

frauds which were so common in the other colonies in connection with land.

MR. MARMION would have an affidavit to start with, and a declaration from some well-known settlers in the vicinity of the land applied for, stating that in their opinion the land was poisoned land.

MR. WITTENOOM said the hon. member for Fremantle seemed to think this poisoned land a perfect El Dorado, which required to be hedged round with all sort of conditions. The hon. member ought to be glad to see this land taken up at any price, so long as this curse in the shape of poison was removed.

The clause was then agreed to.

Clause 77—Conditions of lease:

Agreed to without discussion.

Clause 78—Present lessees in South-West division to have exclusive right for twelve months:

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. J. Forrest) moved that the following words be added to the clause, "and shall in all cases be subject to the approval of the Commissioner.

Agreed to, and clause as amended put and passed.

Progress reported.

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

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Friday, 13th August, 1886.

Gold Reward: List of claimants—Proposed amendment of Scab Act—Responsible Government: Adoption of—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

LISTS OF CLAIMANTS FOR GOLD REWARD.

MR. MARMION, in accordance with notice, asked the Acting Colonial Secretary to place upon the table of the

House a list of claimants to the reward for the discovery of a goldfield, together with copies of the correspondence, if any, accompanying the application of each such claimant. The hon. member also asked the Acting Colonial Secretary, whether the Government had arrived at any decision as to awarding the reward for the discovery of a goldfield, when 10,000 ounces of gold shall have been exported; and if so, to whom it was intended to award the amount, and, if there was any intention of distributing the reward between any of the claimants, to state the method of such distribution. Also, whether any steps were being taken to ascertain the quantity of gold exported? The hon. member said it was generally known that there were several claimants for the reward offered by the Government, and some of the claimants were then in the neighborhood of Perth anxiously waiting for some information on the subject.

THE ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. M. S. Smith) said the Government had received a few applications for the reward offered for the discovery of a goldfield, and he should be happy to give the hon. member, privately, the names of the various claimants, but the Government did not think it would be advisable at present to place the correspondence on the subject on the table of the House. They had not yet arrived at any decision as to the award, nor taken any steps for ascertaining the quantity of gold exported. The terms and conditions on which the reward had been offered would be found in the *Gazette* notice recently republished, and the burden of proof as to the fulfilment of those conditions lay with the applicant. Those conditions were as follows: the goldfields must be within a radius of 300 miles from some declared port of the colony. It was not payable unless 10,000 ounces of gold, either alluvial or crushed from quartz, and obtained from such goldfield, be entered and cleared at a Customs House in some port in Western Australia, and actually shipped to Great Britain within a period of two years from the date of the registration in the office of the Colonial Secretary of the exact position of such goldfield. The Governor in Executive Council was to finally determine to whom

alone, or to which amongst several claimants and in what proportions, the reward shall be paid.

PROPOSED AMENDMENT OF THE SCAB ACT, 1885.

MR. WITTENOOM, in accordance with notice, moved, "That an humble address be presented to His Excellency the Governor, praying that he will be pleased to cause the necessary steps to be taken to amend the Scab Act, 1885, as under:—

- "1. Cancel Clauses 10 and 12.
- "2. The compulsory license referred to in Clause 9 shall enure for a period of six months, and the inspector shall have power to cancel such license at any time after thirty days from the date of it, if in the opinion of such inspector the owner shall not be taking sufficient and satisfactory measures to clean his sheep, and such cancellation shall empower an inspector to enter upon the run of the owner of such sheep and seize, take possession of, hold and take such steps as he may think proper to endeavor to clean the said sheep, and for that purpose an inspector may seize, take possession of, and use all tanks, implements and medicines on the run, and shall have power to destroy any sheep actually infected. Provided, however, that in lieu of taking possession of sheep, implements, etc., for purposes of cleaning such sheep, an inspector may make complaint to any Justice that he has cancelled an owner's license for not taking sufficient steps to clean the sheep, and upon proof such Justice or Justices may adjudge the sheep specified in such license to be forfeited and thereupon such Justices shall order them to be destroyed by an inspector without compensation to the owner thereof or any person having interest therein, and the expense incident to such de-

struction shall be borne by such owner, and on destruction of the said sheep the owner shall not be liable to pay any penalty then due in respect thereof.

- "3. Travelling sheep shall be dipped as often and in such wash as the inspector may deem necessary.
- "4. When any portion of a Magisterial District has been reported clean by an inspector, it shall be declared so,
- "5. There shall be a public dipping station in each district where required.
- "6. Tobacco for purposes of sheep-dipping be imported into the colony free of duty."

The hon. member said the reason he had taken this course instead of bringing in an amended bill himself was because he thought it would be better to ascertain the feeling of the House on the subject first, and, should there be a majority in favor of amending the present Act, he thought the Government would perhaps introduce a bill embodying these amendments. The bill of last session, it might be remembered, had been brought in at a very late period of the session, after many members had left Perth, and, consequently, many alterations and amendments which they would have wished to see introduced were not brought forward at the time. His first object was to repeal the 10th clause of the Act passed last session. That clause provided that a compulsory license shall enure for the following periods, or until such earlier period as the sheep shall be clean: if issued in the months of May or June—for sixteen weeks; if issued in the months of July or August—for twelve weeks; if issued in the month of September—for eight weeks; if issued in the month of October—until the 1st December; and, if issued at any time between the first day of November and the first day of May—for six weeks. Hon. members would see that under this clause a compulsory license could be given for sixteen weeks, and the cleaning of the sheep could not be taken out of the owner's hands until four weeks before the expiration of that time, thus giving him twelve weeks with the chance of infecting his

neighbor's flocks. An inspector could order them to be dipped, but they all knew how careless some people were, and it was impossible for the inspector to take the matter out of the owner's hands until thirty days before the expiration of his license. The amendment which he proposed was that there shall be one general license for six months, and that the inspector should have power to cancel the license at any time after thirty days from the date of it, and so prevent a lot of damage being done. It might be said that this was not necessary, because several districts of the colony had been cleaned under the Act as it now stood; but they must remember that unless owners of sheep co-operated with the inspectors they could not expect any good results; and as the owners of sheep did not always do that, he thought it was very desirable that the Act should be amended as he proposed. He also proposed giving powers to inspectors, if necessary, to destroy any sheep actually infected, so that they might not carry the infection abroad. In the next place he proposed that travelling sheep shall be dipped as often, and in such wash as the inspector might deem necessary. Hon. members might probably consider this provision rather hard, but it was often wanted. Quite recently they had two cases where travelling sheep had started upon a long journey, and, after a week's travelling, scab broke out amongst them; whereas, if they had been dipped before they started all fear of an outbreak would have been avoided. Another proposal of his was that when any portion of a magisterial district had been reported clean, it should be declared so. In many instances large portions of a district might be clean, and one isolated corner of the district infected, and, under the present Act, the sheep from the infected part of the district could go amongst the clean flocks. A case of that kind happened quite lately, and a great many thousand sheep were endangered, and he thought this was a defect in the Act that required to be amended. In the next place he proposed that there should be a public dipping station in each district where required, where an inspector could take the sheep belonging to the small holders and dip them thoroughly. Many of these small

farmers had no conveniences for thoroughly dipping their flocks, and, as it was indispensable that they should be dipped, he thought this would be regarded as a very necessary provision. He also proposed that tobacco introduced for purposes of sheep dipping should be imported into the colony free of duty. This was simply thrown out as a suggestion. It could hardly be embodied in a Scab Act, but it would be a concession that would be very much appreciated, and a great boon to sheep-owners. He hoped the House would agree with him that it was a question of the gravest importance to the colony that scab should be got rid of, and he thought hon. members would agree with him that the amendments which he had sketched out would make the present Act more effective. At present this colony, owing to the existence of scab, was almost a by-word amongst its neighbors, and there was no reason whatever why this stigma should not be removed. It might be argued that in making the Act so very stringent they were making a rod for their own backs; but he did not look at it in that light himself. The Act would operate severely in cases where people neglected to carry out its provisions. No doubt the powers proposed to be placed in the hands of inspectors were extensive powers, but he thought it must necessarily be so, if they wanted to get rid of this pest. The only thing was to secure the services of good men, who would not abuse the powers placed in their hands. He hoped hon. members would agree with him that it was necessary to amend the present Act, which was useless in effectually combating with the disease, especially in some of the Northern Districts. Once this resolution of his was affirmed it would be a very easy matter to introduce a small bill to amend the present Act.

MR. McRAE seconded the motion, without comment.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said he did not know whether any other hon. member was going to address the House on the subject; if there was, he should have wished he had risen before he himself had, so that the Government might know the views of those hon. members who were interested in the subject. "For

his own part he could only say that he must join issue with the hon. member who had brought forward this resolution that the Scab Bill last year was brought in hurriedly at the end of the session. It might be that some hon. members had to go away, but if those who were interested in the question did go away before the bill came on for discussion he thought it was their own loss. He did not think the hon. member had shown any ground for reopening a subject that was dealt with exhaustively only last year. We should never have any finality in legislation if we were going to amend bills every session, simply because some hon. member thought an Act did not meet every particular case. What was the history of this measure which the hon. member now wanted to alter? Last session—and early in the session—he himself, then representing the district of the Murray and Williams, moved for a select committee to inquire into the working of the Scab Acts—not to amend this Act or the other, or to settle any definite scheme, but to inquire into the working of the Acts then in force, for it had struck him that there must be something amiss or they would have got rid of the scab before now. That select committee carefully considered the whole question, and they corresponded with and elicited the opinions of the various inspectors and also the members of the Board of Advice, with the result that they made certain recommendations, and a bill was subsequently introduced embodying those recommendations. After the report of the select committee was before the House some days, the bill was proceeded with. He admitted that the bill itself was not taken at an early stage of the session, but the select committee was moved for at an early period of the session, and the committee brought up their report before a late part of the session. They had to assist them on that committee the two members for the North, who were well versed in the subject, and one or more of the members of the Board of Advice, besides one or two members like himself who knew very little about the matter, but who possibly took a great deal of interest in it, and the result was now the law as embodied in the 49th Vict., No. 21. With regard to Clause 10, which the hon. member pro-

posed to cancel and a new scheme brought into force, he could only say that the scheme embodied in that clause was proposed by another select committee in 1882, and adopted after a great deal of discussion in that House, and a great deal of correspondence in the public newspapers at the time. The clause was re-enacted in the Act passed last year, and the scheme was one that had been thoroughly discussed not only in that House but also outside the House, by men who were practically conversant with the subject. Surely, if the scheme was a bad one—if the provisions of the clause which gave flock-owners a certain time for cleaning their sheep were objectionable—somebody would have pointed it out last year. It could not have escaped the attention of all the experts who had to deal with the subject. The question was very carefully considered, with the result that there was a consensus of opinion in favor of adhering to the scheme formulated in 1882. Therefore it could hardly be expected that the Government would readily consent to re-open the whole subject, after dealing with it so thoroughly as recently as last year. He was not aware that any complaints had been made against the working of Clause 10. There might possibly be some isolated causes of complaint, but they could not be expected to be dealing with this subject year after year. They must have some finality. Next year it might be that some other hon. member would want the Act altered in some respect, and there would never be an end to it. What was the opinion of the inspectors as to Clause 10? If they thought it would not work, surely between 1882 and 1885 they would have found it out, and, when they were consulted last year, they would have suggested that the clause should be amended. But they did not do so; and he believed himself that the clause could be worked very well. It gave a sheep-owner permission to keep his sheep without dipping them, for a certain time, according to the season of the year, but if the owner neglected to do that which the law expected him to do there was ample power now for an inspector (to use a common expression) to make it "too hot" for that gentleman. He knew that some of these inspectors themselves considered that the powers now vested

in them were ample, and that they could do all that was necessary to be done, as regards compelling flockowners to dip their sheep. The hon. member further suggested that travelling sheep should be dipped whenever an inspector might consider it necessary. He did not know by what means an inspector would be able to get hold of travelling sheep to dip them, or where he was likely to get his dipping materials away in the bush. If travelling sheep broke out with scab they were dealt with in the Act in the same way as any other sheep, and had to be dipped. Another suggestion was that when any portion of a magisterial district had been reported clean it should be declared so. He thought that was open to many objections. They might have a portion of a district declared clean this week and next week they might have it reported unclean, and all the privileges granted the week before would have to be cancelled. At present a district could not be declared clean until it had been reported to have been in that state during a period of three years, which was a sufficient safeguard against any fresh outbreak. But under the amendment now proposed they might have one part of a district declared clean this week and find it infected next week. As to the hon. member's suggestion that tobacco used for sheep dipping should be imported duty free, the duty at present was only 3d. per lb., and that was fixed not so long ago. It was competent of course for the House to alter or to remove the duty, and an opportunity had been given them this session, when dealing with the question of opium duty, to have dealt with the duty on tobacco, if they had thought it necessary to interfere with the present impost. He took it that unless the operations of the Tariff Act were going to be overhauled entirely, hon. members would not be inclined to touch this particular duty, which had only been settled a few years ago, after full and ample discussion. He had endeavored in a few words to explain what was done last year, and what would be the effect of the hon. member's amendments, and he trusted that the House would agree with him that, having dealt so fully with the subject last year, it was really too soon to reopen the whole subject for discussion now.

MR. BURGESS said that last session he took exception to the Act, and other members did the same. The Act was brought forward rather late in the session, just as several hon. members were on the eve of returning to their homes, and for that reason there had not been so much opposition shown to the bill as there would have been, if hon. members had been able to prolong their stay in town. One of his objections to the Act was as regards the clause referred to, Clause 10.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): That was not a new clause. It was in the old Act, and re-enacted in the new Act. As a matter of fact the Act of last year was only a consolidation of the existing law, and it contained only two or three clauses that were new.

MR. BURGESS said he had always looked upon the time given by the law for dipping as far too long, and that to extend the time to sixteen weeks, under any circumstance, was unnecessary. He spoke from experience, and he had no hesitation in saying so. It had been the means of allowing sheep to become scabby all over the country, where these infected sheep had been running; and that was one clause which he should have moved an amendment in last year if he had been present when the bill was dealt with in committee. In fact he had prepared an amendment, but, unfortunately, he was obliged to leave before he had an opportunity of moving it. The hon. and learned gentleman the Acting Attorney General seemed to consider the Act as perfect an Act as they could have. [Mr. Burt: No, no.] He was glad to hear the hon. gentleman admit it. He thought the present Act was anything but perfect, and that there were one or two very important amendments required; and he thought if the Government would take up the suggestions put forward by the hon. member for Geraldton, or some of them, they would be found an improvement to the Act, and particularly the proposal to reduce the time now allowed for sheepowners to deal with infected sheep. It was also very desirable that inspectors should have more power to deal with sheep travelling from one district to another. Although the Act had been before the House on many

occasions, there were still many other amendments needed. There were cases within his own knowledge in which a whole district had been placed in danger of becoming infected, through sheep being allowed to travel about as they were now, and he hoped the Government, if they were not prepared to deal with the subject now, would take the trouble of making some inquiries from those who were practically acquainted with the subject, and see if they could not suggest some improvements in the Act between this and next session. He should be very happy himself to give them any little assistance within his power, and no doubt other experienced sheep farmers would be prepared to do the same.

MR. PARKER said he had had an opportunity of conversing with some persons acquainted with the management of sheep and who knew something about this disease called scab. He had also spoken to some of the inspectors on the subject, and he was talking to one of them that day, a gentleman of very large experience, who told him and very properly so, that it was impossible and useless attempting to legislate to meet every possible case. That was obvious as regards legislation upon every other subject. There must be some individual cases of hardship, or cases which the law was not applicable to; and it might be that this Scab Act was defective in some particulars; but he did not think the hon. member had made out such a case as would justify the House in attempting to amend the Act at this early stage after its passing into law. According to the opinion of the inspector to whom he had spoken on the subject (Mr. Craig), the present Act contained provisions which ought to be sufficient to eradicate scab even in the Northern District, as effectually as it had been eradicated in the South; and he believed this gentleman was about to proceed to the North to assist in the eradication of the disease up there. Such being the case he thought it was unnecessary to move any further in this matter at present.

MR. WITTENOOM said they were told by the Acting Attorney General that there were only one or two new clauses introduced into the Act last session. Whether that was so or not, there certainly were some absurdities in it. For instance,

according to the 10th clause a compulsory license issued at any time in the month of October enured until the first day of December; and under the 15th clause an inspector could declare such license void at any time within thirty days before the expiration of the license; so that if a license was dated the 31st of October and it was declared void thirty days before the 1st December, a man would only have one day in which to clean his sheep. That was one absurdity. There were many more which he need not refer to, such as the provisions relating to the returns required under the 37th clause. According to that clause every owner of sheep was called upon, on the last Saturday in the month of December in each year, to make a return in writing of all sheep kept and depastured by him, and to deliver such return within fourteen days after the same had been made to the Resident Magistrate of the district. How was it possible in distant isolated parts of the colony, where there was only a monthly mail communication, for these returns to be delivered to the Resident Magistrate within fourteen days. The hon. gentleman told them that the opinions of experts were elicited by the select committee, and that the recommendations of the committee were the recommendations of experts. Unfortunately for the hon. member's argument, it was chiefly upon the recommendation of experts that he had brought forward these amendments, and one of those experts was the gentleman referred to by the hon. member for Perth. The argument that because an Act was passed last year it should not be amended this year was an absurd one. If they did a foolish thing one year, were they to perpetuate it for ever? The hon. gentleman wanted to know where the dipping stations were to be and where the dipping materials could be obtained in the bush—could they not do the same as they had to do now, when sheep were suspected only? As to the proposal dealing with magisterial districts he had a memorial on that subject from several squatters in the district which he represented, urging him to endeavor to get the Act amended in that respect. If the House chose to reject his proposals, he was afraid it would be many years before the colony would be free from scab.

THE ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Not if the Act is enforced. You want good inspectors; that is what you want.

The motion was then put, and a division being called for, the numbers were—

Ayes ...	...	...	5
Noes ...	...	...	17

Majority against ... 12

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Burges	Hon. M. S. Smith
Mr. Crowther	Hon. J. Forrest
Mr. Grant	Hon. J. A. Wright
Mr. McRae	Mr. Brookman
Mr. Wittenoom (Teller).	Capt. Pawcett
	Mr. Harper
	Mr. Layman
	Mr. Loton
	Mr. Marazion
	Mr. Parker
	Mr. Pearce
	Mr. Randell
	Mr. Scott
	Mr. Shenton
	Mr. Sholl
	Mr. Venn
	Hon. S. Burt (Teller).

The motion was therefore negatived.

RESPONSIBLE GOVERNMENT.

MR. VENN: At last, sir, we have come to the question standing in my name, a question that has been standing on the notice paper for some weeks past, and which has been postponed not particularly at my request, but at the expressed wish of some hon. members of this House, who were of opinion that this important question of Responsible Government should not be taken into consideration until after the discussion of that other important question, the Land Regulations. That discussion, however, is now closed, for the land regulations are to my mind practically settled, and therefore there remains no further reason why we should not now consider this question of Responsible Government. I hope hon. members to-night will give the question a patient and rational hearing. I promise hon. members not to trespass unduly long upon their time, and if I have to draw somewhat largely from the notes before me I do so in order that I may not detain the House unnecessarily, and that I may the better confine myself to the cardinal points of the question. This question has been spoken to in this House on several previous occasions, and I am afraid that all I can add will not throw much additional light on the subject. Nor do I

think it possible to deliver myself in the eloquent language that has characterised some of the speeches delivered upon the question in the instances I refer to; but I will endeavor to put the matter before the House in another aspect, and whether I have a division of the House in my favor or not I shall be satisfied with the consciousness that I have been consistent and sincere in the action I have taken. In rising to deal with the question of Responsible Government, I am, I hope, fully alive to the importance and gravity of the subject. If I did not feel its importance and gravity, or felt any want of sincerity on my own part in bringing it forward I would certainly not have taken up my present position. And, whatever my ability may be to treat the question, I yield to no one in sincerity of purpose. I have now been a member of this House over seven years. I first accepted my seat on the platform I now hold, and have felt each year stronger in the conviction that a change of this constitution to that of Responsible Government is the only course to ensure to this colony that prosperity and advancement which is characteristic of her sister colonies, and more in accordance with our own feelings as Englishmen. Before proceeding any further I may say that, in bringing the question before the House, I do so from no factious opposition to the present form of Government—with no idea of gaining a vote of censure on the present order of things—with no idea of bringing a vote of want of confidence against the present Executive administration—but simply in order to give the colony a more advanced and more enlightened form of Government than she at present enjoys. I shall not deal in extravagant platitudes for or against either side, but shall approach the subject in all its bearings with that rationality and sincerity which its great importance deserves. I hope those hon. gentlemen of this House who, from conviction, are sincerely opposed to the change of constitution, and for whom personally I have the greatest admiration and respect, will treat it in the same way. And I would here wish to say that at an early part of this session, when I first tabled this motion, I was almost disposed to think it was men and not measures who received the applause, support, and confidence of the country. But, sir, I

throw such ingenuous thoughts to the winds. I dismiss them by saying that if this subject is the especial province of any one man—if there is only one man in this House, or in the colony, capable of treating it in a proper manner—and if Western Australia is to owe her chances of advancement to the caprices of any one man, then Responsible Government as a reality is far beyond her. She is, under those circumstances, not ready for it, but should be still tied to the present constitution. But, sir, rightly or wrongly, I am not of that way of thinking. Circumstances develop the men, as circumstances develop a country, and I am convinced and satisfied we have many men, not only equal to the occasion, but ready and willing to accept the responsibility the change of constitution will necessitate, and who will prove themselves so when the time comes,—men who will manage the affairs of this colony with judgment, care, and ability. Not only from among those will these men spring who are in favor of a change, but the colony will draw largely from those who are now averse to the change. This thought is forced upon me as I look round the seats occupied by hon. members in this House. There I see many who, for ability and sound judgment, would compare more than favorably with the leading statesmen of the other colonies, and who will in the future, without doubt, be found administering important positions under Responsible Government. Now, sir, before I proceed further, I shall crave the indulgence of the House for a short time by saying a few words, at the expense of being tedious, as to the real meaning of Responsible Government and the change I propose, because it is just possible that many of the opponents of Responsible Government could not clearly define the exact meaning of the phrase, but talk against Responsible Government as against an unknown quantity. Therefore, I hope I may be pardoned by the more enlightened for saying that Responsible Government was avowedly introduced into the British colonies for the purpose of reproducing local self-government akin to that of the Mother Country, so as to be as near the British form of Government as the circumstances of the different colonies would allow—

thus engrafting, as it were, ministerial responsibility on colonial constitutions similar to that which has prevailed in England since the Revolution of 1688. Thus you may say England gives to her colonial dependencies the same rights of self-government as those enjoyed by herself, and which now, from usage and adoption, has become the birthright of every British subject. It was not, I suppose, intended to replace Monarchical Government for a Democratic one, but simply to extend to distant parts of her Empire the same privileges as enjoyed by herself, by allowing—or establishing (which is a better word)—forms of government that would be a transcript of those of Great Britain. Hence we have, in colonies enjoying Responsible Government, the Governor representing the Crown, and an Upper House; the Legislative Council representing the Lords; and the Lower House (the House of Assembly) representing the Commons; and there is no opportunity, and certainly no justification, for the Crown, through the Governor, exercising any personal interest or government, as he does nothing except through his ministerial advisers, elected by the people, who are consequently in harmony with popular feeling, or at least have the full confidence of a working majority. Although a good Governor (meaning an astute statesman), by judicious management, may exert his influence, or rather make his influence felt without in any way showing his authority; yet, as a rule, it is wiser and safer for a Governor to refrain in every way from showing either the influence or authority of his office. As laid down by Lord John Russell: "In all matters of domestic policy the colony should be governed according to the well-understood wishes of its inhabitants as expressed through their representatives in the Legislature." Thus, while it should be the sole aim of a constitutional Governor to co-operate cordially with his ministers for the time being, irrespective of personal inclination or party feeling, yet, should he not agree with them on matters affecting the public interest (which he may consider of importance to justify extreme measures) he can as a last resort dismiss them and have recourse to other advisers.

Thus, by the exercise of this reserved power (upon trying occasions) the benefits of Monarchical Government are preserved to the people, and the Governor thus secures other ministers who are willing to become responsible for the act of dismissing their predecessors. I will not, however, dwell further on the functions of a constitutional Governor, as there are a multitude of cases wherein a Governor can and does exercise certain powers — powers of the Crown. But, having so far sketched out Responsible Government in the abstract, we can now draw comparisons with the bastard form of Government under which we are living; for, logically speaking, the form of Constitutional Government so much in accord with British instincts, and which has worked so admirably to the advancement of other portions of the British Empire, has been withheld from us. We are left to struggle under a harassing form of Government where we have the direct intervention of the Crown on all matters of domestic policy, which may and can be exercised in an arbitrary and oppressive manner, and which has nothing in it to recommend it to our judgment or consideration save its antiquity and its shadows of despotism, and which is daily before us as a symbol of the state of things existing before the Revolution of 1688, and a denial of that political freedom which we as British subjects of a British colony have a right to enjoy. It is beside the question to point to the advancement the colony has lately made under our present form of Government. What real advancement have we made in comparison to our sisters, in population? Compare the age of Western Australia to that of her sisters, and then ask yourselves what measure of advancement we have made? And if of late years we have moved forward, it only proves the vitality and energy of a long-suffering and law-abiding people, when they, in spite of the form of Government, can make the progressive strides they have; and it is also a tribute to the elasticity of the resources of the colony they are living in. To quote again Lord John Russell: "In all matters of domestic policy the colony should be governed according to the well-understood wishes of its inhabitants as expressed through their

"representatives in the Legislature." Sir, we must have *finality* in our legislation, otherwise we rob the representatives of the people of that healthy stimulus which is the germ of success. We must give to the inhabitants of this colony that active tone in this political life with which responsibility invests them, without which responsibility the whole political system lives a sluggard's life of inaction. What is political life in this colony at the present moment? Look around you! Go to the districts and endeavor to raise a discussion on any important measure likely to be brought before the Legislature, and what is the result? Why, an apathy and disregard painful to witness—the oppressive effects of a form of Government so contrary to their tastes and feelings, and wanting within itself those stimulating elements which responsibility alone would give them. The popular idea is, that the Executive and nominated strength of this House, backed up by the personal influence of the Crown, overawes and controls the House; and who can deny that theoretically this feeling is a natural one? Chain up the most freedom-loving animal in the world for a long series of years, crush all chances of escape by frequent admonitions as to his position, and then see if the smallest cord will not hold him. It is folly to speak of the want of political life as an argument against Responsible Government. There is no freedom for a bird in the most expensive cage. The political life of the colony is crushed out of it by the circumstances of its Government, but we shall yet see increased energy with the stimulus responsibility gives, when it becomes the privilege of every man to have a voice which shall be heard. Who in a general way cares one jot as to the progressive erection of these large buildings now going up; it is not their business. But make them joint shareholders in any one of them, and then see how quickly you infuse life and interest into their feelings. The same motive principle applies to political life. Give the people a living breathing share in politics and you will in a moment see how quickly they will awaken to political vitality. Give them the freedom of constitutional Government, assimilate this form of Government to that enjoyed by others of their kind, and we shall see that,

like them, they can grasp the situation. Do not make them any longer feel that because they are West Australians, they are a different type of the *genus homo*, with less ability or brain power, and so must be governed different to others of their race. It is not my intention as I have said to move a "no-confidence vote," but to deal in general terms with the subject. But I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without raising my voice in condemnation of one institution connected with the present form of Government, and which is hourly showing itself as a glaring infringement against the rights of the people. When the measure passed this House constituting such a body—I am alluding to the Audit Act—I was opposed to it on principle, and ever since this irresponsible body, the Finance Committee, has been formed, its unconstitutional power has been increasingly exerted. Of all the evils that any colony or any nation can be subject to, the worst is the unauthorised expenditure of public money; and this is what the Finance Committee of this colony are doing constantly,—voting and acceding to the expenditure of public money without the assent of the Legislature. Practically this body, constituted of three or four irresponsible gentlemen, controls the funds of the colony. But, sir, it is an axiom of political economy that the Legislature—the representatives of the people in the Lower House—must have supreme control over the finances; and this supreme right is watched and guarded with the most jealous care under Constitutional Government. It is the essence of their power and utility, and in every case where this right has been infringed upon it has led to the most disastrous consequences. Such an infringement of the rights of the Assembly admits of no palliation or excuse, and yet here in Western Australia the Finance Committee are qualified and empowered by statute to commit this unconstitutional act. Can we tell to what extent this power may not be exerted? Why should the Government come down to this House with Estimates at all? Of what use is it for this House to cavil at any items therein? I say, sir, why should the Government bring to this House the Estimates having anything at all objectionable in them—so long as they have the Finance Committee to come to

the rescue and pass any and every item not included in those Estimates. Any appeal from the Governor and Executive meets with compliance on the ground of public utility. Where is the limit of this Finance Committee's operations? This House is solemnly told that your Finance Committee has agreed to do so; and on the authority of this Finance Committee without the assent of the Legislature—without the voice of the representatives of the people—the funds of the colony are expended; and then, to prove the exact and jealous manner in which the funds of the colony are guarded and accounted for, we are gravely asked to pass an Excess Bill for £14 4s. 3d. expended in excess of a vote of this Council, without authority. I am making no wild statement—a reference to the minutes and proceedings of this Finance Committee speaks for itself; it requires nothing from me to expose the truth in all its nakedness. From July to December 1885 £4,703 was voted by the Committee for various public purposes, and although it may be said that notwithstanding those votes the total sum only exceeded the vote of the Legislature by £14 4s. 3d. it does not in any way militate against the principle—it in no way disturbs the foundation of the great principle I have named. But, sir, since 1885 and for the six months ending June 1886, what do we find? The funds of the colony to the pleasant and respectable tune of nearly £50,000 have been appropriated on the authority of the Finance Committee, without the voice or sanction of the Legislature. By sure and steady steps the operations of the Finance Committee have expanded—the first year tenderly appropriating a few hundreds, then a few thousands, and now tens of thousands, and why not hundreds of thousands? Why not the whole revenue?

SIR T. COCKBURN - CAMPBELL: We confirm what they do, every year.

MR. VENN: We cannot help ourselves. The money is expended, and what would be the use of opposing the expenditure? I say again, this Committee has the power to spend what it likes; and if £50,000 can be appropriated without the voice of the representatives of the people, why not the whole revenue of the colony? Why perpetuate the farce of bringing to this House any Estimates at all? This

Finance Committee, this irresponsible body, can as well deal with the whole revenue as with £50,000! Can I say more? Have I not said enough to expose this outrage against the fundamental principles of Constitutional Government. Yes, I can say a little more, just a little to give point and finish to what goes before. There are two items—at any rate one—of £5,000 in the minutes of the Finance Committee, which have attached to them a modest underestimate of their powers. They say they consider these votes rather exceeding their power, and yet they vote them. Here is a revelation. Even this Committee with its already great powers, on an appeal made by the Crown, are quite willing to oblige and exceed that great power, contrary to every principle of political economy, and when asked to vote money in any quantity they do it—feeling they are exceeding this power in so doing. There, sir, is a grand and inspiring picture of self-confidence.

MR. PARKER: What item does the hon. member refer to?

MR. VENN: The hon. member attached a memorandum to it himself. I do not think myself that they exceeded their power, for practically it is unlimited. Still the fact remains, on their own confession, that they believed they were exceeding their power, and that though they believed it they voted this money, and, for all we know, they would vote considerably more. But, in justice to the hon. member for Perth, I must say that the hon. member was the only member of the Committee who protested against it. Time was, sir, only a few years ago when the Excess Bill was an item of which the Government were afraid, but thanks to the operations of the Finance Committee this question is now made easy; and now we are told the colony is progressing under the present Constitution. I am making no attack on the Finance Committee as individuals, but as a statutory body, and I am willing to admit that every farthing appropriated by that Committee would have been voted by the Legislature on the same grounds—the grounds of public expediency. But I say to that Committee—it is countenancing the principle of appropriating money without first having the vote of the Legislature. No man, no politician in

this House or out, can get behind that great principle. It is unassailable and is the great bulwark of Constitutional Government. But will any member of that Finance Committee, after their operations of the past year, dare to say we are not yet ready for Responsible Government? Will any one of these four or five gentlemen dare to impugn the faith and ability of their fellow colonists by saying Western Australia is not ready for the change, when they, a small irresponsible body, now control the finances of the colony. Will they dare say we alone must monopolise the controlling power and be beyond the voice of the people, as expressed by their representatives in the Legislature [MR. MARMION: This House itself gave them that power.] Whether the House gave them that power or not—I know as a matter of fact that the House did give them that power, and I am very sorry for it—I think it would have been better if the House had continued to put up with the Excess Bills, rather than, under the cloak of expediency and of public utility, allowed an irresponsible body of five gentlemen to usurp the constitutional rights of the Legislature. Now, sir, I take it, is a most opportune time in the history of the colony to urge and bring about a change in the Constitution. Everything in the colony is in a progressive state; and unless we have some strong mutual interest to bind us together, we may yet see this great colony divided within itself. Conflicting interests will spring up, and are springing up beyond the powers of the present House to deal with, and it is an absolute necessity that we must have finality in our legislation. We must have Constitutional Government with full and complete representation of every part of the colony. The North must be a moving power in the Assembly (without a controlling one), and each district and section of the colony must feel that they have a voice in Legislation, and participate in the benefits of the revenue. It is only under Responsible Government the colony as a whole can progress, when no one district shall absorb all the benefits or be forced ahead at the expense of another. The North must feel that she is a power equal to the South and that mutual interests bind us together as a whole

colony. Centralisation is rapidly driving us into fractions, which are death to material progress. And, I again repeat, the present is an opportune time for the colony to adopt Responsible Government, to keep and hold us together. Let us bury at once and for ever the factious cry of "North and South." Let us show by our united vote that we wish Responsible Government for Western Australia. Do not let us treat the matter in a half-hearted sort of way, nor let us be satisfied with anything but that real and true form of Constitutional Government with an Upper and Lower House. Let us reproduce local self-government, "*akin*" to that of the Mother Country, so to be "as near the British form of Government as the circumstances of the colony will allow." I have thought the matter over seriously and feel prepared to suggest a complete scheme; and I believe I am adopting a proper and constitutional course when I say that if the motion now standing in my name is carried by a majority I shall at once move that a committee be named for the purpose of considering a bill. And, sir, this bill shall clearly define the nature of our wants, and be the bill we wish assented to by the Home Government, and no other. This bill will convey our meaning, and upon which we of this House must take a firm and uncompromising stand. We must not wait to be told what we will or may be allowed; we must in the form of a bill define our wants, and not allow the Home Government to define them. The essence of success is in the precision of our demand. And now, sir, in order to prepare the House for the measure I shall propose, I will in as brief a manner as possible give a sketch of the forms of Government existing in the other colonies. In New Zealand, the Legislative Council and Upper House is nominated by the Governor, and members hold their seats for life, and it consists of 46 members. The Lower House—the House of Representatives—consists of 95 members, elected by the provinces under a liberal franchise. The Executive Council consists of seven members, six of whom have salaries of £1,250 each. In Queensland the Legislative Council is nominated by the Governor, and consists of 34 members, who hold their seats for life. The Legis-

lative Assembly consists of 55 members elected by the people. No property qualification is necessary for either branch of the Legislature, and the franchise is manhood suffrage. The Executive Council consists of seven members, the Chief Secretary receiving £1,300 per year, the others £1,000, and one without portfolio. In New South Wales the members of the Legislative Council are appointed by the Crown. The House is to consist of not less than 21 members, four-fifths of whom must be persons not holding office under the Crown. The first appointments were for five years, and all subsequent appointments were made for life. The Council now consists of 55 members. The Legislative Assembly consists of 113 members, elected by the people, and the qualifications for a member is manhood suffrage; and the franchise is the same. The Executive Council consists of 9 members, all of whom receive salaries, the Chief Secretary £2,000 and the rest £1,500 each. In Victoria the Legislative Council consists of 42 members, elected by 14 provinces, holding their seats for 6 years, the qualification being property of the annual value of £100. The Legislative Assembly consists of 86 members elected by the people under manhood suffrage, and the members hold their seats for three years, receiving £300 a year each. The Executive Council consists of 10 members, the Chief Secretary receiving £1,800 and others about £1,400. In Tasmania the Legislative Council consists of 16 members, elected by 13 districts, and they hold their seats for 6 years, the qualification being 30 years of age. The franchise for an elector is freehold property of the annual value of £30. The House of Assembly has 32 members, elected by the people, and the members hold their seats for 5 years; the franchise being property value of £50, or household property the value of £27 annually. The Executive Council consists of four members; the Chief Secretary receives £1,100 and the others £900. In South Australia the Legislative Council is elected, and consists of 24 members. Qualification—30 years of age, and the franchise 21 years of age, with property, freehold, of the value of £50, or a leasehold value £20. The House of Assembly consists of 52

members, elected by the people for three years. The franchise is manhood suffrage, which is also the qualification of a member. The Executive Council consists of seven, including the Chief Justice, the other six receiving each £1,000 per year. Honorable members have now a condensed sketch of the different forms of Government of the Australian Colonies, and will be able to carry in their minds a comparison with the proposals I hope to submit to their after-consideration. I am entirely in favor of an Upper and Lower House, and without fixing myself to exact numbers I would suggest that the Upper House—the Legislative Council—be composed of not less than 12 members, nominated by the Crown, who shall hold their seats for 10 years (eligible for re-nomination.) The Lower House—the House of Assembly—to be elected by the people for three years. The qualification of a member for the Legislative Council to be a natural born or naturalised subject over 36 years of age. The qualification of a member of the House of Assembly to be a natural born or naturalised subject over the age of 21, and in possession of property of the value of £50, or household property of the annual value of £10—the franchise being manhood suffrage. The Ministry or Executive to consist of five members, namely, the Chief Secretary, the Treasurer, the Commissioner of Public Works and Railways, the Attorney General, and the Surveyor General. As you will have noted, out of the six other colonies I have quoted, three have a nominated Upper House and three have an elected; and only in one case, that of N. S. Wales, has there been any desire or attempt to change from the nominated Upper House, to that of an elected one. That proposal was lost on the vote by 35 to 5. We may therefore fairly conclude that the principle of a nominated Upper House is one that works satisfactorily. At any rate, after carefully taking the circumstances of this colony into consideration, and bearing in mind that we have not a very large population from which to draw our elected Assembly, and that were both Houses to be elected it would tend to complicate matters, by narrowing the field from which to draw the representatives of the people—also bearing in mind that a nominated Upper House is more

in accord with the British Constitution—I would certainly vote for a nominated Upper House instead of an elected one. The arguments for and against either principle are many, and I shall not now anticipate them. But the great object of the Upper House being to prevent hasty and injudicious legislation, and to correct the supreme monopolising power of any one party, that object is better assured by having the Upper House totally free from party influence, and in no way the representative of party electors; and, as I say, more in accord with the ruling principles of the British Constitution, which is the form from which we get our inspiration. In every case I notice that the members of a nominated Upper House hold their seats for life, but while there may be many cogent reasons for so doing, and without expressing any strong feeling on the point, or fixing myself to any idea, I think 10 years a sufficient period for them to hold their seats. It would seem to me that, when members are nominated for life, ~~cases~~ would occur when extreme age would incapacitate possibly many from taking that active and intelligent part in the duties of the House they should, and would thus reduce the working number of that House to only a small majority. The House of Lords is always being recruited, but in the case of our Legislative Council it would, without further legislation, consist of possibly a fixed number. If, on the other hand, the Legislative Council is elected they must only hold their seats for a short-stated period. The reasons for that are obvious. But if nominated, the question is—shall they hold their seats for life or not? I have stated my opinion, but in any case my sympathy is entirely with an Upper House. So much for the Upper House. Now the Lower House I propose would at first consist of say 30 members; and, after having thought this matter over, and giving as I believe to each district full and ample representation, I do not think that number could be increased, and this number, as you will see, compares very favorably with Legislative Assemblies in the other colonies. After taking the circumstance of our population into consideration, in my opinion a greater number is unnecessary, and, moreover, it is at all times easy to in-

crease the number if desired. I will not, however, at this stage speak further on these points. I have not shrunk from sketching out my ideas, to show this House and the colony that I have not approached the subject without due consideration, and to show that, while I condemn one form of Government, I have not been afraid to submit another for criticism. Hon. members of this House who may be in accord with me on the general question of Responsible Government are in no way responsible for the ideas I have now ventured to put forth—they are entirely my own. I alone feel responsible for them. It is a question I have attempted to treat up to this point single-handed, and with what success I leave this House to judge; but whatever faults there may be about the ideas set forth, I yield to no man in sincerity of purpose. I have one sole object in view, and that is the progressive advancement of Western Australia. It has been stated that Venn is not sincere in this matter. What authority is there for such a statement? Have I ever appeared in my place in this House upholding or voting for any question without being sincere? I challenge any hon. member to gainsay it; and, if sincere in all other matters, what foundation is there for the statement that I am not sincere in this? What the dickens else have I to urge me in this matter? The statement has been put forward with only one object, and that is to weaken the movement. Again it is said, Venn has no ability, or, it is asked, "What ability has he?" That is a perfectly fair and legitimate question; but who knows what ability a man has until he is put to the test? What opportunity has any hon. member had of judging whether Venn has the ability or not? There has been no opportunity of judging any hon. member of this House's ability for parliamentary work under Responsible Government. But that is no proof that they have not got the ability, if they had the opportunity of exercising it. All these statements have been put forth simply in order to damage the cause, to weaken the movement, and I have no fear myself that when the time comes the men and the ability to represent the people will not be wanted. Sir, as I look round

these benches I am very strongly reminded of the voice of the people as regards this question of Responsible Government, in the number of members returned to support it; and if those hon. gentlemen that pledged themselves to a change of constitution are true to the constituencies that elected them, then, sir, this motion will be carried by a majority, and Responsible Government before long will be a reality. I appeal to the voice of the people through their representatives in the House to-night. I ask them to have the courage of their opinions, and to let no specious arguments turn them from that clear beacon ahead—Responsible Government for Western Australia. No arguments brought forward will blind the electors to the fact that they have shirked their duty if they vote against the motion to-night. It was only the other evening that a public meeting was held not far from this House in favor of Home Rule for Ireland. At that meeting there were hon. members of this House who were eloquent in their advocacy of Home Rule for Ireland. Let those hon. members apply the same arguments to Home Rule for Western Australia, the land they are living in. There can be no good object in putting this question off. To postpone it is simply to shirk the whole question. If this resolution be now passed what will our position be then? The question, I presume, will have to go to the country, and this House will be dissolved, and a general election will have to take place, and members returned pledged to the change. That will make it nearly two years before the bill could be sent home and become the law of the colony. But what will be the result if the question is shelved this session? The result will be that probably three or four years must elapse before we get the reins of Government into our hands. Therefore I say that those who want to put off the question are simply shirking their duty, and if they are not prepared to carry out their pledges the sooner the people of the colony know it the better. (Cheers in the Strangers' Gallery.)

THE SPEAKER: If I hear any more such manifestations of feeling as I have heard this evening in the gallery appropriated to strangers, I shall have the gallery cleared.

MR. VENN: I hope His Honor the Speaker does not think I am responsible for these manifestations of feeling.

THE SPEAKER: I do not wish for a moment to accuse the hon. member of any share in the matter.

MR. VENN: Well, sir, my task is nearly done. I ask those hon. members who are pledged to the cause of Responsible Government, I ask them to join with me and let their united voice be heard—a voice that is at the present moment stirring the hearts of the British kingdom, the voice of Home Rule or local self-government. I say again let our strength be felt to-night. No more opportune time will occur. The colony is now healthy and progressive. Do not wait until the wheels of the coach are completely crippled—until a crash comes—until the Finance Committee controls the whole revenue. Use the judgment of the wise, and let us renew the constitution while we can look around us, and judge for ourselves. Sir, I now move, "That 'in the opinion of this House the time 'has arrived when the colony of 'Western Australia should adopt Responsible Government.'"

MR. SCOTT, in seconding the motion, said he did so with mingled feelings of pleasure and hesitation—pleasure in having an opportunity, as one of the representatives of the most important constituency in the colony—and not only pleasure but a pride in having an opportunity—of supporting such a resolution, and hesitation because there was undoubtedly a feeling in his mind that a motion like this should have been brought forward strengthened by the unanimous voice of the party advocating this change. He felt that there was, so to speak, a split in the camp, and there was no doubt that the action taken now was not taken with the unanimous approval of the whole party. It was felt by some members of the party—some of the most prominent members of the party—that until that other great question, vitally affecting every interest in the colony, the question of the Land Regulations, had been disposed of, it would be absolutely useless to bring forward in that House any measure involving such a grave question as that of constitutional change, with any expectation of its being approached with that serious amount of considera-

tion which its importance entitled it to. With this feeling it was decided, at all events by a majority of members who were in favor of the immediate introduction of Responsible Government, that it would be better to postpone it until the Land Regulations were disposed of. It was for this reason, and this reason alone, that he felt some hesitation in seconding the motion, feeling that it would be better that such a question should be dealt with at an early period of the session, when no other great question was dominating the attention of the House and of the country. As to the merits of the question, there was no hesitation in his mind at all; he thought the time had arrived when we might fairly and safely take upon ourselves the responsibilities of self-government. But he thought the question was too important a question to be taken up at the tail end of a session, and therefore he doubted whether it would not be better to wait until the beginning of next session. They knew they had a majority; and, should there be any change or any election between this and next session, they knew they would then have a still larger majority. The hon. member for Wellington had so forcibly and so eloquently demonstrated this that nothing was left for him to say in support of it. He believed, should the motion be carried by a majority, and the House dissolved, and an appeal were made to the country, that a still larger majority of members pledged to the desired change would be returned; and, after the eloquent speech which they had just listened to, he thought that, in the event of an appeal to the country being made, the hon. member's proper place would be on the public platforms of the various districts of the colony as the out-spoken advocate and champion of constitutional reform; and he hoped the party would secure the hon. member's services.

CAPTAIN FAWCETT thought the time had fully arrived when Western Australia should adopt Responsible Government. He should like hon. members to take another little tour with him around the world, and see what other nations and other countries had done under a system of self-government. Would hon. members kindly sail with him to the beautiful harbor of New York, and see

what self-government had done for our American cousins? What would the state of that country be now had it not thrown off its allegiance to the British Crown, or, had it not secured its own independence? Would hon. members also take a trip with him to Canada, and see what great advantages self-government had conferred upon that prosperous dominion? Without taking hon. members right round the world, supposing he asked them to go to Ireland. He would ask them to accompany him as far as Cashel and kiss the blarney stone. He was sure the hon. member for Fremantle (Mr. Marmion) knew that stone very well, and other hon. members perhaps would like to accompany him. In Ireland they would see at the present moment Home Rule advocated all over the country, from Dublin to Cork, and from Cork to Dublin. He was not going to expatiate that evening upon the advantages of Home Rule for Ireland. For his own part he was of opinion that it would be a very desirable thing if Ireland were submerged, say for forty-eight hours, under the water. He thought that during that forty-eight hours, at any rate, they would have peace and quietness. Having created this diversion in favor of Home Rule for Ireland, he thought he had better beat a precipitate retreat to the happier shores of Western Australia. Why should this colony stand alone amongst the family group without the blessings of self-government? Why should we any longer be content to be looked upon as the outcast of the family? Why should not the people of Western Australia be allowed to make their own laws and elect their own rulers? Supposing we had a Governor who was a tyrant and a despot—not a mild one, but one who would rule the colony with a rod of iron—would we not then regret that we had not taken advantage of the present opportunity of electing our own rulers? It was only a question of time whether we should have Responsible Government now or in a few years hence. He should like while on this point to quote a few words from a speech recently delivered by Mr. Gladstone. "Time is on our side,"—the Grand Old Man said—"and the great social forces which move onward in their might and majesty and which the tumult of our debates does not for one moment

impede or disturb—those great social forces are against you. They are marshalled on our side, and, though the banner of political independence which we carry in the fight may at some moment droop over our sinking heads, yet it soon again will float in the eye of Heaven, and be borne onward by the firm hands of a united people to an assured and not distant victory. You have power, you have wealth, you have rank, you have station, you have organisation, you have the place of power. What have we? We think that we have the people's heart; we believe and we know we have the promise of the harvest of the future. As to the people's heart you may dispute it and dispute it with perfect sincerity. Let that matter make its own proof. As to the harvest of the future, I doubt if you have so much confidence, and I believe that there is in the breast of many a man who means to vote against us to-night a profound misgiving, approaching even to a deep conviction, that the end will be as we foresee and not as you—that the ebbing tide is with you and the flowing tide is with us." Those were stirring words, and he commended them to the serious attention of those who were opposed to the introduction of Responsible Government. He felt sure that the longer it was delayed the greater would be the number of members pledged and prepared to support it. For himself he thought now was the accepted time, and he said so in all sincerity.

MR. CROWTHER said that if eloquence could have convinced him that Responsible Government was a panacea for all the ills that flesh was heir to, the speech of the hon. member for Wellington would have converted him. The fact, however, remained that, so far as this question at any rate was concerned, he was still an unconverted sinner. The hon. member was eloquent enough no doubt, but, although he had listened to him very carefully, he had not heard one single cogent argument why this colony should at the present moment go into Responsible Government. [MR. MARMION: Not one.] The hon. member told them that what we wanted was some finality in our legislation, by which the hon. member meant that the people should govern themselves. The other day in discussing the Land Regulations the

hon. member told them that he would prefer leaving such questions to be settled by the Governor and the Commissioner of Crown Lands, rather than leave it to the collective wisdom of that House. If so, he must say he failed to see where the finality came in, and where the voice of the country came in. The hon. member told them he was sincere. Other members were sincere too, and the hon. member must not run away with the idea that he had a monopoly of that virtue. Nor was the hon. member alone in wishing prosperity and happiness to the colony. As to the voice of the country, he was perfectly satisfied in his own mind that the country did not think that what the colony now wanted was Responsible Government. Seven-tenths of the people did not care a rap about it. While on this subject he might be allowed here to repudiate the interpretation which certain sections of the press had chose to put upon what he had said at an earlier part of the session, as to his being prepared himself to bring forward a measure in favor of self-government. What he did say was that should the House and the country decide to go in for that change, and no one felt inclined to come forward to take the lead, he would himself do so, but he would have no half measures. He would have the whole animal, or none at all. He would not only have self-government, but he would also have all the blessings following in its train, including universal suffrage, payment of members, an Upper and a Lower Chamber, and other luxuries of that kind. The one great point in the eloquent speech they had been listening to that evening was the hon. member's complaint against the powers entrusted to the Finance Committee; but he would ask the hon. member what was the difference between the powers—vested by that House itself—in this Finance Committee, as regards controlling public expenditure, and the powers that would be vested in a Ministry under Responsible Government. The members of the Finance Committee were in the first place elected by the people, and afterwards chosen by that House as fit and proper persons to be entrusted with these powers: and he had yet to learn that they had abused their powers. As to the vast amount of expenditure which the Committee had authorised this

year, they all knew what that expenditure was for; and what would have been the outcry and how loud the denunciations of a free press if the Government had not taken prompt action in incurring that expenditure. The greater portion of it was incurred in providing public works and other necessities forced upon them by the discovery of our northern goldfields, and he thought the people of Western Australia had very little to grumble about in connection with that expenditure. He rather thought the boot was on the other leg. The hon. member for Wellington told them—and the hon. member certainly had the courage of his convictions—that he would have two Houses, an Upper and a Lower one. In this he was with the hon. member. He also told them that in his opinion it would only require 48 men to work the new constitution, but he would remind the hon. member that we should want at least double that number, otherwise what was to become of Her Majesty's Opposition? The hon. member also omitted to inform them what the new machine would cost them. [Mr. VENN: You have already been told that.] Yes, that was true. One hon. member told them it would cost about £5,000 a-year, and another hon. member told them it would cost £42,000. He thought the hon. member himself should have given them some idea as to this question of profit and loss. If a man had a large business which he wished to convert into a Limited Liability Company—the present proposal he was afraid was for a company with unlimited liability—the first thing he would do would be to prepare a balance sheet showing the profits of the concern, if he wanted to gain many shareholders; and he thought the hon. member before he asked them to enter this Joint Stock Responsible Government Company should have shown them what the profits were likely to be. For his own part—and he thought he had a perfect right to exercise his own judgment in the matter—he doubted very much whether the profits of the new concern would be equal to the profits of the old concern. He was very certain of one thing—the expenses of management would be greatly increased. And who would be the men that would be entrusted with the management? That was a point which the hon. member

had steered clear of. As to property qualification he had very little faith in it, either under the present constitution or any other constitution. The mere fact of a man having money in his pocket was no proof that he had brains in his head. A man might be a man of property and yet be a complete idiot; yet a fool if he had £500 a year in landed property would be entitled to a vote and a voice in the legislation of his country, whereas another man, a bank manager who had nothing but his yearly salary and a clear head and business habits, would be shut out. Should he (Mr. Crowther) happen to be in the House when the time did come for adopting Responsible Government he would do his best to provide that every man in the colony over twenty-one years of age shall have a voice and a hand in sailing the ship of State, be her destiny what it may. The hon. member for Wellington told them he did not bring this motion forward as a vote of censure upon the present constitution, but he wanted to have a constitution in which men of ability, men of intelligence, men of enlightenment, would take a part in. Supposing the hon. member were to take a broom and sweep out every man connected with the present legislative machine, what different class of men would he have to work the more complicated machine which the hon. member wished to substitute in place of the present one? Would he get a better class of men, or would it be precisely the same class of men? Supposing they had Responsible Government to-morrow, and that House were dissolved and a general election took place, what would the Executive be able to do in the meantime? What was done in New Zealand? A very sensible thing. Ministers voted a bonus of £400 for each of them, and, what was more, they got it: and what they did we would do. The hon. and junior member for Perth spoke the truth, he thought, when the hon. member spoke of a split in the camp; and the split in the camp was caused apparently because one party was eager to commence the fray at once, while the other party thought it would be better to wait for a more opportune time, and that a little more consideration should be given to this weighty subject than it was likely to receive at the

present session. He would give them credit for being wise in their generation, those who were opposed to rushing a question like this—a question which involved the destinies of the country, for good or evil—through the House just as members were getting anxious to return to their homes, sick and tired of the session with all its harassing work, and he thought it would have been wiser on the hon. member's part if he had consented to put it off. For his own part—and he was sincere in what he said—he thought the colony would get on better without Responsible Government for a considerable time to come; but, he would say again, when they did obtain Responsible Government, should he have the honor of occupying a seat in the House he would have Responsible Government pure and simple, or none at all.

MR. HARPER, whilst congratulating the hon. member who had brought forward the motion upon the eloquence with which he had advocated the change which the hon. member was anxious to see adopted, was afraid that the hon. member had paid more attention to the question in the abstract than he had from any practical point of view. The hon. member while devoting his attention to the theoretical aspect of the question had entirely overlooked the teachings of contemporary history. The hon. member had ridden very roughly over the Finance Committee and their doings, but the hon. member did not tell them what would happen as regards unauthorised expenditure under the form of Government which the hon. member himself wished to see introduced. Perhaps the hon. member had overlooked the point, but he thought if the hon. member had been as sincere as he boasted of being he would have pointed out some of the evils of the system of government which he was anxious to see adopted as well as the advantages of the system. One would suppose that under the constitution which the hon. member wished to see introduced there would be no abuses, and no unauthorised expenditure whatever. The hon. member surely had not posted himself up in contemporary history if he believed for a moment that unauthorised expenditure was a thing unheard of in colonies possessing the form of Government which the hon. member wished to see adopted by this

colony. If the hon. member had paid a little less attention to the question in the abstract and a little more attention to the political history of our neighbors, he would have found that the Government of every colony amongst them, except perhaps New Zealand, had expended enormous sums of money without the shadow of parliamentary authority. Only the Ministry before the last in Victoria had got the finances of that colony into such a tangled and embarrassing state that those who succeeded them were unable to make anything out of them; and Mr. Service, after spending about six months over the public accounts, had to inform the Legislative Assembly that in the whole course of his career as a mercantile man he had never seen such muddled accounts; and it was found that about £750,000 had been expended without the shadow of parliamentary authority. That was one very serious blot upon the system of Government of which they had heard so much in its praise from the hon. member for Wellington. The hon. member had made no allusion to unauthorised expenditure under that form of Government; nor had he referred to the result of the working of Ministerial Government in the other colonies. He alluded now to what he might call the principle of expediency which had been introduced, resulting in the formation of Coalition Governments, which appeared to be the only way in which the administration of public affairs could be carried on. Opposition was swallowed up, and Coalition Ministries, with all the attendant evils of unchecked legislation, was the order of the day in nearly all the colonies. At the present moment there was only one colony, he believed, that was not governed by a Coalition Ministry, and that was Queensland; and, in that colony, the leader of the Opposition, tired of parliamentary warfare, had retired into private life, leaving the field to his opponent. In Tasmania, some time ago, on the occasion of a general election, no members of the Opposition were returned at all, and the administration of the colony was left entirely in the hands of one party. Did the hon. member think that would be a desirable position for this country to come to? And he would remind the hon. member

that with our limited population it was far more likely to come to that in this colony than in colonies possessing a larger population, and a larger proportion of public men. Did the hon. member think it desirable that the administration of public affairs should fall into the hands of one party, having a complete sovereignty over the people, and their action free from the wholesome scrutiny of an Opposition party, with no check upon their expenditure, and no one to call them to account. As a further proof of the drawbacks attendant upon party Government he need only point to the result of the last election in Victoria. The question that went to the country was, Shall there be a Coalition Ministry or not—and the advocates of coalition carried the day by an immense majority, and what was styled the Opposition in the Assembly had been forcibly described as a mere "agglomeration of atoms," without any cohesion whatever. He thought after what had fallen from the hon. the junior member for Perth, and what had been stated in the House a few days ago by the other hon. member for the city, who was looked upon as one of the prime movers in the cause of constitutional change,—he thought, after what had fallen from the advocates of the change themselves, he would be consulting the feelings of the majority of hon. members if he moved, as he now did, an amendment upon the motion before the House—"that the consideration of this question be postponed until the next sitting of Council."

MR. SHENTON, in seconding the amendment, said he did so mainly on the ground that an important question like this, which if adopted would derange the whole machinery of government, should not be attempted when the country was in what he might call a transition stage. With the discovery of our goldfields and the large influx of population that was likely to take place, requiring the most careful attention of the Government, he thought it would be very undesirable to agitate for this constitutional change at the present moment. He thought, in view of the great attention drawn just now to this northern portion of our colony, it would be inexpedient to press for a change which they

had been told by the Secretary of State for the Colonies must necessarily involve a partition of the colony, and the separation of the North from the South. Although not opposed to the principle of self-government, he thought this was not an opportune moment for putting that principle into active operation. He was not one of those who looked upon the present form of Government as one that ought to last for ever. When we had sufficient population, and a large number of public men prepared to come forward and take upon themselves the duties and responsibilities of administering the colony's affairs, he would be found a strong advocate for the change. But until the colony arrived at that state of affairs when not only it could send men to the House to carry on the Government but also men that would be able to form a strong Opposition, he did not think it would be wise or prudent for the colony to adopt the system of Government which the hon. member for Wellington advocated. Without a strong Opposition, party Government was one of the most despotic forms of Government that a people could live under. The hon. member for Wellington had made some very severe remarks upon the action of the Finance Committee. As he had the honor of being one of the members of that Committee which formed the object of the hon. member's attack, he should like to be allowed to make some explanation. As to the expenditure of the sum of £5,000 sanctioned by the Committee, that expenditure had formed the subject of a special resolution of the House last session, when the House suggested that, in the event of the financial condition of the colony at the end of the year justifying the expenditure, this sum should be expended on roads. When the end of the year came, fortunately the revenue of the colony was far in excess of the estimate, and, the funds being available, the Finance Committee, acting upon the resolution passed by the House itself, consented to the expenditure being incurred. As to the other large amounts which they were told had been expended, a large portion of these amounts consisted of expenditure that had been forced upon the Government by the discoveries of gold in the Kimberley District, and the necessity for

the immediate construction of certain public works. Had not the Government taken these works in hand at once, they would have been blamed by the public for neglecting the district and neglecting their duty towards it; but, acting strictly within the provisions of the Audit Act, the Governor did all he could in the matter. He went to the Finance Committee and consulted them on the subject, and the Committee, looking at the urgency of the case, recommended that the Government should at once take steps to provide the necessary works and open up the country for settlement, by sending a Government establishment to Cambridge Gulf, and a number of police constables to preserve law and order. There was a large influx of people into the district, and it was necessary that no time should be lost in making some provision to meet this unexpected state of affairs, and the Finance Committee, under the circumstances, sanctioned such expenditure as was absolutely necessary. These were the principal items of expenditure which the Finance Committee had advised the Government to incur. Under Responsible Government, would not the same thing have occurred? Would not a Ministry at once have come forward and incurred this expenditure without calling the Assembly together? Would it not have been their duty towards the country to have done so? Why then should the hon. member blame the Finance Committee for doing that which any Ministry worthy of the name would do under Responsible Government? The Finance Committee had simply done what they conceived under the circumstances was best for the interest of the colony, and so far from any blame attaching to the Committee or to the Government he thought they were rather deserving of praise instead of censure.

MR. LAYMAN, while he did not think it wise to rush into Responsible Government with undue haste, was still of opinion that it would be wiser for the colony to adopt the change when it could do so without creating any great amount of popular feeling, rather than wait for the time when the change may be forced upon us, whether we are ready for it or not. As to having two Houses, he saw no necessity for it. He could not see

himself why two Houses should be able to do more than one could. He was also opposed to the doctrine of universal suffrage. He did not think there would be any difficulty in obtaining a sufficient number of men to carry on Ministerial Government. As to the dismemberment of the colony, he thought that separation was more likely to take place under the present form of Government than if we were in a position to govern our own affairs. One hon. member had told them that he thought it was a bad time to bring forward such a question at the tail end of a session. He failed to see that at all. They had all the members present, and as the bulk of the work had been finished he thought they could not have a better time for entering upon this question than now. It would be better than bringing it forward early in the session, and have all the other work kept waiting until they got rid of the constitutional question. As to the Finance Committee, the members of that Committee were appointed by that House, and if it was a mistake to appoint a Finance Committee it was a mistake on the part of that House.

MR. VENN: So it was a mistake on the part of the House.

MR. WITTENOOM said he could not help adding his quota of praise to the chorus of congratulations which had greeted the hon. member for Wellington upon the delivery of his very able speech in introducing his motion. The speech was one which showed that the hon. member had devoted a great deal of time and research to its preparation. So far as his own views on the subject were concerned he must say that he was in favor of Responsible Government. There were many reasons why in his opinion the introduction of Responsible Government would do good, and recently at Geraldton he had made known some of these reasons. Amongst other things there was the fact that at present, with our existing Government, we were depreciated in the eyes of our neighbors; and another reason was that we did not have that finality about our legislation which we would have if we governed ourselves without reference to Downing Street. Having to refer so many important questions to England involved delay in matters requiring, in

the interests of the colony, an immediate settlement. However, our experience of the last few years had shown us that this was not such a serious evil as it used to be, and the Home Government had dealt with us as fairly as we could reasonably expect. Some portions of the hon. member's speech had disappointed him. He had expected the hon. member to name his first Ministry and show them that there were a sufficient number of men amongst us possessing the requisite ability, time, and knowledge of parliamentary business, prepared to come forward and undertake the responsibilities of governing the colony. Government was not such an easy matter as some people imagined, and, judging by the little experience which he had himself gained in that House, it required a considerable amount of practice and a considerable amount of training. The probability was that under the reformed constitution many new members would find their way into the House, who would be quite inexperienced in parliamentary work, and he should have liked to have heard from the hon. member who were to be the members of his first Ministry, for, although we might have a good leader in the hon. member himself, he did not see where we were going to get the other members of the Ministry and a strong Opposition, and a sufficient number of members to make up two Houses. Without a vigorous Opposition and a capable Opposition - we would have a much greater despotism than under the present form of Government. The hon. member for the Vasse said that he did not anticipate any difficulty in finding a sufficient number of men. There might be in the South, but he doubted if they could be found in the North, without considerable difficulty. He found from his own experience that the honor of being a member of that House was a rather expensive affair, and calculated to interfere with one's private affairs very considerably; and he was afraid that under Responsible Government they would have to distribute money pretty liberally. The hon. member for Wellington had challenged all who were pledged to their constituents to support a change in the Constitution, to be true to their principles, and to vote with him on the present occasion. For his own

part, he was in this position as regards his pledges: he had come to the House unpledged in regard to the question of Responsible Government, but, wisely or otherwise, he had pledged himself to support any movement that was likely to bring about a separation of the North from the South. That being so, and as the hon. member for Wellington told them that Responsible Government would lead to a consolidation rather than to a disintegration of the colony, he felt that, in order to be true to his pledges, he must oppose the hon. member's motion. If his action in the matter did not please his constituents, all he could say was they had themselves to blame in extracting a pledge from him that he would support any movement tending to Separation; for, in order to be logical, he felt that he was bound to oppose any movement that was likely to have a contrary effect. He had a petition from some of his constituents requesting him either to vote for Responsible Government or absent himself from the House when the division took place; and he had another petition requesting him, if anything touching Separation came before the House, to use his strongest exertions to have the line of demarcation drawn at the Arrowsmith River. Some of them would have Responsible Government at any price, but he thought the majority would prefer Separation, and, as he was pledged to do all he could in support of that movement, and the hon. member for Wellington told them that Responsible Government would weaken rather than strengthen the cause of Separation, he felt that he could not consistently support the hon. member's motion.

MR. PARKER said it certainly was distressing to find that the hon. member for Wellington had been unable to convert the hon. member for Geraldton, sitting in close proximity as they did, and with every opportunity of holding sweet converse together. It certainly was unfortunate that all the hon. member's eloquence had been thrown away so far as the hon. member for Geraldton was concerned, and that that gentleman still ranked amongst those who remained only "almost persuaded." When the House first met this year he looked around him and calculated the number of members

who had expressed themselves in favor of this change, and he thought at the time that, so far as the question of Responsible Government was concerned, the session had opened with fairer prospects of success than at any previous time since the question had been resuscitated, after the memorable occasion referred to the other day by the hon. member Mr. Randell, when the minority consisted of that hon. member and two others. Unfortunately, now, the prospects of the reform party looked darker than they had done for years past, and they looked darker simply in consequence of the action taken by the hon. member for Wellington. On the second day of the session the hon. member for Wellington gave notice of this motion, and on the third day it appeared on the notice paper. It was done without any consultation with the party whatever, to his knowledge—it certainly had never been mentioned to him. As the hon. member had told them that evening, he did so entirely upon his own responsibility. One would have thought, bearing in mind that he (Mr. Parker) had borne the burden and heat of this battle for some years back, that, even as a matter of courtesy, the hon. member would have mentioned the subject to him, before putting his notice on the paper. But he did not do so; and the hon. member, it appeared, had not put it forward to advance the cause of Responsible Government, but simply to force hon. members to vote—to see whether those who had pledged themselves before their constituents to support the change would have the courage of their opinions and fulfil their pledges. Now, as a rule, when an hon. member of that House had any particular hobby or any particular motion which he wished to see carried out, he generally tried to ascertain what amount of support he was likely to receive, before putting forward his motion. The hon. member for Wellington himself, being anxious to carry certain amendments in the land regulations adopted that course, and had a caucus meeting of those whom he thought were likely to support his own views; but in this other important matter, upon this grave question of constitutional change, although there was a consolidated party favoring the change, the hon. member, without any reference

to that party, took upon himself the sole responsibility of bringing forward this motion, and had not even the courtesy to mention it beforehand to any member of the party. The hon. member did it on his own account, and defied them, he might say. Unfortunately, when the notice of motion was put on the paper he himself was too unwell to attend the House, and when he saw the notice he did not blame the hon. member, for he (Mr. Parker) was not the leader of the party. He had not been elected their leader, and he did not blame the hon. member for not consulting him in the matter. Still he thought as a matter of courtesy, if the hon. member really had the cause at heart, he would have taken counsel with his party in the matter. It might be remembered, perhaps, that on the first day that he was able to attend the House after his illness, there was a bill before the House to provide the Kimberley district with a separate member, a bill to increase the representation of the colony in that House; and he did his best to have the bill postponed, pointing out that it would be useless to give an additional representative to the Kimberley district alone, if they were going in for Responsible Government. He did all he could to have the bill postponed until the question of Responsible Government was settled one way or the other; but the majority of hon. members disagreed with him, and it was determined to proceed with the bill. Seeing the position of affairs, he did his best to get the party of self-government together, and, as he said the other evening, they had a meeting, and it was resolved by a majority at that meeting that the question of Responsible Government should not be brought forward until the Land Regulations had been disposed of. He felt, as he said at the time, that to come before the House with a split party would simply be to court defeat, and do an immense amount of damage to the cause itself. He had seen that in some of the public prints he had been held up, he might say, to public execration for his action in this matter. He had been called a "political renegade," a "willing tool," and other hard names. There was one very amusing article appearing in the columns of the *Victorian Express*,

where he was characterised as a political renegade of the very deepest dye. Now, he did not mind that a bit. If newspapers liked to fancy that he was a "political renegade," really he did not see why they should not be allowed to indulge in their fancies. But he was afraid that those who wrote these articles first manufactured their facts and then concocted their arguments to bolster up those facts. He also noticed another article published that evening in that erudite journal the *Daily News*. The writer of that article must have known that what he was stating was false; but, poor man, he manufactured his facts to suit the tastes of his readers, and why should he be blamed for it? While we had papers in the colony conducted on this honorable principle, public men must not complain of a little adverse criticism. At the same time, he thought it was to be regretted that the conductors of our public press found it necessary to furnish such literary pabulum for the delectation of their readers. But he was happy to think that there was some little ray of intelligence still left in the public mind. People were not such fools as these newspapers took them to be; and, for his own part, he was quite content to leave his conduct in this matter to the judgment of the public; and, if it pleased any public journalist to call him a "political renegade" he should be sorry to deprive the writer of so cheap a source of amusement.

THE SPEAKER: I must ask the hon. member to address the Chair. The hon. member is turning his back upon me, and addressing the Strangers' Gallery.

MR. PARKER: I have always spoken in this way before.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member must speak to the Chair.

MR. PARKER: I don't know that a member is bound to look at the Chair all the time he is speaking.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member turns his back on the Chair, and addresses himself to the gallery.

MR. PARKER, continuing, said he did not care what the newspapers said about him; he would continue to act in this matter in the way which he thought best. As he had already said, when the present session opened he thought the prospects of the Responsible Government party

were fair and promising; but he regretted to say that the prospects of the party now looked black enough. One hon. member said there was a split in the party. He did not think that himself. Since the meeting he had referred to, the party, so far as he knew, had no split, but they resolved by a majority that they would not discuss this question until the Land Regulations had been disposed of. But the hon. member for Wellington, quite outside the party, had brought the question forward on his own responsibility. The hon. member apparently did not care about the party, or whether he was successful or not. If he did care, he did not think the hon. member would have acted in the way that he had. He would have endeavored at any rate to have got the members of his own party to have voted with him. When he thought of what the hon. member said at Bunbury on a recent occasion—or, rather, of what the hon. member was reported to have said—that since he went to the other colonies his views on the subject had changed—he was only quoting from memory from the newspaper report of the hon. member's speech—when he read what the hon. member was reported to have told his constituents he thought the hon. member, if he had not deserted the party, had become very lukewarm about the matter; and it had struck him that the hon. member had not brought forward this motion in the interest of Responsible Government at all. He was afraid that the adoption of self-government by the colony of Western Australia was not the matter which the hon. member had at heart. Although the hon. member spoke so loudly about his sincerity, he doubted very much whether the hon. member was sincere in this matter. He doubted the hon. member when he said that he was sincere when he placed this notice on the paper only the second day after the meeting of Council, without any consultation or intimation whatever to the other members of the party. He doubted the hon. member's sincerity. Personally, that evening, he did not propose to bring forward any arguments in favor of Responsible Government. He had done so on many occasions, and he did not propose to enter into the merits of the question at all that evening. But the hon. member mentioned the Finance

Committee, and the hon. member spoke with disapprobation of the action of that Committee. Being a member of that body he felt it was his duty to somewhat resent the hon. member's attack. When he said resent, he did not mean that he objected to any hon. member criticising the actions of that Committee. He should be glad himself if some hon. member would bring forward a vote of no confidence in this Finance Committee. That body was constituted by statute—by an Act of that Council itself, which was passed with the view of controlling public expenditure, when the Excess Bills presented to that House covered items of unauthorised expenditure amounting to very large sums of money. The Legislature did its best to control this expenditure, but the Executive in those days was all-powerful; and, as a last resource, this Audit Act was passed, and the result was that the Legislature now, through this Finance Committee, exercised a very complete control over the public expenditure. As the members of that Committee were elected by the House itself every year it was evident that this body was the very essence of representation, so far as the people were concerned. The members of it were exactly in the same position as Ministers under Responsible Government. They were elected by the accredited representatives of the people, and they were responsible for their actions to the representatives of the people in that House. The members were elected annually, and it was evident that they possessed the full confidence of the House, seeing that the same members were, he believed, unanimously re-elected year after year. Therefore, for the hon. member for Wellington to say that it was an irresponsible body was to say that a Ministry under Responsible Government was irresponsible. If a Ministry under Responsible Government forfeited the confidence of the House they were ejected from office, and, in the same way it was competent for that House to eject the members of this Finance Committee from office. Not only that, it was quite as competent for any member of that House to move a vote of no confidence in this Committee or in any member of it, as it was competent for the leader of the Opposition or any other member, under

Responsible Government, to move a vote of no confidence in the Ministry of the day. All the votes sanctioned by the committee were placed on the table of the House each session, and their Minute Book was open to the perusal of any hon. member; and, so far as he could remember, on no occasion had any formal objection been taken to their action. The hon. member for Wellington said that no less than £48,000 had been authorised by this committee to be expended during the last six months. If the hon. member would only consider why this expenditure had to be incurred he would see at once that the committee was entitled to the thanks of the community instead of censure. Of that £48,000 no less than £13,000 had virtually been sanctioned by that House last session, namely, £5,000 for roads, £5,000 for surveys, and £3,000 for boring. The Government, it might be remembered, declined to place these votes on the annual Estimates until they ascertained at the end of the year whether there would be sufficient funds; and, when the Government found at the end of the year that the money was available, they went to the Finance Committee and asked them to sanction the expenditure, which had already been conditionally approved by the Legislature. The majority of the committee thought they had the power to sanction the expenditure, because the House had already voted it by a resolution, and they did sanction it. He himself was the only member of the committee who considered that it was beyond their power to sanction this expenditure, under the circumstances, and he recorded his opinion in the Minute Book at the time. So much for £13,000 out of the £48,000. The only other large items of expenditure were in connection with recent events in the Kimberley district, consequent upon the discovery of gold. The Government found it necessary to take immediate action, in the interests of the colony, to protect the revenue at these Northern ports, to send a Government staff up there, and to undertake certain public works that were absolutely necessary. Had they neglected to do so, there would have been an outcry from one end of the colony to the other, and the Government, seeing the urgency of the matter, sought the advice of the Finance Committee, who, seeing

the necessity for immediate action, sanctioned the necessary expenditure, on the understanding that the Government would at the earliest opportunity obtain a confirmation of the expenditure by the Legislature. He thought that any unprejudiced person would see that the Committee in this matter had acted in the best interests of the colony, and that instead of their action being made the subject of attack and censure it was deserving rather of praise and commendation. As to the question of Separation, judging from the terms of the despatch received a few years ago from the Secretary of State, the question of dividing the colony did not depend so much upon the question of a change in the constitution as upon the probability of an increase of population at the North, which was likely to lead to a cry of separation. He did not think that this question of Separation would be hastened in any way whatever one moment by the adoption of Responsible Government; but he thought there could be no doubt that if the gold-fields proved a success and there was a large influx of population, and if the pastoral industry became developed—and possibly other minerals might be found, and large centres of population established—no doubt when this came to pass, whether we had Responsible Government or not, there would be a cry for Separation, in the same way as there was a cry for Separation now in North Queensland. But the agitation would not be the outcome of a change in the constitution, but the result of that part of the colony being situated such a long way from the seat of Government, and of a feeling that they did not occupy a proper position or were not able to take that active part in the management of public affairs which the importance of their districts entitled them to. There was one matter as to which he did feel it would be an uncommonly good thing if we had Ministerial Government. They had seen during the last few months the painful spectacle of the Executive Government of the colony—the Ministry of the country—divided against itself. Under Responsible Government that state of things could not possibly have occurred, because the Minister who was not in accord with his colleagues, or a Minister who was at direct variance with

his leader, would be bound to leave the Cabinet. But, here, unfortunately—he was not going to blame anyone, for he was not in the confidence of either party, nor did he seek that confidence, and therefore he did not know who was to blame—but, unfortunately at the present time we had a state of affairs that amounted almost to a public scandal. We had the head of the Executive at loggerheads—it was almost worse than that—with one of the chief officers of his administration, one of his chief Executive officers; and when he characterised this state of affairs as a public scandal he did not know whether he was not putting it rather mildly. After perusing the public newspapers for some time past, some of them advocating the cause of one party and others advocating the cause of the other party, he certainly thought he was right and justified in saying that it was a public scandal. Under Responsible Government, as he had already said, we should have had none of this. We should certainly not have in office long a Ministry divided against itself, for the minister who could not agree with his fellows would simply have to retire. He repeated it, he was blaming no one for this unfortunate state of affairs. He did not know who was to blame—whether the head of the Executive or his officer,—but he would say it again, that those who had seen what had appeared on the subject from time to time in the public newspapers of the colony must agree with him that the state of affairs at present existing was nothing less than a public scandal. With regard to the question before the House, he did not intend to argue the merits of the question, but if it came to a division as to whether the question should be postponed until next session, he should vote against its being postponed. Having gone so far with it, he thought it was only fair that the hon. member should push it to a division, and upon the main question; and, if he did so, the hon. member would find him voting against the postponement of the question until next year.

MR. MARMION said it had not been his intention to have spoken at all, but possibly it might be considered that those members who had pursued a certain course of action in the past with reference

to this vital question should say a few words to indicate the line of action which they intended to take on this occasion. He might say that so far as he was concerned he had consistently, while representing the town of Fremantle, for some years past, opposed the immediate adoption of a change of Government; and, on the occasion of the last general election he was returned on the same platform. He might say that like many other hon. members, although opposed to the adoption of Responsible Government at the present time, he believed in the principle of self-government, and he perceived many advantages that might hereafter be derived from the introduction of that form of government. It seemed to him that, as regards the proposed introduction of Responsible Government into this colony, the advocates of the change, of late years, had brought forward the proposal at an inopportune time, when the colony was passing through some grave crisis or the other. He often thought that it was a pity that the question was not taken into consideration more fully by the Home Government years ago, when, in his more youthful days, he voted for its adoption. It had often struck him since that it would have been better for the colony if at that period of its existence the reins of Government had been handed over to the colonists; but he thought that of late years those who had advocated the change had been unfortunate in the time selected for bringing forward the question, when the colony, as he had already said, was in the throes of some grave crisis. And he must express his opinion that the colony was at the present time passing through one of these crises, but a crisis that did not seem likely to result in anything but great benefit to it, and great material progress. At the same time it was a crisis that required the most careful exercise of judgment on the part of those in authority, and it seemed to him undesirable that at this juncture any distracting element—any discordant element he might call it—should be introduced, when all the zeal and intelligence and energy of the Government and of the Legislature were required in the promotion of measures for the material advancement of a distant portion of the colony. He need hardly say

that he was alluding to the gold discoveries in the Kimberley district, and the probable result of those discoveries in the development of that portion of our territory. One of the greatest objections possibly in his mind to the consideration of this constitutional question at the present moment was, that, beyond doubt, were they now by a majority to pass a resolution to the effect that it was desirable to introduce Responsible Government in this colony, they would be quietly told by the Imperial Government, "Yes, you may have Responsible Government—Responsible Government for that part of the colony which has long been settled, which contains a fairly numerous population, a population which is represented in the Legislative Council that has adopted the resolution; but we are not going to hand over to you that rich portion of the country at the Northern end of the colony, with all its valuable resources, as we have already told you. We warned you years ago that, should you at any time think it desirable and expedient in your own interests to adopt a system of self-government, it would be a subject for serious consideration whether we would ever allow you to have the control of the whole of this enormous territory of yours, or whether we ought not to draw a line, severing from you the richer though less populous portion of the colony, situated at the North." This was, to his mind, the principal objection to the introduction of Responsible Government at the present time. It might be said—and no doubt some hon. members who might have to reply to his remarks were already revolving the argument in their minds—"What would be gained by postponing the question? Is it not more likely that in the future, in the course of a few more years, this part of the colony will be of still greater importance, and that the residents there will themselves cry out for separation?" His own opinion was this: that by judicious legislation under the existing form of Government—and no one would deny that it was possible to legislate judiciously under the existing form of Government—it was within our power to cement the bonds which united us to our Northern territory. He thought that

by judicious legislation under the present form of Government, and a due regard for the wants and requirements of this Northern territory, the bond of union between the North and the South would be so cemented that when the day came, as sooner or later it must come, for the adoption of ministerial government, they would all pull together, a united and contented community. Some hon. members in the course of the debate had alluded to the despatch on this subject that was written by Lord Derby, in 1883,—written, he believed, in consequence of a question asked by a member of that House as to the conditions upon which the Imperial Government would be willing to grant us Responsible Government. That despatch, to his mind, was a most important one. It was so important that he thought he might be pardoned by those who had read it before, if, at this stage, he were to read it again, and more especially that portion of it relating to this question of the dismemberment of the colony. The despatch was written by the Secretary of State for the Colonies in reply to a despatch written by Sir Henry Wrensford, who was administering the Government of the colony at the time, enclosing a copy of an address from that Council, praying that the terms and conditions upon which Responsible Government would be granted to this colony might be ascertained for the information of the Council. Lord Derby said:

"I am not at present in possession of all the information which I should require before undertaking to state, even generally, the arrangements which would have to be made in the event of its appearing desirable to introduce Responsible Government into Western Australia; and, before endeavoring to arrive at definite conclusions on all the points connected with this question—the conditions of which are continually undergoing some modification—I should desire to have before me a full statement of the results of your own observation, after you have had some experience of the colony.

"In the meantime, however, I may observe that the case of Western Australia presents some special difficulties which would demand very careful consideration before the introduction of

"that constitutional change—which has
"been so successful in the wealthier and
"more populous colonies—could be de-
"termined upon.

"Although the development of the
"Northern and Kimberley district has
"of late been remarkable, the immense
"area of the colony contains, unfortun-
"ately, a large proportion of land which
"can never maintain a large population ;
"and, although the colony has been
"opened to settlement since the year
"1829, its advance has been slow, and its
"trade and revenue are still inconsider-
"able.

"It is not easy to perceive how the
"growing requirements of places at a
"very great distance from Perth can be
"adequately provided for by a Respon-
"sible Government with the seat of
"administration and legislation in that
"city ; and even if an equally good seat
"of government north of Perth could be
"selected, it would still remain difficult,
"if not impracticable, to secure an ade-
"quate representation of the very dif-
"ferent interests now growing into im-
"portance in the various parts of so
"large a colony. The experience of New
"South Wales, and, after the separation
"of Queensland, that of the latter colony,
"has shown that there would be much
"difficulty in providing for the require-
"ments of tropical districts situate at a
"great distance from the seat of govern-
"ment in the Southern part of the col-
"ony, where the views and interests of
"the people are necessarily in many
"respects different from those of the
"Northern settlers.

"The latitude of Perth is little north
"of that of Sydney, and, looking to the
"fact that the separation of Queensland
"became unavoidable long before its dis-
"tricts in the latitude of the Kimberley
"district had been occupied, it must be
"expected that a strong demand for the
"separation of the Northern part of
"Western Australia would arise almost
"immediately after Responsible Govern-
"ment had been granted.

"I am, therefore, not disposed to
"anticipate that the request for Respon-
"sible Government will be strongly
"pressed at this time, or that, if urged
"by the residents in the Southern part
"of the colony, it would be equally ac-
"ceptable to those who are now develop-

"ing the tropical districts in the belief
"that their interests are protected by
"the Crown. And"—he should like hon.
members particularly to listen to this
paragraph of the despatch—Lord Derby
said: "And while I am of opinion that
"under Responsible Government the
"control of the Crown Lands generally
"would have to be vested in the Colonial
"Parliament, it appears to me, as at
"present advised, that it would be neces-
"sary to make an exception in respect of
"those Northern Crown Lands which
"would be likely to form a separate
"colony at an early date. With a view
"to meet a contingency (which, however,
"I hope may not arise for a considerable
"time, as there appears to be no reason
"why the colony should not continue to
"prosper for a future period under its
"present form of Government")—and had
the colony not prospered, was it not
prospering still, and was it not likely to
prosper still more? (A Voice in the
Gallery: At a snail's pace).

THE SPEAKER: Sergeant-at-Arms,
will you turn that man out?

MR. MARMION, continuing, said he
wished hon. members to pay particular
attention to that paragraph of the
despatch. With a view, Lord Derby
said, to meet a certain contingency—

"I think it desirable that a separate
"account should be kept of the revenue
"raised and expended in each district of
"the colony ; and it will also have to be
"considered whether, in any future Loan
"Bill, it must not be declared that the
"lands and revenues of the Kimberley
"and some other portions of the Northern
"districts will not form part of the
"security for the loan.

"The report with which you will
"furnish me should be full and exhaus-
"tive, and should be accompanied by a
"return, as far as it can be corrected to
"the latest date, of the population, land
"sold and leased, and receipts and ex-
"penditure, in the several districts of the
"colony."

He might be asked why he had taken the
pains to read this lengthy despatch? He
had done it because to his mind it had a
remarkable and distinct bearing upon the
point at issue, and upon the question of
whether, if this motion were carried
that evening, it was at all feasible or
likely we should get Responsible Govern-

ment for the whole colony. He had quoted it at length also because of a speech recently delivered to his constituency by the hon. member who had that evening, they were told, without authority or consultation with his party, put himself forward as the champion of Responsible Government. Some remarkable change must have come over the hon. member's mind since he delivered that speech. What caused that change, no doubt the hon. member himself would be able to tell them; but certainly after reading that speech, and listening to the hon. member that evening, it did seem that a wonderful transformation had taken place in the hon. member's views on this question. A very great change had come over his mind in a very short period. Speaking on this very question of Responsible Government, the hon. member, addressing his constituents, said: "There was one phase of the question, however, that required careful consideration, and that was, should the Southern portion of the colony hasten on Responsible Government,—if such a measure meant separation from the North, were we in a position to lose the North and for the Southern taxpayers to bear the present expenditure that had been made at the North. There was a majority of two elected members in the House now for Responsible Government, and the measure was almost certain to be brought before the House at this session." Not a word about the hon. member's own intention of bringing it forward. "The subject," the hon. member said, "was a delicate one. He was aware that district was in favor of the measure in principle, but for the whole colony. He would not be surprised if the Northern members brought on the question of Separation, and if so it was his intention to resist to his utmost such a measure, even if he voted against Responsible Government in so doing. He did not wish to be considered he was what was vulgarly termed 'ratting' his position as a Responsible Government advocate, although he must admit that after his recent visit to the colonies he felt that under our existing form of Government we had a lot of power without the responsibilities and abuses he found existing under the other form of Gov-

ernment." That was what the hon. member told his constituents, only a few weeks ago; and was it not an extraordinary thing this sudden change that had come over the hon. member? A few days before he entered that House—a few days before he tabled his motion in favor of the immediate introduction of Responsible Government, the hon. member candidly acknowledged that under our present constitution we had a lot of the power without the abuses of the system which the hon. member now was so eager to introduce, under a different constitution. That was a remarkable change of front in such a very short space of time. In spite of the hon. member's acknowledgment of the fact that "under our existing form of Government we had a lot of power without the responsibilities and abuses he found existing under the other form of Government," they yet found the hon. member, almost as soon as he came into the House, tabling a resolution that it was absolutely necessary for us to rush into that "other form of Government," without even considering what amount of assistance and support he was likely to receive from the members of his own party. The hon. member in his speech also said: "Our franchise gave every man capable of thinking a voice in the election of their members, and the Council lately had been vested with great power, since which the history of the colony was one of progress; but he was aware that in a great measure our Governor had sunk his own individuality and given power to the Legislature; and any change in the Administration might put the Council in a minority and make things very different, and for this reason he would like to see a system of Responsible Government adopted for the whole colony, but not with separation." The hon. member said "Not with separation." But how could he help himself, if the North insisted upon separation, and the Imperial Government insisted upon separation? He had only alluded to the hon. member's speech to show how strange a change had come over his feelings in so short a time. He did not think the hon. member had adopted a statesmanlike course in this matter. Whatever other qualities his party might find in him—and he was sure the hon. member

would pardon him for saying so—he did not think that among those qualities would be found those of statesmanship. There were many points to be considered in connection with this question, and many arguments to be advanced, but they had been iterated and reiterated so often that hon. members must be heartily tired of them; but he thought he must refer to the existing state of things, and he must say that he agreed with the hon. member for Wellington when he said at Bunbury that we had a great deal of power, without the responsibility, under our present form of Government. Within the last five or six years no request, no reasonable request, that had been made to the Home Government but had been assented to. We had been treated, in fact, as well as we could be treated under any system of Government. When it was borne in mind that under Responsible Government they had to deal with two Houses; that in the first place, they had a Chamber which was supposed to represent the feelings and aspirations of the people, and another Chamber set over it (so to speak) and, in many instances, thwarting those aspirations, or preventing their being achieved—when they came to look at these things he thought that in all probability our legislation was more rapid and more likely to reflect the feelings of the community and to protect their interests than it would be under Responsible Government. No later than last year complaints were heard by those who did not look upon our present form of Government with favor, and who hankered for the same system of Government as the other colonies possessed,—complaints were made that there were various subjects upon which that House, under the existing constitution, could not legislate, among them being a measure to restrict the introduction of Chinese, and to prevent their going to the goldfields. They were told that the House could not legislate on the subject, yet this very session they had passed a bill as effectually dealing with the question as if the colony had Responsible Government. The probability was that if they had Responsible Government this measure would not have been passed so soon as it had under the present form of Government, for, with the conservative element present in an

Upper House, the probability was that it might be years before a bill of that kind would become the law of the land. The hon. member had formulated some very grave complaints against the Finance Committee, and, although the hon. member disclaimed any intention of reflecting upon the members of the Committee individually, it did seem rather bad taste on his part to find fault with them as he did. Personally he might say that he was one of those who did all he could when the idea was first mooted to prevent this Committee becoming an established fact. His opinions on the subject were in print. He believed at the time that it would lead to discord, and that it would be establishing a power within a power—creating an *imperium in imperio*. But, whatever was to be said about that Committee, good or evil, it owed its existence to the representatives of the people in that House, for it was entirely against the wishes of the Government of the day that this Audit Bill became law. The bill was simply pushed down the throat of the Government, *volens volens*, by the representatives of the people themselves. It was therefore absurd to say that this Committee usurped the functions of the Legislature, for all their actions were open, all that they did was submitted for the ratification of the House, and if the House was dissatisfied with the Committee it was competent for the House at any session to elect others to sit upon it. It had already been pointed out that to a certain extent the powers entrusted to this Finance Committee as regards public expenditure were analogous to the powers entrusted under Responsible Government to the ministry. But he would point this out to the hon. member—that those who constituted this Committee performed their duties without expectation of emolument or reward. There was no ministerial patronage or perquisites attached to the position, and no snug salaries of £1,500 or £2,000 a year. He did not agree with the hon. member that the present was an opportune time for introducing a change in the system of Government. He thought it would be better to wait for a few years, when, with the progress and development of the colony we should find ourselves connected by telegraph with the most distant portions of the colony, and feel that we were

one united community, with a common interest, and that that bugbear of Separation would be no longer dreaded or thought of; when, with the judicious expenditure of money borrowed on the security of the whole of the lands of the colony, and not upon a portion of them—an expenditure incurred in promoting the welfare and advancement of the North as well as of the South—the country would begin to feel the benefit of such expenditure—when all feeling of jealousy between the North and the South had been dissipated, and when they went to the Imperial Government as a united community, and asked for what might then be considered a boon in the shape of Responsible Government—and, in his opinion, it would not be many years before we should be in that position—when this state of things did come to pass he thought there would be no difficulty in obtaining the boon asked for. But until that time arrived, he should be inclined not to advocate the introduction of that form of Government as an opportune movement in the best interests of the colony at large.

After a pause,

MR. VENN said he had waited before rising to reply, in order to allow other members an opportunity of expressing their views, and not give a silent vote upon this most important subject. He was sorry that some hon. members had not considered it necessary to give the House the benefit of their opinions on the subject, whether in favor of his own views or adverse to them. He should have liked to have heard some more cogent reasons than he had yet heard, to skittle (to use a common phrase) the arguments he had put forward. He was in hopes that the debate would not have been settled in one night; but, if such was the wish of the House, he was prepared to bow to it. He should like, however, to say a few words in reply, before they went to a division. If he were to traverse, or to attempt to traverse all the notes he had taken, he was afraid they would not get away before daylight; for he was afraid he would be doing like the last speaker did—take himself right away from the subject. Speaking generally, with regard to the arguments put forward by those who had spoken against the adoption of this motion, he must say he did not think that they had made very much use of

the abilities which they possessed, when they had not said more to the point than they had done that evening. He was very sorry indeed that the hon. member for Perth should have felt it necessary to import into the discussion what he could only regard as personalities, for he had striven himself very hard indeed to avoid it, and to deal with generalities only; and there was nothing in what he had said to lead the House to suppose that there was any split in the camp. He did not admit that there was a split in the camp. If there was, the split was in the hon. member's own mind and not in his. The hon. member had accused him of a certain want of courtesy. He would leave that to the House. He hardly thought, from the character which he bore, that any person could fairly accuse him at any rate of wilful or intentional discourtesy towards any man. If he had been guilty of any political incivility towards the hon. member or anybody else he was sorry for it. But he was not aware that the hon. member had any claims upon him as a member of that House or as a private individual, that he should consult the hon. member on the subject. He never yet had consulted the hon. member upon any subject brought before the House. Individually, he had an opinion of his own, and perhaps the mistake of his life was that he was not in the habit of asking the opinions of anybody else, but sticking to his own. With regard to the present motion, all he asked from hon. members was the opinion of the constituencies that returned them to that House. The hon. member told them that he had borne the heat and burden of the day in this matter. Perhaps he had. He did not say that he hadn't. But he was not aware that the hon. member had done so any more than any other member of the House. He knew of one occasion, and on one occasion only that he now remembered, when the hon. member did deliver a remarkably good speech on this question. The hon. member on that occasion was in accord with the other members of the party; but he could not say that he applauded the hon. member's speech or the hon. member's action that evening. He had always felt that it was a mistake to have brought this question forward when the

advocates of the change were in such a weak minority. He had always felt that when the time came, when the minority became converted into a majority, he would, without asking anybody's leave, move in the matter, if no one else would do so. If the hon. member thought he had acted discourteously or improperly he was sorry for it. He would not traverse the point now in that place. He had every admiration, he had every respect, for the hon. member's opinion as a member of that House. He could say no more. If the hon. member considered that, as regards this question, he held such a position that it commanded the homage of every member of the party, and that he ought to be consulted before any member made a move, he differed from the hon. member. The hon. member said—and on this point the hon. member for Fremantle seemed to agree with him—that there was some little inconsistency in what he had said that evening and what he had said at a certain meeting at Bunbury. It was true that he had met his constituents—he was afraid that other hon. members had not met their constituents—and it was true that he made a speech to them. But was there anything inconsistent in his conduct? The report of the speech was not a *verbatim* report, nor did it embrace anything like all that he said on the subject; and a report like that might make any speech bear a different aspect from what it would if reported at length. He was sure that if his Bunbury speech had been reported *verbatim* it would not have borne the coloring put upon it by the hon. member. The hon. member for Fremantle had gone to a great deal of trouble to fix him, from what he said on that occasion. The hon. member always did go to a great deal of trouble to hunt up what other hon. members had said on some former occasion—he was a wonderful man for *Hansard*; he could always put his finger upon something an hon. member had said on some previous occasion—and, from the hon. member's own point of view, he must say that he had shown a considerable amount of research and knowledge. But, if the hon. member wanted to know why he spoke in the way he did at the meeting of his constituents, without at the same time telling them that he was going to bring this question

forward this session, he would tell him. His mind was made up on the subject himself, but he wanted to invite discussion at the meeting there and then. He was not so soft—he thought himself that a man was simply a blatant ass to say what he was going to do. Let him do it, and talk about it afterwards. They did not want men who were always talking about what they were going to do. They had never heard him do so. He did what he intended to do, and, if necessary, talked about it afterwards. He was not such a blatant ass as to go and tell the electors what he was going to do, but do it. Nor did he, when he came down to Perth, run about to every member of the House and say he was going to do this, that, or the other. He did it. But he had no wish to act improperly or discourteously, or to steal a march upon the hon. member. All he wanted was to have the question brought before the House, and a vote taken upon it, this session. He regretted so far that he had not left it perhaps a few days longer; but it was not out of any discourtesy towards the hon. member for Perth; and, if he had thought the hon. member would have done it himself, he should have supported him, in a more cordial manner than the hon. member had supported him that evening. The hon. member who seconded the motion, speaking generally, said he thought it was a mistake to bring it in at the tail end of the session. If it was a mistake, they could not blame him (Mr. Venn) for it. He had brought it in early enough, and it was at the express wish of other hon. members that the question was put off day after day until the session was pretty far advanced. The hon. member for Perth blamed him for bringing it forward too soon; other hon. members blamed him for bringing it forward too late. What was he to do? As to the meeting of the members of the party, it was not he who called the meeting. He was asked to attend it, and he did so, and, falling in with the wishes of the majority of the party, he was quite willing to act with them, and not to press it upon the House until the land regulations were fairly settled. The hon. member for Fremantle, when referring to his Bunbury speech, said he must have had Lord Derby's despatch about Separation strong-

ly in his mind at the time. He had always had it in his mind, ever since it was first received, and he thought it was his duty to refer to it, and he did so. Had he not already said that if this motion were carried he would move for a committee to frame a bill for Western Australia as a whole, and not go and whine to the Home Government asking what they were going to give us. He thought if the House made up its mind to have Responsible Government for the whole colony we would get it for the whole colony. Was not the North well represented in that House now? He said, yes; and better represented than most other districts, both as regards brain power and everything else. If that House made up its mind for Responsible Government for the whole of the colony, and they passed a bill to that effect, there was not the slightest doubt in his mind that it would have the desired result. He would accept no half measure whatever. The hon. member for Geraldton said he could not go with him because, although he believed in Responsible Government as a means to an end, he could not support it now inasmuch as it was intended to prevent rather than to promote Separation. He had only moved an abstract resolution that evening, and that was all which the hon. member was asked to vote for now. It would be time enough to talk about Separation when the bill itself came before them. He hoped no one would be misled by thinking it was a good thing or a wise thing to postpone this question for another year. In the words of his resolution, the time had now arrived when the colony should adopt Responsible Government, and he hoped hon. members would have the courage of their convictions and agree with him that the time had now arrived. It was no use putting it off. There would be some of them if the motion were postponed for another year, or for twenty years, who would want it postponed again; but he appealed to those who were pledged to support the change to have the courage of their opinions, and to support his motion that evening.

The House then divided upon the question, when the numbers were—

Ayes ...	...	...	8
Noes ...	...	...	11

Majority against ... 3

AYES.
Capt. Fawcett
Mr. Layman
Mr. McRae
Mr. Parker
Mr. Pearse
Mr. Scott
Mr. Sholl
Mr. Venn (*Teller*).

NOES.
Mr. Brockman
Mr. Burges
Sir T. C. Campbell, Bart.
Mr. Crowther
Mr. Grant
Mr. Loton
Mr. Marmion
Mr. Randall
Mr. Shenton
Mr. Wittenoom
Mr. Harper (*Teller*).

The official members abstained from voting. The amendment submitted by the hon. member for York was then put and carried.

The House adjourned at a quarter to twelve o'clock (midnight).

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,

Monday, 16th August, 1886.

Petition: Fremantle Gas Co.—Site of railway terminus at Northam—Aborigines Protection Bill, 1886: first reading—Railway from Bayswater to Busselton: Mr. Dobson's proposal—Import Duty on Hard Wood—Roads Bill: first reading—Wines, Beer, and Spirits Sale Act, 1880, Amendment Bill: first reading—Closure of Drummond Street Bill: second reading—Gold Duty Bill: third reading—Message (No. 13): Replying to Addresses—Message (No. 14): Assenting to Bills—Message (No. 15): re Arthur Edwards's case—Message (No. 16): Replying to Addresses—Message (No. 17): Telegraphic communication with the Kimberley Goldfields—Land Regulations: further considered in committee—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PETITION: FREMANTLE GAS COMPANY.

MR. PEARSE presented a petition from the Fremantle Gas Company, praying for leave to introduce a Bill to extend