

A. C. Onslow) said the Bill had been amended to deal with such cases.

MR. CROWTHER: Then, in my opinion, there is not a blot on the Bill.

MR. S. H. PARKER said he could not allow the second reading of the Bill to pass without adding his meed of praise for the excellent manner in which the work of consolidation had been done, and expressing his appreciation of the value of the service performed in connection with the drafting of the Bill, and the admirable manner in which it had been arranged with a view to facilitate the work of reference.

The motion for the second reading of the Bill was then agreed to.

INCREASE OF MEMBERS BILL.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford), in moving the second reading of a Bill to increase the number of members to serve in the Legislative Council, by having two more representatives for the Northern part of the Colony, said the Bill was framed upon the lines of the resolution passed by the House on the subject. It provided that the Council, instead of consisting of twenty-one members as at present, shall consist of twenty-four, eight of whom (being one-third of the whole number) shall be appointed by the Governor, subject to the approval of Her Majesty, and the remainder elected by the people. It was proposed that the present member for the North District shall retain his seat, which proposal was no innovation, as the same provision was made when the Murray District was separated from the Fremantle electorate, when the sitting members for the latter district were allowed to retain their seats.

The Bill was read a second time, and its committal made an Order of the Day for Wednesday.

DOG BILL.

This Bill was further considered in Committee, when the new clause introduced by Mr. Burt—empowering Resident Magistrates to cause one dog to be registered on behalf of any male aboriginal, without payment of a license

fee—(*Vide* p. 213 *ante*)—was agreed to, and the Bill reported.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Wednesday, 30th August, 1882.

Inspection of Vessels under Passengers Act—Eastern Railway: Survey and Construction of Third Section—Coastal Steam Service: Contract and Breakdown of "Rob Roy"—Responsible Government: Introduction of—International Fisheries Exhibition—Message (No. 3): Consideration of—Legislative Council Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at seven o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

INSPECTION OF VESSELS UNDER THE PASSENGERS ACT.

MR. SHENTON, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Secretary, "Whether he could inform the House "how many inspections of steamers and "coasters carrying passengers had been "made by the officer appointed to carry "out the provisions of 'The Passengers "Act,' from January 1st, 1881, to July "1st, 1882, inclusive?"

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) replied that, between the dates mentioned, the following inspections had been made: of steam ships, 90; sea going sailing ships, 70; coasters, 72. There are three officers detailed to carry out the provisions of the Act at Fremantle.

SURVEY AND CONSTRUCTION OF THIRD SECTION OF EASTERN RAILWAY.

MR. SHENTON, in accordance with notice, asked the Colonial Secretary— "(a.) When it is proposed to build the "Railway Station at Guildford? (b.) "How long will it take to complete the

“final survey of the Third Section of the Eastern Railway? (c.) What period of time it is proposed to embody in the tender for the construction of the Third Section?”

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) replied:—As to (a.) that the station is already built, and will afford as much accommodation as is necessary when the terminus of the Eastern Railway is removed from Guildford to Chidlow's Well. As to (b.)—about eight months. With regard to (c.), the period of time would entirely depend upon the amount of work shown to be necessary, by the final survey of the section.

COASTAL STEAM SERVICE CONTRACT AND THE “ROB ROY” BREAKDOWN.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford), in reply to Mr. Steere's question (*Vide* p. 213 *ante*) as to a breach of contract between Messrs. Lilly & Co. and the Government by the withdrawal of the third steamer, said: “The Government is advised that the correspondence which has taken place between the Government and Lilly & Co., upon the ‘break-down of the ‘Rob Roy,’ amounts to an abandonment for the time being on the part of the Government to their right to put an end to the contract under the 14th paragraph. Fresh proposals have been entertained, and, until a further breach occurs, the Government is precluded at present from saying that the contract has been broken.”

INTRODUCTION OF RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

MR. S. H. PARKER, in moving, in accordance with notice, “That an Humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased during the present Session of the Legislative Council to introduce a Bill to amend the Constitution, by conferring on the Colony a ‘system of Responsible Government,” said: Sir—I feel considerable trepidation in approaching the consideration of this momentous subject. I observe some hon. members smiling already, but I do not think we ought to approach the consideration of this question with any degree of levity. We ought to approach it, in my opinion, with a due regard to

its importance, and as one of the most momentous questions that can occupy the attention of this House. I trust, therefore, that hon. members will deal with the subject this evening in all seriousness, regarding it as I do as one fraught with the utmost importance as regards the welfare and future prosperity of the country. I hope hon. members, in voting upon the subject to-night, will do so according to the dictates of their own conscience, animated only by their own honest convictions, and free from all other considerations than a regard to the best interests of the Colony. It is a subject that has been before this House and before the country for the last eight years. Eight years ago the hon. member for the Swan, now sitting on my right, brought this question before the Legislature of the day, in the belief that the time had then arrived when it would tend much to the future progress of the Colony to establish here a system of Responsible Government. The hon. member moved for a Select Committee to draw up a constitution, and to bring in a Bill to carry out that object; but, another hon. member, who now sits on my left (Mr. Crowther), moved an amendment—at the request, I believe, of the Government—affirming the desirability of adopting Responsible Government, and praying that His Excellency the Governor would introduce the necessary measure for that purpose. That amendment was all but unanimously carried, and, adopting the precedent then established, I bring forward this resolution to-night, asking the Governor to introduce a Bill to amend the constitution. I do so in full confidence that, if this resolution is affirmed, the Government will bring in such a measure as will meet with the approval of a majority of the members of this Honorable House. Before proceeding any further, I deem it right to state that in anything I may say this evening with regard to the actions of the Government, I do not mean anything personal to the hon. gentlemen now occupying the Treasury bench. I desire to eschew personalities altogether in dealing with this question; and, in commenting upon the Government and their measures, I desire it to be distinctly understood that I am referring to the Government, in the

abstract, and not personally. The first question then we have to consider in dealing with this subject is, whether the present is an opportune time for introducing such a measure as is contemplated in this resolution, whether the present is an appropriate occasion for introducing the proposed constitutional change. It appears to be admitted on all hands that our existing form of Government is a mere stepping-stone to the attainment of that more perfect system of self-government under which the ministry of the day shall be held responsible to the Legislature, and through the Legislature to the country at large. That position seems to have been admitted from the very first, on all hands,—as well by Her Majesty's Government as by the members of this House. I find on reference to a despatch written by Her Majesty's Secretary of State, so late back as 1874, Lord Carnarvon in writing to Governor Robinson on this subject says: "It is, I hope, quite unnecessary for me to say that in these remarks I am and can be actuated by no feeling of indisposition towards those principles of Responsible Government which have had full play elsewhere on the Australian continent, and have reproduced the free institutions of the mother country in no unworthy form. Those institutions are the proper and desirable end to which the Colony tends, at which it must in time arrive, and towards which all those, whether there or at home, who are concerned in the administration of its affairs, ought to direct their measures. The question in my opinion is merely one of time, and as soon as it can be shown that by population, revenue, and the other conditions of self-government, the Colony is qualified for the change, no one will welcome that change more cordially than myself." It appears then that both Her Majesty's Government on the one hand, and this Honorable House on the other hand, are unanimously of opinion that we must come to Responsible Government sooner or later, and that its adoption is simply a question of expediency, a question of opportunity. And what I propose to address myself mainly to this evening is a consideration of the question, whether the time has not now arrived when we

should take upon ourselves the responsibilities of a system of self-government. I have quoted this despatch from the Secretary of State in order to show the House that Her Majesty's Government is quite in accord with me when I state that this question is merely a question of time. The hon. member for Swan, too, in addressing this Council upon the subject, eight years ago, acknowledged—or, I should say urged as an argument in favor of the adoption of the step which the present resolution contemplates—that the existing form of government is simply a stepping-stone to the attainment of the full rights and privileges of a system of ministerial responsibility. In a series of resolutions prepared by the hon. member, and submitted to this House in January, 1875,—resolutions which were adopted by a majority of 15 to 3—the hon. member says: "At the time when the present modified form of representative government was introduced, His Excellency Governor Weld fairly warned the colonists that it was the first step towards a system of ministerial responsibility, and that, day by day, they (the members of that House) would realise the necessity for work, for self-reliance and self-sacrifice—principles on which they are fully prepared to act." In another resolution of the same series, the hon. member said, and this House endorsed the sentiment: "The members of this Council, from the date when the present constitution was inaugurated in 1870, have steadily looked forward to the time when the colonists would be permitted to assume full power in the regulation and management of their local transactions,—they have, as it were, been educating to this end; and, fully alive to the importance of the change they seek, they have sought it with a deep sense of the responsibility devolving upon them, and in the full belief that the change is one that will be beneficial to the interests of the Colony and its inhabitants." It will thus be seen that it is recognised as well by the Home Government as by the members of this House that the present constitution is simply the prelude to the enjoyment of those freer institutions to which every British community aspires, and that the only question for our consideration is

the question of whether the time has now arrived for this Colony to enter upon the enjoyment of those privileges, and to take upon itself the burdens and responsibilities of self-government. So long ago as 1874 this House came to the full conclusion that the time for doing so had even then arrived; but, in view of the fact that Her Majesty's Government did not consider it advisable for the Colony to take that step, without further delay, the matter was not pressed, and no further action was taken at that time to bring about the desired end. Still the fact remains that it was unanimously conceded, so far as the members of this House were concerned, that the moment had arrived in the history of the Colony when it might with advantage throw off its constitutional trammels and enter upon the full privileges of a freer and more progressive system of government. Since then the Colony has advanced in all the elements of material prosperity, and, if it was in a position eight years ago to assume the full control of its own affairs, it is ten times more capable of doing so now. I also notice that in the course of the debate which took place in this House on that occasion, the hon. member for Fremantle (Mr. MARMION), alluding to the condition of the Colony at that time, and its fitness for assuming the responsibilities of self-government, said: "Relatively speaking, the other Australian colonies, when they adopted self-government, were not in a more prosperous condition than this Colony is at the present time." That was in 1875, and surely if the hon. member considered that at that time the Colony was sufficiently advanced, and sufficiently prosperous, to take upon itself the burden of self-government, the hon. member must admit that we are in a much better position to-day for doing so, and therefore I think I am bound to get the hon. member's support to this resolution. [Mr. MARMION: Oh, yes, certainly.] Then we go on to 1878, when the question again came before this House, and the position of affairs was reversed, the resolution introduced in favor of the immediate adoption of Responsible Government being rejected in favor of an amendment affirming that the desired change might be further deferred. All the speakers, however, who took part in

the debate still admitted that the adoption by the Colony of the proposed change was only a question of time. The amendments which were adopted on that occasion admitted that public feeling in favor of the early introduction of constitutional reform was at that time stronger than it had ever been, and went so far as to say that the Colony must take upon itself the privileges of self-government unless the Legislature was granted greater discretionary power to carry into effect such measures as it deemed conducive to the welfare of the Colony,—in other words, unless the Home Government relaxed the stringent manner in which it exercised its control over the affairs of the Colony, from Downing Street. The hon. member for Geraldton, himself, the mover of the amendments referred to, went so far as to say that unless the Imperial Government relaxed its supervision over the work of this House, it would be the duty of the House—a duty which it owed to the country—to reconsider the whole subject, and in some way or other take the entire management of our affairs upon our own shoulders. I would ask the hon. member whether the Imperial Government has in any way relaxed its supervision, or whether the Secretary of State does not still interfere in almost all matters of detail connected with the Administration of the Colony. [Mr. BROWN: No.] The hon. member says no. Why, sir, I was quite humiliated—I say it advisedly—I was quite humiliated the other day when I saw from the papers which were presented to this House by His Excellency the Governor, that even such a paltry matter as a question regarding a subordinate officer like the locomotive foreman at Fremantle had been made the subject of voluminous despatches between the Governor and the Secretary of State. Even in such a trifling matter as that, the Secretary of State was asked—not in plain terms perhaps, but inferentially—to advise what course ought to be pursued. I say again it is humiliating to me, and it must be humiliating to this Honorable House, and humiliating to the country, to find that even such petty departmental disputes as these have to be referred sixteen thousand miles away, for the purpose of being reviewed by Her Majesty's Government,

who, evidently, are not disposed in any way, so long as we remain under the present constitution, to relax their control over our affairs. Another proof of this was afforded last year, when this House passed a series of resolutions in favor of raising a loan of £310,000 for extending the Eastern Railway to York and for constructing a Telegraph Line to the North-West. What was the result? Did not the Secretary of State interfere with the details of that scheme? Did he not interfere with it to mar it? Did he not tell us he could not think of allowing us to borrow enough to construct a line of railway all the way to York, or a line of telegraph all the way to Roebourne, but that we must content ourselves with a railway half way, and a telegraph half way—a railway with its terminus in the middle of a forest, and a telegraph leading into the bush, where it could not possibly have been utilised, except by the noble savage, to whom it would probably have been an object of absorbing interest? Had it not been for the action of the Secretary of State in interfering with the details of this scheme, we should have had this railway to York completed at far less cost than we shall now. [AN HON. MEMBER: NO.] I say yes, and for this reason: if the contract for the whole line had been taken in one, instead of piecemeal, it would necessarily have been taken at considerably less than it could possibly be constructed when taken in sections, and in all probability would have been completed to York in the course of next year, whereas now a period of two or three years must elapse before railway communication is established with the Eastern Districts, thus entailing very considerable loss, delay, and inconvenience, simply because the Secretary of State insisted upon interfering with the details of a scheme which he evidently, by his decision, knew nothing at all about. The same again with the North-West telegraph. Had it not been for the interference of the Secretary of State, in insisting upon improving the original scheme, and deciding that the line might be constructed half way, into an uninhabited desert, instead of into a settled portion of the Colony, we should probably by this time be connected with our important Northern settlements, and instead of

having received £13,000 in land revenue from the Kimberley District, we should have received double that amount, as we should then have been in communication with those distant settlements, and possessed of some reliable information with reference to this latest acquisition to our territory, instead of being, as at present, cut off from all communication with this important part of the Colony. So much then for the interference of the Secretary of State. In the series of resolutions proposed by my hon. friend the member for Swan, in 1875, already referred to, and to which I may here state I am very much indebted, setting forth as they do in language much more forcible than I have at my command the advantages which would accrue to the Colony from the adoption of self-government, and pointing out the reasons which should induce us to discard the present constitution for that of ministerial responsibility,—in those resolutions, so admirably and concisely worded, I find another argument, as applicable to the present time as it was when the resolutions were first put forward. "It is recognised," Mr. Steere said, "by Lord Carnarvon that the introduction of Responsible Government is the proper and desirable end to which the Colony tends, and to which it must come; and this Council submits, with respect, that it is far better that Responsible Government should be introduced at a time when the public business of the Colony is small, and requires no very great amount of talent to carry it on, when there are no differences of opinion between the Government and the people, when no spirit of dissatisfaction exists, and when there are, notably, men of different opinions ready to assume office, than at a time when, as in all probability may shortly be the case, changes may occur which may cause the introduction of a different class of population, who may not be so easily governed, when causes of disaffection may arise, when a change of constitution may be literally forced on the country, and power be possibly placed in unworthy hands." These arguments, I repeat, apply with equal, if not greater force at the present day than they did seven years ago. Compara-

tively speaking, the public business of the Colony is still small, and it cannot be said that it requires any very great amount of talent to carry it on. There is no great difference of opinion between the Government and the public, and certainly no spirit of disaffection exists. There are still men of different opinions ready to assume office. [Cries of "Question," and "No."] I maintain there are more men available for carrying on a system of ministerial Government now than there were then. [SEVERAL HON. MEMBERS: No.] If it is simply a question of men, I may say here, so that there should be no doubt about it,—if this House will pass a Bill giving us the privileges of self-government, I am quite prepared myself to undertake the task of forming a Ministry. [Cheers and laughter.] Hon. members may laugh, but I say it for this reason,—that there shall be no mistake about it, for, on the last occasion I brought this question before the House, I was modest enough, when asked by an hon. member outside whether I was prepared to accept the responsibility of forming a ministry in the event of Responsible Government being adopted,—I was modest enough to say that I would leave that task to better men, and this was afterwards used as an argument against the motion which I brought forward in the House; it was said that, though I advocated the change, I was yet not prepared to undertake to form a ministry. But I am not so modest to-night, and, in furtherance of the object which the advocates of Responsible Government have in view, I tell hon. members that I shall be prepared to accept the task of forming a ministry to carry on Her Majesty's Government. When I say this, I do not mean that I should intrude my services upon the country. I would prefer to see others undertaking this patriotic duty—my hon. friend on the right, for instance (Mr. Steere). But, if no one else should be prepared to accept the responsibility, I myself would accept it. There is another point which should not be lost sight of, in considering the opportunity now afforded for seeking constitutional change, and as an argument in favor of present action. I allude to the fact that the Liberals are in power at home, and there is very little doubt our

efforts to secure the privileges of self-government would be more likely to prove successful, and that we should be treated with more liberality than if a Conservative Government were in power. Let me again revert to the resolutions which were adopted by this House in 1875: the more I look at them the more indebted do I feel to the hon. member on my right for having placed them on record. "In requesting the Governor," it is said, "to transmit for the consideration of Lord Carnarvon the foregoing remarks that have with all due respect been made on His Lordship's despatch, this Council desires to point out that, in their opinion, delay in the inauguration of the form of government sought is simply delay in the progress of the Colony." That sentiment was endorsed in this House by a majority of 15 to 3, seven years ago, and, if true then—and who will gainsay it—it is much truer now. The Colony to-day is in every way better able to bear the burdens of self-government than it was when these resolutions were affirmed. ["Question."] Does any hon. member doubt it? Let me refer for a moment to the statistical tables placed before this House the other day, prepared by the Private Secretary for the information of His Excellency the Governor. I will first of all refer to the number of our population. As these tables only come up to 1881, a year ago, I will take for the purposes of comparison the figures given for the year preceeding that when these resolutions were adopted by the House. I find that in 1873 the population of the Colony was 25,761, and in 1881 the number had increased to 30,013. The revenue in 1873 only amounted to £134,831, whereas last year it amounted to no less than £254,313, or nearly double. These figures, I may state, include the Imperial grant for magistracy and police, in each year. But although there is this large increase in the public revenue, I regret to find that there has also been a corresponding increase in the public expenditure, which in 1873 was £114,269, whereas last year it reached £197,386. Our imports during the same period increased from £297,327 in the first named year to £404,831 in 1881; while our exports have nearly doubled, the total value last year being £502,769 as compared with £265,217 in

1872. Our exports of wool alone increased in value from £132,099 to £256,689, and our sheep, which in 1873 numbered 748,536, last year numbered over one million and a quarter, showing an increase of about half a million. Therefore, I say, comparing the statistics of the past with the present, it must be acknowledged—no one can deny it—that if the Colony was prepared to undertake the burden of self-government eight years ago, it is ten times better prepared to accept that responsibility now, and it may be said with tenfold force that we are capable, and willing, and prepared to manage our own affairs. It may be said—I have heard it urged as an argument against our adopting self-government—that our population is too small to be entrusted with the sole control of so large a territory—that 30,000 people cannot be expected to bear the burthen which Responsible Government must of necessity impose upon any community. But I find that in Natal, which like ourselves has been agitating for self-government, the European settlers do not number much more than 20,000, and the Imperial Government was not averse to that colony undertaking the responsibilities of governing itself, although in doing so it would assume the sole control of a native population estimated at 400,000. While I am on this subject, I should like to refer to a very interesting article which appeared not long ago in the *London Times* upon this very question of the adoption of Responsible Government by the people of Natal. "It may be remembered," the *Times* says, "that a Select Committee of the local Legislature reported last December in favor of the establishment of Responsible Government in that Colony. Natal, the Committee point out, is the only portion of South Africa to which powers of self-government have not been conceded." That is exactly our position, among these Australian provinces. Western Australia is the only portion of the continent that has not been entrusted with the power of governing itself. The *Times* goes on to state that the Select Committee referred to state, with regard to Natal, that "a freer form of Government will relieve the Crown from responsibilities, secure greater Legislative vigour, free a loyal

community from the consciousness of political inferiority, and infuse through all classes a desire to participate in the privileges of a citizenship now little better than a name." Sir, no words at my command can so eloquently describe the position of our Colony as these words of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council of Natal. One of the principal reasons which has animated me in bringing forward this question of constitutional reform, is the feeling that the privileges of citizenship which the people of this Colony now enjoy are privileges which are little better than a name, and that they will remain so until we obtain the privilege of governing ourselves under those free institutions to which Englishmen in every country and in every clime aspire. I admit that our existing form of Government is an improvement upon that we possessed before. It is better calculated to develop a spirit of self-help than if we had remained a Crown Colony, pure and simple. We have at any rate the privilege of debate, we have the right of discussing public measures, and we are at liberty to vote upon such measures while the House is in Session. But when we leave this House and the Session is over, we take little or no interest in public affairs. (Cries of No, no.) A great many of us, at any rate, cease to do so—those who like myself look forward to the day when we shall secure greater Legislative vigour, and enjoy the privileges of a citizenship which is something better than a name." I say again, hardly any interest is felt in public affairs, nor can it be expected to be felt, under such a constitution as this, by a community conscious of its political inferiority, and of the powerlessness of its chosen representatives. How different would it be did the Colony enjoy the privileges of those freer institutions which are enjoyed by our neighbors, under which every citizen feels that not only has he a voice in the Government of the country, not only that he may become a member of the Legislature of his country, but that he may reasonably aspire to take an active part in the administration of its public affairs,—which is more than he can do under our present constitution. We hear a great deal about the apathy of

electors and their indifference as regards political matters, but this is simply the result of the form of Government under which they live. They know they can do nothing, and they know that having returned representatives to this House those representatives are powerless for good, unless their actions are in accord with the wishes of the Executive Government, and those wishes are in harmony with Downing Street views. Under such influences as these, is it any wonder that a community shows itself apathetic and indifferent? This feeling is reflected in their representatives in this House, who feel in their hearts that they are incapable of influencing the destinies of the country, and that they simply sit here to advise and to talk, and that for all practical purposes they may as well stop at home. ["No, no."] I can speak for myself, and I know I often feel that it is simply waste of time our meeting here for the purpose of what the hon. member for the Swan once said we were called together, namely, to register the edicts of the Governor. When we come here we know we have reached the goal; we know we dare not aspire to any more active share in the administration of public affairs, and we are naturally imbued with the consciousness of this political inferiority. But let the public feel that they have a real voice in the government of the Colony; let them feel that under a freer constitution they may participate in the privileges to true citizenship; let them be imbued with a sturdy feeling of self-reliance, and be placed on a footing of political equality with their neighbors in the other colonies of the Australian group; remove the feeling that ours is the only member of the family unfitted to be entrusted with the powers of self-government, and the present apathy as regards political affairs would soon give place to a lively and intelligent interest in public matters. Of course I do not mean to say that Responsible Government is an all-perfect form of government; I do not advocate its adoption as a panacea for all the political ills which a country is heir to. Responsible Government undoubtedly has its disadvantages, as well as its advantages, and probably if I failed to point out some of those disadvantages I might be considered as not having

honestly discharged the duty which I owe to my country, in urging upon it to take upon itself the obligations of self-government. Here again I must acknowledge my indebtedness to those resolutions which were affirmed by this House seven years ago, which seem to me to deal in a clear and forcible manner with every phase of this question. It is admitted on all hands that the great want of the Colony is population. The two great problems awaiting solution are, how to induce people in the first place to come here, and in the second place how to induce them to remain with us when they do come. We all know that notwithstanding the thousands of pounds which the Colony has spent on immigration, it has not resulted in any actual increase in our population. Referring to this phase of the question, these resolutions say: "Standing alone, as this Colony does, among the Australian group, as the only Colony not possessing Responsible Government, its inhabitants are looked down upon as unfit to be trusted with those privileges which have elsewhere been accorded to their fellow countrymen—[Mr. BROWN: "No, no.]"—and the consequent result is "that the working classes of the Eastern colonies, no matter what inducements may here offer, will not settle in Western Australia and lose those privileges which they prize, and must in such case give up." I feel myself, and I know the feeling is one that is shared by others who have given the subject any consideration, that if this was true in 1875, it is equally true this day. "No matter what public works may be undertaken," the resolution goes on to say, "or what terms may be offered, it is found impracticable to induce laborers in any number to come to Western Australia, even temporarily; and the few who have been induced to come have left, satisfied with their prospects in regard to work and remuneration, but dissatisfied at the absence of those institutions to which they have been elsewhere accustomed." Is not that still the case? [Mr. BROWN: No.] Do we not still find that those emigrants who come to our shores become restless and dissatisfied, under a form of government which deprives them from participating in the political

freedom and privileges which they have been accustomed to, and which they have inherited from their forefathers,—those sturdy burghers of the olden time who were the best custodians of British freedom? Is it not still the fact that these people, satisfied enough as regards work and remuneration, become dissatisfied at the absence of those free institutions to which they have been accustomed, and turn their backs upon the Colony? Hon. members are as well aware as I am that such is the case, and that this argument, used with such force in 1875, applies with equal force to-day. Listen, again, to another of those resolutions: “The Colony, under its present constitution, can, in the opinion of this Council, never hope to hold its own or compete with the other Australian colonies, whose prosperity dates from the introduction of Responsible Government; but, placed on an equal footing with its neighbors, open to the capital and enterprise of those whose attention is now turned in its direction, and freed from the trammels with which it is now bound, it will, in their opinion, progress in a far more rapid manner than it has hitherto done, and shortly become, not merely in name, but *de facto*, no unworthy member of the Australian group.” Is there any hon. member in this House who will gain-say that? Is there any hon. member who will venture to deny that, until we attain the same privileges as our neighbors, and are entrusted with those powers of self-government which have been conceded to every other member of the group, we can ever hope to be placed upon a footing of political equality with them, or attain that position which the Colony by its immense extent of territory and its varied resources entitle it to occupy? I ask the members of this Honorable House, I ask Her Majesty’s Government, to “free a loyal community from the consciousness of this political inferiority.” I have already dealt with the disadvantages which the Colony suffers under by reason of having to submit its legislation, and even questions of departmental detail, for the review of an authority sixteen thousand miles away, but the next of these admirable series of resolutions deals so concisely with that phase of the question that I hope I may be pardoned

if I direct the attention of the House to it, and I would ask hon. members whether it does not apply with as much force to-day as it did when it was first submitted to, and affirmed by this Council seven years ago. “The delay,” it says, “caused in submitting matters for the consideration and decision of the Secretary of State, the time that is consumed in explanations necessary to enable him to arrive at a decision, are simply delays that are ruinous to the interests of the Colony. A question arises, let it be assumed, of some public work, in one of the Eastern Colonies: its consideration is that of a few days, and a decision is arrived at; the proposer gets his answer, and the matter is ended; he commences his work or turns his attention to something else. A similar question arises in Western Australia: some one offers to undertake a certain work on terms which he defines; the Governor or the Legislative Council, or perhaps both advocate the acceptance of the offer; correspondence ensues with Downing Street; Her Majesty’s Secretary of State wisely declines to express an opinion or to exercise the responsibility till he is satisfied on all points; a year passes by before a decision is arrived at; when the decision comes, it is either too late, because he who offered could not afford to wait, or the decision is coupled with such restrictions that he declines to carry out his offer, and he leaves dissatisfied, and advises all his friends to keep away from a Colony where proceedings are conducted in so unsatisfactory a manner.” How true, how painfully true, is this at the present day. And again, referring to the alienation of land, these resolutions embody a proposition which every hon. member will be ready to assent to,—that “a prompt and judicious exercise of local authority in the disposition of Crown Lands would, under an extended constitution, greatly facilitate the progress of the Colony.” Sir, we all know that we are permitted under the existing constitution to appropriate our territorial revenue, and that, in a limited degree, we are permitted to interfere with the framing of our Land Regulations; at the same time we know very well that these lands are in reality the possessions of the Crown, and that,

without the consent of the Secretary of State, we dare not alienate them. We also know that it would be of the greatest advantage possible to this Colony if it had the power of disposing of these lands, which would be the case under Responsible Government; and, with the Crown Lands at our back, I consider that Western Australia would be in a position to borrow ten millions of money, without the least difficulty. With the Crown Lands at our back, and a parliament invested with full power to manage and to dispose of those lands, I have no hesitation in saying we could borrow to that extent at any rate; but with the Crown Lands at her back, and the Colony itself in the hands of the Colonial Office, I do not think we are in a position to borrow much more than we have already borrowed, and propose to borrow. At any rate, we have the authority of His Excellency the Governor for thinking so, and if that is the opinion of the Governor we may be sure that the Secretary of State will endorse it. The Secretary of State cannot be expected to take a more liberal view of the matter than the Governor himself, and if this is the view adopted by His Excellency, we may depend upon it, it will be the view which the Colonial Office will adopt. Under these circumstances, it appears very evident that, for the present at any rate, we shall not be able to borrow another penny, if we remain under our present form of Government. True, His Excellency in his despatch on the subject to the Secretary of State qualifies this view of the matter by stating that when the public works which have been undertaken out of loans already contracted or about to be contracted prove reproductive, it is not impossible we may then be in a position to incur further liabilities. But as we cannot expect that this railway to York or the telegraph to Roebourne will be completed before two or three years hence, it will evidently take that time before we shall be in a position to know whether there is any probability of these works proving reproductive. Under these circumstances, is it not a fact that the progress of the Colony is retarded, and that a delay in the introduction of Responsible Government is simply delay in the advancement of the country? Is it not also self-evident that, in the words

of these resolutions, "a prompt and judicious exercise of local authority in the disposition of Crown Lands would, under an extended constitution, greatly facilitate the progress of the Colony?" At present we derive a revenue of about £50,000 a year from these lands—this year, I believe it will amount to £60,000—all of which is expended for the purposes of government; but what I say is that we ought to be able to carry on the government of Western Australia without interfering with our territorial revenue at all, which in my opinion ought to be appropriated to the payment of interest on loans for the construction of public works, and to encourage immigration. That is the policy I should advocate, and that is the policy which under Responsible Government we should be able to carry out. But at present we are told we have come to the end of our tether, as regards borrowing any further sum for the development of our resources. At any rate, those are the views entertained by the present Administration, which perhaps is not so progressive in its policy—I am speaking of the Government in the abstract, and without reference to the individual members of it—as other Administrations. I remember, when His Excellency, the present Governor, left the Colony after his first term of office, and he was succeeded by Governor Ord, who was supposed to have very progressive views indeed, and who was going to infuse new vigor into the constitution—I remember the hon. member for Geraldton pointing out what a difference this would make to the Colony; that Governor Robinson's policy was a do-nothing policy, a stand-still policy, a waiting policy,—and possibly it may be so. But I do not blame the Governor for that. It is a policy we must expect to put up with under the existing constitution. It is the policy of the Colonial Office, and the Governor himself cannot be blamed for it. He is simply following out the traditions of Downing Street, and the *fainéant* policy inseparable from a Crown Colony administration, the main object of which is to keep things quiet and the people in subjection; if they ask for bread, to give them a stone, or if they clamour for a whole loaf, to give them a crust to satisfy their immediate cravings.

I say, I do not blame the Governor if he takes a—I will not say narrow, but a conservative view of our position, and puts it forth as his opinion—an opinion which is sure to be shared in Downing Street—that the Colony has come to the end of its tether as regards its borrowing powers. I am not disposed to dispute this view of the matter, for I think myself, that, until we free ourselves from the trammels of the present constitution, we must be content to remain at a standstill, while the world around us goes merrily ahead. I have already referred to the depressing effect which this state of things must necessarily produce upon any community, and the apathy which prevails among the people of this Colony in regard to political matters. We all know how difficult it is, even during the excitement of an electioneering campaign, to rouse the electors from this feeling of apathy, and to induce them to exercise the franchise. They will not go to the trouble of going to the poll; they will not bother their heads to record their votes for one candidate more than another; and the reason for this is not far to seek. They know very well—it is the general feeling—that, under our present constitution, the Legislature is a mere farce. ["No, no," and "Hear, hear."] It is the prevailing idea. I do not say it is a correct idea, but it cannot be denied that such is the general impression. If you ask a man for his vote, the probability is that he will tell you he would as soon vote for you as anybody else; that it makes little or no difference whether he votes for Tweedledum or Tweedledee; that the Legislature can do nothing; and that the Governor does as he likes. And have they not good ground for saying so? [Mr. BROWN: No.] The hon. member says no. Did we not pass a resolution the other day, couched in the strongest possible terms, that this House would not provide the funds for the payment of any military officer to act as Inspector of Volunteers? And did not the Governor, in spite of such resolution, and without any reference to this House, appoint such an officer? Does not that show that His Excellency himself looks upon the Legislature of this Colony in the same light as the people themselves do? I am aware it is stated that His Excel-

lency, when this matter was brought under his notice, alleged that he had not seen this resolution, that he never knew such a resolution had ever been passed by the House. Well, if that is the case, is it not treating this House with still less respect than if His Excellency had seen the resolution and acted in defiance of it? Under the existing constitution, the Governor himself does not, apparently, think it worth while to look at the resolutions passed by this House. Is it, then, to be wondered at that the outside public regard our proceedings as a mere farce? Can we be surprised that the general feeling outside should be that the Legislature under our present form of Government is a powerless non-entity? And can we, under these circumstances, wonder at the apathy which prevails, and the non-existence of any interest in political affairs? Give the public free institutions, relieve them from this consciousness of political inferiority, give every man in the Colony a chance of becoming one day an active agent in the administration of the Government of the country, and not merely a nominal representative, and, I take it, there would soon be manifested that interest in public affairs, and that vigorous political activity which characterises our own race wherever the powers of self-government are conceded to them. I have already alluded to the disadvantage which the Colony labors under in consequence of not being at liberty to do as it thinks fit with its lands, and I think we have a very fair illustration of this disadvantage in connection with the recently discovered Kimberley District. Supposing we had had the control and disposition of the lands of the Colony when this fine district first became known to us; supposing the Legislature could have done what it liked with this magnificent territory, could have parcelled it out and fixed the terms on which we were prepared to dispose of it, could have advertised it in the other colonies, and thrown it open for selection on such terms as the Legislature might deem most advantageous for the Colony—dealt with it, in fact, as if it was our own estate, what would have been the result? Why, from this territory alone, we might have derived a sufficient sum

of money to have liquidated our liabilities, loans and all, if the Colony possessed Responsible Government. [Mr. BROWN: We should not have had the district at all, then.] I wish to impress upon hon. members that I am not advocating Responsible Government for one portion of the Colony, but for Western Australia, as a whole. I am not urging the House to agree to this motion with the idea that the Northern part of the Colony is to be cut off from this part of the Colony: I am urging the House to accept this resolution having regard to its application to Western Australia, and not to any particular section of Western Australia, cut off from another. If this resolution is affirmed by the House, and the Government were to introduce a Bill to establish a constitution, and that Bill were passed, I should ask hon. members to vote for it as a Bill having for its object the granting of a constitution to the Colony as it now appears on the map; and should the Imperial Government, in its wisdom, return the Bill, and say if we limited its application to the Southern portion of the Colony there would be no objection to it on the part of Her Majesty's Government,—in that case I should not consider any hon. member who voted for this resolution bound to give his support to any such a measure as that. I should not myself feel bound to vote for such a Bill. I am going in for Responsible Government for Western Australia, and not for a part of Western Australia, and all my arguments this evening are to that end. I wish hon. members distinctly to understand that. Sir, I think I have now shown, I think every unprejudiced mind will admit that I have shown, that the present form of government places the Colony at a great disadvantage, and that, with a freer constitution and a consciousness of political equality with our neighbors, we might fairly hope to advance the interests of the Colony, and render it no unworthy member of the Australian group. This reminds me of another argument urged by the Natal Legislature in favor of the establishment of responsibility in that colony—an argument which applies with equal force to our position as regards the neighboring provinces. In their memorial to Her Majesty, the Legislative Council of Natal

declare their belief that a federal union in South Africa will prove more easy of attainment if Natal is placed upon a footing of greater political equality with the neighboring colony and states. I say the same with regard to ourselves. If Western Australia were freed from the consciousness of political inferiority which now operates to its disadvantage, and were granted similar powers of self-government as have been conceded to every other member of the family, there can be no doubt that the federation of these colonies would prove more easy of attainment. Next comes the question of cost. I have now done with the question of expediency, and I now approach the financial aspect of the question. I have gone very carefully into this matter, and have looked very closely into the figures furnished to this House by Governor Ord, when the proposal for establishing Responsible Government was last mooted; and the conclusion I have arrived at, as to the cost which the change would entail upon the Colony is this: in the first place we should have to provide an additional £1,800 a year for the payment of the Governor's salary, in lieu of that amount now contributed out of Imperial funds. We should also in all probability have to provide an annual charge of about £1,700 for pensions to those members of the Executive who might be deprived of office in the event of the Colony adopting Responsible Government. This charge of course would only continue during the lifetime of those officers who would be entitled to a pension, and in the event of their not taking office under a system of Ministerial Government. Then comes the Imperial grant in aid of magistracy and police, which, during the years 1883, 4, 5, and 6—when the grant expires—would amount to about £20,000. This, calculated at the rate of 4 per cent. interest, would involve a charge of about £800 a year. If it is decided to have two chambers, an Upper House and a Lower House, I estimate that the former would entail a further expenditure of about £600 a year. This would make a grand total of £4,900 a year, which we should have to pay for the privileges of self-government; so that I think I may fairly say that the whole cost which the proposed change would entail upon the Colony would be covered by a sum of

£5,000 a year, allowing for the immediate withdrawal of the Imperial grant. Now I do not believe myself that we should lose this grant. When the Imperial Government agreed to contribute this money it was on the clear understanding that the Colony did not take upon itself either Representative or Responsible Government. Well, we have adopted Representative Government and the grant has not been withdrawn, and I do not think, regard being had to the smallness of the amount now contributed, and to the fact that it will cease altogether in 1886, the Imperial authorities could behave so illiberally towards us as to withdraw the grant the moment we adopt a form of Government that will relieve the Crown from many responsibilities. As to the question of an Upper House and the charge which a second chamber would entail, that involves the question of whether we should require, or whether it would be necessary, to have two chambers. I notice that, as regards Natal, Lord Kimberley offered no objection to that Colony establishing a constitution with only one House,—at any rate he did not insist upon the adoption of the bi-cameral system. In the absence of a second chamber, Lord Kimberley suggests, as a mode of providing the requisite safeguards against hasty and ill-considered legislation, that the concurrence of a two-third majority should be made requisite. And if there was no objection to Natal adopting a single chamber constitution, I fail to see what objection there could be to this Colony doing the same. The same safeguards could be provided here against hasty and ill-considered legislation, and I have no doubt every care would be taken to provide these safeguards. It comes to this then: provided the Imperial grant is continued, and that we dispense with a second chamber, the adoption of Responsible Government would entail upon the Colony an annual charge of £3,500, namely, £1,800 for the Governor's salary (in addition to what we now contribute) and £1,700 for pensions to the members of the Executive. As regards these pensions, it should be borne in mind that some of these gentlemen will become entitled to these allowances very shortly, whether we adopt Responsible Government or

not, and, as I have said before, it is not impossible that some of them might be induced to accept a ministerial appointment under the new constitution. I would ask hon. members whether they think £3,500 a year, or even £5,000 a year, an extravagant price to pay for the privilege of self-government, and the right to deal with the lands of the Colony as we think fit. I would ask hon. members whether, if we had a government responsible to the people, we should not save a great deal more than that in the management of our own affairs—whether we should have wasted £7,000 or £8,000 upon Beaver claims, or have incurred a possible loss of £20,000 upon McDonald's claims? I do not think I am stepping outside the mark at all when I say that over £10,000 has already been expended by the Government, simply owing to gross recklessness and extravagance, combined with the business incapacity, of a former Administration, the members of which, being in no way responsible to the people, felt themselves altogether beyond the reach of public condemnation. It will be in the recollection of hon. members that a Select Committee sat to inquire into these claims last year, and that they reported in very severe terms indeed with reference to the conduct of the Administration of the day. The Committee came to the conclusion that the loss which the Colony had sustained in this matter "was caused by a total "absence of business capacity on the "part of the Government which was "responsible for carrying out these "contracts, and by a want of foresight "and care in looking after the interest "of the Colony, which, if exhibited in a "like degree by a private individual, "would be characterised by harsher "terms than we have cared to apply in "this instance." That was what the Select Committee thought of the matter, and what was the result? His Excellency, the present Governor, in transmitting this report to the Secretary of State, says it cannot be denied that the strictures of the Select Committee were deserved, and that the Legislature had just grounds to complain of the want of business capacity displayed in the matter, but that he did not think anything would be gained by endeavoring to

decide which members of the Government were more particularly to blame for the blunder. I take it, if we had Responsible Government, if the affairs of the Colony were administered by officials directly responsible to this House, and through this House to the country, this is not how such blunders as these would be dealt with. The public would very soon have ascertained who were to blame, and the minister or ministry guilty of such a want of foresight and care in looking after the interests of the Colony would have very soon been replaced by others capable of exhibiting a little more business capacity. But what do we find under the present form of government? The Governor, in writing to the Secretary of State on the subject, sums up by saying that "under all the circumstances of the case no useful purpose would be served by further inquiry;" and the Secretary of State, on his part, agrees with the Governor, while at the same time expressing his concurrence in the strictures of the Select Committee on the conduct of the Government in the matter. Here we have thousands of pounds of the public money wasted through the bungling incapacity of an Executive that, by virtue of its position, cares neither for the public nor their money, and the people have no power to remove them, and those who have the power do not think that any useful purpose would be served by further inquiry. Yet this is the form of Government which some hon. members in this House are anxious to perpetuate. Why, Sir, the wasteful extravagance which resulted in the loss to the Colony of the thousands of pounds paid in respect of these claims would alone have gone far to cover the increased cost which Responsible Government would entail for some years; and, if under such a form of Government, any such blunders as these were committed, the people at any rate would have the satisfaction of sending the ministry guilty of them about its business. Then again with regard to their immigration expenditure. I have already pointed out that, although we have during the past few years expended between £20,000 and £30,000 on immigration, the population to-day—beyond the natural growth caused by the number of births over deaths—is no greater than

it was years ago, and this money may be said to have been money thrown away. I say money thrown away, because although we succeed in inducing immigrants to come to our shores, we can never induce them to stay here, until we give them an opportunity of sharing in the political privileges which they have been accustomed to, under freer institutions, and we place them upon a footing of greater political equality with their fellow countrymen in the adjoining colonies. I next come to another argument which the opponents of Responsible Government are very fond of putting forward in opposition to the proposed change. It is, in fact, their trump card. We are told that if the privileges of self-government were conceded to the Colony to-morrow, we have not the men to carry on a system of Ministerial Government. All I can say, with regard to this statement, is, that seven years ago the members of this House expressed an opinion—it is here recorded, in the resolutions before me—that "small as is the population of Western Australia, there are in it, in proportion to the numbers of that population, as many men who, by education and social standing, are capable of, willing, and prepared to take an active part in public life, as can be found in any similar number of people in any of the Australian Colonies." That was the opinion expressed by the members of this House in 1875. If that was the case seven years ago, it must surely be the case now. Our population, small as it is, has not decreased, and we certainly have as many men of education and social standing now as we had seven years ago. The hon. member for Swan, when submitting these resolutions to the House, and commenting upon this phase of the question, said: "There is one argument made use of—and I think it is the most serious question for consideration in dealing with this subject—by the opponents of the contemplated change, namely, that we have not, amongst our limited population, men of the requisite stamp, possessed of sufficient leisure and ability, and of independent income to perform their parliamentary duties under a system of self-government. I do not believe such to be the case," the hon. member said, "and it is a libel upon the colonists

"to make such an assertion." I quite agree with the hon. member. It is a libel upon the colonists, and it is a libel which I trust no one in this Honorable House will cast upon them. The hon. member adds that, in his opinion, any man, or body of men, endowed with ordinary capacity, would be able to conduct the affairs of a Colony like this. There is no doubt of that. I do not suppose the noble lord opposite would tell us that it requires a Gladstone to administer the affairs of this country. Three or four gentlemen, of ordinary ability—of which we have no paucity—might well carry on the government of Western Australia for years to come. These men, selected from amongst those who, by their own industry and frugality, and their aptitude for business in private life, have made for themselves a competency, would bring the same qualities to bear upon the transaction of public business, and, I venture to say, that under such an Administration as that, we should not have the money of the Colony squandered away in gross extravagance and blundering incapacity, such as has been the case in the past. The next objection which is usually put forward by those who dread a political change, is that the adoption of Responsible Government must necessarily bring about manhood suffrage. I deny that. I admit that in some of these colonies manhood suffrage has been adopted. [Mr. MARMION: In most of them.] I think the hon. member is wrong. The only Colony possessing manhood suffrage, pure and simple, is Victoria. [Mr. MARMION: What about Queensland and South Australia?] I am guided by the paper presented to this House on the subject by Governor Ord, who certainly was no advocate of Responsible Government, but on the contrary compiled this paper with a view, if anything, to show the disadvantages of that form of Government; and, according to this return, the only Colony of the group which has adopted manhood suffrage as the only qualification of electors is Victoria. In the colonies referred to by the hon. member for Fremantle, though no property qualification is required, there must be a residential qualification, and no man is allowed to exercise the franchise unless he has been six months resident in the

district. The position of this Colony appears to me to be analogous to that of quiet, steady-going Tasmania rather than of democratic and restless Victoria, whose goldfields, I suppose, attracted to its borders some of the greatest ruffians in the world. The franchise in Tasmania, I find, is a £7 household suffrage. There is no manhood suffrage there, although it entered upon Responsible Government twenty-six years ago, when Victoria did. New Zealand, again, which I think may be looked upon as a model colony, and one that has shown as much vigour, if not more, than any of the rest in the prosecution of public works and in the introduction of population,—the electoral qualification there is a £10 household franchise. How then can it be said, how can it be urged for a moment, that manhood suffrage must necessarily follow the introduction of popular government? I am not prepared to say that it may not follow, but what I do say is this,—that it is not bound to follow; and, if we exercise the same prudence and display the same caution in the management of our political affairs as Tasmania and New Zealand have done, we need not have manhood suffrage here. In order to show the wide divergence of opinion which is entertained even on the merits or demerits of a low electoral qualification, I may say that a gentleman for whom I have the greatest respect, and who has been a settler in this Colony for the past fifty years, and taken great interest in public matters, told me, as his opinion, that the reason why this Colony had not made more progress than it has done in the past is in a great measure due to the little interest which the lower classes take in public affairs, and that in order to induce them to do so, we ought to reduce the franchise. I mention the fact simply to show how opinions differ on the subject of manhood suffrage; but, so far as this Colony is concerned, I do not think we need entertain any apprehension as to the adoption of manhood suffrage here, under Responsible or any other form of Government. Sir, I do not intend to trespass on the patience of the House any longer. I have attempted, and I trust I have succeeded in proving that the present form of Government has

always been looked upon by all parties as a mere stepping-stone to a system of ministerial responsibility; I have endeavored to prove, and I hope I have succeeded in doing so, that the slight increase of cost which the change would entail would be nothing, comparatively nothing—would indeed be less than nothing in view of the waste and extravagance which have been committed under the existing constitution. As to the advantages which would accrue from the change, I have demonstrated I hope to the satisfaction of the House that these advantages would far more than outweigh any disadvantages which may result from this change. Before I sit down, I may say again that, in the remarks I have made upon the administration of the Colony, I have had no intention of being personal, and I trust the hon. gentlemen who occupy the Treasury benches will acquit me of any such intention. With regard to this waste and extravagance I believe it is a thing of the past, and that, so far as the present Administration is concerned, we have in the noble lord opposite a public officer who is prepared to do his utmost to prevent a recurrence of such extravagance, and I am not prepared to say that His Excellency the Governor is not also imbued with the same spirit, and will do his best to prevent any wasteful expenditure of the public funds. In fact, I believe that our present Government are doing their utmost to promote economy and to check any undue extravagance. But we must not be lulled into a false security by the existing order of things. The noble lord may leave us to-morrow. The Governor himself may be away any moment, and we may be placed again in the same position as we have been placed before, with the administration of affairs entrusted to gentlemen whose sole idea may be to waste the public funds upon hobbies of their own, and who may do their utmost to prevent this House not only from having any voice in the expenditure of public money but also from having any account of how such expenditure has been incurred. Sir, I have refrained from saying a word about the consistency or inconsistency of hon. members in respect to the action they may take with regard to this question.

I do not see why a man should not change his opinions, even as the times change, and the condition of the country changes. It has been said "Show me a consistent man and I will show you a fool," and if I have referred to the resolutions adopted by the hon. members of this House on this very subject some years ago, I have done so for this reason and for no other—that they are couched in such admirable and explicit language, and are so much to the point, that I could not support my case better than by referring to them, and quoting from them, as I have done, very copiously. In conclusion, I can only express a hope that hon. members will approach the consideration of this momentous question with the gravity and solemnity which its importance demands, and that no attempt will be made to shirk the question on the ground of its not having been brought forward at an earlier stage of the Session, for, in reality, the question has been before this House and before the country for many years past, and I gave notice last Session of my intention of submitting the resolution which I ask hon. members now to affirm, and which I hope they will affirm, on the ground already pointed out,—that delay in the inauguration of a system of self-government is simply delay in the progress and the prosperity of the Colony.

Mr. CAREY, in seconding the motion, said the hon. member for Perth had so completely thrashed out the subject in his very exhaustive speech, that little or nothing was left for him to say in support of the resolution. As to the expediency of the present time for adopting the proposed change, he thought a more opportune time for the introduction of self-government could not be wished for. Hon. members were aware that he was not in the habit of making flattering speeches with regard to the Government, but he must honestly confess that everything was being done by the present Administration that could possibly be done, to meet the wishes of that House, and to husband and economise the financial resources of the Colony. They must not, however, imagine that this state of things was going to continue—at any rate they had no guaranty that it would

continue, for there was no knowing when the present Governor might be removed, and the present leader of the House be transferred to another sphere. And was it not impossible that we might have, as the noble lord's successor, a gentleman of the same stamp as he who occupied that office before the noble lord assumed his present position—and he need not remind the House that in those days it was treated with scant courtesy indeed. Therefore, in view of a recurrence of those unpleasant relations which at one time existed between the Legislature and the Government—when that House would be powerless to assert its privileges, under a constitution like the present—he thought the sooner we assumed the responsibilities of self-government the better. It must be admitted that it would be in every respect better for us to undertake the management of our own affairs, than to entrust them to the management of an agent. There could not be any great mystery attached to the administration of a Colony like this, as was ably pointed out years ago by the hon. member for the Swan. The routine of the various departments of the public service was carried on by subordinates. It might be said that the Colonial Office did not thwart the wishes of the Legislature now as it was in the habit of doing formerly, and that in these days we do not find much difficulty in obtaining the consent of the Secretary of State to proposals to borrow money for public works; but he would ask what chance there would be of obtaining this permission if the Governor of the Colony were not in favor of the proposal? What prospect would there have been of the Eastern Railway being extended had not Governor Robinson done his best to induce the Secretary of State to acquiesce in our wishes with regard to this extension? Supposing the Governor had, in his wisdom, opposed this extension, did hon. members think for a moment the Colonial Office would have listened to the representations of the members of that House? And, as we do not know what day we may lose the present Governor, he thought it would be wise on our part to prepare for such a contingency as the recurrence of the unpleasant relations which had existed between the Legislature and

the Executive in days gone by. On looking round the benches of the House, he noticed that among the twenty members now present, there were only eight who had seats in the House when this question of Responsible Government was introduced in 1874, and, all those hon. members had then voted in favor of the proposed change, in the belief that the Colony was even at that time prepared and capable of undertaking the responsibilities of self-government. Since then the Colony had advanced in all the elements of prosperity, and was now certainly much better prepared, in every respect, to manage its own affairs. He therefore hoped those eight hon. members at any rate would have the courage of their opinions, and vote for this resolution.

Mr. STEERE did not intend detaining the House at any length in replying to some of the arguments put forward by the hon. member for Perth in support of the motion now before them. He thought that, from the hon. member's own point of view, he had made a very able and very effective speech, and as his (Mr. Steere's) name had been frequently referred to in the course of that speech, he did not think he could allow the opportunity to pass without saying a few words in reply. No doubt, as the hon. member said, this is a very momentous question—as momentous a question perhaps a could possibly be brought under the consideration of any Legislature, such as ours; but he could not agree with the hon. member that this was an appropriate time to bring forward such a question. Had he brought it forward immediately after the last general election, when the hon. member was returned on the Responsible Government ticket, pledged to his constituents to support a constitutional change, he should have considered there was some appropriateness in his availing himself of such an opportunity of pressing his views upon the House. At the same time he failed to see that the mere fact of a candidate declaring himself on the hustings to be in favor of any public measure placed him under any obligation to introduce such a measure himself. He thought some hon. members would agree with him that, however eloquent the speech in which the hon. member had introduced this motion, the subject had

not been brought forward with that degree of seriousness which the momentous issues involved would have led one to expect, or indeed in any anticipation of the object in view being attained, for it must have been well known to the hon. member that, if this motion were unanimously agreed to, His Excellency Governor Robinson would not bring in a Bill to establish the form of government which the hon. member sought; and the hon. member ought to have seriously considered that fact before he brought forward his motion. The hon. member had made use, very largely indeed, of certain resolutions which he (Mr. Steere) had submitted to that House in 1875—resolutions which at that time he thought were very applicable to the then circumstances of the Colony, and which showed good cause for the change then advocated. But since that time he had very considerably altered his opinion with reference to this question, and he thought that many reasons which existed seven years ago for seeking Responsible Government did not exist at present. At that time we had a Governor of large colonial experience, and very progressive views, who was ably assisted by the gentleman who occupied the position of Colonial Secretary, and who was in perfect sympathy with the Governor, who was also supported by a Legislature imbued with equally progressive views. At that time both the Government and the Legislature were being constantly thwarted, by the interference of the Secretary of State, in their endeavors to carry out those views, and to push the Colony ahead. As an instance of this, he might allude to the serious financial difficulties entailed upon the country—difficulties which we had only recently been relieved from—by the refusal of the Colonial Office to allow the Eucla telegraph line to be constructed out of loan. The Government of the day, and the Legislature of the day, were very anxious that this work should be undertaken out of borrowed capital, but the Secretary of State, who had to be consulted on the subject, strictly prohibited anything of the sort being done, and would only hear of it on condition that the line should be constructed out of current revenue, and it was in consequence of this decision—which he now merely referred to as an instance of how

the wishes of the colonists as represented by the Legislature were in those days thwarted by the Imperial authorities—that the Colony became involved in those financial embarrassments from which it had only lately been relieved. Another instance of the opposition, the vexatious opposition, manifested in those days by the Colonial Office, to the wishes of the local Legislature, was in respect of the alienation of Crown Lands for public works purposes. The Secretary of State distinctly set his face against any such a proposal, and the Colony was compelled to abandon all idea of constructing public works by any such means. But what was the case now? When the Secretary of State is asked whether there would be any objection to the alienation of land for the construction of railways or the erection of telegraphs, no opposition is offered, but on the contrary all we ask for is conceded. It would thus be seen that a very different order of things existed now, to what existed in 1875, when he proposed the resolutions of which the hon. member for Perth had made so much capital that evening. We had a Government now which he thought was as anxious to work hand in hand with the Legislature, and as desirous of favoring all progressive measures, as we could wish; and, so far as he could see, there was no desire on the part of the Secretary of State to thwart our wishes in any way, but on the contrary every desire to further them. This he thought had been very clearly demonstrated by the ready manner in which the assent of the Colonial Office had been given to the proposed new loan, and it could not be said that any public measures were now being delayed by reason of the interference of the Secretary of State. The hon. member for Perth said that had it not been for the intermeddling of the Colonial Office in the public works scheme adopted by the House last year, we should have been able to have constructed the Eastern Railway the whole way to York, instead of piecemeal, or in sections. He doubted whether we could. He did not think the state of our finances at that time would have enabled us to construct the whole length of the extension. The hon. member also said that if the Colony possessed Responsible Government we

should be able to devote the whole of the £50,000 or £60,000 now derived from land revenue to the prosecution of public works, and so relieve the general revenue from that charge. The hon. member seemed to regard this as an unanswerable argument in favor of the proposed change, and as one of the blessings which Responsible Government would bring in its train. But he was afraid the hon. member had not considered what would be the effect of his scheme if carried out. The hon. member appeared to be oblivious of the fact that if this £60,000 were appropriated out of the general revenue for such purposes as he had indicated, the general revenue would have to be made up from some other source to the same extent. It would have to be levied by means of extra taxation, and if that was one of the blessings Responsible Government was going to bestow upon the Colony, he did not think the public would be inclined to hail the hon. member's boon with any great feeling of delight. There was another argument put forward by the hon. member, which he must say appeared to him to cut the other way altogether. The hon. member referred to statistics to show how the Colony had progressed in all the elements of material prosperity since the time when these resolutions were originally put forward. Surely if these statistics were of any value at all, they went to prove that the country had advanced with rapid strides under the existing constitution. Had the hon. member been able to show that the Colony had remained at a standstill, that the revenue had not increased, that its external and internal trade had not been developed, that its natural resources remained dormant, all these years, he might have had some ground for arguing that a change in the constitution was required; but, when the hon. member pointed in glowing terms to the progress made by the Colony since these resolutions were adopted by the House seven years ago, he really thought the hon. member was cutting the ground from under his own feet. The hon. member also seemed to entertain very glowing visions as to what the Colony could be able to do in the way of borrowing money if it had the Crown Lands at its back. The hon. member appeared to imagine that,

if we had these lands at our disposal, we could go into the money market and borrow—he forgot how many millions the hon. member said, but such a large sum that it completely took his breath away. But he thought, if the hon. member went into the money market with the lands of the Colony at his back and nothing else, he would find his millions would not be so easily obtained. Financiers and capitalists did not look to the quantity of land which a country possessed, but to its revenue, in order to ascertain what security they were likely to get for their money. He was sure if we had all these lands at our back and Responsible Government in the bargain, we should not be able to borrow one farthing more than we are able to do at present. That was his honest opinion. He quite agreed,—he was obliged to acknowledge, that sometimes he did feel, and feel severely, tried by the way in which that House was at times unnecessarily thwarted by the Executive Government; but that did not take away from the interest which he felt in all public questions brought under their consideration. He considered that he came there to consult not his own personal feelings but the interests of the Colony; and although he felt sometimes vexed by the way in which their wishes were thwarted, he continued, and he hoped he always would continue, to take as much interest in the work of legislation as he otherwise would have done. He acknowledged with the hon. member that he felt somewhat humiliated to see such trifling matters as the conduct of a Locomotive Superintendent referred to the Secretary of State; but, after all, these were matters that neither marred nor made the Colony, and certainly not such as would induce him to advocate a change in the constitution. There was one important point which the hon. member scarcely alluded to, and it was only in an indirect manner that he had referred to it at all, namely, that if we are to have Responsible Government he wished it to be for the Colony as a whole. But the hon. member must be as well aware as he was, that if the right of self-government were granted to us, it would only be for the Southern part of the Colony, and that our Northern territory would be constituted into a separate province. He was aware that some doubt

had been cast upon what had been stated with reference to this separation, but he was perfectly convinced himself that if the Secretary of State were asked to sanction a Bill to establish Responsible Government in Western Australia, no opposition would be offered to the proposal. He believed the Secretary of State, if asked to do so to-morrow, would say "Certainly, you may manage your own affairs," but he would also say this, "Remember, if you do so, it is only on the express understanding that the Northern portion of the Colony is cut off from the Southern portion; you may do what you like with the latter, but we shall take care to retain our hold on the former." He was quite certain of that. And he thought this was a very serious matter for consideration in dealing with this question. He could not help thinking that if the settlers at the North knew that this was likely to be the result of the motion now before the House, they would not wish the hon. member who represented them to vote for its adoption. If he did, and the object in view were attained, and separation ensued, they would find themselves very differently situated to what they are at present. Theirs would of course be a purely Crown Colony, and they would have a Governor and his establishment, and the whole machinery of Government, to support, which, in a small community like that, would entail very heavy taxation,—a great deal more than they now contributed to the general revenue of this Colony, without any corresponding advantages, that he could see. The hon. member for Perth, in speaking of the cost of Responsible Government, said he did not believe we should lose the Imperial grant now paid towards the magistracy and the police; but he (Mr. Steere) was in a position to speak very positively on that point. When in England two years ago, he had an interview with the Secretary of State, and, in discussing this question of Responsible Government, he pointed out to Lord Kimberley that it would be a very great hardship to the Colony if this grant were withdrawn. The Secretary of State's answer was this: "I can only tell you, Mr. Steere, that if you have Responsible Government in Western Australia, you

"will not get another farthing paid to you on account of magistracy and police by the Imperial Government." After that, he did not think there could be much doubt as to what the intentions of the Home authorities were with regard to this grant. He did not, however, think that the mere withdrawal of that vote should have any great weight with us in the discussion of this question, for the amount was decreasing gradually, and in a few years time will cease altogether, whether we adopt Responsible Government or not. With reference to the question of an Upper House, the hon. member said the Secretary of State did not insist upon Natal having a second chamber, if she chose to adopt Responsible Government. So far as he (Mr. Steere) was concerned, and so far, he believed, as every other member who had thought of the question at all in this Colony was concerned, he did not think it had ever crossed their minds as to what the Secretary of State thought about the necessity or otherwise of an Upper House. He did not suppose the Secretary of State would care much about it; but this he did think, and so did others,—that, if we had Responsible Government at all, it would be on the distinct understanding that there should be an Upper Chamber, and upon no other terms. He could not imagine who the old gentleman of 50 years standing, referred to by the hon. member for Perth, could possibly be; he must be so old as to have partially lost his senses to think that, if our franchise were lowered, a great deal more interest would necessarily be taken in public affairs. Why our franchise now was almost as low as to amount to manhood suffrage, for every householder in the Colony might be said to have a vote; and it appeared to him it would hardly be wise or expedient to reduce the qualification lower than that. We were told to look to the progress made by the other colonies under Responsible Government, but he would ask hon. members to bear in mind what those who had had an opportunity of watching the result of ministerial government in the other colonies told them about it. He did not mean those politicians who made a regular living out of the business. He referred to those who

had carefully noted the working of political institutions on the other side, but who had not made politics a trade, and what was it they told us? What was their advice with regard to the adoption of Responsible Government? Their advice was this: "For goodness sake, keep out of it so long as you can, if it is to lead to the same results in your case as it has led to in ours." They did not tell us point blank not to go into Responsible Government at all, but they counselled us, in all seriousness, not to do so, if the results here were likely to be similar to the results which had followed the adoption of the system there. Under these circumstances, he did not think it was wise, he did not think it was right, on the part of the advocates of Responsible Government to point to the other colonies as examples of the satisfactory working of that system. He was glad to hear from the hon. member for Perth that evening, that, in the event of this Colony assuming the responsibilities of self-government, the hon. member himself would be prepared to undertake the task of forming the first Ministry. He could not help thinking that when the hon. member said that, he had very little idea indeed of the amount of labor he would have to undergo after he succeeded in the formation of a Ministry. He did not know whether the hon. member's idea of the duties of Premier was to drop in at the office for an hour or two a day, and still continue to practise his own profession. If he did, he was afraid the hon. member would find out he was very much mistaken. The hon. gentleman said he did not think it would require a Gladstone to conduct the public affairs of a Colony like this. That was true. But if the hon. member would interview the noble lord opposite on the subject, he would tell him that the discharge of his ministerial duties as Chief Secretary would occupy him every hour of the day; and there was no doubt that any one who accepted a post in a Ministry here must be prepared to give up the whole of his time to the discharge of his ministerial duties. That being the case, he would ask the hon. member what would be his position if he were turned out of office—and he would not mind wagering that the hon. gentleman would not be six

months in office before he was turned out. He did not say that in any spirit of disparagement; but he felt confident that the first Ministry, whoever it may consist of, that takes office under Responsible Government—the people having been led to expect such wonderful blessings from the change, would be so greatly disappointed, that the first Ministry, whether formed by the hon. member for Perth or not, would be kicked out of office in less than six months. And he would ask the hon. member—having in the meantime given up the practice of his profession, which of course he would be obliged to do—he would ask the hon. member, what would be his position, and what the position of the other members of his Ministry, who had abandoned their ordinary avocations, be they commercial or professional pursuits, for the sweets of office? Why, sir, they would be cast adrift upon the world, almost beggars. They would have given up those pursuits which they had been used to, and, having ceased to draw their official salaries, having been deprived of the spoils of office, and relegated to the cold shade of the opposition, they would indeed become objects of public sympathy. He believed, however, very few people really thought the hon. member was in earnest in this matter, or that he had seriously considered what he said; and he hoped the House would agree with him on this occasion that it would be better for all parties that the hon. member's motion should not be treated as on a former occasion, when the "previous question" was moved, but that in this instance the House should meet his resolution with a direct negative, in order that there may be no doubt at all as to the opinions of the majority of hon. members on the subject.

The House then divided upon the motion, with the following result:—

Ayes	5
Noes	12
Majority against			7

AYES.

Mr. Carey
Mr. Grant
Mr. Higham
Mr. Venu
Mr. S. H. Parker (*Teller*.)

NOES.

Mr. Brown
Mr. Burges
Mr. Burt
Sir T. C. Campbell
Mr. Crowther
Mr. Glyde
Mr. Hamersley
Mr. Marmion
Mr. S. S. Parker
Mr. Randell
Mr. Shenton
Mr. Storer (*Teller*.)

The motion was therefore negatived.
(The Official Members did not vote).

INTERNATIONAL FISHERIES EXHIBITION: REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser), in accordance with notice, moved the following resolution: "This Council having considered the report of the Select Committee upon the question, whether or not this Colony should be represented at the 'Great International Fisheries Exhibition, London, 1883,' concurs in the opinion expressed by the Select Committee that, under the circumstances, it would be inadvisable to take steps to secure such representation." The hon. gentleman said he was sure the House would agree with him that, if they could have recommended the acceptance of the invitation made through His Excellency the Governor by Lord Kimberley, they would have been pleased to have done so; but it was evident to the Select Committee that it would be found impracticable to procure, within the short time that now remained, a collection of marine objects of sufficient interest to warrant a Committee in recommending that the Colony should take part in the proposed Exhibition. No doubt, if a longer period intervened, we could have found, along our 3,000 miles of coast line, most interesting specimens of the various products of the Colony. But looking at the great distance which the exhibits would have to be procured from, as regards the majority of specimens, and the few months remaining for their collection and transmission to London, he was afraid the House had no alternative but to agree to the resolution which he had submitted.

The resolution was then put and adopted.

MESSAGE (No. 3): CONCESSIONS TO JARRAHDAL TIMBER COMPANY—REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

The Order of the Day for the consideration of the Report of the Select Committee on the subject of granting certain concessions to the Jarrahdale Timber Company (referred to in Message No. 3), being read,

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. M. Fraser) said, although the report might appear somewhat inconclusive, he thought the Committee had done all there was for them to do; in the first place, in reviewing the articles of agreement under which the company carried on their operations, and also in drawing attention to the exact position both of the company and the Government respectively, under those articles of agreement. The Committee were of opinion that if the company's line was to be extended at all, in consideration of concessions of Crown Lands, such extension should be made to a point somewhere about the 50th-mile post, being considerably farther than that proposed in Mr. Casey's letter. The Committee did not make any suggestion as to the quantity of land which should be conceded to the company, in consideration of their agreeing to extend their railway to the point indicated, believing that this was a question which ought to be dealt with in a Committee of the whole House. He would say no more at present with reference to the subject. The hon. member for the Swan, who was a member of the Select Committee, was, he believed, prepared with a resolution, giving effect to the recommendations of the Committee; and, so far as he was aware, the hon. member's proposals were such as would be concurred in by a majority of the Select Committee. He would therefore leave the matter in the hon. member's hands.

MR. STEERE said it appeared to him that by simply laying the report of the Select Committee on the Table they would be no further advanced as regards a solution of the question submitted for their consideration than if they had not referred the matter to a Select Committee at all. It appeared to him that a resolution of some kind was necessary in order to give effect to the wish of the House on the subject, and to furnish a reply to His Excellency's Message. He had therefore prepared a resolution which he would now submit, as follows: "That an Humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased, in consideration of the Jarrahdale Timber Company extending their present line of railway to a point somewhere about the 50-mile

"post on the Perth and Albany road, and "entering into an agreement with the "Government to carry out the various "conditions embodied in the Report of "the Select Committee, to recommend "that Her Majesty's Secretary of State "would be pleased to sanction a grant "being made to the said company of "100,000 acres of land, to be taken up "either alongside the line of the pro- "posed extension of the railway, or else- "where outside the Central District." No doubt 100,000 acres might appear a very considerable quantity of land to give away for 20 or 25 miles of railway, —although it would only be at the rate of £2000 a mile; but the Select Committee ascertained, on inquiry, that under their contract with the Government the company had the right to obtain from the Government, in fee,—he thought it was two chains in width of the land through which the railway ran; and, unless this right of the company was paid for in the concession, the railway would remain their sole property, and they would be able to do what they liked with it, without the Colony having any control over it. This was the reason why the Select Committee had recommended so large a concession of land as 100,000 acres. He believed the company expected to get this much land even for extending their line from Jarrahdale to the 42-mile, and without prejudice as regards their ultimate rights. Under these circumstances he thought the proposal put forward by the Select Committee was a very moderate one indeed. With the fact in view that the railway and works the projection of which was now under consideration would otherwise remain the property of the company, the Select Committee considered it a primary condition to be insisted on that all shall become the property of the company, and it was for this reason that he had proposed they should receive such a liberal concession. This, he believed, was in accord with the views of the Select Committee, but, for the reasons mentioned by the hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands, they did not specify the amount of land which in their opinion should be offered to the company, confining themselves to an expression of opinion that it should not be given in the Central District—unless taken up along the com-

pany's line; and that any land so given should be granted in fee to the company on the completion of their undertaking, and be selected within one year from such completion, in not more than three blocks.

MR. BROWN said it was his intention to move an amendment upon the resolution before the Committee, and in order that it may appear in print on the Notice Paper he would move it now, and probably some hon. member would move the adjournment of the debate. It was as follows: "This Council, having "considered the Governor's Message (No. "3), together with the Report of the "Select Committee appointed to consider "it, is of opinion that a Railway from "Rockingham to a point near to the "Fiftieth-mile post on the Albany road "would be a great benefit to and pro- "mote the development of the districts "contiguous to the Eastern terminus of "the line, and this Council would there- "fore view with favor any reasonable "arrangement His Excellency the Gov- "ernor may think fit to make with the "Rockingham Jarrah Timber Company, "Limited, to extend their line of Railway "from Jarrahdale to the locality indi- "cated, in consideration of an adequate "concession of land, provided that the "company in consideration of a further "reasonable concession of land agree to "sell to the Government the Railway "already constructed, as well as all "stations, sidings, and jetties connected "with the said Railway, such Railway, "stations, sidings, jetties, and extension "to be handed over to the Government "when the term of occupancy the com- "pany holds under its articles of agree- "ment has expired." Though not acquainted with the part of the Colony referred to, and being personally unaware whether the country was adapted for agriculture, he presumed His Excellency the Governor was rightly informed on the subject, and he was prepared to accept His Excellency's assurance that, in his opinion, the extension of the railway would promote the development of the districts contiguous to the proposed terminus of the line, on the Albany Road. And he was prepared to concur in the proposal to give the company a liberal concession, upon condition that they sell the railway to the Govern-

ment, and hand it over to them when their term of occupancy expires. There were twenty-three miles of railway already constructed, which must have cost something like £2,000 a mile, so that this would be worth (say) £46,000, and now it was proposed to extend the line another twenty miles, which would represent another £40,000,—or £86,000 in all. Then there were jetties, stations, sidings, &c., which at an approximate estimate must be worth about £7,000; so that, calculated at a reasonable rate, the company's property, when the line was extended to the 51-mile, would be worth £93,000. No doubt the company might be induced to take less than that for their property, but he did not for a moment think they would be satisfied with 100,000 acres. He did not think it was possible for the members of that House, with the information at their command, to arrive at the best arrangement that could be made for the Colony; for he thought a matter of this kind was specially within the province of the Executive Government, and that, so long as the Legislature affirmed the principle of granting the company a further concession, in consideration of their conferring certain advantages upon the public, the question should be left to the Government to make the best terms they could with the company, and, having done so, that they should then come to that House and ask them to ratify those terms. He had no idea himself what the company were likely to accept, but he was sure there would be an end to all negotiations with them if the House were to tie the Government down, hard and fast, to 100,000 acres, as proposed in the resolution. It was for this reason he had submitted his amendment, which would probably have to be modified to some extent before the House affirmed it, as regards the selection of the land by the company.

MR. BURT said he believed with the hon. member for Geraldton that if they really desired to see this line extended, the consideration proposed by the hon. member for the Swan was utterly inadequate. The hon. member for Geraldton set down the cost of the line at £2,000 a mile, but he (Mr. Burt) thought that, looking at the value of the rolling stock and the country it ran through, £4,000 a

mile would be nearer the mark. The hon. member also reckoned the distance at twenty miles, but he (Mr. Burt) believed twenty-five miles would be more like it; and if the House thought that 100,000 acres was an adequate concession to make in consideration of all this, he thought they might as well put an end to the matter at once. One hundred thousand acres, at ten shillings an acre—and few people probably would care to go in for it at that price—represented £50,000 which would not go far to cover the cost of a railway nearly fifty miles in length, including rolling stock, stations, jetties, and other works. A most important feature in connection with this subject was this: if they were prepared to pay for railway extension, could they not do more good by a twenty-mile extension of the York line in the direction of Beverley than by extending this Rockingham line to the Albany Road? If they went in for extending in the latter direction, they would undoubtedly have to connect Rockingham with Fremantle, for the line to be of any benefit. That was a point which ought not to be lost sight of.

MR. MARMION moved, That the debate be adjourned until Thursday, 31st August.

Agreed to.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

The House then went into Committee to consider the Bill to increase the number of members to serve in the Legislative Council.

Clause 1.—Repeal of portions of the Legislative Council Act Amendment Act, 1873:

Agreed to.

Clause 2.—Legislative Council to consist of twenty-four members:

Agreed to without discussion.

Clause 3.—Definition of Electoral Districts:

Agreed to without discussion.

Clause 4.—Sitting member to keep his seat:

Agreed to *sub silentio*.

Clause 5.—Short title:

Agreed to.

Schedule A.—Boundaries of Gascoyne District:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Lord Gifford) moved, That the word "East" be substituted for "South-east," in the 3rd line. This would be a much better boundary than the present one, which included a portion of the Geraldton District.

This was agreed to, and the Schedule, as amended, put and passed.

Schedule B—agreed to.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported.

The House adjourned at half-past ten o'clock, p.m.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Thursday, 31st August, 1882.

Land Regulations: Pre-emptive rights to renewal of Leases—Excess Bill, 1881: Report of Select Committee—(Message No. 3) Concessions to Jarrahdale Timber Co.: Report of Select Committee: Adjourned debate—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at noon.

PRAYERS.

LAND REGULATIONS: PRE-EMPTIVE RIGHTS TO RENEWAL OF LEASES.

MR. VENN, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an Humble Address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to obtain the sanction of the Secretary of State to such an amendment in the present Land Regulations as will provide that lessees of Crown lands, on making application for a renewal of their leases at any time within one month previous to the expiration of such leases, shall have a prior claim to a renewal thereof, under such provisions as may be in force at the time, and thus ensure that present leaseholders shall not be disturbed in favor of new applicants; for although the Council believes that the Government would not willingly sanction leases which have lapsed being capriciously taken from one man and given to another, still the legal obligation of

"the Government might compel it to do such an injustice; and the Council is of opinion that all doubts as to renewals should be removed, and that express provision should be made by a further regulation for granting a prior claim to existing lessees for a renewal of their leases." The hon. member said, although he had felt very much the importance of the question involved in this resolution, he did not think that, in submitting it for the affirmation of the House, he need enter upon any lengthy speech, for he was sure that every hon. member equally with himself realised the importance of the subject as regards existing tenants. The question of an extension of tenure in respect of pastoral lands was a question that had been very prominently before the public during the past year, and though personally he had not taken any prominent part in the discussion, he had listened very attentively to what had been said, and he now felt proud to come forward on behalf of the leaseholders to support what he considered to be their just claims. Certain proposals had been put forward by an hon. member of that House with a view to amending our existing regulations, but it could not be said that those proposals had met with the general approval of the country, and a great deal of strong argument had been adduced in opposition to them. Still there had been nothing advanced, by way of alternative proposals, sufficiently encouraging to induce any hon. member of that House to bring forward any fresh regulations, and he thought that, generally speaking, the feeling of the country was that it would be as well at present not to interfere with the existing regulations. They had also an expression of the Governor's opinion that, so far as the rights of present leaseholders were concerned, they might rest tolerably certain of a renewal of their leases, as they had a moral right to such renewal; but the present resolution went further than that, and sought to give them a legal right, under such provisions as may be in force at the time. In submitting the resolution for the approval of the House he might, in conclusion, say, that he had no ulterior object in view beyond doing a simple act of justice to a large section of the community.