

MR. ILLINGWORTH: They have to be dipped immediately before being put in their place, and now we hear of a proposal to place the pipes on the sand.

THE PREMIER: Surely that is all detail.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It is detail, but it is that kind of detail which may ruin the scheme if it is carried out. It is not for members of the House to enter into engineering matters of that sort, and I do not blame the Government for these things: they must be guided by their engineers. But all the experience of the world, at any rate all the experience in the Australian colonies, shows that the Government cannot carry out this kind of work without increased cost, because they have not the means of control, the means of guiding or directing the work as it ought to be directed. The contract at Fremantle, in which the Government have allowed a man to do some work in such a way that now it has to be undone, shows this. There are a good many things I should like to speak upon, but I know I have trespassed largely on the patience of the House, and I will simply close by saying that I hope that members will carefully consider this point of the reappropriation of the money already voted. The Government have declared that this is to be a question of want of confidence, and we can hardly expect those who have pledged themselves to the Government to betray their party; but there are a good many members on the Government side who hold independent positions, and who are not pledged by any promise whatever, and I hope these members will be found giving their votes according to their consciences, and not according to the place in which they are sitting.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather): The amendment that has been moved by the member for Albany (Mr. Leake) contains, if I may state it in a general way, two broad propositions. The first is that it is inexpedient to reappropriate moneys that have been already appropriated for specific purposes, and the second is that the expenditure of any public money of whatsoever description is detrimental to the interests of this country until all the loans that have been authorised by Par-

liament have already been expended. The first proposition is partly one of procedure, although, as some of the hon. members sitting on the Opposition side of the House endeavoured to point out, beneath it lies a principle, in their minds a strong principle, that should not be departed from, as it is highly dangerous to the interests of good government. Let us examine it for a moment. The fund referred to, out of which the money is to be taken, is, as every member knows, the Coolgardie water loan. It will be within the recollection of hon. members that the scheme appropriated no less a sum than £2,500,000. If the Government, when appropriating that sum, had merely confined themselves to appropriating year by year enough to carry on the works for the year, just as has been done in an instance so well known to us, the Fremantle harbour works, then the application of this principle would not come to us at all. In other words, instead of the Government being placed in a position of taking money from the Coolgardie water loan, it would have come down for a loan direct for the works proposed in His Excellency's Address. But because the whole of this money was asked for all at once and granted by the House, then it is conceded that it is highly dangerous, no matter how changed the circumstances may be since that time. The money was granted because, every hon. member knows that the money market in London, in fact in the whole civilised world, since the hostilities have broken out between Spain and America, has been wonderfully and seriously disturbed; not through the war itself, but through fear of complications which might cause England to be engaged in a European war. That is where the danger lies. That is what the Government see. If the Government went now to the London market for a loan, they would have to pay considerably more for that loan than they otherwise would.

MR. SIMPSON: The Bank of England rate has been reduced during the last two months.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member says that, and he says a



lot of things which show how wonderfully clever he is.

MR. SIMPSON: I suggested that fact to aid your intelligence.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member tells us that the Bank of England rate has been reduced. The rate of exchange of the Bank of England is vastly different from that which is conceded to the people on this side of the equator. It all depends on where the securities are. If the London capitalist thinks it bad to advance money on the security of property in Australia, and that within a reasonable time we may probably have a European war in which England would be involved, do you not think that the London capitalist would sooner have his money behind England and her battleships than in Australia, which is practically unprotected? Therefore the Government, in order to avoid paying a higher rate of interest than they ought to pay for the good of the country, endeavour by this means to use the money that has already been authorised.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: You have not borrowed it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member knows, it formed a portion of his argument, that the money had already been allocated; therefore it cannot be diverted to another purpose, and it cannot without the sanction of the House. When the Government ask the permission of the House to do that, it is done before your face, and if you do not agree with it, we cannot help it; but hon. members know this, that we have to trust to the intelligence of the Assembly, and not to a few factious members on the Opposition side. The next proposition he addressed himself to was that it was highly inexpedient to spend any more money until the whole of the moneys already authorised were used up. I venture to say that even the members of the Opposition side of the House recognise that this second proposition in the amendment is highly dangerous.

MR. LEAKE: They were the Premier's words, last November.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not know what the hon. member will say next, but he always manages to father his remarks upon somebody else. The

hon. member's proposition means this, and this only, that until the last of the Coolgardie money shall have been spent, we must stand with our arms folded without doing one single thing to develop the resources of the country. [THE PREMIER: Hear, hear.] The hon. member told us that it was fortunate that we were able to meet our expenditure with our revenue, but in order to do that we must develop the resources of the country. The hon. member made some allusions, when dealing with the proposed line to Leonora, which showed that he knew nothing about the subject. If he went over the proposed line I believe he would be the first to support it. It is a district which is auriferous from Niagara until it reaches Leonora, and at the extremity of it there is a constant supply of fresh drinking water. There is pasture land where you can even raise cattle and sheep. It is a singular piece of country, and it is simply a marvel that it should lie in such a God-forsaken spot. The Commissioner of Railways has pointed out that the peculiar characteristics of the country noted above formed one strong reason which influenced the Government in favour of constructing the proposed line. The Commissioner pointed out that it would be a wise expenditure of money because it would help not only in the development of the auriferous resources of the country, but also give us a natural reservoir for water, good enough even to satisfy human desires. Now we come to the proposed railway to Bonnie Vale, which has been criticised as a "job."

SEVERAL OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I hear so many "hear, hears" from such various parts of the Opposition side of the House that I am convinced the members who repeat them have done so inadvisedly. They have not, perhaps, ever visited the locality. I doubt if even the member who moved the amendment or the member for East Perth has ever been there.

A MEMBER: You want a telescope to find it, I am told.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If some of those members whose loquacity is about in inverse ratio with their ex-



perience of the country would only visit the locality in question, before they begin to condemn or attempt to criticise the Government proposal, it would be better.

MR. GEORGE: Give us a picnic, then.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Bonnie Vale, it is said, contains only a floating population, but that is incorrect. It contains a constant population, and it is at the present time one of the most thriving places about Coolgardie or Kalgoorlie.

A MEMBER: Have you been there?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes. I know the locality well, or I would not attempt to speak about it to members. The place struck me as one which would pay handsomely if a line were built from it to Coolgardie. It is within easy distance of that centre. The line would go through highly auriferous country, and the time will come when the revenue from that line will not be far short of the revenue derived from the line to the Boulder.

A MEMBER: How many people live there?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not know what the census says, but eighteen months ago, when I was there, there must have been 700 or 800 people.

THE PREMIER: There are 1,200.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The amendment moved by the hon. member for Albany contains these two propositions—that no fresh expenditure shall be incurred; that no further development shall take place, and that we shall stand still until the last of the authorised works has been completed. I asked myself the other evening, when I listened with rapt attention to the clear and lucid manner in which the member for Albany delivered himself, if that member would deliver that self-same speech if he were on the Ministerial benches?

A MEMBER: "There's the rub!"

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is a speech which a man would deliver who had no sense of responsibility on his shoulders. It is the speech of a man who is eager to find fault with anything and everything.

MR. GEORGE: We are all that, you know.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: There is no doubt that the Government have

only to propose one thing, and the leader of the Opposition will always oppose it.

MR. SIMPSON: There is no doubt about that.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If the Government proposed to start a line from Esperance to Norseman, the Opposition would say they ought to start it from Coolgardie to Norseman or not at all; but the present scheme, they tell us, is "a crying shame," "annihilation to Esperance," "cruelty in the extreme," and so on.

SEVERAL OPPOSITION MEMBERS: Hear, hear.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Of course they say "hear, hear." These are the members who have the welfare of the country at heart. They want to make Esperance the port of Western Australia and open the country to the eastern colonies, and when they have done that it will follow, as the night the day, that in a short time an agitation will be got up to separate the western part of the colony from the eastern. [MR. EWING: Hear, hear.] These are the people who cry "hear, hear." It shows us how they can gull the unfortunate electors who put them into power. Each colony tries to take advantage of the other, and when an hon. member tells me he is willing to sacrifice the eastern part of the colony for the benefit of the eastern colonies. I question his patriotism and his good faith to the whole of the colony or to that part of it which he represents.

MR. EWING: That is what you are going to do.

MR. SIMPSON: What are you building the railway to Norseman for?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: It is very interesting to listen to these political jackdaws, chattering like a chorus one after another all the time. Look at the member for Geraldton! I have often thought he had mistaken his vocation. As a "corner man" in a Christy minstrel troupe he would not have his equal. The member for the Swan has not been heard lately, but he is coming to the front once again. I can assure the gentlemen sitting opposite to me that their remarks won't have the least effect in preventing me from making the points I had intended to make. The member for North Perth (Mr. Oldham) has a wonder-



fully gigantic intellect. He would not confine himself to his own electorate during the recess, but must go on a pilgrimage to the goldfields to teach the alluvial digger what he ought to do—a man who was never on the goldfields before, and he knows nothing about them! When he returned he looked so self-important and so self-contained—[A MEMBER: That's personal]—as though he meant to say that if the Government proposed to put anyone in the place of the Minister of Mines but himself, he should endeavour to put him out. The Government have been accused by—I forget which hon. member, because their speeches so dovetail into one another that what one omits the other supplies—the Government have been accused of having put too much in His Excellency's Speech. "It was wearisome," we were told. The member for Albany (Mr. Leake) accused the Government of resorting to the Parliamentary tricks of "secrecy, suppression, and surprise."

A MEMBER: He is reading a newspaper report.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL: I am reading from notes.

THE SPEAKER: The hon. member must not read from notes.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The alliteration is beautiful, and it only conveys to my mind that the member for Albany had studied these three words over, perhaps days beforehand, and finding that they were so pleasant to the ear, he came to the conclusion that they would create a profound sensation in the House.

MR. LEAKE: It is a pity you don't prepare your speeches.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The member for Albany next complained that the Government did not tell the House enough. Does the hon. member want the Government to stand on the housetops and indicate to all the world what they are going to do? When the hon. member takes up the position that the Government should expose their hand at such a convenient time as to give him abundant opportunities for meeting every statement contained in His Excellency's Speech, it is asking for what is done in no other Parliament in Aus-

tralia. Does the hon. member think that the Government are going to walk about and wear their hearts on their sleeves for political jackdaws to peck at?

MR. GEORGE: That comes from "Othello."

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Yes. When I look at the member for Albany and hear him speak, I always think there are some men who will not follow the profession for which nature evidently intended them. There is no doubt about it. The way in which he stands up, the way in which the member for East Perth (Mr. James) also stands up and makes each muscle obey each syllable, is marvellous. It is the result of long practice. You can see, all the while, that it is all the result of artificial training. The words themselves do not give the ring that they would if they came from spontaneous emotion.

MR. SIMPSON: Yours is the native article, I suppose?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I will give my hon. friend an opportunity before I finish. As I was saying, these performances indicate beyond a shadow of doubt that the member who moved this amendment (Mr. Leake) is playing a histrionic trick on the floor of this Chamber. It is but a histrionic trick, to try and gain a catch-vote reflecting on the Government of this country. Would any of those hon. members on the Opposition side who have spoken in favour of this amendment, if they were speaking on these (the Government) benches, speak as they have done in this debate? They dare not do it; and they know it is because they are in Opposition that they are tolerated to speak as they do.

[Several interjections.]

MR. GEORGE: That is a nice word, "tolerated!"

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I cannot help remarking about one thing, and I must say I regret it is the first time since I entered this House that it has been so, that there has been exhibited during the course of this debate a series of pointed and unpleasant personal allusions. [MR. GEORGE: Hear, hear.] The leader of the Opposition, who I thought should be the last man in this House to violate not only the

ordinary rule of debate, but that good taste which a gentleman is supposed to bring into the House, as well as to practise out of it—I did not think the hon. member would be the first to break it.

MR. LEAKE: You are personal now.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I am, because you provoke me. I am pointing out what you have done, and that you are not to be allowed to do it without being punished for it.

MR. SIMPSON: You are going to be punished.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: More interruptions! This is an attempt to make points, not by arguments, not by reasons nor by analogies, but by gross personal allusions, the only effect of which is to reflect discredit upon those who utter them. I may say that I dislike it and condemn it. It is not right, and is not fair; and when hon. members attempt to use it, although I do not complain, yet there are other members of this House less accustomed to public speaking, to whom such interjections are embarrassing, and may affect them in a way they are unaccustomed to. I say this system of running interjections is not right.

[Several interjections.]

THE SPEAKER: Order! Order!

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Once you find you have got the ear of the House, you are attacked with interjections from one member after another. It is unkind and ungenerous, and I say that if, in our debates, we must give hits, let us hit above the belt. I can tell the hon. member for Geraldton, who has raised his voice in those lofty strains which he can so easily affect, and who uses an elegant diction which he can so readily command, that when the time comes for him to sit on this side of the House, he will have to change his attitude, and repudiate much that he had said while a member of the Opposition. I have often wondered how it is that one can play a part, and not recognise the fact that, after all, it is so very thin in its artificiality that it must be easily seen through. I do not like to see a man posing as an oracle—setting up as a paragon of excellence—and speaking of others as being incompetent and fatuous fools.

MR. SIMPSON: I rise, Mr. Speaker, for the purpose of explanation. I was not aware I had used the term "fools" in this debate, nor at any time since I have sat in this House; and, if that is the case, I ask that the hon. member should withdraw the statement.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If the member for Geraldton says he has not used the word "fools," he has used other words equally as opprobrious. [A MEMBER: Appropriate?] I said opprobrious, and I cannot understand why this running fire of interjections is kept up on this occasion, except it be that some hon. members have brought friends here to listen to their remarks and watch their antics, and by these interjections keep up some laughter. I was about to observe that it comes with very bad grace from the member for Geraldton to speak about the incompetency of any person, for I have yet to learn in what particular calling in life the member for Geraldton has distinguished himself, so that he should hold himself up as a paragon, and say "I am beyond reproach." [Several interjections.] The remarks of one member who now interjects remind me of what is recorded of a certain queen in her regard for a certain town, for which she had such great affection that she said that, when she died, the name of that town would be found engraven on her heart: and I suppose it may be said of one member of this House that, when he dies, there will be found engraven on his heart the word "Nannine."

MR. GEORGE: What does it mean?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The hon. member will know what it means.

MR. SIMPSON: Give us an explanation.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If any hon. member does not know it already, all I can say is, he is not a careful reader of the newspapers. His mock modesty is most amusing.

MR. SIMPSON: Give us the explanation. I do not know what it means.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Perhaps these remarks have been rather pointed, but they are provoked by pointed remarks made from the other side. I have endeavoured never to interrupt any member on the opposite side of



the House: but I find that I am subjected, when I speak in this House, to running comments from the Opposition side; and, if members on that side do object to some hot words from this side, those words are brought on by their own indiscretion. I can tell the member for Geraldton this, and I will state it with extreme slowness for his benefit, that the time may come when he and other members on the Opposition side may have to change to this side: and when that comes about, those hon. members who have been trying to run this country down and make out that it is the most distressed part of Australia—for that is the proposition that many of the members on that side of the House have uttered—I say when they are brought face to face with what they have said on that side, and their turn comes to sit on this side, they will want to make out that they never made use of such arguments.

MR. GEORGE: Bosh!

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: "Bosh." of course: but that kind of bosh should never be uttered on the floor of this House, even by members who are so reckless that they do not care how, in firing a shot, they may injure another—the kind of man who would shoot an arrow over a house and kill his brother, regardless of where his shot would go, and whether he killed friend or foe. If hon. members on the opposite side of the House—I allude particularly to the member for Albany and the member for Geraldton—are willing to carry on the same line of conduct as they have done, and as has been tolerated during this debate—[MR. SIMPSON: Tolerated?]—there will be very little Government business done during this session, because the interjections will be so frequent and the debates will be so broken that it will mean there will have to be invoked the authority of the Speaker for maintaining order, or that the conduct of those members will be so changed that they will see the errors of their own bad conduct.

MR. GEORGE: You should feel easier, after that.

MR. OLDHAM (North Perth): I do not pretend for one moment to be an authority on finance; but, taking into

consideration that it is almost impossible for the Government to borrow money on account of the war between America and Spain, and that even for the works which the Government have proposed they will have to borrow money, I think the argument of the Attorney General on that point falls to the ground entirely. It is surprising also to see the hon. gentleman posing as the Chesterfield of this House: for those of us who were new members in the first session of this Parliament will remember that the new Attorney General was one of the first to transgress the laws of courtesy in this House. With regard to the proposed re-appropriation of money for constructing new works, I intend to deal with it from the point of view as it affects the metropolitan district, as it affects Perth and Fremantle. I have been charged to-night with sacrificing the interests of the people I represent in this House: and I made an interjection to the effect that that was what I thought the Government were proposing to do by this policy of constructing a railway from Coolgardie to Norseman. I will try to prove my statement. I know that I may be charged by some members on the Government side of the House and by some on this (the Opposition) side with being entirely parochial. But if looking after the interests of the people who sent me here is parochial, if safeguarding the interests of Perth and Fremantle is being parochial, if looking after the interests of the thirty thousand people in Perth and the twenty thousand or thereabout in Fremantle, and the ten thousand who comprise the population of the suburbs,—if looking after the interests of all these people, one-third of the population of this colony, is being parochial, then I plead guilty. In anything I say here to-night I do not want for one moment to pose as a friend of Esperance. I am not here to champion the cause of Esperance. But, through the courtesy of the hon. member who represents that district, I have had an opportunity of visiting Esperance. It is incumbent on me, notwithstanding the fact that I was the recipient of many courtesies and kindnesses at the hands of the people of that district, to say that,