

it was not the individual the promoter wanted as a director, but it was the political position the Minister occupied that was of value. While our names were our own, the political positions we occupied were not our own; therefore they should not be used for promoting public companies and assisting individual interests. He was quite in accord with the motion, and he would give it his support.

MR. GEORGE (Murray): Not knowing anything about the merits of the Peak Hill goldfields he would leave that matter to the goldfields members to discuss; but he did know something about the timber resources of the colony, and he said emphatically that the position taken up by Mr. Ednie Brown was such that the Government should discharge that officer from the position he occupied.

THE PREMIER: Mr. Ednie Brown would not give any more reports.

MR. GEORGE: Mr. Ednie Brown had reported as to Millar's Company, and also the Canning Jarrah Timber Company, and no doubt received a fee for so doing. But recently Messrs. Millar wished to cut timber on certain timber land which had been reserved for the sole use of farmers and settlers in the South-Western District; yet permission was given to Messrs. Millar to cut this timber. If the Commissioner of Crown Lands were present, he would have to corroborate the statement he (Mr. George) was about to make.

THE PREMIER: The settlers were all right.

MR. GEORGE: They would be as long as the present member for the Murray represented them. Mr. Ednie Brown supplied a report to Messrs. Millar, who wished, for their own purposes, to get a timber reserve made in the district; and when spoken to by him (Mr. George) about the rights of the settlers, that officer simply laughed at the matter. The people were robbed of their rights by an official of the Lands Department, who acted without any consent from the Commissioner of Crown Lands. People were not going to pay the Government to do work, and then have an officer turned into an agent to promote companies.

Question put and passed.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11.28 p.m. until the next day.

Legislative Council,

Thursday, 1st September, 1898.

Paper presented — Motion: Swan River Steamers and Boats (postponed)—Customs Duties Amendment Bill, second reading (moved); Division on adjournment—Beer Duty Bill, second reading and remaining stages (Standing Orders suspended)—Fire Brigades Bill, third reading—Rivers Pollution Bill, third reading — Divorce Amendment and Extension Bill, second reading, debate concluded; division on Amendment (passed), Bill arrested—Public Education Bill, in Committee; postponed clauses considered; Bill reported; also recommitted and reported — Ministerial Statement: Loan (balance) floated; Gold Yield in the colony—Adjournment.

The PRESIDENT took the chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the COLONIAL SECRETARY: Agricultural Bank, Return showing loans granted.

Ordered to lie on the table.

MOTION: SWAN RIVER STEAMERS AND BOATS.

HON. R. S. HAYNES moved: "That a return be laid on the table of the House showing—1, the number of Government steamers and other boats on the Swan River and at Fremantle; 2, the cost of each steamer or boat; 3, the annual cost, including crew, repairs, etc.; 4, the purposes for which the same are used; 5, the number of days a week each boat has been in use since 1st January, 1898." He said the Government some time ago pur-

chased the steamer *Victoria* for £7,000, and that boat had been fully equipped with officers and men. The Government had another steamer, the *Penguin*, officered and manned. Another boat, the *Waratah*, was also fully equipped with officers and men.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The *Victoria* was mentioned in the return supplied by Mr. Briggs.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That was only one. There were the *Victoria*, *Penguin*, *Waratah*, and the boat the Government engineer hopped into whenever he wanted to go 100 yards. Then there was a boat which went up and down the river.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The *Cygnets*.

THE PRESIDENT: When the hon. member was not here yesterday, the Colonial Secretary drew attention to the fact that the bulk of the information required by the hon. member was already on the table. Hon. members could not call for information that had already been supplied. Evidently the hon. member had not read the return. Perhaps it would be better for the hon. member to postpone the motion until Tuesday, and look through the return which was on the table.

HON. R. S. HAYNES said he would move only that portion of his motion referring to boats.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Did the hon. member want the dredges?

HON. R. S. HAYNES said he simply wanted the boats. There was really a fleet of boats on the river belonging to the Government.

THE PRESIDENT: It was impossible to put the question to the House in the way the hon. member proposed.

HON. R. S. HAYNES said he would adopt the suggestion of the President, and ask leave to postpone the motion.

Motion postponed.

CUSTOMS DUTIES AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell), in moving the second reading, said:—I desire to ask the co-operation of hon. members to enable me to carry this Bill through the House this evening if possible. The Bill is a very

short one, and deals with only a few items of the tariff, and no doubt hon. members have made themselves fully acquainted with the contents of the measure. The gist of the Bill is in the second schedule. In the first schedule it is provided that the Opium Duty Act, 1886, and the Stock Tax Act of 1893 be repealed, as the passing of this Bill will render these Acts unnecessary. Hon. members are aware that the duties under this Bill have been collected since the 18th of this month, according to the usual procedure in connection with all Customs Bills. The moment a Custom Bill is laid on the table, it takes effect, and hon. members will understand there is very good reason why that should be so. The object is, to a certain extent, to arrest the operations of clever and wealthy individuals, who might, perhaps, direct their efforts to the detriment of other persons who are not so advantageously placed. In every case in my remembrance, duties, under the circumstances, have been collected immediately the Bill was laid upon the table. The present Bill is, I believe, to some extent a redemption of the pledge given by the leader of the Government in another place during last session, under pressure from the members of that House. Whatever different opinion there may be as to whether that pledge is now fulfilled or not, the Bill seems to have been generally accepted in another place as a reasonable and honest attempt to cope with the difficulties which have arisen. The Bill will afford relief in many cases, and at the same time inflict no hardship on any industry to an appreciable extent. That the Bill is a scientific amendment of the tariff I do not for one moment pretend to say. I have no doubt that if hon. members look into the details, they may suggest many alterations, even in the few items which compose the measure. I myself have carefully considered the items, and speaking not as a member of the Government but as an individual, I can say I accept them as a reasonable effort to accede to demands which have been made for the reduction of the duties on the food of the great mass of the people. No doubt amendment of the duties on other commodities could be suggested, but the Government desire to deal with a few items, and to disturb the

tariff as little as possible. It is not desirable to frequently deal with the tariff. Such a course only unsettles business, and creates difficulties, and, in some cases, may very likely involve loss to persons who are engaged in trade; and interference with the tariff in this country has not been very frequent. We are now working under an Act which was passed in 1893, and that Act was framed on the measure of 1888, so that the Government cannot be accused of tinkering with the tariff very often.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: The tariff has been changed once or twice since 1893.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There may have been one or two items dealt with in the interval which has elapsed.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Oh, a good many.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: From the second schedule it will be seen the duty on cattle (including bullocks, steers, cows, and calves), not otherwise enumerated, is reduced from 30s. to 15s.; the duty on horses is 20s. each; the duty on pigs is reduced from 4s. to 2s.; on sheep from 2s. 6d. to 1s. 3d. each; and then follow a number of animals which are free from duty. I have compared the old and the new tariffs, and the only change I see is the admission of bulls and rams for stud purposes. On these items a concession is given to the breeder of animals for the purposes of his business.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: The only concession is on calves.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have endeavoured to ascertain the alterations made, and the two I have mentioned are all I can see. On apparel the duty has been increased 5 per cent., and that is reasonable, especially on slop clothing, which can bear a small increase. Even the increased duty is very much under that which prevails in Victoria and some of the other colonies, with the exception of New South Wales, which, of course, is free trade. The duty on bricks has been increased 15s. per thousand.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: What was the duty before?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The duty on bricks was 20 per cent. on the export value; so hon. members will see the Bill proposes a very considerable increase. The duty is a varying one; that is to say,

it might be as low as £1 per thousand, and sometimes it might rise to £2. The duty on cheese has been reduced 1d. per lb.; and an effort was made in another place to reduce the duty on cheese still further. I hold the opinion that cheese is a very important article of food, and a very wholesome and healthy food. There is not any other marketable edible which gives so much nourishment to the human system as cheese. I am very glad to see the proposed reduction of the duty, and would have been still more glad to see a further reduction proposed, but the concession means a considerable sum, if the importation of the article continues on the same scale as at present. At the same time, should anyone attempt to start the manufacture of cheese, the impost will afford a very good protective duty. The duty on clocks and watches is increased by 5 per cent., while cordage (including coir rope and other cordage not otherwise enumerated) is removed from the 5 per cent. list to the specific list, and a considerable increase of duty will result.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I rise to a point of order. This Bill does not appear to comply with Standing Order 236, which provides:—

If any Bill received from the Legislative Assembly be a Bill for the appropriation of any part of the revenue, or of any tax, rate, duty, or impost, the Council will not proceed with such Bill unless the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly shall have certified upon the Bill that the purpose of such appropriation had been recommended to the Legislative Assembly by the Governor during the current session.

The endorsement does not appear on the copy of the Bill before us.

THE PRESIDENT: The only copy which is endorsed is the original copy which is sent down by message.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: And that copy I hold in my hand. Doors (wooden), according to thickness, are removed from the 20 per cent. *ad valorem* list to the specific list, under which the duty varies from 3s., 4s., and 5s., according to size. That is a concession to an industry which has been established in our midst in connection with the timber mills. On galvanised iron, which some time ago was removed from the £2 per ton list to the free list, it is now proposed to place a duty of 20s. per ton.

That duty will not be felt very heavily, considering the number of sheets there is in a ton, and how little the builder of even a good sized building would be affected. The Government may reasonably ask for this impost, seeing that the duty was at one time £2 per ton, and that it is only proposed now to charge £1 per ton. As a set-off to the increase of the duty on cordage, hon. members will notice that hemp and flax (unmanufactured) are to be admitted duty free, and that is a concession to the rope manufacturer. It is considered probable that rope works will be established here, if some little protection is afforded, such as proposed in the Bill. On machinery of all kinds a duty of 5 per cent. *ad valorem* is imposed, and on parts of machinery, 10 per cent. Hon. members may think there was very little cause some time ago for moving machinery into the free list, seeing that a number of factories have been established in our midst, in which machinery of one kind and another is constructed, and we should do what we can to encourage the establishment and increase of these factories, with the consequent extended employment of labour and benefit to the colony generally. The duty on bacon and hams is reduced to 2d. per pound. These articles are, to some extent, a luxury; and we can well afford to pay a duty of 2d. per lb. on ham, which can scarcely enter into the food of the working man or the mechanic. The same will apply, only to a lesser extent, in regard to the article bacon. There is a considerable reduction in other meats—hams, fresh, frozen, and chilled meat, salt beef, salt and cured mutton, preserved and tinned meat and tongues; the duty on which I hope will meet with the approbation of hon. members of the House. There has been a very considerable concession on these items, in some instances the duty having been reduced one-half. Musical instruments have been removed from the *ad valorem* list, and placed on the specific list. The object of that—and this has obtained in Tasmania for a great number of years—is to induce importers to bring in a better article.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Is there any duty on bagpipes?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There is a duty of £5 each on pianos not otherwise enumerated, but on square, grand, or semi-grand pianos there is a duty of £15 each. On harmoniums and cabinet organs there is a duty of £3 each. That is a low rate of duty, because a good harmonium costs not less than £50. On ordinary soap the duty has been increased from 5s. to 7s. 6d. per cwt., that is half-a-crown increase. In addition to that a very important article of food, a very healthy one, and one that is very nourishing—oatmeal—has been removed from the dutiable list. These are the various items on the tariff. It is rather a work of supererogation on my part to go into these items fully, because no doubt members have made a note of the amended tariff and the old one, and they are fully seized of the amendments proposed. I trust I shall receive the cordial co-operation of members in the passing of this Bill. It would be a calamity to have it hanging up for some time, and it is desirable that we should deal with it at once. I trust hon. members will give the Bill their favourable consideration and support, and pass the measure into law.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON: What was the duty on oatmeal before?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: 20s. per ton.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Is that coming in free?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes; it was 20s. per ton.

HON. F. M. STONE: I do not know whether the Government are to be congratulated in bringing forward this Bill. The Government certainly gave a promise that they would make living cheaper in this colony. If people want to make their living cheaper they will all have to eat oatmeal. On the other items mentioned in the tariff the consumer will not benefit at all. The Government are now taking the duty off cattle to the extent of 15s. What on earth difference will that make to the consumer?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Half a farthing.

HON. F. M. STONE: The Government might just as well have left the duty at 30s. When we look at the Bill it appears to be inconsistent. The Government reduce the duty on cattle by one half, and immediately increase the

duty on clothing by another 5 per cent. It is a well-known fact that the squatters have to buy ready-made clothing for the natives they employ, therefore the squatter will be taxed under the Bill. The squatters in the North have really to pay because they must have the ready-made clothing for the natives—large quantities of shirts and trousers are purchased by the squatters. We now come to cheese; 1d. per lb. is taken off that article. How on earth will the consumer benefit by that?

HON. C. A. PIESSE: The consumer will get it 1d. per lb. cheaper.

HON. F. M. STONE: I cannot see that. The consumer will go on paying the same price. It will not make a bit of difference in the cost of living. I think no harm has been done by placing a duty on bricks. There are only a few bricks being imported here for a bank, which has raised a great deal of trouble.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: The bricks in the tunnel of the Great Southern railway were imported.

HON. F. M. STONE: The Government would not have paid duty on them; they would come in duty free. It would have been better if the Government had tackled the whole tariff and brought forward a properly amended one. Tinkering with the tariff in this Bill will not satisfy anyone, although the House may pass it. The Bill will not satisfy those whom the Government think it will.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: The Colonial Secretary said that nothing will satisfy some people. To challenge the Government on a question of public policy in a wretched measure like this seems to be rather absurd, but it is a course that I am prepared to take. The Bill contains a point of public policy on which the Government are bound to go down, if not in the opinion of the House, in the opinion of the country; and I believe the Government will go down in the opinion of the House. Although we may have a duty on hams as a luxury, I do not think "tinned dog" should be allowed to come in free, and the duty on hams, which are more wholesome, should be increased. The Government are allowing town bulls to come in free. I understand that the Commissioner of Crown Lands intended to supply town bulls free to the gold-

fields constituencies, but that offer was declined with courtesy by several of the mayors in some of the goldfields towns. There is a serious matter in this schedule which affects the public of this colony. I wish to draw attention to the duty on corrugated galvanised iron. There has been a duty of 20s. a ton placed on this article, and that is the highest duty imposed by this tariff. Nothing is charged so high as galvanised iron. The Government some time ago took the duty off galvanised iron. That was simply because they wished to encourage settlement, and because people would build themselves ovens of corrugated iron to live in, although I wish they would not do that. The Government, however, took this duty off, and now, when people are leaving the colony, the Government puts on a duty of 20s. a ton, and raises the railway freight on corrugated iron to 25s. a ton. This is not the way to encourage settlement.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Plain galvanised iron is free.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: That is because no house is built of it. Corrugated galvanised iron and building materials are taxed, and galvanised iron is the one thing on the schedule that is fixed higher than anything else. When the colony is suffering from want of population, this is not the time to place a duty on building materials.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The machinery for corrugating iron is simple and cheap.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: I wish to point out that all these building materials are imported. There is the Coolgardie water scheme, which is crippling the credit of the colony. The fields have never asked for it. The people have a water supply on the fields coming from God's heaven which will supply all their wants. But the Government want to prevent men from making tanks to catch the water, by putting a duty on iron. The Government, in all the departments—the Railways, the Customs, and the Lands—are in conspiracy to stop settlement on the fields, and the Government are stopping people from bringing their wives and families over here, which would double the market for the producer.

HON. D. M'KAY: Why do not the people bring in the plain iron and corrugate it here?

HON. H. G. PARSONS: I am a protectionist as far as this colony is concerned; but, when population is going away as it is now, this is not the time to place a large duty on iron. It is not reasonable. The Colonial Secretary has said it will take a very few sheets of iron to build a 1,000 gallon tank, as the top and bottom are constructed of flat iron, which comes in free. But why not allow people to obtain tanks as cheaply as possible? I was talking to an importer the other day, and he told me that square tanks had been penalised now. The Government, in the interests of the Perth brewers, have penalised the local brewers. The ordinary square tanks which convey malt and sugar to the brewer cost the purchaser 19s. more now, owing to the railway tariff. There are three things which are crippling this colony. The Government will not have a colonial share register here. That is the first thing; but that may be a fad of mine. Still, there are two other matters which are crippling the colony. The first is owing to the absolute, inert legislation that the Government are responsible for ever since I have been in the colony; instead of mines being owned locally, the Government are practically giving them away to persons outside the colony. In proportion as our mines prosper we lose money, and the better part of the wages earned here are remitted to the other side. The way to stop this considerable drain is to settle the people in this colony with their wives and families on the fields, and the Government say that can only be done by giving the people water. That is the reason why the Premier has stuck to his ill-omened Coolgardie water scheme. The Premier says that until women can get water on the fields to wash their clothes with, and to grow cabbages with, they will not go up there. I say that if you can get the women on the fields the men will become more settled. The men will build houses. Each person will build a house of the value of about £300 on his quarter-acre allotment. I may say here that when the Commissioner of Crown Lands entered the Government, he said

he was going to give every man an acre or two acres of land; but since the present Commissioner of Crown Lands has been in office no one has been able to get any land at all. The Government will double the traffic on the railways; they will double the rates and taxes and the population, if they encourage settlement here. The stand which I took on the Divorce Bill was that as the men on the fields had not their wives with them, they ought to have a divorce. The want of population will damage the revenue of this country materially, and block all progress.

HON. W. T. LORON: What does?

HON. H. G. PARSONS: The want of population. The men would have their wives with them if they could.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Is not the hon. member going off the track?

HON. H. G. PARSONS: No; I am sticking to iron. The people on the goldfields can, year in and year out, catch their year's supply of water from the roof of an ordinary £300 house. On the fields people can have their shower bath, they can have water for the family washing and for washing their pots and pans, and they can have all their drinking water caught on their own house. A person can catch 6,000 gallons of water a year—in fact a person this year could have caught 20,000 gallons off a house. My tank which holds 6,000 gallons has been running over for a long time, and 6,000 gallons is my year's supply. I cannot understand how presumably intelligent persons can insert in a schedule like this such an item as galvanised iron. The Government place an item here of town bulls free, and rams free, and all that kind of thing for the benefit of the agricultural population. That is all very well, but we must first have a goldfields population, so that we can consume the produce of the agricultural portion of the community. I say that the abolition of this small item on the tariff—this duty on iron—will restore the colony's credit, because it will do away with the Coolgardie water scheme.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Call it the Kalgoorlie water scheme.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: If I were to call it the Kalgoorlie water scheme it would be just the same—I do not like it.

If the Government will allow people to have roofs to their houses we shall not want the Coolgardie water scheme, because the mines have enough water and so will the people have. This duty of 20s. per ton which it is proposed to place upon corrugated galvanised iron shows a want of acquaintance on the part of the Government with the conditions of the colony, a want of appreciation of a market for the producers. The Government are responsible for the way in which people are leaving the colony, as well as being responsible for all the revenue from the mines leaving the colony and the wages being sent away. The Government will not try to understand the goldfields. I give the Government credit for the best intentions, but the Government has most lamentably failed. Let us consider the duty on corrugated iron.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: What difference will it make in the cost of a tank holding 1,000 gallons?

HON. H. G. PARSONS: It will double the price.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It will make about 2s. difference.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: About 2s. 6d.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: You are talking of the prime cost of the iron; I am talking of the tank after it comes into use as a finished article. The main building material of the goldfields ought not to be penalised. This drastic policy of getting every shilling the Government can from the goldfields is absurd. Slight as this duty may appear, it is against the policy of settlement. It is opposed to the encouragement of settlement and population, and it is, in another way, an impediment to the colony's credit. I would move a suggestion that the Bill be sent back to another place to abolish the duty on galvanised iron.

THE PRESIDENT: The hon. member can do that when the Bill is in Committee.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: I intend to do that.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I wish to draw the attention of hon. members to this fact: We are agreed on the principle of the Bill—that there should be a revision of the tariff, and the House will, at all events, discuss this Bill in Committee. I was going to say that I did not agree with

any part of the schedule, but there is very little that I do agree with. Still, the matter ought to be discussed, therefore hon. members will no doubt approve of the second reading. If the Bill goes into Committee we can deal with the items separately. If hon. members approve of the principle, why should we not go into Committee at once? I may say that I approve of very little which is in the schedule. I agree with Mr. Stone in saying that there is no necessity to reduce the duty on cattle.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Before we go into Committee on this Bill, I should like to say, in opposition to what Mr. R. S. Haynes said, that I do not agree with the principle of the Bill. I think it is a most unfortunate thing that the Government of the colony should, year after year, interfere with the tariff. At the last general election the Government laid down a policy which was, to some extent, a protective policy, and the country expected that during the four years of this Parliament that would be the general policy, and would not be interfered with at all. This is not the first time that the tariff has been interfered with. I do not hesitate to say that it is a grievous mistake for any Government to be continually meddling with the tariff. When the tariff is interfered with at all it should be gone into thoroughly. But the Government are afraid, I think, to deal with the tariff in that way. They have simply meddled with the thing. They have cut down a few duties here, and have placed more duties on in other directions. The Government might just as well have left the tariff undisturbed. The tariff proposes to take half a farthing off meat and put 5 per cent. on clothing. If it is necessary for revenue purposes to touch the tariff at all, the Government could have done the whole thing in three items. They could have retained a small duty on tea, with which no one would have found fault, and they would have obtained £10,000 or £15,000 from that duty. Then the Government could have put a small duty on sugar, which the country would not have objected to, and they could have put an extra 1d. on beer, which would have made up the difference. I only rose to say that I am not in accord with the

principle of the Bill. I am not going to say that I oppose it. It has been brought down as a matter of convenience.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A demand was made upon the Government.

HON. W. T. LOTON: When demands are made they should be considered, but the Government should stand by their own policy, and let those who demand alterations turn the Government out and try to govern the country themselves. If the Government remains in power and meets the demands of the Opposition, it will come to a poor state of things in the end. I am sorry to say it is coming to that state of affairs now. A great deal has been said as to the duty on galvanised iron. In 1895, before this duty was taken off, the duty received from galvanised iron amounted to the large sum of £2000. I think the duty was then 30s.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was £2.

HON. W. T. LOTON: That was in 1895, and the Government received £2000 from that duty.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: That was before people began to build.

HON. W. T. LOTON: Mr. Parsons has said that the people on the gold-fields, with an iron roof, could catch sufficient water for their own supply for the year. I believe the statement of the hon. member is pretty nearly right, but why is all this disturbance made about a duty of £1 per ton on galvanised iron. About a ton and a half of galvanised iron would roof an ordinary cottage.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: About a ton.

HON. W. T. LOTON: I am giving a good margin of half a ton, and I say that a ton and a half would do the whole roofing of the building, and the duty on that would be 30s.; therefore, a person would have to pay 30s. extra if the duty is imposed. The long argument of the hon. member was pretty absurd in regard to this duty. Still, I think the Government could well have left the duty out. I do not know why the Government selected corrugated galvanised iron. There are many articles that would have given a higher duty. I do not know whether any members wish to say much on this matter, but I hope we shall go into committee at once.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I agree with other members who have spoken in regarding this Bill as absolutely unsatisfactory. It is a peculiar thing that those who support the Government, and those who, in a sense, are in opposition to the Government on the tariff question, are unanimous in their attitude towards this Bill. That obviously arises from the fact that the Government have been endeavouring to please both parties, that is to say, they have been endeavouring to carry out pledges in regard to the food duties, and, at the same time, to carry those pledges out in such a way as to do no practical good whatever to the consumer. The Government have sent down amendments of the tariff which are absolutely delusive. I have taken out the figures very carefully, and, knowing exactly the amount the Government expect from each article, I propose to deal with the various items. First of all, I want to obtain, if possible, from the Colonial Secretary, information as to whether agricultural machinery is included in the schedule here.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Machinery of all kinds is included.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Machinery of all kinds? When I turn to the Customs returns to ascertain what "machinery of all kinds" does include, I find that agricultural machinery and implements are put in a different category. It seems to me that unless the House obtains some pledge from the Government that agricultural machinery is intended to be included, we shall be met later on with the discovery that agricultural machinery has not been taxed, but is under a separate category, and is still imported free as agricultural implements.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That will still be so. I think it is under a different heading altogether.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Agricultural implements includes machinery, so far as I can judge by the customs returns, and I have carefully gone into the matter with all the data which is placed at the disposal of hon. members.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: That is not the intention of the Act.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: We have just heard from the Colonial Secre-

ary that is the intention of the Act. I do not know the authority of the hon. gentleman, but I believe he is accurate. It is the intention of the Government to leave agricultural machinery out of the tariff. If the charge is fair on the machinery employed in general commercial undertakings, it is fair that agricultural machinery should also be included.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: It is intended to be included.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I understand it is not, and I think that the House should go into Committee on the Bill with a clear understanding on the subject. The position is, that the value of the mining machinery imported for the year ending 30th June, 1898, was over £200,000, and a tax of five per cent. would bring in £10,000, whereas agricultural machinery practically gets off scot free. The House will understand I am not raising any objection to the five per cent. charged on mining machinery, if the Government absolutely require to raise that amount for the purpose of revenue. It is perfectly clear the country cannot be carried on without money, but I maintain that it would be exceedingly unfair to the industry which I particularly represent if mining machinery alone is saddled with a tax.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Agricultural machinery is taxed already with a five per cent. duty.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: No, it is free of duty; it was freed last year.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Oh, last year.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: This is a matter on which it is desirable there should be a clear understanding. There is another point I want to submit to the consideration of the House before we go into Committee on the Bill, and that is, that while the Bill was being discussed in another place, "machinery, parts of," were on a chance amendment saddled with 10 per cent. duty, while the duty on machinery was left at 5 per cent. During the course of to-day I have been making enquiries, which confirm me in an impression that nearly all machinery is imported into the colony in parts, and that, as matters stand at present, the Collector of Customs would undoubtedly be within his

right in charging 10 per cent. on nearly the whole of the machinery at present imported.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: That has already been the effect.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I was unaware of that, but I have been telephoning to importers during the afternoon, pointing out that that would be the effect, and it is evidently the intention of the Government that it should be the effect. There is a minor point, of which I cannot say whether it affects agricultural members or not, and though I do not take much interest in the matter, I call attention to the fact that pigs for breeding purposes used to be free, but now have been cut out of the favoured tariff, and will have to pay 2s. a head. That is a fact I submit to the careful consideration of agricultural members. The practical question of the food duties is, after all, the most important we have to consider. The Government were absolutely pledged to reduce the food duties. Though I am perfectly willing to recognise that, under the present condition of the finances of the country, it is difficult for the Government to do very much in the way of reducing the duties, still what they do in that direction ought to be honest, and intended to alleviate the extreme difficulty people find in living cheaply in this colony. I propose to deal with the figures in such a way as I hope will convince members that the Government have absolutely failed in that direction, and, I believe, intentionally failed. I believe the Government have intentionally arranged matters in that way, to avoid displeasing a portion of the inhabitants of the colony, while at the same time deluding a large majority into the impression that an honest endeavour is being made to reduce the duties on food. Let us take the duties which they propose to reduce on cattle for slaughter, and pigs and sheep. The amount of the Government loss by the reduced duty on the basis of last year's imports will be £17,000 odd; on cattle for slaughter £9,229, on pigs £789, and on sheep £7,124, not one penny of which will benefit the consumer. It is absolutely impossible, as things stand, that one

penny of that money can benefit the consumer.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The same would be said if all the duties were taken off.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It would be exactly the same if all the duties were taken off, and, therefore, I advocate that the duties be left as at present. Why should the country lose the money, unless the consumer is going to benefit? It is simply playing the fool—though that is not a very parliamentary expression—with the whole of the electors of the country who are led to believe that the Government are making enormous sacrifices in order to give cheap food, while really the Government are chuckling to themselves, well aware that the consumer will not be benefited one farthing. The Government have gone to a small extent in the right direction in only one item practically in the whole schedule, and that is in the item which shows a reduction of the duty on frozen and chilled meat. That duty has been reduced from 1½d. to ¾d. per pound, and there is no doubt that the consumer will feel the advantage of that reduction almost immediately. Within a few months, importers will be able to bring in frozen meat, and then the consumer will get the full benefit of the reduction in the duty. But the Government should retain the full original duty on stock, the removal of which would do no good whatever to the country, and take off the duty of three farthings per pound on chilled meat. The result of the reduction under this head proposed by the Government will be a loss, on last year's returns, of £8,224 on frozen meat, every penny of which the consumer will benefit by. Let the Government retain the £17,000 odd which they get in duty on stock.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The Government will not get that duty if frozen meat is let in free.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Why not?

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Because the people will eat frozen meat.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I see no reason why people should eat frozen meat if they prefer fresh.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Frozen meat is cheaper.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I am strongly of opinion that we eat frozen meat now, and not fresh meat, and yet the consumption of live cattle goes on just the same. Let the Government give up the £8,224 now received as duty on frozen and chilled meat.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Is the hon. member in favour of retaining the stock tax?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I am certainly in favour of retaining the stock tax, the removal of which would do no good whatever. Let the Government adhere to the stock tax, and give us the full benefit of free frozen or chilled meat, a proceeding which would result in no loss of revenue. A farthing has been knocked off the duty on preserved and tinned meats, and that means a loss to the Government of £3,022. The duty was three farthings and now it is a halfpenny, and the Government ought to knock off a farthing and give the consumer the benefit of the £1,500. The in order to make up the amount paid in stock tax, the Government ought to take 10s. per ton off the duty on flour, and so provide cheap bread and meat. If the Government are honest in their desire they ought to take the duty off the two staples of existence, bread and meat. The duty on flour is 30s. per ton, and the Government could well afford to give us 10s. of that duty, which would mean a loss of £7,991 to the revenue.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Consumers would not get the benefit.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: They would.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: It would not amount to more than a farthing per pound.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It would amount in the long run, and it would be a honest attempt on the part of the Government to give cheap food. The stock tax might be retained, amounting to £17,000, and reductions made in other directions in which they would be fully appreciated to the amount of £16,000.

HON. J. W. HACKBUTT: Who is going to import live meat when they can import dead meat free?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The hon. member might just as well ask who is going to import live stock now? It is simply a matter of the price at which you buy live meat.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: No man in his circumstances would import live meat, under the circumstances.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The Government evidently assume the importer will go on doing it. If the hon. member's argument is worth anything, the Government must be fatally in error, because they have already reduced the duty on frozen meat by three-farthings, whereas the stock tax reduction only amounts to something less than a farthing. In that case, if the hon. member's argument is really sound, people would, even under the present circumstances, stop importing cattle, and the Government would then lose the £17,000 they are reckoning on.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: The difference would not be so great as to alter the price.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The difference between free meat and taxed meat?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The fact remains that if the Government are going to leave matters as they stand, they will lose the £17,000, and the consumer is not going to get any benefit. As to the duty on slops, the Government obviously must find revenue somewhere if duties are taken off food. The Government have certainly taken off duty to the amount of about £45,000, but of that, I have proved, £17,000 would be absolutely inoperative to aid in our present distress. As to oatmeal, that is another instance on which the Government are simply deluding the country at large. The duty paid on oatmeal imported last year was only £731, and it is perfectly ludicrous to put that article on the free list, because, so far as I can see, there is hardly any oatmeal consumed. The value of oatmeal imported was £11,000.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Hit high or hit low, there is no satisfying you.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: On the contrary, I would be perfectly satisfied if the duty were taken off anything in ordinary consumption, but the articles on which the duties have been reduced are not in ordinary consumption. The Colonial Secretary laid stress on the fact that the duty had been taken off hemp and flax. Now, would the House be surprised to hear that no hemp or flax is imported into the colony at all, and never has been.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: That was because cordage was free, was it not?

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I do not know, but whether cordage was free or was not, hemp and flax have never been imported; yet the Colonial Secretary rather plumed himself on the fact that the Government were generously going to allow hemp and flax in free.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I stated the reason was to encourage an industry.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I do not think there are any other things in the schedule worthy of attention at this moment, but I trust the House will not go into Committee on the Bill this evening. The question of machinery is really the important one.

HON. W. T. LOTON: The sooner we get into Committee, the sooner the matter will be dealt with.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: I hope the House will not go into Committee to-day. On the important question of machinery we have not sufficiently accurate data, and I do not suppose anyone has.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: The Government have not; they do not know what machinery is.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I rise to object to tinkering with the tariff session after session. When two Bills were previously brought before the House, reducing the duties on different articles, I spoke very strongly against the reductions, especially in the case of sugar and tea. I pointed out at the time that the reduction would not benefit to any great extent the working classes, but on the other hand would be the means of allowing thousands of people, living in tents in the colony and drawing salaries out of the loan moneys of the colony, to live here without contributing a farthing towards the revenue. I pointed out that the time would come—which has come—when these men, after growing fat on our loan moneys, would leave the colony by thousands at the first dawn of any trouble, leaving those who had any stake in the country to pay the interest on the loans. Hon. members have only to walk into any shipping office to find that all the berthing accommodation in the steamers for a fortnight ahead is engaged, and that additional steamers have been telegraphed for to Melbourne and Sydney

in order to cope with passenger traffic to the east. The duties on tea and sugar should never have been interfered with. I am aware the Government were placed in rather an invidious position in regard to the stupid pledge that they made under pressure, that they would deal with the tariff in the way of making food cheaper. But surely in the present financial position of the country, everybody would have absolved the Government from dealing with the tariff. Every penny the Government can raise is required, seeing that the revenue of the colony will, at least, be something like half a million short of the estimate. Production will increase in the colony, and the imports of wheat and produce will not be anything like what they have been in past years. Thus the receipts from the customs will fall short, and even now the revenue is from £50,000 to £70,000 below the estimate every month; and in the face of that the Government are tinkering with the tariff. Will any hon. member tell me that the reductions made are going to beneficially affect the working classes at all? The reductions will simply have the effect of putting money into the pockets of middlemen and merchants. I agree with the contention that it would be better to retain the duty on meat, seeing that the consumer will not gain a farthing by the reduction. It is not my intention to move that the Bill be read this day six months, but did I do so, I believe I would find a majority to vote with me. It is certainly bad policy to tinker with the tariff at the present time, because the position of the colony is such that the Government should procure every penny they legitimately can. If the Government would only throw over the insane Coolgardie water scheme, they could talk about lowering the tariff; but so long as that scheme is hanging over our heads, so long will our financial position be a bad one. The Government have no right whatever to reduce the tariff in the face of our financial position, which is as bad as it could be made.

SEVERAL MEMBERS: No, no.

HON. E. McLARTY: I regret to say I really cannot compliment the Government on the introduction of this measure. Three years ago, when I had the honour

to move the Address-in-Reply, there was in His Excellency's Speech a paragraph to the effect that the Government intended to reduce the duties on certain articles. I then expressed my opinion very strongly that the Government were going on wrong lines, especially in connection with tea and sugar, and other items which had far better have been left alone. I quite agree with what has fallen from Mr. Crowder. The reductions in the duties have been brought about to satisfy a class of people who came here, and who, having made a fortune in the country, are clearing out as soon as trouble threatens. Speaking for myself, I am the head of a pretty large household, in which a great deal of food is consumed, and I never found any great burden from the tax on tea and sugar. I have always foreseen the day would come when the Government would require revenue, and it is absurd to be continually tinkering with the tariff, trying to make things cheaper in the colony, when, of necessity, taxes must be placed on other things for the purpose of raising revenue. The class of people of which I am a representative in this House have a good deal of reason to complain of the suggestion of the Government in regard to the present tariff. We are asked to put a duty on machinery, and it appears that it is not clear whether farming implements and machinery are included in the taxable articles. We are asked to put a duty of 5 per cent. on machinery and 10 per cent. on duplicate parts, and that I regard as a monstrous thing.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not think that is a proposal of the Government, though it was carried in the other House.

HON. E. McLARTY: During last harvest time, it cost me £15 for duplicate parts of machinery in the field, and I found the imposition of the duty caused great expense. That duty has been placed on because of the pressure brought to bear by foundry proprietors who were always complaining about the abolition of the duty on machinery. Then, I take it that cordage will include twine and string, and these are very expensive articles. People who are cultivating the land have to pay large sums

for binder twine—perhaps more than hon. members have any idea of—and this is an article which ought not to be taxed. I cordially endorse what has fallen from Mr. Matheson. The reduction of the duty on live stock is uncalled for, and will only serve to enrich five or six people in the colony, while the bulk of the population receive no benefit whatever. I give those persons who will be directly benefited by the reduction of duty, all credit for having the manliness to stand up and tell the country the effects of the reduction. These people do not cloak the benefits they themselves will derive, or attempt to argue that the reduction will do good to the public. They say that the effect will be to put many hundreds of pounds in their pockets; indeed, that has already been the effect, and will continue to be the effect, while, on the other hand, the result will be prejudicial to pastoralists of the colony. I have already been told by one firm of importers, now the duty has been reduced on imported stock, that next year I may expect a reduction of £2 per head in the price of the stock in which I am interested. That stock I have been labouring to bring on the market for 15 or 16 years at a cost of some thousands of pounds, and now that there is a chance of my succeeding and making a living, I am met by the Government with a Bill to reduce the duty for the benefit of half a dozen people. A great deal of pressure has been brought to bear on the Government, and a great deal of blame is to be attached to the representatives of Perth and Fremantle and the goldfields, who have always urged that the duty on stock was the cause of the high price of meat. I have said over and over again that if any person could show me that abolition of the stock tax would reduce the price of meat to the consumer, I would consent to that abolition. But I am satisfied that the abolition of the tax would have no such effect. The reduction of the duty to 15s. would be a dead loss to the revenue, and no benefit whatever to the public. The farming community have a great deal to complain of in the tariff, which I do not think has been well considered. There are some articles which might be admitted free, and amongst these is cheese. It will be many

years before this colony will produce cheese, and I for one would have raised no objection whatever if the duty on that article had been abolished. The farming community have to pay duties on machinery, binder twine, cordage of all kinds, and clothing, and the latter is a matter which affects the squatters considerably. It might be thought that clothing was a small item, but I can assure hon. members that, in the case of a couple of stations I am interested in, large amounts are paid for clothing. It will all tell up and make a considerable difference in the course of a year. I cannot say I congratulate the Government on this attempt to amend the tariff. I am aware that, last year, pressure was brought to bear on the Premier, and he promised to bring in a Bill this session. I regret that the Premier was forced into making that promise, but, having made it, I think it would have been better, in the altered circumstances of the colony, if the Premier had explained the whole matter to the House, and left it to the goodness and judgment of hon. members to say whether the tariff should be altered or not. I am sure if the Premier had done that the good sense of hon. members would have released him from his promise. Every one must know that if the Government take the duties off certain things they must put them on other things, and that is what has been done. I am inclined to think if a motion had been made that this Bill be read this day six months I would have seconded it.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I take a very similar view to that which hon. members who have spoken take. I do not consider we can congratulate the Government for bringing in this Bill at the present time. We know the finances of the colony do not justify the Government in making any appreciable reduction in the duties; therefore I think it unwise to meddle with the tariff at the present time. We cannot admit the wisdom of the Government in having introduced a Bill in this direction. The Government should not decrease the revenue at such an important time as this. Taking this view, I move "That in consideration of the present depressed state of the colony's finances and the decline in the revenue, this honourable House does not consider it

desirable to reduce the existing duties, feeling sure the proposed reduction will not materially benefit the consumers." I beg to move that the Bill be read this day six months, and I trust I shall meet with the support of hon. members. This is a matter of vital importance, or I would not be so ready to move this motion. I can see that the consumers will not in any way benefit to any appreciable extent from the alterations, but that the revenue will suffer to a very great extent.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: I do not know that I am altogether in favour of the amendment. I question the wisdom of throwing the Bill out. If the measure goes into Committee, I shall combine with any party to strike out a very great portion of the articles mentioned in the second schedule. I do not understand the claim put forward by the Colonial Secretary in advocating these reductions in cordage and hemp and flax in order to encourage factories for rope-making, because no such factories are in existence in this colony; and at the same time to reduce the duty on soap when we have soap factories here. There may be some idea that the Government are generous in proposing these alterations. That reminds me somewhat of the extreme politeness of the native races in New Zealand, who always say that the depth of the argument of Ministers is such that they are not able to discover it. I think that is similar to the policy of the Government. It is all very well for the Colonial Secretary to say that this Bill was demanded last year, and has been brought forward in accordance with a promise then given. But I go further than Mr. McLarty, who said that the Government should have come forward and informed the House that the condition of the colony was such that a reduction in the tariff could not take place, and ask the House to release the Government from its promise. I should have gone further, and said that the Premier should have stated that the condition of the colony was such that a reduction could not be made because he wanted all the revenue. And I believe the Premier, if he had done this, would have had the support of both Houses. I regret that the Premier did not exhibit confidence in himself, and take that

stand. As to urging the immediate passage of this Bill, I think that is wrong. The Bill was only brought down to this House yesterday, and sufficient time has not been given to members to make a close examination into the proposals of the Bill, to enable us to deliberate upon it. As the new tariff has only been in force since the 18th of last month, no possible harm can be done, and the consideration of the measure could easily be deferred for some time. I quite agree with the suggestion made by Mr. Loton, that the duties should never have been taken off tea and sugar. I think this Bill should have contained a proposal to re-impose the duty on tea and sugar, and also on kerosene oil. It was the duty of the Government, having regard to the considerable exodus which is taking place from the colony, to have taken a stand and collected all the revenue they could, and not propose to reduce the revenue by £36,000. The Government might have instituted a public works policy to give employment to men, thereby keeping the population in the colony. If that policy had been adopted and carried out, we would not have heard so much of the general exodus which has been going on, for although the amount of money which the Government would have been able to expend would not have stopped the exodus altogether, it would have acted as a check. It was my intention to have asked the Government why some steps were not being taken to check the exodus, but I was advised not to do so. I was informed that I should have an opportunity of saying what I wanted to say in this debate. I think it is a pity that as soon as the Government saw the exodus taking place, they did not face the position, and see if some inducement could not be offered, by which the people would have been retained within the colony. I think it is a pity that the Government have not done this. When I came into this House I had pledged myself to my constituents in favour of a reduction of the food duties to a large extent, and in favour of a reduction of other duties; but having become acquainted with the position of the colony, I am perfectly satisfied that I should be doing wrong if I did not go behind my pledges, and oppose

the remission of the duties, trusting to the good sense of my constituents, when I explain my reasons to them. I think that no hon. member who votes against this Bill will be blamed by his constituents for so doing, considering the position of the colony at the present time. But I should like the Bill to go into committee, and then be cut about. I have very great doubt now whether I will not vote for the amendment proposed by Mr. Dempster.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I desire to add my quota to the chorus of disapproval of this Bill. It seems to me that the Government, in endeavouring to meet the pledge they made, are really going from bad to worse. The idea, I understand, was that the Government, by altering the tariff, should provide cheap food for the people. That is the sole object of a Bill of this kind, and I ask hon. members to look at the list of articles affected by the Bill, and say what articles of food there are therein contained. In the first place I see free of duty items, and they are as follow:—"Bulls for stud purposes: cows for breeding purposes: horses for stud purposes: mares for breeding purposes: rams for stud purposes: and ewes for breeding purposes: calves and foals under the age of sixteen months."

HON. G. BURGESS: These are free of duty now.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: These are items that would come in free under this Tariff Bill, which is brought forward to reduce the price of food. With regard to live stock, everybody is agreed that the reduction of 15s. per head on cattle is not going to benefit the consumer. But I will not go so far as Mr. McLarty, or Mr. Matheson, who said that if the duty of 30s. was removed the consumer would not benefit, because I believe that if the whole duty were knocked off there would be some benefit. We find other items on the tariff which are for the benefit of the consumer:—"Clocks and watches, cordage, doors, galvanised iron, hemp, and flax." All these are to benefit the consumer. I say the only thing which will be of any benefit to the whole of the people is the reduction of the duty on frozen meat. The duty is infinitesimal, and I think the consumer will benefit in regard to frozen meat. I agree with hon. mem-

bers that the Bill is most unsatisfactory, but I feel that if this House carries the amendment it will have an ill effect.

HON. E. McLARTY: I cannot see that.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: For a considerable time past the duties have been collected on the articles mentioned in the schedule, and there are articles mentioned in this tariff which are to come in duty free. If the Bill is thrown out, the Government will have lost the duty on those articles which are to be allowed to come in free. I have had communication with those in authority in regard to this matter, and I am informed the Government will have a tremendous loss in this month's revenue. The duties that have been paid on these articles will have to be remitted, and, so far as articles are concerned which have, under the new tariff, been admitted free, the duty cannot be recovered. There is the same result with every change of the tariff.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: Duty is charged on the latter class of articles until the Bill passes.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I believe the hon. member is misinformed.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: No. Where duties are increased they are paid at once. Where duties are decreased, they are not remitted until the Bill passes.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I am given to understand that the effect is as I have stated.

HON. J. W. HACKETT moved the adjournment of the debate until the next Tuesday.

Motion—that the debate be adjourned—put, and division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	9
Noes	9

A tie	0
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AYES.

NOES.

Hon. H. Briggs	Hon. R. G. Burgess
Hon. A. G. Jenkins	Hon. F. T. Crowder
Hon. A. B. Kidson	Hon. C. E. Dempster
Hon. W. T. Loton	Hon. A. P. Matheson
Hon. D. McKay	Hon. H. G. Parsons
Hon. E. McLarty	Hon. J. E. Richardson
Hon. C. A. Piesse	Hon. F. M. Stone
Hon. G. Randall	Hon. F. Whitcombe
Hon. J. W. Hackett	Hon. S. J. Haynes
(Teller).	(Teller).

THE PRESIDENT: I give my casting vote for the Ayes.

Motion thus passed, and the debate adjourned accordingly.

At 6.25 p.m. the **PRESIDENT** left the chair.

At 7.30 the **PRESIDENT** resumed the chair.

BEER DUTY BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell): In moving the second reading of this Bill, I do not propose to go into it in detail. The kernel of the Bill is that an excise duty of 2d. per gallon is to be levied on beer, ale, and stout manufactured in Western Australia. Some two years ago, perhaps a little more, there was a strong expression of opinion in another place, when the remission of the duty on sugar was proposed, that there should be a duty on beer. This Bill, I believe, will be received with general acceptance throughout the colony. The brewer is protected by a moderate duty, I think a halfpenny per gallon; and therefore, especially in view of the fact that the duty of £4 per ton on sugar has been remitted, and sugar being an article which the brewer uses to a large extent, I do not think the brewers can object to the payment of twopence a gallon on beer. I think it can reasonably be expected that the brewers should pay this duty, especially when the Government wish to obtain as much revenue as they can. Of course, I mean legitimately, and I think this is a legitimate object of taxation. I am rather in favour, myself, of the principle of direct taxation, and I do not think I should raise a loud outcry if we had an income tax.

HON. W. T. LOTON: It will come soon.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It will come some day, no doubt. I may say that this Bill is direct taxation, and I trust it will meet with the acceptance of hon. members of this House. I need not go through the Bill, clause by clause. All I need say is that, like a Distillery Bill, the provisions are very stringent, and, considering the subject with which we are

dealing, it is necessary that very particular regulations and laws should be laid down, governing the collection of the excise. I believe it is the intention of the Government to collect this excise through the customs; therefore there will be very little additional expenditure in the collection of the duty. The duty is very easily collected, and it is a duty which some attempt might be made to evade. I think it is charged against the income tax that it is liable to be evaded, and probably that is the case, as persons sometimes forward to the Treasury Department in England what they call "conscience money." That would apply to all such duties as this. By the Bill certain concessions are made to the brewer, of four gallons per hogshead and three gallons per barrel, and also a concession in the case of half-hogsheads and kilderkins. I believe that hogsheads should contain fifty-four gallons, but there seems to be a discrepancy in the casks, and, therefore, a hogshead is to be reckoned at fifty gallons. A brewer has to supply information to the Collector of Customs, in accordance with the second schedule of the Bill, and the information has to be supported by a declaration. The brewer has to furnish certain monthly returns, and he has to pay the duty in stamps. There are certain regulations providing that the hogsheads and casks should not be tampered with, and these regulations are absolutely necessary. Without labouring the Bill, all I think I need say is that, as far as I am able to discover, the Bill makes provision for everything that is necessary. There are strong penalties for offences against the Bill. Offenders are liable to a penalty of not less than £5, nor more than £25, and in many cases specific penalties are provided for. I trust hon. members will receive this Bill with favour, and pass it into law. It is undesirable that the Bill should hang over for a considerable time, having passed through another place without alteration. I move the second reading.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Interpretation:

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: In sub-clause 3 of clause 2, in the interpretation of

"brewer" he wished to move an amendment.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member could only suggest an amendment.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE said he would put it as a suggestion to the Government, that "brewer" should include any servant of the brewer. Another portion of the Bill provided that the brewer should be liable to certain penalties, and the penalty would not apply perhaps to the brewer, if a wrongful act had been done by a servant. In that case the intention would, to a certain extent, be destroyed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: This Bill was a transcript of a Bill in another colony. It was not advisable to make suggestions in connection with any minute detail of the Bill.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: The Bill being in operation elsewhere did not make it any better. Clause 16 of the Bill provided certain penalties if the brewer permitted certain things to be done, and the interpretation of "brewer" did not cover the servant, except the servant was individually connected with the business, where the owner himself was not in charge.

HON. F. M. STONE: It had been distinctly held that a publican was liable for the acts of his servants in the case of *Mullins v. Collins*, therefore he thought the same decision would be given in regard to the Bill before us. Supposing a servant neglected to affix a stamp to a cask, the brewer would be liable.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE said he was going on the decision of the magisterial court in the Victoria district.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 3 to 19, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 20—Minister to prepare permits:

HON. F. WHITCOMBE asked the Colonial Secretary whether it was intended, in addition to the permit, that a stamp should be affixed to the vessel containing beer. In what way was the duty payable on a vessel that had been removed to a warehouse?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The next clause dealt with the matter.

Put and passed.

Clauses 21 to 43, inclusive—agreed to. Schedules 1, 2, and 3—agreed to.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported, without amendment.

HON. F. T. CROWDER moved that the Bill be recommitted, as he wished to get a suggestion sent to another place, that the date for the collection of the duty be altered from 18th August to the 1st September.

THE PRESIDENT: That would mean nothing, because when the Bill came down the duties were collected immediately.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: When the Bill came down, the duties were not collected. Only a guarantee was given. This Bill would come as a serious loss to small brewers. The whole of the orders which brewers had to be executed since the Bill had been before the Legislature had to be executed at a loss of 9s. a hog-head. It would not be much loss to the Government if the duty were collected as from the 1st September.

HON. W. T. LOTON: It was not desirable to make any exception in a case of this kind. He had never heard of any exception of this kind being made, and he did not see that any great hardship would fall on brewers, who had made plenty of profit in the past without paying any excise. It was just possible that the brewers had been far-seeing enough to anticipate a motion of this kind, and put off paying the duty until the 1st of September.

HON. F. T. CROWDER asked leave to withdraw his motion.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Report of Committee adopted.

STANDING ORDERS SUSPENSION.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved the suspension of the Standing Orders, to allow the Bill to pass through the remaining stage.

Put and passed.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, on the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, and *passed*.

FIRE BRIGADES BILL.

Read a third time, on the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, and *passed*.

RIVERS POLLUTION BILL.

Read a third time, on the motion of **HON. F. M. STONE**, and transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

DIVORCE AMENDMENT AND EXTENSION BILL.

SECOND READING.

Debate resumed, on the motion for second reading, moved by HON. F. M. STONE, and on the amendment by HON. J. W. HACKETT, that the Bill be read a second time this day six months.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: After the able and thorough way in which this Bill has been debated, I have considered whether it would be necessary that I should further occupy the time of hon. members in speaking on the Bill; but seeing that many members of this Council, for whose opinion I have the highest respect, hold views entirely opposite to my own, and seeing that the Bill is an important one, I have thought it would not be well for me to give a silent vote. The discussion can be divided into two parts, the theoretical and the practical; and I may say that I intend to look at the subject from a practical point of view. As to the religious aspect of the question, so far as practicable, that has been left out of consideration, and to my mind, justly so. The religious aspect is based on the Bible, and I take it that the Bible can be twisted for and against divorce on certain points. No matter what religious belief is held by hon. members of this House, I think we all agree that so far as divorce is concerned, the Bible sanctions divorce, and the State upholds the same. I think most hon. members—in fact, all hon. members—are in favour of divorce on equal lines for the man and the wife; and seeing that the present law does not give equal rights as between man and wife, I ask hon. members to put away all narrow-minded opinions, and pass common-sense laws. Although hon. members are in favour of divorce being equal between man and wife, most of those who have spoken intend to vote for the amendment proposed by Mr. Hackett. The only reason I can gather for this decision is a fear that, if the Bill be allowed to reach the Committee stage, certain clauses, which certain hon. members do not favour, will be passed. But if members are strong enough to throw the Bill out without discussion, surely they are strong enough to expunge clauses of which they are not in favour. And, further, on the third read-

ing there would be another chance to throw the Bill aside. I do not intend to closely traverse the arguments of Mr. Hackett, for I must admit that his high-flown language was a little beyond me. But the hon. member asked several times during his speech, wherein lay the superiority of divorce over separation; and I will do my best to answer him. The two positions, in my opinion, are as far removed as earth is from heaven. To a woman with children, a separation is simply power to slave and toil for daily bread, and, owing to the cold treatment she receives from the world, it is not long in many instances before she throws propriety to the winds, and, for the sake of her children, becomes the prey of man. Heaven forbid that I in any way should slander women, but many cases of the kind have come under my notice. From past experience, I have come to the conclusion that the worst enemy of woman is woman. I remember distinctly a case of a lady who, after many years of very hard life, passed with a drunken and debauched husband, was compelled in the end to claim the protection of the law, and she got a separation. She could not get a divorce, to which, I maintain, under the circumstances she had a perfect right. This strong-hearted and fearless woman started in the battle of life to procure bread for herself and children, and it will be readily understood what that battle meant to her. All went well for a time, although the fight was a hard one, until one day a gentleman was seen visiting at her house. Then those kind-hearted female friends of hers, who should have been the very first to protect her and her name, immediately began to whisper aspersions on her character. At first, the woman was very much cut up, but, strong in the knowledge of her innocence, she struggled on. At last, the coldness she received from her own sex caused her—like many another poor wretch in the same position, to think that it would be better to have the sweets of life, purchased though they might be at the price of sin, than slave on without the sweets. With such thoughts as this entering the mind, it is not long before the end comes; and that woman is now the mistress of a man. If the law had allowed this woman a divorce, she would now be

a married and respected woman. The man with whom she is living did all he possibly could to marry her, but, when he found that if he did marry her she would have to go to prison, the ceremony had to be dispensed with. This woman was compelled by the law to commit sin, which, had divorce been procurable, she would not have committed. The Bible speaks in an uncertain voice as to whether a woman should receive divorce under such circumstances as I have pointed out, but the Bible speaks in no uncertain voice when it demands that a woman shall not commit adultery; and I contend that this woman was compelled to commit adultery, because the law did not grant her what were her rights. If this Bill will save only one such woman and her children from a life of degradation and sin, are Christian men not justified in passing the measure? I ask hon. members not to listen to Mr. Hackett, who says, "No, go slow; remember England." But if England has not passed such legislation, surely we, as Christian men, know what is necessary for ourselves without consulting England. Does Mr. Hackett for a moment mean to tell me that the laws of England are superior to the laws of Australia? If so, I would remind him that one of the finest laws in operation in England first saw light in South Australia.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: And many other laws.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Mr Kidson started his remarks by saying he was quite prepared to give equal justice as between man and woman in the matter of divorce, but, in the same breath, he told us he had determined to vote for throwing out this Bill.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: And I gave my reasons.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: How the hon. member can reconcile his position with his contention, I am at a loss to know.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: You did not listen to what I said.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I should have thought that Mr. Kidson, from his knowledge, would have been the first to stretch forth a helping hand to the miserable woman who has a blackguard for a husband, probably a husband who openly in broad daylight keeps a mistress on

whom he wastes the whole of his income, leaving his wife and children at home starving. I should have thought that Mr. Kidson knew full well that the life of such a woman is a living death. He knows that if a woman makes one slip, the husband can cast her off for ever; and surely Mr. Kidson cannot have looked into the question from that point of view. He made a point of saying that members had not had proper time to consider the Bill; but the time we have had at our disposal has been quite enough, and I trust that the hon. member, after the week that has elapsed, may have altered his views. The grounds of divorce set forth in the Bill are adultery, wilful desertion, habitual drunkenness, sentence of imprisonment for five years, violent assaults, and insanity. I do not agree with violent assaults as a ground for divorce, but on all the other grounds I consider that a person has a perfect right to have a marriage set aside. On the point of desertion, the present Act gives a woman power, if her husband desert her for seven years, to marry again; but she takes a risk, inasmuch as if the scoundrel turns up after she may have married a second time and had children, those unfortunate children are branded as bastards. Surely that is not as it should be. If a man desert a woman and leave her for seven or eight years, that man is practically dead to that woman, who ought to have a perfect right to marry again and live a comfortable life. I take it the Almighty ordained that people should live in the world, as far as possible, happily and comfortably. Habitual drunkenness and imprisonment are also good grounds for divorce. If the law remove husband from wife and put him into gaol for 10 years, that man is, to all intents and purposes, dead to the woman. The Bill does not compel a woman to get a divorce, and in many a case the woman believes that her husband has made a mistake, and will wait for his release; but, under the circumstances, a woman has as much right to a divorce as she would have in the case of desertion. One ground of divorce on which I hold strong opinions is that of insanity. In South Australia I know of the case of a lady whose husband has been in a lunatic

asylum for six years, hopelessly insane. That lady has five children, and it has been a great struggle to her to support them. That man, so far as the woman is concerned, is as dead and buried as if he lay in a coffin under nine feet of sand. And yet that woman, although she has received many offers of marriage, under which she might have been able to bring up her children decently, has simply had to drag them up the best way she could. Will any reasonable man tell me that in these circumstances a woman should not be allowed a divorce? Mr. Kidson further said that the Bill would tend to hasty marriages. I cannot see on what facts he bases that assumption, because, to my mind, the Bill would have the very opposite effect. It would make the husband more careful as to the way in which he treated his wife. The husband would not—as under the present law—go home, curse and swear, and break everything in the house, brutally ill-use his wife, and then, as the simple reason, say he had had a glass too much. If a man knew his wife could get rid of him, he would take very good care as to his behaviour. The hon. member also stated that the Bill would lead to collusion between the husband and the wife; but I cannot see that the Bill, if passed, would give rise to any more collusion than the present Act. The remarks of Mr. Briggs were, no doubt, intended to show that the Bill was not required, although, to my mind, that hon. member proved the very opposite. I regret very much to find that some hon. members misconstrued the remark made by Mr. Haynes. The remark of that hon. member was that the fact of a man living apart from his wife for six years was presumptive evidence of adultery. There was nothing further from the mind of Mr. Haynes than to cast any slur on those noble men and women who, in the service of the Almighty, live a life of celibacy. How Mr. Briggs could construe these remarks as reflecting on himself, or, as he put it, on Mr. Hackett—they being the only two bachelors in the House—I am at a loss to know.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: There is a third bachelor, Mr. Taylor.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: But when the hon. member (Mr. Briggs), drawing him-

self up to his full height, said he was certain these remarks could not be made of himself I saw a temple, and in that temple I saw the proud, haughty Pharisee striking his breast, and crying aloud to Heaven: "Thank God, I am not as other men are."

HON. H. BRIGGS: It was the publican who smote his breast.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It is the same thing.

HON. F. T. CROWDER: Nor was there any necessity whatever for Mr. Briggs to speak a word on behalf of Mr. Hackett. The saintly life led by the latter gentleman precludes the possibility of any shadow of doubt in the minds of hon. members as to whether he comes within the category alluded to by Mr. Haynes.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Are we to laugh at that?

HON. F. T. CROWDER: I don't know; but I earnestly appeal to hon. members to allow this Bill to go into Committee, even though sub-clause (a), which gives equal justice and equal rights, so far as adultery is concerned, between man and woman, be passed. I trust it will not be said of the Legislative Council of this colony that they refused justice to those whom it is our first duty to protect.

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON: I would like to say a few words on this Bill from a practical point of view. Mr. Stone, in introducing the Bill, carefully refrained from dealing with the question from the religious point of view, and I think too much of the religious element has been introduced into the debate. It is admitted on all hands that women have a perfect right to the same privilege as men under sub-clause (a), and, if that be so, why not pass the second reading of the Bill?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: "Will you walk into my parlour?"

HON. J. E. RICHARDSON: I am in favour of desertion being made a ground of divorce. It is very hard on a poor woman, whose husband has deserted her, that she should not be able to take advantage of a chance which may be afforded her of getting a home. It has been said that in some instances a husband has returned to his wife after a lapse of seven years; but that, take it, is a very rare chance indeed. One ob-

jection which has been raised to passing the second reading of the Bill is that, if we get into Committee, clauses of which some members do not approve may be "squeezed" through. But surely members who object to clauses are strong enough to amend the Bill in the direction they desire. I am not in favour of any of the grounds of divorce set forth in the Bill, except adultery and desertion, and, if the hon. member in charge of the measure will strike out sub-clauses *c*, *d*, *e*, and *f*, I shall vote for the second reading.

HON. S. J. HAYNES: I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill, because, in the main, I agree with the provisions. The present Divorce Act has worked great hardship in the past; and the disabilities and injustice which women labour under at present have come under my notice professionally on many occasions. I could never see why a man should be able to claim a divorce on the ground of adultery, while the woman had not the same right. Why should a man sin with impunity, while the aggrieved wife has no remedy?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It is so in the world, unfortunately.

HON. S. J. HAYNES: It is a pity it should be so in the world. Some of the provisions of the Bill I do not agree with, but I certainly agree with the proposal that, so far as adultery is a ground for divorce, the woman should be placed in the same position as the man. I further agree with desertion, and habitual drunkenness, with cruelty or neglect, as grounds for divorce; but I do not agree with the latter part of sub-clause (*d*), which gives sentence for crime as a ground for divorce, nor with the latter part of sub-clause (*e*), dealing with violent assaults. Sub-clause (*f*), which gives insanity as a ground of divorce, I thoroughly agree with. I regret I was not present during a part of the debate, but I believe the religious element was introduced. My own opinion is that the carrying of this measure would add to a better religious state of living, and add generally to morality and better behaviour. The present divorce laws have in many instances conduced to sin on the part of women.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: And the marriage laws also.

HON. S. J. HAYNES: How? I think this Bill is really required. It will not have the effect of causing hasty or ill-advised marriages, but, rather, will have an opposite effect. It will cause husbands to behave themselves better than perhaps they do at present, and, in most instances, the wrong is inflicted by the man. I, therefore, support the second reading of this Bill, agreeing with almost every one of its provisions.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I have listened with a great deal of pleasure and interest to the many clever and able speeches made by those who have previously addressed themselves to this Bill. I feel satisfied that those who have spoken and supported the Bill have been actuated by motives of the most proper nature. I have no doubt that members of the learned profession who have spoken have seen many striking instances showing the desirability of divorce. I feel sure, however, that if anything is done to weaken the sacred bond of marriage, we shall open the door to a lot more evil than the Bill will do good. I, therefore, shall support the amendment by Mr. Hackett, that the Bill be read this day six months. If divorce be encouraged, it is only feasible to believe that man and wife will be more likely to settle disputes amicably than they would be if they knew perfectly well no separation could be effected. When they know separation is impossible they will see the importance of working in unity all their lives. So sure as the bond of marriage is weakened it will do more evil than good. We have also before us the declared opinions of the ministers of nearly all denominations throughout the colony. These ministers are thoroughly opposed to the Bill, and have not been backward in expressing their opinion, both in the pulpit and in the press; and we ought not to overlook these opinions, seeing that these ministers are our spiritual guardians, and have great opportunities of seeing how the present law works, and know the importance of the sanctity of marriage. These ministers do not wish, on any account, to see the marriage contract weakened, and in that they are quite right.

is known a similar law to that proposed has not worked desirably in other colonies, and that I regard as a great reason for not agreeing to the Bill.

HON. F. M. STONE (in reply): As the debate seems to have come to a close, I propose to make a few remarks on what has fallen from hon. members. Whatever the fate of the Bill, the House must be congratulated on one of the most able debates that has ever taken place within its walls. I cannot thank Mr. Hackett for the kind words he used to me, because he only raised me up to the seventh heaven in order to throw me down again; but I shall perhaps be able to answer some of the arguments adduced by him, and also by other hon. members. It seems to me that hon. members who are opposed to this Bill are really opposed to it on religious grounds, and believe that once a man and woman are married, nothing should part them.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Nothing but death.

HON. F. M. STONE: If that be the position, why have these hon. members not the courage of their opinions, and bring forward a Bill forbidding divorce in any case.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Because you would oppose it.

HON. F. M. STONE: Those hon. members dare not bring forward such a Bill, because they know it would raise a howl from one end of the country to the other. It is well known that revelations are made in the Divorce Court that are a disgrace to humanity. If we look at the present law we see that the Legislature has not only adopted divorce in case of adultery. The argument has been used that it is only for adultery that the Bible sanctions divorce; but, under the present law, there are other grounds on which a woman can have her marriage set aside. For instance, if a man commit the crime of bestiality, sodomy, or rape, women can have a divorce. It will be seen, therefore, that the Legislature has already adopted the principle that for crimes of a serious nature, divorce may be granted. The Legislatures of England and of the colonies have gone away from the religious aspect of the marriage tie, and have adopted the principle of divorce, not only in cases of adultery, but in

cases of crime of a serious nature. In this Bill it is proposed that divorce shall be granted on the husband or wife attempting one to murder the other, or in case either party to the marriage has been guilty of a capital offence and been reprieved; and in this colony rape is a capital offence. Will any hon. member tell me that the wife of a Sydney barber, who attempted to murder her, and murdered his sister-in-law and his two children, should, under such circumstances, not be able to get a divorce. Would it be contended that a wife, under such circumstances, should not be allowed a divorce? Would it be contended that a wife, under such circumstances, was to be tied to such a man?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: She is not tied to him; she can get a separation.

HON. F. M. STONE: What is the use of a separation? Mr. Hackett has asked, what is the difference between judicial separation and divorce? It is this, that if the wife gets a divorce, she is able to marry again, and thus get a home for herself, and not to have to live in slavery tied to a man. We know that in certain stages of society a woman will go and live with a man if she cannot get married to him; she cannot get a divorce from her husband, and so she will go and live in adultery and have children, and these children are bastards. It is the unfortunate children in that case who are punished, and not the woman who is living in adultery. If a wife gets a divorce in circumstances such as I have related, she is able to get a home again, and a father for her children. If she gets a judicial separation, what is her state? She is living without a home, and she has to go on slaving for the rest of her life tied to a man, who perhaps is imprisoned for a capital offence, it may be for killing one of his children, or for committing a rape on his own child. Think of such a case as this! and these cases are occurring, as we see by the papers, every day, and yet some hon. members do not wish to grant divorce, but desire that the wife should be tied to a man for the rest of her life.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: She can get separation.

HON. F. M. STONE: What is the use of a separation to her? Mr. Hackett has

said that a stigma rests on the children of divorced persons. What is a divorce? Take this case. A man is charged with the offence of rape, and is reprieved. If the wife has to go into court in such circumstances, she has to bring her case up there, and is that not a stigma on the children? There is a very little line between judicial separation and divorce. What does it matter if the wife gets a divorce, or not? If you allow her to get a divorce, she will marry another man, and the children will take the name of the other man, as is often the case, and the stigma is removed.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Never.

HON. F. M. STONE: The woman marries again, goes away, gets another man and another name. The children follow her under another name, and the stigma is removed. That is the difference between divorce and judicial separation. If you do not grant the woman divorce, you drive her into adultery.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: No.

HON. F. M. STONE: I have had experience of these cases; they are constantly brought before me. If I were to tell hon. members some of the cases that come before me, they would be surprised; and some of the men concerned in the cases are walking about the streets. I cannot give the circumstances, because it would be divulging matters that are brought before me professionally; therefore I am debarred from telling the details. Even since I have returned from London—with in the last six months—hon. members would be surprised at the number of cases which have come under my notice. It is all very well to say that there are no such cases, and that hon. members never hear of them; but it is the professional gentlemen who hear of such cases, the doctor or the lawyer.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: The clergymen.

HON. F. M. STONE: Very seldom. If clergymen had the experience in these cases that professional gentlemen have, I do not think clergymen would be against the wife being placed on the same footing as the husband. I have not heard one objection against placing the wife on the same footing as the husband. In justice to the wife, let us place her in the same position as the husband; let us do it at once. It is a lasting disgrace on

the statute book of the colony that we place the wife in a different position from the husband. I could tell hon. members of cases, not one, nor two, nor three, but twenty cases, in which women are living in a house with the husband, and the husband has got his woman living in the house with his wife. The unfortunate woman can do nothing.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: She would not.

HON. F. M. STONE: The hon. member says she can go in for separation.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Such women do not get divorces.

HON. F. M. STONE: Then what harm does the Bill do? We only entitle women to go into court; we do not force them into court, and if we meet with only half-a-dozen cases of this kind, we are fully justified in passing this Bill. There has not been a single argument against putting the wife in the same position as the husband. One remark was made by Mr. Hackett as to lunacy. The hon. member said, why not put diseases of the body in this Bill? I shall not be divulging anything in relating one case to hon. members, and I may say that whatever law we pass with reference to divorce, it will not do away with such circumstances as those which happened in the case I am about to relate. A young man having syphilis, and knowing he had it, deliberately married a young girl. She was not long married when she came into the hands of the doctor. A child was born, and happily it was born dead. The case came before me, and I took it into court. I had to go for judicial separation. The judge stigmatised the case as one of the worst cases he had ever heard. Here was a young woman ruined for life. She could not get divorce under this Bill.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It is a most disgraceful case.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: We should pass a law to imprison the man.

HON. F. M. STONE: Even if we passed a law to-night for such a case, it would not help that woman, placed in that unfortunate position. We have heard a lot about the sanctity and solemnity of marriage: we have heard that a man takes a woman for better or for worse, to cherish and to love. Will hon. gentlemen say, in the case that I have related,

that the marriage was not a mockery? Will hon. gentlemen say that when that man took the oath, it was not a mockery?

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: That was a wicked exception to the rule.

HON. F. M. STONE: Then why bind a wife to such a wicked man? There are dozens of such cases. If hon. members will read the papers—take the papers from England or Scotland, or our own papers—they will see how very few divorce cases are undefended. They are all defended, although the adultery is proved up to the hilt. It is said we are making divorce easy. It is nothing of the kind. You will find by the reports in the papers that one or other of the parties is trying the best to stop the other getting divorce.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Because there is a slur in default of defence.

HON. F. M. STONE: What is the use of going into court when the case is so clear? What is the slur? Take a woman who has to go and face the cross-examination, to face the court and the public and tell the whole history of her life. Is that not a slur? Would you not think a woman would sooner die than do that? But look at the papers and you will see that men go into court, and that women go into court, and they do their best to try and prevent the other getting a divorce. By passing this Bill you do not make divorce easy; you make more grounds on which divorce can be obtained, but the husband and wife go into court and fight against one another.

HON. H. G. PARSONS: Because Australia is not America.

HON. F. M. STONE: We know that judges in England, before either man or woman can get a divorce, require the strongest evidence imaginable. Judges do not grant divorces on the slightest evidence. They refuse divorce time after time, and a person who obtains a divorce has to wait six months before the rule nisi is made absolute; and if the person obtaining a divorce is guilty of misconduct during that six months, the rule nisi is not granted. If there is any collusion the Queen's Proctor intervenes. It is very difficult to get divorce. It is said that if we pass this law here there will be some difference between England and the colonies in the divorce law. The same argu-

ment might have applied to the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill. Persons were married here, but in England they are not married and their children are bastards. In Scotland the wife is on the same footing as the husband, and she can get divorce for desertion. She marries, and if she steps over the border line she would be living in adultery. If this state of things exist in the United Kingdom, why should there be any objection to this colony adopting this Bill in regard to divorce? Why should not we pass our own laws? We passed the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, and after a few years of opposition in England it has passed there. I should not be surprised if England does not follow the colonies on this question of divorce; therefore I do not see any objection to our legislating for ourselves in a matter of this kind. There is a strong objection on the part of some members to some of the clauses in the Bill. I may say that I am not strongly in favour of some of the clauses, and if the Bill goes into Committee I shall be in favour of striking some of the clauses out or amending them. I have no desire in a serious matter of this kind to press the whole of the Bill, and I say I am quite willing, if hon. members will pass the second reading, not to go beyond sub-clauses (a) and (b). That is in reference to putting the wife in the same position as the husband in respect to adultery, and then we can discuss the question as to desertion.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That has not been raised in the debate at all.

HON. F. M. STONE: I am quite willing to take the course I have suggested now that I see the feeling of the House.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: You should have stated that at the beginning.

HON. F. M. STONE: How could I do so? I could not know the feeling of the House until I heard hon. members. The debate has been a most interesting one, and, now I am able to see what is the feeling of hon. members, I am quite willing, if hon. members will pass the second reading, to withdraw all the sub-clauses with the exception of sub-clauses (a) and (b), so that we shall go into Committee on these two sub-clauses only.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That is not the Bill you laid before us, and it is very unfair.

HON. F. M. STONE: There is nothing to prevent hon. members voting for the second reading of the Bill, because they can strike out all the sub-clauses except sub-clause (a).

HON. J. W. HACKETT: We have had a debate on a different subject.

HON. F. M. STONE: I think we have been hammering away on all the subjects as hard as we can. As to sub-clause (a) I think I have said quite enough; but I desire to go into Committee on sub-clause (b), for the reason that already the remarriage is sanctioned in the case of desertion for seven years. The Committee say, if they like, alter the period of desertion from six to seven years, and thus bring the measure in line with the present law. At present, although the second marriage is sanctioned, if the first husband prove to be still alive, the children of the second union are bastards. That is what I do not like in the present law.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: I rise to a point of order. This is no reply at all. We are opening a new subject, a new debate, and a new Bill, and surely it is right the House should have an opportunity of debating the new subjects the hon. member is introducing.

THE PRESIDENT: I considered the hon. member (Mr. Stone) was rather overstepping the limits of reply; but as my attention was not called to the matter, I did not interfere. I think the hon. member is introducing fresh matter, and hon. members, having already spoken, have no right of replying.

HON. F. M. STONE: Great objection was made by some hon. members to divorce being granted on the ground of desertion, and I now propose to address myself to the argument advanced by these members. The argument used by them was the religious argument that a woman should not obtain a divorce on the ground of desertion. I propose to show that the law has already recognised, in cases of desertion for seven years, that a wife or husband is entitled to marry again. The Bill only makes it legal to get a divorce; no one need get a divorce if they do not want it. But the present

law goes further, for if it can be proved in court that a man has not been heard of for seven years, the law will grant the administration of his estate to the wife or his sons, and divide the property amongst them, recognising that to all intents and purposes he is dead. The Bill, under similar circumstances, gives the wife the right to marry again. It is usually wives who are deserted; indeed, in my professional experience, I have only had one case of a woman clearing away from her husband and never being heard of again. There are hundreds of cases in this colony where husbands clear off and are never heard of, not for seven years, but for eight or ten years. In such cases the wife is allowed by law to marry, and is not prosecuted for bigamy should the husband subsequently reappear. But, as I have pointed out, all the children of the second union, no matter though it be twenty years before the husband reappears, are bastards in the eye of the law. In common justice to women I ask they should be put on the same footing as men under the divorce law, and, for the reasons I have stated, that remarriage should be allowed in case of desertion.

Amendment—that the Bill be read this day six months—put, and division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	10
Noes	7

Majority for ... 3

Ayes. *Noes.*

Hon. H. Briggs	Hon. F. T. Crowder
Hon. R. G. Burges	Hon. A. P. Matheson
Hon. C. E. Dempster	Hon. H. G. Parsons
Hon. J. W. Hackett	Hon. J. E. Richardson
Hon. A. B. Kidson	Hon. F. M. Stone
Hon. W. T. Loton	Hon. F. Whitcombe
Hon. D. McKay	Hon. S. J. Haynes
Hon. E. McLarty	(Teller)
Hon. G. Randell	
Hon. C. A. Piesse	
(Teller)	

Amendment passed, and the Bill thus arrested.

PUBLIC EDUCATION BILL.
IN COMMITTEE.

Consideration in Committee resumed—postponed clauses.

Clause 41.—All schools other than a State or other school established under this Act may be found efficient:

HON. A. P. MATHESON said that he had intended submitting an amendment on this clause, but, after an explanation made to him privately by Mr. Hackett, he would not proceed.

Put and passed.

Clause 53.—Governor may make regulations:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved as an amendment that in sub-clause 2, lines two and three, the words "State, provisional, evening, training, and other" be struck out, and the word "Government" inserted in lieu thereof.

Amendment put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, as further amendments, that in sub-clause 4, line 2, the words "provisional schools, training schools, high schools, or other schools established under this Act," be struck out, and the words "Government schools" inserted in lieu thereof; also that in sub-clause 5, line 2, the words "State and other schools, established under this Act" be struck out, and the words "Government schools" inserted in lieu thereof; also in sub-clause 6, line 2, that the words "State or other schools established under this Act," be struck out, and the words "Government schools" inserted in lieu thereof.

Amendments put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, as a further amendment, that in sub-clause 7, line 1, the words "State, or provisional, or high," be struck out, and the word "Government" inserted in lieu thereof.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Were positive orders given with reference to children suffering from infectious or contagious diseases? If schoolmasters and district boards were given instructions, they had not carried them out.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A case occasionally came under the notice of the department, and action was taken immediately. There was a case at West Perth, which had been reported to the department, and the child was taken to the hospital. The child was not suffering from an infectious disease, but from a disease of a disagreeable character. The regulation might not be carried out

strictly, but if notice was given, action was taken immediately.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: There was need of some power being given to the various boards to act promptly in matters of this description. Typhoid fever broke out in the school at Wagin, and went right through the school, because time was lost in getting permission from the department to close the school temporarily. There should be power given so that the district board could act promptly.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The board had the power, he thought.

Amendment put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, as further amendments, that in sub-clause 11, line 2, the words "State schools and all schools established under this Act, and of other persons," be struck out, and the words "Government schools and of other persons employed under this Act" inserted in lieu thereof; also that in sub-clause 13, line 1, the words "State or other schools established under this Act" be struck out, and "Government schools" inserted in lieu thereof.

Amendments put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, that the following new sub-clause be added, to stand as sub-clause 15: "Fixing dates and places of nomination for taking the poll for the election of district boards."

Amendment put and passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, that the following new sub-clause be added, to stand as sub-clause 16: "Prescribing the conditions to be observed and fulfilled before a school other than a Government school shall be deemed efficient, and regulating the mode of certifying, classifying, and of inserting them in or removing them from the list of efficient schools."

HON. A. P. MATHESON: That seemed rather to be burking the situation. It left the settlement of the matter in the hands of the Governor-in-Council. The amendment he (Mr. Matheson) proposed in clause 41 made it impossible for the Governor-in-Council to admit any school without examination.

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

Schedules, first and second—agreed to.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

RECOMMITTAL.

On the motion of the COLONIAL SECRETARY, the Bill was recommitted for making consequential amendments.

Clause 3.—Definitions:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, that the sub-clause defining "State school" be struck out.

Put and passed.

Clause 31.—Minister may establish certain schools:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, as an amendment, in line 3, that after the word "schools," the following be inserted: "Where an average attendance of twenty children is maintained."

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Was that not above the present number?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY explained that the amendments in this and in clause 3 were merely a transposition of the interpretation of "State school" from the definition clause into the body of the Bill.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause 37.—Hours of instruction; religious instruction may be given:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, as an amendment, that in sub-clause 3, line 2, the words "by a like agreement" be struck out, and the words "in accordance with sub-section 2" be inserted in lieu thereof.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: It would be better if notice were given of these amendments, because it was impossible to follow them.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was simply a verbal amendment.

HON. J. W. HACKETT explained that in sub-clause (2) an amendment had been made providing that, in case an agreement could not be made in regard to time for religious instruction, the question should be referred to the arbitration of the Minister of Education. Sub-clause (3) was drawn before the words were added in sub-clause (2), and hence the amendment was necessary.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: These matters required explanation.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE suggested that the amendment would be better to read: "In accordance with the preceding sub-section."

Amendment put and passed.

Clause 38.—In case of non-attendance of clergyman, secular instruction to be given:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved, as an amendment, that in line 2, the words "any portion of" be struck out.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE said he did not see exactly what the amendment meant.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The amendment meant that if the clergyman did not attend, the time should be devoted to the ordinary secular instruction.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: Did that mean the whole of the time? Did it mean that the teacher was to go on with the secular education from the very commencement, if the religious teacher were not exactly on time? Suppose the religious teacher came in ten minutes late?

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Why should he be late?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The religious teacher must be there to time.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Or otherwise he would disarrange the whole school.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE said that in any case, from his point of view, the special religious teacher did disarrange the whole school. The amendment should read: "If the religious teacher does not attend at the time agreed on."

HON. J. W. HACKETT: He might be given a few minutes' latitude.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: The clause as amended would not work at all.

Amendment put and passed.

Bill reported with further amendments, and the report adopted.

LOAN FLOTATION: MINISTERIAL STATEMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell) said he would like to announce to hon. members that the balance of the million loan, which was placed on the market the other week, had been floated at a satisfactory price. He would add that the yield of gold in the colony for the month of August was 89,000 ounces.

HON. W. T. LORON: What is the satisfactory price?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: £94 4s.

SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9.25 p.m. until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 1st September, 1898.

Paper presented—Question: Ivanhoe Venture Company's Lease, and Forcible Removal of Ore—Question: Railway Workshops at Albany, Retrenchment—Question: German Mail Steamers at Fremantle—Reappropriation of Loan Moneys Bill, second reading; in Committee, Clause 1 to Second Schedule—Loan Flotation, etc., a Statement—Pollution of Rivers Bill, first reading—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PAPER PRESENTED.

By the COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: Resumption, for railway purposes, of land belonging to the Postmaster-General, Correspondence.

Ordered to lie on the table.

QUESTION: IVANHOE VENTURE COMPANY'S LEASE, AND FORCIBLE REMOVAL OF ORE.

MR. MONGER (York): I rise to ask the Premier, without notice, whether he has received any information from Kalgoolie in connection with the recent disturbance on the Ivanhoe Venture Company's mine, in regard to the taking away of a certain portion of the property belonging to the company.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I may say the Commissioner of

Police has received a telegram, informing him that an information had been laid against four persons by the Ivanhoe Venture Company for larceny, and that warrants had been issued for the arrest of the four persons, including Mr. Burke and others. Three of them had been arrested, and one was being sought for.

QUESTION: RAILWAY WORKSHOPS AT ALBANY, RETRENCHMENT.

MR. LEAKE asked the Commissioner of Railways, Whether it was intended to discharge any of the workmen from the railway workshops at Albany, and whether the construction of a large number of (about 350) trucks recently in contemplation had been countermanded.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied:—1, It is intended to discharge a few of the employees, as there is not sufficient work for the present staff. 2, The department considered the question of constructing 125 trucks, the principal part of which would have been made in the colony, only the underframes and wheels being imported; but, there being no funds available, the matter has been deferred.

QUESTION: GERMAN MAIL STEAMERS AT FREMANTLE.

MR. LEAKE asked the Colonial Treasurer:—1, How much had been paid by the German mail steamers since January 1st, 1898, in harbour, light, and other dues or fees. 2, What had been paid by these steamers for the use of the "Penguin" or other Government vessel as a tug.

THE PREMIER AND TREASURER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied:—1, £390. 2, The only occasion on which the "Penguin" had been used was when the "Gera" came in at night, and the tug "Gannet" could not alone tow her into the harbour. Nothing has yet been paid.

REAPPROPRIATION OF LOAN MONEYS BILL.

SECOND READING.

LOAN FLOTATION AND GOLD OUTPUT—A STATEMENT.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): In rising to move the second