

this colony. That is 42 Vic., Section 37. That section provides that any person to whom the Railway Commissioner has let a refreshment room may apply to the licensing bench for a license, and the application cannot be refused. The license obtained is a general publican's license, and the holder of it sells to the public, while he ought only to be able to sell to travellers by rail. The Commissioner has granted as few of these licenses as possible, and he has done quite right. Under the present law it would be quite possible for the lessee of the refreshment rooms at Beverley, for instance, to compete with the outside hotels for the general custom. The Bill now before the House provides that the license may be granted by the Commissioner upon proper application being made, with proper notice. The conditions under which the licence is held will be found in subsection 2 of section 11, and it reads:—"The person so licensed may sell liquor at such refreshment room or stand, and shall for that purpose enjoy the same rights and privileges as the holder of a publican's general license; provided that liquor shall be sold at such room or stand only within a reasonable time before and after the arrival or departure of any passenger train at or from such station; but this proviso shall not render illegal a sale to any person who may be a *bona fide* lodger in any premises let at any such station by the Commissioner for the accommodation of travellers." When the Bill was first being discussed it was proposed to allow a fixed time after the departure of the last train. Half an hour was suggested, but I have adopted the words of the Queensland Act, and I think they will be more satisfactory.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Does the Commissioner decide what is a reasonable time?

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): He has full power to make all the necessary regulations for carrying out the Act, and for the proper control of these places. Provision is made whereby he may cancel any license. It is necessary that he should have full power to do this, for a lessee might do a lot of things not at all permissible on a railway station, and the best way to prevent that is to give the Commissioner every power we can.

MR. BANDELL moved that the debate be adjourned until the next sitting of the House. Motion put and passed.
Debate adjourned.

MESSAGE FROM HIS EXCELLENCY THE ADMINISTRATOR.

DUTIES ON ESTATES OF DECEASED PERSONS BILL.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) presented a message from His Excellency the Administrator, which was read, as follows:—

ALEX. C. ONSLOW,
Administrator.

In accordance with the provisions of Section 67 of "The Constitution Act, 1895," the Administrator recommends to the Legislative Assembly a Bill for the purpose of imposing duties on the estates of deceased persons.

Government House, Perth,
6th August, 1895.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 6.20 o'clock p.m.

Legislative Council,

Wednesday, 7th August, 1895.

Perth Hospital—Williams railway—Donnybrook land resumption—Justices Appointment Bill: third reading—Licensed Surveyors Bill; committee—Married Women's Property Act Amendment Bill; committee—Loan Act 1891, Recapropriation Bill: second reading; committee—Customs Duties Repeal Bill: second reading; committee; third reading—Municipal Bill; second reading—Mines Regulation Bill: second reading; referred to Joint Committee—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT (Hon. Sir G. Sheuton) took the chair at 7.30 o'clock p.m.

PERTH HOSPITAL.

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON: I have to ask the Hon. the Minister for Mines—

(a.) The cost of the new Perth Hospital buildings.

(b.) Whether the whole of such buildings, when completed, will be set apart for the staff.

(c.) If not, how many additional wards and beds will be arranged for in the new building.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) replied:—

(a.) £8,383 6s. 9d.

(b.) Only a portion of the new Building, when completed, will be occupied by the staff, but ultimately the whole will be given up to staff and the administration generally.

(c.) Immediately after the completion, the wards will be:—Five one bed wards, two two bed ward, one five bed ward, but ultimately there will be no wards in this building. It is the present intention that the whole of the new building shall be for the staff so that the present staff accommodation in the old building may be utilised for wards, but the whole arrangement lies with the Hospital authorities.

RAILWAY CONSTRUCTION IN WILLIAMS DISTRICT.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: I beg to ask the Minister for Mines, whether the Government are considering the claims of the Williams settlers to have a Railway Line constructed to that district from some point on the South-Western Railway.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) replied: The Government are not able, at present, to make any promise in regard to this important matter.

JUSTICES APPOINTMENT BILL.

THIRD READING.

This Bill was read a third time and passed.

LICENSED SURVEYORS BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 15, "Surveyor may enter upon lands to survey," to which the Hon. the Minister for Mines had moved to insert after sub-clause 1, the following: "Provided that due notice shall be given to the owner or occupier of such lands of the intention to enter thereon."

THE HON. F. M. STONE: I beg to move in sub-clause (1) line 4, after the word "make," to insert the following:—"Provided that due notice shall be first given to the owner (if resident in the Colony), occupier, or agent (if any), of any owner residing outside the Colony."

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Since proposing the amendment I did at our last sitting, I have looked most carefully into the matter and I find that it will operate prejudicially, and have too far reaching an effect. On the face of it the

amendment seemed a reasonable one, but after having an interview with those who were concerned in making this Bill, I think it is better to withdraw the amendment. This Bill was discussed at a conference of surveyors in the other Colonies, and I am informed that, if my amendment is passed, it will operate against surveyors in this way: In many instances an employer or owner requests a surveyor to survey a portion of his land, and in order to carry out the work, the surveyor may have to go into two, or three grants so that he may pick up the pegs to enable him to get a starting point. When he begin the work he may consider it only necessary to go through one grant, and he may give the owner of that grant notice; but, after proceeding, he may find it necessary to cross a number of other blocks, the owners of which he had not given notice to. In some cases he might have to go several miles to a Trig station for his departure, and he might not know exactly what lands he would have to cross. Afterwards, when he found out, he would, if this amendment is passed, have to stop work in order to give the notices. It is obvious that this would entail considerable delay and trouble. Moreover, the clause as it stands has been the law for some time past, and I do not think that it operated badly. Even if we now pass the clause without the amendment and do find that it operates badly, we can easily amend it next session. I beg to withdraw the amendment, and ask hon members to pass the clause as it is printed.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The Committee then divided on the amendment proposed by the Hon. Mr. Stone, with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	...	...	...	8
Noes	...	...	...	...	...	9

Majority against 1

Ayes.		Noes.	
Hon. C. A. Piesse	...	Hon. F. T. Crowder	...
Hon. C. E. Dempster	...	Hon. J. C. Foulkes	...
Hon. R. G. Burges	...	Hon. S. J. Haynes	...
Hon. E. Robinson	...	Hon. H. J. Saunders	...
Hon. J. E. Richardson	...	Hon. A. B. Kidson	...
Hon. E. McLarty	...	Hon. E. W. Davies	...
Hon. W. Alexander	...	Hon. H. McKernan	...
Hon. F. M. Stone	...	Hon. D. K. Congdon	...
(Teller.)	...	Hon. E. H. Wittenoom	...
		(Teller.)	

Amendment negatived.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: I now beg to propose in sub-clause (2) that all the words after "commit" be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof: "but the employer of such surveyor shall be liable at the suit of the

surveyor to reimburse him, if the act occasioning such damage was sanctioned by the employer." As the clause stands the employer would be completely in the hands of a surveyor. For instance, in going through a fence a surveyor might leave open a gate through which cattle might enter and, perhaps, destroy a garden or orchard, and the employer of the surveyor would be liable for it. By the amendment I propose if a surveyor, during his work, is likely because any damage, he shall get an authority before the employer is called upon to take the risk.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) : I have not the slightest objection to the amendment.

Amendment put and passed.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

The remaining clauses were agreed to, the Bill reported, and the report adopted.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 4.

THE HON. F. M. STONE : Since the last sitting of the House I have looked into the matter on which I asked that progress might be reported, and, having considered the subject, I do not intend to move further.

Clause agreed to.

The remaining clauses were agreed to, the Bill reported, and the report adopted.

LOAN ACT, 1891, RE-APPROPRIATION BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) : It will probably be within the recollection of hon. members that in the Loan Act of 1891 a sum of £25,000 was appropriated for Harbor Works at Geraldton, including a new jetty. Steps were taken to carry out the work at a cost of something like £13,000, and it was arranged by the Government that the balance of the money should be spent in putting the beach in order, in erecting goods sheds, and in making roads and other necessary approaches. At the time this work was about to be done the Mullewa railway was being undertaken, and it was found that the work could be carried out more easily by the contractors for the railway than as a separate work. The consequence was that the Government decided to carry out the work through the contractors, the Public Works Department laboring under the impression that they always

had the balance of the money under the Loan Act of 1891 at their disposal with which to pay for it. When application was made for payment, however, the Auditor-General raised an objection to the request, because he said the money had been voted simply for Harbor Works at Geraldton, including a new jetty. I might point out that Geraldton will be no loser by having the money reappropriated as provided in the Bill, because hon. members will remember that last year a sum of £14,000 was placed on the schedule of the Loan Bill for the extension of the jetty, so that £11,000 has been expended out of the Loan of 1891, and £14,000 has been available out of the Loan of last year. This Bill is, therefore, simply a matter of form in order to get the necessary authority to use the money for a purpose it was really intended for, although not actually stated. With these remarks I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

Question put and passed.

IN COMMITTEE.

The Bill was then considered in committee, agreed to without amendment, reported, and the report adopted.

CUSTOMS' DUTIES REPEAL BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom) : It will be in the recollection of hon. members that in the Governor's Speech at the opening of Parliament, reference was made to certain duties which the Government proposed to take off some articles in the schedule of the Tariff Act. I now bring forward this Bill, which details these articles. The object the Government have in view is to, in some way, reduce the price of living in the colony. Complaints have been made from time to time, particularly in the columns of the newspapers, that the cost of living in Western Australia is very high, and the Government has determined, at as early a stage as it could, to take steps to remedy, as far as possible, some of the causes of complaint. It will be noticed the reductions to be made are chiefly in connection with articles of food ; besides which a principle has been kept in view, namely, that of only removing the duties on such articles as cannot be purchased in the colony. It is not intended to interfere in any way with those who are engaged in production in the colony, the idea being to take off the duty on

those articles which we cannot produce, or do not manufacture. If we were to reduce the duties, it might make the Tariff more embarrassing than it is, and hence we simply take the duties off altogether. The aim of the Government has been to place such articles on the schedule of this Bill as will benefit all classes of the community. The general public are considered to a large extent from the fact that the duty is removed from many articles of food such as tea, sugar, rice, blankets, &c. The farmer and squatter will be benefited through the duty being taken off bags and sacks, cream separators, and sulphur, and the miner will benefit by having on the free list explosives, galvanised iron, oil, blankets, and rugs, together with many articles of food supply. It has been said that the taking off of these duties will amount in so small a sum individually that the remissions will not be felt; but I think, taking the instance of tea, the 4d. per lb. will be felt considerably. No dealer, who is honest to his customers, will have the temerity to still charge this duty after it is taken off, and tea is an article of general consumption throughout the colony. It may be said—it has been said—that this schedule is not large enough, but I think most hon. members will agree that if we were to extend it too widely we should be acting injudiciously, when we remember the great number of improvements we are being called upon to make throughout this growing colony. In these circumstances, I say, the Government have acted wisely in not extending these remissions to too great an extent, although it is hoped that if this colony continues to progress, as it has done in the past twelve months, we shall be able, next year, if we are spared, to propose further reductions. The particulars of the amount of duty involved by this schedule will be found in the report of the Collector of Customs. For the present year it amounts to about £40,000, and if we add to that 20 per cent., as being the estimated increase for the year, the loss to the revenue will amount, for the current year to nearly £50,000. This is as far as the Government feel justified in going, and I hope hon. members will not attempt to increase the schedule, but will allow it to pass as it stands. With these remarks I beg to move the Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I take it that the Bill now before the House is such that it

can be dealt with in one of three ways—we must pass it in its entirety, or offer suggestions to the Assembly to strike out or add different items, or throw it out altogether. It is a most important Bill as it affects the whole community. I have therefore gone carefully into it, and have approached its consideration with the seriousness its importance demands, but I have not been able to see where the benefit will be derived by members of the community in proportion to the revenue that will be lost to the Government. My objection is to the principle of the Bill, and therefore I do not intend to waste the time of hon. members by moving suggestions to the Assembly. There is no alternative, therefore, for me but to move that the Bill be read a second time this day six months. I feel I have a hard task to get members to look at the matter in the same light as I do, but I ask hon. members for a patient hearing, because it is from a sense of duty, and not simply for the sake of being in opposition, that I move as I do. I have already been told by one hon. member that I shall be looked upon by the inhabitants of the colony in a way no hon. member cares to be looked upon; still I am willing to risk this, because I feel that the course I am taking is the right one. I have gone carefully into figures, and if others will do the same, I am sure that they cannot but agree with the conclusions I have come to, namely, that the Bill will really do very little good for the individual members of the community, in fact it will be said that it is simply a delusion. I take it from the remarks made use of by the Premier, and other members of the Government, that this Bill has been brought forward to take the taxes off the wage earners of the colony. If I can prove that it will not do so, or will do so only in a small way, and on the other hand if I can show that by retaining this money and applying it to other purposes, it will benefit the community five times as much, I ought to receive the support of hon. members in the amendment I move. In the figures I am about to quote I have taken the duty shown for the year ending the 31st December, 1894. I do not intend to put on an extra percentage for the current 12 months because, although the revenue in that time may increase, the population will also increase, and therefore the figures, as I have them, will be sufficiently accurate for the purposes I have in view. The schedule of the Bill I have

divided into two classes—one which affects the working classes and the wage earners, and the other which does not. Under the first I place arrowroot, sago, tapioca, corn-flour, and other farinaceous foods, £779 11s. 8d.; cocoa and chocolate slabs and nibs, £663; coffee, raw, £189 9s. 6d.; molasses and golden syrup, £201 13s.; oil mineral, £4,724 18s. 11d.; rice, paddy ground, and meal £1591 11s. 9d.; sugar, £13,305 16s. 10d.; tea, £12,366 18s. 10d.; total, £33,823 0s. 6d. From this total I take mineral oil used for engines, £1,000; and sugar used in breweries, aerated water factories, etc., £3000, or a total of £4,000, leaving a balance of £29,823 0s. 6d. Taking the population at 80,000, this shows a saving per head of 7s. 5d., which will be the individual gain to the working classes. Under the second head I place atlases, maps, charts and globes, £1 1s.; bags, sacks, including corn and flour sacks, gunny bags, ore bags, and bagging in the piece for wool bales and sacks, £918 7s. 4d.; blankets and rugs, £735 18s.; copper, wire, rod, sheet, and ingot, £66 3s.; cream separators, £20; explosives of all kinds not including powder, gun and sporting ammunition and fire-works, £100; galvanised iron, corrugated and plain, £2,235 15s. 6d.; iron wire netting, iron and steel fencing wire, and also standards, droppers, and staples for fencing only, £794 7s.; lead, (sheet, tea, scrap and pig), £83 18s. 7d.; paraffin wax, £10 11s.; photographs, picture cards for school use, £25; sheep dip, £3 10s.; sulphur, £17 3s.; tinned plates and tinned sheet iron, £59 17s.; wool bales, £581 14s.; zinc, sheet perforated, and plain and ingot, £7 19s.; total, £5,660 4s. 5d., and with the amount deducted from the first statement (£4,000), it leaves a balance of £9,660 4s. 5d., or roughly speaking £10,000. Hon. members will see by these figures that the amount that will be saved to the wage earners is roughly about £30,000. That is the outside sum, and I am confident that the real amount will be nothing like it. If we take molasses, which represents a duty of £201 at 2s. per cwt., which means a farthing per lb., the amount is so small that the retail buyer will get no benefit whatever from it. The whole of that duty will thus go into the pockets of the merchants or the shopkeepers; and many other items on this schedule are in the same position. Therefore, in stating that the amount saved by the wage earners will be £30,000, I have rather over, than under estimated. Then taking the population at 80,000, and dividing it by the £80,000

saved, we find, as I have said, that it amounts to 7s. 5d. per head. With regard to the £9,000 under the second head of my calculation, that sum, if divided into the population, will come to only 2s. 3d. per head. Now, if the Government were to retain this £40,000 and apply it to the opening up of stock routes and the building of jetties in the Northern parts of the Colony, where, I am told, fat sheep and cattle are as plentiful as they are in the other Colonies, we should have at once a direct benefit to the whole community. Taking meat at its present prices, 7d. or 8d. per lb.—or even take it at 6d.—I am sure we should find it reduced to 4d. if the suggestion I have just made were carried out. I say 4d. as the limit, because in the other Colonies it is selling at 2d. per lb. Again, taking the population at 80,000, and allowing 1 lb. of meat per head of the population per day, the advantage of the reduction from 6d. per lb. to 4 per lb. would mean a saving of 65s. per head, or a total of £260,000. Some hon. members may say that these figures are too high, but even if we cut them down by one-half, it means a saving of 32s. 6d. per head on a population of 80,000, or a total of 132,000 as against a questionable gain of 7s. 5d. per head if this Bill is passed. This amount of 7s. 5d. per head is so small that it would be of far more benefit to the working classes even if it were retained and spent on public works. I feel that the Government having entered into a huge expenditure, and having borrowed largely to carry out different works throughout the Colony, should be assured that they will have sufficient funds to cover this extra expenditure, especially when those who have lent us the money have looked, to some extent, to our sound financial position when subscribing to our loans. Under these circumstances we should hesitate before giving away £50,000 in the manner proposed—a sum, for aught the Government know at present, they may want sooner or later. I may be wrong, but I feel that I have the country with me in moving this amendment. Those who carefully look into the matter and consider it in the light of this paltry 7s. 5d. per head, will, at least, give me credit for doing what I consider right. Although the burden of taxation through the Custom-house is indeed heavy, the merchants and trading portion of the community are quite willing to bear it until such time as the Government are in a position to reduce the Tariff in a proper and

systematic manner. I do not believe at any time in tinkering with the Tariff. It does all sorts of mischief, and upsets all calculations. Although there is a certain amount of policy in connection with this Bill, it is not what the business portion of the community want. There are no proper lines laid down as to how the Customs duties affect the community. Take biscuits, the duty is 2d. or 3d. per lb. on the manufactured article. On the unmanufactured article, or rather on the different items which go to make it, the duty comes to 1½d. more than the manufactured article itself. I may say, so far as I am concerned, that I am a Freetrader, but I am not so foolish, or so mad, as to think that a system of Free-trade would do any good in this colony at the present time. To open our ports free to the world would mean nothing short of our being wiped out in one act. What we have to do is to foster our industries; as the other colonies, have done by taxation, and the expenditure of millions of money. When we have done that, we may then go in for Free-trade. I would point out if this Bill is allowed to pass, it is only the thin end of the wedge, and next session we shall be asked to take the duty off flour, chaff, and other articles of agricultural produce.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Who says so?

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: It will come; this is only the thin end of the wedge. The only direct gain to the workers will be the remission of 4d. per lb. on tea and a ½d. per lb. on sugar, and this, I have said, is so paltry an amount that it will matter very little. I claim from the figures I have quoted that this Bill ought not to pass, and I hope hon. members will vote with me.

THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I rise to second the amendment, for I quite agree with all the Hon. Mr. Crowder says. I think such a Bill as this, at the present stage of the colony, is altogether undesirable. As the hon. member has shown, the benefit will be very small to the individual, and the loss to the revenue considerable, and I think, if the amount involved were expended on necessary public works, every individual would derive more benefit than he will by the saving under this Bill. I, as an individual, will benefit a great deal more than nine-tenths of the people, because I have many establishments to keep up, and a large number of con-

sumers; but, taking the people generally, I do not think it is to their interest to have this matter brought forward at the present time. If we look at the matter of expenditure, meat is the heaviest item in most households, but we know that sufficient meat can be produced in the colony to supply the whole of the people, if means are provided for bringing the stock to market.

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: And rain.

THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I think, on the average, we have sufficient rain. In the Kimberley district we have immense quantities of stock ready to be shipped if we had but the means of shipping them or of bringing them to market. I think, therefore, instead of passing this Bill, we should expend the money on opening up stock routes, and in giving facilities for bringing the cattle to market, which would be of greater benefit to the people generally than the reductions proposed in the Bill. I consider the Hon. Mr. Crowder is entitled to the best thanks of the House for bringing the matter forward in the way he has done. I know that a great many throughout the country concur in the opinion that the Government have taken an unnecessary step in bringing forward this Bill. It would have been far better for them if they had endeavored to make hay while the sun shines, and have spent the money which they now propose to give up on public works throughout the colony. There is scarcely a district that is not asking for something. In some parts they are asking for improved sanitary arrangements, and for water conservation, and the Government ought not, with these matters staring them in the face, to throw away £50,000, when benefits to the individual will be so small. I therefore support the amendment of the hon. member, although I know that this course, in the eyes of a great many, will be very unpopular. Notwithstanding this, however, I think we should vote for those measures which we consider are most advantageous to the colony generally.

THE HON. A. B. KIDSON: I cannot support the amendment of the Hon. Mr. Crowder, and for this reason: I do not think the hon. gentleman has shown to the House in a sufficiently plain manner how the price of meat is to be reduced, as he says, to 4d. per lb., or even to 5d. per lb. On the other hand, my opinion is that the Government are to be commended for having brought in a Bill of

this character. We all know that the burdens on the people in the shape of Customs' duties are considerable, and any of them the Government can see their way to reduce they should, and they should be commended by this House for their action. The Hon. Mr. Crowder made use of the argument that this Bill will only reduce the taxation to the extent of 7s. 5d. per head. Supposing that is so, it is still a reduction. Then the hon. gentleman says that if the amount were saved and applied to the building of jetties and the opening up of stock routes, it would have a wonderful effect on the price of meat; but I do not see why the Government should not build the jetties referred to and open the stock routes, as well as give the country the benefits of this Bill. There is one thing I am not in accord with. The Government state that it will not do to extend the schedule, but I think they might have gone a little further and have included in the schedule "live stock for slaughter." I do think with the Hon. Mr. Crowder that it would be a bad thing, at the present time, for us to go in for Free-trade. I submit, however, that there are circumstances in connection with the price of meat in this colony which are exceptional. The price of meat is now almost prohibitive to some persons, and I think if the Government had included in this schedule "cattle for slaughter," they would have received the thanks of the community, especially as regards the poorer classes. I do not think I need say more, except to repeat that I cannot support the amendment.

THE HON. E. McLARTY: I must say that the principle which the Hon. Mr. Crowder has advocated is one which I entirely agree with. During the debate on the Address-in-Reply I stated that I was not in accord with the Government in their proposal to remit any portion of the revenue at the present time. Notwithstanding that the Customs' duties are high, per head, I have heard it said repeatedly that, so long as the Government were prepared to open up the country and carry on large systems of public works, the taxation should be borne. This Bill has, however, been passed in another place, and I do not, therefore, feel disposed to oppose it; although, as I have said, I think it would have been better had the Government not moved in the matter.

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: I have not had time to go into the calculations which the hon.

Mr. Crowder has put before us, but I think we can support this Bill without going into them. The hon. member states that the reductions will only amount to 7s. 5d. per head of the population; but in this he has included men, women, and children, and therefore the reductions per family will be considerably greater than the amount stated. I must say, however, that for my own part I would have preferred that the Government had not brought in the Bill, but still, as it has been brought in, I do not see my way to oppose it. At the same time, as I have said, I think it would have been better had the Government retained the money and spent it in opening up railway and stock routes throughout the country. Still, the hon. gentlemen who has moved this amendment must know that the Government can do these works and give us the benefits of this Bill as well. This Government has done more in a few years than any other Government in Australia. We have more railways and telegraphs according to the population than any other colony, and it is well known that with all this we have still a large surplus revenue—enough to build railways to nearly all the goldfields which are at present known. Therefore, it must be to the interests of the country, and especially to the people who live in towns, to have a Bill of this kind brought in. The hon. member stated that the reductions only meant 7s. 5d. per head, but I think I could show more than that if I went into the figures.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: Why did you not take the trouble to go into them instead of making a statement like that?

THE HON. R. G. BURGESS: There are many men in the country who have wives and perhaps five or six children. Some men have 10 or 12, and even 15 or 16, and it is these men we must consider. I am surprised at my hon. friend objecting to this Bill, when he knows that it will greatly benefit the people of the towns, especially those who have to pay high house rents, high prices for meat, and a duty of 30s. per ton on flour. Now, with regard to the 7s. 5d. per head the hon. member has referred to. In my opinion the reduction of the sugar duty will save each family 15s. or 16s. a year, and I believe another 16s. or 17s. will be saved through the reductions on arrowroot, corn-flour, and such like articles. Every hon. member must know that such things as these are absolute necessities

in every family. I know that men on the farms at the present time go without tea and sugar in order that they may be able to pay their rents to the Government. Although the hon. member represents an agricultural district, I think I know as much about the requirements of the farmers as he does. I have mixed with them, I live among them, and do business with them; and I say that this Bill will be of immense benefit to them, especially those who have 14 or 15 children. I do not think, therefore, any hon. member should deny to them such small reductions as are given by this Bill. I do not think the Government are likely to want this money for building railways and jetties, because, as we know, we have a large surplus revenue and other funds from which to provide them. I hope next year to see some further reductions. At present I am glad the country is so prosperous that we are able to afford what is given us under this Bill, and still keep on our Public works policy.

THE HON. H. J. SAUNDERS: I think this Bill is a step in the right direction, because it will enable people to live at a cheaper rate than they have hitherto been able to do. The only two objections I have to the Bill are in reference to the items "paraffin wax and sulphur." On looking at the Year Book for 1894 I notice that these articles are already admitted duty free, and therefore I do not see why they should be upon this schedule.

THE HON. S. J. HAYNES: I shall support this Bill. The Hon. Mr. Crowder objects to it because he thinks the money could be better spent in cheapening the transit of meat to market. If my recollection is right, I believe the Government has already promised that provision shall be made in this direction. This Bill, I think, is a step in the right direction, for everyone in the community must feel that the present Customs duties press heavily. At the same time the Government, I think, are acting cautiously and with regard to safety, and therefore I shall support the Bill as it stands.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: It is my intention to support the second reading of this Bill, for I am in accord with the principle of it. I think the Government are doing right in endeavoring to cheapen the cost of living, and I feel sure that the poorer classes will realise this. These reductions will help many poor families, both in the towns and in the

country districts, and I shall, therefore, have much pleasure in supporting the Bill.

THE HON. J. C. FOULKES: I think the House is indebted to the Hon. Mr. Crowder and to the Hon. Mr. Burges for the interesting speeches they have made. The Hon. Mr. Burges has said that these reductions will not do harm, but will do good. I agree with him in this, and shall, therefore, support the second reading. I cannot help thinking, however, that there are a great number of other items which, if placed on the schedule, would be of great benefit to the country. For instance, there are such things as winnowing and reaping machines, which cannot be manufactured here. They are protected by patent rights, and, therefore, even if we had the factories, we could not make them. I am glad to see that wire netting and materials for fencing have been placed on the schedule. I cannot see why they were ever charged duty, because it does seem to me anomalous that we should endeavor to get people to open up the country, and, at the same time, tax them for the privilege of doing so. There is one item in the schedule I hope will not pass without some amendment. It is the item "sugar." This article is chiefly used by brewers, and I shall propose, when in committee, to exempt sugar used in breweries from the operation of the Bill.

THE HON. E. G. BURGES: There is to be an excise duty.

THE HON. J. C. FOULKES: I believe a motion was affirmed in another place that this should be so.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: Now you want to tax the working man's beer.

THE HON. J. C. FOULKES: In the debate which took place in another place on the subject, it was shown that the reduction on sugar would be no gain to the working man, but that the duties would all go into the pockets of the brewers. I should like to know whether the Government intend to propose the excise duty this Session. One hon. member advocated the repeal of the tax on live stock. I am glad to see that no one up to the present has supported him. There are a certain number of persons who live in retirement in the towns, and have no interest whatever in the country, and who raise the cry for cheap meat. I do not think that even if we do repeal this tax, we shall get our meat one penny cheaper. There are various causes why meat is so dear, the principal one being that we

have no means of bringing our cattle from the North. Perhaps when the market in Perth is built it may do something to reduce the price of meat. For the present I shall support the second reading, and when in committee I shall move an amendment to add after the word "sugar" the words "for jam making and domestic purposes only."

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: I had not intended to speak on this subject, but I think after the Hon. Mr. Crowder's motion I should say a few words. The country, I think, has to thank the Government for introducing this Bill, because we know that it is a very dangerous thing to open up the tariff question. No hon. member who has the interests of the country at heart should object to the remission of the duties as proposed in this Bill. Reference has been made to repealing the duty on live stock, but if that were done it would interfere with the principle of the Bill. The object of the Government is to reduce the duty on articles which cannot be produced in the colony, and I hope the hon. member will not interfere with that principle. After all, the duty on meat is trifling to the individual consumer; but, on the other hand, it means a good deal to the producer. I notice that the Hon. Mr. Crowder divided the schedule with the object of showing that the gain to the working classes will not be so great as has been stated. I cannot see the object of that, because I think we must take the whole community, and then we shall find that the Bill will be a clear gain.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: Take the whole lot; it only amounts to 9s. 2d. per head.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: Whatever it is, it will be a gain to consumers generally throughout the colony.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: To the storekeepers.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: There is no need to waste time in discussing the matter, because I feel confident the Bill will go through. I only wish to point out that if this House adds to the schedule "cattle for slaughter," it will interfere with the principle of the Bill, and will result in the whole thing being thrown out. When the Hon. Mr. Crowder made the remarks he did, I am positive he was not echoing the feelings of his constituents.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: That is my trouble.

THE HON. C. A. PIESSE: I am astonished at the hon. member, who poses as a Liberal, objecting to a Bill of this kind. The duty on flour amounts to about one-sixth of a penny per lb., and in some quarters it is urged that this duty should be taken off. If this were assented to it would mean no benefit to the consumer, and the whole of the duty would go into the pocket of the merchant or the baker. As I have said, however, there is no need to discuss these matters, because I feel sure the Bill will be passed.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I might be allowed to say one or two words in answer to what has fallen from hon. members. I must say I was astonished at the Hon. Mr. Crowder, who poses as a Liberal, objecting to this Bill. One of his remarks was that the reduction on sugar would not benefit anyone but the brewer.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I only took £4,000 off £13,000.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): The hon. member always objects to being interrupted himself, and therefore perhaps he will not interrupt. I do not mind, myself, but we may as well do things in order.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: Quote me properly then.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): I might point out that the reduction of this duty on sugar will do a lot of good to the jam factories and other industries throughout the colony, and even if it does benefit the brewers a little, why should we not try to help them as well as other industries in our midst? I do not see why there should be a lot of jealousy because one man may gain a little more than another under the Bill. Then the Hon. Mr. Crowder says that the Government have no right to bring in this Bill because the amount involved is so paltry. I have always heard that half a loaf is better than no bread, and it seems to me, therefore, that these reductions are better than nothing. I have already pointed out that the Government are anxious not to go too far; but, feeling that we have a large revenue, we decided to reduce the cost of living to the people as far as we could. No distinctions have been made, and every consumer in the colony will reap some advantage under this Bill. It is also stated by the Hon. Mr. Crowder that instead of taking off this paltry amount of £40,000, it would have been better had we saved the

money and spent it in opening stock routes and in building jetties. I might inform the hon. member that the stock routes are already being opened up, and the work is in the hands of a competent man; and, as regards jetties, the Government have made ample provision, and we are endeavoring to carry out what was stated in the Governor's speech. In that speech we said "the low prices obtainable for our staple products, especially wool and cereals, give cause for serious consideration and anxiety." My Ministers propose to meet these adverse circumstances by reducing the transit rates on our railways for agricultural and pastoral produce to the lowest possible paying point, by giving cold storage accommodation on our railways, by the establishment of a Market and Cold Storage in Perth, which is now in course of erection, and by providing good jetty and wharfage accommodation and other increased facilities for shipping at all the ports of the colony. We are making provision for this, and next session, if we find we are able to make further reductions, we shall do so. The Hon. Mr. Crowder particularly objected to the reduction on sugar, because the amount, he said, was so infinitesimal. I think he also advocated that there should be a reduction in regard to the stock tax.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: What next will you put down to me?

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): Perhaps the hon. member will not interrupt. The duty on sugar is £4 per ton, and if it is infinitesimal, the duty on stock must be more so, inasmuch as it will take the duty on three bullocks to equal the duty on one ton of sugar. Then I can assure the Hon. Mr. Dempster that provision is being made for the improvements he suggested throughout the colony, and he need not therefore trouble to vote against this Bill, so that the improvements he referred to may be carried out. The hon. member instanced sanitary improvements and water supplies, but if we were to undertake works of this character I think hon. members would have the right to complain. It is the duty of municipalities to deal with sanitary matters and water supplies, although the Government, as soon as they can, will be prepared to help them. At the same time, it is not one of the functions of the Government to carry out sanitary works and water supplies in any particular town. The Hon. Mr. Kidson said it would be a good thing to add to the

schedule the item "beasts for slaughter." That would be going altogether away from the policy of the Bill. We only intend to take off the duties on things which cannot be produced in the colony, and I do not think any hon. member will contend that we cannot produce meat. The Hon. Mr. Saunders mentioned "paraffin, wax, and sulphur."

THE HON. H. J. SAUNDERS: I got hold of a mare's nest.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittenoom): These articles pay 5 per cent. under the Tariff Act. Then the Hon. Mr. Foulkes mentioned agricultural implements and sugar. I do not know whether he knows the difference between a harrow and a plough, and as regards sugar, his arguments seem to me a little amusing. On the whole, I think hon. members will agree that this Bill is a step in the right direction, and I hope this House will assent to it in the form that it was sent to us in.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 4 agreed to.

THE CHAIRMAN then left the chair for an hour.

On resuming,

Schedule.

THE HON. J. C. FOULKES: I move that it be a suggestion to the Legislative Assembly to add, after the word "sugar," the words "for jam making, confectionery, and domestic purposes only." My object in moving this amendment is that a considerable amount of sugar is used by the brewers of the colony and I see no reason why they should derive so large a benefit under this Bill as they will do if this amendment is not agreed to. It will be remembered that a short time ago a public meeting was held at the Town Hall, and a proposition was made protesting against an excise duty being placed on beer. An amendment was made to it and carried, and judging from that, it may be taken that the people desire that there should be a duty placed on beer. We have no promise that the Government will impose such a duty, and therefore I move this amendment.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: I desire to point out the absurdity of this amendment. If we pass it, it means that a merchant can import as much sugar as he likes, and afterwards sell it to a brewer. When a merchant sells, how is he to know what the sugar is to be used

for? If we pass this amendment another Bill will have to be brought in, compelling brewers to supply returns of the sugar used. The principle of this Bill is to allow articles to come in free which cannot be produced in the colony. Brewers employ a number of men, and spend a good deal of money, and surely it is only fair that they should reap some of the benefit of a Bill of this kind, for, after all, the amount of sugar used at breweries is not very large.

THE HON. J. C. FOULKES: There is a precedent for it. Under the last Tariff Act the duty on spirits of wine is 16s. per gallon, but if the spirits are required for medical purposes the duty is only 4s. per gallon. There has been no difficulty in the collection of these amounts, and I do not see why there should be any difficulty in this instance.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I cannot support this amendment, but if the hon. member moved to strike out sugar altogether I would support him. If sugar is allowed to come in free, there is no doubt a Bill will be brought in to tax beer, and, therefore, I do not think the brewers should be called upon to pay what will be virtually a double tax. It is all very well to say that brewers do not use much sugar. If they do not, all I can say is that there should be an inspector to see that they did use it, instead of rubbish. If sugar is free, there is bound to be a beer tax, and that will be a direct tax on the publican. The amount would be so small that it cannot be charged to the consumer, and the publican will have to pay the whole of it. When in Victoria, I found that the tax was 14s. 6d. per hogshead, and even this was so small when divided up into glasses that the publican could not charge it.

THE HON. D. K. CONGDON: The Hon. Mr. Foulkes quoted spirits of wine. I have done business in the colony for 25 years as a chemist, and I have cleared considerable quantities of spirits of wine. If the spirit is intended for use medicinally I have had to make an affidavit that such was intended, and I do not think it would be a difficult matter to deal with sugar in the same way.

THE HON. J. C. FOULKES: I would make the brewers declare it. I should like to ask the Government whether they are going to bring in a Bill this session to impose an excise duty on beer.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM): Put it on the notice paper, I

should like to say that the Government are not prepared to support this amendment. I shall not take up the time of the House in replying to the hon. member's argument, which I can only describe as being very weak.

Amendment put and negatived.

THE HON. J. C. FOULKES: I now beg to move that this House suggests to the Legislative Assembly to add the following words to the Schedule: "Agricultural implements, reaping and binding machines only." My reason for moving this is that it is in accord with the principle laid down by the Minister that we should take off the duty on articles which cannot be produced in the colony. These machines cannot be made here, because there are patent rights over them. Farther, if we take off the duty, it will be an assistance to those we are trying to induce to settle on the land.

THE HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I shall support this amendment, because we are finding more and more every year that it is absolutely necessary, if we are to produce hay and other like articles at a profit, we must have the latest and most improved machinery. As time goes on we have to throw away the old machinery and buy new, and therefore the addition of these words must be of assistance to the farmers.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM): It is with some surprise that I listened to the two hon. members who have spoken. I hope, however, the Committee will not agree to the amendment because it may upset to some extent the financial calculations of the Government. I do not think the duties on these articles will amount to much, but to add these words will interfere with the principle of the Bill. It is said these articles are not made here, but I cannot see why we should not make them. Although it is said machines of this kind are patented, there is no reason, if we afford some little encouragement, why we should not have inventors spring up in our midst who will give to us even better articles than those now imported.

Amendment put and negatived.

Schedule agreed to.

Bill reported and report adopted.

The Standing Orders were suspended.

THIRD READING.

The Bill was then read a third time and passed.

MUNICIPAL BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE MINISTER FOR MINES (Hon. E. H. Wittencoom): Hon. members will remember that when this Bill was before us last year we dealt with it in a very thorough manner. It was then sent to another place with amendments, which, however, were not accepted. The consequence was that the Bill was not made use of, and a great deal of inconvenience resulted. The Government have now reintroduced the Bill, and when they brought it forward it was exactly in the same state as it was when it left this House with two exceptions. These occur in Clause 99. The 7th paragraph of sub-section 21 is one of them, and it gives the Council the power, which they had not before, of requiring and regulating, painting of lamp posts, telegraph, telephone, and electric lighting poles, and for compelling the removal of any such pole which may be bent, dangerous, unsightly, or not in use. In sub-clause 20 power is given to municipalities to prohibit or regulate the riding or driving of camels through any street. In the Bill of last year the word "prohibit" was omitted. With these two amendments the Bill was introduced, as I have said, in the form that we passed it last year. I hope now it will be passed as it stands, for if it is not, it may be argued with some amount of reason that, having arrived at certain conclusions last year, we shall be showing that we hardly know what we really do want if we make alterations now. Further, it is to the interests of the country that the Bill should become law as soon as possible. Hon. members are aware that certain things have to be done by municipalities by the 29th Sept. every year. And, unless we pass the Bill soon, there will not be sufficient time for the municipalities to carry out the details. Last year great inconvenience was felt, especially on the goldfields, and measures had to be adopted to enable the municipalities there to carry on their duties. The Legislative Assembly have made several alterations. In Clause 99 they have given power to municipalities to make bye-laws for securing the cleanliness of dairies and places used in connection therewith. That, I think, is a good amendment. Milk is largely used as a food supply, and it requires to be dealt with with the utmost cleanliness. The next alteration is in the 6th paragraph of sub-section 27. The words "whether the same have before the commencement of this Act been, or may hereafter be

erected," have been added. This sub-section applies to the removal of verandahs or balconies. The next alteration is in Clause 146, and provides that nothing in the Roads Act shall restrict the exercise by a municipality, when acting as a Local Board of Health, of the powers conferred by the Public Health Act. Probably hon. members know that in some instances it has been necessary to use waste lands outside the towns to deposit the refuse on. The Roads Board have objected to this, and the consequence is the municipalities are unable, without this provision, to carry out their duties. Then it is provided by Clause 155, sub-section 3, that the annual value of rateable land which is improved or occupied, shall in no case be deemed to be less than 24 per centum upon the fair capital value of the fee simple thereof. Under the Bill of last year this subsection applied only to the value of rateable land which is occupied. The words "improved or" have been added. Then in the same sub-section the word "four" has been substituted for "three." In Clause 160 the words "at all reasonable hours," in the old Bill, have been struck out, and the words "between the hours of nine and five in the daytime" substituted. This is an improvement, because it limits the hours when valuers may enter on promises to value. Then Clause 186 provides that Councils may borrow money for the purchase of steam rollers and appliances for watering streets, as well as the other works which were mentioned in the Bill of last year. All these amendments, I think, are in the nature of improvements. Clause 151 empowers municipalities to strike what is known as a general rate, but this must not exceed 1s. 6d. in the £. Then Clause 155 provides what shall be the annual value of rateable land. Firstly it provides that the annual value of rateable land shall be a fair rent. In the next place it shows what shall be considered the capital value of rateable land, which it says shall be taken to be the reasonable price at which such land might be expected to sell. If any person owned a grant in Perth it would be valued at the possible selling price, and that would be called the capital value of the rateable land. Then the annual value of rateable land, which is improved or occupied, is not to be deemed to be less than 4 per cent. upon the fair capital value of the fee simple. Hon. members will see that this is not a definite amount, but it shall not be less than 4 per cent. In the old Bill, as I have said, the word referred to land which was occupied only. It

was thought that, under that, a person who could not let his house, say for six months, might be called upon to pay the higher rate for unoccupied land, but now that the word "improved" has been inserted as well as "occupied," this hardship cannot arise. Then the annual value of rateable land which is unimproved and unoccupied shall be taken to be 7 per cent. upon the capital value. Therefore, if a grant were worth a £1,000 and it was unoccupied and unimproved, the rateable value would be £75. Here it will be seen that the amount is a definite one. I think these alterations are improvements. Then in Clause 164 it is provided that every effort is to be made to get payment of the rates from the occupier, but, failing that, the owner is called upon to pay. Clause 169 provides that if rates cannot be recovered they can be distrained for, but there is a proviso by which the bedding and absolutely necessary household furniture shall be exempt. Clause 195 provides for loans, and says that Councils may strike a special rate, which is not to exceed 1s. 6d. in the £. Ratepayers will therefore know exactly what they may be liable for. I do not think I need say any more except to ask hon. members to pass this Bill as it is.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I have much this pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill, but I cannot agree with the hon. gentleman who represents the Government, when he says we should pass this Bill in its present form because we made amendments last year. The same arguments might apply to the Assembly and they have made amendments. Before sitting down I should like to refer to one other matter. Hon. members will remember that in Clause 155 this Council last year thought fit to alter the rating from £2 10s. to £3, and in Clause 169 another alteration was made exempting goods from distress under the value of £10. When these amendments were sent to the Assembly, that House alleged that we were infringing their privileges, and the Bill fell through. Since then I have carefully studied that able ruling of the President and also the ruling of the Speaker in conjunction with a solicitor. We looked into *May*, and other reliable authorities, and came to the conclusion that this House was perfectly right in making the amendment it did. I think it is in the interests of this House that this question should be raised, and if it were not that this Bill is much wanted I should again move in

the same direction as I did last year.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

MINES REGULATION BILL.

SECOND READING—ADJOURNED DEBATE.

THE HON. F. T. CROWDER: I moved the adjournment of the debate, because, I with other hon. members, had not had an opportunity of properly looking into the Bill. Since our last meeting I have gone into it, and find that it is really an important measure. I have also taken the trouble to refer the matter to five or six gentlemen connected with mines, and they are of opinion that, in its present form, the Bill does not meet the requirements of the Colony. They called attention especially to Clauses 9 and 10, which seem to give power to miners to harass the mine owners and managers. It is not my intention to object to the second reading, because my hon. friend, Mr. Stone proposes to refer it to a Select Committee, and in that I shall support him.

THE HON. F. M. STONE: I do not propose to oppose the second reading because the Bill appears to me to be a necessary one. As the Hon. Mr. Crowder has pointed out, we yesterday met several gentlemen interested in mines, and went through some of the clauses of the Bill. The conclusion we came to was that the best course for us to pursue was to pass the second reading and refer the Bill to a Joint Committee of both Houses.

THE HON. F. M. STONE moved, "That the Bill be referred to a Joint Select Committee of both Houses of Parliament, with power to call for persons and papers, and to report on 28th August, and that the Committee of the Legislative Council do consist of five members."

Question put and passed.

A ballot having been taken, the following members were elected, in addition to the mover, to serve on such Committee: The Honorables J. W. Hackett, H. J. Saunders, and E. H. Wittenoom.

The Honorables W. Alexander and F. T. Crowder having an equal number of votes the President determined, by lot, "That the Hon. W. Alexander should be a member of the Committee.

Ordered—"That the resolution be transmitted by Message to the Legislative Assembly, and its concurrence desired therein."

ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at ten minutes to nine o'clock, p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 8th August, at half-past four o'clock, p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 7th August, 1895.

Personal Explanation—Traffic on Northam-Southern Cross Railway—Construction of East Perth Railway Station—The W.A. Timber Company's Tramway and Land Resumptions—The W.A. Timber Company's Sawmills and Tramway—Incidental Expenses (miscellaneous services); Excesses on 1894-95 Estimates, and reasons for such—Proposed Redistribution of Parliamentary Seats—Justices Appointment Bill: Message from the Legislative Council—Appointment of Joint Committee re Mines Regulation Bill: Message from the Legislative Council—Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill: in committee—Railway and Theatre Refreshment Rooms Licensing Bill: second reading—Arbitration Bill: in committee—Criminal Evidence Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. RANDELL: I rise, Sir, to make a few remarks before the business of the day is commenced. It is generally understood that I have sent in my resignation of the position of leader of the members sitting on this side of the House, and it has been kindly accepted. I take this opportunity of thanking hon. members on both sides of the House for the kindly consideration I have received at their hands during the period in which I have acted in that capacity. I understand the hon. member for Albany has been elected to that position, and he will now act as leader, I presume, of those members who sit on this side of the House.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I should like to say how much I regret that the hon. member for Perth has thought it necessary and advisable to resign the position of leader of the Opposition. During the time he has occupied the position, he has only carried out his duties in the way in which we know he would carry them out. The hon. member, as is well known in this country, has served a long apprenticeship to public affairs; and, when he was elected to the position he has now vacated, we in this House knew that, whatever he might lead himself to, or take part in, he would be actuated by high and patriotic motives. I can only express the regret of myself, and I am sure also of the members on this side of the House, that he has thought it necessary to vacate the position which he has occupied with credit to himself, and credit to the country.

TRAFFIC ON NORTHAM-SOUTHERN CROSS RAILWAY.

MR. MONGER, without notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways to state when it was intended to lay on the table the return recently moved for by the hon. member for Yilgarn, showing the amount of traffic on the Northam-Southern Cross Railway.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied that he had seen the return, which had taken some time in preparation, on account of the great scope of the requirements set forth in the motion of the hon. member for Yilgarn. The return would be laid on the table almost immediately.

CONSTRUCTION OF EAST PERTH RAILWAY STATION.

MR. JAMES, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works when tenders would be called for the erection of the East Perth railway station.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. W. Venn) replied that tenders would not be called, as the construction of the platform was now in progress.

W.A. TIMBER COMPANY'S TRAMWAY AND LAND RESUMPTION.

MR. COOKWORTHY, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier whether it was the intention of the Government to return to the former owners the land resumed by the Government for the purposes of the W.A.