

excepting one. He would like to see the amendment carried, as it would then leave the question open for further consideration. He was sure the one electorate system would work very curiously in Western Australia: it would be impossible for candidates to canvass the whole of Western Australia. The system, as had been stated, would be in favour of the men possessed of the largest means, and probably men with the largest notoriety. He urged the House to adopt the suggestion of the Minister of Mines; not that he was satisfied that it was the best course, but it left the matter open to the Convention to see if nothing better could be done. One serious objection to the returns in New South Wales and South Australia was that they had not some system of proportionate voting. Owing to the rush of votes in favour of one or two well-known men, the great bulk of the rest of the senators would be returned by minorities. Mr. Barton, who polled the largest number of votes of any delegate, secured three or four times as many votes as the man at the bottom of the poll. If they took away two or three of the top men, the rest were representative of the minority. There was some system of proportionate voting required, the Hare system or some other.

HON. A. B. KIDSON would have liked to have heard some suggestion from the Hon. J. W. Hackett on this important point. For his part he could only come to the conclusion that the senators should be elected by the State as one electorate, for the reason that the Senate was a gathering of the representatives of the States as States, and it seemed to him that if the senators were elected for portions of the State, it could not be held that they represented the State as a whole.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The same would be said if they were elected by the legislatures.

HON. A. B. KIDSON hoped they would never again see an election by the legislatures in the colony. Outside the Houses of Parliament it had given the greatest dissatisfaction. They seemed to think that nobody outside the Houses of Parliament had a chance of election at all. Some persons who were not members stood for election, but not one had a chance. The delegates should receive

some intimation as to what course they were to take. The Hon. J. W. Hackett said they should adopt that amendment and leave the question, but that must raise some difficulties. He did not think the amendment good, as it left the matter in the hands of the Houses of the State to say in what way the senators should be elected. In Western Australia they would have one way, in Queensland another, and so on. In all the States the senators might be elected in different ways.

Progress reported and leave granted to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 5.50 p.m. until 4.30 next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Monday, 23rd August, 1897.

Papers Presented—Business of the Session: Ministerial Statement—Her Majesty's Reply to Address—Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech: fifth day's debate—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPERS PRESENTED.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) laid on the table the following papers:—1. Part I. of Statistical Register for 1896; Comparative Statement showing the Estimated and Actual Expenditure for 1896-7. 2. Report of the Commission appointed to inquire into and report upon a Site and suitable Plans for the proposed New Houses of Parliament. 3. Statistical Register for the year 1896 and previous years, compiled from official returns in Registrar General's office: Part I., Population and Vital Statistics.

4. Report by the Government Actuary on the Commonwealth Bill. Ordered to lie upon the table.

BUSINESS OF THE SESSION.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that, before the debate on the Address-in-Reply was resumed, he must ask hon. members to so arrange the business of the session that the delegates to the Federal Convention at Sydney might leave Perth on Thursday morning. The course suggested might be inconvenient to hon. members, but the sooner the delegates got away, the sooner they would be back, and the sooner the ordinary business of Parliament could be proceeded with. It would be more convenient to himself to leave the colony next week, and, he believed, to every one of the delegates, more especially to those who would be elected on Wednesday; but it would be the better for them to be present at the commencement of the Convention in order to assist in expediting the work as much as possible. If they arrived a week afterwards, the business of the Convention would have to be delayed to suit their convenience, and this would delay their return for certainly a week. If the delegates left by special train for Albany on Thursday morning, they could catch the Oroya. He had telegraphed to Mr. Edmund Barton, who had charge of the Commonwealth Bill in the Convention, asking whether, if the delegates left Albany next week by the slow steamer Ballarat, and did not arrive until the 9th or 10th of September, instead of the 2nd of the month, he could promise that the main features of the measure would not be dealt with until they reached Sydney. He pointed out to Mr. Barton that the Bill was not yet in committee in the Western Australian Assembly, and that as some hon. members had a good deal of comment to make on the provisions, great difficulty was being experienced. He appealed to Mr. Barton for assistance, and a reply telegram had just been received from that gentleman, stating that he quite recognised the difficulty, but was not in a position to give any undertaking before the representatives arrived. The telegram went on to say that Vic-

toria would probably want practical work resumed immediately, especially as a general election in that colony was intended in October. Mr. Barton added that personally he was anxious that Western Australia should receive fair treatment, and that he would consult the Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania on their arrival. That was about as much as the representatives of Western Australia could expect. The representatives of the other colonies, whose parliaments were sitting, were equally anxious to get back to their duties. If hon. members expedited the business so that the delegates could get away on Thursday morning, he would promise to hurry on the business in Sydney as much as possible, and could see no reason why Parliament should not be called together within a week of their return. It was not absolutely necessary that Parliament should prorogue before the delegates left for Sydney. If the Commonwealth Bill required further consideration by the House, the discussion could be continued in the absence of those members who were delegates to the Convention. There would be quite enough members left in the House to carry on a discussion of this kind, and the decisions arrived at could be telegraphed to Sydney. The delegates would stay in Sydney no longer than was absolutely necessary, and he would promise that, within a few days after their return, Parliament would be called together for the transaction of the business of the country.

HER MAJESTY'S REPLY TO ADDRESS.

THE SPEAKER: Before we proceed with the debate on the Address-in-Reply, I should like to read the following communication, just received from the Right Hon. the Premier:--

Premier's Office,

Sir,

Perth, 23rd August, 1897.

I have the honour to inform you that the Address of the Parliament of Western Australia, entrusted to me for presentation to Her Majesty the Queen, has been duly presented. Her Majesty was pleased to hand me, on the occasion of the presentation, a written reply, in the following terms:

"I thank the Parliament of Western Australia for their loyal and dutiful address. I have been deeply moved by the numerous demonstrations of loyalty and affec-

tion to my Throne, which have been called forth by the completion of the 60th year of my reign, and I am sincerely pleased by the cordiality with which the Parliament of Western Australia has taken part in them. I request you to convey my hearty thanks to the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of Western Australia."

I may add that the casket, in which the Address was enclosed, was much admired by the Queen. I have, etc.,

JOHN FORREST,
Premier.

The Honourable the Speaker,
Legislative Assembly, Perth.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

FIFTH DAY OF DEBATE.

MR. J. J. HIGHAM (Fremantle): Mr. Speaker, I have been asked by the hon. member for Sussex, who moved the adjournment of the debate on Friday, to apologise for his non-attendance in his place to resume the debate on the Address-in-Reply. I willingly address the House in his absence, though I think it would be inadvisable for me to continue this debate at very great length. I hope that representatives of this colony will take part in the federation Convention at Sydney, and everything that this House can do will be done to facilitate their departure for New South Wales. One subject in his Excellency's Speech is that of the Fremantle flogging, which has been so hysterically referred to by some members of this House. On the one hand we have a magistrate of 30 years' standing, well known for his integrity, impartiality, and justice, and on the other hand we have two villains, with long criminal records, one of whom is a member of the Collingwood push, and the other a man under sentence of 15 years for garrotting. People who look into the merits of the case must agree that the sentence awarded was well merited, and the only one which, under the circumstance, could be inflicted. The hon. member for North-East Coolgardie referred to the comments of the local and Eastern press on this matter. All I can say is, that if members of the local press had set a better example, we would not have had any such scurrilous remarks as appeared in the newspapers elsewhere, remarks both uncalled for and unnecessary. The character of the worthy magistrate in question

requires no defence from those people who know him. What has already been said is quite sufficient, both for the gentleman himself and for those who know and esteem him. The question of the establishment of smelting works at Rocky Bay has also been referred to. It has been contended that such works will seriously depreciate the value of property and destroy vegetation around North Fremantle; but experience of similar works in other parts of the world show those fears to be groundless. Even if we deemed it necessary to shift these works away from Rocky Bay, it would not be necessary to go more than two or three miles to get a better site at Owen's Anchorage; a site which I hope at no very distant date will be connected with Fremantle by rail. The Railway and Harbour Works at Fremantle are depriving us of facilities for dealing with the cattle trade, and should it be necessary to find another site for the cattle yards at Owen's Anchorage, it would be necessary to connect that place with the railway system by a light line. It is not necessary for me to continue this debate any longer, and I hope the business of this special session will soon be disposed of, so that we may get to the ordinary business of the country.

MR. KENNY (North Murchison): I rise to receive my baptism of fire on the Parliamentary battlefield of this country, and I cannot do better than follow the line of the veterans and recruits who have preceded me, and congratulate you, sir, on your re-election to the high and responsible position which you fill with honour to yourself and credit to the country. I also beg to welcome the Premier back, not only to the country, but to his place in this House. I congratulate the country upon the great benefits that must of necessity arise from the visit of the right hon. gentleman to the mother country. I, like many other members, felt strongly disposed to take part in this debate on the Governor's speech, but in deference to the expressed wishes of the leader of the House I cannot do better than put my remarks as short as possible, in order to enable the Government to carry out their intentions with regard to the Sydney Convention. Although this debate has been somewhat protracted, that is not the blame of the hon. members on the Opposition side

of the House. I believe there is no one sitting on my side of the House who would attempt to raise factious opposition to any good measure introduced by the Government. I myself have always recognised that a well constituted and well managed Opposition is essential to the good government of every country. Whatever may be the opinion of the Opposition, I feel sure they take a higher standard than that their duty is merely to remove the Government with the sole purpose of occupying the Treasury benches. There is no doubt that sooner or later we can achieve federation, but at the present time Western Australia need not be anxious about joining in with the other colonies. The Government are doing the correct thing in endeavouring to meet the representatives of the other colonies at the Convention. We have made an engagement with those colonies, and that engagement should be carried out. Although we may not see our way clear to join in federation at present, a lot is to be gained by our delegates meeting and exchanging opinions on this great question with the representatives of the other colonies. If we are not in a position to federate now, we could at any rate arrange our laws so as to become more closely associated with our neighbours. We have a very different class of people in Western Australia to-day from what we had five or six years ago. The laws that suited the conditions of that time are certainly out of joint with the conditions of to-day. We ought to endeavour as much as possible to so frame our laws, that the thousands of people who have arrived in Western Australia, and will arrive in the future, will not feel they are strangers in a strange land, but rather that our laws are their laws and our people are their people. What I think is this. The one great thing that Western Australia requires now is another five hundred thousand of such people as our goldfields have already introduced to our shores, and then our colony will be able to take up her position in every way equal to her more favoured sisters who, at no distant day, will, I firmly believe, form the United States of Australasia—a great and prosperous nation under the Southern Cross.

MR. OATS: I congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, on your position as Speaker of

this House. I have known you for several years, and I am sure that no better man could be appointed to that honourable position. I also heartily congratulate the Right Hon. the Premier, who has come back to us looking so well, and ready. I am sure, to do his best for the good of this great country. I am in rather peculiar circumstances here. I have been a mining man from the very inception of these great goldfields. I can give you facts that you want to possess with regard to the development of this great country. I was first in Southern Cross—a town in the Yilgarn district which I now represent; and at that time the difficulties were great—very great indeed. Water was scarce; but I will refer more particularly to water later on. I have been for three or four weeks or a month without water to wash my face and hands. But what is a man worth unless he conquers difficulties? We conquered that difficulty in Southern Cross; and for the last four years of my residence there I had sufficient rain water for myself and family and for my visitors. What has been done there could be done elsewhere. I am a Western Australian. I came here over eight years since; and I have thrown in my lot with Western Australia; and I wish to see Western Australia grow to an immensity far beyond the other colonies on the great Australian continent. I believe it is possible for this to be achieved. I am a goldfields member; and when I say I am a goldfields member, I do not intend to speak a word against the other sources of production in this colony. As an individual, I am willing and anxious that the other productions in this colony should be fostered. I will do all I can to bring that about. The land is waiting for the scraping of the soil, and it will grow, and grow productively—in fact, I look forward to the time when instead of importing we shall export; and in the meanwhile, as the right hon. the Premier said, we want the people here. So we do. At present the sum of £80,000 a month is going out of the colony to supply the wives and families of men who are working here. At present that money is going out; but I want to see it stop in. If these men bring their wives and families here, more money will be circulated, and it will be so much

the better for the colony. To bring about that, we shall require the same advantages in this colony as the other colonies possess. The miner comes here, and he certainly gets good pay—say £3 to £3 10s. a week. [AN HON. MEMBER: Four pounds?] Yes; but that is exceptional. Before long perhaps, the people will be able to live on £3 a week better than they can now live on £4 a week. Now about the tariff. If we could reduce the price of necessaries I would even go so far as to subsidise production. We must have these things admitted into the colony at as cheap a rate as possible.

THE PREMIER: Yes; if we cannot produce them.

MR. OATS: I glanced over the list of articles which are imported free, and I noticed nothing but food for Chinamen. I noticed nothing on which you could bring up a stalwart Britisher. Knock off the duties on the necessaries of life. Give a man a free breakfast, give him a free dinner and a free supper, and put the duties, if you like, on the luxuries of life. [AN HON. MEMBER: Free drinks.] Yes. Put a duty on champagne as much as you like; but bring in the necessaries of life free, and relieve the working backbone of the country of the duties which are now imposed on the necessaries which these men consume.

AN HON. MEMBER: What about the landlords?

MR. OATS: They are better off now than they were eight years ago. I will draw attention to the difference between Western Australia now and what it was eight years ago. There were few people here eight years ago, and there was very little money. I paid many men in Western Australia the first golden sovereign they ever had in their lives. What has brought this change about? The magic wand of gold. Gold has brought this about, and will bring about yet greater results if we treat the country right. I am not afraid to say—I stake my reputation on the assertion, and there are others who will back me up, the member for Coolgardie will back me up—that the gold production in this country will increase and go on increasing. In a year from now 100,000oz. in the month will be produced, and more than that, even, in a very few years. We cannot go on taking out the gold for

ever; but so far we have a bigger result per ton than any other goldfields in the world. I hope to see this production of gold increase; for gold will help our agriculture and will help every other industry. Let us therefore help on the production of gold. Let us help the prospector. I am not so much in favour of the capitalist, although you cannot do without capital. Let us have capital and spend it rightly. I need not refer to the great industries of the capitalist, or the moneys sent here by the capitalist. We are told that we are having hundreds of millions of money spent in this colony. It is a lie! Show me where five millions have been spent here! There are statistics showing that so much money has been spent on the mines; but more still has been spent in the offices in London and elsewhere.

AN HON. MEMBER: A good deal has been spent here too.

MR. OATS: The next point I wish to refer to is that of the public batteries. I know the right hon. the Premier will carry out what he has said. I am sure he will. We don't want a toy battery. We don't want a coffee mill. We don't want a dolly. If the Government are going to spend anything in the erection of a battery, they must erect a battery which shall be a success as a business transaction. It must not be put there to pacify, but to help the industry. I know districts where a good mill put up on proper land would pay great profits, and should return the money in a very short time.

THE PREMIER: Tell us where these places are.

MR. OATS: I will. Carry out my scheme, and I guarantee success. Let me tell you what has been done in some parts of the colony. In one case they have to take the stone 40 miles at a considerable cost before they can get it crushed, and the crushing costs sometimes £3 a ton. [AN HON. MEMBER: £5 sometimes.] I am speaking of an instance that came under my notice to-day. Give me a good plant and water—there is plenty of water there. [THE PREMIER: And wood?] Yes; there is plenty of wood too, and I will guarantee to crush that stone for ten shillings a ton and less. [AN HON. MEMBER: You cannot do it.] Who said I cannot do it? The hon. member does not know anything about it.

I know what I am talking about. I think that great caution should be exercised in the matter. The Government should first determine on the district where the battery should be applied. You must first know if the stone is there, and its value; and when you have ascertained that, I think you cannot do better than erect a battery. Coming to federation, I would like to see a united Australia; but I do not want to see Western Australia absorbed in the other colonies. The time is not ripe for federation entirely; but the delegates should go to Sydney and tell the members of the Convention what we expect. They should tell it boldly and manfully. Federation will come when the time is ripe for it; and when that time comes I shall do all I can to bring it about. The next question is with reference to water. I must say something about that. You know very well that the year before Coolgardie was discovered, several prospecting parties went out and found gold. I can give the names of them—in fact, I assisted in sending these men out. They came back, and said they could not get water. Well, there are 20,000 people in a small area there now, with plenty of water for everybody. The member for Coolgardie said that he would like to see the mines at Coolgardie more advanced. I contend that in Coolgardie, within an area of five miles, there is plenty of good stone—many hundreds of thousands of tons—that can be profitably worked. When I talk of profit in gold, I do not want any two or three ounces of gold per ton. We would like to have it; but still, at the same time, it is not required for economical mining. Not at all. I am not going to say anything against Coolgardie. But someone said that there was no water there. Now with reference to drinking water. We want good drinking water—condensed water. I have lived on it for eight years, and I ought to know something about it. Water in Coolgardie was five shillings a gallon. To-day it is 1½d. or less. We must first prove what water we have, if we are to spend half a million on it. I do not object to the water scheme; only if we can do it without pumping the water up, let us do it. But let us first see what water we have. There are oceans of water there, and tanks might be erected to conserve it. Skillful

engineers might be sent there to see what is the best thing to be done. I believe all hon. gentlemen here on both sides of the House will do their best to help the country. I would like to mention that I am sitting on these cross-benches, but that I am going to do the best I can to help the Government in any good measures for the country. I shall not be afraid to cross this gangway to vote for the Government, if they produce a plan or a measure that will help this colony. I will cross the gangway willingly; and I believe others will too. Still I have come here—not to vote for a certain party or a certain man with my eyes shut. The little brains I have I will use; and they are at the service of the country.

MR. LYALL HALL: It was not my intention to have addressed the House at this stage; but I feel I cannot refrain from commenting on some of the speeches made by hon. members on the opposite side of the House. There is no necessity for me to follow the example of other members and to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker. It is the House which is to be congratulated. I would ask you to extend to me the same forbearance—the same leniency—you have always shown to other new members; and I would ask you to remember, if I should transgress any rules which govern the debates in this House, that I graduated first in the City Council.

AN HON. MEMBER: You need not apologise for that.

MR. HALL: I shall only say a few words to-night, as I intend to speak again when Parliament re-assembles; and I shall only touch on those topics already touched on by hon. members. First of all, I must deeply deplore the uncalled-for attack made by the member for the Swan on the Acting Premier. I believe that if he had commenced his electioneering speeches in the same strain he would never have occupied the seat he does.

MR. EWING: Never prophesy unless you know.

MR. HALL: I think that the hon. member went out of his way to abuse the opposite side. The hon. member went so much out of his way to be nasty that I can well understand his being told recently in the law courts that he had yet to learn the rudiments of manners. [MR. EWING: Supposing you teach me.]

The hon. member opposite came in as an independent candidate; but I do not think his best friends would ever accuse him of being independent, unless it is that he thinks, as a great number of so-called independent men seem to think, that in order to show his independence he must be abusive. The principal subject that the House has met to discuss is that of federation. I listened with very great pleasure to the speech of the hon. member for East Perth, who has evidently made a study of the subject; and, as an Australian born, I am pleased to see that those who are able to express their views, and those who are able to judge, consider that it was a speech that would have done credit to any Parliament in Australia or in any part of the world. Despite the hon. member's arguments, I am not prepared to hand over this colony of Western Australia to the tender mercies of the older colonies or to the more advanced colonies, believing, as I do, that we shall progress better in the peculiar circumstances in which we are placed under local government than by being members of a Federated Parliament. I think, however, that we should be represented at the forthcoming Convention. The Premier has pointed out that we are not bound to accept any of the provisions of the Convention; but in the interests of those who may come after us it is as well that we should have a hand in the framing of the Federal Constitution. With regard to the mining laws, I am glad that the right hon. the Premier has seen fit to make some amelioration in the conditions of labour; and I hope that he will also see his way to grant some security of tenure to those people who invest their money in the mines. I congratulate the House upon the return of so many members representing the goldfields; and I can assure those hon. members that I will do all I can to further the industry which has raised this colony from obscurity to greatness. Since my return to Parliament I have had the privilege of a tour through a portion of the goldfields; and I have made it my special aim to enquire among the mining population their views with reference to the Coolgardie water scheme. I found there was a diversity of opinion, but that it simply resolved itself into this, that those gentlemen who, like

my friend Mr. W. G. Brookman and others, had plenty of water at their mines, and who were able to sell the valuable fluid at an enormous price, did not want a cheap and plentiful supply of water to the fields. Those, on the other hand, who had not a sufficiency of water—even by paying a high price for it—were strongly in favour of the Coolgardie water scheme; and from inquiries I made I venture to say that if a vote were taken on the fields there would be five to one in favour of the Coolgardie water scheme being carried out. The chief objection of hon. members on the Opposition side of the House to the scheme seems to be the expenditure of what, I may say, is the paltry sum of £2,500,000. I ask those hon. members to consider what has been the expenditure on water supply systems in other colonies. In Victoria—I am not quite certain of my figures, but I know I am very nearly correct—it cost something over £2,000,000 to supply water for Ballarat, the chief mining centre. To supply Sandhurst there was an expenditure of something like £1,500,000, and the water supply of Geelong cost about £500,000, while the Melbourne water supply cost several millions of money.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Melbourne water supply system pays.

MR. HALL: So will the Coolgardie system pay. The Victoria irrigation system cost £6,000,000 or £7,000,000, but in this connection money was misapplied.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Victorian irrigation system has never paid a penny of interest yet.

MR. HALL: The money, as I say, was misapplied. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: I know that.] On the Coolgardie water scheme it is proposed to expend only £2,500,000, and yet hon. members are found to object to supply with water the source of all our prosperity. The conduct of such hon. members is not fair. In trying to persuade others they seem to have convinced themselves that the scheme is bad. Hon. members on the opposite side seem to have mistaken noise for argument; and having persuaded themselves that their view is the true one, as no doubt they have, I am willing to give them the benefit of the doubt by assuming they have convinced themselves, and believe

they are right. There is only one other matter I would like to mention, and that is the Fremantle flogging case. Much has been said of it—indeed I think too much has been said—but allowing that the sentence may have been too severe, yet that sentence was imposed by the magistrate, and not by the Attorney General. I think the Attorney General would not have been doing his duty to the country if he had mitigated that sentence in any way, for the only way to prevent some men from committing crime is to use the “cat,” and had the Attorney General been so weak as to listen to the pleadings of the deputation, then I say the prison at Fremantle would have been in a state of anarchy, because it is well-known that some of the prisoners were making wagers of tobacco that their friends on the deputation would get them off the punishment—that is while in prison. I think that, instead of blaming the Attorney General, he deserves the thanks of all law-abiding citizens. Gentlemen, I thank you for the way in which you have listened to me.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse): I desire to congratulate you, Mr. Speaker, upon assuming again the honourable position you have so long filled; and as one of the older members of the House, since Responsible Government was introduced, I can cordially endorse the words of other members in reference to the great ability with which you have filled the position. My reason for rising at this stage of the debate, is to set at rest a matter referred to during my absence, in regard to railway rates and management in connection with the carriage of ores from the gold-fields to Fremantle. I do not rise for the purpose of debating this question, but for setting at rest some differences which have arisen in connection with this matter, and to point out that what has been already stated with regard to the reason why there has been a falling off in the returns of gold, which has been attributed to the discouragement of the carriage of ores on the railways, can be refuted by me in a few words. The member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper) stated that the apparent diminution in the gold returns was due to the discouraging effect of the railway rates for the carriage of ore. Now this question of the

carriage of ore is one in which I have taken great interest, and I have done my best to encourage the increase of that traffic. When it was first proposed to the department to carry low-grade ores, the understanding was that they would be carried to Fremantle for being shipped to smelting works at Wallaroo, near Adelaide, and it was mentioned then that these would be low grade ores.

MR. VOSPER: Low-grade ores to be sent to Adelaide!

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Yes; the ores were to be carried to Fremantle in bags at 16s. a ton at owners' risk, on the understanding that the trucks which were carrying merchandise up to Kalgoorlie should be used in this traffic for back-loading down to Fremantle, and the rate being the ordinary traffic rate charged by the department for goods carried at owners' risk. After some negotiation with the department, as to taking the responsibility for loss in transit, if any, it was proposed that the department should accept the risk by charging at the class D rate, namely 36s. a ton for ores carried to Fremantle. As to alleged losses in transit, I may say that although some claims have been made for losses in regard to these ores, and in one instance a claim was made for alleged loss of 160lbs. of ore as shortage, yet there is no evidence forthcoming up to the present to show that a loss did occur in this or any other consignment during transit to Fremantle. We were informed that in one consignment some shortage had taken place at Fremantle; but it was afterwards found that, on the ore being turned out at Adelaide, the number of bags was quite correct, and therefore no shortage actually occurred in that case. It seems that the consignor had expected there would be some shortage, and consequently he was endeavouring to protect himself by making a claim in advance for shortage that had not actually occurred. Now, if the department were to accept the responsibility for loss or shortage in the transit of gold ores, and we charged only at the low rate of 16s. a ton from Kalgoorlie to Fremantle, it will be evident that, considering the high value of these ores, as much as £240 to £250 sterling per waggon load, the senders of this valuable property should surely take some portion of the

risk, by paying a higher rate for carriage, as we have asked them to do, namely 36s. a ton. If the consignors will pay the higher rate, the Railway Department will give a receipt for every bag of ore delivered at the railway for transit, and will take a receipt for what we re-deliver to the consignee at Fremantle, keeping a tally of the bags at each end of the journey.

MR. VOSPER : Could you not do it for less than £1 extra for taking the responsibility? Could you not do it for 5s. extra.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS : The railway rate for this class of goods is fixed by the department at 36s. a ton; and as we accept the responsibility for goods carried at that rate, I do not see why we should depart from that principle; because if the consignor were to send ore at the lower rate of 16s. a ton, and had to pay insurance on it for safety in transit, he would be paying more insurance than the extra rate which we ask would come to. I can assure the House that everything is being done by the department to encourage this traffic; but at the present I am not prepared to carry at a less rate than 16s. a ton without risk, or at 36s. a ton with the risk taken by the department. If all the facts are taken into consideration, you will find the rate is as low as any railway rate in Australia for a similar distance, and no responsibility is usually taken for goods carried at so low a rate as 16s. a ton. Losses in this traffic have only been anticipated, and have not actually occurred, for up to the present there has been no loss of ore carried by railway, and no cause for complaint has therefore arisen on that account. As to the railway rate for such freight and the alleged discouragement given to the mining industry at Kalgoorlie, I may say that on a portion of the Boulder tramway, now under construction, there have been complaints that the Government charged 4s. per ton for the carriage of ores over the extra distance beyond Kalgoorlie. I may say that when a train goes out for ore to be delivered at a point on that tramway, a minimum charge of £2 per train is made, because if the ore is not there when the train goes, the department will be put to expense in running the train empty. If a minimum charge were not made, the consequence would be that the train must

run out and back without freight. We are prepared at present to carry the ore at 1s. 3d. a ton for the extra distance; but what is proposed to be done in the future will bring the charge down very much lower, because it is intended that the rate from any point on the Government railway shall be a through rate, and consequently the ore will be carried at about 4d. per ton for this extra distance, as compared with 1s. 3d. charged while the Boulder tramway is in course of construction. This will show the Government are prepared to encourage the mining industry in every possible way. As to the Boulder tram line, it is being constructed at the cost of the country; and those mine-owners who wish to make junctions for connecting with their mines will do it at their own expense, so that the connecting branch of each mine will be constructed at the expense of the owners of that mine. There has also been a complaint that the Government intend to claim £125 per annum for the use of the junctions; but I may say that no rate has yet been fixed, and when the rate is fixed it will probably be £15 to £25 per annum. Therefore the mine owners will have to connect their several mines with the Government tram line at their own cost, and will have to pay a small charge for the junction in each case, as is done in other instances where junctions are made connecting private works with a Government railway. Consequently, there can be no complaint that the Government are attempting to make money out of mine owners by imposing some charge that is not a usual charge; but, on the contrary, it will be seen that we are doing all we can to assist them. I will give you another instance. A few days ago an agent at Fremantle asked the Railway Department what would be the charge for conveying 2,000 tons of mining machinery, to be carried from Fremantle to Kalgoorlie and along the Boulder tramline, to a mine. He was informed that, besides the ordinary traffic rate, the additional charges would be 3s. 4d. a ton for delivery at the mine. The agent stated afterwards he had quite expected the additional charges would be more; but I may explain that there will be only one unloading for this machinery, delivered from the trucks to the mine, and that when the company has connected its

mine with the tramline, there will be no necessity to unload at Kalgoorlie, load again on fresh trucks, and unload those trucks at the mine. One loading at Fremantle and one unloading at the mine, when connected with the tramline, will be all that will be necessary; so that these 2,000 tons of mining machinery or any similar consignment can be conveyed at 3s. 4d. a ton added to the ordinary rate, and including all charges from Fremantle to delivery at the mine. The extra charges will be for unloading at the end, the same as we charge elsewhere, with the usual shunting charge if we have to put the machinery down at the company's mine. You will see, therefore, that it is the intention of the Government to deal fairly with the mineowners and with all parties who use the Government railways, and also to deal with them liberally. I have listened to remarks on this question by several hon. members, and I read a newspaper report of the remarks of the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper); therefore in speaking on this question to-night I have thought it would be well to set at rest the minds of the people and those engaged in the mining industry, by explaining what we intend to do. I hope that if any cause of complaint does arise with regard to trucks or any matter of that kind, such complaints will be made to the district superintendent at Coolgardie, who will deal with them directly; and if they are not dealt with in such a manner as to satisfy the complainants, I hope they will hear something more from myself. I will endeavour to see that each matter of complaint is attended to, and that the interests of the public receive every consideration by the department.

Question—*that the Address-in-Reply to the Governor's Speech be adopted—* put and passed.

TREASURY BILLS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

PAPER—NEW HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

THE PREMIER laid on the table the report of the Commission *re site and*

suitable plans for projected new Houses of Parliament.

COMMONWEALTH BILL.

DEBATE ON GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest), in moving that the House resolve itself into committee for the consideration of the Commonwealth Bill, as adopted by the Adelaide Convention, said: If this question were a new one, and if we were for the first time discussing the question of a federal constitution, it would, no doubt, be necessary for me to make a lengthy speech. This matter has been before this Assembly times out of number. We have discussed the general question of federation on more than two or three occasions, within my own experience; and therefore I do not propose to allude to the whole question of the federations of the world, as has been done elsewhere by persons occupying positions similar to that which I occupy to-night, and who have been able to place before the members of their several legislatures the constitutions of every federal government in the world. I do not propose to deal with the federation of the United States, which is no doubt the great example on which the federations in other parts of the world have, to a large extent, been framed. I do not intend to refer to the federation of Switzerland, and I do not intend to refer to the federation of any place other than making brief reference now and again to the federation of the great Dominion of Canada. It seems to me that, after all, the Canadian Dominion is the best example we can refer to, being a thirty-years' example of federation under the British Crown; a federation founded upon the constitution of the British empire, and founded upon our own constitution, because the plan which finds a place in the constitution of Canada is really the plan of the British constitution, which is also the plan of our own constitution. Therefore it is not difficult for any hon. member who takes an interest in this matter to very soon gauge for himself the scope and extent of the federal constitution, if he has any knowledge of the constitution under which we live in this colony. Why is it that the colonies of Australia desire—and no doubt there is a strong feeling in the

minds of a great many people who live on this continent, and especially amongst many of its prominent men—that the time has arrived when we should have something in common, some union among ourselves, so that we should not be separated from each other on the same continent as if we were foreign nations. We are allied by the ties of kinship, by having come from the same stock, having the same history, the same aspirations, the same hope for the future. Yes, we have all these in common. The future of the British race and the British Empire is ours; their hopes in regard to it are our hopes; therefore there is something in common, there is everything in common, between ourselves and the people who inhabit other portions of Australia. But, at the same time, if you come to our constitutions as colonies, we are to each other in the position of foreign nations; for we have all the powers within ourselves of legislating on subjects of internal concern, and although on some few subjects we are under the control of another country, yet for all practical purposes we are sovereign States, and have nothing in common in our constitutions binding us to the people of any other portion of Australia. Seeing that we have all the same interests—I cannot use a better word—that we have the same interests, then it comes about that we, in this colony, must feel an interest in the welfare of our neighbours. We cannot afford to stand still and see other parts of this Australian continent doing badly or faring ill, or being subjected to foreign force, or in any way being interfered with by the people of any other country; and for that reason there has been a strong desire—of course tempered by self-interest, but that is the only tempering it has—that we should be united for all purposes of defence and mutual safety, and that all those laws which to a large extent govern our daily life should have effect not only within our own borders, but also throughout this island continent. That being so, for many a long day it has occurred to the leading spirits of the great Australian colonies that, while we should retain to ourselves some power of Government, and not give up the control of our local affairs, still there should be some one voice within our borders which could, as occasion required, legis-

late for our common wants, and be able also to speak with one voice for the whole of the peoples of this great continent. That being so, there has been a great deal written and thought about federation, and the only question is how best to set about it. I am sure we can all understand that in the early days of self-government—just as in the early days of life when a young man, having got freedom from restraint and felt for the first time he could manage his own business without restraint or control by others, is naturally desirous of doing so—there is a natural anxiety on the part of these self-governing communities that each should have the management of its own business, without being controlled by any superior power. And, naturally, these young communities have fancied, as no doubt we do, that we shall be of much greater importance in the estimation of other nations of the world, by being independent and managing our own affairs, than we should be by sinking our individuality in a federal union. That, no doubt, has been the feeling on this continent, and I do not wonder at it, for I think it is a goodly thing that one feels his entire destinies are under his own control, especially when he has been subjected to some control in the past; and I have no doubt that feeling has operated to prevent the idea of federation gaining ground in Australia. There is another reason I gave expression to years ago, that there is a great desire for all of us in these colonies to be regarded as of some importance in the world. We desire that our country should be autonomous, that it should be an independent State so far as it can be while a portion of a great empire, and we do not want to sink our individuality and be only one of a great number. We feel on this question that our prestige is at stake; for although people in other countries may probably know who is the Governor of this colony, may even know who the Premier is, and know something about several other persons who take part in the governing of this colony, yet all that would pass away when we become part of a federation of States. I at once say that it would to some extent; because I need only ask how many members here, although they may know who the President of the United States is, and may know the names of some

few of the American Ministers, are yet sufficiently acquainted with prominent men in the various States as to be able to tell us something about the leading politicians in those American States. Take a case nearer home, the case of the Dominion of Canada. We all know who is the Governor-General of Canada, and who is the Prime Minister, and we may even know who are some of the Ministers associated with him; but who takes any interest in knowing who are the Governor and Prime Minister of the Province of Ontario, or of Manitoba, or of British Columbia? We don't know, and we take little interest in it. We look at the Dominion of Canada and know who are the persons who control the legislature of that great Dominion, and we do not trouble ourselves about those who control the legislatures of the provinces, and yet some of these provinces are as large as some of the Australian colonies. You will see that we will suffer a loss of prestige individually; but I think that what we lose in individual prestige we will gain in the great national cause. We will not think of ourselves then as Western Australians. If any one asks you what are you, you will not say that you are Western Australian, but that you are Australian. You will find no one now in Canada after 30 years' experience telling us he comes from Ontario, or that he is a Quebec man, or a British Columbia man, but he will tell us he is a native of Canada. And that will be the same with us. We will be proud to belong to the great Australian Commonwealth; and though we may suffer, as I have no doubt we will to some extent, we will not suffer really in national sentiment or in national progress. There is no doubt that the best government we know of is that of the British Constitution. There are lots of people at the present time who would advise us to try some new constitution. In fact some people will tell us that responsible government cannot live under a constitution such as is proposed in this Bill. They seem to think that we must find a constitution for ourselves, that some new plan will be devised for us which will suit our circumstances better than the well-tryed—what I might call the old-fashioned—plan of responsible government as we understand it under the British Constitution. Now, for my own part, I prefer to go along the

road that is well cleared and that we know, rather than go upon a bush track which we do not know. I can see no reason why we should leave the beaten track in order to please those who think that the road is not quite good enough for us to travel in. I believe in sticking to the grand old Constitution of England, which has lasted for a considerable time, which we understand, which we are used to, and which I believe is altogether suitable for our conditions and our circumstances. The majority of the delegates in the Convention of 1891, as also in that of 1897, were agreed in regard to that. Both the Bill framed in 1891 and the Bill founded upon it in 1897 have for their pattern the British Constitution. In the proposed Federal Constitution there will be two Houses with a Governor General having the same powers exactly, so far as I can remember, with those of our Governor here. In fact, he represents the Queen, having the same powers as the Sovereign has in England. Of these two Houses, one represents the whole of the people of this continent, the other represents the several States. Then there is another point—I did not think of coming to this point so soon, but the hon. member for Central Murchison has reminded me of it—some people think that the Upper House in the Commonwealth is to be just the same as the Upper House here. It is on the same pattern, but it has not quite the same duties. Now, the representatives under this Commonwealth Bill for the Lower House are to be in proportion to the number of the electors of the whole continent, and it goes without saying that, with our smaller population, the members that we shall have in the Lower House will be very few indeed. By clause 24 of the Bill, it is provided that no colony shall have less than five representatives; it was four in the Bill of 1891, but we were able to increase the number in 1897 to five. That is all we would have. We should only have five members in the Lower House for some time, and you will understand that the great colonies of Victoria and New South Wales being very similarly situated—they are the same people, the same blood runs through their veins, and the same interests, really the same interests, apply to both of them—they would be able, if they combined—

I do not know that they would combine—but their interests being similar they would naturally act together, and they would be able to carry the questions in which they were interested. If there was a matter in which the interests of the various colonies came into collision, the colonies of the Eastern side, especially those two great colonies, by their large populations, would be able to altogether outvote the five members who came from the remote Western colony. That was the reason why, as a compensating influence to this state of affairs, the proposal of 1891, and also of 1897, provided that in the Upper House there should be an equal number of representatives who should represent the States, not by numbers, not numerically as in the Lower House, for the whole of Australia, but that each State should have an equal number of members, in order that the State rights of each particular colony should be protected; so that, if there were some law proposed in the Lower House which very much affected the interests of these colonies, some law or tax, or if something were desired which would be against the interests of this colony or against the interests of Tasmania or of South Australia, as the case might be, because such cases would be quite likely to occur, though these colonies might not have much influence in the Lower House, there would be an opportunity of protection for these smaller States in the Upper House. We were all agreed on that principle. I do not think that any dissentient voice was raised. Although the numbers of the populations of the several States are so different, the representatives of each State in the Senate will be equal, to protect the smaller States, so that each State will have an opportunity of protecting its rights when a measure comes before the Senate. Now, in this Bill the only difference that is proposed between the elections for the Upper House and the Lower House is that the representatives of the Lower House shall be elected by the people in such a way as the Parliament of the Commonwealth shall prescribe, and in the meantime in such a way as the different colonies shall prescribe, but subsequent to the establishment of the Commonwealth as the Commonwealth shall prescribe, while in the case of the Senate it is proposed that the elections

shall be on the basis of each colony as one electorate. All electors eligible to vote for the Lower House are to vote as one electorate for the whole of the colony, and return the ten members. Each elector would have the right of voting for the ten members. That plan seemed to have got such a hold on the representatives at the Convention in Adelaide that there was no use trying to alter it at that time. I myself was not in favour of it. I will tell you my reason why. The reason why it was proposed by some of those who were most conservative was because they thought that by making the Upper House more in touch, as they supposed, with the people, it would have greater weight with the country, and that the Convention would then be willing to give it larger powers. We heard a great deal at the Convention about that. "If you will only make the Senate a real representative body," they said, "If you will constitute it on a thoroughly liberal basis, we will be very willing to consider how far we will give it powers, far greater powers than we otherwise would." The elections in New South Wales, and also in South Australia, had pleased a great many people, especially the conservative people, because they had returned men who they thought were very well suited to take part in the deliberations of this Convention, and they argued that this plan had worked so well once that it could with safety be used again. My objection to it was that it threw too much power first of all into the larger centres of the colony; but my greatest objection to it was, and I have that objection still, and I think it must be considered a strong objection, that the persons who voted for the members would not, as a rule, know the men that they were voting for. Take this colony with its immense area. Ten men are put forward as delegates. We will say 50 candidates are put forward for election, and the average elector is asked to select ten out of the 50 who, he thinks, should represent him.

AN HON. MEMBER: It has been reduced to six.

THE PREMIER: Well, he is asked to select six out of a large number whom he does not know. He lives in an out of the way district, and perhaps has never heard of some of these men at all.

AN HON. MEMBER: They read the papers there.

THE PREMIER: I read the names of candidates during the recent election whom I had never heard of before. What must it be then with the people who live in out-of-the-way districts? They do not know the people who are aspiring for political honours. They will exercise their vote on a ticket. The various political institutions will issue a ticket and ask their friends to vote for it. We will have the Orange ticket, and the labour ticket, and the teetotallers' ticket. We will have all these tickets going round. Then we will have a newspaper ticket, and I think the poor electors will find themselves rather in a fix. They will not be able to exercise that discrimination which they are able to exercise in an ordinary election, when they have the opportunity of hearing the men who seek their votes. That is my principal objection to the proposal. I think it would be very much better if we had followed the plan set out in the Commonwealth Bill of 1891, where it was left to the Parliaments of the several States to determine in which way their representatives were to be elected. If that was not done, I would trust to the Parliament of the Commonwealth to determine how the representatives shall be elected rather than have each State, as is now proposed, made one electorate. Let there be districts, large areas returning members—not so large that candidates would be unable to visit different parts of the electorate and address the electors—but do not let us make New South Wales and Victoria or Queensland single electorates, which would in my opinion only create disaster and eventually have to be altered. There is no great difficulty in altering anything in this Bill; but once it is passed there will be very great difficulty. The proposal in this Bill is that one House should represent the people and the other House the States, the lower House by numerical proportion and the upper House by equal numbers for each State. These Houses will form the Parliament of the Commonwealth. The powers of this Parliament are clearly set forth in the Bill, as hon. members can see for themselves. There is one difference between this clause and the similar clause in the Canadian Act, inasmuch as our Bill provides that the Common-

wealth shall have control only over the subjects named in the 52nd Clause and over no other, while all those not named shall be left in the hands of the States. The reverse operation exists in Canada. In the Canadian Act the powers to be exercised by the various States are named, and all others are left in the hands of the Commonwealth, so that any new subject which may arise under our proposed constitution will be under the control of the States. It must not be thought by anyone that this Bill in any way takes away from the control of the local Parliament the management of local affairs. All the local affairs which belong to us now, such as the control of our railways, our loans, the making of laws for our own internal welfare, so long of course as they do not conflict with the laws of the Commonwealth, the borrowing of money for public works, all these things will be left in the hands of the State. The control of those subjects which are named in the 52nd clause, and which will be taken away from us for ever and given to the Federal Parliament, are matters of general concern which it is thought should be dealt with by a general law. On these subjects the power of legislation will be taken away from us. One important matter hon. members must not forget is that this Commonwealth Parliament will be able to legislate on all the subjects named in the 52nd clause, not over one part of Australia only, but over the whole. They will be able to make laws to control the whole of this great continent. They will be able to regulate the customs, not only the intercolonial customs, because, when this Commonwealth Bill comes into force, all intercolonial products will be free, but in regard to the outside world as well, in its dealings with which the Commonwealth Parliament will be absolutely supreme. They will be able to make any tariff they like, and it will apply to us equally as to every other colony. It is also important to remember that you are handing over the power to this Commonwealth, not only of imposing customs against the world, but also of taxing land in this colony for federal purposes. In fact, the Federal Parliament will be paramount in regard to these subjects, and we will have, except through our representatives, no voice in the matter.

AN HON. MEMBER: Where is the power to tax land?

THE PREMIER: There is no power to tax land that belongs to the State, but there is power to tax land that belongs to individuals.

AN HON. MEMBER: For Commonwealth purposes?

THE PREMIER: Yes. There is a clause which prevents them from taxing Crown lands which are still unalienated. There is a very important double clause here, which gave a great deal of trouble to the Conventions of 1891 and 1897. I refer to the 54th, and also to the 55th clauses. I would like to refer hon. members to these clauses because your representatives, both in 1891 and 1897, took a firm stand upon them. They desired that the States Houses should have a voice in regard to taxation. As I have already explained, the reason why we were so anxious about it was that we did not want to hand ourselves over, body and soul, to these other States, however well disposed they might be to us, without having some power to influence the question which was being discussed. We might have five or six very clever men in the Federal Assembly, but they would be powerless against the great numerical strength of the larger colonies in the lower House. We, therefore, turned our attention towards the Senate for the protection of what we might call our particular interests. The Upper House of South Australia has, I notice, struck out clause 54. We did not object to that clause, and I myself do not consider it very important. We thought it reasonable that "proposed laws having for their main object the appropriation of any part of the public revenue or moneys, or the imposition of any tax or impost," should originate in the House of Representatives. We did not oppose that, but South Australia has since struck out that clause. Although we thought that in this Federal Constitution the Senate should have the opportunity of introducing Bills as well as the Lower House, still, after all there is not very much in it, because another section provides that no law can be passed for the appropriation of the public revenue which has not been first recommended to the House by the Governor General in the session in which the law is proposed. Therefore no vote on a money Bill could be taken unless it were first introduced by the Governor General

clearly in his message. I do not think there is any reason why we should object to clause 54 at the present time. I do not propose, myself, to move that it be struck out, but clause 55 is a different matter.

At 6-30 p.m. the **SPEAKER** left the chair.

At 7-30 p.m. the **SPEAKER** resumed the chair.

THE PREMIER: When the House adjourned at half-past six, I had come to that portion of the Bill dealing with a question which gave rise to the greatest amount of controversy and disagreement between the delegates of the various colonies at the Convention. The larger of the Australian colonies desire that the Senate shall be as weak as possible, whereas the smaller colonies with the smaller populations desire that the Senate shall be as strong as possible. Both at the Convention of 1891 and that of 1897 there was a pitched battle, if I may say so, between the representatives of the smaller colonies and the representatives of the larger colonies on this point. As you all know, the Bill of 1891 proposed that the Senate should be elected by the legislatures of the various colonies, following the plan which has stood the test of 100 years or more, and which is still practised in the great Commonwealth of the United States.

MR. SIMPSON: The worst of all possible plans.

THE PREMIER: It was not always thought so. People who have read Bryce and other authorities on the working of the American Constitution of recent years know that the plan of electing the senators in that country has worked in a way never contemplated by the original founders of the constitution. Let Bryce or anybody else say what they may, the fact remains that that mode of election continues part of the constitution of the great American Republic. I have heard it stated by authorities that the American Senate is one of the most eminent legislative bodies in the world. I am not prepared to say that is true, because I do not know; but if it be true, the plan almost unanimously adopted at the Convention of 1891 cannot be a very bad one, notwithstanding what may be said in regard to the management

of the American elections. It is said that in America a person elected to a seat in the Legislature of any of the various States has to pledge himself to vote for a certain candidate for the Senate. That, in my opinion, would be a very difficult thing to work, but if such is the result in the course of a hundred years, it will take some time to arrive at the same condition of things in Australia, although we are a pretty active people. The fact remains that a magnificent body of men represent the United States in the Senate. The alteration of the views on that question shows how quickly public opinion moves in Australia. In 1897, when the Convention met at Adelaide, very few delegates indeed were willing to vote for the continuance of the clause as provided in the Bill of 1891. I take it that the chief reason for the great change was, as I said some time ago, the great admiration which the delegates had for that electorate which had been so wise as to return them to the Convention. The delegates could not help thinking that an electorate which had been patriotic and intelligent enough to discriminate and return them must be really well worthy to be trusted with all future elections.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Were they not good representatives?

THE PREMIER: Very good.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Very well, then, trust the people.

THE PREMIER: I am not prepared to say that, as time goes on, you will find the same wisdom and discrimination.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Why not?

THE PREMIER: In the early days of the American Constitution the mode of election worked excellently, and it is only recently, when every dodge has been found out and every device is resorted to, that the American plan is said not to work very well.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Is humanity getting worse?

THE PREMIER: The system still remains at any rate in the United States.

AN HON. MEMBER: The American Constitution is unalterable.

THE PREMIER: Hon. members will notice that Section 55 provides thus:

The Senate shall have equal power with the House of Representatives in respect to all proposed laws, except laws imposing taxation, and laws appropriating the necessary supplies for

the ordinary annual service of the Government, which the Senate may affirm or eject, but may not amend. But the Senate may not amend any proposed law in such a manner as to increase any proposed charge or burden on the people.

In 1891 and 1897 the representatives of the smaller States opposed the words "imposing taxation and laws." There was no objection to allowing the Lower House to have control of the finances of the country and ordinary supplies. Everyone will agree that the Senate should not have power to amend the Appropriation Bill, which deals with the ordinary business of the country. If the Upper House were allowed to amend the Appropriation Bill, it would be very difficult to apply the system of Responsible Government in the way we understand it. You could not have a Ministry responsible to two Houses, and if the Senate were to amend the Appropriation Bill, and the Ministries were not responsible to the Upper House, it would be almost impossible, so far as my knowledge goes, to carry on the Government. This is an important and very pressing matter.

AN HON. MEMBER: The Senate can only reject an Appropriation Bill.

THE PREMIER: No one ever heard of an Upper House rejecting an Appropriation Bill, for it would mean the stopping of supplies.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Upper Houses have done so.

THE PREMIER: That has only been done in cases where an attack has been made by the Lower House. While the delegates were all agreed that the Appropriation Bill should not be amended by the Senate, they were almost unanimously agreed that the Senate, as representing the States in this Commonwealth Constitution, should have power to amend laws imposing taxation. Although we were defeated on this point both in Melbourne in 1891 and in Adelaide in 1897, still it was by a very narrow majority. There were great differences of opinion, and for my part I shall urge on the committee to strike out the words "laws imposing taxation," so that the Senate shall have the power of amending any law imposing taxation. I cannot see why there should be such objection as there seems to be to such a proposition.

AN HON. MEMBER: Why would you give the power to the Upper House?

THE PREMIER: I do not look on the imposing of taxation as of vital importance to the continuance in office of a Government. It may be very nice for a Government to come down with a policy and desire to carry it, but it is a different matter, in a Federal Commonwealth, to altogether gag, or try to gag, an Upper House which represents the States. It is absolutely necessary for the continuance of a Government in office to pass the Appropriation Bill, in order that it may carry on the business of the country. In all countries there is a system of taxation already in existence; and suppose a Government does introduce a new taxation Bill, the existence of that Government does not depend on whether the Bill be carried. If the Government pass the Bill in the Lower House and the Upper House amend it, then it is for the Government to say whether they will accept the amendment.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Government would have to resign.

THE PREMIER: They would not, because they would not have lost the confidence of the Lower House. Unless there is something behind the Appropriation Bill, and it is desired to bring pressure on the Upper House, there is no necessity for the Government to resign. I know of no instance where a Ministry has resigned under the circumstances; and in England there are plenty of instances in which there has been no resignation.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: In England the Upper House has not the power you propose to give the Federal Upper House.

THE PREMIER: What is reasonable in a colony with autonomous government is different where a number of States are banded together, and where great injustice might be done to the inhabitants of one State by the votes of the other States. At any rate I am of opinion that unless we are able to alter the clause, it will be very much worse for this colony. The right of amending any taxation Bill should be given to the Federal Senate, which is elected on the same franchise as the House of Representatives, and represents the whole of the people of the colony to a greater degree, perhaps, than the Lower House. It is said that every elector should have a vote for the election of the Senate representatives.

MR. SIMPSON: There is no power of dissolution in connection with the Senate.

THE PREMIER: But the members of the Senate vacate their seats regularly. The hon. member might make the same remark as to there being no power of dissolution in connection with the House of Lords.

MR. SIMPSON: The House of Lords cannot amend money Bills.

THE PREMIER: It is a different thing dealing with a colony within itself and dealing with a federation of different autonomous States. It has been argued that there is no difference between the power of suggestion and the power of amendment.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There is a great deal of difference.

THE PREMIER: The difference is that the Upper House can make a suggestion, but if the Lower House does not accept the suggestion, the responsibility of putting the Bill aside rests with the former Chamber. On the other hand, if the Upper House makes an amendment, the Lower House has to take the responsibility. It will be seen that in practice, and in all relations to responsibility, there is a great deal of difference between the power of suggestion and the power of amendment. The House which lays the Bill aside really takes on itself the responsibility of shelving the measure. But a good Upper House, such as we should have under the Federal Constitution—an Upper House representing the whole people—I have no doubt would exercise their powers and make themselves felt, even to the extent of rejecting a measure to which they object, rather than place it on the statute book. Even if the Bill is passed in its present shape, I do not despair of its being a good workable measure, especially if we get a good strong Senate. I advise the House to support the action of their delegates in 1891 and 1897, leaving the matter to be fought out, as it will be, in the Convention. I do not know the opinions of the majority of the members of the Convention on this matter; but for my own part I do not propose to change my colours. It is reasonable that in a matter which affects our taxation so much, we should have some voice. We are a small colony, with a small population, and a very small voice in the House of Representatives; and if

we have any regard for our own interests we must try to obtain as large an influence as we can in the Upper House and direct taxation in the way we desire. Are we going to put ourselves altogether into the hands of the other colonies and say, "We are going to trust you?" If we are to do that, why have any representation at all? The reason we want representation is to guard the interests, not only of this colony, but of the whole of Australia. Self interest is strong in most people, and I feel confident that the representatives of the smaller States will generally be found voting for as many safeguards for themselves as it is possible to get.

MR. SIMPSON: Safeguards which are dangerous to other States.

THE PREMIER: I do not see how they would be dangerous.

MR. SIMPSON: By allowing minorities to govern majorities.

THE PREMIER: You would have to get the smaller States all of one mind first.

MR. SIMPSON: There would be a danger of three-quarter millions of people controlling a million and three-quarters of people.

MR. JAMES: The hon. member for Geraldton is thinking of unification, and does not know what federation is.

THE PREMIER: As to the initiation of money Bills, we may fairly leave the Commonwealth Bill as it is. The same constitutional practice prevails all over the world; and, although a great deal has been made of the matter, I do not think it is of great importance. In nine cases out of ten, Taxation and Appropriation Bills cannot be brought in except on a message from the Governor. I recognise the great privileges of what is called the Lower House or House of Representatives, and am not inclined to take away those privileges. I am willing that the Senate should not have the power to alter a Bill in such a manner as to increase any proposed charge or burden on the people. Such a restriction is reasonable, though not so reasonable as it is in the case of the local Parliament here. Our Legislative Council does not represent the whole of the people of this colony, but a section, and there is a property qualification attached to the franchise. But in the case of the Senate, every elector would be able to vote, and no one can

say that that Chamber would not be thoroughly representative. As I have said, I think it unreasonable for the Senate to have power to increase the burdens of the people; and that can be left to the Lower House if they regard it as of great importance. The House to-night is only called upon to suggest amendments. We have no power to enforce our opinions at the Convention. There is nothing to bind any member of the Convention to vote in the way the majority of this House may desire. A delegate holds his position entirely separate from the Legislature, and it is merely an accident he has a seat in this Parliament. He is elected for a certain purpose. Whatever the conclusions arrived at to-night may be, they are not binding on any member of the Convention, and it would be unreasonable that they should be. He must try and sift the wheat from the chaff, and do his duty to the colony to the best of his knowledge and ability. No doubt the delegates will be very much influenced by the views expressed by hon. members, and by suggestions which may be adopted by the House. The time to decide on the Commonwealth Bill has not arrived. When we see the completed work of the Convention, and we are asked to send the Bill on to the electors of the colony, will be the time to say whether we think it is a good Bill which we, as members of the Legislature, can send on for the opinion of the people. We often hear in regard to important matters that there are "lions in the path." That is a very nice, euphonious expression, which I think I may use on the present occasion. In fact there are two lions in the path of the Federation Bill. One lion is that if this colony joins in this federation, we must give up to the Federal Parliament the control of our customs duties and excise, and have no more power over them. That is an important fact that the House should thoroughly realise and seriously consider. In common with every other colony, Western Australia owes a large amount of money on which interest has to be paid, and in connection with which a sinking fund has to be provided for every year. If we give up the control over the customs and excise, and remain responsible for the repayment of our

public debt and for the interest and sinking fund, we may find some difficulty in obtaining money. These two matters are interwoven, and are of the greatest importance to us. We know what our duty is now, and also what it will be when we have exhausted the borrowing powers approved by Parliament. The interest and sinking fund represent a considerable amount, and, if we lose the customs and excise, we shall have to find revenue from other sources for the repayment of the public debt. It may be urged that the revenue received from customs and excise, outside the intercolonial customs and excise, which will be done away with, will be quite sufficient to pay our contributions to the central Government, and leave to be refunded to us annually an amount sufficient to pay interest on the public debt of this colony. This question needs to be thoroughly understood, and carefully inquired into. The obligations of the Federal Government may increase in the same way as the obligations of the various colonies are continually increasing. Take the one item of defence alone. The cost of defence might be so great as to absorb all the customs and excise revenue, and leave nothing to be returned to the States. I have had opportunity of considering this matter as much, perhaps, as most members, and any federation scheme which would be acceptable to the people of this and I believe the other colonies, should have a provision in it under which the Federal Government would take over a considerable portion of the State's public debt. There might be some trouble in arriving at how that could be equitably done, but I do not think it should be very difficult. A portion of the public debts of the States might be taken over on the basis of so much per head of the adult male population of each colony. If, say, £60 per head or some similar sum in each colony were transferred from the local Governments to the Federal Government, it seems to me it would, if not altogether, to a very large extent, relieve the public debt of these colonies and place it on the shoulders of the central authority. Of course the amount necessary to pay the interest would have to be taken from the customs, and the States would undertake to give up the amount that might otherwise have

to be refunded. The responsibility should not be on the States in the future, but on the Federal Parliament.

MR. SIMPSON: Would that be a fair arrangement, seeing the large proportion which the male population bears to the female population?

THE PREMIER: I think it would be perfectly fair. At any rate it is the best basis I can see of arriving at some arrangement by which the Federal Government would be responsible for the public debt.

AN HON. MEMBER: How do you arrive at the £60 per head?

THE PREMIER: I took that figure merely as an illustration.

MR. SIMPSON: I would suggest that in the other colonies there is nothing like the large population of males to females which we have in Western Australia.

MR. JAMES: Would it be fair to ask the other colonies to accept your proposal?

THE PREMIER: I think so. I can see nothing unfair about it. The question is, are 1,000 men in Western Australia less or more able to bear £60 than 1,000 men in Victoria? There is not such a vast difference as might be supposed.

MR. VOSPER: It would not be unfair, seeing that most of our male population comes from the other colonies.

THE PREMIER: The point I want to make is that in a Constitution of the sort we are discussing, there should be some arrangement by which the public debt would be taken over, as the customs and excise revenues are taken over by the central authority. I now come to the financial clause. It gave a lot of trouble to the members of the Convention. I do not like the conclusion at which they arrived. I do not think they have been thoroughly well thought out. They had a most able man as Chairman (Mr. McMillan), and they had other financial authorities to advise them, and yet I do not think anyone will desire that the final conclusion arrived at by them should be accepted. I am inclined to think that a much more simple plan should be adopted. My own idea is that for a certain number of years—say five—accounts should be kept of the receipts and also of the expenditure, that the amount to be handed over to each of the colonies should not

be less than a certain minimum, and that after five years we should throw in our lot with the other colonies on some general scheme. During those five years I think we should try and have a minimum fixed as a contribution from the Federal Government, and that we should get all that we are entitled to. After paying the expenses of collection, and after paying our contribution towards the general fund for the expenses of the Commonwealth, the balance should be returned, and not less than a certain sum should be handed over to the several States. [AN HON. MEMBER: How after the five years?] After five years we should go into the general plan, and no account should be kept after that. I think if some sort of arrangement were come to like that, it would be much simpler, and be just as good as the complicated plan contained in the Bill, which for my own part I think would be very difficult to carry out. I have no doubt that we will be able to get a great deal more light on this question than we already have had thrown on it, because a good many people have their attention directed to it. At the same time it is a very important question how we are to arrange our finances after the introduction of the Commonwealth. The only way out of the difficulty that I see is by having an account kept for five years, and after the expiration of the period named there should be some general plan adopted, founded upon the experience of the five years, without any account keeping. As I said at the beginning of my speech, I do not intend to review all the clauses of the Bill. I have no intention whatever of going through them, because I think we will be able to deal with them better in committee. There is, however, one provision in the Bill to which I would like to refer. It deals with the conditions under which the several States can come into the Commonwealth, should they not desire to do so when the first three colonies determine to federate. I refer to Clause 114, which provides that "The Parliament may from time to time admit to the Commonwealth and may from time to time establish new States, and may upon such admission or establishment make and impose such terms and conditions, including the extent of

"representation in either House of the Parliament, as it thinks fit." There is some objection taken to that clause, as it seems to imply that after the States had formed themselves into a Commonwealth, they would have the power of imposing conditions on any States that might come in afterwards; but that was not the intention of the framers of the Bill. Their idea was that States subsequently joining the Commonwealth might be able to get better terms. There was no idea of giving worse terms to the colonies coming in afterwards, but rather that there might be an opportunity of giving them better terms. There are questions connected with a tropical country like Queensland which do not affect the other colonies, and it was thought that, by leaving the door open, the federated colonies might be able to induce the other colonies to come in. It is quite competent for us to amend that clause. There is one thing in this Bill with which I am not altogether in accord. There is a sort of tendency throughout its provisions to rather curtail the powers of central Government. I am not in favour of that myself. I think that if we are going in for federation, our desire should be to make the central Government very powerful and strong, and that the States should not consider themselves as altogether outside the central Government. I have been told by some members that that would lead to unification, but I do not think that it would. In Canada the States have full power in regard to their international affairs. The only difference between this proposed constitution and the Canadian constitution is that in the latter case matters not mentioned in the Act are reserved for the central Government, whereas in our case, under Clause 52, the powers of the Federal Parliament are mentioned, and those not mentioned in the Bill are reserved for the States. There is one provision in this Bill of which I do not approve. I am most desirous that we should have self-government in this country, that it should not be interfered with by anyone, by the central Government or by anyone else, but I do not think that we should set up altogether as an independent State, and snap our fingers at this Federal Government that we desire to set up. We want to set up a government to exercise jurisdiction over the

whole of the continent. Then why not try and make it as powerful as possible? The constitution provides that the governors of the colonies are to be governors and not lieutenant-governors. That is a minor matter and merely concerns a name, but the governors of the colonies are allowed by the constitution to correspond with the Secretary of State at Home and to carry on correspondence with other States on their own account. Governors here will be carrying on a correspondence with the Home Government without consulting the Federal Government, and the Federal Government will be a sort of puppet which we will all despise. By this Bill it is intended that the Imperial Government shall send out their representatives to the colonies in the same way as they do now. I think that is all wrong. If we want to be a great and independent country of Australia, surely we do not want our governors to be sent from England here. Surely we can trust the central Government, whatever it may be. Some people may think that the central Government might not be very good judges of the class of men we would like to have here as representing the Queen. The provincial governors in Canada do not represent the Queen to the same extent as the Governor General does. They have not the prerogative of mercy in capital cases. Be that as it may, it seems to me that if we want to have a Federal Government here, a Government that will speak with one voice for the whole of us, our desire should be to make it as strong and as powerful as possible. We should not have one State with a lot of little States around it not owning allegiance to it, and with the Governors of those States not in any way subordinate to the central Government. For my part, I think we are all on the wrong tack. We are aiming a blow, in my opinion, at that federation which we seem so anxious to set up. Now, I have no doubt it has been gathered from the remarks I have made to-night that I am an ardent federationist. I cannot help having a leaning towards federation, but I am not a federationist on any terms. I am only a federationist if it is possible to have federation with advantage to Australia and to this colony. I cannot help thinking that the lines that separate us now from

one another are ridiculous. I cannot help seeing that. The same laws, and to some extent the same governments, are alongside one another, and we seem divided by hostile tariffs and in every conceivable way, in order to make us different nations. It is impossible to make us different nations or peoples: we are all one. I have often thought, with reference to the food duties, that the people of the colony look upon me as being desirous of forcing duties upon food, but nothing is further from my intention. If possible, I would have the products introduced free, but that is no reason why I should advocate such a policy at the present time. The colonies are divided for the most part by imaginary lines drawn on the map, and across one side of that line no duties are imposed, while across the other side of that line duties are imposed. These imaginary lines require sweeping away. There is nothing definite or tangible about the division which exists between this colony and South Australia, for instance. It is merely a line drawn on the map. This federation will sweep away all such divisions. We shall have to throw in our lot with the other colonies, and depend on some other system of taxation than that on which we have hitherto relied. There is no doubt a difficulty in that at the present time. We are a small population here. We are trying to build up the country to make it self-producing, and in trying to do that we are doing what everybody else is doing, protecting those who are cultivating the land. We do not want to tax anybody if we can help it. We want to induce people to settle on the land. We think, and we have some good authority for the thought, that it is unwise to interfere with those who are trying their best to make the wilderness self-supporting. With regard to federation, everyone I think will admit that it will come some day. I do not suppose there is a man in Australia who does not believe in federation, and who believes that it will never come. Everybody will tell you it is sure to come some day. The only question is: when will it come? When will we be ripe for it? Those who tell you that we are not ready for it at present will be able to show you some disadvantage which will accrue to us by joining at the present time. The only one that occurs to me is the question of the tariff.

I do not see any other reason. It is an important question, that of changing our present method of taxation, which is imposed with a view to encourage the cultivation of the land. Other than that, I do not see that anyone can have any objection to federation. Some people think that we will be giving up too much, and that therefore federation will not pay us. It really comes down to a financial proposition after all. In everyone's mind that is the only thought. Everyone wants to be federated, but we do not want to pay too much for it. We do not want to make money out of federation; we only want to be assured that we shall not lose by it. I take it for granted that everyone is in favour of federation, only with this reservation: shall we lose by it? We are quite certain that we shall not gain, but we do not want to lose. In the great Dominion of Canada and in the United States of America, no one is ever heard even to whisper a regret at having federated. I had an opportunity of meeting prominent Canadians in London the other day, and this matter being uppermost in my mind I had a good long talk with them. I asked Sir William Laurier and Sir Matthew Davies whether any of the provinces of Manitoba, Quebec, Ontario, or British Columbia, ever expressed regret at having taken the step of federation. These gentlemen assured me that such a thing never entered into their minds. The idea had gone altogether, as to whether it was good or bad to enter into federation. They were all satisfied with being Canadians and members of the great Dominion.

MR. SIMPSON: How do they deal with finance?

THE PREMIER: I really could not tell you. I think in the same way as we did in the 1891 Bill.

MR. JAMES: By a system of subsidy. They were always quarrelling for better terms, and that was why Sir John Macdonald was so long in power.

THE PREMIER: In Canada or the States they never think of going back to the old state of things. That idea has quite disappeared. My desire is that this Commonwealth Government, if it is erected, should be a strong one. I do not believe in being jealous of it. Depend upon it the Commonwealth Government will be just as anxious for the welfare of

the several States as we are. It is not likely that a Government we set up in Australia, representing all the colonies, will be desirous of usurping the powers of the local Government. They will not be able to do so if they wished. I would make this Bill very much more liberal in regard to the Federal Government. I am afraid that a Bill like this, constituting the Federal Government in the way proposed, would give so little powers that its work would be very much curtailed, and in the end I do not think it would have that respect from the colonies that I would like to see it receive. It must be apparent to everyone that this Bill is excellently drawn up. It has had the best minds, I suppose, of Australia, in 1891 and 1897, devoted to it. When we think that men like the late Sir Henry Parkes, Sir Samuel Griffith, Sir George Grey, Mr. Barton, Mr. Kingston, and Mr. O'Connor, the Attorney General of Tasmania, Mr. Clarke, and others, have all taken part in framing this Bill; when we think that other eminent men, some of whom have passed away while others remain with us, gave their best knowledge to it; when we know the high encomiums passed upon its construction by everyone throughout the world, I might say, I am sure we will hesitate, as Mr. Barton said he hesitated, to lay ruthless hands upon any word in this Bill unless it be absolutely necessary. I feel sure that, seeing the care and the ability that have been displayed in framing this measure, founded, as it is, upon the experience of other countries and of all the other commonwealths in the world, and especially inspired, as it was, by the Constitutions of the United States and of Canada, I am sure every one of us, before he lays a hand upon any proposal in it, will have carefully thought it out, and I hope that no one will think of touching any portion of this Bill unless it is in the way of some tangible amendment. Of course the phraseology does not rest with us. All we have to do now is to go into committee, to go through the Bill clause by clause, and to make suggestions, using any words that occur to us as applicable. These suggestions will be presented to the Federation Convention, and will there receive, I am sure, due consideration. Although, as I said just now, I am not prepared myself to say

that I shall be found supporting every resolution that has passed this House, I may say that it will be my desire to try my utmost to carry out as far as I possibly can the deliberate wishes of this Parliament. By an accident—I confess, an accident—I am a member of this House. It is not necessary that anyone should be a member of this House to be a member of the delegation, but being a member of the House it will be my desire, and I am sure I speak for the other delegates, to try and meet the wishes of members in the views I shall express when dealing with a question in the final Convention. I can only say, in conclusion, that I thank hon. members for listening to me. I must almost apologise for the way in which I have dealt with the question, for I have not had time to deal with it in the way it deserves. When we go into committee I shall be glad to give hon. members the benefit of any experience I may have had, and I do hope that the House will deal with the Bill with as little delay as possible, and that the delegates may be able to take their places at this Federal Convention at the opening meeting on the 2nd of September. If that can be done, I feel sure it will be to our advantage, and to the advantage of the colony as well, and that it will very much expedite the business of our own colony by enabling us to return home earlier than we otherwise would.

MR. SIMPSON: I rise to move the following amendment, of which I have given notice:—"That all the words in the original resolution after the word 'that' be struck out, for the purpose of inserting the following in lieu thereof: 'in the opinion of this House, the proposed adjournment of Parliament for the purpose of permitting attendance at the session of the Federal Convention to be held at Sydney of delegates having no mandate from the electors of this colony is without precedent; that it will unduly defer investigation of the country's financial and administrative affairs, will delay much-needed legislation, and is a grave trespass on the orderly conduct of public business.'" In moving this amendment I wish to assure the hon. member for East Perth that I have not the faintest wish to assume an attitude which might be regarded in any degree as

obstructive. I think it might be admitted that my giving due notice of my amendment was an indication of no wish or endeavour to delay the attendance of delegates at the Convention, if the House decided to send them there. I hold very strong views as to the position which legislation has got into in this country. After very carefully listening to the way in which the Premier submitted the question of federation to this House—the almost ideal way in which he suggested to this Parliament the absolutely impotent position they hold with regard to the delegates—I think it does suggest that the process of going through this Bill is one of the most grotesque affairs that an intelligent legislature ever has had submitted to it. We have delegates, or rather a delegation, for by a process of resignation or disappearance some have gone out—and I think I am safe in saying that we never heard an expression of opinion from any of those delegates except one as to the views they held on the subject of federation. That single exception was Mr. Hackett, who issued an address before he was elected. The delegation turned up at the Convention very late, and the proceedings were delayed until their arrival. The debate on the general principles of the Commonwealth Bill had almost closed, and I think out of courtesy to the West Australian delegation the proceedings were delayed to allow our representatives to give their opinions.

THE PREMIER: That was not so.

MR. SIMPSON: I think there was an expression of opinion by one of our delegates. The Premier said he spoke for all of them, and that all the others had decided not to speak at all.

THE PREMIER: We wanted to get into committee on the Bill.

MR. SIMPSON: Then the delegation decided to go into secret committees to discuss the Commonwealth Bill. This Constitution was not discussed before the public, but in secret, and the results of their deliberations are in this Bill. Subsequently the Premier moved, and after much opposition the Convention fell in with the proposal, to take the clause dealing with money Bills first. The relative powers of the two Houses should have been dealt with and decided before they constructed the two Houses,

and before they decided on the franchise, but the ordinary procedure of legislation was abandoned. I hope the Premier will not imagine that I am saying what is unfair. He was endeavouring to impress on the Convention that he had a majority. He was endeavouring to construct the Commonwealth Bill of Australia on the idea of counting noses. By the determination of some of the representatives of Tasmania and the Premier of South Australia, this attempt was made by the Premier. [THE PREMIER: And others, too.] He was defeated on this particular idea. In no invidious sense do I analyse the efforts of our delegation to construct the Commonwealth Bill of Australia. Personally, I think we had in the Convention two ardent federationists, the hon. member for East Perth and the Hon. J. W. Hackett.

A MEMBER: And the right hon. the Premier.

MR. SIMPSON: Of course, the right hon. the Premier. It may have been a misfortune or accident, but the Hon. J. W. Hackett never spoke or voted in a division. [THE PREMIER: I think he voted.] He never voted and never spoke: the other ardent federationist spoke once. The hon. member for Albany did speak; and I think there was placed to the credit of an hon. gentleman of the Upper House the interjection of "hear, hear," which he did not utter. We know nothing about the secret committees. That is the result as far as the electors know. The members of the delegation from Western Australia have come back to give an account of their stewardship. These gentlemen were permitted to go there untrammelled and they have returned, and with the exception of an address by the hon. member for East Perth to some juvenile literary association and an accidental expression of opinion by the Speaker at an accidental banquet, and the Premier's expression of opinion to-night, the public of this colony are in no way advised as to the procedure of our delegates at that Convention. My reason for suggesting this matter is that I base the whole value of the delegation on having its mandate from the people. They are not going there to make a constitution for this colony but for the whole of Australia, and they went without getting directions from the people of the community to go.

THE PREMIER: You know that is not so, I think.

MR. SIMPSON: I heard the Right Hon. G. H. Reid from the hustings make the statement, and it was absolutely unchallenged by the whole of the New South Wales press.

THE PREMIER: They did not want to challenge it.

MR. HIGHAM: Mr. Reid is not infallible.

MR. SIMPSON: I agree with the hon. member for Fremantle that Mr. Reid is not infallible. That is the best interjection for the hon. member to make. I stand here with the object of strengthening our delegation at the Convention, that they should not go without the voice of the people behind them.

THE PREMIER: We will not go at all if we do not go now.

MR. SIMPSON: In that memorable speech of two and a half hours which the Premier made at Bunbury, I do not think there were ten lines in the whole of the sixteen columns devoted to the question of federation, and then he only alluded to the matter in a very far-away, hazy sort of manner. I say the people were not consulted at the last election, and the delegates have no mandate from the people.

THE PREMIER: We were elected by the members of the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council.

MR. SIMPSON: You were elected by a House 33 per cent. of the members of which disappeared at the last election.

THE PREMIER: We were elected by the House as a House.

MR. SIMPSON: I want to point out what an invidious position you occupy; you do not stand on the same level as the other delegates.

THE PREMIER: What about the American Senate—have the members there no mandate from the people?

MR. SIMPSON: The Premier has said that he thought it would be a dangerous provision to make, that the representatives should be elected by the whole of the colony, and he instanced the fact of some one resident in East Kimberley not being quite in touch with the names of the public men. But in New South Wales a man was absolutely elected—Mr. J. T. Walker—as a delegate who was never heard of in political life before, yet the

man was selected by—well, the fact of the matter is that 149,000 votes were polled.

THE PREMIER: On some ticket, I suppose, he was elected?

MR. SIMPSON: There was no ticket in New South Wales—absolutely no ticket: you can see by the composition of the men. Well, there was one ticket—the labour ticket, but no other; there was no party cry. [A MEMBER: Sectarianism.] The first 14 men were elected right through the colony. In addition to the ten delegates there were Mr. John See, Mr. Bruce-Smith, Cardinal Moran, and the leader of the labour party. [A MEMBER: They have good railway communication there.] Our delegation does not stand in that great assembly on the same platform and on the same level as the delegates from the other colonies. I have before me a nomination paper to select three other delegates. I do not know whether they believe in federation or not.

THE PREMIER: At any rate you know the men.

MR. SIMPSON: I do not know what they believe in, yet I am called on to vote.

THE PREMIER: What did you want to put yourself up on the last occasion for, if you did not believe in the mode of election?

MR. SIMPSON: I never did.

THE PREMIER: You telegraphed over for someone to nominate you.

MR. SIMPSON: I never telegraphed to the Premier or anyone else. I have never asked for the assistance of the Premier.

THE PREMIER: You were on our side once, you know.

MR. SIMPSON: I suffered from a slight aberration once and acted the part of candid friend to the Ministry, but they failed to respond to the candour of my friendship, and I left even the Government cross benches at the time of a great national question, which compelled the Government to climb down.

THE PREMIER: You were not on the cross benches; you were on our side.

MR. SIMPSON: I was on the Government cross benches. These interruptions, although good-humoured, are only wasting the time of the House. We are told by the Premier that we can sit in solemn conclave and decide that the two Houses

have co-ordinate powers if we like, but the delegates go away unfettered and do as they like.

A MEMBER: That is what Mr. Barton said.

MR. SIMPSON: It will suit the hon. member and be better for his political reputation to keep closer in touch with the people, and I speak as one of his constituents. We are sitting here dealing with the proposed amendments, which are not in the slightest degree binding on any delegate. We may express our views, and then those we elect can go over there and carry out any course of action they like. Is that not an absurd thing in dealing with the Commonwealth Bill? Surely we realise what we are legislating about—a Bill that is to control the destinies of Australia, and not West Perth, or Geraldton, Albany, Fremantle, or any other place.

A MEMBER: That is all the more reason why delegates should go.

MR. SIMPSON: I am stating the process we have to go through.

THE PREMIER: The same as in the other colonies.

MR. SIMPSON: Scarcely the same as in the other colonies. Every other man, excepting the delegates from Western Australia, has been before the public, has expressed his opinions, and been returned on the integrity of his views. That is my reason for suggesting the inexpediency of sending a delegation. There is no mandate from the people—it is irresponsible to this House even. Even the Premier has informed the House that he is not so well informed on the Bill as to be able to put it well before the House. Here is a gentleman who attended the assemblage of the great men of Australia, and he tells us he is not well up in the Bill, and that he does not quite understand what we are going to send him for.

THE PREMIER: I did not say that.

A MEMBER: I cannot understand the Bill before the House.

MR. SIMPSON: Here is one of the intelligent electors, and he says he cannot understand the Bill. There are other features in connection with the amendment I have submitted to the House, but I have no desire to appear to be delaying the process in connection with the measure. I will ask the House to deal with the one

principle in my amendment. The delegates from Western Australia have no voice from the people; they do not go as representing the aspirations, the hopes and the desires of the community. They cannot include in any Constitution Bill the desires of the people. I have referred to the investigations of the country's financial affairs, and within the last week we have had a great reason given why the House should endorse my suggestion. Placed on the table of the House within a week was the Speech from the Governor, and in that Speech it says the colony is indebted to no financial institution within its borders; and in another place, in reply to a question, it was stated that the colony was not under any obligation without its borders; and yet, on Friday night, the Premier and Treasurer stands up and tells us our name is to bills to be met in January amounting to £400,000. That calls for explanation. I say where is the Press of the colony?

THE PREMIER: They have more sense than to raise quibbles of that sort.

MR. SIMPSON: I say where is the Press of the colony? They may think it their duty to bolster up the Forrest Ministry at any cost, but it has a duty greater than that—the duty which it holds to the people of the country. I submit the amendment standing in my name, and I hope hon. members of this House, who have come straight away from their constituents, will be true to their pledges and will stamp on the proceedings of this Parliament the fact that any delegation from this colony should stand in the same position as the delegates from the other colonies.

MR. MORAN: In seconding the amendment, I have to say that hon. members know already, from the few remarks I made on the question the other evening, that my views are agreeable to those of the hon. member who has just resumed his seat on this great question. As I then said, I had very particular reasons for refusing to nominate, although I might have done so, and I would not vote last time the delegates were sent, because I knew I would not have been representing the views of my constituents by sending delegates to the Convention who I knew were not in touch with me or my constituents, or the population of the colony on the goldfields.

A MEMBER: One of the goldfields members went.

MR. MORAN: We know what that hon. member for the goldfields did and said on the occasion, and we also know what the other nine delegates did and said. We all admit that we were proud of our Premier in the discussion. No one will say he did not take his part as a statesman. Naturally Mr. Barton stood out prominently as leader of the House, and our Premier at once assumed the leadership of the other side in the debate. It is perhaps a matter for regret that such an amendment as this was given notice of. When one analyses the question, it stands like this: These delegates will go, possibly the last seven of them, even if this amendment is carried. They have their right to go as delegates under the Act, and the carrying of the amendment would not cause their deposition; but it is a standing protest against the mode of election. It is impossible to drag party politics into this debate, seeing that one of the silent ten was the leader of the Opposition, who, if he had tried, would have no doubt impressed on the delegates his views. We know he is able to give them. What does it matter to the people of the colony who goes to the Convention? They have no voice in it; I maintain they have not. The whole of the people residing on the goldfields are ardent federationists. What is the position of Western Australia? The only real lion in the path of federation, as the Premier says, is the customs duties. As to the mode of election, I say the Government in power can elect the whole ten delegates. The Government of the day has a certain policy: it has to keep the lion in the path of federation. This Government has a majority in the Lower House to carry out its financial policy and its policy of every kind. Prominent in the policy are the customs duties.

THE PREMIER: We are not the only colony that has customs duties.

MR. MORAN: The Premier would do just as well not to interrupt or interfere with those who are inclined to be liberal. I am pointing out this fact, that under our mode of election by the two Houses of Parliament, this Government has a majority in this House, and must of necessity have a majority in the Upper House; and cannot it elect any ten dele-

gates it likes? Where does that party come in, represented so well by the Opposition benches? Where does that party come in which thinks that the time has arrived for wiping away the customs duties, and that we should have freetrade in Western Australia? The Government are sending away ten delegates whose views represent their own. Perhaps the Government have not exercised that power and influence which they could. [THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.] Without picking out any individual members of the delegation, I do not think they were the brightest minds on constitutional law there. If one looks through the book of reported speeches of the Federal Convention, Western Australia is represented as the golden colony, and the representatives gave any amount of proof that silence is golden. They were very golden on that occasion; they did not say anything about the feelings of Western Australia. If delegates were nominated and went to large centres in the country and addressed the people, it might be found that the colony was equally divided in its views on the Convention. I do not know that I have any intention to prolong the debate and prevent the House going into committee on the Bill. Who have been the great promoters of the federal movement during the last seven or ten years? The colony from which I came (Queensland), when this question was perhaps most prominently brought forward, supplied some of the brightest lights who, at the older Convention, marked their names indelibly on the history of the movement. First and foremost there was that great constitutional authority, who is so much respected and recognised to-day, Sir Samuel Griffith, whose constitutional law, apart from his politics, is good. The second one is now no more, but the Premier may have met him. I allude to the Hon. John Macrossan, whose financial speeches in relation to federation are almost taken as standards. Then there comes Sir Thomas McIlwraith, who was one of the greatest minds in Australia, though he ran a little amok in his later years. Queensland gave the most practical illustration of the necessity for a federal authority, not only for legislation but for an executive power to carry out legislation in the matter of the annexation of New Guinea, which is the only question yet

where the want of such an authority has been strongly felt. Half of that rich land was lost for ever to Australia, because there was no federal authority at the time with authority to annex it. When Sir Thomas McIlwraith cabled to the other Premiers and tried to get the annexation carried out, they did not back him up; but the practical lesson showing the necessity for a federal authority came from Queensland. I object to the views put forward by the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie. The practical lesson given by Queensland showed there could not be a confederation unless there was an executive authority with power to deal with questions of the kind. My remarks may be altogether apart from the object of the motion; but there is not for a moment the shadow of a doubt that none of the delegates who go from Western Australia to the Convention have any idea they are going to assist federation. The Premier believes he cannot give up the customs duties for many years, and it is candidly and honestly contended that we cannot have federation without giving up those duties. It is absolutely true that Western Australia cannot live without the customs duties; and the only condition on which we can federate is that we get a *quid pro quo* for the surrender of that revenue. The most ardent federationist would not be so foolish as to expect that Western Australia, like some of the other colonies, can get revenue elsewhere. To tax the land for revenue purposes would be foolish and wicked, because there is no land which could properly be taxed. At the same time, if Western Australia is not prepared to federate for a few years—if she cannot live under the only possible conditions on which the other colonies will consent to federate—we need not attack a sacred principle and revert back years to a state of things we have learned to live down. Is it not strange to hear the Premier advocating the absolute right of both Houses to deal with money Bills? We know what an ardent champion of one House and the rights of the people he has been in the past, as against any interference by the Upper House with money Bills. And yet, in the Federal Convention, where all the representatives are assembled, and where the desire is to build up a Parliament exactly like our own,

but with enlarged powers, we find him advocating the very thing he has condemned so loudly. The Premier tells us that the difference between the two constitutions is that under federation both Houses are popular Houses elected by the people. But if both Houses are elected by the people, why are two Houses wanted? For myself, I choose to follow, in these financial questions, the great lights on the other side, who say that it is impossible to have Responsible Government, in the true sense of the word, if Ministers are responsible to both Houses. If both Houses hold the control of the purse there cannot be any finality. It would be far better if the delegates would consent to the formation of federal laws on sound constitutional principles. There are arguments on both sides of the question; but if we cannot live without the customs duties and the smaller States are not going to trust to the good faith of the other colonies not to rob them, we ought not to attack a great principle for the sake of getting into federation now. It would be far better to assist the delegates in making a constitution of which the people would approve, and leave it to time and to the natural desire of the electors and the people of the colony to ask us to join in federation. I enter my protest against the mode of electing the delegates. It means that the reigning clique have absolute power and control over the election. The two Houses of Parliament are controlled by the Government; and it is possible that at the Convention the views of the minority may be looked on as the views of the electors and the views of the whole people. The views of the Government may not be the views of the majority of the people under the present electorates. I hope that future delegations will be able to speak with greater confidence for Western Australia. I look forward to the time when, after a few years of growth of more liberal principles in the colony, each delegate who seeks election will have to go, like a man, before the people on the public platform and give an opportunity to judge whether he is a fit and proper person to take in hand the construction of a great Commonwealth Constitution, under which we hope in time to be governed. I have much pleasure in seconding the amendment.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie): I labour, like most new members, under the disadvantage of not being intimately acquainted with the procedure in this House. I have been informed by hon. members that a member, in such a case as the present, is entitled to speak on the amendment and subsequently on the original motion. Such being the case, I propose to pass over the remarks made by the hon. member for East Coolgardie on what I said a few nights ago. I take it that, when I have the opportunity of speaking on the motion, I shall be able to reply to the observations of both the hon. member for East Coolgardie and the hon. member for East Perth. In listening to the debate so far, on this amendment, I observe first of all the interjection made by the Premier in connection with the election of the American Senate. The Premier asked, "Do not the American Senate represent the people?"

THE PREMIER: What I asked was, "Have the members of the Senate no mandate from the people?"

MR. VOSPER: The object of the Premier was to show that although the American Senate were elected indirectly by the legislatures, they nevertheless possessed the people's mandate. It is a peculiar thing that the Premier should have made use of that interjection, after just informing the House in his speech that it was a common thing in America, when an election was going on for the various States Governments, for the electors to insist on the candidates pledging themselves to vote for some particular candidate for the Senate. That shows in either case that although the senators in America are elected by the legislatures, yet, at the same time, they are elected by the indirect mandate of the people. In this colony it cannot be shown that in a single instance was a candidate for Parliament asked to pledge himself to vote for a particular candidate for the representation of this colony at the Federal Convention. On the contrary, very little was known in the country generally as to who the delegates were, what their mission was, or anything about their principles, and in no single case was anyone asked whether they approved of the *personnel* of the delegation. It was alleged that it would be a very difficult matter to send candidates

all over the country seeking the suffrages of the whole body of the people. That was made use of by the Government as a reason for confining the franchise to Parliament. I admit that it would be difficult to send candidates all over this colony; but if the electors in the North and other extreme parts would have been put at a disadvantage in being unable to ascertain the views of candidates, they would have been no worse off than at present, while they would have had the advantage that they could not be represented by persons in whose elections they had no share. If the election were popular, the vastness of the colony would prevent corruption or intimidation. I cannot see any sufficient reason for the Government's refusal to lay the matter before the people as a whole. The question was also raised as to how the candidates on the hustings during the general election regarded the question of federation, and how the electors received the subject. I can only give my own experience, which I think will be re-echoed by most hon. members. As a general rule, the electors were quite content to dismiss the whole question of federation in very few words. If a candidate, no matter how popular, ventured to go into an elaborate disquisition on the subject, he was asked to cease his remarks, in tones more forcible than polite. I do not say the people are anti-federal, but they certainly do not appear to have any particular taste for detail.

THE PREMIER: They do not want anything to do with the other side.

MR. VOSPER: I would not say that—far from it. They know there are certain advantages in federation which cannot be gained in any other way. A great majority are in favour of the abstract principle of federation, but they do not show any desire to discuss it. It would be interesting to try and analyse this matter a little further, and ascertain whom these delegates, as at present constituted, do represent. They certainly cannot represent the people, for the simple reason that the people not only had no share in the election, but are totally unacquainted with their views. Nor can the delegates represent the combined Houses of Parliament, for it is to be doubted whether Parliament is any better acquainted with their views than

the general mass of the country. There has certainly been a large amount of more or less valuable darkness turned loose but no very luminous ideas on the subject of federation. The Premier himself apologised to the House for not being so fully prepared as he might have been of the question. When the hon. gentleman in charge of the Bill takes such a stand, what can be expected of the rest of the House?

THE PREMIER: It was a little modesty on my part.

MR. VOSPER: I am quite willing to admit that the Premier does possess modesty, although a lack of it may have been noticed at times. Seeing that the delegates represent neither the country nor Parliament, I can only assume that they represent the Government—that they represent the Government which has a majority in both Houses and in a certain phase of social dominance and life in this colony. It is a peculiar fact that the delegates for the most part are all chosen from one particular class of people. The Premier has told us that it is a mere accident that those delegates are members of Parliament. But the most remarkable accident is that no one outside the two Houses was elected. There seemed to be a determination from the beginning to keep the so-called representation confined to the select few within the charmed circle which is inspired and dominated by the Government.

THE PREMIER: Some of the delegates were from the Opposition side.

MR. VOSPER: The Opposition in Parliament, as then existing, consisted of a very small number of gentlemen. The Opposition to-day is a very different thing from the Opposition of yesterday.

THE PREMIER: Three delegates were from the Opposition, any way.

MR. VOSPER: It might be worth while to see, as far as we can, what the country does think on this question of federation. The hon. member for East Coolgardie says that the goldfields people for the most part are in favour of federation. I am in a position to endorse that statement, speaking from my late experience on the hustings. The sole aspiration of the goldfields people is that the Federal Constitution should be of the most democratic type possible to conceive. It was breaking faith with the very first principle of democracy to make a Star-

Chamber business of the election of delegates. If this country is to have federation, it wants it of the most completely democratic type. Under the circumstances I have no option but to give my heartiest support to the amendment moved by the hon. member for Geraldton.

MR. CONNOR (East Kimberley): I do not propose to take up the time of the House for many minutes, but I rise with pleasure to support the amendment of the hon. member for Geraldton. I have no doubt at all that this amendment will be negatived, and that at a later date we shall have an opportunity of discussing the various clauses of the Bill in committee. I have to thank the hon. member for, at the outset, informing us that he did not intend to bring this forward as a party question. That makes it much easier for hon. members on this side of the House to support the amendment. I will give one reason, and one only, why I am in favour of the amendment as against the motion, and it is that I do not believe all the seven delegates who are going to represent Western Australia, and the three others who are to be elected, will be inclined honestly to support federation on lines at present favourable to us.

MR. LEAKE: This is not a party question, and I feel at liberty to oppose the amendment which has been brought forward by my friend the member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson). I must say I am astonished that the hon. member, being a member of the Opposition, cannot support his proposition with more powerful arguments than those he has advanced; and unless there is an improvement in his method, he may possibly be subjected shortly to the indignity of an instant dismissal. (General laughter.) The speech of the hon. member appears to me rather in the light of a wailing disappointment, but in what respect he is disappointed is difficult perhaps to imagine, because all that has been said about the voice of the people and the validity of the representation might, with greater force, have been advanced upon the second reading of the Enabling Bill. [MR. SIMPSON: I was not here then.] Speaking as a Convention delegate, I honestly ask the members of Parliament to assist the delegates in a difficult task, rather than impede them, and it would be better to give encouragement than to throw cold water at such a

late hour on this very important question. It is due to me to explain, because the question was perhaps not in the mind of the Premier when speaking, why it was that delegates were really forced into taking up a particular position at the Adelaide Convention. Then, as now, they left the colony at a certain amount of personal inconvenience. Now, we anticipate a meeting of Parliament; then, we were anticipating a general election, and our first desire was to save time. Therefore, when we reached the Convention, our policy of silence was agreed upon, not because the delegation desired not to express their views, but rather with the intention of avoiding a discussion upon the general principles of federation in order that we might, as each particular matter cropped up in committee, then and there thresh these questions out separately. That was our intention, and that was the idea undoubtedly for a time of the majority of the Convention; but after the debate on the general principles of federation had proceeded to a certain extent, it was found to be next to impossible to carry out that idea of going into committee straight away upon the Bill; and at the last moment—I think I am right in this, and I wish to make no misrepresentation—it was found absolutely necessary for each of the separate matters in the different parts of the Commonwealth Bill to be referred to select committees—or, as they have been termed by the member for Geraldton, secret committees—and you may believe me when I tell you that perhaps the most interesting debates and arguments occurred in the deliberations of those committees. It is true that the general public had not the advantage of listening to those debates, or, as my other friends may put it, were not subjected to the infliction of those debates; but, be that as it may, I honestly believe the first and best principles of federation were more thoroughly threshed out at the sittings of those committees than in the full sittings of the Convention. When the committees had concluded their labours, and it was not until after considerable delay, we found it would not be possible for us to devote the whole of our time to the Bill in its committee stage; therefore, at the instance of the Premier, and therein he acted with the concurrence of his fellow

delegates, it was urged that the question of State rights, principally the right to amend money Bills, should be debated during our presence at the Convention. That was done, and as soon as that was over, almost immediately after the division was taken, we had to leave Adelaide to catch the steamer, so that we might be here in the colony to appear before our constituents at the general election, and also to enable the Premier to get away to England. I mention this at length because I think it is due, not only to us but to those whom we represent both in this House and out of it, to know that we really did not shirk the duty which had been expressly or impliedly put upon us. Undoubtedly I do not approve of the method of election, but there it is: it is the law. I submitted myself for election, and I cannot say at this late hour that I am not properly elected; and although I may tell members of Parliament, in confidence, that their representation at the Convention is disputable, in that sense, yet when we go to the Convention, whether in Adelaide or in Sydney, we tell them most emphatically that we represent the people; and I ask my constituents in this House not to say anything which will destroy or weaken that argument, which so far, I think, is incontrovertible. We must accept the inevitable. We have been elected, and we must attend the Convention, unless it is the wish of this House, a wish honestly expressed, that we should not be represented. As a delegate, I say earnestly that it is no discreditable position to occupy, to represent Western Australia at so important a gathering of so many prominent Australians; and, although we may deprecate the method by which we get there, yet when we are there, I do ask you to assist us in doing our duty to the best possible advantage. If we are all in favour of federation in the abstract, no harm can be done in sending delegates to consider the details of the Federation Bill; and, although a great deal has been said on this question of federation, a great deal that some people do not understand or do not want to understand, yet we must admit it would be greatly to our discredit if, at this late hour, we were to withdraw, because, in doing so, our action would not be regarded from, perhaps, the limited standpoint with which we regard

it in this House. We go there as part and parcel of this proposed future Australian nation, and it ought not to be said that Western Australia flinched from its duty, and backed out of something which its public men had undertaken, because we were afraid that we were not taking perhaps a popular line. It cannot be said it is an unpopular line, for there has been no expression of public disfavour, and there has been no desire expressed to repeal the Enabling Act; therefore, unless I am told most emphatically by this House that I must not go to Sydney, I feel it my duty, much as I shall be personally inconvenienced by it, to make the best effort I can to represent the country. I speak against this amendment and shall vote against it; and unless hon. members wish to place their delegates in a false and undignified position, I hope that members will see their way to vote against the amendment.

MR. W. JAMES: If one did not know the member for Geraldton, one would find some difficulty in applying the hon. member's remarks to the amendment he has moved. I observe that, with the hon. member's usual fondness for high-sounding and empty phrases, not only does he ask this House to pass an amendment for postponing the sending of delegates to the Sydney Convention, because he says the manner in which they were elected is without precedent—and I think that is the only part of the amendment to which his very irrelevant remarks were directed—but he proceeds to say the sending of delegates will unduly defer investigation of the country's financial and administrative affairs, and so on. We have heard neither from him nor from the member for North-East Coolgardie (Mr. Vosper), nor from the member for East Coolgardie (Mr. Moran)—and this House knows how that hon. member talks when he starts—not one word about what appears to be the most important part of this motion. In addition to the part to which he has not referred, he states that the adjournment of the ordinary session will delay much-needed legislation; yet we have not heard one word about that from him or those other members. The amendment further says there is a grave trespass on the orderly conduct of public business. That is a nice sounding phrase, reminding me of some of those

vague and unmeaning phrases one reads in the reported speeches of the dead-and-gone Sir Henry Parkes. The hon. member seems to have caught up from that deceased statesman a good deal of his high-sounding language, and I hope he has also caught up some of the broad-mindedness which characterised that statesman. If I am to judge of this amendment in its practical effect, it is brought forward for harassing and interfering with the usefulness of the representatives of this colony at the next Convention. I cannot see any other reason that prompted this amendment, especially when the remarks in support of it were absolutely not directed towards dealing with the most important part of the amendment. He tells us that not only is the mode of electing delegates who have no mandate from the people without a precedent, but that the absence of those delegates from the next Convention will not have any effect on the formation of a federal constitution. Now while that appears to me to be the only part of this amendment which ought to commend itself to the consideration of this House, if arguments were brought forward in support of it, yet he passes that by and goes into the question of whether the delegates do or do not represent the people. It is always a pleasure to hear the hon. member, and although his silvery tongue is apt to lead us somewhat astray, I was anxious to hear more of that eloquence in order to see if I could not gather some of those burning thoughts; and I expected that a man whose very feelings in favour of orderly good government were shocked and outraged by a Bill of this nature, would have discussed this matter, and shown us how entirely wrong we were and what an injustice we were doing. Not one word has he said about that, either in this House or outside the House. It seems he is astonished at what he regards as an unconstitutional course; but, with due respect to the hon. member's knowledge of constitutional practice, of which I know very little, I say that when we have an Act which states that we should have delegates elected in a certain way for a certain purpose, it does appear unconstitutional that we should now pass an amendment, the effect of which would be to repeal, in an indirect way, that Act under which, so far as we are concerned, the Adelaide

Convention was held, and under which this very discussion is now being held. If the motion of the hon. member is to have any effect at all, would it not be in the nature of a repeal of the Federation Enabling Act? Why does not the hon. member for Geraldton call a spade a spade, and ask us to repeal the Act? If the hon. member thinks the principle at stake is so important, why does he not take that course? It does seem to me to be entirely unconstitutional to introduce an amendment to repeal an Act which was passed with due care and deliberation last session. We have heard a great deal of talk about the election of delegates, and I should prefer to have had the election of these delegates made by the people. I should have felt safer if I had had that, but I believe I am just as good a representative of public opinion as the hon. members for Geraldton or North-East Coolgardie, and quite as much in touch with public opinion on this matter as they are. The member for North-East Coolgardie stated that if any candidate had mentioned the subject of federation at the last election, he would have been told to pass it by as a matter of no importance. If this is true, does it not tend to show that the action of the Government was a wise one in getting the delegates elected by the Legislature instead of by the people? I do not mean to say that the member for North-East Coolgardie represents the true facts of the case. If the matter had been brought before the electors I believe they would have taken an interest in it, not so much, perhaps, as the electors of New South Wales, as the circumstances were different. The member for North-East Coolgardie takes up a peculiar position. He tells us that the Premier acted as a true statesman, and what is his accusation against the other delegates—that they followed in the footsteps of the Premier! I do hope that the hon. members of this House will not be led astray by this discussion. If it were possible for us to repeal this Federation Enabling Act, and go to the country and have an election on the basis suggested by the hon. member for Geraldton, we should be in an entirely different position, and I should be willing to give my earnest support to the proposal; but we are in this position, that unless the delegates go to Sydney at once, Western Australia will not be represented.

Whatever may be our opinion of federation, surely we ought not to insult this great movement by checking it, and to a large extent throwing it back for a considerable number of years by weakening the position of the Sydney Convention through the absence of Western Australia. It will be weakening, and considerably weakening the Convention if we are absent. No one can fail to regret the absence of Queensland at the Convention, and if Western Australia—small though it be in population, yet having an importance on account of its magnificent resources and position, inferior to none—if we stand out I believe the movement will receive a check which will keep it back for a number of years. An hon. member who has a much more fluent command of language than I, accompanied by wisdom far greater than I can hope to attain, (Mr. Illingworth) at the second reading of the Federation Enabling Bill last session said, "While I would much have preferred that these representatives should be chosen by the people as a whole, as they are being chosen in three of the other colonies, yet I am fully prepared to waive that particular point, because to me the important question is as to the sending of representatives. As to the issue, that remains in the great unknown. I agree to every word the Premier has uttered in reference to the absolute certainty that there will be a federation of these great Australian colonies. I think, with him, it would be a grave mistake if, in this new start on the question, Western Australia was not represented. The future of this colony demands that we should have a large voice in this matter; and I am perfectly satisfied the West Australian representatives in that Convention, apart from their personal qualities, apart even from the arguments they will present, will, from the mere fact that they are West Australian representatives, command an influence which the representatives of no other single colony will possess. This influence will simply arise out of the fact that the eyes of all Australia, as well, I dare say, as of the world, are at present fixed upon this colony." I commend these words—weighty words—to the earnest consideration of the member for Geraldton, and all those who are willing to support him.

MR. GEORGE: I think that the representatives of this colony should be in Sydney at the forthcoming Convention, and that it will be a great mistake if we, having put our hand to the plough, should draw it back. I see no reason why we should not be represented at the present time. Of course I am quite aware that our representatives may not be able to obtain all that we should desire in our own interests. I think if they are guided by the principle of give and take, they will get all we can expect at the present moment. Although it may be said that there will be considerable inconvenience in proroguing Parliament and having to call another session this year, yet if we are going in for big things, the ordinary routine must be put on one side. We went to some inconvenience in order that the Premier might represent us in London. I do not think anyone regrets that inconvenience, or is not proud that he went there. This matter of representation at Sydney is almost on a par with that—although it may not be so brilliant at the time, it will certainly shine in the years yet to come. I wish to say a word in reply to the member for East Perth, whom I have known for many years. I wish he would give us a little more solid work. He delivers a brilliant speech and holds us enthralled, and then clears off. He has taken up this question of federation with an enthusiasm which compels our admiration. Now we expect, when this Bill is discussed, that he will give us the benefit of his presence. How can we attach the importance we would to his remarks if, after delivering a brilliant speech, he clears out, and does not hear the reply. I see before him a brilliant career, but how can he fulfil our expectations if he does not stick to work like a man? I hope we shall be able to finish the discussion of this amendment to-night. The amendment will be lost—there is no question about that. Let us get on to the Bill and have done with it.

MR. KENNY: I am sorry I cannot support the amendment. No one more deeply regrets than I do that it was not the people who elected the delegates to the Convention. That is a thing of the past. It is too late to talk about that now. Nothing would be worse, in my opinion, than for Western Australia not to be represented at the forthcoming Con-

vention, and it would be almost as bad if our delegates were to arrive there late. Let us join hands, therefore, and send our delegates without delay.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I crave the indulgence of the House, rising for the first time since the Premier has returned to the colony, to offer my congratulations on the honours which have been granted to him by Her Majesty, not on his account, but on account of the colony of which he is Premier. I could say much, but the time is not fitting to say it. Dealing with this question which is now before the House, hon. members will remember—those who were present last session when the Enabling Bill was before the House—that I pointed out it was quite possible that the representatives who were sent would be absolutely and really the nominees of the Government. I have no hesitation in saying that such was the result.

THE PREMIER: The leader of the Opposition was elected.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You nominated the leader of the Opposition yourself. What is the use of questioning the fact? We had to face a difficulty on that occasion, and the same difficulty presents itself to-night. We were either to stand for the principle of election and have no representation, or we were to elect as we could by the House, and have representation. And so ardent was my feeling—and is still—on the question of federation, that I was prepared to accept the delegation which I knew would be the nominees of the Government rather than have no delegation at all. We are in the same position to-night. We have sent one delegation. The business has been begun: it remains to be completed. What action shall we take? I regret that the delegation will not be what I would like to see it—that the delegation will not stand in that great assembly and claim that they have the mandate of the people behind them. I admit that. But I think this: they are sent by this House to help to frame the Commonwealth Bill; and although probably eight out of the ten are not federationists, and will not be able to take that position which members should take in discussing the Commonwealth Bill, and although their attitude may be destructive of the first principle of the Commonwealth, and

although everything they say will be to hinder what I consider to be the right lines on which this Commonwealth should be based, though I believe a better Commonwealth Bill can be constructed with our delegates absent rather than with them present, yet I still say it is our bounden duty to be represented at the Commonwealth gathering. [A MEMBER: Misrepresented.] No, sir; not misrepresentation, for this reason: There are certain broad lines on which the constitution will have to be based; and it will be impossible to frame a Commonwealth Bill acceptable to the people unless these lines are observed. Unless our delegates can be educated—and they require education on this subject—unless they are educated up to a proper standard, we shall have no chance in the future more than in the present; because we cannot hide our faces from the fact that the hon. gentlemen who have been selected for the most part would have been selected if they had appealed to the people. The hon. member for Albany will perhaps take note of that admission. In all probability, supposing we were to put the question before the people of the colony, the names are so well known, and there would be such a short time for those gentlemen to make their views known, that the selection would probably fall on the same men. I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that Western Australia on the whole is not in favour of federation. The people who came from the other colonies are no doubt in favour of federation; but I believe when the Western Australian people as a whole understand the principles on which the constitution of this federation Bill must be based, they will be as willing to enter the federation as they are now unwilling. A great deal of opposition arises from not understanding the basis on which a constitution of this character must eventually be built. I am not now going to discuss the Bill itself: we will have an opportunity of dealing with it shortly. But I wish to urge upon the House that the position which we occupy in connection with this great Australia, of which we form part demands that we should at least be represented, when we take into consideration the fact that the colonies have given way to the extent of allowing us to go to the Convention even-handed,

with ten representatives for one hundred and sixty thousand people, when there are only ten representatives for one million two hundred thousand people, we ought to be prepared to meet them, and send our best men to discuss federation. I hope this amendment will be defeated. It is rather an uncommon thing for me to vote against the hon. member for Geraldton, but I shall be compelled to vote against his amendment.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): I would like to say a word or two. Several hon. members have said that they would like to see this amendment defeated. I would like to point out that if they stand up to speak, and speak against the amendment, that is not the way to defeat it. The best way would be to vote against it at once. I would point out to members of the House that this is an old Parliamentary game of the hon. member for Geraldton. He is afraid to go straight to the point and say it is not right to go to the Convention; but he says some high-falutin words, and we, as old members, understand him. I wish to give new members of the House this note of warning. I know there are some members who wish to speak on the motion; but we have to deal with this amendment first before we can get to the motion. Therefore I suggest that we defeat this amendment. Say nothing more about it, and let it be put.

Amendment put and negatived.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I ask the Government to adjourn at this late hour.

THE PREMIER: I thought we could sit till 12 o'clock. This plan of adjourning at ten or eleven o'clock is a bad practice. It is not done in any of the other legislatures. They all sit till 12 o'clock.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Well, sir, I rise at this point to speak on the main question, though I would much rather have spoken at another time. We have listened with great interest, I am sure, to the presentation of his views on this great subject by the right hon. the Premier; and when I spoke on the Address-in-Reply I made no reference to this federation question because I felt that we should deal with it in its proper place. Some hon. members have spoken about cold water being thrown on the movement. It is somewhat amusing to me to be charged with throwing cold water on the federa-

tion question. No one is more earnest in his desire to see a federal Australia than I am; and I was certainly very much amused to listen to the hon. member for East Perth, who is always absent except when he wants to speak. He charged members on this side of the House with throwing cold water on this question, and then delivered a grand speech—which I highly appreciated—of an hour's length. I only regret that that speech was not delivered in the Convention; for the only speech delivered by the hon. member in his position as a delegate was a speech, for the most part, in defending State rights, and in defending a principle in connection with State rights, which was absolutely foreign and absolutely fatal to federation. Whatever may be said on the question of State rights, if this colony, or any other colony, makes that a condition of federation, federation will never take place; and those who take up this position—however honestly they may take it up—are simply taking a course which is destructive of the federal principle. This is not a party question; and probably I shall differ in many of the views I take of the question from those sitting on this side; but we are here to discuss the question as it affects the whole of Australia, and not the destiny of Ministries. I said just now, in treating of the question of the amendment that has just been disposed of, that it is my conviction that there is not a deep-seated feeling in favour of federation in this colony; and as far as there is any feeling, it is with those who have come from the other colonies, rather than those who belong to this colony. Even those who have come from the other colonies and have been absent from them for a while, have become imbued with the views which obtain in Western Australia. There is a sort of feeling that something is going to happen if federation takes place, which will injure this country. What is involved in the question of Federation? It is not a question of certain States absorbing us, or our being absorbed by larger States. It is a question of a certain number of British-born people, living under a British flag, and with British instincts, uniting for the purpose of forming a nation. The principle on which federation is based is that every man from the Gulf of Carpentaria to Bass's Strait, and from

Fremantle to Brisbane, shall be free in his political life, and have the same rights and privileges, political, social, and legal, and form one great nation for specific purposes. There are three things which a people have to look to in dealing with a question of this character. War, pestilence and famine are calamities that may come upon us, and give rise to questions which are national in their character. One of the first things that have led statesmen for the last fifteen years or more to consider federation is the possibility of danger in the shape of war, and the necessity for providing a force sufficient for our defence. The question is sometimes asked, what have we to gain by federation? That is not the aspect in which we should approach the question, which is really, what are we prepared to sacrifice to obtain the unity of the whole of the people of these Australian colonies? Some hon. members who dealt with this subject in the debate on the Address-in-Reply took the view that this colony was not old enough or large enough to enter into federation, and that we should not consider the question until it suits us. It was the member for the Murchison (Mr. Mitchell), I think, who asserted that until West Australia became noted for the discovery of gold, and had attained her subsequent high position, nothing had been said by the other colonies about her federating with them. But you, sir, were present at a federation meeting in the city of Melbourne before gold was discovered in this country.

AN HON. MEMBER: Gold was found before that at Kimberley.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That may be so, but Western Australia was not noted as a gold-producing country even when gold was found at Kimberley. The opinion then held regarding Kimberley was that it was a huge failure, and shipments had to be sent over for the relief of the people on the fields.

MR. DOHERTY: What was it that had to be sent? That is not a fair thing to say about any place.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If the hon. member disputes the fact, I will not press the statement; still what I have stated is the impression on my mind. [MR. DOHERTY: Impressions are not facts.] I may possibly be confusing Kimberley with some other place to which relief had

to be sent; but I contend that, in the matter of federation, the larger colonies have by far the most to sacrifice. If federation is a question of profit and loss—which I desire to entirely ignore in this debate—I contend that the smaller colonies have most to gain. Take for instance the question of war. What would be the first port of Australia attacked? I contend that Albany would be the first port taken in Australia as a base of operations for attacking the trade of the Australian colonies. I am not expressing my own opinion, but that of the best experts in this colony and in Great Britain.

MR. DOHERTY: Experts are doubtful in this country.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: They are very doubtful in this country; but it happens the experts I am quoting do not belong to this country, and consequently the remarks of the hon. member do not apply. What would be our position, supposing Albany were taken by an enemy? I simply use this illustration as one amongst many of how we as a people have more to gain than to lose by federation. If the smaller colonies of Tasmania, South Australia, and Western Australia take up the position that 150,000 people are to demand as a basis of federation the same power and representation in the Senate as 1,200,000 people in New South Wales, and, on the top of that, are going to ask that the Senate shall have power to amend money Bills, they are asking what is unjust and unreasonable, and what will, as a consequence, defeat federation. When the representatives of the larger colonies gave way on this question of representation, and admitted that it should be equal in the Senate, they went a long way from the first principle of federation.

MR. MORAN: They did not give way; they were defeated.

THE PREMIER: They were defeated on a vote.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Whichever way it was done, it is a concession apart from the principle of federation, which is absolute uniformity in representation—the principle that every man is to be equal.

MR. DOHERTY: You are excluding territory.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The federation agreed on in the Bill provides that the

smaller colonies with 150,000 or 160,000 people shall have the same power in the Senate as the larger colonies.

MR. DOHERTY: Quite right. That is protecting the smaller States.

THE PREMIER: Western Australia is not the only colony in favour of equal representation in the Senate. All the other colonies are in favour of it except the big ones.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: In favour of what? Of the Senate amending money Bills?

THE PREMIER: We very nearly carried the proposal in 1891, and only lost it by one vote at Adelaide. We were alone and could not do much.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I am discussing the principles of federation, and I say that the machinery will not work on the basis proposed. The Premier has told us that he wants this Federation Bill to be based on the principle which rules in the Canadian Dominion. He says that he is not prepared to accept the American Constitution. Neither am I. Nor is he in favour of going to foreign parts for a constitution. Neither am I. In forming a constitution, there are two things we have to keep clearly before our minds. We must build it up on the grand national constitution which has been the growth of a thousand years in the British nation. We must hold to the principles of representative government, and no other government, as we understand it, can work with co-equal powers in both Houses. I have been through the fight and know what it means.

THE PREMIER: We except the Appropriation Act.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I know you except the Appropriation Act.

THE PREMIER: And that is a very important Act.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Premier has explained the difference between the power of suggestion and the power of amendment of money Bills given to the Senate in this Bill. That power of suggestion is a step further than I personally would be disposed to go. If we have to allow the Senate to make and unmake Ministries—because that is just what it comes to—the machine will not work; and I express the hope and conviction that our delegates will not take the attitude

which they took at the Adelaide Convention. Let us have a constitution based on principles that will work. We must remember that this country, by and by, may be one of the largest colonies, and we want a constitution that will work in the changing conditions. We have to remember that there is no possible chance or expectation of the larger colonies combining against the smaller colonies. [**MR. DOHERTY:** Is there not?] The questions are not questions of State interest. The man who is a freetrader in Sydney and the man who is a freetrader in Perth will sit side by side, irrespective of their colonies. The man who is a protectionist in Melbourne and the man who is a protectionist in Adelaide will vote side by side. They will vote for principles.

MR. DOHERTY: There will be inter-colonial freetrade and a uniform tariff.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: How does the hon. member know that, when the federal tariff is formed, it may not be on protectionist lines?

MR. DOHERTY: There is to be inter-colonial freetrade with protection against the world.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: But, as I have said, the protectionist of Melbourne will sit side by side with the protectionist of Adelaide, and the vote will never be as State against State. There will never be a vote in the Federal Parliament in which South Australia will vote as against New South Wales. There will be the same diversity of opinion as there is in one of our own elections when two candidates are up for opposite opinions. Supposing there is a majority on any given principle in the whole of Australia, the will of that majority, if properly expressed at the ballot-box, will win. Our little colony might have the power to turn an election on a given principle, but in no case has the fear any foundation as to State over-riding State, because the vote takes place on individual subjects, and elections will be decided, in the selection of representatives for the Federal Parliament, upon the principle and not upon the place in which the electors happen to live.

THE PREMIER: You may depend upon it they will vote as States, in many cases.

MR. PENNEFATHER: Suppose the Federal Parliament wanted to spend a lot of money on defences, would the larger States tax themselves for that expenditure

in one or two small States where defences might be required?

MR. JAMES: They would pay *per capita*.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If the question were one of expending money on defences, say at Albany or at Sydney harbour, it would be settled on the question of policy as to expending money for defence by the votes of those who contributed to the taxation, and not on the question as to where each man lived. [MR. PENNEFATHER: Query?] Assuming there to be 2,000,000 of people in Victoria and 2,300,000 in New South Wales, if the majority in those States vote for money to be expended, they will have to be taxed for that expenditure according to population; and surely, as a matter of principle, the people who vote the money have a right to vote on the method of expending it, wherever it is to be expended. I want to call the attention of the Premier to the question in reference to the position of the Senate in dealing with money Bills. Bourinot says, at page 471:—

The principle appears to be well understood and acknowledged on all sides, that the Upper Chamber has no right to make any material amendment in such a Bill, but should confine itself to some verbal or literary corrections. Without abandoning their abstract claim to reject a money or tax Bill, when they feel they are warranted by the public necessities in resorting to so extreme and hazardous a measure, the Senate are now practically guided by the same principle which obtains with the House of Lords—

THE PREMIER: You will remember it is a nominated Upper House.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I remember that, and it is a difference, I admit.

MR. MORAN: And a big one too.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The principle, says Bourinot, appears to be well understood and acknowledged on all sides; and the passage I am quoting goes on to say:—

by the same principle which obtains with the House of Lords, and acquiesce in all those measures of taxation and supply which the majority in the House of Commons have sent up to them for their assent, as a co-ordinate branch of the legislature.

Now the Premier says he wants a constitution based on that of the Dominion of Canada. That is exactly what I want, only I want it improved in the way in which the hon. member has indicated in

some respects. I agree that, when it comes to a question of State election, I think the State would elect candidates residing within that State rather than others outside of it. We must approach this question not as a huckster, as to how much we can gain, but rather how much we are prepared to sacrifice for a great principle. One thing I want to impress on delegates is the desirability of going slowly. Ardent federationist as I am, I would desire that we should lay foundations deep and broad for building up a great nation, and the motto I would like to see written over the door of the next Convention is "*festina lente*." It is proposed to take over the whole of the post and telegraph offices; but I contend it is not an essential element of federation that we should, at this stage, give up our post and telegraph offices. I am giving this only as an illustration, because whatever we give up we give, and cannot recover; what we surrender, we surrender for ever. I admit there is something in this question that has not been noticed, and that is: supposing the Commonwealth Parliament took over our post and telegraph offices, then by doing so they probably will put us in sufficient funds or take up sufficient of our bonds to relieve us of our national debt, and perhaps bring it down to a reproductive limit for the money expended on our railways. I should say the value expended on our post and telegraph offices is probably equivalent to the whole of our national debt, *minus* our railways. The Commonwealth Parliament will manage our post and telegraph offices and administer those services, though whether they will do that as well as we did some two years ago, I do not know—it is possible they will not do it even as well as it was done on that occasion. Then it might be difficult for us to reach them as the governing power, if the capital were fixed at Wentworth or at Peak Hill. I would like the Premier and the other delegates to consider and to raise this question in the Convention, as to whether it is a cardinal principle that we should surrender these services and the buildings used for carrying them on. The first step, of course, should be to surrender our customs. [A MINISTERIAL SUPPORTER: Oh! of course.] The hon. member ought to know that any profits which accrue

over and above working expenses will come back to this colony. I was pleased to see, in the debate at the Convention, that the idea of taking over the railways at present was abandoned, and I think it would be sufficient to base our federation on fewer items and on broader principles, and not surrender anything that is not absolutely necessary for the federal constitution, until we are prepared to surrender it. For the first five years, I take it, the Commonwealth Parliament would have plenty to do to set in order the question of customs, to rightly adjust the finances, and to deal with such federal matters as lights and quarantine, also arranging with the colonies to surrender the control of their posts and telegraphs. When it was seen that the federal authorities were working well the custom-houses and the general business in connection with the services I have named, then the Commonwealth Parliament might take over, as the colonies were prepared to surrender them, various other departments and also increase them to suit requirements. But if we surrender our posts and telegraphs at too early a date, before the Commonwealth is prepared to properly manage them, we may regret it; but I think the surrender of our telegraphs is by no means essential to federation. Let us base our federation on few items and on broad principles, and then it is possible this federation may grow. I was speaking just now on the question of handing over our customs, and I say we ought to face the question, not in regard to what we have to gain, but what we have to lose. There is a question in this connection that has not been raised. It is not a question so much of adjusting the actual taxation, but the effect on commerce in the market value of goods that will take place on a sudden application of this principle. It seems to me that time should come in as an element; for if, on the first of next year, we were to have a uniform tariff all round these colonies, there would be a vast depreciation in the value of certain goods, which would be almost destructive to certain merchants who trade in them; therefore we must be prepared for these things. There are a number of other points I want to discuss briefly in committee. I want it now to be impressed on the members of the delegation that

the idea of giving to the Senate a power of amending money Bills will absolutely destroy the principle of federation with the colonies, as the larger colonies will not unite on that principle; and even if we proceed to unite, we shall be making a constitution that will not work, and we shall have an alliance that we cannot possibly remedy, so that the last state of these colonies will be even worse than the first. I hope our delegates will go with a true spirit of federation—to help and not to hinder the endeavour to make a constitution which will be broad-based; remembering that possibly the time may come when we may be the larger and not the smaller colony, and endeavour to make a constitution that will fit us as well when we are two million people as when we are 150,000. It is no use building a constitution that will fit us as a little colony, because I have a good hope and expectation that this colony will grow immensely, and it may be we shall become the largest of the group in population. I would like to see the Commonwealth five or ten years at work before we handed the control of our posts and telegraphs over to a Federal Parliament. Later on, if they performed the work in connection with the posts and telegraphs well, it might be a question of handing over the control of the railways. We shall be doing wrong if we give too much at first, and especially if we lose control of the posts and telegraphs, which touch us all very closely every day of our lives. In the early stages of the existence of the Commonwealth, I question whether the federal authorities would be able to handle the posts and telegraphs better than we do. I hold that it is not essential to federation at present to hand them over, and that it would be very much better to put the Commonwealth on its trial and see how it would work, before giving them the control of everything. First get the machinery at work, on a limited area, and if we find that it does its work well on that limited area, give it more to do. I hope the efforts of our delegates will have the result of bringing before the people of these great colonies a constitution which will meet the wishes and be an answer to the hopes of the whole of the people of this great continent, so that we may have a Com-

monwealth based on the people's will; for I contend that so great a change in our political life demands the fullest care and the most earnest attention, not only of the statesmen of the colonies, but of the whole people. It is hard enough for a statesman to grasp this subject, but such a constitution as this has to be simply and plainly placed before the people of these colonies, so that they can grasp its main principles too, and so that they can say "We will unite on these principles," and then there will be no difficulty in times to come. The constitution will work out its own destiny, and we shall have what my hon. friend asked for: an opportunity of seeing our constitution grow up by our own direction, and fit itself for the changing life of this great Australia.

MR. VENN: I think hon. members hardly realise the fact that if they desire to speak on the general question they must do it now before we go into committee, as it will be rather out of form after the measure has once gone into committee for hon. members to attempt to deal with the general question. They will have to confine themselves then to the special clauses. As a candidate for election as one of the delegates from Western Australia to the Convention, I take this opportunity, at this early stage of the question, of saying a few words on the general principles of the measure. I was also a candidate for a position on the delegation in the first election, and I regret that I was not elected. It was a disappointment to me. I have taken a very keen interest in this subject, and I can only suppose that in that election the best men were chosen; and, as some of them have retired from their positions, I place my nomination before the members of this House. Things have changed very considerably, I take it, since the first election, inasmuch as at that time there was no definite Bill to consider. It was a question upon which our delegates had to go to Sydney to meet ten other delegates from all portions of Australia to consider the provisions of a certain Bill, and I think it is very unfortunate that the House passed the Enabling Act in the form they did. It was a matter for regret that the form of election was not exactly on the same basis throughout Australia. I do not say that the form

adopted by the other colonies was actually the best, any more than I say that ours was the best, but whatever form was adopted in one colony should have been adopted in the others. As a matter of fact, it would have been better if the election could have come from the people generally. It is apparent to us now—although it may not have been before—that in that case hon. gentlemen who desired to become candidates for election would necessarily have had to go before the people. They would have had to traverse the principal centres of the colony. They would have expressed their views in different centres, and would have given a greater life to this question. They would have educated the people, and they would have educated themselves. There is a great deal of personal education required. No one can keep himself in touch with this great question unless he puts himself to it. Had the election been from the people, there would have been more education on the subject than there has been. This House in its wisdom—I was a member of it at the time—passed the Enabling Act. It considered the matter, and we have to accept the Bill as it is and return the members for the Federal Convention. That being so, I think it is rather late in the day to take any exception to the form of election. Nor do I think myself that it can be justly said that the delegates do not represent the voice of the people, nor that the elections did not express the wishes of the people. That being so, the delegates who will be elected will carry as much weight as any gentlemen elected in any portion of the colonies. Following up the remarks of the last speaker, I think it is a great concession for our colony to be represented at the Convention by ten delegates, so that the different colonies engaged in formulating a constitution for Australia shall have an equal numerical value. The question has now assumed a different form to that which it had before the last election, inasmuch as it was then proper for gentlemen who had offered themselves for election to take some opportunity of expressing their views on the question of federation. There was not much time, I admit, and the only gentleman who did express any views on the subject has been already alluded to this evening. Whether that is so or not, we come to this, that at

the present moment we have the Bill drafted by the Convention to consider—not a Bill which we can change, or which will be affected by the individual sentiments of any member elected by this House, but a Bill which was sent down to this colony for suggestions—and I take it that those gentlemen who will be elected this time will be delegates in the proper sense of the word, and will express the views of this House at the Convention on the subject of federation. I do not think they will be quite free, and differ from the right hon. the Premier in the remark he made. I do not think the delegates will be free to do exactly what they like, and to vote according to their convictions, and not according to the instructions and the expressed wishes of this House. It will be my duty if elected, and my pleasure, to give expression to the views of this House, and to do my best in their interests and in the interests of the colony I represent. The day has gone by when individuals have any right to express their individual opinion in regard to the form of the Constitution Bill itself. I was pleased to-night—and rather disappointingly pleased—with the action of the right hon. the Premier this evening. I had an impression on my mind—and I think it was shared by a number of others—that in some way the Premier had not approached the question with the whole-heartedness that we hoped he would have done; but that opinion was entirely dispelled after hearing his speech to-night. I was very glad to hear the sentiments of the Premier to-night, for they showed that whatever opinion he may have formed with regard to federation in the past, his heart and soul are in the movement now, and he advocates federation in the proper sense of the word, tempered by a feeling for the rights and best interests of the colony he represents. That being so, I must again express my pleasure at hearing the remarks he made on introducing the Bill. I have not much to say upon the general principles of federation at the present moment. The question has been in my mind, as it has been in the minds of a great number, for many years. An hon. member said it was not a new question. We all know that. It was spoken of in the early part of the session as if it were a question of to-day or yesterday.

It has been before Parliament for many, many years. I came away from the Convention of 1891 with a strong conviction in my soul that federation was a thing of life, and that before ten years were over our heads we would see it brought to an absolute fact. It is not ten years since then. I venture to say that before ten years from 1891 elapse, the chances are federation will be an established fact. I only hope it will. I am an ardent and strong federationist. I believe in the general principles of federation; and I cannot see by any form of argument that Western Australia will in any way lose—politically or otherwise. I think her position will be far and away advanced. At the same time, it is well for the House to express its opinion on the whole of the clauses, so that the delegates will know how to act at the Convention in Sydney. I do not quite agree with the remarks of the Premier on the constitution of the Senate. I do not think it is such a very great and important point that there should be co-equal powers with the Senate and House of Representatives. Inasmuch as the smaller States have equal representation in the Senate, their power there will be sufficient. It has been argued by South Australia and other States that it is absolutely essential that the Senate shall have equal powers with respect to money Bills as the House of Representatives. At the same time, I cannot see there is such a great point in that, when we consider that the smaller States have equal representation in the Senate with the larger States; nor do I think we need ever fear—nor does history tell us we have any right to fear—that the larger States will at any time prey on us as smaller States. The Premier said in the Dominion of Canada he interviewed some of the most prominent men of the Dominion; and he was pleased to tell us that in no instance did he meet with an expression of regret at any of the States having joined the union. We might naturally expect that in the Dominion of Australia the same unanimity of feeling on federal matters would prevail as in the Dominion of Canada and in the United States. On the question of the election of the Senate, and after consideration, I think that the whole of the colony forming one electorate is not a good idea.

To enable the inhabitants of this colony to become in touch with the individuals who would stand for election, and know them, it would be necessary for the candidates to traverse the whole length and breadth of the colony. They would of necessity have to go to the most important towns; and I think the mode of election might be improved on by dividing the colony into divisions or districts. At the same time, it is a matter of opinion; and I have no doubt the House will express its opinion on the subject. Of the two principles, I should rather be disposed to support the election by divisions, instead of the colony voting as one electorate. I have not much more to say on the Bill. I did not rise to-night with the view of making a long speech. The time has gone by when it is necessary to make long speeches on this subject. We are here to discuss the provisions of the Bill and to make suggestions on it; and there is not the slightest doubt in my mind that the united efforts of the House, as it is constituted, will express in a great measure the voice of the people of Western Australia; and I feel satisfied the electors of Western Australia will have no cause to regret the confidence placed in the representatives at the Convention. Hon. members must know that this is not the last we shall hear of the question. The question is not likely to be hurried. It is impossible to hurry it. A question which means the forming of a Dominion of Australia is not going to be hurried on by the politicians of the other colonies. Each of the States has its rights, and each will have its say; and it is a question that will grow by discussion. If there was a draft Bill absolutely agreed on by the Convention in Sydney and forwarded to His Excellency the Governor, who would place it before Parliament, hon. members would be able to discuss it again, and to agree upon the terms on which they, as a State, would join in the federal union. There is another stage. The Bill will go as a sort of referendum to the people of the country. Therefore there is plenty of time for the electors and legislators to consider it. If a certain number of the people vote in favour of the measure, it will be passed; but if a lesser number than that named in the Bill vote, the Bill will come back to the legislature, and another

procedure will be gone on with. If it is agreed to by the people, it is to go back to the Parliament before it can be presented to the Queen for final ratification. Hon. members will see there is no hurry about it. At the beginning of the session, several hon. members spoke on the question as if we were going to rush into federation in a week or a month. It will take years; and by that time the people of the colony will be educated to the question. It will be the duty of public men to do what they can to educate the people. In my own district I spoke very fully on the subject; and the people there know that their member is zealous on the question of federation; and if my actions do not meet their views, I shall soon hear of it. I shall address myself to the clauses as they come before the House.

MR. LEAKE: In considering the motion before the House, I take it that hon. members will naturally agree to deal with the main principles, or the essentials of federation; and though we might speak at very considerable length on this important Bill, there is really no need to elaborate its many clauses. But if we go straight to the heart of the matter, we shall find that, after all, there are not so very many questions in dispute. Few though they are, they are nevertheless of the very greatest importance. To illustrate my meaning I will ask hon. members to draw a distinction between one or two questions. For instance, if we federate at all, we must admit that this is an essential of federation—defence. And intercolonial freetrade is another essential. Without you concede these two points as essential, you cannot possibly have federation. These are essential; but the question of State rights, and the method of returning representatives to the different Houses of Parliament, are not essential. If we were to decide that the question of defence should be struck out of the federal programme, it would be a vital amendment of the Bill; but if you make an amendment in the section relating to State rights—for instance, if you declare that money Bills shall or shall not be amended—that is not necessarily fatal; it is not an amendment that would be fatal to federation. We could, in fact, federate with the question of money Bills on either of these conditions; so that all we need consider to-night, in discussing the general

principles, is what is or is not absolutely essential to federation. And so far as my studies have led me, the one underlying principle or difficulty of the whole of this Bill, is the question of finance. Every other question in the Bill can be settled. An agreement can be come to in such a manner that federation can be accomplished. But when we come to deal with the question of finance, then we find ourselves in a considerable difficulty. Much was said throughout the federal debate in Adelaide on this question, and the great difficulty at one time seemed to be, how to get rid of the surplus which the Federal Government would hold if it took over all the customs revenue. How was the surplus to be distributed? Was it to be distributed in proportion to the population, or was it to be re-distributed in proportion to the contribution towards that revenue? I was very much impressed by a suggestion which was made by Mr. Holder, one of the representatives of South Australia, who said, amongst other things:—

Let every State collect the customs and excise duties under a uniform tariff, and let them manage their own internal affairs in such matters as are not handed over to the federation. Let the federal authorities make an annual levy upon the States per capita, which levy shall be paid quarterly in advance, and we have at once avoided the difficulty.

MR. DEAKIN: A mere confederacy.

MR. BARTON: Then you get out of the difficulty of making the States dependent upon the Commonwealth, by making the Commonwealth dependent upon the States.

MR. HOLDER: I think that is subject to modification, when I have explained my plan. The first answer I make to the interjection is this, that I would let each State collect its own revenue, and as to ascertaining what the cost would be, it would be a simple matter, because the Treasurer of the Commonwealth would have annually to prepare his budget. That would show the true federal revenue; it would show the true federal expenditure, which would be very much larger; and it would show the amount of the levy which each colony would have to pay quarterly in advance until the next budget came round. Every State would collect its own customs and excise duties under the Commonwealth tariff.

Then again Mr. Holder said:—

In the event of non-payment at the due date of the levy, the federal authority could enter and collect the revenue from the customs or otherwise. There would be no fear of any State repudiating its debt.

Although that suggestion was admitted to a certain extent to have a practical ring

about it, it was said it would create a mere confederacy. It was astonishing how, during that debate, the question arose as to whether a confederation or a federation was contemplated. Even in the short debate in this House, the same thing may have been noticed. When the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie was speaking, the hon. member for East Perth interjected, "Oh, then you will only have a confederation;" and the member for East Perth hit the member for North-East Coolgardie rather hard on the point. But, as I understand the argument of the hon. member for North-East Coolgardie, he suggested a confederacy rather as a tentative measure. He was not so much definitely laying down a constitution, as he was actuated by what he had said as to the necessity of a constitution being the growth of time and the result of circumstances. The hon. member would introduce this confederate idea as a sort of stepping stone to a higher federation. Really, after all, it is not a bad suggestion. We cannot expect to jump from our present level to the higher one of federation, and cut away all intermediate stages or steps. If we attain our ultimate aim by some gradual process and easy gradations, then the chances are we shall have in the end a far better constitution than that we anticipate at the present time. The more I consider federation the more I become bewildered. It is a question of such vast importance, and its ramifications are so deep, that the further you go the greater the obstacles appear, and one is unconsciously and unwillingly thrown back to the consideration of first principles. If we are not to be bound, generally speaking, in the forming of a constitution, within the four corners of a particular written document or Act, how can we hope to bind the principles of finance within the four corners of a similar document? If it is necessary that the constitution itself should be a creature of gradual growth, then this question of finance must also be a thing of gradual growth. If by any means we can arrive at some tentative measure or scheme which will aid still further deliberations with the added assistance of practical experience, then we shall be doing some good. Because we agree on what might now appear to be a con-

federate idea, it does not say that a confederacy would be established for all time. It might possibly lead to the accomplishment of a complete system of federal finance. In considering whether the surplus should be returned on the basis of population or on the basis of contributions of customs, we are between, so it seems to me, two fires. If it be returned on the contribution basis, we have to meet the local difficulties of freetrade or protection, and these two policies give the profoundest politicians and political economists very considerable thought. If, on the other hand, the return is purely on the basis of population, we are confronted with the difficulty suggested by the hon. member for Geraldton, namely that you must consider the proportion of the male tax-paying population to the total population. In any event, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that one colony or another has to make a sacrifice. All the colonies cannot gain, but some must lose by federation. We must consider the question on broad principles, and not from the narrow standpoint of States. Our arguments must be directed now towards the forming of a Constitution. It is not a question of whether or not we should enter this Constitution, or attach ourselves to it. We must not restrict ourselves and our arguments to points which bear merely on the question of convenience. [AN HON. MEMBER: Expediency.] "Expediency" is a far better term. Although we may not accept this federal constitution to-day, we may be in a position to accept it several years hence. We must now legislate, as it were, from a distance, and take care, in what we do, not to block the way for our own selves a few years hence. The question of freetrade or protection presents a great and almost insuperable difficulty, and I say again that the more one thinks about it the more one is appalled at the question, and at the difficulties which surround it. On the question of representation I do not think there is such a great divergence of opinion. It seems to be conceded that the House of Representatives should represent the people, and that the Senate should represent the different States. Each colony is equally represented in the Senate; but in New South Wales, if we may judge from the newspaper reports,

there seems a desire that the representation in the Senate should be on the basis of population. [AN HON. MEMBER: That is so.] The people of New South Wales and the people of Victoria want to have all the control, both in the House of Representatives and in the Senate.

AN HON. MEMBER: Where would we be then?

MR. LEAKE: Where, indeed?

AN HON. MEMBER: That is unification.

MR. LEAKE: Well, it certainly is not the sort of federation which we can adopt. If we adopt it, the other colonies would not. There is not much of the laudable principle of give and take in this matter.

AN HON. MEMBER: We give and they take.

MR. LEAKE: Next comes the question of the control of the finances, or, as it is put by some, State interests and the right to deal with money Bills. If we apply to federation the principle of responsible government as we know it, then this question of the amendment of money Bills must be left purely and solely to the House of Representatives; but I cannot bring myself to admit that in the House of Representatives and in the Senate we have an exact parallel to the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly in the various Australian colonies. In the local Parliaments we legislate purely for ourselves, whereas in the Federal Parliament we legislate for others.

MR. MORAN: Our own Parliament represents interests North, South, East, and West.

MR. LEAKE: There would be greater divergence of interests in the Federal Parliament than are represented in Western Australia. I am approaching this subject with the greatest possible diffidence. My mind is still open on the question, and although I may give my vote in a particular way at the Convention, I shall do so with the reservation that ultimate developments may lead me to vote on a subsequent occasion in a different direction. I cannot, in the short time that I have really seriously considered this question, satisfy myself that I am in a position to give valuable advice on this very intricate subject, and I approach it in an argumentative rather than in an assertive mood.

MR. MORAN: Will the hon. member allow me one moment? In the Senate, would not the smaller States have the balance of power, and be able to reject money Bills altogether if these were distasteful?

MR. LEAKE: That leads me to the question of the power given in the Bill to the Senate to make suggestions for the amendment of money Bills. [MR. MORAN: Or reject the Bills.] Yes. In either case, whether power is given to suggest or to amend, the Senate has still the right to veto. Surely, if it has the right to veto, the question of amendment or suggestion does not become what might in other circumstances be a fatal or vital principle.

MR. FENNEFATHER: Then it is a question of responsibility.

MR. LEAKE: Yes; it is a question of responsibility, and a question also of constitutional development. The power to veto is there, and whether that veto or the power of amendment be exercised, will depend on what ultimately proves to be the dominating House. Assuming, for the sake of argument, that federation is adopted, the question of whether or not the power to amend or suggest is to be a mere shadow or a substance will depend on the first exercise of that power by the Senate; and from the start it will be declared whether that is the ruling power or not. The House of Representatives undoubtedly will say: "You must not amend, or if you suggest you must not veto, because by so doing you will contravene the first principles of responsible government as hitherto known to the States." If on the other hand, the Senate says, "The people of Australia, in framing our constitution, gave us this power, and we mean to exercise it unless you modify the views you have expressed," thereupon the Senate will be departing from the first compact on this all-important constitutional question. Then it will be decided whether it is a paper constitution or an actual one, and from that time forth it will be determined whether the Senate is the servant or the colleague of the House of Representatives. Now every federationist I have heard speak desires, in principle, not to detract from the dignity or importance of either House; and when I talked of a dominating

House, I did not so much mean that one House shall dominate the other, as whether each particular House will have the courage of its opinions and insist that its directions shall be regarded. We do not want in this new constitution—at least I do not think it would be for the benefit of the public—that one House should be discredited or extolled at the expense of the other. We want them both to be in such a position that they will do good work and assist one another, and if we apply the practices of responsible government as we know them we will not then have a House of Representatives dominating the Senate, but we give the power to Parliament as a body.

MR. MORAN: There is no finality, and the Upper House is not subject to dissolution.

THE PREMIER: We want the Houses nearly alike. In the United States the Senate dominates the Lower House.

MR. LEAKE: We want to have, not exactly fear, but respect of one House for the other. I think the mere knowledge that the Senate, for instance, holds a certain controlling power will restrain the House of Representatives from the exercise of improper force, and will prevent either House from trenching on the privileges of the other Chamber.

MR. JAMES: "How oft the sight of means to do ill deeds makes ill deeds done!"

MR. MORGANS: How are you to overcome deadlocks?

MR. LEAKE: With good government and with two good Houses, we should not have a deadlock. If the principle of giving and taking is to actuate both Houses of the Federal Parliament, we may assume there will be no deadlock—either one or the other will give way. The exercise of the power is by way of dissolution, and the dissolution would be only that of the Lower House. For all practical purposes I think the power of dissolution has proved to be very effective. It concentrates attention on the particular question, and everybody, both electors and candidates, approach the consideration of the question with the knowledge or the anticipation of the circumstances, and of what may result. [MR. MORAN: It is very expensive.] True; and perhaps in many instances it is a heroic remedy,

but if in framing the constitution we provide for the dissolution of both Houses, that would be an extreme step which no politician in Australia would care to take or to advise. On the whole, then, my inclination is to give the Senate the power to amend. Yet if they have not the power to amend, I would say, take the clause in the Bill that has been passed at the Convention and be satisfied with the power of suggestion, because if persons are honestly intent on doing justice to themselves and the country, there is ample provision in that enactment to enable everything to be done which should be done. Whatever constitution you adopt—whether you give the full power of amendment or the power of suggesting, or you take both away from the Senate—there will be a struggle sooner or later for supremacy; but whatever you do you cannot take away the power of veto, and the strength of the Upper House is in veto. The question is whether they will apply it.

THE PREMIER: Of course the question is whether they will apply it. Look at the House of Lords.

MR. LEAKE: We have this advantage over the House of Lords, that in debating this question of a Federal Constitution, we are building this constitution with a knowledge of the power that the House of Lords possesses but does not exercise; and we say: "We give you this power, not that you may not exercise it, but to exercise it if you will, when the circumstances demand it." The fact that we have hesitated about giving the power does not do away with the fact that the power co-exists, and it was given in order that it might be exercised. It still comes back to the question whether or not the Senate will have the backbone to exercise the right which the constitution gives them, and it all depends again I say—and I emphasise this—on the exercise of that power, whether it is to be an active or a dormant force.

THE PREMIER: The Senate is just as representative a body as the other House, and why take from them all the power?

MR. LEAKE: I am trying to put, as fairly as I can, the arguments that are from both sides. My inclination is to give the power of amendment. I am not frightened with the argument that you

are doing away with responsible government, and that, therefore, no constitution can work, because I will not admit, as the basis of that proposition, that our State Parliament is an exact parallel.

MR. MORGANS: Is there any further vetoing power beyond the two Houses?

MR. LEAKE: The Queen.

MR. MORGANS: I understand the Governor General will have a veto in Parliament for both Houses, and it will be exercised under this constitution.

MR. LEAKE: Yes. The principle that seems to run through this Federal Bill is to leave a good deal to circumstances, to be defined by the Federal Parliament as each case may arise; and I think we must do that, particularly as it seems to be admitted that we do not want a hard and fast constitution as they have in America, but want to make it as elastic as possible, to meet every case of emergency.

MR. SIMPSON: The fact of having it written makes it inelastic.

MR. JAMES: That is entirely wrong. The rigidity depends on whom does the power rest of amending the constitution.

THE SPEAKER: Hon. members are getting irregular, in having an argument between the benches instead of debate.

MR. LEAKE: I shall approach the consideration of the different clauses in committee with the greatest possible pleasure and curiosity, and I have no doubt the more we discuss this question the more we shall learn. Whether or not federation is within the bounds of practical politics remains to be seen; but let us consider this question from the broad standpoint that we are building a constitution, and not determining whether or not we shall enter into the federation.

MR. VOSPER: I move that the debate be adjourned. [11:40 p.m.]

Motion for adjournment put and negatived.

Question, that the House resolve itself into committee for the consideration of the Bill, put and passed without opposition.

THE SPEAKER left the Chair.

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE, by request, took the Chair in committee.

Clause 1—Short title:

On the motion of the PREMIER, progress was reported, and leave given to sit again.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11:50 p.m. till next day.

Legislative Council,

Tuesday, 24th August, 1897.

Question: Water Supply for Perth and Suburbs—Companies Act Amendment Bill; first reading—Court of Criminal Appeal Bill; first reading—Police Act, 1892, Amendment Bill; second reading; President's ruling on procedure; in Committee—Hainault Gold Mine, Limited, Bill; second reading; President's ruling on procedure; referred to Select Committee—Commonwealth Bill; in Committee—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Shenton) took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—WATER SUPPLY FOR PERTH AND SUBURBS.

HON. R. S. HAYNES (for the Hon. G. RANDALL), in accordance with notice, asked the Minister of Mines if he could inform the House what steps the Government were taking to ensure an adequate supply of water for the city of Perth and suburbs?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM) replied:—I have received the following letter on this subject from the Metropolitan Waterworks Board, and I may also inform the hon. member that a bore is about to be put down by

the Government at Subiaco and Leederville:—

The Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM, M.L.C., Legislative Council, Perth.

The Metropolitan Waterworks,

St. George's Terrace,

SIR,—Perth, August 23rd, 1897.

In reply to your question of the 24th inst., I have the honour to inform you that a new 21in. main is in course of being laid from the Mount Victoria Reservoir to Mount Eliza, and will be completed by the end of September, the capacity of which would enable us to put four million gallons of water per day into Mount Eliza Reservoir, *if we had it*; but the present capacity of the Mount Victoria Reservoir would only justify us in drawing one million gallons per day.

Twenty-seven miles of new reticulation pipes have been laid in the city during the past nine months.

A bore is also being put down in Wellington Street to try and obtain an extra supply of water.

The present consumption is 650,000 gallons per day; and we anticipate that it will require 1,500,000 gallons to supply the city for the summer months.

I have, etc.,

For the Metropolitan Waterworks Board,

WALTER H. JONES,

Secretary.

In addition to that, I may say the Government is about to start, or has started, a bore to try and tap water at Subiaco and Leederville, hoping by this means to supply these suburbs with water during the summer months.

COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the Hon. H. G. PARSONS, and read a first time.

COURT OF CRIMINAL APPEAL BILL.

Introduced by the Hon. A. B. KIDSON, and read a first time.

POLICE ACT, 1892, AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING—PRESIDENT'S

RULING ON PROCEDURE.

THE PRESIDENT: In accordance with the request made to me yesterday, I will give my ruling on the point which was raised. I have looked carefully into the matter, and the decision I have arrived at is as follows:—As the latter portion of the third clause refers to the Western Australian Turf Club, who enjoy certain powers and privileges under a private