, the better for the colony. Another

matter I wish to direct attention to is that I consider the time has come when our Civil servants in the large centres of population should occupy as little of their time as possible on the magisterial bench. They ought to find plenty to do in their offices, and, if they have not enough to occupy their time, they should be given more to do. In Perth and Fremantle particularly they are not required to devote their attention to administering justice from the bench. As to another matter, I am sorry to see that the present suggestions of the Treasurer are not in the direction of dealing with the Ecclesiastical Grant. I do think the time has come, in the interest of the colony, and for promoting a manly, healthy public opinion with regard to religion—I do not say sacerdotalism—that every man should be given to understand that he should support and pay for his own religion, and that it is no duty of the State to have him taught religion. I believe, with Oliver Wendell Holmes, that we are sailing for the one port, in different boats; and I think the time has come when we should give the religious bodies to understand that the grant is a diminishing one, and that it is the duty of each man to pay for his religion out of his own pocket. With regard to the Lands Department, I do not know what to say about the way in which the estimates are made up. I see it is there indicated that we are to have a Secretary for Mines and Water Supply. I do not know whether he is a knight of the divining rod; but there has been too much divination in our mining, up to the present, and it has not led to dividends. Our mining has grown to that position which requires that we should have in the department accomplished men who thoroughly understand what they are dealing with. We know that, in the exigencies of Responsible Government, Ministers may come and Ministers may go; but we want, at the head of that department, a Permanent Under Secretary for Mines, who can advise each new Minister for Lands when he comes into office, so that the Minister may act upon wise conclusions, in dealing with that great industry.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): That is the man provided for.

MR. SIMPSON: The item says, "Secretary for Mines and Water Supply."

There is another matter, not alluded to, and that is the Treasurer, in his happy Statement, omitted to mention our coalfield. We have in our colony an undoubted bed of coal—which means manufactures, and smoking chimneys near the pit—close to the town of Bunbury. I have no doubt we shall find more coal in other parts. I have also no doubt that we are going to be one of the greatest tin-producing countries on earth. At present we are sending away many thousands of pounds annually for importing coal to be consumed on our railways, and other purposes; and I do hope that some scheme will be organised or suggested by which these coal measures may be developed, and a big industry be established down there, which would largely tend to drive our country to the front; and I regret there was no such mention in the Statement. One cannot possibly be a harsh critic of the Premier at any time. His genial, honest, and kindly ways endear him to us all, but they endear him a bit more when he has an opportunity of saving the ship of State from such a severe storm as we have had lately, and bringing the stately ship safely into port. I congratulate him on the Statement.

MR. LEFROY: On the occasion of introducing the annual Estimates, the opportunity is often used, in Houses of this kind, for attacking the general policy of the Government. I do not think that any hon. members in this House, at present, have any intention of attacking the general policy of the Government; for although we may differ from the Government on some points of policy, yet, as this House is at present constituted, one side differs on those points quite as much as the other. This House clearly bears the best feeling towards the hon. gentleman who leads the Government; and I cannot refrain from complimenting him on the able manner in which he has introduced the Estimates to us, and the very satisfactory account he has given of the position of the colony in general. He might almost be termed an optimist, and some people might think he lives too much on hope. I am not a pessimistic person, by any means, myself, but at the same time it is always well to look ahead and see what we are likely to encounter, though I never believe in meeting troubles half-way. We have at present an indebted-

ness of over £2,000,000, and the hon. gentleman has told us this represents about £35 per head of the population. I think the Government should bear in mind—and I am sure the Premier does so—that when the Loan Bill which he proposes to introduce has passed and the money been borrowed, we shall be responsible for about £1,500,000 more of loan money. I take it that we have yet to borrow £436,000 under the last Loan Act; the Loan Bill which is to be introduced will cover £540,000 more; and I cannot help looking on the £500,000 we have guaranteed for the construction of the Midland Railway as a bill on which our name is on the back, so that we must look on it as a charge upon the country, and one on which we may have to pay interest, for in the event of that Company failing we shall have to take up the bill. I do not presume to point out to the Government what they should do, but I feel confident the opinion of this country is that, while going forward with a bold policy, we should still be cautious. I cannot see any harm in being cautious. Over-cautiousness may amount to timidity, and I think that is bad. But the Premier, no doubt, feels that

. . . his deserts are small,
Who fears to put it to the touch
To gain or lose them all.

I feel that is the spirit in which the hon. gentleman not only conducts the Government, but it was in that spirit he went across Australia. The head of a Government must have courage and implicit faith, and I believe we have a man at the helm who has the courage of his convictions. Perhaps those convictions may sometimes be wrong; and the hon. gentleman, I know, never feels any illwill or objects to any one in this House criticising any measure he brings before us. Still, I cannot help thinking there is a considerable feeling throughout this country—a large area with a sparse population—that we must not be rash in borrowing. I do not agree with any one who says “Borrow as much as you can get.” I know that individuals who have that spirit very often get into difficulties. I think the State ought to deal with the people's money in the same spirit as that in which the prosperous business man would deal with his own money. I am not finding fault with the proposals of the Government. It has been the policy

of our present Government to develop the resources of this country, and I think they have been quite right in doing so. They have gone to work in the very best way by building railways to increase the facilities of traffic, and I am certain that these railways will in time bear good fruit. In these days it is impossible to hold any position in the estimation of the outside world without building railways. We would be behind in the race of life, and completely outrun by all other countries, if we did not have railways, and I think we are quite right in borrowing money to build them. The Premier tells us that our population will increase in a sufficient ratio to bear the increased indebtedness in the same proportion as we are bearing it now. I sincerely hope it may be so, and that population will flock to these shores; and I hope that when these new people arrive they will remain with us. We want them, and I am sure we welcome them; and we hope that numbers of those who are coming here to look for gold will settle on our lands and work them, because, when all is said and done, the land is about the best investment a man can go in for. The land will never fail, for so long as a man works it properly he is always sure of deriving some benefit from it. There is no repudiating its debts, by the land. Treat it properly, and it will always yield its increase. The time has come when people throughout Australia will give more attention to the land, and the statesmen should try to move people out of the towns, and get rid of the urban congestion, which is so baneful to all countries. I hope that by building these railways we will assist in developing the country, which we all so much desire. I cannot but compliment the Treasurer on his Statement, and the able way in which he has placed before us the condition of the colony; and I thought it would be unbecoming of me, sitting as I do on this (the Opposition) side of the House, not to express the honest feelings I have on this occasion. In sitting where I am, it is not my object to factiously oppose the Government in any way, but if I thought they were not carrying on the affairs of the country properly, I should be one of the first to resist them. I feel certain that in the Premier we have a gentleman who honestly has the

best interests of the country at heart, and for that reason I have risen to express my satisfaction, and to compliment him upon the state of the finances of the colony. I think he is quite right in telling us the colony is in a sound position, financially. The Government have been much favoured by fortune, in every way, and it would almost show that Providence approved of the present Government, because everything has favoured them. [MR. R. F. SHOLL: He has not found them out yet.] Gold was discovered here in large quantities, just after the Government took office, and gold has continued to be found ever since, and is increasing daily. I hope it will continue to increase, and make this a great country. We are having one of the finest seasons this colony has ever experienced, and I think we may congratulate ourselves on the fact that those sad difficulties in the North have been surmounted, to a certain extent; for the pastoralists who lately suffered so much are having a grand season, and I hope their flocks and herds will soon increase, and assist to increase the revenue of the colony. Not only in pastoral pursuits, but in agriculture also, we have the very best hopes; and I trust that the elements, as well as Providence, will assist the Government in every way to carry on the affairs of the country in a prosperous and satisfactory manner.

MR. MONGER: I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without also tendering to the Premier and his colleagues my congratulations on the very satisfactory Financial Statement which has been submitted to us. My only regret is that I cannot do so in the same flowery oratory as that used by the hon. member for Geraldton, but I hope the Premier will accept my congratulations as being equally sincere. I consider the Government have been most fortunate, for they have had the management of a country which until recently was looked down upon by the other colonies of Australia; and they have been in office during a most prosperous time, commencing on the eve of our gold discoveries; and although during the first twelve or eighteen months of that period the Northern portion of the colony suffered one of the most terrible trials ever known in the history of this country, still the discoveries of gold in many parts of the country have made up

for the losses which fell upon the Northern squatters. While the Government deserve every congratulation for the way in which they have managed the affairs of the colony, they must admit that fortune has undoubtedly favoured them. We are fortunate in having for our Premier one so well versed in the requirements of the colony, and we may also congratulate ourselves on having so many West Australians in the Ministry. I think their actions throughout have gained the fullest confidence of the country, and though I do not sit on the same side of the House as the Ministry, I am more than satisfied with the way in which they have looked after the interests of the colony. Unlike the men who hold the reins of government in other parts of Australia, our Ministers appear to me to have left personal interests entirely on one side, and wherever the occasion has required it, they have studied, not their personal interests, but the interests of the whole colony. There are many items in the present Estimates to which I take exception, but I really regret that a larger sum has not been placed on the Estimates for the maintenance of roads and bridges. To my mind—and I think I am only echoing the views of the people of the country—our roads and bridges require a far greater sum than is provided in these Estimates. The amount now proposed for twelve months is only the same as we were asked to vote in the last session for only six months. I would prefer to see an increase in this vote, and that some less important items should be erased. The Ecclesiastical Grant, the amount for the Aborigines Protection Board, and sums of that sort might well be dispensed with; but it is too late now to enter any protest against these items being included in the Estimates for this year. I have much pleasure in congratulating the Government on the satisfactory Financial Statement.

MR. MOLLOY: I also, in common with other members, have pleasure in congratulating the Government and the Premier on the able and exhaustive Speech upon the financial position and the progress that has been made. In view of the depression and the financial panic through which we have passed, I think the congratulations which have been bestowed so lavishly on the head

of the Government are justly deserved. We find that the population of the colony has increased beyond our most sanguine expectations. We also find that the value of our imports has increased considerably, and that the estimated receipts have been almost, if not quite, realised during a period of difficulty; and this is most satisfactory, under the circumstances. We have been told, in the speech, that the public debt averages £34 per head of the population; and this, in contrast with the proportion of debt in the other colonies, and considering the results we have achieved, is very satisfactory. What I notice with regret is that there is mention made of the necessity of a further loan. This is necessitated mainly, not by the undertaking of new works, but by the incompleteness of the estimates for certain works which were scheduled in the Loan Act of 1891, and by the purchasing of land required for railway purposes in Perth, the cost having exceeded the expectations of the person responsible for producing those estimates. I also notice with regret the increased cost which is now found necessary for completing the Mullewa Railway. I was one of those who objected to that expenditure when first proposed, and I endeavoured to show it would be a serious tax on the country, not only for the interest on the expenditure, but because of the cost of maintaining that railway without any adequate return from the traffic. It is true that we do not look for our new railways to be immediately payable, the principle being recognised that railways are facilities for promoting the settlement of the soil, so that the country may maintain an increased population; but, in this particular railway, it will be noticed that this result will not be achieved, because for the most part this line runs through a desert, and its only use is to connect a far-distant pastoral region with the port of Geraldton, and from which we can only expect the traffic supplied by those pastoral properties.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): And the Murchison goldfields.

MR. MOLLOY: I am reminded that the Murchison goldfields will also be served by this railway. That is the only relieving feature, and the only thing which will account for such a large sum

of money being expended by the Ministry in that direction. But the increasing indebtedness per head of population should be carefully watched, and only when a railway is shown to be really necessary for settling the lands of the colony should such expenditure be incurred. In addition to the further expenditure for the new railway station and yards in Perth, there is also expense which does not reflect credit on the management of our Public Works Department; and while disclaiming any intention to be personal in this direction, yet when we have a highly-paid Engineer-in-Chief, from whom so much was expected, it is only reasonable that the results achieved in this direction should be proportionate to the amount of money expended in the management. It is notorious that we have had our Works Department manned to an inordinate degree by fresh arrivals in the colony, and now, when retrenchment is being enforced, there is a wail coming from those who are suffering by it. It would have been much better if those responsible for the management had gone on with the Loan expenditure in a slower manner, so that a less number of persons might have been employed to do the necessary work, and the expenditure been carried over a longer period, thereby causing greater satisfaction to those employed and to the public, instead of some of these men being so soon discharged, and their labour thrown on the market at a bad time. It may be found necessary to stifle the agitation caused by the cry from these discharged men that they cannot obtain fresh employment in the colony. The Financial Statement would have been equally satisfactory if this one blot had not been thrown on an otherwise excellent report. I trust that the expectations of the Premier may be realised. I notice with pleasure that the imports are continuing to increase at a greater rate than the increase of our population, and that this is a good sign no one will deny; but I notice at the same time that the exports are not keeping pace with the proportion of the imports, and this is a matter to be deplored. The recent drought in the North will, however, account somewhat for the decrease in the exports. The season promises to be exceptionally favourable, and, with the exception of the drought, we seem to have been

blest by Providence with a lot of other lucky incidents which have helped us to overcome that one serious difficulty, and our prospects now seem to be bright all round. The increased output of gold is highly satisfactory, and beyond our most sanguine expectations; but, in this connection, it is to be deplored that better provision was not made for the search of the precious metal by providing a water supply in the summer months, so that those engaged in it might continue with us and increase the prosperity of the colony. It is true the Government have expended more money than perhaps they intended in this direction, but with the great increase of our population on the goldfields, and the attraction of more people by the large discoveries of gold, we can only avoid disaster by a fortunate set of circumstances. However, the Premier and his colleagues are to be congratulated on the control they have exercised over the affairs of the colony, and we are all agreed that the members of the Ministry are sincere in their endeavours to promote the best interests of the colony. We have at the head of our affairs a gentleman who, throughout the length and breadth of the land is held in the greatest respect and esteem, and in whom, as a West Australian, we feel a great pride; and he is, in himself, a refutation of the statement that we have no persons in this colony who are able to conduct a business which requires exceptional ability. We have other natives of the colony who are exceptionally able, I may say brilliant, in the management of the affairs of their departments, and we, as West Australians, may feel justly proud of them. Although we may differ from the Premier, still the criticisms we offer are, I am sure, taken in the spirit in which they are meant, as our honest convictions; and, while differing from him on some points, we agree that he is actuated by the highest motives. In reference to the Estimates, I trust the Premier's expectations will be more than realised, and that at the end of the financial year he may be able to announce that instead of having a small surplus, he is in a position to announce a large one.

MR. CLARKSON: I hope the amount of praise received by the Government will not have a bad effect on them. Every

hon. member who has spoken, so far, has congratulated the Government, and I must join with them. I really do not see how the Premier could offer any other than a satisfactory statement of the financial affairs of the colony, for I believe the colony was never in a more prosperous position than it is at present. It has suffered in common with other colonies, but I hope the bad times are over, and that in the near future we shall be in a still more prosperous position. I should like to have seen a larger sum placed on the Estimates for roads. The roads throughout the country districts are in a very bad state, the recent heavy rains having damaged them seriously, and in every direction teams are being bogged. Many of the roads are impassable. Now is the time that we want good roads, for feeding the railways with traffic, and I am sorry the Government have not seen their way to place more money on the Estimates for roads. An important matter to be dealt with in the immediate future is that of water supply to the goldfields, and if water is not sufficiently provided, one of the chief sources of our prosperity will be cut off, for in a short time we shall have hundreds of men returning from the fields disappointed by the want of water, and our towns will be filled with unemployed, who will perhaps be asking the Government to start relief works. At this stage, however, I will content myself with congratulating the Government upon the prosperous statement set forth.

MR. SOLOMON: I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without adding my meed of praise to the Government for the manner in which they have carried out the duties of their position during the last six months. While members must find some complaints to ventilate at times, yet no one can take away from the Government that *kudos* to which they are entitled, for they have had the best interests of the colony at heart in everything they have undertaken. The number of Bills presented to us during the present session is a proof that they have not been idle, and I can safely say that, in all instances, the Bills they have produced have been popular, and been brought forward in the interests of the public generally. Looking at the totals in the Estimates, I feel sure the Government have taken into considera-

tion the financial position of the colony, and I must congratulate them on the manner in which they have produced the Estimates. The amount put down for roads and bridges is scarcely sufficient for the requirements, more especially as roads are essential to the producers in the country, for enabling them to bring their produce to the railways or to the market. I know that in some cases the cost of carting is so great that the expenses are more than the amount received for the produce. I can assure the Government they will have my support in the future, as they have had in the past, so long as they continue to act in the best interests of the country.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: I must not, on this occasion, be behindhand in congratulating the Government on the prosperous state of the colony's affairs. I am very pleased that the Government have been successful in breaking up the drought in the North, and, as a consequence, things pastoral are in a very favourable position; also that, from an agricultural point of view, we have had a prosperous season, and I am sure it is wholly due to the Government. I must also congratulate the Government that, through their foresight and ability, gold has been discovered all over the colony; and, further, that they have succeeded in creating a depression in the Eastern colonies, which necessitated a large influx of population from those colonies into this one. I regret, at the same time, that the Government have been unsuccessful in fixing the market as regards wool, for I feel that if they had been successful in increasing the price of wool in the English market, things in this colony would have been in a more prosperous state than they are at present. But we cannot expect the Government to be successful in everything. If they manage to bring us good seasons, and an influx of population, and are responsible for the gold discoveries, I think they have done a good deal; and we should not expect them also to rig the wool market by putting up the price, though probably next year they will be able to concentrate their energies on that particular line, so that we may be still more prosperous. Hon. members may hardly believe that, for the first time since I have been a member of this House, I

have not looked through the printed Estimates, and consequently I cannot say whether they have been framed with a view to economy. But in his Financial Statement the Premier told us he intended to bring down a Loan Bill, and I think he told us there would be an item in the schedule of that Bill for the repayment of money taken from the South-Western Railway for the purchase of land required for railway accommodation in the City of Perth. I cannot understand at present, though it may be discussed when the Loan Bill comes before us, why it is that, in view of the very low price at which the construction work for that railway was let, the Government find it necessary now to raise further loan money for that purpose. When the Government expended the money for the purchase of land in Perth, out of a balance of the Loan of 1891, they knew then what the railway was likely to cost, and unless some extraneous and very heavy expenditure, unforeseen, has occurred since, I cannot see why this money taken for the purchase of land in Perth is required to be repaid to and expended on the South-Western Railway. There are many works which were sanctioned by this House which will be included in the new Loan Schedule, and which, I think, are urgently required, one of which is the deviation on the Eastern Railway; and, although this is not a time for increasing our indebtedness by bringing down a fresh Loan Bill, yet that is a work which, even from the point of view of economy, is urgently required. We were told last session that we were losing thousands of pounds by the extra wear and tear of rolling stock, caused by the heavy grades and the haulage up the Greenmount section, so that it would be wise to carry out the deviation for improving those grades as soon as possible. I will only reiterate what has been said by every hon. member who has spoken, by adding my congratulations to the Government for the prosperous condition of the colony, which is due to the foresight and ability of the Government.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Although the policy of the Government in regard to the future, and their past action, have not been criticised adversely in any degree, by members of the House, and under ordinary circumstances it would

not be necessary for me to make any observations at this stage, yet I feel that I must thank hon. members for the terms in which they have been good enough to speak of the exertions of myself and my colleagues, during the past six months. I suppose that such an occurrence as has happened to-night is almost unprecedented, certainly in any Australian colony—the Government placing before the Assembly an account of their stewardship and of their intentions in the future, and having it received with the consideration and approval which the policy and the past actions of this Government have received from hon. members on this occasion. This should be, to the members of the Government, an incentive to work even harder than they have done in the interest of the public, feeling that they are working for a colony whose representatives are men of a kind and generous disposition. I am sure that nothing could be more pleasing to me personally, and to those associated with me, than the manner in which the speech I had the pleasure of delivering the other evening has been received by hon. members. I quite agree with the hon. member for the Moore, who advises that, in the present serious condition of financial affairs throughout the world, great caution is necessary in conducting the public affairs of this colony. I think it may be truly said it was not necessary for him to give that caution to the Government, because we are conscious of the great responsibility that rests upon us, and has rested upon us for some time past, in dealing with the finances of the colony; and the Government are aware that, however good and solid may be the financial position of this colony, still conditions may arise, from outside causes, which may necessitate the most anxious caution on our part. In regard to his observations as to our borrowing, I agree with him there also. I should be glad indeed if we could cease borrowing, for a time—in fact, I should have been glad if we could have done without borrowing at all, but that was simply impossible. When the Government came into office, we had to make up our minds, once and for all, whether we were to be content to go on as we had been doing for many years, or whether we would take a new departure, and strike out boldly by incurring liability, with the object of con-

structing railways and other works for opening and developing the resources of the country. As I said at that time, if we were content to go on as we had been doing, all that we could expect was that our condition would improve a little, and that we were altogether unable, out of our ordinary revenue, to undertake or complete any of the great works that the colony was languishing for, and which were absolutely necessary if we wished to make progress. We therefore felt that the only course open to us was to go for a liberal loan policy, by which we could undertake the great works which we have been and are now carrying out. We all felt certain that the result would be entirely satisfactory, and I see no reason whatever, now, to alter the opinion I then formed. In fact, everything goes to show that our circumstances are improving, and that our present condition is actually better than we then anticipated it would be; so that I think we were perfectly justified in entering upon a loan policy, and in passing the Loan Act of 1891. With regard to our new Loan Bill, £280,000 of the amount has been already approved by Parliament, and, with regard to the remainder of the amount, it is absolutely necessary in order to complete, and add to in some instances, the works we have in hand. Hon. members are aware of the items of this Loan Bill, and when the measure is before the House I do not think that hon. members will be inclined to strike out any of the items in the schedule. If it were possible to reduce the amount, the members of the Government would have been only too anxious to do so; but it is not possible. As to the increased expenditure on works in progress, I may point out that in the framing of the Loan Act of 1891 we had no estimates or surveys of the railway lines then scheduled. We had no detailed estimate of the expenditure required for constructing the South-Western Railway. The route of the proposed railway to Mullewa had not been then surveyed; we did not know the exact length; and we did not anticipate that the line would cost nearly so much as was afterwards found necessary; but I may point out that the Mullewa line has become a greater necessity now than it was when the Loan Bill of 1891 was introduced. If hon. members and the Government con-

sider the work was good enough, at that time, there are many more reasons now why that work should be undertaken, because since then the Murchison goldfield has come into existence—a goldfield which is second in its output of gold only to that of the Yilgarn goldfield. In fact, I think the Murchison goldfield is one of the most promising in the colony, and therefore I have every confidence that this Mullewa Railway is a work that we should have undertaken, and one that will prove of great advantage to the colony. I have only to again thank hon. members for the support they have given to the present Government, and for the consideration they have shown to me personally, and I may say also to every member of the Government.

His Excellency the Governor, £1,315 :

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked why this vote was increasing, and why all the items connected with this establishment were not included under one heading.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said there was no increase in the total amount of this vote, but certain items previously charged to other votes were now transferred to this vote. The general estimates for 1893-94 were prepared upon a new plan, and a better one than that previously followed. All items relating to one matter were now included under one heading, instead of being distributed through the estimates of different departments. For instance, the wages of the gardener at Government House were previously charged to the Public Works Department, whereas they now appeared under the head of this vote; also, travelling and incidental expenses of officials were previously charged in a lump sum, but were now included in the votes to which they were properly related; again, postage and telephone rent were previously included in a lump sum for postage; and foreign telegrams and stationery were not previously separated. By the new form of estimates, each department or each service was charged with its separate portion of any expenditure; and in future years the items could be more readily compared, and hon. members would be better able to perceive and check any increases.

Vote put and passed.

Legislative Council, £1,380 :

Put and passed.

Legislative Assembly, £2,860 :

MR. R. F. SHOLL moved, as an amendment, that the vote be reduced by £200. He said the keeping open of the refreshment room during the recess, for the convenience of a very few members, had increased the expense by £30 a month, and he did not think this expenditure was necessary or fair.

MR. A. FORREST said the amendment was a mistake, as the keeping open of the refreshment room during the recess was a reasonable convenience for hon. members, and the only additional expense was the cost of servants during the recess, each member paying for what he received.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. R. F. SHOLL moved, as an amendment, that item No. 12, "Refreshment room wages, £300," be reduced by £100. He moved this as a protest against the system of keeping open the refreshment room during the recess.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the hon. member, instead of advancing with the times, was most retrogressive. The keeping open of the refreshment room during the recess was a progressive move, and one which had been found, upon trial, to be a great convenience to many hon. members, who were thus enabled to meet any day, especially at luncheon time, and talk over matters with Ministers and others, to the great advantage of the country. The change had been found to be a very great convenience, and he would be sorry now to see it done away with. There was no advantage of cheapness to hon. members, in using the refreshment room. For himself, he found it very convenient to use that room, especially at luncheon time, because he thus had an opportunity of meeting members and visitors, and talking over public matters. Members of both Houses could use the refreshment room, and the only expense to the country was the wages for servants. It would be ridiculous to provide a refreshment room and keep it closed nine months in the year. A member residing in Perth had the convenience of his home and his club, but members coming from the country occasionally had no such convenience, and to them the refreshment room was particularly useful as a place which other members frequented and where Ministers could be met with.

MR. RICHARDSON said the refreshment room was a good institution, from a political point of view, and a great convenience to members during the recess.

MR. HARPER said it was also convenient for any member to be able to take a constituent into the refreshment room, while visiting Perth during the recess, and it afforded an opportunity for meeting Ministers at luncheon time to discuss public matters. This had been found a valuable convenience during the recess.

MR. R. F. SHOLL still objected to the refreshment room being kept open during the recess, at a cost of £30 a month, even for the convenience of Ministers. Being on the Refreshment Room Committee, he was in a position to know the cost. Clubs in the city afforded all the convenience that was required, during the recess.

MR. SIMPSON said that, as one using the refreshment room, he paid for what he got, and if the charges made did not cover the whole expense, the committee should increase the scale of charges. He did not want refreshments at the expense of the country.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that, though a member of the committee, he was not willing to attend business meetings during the recess. It was enough to do that during the session.

MR. CLARKSON said the charges for refreshments should be increased, if they did not cover the whole expense. The room was a convenience to members during the recess, and it was an advantage to the country that the room should be kept open.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the motion for opening the refreshment room in the recess was sprung on the House suddenly last session. It was wrong in principle to keep the room open during the recess, at an expense to the country.

MR. LEFROY said the members were entitled to some little indulgence, and the cost was only about three-halfpence per head of the population.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. W. E. Marmion) said the Ministers had not asked for the refreshment room to be kept open in the recess, but the plan having been tried had been found a great convenience, by bringing together members of both Houses, and tending to smooth away difficulties.

Amendment put and negatived.

Vote agreed to.

Colonial Secretary's Department :—

Office of Colonial Secretary, £1,617 :

Put and passed.

Audit, £2,089 :

MR. MOLLOY said that the salary of the Auditor General was £500 a year, and seeing that every other head of department had had his salary increased to £600, the salary of this important officer should be increased.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said only two heads of departments had had their salaries increased.

Vote put and passed.

Medical, £17,280 15s. :

MR. A. FORREST asked whether any provision was made in the Estimates for reimbursing the Municipality of Perth for the large expenditure incurred in stamping out the epidemic of small-pox. Over £2,000 of the amount had not been reimbursed, and the City Council were not in a position to bear this large outlay for a work which was necessary in the interest of the whole colony. Patients were brought into the city from outside places, and the disease itself was brought into the city in the first instance. He hoped the Treasurer would give some intimation to the House that he intended to help the City Council.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) : To pay your debt!

MR. A. FORREST said it was not the city's debt at all. The City Council had borrowed the money as a bank overdraft and would have to repay it. He hoped the Treasurer would see his way to do something in this direction before the Estimates were disposed of.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said he hoped the Premier would not.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Government had already made a grant of £2,000 to the City Council on this account, and he was not aware, until he received a letter two or three days ago, that the City Council had expended about £2,000 more than the Government had given them. The City Council were not even civil in making their further demand upon the Government. It was rather like pressing a claim at the point of the bayonet. In one of their letters, making a demand for money,

they blamed the Government for having caused the epidemic. However, the last letter from the City Council would be considered by the Government in due course. It was received too late to be dealt with before the year's Estimates were made up. He thought the City Council should bear a portion of the small-pox expenditure instead of asking the Government to pay the whole of it. The Government had paid £2,000 of the amount, as a special grant to the City Council; and why should not the City Council pay something in such a case? The Government also subsidised this and other municipalities to some extent, and were always glad to assist them in every practicable way. When the Mayor of Perth wanted something from the Government, it would be better if he would not say that he was going to have it. When a person was asking a favour, he usually did it in a somewhat subservient manner. However, he promised that the Government would consider the request which was contained in the letter from the City Council.

MR. MOLLOY said he did not know what the Premier meant by saying he got a letter from the City Council only the other day. As a councillor, he must say the City Council were assured, before they passed any accounts for the small-pox expenditure, that the Government would refund to that body any money expended in suppressing the epidemic. What had the city of Perth to do with a calamity that had been brought there from outside, and which was a matter for the whole colony to deal with? Were the City Council to provide hospitals for the whole colony? [THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Certainly.] If so that was a new doctrine. The city of Perth had no more to do with that epidemic than any other district. The patients treated in the city came from different parts of the colony. There was such a thing as a Central Board of Health, which was a purely Governmental institution; and seeing that this disease was disseminated through the want of proper control by the authorities who were subject to the Government, the reply of the head of the Government came with a bad grace. The City Council had been assured that the funds would be supplied by the Government.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) asked who gave the assurance.

MR. A. FORREST, as Mayor of Perth, said it was generally understood, at the time, that the Government would pay.

MR. MOLLOY said that after the City Council had expended a considerable sum, a grant of money was received from the Government, and the councillors considered that was an instalment, and it strengthened the assurance which had been given by the Mayor. It could not be expected that the citizens of Perth should tax themselves for paying the cost of a national calamity.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the gratitude, if any, should be on the side of the City Council, who were not the only local body in the colony that had been put to expense on account of the small-pox. What was a Local Board of Health for, and why did the City Council want, previously, to take the powers of the Health Board which Parliament transferred to them? They had thus got power to raise rates for Health Board purposes, yet, as soon as they were required to pay anything, they requested the Government to pay it for them. The hon. member who spoke last had said the Local Board of Health were under the control of the Central Board of Health. He could not allow that statement to pass, as the Local Board were quite independent of the Central Board, and could take what action they thought proper without regard to the Central Board. As to the statement that the citizens of Perth had nothing to do with the epidemic, it should be remembered that about sixty of them got the smallpox, at any rate. The Local Board had got power to raise rates for the very purpose; and yet that Board asked the Government to pay the whole expense. The Government had paid £2,000 already, and now they were asked to pay the whole of the further amount expended. If they did so, could they resist paying all that the other councils had expended? If an epidemic arose, whose duty was it to deal with the trouble, if not that of the Local Board of Health, who had all the power and had the means of raising funds? If the Local Board were abolished, and the power and duty taken out of the hands of the City Council, then the Government would pay.

MR. TRAYLEN said the first case of small-pox in Perth was that of a man who came by steamer from Singapore. The Health Officer who passed him in as a new arrival was an officer of the Government, who had no connection with the Perth Council. If that officer had been on the alert he could surely have detected the indications of small-pox in the man on arrival. That passenger from Singapore found his way to the Colonial Hospital, as a person suffering from some ailment; and if the Colonial Surgeon, who was an officer of the Government, had attended that sufferer in the Hospital, it must be supposed he ought to have detected the indications of small-pox. It would be scarcely right to say the House Surgeon should attend to every patient in the hospital. It was no doubt, also, the Colonial Surgeon's duty to attend. After the patient had been in the hospital a short time, rumour said that the younger officer, the House Surgeon, expressed the opinion that the patient had small-pox, but that the senior officer, the Colonial Surgeon, said it was not small-pox, but German measles. Now if the senior officer erred, or did not take enough care, or if he had not had sufficient acquaintance with the symptoms of small-pox during the past quarter of a century, it was not altogether wrong to charge him, and say that his omission to treat this as a small-pox patient had made the Government responsible for the consequences—meaning that their servant seemed to have erred or neglected his duty, as he admitted, after two or three days more, that it was a case of small-pox. The public were of opinion that, after the case was admitted to be one of small-pox, sufficiently prompt measures were not taken to prevent the spread of the disease. When a case of small-pox was detected in a coffee palace in Melbourne, about a year ago, not only was the local Health Officer in attendance immediately, but the Chief Medical Officer and his assistants were there also, and everything practicable was done for staying the spread of the disease. This was what was meant when the Perth Board of Health sent a letter to the Government, which seemed to bear the construction that the Government were charged with being the authors of the epidemic. He hoped, therefore, that the Government would

pay the whole of the expenses incurred in suppressing that epidemic. The Local Board had power to levy a rate for health purposes only up to 3d. in the pound of the annual value of property, and a considerable portion of that amount was required for the ordinary work of scavenging and cleansing. The Perth Board, of which he was a member, were certainly under the impression that the Government had promised to bear the expenses, if the Local Board undertook the work of management. It was perhaps a misconception, on the part of the Attorney General, in saying that as the Local Board undertook the management they ought to bear the expense.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) asked what amount of health rate the City Council levied for that year.

MR. A. FORREST said the health rate was 2d. in the pound.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the City Council should levy the other penny before appealing to the Government.

MR. A. FORREST said the Colonial Secretary had lately written to the City Council, offering to hand over the newly built fever hospital to the Council, and thanking the Council for the prompt manner in which they had dealt with the epidemic. Speaking as Mayor of Perth, he had been fully under the impression, from conversations with the Premier and other members of the Government, that any expense incurred by the City Council in suppressing the epidemic would be reimbursed by the Government. It was absurd for the Attorney General to say the City Council had power to rate the city in order to pay the large expenditure that had been incurred. That would take the whole of the rate.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the City Council wanted to hand over the new fever hospital to the Government, which the Government declined with thanks. That was the promptness.

MR. QUINLAN, speaking as one of the Finance Committee of the City Council, said that accounts in connection with the small-pox epidemic were signed reluctantly, upon an assurance that the money would be reimbursed by the Government. During the epidemic there

were 50 persons quarantined, and the whole cost of suppressing the epidemic averaged for these 50 about £80 a head; whereas in Fremantle only one person was quarantined, at a cost to the colony of £500, and that patient died. He felt sure the Government would not refuse to reimburse this large expenditure to the City Council, but they wanted time to consider the matter, as the question had been sprung upon them suddenly, in this discussion.

MR. CLARKSON was surprised that the City Council refused to pay for their own blunder. From first to last, a most horrible blunder was made. The quarantine station was first put in the wrong place, and then had to be removed.

MR. TRAYLEN directed attention to item 95, "Vaccination fees, £1,382 14s. 7d.," for the past six months, and asked why this large sum was paid. It seemed to him that the omission by the Government's Chief Medical Officer, to recognise the case from Singapore as one of small-pox, had resulted in putting a large amount of fees for vaccination into the pocket of the person who so failed to diagnose the disease. It was open to the Government to make a bargain, as would be seen if they referred to the Act. Most of the sum of £1,382 14s. 7d. had been paid to two persons in Perth.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he did not know that the Government were in a position to make a bargain, and the vaccination had gone on all over the colony. He believed the fee was 2s. 6d. per head, and a great many medical officers had received the money. If a return of the particulars were moved for, he would be glad to supply it.

MR. A. FORREST asked whether the Colonial Surgeon and the House Surgeon at the Hospital received the vaccination fees in addition to their salaries. If so, they had no right to be paid the fees.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said they were paid 2s. 6d. for each person vaccinated.

MR. MOLLOY said that if it was considered reasonable to pay the Colonial Surgeon and the House Surgeon at the Hospital a large amount in fees, in addition to their high salaries, for doing a little extra work, how much more necessary was it that the funds asked for by the City Council should be paid. It

was monstrous for the Government to refuse to contribute the amount which they had led the City Council to suppose they would pay, if it were expended wisely in endeavouring to stamp out the epidemic; and it was unreasonable to ask them to tax the citizens of Perth to pay for this work, while the Government, on the other hand, were so lavish in their payments for vaccination fees to officers who had salaries.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the amount of the vaccination fee was fixed by regulation, which had been published. If he were to offer his own opinion, he would agree with hon. members as to these charges, under the circumstances; but there were the statute and regulations issued under it. He thought a public officer might do the work for nothing.

MR. SIMPSON asked whether the public officers had charged for vaccinating children under seven years of age during the epidemic. There had been enough salary paid to public vaccinators already, for ensuring the free vaccination of children under seven years of age.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that, when the epidemic was present, he did not think it was a time to be higgling about the amount to be paid per head for vaccination.

MR. MOLLOY said he was glad to hear the Premier say that.

Vote put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

FREMANTLE WATER SUPPLY BILL.

Introduced by the Attorney General (Hon. S. Burt) and read a first time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11 o'clock p.m.