

## Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 29th November, 1899.

Pearl Dealers Licensing Bill, first reading—Papers presented—Perth Tramways Amendment Bill, Select Committee's Report—Sitting Day, an alteration, Division—Peppermint Grove, etc., Water Supply Bill, Select Committee's Report (debate)—Seats for Shop Assistants Bill, second reading, in Committee—Registration of Firms Amendment Bill, second reading, in Committee, third reading—Loan Bill, in Committee, clauses and schedule, progress—Bank Holidays Amendment Bill, first reading—Companies Act Amendment Bill, in Committee, Clause 2 to end, reported—Western Australian Contingent: Telegram—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

### PRAYERS.

#### PEARL DEALERS LICENSING BILL.

Introduced by MR. A. FORREST, and read a first time.

#### PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the PREMIER: Report (annual) of Government Storekeeper.

By the COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:  
1. Northam Roads Board By-laws, Width of Tires Act. 2. Locomotive Departmental Inquiry, report. 3. Works Department, annual report.

By the MINISTER OF MINES: Amendment of Schedules 11 and 22 (monthly returns), under Goldfields Act.

Ordered to lie on the table.

#### PERTH TRAMWAYS AMENDMENT BILL.

##### SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

HON. F. H. PIESSE brought up the report of Select Committee on the Bill.

Report received, read, and ordered to be printed.

#### MOTION—SITTING DAY, A CHANGE.

THE PREMIER moved, "That this House sit on Friday, 1st December next, instead of on Thursday, 30th instant." This motion was submitted with much regret, for he knew the session had been greatly prolonged, and that all hon. members were anxious to bring it to a close as soon as could reasonably be done; but he was informed that many members desired to visit Busselton at the annual show on Thursday, and while his own desire was to

visit all the annual shows in the agricultural districts, which the proceedings of this House did not permit him to do to that extent, yet he had a particular desire to visit the Busselton show on this occasion. Perhaps in another year the various agricultural societies might be induced to hold their annual shows on days when Parliament would not be sitting, say on Friday, because many members desired to visit these shows, not only for the instruction they afforded, but from a social standpoint. Busselton show was one of the oldest in the colony, and if hon. members would consent to sit on Friday instead of Thursday, this would not seriously interfere with the business of the House. He was aware that a cricket match had been arranged in which some hon. members were interested; but those hon. members who wished to visit the Busselton show on Thursday could get back on Friday in time for that match, and the hour for commencing business in this House on Friday could be fixed at half-past seven in the evening. If it were a question of priority, the agricultural society at Busselton should take precedence of the proposed cricket match, which could be held on Saturday or Monday. He thought this would be the last occasion on which the House would be asked to adjourn under similar circumstances; and he believed that the member for Sussex (Mr. Locke), who took a great interest in the district of Busselton, had reason to expect the adjournment would be granted.

MR. MITCHELL protested against repeated adjournments for the purpose of allowing members to attend agricultural shows. Country agricultural societies ought to hold their shows on days when Parliament did not sit, seeing that Parliament was certainly of the more importance; and as to the cricket match, Parliament *versus* the Press, for which arrangements had already been made, this function ought to have precedence of the Busselton show in the consideration of hon. members.

MR. GEORGE: The Premier had expressed the hope that next session it might be possible for hon. members to attend every one of the agricultural shows. There were now 44 members, and under the Constitution Bill there would be 50; and was it proposed there should

be 50 adjournments for these "pumpkin and potato" functions? It was a serious matter to take men away from their business for three days a week for the purpose of attending Parliament, and then propose that they should also devote Friday to their public duties, merely for the convenience of the Premier and his friends. If Parliament had to be conducted in this way, only men with private means, or men paid by the Government, would be able to become members.

MR. MORAN: Very little business would be done if the House did sit on Friday, and what was transacted would probably turn out to have been better left undone. It was only because these little agricultural districts were near the metropolis that it was necessary to attend the shows, and he might as well ask hon. members to give their time in attending the opening of a public battery at Kalgoorlie, or some other function on the goldfields. The Premier was hardly fair in talking about "a few members who desired to play cricket," because in most of the colonies the match, Parliament *versus* the Press, was an annual fixture. Friday had been selected for this match because Parliament did not sit on that day; and as the authorities of the W.A. Cricket Association and members of the Press had gone to some trouble in making arrangements, he moved, as an amendment, that the House at its rising do adjourn to 4:30 p.m. on Monday next.

MR. A. FORREST seconded the amendment.

MR. LOCKE: It was to be regretted that members were making such a fuss about the loss of one evening, considering that so many months had been wasted in the House. Busselton show presented the only opportunity he had of inducing members to visit his district, and he did not suppose that one day added to the session would seriously affect any hon. member.

MR. GREGORY protested against adjournments on account of agricultural shows, because the practice was hard on country members, who had to come a considerable distance only to see the time of the House wasted on many occasions. There ought to be a rule that the House should only adjourn for a national agricultural show; and, further, it must be very

expensive for the people in those small country districts to entertain the large number of members who attended as guests. The cricket match between members of Parliament and the Press had been arranged for a day on which Parliament did not sit; and he had been informed by members of the Press that if Parliament did sit on Friday, their work would prevent the match taking place so far as they were concerned. He hoped no adjournment at all would be approved.

MR. LEAKE: In previous years the Busselton agricultural show had not been regarded as a great national event, or of such importance as to justify the adjournment of the Assembly, or possibly both Houses of Parliament. After five months of the session, an effort ought to be made to bring the business to a close; and he reminded hon. members that there was a far more important show at Bridgetown last week, but no desire was then evinced to adjourn the House. In any case, out of respect to Mr. Speaker, as representative of the district, the House should, if circumstances permitted, have adjourned for the Bridgetown show.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member was asked if he would agree to the adjournment of the House for the Bridgetown show, and he was opposed to the proposal.

MR. LEAKE: And to the present proposed adjournment he was just as opposed.

THE PREMIER: Then the non. member should not suggest that disrespect had been shown to the Speaker.

MR. LEAKE: If other hon. members had no respect for the Speaker, he had, and the Premier need not bellow at him (Mr. Leake) as if he had made a mistake. There was no reason to show more favour to the member for Sussex in regard to his local show than had been shown to the member for Nelson in regard to the show at Bridgetown last week. He (Mr. Leake) must again protest against this unnecessary delay, and he appreciated the remarks of the member for the Murchison (Mr. Mitchell). The House should not consent to delay its business merely to enable certain members to carouse and career about the country in procession, following the member for Sussex.

THE PREMIER (in reply): The proposed adjournment was not of his seeking, and if he were a free agent in the matter he would rather get on with the business of the House. He felt that it was desirable to visit all parts of the colony when opportunities offered; and he had been assured that a considerable number of members were willing to go to the Busselton show, and that others, including the member for Albany, had said they would not oppose the adjournment. He understood this assurance was given to the member for Sussex.

MR. LEAKE: No. He had told the hon. member that he would oppose the adjournment: told him so last night.

MR. LOCKE: The hon. member told him he would not oppose it.

THE PREMIER: Having been pressed to bring this motion forward for the convenience of the majority of members, he hoped the House would accept the motion. The member for the Murray had spoken in a censorious way about adjournments of the House during the session, when the fact was that the hon. member himself had obstructed the business of the House on several occasions. There had been only one such adjournment, and that was at his (the Premier's) request in order that he might attend the show at Bunbury. It was not reasonable for the hon. member or any one else to complain that the House was adjourned for all sorts of purposes, when there had been only one adjournment this session.

MR. GEORGE said he would reply to that when he got an opportunity, and would let the Premier know about it.

MR. WOOD congratulated the member for Sussex on the way in which he had "nobbled" most of the members, for it appeared that those who had not been induced to promise they would go to Busselton, had at least been got to say they would not oppose this adjournment. He (Mr. Wood) regretted the motion, and felt obliged to protest against the adjournment as being unnecessary at this period of the session.

Amendment (to adjourn till Monday) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

|      |     |     |    |
|------|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes | ... | ... | 16 |
| Noes | ... | ... | 11 |

Majority for ... 5

AYES.  
Mr. Connor  
Sir John Forrest  
Mr. A. Forrest  
Mr. Hall  
Mr. Hubble  
Mr. Lefroy  
Mr. Locke  
Mr. Monger  
Mr. Moorhead  
Mr. Moran  
Mr. Pennefather  
Mr. Piesse  
Mr. Quinlan  
Mr. Rason  
Hon. H. W. Venn  
Mr. Doherty (Teller).

NOES.  
Mr. George  
Mr. Gregory  
Mr. Illingworth  
Mr. James  
Mr. Leake  
Mr. Mitchell  
Mr. Phillips  
Mr. Wallace  
Mr. Wilson  
Mr. Wood  
Mr. Holmes (Teller).

Amendment thus passed.

#### PEPPERMINT GROVE, ETC., WATER SUPPLY BILL (PRIVATE).

##### SELECT COMMITTEE'S REPORT.

MR. DOHERTY (in charge of the Bill), moved that the report of the Select Committee be adopted.

MR. GEORGE: The member for East Perth (Mr. James) had assured him that this Bill did not contain anything conferring a monopoly on the person seeking this right to lay a water service in the districts mentioned, and that the Bill did not prevent any other person from laying pipes for a similar purpose, if such person could obtain the consent of the local authority. He wished this statement to be placed on record in *Hansard*, because he had reason to believe that precaution was necessary in regard to the person who had originated this Bill—he was not referring to any member of this House, but to Mr. James Grave, who was acting in this matter in the name and under the wing of Mr. W. D. Moore. The residents of Claremont had had considerable trouble in regard to a matter of this sort within the last few weeks; and he had been desired to get this assurance placed on record in *Hansard*, because there was a feeling that, however much the rights of the people were protected in the Bill, yet if there was a possibility of evading the conditions, the gentleman who had promoted this Bill might try some evasion at a future time.

MR. JAMES: As stated by the hon. member, this Bill did not confer a monopoly in express term on the person promoting the Bill. All it did was to create a certain moral obligation, by which it was expected that the person promoting the Bill and obtaining this power to lay a water service would not be interfered with by any similar right being granted by the local authority. The Bill provided

that no street within the districts mentioned could be broken up for the purpose of laying water mains, unless with the consent in writing of the local authority; and therefore the promoter of the Bill obtained that protection, although the promoter could not legally construe it as conferring a monopoly. It should be said at the same time that a water service such as this Bill proposed to provide was really necessary in those districts, for enabling small householders to get a supply of water.

Question put and passed, and the report adopted.

#### SEATS FOR SHOP ASSISTANTS BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

MR. MOORHEAD (North Murchison): In moving the second reading of this Bill, I may say briefly that it is an unpretentious measure which aims at an important amelioration in the position of female assistants in shops. The Bill consists of only four clauses, and enacts that all shopkeepers shall provide seats for their female assistants in the proportion of not less than one seat to every three females employed in each room. The second clause provides the penalty; the third clause states that the Bill shall come into force on the 1st January next year; and the fourth clause sets forth that the Bill shall be read in conjunction with the Early Closing Act of 1898. The Bill is a copy of an Act which was placed on the English statute book this year; it is a measure, also, that one would have thought unnecessary at the present moment in Perth; but unfortunately, experience has pointed out that not only do some shopkeepers in Perth refuse to grant this small boon to their assistants, but that the assistants, according to a medical report recently submitted in this connection, are very seriously injured in their health by reason of the absence of seats during the long hours of employment. At the present moment, from the time some of those assistants arrive in the morning at their work till they knock off in the evening, the only rest they obtain is during the hour given them for luncheon, and then they are obliged to walk backward and forward to wherever they may obtain lunch. I have every confidence in sub-

mitting this measure to the House, and I am also confident that the second reading will be carried without any dissent.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—Seats to be provided in shops:

MR. JAMES moved that the words "or other premises where goods are actually retailed to the public and," in lines 1 and 2, be struck out; also that the words "for the retailing of goods to the public the employer carrying on business in such premises," in lines 3 and 4 be struck out, and "the shopkeeper" inserted.

Amendments put and passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 2—Penalty:

MR. JAMES moved that the word "person" in line 1 be struck out, and "shopkeeper" inserted.

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

Clause 3—Commencement of Act:

MR. JAMES moved that the following words be added to the clause: "And shall apply to all shops, from time to time subject to the provisions of the Early Closing Act, 1898."

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

Clause 4—Construction and short title:

MR. JAMES moved that the clause be struck out and the following inserted: "This Act may be cited as 'The Seats for Shops Assistants Act, 1899,' and in the construction thereof 'shop' and 'shopkeeper' shall have the same meaning as in the Early Closing Act, 1898."

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

Preamble—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

#### REGISTRATION OF FIRMS AMENDMENT BILL.

##### SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather), in moving the second reading, said: The object of this short Bill is to provide for an omission in the Registration of Firms Act, 1897, in which it appears that no provision was made for the recovery of the penalties;

and the object of this Bill is to supply that omission. I beg to move the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE, ETC.

Bill passed through Committee without debate, reported without amendment, and the report adopted.

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

LOAN BILL, £750,000.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 and 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Sums raised, how to be applied:

MR. MORAN: Clause 2 gave authority to borrow £750,000; but would the assent given to that clause interfere with the right of members to strike out items in the schedule?

THE PREMIER: Clause 2 provided that the sum borrowed should not exceed £750,000, and the schedule could be amended.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 6, inclusive,—agreed to.

New Clause:

MR. MORAN moved that the following be added, to stand as Clause 7:

Provided, however, that no new railway mentioned in the schedule to this Act shall be commenced until a Public Works Committee of this House shall have reported on it, and recommended its construction.

MR. GREGORY: Why not apply the proviso to all new works?

MR. MORAN: The object was to apply the proviso to proposed new railways only. When speaking on the second reading of the Bill he had said the time had arrived when there should be a Public Works Committee, consisting of members of the Assembly or members of both Houses of Parliament, to investigate and report on all public works proposed to be constructed out of loan moneys. Such a committee would relieve the Government from having to listen to their supporters and others who desired public works constructed in different districts; and it would be admitted that members of Parliament, in looking after the requirements of their constituents, must at times be troublesome to Ministers. A Public Works Committee would

inquire as to whether proposed works were necessary, whether they were likely to pay, and whether the time was opportune for their construction; and such a plan, while relieving the Government of the onus of having to disappoint supporters and others, would also relieve hon. members from much pressure at present exercised by constituents. The history of politics in Australia was largely summed up in the words "public works," and more abuse had arisen in connection with the distribution of loan moneys than in any other phase of public life. There had been sad instances elsewhere of works, especially railways, built for political purposes; and possibly had there been such committees as that now proposed, many of those works would never have been constructed, and millions of money thus saved. His desire was to apply the principle to the new railway lines in the Loan Bill, making it obligatory on the Government not to start the works, or, if they desired to go ahead, to appoint a Public Works Committee.

THE PREMIER: The object of the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran) had in view was a good one, but the principle of a Public Works Committee ought not to be introduced by a clause of three or four lines.

MR. MORAN: There was no other way of blocking the proposed railways.

THE PREMIER: Was that the object of the hon. member?

MR. MORAN: Quite so.

THE PREMIER: It was just as well to understand thoroughly the object of the hon. member; but probably he would not be successful in blocking the proposed railways by means of the new clause, because a Public Works Committee might be quite in accord with the views of the Government.

MR. MORAN: If the Government could get such a committee, he would support the proposed railways.

THE PREMIER: What was the difference between a committee appointed by a majority of the members supporting the Government, and the Government itself?

MR. MORAN: None whatever; and if the Government liked to use their power, the country must suffer.

THE PREMIER: That the principle now advocated had been a success in the

other colonies was not quite certain, and there was the further question whether, under the Constitution, there could be handed over to a committee responsibilities which Ministers of the Crown ought to bear.

MR. EWING: The Public Works Committee would only recommend, and the execution would still lie with the Executive.

THE PREMIER: Why should a committee be given absolute power to say whether a line of railway should be built or not, and thus coerce the whole of the electors of the colony? Such a power was more than that possessed by responsible Ministers.

MR. MORAN: The committee would have no power at all.

THE PREMIER: Apparently the hon. member had not fully considered the clause he had submitted.

MR. MORAN: The clause had been thoroughly considered.

THE PREMIER: Then the clause was ill-advised, and certainly not worthy of the hon. member's astuteness, seeing that he proposed to give a committee of four or five members more power than was now possessed by the Government.

MR. MORAN: The Premier did not mean to misrepresent, but he must know that the power to recommend was not an executive power.

THE PREMIER: Would a committee have any greater reputation and honour at stake than the Ministers of the day?

MR. MORAN: But the committee might have greater knowledge.

THE PREMIER: That was possible, but a committee would probably have less knowledge.

MR. MORAN: That was a matter for argument.

A MEMBER: The committee might have interests to serve.

THE PREMIER: It was true the committee might have greater interests to serve, and they would not be responsible to the whole of the people of the country, as were the Ministers. The plan proposed had not worked well in the other colonies, and responsible Ministers were likely to be more capable than a committee composed in the way suggested. If the hon. member's only object was to obstruct the Bill, he could expect no support from the

Government; and after the division of last night and the expressed desire to get on with the business of the country, such obstruction was neither just nor right.

MR. GEORGE: Was there any obstruction in the motion?

THE PREMIER: The member for East Coolgardie said there was.

MR. GEORGE: Then the Premier had his remedy under the Standing Orders.

THE PREMIER: The member for the Murray (Mr. George) must be asked not to interrupt; and if he took another week's leave of absence, the business would be got on with more quickly.

MR. GEORGE: That was absolutely untrue.

THE PREMIER: Perhaps the Chairman would call the hon. member to order, so that the business might be proceeded with.

MR. GEORGE: In the exercise of the rights of a private member, he denied the accusation of the Premier as absolutely untrue.

THE CHAIRMAN: The word "untrue" was out of order.

MR. GEORGE: Then the word "untrue" would be withdrawn, but the Premier's statement was surely also out of order.

THE PREMIER: The member for the Murray was irrepressible.

MR. GEORGE: The member for the Murray knew his business, whereas the Premier did not.

THE PREMIER: All men had their prejudices, and to expect to get absolute justice and right by any process such as that proposed would only lead to disappointment. At any rate, at the present time it would be better to go on with the business in the ordinary way; but there was no reason why a Bill should not be introduced next session, providing for a committee of public works such as existed in New South Wales, which might have worked well, though at considerable expenditure. He had never heard anyone say that the Public Works Committee in New South Wales had done any great amount of good, though no doubt it had relieved the pressure brought to bear on Ministers. Pressure was brought to bear on Ministers to do certain works, and this always would be so; and pressure would also be brought to bear on a committee of this kind, if it had the power of recommending works to be done.

MR. MORAN: Still, the recommendations of the proposed committee would always be subject to the approval of Parliament.

THE PREMIER: A perfect machine could not be obtained, whichever way the attempt was made; and the difficulty of constituting such a committee was shown by the fact that the Act relating to the Public Works Committee of New South Wales contained 18 clauses, whereas the hon. member was now proposing to settle the whole matter in a few words. The proposed works now before hon. members should be dealt with in the ordinary way, and the hon. member would have his opportunity of throwing out any particular work, or throwing out all the works, when the necessary Bill for giving effect to the works proposed had to be dealt with in ordinary course by this House. When a Bill authorising the construction of the particular works was being dealt with, the hon. member could propose to insert a clause providing that these works or any of them should not be dealt with for six or twelve months, as he might think necessary. Therefore, there was ample opportunity for delaying these works, if that was the object of the hon. member; and his proposal at this stage was out of place.

MR. MORAN: Hon. members would not, he hoped, misinterpret what he had said about his desire to obstruct the building of these new railways. That word "obstruct" was an unfortunate one, and his desire was to prevent the construction of these railways until Parliament met again next year. He was a believer in the system of having matters of this kind dealt with by a Public Works Committee, which in New South Wales had operated as a buffer between the Ministry and the great pressure brought to bear upon them by members of Parliament and by people in particular districts for the execution of desired works. As to whether the system in New South Wales or elsewhere had worked well or not, that was a matter of opinion. Hon. members on the Ministerial side of the House had expressed themselves in favour of the Loan Bill, because those members desired to carry out existing works; but those members who had spoken had, at the same time, spoken in opposition to the policy of building new railways at

the present time. To accuse him now of unnecessarily delaying public works was going too far; and the Government could not expect hon. members to rush this Bill through without fair discussion.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member was introducing a new principle at this stage.

MR. MORAN: It was a principle well known in Australia, and would give to members an opportunity of saying they wanted further inquiry in regard to the necessity for the proposed railways, to ascertain whether these were likely to pay, and whether they were desirable. Some of the proposed railways he was certain would not pay for the axle-fat; and an independent committee would prove that to be so, for they would inquire as to the population to be served by each railway, the amount of traffic which the line might be expected to carry, and the probable revenue; and if such committee found, as he believed they would, that one train a week would do all that was required in a district where a railway was proposed for construction, that committee would not be likely to recommend such railway for construction. Facts of this nature had not been put before hon. members, and why burk inquiry?

MR. MOORHEAD: The other night the hon. member told us that railways were not built to pay.

MR. MORAN: That was what he said now also, but he did not believe in building a railway merely to prospect a country. The unfinished works should go on, and these new works should be reported on by a committee.

THE PREMIER: The hon. member was not quite fair with hon. members, for he was opposed to these new railways being constructed, and had stated that his object was to prevent their being constructed at the present time; yet by a side-wind he was now trying to prevent hon. members from dealing with these works. Would it not be better to wait until the Bill authorising the particular works was brought down, and then the hon. member could try to put in a clause, if he obtained sufficient support, specifying that the works must not be commenced within a certain period. The hon. member wanted to place in the hands of a small committee of this House the absolute power of saying whether public

works should be carried out or not, thereby taking that power out of the hands of the whole House. If the proposed committee did not recommend the construction of the works referred to them for consideration, then this House and Parliament would have the power taken out of their hands and transferred to that small committee, so that we should be transferring to a committee of four or five members the absolute power of overriding the whole House and overriding the Government of the country, because if that committee did not recommend the construction of the works, those works could not be carried out. Was this what responsible government was coming to, that a committee of four or five members should dominate Parliament and dominate the Government?

MR. MORAN: Was not the system in operation in other colonies?

THE PREMIER: Not to the same extent, so far as he was acquainted with it. Where the system did exist, he knew that Parliament had to decide whether the recommendations of the committee should be carried out; but the hon. member's motion affirmed, in effect, that unless the committee recommended the work, it should not be carried out at all. The hon. member had evidently not considered his own motion. This House had decided by an overwhelming majority that this Bill should be considered in Committee of the whole House; and we should now proceed with it in Committee. Further legislation would have to be brought in for authorising the particular works contained in the Loan Bill, after this Bill passed; and that would be the time for the hon. member to put in his condition for the purpose of delaying these works or any of them.

MR. MORAN: Was it possible to amend his motion by dropping a word out of it?

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could not amend his own motion.

MR. MORAN: The word "recommend" was what the Premier objected to particularly, and he would like to drop that out of the motion. His intention was that not a pick should be put in the ground until the particular work was approved by a Public Works Committee. He believed in that principle, and it would be too late to introduce the

principle here, after giving to the Government power to build five new railways.

A MEMBER: It was too late to start with that principle at the end of the session.

MR. MORAN: Then the Bill should be dropped altogether. An absolute majority of the Government supporters did not believe the proposed new railways would pay; therefore let us get some information about these railways.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: There would have to be a special Bill passed in respect to these new works, after the Loan Bill had been passed.

MR. MORAN: A greater scandal did not exist than the horrible condition of the Boulder railway at present; and if any other member represented that district except himself, who had been somewhat neglecting his duty in this respect, the Government would have heard more about it. He had not pressed them in regard to that matter, because he desired to give them time for doing the work.

THE PREMIER: Give us the money too.

MR. MORAN: If 99 out of every 100 persons in his constituency asked him to vote for this Loan Bill, he would not do it. His opinion of what his constituents might think was sometimes very indifferent.

HON. H. W. VENN: The Premier had explained the position very well, and had somewhat anticipated what he (Mr. Venn) had intended to say. The hon. member (Mr. Moran) must feel that in this motion he was somewhat anticipating events, and that he ought to have taken this action some weeks ago, if he thought it was seriously necessary and was the right course to take. This principle aimed a blow at the foundation of responsible government.

MR. MORAN: Rot! At present the Government engineers acted as advisers.

HON. H. W. VENN: Probably the Premier would accept the proposition for the appointment of such a committee, if properly submitted, for it would relieve the Government of much responsibility. If hon. members wished to lengthen the lives of Ministries, they could not do better than appoint a Public Works Committee.



MR. MORAN: Did not the hon. member approve of railway commissioners?

HON. H. W. VENN: In certain circumstances; and he was not averse to the principle of a Public Works Committee; but this was the wrong place and time to introduce the proposal. If the hon. member's sole idea was to block the construction of these railways—

MR. MORAN: No.

HON. H. W. VENN: The hon. member had said so—that should be done in another way; but it would be a mistake to introduce such a vital principle into this Bill, and the hon. member must perceive that to do so would harass the Government, and put this Committee of the whole House in a false position.

THE PREMIER: This was a money Bill.

HON. H. W. VENN: If the hon. member would give notice of his intention, the proposal for such a committee would receive the respectful consideration it deserved.

MR. MORAN: By his amendment, he had given the House an opportunity of again considering this policy of building new railways. He had done his duty, and would say no more on the matter. He believed Parliament was making a horrible mistake by rushing a Loan Bill through the House so late in the session; and his amendment was one means by which a false policy could be subverted, a policy which would land the country in endless confusion within the next twelve months.

THE PREMIER: This was not the proper place for the hon. member's proposal. This was a money Bill, authorising the raising of loans, but going no further.

MR. MORAN: But there was an Upper Chamber.

THE PREMIER: The Bill gave no authority to spend money—that was obtained on the Loan Estimates; nor did it give authority to construct any railway, for to do so a special Act must be passed.

MR. GEORGE: But some of these works had already been done.

THE PREMIER said he did not know to which works the hon. member was referring, but if so the Government were responsible.

MR. GEORGE: The amendment was hardly reasonable, for if the proposal were carried out, such committee could

not report without a large expenditure for a survey of the lines, and a flying survey would be of little use.

MR. MORAN: No survey was needed to ascertain how many people would be benefited by the railway.

MR. GEORGE: True; and in the Leonora district there were many places where no living thing could be found. A Public Works Committee, altogether non-political and free from log-rolling influences, would be very useful; but such a principle should not be embodied in this Bill. Hon. members had been told that these items in the schedule could be dealt with in Committee; but surely none would be so credulous as to think there was the slightest chance of altering a single item now. Those who voted for the second reading must vote for every item in the schedule.

MR. A. FORREST: No, no.

MR. GEORGE: If mistaken, he would apologise. Government supporters well knew that if they voted against the items, the Premier would resign. Thus political life was being prostituted. The previous remark of the Premier, that he (Mr. George) ought to be out of the House, was most impertinent.

MR. MORAN asked leave to withdraw the amendment.

Amendment by leave withdrawn, and the clause passed.

Schedule—Harbour Works, Jetties, Approaches, etc.:

Item—Albany, £10,000:

MR. SOLOMON: While not objecting to the items in any part of the schedule, and while willing to support loans for all authorised works, he must protest against further borrowing for new undertakings.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member must confine himself to the item, "Albany."

MR. A. FORREST: The member for Albany (Mr. Leake), who ought to know more about the necessity for this expenditure than anyone else, had voted against the second reading of the Bill; and, under the circumstances, other hon. members who knew nothing whatever about the matter could not do better than follow his example and reject this item.

MR. EWING: Would the hon. member sacrifice a district on account of personal prejudice?

MR. A. FORREST: If the member for Albany voted against the second reading

of the Bill, members representing other districts need not vote for this item.

MR. EWING: That was not a right principle.

MR. A. FORREST: It was not said the principle was right, but as the member for the district had voted against the second reading, which included this item, it was for the Committee to consider whether this expenditure was necessary.

HON. H. W. VENN: The Committee should not approve of the principle suggested by the hon. member. It rebounded to the credit of the Government that they proposed expenditure for districts returning members of the Opposition; and in such matters it would be highly improper for the Administration to be swayed one way or the other by political feeling. This Government had never acted on the principle of "the spoils to the victor," and he felt satisfied they would always do their duty to all parts of the colony. If, for personal or other reasons, individuals were not in accord with the item, it was nevertheless the duty of the Government, if they considered the expenditure justified, to endeavour to have the item approved by the Committee; and too much could not be done for the important town of Albany, where there was a port, one of the best in the colony, which would play an important part in the history of the defences of Australia.

MR. A. FORREST: There was no desire to deprive Albany of the benefits of this expenditure, but if the item went to a division, the member for Albany and those who thought with him would vote for it, while they would be found in opposition when other items were in question.

MR. LEAKE: Would the member for West Kimberley kindly speak for himself, and not for the member for Albany.

MR. A. FORREST: Surely there was a right to comment on the action of the member for Albany in relation to the Bill; and no doubt the hon. member would try to throw other items out.

MR. LEAKE: Hear, hear.

MR. A. FORREST: And the member for North Coolgardie (Mr. Gregory) would do the same.

MR. GREGORY: The hon. member for West Kimberley must speak for himself.

MR. GEORGE: Would some member of the Government explain what the £10,000 was for, so that hon. members might know what they were discussing?

MR. KINGSMILL moved that the item be struck out.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: This £10,000 was for extension of wharves at Albany, so as to provide four extra berths for which necessity had arisen owing to the increased timber business; and, in addition, provision would be made for connecting the town jetty with the railway system, thus enabling trucks to run alongside vessels. A great portion of the work had been carried out, and it was highly desirable to complete the work.

MR. GEORGE: Had the money been already spent?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: About £2,000 had already been spent out of a previous vote, which had been found insufficient.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: All the small votes ought to be struck out of the schedule, and the works be constructed out of revenue. The Premier had told hon. members that the revenue for this month was likely to be £240,000; and, if that were so, it was not necessary to provide for these works out of loan.

THE PREMIER: The smaller items totalled £154,000.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Parliament was placed in a very absurd position when items of £4,000, £5,000, or £10,000 for works of the kind were inserted in a Loan Bill, and the Committee ought to vote for the amendment.

MR. WOOD suggested that all these smaller items might be included in one item, dealing with improvements in harbours, rivers, and lighthouses.

MR. MITCHELL: The member for Albany, when he voted against the second reading, was not objecting to the particulars in the schedule; but, as leader of the Opposition, was opposing the principle of the Bill. The £10,000 would be thoroughly well spent at Albany, and although it had been promised the mail steamers would shortly make Fremantle their port of call, there would always be plenty of shipping at Albany to derive benefit from the public works in that splendid harbour.

MR. KINGSMILL: The word "Albany" had absolutely nothing to do with the attitude he had taken up in moving the amendment, which would have been submitted if Port Hedland or any other port had been affected. The amendment was moved as a protest against the inclusion in the schedule of small amounts which should be more properly met out of revenue. When we borrowed, there should at least be a prospect of the works carried out repaying interest and providing a sinking fund; and he intended, if other hon. members did not, to move the omission of all the other items to which the argument he had adduced might fairly apply.

THE PREMIER: Hon. members, perhaps, were unnecessarily taking exception to the smallness of the items, because if previous Loan Bills were searched, there would be found a considerable number of equally small sums making up a large total. As he had already pointed out, the total for harbour works, jetties, and approaches amounted to £154,000, and it must be remembered the votes for Albany, Bunbury, and Carnarvon were supplementary, intended to complete works for which there had already been made provision out of loan money. He did not know, however, that the work at Busselton came under this head.

MR. GREGORY: Had the Chairman not already ruled that hon. members must confine themselves to the item "Albany, £10,000"?

THE PREMIER: It was customary to allow more latitude to a Minister than to a private member, especially when a Minister was making an explanation.

THE CHAIRMAN: The Premier was only explaining, and the explanation was permissible.

MR. GEORGE: But surely the Premier was out of order in answering for the Chairman?

THE CHAIRMAN: The member for the Murray was out of order.

At 6:30, the CHAIRMAN left the Chair.

At 7:30, Chair resumed.

MR. LEAKE: Having heard the remarks of the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) on this item, he was not altogether surprised that, with

characteristic inconsistency, the hon. member suggested that this item should be struck out, practically in order to spite the member for Albany. But the hon. member dared not strike it out.

MR. A. FORREST: Well, he would dare to go to a division about it.

MR. LEAKE: One regretted to think that politics should have descended to the level to which they appeared to have done in the case of the hon. member.

MR. A. FORREST: What would the member for Albany do when the item relating to Bunbury was reached?

MR. LEAKE: Strike it out, if he could.

MR. A. FORREST: Yes; we knew he would do that.

MR. LEAKE: But the hon. member himself was responsible for the level to which politics had been dragged down, and yet the hon. member thought there were other members whose votes were practically to be purchased by an item such as this. When that principle was applied to members on this (Opposition) side of the House—

MR. A. FORREST: They were all honest men there.

MR. LEAKE: We could not help that; but when this principle was applied to members on the Opposition side, the hon. member made a mistake. Perhaps he and his myrmidons might be influenced by considerations of this kind.

MR. A. FORREST: Was that a proper remark?

THE CHAIRMAN: There was no harm in it.

MR. LEAKE: One did not trouble to go back into ancient history to explain to the hon. member the meaning of that word, though the hon. member might be assured there was nothing immoral in it. What was meant was the compulsory loyal followers of the hon. member; so the term was one of compliment, and he (Mr. Leake) would regret to say anything that would bring a blush to the cheek of the hon. member. Having opposed this Bill on principle, and feeling that members should rise above the level of a politician in search of money for his constituency—

MR. A. FORREST: One wished the hon. member could do that.

MR. LEAKE: We should, in the interests of the country, support measures

which were for the general benefit. A member's duty was to the country first, to his constituents next, and to himself last. Hon. members on the Government side dared not vote against this item any more than they dared vote against any item in the schedule; and if this item must go to a division, he would vote against it, because, if opposed to the Loan Bill on principle, it must follow he ought to oppose every item in the schedule, seeing that at the present juncture the country was not justified in incurring an extra loan authorisation of £750,000, which was admittedly only the "thin end of the wedge" for a loan of double that amount. By pledging ourselves to raise this money, we could not stop the borrowing afterwards until the whole amount had been raised. In opposing every item, he (Mr. Leake) was acting constitutionally, and he hoped members would consider the result of this vote. The hon. member (Mr. A. Forrest) constantly disregarded constitutional principles; and, like certain other members, he regarded as constitutional only that which was for the moment convenient.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: And which the Government could carry.

MR. LEAKE: Hon. members opposite dared not interfere with the schedule. Whenever an item was in danger of rejection, there would be some Ministerial assurance to the effect that, although the item were passed, the work would not be proceeded with for some time; consequently the Committee would be practically hoodwinked into a false sense of security, Ministers being left to give effect to these votes as they might think fit. The constitutional effect of any interference with one item in the schedule, or with any material portion of the financial proposals of the Government, would be a vote of want of confidence.

MR. A. FORREST: No.

MR. LEAKE said he was speaking only from a constitutional point of view. It would be idle to suppose that certain members were actuated by constitutional principle; but as the rejection of even one item would be practically a vote of want of confidence, no item would be rejected, but efforts would be made to cast the odium and responsibility of the rejection of certain items upon hon. members in another place. Let hon. members

take a broad, constitutional view; and if opposed to further borrowing, let them oppose every item in the schedule. If he (Mr. Leake) voted in favour of this item, he might be charged with inconsistency, and with having sunk his principles to please his constituents; but he would not do that. The Commissioner of Railways said that of this item, £10,000, a portion had already been spent, and that, too, out of loan. The records of the House would show that no such vote had been passed. Hence the country had been committed to the expenditure on the mere motion of Ministers without parliamentary sanction.

THE PREMIER: The money was spent out of an existing vote for harbours and rivers.

MR. LEAKE: But not out of loan moneys?

THE PREMIER: Yes.

MR. LEAKE: But the harbours and rivers vote only included the Fremantle harbour works and a few similar items.

THE PREMIER: And other works.

MR. LEAKE: The Premier must settle that matter with the Commissioner of Railways. This item "Albany £10,000" and the other items in Clause 1 of the schedule had been proposed to be constructed, not out of loan, but out of revenue; and the Government having committed themselves to the execution of these works, no doubt with the desire to attract votes, were now forced to finance in a manner not originally intended, and therefore had to bring down a Loan Bill. The worst feature of the Bill was that, whilst in principle hon. members must necessarily favour some of the items, yet the Government proposed to secure votes for inferior items by the pernicious practice of tacking on these to items more attractive and more justifiable. While approving of certain items in Clause 1 of the schedule, hon. members should not permit themselves to be tricked into voting for items in the other clauses. He must therefore follow the member for Pilbarra (Mr. Kingsmill) by insisting on the rejection of this item "Albany." Of course the item was not singled out as being worse than any of the others, but for consistency's sake he must oppose it, and on the same principle he would vote against every item in the Bill on which a division was taken. Hon. members who,

up to a certain point, averred their independence and their intention to vote against this and that, changed their minds when the division bell rang. The Premier wielding his political whip could persuade his followers to vote against their expressed ideas.

**THE PREMIER:** So the hon. member did with the Opposition, but there were not enough followers on that side.

**MR. LEAKE:** The Premier could congratulate himself on the successful efforts of Government supporters to keep the Ministry in office at the country's expense; and a Minister in that position could afford to indulge in little pleasures at the expense of the Opposition, and to ride roughshod over persons and principles.

**THE PREMIER:** The Government left it to the hon. member to ride over principles.

**MR. LEAKE:** Let us proceed to a division on this and other items without delay. He trusted the member for West Kimberley (Mr. A. Forrest) would some day learn enough about constitutional and parliamentary principles to enable him to refrain from venting what was apparently political spite, by attempting to strike out certain items in the schedule, not in furtherance of a broad principle, but in order to penalise a member of this House.

**MR. A. FORREST:** That had been done by the hon. member's own side.

**MR. LEAKE:** One could not hope the hon. member would benefit by any advice or admonition from this side of the House, but it would be seen that members on this side could sometimes sink personal advantage in the interests of the country.

**MR. A. FORREST:** When speaking of having this vote struck out, it was with the object of getting the member for Albany to explain his action in voting against the second reading of the Bill, and then expecting members on the Government side to allow this Albany item to pass without objection, while the hon. member would reserve himself to oppose all other items in the Bill. He (Mr. Forrest) had no wish to injure Albany, or to injure any part of the colony, and especially when we knew that a portion of this money had been already spent on the work in progress at Albany, and that the remainder was urgently required. He

(Mr. Forrest) did not wish to interfere with a single item in the schedule, for they were all required; but he did not wish it to go forth that members on the Government side were to be bamboozled by the leader of the Opposition.

**MR. LEAKE:** In reply to the hon. member, he (Mr. Leake) did not propose to barter his principles.

**MR. A. FORREST:** The hon. member had not got any principles.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** As mover of the amendment to strike out this item, his action had no local significance, for his wish was that the House should say whether money that could be more properly appropriated out of revenue was to be provided by loan.

**THE PREMIER:** Members on that side had too much principle, and the hon. member's constituents would not thank him if that were applied to expenditure proposed for Port Hedland.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** As to what constituents might have to say on the action of their representative, that should be left to be settled between the member and his constituents. Were unproductive works to be built out of loan moneys or not?

**THE PREMIER:** Where did the hon. member get that principle from? Not from the land he came from.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** Interjections of this kind had an effect the very contrary to what the Premier appeared to desire, for they compelled hon. members to answer them. He believed the works at Albany were fully justified, but they should not be built out of loan funds.

**MR. MORAN:** Would the hon. member also construct the Fremantle harbour works out of revenue?

**MR. KINGSMILL:** All necessary works that were not reproductive should be built out of revenue.

**MR. MORAN:** That reduced the hon. member's proposition to a *reductio ad absurdum*, for he was advocating the impossible.

**THE PREMIER:** Something would be got out of revenue from shipping dues.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

|      |     |     |     |    |
|------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes | ... | ... | ... | 12 |
| Noes | ... | ... | ... | 18 |

Majority against ... 6

AYES.  
Mr. Gregory  
Mr. Holmes  
Mr. Illingworth  
Mr. Kingsmill  
Mr. Leake  
Mr. Locke  
Mr. Mornu  
Mr. Robson  
Mr. Solomon  
Mr. Wallace  
Mr. Wilson  
Mr. Vosper (Teller).

NOES.  
Mr. Connor  
Mr. Conolly  
Mr. Doherty  
Sir John Forrest  
Mr. George  
Mr. Higham  
Mr. Hubble  
Mr. Lefroy  
Mr. Mitchell  
Mr. Monger  
Mr. Morgans  
Mr. Pennefather  
Mr. Phillips  
Mr. Piesse  
Mr. Throssell  
Hon. H. W. Venn  
Mr. Wood  
Mr. Rason (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived, and the item passed.

Item, Bunbury Harbour Works, £40,000:

MR. KINGSMILL: After the division just taken, and in order to expedite business, he was willing to accept the division as a test on this question. He had come to the conclusion that a majority of the Committee were in favour of the principle of building out of loan those works that were not reproductive, this having been affirmed by a substantial majority in the division just taken.

MR. GEORGE: Before this item was passed, he would like some information in regard to harbour works at Bunbury.

THE PREMIER: The port of Bunbury in its natural state was an open roadstead, protected to a slight degree from westerly winds and altogether protected from the south-west by a reef. Two or three years ago the Government, being desirous of doing something towards improving the port, submitted to this House a proposal to construct a breakwater at a cost of £100,000, to be paid for out of revenue. The House then approved of the proposal, and for two years the work proceeded, about £68,000 being expended out of general revenue in constructing a breakwater from Casuarina Point along the reef a considerable distance, afterwards getting into deep water. Last year we found it was not convenient to continue the work out of current revenue, and this House was then asked for, and approved of, a further expenditure of £30,000, to be appropriated from loan funds for continuing the construction of the breakwater. This money had been expended, so that something like £98,000 had been already expended on the breakwater. The results so far had been satisfactory, inasmuch as shipping had been attracted to

the port, which was not previously the case. In fact, it had been said that ships never went to Bunbury, but that on the records being searched it was found that one ship did enter there, but there was no record to show it ever got out again. That state of affairs had now passed away, and ships had begun to use the port, and were able to carry on business there even during the winter months, when the weather was least favourable for that port, the winds blowing strongly from north to north-west. It was felt, however, that the protection thus afforded was not nearly sufficient to protect the harbour entirely from the northerly and north-westerly winds; and the proposal to expend another £40,000, as appeared in this schedule, was for the purpose of extending the mole some thousand feet more, and also with a view to improving the jetty accommodation, so as to give more berthage space for the large number of ships engaged in the timber trade which now frequented the port. His last visit to Bunbury was about a fortnight ago, when some hon. members were good enough to accompany him to the annual show; and they had an opportunity of seeing for themselves what was going on, and judging whether it was desirable that any more public money should be expended on that work. They found three or four ships loading timber and two ships anchored off the jetty waiting for berths, making altogether seven ships. He was told also that many more ships were then expected to arrive. There was no doubt that the port of Bunbury, if better facilities could be provided, would become one of the principal ports of the colony for the export of timber, and he hoped also for the export of coal. In regard to coal, we knew that the local coal was being used on our railways, and was coming into use in various parts of the colony. In regard to the export of coal from Bunbury, no great quantity was sent away by ships, because the coal was not available for that trade, as only one mine was working, and it was kept fully employed in supplying the railways and other customers. Another reason was that there was no convenience at the port for giving quick despatch to steamers which might call there for coal; but as soon as these facilities could be provided, he believed that steamers trading

on our coast and those trading to Singapore would find it preferable to run the distance from Fremantle to Bunbury, about 80 miles, to take in coal at Bunbury, where it could be obtained cheaper than coal imported from New South Wales for loading at Fremantle. There were great possibilities in regard to the export of timber at Bunbury, and in the opinion of the Government, and also in his own opinion, we would be acting wisely in giving more protection than at present to shipping at that port. Some improvements had been made there in regard to the jetty, by strengthening it to the extent that a locomotive could run on the jetty and deliver timber alongside a ship. What was required, however, was an extension of the jetty to give more berthing accommodation, also an extension of the breakwater for giving more protection to the jetty; and it had been suggested by the engineering department that it might be possible to erect a wharf alongside the breakwater itself, inside. If that could be done, it would be very advantageous for shipping coal, and especially for timber, because the water would be deeper alongside that wharf, and a train could run on the wharf and deliver directly into a ship. This would also give additional accommodation to shipping generally, and some accommodation under the shelter of the breakwater. The Engineer-in-Chief was considering the suggestion, and the proposal appeared to be a reasonable one; and if, as the breakwater was extended, it was found that this scheme could be carried out with advantage, it would be done. As to the idea that this colony could build public works of this nature out of current revenue, such an idea could only come from those who were not acquainted with the demands on the current revenue of the colony. Bearing in mind the immense territory we had to provide for, the necessity also of an immense civil service, far greater than it would be if we were more centralised; remembering that all the buildings required throughout the length and breadth of the colony were, as a rule, erected out of revenue; remembering that throughout the colony, and notwithstanding the boom period through which we had passed, not more than £130,000 had been expended on public buildings, including the goldfields, nearly

all public buildings being erected out of current revenue; remembering that in one year we expended out of current revenue a million of money on public works and buildings, and that even last year we spent something like £300,000, and this year we proposed to spend over a quarter of a million; remembering these things, we could realise how impracticable it was to ask this country to undertake the cost of all jetties along our extensive coast and all harbour works in the colony, as well as public buildings, out of current revenue. Many works that were necessary were not reproductive, and yet most of these had to be constructed out of current revenue. If constructed out of loan, the interest on the cost would have to be paid in the form of taxation; but, as he had said the other evening, out of nearly 12 millions which we were authorised to borrow, 10½ millions of which had been already raised, two millions were for the Coolgardie water scheme, a large sum for railways, and three-quarters of a million for Fremantle harbour works, which, if not reproductive, would at least bring in some revenue from shipping dues towards paying interest on the cost, and would not altogether be dead work, for all ships using jetties and harbours had to pay some dues.

MR. MORAN: What was meant by reproductive works?

THE PREMIER: Works that directly paid the interest on the amount expended.

MR. MORAN: Did not that apply to every public work?

THE PREMIER: Every public work did not pay interest directly. Shipping that came into a harbour had to pay light dues, harbour dues, and berthage dues. In this loan schedule £20,000 was for lighthouses, and was it to be said that all the lighthouses on our coast must be constructed out of current revenue?

MR. KINGSMILL said he would like to see that done.

THE PREMIER: Yes; and not only that, but he (the Premier) would like to see all our railways and everything else constructed out of current revenue, if that were possible; but we had to deal with things as they were, not as they might be. We must not forget that in all the Australian colonies the democratic idea was that all public works, such as railways and other works that

come into immediate contact with the public, should belong to the State; and this idea had taken root in Australasia and flourished from one end to the other. Hon. members opposite would say this principle was wrong. He (the Premier) did not say so, his opinion being that there was good on both sides. Hon. members opposite said all these undertakings should be in the hands of private people, and be carried out by private enterprise as was done in England. If this could be done it would certainly lessen the difficulty of government in this colony to a great extent.

MR. VOSPER: The doctrine of private enterprise did not belong to this (Opposition) party.

THE PREMIER: The member for Albany (Mr. Leake) and the member for the Canning (Mr. Wilson), as leaders of the party, had advocated the doctrine of private enterprise for all these things.

MR. VOSPER: That did not affect the party generally.

THE PREMIER: Those hon. members were the leaders, and you (Mr. Vosper) and other members on that side were the followers, and had to be guided by the leaders generally. The hon. member posed as a radical, or a socialist, or a liberal—whichever term he would accept, it did not matter—and he was associated with leaders in this House with whom he was not in accord. That was evident; but it did not alter the fact that the leader of the party opposite and his first lieutenant—a very good lieutenant too, the member for the Canning—were the advocates in this House of private enterprise for carrying out works of a public character.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Not in regard to our railways.

THE PREMIER: Yes; in regard to railways too. The hon. members should allow the leaders to speak for him, for he was only a subordinate member in the party. Hon. members generally, knowing that the public debt was increasing at a rate greater than some of them liked, should recollect that the greater portion of the debt we had undertaken was for works that were directly reproductive. If it were not so, if the Bunbury harbour and other large works were constructed by private enterprise, the Government need borrow nothing, but could do as was

done in England—keep up a standing army and navy with the revenue, and have nothing to do with public works. When in the old country he had been informed that the British railways had cost one thousand million pounds to construct; therefore, had those lines been built by the Government, that money must have been borrowed.

MR. VOSPER: Surely they did not cost that much?

THE PREMIER: So he had been informed. Therefore critics like the member for Pilbarra (Mr. Kingsmill), who talked of what should be done out of loan and what out of revenue, should remember the great obligations cast upon the Government of a colony not thickly populated, but with an immense territory and immense and growing interests, and where the Government were expected to bring comfort and civilisation, law and order, to the people, and to give conveniences of transit from one end of the country to another. Recognising this, hon. members must see that many things the Government would like to do out of revenue must be done out of loan. So long as the loan funds were carefully expended, and the greater portion of them expended on reproductive works, there was no fear. Out of the ten and a half millions expended, seven and a half millions was not only producing interest and working expenses, but also providing a sinking fund of one per cent.; and the railways, which were responsible for six and a half millions of that debt, were paying a small but handsome sum to the revenue. It was useless for the hon. member (Mr. Kingsmill) to think that he could start a new public works policy.

MR. KINGSMILL said he did not claim originality for the idea.

THE PREMIER: If the hon. member knew more of the parliamentary history and the finances of the colony, he would not expect the Government to construct in one year out of current revenue many works costing £40,000. Two courses were open to the Government: the course now pursued of going on with the work knowing that it would be beneficial, and the course of sitting still and doing nothing, which no doubt would be advocated by the hon. member, who would let the port of Bunbury become what it was



years ago, when a ship was said to have come in there but never went out again. That course was open to hon. members, though he did not think Bunbury could be so unfortunate again, even if this item were struck out, because the harbour had already been to some extent improved. Even the member for Geraldton (Mr. Robson) admitted these harbour works were necessary, but said the country could not afford the expenditure. That hon. member knew a good deal about his own business, and perhaps about his district, but might be guided by him (the Premier), to some extent, as to what the country could afford. The country was never in such a flourishing condition as at present: its debt was next to nothing, because most of it had been invested in works which paid their way; and unless some great catastrophe overtook the colony, that debt would be no burden on the general taxpayer. The man the hon. member had referred to as living on the banks of the Chapman River, had not to pay one cent. towards the country's railways unless he chose to travel by rail. The same remark would apply to the Coolgardie water scheme. Hon. members might laugh at that, as they had recently done; but he (the Premier) was pledged to carry out the scheme and to make it profitable, and he would do so provided the mines on the Coolgardie fields did not give out. So long as the mines were there, and they would be there, that scheme could not be other than reproductive. Take £7,000,000 for railways, £2,000,000 for the Coolgardie water scheme, and £1,000,000 for the Fremantle harbour, and how much more public debt was there upon which the taxpayer had to pay interest? Very little indeed—£2,000,000 at 4 per cent., or £80,000 a year out of a revenue of over 2½ millions. Where then was there cause for fear? Frequently after leaving the House at night he wondered why he should speak here so often, exhausting himself, sometimes getting out of temper, in trying to inspire in hon. members confidence in the future of the colony. After all the years he had spent in the House, it often occurred to him that he might be better employed. If hon. members could not be convinced by the signs around them, he would say: "They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear

them." He hoped there would be no opposition to this item for Bunbury. This was as good a work as had ever been mentioned in the House; it was also necessary; and he hoped it would be carried without a dissentient voice.

MR. MORAN: The Premier had wandered from the question of the harbour works at Bunbury to the question of reproductive works generally. He (Mr. Moran) would follow him in his argument. The doctrine that we must construct large public works out of revenue was untenable. How could the Fremantle harbour works be built out of revenue? This was like asking a private individual starting in business to build his factory out of profits, instead of out of capital.

MR. KINGSMILL: The cases were not analogous.

MR. MORAN: The hon. member had said the colony should build a railway system through its interior out of revenue.

MR. MONGER: Was the speaker in order in making a second-reading speech on this item?

THE CHAIRMAN said he did not think the hon. member was making a second-reading speech; but he would ask him to keep to the point as closely as possible.

MR. MORAN said he would do so; but it was impossible to discuss the Bunbury harbour works item without going into the general question. The colony could not construct a railway system without giving that system exits and entrances for trade in the shape of ports. A railway system was intended for communication with the outside world, therefore how could one reasonably say that harbour works were nonproductive, and railways reproductive?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: None said so.

MR. MORAN: Without harbours, railways were useless.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: All admitted that.

MR. MORAN: All did not admit it. The hon. member himself was always talking about reproductive and non-productive works. As a protest against the whole Bill, he (Mr. Moran) had voted for striking out the first item in the schedule. He did not think it wise to strike out any more items for the carrying on of old works. It was impossible to justify the stoppage of a work half done,

though he would use every effort to prevent new works being undertaken. The Bunbury harbour was a great national work which he had always supported, and he should be glad to see Bunbury made equal to Fremantle. True, the country should not have to borrow money for the Bunbury harbour: that money should be available from other sources; but to leave the work half done would be wasting £100,000 to save £40,000. He hoped hon. members would reserve their forces to vindicate the proposition almost unanimously laid down, that we should vote for no new railways.

MR. GEORGE said that when he asked the Premier for a little information about the Bunbury harbour works, he had no idea the right hon. gentleman was going to lose his temper, and bring to bear on him so much heavy artillery. That work had been started a few sessions ago, and he (Mr. George) had then supported its construction, and he saw no reason for not supporting it now.

MR. GREGORY: If possible he would have the whole of Clause 1 of the schedule struck out; but having been defeated in the recent division, it was not worth while to divide on this item. Would this £40,000 complete the Bunbury harbour?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: No. The jetty would be carried out 1,400 feet.

MR. GREGORY: What would the work cost when completed, and did the Engineer-in-Chief approve of the work?

THE PREMIER: This amount would suffice for a time.

MR. GREGORY: By Act 62 Vict., No. 7, an amount of £30,000 had been allocated for the completion of the Bunbury breakwater.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Yes; for the portion then authorised, which had ultimately cost £32,000.

MR. GEORGE: The harbour would cost £250,000 before completion.

MR. GREGORY: Was there to be another breakwater?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: A continuation of that already constructed.

THE PREMIER: That breakwater had cost another £30,000, which the Government could not afford to pay out of revenue, and which had therefore been taken out of loan.

MR. GREGORY: When the £30,000 was reappropriated, the House had been informed that it was for the completion of the work. Now we were told another £40,000 was required. What did the Engineer-in-Chief estimate would be the cost of making Bunbury a safe port? Did that officer think this expenditure wise and just?

THE PREMIER: Yes.

MR. MORAN: Would there be finality with an expenditure of, say, a quarter of a million?

THE PREMIER: The original plan was prepared for a breakwater 6,000 feet long. At the commencement there was a proposed expenditure of £30,000, afterwards increased to £32,000, and now the Engineer-in-Chief intended to change the direction of the breakwater a little to the northward. An additional 1,000 feet would be an immense protection as compared with the existing works, but if the port progressed, no doubt an additional 2,000 or 3,000 feet would be required. The original estimate was 6,000 feet.

MR. MORAN: What was the full estimated cost?

THE PREMIER: The original estimate was £280,000. If the trade of the port increased largely, more work would be done. The opportunities for a large trade were great: there were the Bridgetown railway, the Greenbushes line, the Collie line, and two or three feeders, such as the Canning Jarrah Company's line and the Millar Brothers' two lines, all having Bunbury as their port. There would be a great timber export for which the necessary facilities must be provided. These facilities need not be all given at once, and the Government would go slowly. This extra 1,000 feet of breakwater would make a great difference, and be trusted increased trade would justify a further extension.

MR. WILSON said he opposed every item in the schedule for the same reason as he had opposed the second reading, because he did not think the time opportune for increasing our borrowing authorisations; but to make the Bunbury harbour anything like what it ought to be, one and a quarter millions must be spent. The Premier had correctly stated that an expenditure of £40,000 would be of great benefit. The mole should not have been constructed at all: the inner harbour,

the estuary, should be opened out as at Fremantle.

**THE PREMIER:** The jetty accommodation would not then have been sufficient.

**MR. WILSON:** That was an initial error of which it was useless to complain. If the money had to be raised at all, he favoured this expenditure, for there were great possibilities for that portion of the colony. The timber export trade, though now languishing, was bound to exist so long as there was marketable timber in the colony. He disagreed with the member for Pilbarra (Mr. Kingsmill) in the theory that public works should be constructed out of revenue. All permanent public works should be constructed out of loan moneys: the revenue should pay for the maintenance, the interest on cost of construction, and the sinking fund; and the balance of the revenue should be utilised in reducing taxation, thus making the conditions of life easier and cheaper for the people. No permanent public work should be constructed until we could borrow the money, and he maintained that we had gone to a reasonable extent in our borrowing policy, and should wait a year, or two years if necessary, before increasing our authorisation. Regarding private enterprise, he had always advocated its utilisation in a large country like this. Certainly if we could utilise private capital even for constructing our railways, or for the Coolgardie water scheme, our revenue could be used for reducing taxation, reducing the cost of living, and attracting population.

**THE PREMIER:** Private enterprise had numerous outlets now.

**MR. WILSON:** But the most expensive mode of carrying out public works was the pernicious system now adopted of doing them departmentally by day labour. Public works could be executed by private contractors much cheaper than by the Government. Given proper supervision and proper conditions of contract, no better results could be obtained than by private contract.

**MR. A. FORREST** hoped this item would be passed. Something must be done for the growing wants of that portion of the colony, and more especially for the timber and coal exporters. The colony must soon become an exporter of coal, and facilities for such export must be provided at Bunbury, for the cost of

trainage to Fremantle was prohibitive, because the port of Bunbury was not able to receive the timber that was cut and marketable for export to London and other markets. Those members who had visited that port lately would have seen that it was absolutely necessary to increase the wharfage accommodation, and to extend the breakwater, and he could not understand how there could be any objection to this item. If members who opposed this item had had to pay the extra charge for carriage of timber from mills south of Drakesbrook in order to bring it to Fremantle for shipment, instead of taking it the shorter distance by railway to the harbour at Bunbury, they would realise the necessity for making Bunbury a really good and serviceable harbour. He was informed that steamers engaged in the trade with Singapore would take our coal if they could load it at Bunbury. Harbour improvements at Bunbury, and at other ports provided for in the Bill, were absolutely necessary for the trade of the country.

**MR. LEAKE:** It was not much use protesting against this item. The Bunbury harbour scheme would cost £280,000 to complete; yet when it was inaugurated only £100,000 was to be spent on it, and that too out of revenue. Last year there was one of those misleading votes for which the Ministry were so famous; a vote of £30,000 for the completion of this work. The word "completion" suggested finality.

**THE PREMIER:** The work was stopped now, and waiting for the action of this House.

**MR. LEAKE:** It was an open secret that the Engineer-in-Chief condemned this work. This was Colonel Angelo's scheme, or, if not, it was the Premier's scheme, and was certainly not the Engineer-in-Chief's, because his scheme was for a harbour inside the river, and he had never yet approved of this scheme, and never recommended it.

**THE PREMIER:** He recommended a submerged one first, then he recommended the other one.

**MR. LEAKE:** The Engineer-in-Chief had never recommended this scheme. The scheme he did recommend was for a harbour inside the estuary; and the engineering department would tell hon. members that the result of this expendi-

ture would not be what we were told to-day.

**THE PREMIER:** One did not know before that the hon. member was an engineer.

**MR. LEAKE:** Hon members were asked to take the advice of persons on matters of which those persons knew nothing. If the Premier could produce a report from the Engineer-in-Chief, saying this scheme would provide an efficient harbour, we should have something to go on. The Engineer-in-Chief had always been careful not to recommend this as an engineering work, but he only undertook to build a breakwater for a certain sum.

**MR. A. FORREST:** It was very similar to the work at Fremantle.

**MR. LEAKE:** If we had an assurance that this £40,000 would complete the work, he did not suppose many voices would be raised against it, but on their own showing the work was only half complete.

**THE PREMIER:** If the Engineer-in-Chief did not approve of it, he did not say so.

**MR. LEAKE:** The right hon. gentleman was now challenged to produce a report from the Engineer-in-Chief, that an effective harbour could be made at Bunbury for the amount proposed.

**THE PREMIER:** Look up the report which the Engineer-in-Chief presented in the first instance.

Item put, and passed on the voices.

Item, Busselton £4,000:

**MR. GEORGE** asked for information on this work.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** In regard to this expenditure, several timber companies had recently commenced operations in the neighbourhood of Busselton, and they contemplated shipping timber from that port, so that it became necessary to strengthen the existing jetty in order to make it suitable for carrying a railway engine and delivering timber alongside the ship. That was the reason for this item, and it was a necessary work.

**MR. GEORGE:** Was Busselton any good as a harbour?

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** Yes; it was an excellent harbour: better as an open harbour than Bunbury was before the work there began.

**MR. ILLINGWORTH:** Was it not possible to find £4,000 for a work like this, the mere strengthening of a jetty, without going to the loan market for the money? This was bringing the whole system of borrowing into supreme contempt.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** This work was included in the general scheme of loan expenditure; and had the Government not been desirous of giving information, they could have included this item in a general vote of £150,000 for improvements to harbours and rivers, and could have given some information in regard to the larger items included in that vote, and have brought in a small item like this as they pleased; but the desire was to give full information to hon. members.

**MR. GEORGE:** This item was paltry, to be included in a Loan Bill. A borrower in the London market should endeavour to take a dignified position, and not ask for £4,000 for a small work. This was a twopenny-halfpenny item.

Item put and passed.

Item, Carnarvon £5,000:

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** Last year a vote of £20,000 was taken for carrying out certain works at Carnarvon. The jetty had been constructed, but it was necessary to make approaches to it, and it was intended to provide a tramway to connect the island and jetty with the town. This expenditure would bring the jetty into greater use by connecting it with the town, instead of leaving the jetty separated from the town by the river.

**MR. KINGSMILL:** The Government were acting wisely in building this jetty, although so small a work might have been constructed out of revenue.

Item put and passed.

Item, Fremantle Harbour Works (including wharf sheds), £70,000:

**MR. GEORGE** asked for information to show how the money was to be spent.

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** Of this amount, it was intended to provide £20,000 for erecting sheds and wharves at Fremantle. The department had been pressed for some time past to erect these sheds, and it was intended that persons engaged in the shipping trade should make use of the sheds, the cargo from vessels being put into these sheds and handled directly by the ship-

ping people, instead of being handled first by the department and handled again afterwards. This facility would relieve the department from the necessity of providing a good deal of rolling-stock, and relief would be given to the railway traffic in that way. The work would also provide conveniences for the shipping people to put their goods in the sheds. This was the commencement of a work he had advocated for some time, because he considered we should be relieved as far as possible from the difficulties now existing in regard to the double handling of cargo at Fremantle, and these facilities would be appreciated by people at Fremantle engaged in the shipping trade, while also assisting the Government materially. This sum would erect at least three sheds, and with this commencement it was hoped the department would soon see the effect of it, and would be able from time to time to continue this work in connection with the general harbour scheme. There was sufficient money to carry on the works at Fremantle for some time, but more money was required to continue the general work; and this item would enable the department to continue the dredging of the harbour, the construction of wharves on the northern side, also the reclamation of land on that side, and to make further improvements in connection with the general scheme. It was proposed to construct a road to run parallel with the wharves from Cliff Street to the extreme end of the wharves, enabling the carters to make use of the wharves, and generally to improve the wharves so as to economise and facilitate the dealing with cargo.

MR. DOHERTY: Did this item include facilities for the quick dispatch of steamers requiring coal, such facilities as hydraulic cranes? The wharf sheds would be a great convenience to the shipping people, and would facilitate despatch by 50 per cent., while also relieving the Government of immense responsibility in having to take charge of cargo and thereby becoming responsible. The goods had to be handled twice now instead of once. He did not know what his colleagues for Fremantle who sat with the Opposition would do on this item, but he supposed that as two of them (Mr. Solomon and Mr. Holmes) had opposed the second reading of the Bill, they would

also oppose the items in it, and therefore oppose this expenditure for Fremantle.

MR. SOLOMON: The hon. member need not trouble himself about that.

MR. DOHERTY: But really he was very much troubled about it, and members on the Government side asked for an expression of opinion from those members on the other side who represented Fremantle, and were opposed to improvements and other works included in the Bill.

MR. SOLOMON: Who opposed Bunbury?

MR. DOHERTY: The hon. member was afraid to oppose it, that was all. That side of the House was opposed generally to this loan scheme and the works included in it, and the two Opposition members for Fremantle were afraid to test the question again by opposing this item, because they had been beaten in the division on the second reading. What would the two members for Fremantle, sitting on the Opposition side, do in reference to this item? This was a great national work; but they having opposed the scheme of works in the Bill, what line would they take on this Fremantle item?

MR. HIGHAM supported the item. He was compelled to wonder as to how many of the numerous requirements for the Fremantle harbour works the Government intended to deal with out of this £70,000. He hoped the system of wharf sheds would be undertaken as early as possible, for the benefit of the trading community and of the Railway Department. He also hoped that a macadamised road would be constructed for the economical working of the sheds. As to hydraulic cranes referred to by one hon. member, the shipping community were of opinion that this system of loading was not applicable to the traffic at Fremantle at present, and it was not desired to have an expensive system of hydraulic cranes when the money could be better used for prosecuting the work already in hand.

MR. DOHERTY: Cranes would facilitate the quick dispatch of steamers in coaling.

MR. HIGHAM: Hydraulic cranes would not be the least use for coaling in connection with bunker requirements, but only in dealing with coal for export.

MR. A. FORREST: Was this money actually required? In view of the division on the second reading of the Bill, and the

objections urged from the opposite side, particularly by certain members for Fremantle, as to the colony not being justified in borrowing more money for public works, were those members for Fremantle justified in voting now for this expenditure of further money on the Fremantle harbour works? In view of the remarks made by leading members on the Opposition side, and the effort they made on the second reading to throw out the Bill, would it not be in the interests of the country to take a vote now on this item as to spending further money on the port of Fremantle?

**THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS:** In reply to the member for North Fremantle (Mr. Doherty), it was not intended from the amount provided in this schedule to purchase the hydraulic cranes mentioned, nor was it proposed to place such cranes on the south side of the river at all. It was hoped that provision might in future be made to deal with the coal traffic on the northern side, where that could be done with much greater facility. Replying to the member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham), as to what works could be carried out with this vote and the moneys now at the disposal of the Government, he would reply that at the end of June last there was a balance available of between £70,000 and £80,000, and that amount with the £70,000 in the schedule would, it was hoped, enable the works now in hand to be proceeded with. Three wharf sheds would be constructed, but it was hoped the amount at the disposal of the department would suffice for more. All necessary works mentioned from time to time by deputations and by hon. members would be carried out, and certain portions of these works must be completed to accommodate the mail steamers which were expected to call next August. This could not be done without the money, and unless funds were provided, the work must come to a standstill.

**THE PREMIER:** Although the item has been favourably received, he must say a few words with regard to the great work going on at Fremantle, which, when accomplished, would be one of the greatest imaginable boons to the country, which since its establishment had suffered, and was now suffering, by reason of its isolation. Both the friends and the

opponents of federation knew that the greatest obstacle in the way of this colony federating was its isolation. We were as isolated as an island in the Indian Ocean, and even more isolated than New Zealand; for people could reach New Zealand from Sydney or Melbourne by different routes, while there was only one means of communication with this colony, namely, by sea to King George's Sound or Fremantle. In fact it would be better if Western Australia were an island in the ocean, than to have 1,000 miles of unoccupied country separating us from the rest of Australia. But if that were true of Western Australia as a whole, or of the Government here who controlled one-third of the Australian continent, it was equally true of the inhabitants of the central portion of the colony, of which Fremantle was the port. Western Australians who had travelled in other countries knew the difficulties at present experienced in travelling, and the far greater difficulties in days gone by. Even now if one wished to go to the Eastern colonies one had to take a journey of 340 miles from Fremantle to Albany by rail, and had to await the arrival of the steamship, which might come in at any hour of the day or night. The traveller had sometimes to wait two or three hours on the Albany jetty in the cold, and possibly in the rain, till the tender-boat came to take him off to the steamer; and then he felt that he was once more in civilised surroundings. If one came here from other countries, and if the winds were adverse, the steamer perhaps stayed in the outer roads, and passengers in the middle of the night were told they must take their baggage and land on the Albany jetty; and when they got to it there were no commissaries from hotels awaiting them with vehicles. Those few hotels were generally full, and some travellers had to sleep on the floor or on the billiard-table till morning. These were every-day experiences, and he asked everyone who had travelled whether this state of affairs was creditable. He had travelled in Europe, in Great Britain, in America, and throughout all the Australian colonies except Queensland, and in no other place he had visited were the disadvantages to the traveller so great as in this country. He had never seen a place where the people were less eager to do

anything for the traveller, nor a place where with money in his pocket the traveller received less for it. Who would blame the Government for trying to end this state of affairs? It was desired to enable visitors to come to Fremantle direct. The object of the Government was to put the centre of the colony on the highroad of trade and commerce with the old country, to bring railway trains alongside the steamers at Fremantle, so that travellers might have some of the comforts and conveniences to which they were accustomed on board ship and in civilised countries. Such facilities could not be obtained in Albany. A good deal of odium had been cast on him for desiring this change; but he would ask any reasonable person to take a trip to Albany, to visit another colony, to come back again, and to say whether that person was satisfied with the Albany arrangements. The expenses, too, were very great; the traveller's hand was always in his pocket; and much money would be saved by being able to board a ship at Fremantle direct from the train.

MR. MORAN: And spend the money in Victoria?

THE PREMIER: People did not visit other colonies to spend money unnecessarily: at all events, much better spend it for the sake of comfort than for discomfort. Perth and Fremantle were the most populous towns in the colony. There must be at least 70,000 people within 12 miles radius of Perth. On the Coolgardie goldfields there were perhaps 50,000 to 60,000 people. Why should all these persons have to travel 200 or 300 miles more than was necessary in order to get on board ship for England? It was clearly the duty of the Government to place the metropolis on the highroad of commerce, for not only would this course prove a great convenience, but it would be to the great advantage of the colony; for people passing through Fremantle would see a very respectable town, and in Perth a very respectable city; and such travellers would probably visit the goldfields. But what attraction was there for passengers by the mail boats to land at Albany? If they went on shore, there was no accommodation for any considerable number of visitors. Even Fremantle would have to improve in that respect, but the wealth and the import-

ance of Fremantle would make its inhabitants equal to the occasion, and when several hundred passengers were coming and going every week in the mail boats, requiring accommodation, attention, and civil consideration, the people of Perth and Fremantle would provide for these requirements. In the first political speech he had ever made, he said the great thing he had to do was to make a harbour at Fremantle, so as to place that port and the metropolis on the high road of commerce between the old country and the rest of Australia. The present Government and their supporters had worked for this object during the last nine years, and, as must be admitted, they had been highly successful; in fact, more successful probably than any of them had hoped to be. The Fremantle harbour now accommodated all the ships which called at the port. There were few ships which could not be accommodated at the wharves, and in a short time the slight obstructions which might now prevent the larger steamers reaching the wharves would be removed. He trusted that next year he should have the great pleasure of being present to witness the arrival of the first P. and O. or Orient steamer which would make Fremantle a port of call. On the last loan appropriation there was a large amount of money still unexpended for this harbour, which sum, however, was insufficient to carry the work through the present year and into next year until Parliament again had an opportunity of voting a further supply. He proposed to move an amendment that "£25,000" be added after the words "including wharf sheds" in the parenthesis. This expenditure would be required to give greater facilities for shipping cargo, and it was believed that as soon as these extra funds were available, the work could be pushed on according to the plans which had been approved by the Chamber of Commerce and by the Works Department. It was regrettable to note that the two Fremantle members on the Opposition benches (Mr. Holmes and Mr. Solomon) had not even thought this matter sufficiently interesting to be present during this discussion.

MR. MITCHELL: They had run away.

MR. GREGORY: Only after the question had been put.

THE PREMIER: They relied on the Government to carry out this great work either by hook or by crook; in fact he had been informed that one of those hon. members had told another member of the House that the Premier would never desert his pet project of making the Fremantle harbour worthy of the colony, and a port of call for the mail steamers. That hon. member seemed to think that he (the Premier) could do this even without money; but unless money were available, the work could not be carried out. One would have thought that a matter of such great importance to Fremantle, to Perth, and to the whole colony, would have attracted sufficient attention from those two members to induce them to be present at this debate.

MR. LEAKE: The item must be passed.

THE PREMIER moved that "£25,000" be added within the parenthesis.

MR. MORGANS: What amount did the Engineer-in-Chief expect would be expended on the Fremantle harbour works before their completion?

THE PREMIER: Probably about £200,000 more.

MR. MORGANS: Then the colony must look forward to the expenditure of another quarter of a million upon these works. With the Premier, he regretted that two members representing Fremantle constituencies in the Opposition were not taking part in this important debate. Such hon. members should have been more interested than anyone else in the discussion. The Committee had a right to know from those gentlemen whether they were in accord with the views enunciated by the leader of the Opposition, and by the members for the Canning (Mr. Wilson) and for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth), that no expenditure should be made for these works except out of revenue.

MR. LEAKE: Who said that?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Nobody.

MR. MORGANS: Those gentlemen had expressed that view, which, however, had for its strongest exponent the member for Pilbarra (Mr. Kingsmill); and no Opposition member had raised his voice against it.

MR. WILSON asked whether the hon. member had not heard his speech.

MR. MORGANS withdrew his remark as regarded the member for the Canning

(Mr. Wilson), but he had heard the leader of the Opposition, and all through the debate the main contention of the Opposition appeared to be that no such expenditure as this should be made out of loan, and that no loan was justified where such expenditure was involved.

MR. WILSON: No.

MR. MORGANS: Then why did the Opposition divide the House on the Loan Bill, and try to defeat its second reading?

MR. LEAKE: The Bill was consequent upon the reappropriations of recent years.

MR. MORGANS: That did not affect his argument. If the objections of hon. members to further loans for these and other works had any real foundation, they must object to any expenditure from loan upon the Fremantle harbour or other works in the Bill. That work would cost one million sterling, and there would probably be extras costing another quarter of a million. That expenditure was probably justifiable, but if so, the Opposition should not have divided the House upon the Bill. The Government might well defer this large expenditure on harbour works, as the quarter of a million could be far more profitably invested in goldfields railways.

MR. DOHERTY: The harbour accommodation at Fremantle was insufficient for goldfields requirements.

MR. MORGANS: No. The only railway system paying to-day was that of the goldfields, and the further extension of such railways would add to the earnings of the department. Probably if he were to divide the House on this item it would be struck out, but he would not do so. His main object in speaking was to show how inconsistent were Opposition members in their opposition to this Loan Bill. They wished these large sums of money to be spent in harbour works, and yet only two or three nights ago made a most violent protest against the borrowing of £750,000 for carrying out these very works. Of course for political reasons Opposition members had to be inconsistent, but on great questions of the development of the colony's resources, and the carrying out of works admittedly necessary, such an attitude was altogether indefensible.

Item put and passed.



Item, Improvement harbours and rivers, £5,000:

MR. GEORGE asked for information as to this expenditure.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: This money was intended for dredging in Perth Water, in order to widen and deepen the existing channel for enabling ferry steamers to ply between Perth and the increasing settlement on the south side of the river. It was necessary to widen and deepen the existing channel, and to carry out the dredging of another channel for making a proper approach to the Mends Street jetty at South Perth. This amount was in addition to a vote already in existence for harbours and rivers.

MR. GEORGE: Was this money to be spent in the development of private property?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: South Perth had become settled recently with a large population, and there must be communication between South Perth and Perth by river steamers. The present channel was not deep enough for the traffic, and should be deepened and widened.

MR. GEORGE: Was this a portion of the scheme for dredging the River Swan from Perth to Fremantle, with the idea of bringing up steamers to Perth?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: No.

MR. GEORGE: Then this expenditure would be an absolute waste of money.

THE PREMIER: The ferry steamers could not get across the river conveniently at present, and what was to be done?

MR. GEORGE: There had been a scheme in the Works Department for years for dredging the river down to Fremantle.

THE PREMIER: It had never been authorised at all.

MR. GEORGE: Still he knew it to be a fact that there had been a scheme fructifying in the department for years.

THE PREMIER: There had been no Government scheme at all.

MR. GEORGE: Nature had not given to the Premier the capacity to understand the scheme now referred to. It was well known there had been this scheme, with drawings and estimates,

THE PREMIER: At whose request? It was not at the request of the Government, anyway.

MR. GEORGE: If this sum of £5,000 was for dredging part of the Swan River, that work should be part of the larger scheme.

Item put and passed.

Item, Lighthouses £20,000:

MR. GEORGE asked for information on this item.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: It was necessary to provide leading lights at Fremantle for steamers coming into the new harbour, and provision was made for carrying out the necessary work. It was also intended to provide a light at Breaksea Island (Albany).

Item put and passed.

Progress reported, and leave given to sit again.

#### BANK HOLIDAYS AMENDMENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and, on motion by MR. MORAN, read a first time.

#### COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL. IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration resumed from 23rd November.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 3 of 62 Vict., 28:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL asked leave to withdraw the amendment he had moved at the previous sitting.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that the following be inserted as Clause 2:—

Strike out all words after the word "by" in line 2, and insert the following in lieu thereof:—inserting at the beginning thereof "Every foreign company or"; and by striking out in line 6 thereof the words "registration of the company in the Colony," and by inserting in lieu thereof the words "deposit in the office of the Registrar of the power of attorney, in accordance with Section One hundred and ninety-eight of the Companies Act, 1893"; and by striking out the third paragraph of the said section, and by inserting in lieu thereof "Every such foreign company, or the attorney of such company, failing or refusing to comply with the provisions of this section shall incur a penalty not exceeding £50 for every day during which such refusal or non-compliance shall continue, to be recovered in a summary manner before any two justices of

the peace or by action or suit in the Supreme Court, and shall be a charge on the property of the Company, and in addition thereto, if such default continues for the space of three calendar months, the company and every person acting as trustee or agent for the company or otherwise on its behalf, shall thereafter be incapable while so in default of bringing or maintaining in Western Australia any action, set-off, counterclaim, or other legal proceeding whatsoever in the said Colony: Provided always, that the attorney of such company may recover from the company the amount of any penalty inflicted upon him, together with all his costs and expenses."

MR. MORGANS said he was glad to see this clause proposed, but the penalty was not sufficient. To make the provision effective there should be a penalty of £100.

SIR JAMES LEE STEERE: And a minimum.

MR. MORGANS: Yes; a minimum penalty, say, of £5 a day.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The only objection was that if a minimum were fixed, the effect would be that justices in this colony who would have to administer the Bill would invariably inflict only the minimum penalty. As this clause applied to large and wealthy companies, it appeared desirable to increase the penalty as had been suggested, and not to fix a minimum, because of the practice amongst justices which he had pointed out.

MR. MORGANS accordingly moved, as an amendment, that the amount of penalty be £100 in lieu of £50.

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

Clause 3—Repeal of 62 Vict., 28, s. 4:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that the clause be struck out, with the view of inserting the following in lieu of it:—

If by the constitution of the foreign company, the company or its directors have power to reject a transfer of shares, such power shall, in respect of transfers tendered for registration in the colony, be vested in the attorney for the company or the local board of directors.

Amendment put and passed, the clause struck out, and the new clause inserted.

Clause 4—On reconstruction, liquidator or company to reserve colonial members' share of consideration:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that in Sub-clause 2, line 4, the word "regulation" be struck out, and "section"

inserted in lieu thereof; also in line 5 that the word "received" be struck out, and "filed" inserted; also at the end of the clause, to insert the following as Sub-clause 3.

Before filing any declaration purporting to comply with Act, the Registrar shall examine the same and satisfy himself of such compliance.

The object was to place on the Registrar the duty of satisfying himself that any declarations lodged with him were strictly in accord with the law, so that he might examine each declaration and not pass any in a perfunctory manner.

Amendments put and passed, and the clause as amended agreed to.

Clause 5—agreed to.

Clause 6—Notice of any right or option accruing to members to be given in *Gazette*, and their rights reversed:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that in paragraph 2, line 9, the words "in respect of any contract, dealing, or transaction" be struck out, and "whatsoever" inserted in lieu thereof. The object was to absolutely prevent a company from either bringing or defending an action for a breach of contract as well as for a tort.

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

Clause 7—agreed to.

Clause 8—Repeal of 62 Vict., 28, section 6; copy of register of members to be kept:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL moved that in line 1 the following words be struck out: "Section 6 of the said Act is hereby repealed"; also, in line 9, that after "penalties" the words "and be subject to the like disabilities" be inserted.

MR. MORGANS said he had always doubted the necessity for this clause, because, looking to the position of a company in London in regard to holders of shares in this colony, he did not see much advantage in having a copy of the London register kept in the colony; and when we realised that the names on the register in London were changing day by day, there was not much to be gained by this compulsory requirement. The difficulty could be got over by compelling the issue of colonial shares in every company, and the keeping of a register of colonial shares in the colony. This would be a far more practical plan; we should have

a register of the shareholders in Western Australia kept within the colony.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** That was already provided for.

**MR. MORGANS:** This compulsory clause would cause unnecessary irritation, and the section should be struck out of the existing Act.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** London shareholders moved or acted in solid bodies, and the object of the section was to give a corresponding advantage to colonial shareholders, who could communicate with London and checkmate such movements when adverse. To avoid harshness, it was provided that after a transfer was made in London a corresponding entry must be made in the colonial register within three months. This would throw much work on the company and would doubtless be resented by London directorates; but the advantage to the colony was tangible, and the trouble caused to companies was more than counterbalanced by the relief given to colonial shareholders.

**MR. A. FORREST:** This clause was unnecessary. The main object of the Bill was to facilitate transfers between the colony and England. For a mine like the Great Boulder to keep a complete copy of their London register in this colony would involve great expense and would be impracticable. Only a register of colonial shareholders was required.

**MR. MORGANS:** Though none sympathised less with London companies than he, it was not obvious what advantage would be gained by having particulars of the English share list in the colony. A London company could, under the English Acts, carry any resolution, if they had the necessary majority of shareholders. To do so under this Bill, such company must give Western Australian shareholders notice of these resolutions, so that the interests of the latter might be protected; but of what use would be a copy of the English share register in the colonial office? This clause would provoke more animosity against the Bill than any other, with no compensating advantage, and should be struck out. Regarding the issue of colonial shares, this must be done by authority of the local office. Provision

for such issue was not clearly made in the Bill.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** That was provided for by the fact that every transfer on the colonial register was subject to the constitution of the company as administered by its attorney. Thus there was no necessity to send transfers to London, and to await their return. Regarding Clause 8, he had sunk his own opinion in deference to goldfields members. If the Committee thought fit, let the clause be struck out.

**MR. A. FORREST:** It would be unworkable.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** Not unworkable, but it would involve much trouble and expense to companies.

**MR. MORAN:** Better withdraw the clause. If necessary, further legislation could in future be introduced. A strong agitation against the clause in the old country would be undesirable.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** moved that the clause be struck out.

Amendment put and passed, and the clause struck out.

Clause 9—Amendment to 58 Vict., No. 8, Sec. 29:

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** moved that all words after "section" in line 1 be struck out, and the following inserted:

*Repeal.*—Four of the Act passed in the Sixty-first year of Her Majesty, numbered thirty-five, and Sections four and six of the Act passed in the Sixty-second year of Her Majesty, numbered twenty-eight, are hereby repealed, and Section eight of the last-mentioned Act is hereby amended by inserting in line 2, after "engaged in," the words "or authorises to engage in and." Section twenty-nine, sub-section one, of the last-mentioned Act is further amended by striking out the words "and distinguishing each share by its number."

In the 1897 Act, Section 4, the words "manager," etc., were used clearly in error, for that word was totally inapplicable, "attorney" being correct. That section had therefore been redrafted and divided into four sub-sections, which he would subsequently move as a new clause.

**MR. MORGANS:** What was the status of a company registered in London regarding the issue of scrip in this colony? A colonial shareholder wishing to have scrip from England transferred to him handed the scrip to the company's attorney, but that transfer could not be

recognised till approved in London. Could a company under the Bill issue colonial scrip transferable in London, which could be bartered without reference to London?

**THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL:** Yes. To register scrip on the colonial register the colonial shareholder must apply to have his name transferred from the English register, and for that purpose his transfer must go to London, where it would be approved if there were no objection by reason of unpaid calls. Once on the colonial register, the scrip might be transferred from hand to hand without further reference to London. If London companies would take advantage of the Colonial Registers Act passed by the Imperial Parliament in 1883, there would be no necessity for this Bill.

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

**New Clause :**

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** moved the following, to stand as Clause 3 :

If by the constitution of the foreign company, the company or its directors have power to reject a transfer of shares, such power shall in respect of transfers tendered for registration in the Colony, be vested in the attorney for the company, or the local board of directors.

The clause would provide that while English companies had the right to reject transfers, that right should be exercised through the colonial attorneys.

**MR. A. FORREST:** Shareholders now on the colonial register forwarded certificates to London which the companies must register, and an English shareholder wishing to sell scrip in this colony must send it here. The present system worked well, and transfers were easily made.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** It was only sought to legislate for colonial shareholders. If an English shareholder bought colonial scrip, such scrip was necessarily entered on the English register, the place of registration being determined by the domicile of the shareholder.

**MR. A. FORREST:** But the scrip must first be sent here to be taken off the colonial register.

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL:** Undoubtedly.

Clause put and passed.

**New Clause :**

**THE ATTORNEY GENERAL** moved the following, to stand as Clause 4 :

(1.) Any shareholder in a foreign company, who desires to be registered in the colonial

register, may deliver an application in the form of the First Schedule hereto, together with a certificate of the shares in respect of which he desires to be registered, to the attorney of the company at its registered office in the colony.

(2.) The attorney shall thereupon give to the shareholder a certificate of deposit in the form of the Second Schedule hereto, and shall with due diligence forward the share certificate to the principal registered office of the company, and if it there appears that no encumbrances or unpaid calls are registered against or due upon the shares, the shares shall be transferred to the colonial register.

(3.) Upon production of the said certificate of deposit the attorney shall issue to the shareholder a certificate indorsed with the words "Colonial Register," showing that he is the proprietor of the shares, and such certificate shall be of the same force and effect as the superseded certificate.

(4.) For any failure or refusal to comply with this section, the company or its attorney shall respectively incur the like penalties, and suffer the like disabilities as prescribed by Section two hereof.

Section 4 of the 1897 Act, which recently gave rise to adverse comment, was by this clause split up into four subsections, embodying the necessary alterations.

New clause put and passed.

**Schedules :**

On motion by the **ATTORNEY GENERAL** two new schedules added to the Bill.

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

**WESTERN AUSTRALIAN CONTINGENT**  
—TELEGRAM.

**THE PREMIER**, before moving the adjournment, said : With the permission of hon. members, I should like to inform the House that His Excellency the Governor has just received a cablegram from Sir Alfred Milner, the Governor of Cape Colony, dated 28th November, with reference to our military contingent, as follows :—

Just returned from visit to Australian contingent now in camp a few miles from Cape Town. West Australians a set of splendid-looking men, extremely fit and keen for active service. Contingent going to the front immediately, at which all are delighted.

(General applause.)

**ADJOURNMENT.**

The House adjourned at six minutes to 11 o'clock until the next Monday.