

thought members ought not to reflect upon this gentleman's capabilities until at any rate they had his report before them, giving the result of his inquiries.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said of course these papers would be laid on the table. He did not know how many reports had been received from Mr. Edwards; he had seen one himself, and no doubt there were others. What he wished to refer to was the observations made by some hon. members with regard to the appointment. He thought it had been made before last session; at any rate it was made at the urgent request of the people of the Southern districts, who brought a great deal of pressure to bear upon the Government in the matter. The Government, he might say, did not require much pressure, because they were aware of the great ravages which this disease was making amongst cattle in those districts. It was pointed out to the Government that there was a veterinary surgeon from Victoria at that time in the colony who was eminently qualified to examine into the disease, and it was suggested that the Government should engage his services. He entered into communication with the Government of Victoria as to this gentleman's qualification, and he found that he was a duly qualified veterinary surgeon, who had obtained his diplomas, and that he had received a proper training in his profession. An agreement was thereupon made with him for one year, at £600 a year, he to pay his own expenses, except in cases where he had to travel to some far distant places. After all, he did not think that £600 was an enormous sum to pay a professional man for one year, to come to the colony and stay here. This gentleman, he believed, had a practice in Melbourne, and had to make arrangements with regard to it. At any rate the Government thought that £600 was not out of the way, and they engaged him for one year at that salary; and he had no reason to doubt his ability to carry out what he had undertaken. He thought if, instead of £600, they spent £6,000 in finding out the cause of this disease and how to prevent it, they would be doing right in the interests of the colony. Hundreds and thousands of cattle along the sea-coast country between here and the Vasse, and

along the Warren country, had been affected by this disease. He did not know the cause of it, but he was sure it was not the poverty of the soil. He believed it was something which the cattle eat, and very likely it was the palm. At any rate that seemed to be the conclusion which this gentleman had arrived at in the report he (the Premier) had seen, so far as his investigations had then gone. He only hoped that the final result of his investigations would be that not only would we find out the cause of this terrible scourge, but also an antidote for it. If we did, all he could say was that the money spent would be very beneficially spent in the interests of the country.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: You will have to change your man.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I don't know why. You cannot say anything against him.

Motion put and passed.

#### BANKERS' BOOK EVIDENCE BILL.

Read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at eight minutes past 6 o'clock, p.m.

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### Legislative Council,

Thursday, 9th August, 1894.

Reservation of Lands for Homestead Leases—Coolgardie Water Supply—Mullewa Railway: Working of—Defence Forces Bill: committee—Bankers' Books Evidence Bill: first reading—Adjournment.

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

#### PRAYERS.

#### RESERVATION OF LANDS FOR HOMESTEAD LEASES.

THE HON. H. MCKERNAN asked the Colonial Secretary, (1) If the Government

had set apart any of the Crown lands, in the South-Western Division of the colony, as open to application for leases under the 18th clause of "The Homesteads Act, 1893"; (2) and if not, why not; and (3) when it was intended to do this.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) replied: The Government has not set apart any Crown lands in the South-Western Division of the colony as open to application for leases under "The Homesteads Act, 1893," because funds have not been available for the necessary surveys, the cost of which it was found would be considerable.

The question of setting apart lands for homestead leases is being considered.

#### COOLGARDIE WATER SUPPLY.

THE HON. H. MCKERNAN asked the Colonial Secretary if the Government had any scheme under consideration for supplying the Coolgardie goldfield with fresh water, other than the dams for conserving the rainfall and the condensers now in use on the field; and if he would place on the table of this House a return showing the amount of money spent in the construction of said dams, and on bores and sinkings for water on that goldfield; and if so, by what date.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker) replied,—

1. The Government propose to put down a bore at or near to Coolgardie, and the Kauffmann borer will shortly be carted to Coolgardie for that purpose.

2. A return is now being prepared by the Works Department of all moneys expended in the construction of dams, and on bores and sinkings for water, up to the 30th June last, on the Yilgarn and Coolgardie goldfields. This return will probably be ready by the 18th inst., and I will at once lay a copy of it on the table of this House.

#### MULLEWA RAILWAY—WORKING OF.

THE HON. H. MCKERNAN moved, "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable, in the interests of the colony, but more particularly in the interests of those people who are connected through trade, commerce, or mining with the Murchison goldfield, that the Government do take over and work that portion of the

Mullewa Railway line which is completed." He said: The notice of motion standing in my name is one which calls for the serious attention of hon. members, in view of the statement already made by the representative of the Government, that there is no intention on the part of the Government to take over that portion of the Mullewa line which is complete. I may say that I have nothing to do with any of the individuals connected with the line, and even were it so the interests of individuals must be ignored where the interests of the public are at stake. We are here to promote the interests of the people of this colony, and my object in making this motion is simply in those interests. I make these observations because I was confronted yesterday, and asked why I was interesting myself in this line, and my reply was that I could not, nor did I think any members of the Legislature could, consider the interests of individuals where the interests of the people were at stake. The time mentioned in the contract for the completion of this line has expired, and for some reason the contractor is using the line, although I do not know who gave him leave to do so. The reply given the other day, that the contractor was carrying the traffic at his own risk and expense, calls for some explanation, for I do not think any individual should have the right to use property which is ultimately intended to become the property of the Government. Suppose an accident occurred, where would the responsibility come in; and how would the liability be met? The necessity for this motion might not arise if the contractor happened to be more liberal in his dealings. We know that the people using this line are the pioneers of the colony—the men who are developing the Murchison goldfields, and when we have the statement that the contractor, without the permission of the Government, is charging three times the ordinary fares, it is time this House should consider the matter. We have the deliberate statement that the contractor is making £1,500 a month profit from the traffic, and this is money which should go, not to enrich the contractor, but to swell the revenue of the colony. It may be contended that no action can be taken, and that the Government are not entitled to take over the line; but we

must remember that the Yilgarn line was taken over even before the contract time was up. So far as I can gather, two and a half miles are incomplete, and for the sake of that small portion I do not see why the balance should not be taken over. I urge this House to seriously consider the matter, and say that it is the duty of the Government to take the line over at once, for the benefit of the people. I beg to move the motion.

**THE HON. E. H. WITTENOOM:** I have much pleasure in seconding this motion, for I should be extremely delighted if the Government could take over the line; although I feel sure there are certain circumstances connected with it, of which I am at present ignorant, which stand in the way of the Government taking it over; and I gave notice of questions this afternoon, which, when answered, will the better enable me to understand the matter. Probably, if the Government ran the line, the charges would be lower; but I have no hesitation in saying that the contractor is affording all possible facilities both for carrying goods and passengers. The conditions are not first-class, but everything is done that can be. If the Government take over the line there will be, probably, a question of compensation to be considered, and if there is, it would be better, I think, to let the contractor complete his work. The traffic amounts, I am informed, to about 200 tons a week, and the average charge is about £3 per ton. Although somewhat high, the contractor is giving every facility he can, and I am sure that the public of Geraldton and those on the fields have reaped considerable advantages by it. There is a certain thing there known as a sand-plain, and if hon. members had been in the habit of driving six horses over it, as I have, they would know the advantages of the railway. I should have been glad had the hon. member deferred his motion until I have obtained answers to the questions I have given notice of; but, at the same time, I agree with the hon. member that, if the Government can take over the line and work it, they should do so.

**THE HON. E. G. HENTY:** I move that the debate be adjourned until this day fortnight. I am quite in accord with my hon. colleague, but I think it necessary, in view of the importance of

the question, that we should inquire further into the matter. I know that the arrangements in connection with the Yilgarn and Mullewa Railways have caused considerable inconvenience to the public; but I would be the last one to do anything to hamper the Government, because I believe they are trying their best to cope with these matters. When the questions which the Hon. Mr. Wittenoom has given notice of are answered, we shall be in a better position to speak on the subject; and I, therefore, move the adjournment of the debate.

Question—That the debate be adjourned until 23rd August—put and passed.

#### DEFENCE FORCES BILL.

##### IN COMMITTEE.

Clauses 1 to 5 passed.

Clause 6: "Defence Forces."

**THE HON. E. H. WITTENOOM:** I move that progress be reported. I was under the impression that this Bill came to us from the Lower House; but, as it was initiated here, we should try to make it as perfect as possible before sending it on, and to do that we must have more time.

**THE HON. E. W. DAVIES:** With all due respect to the hon. member, I think we should go on. We have all had due notice of the Bill, and if there were anything objectionable in it the constituents of hon. members would have called attention to it.

Question put and negatived.

Clause passed.

Clauses 7 to 9 passed.

Clause 10: "Appointment of officers and non-commissioned officers."

**THE HON. E. G. HENTY:** I rise to move that sub-sections (2) and (3) be struck out, and the following inserted in lieu thereof:—"The commanding officer of any particular corps shall have power (subject to the approval of the Commandant) to appoint all non-commissioned and warrant officers in his corps." I do this because I think that if the Commandant is given the power to appoint it will materially interfere with the discipline of the corps. My amendment will give the commanding officers power to appoint, subject to the approval of the Commandant.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. S. H. Parker):** My hon. friend has over-

looked the fact that this clause refers to all the forces—the permanent and militia, as well as the volunteer force. So far as the permanent force is concerned, certainly the Commandant is the proper person to appoint all warrant and non-commissioned officers, and so with the militia. With regard to the volunteers, he is also the proper officer, but in this instance he has the opportunity given him of delegating his powers to the commanding officers of the corps. After many years experience, the Commandant thinks that this power should be retained by the person controlling the forces. He does not prepare this Bill in the shape it is to retain the power himself, because ere long he will depart and a new Commandant will take his place; but, for the proper discipline of the force, he does not deem it advisable to leave this power entirely in the hands of the commanding officers. I trust the committee will allow the clause to stand, for I feel sure that where the Commandant feels he can, he will delegate his power to the commanding officers of the corps. Bearing in mind that we have in our Commandant an experienced officer, and that the country subsidises the volunteers to a considerable extent, there is nothing unreasonable in retaining this power, especially when it can be delegated, if advisable, to the commanding officers.

**THE HON. H. McKERNAN:** I agree with the hon. the Colonial Secretary, although, instead of these sub-sections, I should like to see the appointment of officers made by examination. In England they have competitive examinations, and I do not see why we should not follow their example. If these appointments are made by one man, any amount of jealousy will be caused, which would be done away with if there were competitive examinations.

**THE HON. D. K. CONGDON:** I intend to support the Hon. Mr. Henty, because I think these appointments should rest with the commanding officers.

**THE HON. S. J. HAYNES:** What the hon. the Colonial Secretary has said seems to me reasonable and business-like. The Commandant has the power to appoint, and, as a matter of tact and good judgment, he will, no doubt, delegate his power to the commanding officers. With regard to competitive examinations, I

believe the regulations provide for them. Appointments are made acting only, and then within a certain time the officers have to pass an examination or the appointment is not continued. For the reasons given by the Colonial Secretary I shall support him.

**THE HON. J. C. G. FOULKES:** I had the honour of holding a commission for four or five years in England, and therefore know something about the appointment of sergeants and non-commissioned officers. At Home the commanding officers make the appointments, but they have to be sent on to the colonel of the regiment for confirmation. In nine cases out of ten the colonel accepts the recommendation of the commanding officer. But circumstances are different here. In England the forces are powerful ones, but here the force is small; and I may say, although I do not wish to give offence to anyone, that perhaps the officers are not so good.

**THE HON. E. H. WITTENOOM:** Better.

**THE HON. J. C. G. FOULKES:** Let me except Geraldton, then. We know there is a great deal of talent in the hon. member's district, but it may not always be there, and we have to provide for the future. When I had charge of a company I had to appoint a couple of sergeants and corporals, and I can assure this House that it was a most unpleasant duty on account of the jealousy which arose, and I should have been glad if I could have shelved the responsibility on to the commanding officer or the colonel. I believe it will be better for the commanding officers if the appointments rest with the Commandant. As to competitive examination, it is unworkable, because the man who may come out first in an examination may by no means be the best man to take charge of the company. A sergeant requires tact, and must be a good manager, and although he may possess these qualifications, he may not be good at answering questions on paper. I shall support the Colonial Secretary.

**THE HON. E. H. WITTENOOM:** It seems to me that before we are entitled to speak on this question, we should show our fitness to do so. One hon. member has shown us that he is a member of the rank and file, and another that he has had charge of a company. My right to speak on the present occasion is based on

the fact that I have been an honorary member of the Geraldton volunteers for twelve years, which privilege I obtain by paying £1 ls. a year, and I once won the honorary members' prize at shooting. The question before us seems to involve one of the fundamental principles of the Bill, and I do not think we have had time to consider it; and I therefore hope hon. members will agree to report progress. We are not overburdened with work, and we can the better discuss the question after we have had more time to look into it. I move that progress be reported.

Question put and passed.

#### BANKERS' BOOKS EVIDENCE BILL.

This Bill was received from the Legislative Assembly, and was read a first time.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The Council, at 5-20 o'clock p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, 15th August.

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### *Legislative Assembly,*

*Thursday, 9th August, 1894.*

Loan Bill (£1,500,000): Message from the Governor—Resident Medical Officer for Derby—Small Debts Ordinance Amendment Bill: first reading—Application for Gold Mining Leases—Correspondence re Forfeiture of "Londonderry" North and South Claims—Yilgarn Railway Differential Rates—Friendly Societies Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4-30 p.m.

PRAYERS.

#### LOAN BILL (£1,500,000): MESSAGE FROM THE GOVERNOR.

The following Message was presented from His Excellency the Governor: "In accordance with the requirements of sec-

tion 67 of the Constitution Act, the Governor recommends to the Legislative Assembly that an appropriation be made out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund, for the purpose of a Bill intituled 'An Act to authorise the raising of a sum of one million five hundred thousand pounds, by loan, for the construction of certain public works, and for other purposes.'

"Government House, Perth, 11th August, 1894."

#### APPOINTMENT OF RESIDENT MEDICAL OFFICER, DERBY.

MR. A. FORREST, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier when the Government intended to appoint a Resident Medical Officer for Derby, in the West Kimberley District, the salary for such officer being provided on the Estimates.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied that the appointment would be made as soon as a suitable officer could be obtained.

#### SMALL DEBTS ORDINANCE AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by MR. BURT and read a first time.

#### APPLICATIONS FOR GOLD MINING LEASES.

MR. SIMPSON, in accordance with notice, moved that a return be laid upon the table of the House, showing—

1. The number of applications for gold mining leases in the Mines Department, about which no decision has yet been come to.

2. The dates of such applications, and the various localities in which such leases are situated.

Question put and passed.

#### FORFEITURE OF "LONDONDERRY" CLAIMS (NORTH AND SOUTH).

MR. LEAKE: I rise to move the motion standing in my name—"That all papers be laid upon the table of the House relating to the forfeiture of the Londonderry North and South leases, on the Coolgardie goldfield, the applicants for the leases being Messrs. Huxley and Miles." I do this in consequence of the decision arrived at yesterday by the Executive Council, upholding the claim of the jumpers of these leases. In mov-