stand anyone saying so at the present moment.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: I meant in proportion to population.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Then, as regards the difficulty of registry in the district alluded to by the hon. member, surely at Lawler's—or, indeed, in any place where men have a desire to get on the roll—there is a police inspector, or constable, or postmaster, in the locality, who has power under the Act to receive claims for registration; and, in fact, one or other of these officers is generally to be found wherever there are 100 persons settled in a district. Then, again, the time or date for getting on the roll is not now limited, and registration can take place all the year round. I do not think the facilities for easy registration under this Act can be surpassed. The hon. member also desired that a miner's right should entitle to a vote; but there is a great difference between the holder of a miner's right as compared with a lessee of the Crown who pays £10 a year for a lease of land. If, however, the lessee paid only £9, he would not get the franchise. My experience leads me to think that the class of man for whom the hon. member wishes to obtain the franchise cares little or nothing about politics. The man who is a politician is one, as the hon. member knows, who has little or nothing else to do except busy himself in politics; and one strong objection brought against payment of members is that such men are not reliable or desirable, because they make politics a business for getting the pay. I think the hon. member's strictures on the Electoral Act are undeserved. The terms of that Act are very liberal, and cannot, I think, be improved on. With regard to the suggestion of the hon. member for Geraldton to insert a clause in the Bill dealing with the Aborigines Protection Board, I may remind him that the Bill passed by this House last session for repealing the particular provision in the Constitution Act relating to this Board, is now before the Secretary of State in London; and, being thus in suspense, it would be improper and unconstitutional for this House to again pass a measure somewhat of the nature of the Bill now before the Secretary of State. In conclusion, I would like to express my thanks to all hon. members of this House for the way in which they have received this Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 10 o'clock, p.m., until next day.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 30th July, 1896.

Question: Reported Disgraceful Scenes at Kalgoorlie—Question: Repairs to Albany Jetty—Question: Alleged Statements by Member for York: personal explanation—Question: Clause 11 of Goldfields Act—Companies Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Noxious Weeds Bill: first reading—Statutory Declarations Bill: first reading—Sale of Liquors Regulation Bill: first reading—Streets and Roads Closure (Eastern Railway) Bill: third reading—Adoption of Children Bill: third reading—"Hansard" Reporting Staff: report of select committee—Constitution Act Amendment Bill: in committee—Adjournment.

THE SPEAKER took the chair at 4·30 o'clock p.m.

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—REPORTED DISGRACEFUL SCENES AT KALGOORLIE.

MR. RANDELL, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier whether he had received complaints of any indecent and disgraceful scenes occurring in Hannan Street, Kalgoorlie, or whether his attention had been called to a letter appearing on the subject in the *Kalgoorlie Miner* of July 27. If it had not been brought under his notice, whether he would cause inquiries to be made, and, if the evil were found to exist, give directions to the police or other authority to have the nuisance suppressed.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir. J. Forrest) replied that he had not read the letter referred to, but that the hon. member's question had been forwarded to the Commissioner of Police, who had been asked to make a full inquiry into the matter.

QUESTION—REPAIRS TO ALBANY JETTY.

MR. HASSELL, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works when the repairs to the jetty at Albany were to be commenced, and whether it was true that in the plans a new landing stage was proposed to be constructed in such shallow water that no boats could approach it except at the highest tides; also, for what purpose fender piles were to be put at that part of the jetty where there were only about 2ft. of water at highest tides.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) replied:—The contractors are expected to commence on the ground within a fortnight. The landing stage referred to is one of four, and situate near the shore, and is only intended for small pleasure boats. In reference to the second landing stage, the original plan provides fender piles, as stated. It was intended that this stage and the fender piles should be struck out of the plan, but, in the process of transferring the work to the recently formed Harbours and Rivers Branch, the matter was temporarily forgotten; however, on the 24th inst., this oversight was discovered, and steps taken to rectify it. No loss will result to the department.

QUESTION—ALLEGED STATEMENTS BY MEMBER FOR YORK.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION.

MR. HARPER, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier whether there was any authority for the statements alleged to have been made by the hon. member for York, and published in the *Eastern Districts Chronicle* of the 25th instant, to the effect that "He had friends in the Ministry who would grant any reasonable request;" that "The Government had pledged itself to construct this (the York-Greenhills) railway;" that "He would assure them that the starting point would be York—he had the Premier's word for that;" that "The water supply scheme for the goldfields, proposed by the Government, would start from a point some 14 or 16 miles from York, and thence be conveyed along this loop line railway."

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied:—1. The hon. member for York has been informed by me, and so have all members of this House, that any reasonable request made by them would, *if possible*, be complied with. 2. The Government has not actually pledged itself to construct a railway from York to Greenhills, but it has the matter now under consideration. 3. In the event of a railway being constructed, the starting point should, in the opinion of the Government, be about four miles southward of York. I have informed the hon. member for Beverley, in writing, of this opinion, and very probably may have verbally expressed myself in similar terms to the hon. member for York. 4. There is no authority that I know of for the last statement, as to the water supply scheme; and I feel sure the hon. member for York has been incorrectly reported.

[At a later stage, the member for York sought to move the adjournment of the House; but this being ruled out of order, he made a personal explanation as follows.]

MR. MONGER: I wish to make a personal explanation in reference to the question asked by the hon. member for Beverley. I did say I had friends amongst the Ministers, who occupy these very high and honourable positions, and who would grant to the district that I have the honour of representing, and to the colony in general, anything that had for its object the advancement of Western Australia. I have always said that; I have said it in this House, and I think every member who sits on this side of the House, or on the other side, has said he has friends amongst the Ministers, who have got that one common desire in view. That was exactly what I said then, and what I state here. I thank the hon. gentleman for taking a newspaper report as a verbatim report of what I was supposed to have said on this particular occasion. I think if any person who occupies a seat in this House looks at the report of his speeches in the paper which that gentleman has the honour of being a partner in, any member can be asked questions such as the hon. member for Beverley has asked about me. I thank him for doing so, and I will promise him this, that the next time he makes an address to the electors who returned him by that big majority of one—the next time he makes a speech to them I shall have some one there who will take down

verbatim what the hon. gentleman says; and I venture to say that, in addressing his constituents, the hon. gentleman pledges the Government to a far greater extent than I have ever done, or ever intend to do. With reference to the second portion, that the Government had pledged itself to construct the York to Greenhills Railway, what I then said was that if a line of railway to the agricultural areas to the eastward of York had to be constructed, the Government were in honour bound to construct that line of railway from a point near York. I believe that is what the hon. the Premier replied to a wire sent to him by the member for Beverley, on the occasion of his recent address to his constituents; and I took that as the basis of my information, and I think it fair information, too. When the Premier thinks he cannot agree to this agitation which emanates from Beverley, and that he is virtually in favour of the line being constructed, if it is to be constructed, from a point somewhere near York, I think that is fair information for me to go upon, when it comes from the hon. the Premier himself. But when the Premier states that he cannot agree to this agitation which emanates from Beverley, and that if a line of railway is to be constructed it should start from a point somewhat nearer York, I think that is sufficient data for me to go on, in saying I had it from the hon. the Premier that York will be the favoured spot, if such a line is considered necessary. As regards the last part of the question, I do not mind saying that, if I can do anything possible to convince the Government that it is necessary, or to get the Government to think it is necessary, to construct a loop line from York, to connect with some point on the Northam-Yilgarn line, and that they are convinced it is necessary for them to carry their supposed water scheme along that line, I am only doing something for the advancement of my own district. That was what I intended to convey, and I am not going to say I was misinterpreted. I am going to say that the newspaper, which was good enough to report me, cut down my speech, in the same way as the newspaper, which the hon. gentleman has the honour of being a partner in, cut down his speech also. If every time a misconception arises, or a misconstruction can be placed on a speech that is reported in a condensed form, the outcome is to be personal questions such as the hon. member has asked on this occasion, then I am afraid the time of the House will be taken up in hearing these questions, and in hearing the subsequent explanations. Sir, I have tendered my explanation, and I hope that the hon. member for Beverley will be able to give as good a one after his next address to his constituents, as I have done on this occasion.

QUESTION—CLAUSE 11 OF GOLDFIELDS ACT.

MR. MORAN, in accordance with notice, asked the Premier whether it was the intention of the Government to amend Clause 11 of the Goldfields Act?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) replied that the Government were advised that the present arrangement was working well, and that to return to previous methods would mean a repetition of former mistakes and errors. Under these circumstances, the Government did not intend to amend the clause.

COMPANIES ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER (for the Attorney General), and read a first time.

NOXIOUS WEEDS BILL.

Introduced by the COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS, and read a first time.

STATUTORY DECLARATIONS BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER (for the Attorney General), and read a first time.

SALE OF LIQUORS REGULATION BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER (for the Attorney General), and read a first time.

STREETS AND ROADS CLOSURE (EASTERN RAILWAY) BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

ADOPTION OF CHILDREN BILL.

THIRD READING.

Bill read a third time, and transmitted to the Legislative Council.

"HANSARD" REPORTING STAFF.

REPORT OF SELECT COMMITTEE.

The report of the Select Committee, appointed to inquire into the present arrangements for reporting and publishing the parliamentary debates (the report having been brought up on the previous day), was read, as follows:—

"Your committee, having carefully considered the matter of *Hansard*, beg to report:—*First*, that Messrs. Stirling Bros. and Company have positively and finally refused to continue printing the daily *Hansard*, under the conditions of the present contract. *Second*, that the only conditions upon which Messrs. Stirling Bros. and Company are willing to produce a daily *Hansard*, and provide the necessary sheets for a permanent *Hansard*, as hitherto provided, are: (*a.*), that the whole of the reporting staff be engaged by, and shall be under the control of, Messrs. Stirling Bros. and Co.; (*b.*), that the sum of £2,500 per annum be paid in lieu of existing arrangements, which sum is to cover the whole cost of reporting for and printing a daily *Hansard* in the columns of the *Morning Herald*, with type in sheet form handed to the Government Printer ready for the production of the *Hansard* volumes. *Third*, your committee, having carefully considered the foregoing proposal, have agreed that they cannot recommend this House to adopt the plan therein proposed, for this special reason, amongst others, that, in their opinion, the *Hansard* reporters should be within the control of Parliament. *Fourth*, in view of the foregoing facts, your committee recommend: (*a.*), that Mr. Speaker be empowered to bring the *Hansard* staff up to efficiency, by securing the services of four first-class *Hansard* reporters for the Assembly, in addition to the staff now employed in the Legislative Council; (*b.*), that the idea of a daily *Hansard*, published in a newspaper, be abandoned, at least for the present session; (*c.*), that arrangements be made with the Government Printer to produce *Hansard*, in book form, at intervals of not less than one week; (*d.*), that during recess arrangements be made to place *Hansard* on a permanent and efficient basis."

MR. ILLINGWORTH (Chairman of the Select Committee) moved, without comment, that the report be adopted.

Question put and agreed to, without debate.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT (REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS) BILL.

IN COMMITTEE.

The House went into committee on the Bill.

Clauses 1 to 3, inclusive—agreed to.

Clause 4—Colony divided into eight electoral provinces, each returning three members:

MR. MOSS said he intended, when clause 8 was reached, to move that the colony be divided into forty-four instead of forty-three electoral districts; and, if he succeeded in carrying his amendment on that clause, it would be necessary to include the new electorate in the electoral provinces set out in this clause. He, therefore, asked that the consideration of clause 4 be postponed until after clause 8 had been dealt with.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Bill could be recommitted for making the alteration referred to, if it should be found necessary to do so.

Clause agreed to.

Clause 5—Retirement of members of Council to be computed from 21st May:

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) explained that this clause was intended to fix definitely the date on which members of the Upper House should retire, and the date on which new members should be entitled to sit in the Council. Under the present law it was not easy to secure the presence of a new member in the Council exactly on the day on which the previous member should retire, and the object of this amendment was to fix the 21st day of May as the date from which the sitting of a member should be computed. The 21st May had been selected because, under the existing arrangements of the financial year closing on the 30th June, Parliament would not be likely to meet until June, under ordinary circumstances; and, that being so, the elections could take place as close to the meeting of Parliament as possible. If hon. members thought the 21st May, for completing the elections, would be too close to the usual meeting of the Houses, then, of course, the date could be placed a little earlier in the year; but, in the opinion of the Ministry, the 21st May would be a good time for

the elections to be completed. The election for filling ordinary vacancies would have to take place sooner than that date, of course, and it was provided that the writs must be issued about the 10th day of April. He did not know whether there would be enough time between the 10th April and the 21st May—that was about six weeks—to get the elections over and have all the writs returned; but the writs would have to be made returnable on the 21st May, and the elections probably would take place ten days before that date, or in some districts even more. Whether that was long enough it would be for hon. members to say; but, in the third sub-section, there was provision made for any extraordinary vacancy occurring between the 21st January and the 21st May, in the case of a seat being vacated other than by effluxion of time. If a member were to die or resign between the 21st January and the 21st May, the seat was to be deemed to have been vacated by effluxion of time, and the new member elected to fill such vacancy was to be entitled to sit until the date for his retirement, as if he had been elected on the 21st May in the ordinary way. That was the way in which the Attorney General proposed to provide for such a contingency, and he (the Premier) thought it would be found a useful provision. This section had been carefully thought out by the Attorney General and himself, and it appeared to provide all that was required. The only question he would like the House to consider particularly was as to whether the 10th April was the best date that could be chosen for the issue of the writs, seeing that they must be returned by the 21st May. Was the interval long enough? He thought it was. It would give a month from the issue of the writ until the polling, and ten or eleven days afterwards for the writ to be returned.

THE CHAIRMAN (Mr. Randell) suggested that the Attorney General should draft a marginal note to sub-section three.

THE PREMIER assented to the suggestion.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 6—agreed to.

Clause 7 — Legislative Assembly to consist of 43 members:

MR. MOSS moved, as an amendment, that the word "three," in the first line, be struck out with a view to inserting "four" in lieu thereof.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the amendment had for its object to constitute North Fremantle into a separate electorate. As had been explained to the House on the previous evening by the Attorney General, the Ministry would not oppose the amendment if it were the wish of the House that Fremantle should have another member. Since then he had carefully considered the matter, as he had done for a long time past, and he must say that he did not think Fremantle was entitled to an extra member. He would give his reasons for holding this view. An argument used by one of the members for Fremantle was that, if another member were not given to that place, it would be tantamount to saying that Fremantle had not progressed during the last five or six years. Well he was of opinion that all parts of the colony —he hoped, at least, that every part of the colony — had progressed considerably during that time, and the same argument that was used by the members for Fremantle could be put forward on behalf of Albany, Geraldton, York, Northam, Southern Cross, and other towns, as a plea for increased representation. The only way to meet the wishes of the members for Fremantle would be to divide North Perth into two electorates and throw the southern half into North Fremantle, also making the northern half what would be known as North Perth. If the boundary of North Fremantle were to include Buckland Hill, Cottesloe, and Claremont, the House would be acting reasonably and liberally, and they would have Subiaco, Leederville, and the country around Waneroo to be known as North Perth. There was a large population there, and some division of that kind would be reasonable.

MR. MOSS said Fremantle would be quite satisfied with that.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he knew that at Cottesloe and Buckland Hill a lot of land had been subdivided; that those were rising places, and he hoped they would be thickly settled soon. Still, not many people were there yet, and it would be giving them rather more than could be fairly asked for under existing circumstances, and more than was given to other places,

if now made into a separate electorate. It was not possible to give to other towns in the colony larger representation at the present time; but to meet the wish of the hon. member for North Fremantle, if it were the desire of hon. members generally, Cottesloe, as far as the Osborne Hotel, might be added to the North Fremantle electorate. At the present time, however, the people who were living there, so far as his knowledge went, were not associated by a community of interests with the North Fremantle people, as they were chiefly people who had their residences in Perth, and had seaside residences in the neighbourhood he had referred to. If Cottesloe, Buckland Hill, and Claremont were added to the North Fremantle electorate, he did not think the various parts of that electorate would be much in sympathy with one another. At the same time, he did not see any other way of giving an additional member to Fremantle if the House determined to do it. It had been the object of the Government, in framing the Bill, to keep together the interests of people which were somewhat identical, so that when an election took place the electorate should not be divided against itself, by fighting between opposing interests. He again said he did not consider Fremantle was entitled to more representation than was proposed in the Bill; and that, if it were granted to Fremantle, it might be fairly claimed by other large towns of the colony. Still, if it were the express wish of the House to take this step, the Government would not push their opposition, although he did not think the plan he had suggested would be a very good one. It was the only plan that could be adopted; otherwise he must express his opinion that he did not think a case had been made out on behalf of Fremantle.

MR. SIMPSON: Call the new electorate "Claremont."

THE PREMIER: Fremantle would not like that.

MR. MOSS: We do not care what it is called.

THE PREMIER: We must name the electorate after the most important part of it.

MR. MOSS: I am quite satisfied to accept the suggestion of the Government, and I think they are treating Fremantle fairly.

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

Clause 8—Colony divided into forty-three electoral districts:

MR. MOSS moved, as an amendment, that the words "East Fremantle" be inserted after the word "Fremantle," in the list of electoral districts.

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

Clause 10—Registrars to amend electoral rolls in accordance with new division of provinces and districts:

MR. MORAN asked what would happen under this clause if a man were not at present on the roll, and who, at the time of making up the rolls under this amending Act, had not resided for six months in the district in which he at that time lived—would he be entitled to go on the roll for that district, or what would happen? For instance, he might have lived three months or so in Southern Cross and three months at Coolgardie. For what district would he vote?

THE PREMIER: It seems to me you cannot get over the difficulty.

MR. MORAN: You can, if you like.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): said the only way he could see, for dealing with the matter, was to let every man go on the roll for the district in which he was located; but, in order to do that, there would have to be an amendment of the Electoral Act, which now made it necessary that, before going on the roll, a man should have resided for six months within the district. Most of the men to whom the member for Yilgarn had referred were of nomadic habits, and, under any conditions, they would find it difficult to get on the roll. The same disability applied in Perth and Fremantle; for there, if an elector crossed the street, and went over an electoral boundary, he would lose his vote until he could qualify for his new district. Many of the men on the fields could never be got on the rolls, as they were constantly moving from place to place, and could not therefore comply with the Act. The same difficulty was experienced in the other colonies, where they all had some qualification—some large and some small. All of them, however, had a provision that an elector must reside so long in a district before he could get the franchise. Those who were on the electoral

rolls were people who were settled down. There were hundreds of these people who were settling within the goldfields district, while there were also hundreds who, through having no fixed abode, could not qualify for the franchise. There was no desire on the part of the Government to keep anybody off the roll; and in fact, they wanted all the people on. He would bear this point in mind, and place it before the Attorney General. It would be impossible for the Attorney General to deal with it at once, while in the House; but he would place it before him for consideration, and see if the Attorney General could suggest any way out of the difficulty. He quite recognised the point.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he was not quite sure that the Premier did recognise the point. He (Mr. Illingworth) saw the difficulty, and understood what the member for Yilgarn wanted. As he read the clause, he understood it that the registrar would make up the rolls for each district, and each man whose qualification was for, say, Southern Cross, would be put on the roll for Yilgarn, and the same thing would be done in all the districts. If a man, whose qualification by residence stood on the roll as being at Southern Cross, moved to Menzies, or Coolgardie, or any other electorate, he would not lose his right to vote in the district where his name was enrolled.

MR. MORAN: He will lose his vote if he has moved from his district.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Supposing he has moved, he will not have lost his right to vote. [MR. MORAN: Yes, he will.] He did not wish to contradict an hon. member, but was perfectly certain he was right. The thing was done at every election; it was done every day. No returning officer would refuse to take a man's vote, either personally or by proxy, if that man were on the roll of the district for which he wished to vote. If he were on the roll, he would be entitled to vote. If he desired to vote at Southern Cross, his name being on the roll there, he could either go there and vote, or send his proxy under the existing Act. There was not the slightest doubt that was done at every election. Residence was not a part of the question. It was only the first qualification to be placed on the roll. The roll, when once made up and passed by the registrar, was unassailable, and the man who identified himself as a man whose name was on the roll had the right to vote. On the other hand, a man who had left Southern Cross, where his name was on the roll, and had not qualified for his new district, could not vote in that new district, but could still vote for Southern Cross.

MR. MORAN: But that is a different district—not the district in which he is residing.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That does not matter.

MR. MORAN: You are off the track. You don't understand the point.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It is impossible to arrange to meet the views of the hon. member for Yilgarn, if he desires that the old rolls shall not be followed, and that a man may be placed on the rolls of any of the new districts, whether he has qualified there or not.

THE PREMIER: A voter whose qualification is residence only cannot send his vote.

MR. MORAN: That is the point. Is the man who has left Southern Cross to travel 1,500 miles, perhaps, to register his vote?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The question of residence does not apply. The man does not lose his vote so long as he is on the roll.

MR. MORAN said the hon. member for Nannine was on the wrong track. He would ask the hon. member one question, and the member would then see the difficulty. Supposing a man were put on under the residential qualification, and the registrar were to ask him, "John Jones, have you resided six months in this electorate?" and supposing Jones replied that he had resided three months at Coolgardie and three months at Southern Cross, could that man be put on the roll for either Southern Cross or Coolgardie? At the present moment, that qualification would be sufficient for him to go on the roll for Yilgarn; but, with the cutting up of the Yilgarn district, it was not clear whether the man would not have to establish his qualification anew.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said that any intelligent registrar for the district in which the man was residing would put him on the roll.

MR. MORAN said if any intelligent registrar did a thing like that, he would, under the Act, get two years' imprisonment. The law did not allow a man to be put on the roll for three months' residence; and what he (Mr. Moran) wanted to know was, whether a man who had resided, say three months at Southern Cross and three months at Coolgardie, would be entitled to have his name placed on the roll for the district in which he was residing at the time of the making up of the roll; the three months' residence in the other part of the Yilgarn district counting as part of his qualification? Would he be required to reside for six months within the Coolgardie district, that being his place of residence at the time of his application?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): No; I don't think so.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said the names were to be removed from the existing rolls and placed on the new rolls, in accordance with the judgment of the registrar of each new district. Six new rolls were to be created out of the existing Yilgarn roll, and did not that existing roll apply to the point at issue? [MR. MORAN: Certainly not.] If the man were on the existing electoral roll, he would be placed somewhere, by the judgment and business intelligence of the registrar. If, on the other hand, a man were not on the existing roll and wanted to get upon the roll of one of the new districts, that was entirely another question, and a question that could not be met in Clause 10. As far as the clause was concerned, it dealt with existing rolls, upon which there were about 2,600 people. The question was, where were these people going to be placed, so far as the electorates were concerned? That was the only question dealt with in the clause. If, on the other hand, a man had resided twelve months in the colony, and, after living three months at Southern Cross, had gone to Coolgardie and applied there to be placed on the roll, the registrar could not place him on the roll until that man had been in the district six months.

MR. MORAN: Supposing a man had been in residence for five months at Southern Cross, and one month at Coolgardie, would he be entitled to go on the Coolgardie roll? [THE PREMIER: Yes.] He won't have been the full term of six months in any of the electorates. Can he get his vote without having qualified for one of the new electorates? That is the question, in short.

MR. MOSS said he did not think Clause 10 would be sufficient to cover what was desired by Mr. Moran, and what the Premier thought could be done under it. He would suggest to the Attorney General that the Bill should contain a sub-clause to Clause 10, or an entirely new clause, providing that residence in any existing district for six months should be a fulfilment of the residental qualification, provided the elector applied for enrolment on the new rolls. If that were not done, it would be impossible for a person seeking to vote by virtue of residence to answer the question which the presiding officer at any election had the right to put to him, namely, whether he had complied with the Act as regards qualification. Under the new Bill, many persons would not be able to answer that question in accordance with the law, and it would therefore be in the power of the presiding officer to prevent them from voting. It was necessary to have some words to modify Clause 10 in the way he had indicated, or people really entitled to vote might be disfranchised.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the intention of the clause was as clear as possible. At the same time, the hon. member for Fremantle had made a good point, and the Government would see if they could draft a clause so as to make it clear how the electors on the existing rolls, and others qualified to vote, should be dealt with. The only difficulty was that the question might be asked of an intending voter, "Have you resided six months in the district?" To get over that difficulty, they might accept some new clause. It was perfectly clear that it would not be necessary for the elector to reside six months in the new district, if he had resided six months in the old district. At the same time the Government would look into the point, and he hoped they would be able to move in regard to it later on.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 11—agreed to.

Clause 12—Provisions of sections 10 and 20 of 57 Vict., No. 14, to extend to vacancies caused by acceptance of office liable to be vacated on political grounds;

writ to issue on receipt of certificate of death or publication of appointment to office:

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE said he wished to propose an amendment to subsection 2 of this clause. The clause provided that, in case of the death of any member, a certificate under the hand of two members of the House, or in the case of acceptance of office, the writ should issue for the election as soon as the appointment of such member had been published in the *Government Gazette*. He thought it was necessary to provide that the Speaker, or President, or Governor, who had to issue the writ, should receive notice of such publication in the *Gazette*; otherwise it might be overlooked. Therefore, he moved to amend the clause by inserting, after the word "Gazette" and before the word "which," the following words: "and notice of such appointment has been given by the Colonial Secretary to the President, Speaker, or Governor, as the case may be, and."

MR. ILLINGWORTH said that, as he understood this clause, it was intended to do away with the difficulties that might arise in the filling of vacancies or in the re-election of Ministers when Parliament was not sitting. He thought that the clause should cover all the cases which might arise when Parliament was not sitting, and it, therefore, might be made to cover disqualification for bankruptcy.

THE PREMIER: But the man who is insolvent always resigns.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: But if he won't resign?

THE PREMIER: It is a great power to put into the hands of any officer of the State—that of turning a member out of Parliament.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: There has been such a case of a member refusing to resign when insolvent, in another colony.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the seat might be declared vacant by the House, and that was surely the right way to deal with a case of that sort. He had never known of a case in which the member had refused to resign when that member became insolvent.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said the clause ought to be made to deal with the whole of the cases of disqualification, as well as those of death and appointment to the Ministry.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said this was a matter that had engaged the attention of the Attorney General and himself. The reason why they had placed acceptance of office in the category covered by the clause was that they desired to avoid the difficulties they had met in the past when dealing with appointments, when Parliament was not in session. A member accepting an office of profit under the Crown had first to send in his resignation to the Speaker, or President, or Governor, as the case might be, and as soon as he was no longer a member of the House he accepted the office, and the Speaker could issue a writ. If the member accepted office without resigning, he would vacate his seat; but there was no power, under the law as it at present existed, for the Speaker, or President, or Governor to issue a writ, until the seat had been declared vacant by the House. It seemed better to the Government to include that provision in the Bill, and he might say it was the law in England. A special Act was passed in England allowing a writ to be issued at once where a member had accepted a Ministerial office. To include bankruptcy among these disqualifications would, it seemed to him, be giving too much power to the Speaker, or the Governor, or anyone else. It would give them the power to say whether a member had forfeited his seat or not. That seemed to him too great a power to give to anybody, to say that any person had so conducted himself that he had become disqualified for membership. The ordinary course was for the member to resign; and, if he would not resign, no one should have the power to turn him out except the House of which he was a member, and that could be done by resolution.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: What about a contractor?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he did not know that a contractor was absolutely disqualified; but, be that as it might, it should not be in the power of anyone but the House—not even in the power of the Speaker—to say that a member had forfeited his seat.

SIR J. G. LEE STEERE said the Bankruptcy Act provided that a Judge fo the Supreme Court could send a certificate to the Speaker, to the effect that

a member of the House had forfeited his seat by becoming insolvent; and, upon the receipt of that certificate, the Speaker could issue the writ for an election.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said this was a case in which power was necessary to be given to the Speaker to issue a writ during the recess. There was no question about a seat being vacant: the only question was the issuing of the writ.

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

Clause 13—Principal Executive offices increased to six:

MR. MORAN said, before the clause was passed, he would like to express an opinion regarding the present state of things in the Post and Telegraph Department, and in the department of the Minister of Mines. These departments were more largely used, and more largely blamed, than any others, and they should be represented by a Minister sitting in the popular chamber. He would like to see the Minister, representing those two departments, sitting in that chamber, in order that the Minister might answer questions, and know the feeling of the popular representatives regarding those two growing departments.

MR. ILLINGWORTH moved, as an amendment, that the word "six," in line two of the clause, be struck out, with a view of inserting the word "seven" in lieu thereof. He had given reasons for doing so on the second reading, and he need not repeat them now. The business of the country demanded that there should be at least seven Ministers.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he was not sure whether the change would be a wise one. In South Australia they had only five Ministers, and there they did not indulge in having Ministers without portfolios. He had no doubt, as time went on in this colony, they would not be able to get men to devote so much time to public work as the present Ministers had to do. Still, it was not desirable to increase the Ministry to too large a number. In Victoria there were many Ministers, and a great many without portfolios. He did not know what those Ministers did, but no doubt they were useful when it came to a matter of counting heads. If in this colony more Ministers were made, more provision would have to be made for their salaries, and there was no such provision in the Bill. Perhaps it would be better not to settle the matter just then, but he was inclined to think that six Ministers ought to do for a little while at least.

Amendment put and negatived, and the clause agreed to.

Clause 14—agreed to.

New Clause:

MR. ILLINGWORTH moved, in accordance with notice, that the following new clause be added, to stand as Clause 10:—"In Clause 39, Sub-clause 3, paragraph (*c.*) of the Principal Act, the words 'the holder of a miner's right or' shall be inserted." He said if a man were a ratepayer in a district his name would be sent to the electoral registrar and be inserted on the electoral roll, and he (Mr. Illingworth) desired that when a man took out a miner's right his name should be sent to the registrar of the district for which the man took out the miner's right, and should be inserted on the electoral roll. If a man took out a miner's right on January 1st, and his name was recorded in the registrar's office, that name should be sent on to the electoral registrar, and be placed on the electoral roll, after the holder had been in the country the requisite time.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he had been anxious to hear what the hon. member had to say on the subject, for he himself had had to discuss the matter often in his travels on the goldfields. The question put there had been, "Are you in favour of giving every man with a miner's right the right to vote?" He had explained, and been able to satisfy his audience, as a rule, that it was an unreasonable request. He had no doubt the hon. member for Nannine had often had to answer a similar question, but no doubt he simply said "Certainly; certainly." There was never a more unreasonable request made by an intelligent man than that one, and he (the Premier) could not understand what fetish there was about a miner's right to qualify a man to vote. Why could not the miner apply, like other people, to be placed on the roll? A ratepayer was a very different class of man, as he was rated on the value of his property on which he was generally living. In order to get as many people as possible on the roll, and persons of substance, that ex-

cellent system was commenced in Victoria, and he did not know that it found a place in any of the other colonies of Australia. It certainly found no place in Queensland, South Australia, or Tasmania. Ratepayers in South Australia and Queensland had to apply like anyone else; but in Victoria they introduced the present system, which was working very well. He had heard so much in praise of it that, when the Ministry were framing the Electoral Act in this colony, they placed that provision in the Act, and it was working very well here. Why should the man with a miner's right be placed in any different position from the man with a timber license, for which he had to pay 5s. per month? Would they say that every man who took out a dog license, or any one who paid fees to the State, was to have his name placed on the electoral roll? He had argued the point years ago in Bunbury, and said he could not understand why a man who paid 10s. for a miner's right should be put in a better position than the man sawing timber in the bush. The hon. member for Nannine could not show him they did it anywhere else, and yet he wanted to introduce the system here. When voting time came, which district would a man vote in; for miner's rights were in force everywhere?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Wherever he is on the roll.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): If a man has his name on the roll he can vote without any miner's right.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: He gets on the roll by this process.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): Why couldn't he get on the roll by making application like other people? The thing was nothing more than claptrap, and it was ridiculous nonsense. The hon. member for Yilgarn had bearded the miners to their faces, and told them he could not see that the system was practicable. It was not practicable, and was a foolish idea. He was surprised at a man like the hon. member for Nannine proposing such ridiculous nonsense. If a man wanted to get on the roll in this country, he could do so as easily as anywhere else; but he (the Premier) could not see why one should argue that the mere possession of a miner's right should give such rights and privileges. A miner's right certainly did give privileges, as it enabled a man to hold land against the world, and take the gold out of it, besides giving him the right to reside on it. If they extended to miners such a privilege as was now proposed, they must also do so to every other man who had a license from the Crown.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he was glad the Premier had delivered himself on the question. The Premier had argued that they pleaded for qualification on the miner's right, but he was not pleading for anything of the kind. According to the franchise, a man was entitled to vote on his manhood, after being in the country a sufficient time; and they could find out the time he had been in the colony far more easily, by the record of the miner's right, than by any other process that could possibly be placed on the statute book. If a timber cutter or anyone else could be identified by a license, that was the best identification. When a man took out his miner's right, his name should be recorded, and the length of his residence in the colony would be proved by the miner's right; so that there was no reason why he should be called upon to go a second time to a second officer, and do the work which he could do in one motion without any difficulty to the State. It was just as easy for the mining registrar issuing the miner's right to send on the name, as it was for the secretary of a shire to send on the names of men rated in that shire. The conditions in the colony were such that they prevented men from doing the work demanded under the Act. In New South Wales the Government took the trouble to follow up every man with a policeman to get his name on the roll, and what he (Mr. Illingworth) asked for could be done at very little cost, and would put on the roll some of the most worthy men they had in the colony.

THE PREMIER: Why can't they get on now?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: The Premier knew they could not, but the Government did not want the men on the roll, and they were not desirous of getting them on. If they were honest in their intention to give manhood suffrage, they would give every facility for men getting on the roll.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS: I am not quite so sure either about the hon. member for Nannine.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he knew more about the hon. member for Nannine than the hon. member for DeGrey did. In South Australia, as soon as a man landed in the colony he could go to the registrar's office and have his name entered for the particular district in which he was going to reside, and three months after landing, his name could be entered on the roll. If he desired to move out of that district, he simply told the registrar of the district, and his name was sent on to the registrar of the district where the man was going to reside. He (Mr. Illingworth) was not advocating such a system as that, but he had proposed a simple way of dealing with the matter. The question had been discussed long enough, and, with an independent House like that, they should be able to initiate legislation, and not be everlastingly copying the legislation of other places. The Government seemed tied hand and foot to Queensland, as if there were no other colony like it.

THE PREMIER: Queensland is a mining colony.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: That was no argument, as, if they could meet the requirements of their own colony by a simple process like that proposed, they should do so. He contended it was a just, sound, and easy way of getting on the roll. [MR. CLARKSON: We don't want them to be there]. He (Mr. Illingworth) was perfectly satisfied they did not.

MR. MORAN said he was desirous of supporting the hon. member if the explanation could be made a little clearer; but it appeared to him that, in order to do anything, they must abolish the six months' qualification in a district, and he would be in favour of doing that. A miner should be allowed to vote in any mining district of the colony, even if he had been there only one day. The hon. member had begun at the wrong end, as a miner's right was issued for the whole of the goldfields; and where would the registrar send on a miner's name?

MR. ILLINGWORTH: To where the right was issued.

MR. MORAN: It was issued in Perth.

MR. SIMPSON: It has to be endorsed in a mining district.

MR. MORAN said it was not so, as he believed a miner's right applied to the whole colony. He held one himself, and had used it in one or two districts, and had never had it endorsed by any warden. The hon. member for Nannine had brought the matter up without considering the surrounding circumstances, as the amendment was proposed in such a crude manner, and it would not apply under the present Electoral Act, which was rather clumsy. He favoured the New South Wales system of police officers being employed in getting names on the roll.

MR. SIMPSON: How could they do it on the goldfields?

MR. MORAN: In his district the police could do it, and nothing would please them better than to get men on the roll. That would save the whole of the present trouble and bother. The trouble arose because men had not the time to go and get their names put on the roll, and it was the duty of the Government, therefore, to get the names of these men on the roll. The Government should issue instructions that police officers, say the sergeants, should be sent round and get names put on the roll. While the present Electoral Act existed it was impossible to give an electoral right on a miner's right. Even if they had universal voting, he would not support it, because if miners at, say, Southern Cross took special train on the day of election to Coolgardie and voted there, they could throw out a candidate there. Before hon. members went into the question, they must take into consideration the Electoral Act, and an amendment of that Act must first take place. Much as he would like to support the hon. member, they had not time enough before them to go into the question he had raised.

At 6·30 p.m. the CHAIRMAN left the chair.

At 7·30 p.m. the CHAIRMAN resumed the chair.

MR. GEORGE, in supporting the amendment moved by the hon. member for Nannine, said that with regard to what was called the shifting population, comprising not only miners, but timber hewers, splitters, and haulers, who had to take out a license, and contribute in that

way to the revenue, there was great hardship to many of them, in not being able, without serious loss of time, to get on the roll. In the timber-cutting business, for instance, a man might be employed for a few months splitting timber in one district, and, the demand at the mill for the timber slackening off, he might have to go to another district, and so lose his right to vote there, not having remained six months in one district.

THE PREMIER: How are you going to get over that?

MR. GEORGE said he was not able to point out a way, but the difficulty existed, and he felt it could be overcome by those who had had experience, if only the Government would make a serious effort to do it. The Government should show a willingness to meet the necessities of men in this position, and by so doing the Government would show some reason for the assertion that they were anxious to help all working men to get on the roll. He felt sure the Government could overcome these difficulties, if they would only try. It was easy to say that every man could get on the roll if he chose to do so; but some men could not spare the time, and to seek out the proper officer for putting them on the roll would mean, in very many cases, the loss of a day's wages. The system of registration should be enlarged to enable a declaration to be made before a police constable stationed in the district; and he knew that constables performing this duty were men who could be trusted to do what was required for enabling men to get on the roll.

THE PREMIER: A man can get on the roll any day in the year, remember.

MR. GEORGE said it was a hardship that a man should have to lose a day's wages in order to find someone who could register his claim. A police constable stationed in a district like Jarrahdale, for instance, would be travelling over the district and would know every man in it; and the constable would be careful to comply with the Act when receiving claims to be put on the roll. The system should be adapted to the needs of a shifting population. If the Government wanted to restrict the number of voters on the roll, they could not do it more effectually than by continuing the present system; but if they really wanted to give to each man the right of his manhood, that was a vote, they should make it as easy as possible for that man to get on the roll in order to exercise his vote.

THE PREMIER: Where do they do it anywhere else?

MR. GEORGE said he was not inclined to regard precedents in all cases. Why should not the Government make a precedent in this case, where there was moral justice, at any rate? He would like to see the Government look on these things in a proper spirit, but he supposed hon. members would have to wait until after the next election, before this was done.

MR. CLARKSON said the alleged anxiety of miners to get on the electoral roll existed only in the fertile imagination of the hon. member for Nannine. Miners did not ask for the vote; they were not necessarily entitled to it, as people who were moving about, and they did not use it when they got it. He desired to read an extract on this subject from the *West Australian* newspaper of that day.

HON. MEMBERS: You must not read that.

MR. CLARKSON: Well, the effect of it was that in a recent election on the Eastern goldfields only 64 per cent. of the voters at Coolgardie exercised their vote, a still smaller proportion did so at Kalgoorlie, and one vote was recorded at Niagara. Other places were mentioned where not a single person recorded his vote. Did that look as if miners were very anxious to get a vote and use it? It showed the very opposite. Why should these men care about a vote? They came here only for a few years at most, with the object of making some money, and intending to go away and spend it elsewhere when they had got it. They did not care a button about a vote. That was the real truth of the matter. He was surprised that the hon. member for Nannine should take so much trouble, and should occupy so much of the time of the House in bringing forward a proposal which the hon. member must know would never be carried. The House would not have it.

MR. MOSS said the clause in a previous Act, to which the hon. member desired to add the words in his amendment, had been repealed by the Act of 1893; but, in any case, the addition of these words would not have the effect

which the hon. member had in view. He (Mr. Moss) was inclined to think they would have the effect which had been pointed out by the hon. member for Yilgarn. Still, there was this to be said, that where a miner took out his miner's right in a goldfields district, the mining registrar should, twelve months afterwards, be required by the Act to place that miner's name on the electoral roll, in respect to residential qualification.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: He might be dead.

MR. MOSS: If dead, the man would not vote; and if out of the district, he could not vote. The suggestion he (Mr. Moss) had made for treating the miner's right as equivalent to residential qualification would facilitate registration, and would satisfy the miners. It had been said there was a manhood population of some 35,000 on the goldfields, and only a few of those even possessed the franchise so far as the roll was concerned. He doubted whether the words proposed by the hon. member for Nannine would have the effect desired. It would, of course, be against the public interest that the holder of a miner's right should go into an adjoining district, and vote in that district as the holder of a miner's right; but if the hon. member for Nannine would propose words, whereby the holder of a miner's right should not be in a better position as a voter than a person holding a residential qualification, and if the holder of the miner's right could satisfactorily answer the questions which the holder of a residential qualification would have to answer if residing in a town, he (Mr. Moss) would support an amendment to that effect.

THE COMMISSIONER OF CROWN LANDS (Hon. A. R. Richardson) said most hon. members would admit that the very spirit of the Electoral Act was that the qualification for a vote should be residence for a certain length of time, although there might be a difference of opinion as to what the length of that residence should be. The hon. members for Yilgarn and North Fremantle would not support the principle of enabling a man to vote merely upon the possession of a miner's right, because it would enable the man to go into a neighbouring constituency and exercise his vote in a place where he did not reside. The spirit of the Constitution was that a certain length of residence in a district should be the qualification to vote; but, if the amendment were carried out, nothing of this spirit or intention would enter into the exercise of the miner's right to vote. A man might take out his miner's right from the 1st of January; he might start away for Queensland on the 2nd of January, and in 6 or 9 months afterwards he might return, perhaps just in time to exercise his vote as an elector in this colony. There could be no residential responsibility in that. As to authorising the police to chase men round the country in order to put them on the roll, almost whether they would or not, as was said to be done in New South Wales, he was always under the impression that the right to vote was a privilege to which a man should attach some value, and if a voter attached no value to it he ought not to have it. If a man, having the right to vote, would not use it in order to exercise a certain control over the destinies of his country, whose business was it to compel him? Such a man would be unworthy of the privilege. He (the Commissioner) agreed that no unreasonable impediment should be put in the way of getting on the roll, or exercising a vote, and that every reasonable facility should be given for enabling men to do so. If a man wanted to get on the roll, and had a desire to exercise his responsibility as an elector, he would easily find a way of doing it, for there were fifty ways by which a man might do it.

MR. JAMES said he could hardly follow the Commissioner of Crown Lands in the argument that the right to vote was a privilege. He regarded it as a right that every man of 21 years should possess; but he agreed that the holder of the right should carry out the residential or other qualifications required by the Act. As many as possible of those entitled to the right should exercise it; and it was to the interest of all that there should be a large electorate in every constituency, because it tended to a better representation, and a better Parliament. The principle underlying the amendment of the hon. member for Nannine was simply an extension of a principle recognised in all electoral Acts; and now that the Government were introducing a new

Act, this was a proper time for carrying that principle further. He was opposed to the suggestion that the mere production of a miner's right should entitle a man to vote; but he certainly thought that if a miner's right were issued, say, in June of one year, the registrar should, in the June following, place the holder of that right on the electoral roll as a person residing in the district. He did not deny that there might be abuses under that system, but was not every system of registration open to objections? Could it be said there were no abuses now? If it was an abuse for a miner who was a voter to be out of the colony for four or six months at a time, it must be equally an abuse for a member of this House to be out of the colony for a like period. Whilst they had the present obnoxious Electoral Act, copied from the most obnoxious legislation in Australia—that was the Queensland Act—[THE PREMIER: Oh! oh!]—he would protest against it, as it was an Act passed in Queensland for the express purpose of disfranchising voters, and, whether passed for that avowed purpose or not, it had the effect of disfranchising thousands of men. It was to be regretted that, when introducing an Electoral Act into this colony, the Queensland Act should have been taken as a copy, that being the most cumbersome Act in Australia.

THE PREMIER: An Act prepared by one of the best lawyers in Australia.

MR. JAMES said he did not wish to hear anything about one of the best lawyers in Australia, when he knew that nine-tenths of that lawyer's decisions had been over-ruled by the Full Court. On that point he happened to know more than the Premier knew, so he did not want to hear any more about the best lawyer in Australia.

THE PREMIER: He might have been right, after all.

MR. JAMES said that in every way they should simplify the registration of voters, and this amendment was a move in the right direction. He agreed that, in theory, every man ought to register his claim and exercise his vote; but how many members in that House did register their voting claim? For instance, on how many occasions, when matters of importance came before the municipality of Perth, had various members of that House neglected to register their votes as Perth ratepayers?

MR. A. FORREST: You can't make people vote.

MR. JAMES: How many times had the Attorney General, after an election in Perth, said he had forgotten all about it, and that he was sorry a certain man had got in, and sorry that he (the Attorney General) had not gone up to vote against him. When persons in high places neglected to register, how could they blame working men for not registering their votes in all cases? His own opinion was that, if a man had a vote and did not exercise it, he ought to be fined.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said that, after the mis-statements which had been made about the Electoral Act, he would call the attention of the House to its great simplicity. It had been described as something cumbersome and involved. The case presented to them by the hon. member for Nannine, about the difficulty of a miner in registering his vote, and that the only way to exercise it was to do it as the possessor of a miner's right, would not bear examination. A man who took out a miner's right had to go for it to one of those gentlemen who, under the Electoral Act, could register his claim at the same time. Therefore that miner was brought, by the necessities of the case, into contact with an officer who could take his claim to vote; and why did not the miner put in his claim when he was also looking after the other thing? What reason was there why that man, when getting his miner's right, should not say to the very gentleman who was doing that business for him: "I want to claim a vote, too; give me a paper."

MR. ILLINGWORTH: He might not have been long enough in the country.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Well; suppose he went for his miner's right as soon as he got into the country, he had shortly to go back to that office on some business connected with mining, because all his transactions in mining must be done at the warden's office, or at the mining registrar's office. Therefore, that man had to go into the locality of the warden's office several times a month, in all probability; and if there were no such officers in his locality,

there would be a postmaster there, or the teacher of a public school, or a policeman in charge of the district. In any case, that miner was bound to go, at the end of 12 months, to renew his miner's right, and pay his money. [MR. ILLINGWORTH: Anyone can do that for him.] Well; he would go into the town to get a drink, anyway; and if any one told him (the Attorney General) that a miner would stay out of a town for 12 months, he would not believe it. Then, as to the nature of the claim itself, which had been described as a thing difficult to understand, there was nothing in it that any man of ordinary intelligence could not clearly understand. The questions were simple, and the answers could be simple. Could not a miner answer to his name, and say what was his place of abode, what his occupation, whether he was a British subject or not, and whether he was in receipt of relief from any charitable institution, or from the Government?—though, as to the last question, he might be looking to the Government all through his career, knowing that at the end of it he would get something out of them somehow. To say that questions like these were difficult to understand, and not easy to answer, was to say that which was ridiculous; and the idea of arguing that the officer who issued the miner's right should make a collection of all the names of persons who had taken out miners' rights during twelve months and have them placed on the register of voters, whether the men remained in the district or not, and whether they were alive or dead, was the height of absurdity. The probability was that many or most of the men would have gone away from the district in one of the many rushes to some fresh find; and yet the hon. member's argument was that these men's names must remain on the register of the district in which they had taken out their miner's right. The registrar might, in this way, have accumulated a list of a thousand men on his books, not one of whom might remain in the district twelve months after.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: It is just the same with ratepayers in a municipality.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): Not at all. Ratepayers do not vote for residence; they vote for property. It would be the duty of the electoral registrar to challenge everyone of those names, because he had to satisfy himself that the persons so registered were still in the district, and, if not satisfied, he was bound to challenge them. Therefore, such a system would be utterly unworkable, and to propose it was nothing but ridiculous. If any one would take a voter's claim and see how simple were the questions which the miner was required to answer, he must be a lunatic who persisted in saying it was a complicated system, and one he could not understand.

MR. JAMES: Then I am a lunatic.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt): As to municipal matters, referred to by the hon. member for East Perth, he did not think he had failed in his duty often; but he did know that when the hon. member had been a candidate, he had gone straight to vote against him. At any rate it was very true, as the hon. member for Toodyay said, that the miners did not care to have a vote at all. If they were placed on the rolls, they might have to travel perhaps 50 miles to a polling booth to record their votes, and they did not want to have that bother for the hon. member for Nannine or any one else. It was like bringing a horse to water without being able to make him drink. The system of registration could not be made more simple. The whole thing was contained in a page or two of the Act, whereas in the colony of Victoria the regulations alone, which were supplementary to the Act, comprised a whole printed volume. The amendment of the hon. member for Nannine would only lead to the filling up of the roll with a lot of names that ought not to be on it; and, as had been the case in the other colonies, the purification of the rolls would have to be carried out. If this House wanted to keep the rolls pure, the present system was an admirable one. There was no complexity about the Act; it was simplicity itself; although he would admit that, in some cases, it would be better if the Act could be administered by older and more experienced officers than were some of the clerks of petty sessions who acted as registrars, and who were sent up the country to fill those posts after getting a smattering of legal knowledge and of the police offences statute. But these young men, who

sometimes had to act as electoral registrars, were generally able to carry out this simple Act, by obtaining occasional advice from Perth. The Act would sometimes work much better if they had, in all cases, men of mature age and experience to administer it; but, at the same time, he did not think there was anything in it that an electoral registrar could not throw light upon, and the registrar could always get instructions from head quarters to clear away any little misunderstanding. He hoped the committee would oppose the amendment of the hon. member for Nannine.

MR. CLARKSON said he was sure that the hon. member for Nannine must feel ashamed of having brought forward the amendment, and he (Mr. Clarkson) suggested that the hon. member should withdraw it.

Amendment (new clause) put, and negatived on the voices.

Mr. Illingworth having called for a division, the House divided with the following result:—

Ayes	...	...	2
Noes	...	...	12
Majority against			10

AYES.	NOES.
Mr. James	Sir John Forrest
Mr. Illingworth (*Teller*).	Mr. Burt
	Mr. Richardson
	Mr. Hassell
	Mr. Clarkson
	Mr. Throssell
	Mr. Higham
	Mr. Moss
	Mr. A. Forrest
	Mr. Hooley
	Mr. Solomon
	Mr. Piesse (*Teller*).

New clause negatived.

MR. JAMES said he desired to introduce a new clause, for the enfranchisement of women; but he did not want to introduce it in a thin House. He would rather bring this matter forward as a substantive motion.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL said they had had all that on the previous night.

MR. JAMES said they did not have it all last night; and they would have a lot more this session on the same subject.

THE CHAIRMAN pointed out that some alterations would have to be made in the schedule, and, perhaps, it would be as well to report progress.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that, in regard to the schedule defining the boundaries of the new electorates, on the last occasion when an Electoral Bill was before the House, in 1893, the course adopted was to refer the schedule to a select committee. He was willing that this course should be adopted on the present occasion, if it were necessary; but it seemed that hon. members were fairly satisfied with the schedule as printed, and, perhaps, it would not be necessary to have a select committee. Of course the boundaries of the new electoral district of East Fremantle would have to be prepared. He would be able to submit the schedule of that district on the next Tuesday, and, perhaps, in the meantime, it would be as well to report progress. In regard to the schedule generally, hon. members knew the localities so well that they would be able to thoroughly understand the boundaries, with the map before them. If he was to understand that the feeling of the House was not to have a select committee on the schedule, he would make the alteration regarding the new electorate, and the House could then go into committee upon the complete schedule. He would move that progress be reported and leave obtained to sit again on the next Tuesday.

Motion agreed to, and progress reported accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 8·25 o'clock, p.m., until the next Tuesday.