

motion. At Mulline and a number of similar places, there was only a mail custodian, and he (Mr. Gregory) would like an assurance that "post office" should mean any place to which mails were sent and distributed.

MR. KINGSMILL (Pilbarra): Instances could be given of places which had no miners' institute, post office, or any institution of the kind. At one place in his own constituency they were going to have a miners' institute, but had to "swap" it away for a lock-up; and there were many centres of population, certainly not large centres, but still large enough to entitle the residents to the same rights as the other people of the colony, where there was no building whatever answering the description in the motion as amended.

THE PREMIER: There was a post and telegraph office at every place in the hon. member's district.

MR. KINGSMILL: That was not so. At the 40-Mile, where there was a population of fully 200 people, there was no post office, though it was true a mail was carried there and distributed by some local storekeeper or butcher.

THE PREMIER: These places were generally deserted after a post office had been provided.

MR. KINGSMILL said he had no intention of being captious, fractious, or anything of the sort, but really the statements of the Premier were derogatory to his (Mr. Kingsmill's) electorate. Outside of his own electorate he knew of a place on the new line to Phillips River, where a population of 150 men had no post office, and would not have for some time to come. These men ought to have every opportunity of getting on the roll, and of finding out whether they had been placed there.

THE PREMIER: We were not at present engaged in passing a law, but in discussing a motion, in the spirit of which members should act, and not go into particulars, as was being done. One of the reasons he objected to the motion as originally proposed was that "public institutions" was so wide a term, that it would include a gaol, and his desire had been to make the proposal more definite.

MR. LOCKE (Sussex) suggested that copies of the rolls should be handed to hon. members, who could then distribute

them in outlying districts in their electorates.

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

#### ADJOURNMENT.

On motion by the PREMIER, the House adjourned at 5:44 o'clock until the next evening at 7:30.

### Legislative Council,

Thursday, 7th June, 1900.

Elections for the Council, Additional Municipal Institutions Act, an Amendment—Agent General Knighthood Question: Lead Ore, Export, etc.—Federation Enabling Bill, Standing Orders suspended, second reading, in Committee (amendments), third reading—Chairman of Committee: Election—Paper presented—Adjournment.

THE PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

#### PRAYERS.

#### ELECTIONS FOR THE COUNCIL, ADDITIONAL.

HON. A. P. MATHESON asked for an intimation from the President as to what steps were contemplated in regard to electing four additional members to the Council, the amended Constitution Act providing for an increase from 26 to 30 members. Writs would have to be issued for the vacant seats, and the electors in his district were anxious to know when the writs would be issued.

THE PRESIDENT: Formal notice had better be given of a question of this kind, to the leader of the House.

#### MUNICIPAL INSTITUTIONS ACT, AN AMENDMENT.

HON. R. S. HAYNES, in giving notice of his intention to introduce a Bill to amend the Municipal Institutions Act

1895, pointed out that, according to the Notice Paper, it was the intention of the Colonial Secretary to move the suspension of the Standing Orders relating to the passage of public Bills; and as the amending Bill he desired to introduce was for the purpose of putting people on the roll under the present Act, he desired to know whether, if the Standing Orders were suspended, he would be at liberty to move the first reading during the present sitting.

**THE PRESIDENT:** That would be for the House to decide. The hon. member could only give formal notice now.

#### AGENT-GENERAL'S KNIGHTHOOD.

**THE PRESIDENT** informed hon. members that he had received the following in reply to the congratulatory message sent to Sir E. H. Wittenoom on his receiving the honour of knighthood:—"Congratulations sincerely appreciated.—WITTENOOM, London."

#### QUESTION—LEAD ORE, EXPORT, etc.

**HON. J. M. DREW** asked the Colonial Secretary: 1. The number of tons of lead ore exported from Western Australia during each year from 1873 to 1883. 2. The estimated value of the same. 3. The number of tons of lead ore imported into Western Australia during the years 1898 and 1899. 4. The estimated value of the same.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** replied:—

| Year. | Quantity.<br>Tons. | Value.<br>£ |
|-------|--------------------|-------------|
| 1873  | 964.50             | 11,586      |
| 1874  | 2,143.75           | 25,725      |
| 1875  | 2,289.00           | 27,468      |
| 1876  | 2,191.50           | 26,298      |
| 1877  | 3,955.50           | 47,466      |
| 1878  | 3,617.50           | 43,410      |
| 1879  | 2,725.00           | 33,300      |
| 1880  | 1,921.00           | 15,368      |
| 1881  | 1,400.50           | 11,204      |
| 1882  | 1,793.50           | 14,348      |
| 1883  | 1,038.00           | 7,266       |
| Total | 24,090.75          | 263,439     |

I am able to answer only questions 1 and 2, but the other information is in course of preparation, and I will take an opportunity of communicating it either to the House or the hon. member.

#### FEDERATION ENABLING BILL.

Standing Orders suspended by resolution, to facilitate the stages of the Bill.

#### SECOND READING.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY** (Hon. G. Randell), in moving the second reading, said: Before proceeding to deal very shortly with the clauses of the Bill which has been introduced to enable the House to place the question of federation before the country, I desire to correct an error into which I fell in the few remarks I made on the Address-in-reply. I was then under the impression that Mr. Matheson had voted against both the Commonwealth Bills then before the House being sent to the people; but on reference to *Hansard* I find that hon. member seconded the motion for a referendum on the two Bills, namely the Commonwealth Bill as agreed on by the Premiers, and the Bill as recommended by the Joint Select Committee—and also voted with me and two others in favour of that course being adopted. I am sorry I misrepresented the hon. member, and I am sure he is aware I did not do so designedly, but from a lapse of memory at the time: I take the first opportunity to put the matter right. Of course the hon. member opposed the sending of the Committee's Bill, after various manipulations of the question in this House. I only propose to draw attention to two or three points in the Enabling Bill hon. members have in their hands, the Bill itself requiring no explanation from me. The first alteration made is in the preamble, which provides that the Commonwealth Bill shall be sent to the electors with this proviso: "Subject to the amendments of the Imperial Parliament." Members are aware that this Bill is being dealt with by the Imperial Parliament at the present time, and as it is certain that some amendments at any rate will be made in it, and that those amendments will be accepted by the colonies interested, we shall be quite safe in inserting a provision of this kind. The interpretation of "Constitution" is as follows:—"The draft of a Federal Constitution for Australia set out in the Fifth Schedule hereto, subject to the amendments of the Imperial Parliament." "Elector" is defined as "A person who is qualified

and entitled to vote for the election of a member of the Assembly at the time of the taking of the poll hereinafter mentioned, or who is at such time the holder of a voter's certificate issued under the provisions of this Act." It is further provided in the closing sentence of Clause 2 that "this section shall not extend to or affect the interpretation of any terms used in the Constitution." I take it that is a legal provision put in for the purpose of protecting anything which may have escaped the notice of the drafters of the Bill. Members know that the Bill is to be submitted to the votes of the electors on the 31st July, the date having been altered in consequence, I think to some extent, of representation from the Premier of Victoria, Mr. McLean. The third clause also provides that the roll shall be taken throughout Western Australia on the same day, and Western Australia is to be one electorate. "Each voter shall vote by ballot, 'yes' or 'no' on the question, in accordance with the direction on the ballot paper in the First Schedule hereto." It is also provided that no elector shall vote more than once, notwithstanding that his name appears upon more than one electoral roll of the colony. This is the principle of one man one vote.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: One adult one vote.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Yes. The clause also says: "Any person who votes or attempts to vote more than once shall be liable, upon conviction before any two justices, to a penalty not exceeding fifty pounds, or to be imprisoned for a period not exceeding six months."

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The penalty is not sufficiently high.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I think it would deter any man from attempting to get the advantage of voting more than once.

A MEMBER: I do not think he will get much advantage.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: In my opinion he will not get any advantage. The penalty for voting or attempting to vote more than once is, as I say, put at £50 or six months' imprisonment. Clause 4 provides that "The returning officer, in addition to the powers and duties vested in and imposed upon him by this Act, shall have such of the powers

and shall perform such of the duties of a returning officer appointed under the Electoral Act, 1899, as are necessary for carrying into effect the provisions of this Act." The returning officers are also to act as assistant returning officers for the purposes of this Bill, and, in addition to the powers and duties vested in and imposed upon them by this Bill, shall have such of the powers and shall perform such of the duties vested in and imposed upon returning officers under the said Electoral Act as are necessary for carrying into effect the provisions of this Bill. Clause 6 provides that "the rolls existing for each electoral district at the commencement of the Electoral Act, 1899, shall be used for taking the poll under the provisions of this Act." Clause 7 provides that any adult person of either sex may obtain a voter's certificate; that is in addition to the qualification possessed by any person who is on the electoral roll. Such person "may obtain a voter's certificate on making an application therefor, in the form of the Second Schedule hereto, to the registrar or assistant registrar for the electoral district." I may mention that it is intended to appoint a considerable number of assistant registrars, so that every facility possible will be given to electors to obtain their certificates and record their votes, if they are so minded. The clause also says: "Voters' certificates issued for each polling place within each electoral district shall be numbered consecutively." Of course members will see at a glance why that provision is made. The first intention was to number the certificates consecutively from headquarters, but now each polling place will have certificates, which will be numbered consecutively; so that I think this is another provision which will prevent duplicate voting, though, in my opinion, no one will run the risk of attempting to vote twice. If a person does vote twice, it will be merely through a mistake resulting from defective information or some other cause of that description. I may point out also that these certificates can be issued up to the 28th July; that being scarcely two clear days before the polling takes place. I think that as liberal provision has been made as it is possible to make, and I hope that it will satisfy the voters of the country. Sub-

clause 4 says: "Any person to whom a voter's certificate is issued may, on producing and delivering up the same to the assistant returning officer or other presiding officer, vote at the polling place therein named within the electoral district"—it is important to understand this—"for which such certificate was issued, but not elsewhere." An assistant returning officer may, to prevent personation or the handing over by one person of the voter's certificate to another, if that voter shall be unable to attend to record his vote, request the person presenting the certificate to indorse his name on the back of it. The penalties attaching to such personation or attempted personation are those which attach to the commission of wilful and corrupt perjury, and a person may be punished accordingly. Clause 8 says: "Every elector whose name is on a roll existing for an electoral district at the commencement of the Electoral Act, 1899, who resides more than thirty miles from the nearest polling place of the electoral district for which he desires to vote, or who, after the issue of the writ and before the day fixed for taking the poll, is within any other electoral district, may apply to a resident magistrate or some other person appointed by the Governor in that behalf, for leave to vote in absence."

HON. R. G. BURGESS: The distance is too far.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A person may apply to the resident magistrate or other person appointed to take his vote as an absent voter, and the provisions laid down here in the sub-clause are, I believe, though I have not compared them, exactly in accord with the provisions prevailing at the present time; and although in reading them they seem to be very considerable, I have found on the very few occasions on which I have recorded my vote as an absent voter that they are very simple indeed and occupy no time. Clause 9 provides that "Every assistant returning officer and every presiding officer shall, for the purpose of making the return hereinbefore mentioned, permit any electors, not being more than six in number, to be present when the ballot box is being opened and the votes are being counted." I think that will be a sufficient number of electors

to be present to carry confidence to the outside public. I believe the practice generally pursued, but perhaps a little extended in some of the more populous districts, is to have two scrutineers and perhaps more, and these are authorised to attend when the counting of the votes is taking place. Their presence would be a sufficient safeguard against any possible abuse of the privacy of the ballot box. The last paragraph of the clause says: "Every return to be made under this section may be transmitted by telegraphic message or messages under the provisions of the Electoral Act, 1899." Clause 10 provides that "the total number of votes given for the acceptance of the Constitution, and the total number of votes given for the rejection of the Constitution, shall be indorsed upon the writ by the returning officer, who shall forthwith return the writ so indorsed to the Governor. The result of the poll so indorsed shall be published in the *Government Gazette*. Such publication shall be conclusive evidence of the result of the poll." Clause 11 provides that "Upon the taking of the poll as aforesaid, the majority of votes given shall decide the question of the acceptance or rejection of the Constitution; and if the Constitution is thereby rejected, no further action shall be taken under the provisions of this Act." That is a very important clause, and perhaps will not be satisfactory to all of us, but it has been decided apparently that the majority shall settle this question. However, I may point out that there remains still an opportunity for the action of Parliament, because the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council separately have to agree to the Address to be sent forward to Her Majesty praying that Western Australia may be admitted as an original State of the Commonwealth. I do not see how we can very well adopt any other course than that of taking a majority vote, and we can hardly expect that there will be so narrow a majority as one. If such a thing should happen, of course the Legislature would have it within its power to consider the question, and say whether it would be right and proper with a majority of that description to transmit an address to Her Majesty the Queen. I repeat it is

scarcely to be anticipated that there will be such close polling as that. I know it is anticipated there will be a considerable number of electors who will register their votes against the acceptance of the Constitution; but I am not sufficiently well acquainted with the circumstances of the various electorates of the colony to predict what the result of the referendum will be, and if I were I would not attempt to predict it. Time will show the feelings of the electors. All I can say is that I hope, and I think we have a right to expect, that the electors of the colony will remember that this is a very serious occasion, and I may say crisis, in the history of Western Australia. I have no doubt that they, as well as the members of this House, will approach the subject very carefully and with due consideration of the responsibilities thrown upon them as to the future welfare of the colony in which they reside. We can hardly anticipate, however, that some of those who have been with us only for a short time, and who possibly purpose not to remain here, will take the same view of things as is taken by those who have been settled here for many years, or who purpose to remain here and to devote their energies and abilities to the building up of the country. I say we can scarcely expect that they will be animated by the same motives. Still I think it is reasonable on our part to assume that the voters who will vote upon this question will approach it in the spirit I have indicated. This subject is serious from the point of view that the step taken will be irrevocable; that, having once taken the step and become portion of the Commonwealth, there is no seceding from it except through strife, and strife which may involve, perhaps, bloodshed. However, we may hope that nothing of the sort will occur. I trust that the various colonies of this great island continent will work together for the public good, if they are combined in one great federation. As I said the other day when speaking upon this question, possibly events may show that the anticipations we have formed are beside the mark either on the one side or the other, but I myself feel a very great amount of concern as to what will be the future of this colony, if we take this important step. Nevertheless, I feel it is only right

that the people of the country should have a voice in this matter, and if, after due and careful consideration of the whole of the circumstances connected with it, and after all the light that has been attempted to be thrown upon the subject from various points of view, especially by Mr. Whitcombe, they think that in the best interests of this colony it is desirable we should federate with the other colonies, then it will be the duty of not only the members of this House but of every citizen to accept the decision in a proper spirit. I trust that after the step has been taken heartburnings and disagreements will disappear, and it should be our endeavour to look around and see the best way to promote the interests of the country.

I do not know that I need say more, but will repeat that this is a very important epoch at which we have arrived, and to-day or to-morrow we will arrive at a decision whether the Bill shall be remitted to the people of the country, to the adult population, to vote upon and give their decision. I think it is right and proper to remit the question for the consideration of the people and for their vote. The Governor has power to make certain regulations, which is a necessary feature in the Bill, because there are many things which have to be provided for, and which can only be done by regulations, which must be in harmony with the clauses of the Bill. The expenses of the referendum, which will be very considerable no doubt, have to be defrayed from the general revenue of the country.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Do you know what it is expected the expenses will be?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I have no idea, but I believe they will be very considerable. Every election costs a considerable amount of money, but this election must cost more, because of the large number of people appointed for the purpose of taking the poll and giving certificates, and many other things, and the great extent of territory we have necessarily makes every action of this kind much more expensive than in a country where the population is more compact. I am afraid I have not dealt with the Bill in a manner which I should have liked: I have not had much time to look into the subject. I have only attempted to point out a few of the leading features of the

Bill to hon. members, and if I have been of any help to them in fixing their attention on the points to which I have alluded—I do not know that I have omitted points of any consequence—I shall be only too glad. With these few remarks I beg to move the second reading of a Bill to make provision for the acceptance and enactment of a Federal Constitution for Australasia.

HON. R. S. HAYNES (Central): The Government are to be congratulated on having forced the Bill to its present stage, but for my own part I do not feel disposed to rush the measure through. The Colonial Secretary has said that this is an important measure. So it is, one of the most important which has ever been brought before the House; and at least we ought to devote sufficient attention to it to see that we shall not make any mistake, and to see that the provisions of the clauses carry out the intention. Time after time measures have been brought down to this House at the close of the session, after we have been waiting months for them—in this case we have been waiting years—they are brought down, and we are asked to rush them through. I agree with the Colonial Secretary that in view of the circumstances no time should be lost, and that the Standing Orders should be suspended, so that a day may not be lost in sending the Bill to the people. At the same time I hope members will weigh each clause, especially those referring to the sending of the Bill to the people. If I remember aright, the speech with which Parliament was opened said that this Bill was to be sent to the electors on the electoral rolls. Now we find that it is to be sent to the electors and other persons who may become qualified to vote. I do not think sufficient attention has been paid to Clause 6, which says:—"The rolls existing for each electoral district at the commencement of the Electoral Act, 1899, shall be used for taking the poll under the provisions of the Act." What is the roll existing at the date of the coming into operation of the Electoral Act? The rolls in existence are those at present in existence. I have heard the Colonial Secretary say the rolls were in a somewhat deplorable condition, and it is admitted on all hands that they do not represent—

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not think I said that.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I was going to say a stronger word, but if the Colonial Secretary did not use that word, it was a word very like it. He may have said the rolls were in an unsatisfactory condition.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Perhaps I did.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: If the rolls were then in an unsatisfactory condition, they are in an unsatisfactory condition to-day.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: That does not prevent people getting on the rolls.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I do not know whether hon. members have taken the trouble to look at the effect of the Electoral Act of 1899. Under that law any person residing in the colony for six months, subject to certain conditions, may apply to have his or her name put on the roll, and the date when the claim is sent in to the electoral registrar is taken as the date of registration, but it does not take effect until the name has been on the roll for six months. I want to make that clear to the House. A great number of people who have applied to be put on the roll recently consider they are on the roll, because there has been a Revision Court, and the roll has been passed at that Court; but when those people go to vote they will find that after being on the roll for six months they are not able to vote. We shall have two classes of persons on the roll, those who are entitled to vote and those who are not. The Act is misleading, and a set of circumstances could not have been produced which are more misleading. I do not know whether the Colonial Secretary follows me?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I do not quite.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Under the present electoral law a person who has been in the colony for six months can apply to be placed on the roll. The claim is received by the electoral registrar, but the person is not entitled to vote until he or she has been six months on the roll, or unless the name has been six months on the roll and has been transferred from another electoral district. When the poll is about to be taken, the returning officer will prepare the roll and strike off the names of all persons which have not

been there for six months. I am referring to Section 87. That will be the roll used when the referendum goes to the people. Several thousands of people have already been placed on the roll, and those people will consider they are on the roll and entitled to vote, therefore they will not go to the trouble of taking out voters' certificates, and when they go to vote they will not be entitled to do so.

HON. H. LUKIN: That is their look out.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: If it is the wish of the House that every man who has been in the colony for twelve months, or as I shall move presently six months, is to vote in the referendum, let us be honest. Section 87 says:—

The lists of voters shall be lists of the electors on the roll who have been registered for six months, or whose names have been transcribed from the rolls and electoral lists existing at the commencement of this Act, or from the electoral list of a municipality or road board as hereinafter provided; and such lists shall be signed by the Returning Officer and delivered to the presiding officers before the hour for commencing the poll, for their guidance during the polling.

We will say the 31st July is the date fixed for taking the referendum: on that date each electoral registrar will look through the roll and find that certain names have not been there for six months. He will score these names out, and that is the roll he is bound by; the returning officer is bound only to accept those names on the roll; consequently those persons who, during the past six months, have made application to the electoral registrars to be placed on the electoral rolls will not be entitled to vote, although those persons have had their names passed by the Revision Court; and when those persons go to the poll they will not be entitled to vote. If the Colonial Secretary can show me any way in which we can get over that difficulty, I am content to let the clause stand as it is. I said at the first meeting of the House this session that I was in favour, and that I would test the feeling of the House on the point, that all persons resident in the colony for six months, on making application at any time before the time limited for the granting of the voters' certificates, should be entitled to vote.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: You might just as well ask the "man in the street," and let him vote as he likes.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I do not know that the man who has been here twelve months is to be respected more than the man who has been here six months. Some persons who have been here six months can vote because their names are on roads boards or municipal lists; therefore they are transferred to the ordinary rolls, and the persons can vote.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: A person might go away after he has been in the colony for six months.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I can understand a person making an objection, on solid ground, against my argument, but I cannot understand a man "straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel." When the time comes I shall move that a person who has been in the colony for six months shall be entitled to vote. With reference to other portions of the Bill, the matter has practically been talked threadbare, and I do not propose to say anything in regard to them. I do not think the Bill requires any amendment further than that which I have pointed out. I certainly support all the other clauses, and I hope the House will be unanimous in making the referendum as liberal as possible, and will afford every opportunity to people to get on the roll. If that is the intention of the House, we shall not be long in coming to a conclusion. When in Committee on this Bill I shall move an amendment to Clause 6, making it clear what rolls shall be used, and I propose to move an amendment that after "1899" in Clause 6, certain words be included, which will be necessary if the measure, notice of which I gave this evening, passes into law, to include 618 ratepayers in Perth who have been disfranchised, and who probably do not know they have been disfranchised, and when they apply at the polling places, they will find they are not on the roll. This is the state of affairs, not only in Perth, but in Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie, as well as in Fremantle. Numbers of persons have been taken off the municipal roll, and consequently their names will be struck off the parliamentary roll. I therefore propose to add to this clause the words:

Including also the names of all persons lawfully added thereto by proclamation or otherwise now or hereafter to be made in pursuance of the said Act.

I do this for the purpose of making provision for the reception of fresh names, or for the exercise of the right to vote by persons who have been excluded from the municipal roll through some misunderstanding on the part either of the electors or of the municipalities themselves. Subject to this, I shall have much pleasure in supporting the passing of the Bill into law.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE (Central): I do not like to let the first occasion on which this House has an opportunity of speaking on the Bill for referring this question to the people pass without expressing my disappointment. We have had no good reason given us yet by the leader of the House why this Bill should be carried. Of course, I can understand the hon. member (Hon. G. Randell) is only too glad to jibe at me, as he says for treating this as a light matter; but I have never yet spoken on the merits of the Bill, either in this House or elsewhere.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I thought you interjected "light."

HON. R. S. HAYNES: No; Mr. Piesse did so.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: I beg pardon. I thought Mr. Whitcombe was the interjector.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: I think it would have been well had the leader of the House given some reasons why we should support this Bill and carry it into law, and offered us some attempted explanation of the clauses to which considerable objection has been and probably will be taken. I do not like the way in which the measure has been brought before us. It ought to have been brought to us last year, if there be anything in the position the Government are taking up to-day, instead of time being wasted in abortive attempts to obtain certain amendments. Nearly twelve months has been wasted in these attempts, unauthorised either by Parliament or by the people, to obtain certain amendments; and particularly I do not like, when these attempts have failed, that there should be no explanation why the time has been wasted, and why the Bill is now thought desirable which six months ago was thought undesirable. I mean the Bill as it now stands. If, as we understand, the objection taken in the Eastern colonies to

the amendments proposed on behalf of this colony was that the Commonwealth Bill as originally accepted in the Eastern colonies was not capable of amendment without further referenda in those colonies, I cannot understand why that Bill should now be brought to us subject to certain amendments of which we as yet know nothing, to be passed by us and submitted to the people without some provision being included in this Enabling Bill whereby the Commonwealth Bill, if accepted by us, shall not be binding upon us until it, in its new form, has been accepted by the Eastern colonies. It seems we are asked to accept one Bill in the dark, and to be bound by it, although we do not know whether the Eastern colonies will accept it or not; but we do know so far as Queensland is concerned, for the Queensland Premier has declared the Bill will have to pass the Queensland Parliament before Queensland will be bound by the Bill as amended by the Imperial Government. I say we had better wait and place ourselves in the same position. We should know what Bill it is we are asked to send to the people, before binding the colony now and for ever, in a way we do not understand, to the Bill which is before us. So far as the principles of the Bill are concerned, it seems to me Clause 11 renders the measure one of the most objectionable that could be introduced. We are asked to say that a bare majority of those voting in the referendum, if in favour of federation, shall impose this Constitution upon Western Australia for ever. I should like to see a minimum vote enforced, or at any rate that a majority of the persons entitled to vote must record their votes in favour of the Bill. So far as we can judge by the return provided for me a few days ago by the Colonial Secretary, there are from 100,000 to 170,000 adults in the colony as the present time; but even allowing the number at 100,000, I think it would be proper to provide that there must be 50,000 votes cast in favour of the Constitution before it shall be binding on this colony. My reason is all in favour of the goldfields and their representatives. We take it on their statements. The organ which represents the goldfields views upon this subject is the *Kalgoorlie Miner*.

HON. C. SOMMERS: And others.



HON. F. WHITCOMBE: The *Kalgoorlie Miner* is the chief; at any rate it makes the most noise, and is most generally quoted and accepted by the people on the coast as being the goldfields authority, both on the separation and the federal agitations.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: An empty tin makes the most noise.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: I am not saying the editor is not possessed of all the attributes of an empty tin. In an article which, up to the present, has not been qualified, and which was issued last Saturday morning, that paper says the goldfields wish to give the colony to understand most distinctly that they will stay at nothing unless the views of the majority of the population are carried out on the question of federation. Well, I am asking for nothing more. I ask that the decision of a majority of the competent voting population of Western Australia shall be taken on this question, and that, if a majority of that voting population is not in favour of the Bill, then we shall not be bound by the referendum. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] Of course I shall probably be told by some of the advocates of federation at any cost, or at the sacrifice entailed by the Bill before us if it be carried, that there would be no hope of the minimum vote being obtained. But we have it from the promoters of the goldfields petition to the Throne for separation that they have a population on the fields of 80,000, that they obtained a petition signed by 28,000 adults; and, if they are so enthusiastically in favour of federation as they profess themselves to be, they will have no difficulty in getting 50,000 votes when they include the federalist vote outside the goldfields. So that, upon their own showing, the separatists who now allege they were only appealing for separation in order to bring about federation, should not object to being asked to poll in favour of the measure a majority of the capable voters of this colony. If the existence of this colony—the practical existence of this colony for years to come, at any rate—had been safeguarded in this Bill by the Government, they would have had such a provision inserted. [HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Hear, hear.] But what can we expect? The Government as

a whole, including the leader of this House, have done nothing for this colony in the matter of federation, except to play the fool with it for some years past.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: One man has done it all.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: One man may have done it all; but the whole of them must be held responsible. If the Ministry, if the Cabinet, are not to be held responsible, surely they are not going to say one man alone sent that poor delegate to London on a wild-goose chase to bring about or to try to bring about an impossibility. If it be the fact, as one member says, then it is a disgrace to every other member of the Cabinet that they should have attempted to put the colony to an expense of the kind when no good results could be hoped, and that an attempt should also have been made to obtain amendments—I take it the Cabinet are responsible for this—to obtain amendments which, as had been distinctly laid down previously by every Premier in the Eastern colonies, could not be made in the Bill after last November. The people of the colony are played fast-and-loose with, the financial condition of the people is spoiled, the trade of the colony has been handicapped, simply owing to one cause. There has been a feeling of uncertainty throughout the whole of Western Australia for the last seven or eight months, at any rate; and that feeling will continue until the question of federation is settled. The whole blame for this lies at the door of the Government, of the Ministry, or, if hon. members like, of the Premier. The man who has conducted the whole of this federal campaign, rightly in his own estimation, on behalf of Western Australia, and to get the best terms that he could for her, finally leaves her in the mud to become a victim to the Eastern colonies, if the people of this colony are content to be so—if we, in the first instance, are content to send this Bill to the people without any proper safeguards, and if the colony as a whole is content to become the victim of the Right Hon. Sir John Forrest, and to leave Western Australians practically ruined, the servants of our Eastern friends who are going to be good to us.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Federation will get rid of him, and cheaply too.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: Federation may get rid of him, but I am afraid the effect will be very lasting.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: We may get a Barton.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: Well, it is hard to say, if the Premier is to be judged by his action on federation, whether we could get a worse. Except the matter already touched upon by Mr. R. S. Haynes, I do not think there is anything in this Bill which calls for much comment.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: But you do not want it to go to the electors.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: No; I should prefer it not to go to the people in its present form.

A MEMBER: Why not throw it out?

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: You may very safely do so, and you will not be far wrong. I said when I came into the House that I should do my utmost to prevent its going to the people. Although I recognise it must go, I should like to stand out for suitable and proper provision being made, so that federation may not be carried by a minority vote; because, with the difficulties placed in the way of those who are not now on the rolls getting registered, it is quite possible that 25,000 people voting in favour of this Bill may out-vote the 100,000 competent voters now in the colony, and saddle for ever those who are to come after them with an incubus from which they cannot escape, and which I am afraid for many years we cannot carry without great hardship. The difficulty I have mentioned is in the matter of obtaining electoral certificates. Although one may be living 30 or 40 miles away in the country, it is necessary to come down to an assistant returning officer in order to obtain a certificate, and even if that be done on the last Saturday available, it is then necessary to return three days afterwards to vote. That is putting a great hardship on those engaged not only in farming and pastoral industries, but also in the mining districts, because two long trips in many instances of 30 miles each way will have to be made, when possibly they might be allowed to vote by proxy. Another difficulty in the way is that even when these conditions are complied with, one cannot get a certificate after four o'clock in the afternoon, and not at all on Saturdays.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: The hours are 9 to 6; see Clause 7.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: The clause says an elector "may obtain a voter's certificate on making an application therefor, in the form of the Second Schedule hereto, to the registrar or an assistant registrar for the electoral district in which such person resides, on any week day, except Saturday, between the hours of 9 a.m. and 4 p.m." But 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. is not late enough, and in any case there is not sufficient provision to enable every competent person to get on the roll. I can describe the Bill as nothing but one damaging to the colony, and which if carried into effect without suitable safeguards will ruin Western Australia for many years to come.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER (East): I am not going to oppose the Bill, though I should very much prefer no referendum on the Commonwealth Bill; and I regard it as very unnecessary that the matter should have been brought before the country again. The agitation has been brought about by federalists who are not sincere friends to the interests and welfare of the colony, or they never would have endeavoured at this time to force the people to state whether we should or should not enter the Commonwealth. We are, all of us, now agreed that the Bill must go to the people, but it would be a burning and a cruel shame to the country if a small majority is allowed to carry it. I therefore quite agree with the remarks of Mr. Whitcombe, that no small majority should decide the matter: there should be a large majority or none at all, and I would certainly advocate a majority of at least two-thirds in favour. The cry of "The Bill to the people" has been thoroughly worked up by agitators in favour of federation, who have dwelt on what they call the injustice of not allowing the Bill to be referred last year. Their eyes have been shut to the many disadvantages which must follow the adoption of federation by this colony. Everyone who has taken the matter carefully into consideration must have come to the conclusion that our very best interests and advantages we were looking forward to in this country will be stifled for many years by federation; because to enter the Commonwealth will entail very great cost to the country, which cost

can only be met by additional taxation in every direction. The feeling in favour of federation emanates to a very great extent from those who have little or no interest in the colony, from those who can at any time put their hats on their heads and clear out, leaving the burden of taxation to be borne by those who could not get away under any circumstances. I consider that no one ought to have a vote in a matter which will affect the constitution of the colony for all time, except those who are *bona fide* settlers in this colony, because it is a cruel and burning injustice that a man in the street who only came yesterday should have an equal voice with those who have lived all their lives in the colony, and have spent all the money they have made in the colony in improving and developing the country in every possible way. From my infancy I have been in the colony, and have worked at improving my holdings, assisted in opening numerous industries, and brought up a large family; and to say that I shall only have the same vote as the man who came to the colony yesterday, and who is able to clear out at any time, is a gross injustice.

A MEMBER: The Bill does not say so.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Scandalous!

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: It is most unjust to all the vested interests in the colony to think that such should be the case, and I must say it will be most discouraging to all future settlement.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: See how many are pouring in to take up land now!

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Settlers are far more likely to come in without federation than with it, because the taxation in the other colonies is already so oppressive without federation that people are glad to come where the imposts are lighter.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: They would still have the advantage of federation.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: In conversation with a gentleman who arrived only a short time ago from the other colonies, I was informed that as an agriculturist he had been driven away by excessive taxation. He had to pay a water rate, a land tax, and an income tax, as well as the tax levied on all articles which he as well as others consumed. He said there was nothing produced and consumed on the farm, not even a pound of butter, which had not to be taken into

consideration in assessing the income tax, showing that all over and above was open to taxation. Such a state of things was simply living to pay taxes; and that is what this colony is fast drifting into if we do not take steps to avoid it. It is no use going into the merits or demerits of federation at the present time, because that question has been fully discussed; but I trust those whose sole object is advocating "the Bill to the people" will, when the Bill is sent, use the very best of their intelligence in dealing with the matter, consider how it will affect the colony in every aspect, and give their vote accordingly. I trust that when it is seen how federation will affect one class much more than another, those who have no interest in the colony will be too honourable to vote for a measure which will crush to a great extent our few industries and interests, which I hope will be conserved, and a fair and reasonable decision arrived at. We must remember that though we may have federation, people will have just the same power to take off the food duties or reduce those duties that they have at the present time: federation cannot under any circumstances make any difference in this respect. In thinking over the matter of cheap living on the goldfields, I am very much struck with the fact that while a two-pound loaf there costs 8d., the value of flour in this colony is only £9 a ton, or a penny a pound, so that if anyone wants to live cheaply he can buy his own flour and make his own bread instead of giving 4d. per lb. Yet that is one of the "handles" used by the federal agitators, namely that it is in consequence of the duties which are levied by the Government of Western Australia that living is so dear. Flour ground in the colony can be supplied cheaper than it can be imported, and therefore the agitators cannot have a "handle" there against the Government, because, as I have said, they can get their bread as cheaply of Western Australian ground flour as they can of Adelaide flour.

HON. C. SOMMERS: It is curious there are no rich bakers.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: The bakers ought to be rich when they make 400 per cent. Another matter which shows the goldfields are altogether led by the *Kalgoortie Miner* and agitators in the

neighbourhood, is that every hotel there charges one shilling a drink for lemonade, ginger beer, and drinks of every description. Why is no objection raised to such prices as a shilling for a penny cigar, and all that sort of thing? Nothing is said of these prices by federal agitators, and I can only suppose they are interested in those industries. I maintain that it is the duty of every representative and member, for the goldfields particularly, instead of trying to foment great discord, to do all they possibly can to bring every person in all portions of the colony together in neighbourly feeling.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Whose fault is it there is strife?

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: The hon. member's fault a great deal.

HON. C. SOMMERS: The editor of the *Sun* is a farmer in Mr. Dempster's own district.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I wish he was a farmer in some other part of the world, because it would be a great benefit and boon to Western Australia if all men of that description were, I was going to say, banished from the colony. Indeed, it might be desirable for the country to contribute and send them to some other sphere where they would shine more, or, at all events, do less harm.

HON. C. SOMMERS: "Let there be light."

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I like to live in a community where friendliness and goodwill exist, and where members representing different constituencies make the bringing about and maintenance of such a state of things their sole object.

HON. C. SOMMERS: That is federation.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Federation will not bring that state of things about.

HON. C. SOMMERS: Yes, it will.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Federation will bring ruin to the colony; and I look on federation as giving Western Australia away to the other colonies. The Federal Parliament in Melbourne must always be ruled by a majority of those who represent States which are adjoining and whose interests are identical, and totally different from those of this colony, which is isolated; and yet we are told that under these circumstances the other colonies will do us justice. Perhaps the other colonies may be more generous than I give them credit for, but I do not like

the idea of placing ourselves entirely at their mercy, and I am sure the colony will be a great deal better off if we keep out of federation for at least ten years. Without federation there are numberless industries which, at the present time, have been totally neglected, but industries which would afford labour to thousands of people and be a source of profit to the whole colony. Under federation, these industries will remain perfectly undeveloped in the absence of encouragement, with the result that we will not require anything like the amount of labour we should if we did not enter the Commonwealth. It will be seen that federation will make the conditions worse for the working classes, who have, however, been taught to believe that living will be cheaper and wages higher under the Commonwealth. They have now to look to the facts, and I hope that when the matter is brought before the country, it will be proved to the working classes that they, at all events, will not benefit by federation, notwithstanding all that is said by agitators and those who look forward to future advancement, have no stake in the country, and take no interest in our future welfare. A great many of our solicitors advocate federation, and I can only think they do it because they look forward to an amazing amount of complication and difficulties, which will lead to litigation and be a sort of harvest to them. I cannot help thinking that with some of our local solicitors and lawyers, young men who have been born in this colony and ought to have thorough interests in our future welfare, such motives have actuated them.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: You are not referring to solicitors in the House, of course?

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: I feel that I have spoken rather warmly. I trust when the Bill goes to the people, they will use their best discretion in considering the subject, and give an honest and fair decision. I hope they will not act hastily, but consider all the merits and demerits of the case, and I believe in the end, when we get the vote of the people, it will be found that those who are in favour of federation are in a minority. I have said from the first that from federation we have all to lose and nothing to gain, and I hold the same opinion at the present

time, for I have not heard from one of those who have so strongly advocated federation any proof that there will be anything like a return for the enormous expenditure it will cost the country. I therefore will do all in my power to enlighten the people as to the disadvantages of federation, and I hope that when we vote upon the question we shall see that the whole of the people of the colony are not federalists.

HON. R. G. BURGESS (East): I am not going to take up the time of the House with these matters, for it would be almost useless to do so. It would only be reiterating statements that have already been made. I have not changed my opinion, and I do not think I am going to. In fact, so far as I can judge from all I have read in reviews and other things, we have nothing more to show us why we should join federation than we had when we threw out the Bill last year.

A MEMBER: Not so much.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Not so much, considering the way the other colonies have treated us with regard to the mails. That action shows the unfederal spirit of those colonies. Everyone in this colony who knows anything of the country—even those people who have lately come to Western Australia, and who form the larger portion of the inhabitants—must be astonished at the action of some who take a prominent part in the public affairs of the colony. In the Commonwealth we shall only have five members out of 75 in the House of Representatives. Just think of that! However, it is no use to argue this matter, for it has been dealt with previously. It would be useless, and it would also be quite unjust, for this House at the present time to try to stop this Bill from going to the people. A junior member of this House, only lately elected, has taken to task hon. members who have had some experience. But I suppose that little men now-a-days, who have come to the front in other matters, think they can lecture us, and show other people what they can do. We have a perfect right to resent this line of action. Members who come into this House ought, at any rate, to learn a little from the experience of others with regard to the action which the Legislative Council has a right to adopt. I think that if the junior members would

take the trouble to investigate, they would find that we had a precedent for the action we took. Of what use are we here at all, if we do not consider measures submitted to us, and stop what I call hasty legislation upon such a subject as this? I ask any hon. member and reasonable man, not only in this House but in the country, whether it was advisable to refer the question to the people during the existence of such a state of things as prevailed last year on the goldfields? I say "no," notwithstanding that the junior member to whom I refer told us that we were not acting within our powers.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Which member was it?

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Mr. Moss.

HON. M. L. MOSS: I emphasise all I said then.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: The hon. member said he emphasises all he said then, but perhaps when he is here a little longer he will recognise that if we are to be of any use at all we must exercise our power. We are here not only for the purpose of checking hasty legislation, but to throw out measures that we think are not desirable in the general interests of the country. I wish to make a few remarks with regard to the amendment proposed by Mr. R. S. Haynes. I do not think that hon. member has altogether looked into this matter, because he advises that anyone who has been in the colony for six months should have a vote. I think if he had looked into the matter he would have found that of the people who have come to the colony during the last few months, a large number have already voted in the other colonies, and if this amendment be passed they can vote in Western Australia if they have been here six months. That would be unfair and unjust. Of course not all the people in the other colonies are in favour of federation, but the federal idea has grown, and men who have come from the other colonies to Western Australia would vote here for federation. I do not think the hon. member ever thought of this, for had he done so, he would not have brought forward his proposal, although he is an extreme Radical. Mr. Moss told us what the Legislative Council has to do, although he has only just come into it. I am always willing to learn, but I would

rather learn from those who have experience, than from some of our junior members. I hope that when the Bill goes into Committee an alteration will be made so that we can give to everyone who desires it the right to vote. I want the hours available on Saturdays to be extended, and in my opinion the hours should be from 9 to 9. We have railways all over the goldfields, and in the country districts there are a large number who could get to the polling station in the evening. You must remember that lots of those people have to come in first to obtain their electoral rights, and, as has already been pointed out, they have to come again two or three days afterwards to vote. Such an alteration as I advocate should be satisfactory to even the people living in large towns, for there are many who come into the towns on Saturday night, but would not have time to get their voters' certificates if the hours on that day be from 9 to 6 only. In regard to Clause 8, I consider the distance of 30 miles too great. There are not post offices and polling places everywhere, and some people live hundreds of miles from polling places, yet they have a right to vote the same as people who live in towns. They have an interest in the country, and just as much right to vote as a person who lives near the Town Hall in Perth. It is unreasonable to expect men to come 30 miles to get a certificate, and then to travel again subsequently to record their votes. Not only is it unreasonable, but unjust. There are a lot of people in the towns who do not know about the country at all. Great hardship has been inflicted upon the people of the country. People have been induced to come here by nothing less than fraud—I refer to the Land Regulations—and you do not even give them the right to vote. Justice ought to be done, not only to the people in towns, but also to those who live in the country who should have every chance of being able to vote on this question. The Bill provides that women also shall have a right to vote. There are families in the country comprising five or six, or sometimes eight or nine, grown-up people, and by the Bill as it at present stands those people might be shut out altogether. Is there any reason or justice in that? I say "no." We should let everyone vote.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: How would you alter the distance?

HON. R. G. BURGESS: I would make it 20 miles. To expect farmers to drive 19 or 20 miles to get an elector's right, then to travel in again to vote, is unjust and unreasonable. It is always the same in regard to people in the country. I wish our friends here would only take to heart the words of Mr. Dempster and act upon them. I see a red paper before me, and I hope my hon. friend (Mr. Jenkins) has nothing to do with this red paper, but he handed round red papers last year.

HON. A. G. JENKINS: I did? I beg your pardon.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: The hon. member never had any red paper. He made use of what paper he liked. He never handed me a red paper last year, but there are red papers.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Blue papers are the only papers to be feared.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Does the hon. member want to bring before the House what we once had in regard to those blue papers? I hope not. If so, the matter will come to the same end as that affair some years back. I will move the amendment which I have advocated, and I hope the hon. member (Mr. R. S. Haynes) who is going to move an amendment will consider my amendment, and that the House also will do so. This House did its duty last year, notwithstanding what anyone may say. We stood on our rights, we did our duty, and we have accomplished good. We have given people time to look into this matter, and what do we find? The ignorance which still exists in relation to it is astonishing. There are lots of people who get up and try to argue the matter, and have never read the Bill—in fact a large number of people think that the tariff is to be uniform for the world. I was present at a large gathering attended by talented men, and they were under the impression that the tariff was to be uniform for the world. The hon. member to whom I have referred (Mr. Moss) said that we were not doing our duty, and that we were acting outside our powers; but I believe that the leading men to whom he addressed his remarks are just about the same with regard to this matter as others to whom I have referred. They talk about it, but they have never looked into it, and have not considered

what effect it would have upon the country. I hope at any rate that those members who have taken some trouble with regard to this question, and that those who have the interests of the country at heart, will place the question clearly before the people. I hope that my hon. friend (Mr. Moss) will take the trouble to explain clearly to the people the effect federation will have upon Western Australia. I hope the hon. member (Mr. Matheson) will take the same trouble as he did on a previous occasion, and show to his own constituents and the country the advantages that are to be gained by federation. Every member should not only consider his own district, but what is good for the interests of this large and growing country. I could speak on this matter for ever, but there is no necessity. Every argument used shows that no man knows what federation will bring upon us. I have already pointed out that one of the drawbacks is our small representation. Another is, where are we going to get our men from? Can we afford to send our best men away from the country, and will they go for £400 a year? It is not so easy to get members now to fill vacancies in our local Parliament. Mr. Whitcombe is one of the staunchest anti-federalists in the House, and I admire him for it; I admire other hon. members who would like to get a majority vote; but now we have done all we can, and as the matter must go to the people we should be satisfied. The cravings of the people will be satisfied and the people will only have themselves to blame: they have taken the matter out of our hands, and the responsibility will rest with them. It is not those who vote who will have to bear the brunt of the matter, but those who remain in the country. With these few remarks I support the Bill, and I trust the amendment which I intend to move will receive the consideration of the Committee.

HON. H. LUKIN (East): I do not intend to detain the House more than a few minutes in what I have to say on this matter. I have very much pleasure in supporting the Bill. It has, as far as I can see, been fairly drafted, and I hope it will go through the House very much as it stands now. I have opposed federation for all I am worth, and I still intend to do so. Any remarks I have to make about

federation I shall make outside the House: sufficient has already been said inside the House on the subject. In reference to what I said the other night, that I was not prepared to vote for the Bill going to the people unless it was sufficiently safeguarded so that there would be no double-dealing, I think the Bill does safeguard us. We cannot frame a Bill so that it will satisfy all of us in every particular, but I think the Bill will meet the circumstances of the case. I shall support the Bill going to the people, and I would also like to say that now it is going to the people I am glad to say that a comprehensive vote will be taken. No man or woman in the country can complain of not having had an opportunity to vote; they can get on the roll easily. If they do not get a certificate and do not vote, they will have themselves to blame.

HON. E. McLARTY (South-West): It is not my intention to oppose the second reading of the Bill. On the last occasion when the question of federation was before the House, I felt it was my duty to vote against the motions brought forward, believing I was acting in the best interests of the colony, and I have not had any reason since that time to change the opinions I then held. I still think and honestly believe that the acceptance of federation for this country will do it a great deal of harm; the country will receive a blow that it will not recover from for many years to come; but I am fully convinced that there is a strong desire on the part of the people that they should vote on this question; I will go further and say that there is more than a strong desire, there is a determination on the part of the people; and knowing this, it is not my place to hold to my opinions and prevent this question going to the people, therefore I intend to support the second reading of the Bill. It has been said, or hinted in the debate on the Address-in-reply, that those opposed to federation on the last occasion when the subject was discussed in the House had climbed down or had been intimidated by the separation petition. For my part I deny this: I have not climbed down, and I am still opposed to federation just as much as I was before. As to the separation petition, I never gave it five minutes' consideration, and I

do not think those who were moving in the matter thought it was worth five minutes' consideration either. They looked on it that they were getting up the petition to help on the cause of federation: perhaps to some extent they have succeeded. I deny that I have climbed down; I still hold to my previous opinions; but the general public think they have a right to vote on this subject, and I think so too. Notwithstanding all that has been said by some members of this House, I think the Premier has fought a very hard fight in the interests of the country and done all he could.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: After the mischievous he did.

HON. E. McLARTY: He has perhaps made mistakes, and the very wise people see the mistakes after the event. Had the delegates from this colony moved the amendments at the Convention which the Select Committee suggested last year, I believe the Convention would have accepted them, and we would have had the benefit of another five years' protection; after that we could very well have done without it. As much as I am opposed to federation, I am prepared to see the Bill go to the people on fair terms. I desire to see every adult in the country have a vote on it, those who are on the electoral roll, and those who have a right to be placed on it.

HON. C. A. PRESSE: The street larrikin.

HON. E. McLARTY: I am also prepared to take a majority vote and stand by the consequence. If the people desire federation, I am not one of those who will give them any chance of saying they have not been fairly well treated. Those are my views. As to the referendum, I consider every adult in the colony should have a vote on the matter, and every facility should be given to the people to vote. If a majority is found to be in favour of federation, for my part I shall cheerfully accept the decision and make the best of it. I do not know that it is necessary, in fact I think it is unnecessary, to adduce many strong reasons which might be urged against the adoption of federation. These arguments have already been given, and it is no good repeating them. At this stage hon. members have agreed almost unanimously, perhaps quite unanimously, that the Bill should go to the people for their decision. I wish to make it clear

that I have not climbed down or altered my opinions; but in deference to the expressed wish of the people, both for and against federation, I wish to support the Bill going to the people.

HON. F. M. STONE (North): I do not propose to take up the time of the House in going into the question whether the colony should enter the federation or not, but I wish simply to tell hon. members that I was always in favour of federation, yet I wished to get the best terms for the colony I could get. Unfortunately we have been unable to get the terms which I thought we should get, and I am prepared now, not only to vote for the Bill, but for federation when I have the chance of voting. There is one matter in the Bill which I intend to move an amendment upon when in Committee. I think that every opportunity should be given for every adult to vote. I do not think Clause 7 gives that opportunity, because I think from the way in which the rolls are made up, even although people might be entitled up to two days to get an elector's certificate, many persons will think they are on the rolls, and when they go to vote they will find they are not. I cannot see any difficulty in allowing a person to get an elector's certificate even on the day of voting. At certain places where there is large population there cannot be much expense attached to it. The Government could there appoint a person to issue certificates. Say at the Perth Town Hall there would be a returning officer and his assistants, and there could be a person there from whom we could get an elector's certificate. I might go to the returning officer and find I was not on the roll: why should I not then be able to go to the person appointed to issue electors' certificates and get my certificate, and then go and vote straight away? When the Bill is in Committee I shall move an amendment so as to allow any person on the day the poll is taken, if he is not on the roll, to go to the person appointed by the Government and get a certificate entitling him to vote. I cannot see the slightest objection to that provision: it may cause a little more expense, but on a question of this kind hon. members do not wish to see persons prevented from voting who, owing to their neglect or illness, have not been



able to see that their names are on the roll. I do not want to see any heart-burnings after this question is over. I want to see every man have the opportunity of going to the poll, and if he finds that his name is not on the roll, I want to see him entitled to get a certificate and vote straight away. In Committee I shall move an amendment to this effect, and I trust the House will agree to a provision having that object in view.

HON. A. B. KIDSON (West): I think, with those hon. members who agree to the provisions of the Bill now before the House, that there is indeed very little to say about it; but there are one or two points to which I should like to allude. With regard to the suggested amendment of Mr. R. S. Haynes to Clause 6, I do not think it would be advisable for this House to agree to any amendments other than are absolutely necessary for the purpose of perfecting the Bill; and I do not think that amendment is necessary, because the means which are provided by the Bill for every voter to obtain an elector's right are so easy, that I think it would be a pity to make an amendment which might cause the passage of the Bill at all events to be postponed for a short period. To my mind, the sooner the Bill becomes law the better. We have seen in this colony an amount of dissension between the people in it that I hope, at all events as long as I remain in the colony, I shall never see again. [SEVERAL MEMBERS: Hear, hear.] For this dissension there are various causes, and particularly as I said, on speaking on the Address-in-reply, is it due to the action the Government have taken in connection with federation, and partly to other causes which have been referred to by one or two hon. members who have spoken to-day. I do not think I need particularise those causes, for they are fresh in the minds of those who have listened to the speeches. I should like to assure Mr. Burges—and I think he feels somewhat sad upon the subject—

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Not a bit.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: That there is in this House at all events one honest lawyer.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: I did not say the others were dishonest lawyers.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I do not wish to take any credit to myself in the whole-

sale condemnation of the noble profession to which I belong.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: I am sure I never made the remark with any such intention. If I said that, it was a mistake; and I withdraw any such statement.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I understood the hon. member to say those lawyers who had been taking a leading part in the federal agitation had been doing so for their own purposes; and if that is not dishonest, I do not know what is, and I desire to say there is at least one honest lawyer in this House, and I am sure the hon. member (Hon. R. G. Burges) will agree with me, when I tell him that I am heart and soul against federation.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: That is not what I said. You have made a mistake.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: I think the hon. member is mistaken. I think some hon. members have taken up a rather extraordinary attitude with regard to this reference to the people. Mr. Whitcombe said no reasons were given by the leaders of the House why the Bill should be referred. If Mr. Whitcombe has not gathered the reasons from his knowledge of what is going on outside this House, then all I can say is I am exceedingly sorry for the hon. member's intelligence. I will tell the hon. member the reason for the remission of this Bill to the vote of the people. It is because the people want it; and, as has been stated to-night, the people are determined to get it. It is all very well for the hon. member, who was fizzing like a champagne bottle, to say that he will not have this and that. Why could he not have fallen into line with other members and voted for the remission of the Bill to the people, when he knows the people will have it? And he says: "I am prepared to vote against it; I would not have the Bill go to the people at all," when he knows perfectly well that it must go. It would have been much better for the hon. member, when he saw the feeling of the people outside, and other hon. members in this House, to fall into line with those hon. members, and allow the Bill to go from this House to the people by a unanimous vote. On the subject of federation I intend to speak very shortly indeed, because I shall take an opportunity, at a later stage and in

another sphere, of stating my views on that question. I shall content myself with again saying very briefly that I am opposed to federation tooth and nail, and that I intend to take every constitutional means in my power, after the Bill has been referred to the people, to prevent the Bill being carried, because I do not believe in the Bill. I do not agree with Mr. Burges altogether. I do believe that those hon. members in this House and in another place who have taken a leading part in the advocacy of federation have motives as conscientious as I would ask them to give me credit for possessing. I believe they are conscientiously in favour of federation. It is quite open on this great question for persons to have divided opinions, because it is a difficult question to understand, and it requires a large amount of study. But I honestly think the effect of federation on this colony will be disastrous; that federation will have the effect of practically wiping out whatever industries we have in the colony, of depleting our Treasury, depleting our population, and for a time, at all events, dealing a very serious blow to the colony's prosperity. That being so, I think every right-minded person who has made his home in this colony, and who looks upon this as his country, should consider his country first before self; and I do not think that is altogether the case with every member in favour of federation. But people should take the country first—the interests of the country—and their own interests or those of their class afterwards; and I think they do not all do that. All, or most of us, have the interests of this great colony at heart. It is to our interest to see that the colony shall progress, shall go ahead instead of backward; and I think the effect of our joining the federation will be to set the colony back for many years. I should like to take this opportunity of repeating what I said before, that I have on numerous occasions discussed this question of federation with persons who ought to understand it. I have read speeches on the subject by persons in favour of federation; I have read long letters in favour of it; and I have never yet up to the present time on any of those occasions been able to learn of one single benefit that will accrue to this colony by its join-

ing the Commonwealth. It seems to me those who want this colony to go into the federation must prove their case. They must show us that there is in federation something better for the colony than exists at the present time. They have not done that: they have never been able to do it. I have said to many of them: "Mention to me one benefit the colony will gain by joining the federation?" And the answer invariably has been: "Oh, well, I cannot stop to make a speech now: I must put it off to some other time." It seems to me we want something more definite than mere sentiment in dealing with a question like this. We want something practical; we want to know at all events that this colony is not going to lose a great deal by entering the federation; and we know that all the great authorities upon this question agree that we must, by federating, lose to a very large and serious extent. That being so, I think every right-minded person—and I may say without fear of contradiction that I look upon myself as a right-minded person—should use every effort that in him lies to prevent this colony joining the union, because of the very disastrous results which in my opinion must follow from its so doing.

At 6-30, the PRESIDENT left the Chair.

At 7-45, Chair resumed.

HON. A. B. KIDSON (continuing): I desire now to only refer to two matters of importance which have arisen in the debate. The first is the amendment which Mr. R. S. Haynes proposes to move in Committee, with regard to reducing the qualification of residence from twelve months to six months; and my reason for mentioning the point is that in speaking on the Address-in-reply I advocated the six-months period; but I now feel it inadvisable, and in fact wrong, to endeavour to so amend the Bill, because that would have the effect of delaying the passage of the measure into law. The matter has been threshed out at great length by both those who are for and those who are against federation; and they have come to the unanimous conclusion that twelve months' residence is a proper qualification. That being so, it would be useless for us to

pass an amendment of the kind suggested when we know that in another place a conclusion has been come to which is not likely to be departed from. As to Mr. Stone's amendment I intend to oppose it, because the same difficulty would arise, inasmuch as the amendment would not be agreed to in another place, and the passage of the Bill would be delayed when we all desire to see it passed into law at the earliest possible moment. I should like, in conclusion, to say in connection with some remarks which I ascribed to Mr. Burges that I did so under a misapprehension. I should have ascribed the remarks to Mr. Dempster, and I say this in justice to Mr. Burges.

HON. S. J. HAYNES (South-East): I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill on which, though I formally seconded the motion, I do not desire to give a silent vote. I shall support the Bill as it has reached us from the Assembly without amendment, because I have read the measure carefully and am satisfied it is a fair and reasonable Bill, which will tend to allay the unrest which has agitated this colony for so many months. I thought last session, and still think, that it was a mistake on the part of this House not to grant the petition then submitted to us. I was of opinion then, and I see no reason to depart from that opinion, that the public demanded a referendum, and I say, with all respect, that the House as constituted at that time, and the leading newspapers, did not gauge the true public feeling. The question before us now is not a question of whether federation is a good thing or whether it is a bad thing. The question has been discussed pretty fully before, and the question now is purely one of whether we are to trust the people to give a serious and intelligent vote, which will affect the destinies of this colony very materially. Last session I advocated, though I was in a minority, that the people should be trusted. I submit, and I am sure every one will agree with me, that the electors of this colony are not less intelligent or less serious than the electors of the other colonies; and the people here desire to have the same privileges that their fellow-colonists and neighbours in the Eastern colonies have had accorded to them. The people of

Western Australia felt bitterly, and do feel bitterly, that they have not had that opportunity; but this Bill gives the opportunity desired. I have listened very carefully to the various hon. members who have spoken, and particularly to Mr. Dempster, and there is no doubt that gentleman's views with regard to federation are more woful than the "Lamentations of Jeremiah." But I give the hon. member credit for conscientiously advocating those views; and I am pleased that he and others have at any rate changed their convictions, not perhaps with respect to federation, but with respect to the desirability of referring the Bill to the people. Mr. Dempster has drawn attention to the profession of certain members of the House; and if some of us happen to be solicitors, perhaps it is our misfortune; but whether that be so or not, I believe the legal members of this House have never let their private affairs or self-advancement guide them in any one of their votes. I do not think for a moment that Mr. Dempster, who is usually generous in his remarks, desired to say anything ungenerous, but his words conveyed the impression that certain legal members of the House were voting for the Bill, and are supporting federation, in order to bring "grist to their mill." I am sure, however, the hon. member did not intend really what he said; and while I accord to Mr. Dempster and other gentlemen who think with him the credit of speaking conscientiously, strongly, and honourably in an opposite manner to myself, I demand and ask the same appreciation of my conscientiousness and that of other members. For myself I think federation would be the best thing that could happen to this colony; but the question whether federation would be the best thing or not remains for decision at the ballot box; and the electors of this colony should have an opportunity of saying "yes" or "no." The electors will exercise this privilege if granted to them, carefully, and will vote, so far as their intelligence goes, for the best interests of the colony. It has also been said that those who are supporting this movement and desire federation are "agitators, members for the goldfields," and so on. But I believe the people on the goldfields

are equally honest with people anywhere else; and the petition which has been referred to was signed not only on the goldfields, but on the coast and in other portions of the colony, and further it was signed by men who have a considerable stake in the colony. I signed it, and what little I have in this colony, and though that little does not, perhaps, compare with the wealth of Mr. Dempster, my vote will be given quite as honestly as will his. Man's conscience should not be gauged by his possessions. However, I do not think it necessary to labour the question at the present time. I listened to the suggestions made by hon. members, and the only one made by Mr. Burges was practically that the hours for obtaining certificates should be extended from 6 o'clock in the evening until 9 o'clock. But 6 o'clock is quite late enough, and if 9 o'clock had been proposed in the Bill, 12 o'clock would have been suggested, and it would be scarcely worth while to return the Bill with such an amendment. A suggestion was made by Mr. Stone, which somewhat met with my approval, namely that those who desired to vote might obtain certificates practically up to the moment of polling; but on reconsideration I think that this is scarcely a material point. If people are too indolent to get a certificate within practically 24 hours of the polling day, Sunday being a *dies non*, they deserve to lose the liberty of exercising the franchise. If people who desire to exercise the franchise do not get their electors' rights, the same thing will happen on both sides: some in favour of federation will neglect to obtain their certificates and others not in favour will do so, so honours are even. I trust the Bill will pass without amendment, and I think the result will be the adoption of federation, a result which I sincerely trust will be realised, because the woes, pains, penalties, and troubles which Mr. Dempster anticipates will never reach us. While believing federation to be to our best interests, I at the same time respect opposite opinions as conscientiously expressed.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): I shall not delay the House very many minutes in the few remarks I have to make, but I am unwilling to give a silent vote on the question.

I venture to express the opinion, and probably this will be the last time I shall do so, either in this House or on the platform—I venture to give utterance to a deep expression of regret that the Bill now before us will be passed without a division, a Bill which will give the franchise to every adult in the country, and will result, I have not the slightest scintilla of doubt, in the adoption of the federation scheme by a large majority in Western Australia. I say that I once more venture to voice my regret that we are going to adopt federation without some more favourable terms for this colony than are embodied in the Commonwealth Bill. It seems to me that Western Australia is at the present time too weak, that we are too distant, and will be altogether too over-weighted to make that due impression in the councils of federation, a position which would result in our being unable to fight those extraordinary difficulties which this colony has to face in becoming a rich and powerful element of the Commonwealth; and I venture further to say that few more lamentable things have occurred than the vote that took place in this House last session, by which first of all the proposal was rejected which would have permitted this House to express itself in favour of sending the amended Bill—I mean the Premiers' Bill as amended by the Joint Committee—to the country, expressing an opinion in favour of that course being adopted, and consequently suspending that action until, in the words of the further resolution, negotiations were opened up with the Eastern colonies to see how far further terms could be secured. I am not going back upon the history of that session, nor am I going to cast it up as a reproach to any gentleman who no doubt gave a vote conscientiously on that occasion; but I do think that if those two motions had been adopted, we should have secured the terms without which it is not advantageous and without which I venture to say it is barely safe for Western Australia to enter the Commonwealth.

HON. W. MALEY: It is their only hope.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That opens up a thesis which would be too lengthy for me to introduce into the course of my argument. No doubt the hon. member before the debate closes will give his argument.

in favour of the theory that federation is our only hope—I do not know whether I gather correctly that it was in this world or the next. I cannot see much cause for it in this world, at least for some time to come, but that matter is now set by. We shall have federation under the terms prescribed in the Commonwealth Bill, and we shall certainly, I trust we shall endeavour that

Out of this nettle Danger we pluck the flower Safety. The question now arises, what is the other alternative to be taken? If those terms were not secured, it was open to us either to remain out of the federation for several years until that strength was secured for this colony which would have made us something like an equal partner in the federation, or to take the further step of proceeding with the Bill immediately and entering the Commonwealth as an original State. Looking all round, I think the issue before us to-night is not whether the Bill shall be sent to the people, for that is a foregone conclusion, but whether when we give our votes on the second reading we are prepared to do our best to secure the admission of Western Australia as an original State into the federation or not. I rise this evening—and it was my main object in rising—to state that so far as I can see, the alternative of waiting for one or two or more years is out of the question, and there only remains for us to enter as an original State, and do our best when we have adopted that course. I have never concealed my conviction that federation has enormous advantages to offer us if we accept it. Neither have I concealed from myself also the peculiar dangers in which we stand. If the issue is simply whether we are to stand out for a year or two, or whether when England urges us, Australia requires it, and our own people desire it, we shall enter the federation, and enter it at once, I do not hesitate for a moment to give my suffrage in favour of the latter course.

HON. H. LUKIN: Find out first whether the people do desire it.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: That of course will only be shown on the polling day. But nothing I have heard this evening, nothing I have read in the last few weeks, nothing which has come to me from the peculiar sources of information which a newspaper editor

always possesses, leads me to doubt for a moment that the majority in favour of federation will be at least two to one, and I fancy it will approach more nearly three to one. That is my opinion, and we shall see on the polling day whether it is correct. I am not disposed to sit down and cry over spilt milk. I recognise that the entering as an original State offers us advantages which it would be an absurd extreme of folly to refuse at the present moment. First of all it secures us in the Senate a representation beyond the reach, I was almost going to say, of mortal man. The Bill provides that for all time the Act shall last we shall have that representation. No human power short of a revolution can take it away from us. As to the representation in the House of Representatives, according to the quota that is almost certain to be adopted, we are now entitled to four members in that House, and the Bill only assures us five. But beyond that we shall have the inestimable advantage of having an early voice in the selection of the capital, in the framing of the federal tariff, in the moulding of large social measures which will certainly occupy the first or second session of the Federal Parliament, and what is certainly not less than any of these, in helping to select the first Government that is to rule over federated Australia. I have the strongest opinion that it will become the practice of the Commonwealth to select among its seven Ministers of State, one at least representing each colony; and to that Western Australia may look forward. That she would have lost, if she had remained outside the conditions of an original State. I have only a word or two more to say, that being that so far as this Bill is concerned, unless the amendments brought forward are designed to and will succeed in giving fuller and better effect to its intentions, I shall vote against them all *seriatim*. If it can be shown that the Bill will be immensely improved, if it can be shown that it is really in need of one of those amendments, then I shall be prepared to consider and probably to vote in favour of such amendment; but, so far as I can see, with some changes which can be made outside the Bill, all the objections brought against the measure sent up to us from another place can be met and dealt with in a more or less

satisfactory fashion. I shall certainly not support any proposal for a majority clause or proportionate voting. I am not prepared at this stage to raise artificial restrictions between the people and the referendum. I am not prepared to construct a hedge between the people and the country they desire to leap into, simply that they may have a little more trouble in climbing over it. I am prepared to abide by a straightforward, simple and candid "yes" or "no" as to whether the adults of Western Australia are in favour of federation or not. Under these circumstances I am prepared to maintain the Bill as it is. I am prepared, further, to endeavour to give effect to the Bill, and what poor services I have shall certainly be at the disposal of my own colony in deriving the very best terms that can be derived from a measure and a course which I look on with a great deal of doubt, but perhaps on the whole with as much confidence as I do the Bill now before us.

Question—that the Bill be read a second time—put, and passed without dissent.

Bill read a second time.

#### CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES, ELECTION.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. G. Randell): In accordance with the wishes of hon. members of this House, I now have the pleasure of moving that the Hon. H. Briggs be appointed Chairman of Committees. I believe that the selection made by the House is as good as possible. Mr. Briggs should by this time be acquainted with the forms of the House and with what is required of him as Chairman of Committees, whose position is second only to that of President. The duties are of great importance, and I venture to say that if Mr. Briggs be elected by the House, as I believe he will, he will occupy that chair and decide impartially between member and member on any questions which are brought before him. I do not think I need say more than express my pleasure in proposing the hon. gentleman as Chairman of Committees.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: I have much pleasure in seconding the motion moved. Inasmuch as the time is short, and there is a good deal of business before us, I do not propose to say anything more than

that the House is unanimous in its choice of Mr. Briggs, and I think we could not have made a better selection.

Question put and passed.

HON. H. BRIGGS took the Chair. (General applause.)

THE CHAIRMAN: I beg to return my sincere thanks for the manner in which you have honoured me by your confidence, and I willingly place my services at your disposal.

#### IN COMMITTEE ON THE BILL.

Clauses 1 to 5, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 6—Existing rolls to be used:

HON. R. S. HAYNES moved: that the following words be inserted after "1899":—

Including also the names of all persons lawfully added thereto by proclamation or otherwise, now or hereafter to be made in pursuance of the said Act.

At present a large number of ratepayers had been removed from the ratepayers' lists of the city of Perth; he believed also from the ratepayers' lists of Fremantle, Kalgoorlie, and Coolgardie, and of several other important towns in the colony. These names had been removed in consequence of a misunderstanding of the construction to be placed on Section 37 of the Municipal Institutions Act 1895. There was a conflict of opinion about this section, and several by-laws were passed by the various municipal councils directing when the lists should be made up. These lists were made up and transmitted to the electoral registrars, and copied on to the rolls, thus becoming lists for the election of members of Parliament. By some inadvertence no less than 618 names had been excluded from the ratepayers' list of the city of Perth; and not only had they been excluded from the ratepayers' list, but consequently from the parliamentary electoral lists. If this Bill were referred to the electors of Perth, for example, 618 people would go to the polling booth and find that they were not on the rolls. It might be said, and with some force, that provision was made by Clause 7 for any person not on the roll to apply to the Electoral Registrar and obtain a voter's certificate. That was true; but his answer to that was: judging from past experiences it was unlikely that 618 people would take the trouble to attend

before the Electoral Registrar to place their names on the roll. Assuming that these people did attend on the Electoral Registrar to obtain certificates, was it reasonable that we should compel 618 ratepayers of Perth, and probably a similar number in Fremantle and a similar number in Kalgoorlie and Coolgardie, to go the trouble of getting voters' certificates, and applying to be placed on the roll, when by the amendment suggested their names would be at once placed on the roll? Why ask 2,000 or 3,000 people to get certificates when votes could be given them in this simple manner? It was the intention of the Committee to see that every person *bona fide* entitled to vote—householders residing in towns—should receive votes, and that no obstacle should be placed in their way, or any trap laid for them. There had been a good deal of commotion over this matter, and a good many persons might avail themselves of the provisions of Clause 7; but if, by a simple amendment which did not alter the spirit of the Bill, and did not affect it at all, but only increased the number of people called on to exercise their right, if that was the only object of the alteration, then he had the sympathy of hon. members. He could not see any objection to the amendment, if it was the intention of Parliament to submit the Bill to the people entitled to vote. It might be said that this would delay the Bill, but it would not if this amendment were passed. The amendment would be considered in another place, and if members in another place took upon themselves the responsibility of preventing people from voting, then the responsibility must rest with them. This amendment was moved in pursuance of a resolution passed at a ratepayers' meeting in the city of Perth, to carry out the wishes of the ratepayers. In approving this amendment the City Council were discharging their duty so far as in them lay. The reason this amendment became necessary was in consequence of the Electoral Act of 1899. He took it that the rolls which would be used for the referendum were the rolls at present in force, and these rolls were revised at the last sitting of the Revision Court. There seemed to be some doubt about that.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There could be no doubt about that, he thought.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Then there was an end of it. If the rolls to be used were those which were revised at the last sitting of the Revision Court—

SEVERAL MEMBERS: No; the existing rolls.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The Colonial Secretary had stated the rolls were those revised at the last revision court.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY said he had thought so, but he believed he was wrong. They were the rolls that were revised on the 17th May, but whether they were revised under the old Act or the new Act he could not say.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Still, from those rolls there were 618 ratepayers' names missing.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: Perhaps they were men who had gone out of the colony.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: No; they were names of men who had not gone out of the colony.

HON. W. MALEY: Some were in the cemetery, perhaps.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: No; they were alive, and were entitled to be on the rolls. If that were so it was necessary that some provision should be made in Clause 6 for the purpose of providing that the names of these persons and other persons disfranchised should be on the roll. If the roll was that revised on 17th May, then there was all the more reason why the amendment should be passed, because that roll was, he believed, a delusion and a snare. He had asked for leave to introduce a measure amending the Municipal Institutions Act, so as to fit in, so to speak, with the present amendment. In that Bill provision was made empowering the council at any time to cause a list of all persons liable to pay rates within a municipality to be made and transmitted to the Electoral Registrar.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Did that only apply to Perth?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: To all municipalities. If the amendment he suggested was carried, the chief objection he had urged against the clause would be removed. He understood that another amendment was about to be moved of a more drastic and sweeping character. If his amendment were carried it would not affect the merits of the Bill, but would afford

greater facilities for those persons not on the rolls, to be added.

HON. M. L. MOSS asked by what section of the Act of 1899 the Governor was empowered to make the proclamation mentioned by Mr. Haynes?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Under Section 31 of the present Electoral Act, the clerk of the municipality must, in December of each year, compile a list of all who had paid their rates, and of all who occupied premises and had not paid their rates--an alphabetical list of all persons holding rateable property within the municipality. Under the old Act the list consisted merely of persons who had paid their rates; under the new it included all who held rateable property. The list was to be transmitted to the Electoral Registrar, and, under Section 34, the names when received would be forthwith placed on the electoral roll, which immediately became the voters' list. Presumably the list would be subject to revision.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: It would go through the ordinary stages.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: By Section 164 the Governor might, by proclamation, direct that the list be sent in at any time from July to December. It might be urged this was only for the purposes of the first general election. That was true; but if done for that election the names must be placed on the roll, and by this Bill the persons on that roll would be entitled to vote in the referendum; and this amendment was the only means by which the 618 disfranchised ratepayers could be put on the roll, for it would enable the Government to do so by proclamation.

HON. C. A. PIESSE: Why not register everybody?

HON. M. L. MOSS: The amendment was desirable if it would achieve its purpose, but evidently it would not do so. In effect it desired the Government to issue a proclamation under Section 164 of the Act of 1899, to make additions to rolls in existence at the commencement of that Act. The rolls passed by the revision court on or about the 17th May were compiled under the Act of 1895, and the amendment desired, by proclamation under the Act of 1899, to make more complete rolls compiled under the Act of 1895. That could not be done. Clause 7 of the Bill would enable everyone who

desired it to get on the roll. Mr. Haynes stated there was in Fremantle also a number of disfranchised ratepayers. Personally, he (Mr. Moss) desired to see everyone on the roll, and did not oppose the amendment in order to hinder their enrolment. But some people were very apathetic in the matter of registering, and while anything that could be done to facilitate registration was desirable, let the Committee consider whether a proclamation made under the Act passed in 1899, which could only have reference to rolls prepared under that Act, would have the effect of adding names to rolls prepared under the Act of 1895. He would vote against the amendment.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: Mr. Haynes's amendment would hardly meet the case. The proclamation would be made under one Act, and would have reference to and deal with rolls compiled under a previous Act. How could that be effective?

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The present Act provided that the old rolls should be the rolls under the new Act.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: But the old rolls could only be touched or altered by authority.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The old rolls became the rolls under the new Act.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: And to that extent the rolls referred to either Act. He feared Mr. Haynes was bringing Town Hall broils into the federal company.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Nonsense!

HON. J. W. HACKETT: If there were any danger of injustice, let the 618 ratepayers struck off be notified by advertisement in one of the daily papers of the necessity for their registering afresh. He trusted hon. members would not consider this a selfish suggestion.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: No one read those papers.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: The hon. member did, and sometimes lost his breakfast in consequence. Such an advertisement would be widely read. The amendment opened a large question, and, if carried, it was not clear whether another place would understand what the Committee were driving at, for the amendment really referred to the other Bill which the hon. member (Mr. Haynes) had in his portfolio; and it was desired to asked the Committee to take that Bill on trust.



**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** While the Government had every desire to give as many as possible the right to vote in the referendum, he feared the amendment would create considerable difficulty. The mover hesitated slightly after getting Clause 164 in his hands. The amendment would go further than had already been stated, by enabling the Governor to override specific arrangements for the control of the referendum or of parliamentary elections, by taking the procedure, as it were, out of the hands of the Legislature and giving it over to the Ministry of the day.

**HON. J. W. HACKETT:** True, if it were done by proclamation.

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** But the Act had been passed.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Evidently the amendment aimed a direct blow at the principle of the Electoral Act.

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** The machinery was provided by the Act itself.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Moreover, there was no guarantee that the Bill to be introduced by Mr. Haynes would be passed either here or in another place. If rejected, then the Bill now before the Committee would be returned in order that this amendment, if incorporated therein, might be expunged; the result being that the Enabling Bill might be hung up for a considerable time.

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** It had been hung up for three years without complaint.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The hon. member himself had complained of the delay.

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** And now there was too much haste.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** It was not conceivable that any Bill could be introduced which was not susceptible of improvement.

**HON. A. B. KIDSON:** Then it was our duty to improve it.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** It was generally allowed this was a liberal measure, which amply provided for every person voting; and he must object to any action which, to an extent, would pauperise the people by enabling them, without effort, to avail themselves of the right and privilege of voting. At present every adult in the colony was so seized with the importance of voting "yes" or

"no" on the Bill, that it was not reasonable to suppose many would neglect to take the necessary steps to enable them to vote in the referendum; and Clause made ample provision for registration. He had thought of Mr. Hackett's suggestion to notify the 618 persons who by some means had been struck off the roll, but surely every voter in Perth and elsewhere would ascertain whether he was or was not on the roll, and to ascertain that would be easy. The amendment was unnecessary, and would not effect the purpose in view.

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** Notwithstanding the speech of Mr. Moss, he (Mr. Haynes) still adhered to his own opinion, as this was a matter on which he had perhaps spent considerably more time than the hon. member. He had not introduced the amendment without due consideration, and it was the only means by which the 618 ratepayers could be enrolled. Some of those ratepayers were the very persons who had returned the hon. member to the House, and surely no member would tell his electors he had refused to vote for an amendment which would place on the rolls these 618 disfranchised electors. How many people knew where the Electoral Registrar's office was situated?

**HON. R. G. BURGESS:** If one asked in some of the Government offices, one could not find out.

**HON. F. WHITCOMBE** said he discovered the Registrar's office last week.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** There was a large signboard painted in front of the Registrar's office, and another hanging over the footpath.

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** But where was the office?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** In Hay-street, near the Mechanics' Institute, and the fact had been advertised in the newspapers.

**HON. R. S. HAYNES** repeated that he did not think half a dozen members, not even above two, in the House knew where the Registrar's office was.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** They know now.

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** But hon. members did not know before, and if hon. members did not know, how could the electors be expected to have the information? At the last election some

members of the House, on going to vote, found they were not on the roll.

HON. A. B. KIDSON said he was one of those.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: If that could occur in the case of Mr. Kidson, was it to be wondered at that benighted electors in the wilds of West Perth did not know they were not on the rolls? The charge had been reiterated against the House at every election at which he had been present, that hon. members tried to gag the people and keep them off the roll, and endeavoured to get measures decided by a circle as small and sacred as possible. That charge was indignantly denied by every candidate before the electors, in the House.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: It was to be hoped the hon. member repudiated the charge.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: If the Colonial Secretary, when he went before his electors the next time, was asked some question on this point, and he (Hon. R. S. Haynes) was present, he would refer to the present discussion. It was entirely for the House to decide whether or not this favour should be granted to the electors, not only of Perth but of other towns. If the House would not grant that favour, he had discharged his duty, and had simply to submit to what he considered was an injustice. He could see that hon. members did not want to discuss this question at any very great length, and he did not wish to prolong the business; but he firmly believed that this amendment would have the desired effect, and that if it were not agreed to, these people could not be placed on the rolls unless they came forward under Clause 7. If this amendment were not passed, another amendment, which would have a more sweeping effect, would be moved.

HON. A. B. KIDSON said he did not desire to create difficulties, but only to ask for information, because the effect of the amendment did not appear quite clear to him. The proclamation only applied to things required under the Act of 1899, and one thing required by the Act was hardly the placing of ratepayers on the roll by proclamation. At present it was not quite clear under what authority the proclamation was going to work.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Nothing would have given him greater pleasure than to vote in support of Mr. Haynes's amendment, had he (Mr. Matheson) really believed the amendment would have the result Mr. Haynes believed it would; but it was practically clear to him (Hon. A. P. Matheson) at any rate that no such result would be achieved, and Mr. Moss had clearly set out the position. The rolls to be used were the rolls of the 1895 Act, revised on the third Tuesday in May.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: They were now the rolls under the present Act.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: But they were not to be used in this election as the rolls under the present Act, and the rolls that this particular Bill was going to deal with were rolls of the 1895 Act, revised on the 17th May.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The same rolls, exactly.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: But the Electoral Act of 1899, even if it could be interpreted in the way Mr. Haynes suggested, only provided for altering the Electoral Act of 1899, not that of 1895, as revised; and these particular rolls being the rolls under which this election was going to be conducted, it was clear Mr. Moss was right, and it would be impossible to legally amend those rolls by any proclamation under the Electoral Act of 1899. If the course proposed could be adopted satisfactorily he would be the very first person to support the amendment, because those ratepayers had been most scandalously treated by the City Council, who appeared to have gone considerably out of their way to strike them off the roll; and there was no doubt it would be, as Mr. Haynes had pointed out, a very great hardship to those people if they were compelled to find the Registrar's office, and apply for certificates. But he was afraid that was the only alternative, and if, as some members had said, these people had not the energy to walk to Hay Street and apply for electors' certificates, they perhaps did not deserve as much sympathy as they otherwise would.

HON. SIR G. SHENTON: One way out of the difficulty had been overlooked. It was the wish of members that every facility should be given to electors for recording their votes, and

those 618 electors were suffering under hardship through no fault of their own; but the next clause gave them power to get on the roll, and he suggested that their names should be advertised, so that they might have an opportunity of seeing from public prints that their names had been removed. But a greater hardship might be involved, seeing that the ladies, under the Bill, had the right to vote on this question, and it would be a pity if any amendment were brought forward which would have the effect of delaying the measure; because it was the wish of everybody that this question should go to the people and be settled as quickly as possible.

HON. M. L. MOSS suggested as a compromise that the Colonial Secretary should give an assurance that to each of the 618 electors, a specially prepared circular should be sent by the Registrar, informing them that their names had been struck off the municipal roll, and consequently off the electoral roll, and that on application to the authority mentioned in the Bill, they would be given voters' certificates.

HON. W. MALEY: The City Council appeared to have done all the things which they ought not to have done, and left undone those things which they ought to have done. They were wrong in striking the names off the roll, and it was their duty to draw the attention of these electors to the fact, instead of troubling the House as they had. A circular sent out by the City Council notifying those persons that their names had been inadvertently struck off the roll would have the effect of causing them to apply to the Electoral Registrar under Clause 7; and he was pleased to see that Mr. R. S. Haynes had so successfully influenced the City Council as to have apparently induced them to give him a brief to remedy matters. This discussion would do a vast amount of good, and in the end those people would get on the roll, because they, unlike residents in the country, would have no difficulty in going to the Registrar,

Question—that the words proposed to be inserted be inserted—put and negatived.

MR. WHITCOMBE moved that the clause be struck out. He did not approve of the rolls being used, if it were only for the reason that there was ample provision in Clause 7 for every person to take out

his certificate and exercise his vote. By the use of existing rolls, it would be possible for persons who had a vote in more than one electoral district, to vote in each of those districts without any reasonable chance of detection, because if there was to be the usual process of detection pursued by the Returning Officer, it would be necessary for him to examine every roll and compare them with the voters' papers; so that it would be practically impossible to detect any improper voting. If, as had been shown, more than two-thirds of the electors would have to obtain voters' certificates, it was difficult to see why the other one-third should not do the same, and thus do away with the possibility of plural voting.

Motion negatived, and the clause passed.

#### Clause 7—Voters' certificates:

HON. F. M. STONE: It was his intention to submit an amendment dealing with the question he mentioned when speaking on the second reading. Under the clause a person could obtain a voter's certificate by applying on certain days and hours up to the 28th July, or two days before polling day. He proposed to make three amendments in the clause, to enable any voter to obtain a voter's certificate on polling day. That would do away with much of the objection made with reference to the disfranchised voters referred to by Mr. Haynes. It would simplify the matter very much, and we should not have heartburnings afterwards. Supposing a person resided 30 or 40 miles from Perth, he would under this clause have to come into Perth to get a voter's certificate, if he was not on the roll, and then he would have to come in again on polling-day to record his vote. What objections could there be to the amendment he proposed, namely that any person could obtain a certificate on the day of polling? Persons forgot to see if their names were on the roll; and supposing on the day of polling a person came to vote and found that his name was not on the roll—as doubtless would be the case with very many persons—such person would, if the amendment were carried, go to the returning officer, who would tell him he was not on the roll, and then the person would go to someone appointed and obtain a voter's certificate,

which he would take to the returning officer, and then he would vote. Why should the provision as to two days before the polling have been put into this clause? When the voting paper thus obtained was taken to the returning officer, that officer would put the person's name down on the list, together with the number of his voting paper, and that system would prevent any person from voting twice. These lists from the returning officers could be compared afterwards, and it could be ascertained whether any person had voted twice; but one felt sure that on an occasion like this no person would do so. We were told that we must not amend this Bill in any way, that if we did so we should jeopardise it, or something of the kind. But what were we here for? If there was a chance of making the voting easier under this Bill, it was the bounden duty of the Committee to do so. Under Clause 8 there seemed to be an exception in regard to any person who was on the electoral roll, because, under that clause, if such a person was 30 miles away, he could vote by going before a resident magistrate. But supposing a person was not on the roll. In Perth alone there were 600 off the list—in fact nearly 700, and goodness knew how many more—and under Clause 8 not one of those 700 would be able to vote if he could not come in on polling day. As had been pointed out, even some of the members of the House did not know where the electoral registrar was; yet a man had to come in first of all and hunt about for the electoral registrar, and find him to get a certificate, and then he would have to come in again on the polling day; whereas if the amendment proposed were carried, he would simply go to the polling booth, and, if not on the list, go to a person authorised by the Government to issue certificates, and obtain a certificate, and then go and vote.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That was done in Victoria.

HON. F. M. STONE: If the hon. member (Mr. Hackett) was sincere in the wish that if he saw any chance of amending this Bill so as to make voting easier he would do it, that hon. member should be the first to support the amendment. He moved that after "resides," in line 8, there be inserted "or from any

person appointed for such purpose by the Governor." Of course, in small country districts the returning officer could be appointed, because the amount of voting would be very small; but in the larger towns it would be necessary to appoint persons to issue these certificates, so that the returning officer could carry out the other duties which would devolve upon him.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Clause 2 seemed to him to provide for what was advocated by the hon. member (Mr. Haynes). The interpretation of the words "assistant registrar" was "a person appointed as such for the purposes of this Act under the powers conveyed by the Electoral Act, 1899, Section 158."

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The Electoral Act of 1899 did not apply.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We had no other Electoral Act to work on. There was no necessity for this amendment. We all knew the weakness of most people, especially electors, who deferred to the last moment the opportunity of exercising their electoral rights. The result of the amendment, if passed, would be that the polling places would be crowded. People would put off applying for their certificates to the last hour, the consequence being that the polling-booth would be so crowded that persons anxious to record their votes would be shut out from so doing.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Let there be more polling places.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Very numerous polling places would be provided, but no number of polling-booths in the world would make people go to the poll sooner than they were inclined to go.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: What was proposed under the amendment was done in Victoria.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Let not the hon. member quote Victoria.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member (Mr. R. S. Haynes) now quoted Victoria; but on other occasions when Victoria was mentioned, that gentleman nearly always took the opportunity of disclaiming any regard for the legislation of Victoria.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: There were exceptions to every rule.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There were, he believed, to be six weeks

after this Bill became law to enable the electors of the colony to obtain their voting certificates. Each week during that time persons would have the opportunity of applying for certificates between 9 and 4 o'clock on five week days, and between 9 and 6 o'clock on Saturdays; and it was only reasonable to expect the voters of the colony to use the opportunities afforded by this clause to obtain their rights. There would be disappointment in the voting, whatever system was adopted, owing to the usual apathy and indifference of the electors. He hoped the House would not consent to the amendment, because it was not required, and he believed members were satisfied that the Bill fairly and honestly provided for all the emergencies and exigencies of the case. There was an objection to the adoption of any amendment in this Bill unless it was extremely important, for any amendment would have the effect of retarding the passage of the measure.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: By one day.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We wanted to give as much time as possible for electors to qualify themselves to vote at the referendum. The amendment was not of sufficient importance to require us to give it a place in this Bill, for every provision had been made in Clause 7 to enable persons not on the roll to obtain certificates.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: According to the remarks of the Colonial Secretary there was no necessity for the existence of the Legislative Council at all. The hon. gentleman said this Bill must be passed as it stood at present.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: The Colonial Secretary did not say that. What he said was that the Bill must not be amended.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Quite right: he bowed to the correction. The hon. gentleman was not the first leader of the House who had said that we should not amend a Bill; but how often had the leader of the House said that a Bill was not to be amended, and the House had told the leader that the Bill should be amended if the House deemed it necessary to amend it. After waiting three years the Colonial Secretary came down and wanted us to pass this measure through

at one sitting. He (Mr. Haynes) was told that he was quite wrong in the amendment he moved a few moments ago, that the Electoral Act of 1899 did not apply to this Bill; and yet the Colonial Secretary, after making that statement and urging it as a reason why his amendment should not be accepted, actually urged that Mr. Stone's amendment should not be accepted because it was provided for by Clause 2 of this Bill. What did Clause 2 say? It said that an assistant registrar was "a person appointed as such for the purposes of this Act under the powers conveyed by the Electoral Act, 1899, Section 158." How could the Electoral Act of 1899 apply to this Bill? Section 158 said "the Minister may appoint such officers or persons as may to him appear necessary for the purpose of assisting any returning officer or registrar in the performance of his duties, or otherwise for carrying this Act into effect." The Act there referred to was the Electoral Act of 1899, which was not yet in force. Mr. Stone's suggestion was that the Governor might appoint other persons besides electoral registrars to issue electors' certificates, which was a step in the right direction, as it widened the opportunities of people to get on the rolls. He could not see any valid objection to the amendment. The only objection raised was that it would have the effect of introducing an amendment to the Bill. He supposed the Colonial Secretary was under marching orders, that he had been told to force the Bill down the throats of hon. members whether they liked it or not, and to send it back without amendment. Were members like a lot of school-boys to put up with anything like that? Frequently we had passed measures through this House and then found that we had made a mistake. The spirit of the House seemed just now to be jocose. There did not seem to be any intention of approaching the Bill with anything like decorum, especially on the part of several members. Members laughed at anything that was proposed, but they swallowed anything which the Government brought forward. The amendment was a fair and reasonable one, and the only objection to it was that the Government did not want any amendment in the Bill at all. He had previously shown that what appeared to be the only valid reason against the

amendment was not a valid reason at all.

HON. A. B. KIDSON: Mr. Haynes had exercised wise discretion in leaving the question to hon. members to decide; for if the hon. member had not done so he would have landed himself in a difficulty. There was a greater objection to the amendment than had been stated by Mr. Haynes. If there was any member of the Committee more than another whose amendment he would care to support because of the attention which would be bestowed upon it before it was introduced, it was Mr. Stone; but there was an objection to the amendment. He understood it was preparatory to another amendment giving the right to obtain electors' certificates up to and on the date of the referendum. That would not do, because all knew that electors did not roll up as fast to the poll as was always perhaps desirable. People left matters of this kind till nearly the end, then trouble arose in order to get votes, and as a consequence a number of people who desired to vote were not able to do so. This was instanced in the recent election for the Metropolitan province, when numbers of people were unable to get to the poll to vote because they came so late. If the amendment were carried, not only would there be the crush in connection with the voting, but persons would be rushing to obtain electors' certificates, perhaps in the same hall where the voting was taking place. If that was not creating a difficulty, he did not know what was. Two days before the referendum took place was quite close enough to obtain certificates.

HON. E. McLARTY: If there was any real necessity for the amendment he would give it his heartiest support, as he desired to see every facility given for electors to obtain votes; but every facility was given by Clause 7 of the Bill. The amendment would lead to confusion. Out of the 618 disfranchised electors which had been mentioned by Mr. Haynes, if the amendment were carried about 600 of them would come up for their certificates on the last day, which would lead to no end of confusion. If electors would not take advantage of the provisions of Clause 7, which enabled them to obtain voters' certificates up till

the 28th of the month, they should not be entitled to get them.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: It was quite refreshing for the Colonial Secretary to come to the Council and say he had brought forward a perfect Bill, for during the last two years he had not done so. If the interpretation clause applied as had been pointed out by the Colonial Secretary, it would be better for Mr. Stone to withdraw his amendment and strike out the preceding words "for the electoral district in which such person resides." Although a person might be entitled to vote, say in the Kalgoorlie district, he might temporarily be outside that district, and it would be impossible for him to obtain an elector's certificate under the clause.

HON. F. M. STONE: The amendment which he had moved got over that difficulty.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: If the interpretation clause as carried applied, it would be surplusage to insert the amendment. The difficulty could be overcome by inserting the word "any" before assistant registrar in the place of "an."

HON. R. S. HAYNES: That would not get over the difficulty.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: It was not right to allow electors' certificates to be taken out right up to the last day; but that was not the question now before the Committee.

Amendment (Mr. Stone's) put, and a division being called for, it was taken with the following result:—

|                  |     |     |     |    |
|------------------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes             | ... | ... | ... | 3  |
| Noes             | ... | ... | ... | 18 |
| Majority against |     |     |     | 15 |

| AYES.             | NOES.                 |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Hon. R. S. Haynes | Hon. C. E. Dempster   |
| Hon. F. M. Stone  | Hon. J. M. Drew       |
| Hon. F. Whitcombe | Hon. J. W. Hackett    |
| (Teller).         | Hon. S. J. Haynes     |
|                   | Hon. A. G. Jenkins    |
|                   | Hon. A. B. Kidson     |
|                   | Hon. H. Lukin         |
|                   | Hon. W. Maley         |
|                   | Hon. A. P. Matheson   |
|                   | Hon. E. McLarty       |
|                   | Hon. M. L. Moss       |
|                   | Hon. C. A. Piesse     |
|                   | Hon. G. Randlell      |
|                   | Hon. J. E. Richardson |
|                   | Hon. H. J. Saunders   |
|                   | Hon. C. Sommers       |
|                   | Hon. W. Spencer       |
|                   | Hon. R. G. Burges     |
|                   | (Teller).             |

Amendment thus negatived.

HON. R. S. HAYNES moved that in line 10, the word "six" be struck out and

"nine" inserted in lieu. Many working men could not apply between 9 and 4, and after 4 the office would be closed. It was said they might apply up to 6 p.m. on Saturdays, but that would only give working people one afternoon in each week for registration, or four Saturday afternoons in all till the polling day.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: Though a little matter, the amendment would be of great advantage, particularly to country people, many of whom could visit the towns on Saturday evenings only, particularly at this busy season of the year.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: In connection with the Electoral Act, and in dealing with the Revision Court, he had advocated a similar extension of hours. He congratulated those who opposed him on that occasion, and who were now becoming more modern and civilised. The argument in favour of keeping such offices open till nine on Saturday night was beyond controversy, as hundreds would otherwise be prevented from registering.

HON. W. MALEY: Country people, in his experience, preferred doing their business in towns on Saturday afternoons, and getting back before nightfall.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: That was only in the hon. member's district.

HON. W. MALEY: As applied to towns the amendment might be desirable, though even there working men, by a slight effort, could record their votes in the lunch hour.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: The Electoral Registrar had a lunch hour.

HON. W. MALEY: Working men desirous of registering could readily obtain leave of absence from employers. In these days of trade unions men could look after themselves, and no one would suffer by letting the clause stand.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY complimented the Committee on the apparent tendency to liberalise the Bill.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: To liberalise it?

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: No doubt the hon. member thought it too liberal.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: Worse than that: it was radical.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Surely every reasonable concession had been made. There were really six weeks in which persons could take out certificates.

Regarding country districts especially the amendment was unnecessary, for people would not go out at 9 o'clock on winter nights.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: The hon. member knows nothing about it.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Justices used to sit in Perth on Saturday nights to put people on the roll.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hours had already been extended from 4 to 6, thus giving two hours extra, and any persons seriously desirous of getting on the roll could do so without difficulty either in these hours or in the luncheon hour; moreover, no employer would grudge his workmen leave of absence for such a purpose.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: But the training service would not permit the people in some of the outlying districts visiting the Registrar's office.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The amendment would certainly entail reference to another place.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: The hon. member had received his marching orders.

HON. F. M. STONE: It certainly appeared as if marching orders had been issued, for any attempt to liberalise the Bill was at once sat upon by the leaders of the House. In the country, workmen did not cease work until 6 p.m. on Saturdays. Numbers of men had been placed on the roll on Saturday nights by justices, and that night was the most suitable time for registration. Let us pass the amendment.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Hear, hear! Show our independence, at all events.

HON. H. LUKIN: Surely hon. members must deplore the opposition shown to the Bill to-night. Many were in doubt as to whether the Bill was going through the House at all, and it would really have been better to pass the Bill on a silent vote. Instead of that there had been a lot of paltry amendments moved, in which there was nothing that would liberalise the measure at all, because the Bill was liberal enough for everyone. One could not help feeling that a number of hon. members—and he was sorry to say it—who had spoken to-night had been doing neither more nor less than "playing to the gallery." He was sorry to make the accusation, but no thinking man could come to any other conclusion.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: It was playing very low down, was it not?

HON. H. LUKIN: Yes, it was. No one was more anxious than himself that there should be a full and out-and-out vote taken on the question, now that it was going to the people; and the Bill would enable every man and woman to record their vote. To listen to some hon. members it would be thought the country should go to the expense of sending a policeman, with a certificate and a bell, after every person who ought to have a vote. If people did not take sufficient interest to vote on this great question they were not worth looking after.

HON. R. S. HAYNES said he would bow to the superior wisdom of Mr. Lukin, when the latter said "paltry" amendments had been moved in the House; and no person could accuse the hon. member of moving amendments "paltry" or otherwise. Mr. Lukin had suggested that the Bill should have been passed on a silent vote, and accused hon. members of "playing to the gallery;" and it would never be laid to the feet of Mr. Lukin that he had "played to the gallery."

HON. H. LUKIN said he never would.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Mr. Lukin objected to the amendments because they did not liberalise the measure. Did the hon. member know the meaning of the word "liberalise?" If he did, his statement was surprising. Did the hon. member wish to lecture the House as to the rights of hon. members to express an opinion? Did the hon. member wish, because his time was short and he wanted to go home and dig his potatoes, that other members should not do their duty? Was the hon. member of such long legislative experience that he should take on himself to lecture the House? He (Mr. Haynes) would not sit under such a lecture, and whenever he felt called on, he should move such amendments as the justice of the case or the occasion required. If the hon. member referred to him (Mr. Haynes) as "playing to the gallery," the insinuation was cast back with contempt. It was to be hoped no member would be heard accusing another member of "playing to the gallery," and it ill became Mr. Lukin to make a charge against an hon. member, for since he had been in the House everyone had paid the utmost

courtesy to him, a courtesy which, it appeared to him (Mr. Haynes), the hon. member did not deserve.

Amendment put, and a division taken with the following result:—

|      |     |     |     |    |
|------|-----|-----|-----|----|
| Ayes | ... | ... | ... | 11 |
| Noes | ... | ... | ... | 10 |

Majority for ... .. 1

| Ayes.                 | Noes.               |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Hon. C. E. Dempster   | Hon. J. W. Hackett  |
| Hon. J. M. Draw       | Hon. S. J. Haynes   |
| Hon. R. S. Haynes     | Hon. A. B. Kidson   |
| Hon. A. G. Jenkins    | Hon. H. Lukin       |
| Hon. A. P. Matheson   | Hon. W. Maley       |
| Hon. M. L. Moss       | Hon. E. McLarty     |
| Hon. J. E. Richardson | Hon. G. Randell     |
| Hon. C. Sommers       | Hon. H. J. Saunders |
| Hon. F. M. Stone      | Hon. W. Spencer     |
| Hon. F. Whitcombe     | Hon. C. A. Piesse   |
| Hon. R. G. Burgess    | (Teller).           |

Amendment thus passed.

HON. F. M. STONE moved, as a further amendment, that all words after "nine p.m." be struck out, which would have the effect of enabling any person to obtain a voter's certificate up to and on the day of polling. There seemed to have been some misconception in the minds of hon. members who voted against the amendment on which a division had just been taken. They appeared not to have understood that his object in moving that former amendment was to enable him to move the present amendment. The only objections raised to the former amendments were by the Colonial Secretary and Mr. Kidson, the former seeming to think no amendment whatever should be made in the Bill. Now that an amendment had been passed, that argument could not apply to the amendment now proposed. When the Committee had passed an amendment that the hours should be extended from 6 o'clock to 9 o'clock, so as to liberalise the measure, there should be no objection to further liberalising it by enabling any person to obtain a voter's certificate up to and on the day of election. It had been said that persons were too lazy to get themselves placed on the rolls; but the Committee had heard of persons being disfranchised not through being lazy, but through the fault of the City Council, and it was not only municipal councils who were to blame, but also the roads boards, by whom hundreds of electors had been disfranchised owing to the way in which the rolls were made up. It often occurred that persons on going up to vote in



ordinary elections for either House of Parliament were informed that they were not on the roll; and he had had that experience himself on going to vote in municipal elections. To pass this amendment would only cause two or three days' delay in passing the Bill, and surely the liberalising of the measure was worth that delay if hon. members were sincere in their wish that every adult who had been twelve months in the colony should vote. It might be objected that a person could vote twice; but to prevent that, he proposed to further move that the returning officer, on the presentation of the voter's certificate, should on a list enter the name, address, and occupation of the voter, and the number of the certificate, in order that comparison might be made with the roll. He urged the House with all seriousness to pass the amendment, which would do away with the heartburnings which otherwise were sure to arise. As to the charge of laziness, hon. members themselves were for the matter of that often too lazy to enrol themselves until the date had passed. As the Bill now stood, every voter in town or country had to make two journeys to the Registrar's office, one to obtain his certificate, and another to record his vote. In the event of his amendment being passed, if a person went to the polling booth, and was not on the roll and did not happen to possess a voter's certificate, he would not be prevented from obtaining such certificate. It was said that this would lead to confusion, and it was pointed out that at the last election in Perth great confusion occurred. He was not going to say whether that was the fault of the Government, but it was the fault of someone.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The Government had nothing to do with it.

**HON. F. M. STONE:** Then it was the fault of the Returning Officer, because he sat with one clerk to take the votes of hundreds of persons. There could have been five or six officers there, and two or three persons to take the voters' certificates, so that there need be no confusion. As soon as a row was occasioned at the Perth election, the Returning Officer was obliged to get further assistance, and there was no confusion after. He (Mr. Stone) went to the polling booth at James street, where threes and fours voted, and

there was no difficulty. His amendment would contain the words "up to and including the closing of the poll."

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** The Committee would, he hoped, accept this amendment. He had lost his amendment as to certain ratepayers in Perth being placed on the roll; but he had endeavoured to point out that the exclusion of these ratepayers would be a great hardship, and if passed, the present amendment would have the effect of giving them the opportunity of being placed on the referendum roll. He especially asked the members for Perth to vote for the motion, and he hoped that, if they did not do so, their electors would remember it.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Was the hon. member using a threat?

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** No threat was used by him, but he made a bald statement. The constituents of the members for Perth were under greater difficulties than any others. There would be no crush at any other polling booth than the Town Hall, and there need be no crush there, if one or two polling booths were provided. He appealed to members generally, especially members for Perth, and the Colonial Secretary as representing the Government, to accept the amendment.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Mr. Haynes had thought fit to appeal to him as a member of a metropolitan constituency, and he used language which was quite unjustifiable, threatening him with the displeasure of the electors.

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** No threat was used by him at all. If the hon. gentleman took his words as a threat, he would withdraw them unreservedly. He was referring more to Mr. H. J. Saunders, and did not in any way use the words as a threat.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** In the interests of the citizens of Perth he could not support this amendment because he believed that, if the amendment were passed, a scene of confusion would take place which would result in far more dissatisfaction than would arise under the present very liberal arrangements.

**HON. R. S. HAYNES:** Only in Perth.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** In Perth, and in other large centres, and elsewhere, unless we had a host of per-

sons authorised to issue certificates. He did not think the issuing of certificates should be entrusted to every Tom, Dick, or Harry, but selections would have to be made from suitable persons to see that the certificates were properly signed, and that the voters did not lose their votes when they went to hand in their certificates, because experience had shown him very clearly that there was a danger of that taking place. As he had already stated, there would be a period of six weeks for people to qualify themselves on this very important question, and we might reasonably ask that those persons who desired to exercise their rights should take a reasonable view of things and qualify themselves accordingly. As one member observed just now, if the amendment were passed, we should be punishing the many for the sake of the few, and the possibility was that hundreds, or perhaps thousands, might be shut out on the day of election. This was going to be no ordinary election. In the Metropolitan Province there would perhaps be not only a thousand, or probably a little over, as would be the case at an ordinary election, but there would be an immense poll, because every person in favour of the Commonwealth Bill would vote, as would also those who were opposed to federation. He repeated that he hoped the House would not consent to the amendment, because it was not necessary, and, if passed, would create confusion.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The members of the House would, he hoped, support the amendment, which, if passed, was likely to be of very material assistance to the people, particularly those mentioned by Mr. Burges, people living thirty miles and more from a polling booth, who would, if they were not on the roll, have to drive in with their families to get electoral rights, two or three days prior to the election. They would then presumably have to make a trip home, and subsequently have to come in to vote.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Applications for a voter's certificate could be sent by such people: they need not apply personally.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: That might be in the Bill, but there was always the possibility that persons who sent might get no reply. Again, most of the people living in the country were not very well

up in filling in forms, and probably they would fill in application forms in a wrong way.

HON. M. L. MOSS: The only thing to do was to sign the name to the application.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: The people had to obtain forms.

HON. M. L. MOSS: Forms were, he supposed, procurable at every post office.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: As had been pointed out, the holder of an electoral right was not able to give what was called a proxy vote, but must, whether male or female, go to the polling booth in person; so it was particularly desirable that the greatest scope should be given to such persons to get electoral rights. It was not at all reasonable that a person should be obliged to make two trips, when one trip on the day of election would be ample.

HON. C. E. DEMPSTER: There would be so many rushing in on the day of election that it would lead to a lot of confusion.

HON. A. P. MATHESON: Was it more advantageous that the State should spend a little more money and provide accommodation to enrol people on the polling day, than that people should be disfranchised? This was supposed to be a referendum to the people, and it should be a referendum to the people in the broadest sense. In this vital matter to Western Australia the fullest scope should be given to people to enable them to vote.

HON. R. G. BURGESS: There had been great dissatisfaction in the Eastern Province during the last two elections. All those people whose names were unfortunate enough to begin with the initial letter H, appeared not to be able to get on the roll, as there were only two persons in the Eastern Province on the roll whose names began with that letter. Some of those persons whose names commenced with H were likely to leave it to the last day to get a vote, and when they came to the poll they would be unable to vote if they could not get a certificate on the day of election. We ought to give people every chance, all through the country, to get a vote. At first he thought there would be a great deal of confusion on the day of election if certificates could be obtained on that day, but the Government were

able to overcome that by making plenty of provision at the polling places. The rush could only occur in the large towns, and the Government could provide against such a contingency. Although not altogether in favour of the amendment, there would be great dissatisfaction if all the people were not able to vote. Many of the people would think that they were entitled to vote, and come to the poll to find that they were not so entitled. If the amendment were carried, these people would be able to get a vote on the polling day.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE, in supporting the amendment, said it was far better for certain expenditure to be incurred by the Government in making provision for people to record their votes than that a number of people should be disfranchised. It seemed that the Government did not wish that people in outlying places should vote on this question, and the Government were putting these people, by the position taken up, to a great deal of trouble and expense in trying to get a vote. It seemed unreasonable that the Colonial Secretary should object to the amendment.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: Every possible opportunity would be given by the Government for people to obtain votes and to get votes, but the Government could not do impossibilities.

Amendment (Mr. Stone's) put, and a division taken with the following result:—

|                      |     |    |
|----------------------|-----|----|
| Ayes ...             | ... | 6  |
| Noes ...             | ... | 12 |
| Majority against ... |     | 6  |

AYES.  
Hon. R. G. Burgess  
Hon. A. P. Matheson  
Hon. C. Sommers  
Hon. F. M. Stone  
Hon. F. Whitcombe  
Hon. R. S. Haynes (Teller).

NOES.  
Hon. C. E. Dempster  
Hon. J. M. Drew  
Hon. J. W. Hackett  
Hon. S. J. Haynes  
Hon. A. G. Jenkins  
Hon. A. B. Kidson  
Hon. W. Mailey  
Hon. E. McLarty  
Hon. C. A. Piessie  
Hon. G. Randell  
Hon. H. J. Saunders  
Hon. M. L. Moss (Teller).

Amendment thus negatived.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE moved that in Sub-clause 2 the words "and by the voter," in lines 3 and 4, be struck out. Only by this means could voters living at great distances from the polling places be put in a fair position and enabled to obtain their certificates through the post. Provision was made in the next clause for those already on the rolls to vote in

absence. At present it had not been announced where polling places would be situated.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: There would be an assistant registrar at every court-house and post office.

HON. F. WHITCOMBE: Even so, what objection could there be to certificates being sent by post?

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause as previously amended agreed to.

Clause 8—Method of voting in absence:

HON. R. S. HAYNES moved that in line 3 the word "thirty" be struck out, and "twenty" inserted in lieu. Though there were good reasons for the amendment, yet, in consideration of the lateness of the hour, he would simply ask that it be passed.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: The clause as it stood was in accordance with the existing law. There was evidently some misunderstanding on the point, for every elector residing more than 80 miles from the nearest polling place could vote as absent.

HON. R. S. HAYNES: Surely the same privilege should be allowed to persons 20 miles distant.

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

Clauses 9 to 14—agreed to.

Schedule 1—agreed to.

Schedule 2—Application for voters' certificates:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that after the words "Electoral Registrar," the words "or Assistant Electoral Registrar" be inserted, it being the intention that the assistant registrar should also issue certificates.

Put and passed, and the schedule, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule 3—Voters' certificates:

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY moved that after the words "Electoral Registrar" the words "or Assistant Electoral Registrar" be inserted as a consequential amendment.

Put and passed, and the schedule, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule 4—agreed to.

Schedule 5—Commonwealth Constitutional Bill:

HON. F. WHITCOMBE asked what steps would be necessary to add the Imperial amendments to the schedule?

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** The Bill would be reprinted as soon as received. The Imperial amendments were an unknown quantity.

Schedule put and passed.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments, and the report adopted.

### THIRD READING.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** I think it will meet with the views of hon. members, if I move that the third reading—

**SEVERAL MEMBERS:** Not now.

**SEVERAL MEMBERS:** Now.

**THE PRESIDENT:** The Bill cannot go down to the other House to-night, because the Legislative Assembly is not sitting now.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** I think time would be gained.

**HON. M. L. MOSS:** The Standing Orders have been suspended.

**THE COLONIAL SECRETARY:** I move that the Bill be read a third time.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a third time, and returned to the Legislative Assembly with amendments.

### PAPER PRESENTED.

By the **COLONIAL SECRETARY:** Specimen copy of account books furnished to Roads Boards by the Public Works Department.

Ordered to lie on the table.

### ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10:40 o'clock until the next Tuesday.

## Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 7th June, 1900.

Question: Mining Classes, to Establish—Question: New Industries, to Encourage—Question: Agricultural Districts, to Bore for Water—Question: Railway Servants and Public Bodies—Question: Holiday, Relief of Making—Question: Road to Lake Way, Repairs—Papers presented—Urgency: Electoral Rolls and Canvassing for Names—Motion: Mundaring Weir, Reports on Concrete—Motion for Papers: Railways and Alleged Frauds—Motion for Papers: Mail Steamers, as to Calling at Fremantle—Urgency: Committee of Inquiry, Robson case, Leave to employ Counsel—Adjournment.

**THE SPEAKER** took the Chair at 7:30 o'clock, p.m.

### PRAYERS.

### QUESTION—MINING CLASSES, TO ESTABLISH.

**MR. OATS** asked the Premier, Whether it is the intention of the Government to place a sum of money on the Estimates for the purpose of establishing mining classes in the different important mining centres.

**THE MINISTER** of MINES replied that the matter had not been brought under the notice of the Government, nor had it been considered.

### QUESTION—NEW INDUSTRIES, TO ENCOURAGE.

**MR. QUINLAN** asked the Premier, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill during the coming session of Parliament, having for its object the encouragement of new industries.

**THE PREMIER** replied that the Government had such a Bill under consideration.

### QUESTION—AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS, TO BORE FOR WATER.

**MR. QUINLAN** asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands, Whether it is his intention to take steps to introduce a measure for boring for water in agricultural districts, as promised some time ago.

**THE COMMISSIONER** OF CROWN LANDS replied:—Yes; steps are being taken in the direction indicated, and regulations are now under consideration and will shortly be made public.

### QUESTION—RAILWAY SERVANTS AND PUBLIC BODIES.

**MR. SOLOMON** asked the Commissioner of Railways, Whether it is a fact