

before the word "service" showed, on the face of it, what the meaning was. I have a perfect recollection that there was no postponement of the clause.

THE PRESIDENT: In reply to the hon. member (Mr. Matheson), I am informed by the Clerk that the Minutes are correct, and that Clauses 13 to 17 were agreed to. This House is ruled by these Minutes, and not by *Hansard*. Mistakes are made by *Hansard*. If this mistake has occurred in the official reports of *Hansard*, the reporter will have to explain to me why it occurred.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9:40 p.m. till the next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 8th December, 1897.

Agricultural Bureau: Report of Select Committee—Question: Survey and Construction of Goomalling Railway—Question: Drainage of Harvey Agricultural Area—Question: Delay in Drainage of Harvey Agricultural Area—Question: Departmental Difficulties re Drainage of Agricultural Area—Question: Railway Workshops at Midland Junction, and Coolgardie Water Scheme Reservoir—Question: Further Exemptions on Collie Coalfield—Question: Resignation of Agent General—Motion: Drainage of Harvey Agricultural Area—Motion: Opening of Perth Museum on Sundays—Motion: Additional Water Supply for Perth—Motion: Incursion of Rabbits from South Australia—Stock Diseases Act Amendment Bill: second reading: Bill referred to Select Committee—Noxious Weeds Bill: second reading—Early Closing Bill: in committee—Bills of Sale Bill: second reading—Divorce Act Amendment and Extension Bill: second reading (moved)—Dentists Act Amendment Bill: Discharge of Order—Local Courts Evidence Bill: second reading (moved)—Legal Practitioners Act Amendment Bill: second reading (negative)—Registration of Firms Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

AGRICULTURAL BUREAU—REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. SIMPSON, Chairman of Select Committee, brought up the committee's report on the advisability of placing the Agricultural Bureau under the control of a Minister of the Crown.

Report received, read, and ordered to be printed, and the consideration of the report made an order for the next sitting.

QUESTION—SURVEY AND CONSTRUCTION OF GOOMALLING RAILWAY.

MR. QUINLAN, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Railways: 1. Whether the survey of the Goomalling Railway had been completed? 2. Whether it was true that the Government had thrown open a large area of agricultural land for selection in view of the early construction of the said railway, and that a considerable amount of selection had taken place in consequence in that locality? 3. Whether it was the intention of the Government to construct the line at an early date?

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piessé) replied: 1. The survey has been completed, and plans are in course of preparation. 2. I am informed that the Lands Department has laid out agricultural areas, and that they are open for selection. The survey of this line did not necessarily imply that the Government would be able to immediately proceed with its construction. 3. The matter will be placed before Parliament as soon as funds can be allocated from Consolidated Revenue for the work.

QUESTION—DRAINAGE OF HARVEY AGRICULTURAL AREA.

MR. GEORGE, in accordance with notice, asked the Commissioner of Crown Lands: 1. Whether temporary relief would be given to the settlers in the Harvey Agricultural Area by means of drainage works to be initiated during the month of December, 1897? 2. If not, why not? 3. If not, whether he was prepared to refund to the settlers the money paid by them for the land and also all expenditure up to date on lands bought from the department? In asking the question in this form, which had been altered from the original form of the question, he disclaimed any intentional discourtesy to the Commissioner of Crown

Lands; and he thanked Mr. Speaker for having altered the question to the proper form in which it should be put before the House.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell) replied: Yes; the Government intend to carry out some temporary drainage works on the Harvey Agricultural Area, and an officer of the Works Department and an officer of the Lands Department are at the present time on the ground obtaining necessary information on the subject.

QUESTION—DELAY IN DRAINAGE OF HARVEY AGRICULTURAL AREA.

MR. GEORGE, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works, Whether he would explain the action of his department in reference to the delay in the drainage of the Harvey Agricultural Area?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied: Delay in draining the agricultural area has occurred, owing to the necessity that exists for obtaining statutory powers to enter upon the lands. The Lands Department having promised to afford early relief to the settlers, the Government have despatched officers to the district to ascertain whether some temporary measure of relief cannot be afforded at once.

QUESTION—DEPARTMENTAL DIFFICULTIES RE DRAINAGE OF HARVEY AGRICULTURAL AREA.

MR. GEORGE, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier whether he was aware that the action with reference to drainage matters between the Lands and the Public Works Departments was materially injuring the prospects of permanent settlement in the Harvey Agricultural Area, and impeding the progress of the farmers in that district.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied that he was not aware that such was the case.

QUESTION -- RAILWAY WORKSHOPS AT MIDLAND JUNCTION, AND COOLGARDIE WATER SCHEME RESERVOIR.

MR. ILLINGWORTH, for Mr. Ewing, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works: 1. When he intended to proceed with the erection of

workshops and other railway buildings at Midland Junction? 2. At what date was the Helena Valley reservoir in connection with the Coolgardie water scheme likely to be commenced?

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied:—
1. The erection of the workshops and other railway buildings has already been commenced. 2. The survey and plans for the Helena Valley Reservoir have already been completed, and the department is in a position to proceed with the work as soon as instructions have been received from the hon. the Premier.

QUESTION—FURTHER EXEMPTIONS ON COLLIE COALFIELD.

HON. H. W. VENN, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier, Whether any further exemptions would be granted to leaseholders in the Collie coalfields?

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied: I have been informed by the Minister of Mines that it is impossible to say until the application is made in accordance with the Act, and dealt with on its merits, but the desire of the Government is that every lease should be fully worked.

QUESTION—RESIGNATION OF AGENT GENERAL.

MR. SIMPSON, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier, Whether it was a fact that Sir Malcolm Fraser had resigned his position as Agent General for the colony, and whether the Government was in a position to give the House any information with regard to the reorganisation of the agency?

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied: 1. Sir Malcolm Fraser has desired to be relieved of the position of Agent General in April next. 2. I am not aware of the reorganisation that is referred to.

MOTION—DRAINAGE OF HARVEY AGRICULTURAL AREA.

MR. GEORGE, in accordance with notice, moved:

That there be laid upon the table of the House the whole of the papers in connection with the drainage of the Harvey Agricultural Area.

He said he intended to deal briefly with the motion. The reason why it was

desirable that the whole of the papers should be laid on the table was —

THE PREMIER: They would be good reading.

MR. GEORGE: He had not had an opportunity of reading the papers. It was only right that the House should be able to judge as to the rights or wrongs of the various representations made throughout the press as to the Harvey agricultural area. Some few months ago it was his privilege, in conjunction with Mr. McGoughy and the member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson), to approach the Director of Public Works in reference to this drainage matter; but that gentleman referred the deputation to the Commissioner of Crown Lands. The deputation was met by the Commissioner of Crown Lands with that courtesy for which the hon. member was distinguished, and with a business-like spirit which might with advantage be copied by other departments. The Commissioner of Crown Lands recognised the arguments placed before him, and promised to see that temporary relief was granted to the settlers during the present month. He (Mr. George) did not suppose that any member of the House would have doubted for a moment that the promise given by the Commissioner of Crown Lands would have been carried out. Some little friction had arisen between the Lands Department and the Works Department. He did not say the friction had arisen through want of friendly feeling or jealousy, but one department might not like the interference of another department. He wanted to see the whole of the papers connected with this matter, and not a file that had been culled or prepared. If hon. members saw the whole of the papers, we should be better able to form some judgment on the subject. The area of land affected by the drainage scheme was estimated at 20,000 or 30,000 acres, most of which was suitable for growing potatoes and other things required in this colony. If we had the papers we should be able to decide whether it was necessary to take further action.

MR. SIMPSON (Geraldton) seconded the motion. This was a question which he had taken much interest in, being the owner of some property in the neighbourhood in question. The scheme had been

dangled before the public and the settlers of the district by the Commissioner of Crown Lands for the past six years, to his certain knowledge, and he did not think that the scheme was any further ahead than it was seven years ago. There had been innumerable surveys and estimates. He understood there was some friction in connection with the dual control of this work. The Lands Department gave authority for the work to be done, but the Works Department had to carry the work out. Not much advantage would be gained by having the papers laid on the table of the House, for the answer given by the Commissioner of Crown Lands that evening was to the effect that officers had now been sent out to initiate the scheme. He had no hesitation in saying that if the department accomplished this work they would carry out a public benefit, and the settlers would be enabled to work the land and turn it to a profitable account.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell) said he would like to make it a condition that the hon. member would read the papers when they were laid on the table. If the Government decided to comply with the request of the settlers and drained the area, it was estimated to cost £9,000, as hon. members would find when they read the papers through. Could the Government spend that large sum of money without some return to the State? The matter of carrying out this scheme was now under consideration. Meanwhile, as he had already explained in answer to the question put to him, the Government had not lost sight of this matter, and officers were now making a start with the temporary scheme which was to be carried out by the Works Department. The Government intended to give some temporary relief by straightening the creeks, and they hoped later on to be able to do something more. He assured the hon. member who had moved this motion, that the department was fully alive to the importance of the work. He promised to lay the papers on the table, and he repeated the request that the hon. member would read them.

HON. H. W. VENN (Wellington): If the member for the Murray had been satisfied with the replies given by the Commissioner of Crown Lands in answer

to the questions, the House would not have received the piece of information which had just been given to hon. members, and which placed the whole matter in a different light. It occurred to him that the temporary relief which was to be afforded by the department in straightening out some of the creeks would be little or no relief at all. That was not the sort of relief that the settlers wanted. What was wanted was that the water should be drained right away into the sea. If the temporary relief which the Commissioner spoke of was the straightening of the creeks, it would be far better to leave the whole thing alone, until the complete system of drainage could be carried out.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piessé): With regard to the question of delay mentioned by the member for Geraldton, the hon. member would recollect there was no money available to carry out the work seven years ago. He believed that in 1891 this question was raised, and it had been hanging up ever since. When the Government went into the matter, several proposals were made, and the most recent one was made by the engineer for water supply for towns, Mr. Hodgson. That officer made a complete report on the drainage, which he estimated would cost £9,000, which was equal to £1 per acre for the land to be drained. The question was whether the Government would be justified in expending £1 per acre in draining the land, and would the land be improved to such a degree that it would be increased in value to that amount? The Government would have to adopt some system of assessment. He had pointed out to the late Commissioner of Lands (Mr. Richardson) that the Government had no statutory power to enter on the land, and before anything could be done it would be necessary to introduce a Bill to the House granting this power to enter on the land, also to strike a rate to assess the people. If this work was to be carried out for a section of the people, and the public had to pay for it, difficulties would crop up throughout the country. Every section of people would be asking for something to be done for them. Hon. members could see the difficulty in which the Government would be placed. The hon. member for Wellington had dealt

most carefully with the question long before he (the Director of Works) assumed office. Then the late Commissioner of Crown Lands took the matter up, and it had been hanging on from time to time. He had thought that they could arrive at some definite conclusion when Mr. Hodgson's report was brought forward; but the Government had no power to carry out the work, and, unless the people gave their consent, it would be impossible to go on with the work. Some objected to the scheme, and others were willing to give the land and to allow the drains to pass through their land; but unless the Government had some statutory power to enter on the land, he could not see how the scheme could be carried out. Some remarks had been made as to friction between the departments. No friction whatever had occurred between the Lands and Works Departments. Some delay was caused through the necessity of obtaining information which was required before they could possibly proceed with the work at all. Some temporary relief was now proposed to be carried out, and that was pending. Officers had been sent up to inquire whether the starting of this temporary work would afford some relief. His opinion was that the only proper scheme was that proposed by Mr. Hodgson. It was a complete scheme for the drainage of the whole of the area, and that was the only way in which relief could be afforded. The Commissioner of Crown Lands, in promising to lay the papers on the table, did not mention that the Works department was interested in these returns; and, if it could be done, he would ask that the Government be allowed to take the file of papers off the table of the House as soon as hon. members had done with it.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Although this was considered by some persons to be a pressing matter, the people in the Harvey Agricultural Area had not approached him on the subject. This question of drainage was surrounded with difficulties, some of which might not be apparent. There must, firstly, be legislation to authorise the work. Secondly, if the Commissioner of Crown Lands were to drain these brooks without the prior assent of the persons interested, there might soon be

claims for compensation, and perhaps actions at law for alleged injury resulting from the drainage on particular portions of the land being more than the parties desired. While regretting there would not be time to legislate in the present session, yet preparation could be made with a view to legislating in the next session; and every person interested in the Harvey area, as well as some who might be affected by the drainage beyond that area, might be asked to sign a document agreeing to indemnify the Government for any action to be taken in draining the area. Probably some persons on that area did not want their land drained, while others suffered from too much water in winter; and how were these conflicting requirements to be reconciled?

MR. GEORGE: That was a matter for the Government officers to arrange.

THE PREMIER: But there must be compulsory powers given by an Act, and those persons whose land was to be drained should contribute towards the expense of the drainage. A few persons might have taken up land in expectation that the Government would provide drainage; and of course in the summer time the Harvey Agricultural Area looked very suitable for cultivation. The whole of the coast land between Drake's Brook and the Harvey River needed draining into that river; but the cost would be considerable, and whether the outlay would be repaid by the result was a question. Something should be done, temporarily, by obtaining the consent of those interested, because if the work were undertaken without this consent being first obtained, there might be a sorry tale to tell afterwards about actions commenced in the lawcourts for compensation. The Government were in sympathy with the hon. member (Mr. George), in his desire to have that district drained and settled; and the Government must, in the next session, bring in a Bill giving the necessary powers for undertaking the work; and the persons who would be benefited by it should be required to pay some little contribution towards it.

MR. GEORGE (in reply): The Premier had not been present when a deputation of the settlers waited on a Minister. Those men had been induced to take up this land by representations made by the Lands Department. In the summer

time, as had been said, the land looked beautiful; but in winter, those who were partial to aquatic pastimes could have as much water as they required. There need be no fear of legal actions against the Government; for if the Government would send an officer possessing ordinary common sense, the people in the district would help in a reasonable way. He had been astonished to hear the Premier, who professed to be a champion of the farmers, speak of farmers in the Harvey district as if they were likely to sue the Government for damages in such a case.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—OPENING OF PERTH MUSEUM ON SUNDAYS.

MR. LEAKE (Albany), in accordance with notice, moved—

That, in the opinion of this House, it would be in the best interests of the public to open the Museum in Perth on Sundays, during such hours as the committee of management may determine.

He said: This matter was suggested to me the other day; and, as it struck me as being practical and useful, I thought I would test the feeling of the House. I submit it with confidence, and hope members will support it, so that the public of Perth may have the full benefit of one of the few advantages they possess—an interesting Museum. If opened on Sunday, we hope it will be a resort of persons who are unable to visit it on week days, who will go there for the purpose of instructing themselves, and perhaps others at the same time. I am certain that the hon. member for West Perth (Mr. Wood) would be found there on a Sunday morning or afternoon with his sons and daughters. I hope that no member will take the trivial objection to this motion that it is a desecration of the Sabbath. I shall not anticipate such an argument; but if any member intends to introduce it, I shall be glad to deal with that aspect of the question in my reply. The more we encourage the attendance of the public at these places, the more likelihood is there of their developing into good and useful institutions; and the more people see of them, the more ready will they be to contribute to the exhibits. Many people on the goldfields pick up interesting little specimens which, though of no particular value to themselves, may

be interesting in the Museum. I do not anticipate any objection from the Government to this suggestion. The only reason they could have for objecting to it would be on the score of expense, for there would have to be a little extra labour employed. But even in that regard I think the compensating advantages would be very great. I would not like to think that extra work would be entailed on the staff of the Museum by opening the institution on Sundays; at any rate, each member of the staff should have his weekly day of rest, whether it be Sunday or some other day. This motion has not been introduced without the knowledge of the committee of management. It is merely suggested that the institution should be opened on Sundays, and the motion does not presume to dictate to the committee during what hours the rooms shall remain open. That is a question of detail, to be settled by them. When I tell the House that the committee approve of this motion, I hope we will empower the committee to do that which they consider to be in the best interests of the public.

MR. HUBBLE (the Gascoyne): I have much pleasure in seconding the motion, feeling quite certain that large numbers of working men are unable to visit this institution during the week who would be glad to do so on Sunday. In passing this motion we shall be following the example of many of the other colonies, where the Zoological and Botanical Gardens are visited by large crowds of people every Sunday.

MR. SIMPSON (Geraldton): I take this opportunity of congratulating the committee on their desire to use this institution for the benefit of the people. I do not think members of this House take much advantage of it; but I visit it occasionally, and think it is a credit to such a small community as this, and exercises a very valuable influence throughout the country. I have no doubt the committee will consider the convenience of the public in fixing the hours of opening, and will at the same time deal fairly with the staff. I do not think there will be any opposition to the proposal. I commend it to the House; and am glad to have an opportunity of speaking favourably of the institution.

MR. VOSPER (North-East Coolgardie): In rising to support the motion, I

may be permitted to indorse the congratulations of the member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson) on the condition of this institution at the present time. I would like, however, to mention that, whether owing to lack of funds or to some other cause, insufficient care is taken of the mineral section, to which the contributions are almost entirely voluntary. Gentlemen are appointed to collect specimens in zoology and natural history on behalf of the Government, and I think someone should also be appointed to collect minerals. At the present time I think there are not more than one or two samples of any of the telluride ores, which are such an important feature in our gold-bearing strata. Voluntary contributors to the mineral and other sections of the Museum should be allowed to send their parcels through the post office free of charge. The great difficulty lies in sending these things to Perth. I have been a contributor to the Museum, and would have contributed far more largely than I have done, but for the difficulties placed in the way of sending the material to the curator.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—ADDITIONAL WATER SUPPLY FOR PERTH.

MR. WOOD (West Perth), in accordance with notice, moved:

That, in the opinion of this House, the Government should take immediate and urgent steps to provide a temporary extra supply of water for the city of Perth.

He said: One reason why I think the Government should undertake this work is that the Waterworks Board are directly responsible to the Government and to this House, otherwise we should not have had their report before us. When I read that report, dated 2nd November, it caused me a considerable amount of alarm, seeing that it states that the water supply of Perth is likely to run out during the coming summer. The experience of last summer was a very dreadful experience indeed to many people in the North and West Wards of the city; and, seeing that this board, or whoever was responsible, had not sufficient foresight to guard against a water famine last year, I think it is time this House took the matter in hand, and made some very forcible suggestions indeed. I do not want to make an indirect attack on the Metropolitan

Waterworks Board, but to confine myself to the subject of the motion. We are asking the Government to give an extra temporary water supply to the city of Perth. According to the report of the Waterworks Board, we shall be some half-a-million gallons per day short of the normal supply in the reservoir for this summer.

THE PREMIER: You could get 50,000 gallons out of the bore.

MR. WOOD: This report says the bore water is not satisfactory; and I think that is putting it in a very mild way. Those who know anything about it would go further, and say that it is unfit for human consumption. It is all very well when it first comes out of the ground; but, if you allow it to stand for a day or two, it is absolutely unfit to drink. I take it that this matter is not merely a local question, though it may seem to be so at the first glance; but the water supply of Perth is a national matter which affects the well-being of the whole colony, because every man in the country must be represented in Perth at certain times during the year. For that reason only, I trust the House will favourably consider the motion. The board proposes to erect a new reservoir during next year. But the summer will be over before this work is started, for it cannot be commenced before the next session of Parliament; and little less than eighteen months must elapse before it can be fairly under way. Then it will cost about £200,000. But what are we going to do in the mean time to supplement the water supply? The bore water we must use, I suppose, for the present; but the Waterworks Board should at once endeavour to strike the flow of water which supplies Fremantle. This could be tapped at Mount Eliza, and pumped into the reservoir.

THE PREMIER: The level is lower in the town than there.

MR. WOOD: Yes; but this is not artesian water. It could be struck between here and Claremont, in any case. The same flow which supplies Fremantle is tapped at Osborne. That supply is practically inexhaustible. The question raised about its running out has been fairly met and disproved. From what I can learn, a cylinder could be put down at Mount Eliza, and the water pumped

into the reservoir. It is objected that the water is very hard; but if it is hard, it is at least pure. My object is to get a temporary supply to carry us over the summer, and the question of the reservoir can be considered at a later date. I have no doubt the Director of Public Works can tell us what is being done in this matter, and perhaps I should have introduced the subject by asking a question. Still, the matter was of such great urgency that I overlooked that. I maintain that the people of Perth are entitled to a full and plentiful supply of water. I do not admit that the board or the Government have any right to shorten the supply. We pay the full rate of 1s. in the £ on our municipal rates, and what we pay for we are entitled to get.

A MEMBER: You will not get it.

MR. WOOD: That is not my fault. We enter into a contract with the Waterworks Board when we pay our rate, and they enter into a contract to supply us with what we pay them for. If they like to reduce the rate in proportion to the amount of water supplied, that is another thing altogether. When we pay the full rate, we are entitled to a full supply of water.

THE PREMIER: Could you get it from the old company?

MR. WOOD: That has nothing to do with it. Had anyone taken action against the old company, I do not think there would have been much doubt about the result. It is simply a contract. If we do not pay our rate, the water is cut off. If any man in this House enters into a contract and does not carry it out, he has to pay the penalty; and I do not see why this board should not be under the same liability to carry out its contracts as is a private individual. Many people in this city have gone to great expense in laying out gardens to make the place fit to live in; and, if these are to be ruined in one summer, the progress of the city will be put back, I suppose, two or three years. It is not a fair thing; so I think the board should make every possible endeavour to give us that supply. Where they are to get it from is not so much for me to say as for them. I see the estimated revenue of the Waterworks Board is as follows:—At a rate of 1s. in the £, the revenue for 1896-7 is £9,789; and for 1897-8, £11,746; but,

from information which we all possess, we know that the revenue of the board, in view of the new city valuation, will be £13,500, leaving some £18,000 more available for 1897-8 than was estimated. The ratable value of Perth has increased considerably during last year—an exceptional year as regards building operations; so that the board will have a revenue of nearly £14,000, as against an estimated revenue of £11,746.

MR. GEORGE: They will strike another rate.

MR. WOOD: I know nothing about that. I do not want to go into the question of the Waterworks Board. I want to get hon. members to urge the Government to take immediate steps to see that a plentiful water supply is provided for the city of Perth.

MR. GEORGE (the Murray): I have much pleasure in supporting the motion, and I think the mover has been very moderate indeed in what he stated, and I will try to follow in the same lines. I believe that 300,000 gallons per day is taken out of the new bore. I say most emphatically that the water out of the new bore, and out of the bore at West Perth, is not fit for human consumption. I do not care what analysts say about it.

MR. SIMPSON: Analysts stated that the water in the reservoir was not fit for human consumption.

MR. GEORGE: I have taken samples from the West Perth bore, and I have tested the water in a most simple way. I got a clean vessel and placed the water in it and stood it for five hours in the sun, and the water has become putrid and stinking—so putrid that horses would not touch it. I am told that tea made from the bore water is enough to make a man throw up his immortal soul, if that is possible. I do not think that the Chairman of the Waterworks Board would contend that the water was fit for human consumption; yet water from this bore is being pumped into the mains leading into the city, and is being mixed with the water from the reservoir at the rate of 300,000 gallons per day. This is a matter for inquiry, and should be looked into. As to the new reservoir which it was stated in the press the board intended building somewhere in the Canning, I may say—I have had some experience in reference to these water-

works—that the present catchment area, if properly attended to, is quite sufficient for the necessities of Perth and Fremantle, and all the suburbs between those places. The present source is being delivered from the No. 1 brake pressure tank, and there is quite sufficient pressure for all that is required in Perth. I know it is the opinion of engineers who were employed by the Waterworks Company that a retaining wall might be built lower down the gully, which would save millions and millions of gallons of water which now run to waste.

THE PREMIER: I hear that no water ran to waste this year.

MR. GEORGE: I cannot contradict every assertion made by the Premier; but during my experience as manager of the Waterworks, millions and millions of gallons of water have run to waste that might have been saved. During the last winter a large quantity of water could have been saved by placing a retaining wall lower down the valley; and, if a retaining wall is placed across it, millions and millions of gallons of water can be impounded. There is another valley on the left of the present catchment reservoir, where there is another stream of water, which delivers large quantities every year. It is favourably situated, in the opinion of engineers, for filling the reservoir. If that is not so, how is it that the Waterworks Board have put down a 21in. main to bring down five million gallons of water, if they have not the five million gallons of water to bring down? And if it is intended to build a new reservoir, why did they carry this 21in. main to the No. 1 brake pressure tank? If a new 12in. pipe of sufficient strength had been laid down from the No. 1 brake pressure tank and to the Canning, where it is stated that it is intended to build a new reservoir, the pressure would have been sufficient to deliver all the water that could be got out of the reservoir in one day. If the board have no intention of building another retaining wall, they are guilty of wasteful and thoughtless expenditure in putting down pipes to carry such a large quantity. I do not wish to carp against this action of the board. I wish to support the hon. member for West Perth in saying that the people are entitled to a full domestic supply of water. There

is not the slightest doubt that the people are entitled to that. I think, at the present moment people are getting a full supply, and I do not think there is any cause for anxiety during the present summer; but unless something is done during the next few months with regard to the future reservoir, there will be a great cause for anxiety in the summers two or three years hence. I do not think there is any cause for anxiety for this or next summer, but I am sure that as to the summer afterwards, unless the reservoir space is augmented, there will be cause for great anxiety. As far back as February, 1892, a report was handed to the Waterworks Company by myself, based on reports given to me by engineers and on my own observations, and the prognostications put forth in that report have been borne out by what has happened. The reason why the company did not put down larger mains was shortness of money. The Government having undertaken the water supply of Perth, the responsibility rests on them to see that the people have a full supply of water. The Government have no right to shirk their responsibilities. I do not think the Premier wants to shirk the responsibilities, but it is for him, as the head of the Government, to make the necessary inquiries and see that the people of Perth are relieved from any anxiety as to their supply of water. In regard to what the hon. member for West Perth said about the underground supply, I do not know sufficient about that matter to say more than this, that there is an underground supply, but Mount Eliza is not the place where the sinking should begin. I have heard some remarks about this matter, and I am told the course of the underground supply runs through Leederville; and, if that is so, Leederville is the place where a cylinder should be put down. It would be easier to raise water at Leederville, if it were struck, and there would be no necessity to sink some hundreds of feet more through Mount Eliza when the water could be obtained at a less depth. I do not intend to say more, except to impress these two points on the Premier, that the bore water is inimical to the health of Perth, and that it should not be allowed to be mixed with the reservoir water, as it contains the germs of disease. Also, before the board decide

on the reservoir at the Canning, it should be satisfactorily determined whether they cannot get a supply of water nearer at hand. The people of Perth have to consider that if they pay a shilling in the pound, the less cost in carrying out any further scheme might allow that shilling to be reduced. If the water is brought from a further distance than is necessary, there will be no chance of reducing the shilling.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): It is apparent to me, even at this stage, that Parliament, in coming to the rescue of the citizens of Perth, have put a load on their backs that they will not get rid of in a hurry. We all know the history of this matter. The citizens of Perth made a bad bargain and came to the Government for assistance, and Government came to this House. The Government had to pay the company twice as much as the works were worth. It was a useless concern; the only good thing about it being the reservoir. The pipes were small and bad, and the whole thing was a wretched bargain. But there was an agreement, and the Government came to the rescue of the people and paid twice as much as the waterworks were worth, in the interests of the citizens. We have appointed a board under a statute, and that board has spent £130,000, which we thought would be sufficient for a long time to meet the wants of the city. The Government paid £220,000 for the works, and they provided another £130,000 to improve these works. The result is that the works have been improved, and the £130,000 has been spent; and the board now want £250,000 more in order to build a new reservoir at the Canning and make the water supply perfect. There is one advantage in the new site, and that is that there is a magnificent supply of water there, which will provide all the wants of Perth and Fremantle and the suburbs between, and far more, which cannot be said of the supply mentioned by the hon. member for the Murray. I am quite in accord with that hon. gentleman that we should cut our coat according to our cloth. It would be much better to make another dam, some kind of temporary provision, and to carry out the permanent works later on.

MR. GEORGE: You could build a retaining wall for £50,000.

THE PREMIER: I was informed by the chairman of the Waterworks Board that there was a difficulty in filling the reservoir this year, and that may happen again. This is one of the worst years we have had. This further expense the Government will have to consider. It goes somewhat against the grain, because I never expected the Government would have to find more money for some time to come yet. I do not think my friend, the hon. member for West Perth, whom I respect, ought to have taken such a high stand in this matter in saying that the people were entitled to this full supply of water, and that the board should give it to the people and the Government should look after it. The hon. member for West Perth should remember that we came into the breach to help the citizens; and when one man does a good turn to another, he does not want to be kicked along faster than he desires to go. There are other towns in the colony far worse off than Perth is for a water supply: there are all the places on the goldfields. The people of Perth can get water within a short distance, but there are large towns with large populations, like Kalgoorlie, which have no water supply. It is true we have something in view to help them, but that cannot be carried out for some time. The citizens of Perth, I am sure, will be reasonable in regard to this matter, and not be too hard on those who are trying to help them. For my part, I think we shall have to deal with the matter in the only practical way, and bring in a Bill authorising the board to borrow a further sum of money. I have heard some remarks around the House as to this board. I have been away so much this year that I am not prepared to say anything about the work done by this board, knowing nothing that is not to their credit. The members seem to have used their energy in spending money; at any rate they spent all they had, and I do not think any board could have done more than that in the time. The proposal of the hon. members for West Perth and the Murray seem to be good, and we have an abundant supply of water about Leederville. There is a drain in Monger's Lake in this direction. I cannot say whether the supply from there is excellent. The bore water does not seem

to make good tea, but it appears to me to be good water. I have been down to the bore several times, and I always take a good drink of it: I do not find anything very injurious in it. People always drink from springs when they see them: we know they are fresh, and there is no hesitation in drinking the water. I am inclined to believe there is nothing injurious in the water from these bores, although, if it is boiled, the water is not of such a good colour as the water we are accustomed to see. I am quite willing to go with the board in increasing the temporary supply. There can be very little trouble in putting down a cylinder and erecting a pump over it. Therefore there can be no anxiety about the supply for Perth, but this will be only a temporary matter. Now that we have put our shoulders to the wheel, we must complete the work, and the only way to do that is to find more money.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That cannot be done this year.

THE PREMIER: The water will not be ready for this summer, but the chairman of the board says there need be no anxiety about this summer, but that this temporary supply will be ready for next summer. I am glad to have heard this matter discussed, and I will give it attention. I have no objection to the motion that has been moved.

MR. QUINLAN (Toodyay): I regret the necessity which has caused this motion to be brought forward, but I can indorse almost every word which has been said in regard to the feeling at present existing in Perth as to the anxiety about a sufficient supply of water during the present summer, as well as the danger in case of fire. Last summer there was considerable danger when fires took place, and we know that above the ground level, during a considerable term of last year, it was impossible to obtain water. I know that in two and three-storey houses people were for two-thirds of the day unable to get any water whatever; and the people who occupy these two and three-storey houses pay the rate, and are justly entitled to some value for the money. The references which have been made by the hon. member for the Murray, who is qualified to speak on the subject, inasmuch as he was connected with the waterworks from

their commencement, are worthy of some attention. There is a great danger attending the site of the catchment area, which is surrounded by timber mills, and unless these mills are removed, sooner or later it will be impossible to obtain a supply of pure water. The Director of Public Works tells me that some diversion has been made to avoid the risk; but I know that the City Council obtained an analysis of this water, and it was reported as containing the germs of typhoid. This may not be quite as dangerous as it appears on the surface, but there is danger if the water coming in from that source is used. Anything that can be done to give Perth a full and pure supply of water will be appreciated, not by the citizens of Perth only, but by the colonists who have to frequent the city from time to time. The board in itself has not given satisfaction. So far as the gentlemen composing it are personally concerned, I have the highest admiration for them, especially for the chairman, who is a very estimable gentleman, and I think that the Government did wisely in their choice of a chairman. As the board is at present constituted, the municipalities, which have to collect the money from the ratepayers, are not directly represented on it. The mayor we know is a member of the board, and he has had to admit that he is unable to obtain the information sought by the ratepayers. When some measure is introduced to extend the borrowing powers of this board, I hope the Government will bear in mind the municipalities, and the desire of the citizens to be represented in a better manner than they are at the present time. The mayor was authorised by his council to obtain some information from the board, and the only answer he could give to the council was that he applied to the board for the information, but could not obtain it. I desire to compliment the hon. member for West Perth in drawing attention to such an important matter.

MR. OLDHAM (North Perth): I desire to express my satisfaction at the course taken by the hon. member for West Perth in drawing the attention of this House to the very serious considerations in regard to the water supply. The gravity of the situation demands the immediate attention of those who are responsible. Although it has been stated

that there is no necessity for alarm in the city during the ensuing summer, I am of a different opinion, and I think there is a great necessity for alarm in reference to the scarcity of water that the citizens will have to put up with during the summer. I would like to say one or two words about the board. They are called the Metropolitan Waterworks Board, and they govern the water supply of the city and suburbs. The board have spent £130,000 in a manner which I do not think has been judicious; at any rate they have spent a portion of the money in laying down large mains, when they knew very well—or ought to have known well enough—that, by the adoption of Munday's brook, they would have had sufficient water to carry through their mains. There was never more water in the reservoir than could have been brought down to Perth through the 12-inch mains, and I do not think the board will have more water to carry down this summer than the 12-inch pipes would have carried. I do not think they have carried any more water down than was the case last summer.

MR. GEORGE: Yes; they have.

MR. OLDHAM: Well, I am only informed, and I draw attention to this. I do not think there was any necessity for laying the 21-inch main throughout the whole distance. There is a gorge beyond the present reservoir, from which a sufficient supply of water for the city of Perth and suburbs could be drawn, and this work could be carried out at a much smaller cost than it is intended to expend in establishing a new reservoir on the Canning River. The board are the most "silver tailed" crowd ever brought into existence.

THE PREMIER: What does that mean?

MR. OLDHAM: They have built a new office and got a staff of men, while the member for the Murray was able to do all the work—quite as much work as is done to-day—in a tent and an office 6 feet by 4 feet. I do not object to a substantial office and proper officials being employed; but, at a time like the present, such is not necessary; in fact, I think it is absolutely criminal to erect large offices just now for the purpose of finding accommodation for the officials. With regard to the representation on the

board, I should like to point out that this board is responsible to no one. If the board is fulfilling the obligations which are supposed to rest upon it, and remembering that it is a board for the metropolitan district, surely not only the city itself is entitled to greater representation than the one member it has at present on the board, but also if the suburbs of the city are to be supplied with water, it will be necessary and right that they also should have representation on the board, as they will be interested in the expenditure. It has to be admitted that, as far as the City Council are concerned, they have not been able to get the slightest information from the board during the period of the last mayoralty, and I do not know whether they will be able to get any during the term of the present mayor; but I hope they will. Speaking as a member of the City Council, and representing a ward which suffered more than any other from a scanty supply of water during the last summer, it must be admitted that when we asked questions as to what the board were doing and what they intended to do for increasing the supply of water, we could not get any information. Twelve months have gone, and they have spent £130,000, and I believe that before this summer is over the water supply in the ward I represent (North Ward) will be as bad as it is in any other part of the city.

Question put and passed.

MOTION—INCURSION OF RABBITS.

MR. CONOLLY, in accordance with notice, moved:

That in the opinion of this House it is of the utmost importance to the country that immediate and rigorous steps be taken to stay the inroad of rabbits along our Southern coast.

He said: Any member of this House who may have had doubts as to the danger from the incursion of rabbits, on the last occasion when this question came before this House, will long since have been convinced of the great danger that threatens the colony, more especially with reference to our agricultural and pastoral industries. Looking through the reports of debates on this question in the last session, I observe that the then Minister of Crown Lands stated that the rabbits had already encroached 100 miles within

the colony's boundary. That area of country where they had encroached is probably the most barren portion between West Australia and South Australia, and now there is nothing between those rabbits and the South-Western District.

THE PREMIER: Is it worse country along there?

MR. CONNOLLY: The other country that the rabbits have passed over is dry, barren, and sandy. That is the character of the country about Eucla, and we know there is difficulty in supplying borers there with the necessary water. It is for this House and the people of the country to know and realise the great danger from this continual encroachment of rabbits, having regard to the immense losses which have been suffered in the other colonies of Australia from the same cause. We know it has cost the farmers and pastoralists not only hundreds of thousands, but millions of money in trying to suppress this terrible scourge, for it is a scourge to the pastoral and agricultural industries, and will be so in this colony as it has been in other colonies. The worst feature of the question is, that all the efforts made by Governments and individuals in other colonies have failed in suppressing this terrible scourge, which is continuing and growing there; and the only thing that has kept the rabbits in check has been wire fencing, together with the occasional droughts. Of course the droughts will have their effect on rabbits as well as on any other living creatures; and in Queensland and New South Wales, the occasional droughts have materially assisted in thinning out the rabbits; but while conferring some benefit in that way, the droughts have been a calamity to the pastoral and agricultural industries, so that there was nothing gained by that means. I do not know whether hon. members have seen in the eastern colonies any district that has been infested with rabbits; but I have seen in New South Wales, Queensland, and in Victoria great tracts of back country and great paddocks so burrowed into by the rabbits that it has been dangerous for a man to ride his horse over, and especially dangerous to the rider, the country being perforated with rabbit burrows. Furthermore, rabbits together with droughts have done more to cripple and ruin those who embark in pastoral

and agricultural industries in New South Wales, than almost any other cause. Indeed the rabbits come second only to droughts in their devastating effects; and it is very doubtful whether they are not worse than droughts to those who have suffered from them. I would like to draw attention to the fact that every year we postpone action with reference to exterminating rabbits, means so much of this country being cut off from the rest, and practically handed over to rabbits. At present they are encroaching at the rate of at least 100 miles of country a year, according to our present knowledge, and I am not taking into consideration the fact that a few days ago in one of the newspapers it was stated that traces of rabbits had been seen within twenty miles of Northam. It is quite possible this may be so, but I am going on what we have proved in evidence.

MR. VOSPER: Probably they were tinned rabbits.

MR. CONOLLY: I do not know that; but the indications as described in the newspaper must have been made by some creatures more lively than tinned rabbits. By delaying thus, we are not saving the country from any expense, because this provision against the incursion of rabbits must be carried out; and not only will it have to be carried out, probably at a greater cost in the future, but by delay we shall lose so much more country occupied by these devastating creatures. The country around Eucla is not very good, but that country improves as one goes southward, and a little past Eyre's sandpatch there are patches of exceedingly good country.

MR. A. FORREST: How many people are living there?

MR. CONOLLY: I do not know, but there are squatters there. Steps should immediately be taken for preventing the encroachment of rabbits, for that means a loss both in territory and money. I see on the Estimates that £1,000 is put down for this work in the present year. Not only is this amount absolutely inadequate for the work required, but it is also out of proportion to the great danger incurred by allowing this encroachment of rabbits to go on. I believe the danger has been very much under-estimated in the past; because probably it has been thought that the danger was so far away,

it was not necessary for people to trouble their minds about it; but the danger is increasing so rapidly, and the rabbits are coming on so fast, that I think any further delay would be very serious. I hope the Government will not deal with this motion as they did with the resolution which was carried last year, to the effect that active steps should be taken for the prevention of the encroachment of rabbits; for, although that was passed, we see that nothing has been done to check the encroachment, and we see also that for this year a very small sum is on the Estimates for this purpose. I do hope the Government will take more active steps, and will show more energy in averting this danger.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell): The hon. member has called attention, through this motion, to the necessity of taking action for preventing the invasion of rabbits. I want to assure the hon. member, and others, that the Government have been fully aware of the danger for some time past; and although it may be a question whether rabbits are such a source of danger to Western Australia as they have been in the eastern colonies, still we feel that no risk must be run in dealing with this danger. Steps have been taken to place in the hands of the Stock Department the whole work of dealing with rabbit invasion; and hon. members will be glad to hear that an active and intelligent officer has been obtaining information on the spot, to ascertain the nature and extent of the rabbit invasion. As soon as that information is obtained, and we expect to receive it within a few days, we shall take active steps to do whatever is necessary, and to undertake fencing if that be found desirable. It would, however, be unwise to get excited over this matter, and rush into needless expense, until we have authentic information to guide us in the matter. I may say we have kept ourselves in touch with persons who are resident on the spot, and well acquainted with that country; and when we receive the information which has been obtained from persons well acquainted with the local conditions, we shall be in a position to act vigorously. An officer has been ordered to await the information which

we expect to receive within a few days, and then he is to act with all the vigour that may be necessary for coping with the difficulty. I can assure hon. members that every possible step will be taken, not only to ascertain fully the danger we run, but we are also prepared to act vigorously at the right time when we have the necessary information. It has been a moot point of late as to what steps should be taken. Some time ago certain hon. members ridiculed the idea of the Government going to the expense of fencing, and advocated the use of poison and infection of what is called chicken cholera. I may say that I have taken a great deal of trouble to get the latest information on this subject, not from one colony only, but from all; and I would point out that the late Queensland Convention, after hearing all the evidence brought before it, came to the conclusion that fencing is indispensable, and that there was no evidence that chicken cholera would act in the way some persons alleged it would. In some instances, indeed, it had proved a source of danger. We have full information up to date on all the different methods proposed—chicken cholera, the employment of natives, poisoning, also the purchasing of skins and not the scalps only, to ensure the destruction of rabbits. We were even told that wild cats—I am not referring to Coolgardie “wild cats”—were valuable for this purpose. I want to assure hon. members that no efforts shall be wanting, firstly to prove the existence of the danger, and then to exterminate the pest as soon as possible. I believe that in the Chief Inspector of Stock we have a man who will do his very best in this direction. He has already conferred honour upon himself by exterminating the scab; and I believe this new departure will give ample scope for his energy.

MR. HASSELL (Plantagenet): I am glad the Government have realised the seriousness of the position. I have drawn the attention of Parliament to it on several occasions, having once moved the adjournment of the House to do so. I still think the Government have sufficient proof of the existence of rabbits in the colony to warrant them in at once attempting to put a stop, as best they can, to the incursion of these animals. The House should vote

sufficient money at once. One thousand pounds will do no good at all. The only practicable step would be to erect fences where required; and £1,000 would go but a little way in that direction. I am glad to hear what the Commissioner of Crown Lands has said, and I hope the end to be gained will justify the means.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): I am pleased to hear the statement of the Commissioner of Crown Lands. I only rise to say that the weighty words which he has uttered—which, of course, will be recorded in *Hansard*—will be remembered against the Government in times to come. Personally, I desire to throw upon the Government the responsibility of acting on the statements which have been made in this House to-night. I am certain that a very grave and serious difficulty is before us, and that unless we cope with it at once, every year's delay will mean an inevitable increase of the cost of so doing, in perhaps a tenfold ratio. Had the Government taken the advice tendered in this House two years ago, they could have dealt with this matter at one-tenth of the cost which must now be incurred. Every day's delay will add to the cost of extirpating this pest. It is one of the fiercest scourges that has ever visited the Australian colonies. In Victoria, I have seen country which had been bringing in an immense revenue to the State, absolutely devastated by these animals, and abandoned at the rate of a hundred thousand acres at a time, no one being willing to take it for nothing with the proviso that the rabbits should be exterminated. Such tracts of land brought in no revenue, and were a constantly increasing scourge to the people round about them. As has been said by the Minister of Lands, there is no evidence up to date of any effectual means of stopping the incursion of rabbits except by fencing. It was suggested a few years ago in this House—I think by the hon. member for Beverley (Mr. Harper)—that fencing should be begun at a particular point. If this had been done at that time, these rabbits might have been stopped. But now the difficulty of finding out where the rabbits are is very great indeed; and while you are finding them out, they will be getting into many other districts. Those of us

who knew the late Sir William Clarke knew that he was a man exceedingly careful in the statements he made. He had at Rupertswood one of the finest squatting properties in Victoria; and, in his place in the House in Melbourne, I heard him state that, after the introduction of rabbits on his estate—a few couples only—in three years' time he killed 180,000 of them. We have no idea in this colony of what the ravages of this pest really are. As another instance of them, I may mention Mr. Chirnside, also of Victoria, who introduced rabbits on his Werribee estate for the purposes of sport. During the first year, he was inclined to put in gaol any man who came along with a gun; but in the second year, he invited his friends, and asked them to bring their guns with them and to stay as long as they could. The whole estate was devastated; and he had to spend about the amount of the prime cost of it in endeavouring to exterminate these vermin. If you once get rabbits into some of the Southern parts of this colony, you will never get them out at all. The mischief they do is simply incalculable; and the only way of eradicating them is that which was adopted in the Colac district in Victoria—by establishing rabbit factories, and offering a certain price for the animals. There is a good deal in what the Minister says in reference to buying the skins. The skin is an article of commerce, and tinned rabbit is another. I judge that this House takes it for granted that the Government are seriously in earnest at last. They are two or three years late; but they are now in earnest. This House will hold them responsible for carrying out what I take to be the promise of the Minister with regard to this question. In reference to the cost, £1,000 is a pure farce. If there is no more than that sum available, the Treasurer had better not pay it at all. The thing must be done, whether the money required be much or little. Spend sufficient to drive back this pest. If you are not prepared to do that, it is no use spending a shilling. If it is going to cost you £10,000 to do it now, I warn the House that it will cost £100,000 to do it in twelve months' time. If you leave it for ten years, it will cost you a million of money to do what you can accomplish to-day for £10,000. Per-

sonally, I shall hold the promise of the Minister of Lands as absolutely sacred.

MR. CONOLLY (in reply): In view of the statement of the Commissioner of Crown Lands, and the assurance given that adequate measures will be taken to eradicate this evil, I have much pleasure in withdrawing the motion.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I must take a very exceptional course, and ask that the motion be put. I desire to have it entered on the proceedings of this House.

Motion put and passed.

At 6-30 p.m. the SPEAKER left the Chair.

At 7-30 p.m. the SPEAKER resumed the Chair.

PRECEDENCE OF BUSINESS.

THE SPEAKER: According to Standing Order 214, "If all motions shall not have been disposed of two hours after the time fixed for the meeting of the House, the debate thereon shall be adjourned, unless otherwise ordered, and the Orders of the Day taken in rotation." Unless it is otherwise ordered, we shall proceed with the Orders of the Day.

MR. VOSPER: I beg to move that the motions be proceeded with. The next motion stands in my name, and it has been postponed twice already, to meet the convenience of the Government.

THE PREMIER: Not at all to meet the convenience of the Government. I have not spoken to you about it.

MR. VOSPER: If that is not the case, I have been spoken to by other members. At any rate, this motion has been held over long enough, and I think the House should consider it now.

THE PREMIER: How long will it take?

MR. VOSPER: Not very long. I shall be very brief.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather): With reference to the motion, I may, perhaps, anticipate it by stating that, at the present time, I am engaged in drafting a Bill to place before Parliament on the lines of the Act which is now in existence in Queensland, as to recognising trades unions.

MR. VOSPER: A very bad law.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: If that is what the hon. member is aiming

at, to give these trade unions a legal status, I may say the Crown Law Department is drafting a Bill to that effect.

Mr. VOSPER: In view of the remarks of the Attorney General, and seeing that an opportunity will be given to discuss this matter when the Bill comes before the House, I beg leave to withdraw the notice of my motion, and move that the order be discharged.

Notice discharged from the paper.

Orders of the Day were then proceeded with.

STOCK DISEASES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

HON. H. W. VENN (Wellington): In moving the second reading of this small Bill, I may say that, when the Stock Diseases Act of 1895 was passed in this House, it never occurred to hon. members that the interpretation which has been given to the term "infected stock" would be such that it would include sheep suffering from tick. It appears that the Stock Department have framed regulations which bring in sheep suffering from tick. It was never contemplated that a regulation should be framed which would include tick in sheep. Hon. members know from recent events that a very great deal of alarm has been caused throughout the colony from an actual disease called "tick," which has infected Queensland cattle, and, I understand, is likely to do some damage to stock in the northern portion of this colony. Hon. members must understand that the tick disease which infects cattle is a different disease from that which is called tick in sheep. The two are as different as daylight from dark. It never occurred to the framers of the Act of 1895 that a regulation would be framed by the Government to include tick in sheep; but the department have now interpreted the term "infected stock" to include tick in sheep, and have issued a regulation which is harassing to the owners of sheep; and it has been thought necessary by those interested in sheep that a proper definition of the term "infected stock" should be made. This Bill has been introduced with that effect. There was no other course open to those interested in sheep,

inasmuch as the department insist on calling the tick in sheep a disease. I do not want hon. members to take my word for that entirely. If a case was taken before a court and argued before a judge, I do not think the Stock Department would have a leg to stand on if the department called tick in sheep a disease. It is no disease. One may just as well call the insects which infect dogs, fleas or the lice which can be found on fowls, diseases. These insects which have infected sheep from time immemorial—I think we can go back to ancient history in regard to this matter—are lice. They are called "fly lice," the entomological name being *Melophagus ovinus*. Right through Great Britain, and in all cold climates, and in the colder climates of the Australian colonies, sheep are subject to this small parasite, which is the "fly louse." The disease that infects cattle is called *Ixodes bovis*. The tick in cattle does lead to a disease, whereas the tick in sheep leads to no disease at all. I think those interested in this subject would be glad to see the regulation enforced, if it was going to be of any benefit at all. Tick in sheep are incidental to animal life. If you kill them to-day, in a month or two tick are in the sheep again. I have been breeding sheep all my life, and I take it as common a thing to find tick in sheep as it is to find hair on my own head. When stock owners find that their sheep get more ticks than usual in them, and these ticks begin to worry them, they dip the sheep; but this only occurs when the sheep are poor. As soon as the sheep begin to pick up, the ticks fall off. If any permanent good was to be derived by the enforcement of this regulation framed by the Stock Department, I feel sure that those who are with me would be very loth to move in the matter. There can be no possible permanent benefit from the regulation which the Stock Department has framed. The tick in sheep troubles no one any more than a dog having fleas may trouble your neighbour. Sheep with tick thrive, and if you clear them off the sheep to-day the sheep will have them again in a very short time, and so it goes on to the end of the chapter. There should be no harassing regulations to compel owners of small or large flocks to dip their sheep at the time of the year when they

can least afford to do so. Compelling sheep-owners to dip their sheep is not a great hardship, but the hardship is this, that the sheep, after being dipped, are placed in quarantine. If an inspector comes along and finds one or two ticks on sheep, he puts the sheep in quarantine, and the owner is unable to sell to the butcher until such time as the sheep have been dipped and have been passed by the inspector as clean. Such a regulation occasions very great loss to the squatter. Without any such offensive regulation, the squatters themselves, in climates where sheep are infected with lice, dip their sheep without being compelled to do so. I do not say it is not a good thing to dip sheep, but I say there is no sheep-breeder, who knows anything about the breeding of sheep, who will say that the ticks in sheep do any particular harm, except those who have not any experience with tick in sheep in the humid climates. I have known sheep-breeders in dry areas who have never seen tick in sheep in their lives. That class of breeder could have no experience at all with regard to the tick in sheep, and he might say the best thing would be to get rid of the tick. It is no use getting rid of the tick, inasmuch as a month after the sheep have been dipped they have the tick again. I saw a most extraordinary paragraph in a paper a little while ago, and to every sheep-breeder it must have proved an endless source of amusement, especially to sheep-breeders in the other colonies. It was stated that, at one of the shows, an inspector found two ticks on one of the pens of sheep, and he said that this was the way in which this disease was carried about from flock to flock. This is nonsensical twaddle, to say that the disease is thus carried about. A man may have some handsome long-woolled sheep which he is showing, which may have a "fly louse" on them, but these sheep are not going to spread a disease right through a district which will injure the flocks. I have little more to say, but I thought it necessary, in moving the second reading of this Bill, to explain to members the exact features of the Bill.

MR. MITCHELL (the Murchison): I second the motion, and in doing so I will say I do not guarantee to vote for or against the Bill, not having seen a copy of it.

MR. HASSELL (Plantagenet): I intend to support the Bill, and I think this amendment of the Act of 1895 is very necessary. I have been a sheep-breeder all my life, and have known ticks to be in sheep all the time, but I have never known ticks to do any harm to sheep. When sheep get poor, the ticks are on them, but then the ticks are not very detrimental. A regulation of the kind which has been framed by the Stock Department is harassing to settlers, who have enough to contend with in reference to bad seasons and poor runs; and I think that instead of the Government harassing settlers, they should try to assist them.

MR. LOCKE (Sussex): I am not a sheep-breeder, but for many years I have had some little experience with sheep, and I have known this tick to exist in sheep, down in the part of the country which I represent, for the past 20 years; I can say that with safety. I have never known any ill effects occur to the sheep from the tick. The regulation of the Stock Department is most harassing to the settlers in my district. I think the tick in sheep is more peculiar to the part of the country which I represent than to the Northern districts. When the Act of 1895 was passed, it was never intended that the term "infected stock" should apply to tick in sheep. The sheep tick and the cattle tick are two distinct things: the cattle tick brings on a disease, but the sheep tick is a louse. I have known horses in low condition get "lousy," but as soon as the season advances and the grass grows the horses pick up. So it is with sheep; the lice go away as soon as the sheep get into condition. It is absurd to quarantine a man's flock of sheep because the sheep have ticks. It is not right to harass sheep-owners because the Inspector of Stock says tick in sheep is a disease. I have never known of any harm arising from the tick in sheep. I will have an opportunity, later on, of speaking about this, and so I will be satisfied now with supporting the Bill.

HON. H. W. VENN: I should like, with permission, to read a letter I had intended to read, and which was sent from the Secretary of the Bureau of Agriculture to a pastoralist who is well known in the southern districts. It is

headed "Entomological," and reads as follows:—

In reply to your letter of the 29th instant, with reference to the entomological name for ticks, Mr. Lea, the Entomologist of the Bureau, reports as follows:—"The name of the cattle tick is *Ixodes bovis*. The so-called sheep tick is not a tick at all, but a fly louse. Its name is *Melophagus ovinus*."

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. G. Throssell): I am sorry I shall have to oppose the amending Bill brought in by the member for Wellington (Mr. Venn). Whether this is tick or louse, and whether it is a disease or not, may be a matter of opinion; but, as advised at present, I am satisfied the tick in sheep may be truly considered a disease. I have heard a great deal, at times, about the sheep tick having been in various parts of the colony during many years, and I am told it has been here for 36 years. I have an authority here which the member for Wellington will no doubt accept, and speaking on this question the book (Dr. Cooper Curtice on the "Animal Parasites of Sheep") says:—

The disease produced by the external parasites are true contagious diseases, and should be regarded as such fully as much as any of the more actively virulent maladies.

I must say this Bill is altogether a backward movement in this colony, and especially when we compare it with what is being done on this question in South Australia and New Zealand, where there is the same law in existence, and I believe it is carried out. For some time we have not carried out the law vigorously in this colony; but now our inspectors are at work, and notices have been sent to the pastoralists and agriculturists in the various districts, and I am able to say that a good proportion of them have complied with the Act. I have letters before me from some prominent settlers, expressing satisfaction with the working of the Act; and I may quote, as an example, Mr. G. H. Lukin, a prominent settler in the Beverley district, who had the misfortune to buy some sheep in the South that were not clean, and when exhibited on the show ground at Beverley they were found to be infected with tick. In consequence of that he was prosecuted and fined £5. I have here a letter from Mr. Lukin, expressing satisfaction with the verdict, and stating

he considers that if the fine will have the effect of saving the Beverley district from the tick invasion, the £5 will have been well spent. I have here also letters from settlers expressing their willingness to comply with the Act; and I ask, would it be well to do now what this Bill proposes, in view of the evidence we have that the tick is a disease, and that the present Act is working satisfactorily to many of our settlers? I cannot help expressing my surprise that so progressive a settler as the member for Wellington (Mr. Venn) should come forward now with such an amending Bill as this. The other evening he gave me a great surprise when he defended the wild radish in the farmer's wheat crop as being a very valuable fodder plant; and now he comes forward in defence of the tick in sheep. Those who understand the question, and must perforce have regard for the authority of persons who are fairly well acquainted with the tick question all round, will at least allow that if the sheep or any other animal be affected even with what the hon. member describes as a louse, it cannot be good for the animal. With the fact before us that a considerable number of settlers in the Southern districts have complied with the dipping required by the Act, it would be manifestly unfair to them and others like them to allow some other settlers, who have not complied with the Act, to be relieved from doing so by passing this Bill which the hon. member is advocating. The Government have no wish to be harsh; far from it; and I may say that last June notices were sent out to settlers throughout the colony; and when it was afterwards represented to the Government that, owing to the bad season, the sheep were poor and it would consequently be harsh to enforce the dipping, we recognised that there was no danger to be feared from this tick, except poverty of the sheep and loss to the individual, and of course the consequent loss to the State. Thereupon we decided that we would put off the dipping required in the notice until the first day of December. Therefore notices were sent out to every sheepowner, under my own direction, and were delivered at their doors, calling attention to the Act and to the date allowed for compliance with it. Now December has come, and we find a

number have complied with the Act, while some say they have not received the notice, owing to their isolated position. As to them, we say we do not wish the Act to be enforced tyrannically; and if any settler can show he has not received a notice, we will extend the time in his case until February or March, if necessary; but there must then be compliance with the Act. We are going forward in every other direction in this colony, and for heaven's sake do not let us go back in this matter. If a member of this House can stand up and defend the wild radish as being necessary to the farmer, it is no wonder the same member can stand up again to-night and defend this louse in sheep, by saying it is not a disease. We have pretty good authority for saying that

A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.

And I think that a tick in sheep by any other name would be just as bad. We have an excellent Stock Department, and I can assure the House the officers are up to date, and a better class of officers will not be found in the Australian colonies.

MR. HUBBLE (the Gascoyne): I must oppose this Bill; and I think the very name of tick we have had drummed into our ears during the last few months has been enough, whether in regard to sheep or cattle. We ought to keep our sheep and cattle clean; and I shall oppose this Bill most strongly as tending in the other direction. I am told the cattle disease is here in the city, and why not get rid of that?

MR. DOHERTY: There is another form of "tick" in the town, worse than that.

MR. HUBBLE: I am in a position to state, and will give names if necessary, that tick has been brought here from Kimberley in a match-box. It was a female tick, and it laid its eggs in this town. I am also informed that this tick has been burned; but if tick has been brought here, I say it is a disgrace for any man to bring such a disease into this part of the colony. My informant is the Chief Inspector of Stock, and the party who informed him is Mr. Hart, a drover from Kimberley. I say if this disease has been brought here in the way I have stated, the person who brought the tick deserves to be sent to Klondyke or to the North Pole. If disease in cattle is as bad

as is reported, I have no doubt the tick disease is equally as bad when it infects sheep. Therefore, I shall strongly oppose this Bill.

MR. MORGANS (Coolgardie): My only knowledge of sheep is in the form of mutton on the table, and I am best able to judge of it when it is of good quality. With regard to the Bill before the House, I really think it is worth the attention of hon. members, looking at it from a business point of view, to consider the tendency there is on the part of the Government at times, and I regret to see it, to hedge in the industries of the colony with a great many conditions and regulations that must have a bad effect upon them. I sympathise to some extent with the member for Wellington (Mr. Venn), because we find in the case of mining that the regulations connected with that industry are hedged round with what we believe to be unnecessary conditions; and if, as the hon. member says with regard to tick, it is simply ordinary tick, I may say with every confidence that there is not a flock of sheep in England to-day that can be found without tick upon them. If that is so, I do not see any reason why the Government should introduce regulations for the purpose of hampering this industry. If the sheep breeder suffers inconvenience from the presence of tick, he is the chief sufferer, and he will naturally look for some remedy to exterminate tick. I am in sympathy with the hon. member who introduced this Bill, and I hope the House will assist him in what he is aiming at, and let us see if we can put a little brake on the Government in introducing too many regulations on the industries of the colony. Referring to my former experience in Central America, where a person can hardly walk out without getting covered with ticks, I may say I have not felt any inconvenience from those ticks except at the time; and although one may get covered with thousands of them in Central America, it is quite easy to get rid of them. I think they are very much the same kind of tick that infest the sheep on the coast in this colony; and I hope the House will assist the hon. member in his desire to rid this industry of these regulations. If he presses the matter to a division, I think he will find a majority on his side.

THE PREMIER (Right Hon. Sir J. Forrest): There is no doubt that in dealing with this question there must be a want of knowledge felt generally, and this puts one in a difficulty. We may be doing right or wrong in regard to this matter; and if these ticks are injurious, and if they do, as the member for Plantagenet (Mr. Hassell) says, make the sheep poor, I think every reasonable effort should be made to get rid of the tick. But this is a matter for expert evidence. At present I am bound to support my hon. colleague, not because I know much about the subject, but I think the department should be supported in the action that has been taken. If the member for Wellington, instead of bringing in this Bill, had moved for a select committee on the subject, he would have done well; for we are all in the dark with regard to the question whether this tick is injurious or not. If the question now before the House goes to a division, I shall support my hon. colleague; but I think there is room for doubt upon it, and it is very hard for hon. members to have to vote on a subject on which they have not sufficient knowledge. I cannot advise hon. members either way, very strongly, because I do not know; but I shall have to vote against the Bill. I should, at the same time, like to have some expert opinion on the subject.

HON. H. W. VENN (in reply): I do not know which way to act. As to obtaining evidence, I am an expert in the matter, with the experience of a lifetime, and there are other members of this House who have the experience of a lifetime. The evidence I ask you to accept is the historical knowledge which these and other persons have all around you. These lice have been in the sheep since the foundation of the colony; and while efforts have been made by sheep-owners to exterminate the lice, they are not exterminated. Sheep-owners in England have suffered in the same way, and that is the best evidence you can have. If you doubt my word as an expert, look at the authoritative works published on the question. The Commissioner of Crown Lands has read to you out of some book, saying that this tick, or as I call it "louse," is a disease, and that it is desirable to get rid of it. I admit that it is desirable to get rid of this louse, but you cannot do

it. There can be no extermination of lice in sheep, because they are natural to the existence of the animal. You can reduce their operations, the same as you can reduce the operation of fleas or other pests in various animals. If I were to ask for a select committee, I do not know that I should be any further ahead, because the expert evidence I can bring is only such as that of the member for Plantagenet, the hon. the Speaker of this Assembly (Sir Jas. G. Lee Steere), and others who have had knowledge of sheep in the humid or cold portions of the world. These ticks are everywhere. The Commissioner of Crown Lands has told us that the regulations made under this Act are similar to those made in other colonies, and that in New Zealand and South Australia they are considered very necessary. I am acquainted with South Australia, and I say the regulations are not in force there, so far as I know. It frequently occurs that, a month or two after the dipping, the sheep are free from tick, and it is said that by using Cooper's dip it improves the wool and kills the tick. It is true that, by continual dipping, you may reduce the tick in sheep so as not to have so many; but to say that you can exterminate tick by dipping is ridiculous. If it is possible to exterminate tick, how is it that the tick has not been exterminated in Great Britain, or in Germany, or in France? You will find it there. The Minister has said I am not sufficiently progressive; but I thought I was progressive. I am very much opposed to harassing regulations that have no particular sense in them. When the Minister says that some flock owners have complied with the regulations, I have no doubt they have, because they are frightened of the inspector, and they won't dip without some compulsion; but I can assure the Minister that, if he goes to those sheep next year at shearing time, the tick will be there again. How can it be otherwise? A month after shearing you will probably not find a single tick on the sheep, but five or six months after shearing they will be there again. It may be desirable to do something in the interests of the flock-masters all through the southern portions of the colony; but not in the northern districts, because the ticks do not live on sheep in that hot climate.

There should be a distinct understanding that the stock inspectors should not harass people, and enforce regulations which can do no real good. The best evidence in favour of the course I am taking is that there have been ticks in the flocks of this colony ever since it was a colony, and there have been ticks in the flocks of Great Britain ever since it was Great Britain, and in those of Germany ever since it was Germany.

MR. HARPER (Beverley): I know very little about the louse in sheep, but from what I have heard, I think it is desirable that this House should know really more about this matter before we vote on this Bill. The member for Wellington (Mr. Venn) has said the reason why the regulations should not exist is that the louse exists in sheep in England and on the continent of Europe. It is also a fact that the great enemy of sheep, scab, does exist in those countries; therefore, it is no sound reason to say that, because scab is there, it need be here. He further tells us the tick does not exist in the North. I have been informed that this insect is very troublesome in the flock on Dirk Hartog Island; and was very troublesome until they introduced a regular course of dipping, and received great benefit thereby. I was told there was a considerable loss of sheep through tick at Esperance Bay a year ago. We should know whether these are facts, and know what we are doing, before voting on this Bill. I shall move, after the second reading, that the Bill be referred to a select committee.

Question—that the Bill be read a second time—put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

APPOINTMENT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

MR. HARPER (Beverley) moved that the Bill be referred to a select committee.

HON. H. W. VENN (Wellington) said he had no objection to the motion; only as the session was so near the end, and it was desired by the Government to close, if possible, by Christmas, he could not see that a committee could take evidence and report in the short time available this session.

THE PREMIER: There would have been a division on the second reading, if it had not been understood that the Bill was going to be referred to a select committee.

HON. H. W. VENN said he desired that every member should have sufficient information on the subject; but the object would probably be frustrated if the Bill were referred to a select committee at this late stage of the session.

THE PREMIER: The evidence of veterinary surgeons could be obtained.

HON. H. W. VENN said he would prefer to let the Bill pass this session, and he would himself be willing to move, next session, for the appointment of a select committee to inquire into the subject. He had no desire to get the Bill through, and let it remain without further action.

Question put and passed, and the Bill referred to a select committee.

A ballot having been taken, the following members, in addition to the mover (Mr. Harper), were appointed:—Messrs. Venn, Lefroy, Locke, and Hubble; the committee to have power to call for persons and papers; and to report on the 15th December.

NOXIOUS WEEDS BILL.

SECOND READING.

MR. HARPER (Beverley) in moving the second reading, said: Hon. members will observe that considerable alteration has been made in the Bill since it was previously introduced and withdrawn. I have gone through it, and have tried to make it as purely permissive as possible. I have even gone so far as to strike out the favourite weed of the member for Wellington, the Spanish radish; so that, if the people in his district (Wellington) require to grow it, they can do so. I do not propose to say much in regard to this measure. It is intended to be a purely permissive Bill; and I wish to place before the House the reasons why this Bill is brought forward. The hon. member (Mr. Venn), who opposed this Bill so strongly on the last occasion it was before the House, gave hon. members to understand that it was not in any way desired by the country people. The hon. member objected to the principle of this legislation. I may point out that in April, 1893, a conference of elected members on agricultural matters was held, when this resolution was carried:—

That the Government should be urged to extend the Noxious Weeds Act so as to include the stinkwort, Canadian thistle, Bathurst bur,

and other noxious weeds from time to time, and that, in view of the rapid spread of noxious weeds in certain districts of the colony, he requested to see that the Act is stringently enforced.

In the following year (1894) the delegates from the Wellington Vine and Fruit-growers' Association tabled this notice:—

That the Government be requested, at the earliest possible date, to repeal the present "Spanish Radish and Scottish Thistle Prevention Act, 1874," and substitute in lieu thereof an Act on the same principle as the "Destructive Insects and Substances Act, 1880," and that the Government be further requested to provide funds to carry out the provisions of the Act.

That was carried also, and at the third annual conference in April, 1895, the following resolution was moved:—

That, in the opinion of the Conference, it is desirable that the Spanish Radish and Scottish Thistle Act should be amended and the scope enlarged.

At the fourth annual conference of 1896 this resolution was passed:—

That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that a Noxious Weeds Bill be introduced into Parliament this session.

The motion was not discussed, as the introduction of a Bill was promised by the Attorney General. The question came up at the last conference, and a very similar resolution was passed. There were, I think, three separate resolutions tabled by delegates from different parts of the country on this subject. This measure has been asked for during the last four years by men elected to represent the agricultural districts at the agricultural conference. I think every opportunity has been given during those four years for any opposition to the principle being shown, but instead of opposing such a measure, the desire for it appears to grow stronger. On these grounds this Bill has made its appearance in the House. As to the Bill itself, I need only say it is, as at present drafted, totally inoperative unless the people in any locality wish to bring it into force. All those who wish to bring the Bill into force can state what class of weeds it is intended to have treated under the Act. There cannot be any reasonable opposition to a Bill of this kind. If we take into consideration the desire of the agricultural community to be able to protect themselves against fresh weeds

being introduced into localities, and give them the machinery to annihilate them, we shall pass this measure. If agriculturists wish to protect themselves against their enemies, they will be able to do so. I beg to move the second reading.

HON. H. W. VENN (Wellington): The hon. member almost made a slip, when he said I opposed the previous Noxious Weeds Bill; but, in the next sentence, he said I opposed the principle of the measure. I am pleased to think that the opposition I showed to the measure previously introduced has had the effect of bringing in the present Bill. This is a child of a totally different colour, and I feel sure I was not far out when I said I did not think the hon. member himself was aware of the whole of the provisions of the previous Bill, or that his mind had gone into it. But I can see the hon. member's hand in the framing of this Bill. The hon. member is bringing in a Bill which I do not feel disposed in any way to oppose. It is permissive, and if a Bill like this one had been brought forward in the House in the first instance, the hon. member would have had me speaking then as I speak now. I wish to draw attention to the fact that the present Bill, excepting one or two clauses, is not the same Bill at all as the one previously introduced. It has distinct provisions for local option, for the formation of a board or committee in every district. In the other Bill power was given to the Governor to appoint inspectors. Our idea of Government inspectors is that these officers discover some means of trying to keep their billets alive.

MR. SIMPSON: That is an utterly unjustifiable statement.

HON. H. W. VENN: I know the hon. member's views on the subject: they are similar to mine. The Bill before the House deals with the question of local option. I wish to refer to a remark made by the Commissioner of Crown Lands, and by the hon. member for Beverley, who said something about my favourite weed. When the previous Bill was introduced, I spoke strongly against the principle of the measure and of noxious weeds in general, and of the harassing class of legislation he wished to bring forward. I have no more love for the Spanish radish than the hon. member

himself, or the Commissioner of Crown Lands has. As a matter of fact, I exterminate it by taking it out at considerable cost, and if I had any particular love for it I should leave it there. Outside of its presence in the growing crop, this Spanish radish is a fodder plant. I do not know that it is a particularly valuable fodder plant, but I know that as a fodder plant it can be used, and that it does no harm to the grazier as long as it does not get amongst his cultivation. With these remarks I wish to withdraw any opposition I had to the Bill. I do not think the measure will have any great beneficial tendency. Personally, I would have preferred, when the Agricultural Bureau met next time, and delegates were called from the different districts of the colony, that this measure should have been placed before them and discussed; and after the discussion the hon. member could then have been able to formulate something, and would have been backed up by the bucolic vote altogether. Had the Bill which the hon. member first prepared passed this House, he would have had the whole of the farming community against it. I have much pleasure in saying I withdraw my opposition to this Noxious Weeds Bill.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather): This subject of noxious weeds has engaged the attention very considerably of some of my constituents, and some of the constituents of my hon. friend, the member for the Irwin (Mr. Phillips). There seems to be a consensus of opinion amongst the farmers in these two districts that to make the measure compulsory would meet with their undoubted hostility, and I am glad to see that the hon. member for Beverley has so worded his Bill as to make it permissive, and in that way it is particularly inoffensive. As may be pointed out, what may be a noxious weed in one part of the country is a perfect godsend in another; and that being so, in the measure before the House it is proposed to class as a noxious weed what is known as the wild oat. The wild oat, in the hot summer season, when there is no moisture about and very little feed, is the mainstay of the cattle in my district.

A MEMBER: Do the people sow them?

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: Unfortunately, too often. I hope I shall

have the assistance of the hon. member some day in giving some artificial water to those people in my district who are trying to eke out an existence.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

EARLY CLOSING BILL.

IN COMMITTEE:

Clauses 1 and 2--agreed to.

Clause 3--Act not to apply to certain shops:

MR. JAMES moved, as an amendment in the first line, that the words "and eight" be struck out, and the words "to ten, both inclusive," be inserted in lieu thereof.

Put and passed.

MR. JAMES moved, as a further amendment, that the following words be added after the word "Act," in line 2: "nor to premises respecting which a publican's general or hotel license, within the meaning of the Wines, Beer, and Spirits Sale Act, 1879, or any Act amending the same, has been granted and is in force."

THE PREMIER: Could not the municipalities do it, instead of throwing this on the Government?

MR. JAMES: There was no provision in the Bill for providing money, and there was no need to have an inspector at all, unless it afterwards became necessary to appoint one for checking abuses.

THE PREMIER: Who was to pay the inspector?

MR. JAMES: Those who asked for the appointment. The Early Closing Association, for instance, should pay the inspector. The clause was permissive in this respect, and not compulsory.

THE PREMIER: There was no need for an inspector at present.

HON. H. W. VENN: If there was no need for an inspector, what necessity was there for the Bill?

MR. JAMES: Any person aggrieved could take action, or any association of shop assistants.

MR. MORAN: The associations of shop assistants would be careful to see this Bill administered, and no shopkeeper would run the risk of being had up before a magistrate for an offence under this Bill. The machinery of the Bill would be set in operation by the shop assistants.

THE PREMIER: That should be provided for in the Bill, so as to put the obligation on them and not on the Government.

MR. MORAN: If they did not look after their interests when they had the machinery of this Bill, let them suffer.

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

Clause 4—Appointment and removal of Inspectors:

MR. ILLINGWORTH: With all deference to the member who introduced this Bill, he must call attention to words which said "the Minister may appoint inspectors." If appointed, they must be paid. This clause should be abandoned, because the combinations which would undertake the carrying out of this Bill should be prepared to provide their own inspectors, and, therefore, to pay them. He questioned whether the Bill could be passed with this clause in it.

MR. JAMES: It was not intended to throw any obligation on the Government to pay inspectors. The words were permissive, and the Minister would not appoint an inspector unless he saw that some provision was made for the inspector's salary. The Early Closing Association should be prepared to pay an inspector, when that officer became necessary.

THE PREMIER: The Early Closing Association would die when this Bill came into force.

MR. JAMES: No; it would not.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather): The member who introduced the Bill would perceive that this provision, which gave permissive power to a Minister to appoint inspectors for carrying out the provisions of the Bill, must involve necessarily the payment of the person so employed. Assuming this Bill to be passed, and granting we were all anxious to assist the people for whose benefit it was intended, yet it was not desirable to make provisions that would be a dead letter. There must be a fund out of which the Minister could pay the inspector, if an inspector were appointed, because in clause 15 there were great and necessary powers given to the inspectors; and, as all members knew, the crying evil in most of the shops in cities was the wretchedly bad accommodation given to assistants on

the premises. If this part of the Bill were allowed to remain a dead letter, then practically three-fourths of the benefit of the Bill would have vanished. Either a fund must be designated, out of which the inspectors should be paid, or the provision for appointing inspectors by a Minister must be withdrawn.

HON. W. H. VENN: That seemed a natural consequence, according to his reading of the clause.

MR. SOLOMON: Could not the inspectors be appointed by a committee of employers and employees, and the appointment be approved by the Minister?

MR. MORAN said he did not know whether the Government intended to oppose the measure. (**THE PREMIER:** No.) The point raised by the member for Central Murchison (**Mr. Illingworth**) was not friendly to the Bill, and he hoped the clause would be allowed to pass. A similar Bill had been introduced into the Queensland Parliament by a private member, with this provision in it, and the Bill had passed in that form. The quibble now raised was too small.

MR. OLDHAM said he was in favour of the clause as printed. The great powers given to an inspector made it desirable that the inspector should be appointed by an impartial authority. If appointed by an association of shop assistants, it could not be said the choice was impartial. The inspector should be appointed by the Government, and not by an interested body. Surely it was not too much to ask the Government to appoint inspectors, and also to pay them.

THE PREMIER: A raid on the Treasury!

Clause put and passed.

Clause 5—Act to be in operation only in proclaimed districts.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse): The clause provided that the Government might declare certain places to be districts for the purposes of this Bill, but in what way was the application to be made?

MR. JAMES: The Bill did not provide for the system of local option; and the Minister, before declaring a district, would take care to ascertain that the feeling of the district was in favour of the proclamation being made.

THE PREMIER: Proclamations were always made by the Governor-in-Council.

MR. JAMES moved, as an amendment, that the word "Minister" be struck out, and the word "Governor" be inserted in lieu thereof.

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

Clause 6—Act to be in operation in metropolitan district on 1st February, 1898:

MR. MORAN moved, as an amendment in the second line, that after the word "district" there be inserted the words "and also in the municipalities of Coolgardie and Kalgoorlie."

THE PREMIER: And the Boulder city?

MR. MORAN said he had not any information from the Boulder yet.

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

Clause 7—All shops to be closed at 6 p.m.; substituted half-holiday allowed:

MR. SOLOMON moved, as an amendment in the last line, that the word "nine" be struck out, and "ten" inserted in lieu thereof.

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

Clauses 8 and 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Penalty for keeping shops open after the prescribed hour:

MR. ILLINGWORTH moved, as an amendment in the sixth line, that the word "three" be struck out. It would also be necessary to alter "Christmas day" to "Christmas week," for completing the amendment.

Put and passed.

MR. JAMES moved, as a further amendment in the same line, that the word "week" be inserted before the first word "day."

Put and passed

MR. QUINLAN moved, as a further amendment, to add in the second paragraph after "Christmas Day" the words, "and New Year's Day."

MR. JAMES said he did not want to increase the hours more than possible, and he asked the Director of Public Works, as one having had experience in business, whether he thought the amendment a fair one.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. H. F. Piesse): The three days before Christmas Day were quite

sufficient. As to the closing time, it was well to keep the hour nine o'clock, as assistants were generally kept half an hour after the shop was closed.

MR. QUINLAN said he had spent nearly all his life in the shopping business, and he thought the day before New Year's Day should be added.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The contention of the member for Toodyay was quite right. The days preceding Christmas Day and New Year's Day were regarded as being like Saturdays. It was not necessary to keep the shops open late for three days prior to Christmas Day.

Put and passed.

MR. QUINLAN moved as a further amendment to insert after "Christmas Day," and "New Year's Day."

Put and passed.

MR. SOLOMON moved that in the last line the word "nine" be struck out and "ten" be inserted in lieu thereof.

MR. JAMES: Ten o'clock was too late for closing, as it was half-past ten before the shop assistants got away.

HON. H. W. VENN: In the interests of buyers, shops should remain open a little later on those days.

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

Clauses 11 and 12—agreed to.

Clause 13—Penalties for employees working on Sundays:

MR. ILLINGWORTH: If the clause was passed as it stood, it would prevent a hotel bar being cleaned out on a Sunday, which was the only day when there was an opportunity of cleaning the bar out thoroughly.

MR. MORAN: The clause was unnecessary, as Sunday trading was prohibited under another Act. He would not take away the right to serve lodgers and travellers on a Sunday. He moved, as an amendment, that the clause be struck out.

MR. EWING: The hon. member, in his opinion, was right. Although liquor could be sold on a Sunday to boarders and *boni fide* travellers, it could not be sold over the bar, or in any bar.

MR. JAMES: This section was inserted for the purpose of preventing the barmaid or barman being employed on Sunday.

Motion (to strike out the clause) put and passed.

Clauses 14 to 26, inclusive—agreed to.

New Clause:

MR. OLDHAM moved that the following new clause be added to the Bill, to stand as Clause 26:—

Every shop or premises where is carried on the business or trade of a barber or hairdresser shall be closed every evening of the week at 7 o'clock p.m., except Saturday evening, when the same shall be closed at 10 o'clock. If any person be employed or allowed to remain in any such shop or premises later than half an hour after the hour fixed for closing by this section, the person or company carrying on such trade or business, or having the care or management or control of the same, shall be guilty of an offence against the provisions of this Act.

MR. MORAN: This clause would give tobacconists an opportunity to keep their shops open until 7 o'clock.

Put and passed, and the clause added to the Bill.

Schedule:

MR. ILLINGWORTH moved, as an amendment, that the words "newsagents' and booksellers'" be struck out, and the words "fruiterers and confectioners" inserted in lieu thereof.

MR. MORAN: All sorts of things could be sold under the heading of "confectionery." This was a rather dangerous proposal.

Put and passed.

MR. JAMES moved, as a further amendment, "That the last three lines of the schedule be struck out."

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

Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILLS OF SALE BILL.

SECOND READING:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather): Having moved the adjournment of the debate on this Bill, my object was to bring under the notice of the hon. members who introduced it a series of new clauses, which I think he will agree to; and if he does, I am sure the community generally will thank him for having brought this Bill before the House. One of the dangers to which a trading community is liable is the surreptitious registration of bills to sale; and, if the statute provides that it shall be obligatory on any person about to give a bill of sale to give 14 days'

notice of his intention so to do, that will be a distinct notification to parties interested that the debtor is about to confer upon some other person some benefit or advantage—a proceeding which they may choose to object to. The provisions are taken from an Act which has worked very satisfactorily in Victoria; and the procedure is simple. When a creditor finds that his debtor is about to register a bill of sale, he lodges a caveat. The person who wishes to give the bill of sale can get that caveat removed by an application to a judge in chambers, if the caveator has no legal claim against him. If, on the contrary, the caveator can show that the debt is due, the person about to give the bill of sale is blocked from giving it. Any creditor may lodge a caveat. The member for East Perth (Mr. James) has intimated his concurrence with this amendment, which will be brought forward in committee, and I thank him for bringing this Bill before the House, as it will undoubtedly have the effect desired.

MR. LEAKE (Albany): I shall support the second reading, and do so the more readily after the remarks of the Attorney General, suggesting an amendment in the direction indicated. Anything which will prevent bills of sale from being secretly given will, I am sure, be to the advantage of the trading public. I have always held somewhat strong opinions on these bills of sale. I have thought for a long time that perhaps one of the best remedies would be to prohibit bills of sale except on specific chattels for actual *bona fide* personal advances. However much I should like to see bills of sale regulated in that manner, I think the suggestion of the Attorney General will go a long way to place further obstacles in the way of bills of sale being given in secret, and to encourage legitimate trading. If a person has to give notice of his intention to give a bill of sale—that is, to prefer one creditor to another—he will be very careful not to do so unless it is a matter of necessity, and the circumstances of his business justify his action. I think the suggestion of the Attorney General is an excellent one, and I shall support the second reading, and support him in introducing his proposed amendment.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

DIVORCE AMENDMENT AND EXTENSION BILL.

SECOND READING.

MR. EWING (the Swan): In moving the second reading of this Bill, it appears to me that there are two reasons why I may perhaps be able to fall in with any suggestion for allowing it to stand over until the next session of Parliament.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Until the next century.

MR. EWING: Not till the next century, because I believe that the public demand the Bill, and that, in the interests of the community, the Bill will operate beneficially. I believe the Bill is necessary, and I also know that it will make a very great change in the existing law of this colony; and I also believe that no change of this kind is desirable unless it is done after mature and proper consideration. My main reason for moving the second reading to-night is in order to let the general public know that it is my intention to bring this matter before Parliament as soon as the Government are prepared to proceed with it, and as soon as hon. members have had time to give it the consideration it requires. I think there are many reasons why this Bill should be introduced, and the first reason is the inequality that exists in the law of divorce as between a man and a woman. We all know that a man can get a divorce on certain grounds; but those grounds are not sufficient—unless coupled with cruelty and desertion—to enable a woman to get a divorce. An inequality of this kind appears to me to be unjust; and, as this Bill will remove that inequality, it should commend itself to the consideration of the House. I do not think, with the hon. member for Central Murchison (Mr. Illingworth), that it is desirable that it should stop there. I think that, in the interests of the community, and of the next generation, children should not be brought up under conditions which are bound to be prejudicial to their future life. The Bill is drawn on the lines of the New South Wales Act and the New South Wales Divorce Amendment Act. It provides, in the first place, that either party, as I have already indicated, may, on the ground of adultery, obtain a dissolution of marriage. The second ground

is that if, without lawful excuse, the husband leaves his wife without means of support, divorce can be obtained. If a man or a woman has so little regard for the marriage tie, and for the obligations that are cast upon him or her, as to neglect his or her children and to leave them without support, contrary to the provisions of the marriage contract, the sooner there is a dissolution of marriage, the better will it be for the interests of the community. The court has full power under this Bill to provide means of support for a woman obtaining divorce, so as to ensure that she and her children will not be cast upon the world. Habitual drunkenness, coupled with cruelty, is the next reason for divorce. Can any member urge that it is desirable that a woman, against her will, or a man, against his will, should be compelled to bring up children under the influence of a habitually drunken parent, who is in the habit of treating the other party to the contract with cruelty? We have to consider, not only the parties to the marriage, but the effect upon the children themselves. That effect appears to me to be this, that if you bring children up under such conditions, they think, in nine cases out of ten, that what they see their parents do is right; and, in all probability, they will do much the same thing when they grow up. It appears to me most undesirable to force people to live together, and to bring up their children, in an atmosphere which must be detrimental to the interests of those children when they attain full age. The next ground of divorce will be that, at the time of the presentation of the petition, the respondent has been imprisoned for a period of not less than three years, and is still in prison, under a commuted sentence for a capital crime, or under sentence to penal servitude or imprisonment for seven years or upwards, or, being a husband, has within five years undergone frequent convictions for crime and been sentenced in the aggregate to imprisonment for three years or upwards, and left his wife habitually without the means of support. Cases must have come before hon. members where a woman has been thrown on the world with a large family and without means of support, under circumstances such as are here described. If the law were altered so as to

permit of that woman marrying again, and thus providing for her family, the effect to the community could only be beneficial, as also to the woman and the children themselves. It is far better to have a happy and decent home than to have a woman thrown upon the world without the means of earning a livelihood or of bringing up her children satisfactorily. The next ground is that one of the parties has been convicted of having attempted to murder the petitioner, and of having assaulted him or her with intent to do grievous bodily harm. If a man endeavours to "slaughterationise" his wife, or if he does any of those things which would come under the heading of inflicting grievous bodily harm, it is desirable that a dissolution of the marriage should take place. Otherwise it is probable that a dissolution of the marriage will take place of a still more unpleasant character. To insist that such couples should continue to be joined together in holy matrimony would simply be to insist on their living together in order that one of the parties might be murdered. People who live under conditions like these should be separated. There is one ground for a dissolution of marriage in this Bill which is not in the New South Wales Act, namely, that one of the parties to a marriage has been three years insane, and is, in the opinion of the Court, incurable. That clause should commend itself to all. It is undesirable that a man or a woman should be bound to a person not of sound mind. These are the main grounds for a divorce contained in the Bill. There are certain other provisions in the measure which enable the Court to deal with the property of the husband and to make settlements on the wife. If the husband has transferred his property to somebody else, the Court is empowered to set aside that transfer, and before anyone else can take the property it shall be charged with the maintenance of the wife. There is another important provision by which, in an action for dissolution of marriage on the ground of adultery, a man cannot claim damages from the co-respondent if the act of adultery has been committed three years before the bringing of the suit. These are the main provisions of the Bill, and I earnestly commend them to the consideration of hon. members. We must

admit that there are certain members of the community who, on religious grounds, take objection to this measure. These persons believe, to use the generally accepted phrase, that marriages are made in heaven, that marriage is something more than the most serious of legal contracts. The opinions of these persons are entitled to the deepest respect, in that they are the outcome of religious conviction.

THE PREMIER: Moral conviction.

MR. EWING: These persons hold that the marriage contract is made solely by the Church and is under the control of the Church; and, according to the decree of the Church, no man may put asunder those who have been thus joined. Holding this belief, they consider the Legislature is taking too much upon itself to separate them. These are religious grounds, and if a person comes to the conclusion that it is undesirable, on religious grounds, to extend facilities for divorce, we must give his opinions the fullest consideration and treat them with the deepest possible respect. The aim of religion is the furtherance of social welfare. It has for its primary and leading object the satisfactory management of the community, and it also endeavours to enable people to live together happily, reasonably, and well, and to bring about a good order and condition of things.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There are more worlds than one.

MR. EWING: I do not dispute the proposition. I do not say that there are no more worlds than one, or that there is no future world, but I do say that while we are living in this world we must make the conditions as satisfactory as we can, and we must use religion, not as a means of keeping people together who ought to be separated, and of bringing up unhappy families, but as a means of promoting the highest interests of the community and of bringing up children well. These ends will be best obtained by dissolving any marriage that will operate to destroy the lives of the parties to it, or that will lead to the rearing of children under conditions prejudicial to their future lives. I do not propose to speak at any length on this question, because I do not suppose the Bill will be gone on with this session; but in the interests of religion itself—and I suppose that most of the opposi-

tion will come from the upholders of the religious aspect of the question—in the interest of those good things which religion endeavours to bring about and in the interests of social welfare, this Bill should be passed. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading, and I trust that it will be agreed to.

THE PREMIER: I move that the debate be adjourned to this day three weeks.

MR EWING: I have no desire to proceed with the Bill, and am quite willing to fall in with any course that may be suggested.

Motion—that the debate be adjourned for three weeks—put and passed.

DENTISTS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

DISCHARGE OF ORDER.

MR. EWING: I do not wish to proceed with the second reading of this Bill, and I move that the Order of the Day be discharged.

Put and passed; and order discharged.

LOCAL COURTS EVIDENCE BILL.

SECOND READING.

MR. LEAKE (Albany): The principle involved in this Bill was under the consideration of hon. members a session or two ago. It is to enable suitors in the local courts to take the evidence of witnesses who are living at some distance. The same rule applies in the Supreme Court, and it is thought that in the interests of the community the same privilege should be extended to the local courts. When the population centred round Perth and Fremantle, the necessity for this procedure did not arise, but now that people live in places far distant from those centres, very great inconvenience and great expense are occasioned for want of some such provision as is contained in this Bill. It provides that both parties to a suit shall have proper notice of what is going to happen, so that they may cross-examine the witnesses if they so desire. There is nothing new in the principle. I am not going to press this Bill, if there is likely to be any serious opposition to it. It has been handed to me by a gentleman who occupies a seat in a higher place than this, and I desire to further his views as much as I can. I

move that the Bill be now read a second time.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather): I have read this Bill, and I must say it contains many provisions that require close debate. I am personally opposed to many of them. One of the clauses, which is rather sweeping in its operation, gives the right to any litigant to establish, so to speak, a second trial in the shape of collecting evidence, if his witness happens to be 20 miles from the local court. That seems almost preposterous. For instance, a man living 20 miles up the line can have his evidence taken before a magistrate away from the court where the trial will be held, which will entail the necessity for the other side to be present, and to go through the whole procedure of the case twice over. One portion of the evidence will be taken 20 miles away, and the other portion before the Local Court. While it is intended to remedy some cases of great hardship, the Bill inflicts greater hardships. The hon. member for Albany might agree to postpone the second reading of the measure to some future date. If my hon. friend does not object, I will move that the debate be adjourned for three weeks.

MR. LEAKE (in reply): I wish hon. members to understand that this is not my Bill, that I did not draft it, and I have simply taken charge of it. Although I am not convinced by the arguments of the Attorney General, and although I feel I have arguments in favour of the measure, I have not the time to convince hon. members opposite, particularly when I know the number I shall have to attack, while the number of members on my side of the House is somewhat small this evening. I do not intend to divide the House on this question, but to submit to what seems inevitable, and accept, with as good a grace as possible, the motion.

MR. JAMES (East Perth): Before this Bill is finally dealt with, because I suppose we shall have to say good-by to it after this, I should like to say that legislation in the direction of this Bill was passed a few years ago. An alteration in the law was effected by which a person carrying on business at Perth could be sued by a person carrying on business at Roebourne or Carnarvon, hundreds of miles away. The only way to

get the evidence before the court was by personal attendance. That is an evil which should be remedied.

Question—that the debate be adjourned for three weeks—put and passed.

LEGAL PRACTITIONERS ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

SECOND READING.

MR. HIGHAM (Fremantle): The Bill which I desire the House to read a second time is a short one, and I trust it will not meet with the fate of the measure which has just preceded it. It is a Bill to deal with a grievance relating to a certain profession, and I hope it will receive proper consideration at the hands of hon. members, who will make up their minds to treat the Bill in a favourable spirit and pass it through all its stages. This Bill has been brought in with a view of admitting gentlemen as practitioners of the Supreme Court who are now debarred because they have not fulfilled all the conditions of the old Act. The particular condition referred to is, not having served under articles of clerkship. There is practically only one clause in the Bill (amendment of paragraph 2 of Subsection (d) of Section 14 of 57 Vict., No. XII.). I am aware that I shall meet with some opposition from some hon. members, possibly from a jealous desire to guard their own profession, and possibly with an eye to shut out competition. [MR. JAMES: Rubbish!] It is possibly rubbish, from the hon. member's point of view, but not from a layman's point of view. Anyone who reads through the special conditions under which we desire to admit legal practitioners will see that the public are safeguarded and the profession is given a sufficient guarantee that the gentlemen who will be admitted under the Bill will have had sufficient experience, and have proved their qualifications for admission as practitioners of the Supreme Court. A practitioner who has served ten years as a solicitor or barrister, and after that has resided two years in this colony, and during these two years has served in the office of a solicitor of this colony, I think will have sufficient proved that he has all the qualifications that are requisite for admission. In the other case the qualifications, I think, are just as satisfactory, and I hope

that at least the lay members of the House will recognise the justice of the claims of these barristers. I am not bringing in this amending Bill, as I have been told, as a one-man Bill.

A MEMBER: Whom else does it apply to?

MR. HIGHAM: There are a good many solicitors in the colony who are debarred under the rules regulating the admission of practitioners, because, in New Zealand, five years under articles is not required, although many practitioners of New Zealand go through the five-years articles. I am not speaking of one particular man, but of a good many. I have had communications, not only from Fremantle and Perth, but as far distant as Cue, from qualified solicitors who are debarred from entering the profession because this legal bugbear stands in the way. I hope hon. members will recognise the justice of these men's claims. Even if we pass this Bill, the gentlemen who wish to be admitted will have to pass the Barristers' Board, and will have to prove their personal fitness for the position. I think it would be a crying shame and a wrong to the general public, if we were to make the admission to practise in the Supreme Court too exclusive. I do not see why we should not have competition in the Supreme Court just as we have in other businesses. I think if hon. members take the trouble to read through the provisions of the Bill, they will find nothing pernicious in it. The Bill will not lead to the admission of solicitors who are not properly qualified, but it will remove a great grievance, which several properly qualified practitioners, who are now resident in the colony, have. I move that the Bill be now read a second time.

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Central Murchison): Without committing myself to the absolute wording of this Bill, I desire to express my conviction that something of this kind is required. I know of some cases myself, and seeing that the legal standing of gentlemen who have come from New Zealand is completely barred by the conditions of our present Act, it does seem to me that solicitors who are able to practise in the courts of New Zealand and hold high positions there, ought not to be barred here because we have some special legislation. Clause 2 of the Bill is rather

long, and is somewhat confusing, and it may be open to amendment. I certainly support the second reading of the Bill. Possibly my legal friends may be able to reduce the clause in length and give us something more clear: it is not very clear to me. I hope the principle of admitting men of undoubted qualifications, who have passed under a different kind of Act, and whose qualifications are all right, is all we require. I think we ought not to delar solicitors from a colony like New Zealand from practising in the courts of this colony. I will support the principle of the Bill, although I will not commit myself to the exact wording.

MR. LEAKE (Albany): I do not rise to oppose the Bill, but rather to ask for a little information. I would like the hon. member for Fremantle (Mr. Higham) to explain to the House the position of the law on the subject in New Zealand. The rule which obtains here with regard to the admission of legal practitioners is this. Where one colony admits our practitioners, we admit them. It is reciprocity, in fact, that we go in for. If the hon. member in charge of the Bill will tell us that West Australian practitioners are admitted in New Zealand, I can see no objection to the measure. So far as I am personally concerned, I do not care how many lawyers come here to practise—"the more the merrier;" and I am sure the Attorney General will agree with me that, so far as he and I are concerned, new-comers generally make business for us, and we work harmoniously together. I should like some information as to the law of New Zealand on the question. A Victorian practitioner cannot be admitted in this colony because, in Victoria, West Australian qualifications are not recognised, and I do not think that is unreasonable. I only ask for information, and will support the second reading of the Bill.

MR. SOLOMON (South Fremantle): I rise to support the motion for the second reading of the Bill. I do not know much more about the matter than that the state of things the measure seeks to remedy appears to be an injustice to practitioners in other colonies, especially at a time when a great many people are anxious for federation and the assimilation of Australian laws. In a great many instances, it seems a hardship that practitioners who have had perhaps years of

experience in another colony cannot get admitted to the legal profession in this colony. No doubt hon. members who belong to the legal profession see where the weaknesses of the Bill are, and will be able to deal with them should the Bill go into committee.

MR. JAMES (East Perth): I intend to oppose the Bill, which is introduced to deal with merely personal grievances. Some gentlemen who have come to Western Australia regard their grievances as of such importance as to justify a special Act of Parliament for their relief. I hope, however, the House will not legislate simply in order to meet the case of these persons who came to the colony with their eyes open and prepared to run the risks which a knowledge of the circumstances entail. Lawyers are not so "exclusive"—to use the word of the hon. member who introduced the Bill—as to be afraid of the competition of the gentleman who drafted this wordy clause of which the Bill is composed, and which is a monument of his skill and ability. The powers of the Barristers' Board, though strong, are not exercised in any narrow way. Dozens of practitioners are admitted, and certainly no one can say that the country is short of lawyers. The trouble is that in New Zealand, the qualifications of a legal practitioner are insufficient, and are not recognised in any other part of Australia. If our law is wrong, let us rectify it; but while the law of Western Australia remains different from that of New Zealand, why should we here, by an indirect method, allow the law of that colony to be forced upon us?

MR. MORGANS: Should not New Zealand practitioners be qualified as fellow-colonists for admission here?

MR. JAMES: It would be just as appropriate to ask whether French lawyers or German lawyers should not be admitted. Thousands of Germans speak English. What has the fact of a man being a colonist got to do with his qualifications as a lawyer?

MR. MORGANS: It has something to do with his admission.

MR. JAMES: What has it to do with his admission?

MR. MORGANS: He is a colonist and not an alien.

MR. JAMES: That has nothing to do with legal qualifications. In New Zea-

land there is a special law on this subject, and New Zealand lawyers are admitted to practise in no other Australian colony. Why, then, should New Zealand lawyers be admitted to practise in Western Australia? This Bill is not introduced on any broad principle, but simply to meet a few cases—amongst these, no doubt, the case of the gentleman who drafted the measure. I should not object at all to some amendment of Sub-section (a) of Section 14 of the Act, for the purpose of meeting *bona fide* cases; but while the qualifications in this colony remain as at present, they must be possessed by applicants for admission. Suppose some colony passed a law providing that every man who paid a shilling should be a “qualified lawyer,” would it be fair to admit such “lawyers” to practise in Western Australia, while our practitioners have to serve a long apprenticeship? I have passed an examination in general knowledge of the law, and have served ten years in the profession, and yet I could not be admitted in New Zealand without paying certain fees and passing an examination. New Zealand does not extend to Western Australia the facilities which we are now asked to extend to that colony.

MR. MORGANS: That is not federation.

MR. JAMES: It is the very soul of federation. It must not be forgotten, however, that New Zealand is outside federation. It is a significant fact that in the examination in connection with local law, the overwhelming majority of candidates for some years past have failed to go through. It is not right, under the circumstances, to ask Western Australia to take the first step, more especially as the Bill is not introduced for the purpose of recognising a broad principle, but simply to meet the cases of three or four individuals.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather): There is one claim which may be very strongly urged against this Bill. It is radically wrong in principle to use Parliament as a means to admitting one or two individual practitioners, who do not at present come within the scope of the law. On this ground the Bill is objectionable. The examinations for admission to the legal profession in Western Australia are not very severe,

but only reasonable. The qualifications practically come under two headings. The candidate must have passed a reasonable examination in law, and must have come from a country which reciprocates with Western Australia in the matter of legal admissions. We have yet to learn that New Zealand reciprocates with Western Australia in this respect.

A MEMBER: You know it does. There is Mr. Moss.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: I do not know it. Mr. Moss was admitted; but I want to know if the practice works the other way round. The standard in New Zealand has been so lowered that her practitioners are admitted in none of the other colonies. The result is that New Zealand is overrun with what I may call unfledged practitioners. When in Wellington two years ago I noticed a solicitor who practised his profession one part of the day and kept a livery stable the other part. The standard has been so lowered that the legal profession is completely overrun in that colony. Would it be beneficial to lower the Western Australian standard to the same level? This Bill seeks to express no broad principle, but simply to enable certain gentlemen to enter the profession. Once they get inside, then, according to the Bill, the door is shut behind them. The Bill would have no operation in regard to other persons seeking admission, but it is framed with a view of preventing men from New Zealand being admitted until they have resided in Western Australia for two years. It is very cleverly done. The object of the Bill is to prevent other men coming from New Zealand after it becomes law, by means of a proviso to the effect that no such practitioner shall be admitted until he has been two years in the colony. The present limitation as regards residence is six months; but this is an attempt on the part of practitioners here the effect of which is to say to the House, “Don’t oppose this, because we are putting in a provision that no man shall in future be admitted until he has been here for two years.” Speaking of the principle utterly regardless of the fact that I am a member of the profession, I say it would not be wise to establish a precedent that you can have an Act of Parliament passed to admit two gentlemen who came to the country

at the time they did. I know the two gentlemen in question. They came here, and got positions and good salaries. The rest of us, when we came here, had pretty well to starve or endure hardships for some time after our arrival. We were not engaged immediately on arrival. These men were practically under an engagement from the time they left New Zealand; and then they want to be admitted without putting in six months in the colony.

MR. SIMPSON (Geraldton): I propose to support the second reading of this Bill, and will take every opportunity, so long as I hold a seat in this House, of opening wider the doors for the admission of accomplished practitioners to the legal profession. Indeed, I hope to follow in the footsteps of those great Australian colonists, Sir George Grey in New Zealand, and the Hon. Charles Kingston in South Australia—no mean names to mention in this connection. I was a little surprised to hear the Attorney General's remarks about the legal profession in New Zealand, which has included men like Judge Richmond, one of the greatest lawyers in the Southern Hemisphere, Sir Robert Stout, and men of that class. To say that the mental calibre and accomplishments of these men are inferior to those of the great legal luminaries of Western Australia does really suggest that we are approaching a season of Christmas pantomime. I am not aware whether this Bill is a proposal to ask Parliament to admit any particular men to the practice of this profession. If so, I must object to it. We are getting too many of these single-clause Bills introduced by private members. I should like to see the Government take a firmer stand in connection with this practice. We are running very great risk in allowing these little private Bills with single clauses, that may prove most inimical to the best interests of the colony, to slip through the Legislature. There is, however, no monopoly in the world that is surrounded with so much unearned privilege as the legal profession. No man has higher respect for the administration of justice than I, but why is it that men of average intelligence, whom we meet in knocking about the world, have such an absolute dread and terror of going near a law court for fear they will be robbed?

The law courts of the present day are no places for the poor man. It is well-known to members in this House that there is no work of art which can conceal services rendered and exhibit the arts of construction so well as a lawyer's bill of costs. I hope the lay members of the House will face the question, and that they will support this measure in the interests of the whole community. By doing so they will be letting it go forth—and the expression of their opinion is bound to have an educational influence on the people—that, in their opinion, the avenues by which men can enter on a career for securing the administration of justice to their fellow men shall be made more easy of access, and that they shall not be blocked with the inscription "None but the rich can enter here." The expression of such an opinion by the lay members of this House would do an unalloyed good to the country. At present there is no hide-bound monopoly on earth so surrounded by legalised extortion as the legal profession.

MR. HUBBLE (the Gascoyne): I mean to oppose this Bill. I do not think any one should be allowed to enter the legal profession here without first showing his papers and proving that he has passed the proper examinations. Victoria would have been pleased to reciprocate with this colony so as to get rid of her surplus stock, but she cannot send her solicitors to this colony now. I do not approve of any Bill being brought forward by which people who have gone through a term of office without going through the proper legal examinations can be admitted to the profession.

MR. EWING (the Swan): Every man who has a proper qualification, and who has served the proper term of apprenticeship as required in the legal profession, should be admitted, provided he is a fit and proper person in other respects to practise here. New Zealanders, up to 1882, were admitted in this colony because they had served the required term of articles and had passed the examinations here required. They had to do the same as a Western Australian boy had to do, or has to do at the present time. Consequently we admitted them, and because I have done those things I was admitted to practise in this country. But the effect of this Bill will be this. Articles have been

abolished in New Zealand. We know that the standard of examinations in New Zealand is not high, and we are asked to admit men who have neither passed the high examinations we have passed, nor yet served any term of apprenticeship at all. I admitted to the gentlemen who desired this legislation that, in the case of two gentlemen who came over here, they were entitled to some consideration; but when I got a letter from the author of the Bill, telling me that if the Bill was blocked by the Attorney General and other legal gentlemen in the House—I never showed the letter to the Attorney General, and I am glad to hear his opinion without his being prejudiced by having seen the letter—that if the Bill did not go through the House he would get some of the liberal members to introduce a Bill to wipe away legal qualifications entirely, and enable any one to do legal work, if I had any doubt in my mind before that, I determined at once that I was not going to be subjected to any threat like that, and that I would not be dictated to. I say that the Bill is unjust to the legal practitioners or to any West Australian boy who has to serve articles and pass an examination before he is admitted.

MR. QUINLAN (Toodyay): I intend to support the Bill as introduced. I believe in the sentiment expressed by the hon. member for Geraldton (Mr. Simpson), that West Australia should open its doors and its arms too, to everyone of our colour. We cannot class these people as Chinamen. Some members of the legal profession in this colony are not all that might be desired. I was present when the Legal Practitioners Act was passed, and I then expressed myself as opposed to it. The provision made in the Bill before the House, that persons should have been practising as solicitors for ten years, is quite sufficient. I think such persons would be qualified in law, and if they are not, then they will not be a success, and no lawyer in the colony need fear such competition.

MR. CONOLLY (Dundas): Certainly there is a great deal in what the hon. member for Geraldton has said. I think it is a benefit to all classes, so far as possible, to destroy any possibility of a monopoly in whatever class it may be; but I do not think, in so doing, it would be beneficial to lower the grade. It

appears to me that if we admit solicitors coming from New Zealand who have been admitted to the bar in their own colony on lower qualifications to those under which solicitors are admitted in Western Australia, that, in a certain degree would be lowering the grade of the legal profession here. I think there would be no objection to admitting solicitors from New Zealand, provided they had passed an examination and have qualifications in any degree equal to those required for admission in this colony; but, knowing as I do, and as we have been told this evening, that the legal practitioners of New Zealand are admitted to the bar under lower qualifications than those in force here, I do not think it desirable to allow these practitioners to be admitted free to practise in Western Australia.

MR. EWING: Under the present Act we admit them now, providing their qualifications are equal.

MR. HIGHAM (in reply): In New Zealand, practitioners are admitted after an examination in general knowledge of the law, and they have to go through an apprenticeship which to all intents and purposes is equivalent to five years' service under the Western Australian law.

THE PREMIER: Is there reciprocity?

MR. HIGHAM: There is reciprocity, with the exception that a Western Australian solicitor going to New Zealand would have to pass some examination in general knowledge of the law as locally practised.

MR. EWING: New Zealand practitioners are not admitted in any of the other Australian colonies.

MR. HIGHAM: The hon. member for East Perth (Mr. James) complains that this Bill is brought forward to remedy a grievance. But there are very few Bills which have not a grievance at bottom. It has been said that this is a one-man Bill. Possibly, when the idea of the measure was conceived there was one man behind it. But I can assure the House that there is now a considerable number of gentlemen who wish to avail themselves of the provisions of the Bill. Most of these gentlemen are fully qualified, and hold responsible positions in the offices of solicitors here, who are glad of their services, and do not decry their capabilities.

I am sorry the hon. member for the Swan (Mr. Ewing) did not do justice to the letter to which he referred, and read it to the House. It would then have been found that it simply amounted to the fact that the law has been simplified in New Zealand for the benefit of the general public, and that in this matter there is, in more ways than one, a practice similar to that observed under the Torrens Land Act. Legal brokers do for half-a-crown that for which a legal practitioner would charge anything from two to five guineas. I am not at all surprised that the legal profession in Western Australia should be jealous of such a system obtaining a footing here. It would be for the benefit of the community as a whole, if there were more legislation on the lines of the Torrens Land Act, by which land could not only be transferred for nothing, but other legal services rendered at fair, equitable prices, instead of the innumerable guineas now charged by legal practitioners. I hope hon. members will regard the Bill from an unbiassed point of view for the benefit of the community as a whole, and not from the jealous standpoint of the legal profession. The Bill provides that gentlemen admitted shall have all necessary qualifications, so that there remains no objection to their being allowed to practise at the bar.

Question put, and division taken with the following result:—

Ayes	10
Noes	11

Majority against ... 1

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. Higham	Sir John Forrest
Mr. Leake	Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Locke	Mr. Harper
Mr. Morgans	Mr. Hassell
Mr. Oats	Mr. Hubble
Mr. Quinlan	Mr. Lefroy
Mr. Sholl	Mr. Oldham
Mr. Simpson	Mr. Pennefather
Mr. Solomon	Mr. Piesse
Mr. Wood (Teller).	Mr. Venn
	Mr. Ewing (Teller).

Question thus negatived.

REGISTRATION OF FIRMS BILL.

SECOND READING.

MR. JAMES (East Perth), in moving the second reading, said: This Bill has already been passed by the Legislative Council. A great deal of difficulty exists at present in ascertaining the names

of those who are associated together in a business firm, and one of the objects of the Bill is to prevent a man's name being used by a firm for the purpose of suggesting to anyone dealing with that firm that this man is connected with the firm, and thus to obtain credit which would not otherwise be given, through the use of a well-known name. Very often a firm exists, the members of which are not known, and you suddenly find, on demanding payment of a debt, that an individual whom you believed to be still connected with the firm has retired years ago. This Bill provides for the registration of the name of the firm, the nature of the business carried on, the place or places where the business is carried on, and the full name, usual residence, and other occupation (if any) of the person or persons carrying on or intending to carry on the business. The Bill has been introduced for the purpose of simplifying the law and facilitating business as much as possible. It is in operation in South Australia. It was introduced by a gentleman of Perth a couple of sessions ago, and I think met with the approval of the House. I believe it has commended itself to the Chambers of Commerce of Perth and Fremantle, and will be found very useful in practice, and will serve the end of men engaged in commercial pursuits generally.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. R. W. Pennefather): I beg to support the second reading of the Bill. It is nothing more nor less than a Bill to enable a person to understand with whom he is dealing. Persons in trade take fancy names, to deceive the public who trade with them. A measure of this description has been in operation in Victoria for six years, and it has worked admirably.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 11-30 p.m. until the next day.