

sentatives of the people, and it is now for us to take the responsibility of saying whether it shall be carried out or not. I can only trust that hon. members will see their way to assent to this Bill, and thus give relief to thousands of people upon our goldfields, who are in need of it. Sir, I move that this Bill be now read a second time.

THE HON. S. H. PARKER: I have been requested to move that the debate be adjourned until this day week. Hon. members are aware that a great responsibility attaches to them, not only on account of the goldfields, but in regard to the colony at large; and they feel it would be almost indecent for them to pass such a measure as this at one sitting, even if they were inclined to do so. They feel that they should have time to read, mark, and digest the admirable speech which has been addressed to them this evening by the Hon. Minister for Mines. In these circumstances I move that the debate be adjourned until this day week.

Motion put and passed.

Debate adjourned accordingly.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House at 8:45 o'clock, p.m., adjourned until Wednesday, 19th August, 1896, at 4:30 o'clock, p.m.

Legislative Assembly.

Thursday, 13th August, 1896.

Question: Condition of North Fremantle Road Bridge—Motion: Joint Committee on Bridges over Railway in Perth—Married Women's Property Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Transfer of Land Act Amendment Bill: first reading—Constitution Act Amendment (Re-distribution of Seats) Bill: re-committed—Streets and Roads (Greenmount and Marble Bar) Closure Bill: second reading—Federal Council Reference Bill: second reading; in committee—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

QUESTION—CONDITION OF NORTH FREMANTLE ROAD BRIDGE.

MR. MOSS, in accordance with notice, asked the Director of Public Works,—(1.) Whether the Government were aware of the condition of the traffic bridge over the Swan River at North Fremantle; (2.) Whether the Government had recently had a report from any of their engineers as to the safety for traffic of the said bridge; (3.) Whether the Government intended laying such report (if any) on the Table of the House; (4.) If a report had not been recently obtained, whether the Government would instruct an engineer employed by the department to make a survey of the bridge, so that the public safety might not be endangered.

THE DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC WORKS (Hon. F. H. Piessé) replied:—(1.) The Government have no information whatever leading it to doubt the stability of the North Fremantle Road Bridge. (2.) The last report is dated 17th April, 1895. (3.) It was not intended to lay the report on the table of the House, but for the hon. member's information. I will, with permission, lay copies of reports received on the subject since 11th February, 1893. (4.) A further survey and inspection of the bridge will be made forthwith.

MOTION—JOINT COMMITTEE ON BRIDGES OVER RAILWAY IN PERTH.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piessé), in accordance with notice, moved: "That, in the opinion of this House, the time has arrived when one or more dray-bridges over

the railway lines must be substituted for the level-crossings at William Street and Melbourne Road, in the city of Perth; and that, as the subject is a very large and most important one, involving the consideration of a number of possible alternatives, and the effect which same would have on existing interests, it is desirable that it should be referred to a joint select committee of both Houses of Parliament." He pointed out that, owing to the increase in railway traffic, and the extension of railways connecting with Perth, as well as the new public buildings, it was necessary that some provision should be made for bridging the level-crossings at William Street and Melbourne Road. The increasing traffic pointed to the necessity of bridging these thoroughfares, which were used so much as level-crossings, for the public convenience; and the question was one which should receive the consideration of the House. The Government desired that, in order to enable them to arrive at some decision as to what should be done in the matter, a joint committee of both Houses should meet to decide as to the best method of either bridging these streets or providing such other means as would make the level-crossings safe. The provision made for greater safety at the crossing of William Street was a foot-bridge for passengers, but as the Government had made no provision for vehicular traffic, with the exception of the Beaufort Street Bridge, and as the vehicular traffic was becoming very great, especially at the William Street crossing, the Government desired to provide for it also. This increase pointed to the necessity of immediately taking some steps to protect those who were daily using these crossings. It was hardly necessary for him to dwell on the subject, for the reason that it was so evident the crossings should receive some attention with a view to making the passenger and vehicular traffic convenient and safe.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said the motion involved important considerations. He had previously called attention in this House to the fact that the Government were making a mistake in placing the Perth markets in their present position, and he thought the Government would now be prepared to admit it was a mistake, and that both the building and

the land were already required for railway purposes. A good deal of the traffic from Fremantle would require to stop on the west side of William Street, and the station accommodation should be fitted for that purpose. He had also, as Ministers would remember, called special attention to the fact that there was an absolutely straight line available from Subiaco to Bayswater, and that it would be wise on the part of the Government to construct an additional line of railway along that course for the purpose of carrying the great bulk of the heavy traffic which now passed through the city. In connection with that suggestion the Government might, at very little cost, establish a most valuable thing for the city of Perth, namely, a circular railway, beginning at Perth, passing through Leederville round the north part of the city into Bayswater, and returning. This route, with a single line of rails, would take the heavy traffic from Guildford past Perth, instead of through the bottleneck arrangement which had been established in consequence of the necessity of bringing the railway into the city. A large amount of the traffic which was now dangerous to passengers and dangerous to the locomotion of the city could be passed away outside the city, and the present line would be greatly relieved. If they attempted to make bridges over level-crossings in the city, a very large cost would be entailed, and there would not only be great inconvenience to the public, but a considerable depreciation of the value of property in the neighbourhood of the bridges. This motion admitted the possibility of alternative schemes, and he hoped that, whatever committee might be appointed, it would give full consideration to the suggestions he had made, and to other suggestions that might be made for the purpose, if possible, of doing away with the necessity of bridging the railway at several crossings. To erect such bridges would be a most grave matter, although it was quite certain that something must be done very soon to relieve the traffic and protect the public, or serious consequences would result. It was desirable that some action should be taken as early as possible; and with the expectation that the Government would give full consideration to such alternative schemes as the one he

had suggested—namely, a railway from Subiaco to Bayswater, for taking off a large part of the heavy traffic—he would support the motion. One means of relief would be to have two sides to the Perth railway station, for landing and taking up passengers; one in Roe Street, as well as on the Wellington Street side.

MR. VENN said, with regard to the remarks of the hon. member in objecting to bridges being made at the level-crossings, this question had been thought out by the departmental officers of the Government, and it was, no doubt, a very big question to face. Some months ago he (Mr. Venn) had suggested an idea he thought worthy of consideration, that instead of erecting many bridges over the numerous level street crossings (which sooner or later would become a necessity by reason of the rapidly increasing city traffic), an overhead or high-level railway be constructed from, say, a point at or near Subiaco down to some point beyond the city of Perth. The railway passing through the city would then be one continuous bridge, available for traffic under it at all crossings, instead of having numerous separate bridges. He did not know whether the departmental officers had completed the statistics of the cost of such a scheme, but he had consulted some capable authorities on the matter, and the scheme was regarded very favourably by several engineers. If each bridge which would be necessary over level crossings in the future, say 9 or 10, were taken into account, the whole of these would be little short of a continuous bridge for making an overhead railway as he had suggested, and thus relieving all the crossings from the present inconvenience and danger. A difficulty might arise in dealing with the goods traffic; but that could be overcome by suggestions already made to the Engineer-in-Chief, and by other suggestions made by the Engineer-in-Chief. By taking the course now proposed in the motion the Government would be relieved of responsibility in deciding as to the best scheme to adopt for relieving the railway traffic of the city. The committee might make valuable suggestions, and for that reason he had no objection to the motion.

MR. RANDELL said it might not be wise to say much about this matter, as it was going to a select committee, but

evidently something would have to be done with regard to the railway traffic through the city. He must say, as he had said before, that he did not share the alarming feelings which some people had with regard to the dangers of the traffic at the William Street crossing, because, with one or two intelligent men stationed there to regulate the traffic, there would not be nearly so much danger to life, or inconvenience to the public, as were now experienced at some of the busiest corners of the city, particularly the Hay Street and William Street corners, the Barrack Street and Hay Street corners, the Murray Street and Barrack Street corners. He had seen many more narrow escapes happen at those corners than he had seen at the William Street crossing, although he had watched the traffic considerably, and had crossed at William Street as much as six times a day. Reckless and careless people would be found not only at the railway crossings, but in other parts of the city, where they might get into danger. The increase of vehicles, and especially bicycles, had made the traffic more dangerous at many of the street crossings in Perth. One serious accident to a bicycle rider, of which he had been a witness, at the corner of St. George's Terrace and William Street, was due to the action of the City Council in permitting hoardings to be erected 7ft. or 8ft. high, and extending out to the street. Hoardings for building operations should not be more than 3ft. high, and should not extend into the roadway, especially at a busy corner. The primary cause of that accident was the City Council, in not taking proper care to regulate the erection of hoardings. The eight lines of railway which crossed at William Street might be reduced to six, as he had suggested to the Engineer-in-Chief, without inconvenience to the railway traffic. He was prepared to admit that, as traffic increased, the inconvenience at the railway crossings would necessarily increase; and some steps should be taken for relieving that inconvenience and making the traffic safer. He was not prepared to express an opinion on the suggestion of an overhead railway, made by the hon. member for Wellington. Members would know that such railways were used in other places, especially in London,

but he hardly thought the time had arrived for constructing an overhead railway in Perth. Still, after considering all the facts, it might be found cheaper to construct such a railway than to build a number of bridges, although for many years to come there could be no necessity for greatly extending the number of bridges. One railway crossing in the city which was peculiarly dangerous, and he had already mentioned it to the Commissioner of Railways, was that at Brown Street, adjoining Lord Street; and it was made the more dangerous by the high buildings preventing people from seeing the approaching trains. That crossing was far more dangerous than the crossing in William Street. The Government were proceeding wisely in asking for the appointment of this committee, and he hoped their deliberations would result in such recommendations as would be in the best interests both of the railway service and the traffic of the city.

MR. GEORGE moved, as an amendment to the motion, that the words "and shall confer with the City Council" be added after the word "Parliament." [The PREMIER: Oh, oh!] He really did not know how it was, but he seemed to be able to put the House into a jocular mood immediately he rose. He seemed to have found his function, and would proceed to fulfil it. The reason why he proposed that the committee should confer with the City Council was that the project suggested in the motion would interfere materially with the property and convenience of Perth ratepayers. Surely, in a matter of this sort, the City Council had a right to have a voice in saying what should be done. This Assembly, in its wisdom, might perform a benevolent action in conferring with the City Council, for it was said that wisdom might be gathered even from a fool, and in conferring with the City Council the committee might be able to do some good, even in that direction. William Street crossing should be dealt with as quickly as possible, the condition of affairs there being urgent. To bridge it over would interfere seriously with existing interests. He certainly had been led to believe the Railway Department had been purchasing land belonging to Mr. Charles McNess; and he considered that, in matters of

that sort, the City Council had a right to be heard.

Amendment not seconded.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) explained that it would be in the power of the committee to summon any witnesses, and the committee might summon such members of the City Council as they thought might help in arriving at a decision. He had purposely refrained from making any comments on the different methods the Government intended to adopt in dealing with the matter. The subject had been before the Government for some time; models having been prepared and information obtained, and these would, at the proper time, be at the service of the committee. He was glad that so many members had spoken on the subject, which was one of very considerable importance; but there would be a further opportunity, when the committee's report was presented to the House, for full discussion on the different points raised. The object desired by the hon. member for the Murray could be attained by summoning witnesses; and, as it was a very important subject, he intended to ask the House to agree to an increase in the number of the select committee from five to seven.

MR. GEORGE said if his amendment was likely to embarrass the Government he would withdraw it.

Motion put and passed.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) moved that the select committee consist of seven members instead of five.

Put and passed.

A ballot resulted in the election, by this House, of Messrs. W. J. George, Illingworth, Lefroy, Randell, Venn, and Wood, with the Commissioner of Railways as mover, to be members of the joint select committee.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) moved that the committee have power to call for persons and papers, and to sit on those days when the House is adjourned.

Put and passed.

Ordered that the committee report on the next Tuesday fortnight, 1st September.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) moved that

the resolution be transmitted to the Legislative Council, and that they be requested to appoint a committee to confer with the committee appointed by the Legislative Assembly.

Put and passed.

MARRIED WOMEN'S PROPERTY ACT AMENDMENT BILL

Received from the Legislative Council, and read a first time.

TRANSFER OF LAND ACT AMEND- MENT BILL.

Received from the Legislative Council, and read a first time.

CONSTITUTION ACT AMENDMENT BILL.

On the motion of the PREMIER, the Bill was re-committed.

IN COMMITTEE.

Clause 4—Colony divided into 8 Electoral Provinces, each returning 3 members:

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved that the words "East Fremantle" be inserted after the word "Fremantle," in line 21.

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:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the heading of the clause be struck out, and the heading "Temporary Provisions relating to the electoral rolls" be inserted in lieu thereof.

Agreed to.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the Government proposed to make it the duty of the returning officers, immediately on the commencement of the Act, to cause an amendment of the rolls to be made. He moved, as a further amendment, that the words "electoral registrars within 60 days" be struck out of lines 1 and 2, and that the words "returning officers immediately" be inserted in lieu thereof.

MR. GEORGE asked if that amendment would render it immediately imperative for the returning officers to make out a new and pure roll throughout the whole electorate.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said if the hon. member took

the trouble to read the clause, his difficulty would be removed, for it distinctly said the registrar should amend the roll by removing from it the name of every elector whose qualification had been removed from one district to another.

MR. GEORGE said he had read the clause with all the brains that Providence had given him, but the words did not convey the meaning that it was the duty of the returning officers to put all the men on the roll who should be there. He desired to see on the roll the men who were entitled to vote; but now a man might have his name on the roll, while a hundred others who were similarly entitled might not have their names on the roll. He (Mr. George) wanted to know if the returning officers would be instructed to make up a new and pure roll.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said they proposed to deal only with a set of circumstances which arose owing to the creation of new provinces and new districts. In the new districts and provinces there would be no roll; as, until the Act was passed, no one could claim to be registered as a voter. To prevent disfranchising anyone, they proposed that in a district like East Perth the returning officer should remove from the East Perth roll all those electors whose qualifications arose in one of the new districts, and should put them on the new roll, to be called the Canning roll. That preserved the vote to the elector who now lived in the Canning district. The Government were not proposing, in this clause, to put anyone on the roll who was not now on the roll. [Mr. GEORGE: Why don't you?] We have other fish to fry.

MR. RANDELL asked what the returning officer would do with the roll he made up, after he had finished with it.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the returning officer should send on the roll to the returning officer of the new district as soon as possible, as the clause made it the roll for the new district.

MR. RANDELL said it was not well to leave anything to chance, and the returning officer should be compelled to send on the roll to the returning officer of the new district.

MR. GEORGE asked whether the Government wanted to have a roll of the

electors or not. If they wanted people who had a right to be on the roll to be on it, let them say so. It was stated the rolls must be made up immediately after the passing of the Bill; but, by doing that, they would prevent the returning officers from making proper rolls.

THE CHAIRMAN said that was clearly not the question before the committee.

MR. GEORGE asked if he would be in order in moving to insert the words "within 30 days" instead of the word "immediately."

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. member can move that amendment, if he thinks well; but he cannot discuss the matter now, because it is not before the committee.

MR. MOSS said it would be well to add some words to Clause 10, making it incumbent on returning officers of existing districts to send a list of the names of people struck off the existing rolls, and who would be comprised in the new district created under the provisions of the Bill.

Amendment put and passed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) further moved that the following be added as Sub-section 2 of Clause 10:—
"In the case of a province or district created by this Act for which there is no electoral roll in existence, the returning officer shall remove from the roll of the province or district of which the newly created province or district formed part, the name of every elector whose qualification by the operation of this Act is situate or arises in such newly formed province or district, and shall compile a roll for every such last-mentioned province or district of the names so removed in the form given in the forty-fourth section of 'The Electoral Act, 1895,' and such roll shall be forwarded by such returning officer to the returning officer of the newly formed province or district, and such shall be the electoral roll for every such newly formed province or district until a new roll is completed under the provisions of 'The Electoral Act, 1895.'" He said the object of this sub-section was to preserve to every man who was now on the rolls his vote, even though some districts were to be split up and the boundaries altered. The sub-section did not contemplate putting new names on the

roll. Those persons who wanted to vote must take care to register themselves. The Government did not claim to put names on the roll, as they might put wrong ones on, or they might leave out some names which ought to have gone on the roll. There would be quarterly revision courts for supervising the preparation of the rolls, and under the sub-section, if an election took place in any district before the court sat, those entitled to vote would be those electors whose names were taken by the returning officer from the existing rolls to form the roll of a newly created electoral province or district.

MR. RANDELL asked whether the rolls would be in the custody of the electoral registrar or returning officer.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said the returning officer would keep the rolls.

MR. R. F. SHOLL asked whether it would not be well to limit the time within which the rolls should be forwarded by the returning officer, as provided in the sub-section.

THE CHAIRMAN said the committee had, in Clause 10, passed the word "immediately" as the time within which the rolls should be forwarded.

Sub-section put and passed.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) further moved that the following be added as Sub-section 3 of Clause 10:—
"For the purpose of an answer to the fourth question, mentioned in Section 77 of 'The Electoral Act of 1895,' residence within the boundaries of an electoral district named in the Amendment Act, which, before the commencement of this Act, embraced the district on the roll of which the name of an elector had been inserted under the provisions of this section, shall be equivalent to residence in such last-mentioned district."

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

Clause 12:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the following heading to Clause 12 be inserted:—"Provisions relating to certain cases of vacancy of seats."

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

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) further moved that Clauses 11

and 12 be transposed, and be re-numbered accordingly.

Agreed to.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) further moved that the following heading to Clauses 12 (as re-numbered) and 13 be "Executive Offices and Civil List."

Agreed to.

New clause:

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) moved that the following new clause, to be numbered 14, be inserted:—
 "There shall be payable to Her Majesty in every year, out of the Consolidated Revenue Funds, sums not exceeding in the whole fifteen thousand four hundred pounds, for defraying the expenses of the services and purposes set forth in the fourth schedule to this Act, and the said several sums shall be issued by the Treasurer in discharge of such warrants as shall from time to time be directed to him under the hand of the Governor." He said the insertion of the clause was designed to repeal the corresponding section in the Constitution Act. Hon. members would notice that there were some increases in the schedule of salaries, which he would say more about when the schedule was to be dealt with.

MR. ILLINGWORTH asked whether it was competent for the committee to discuss the schedule at that stage.

THE CHAIRMAN said it was.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said the schedule proposed to increase the salaries of the three judges by £400 per annum each, and the Ministerial salaries by £200 per annum each. As far as the Ministers were concerned, he thought that the increases were necessary, but he would like to know how the Government had arrived at the conclusion that it was desirable to again increase the salaries of the judges, which had been increased last year. No doubt the Government could give good reasons for the action they were taking in this matter, but, at the same time, he would like to hear what those reasons were.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said that on several grounds the Government considered the salaries of the judges to be inadequate. This would be shown upon a comparison of the salaries paid to judges in this and other colonies. It had to be remem-

bered that usually, by the time a man became a judge, he was getting advanced in life, and should be placed in a position to live in reasonable comfort. There was also the consideration that public interest demanded that the bench should be occupied by capable men; and, when a judge accepted this appointment, his career was closed in some respects. For example, he could not go speculating on the stock exchange in companies whose affairs might come before his legal purview, and he was quite shut out from engaging in any business pursuit with the object of augmenting his salary. All the judge had to look to was his salary. A Supreme Court judge had to wear a long face and behave himself. A statement of the salaries paid to judges in other colonies, with the exception of Tasmania, would show that the salaries here bore no proportion to what the members of the judiciary received elsewhere. In New South Wales, the Chief Justice had a salary of £3,500 a year, the six puisne judges £2,600 each, and six district court judges £1,500 each. In Queensland, the Chief Justice received £3,500 per annum, four puisne judges received £2,000 each, and a district court judge £1,000. South Australia gave her Chief Justice £2,000 per year, two puisne judges £1,700 each, and a third £1,000. Victorian salaries were: Chief Justice, £3,500, and £3,000 for each of five puisne judges, while the judge of the insolvency court had £1,500 a year. In this colony, the Chief Justice's salary at present was £1,300, and that of the two puisne judges £1,000 each. Members would see in the "Year Book of Australia" the figures he had quoted. South Australia was more nearly on a par with Western Australia than the other colonies, but the business of the court here was growing rapidly. Lately the judges had had a good deal more to do through the extension of their jurisdiction to appeals from the gold-fields; and, of course, with the growing prosperity of the colony and the continued increase of population, extra work would be brought to the courts. The present was a right time to consider the question of the payment of judges, and the Government now proposed that the judges should receive very nearly what was received by judges in South Australia.

There the Chief Justice received £2,000, whereas the Government proposed to give the Chief Justice of this colony £1,700, while the puisne judges were to receive £1,400 each. It would therefore be seen that the salaries of judges in this colony would be still much below the salaries of judges in other colonies. He did not know whether the proposed increases would satisfy the judges here, nor did he expect hon. members to satisfy them. Only lately he had been reading remarks made by the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the subject of the payment of officers, especially where those officers were members of the professions. Speaking at Birmingham, Mr. Chamberlain warned his hearers, in very decided language, of the great evil and disadvantage of not paying well the men who did professional work, or who held positions of trust. These remarks would apply very well to the question before this House.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said that the judges ought to be well paid, but this subject of salaries could not be well considered apart from a Bill which was on the table of the House, in which it was proposed that a judge, after serving 15 years, should be entitled to retire on a pension of half his salary. In view of that measure, it was a matter that required great consideration as to whether the present was the time for increasing the salaries of judges, or whether it would be wise to pass the Bill then on the table. He was of opinion the judges should be paid reasonable salaries, for members of their own profession were earning incomes double what the judges received. The House could not avoid dealing with the schedule, because there was named in the clause the sum of £15,400, made up of items in the schedule. He did not see why the items "Private Secretary, £350," and "Clerk to the Executive Council, £350," should not be struck out of the schedule and placed on the Estimates annually, the same as the salaries of other civil servants. With regard to the Ministerial salaries, he did not think any one could object to the proposed increases. He might be out of order in dealing with those items, but he was bound to do so under this clause. The present Ministers gave up a great deal of time to their duties, and were fully entitled to the increase. He was quite sure the next

Ministry would not work as hard as the present one, and it would, perhaps, be as well if the Ministerial salaries were on the Estimates, so that they could be altered if necessary. As to the items "Private Secretary" and "Clerk of Executive Council," he could see no necessity at all for their being placed on the Civil List, and when they came to the schedule he would move to amend it by reducing the amount by £700, with a view to placing the two minor officers on the Estimates.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he was not aware of the procedure elsewhere, but there was no doubt this House had adopted the procedure shown in the schedule in the Constitution Act of 1889, and he expected they would find that it was the practice in other colonies. The salary of the private secretary might just as well be on the Civil List as that of the Governor, and he could see no reason why this should not be so. The clerk of the Executive Council was placed on the Civil List in 1889, and there was no reason why he should not remain there. The only reason that he (the Premier) could see was that, if these salaries were on the annual Estimates, members would have more opportunity for reducing salaries. It might be said the same rule applied to Ministers' salaries, and that they, too, might be left open for discussion every year. The object of putting the salaries of Ministers on the Civil List was that the House should not have the opportunity of attacking Ministers personally, on motions for reducing their salaries. That was, he thought, a very good reason for the salaries of Ministers being on the Civil List, and he supposed the same reason applied to the clerk of the Executive Council and to the private secretary of the Governor. There was no reason that he could see for departing from the rule that had been already made. Any departure from that rule should not be taken without a good reason for it, and it was just as reasonable to have the clerk of the Executive Council and the private secretary on the Civil List as to have the Ministers there.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: Why not have the heads of departments there?

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the heads of departments were not so closely allied with the Ministry as these officers of the Executive Council

were to the Governor. If the salary of the private secretary were on the Estimates, an opportunity might be taken to attack the Governor through his secretary. If the hon. member for the Gascoyne would show a good reason, he (the Premier) would be prepared to listen to it, and, perhaps, make the required alteration; but at present he thought the schedule had better be left as it was.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL (Hon. S. Burt) said that in the other colonies there was the same provision for the Civil List, and in the Constitution Act of Queensland the private secretary to the Governor was provided for; but he (the Attorney General) did not find the clerk of the Executive Council in the Act of that colony.

MR. JAMES said he could understand the justice of having the private secretary on the Civil List, as he was connected with the Governor; but he (Mr. James) certainly could not understand why the clerk of the Executive Council should be mentioned there, and he would be inclined to vote for the salary of that officer being placed on the Estimates instead. He could not see why the clerk to the Executive Council should be specially exempted from criticism when the annual Estimates were going through the House. It had not been shown that it was the practice elsewhere to place the clerk to the Executive Council on the Civil List.

THE PREMIER: You propose to take away from a man what he has got.

MR. JAMES said every Act deprived somebody of some right or privilege, and if members were to consider the interests of people in that way, their hands would be tied. He could not see that the clerk of the Executive Council had more right to be on the Civil List than the Speaker or the Clerk of the Assembly. He thought that good reason should be shown by the Government for these two items being on the schedule. The discussion had nothing whatever to do with the present occupant of the post of clerk to the Executive Council. It was a question of principle—whether they should keep the Civil List in this colony down to those officers who were on the Civil Lists elsewhere.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said he would like again to point out that

the amendment, if it were proposed and carried, would take away from an officer that to which he was entitled under the Constitution Act.

MR. JAMES said this was an increase of the salary.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it was clearly a matter for the House to say whether or not the salary should be increased, but it was hardly proper for the House to say that what was done in the Constitution Act of 1889 should be altered now, and that the officer concerned should be deprived of a privilege. He could see well enough that, if the House refused to increase the salary, that would be all right; but it would not be right to take from this officer the position he occupied under the Act of 1889. He (the Premier) hoped that argument would appeal to the member for East Perth.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said the clerk to the Executive Council was not entitled to his position for ever. He would go out with the Government. [THE PREMIER: No, no.] The clerk to the Executive Council would be bound to go out, and would be replaced by some one else if the Opposition took office.

THE PREMIER: But he holds the appointment.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said it would be absurd for any Ministry taking office to continue the present clerk in his post. It would be ridiculous for them to do such a thing. He had no feeling whatever in the matter, but he did think it absurd that the heads of departments were placed on the annual Estimates, and their salaries subjected to criticism, and that the private secretary to the Governor and the clerk to the Executive Council were exempt from that ordeal. Why should their actions not be challenged? The members of the House did not want to attack the individual, nor did they want to attack the Governor through his private secretary; or if they wanted to criticise the Governor's actions they could do it directly, or they could raise the question on the vote for expenditure on Government House. Members would not do this through the private secretary. Assuming that the House did not want to alter this schedule, any increases might fairly be put on the Estimates.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said one or two hon. members seemed to take exception to the fact that the clerk to the Executive Council was a close relation of his—in fact his brother-in-law; he thought the hon. member for the Gascoyne had also relations in the Public Service—officers with even closer relationship than that between the clerk to the Executive Council and himself. He (the Premier) even supposed there were other members of the House who had relatives in the public service. Still, the hon. member for the Gascoyne would not effect much by attacking him (the Premier) personally in this matter. It seemed that whenever an opportunity presented itself to be personal in his remarks, the hon. member always took that opportunity. He (the Premier) did not think it was a good thing for the hon. member to be so ready to act in that direction. The Government were trying to serve the country as well as they could. The member for the Gascoyne seemed to take it for granted that, when the clerk to the Executive Council came under another Government, he would have to resign.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he did not think the clerk would have to resign, but that he would get another appointment.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) asked why, in the event of a change of Government, the clerk to the Executive Council should resign.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he had not the slightest wish to insinuate anything, but, fortunately or unfortunately, the clerk to the Executive Council did happen to be a relation of the Premier.

MR. VENN said if the hon. member who had just sat down had reflected a little, he would not have said that, as a matter of course, the clerk to the Executive Council would have to resign with a change of Government. It was most useful and most necessary that the clerk to the Executive Council should be a permanent officer, and for that officer to be changed with every Ministry would be out of the question.

MR. SIMPSON said if they allowed the total to go into the clause as £15,400, they could not go back upon it afterwards, and he wished to deal with the salaries of the judges.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL said the Bill could be re-committed.

MR. SIMPSON said that, personally, he thought it was proposed to unduly increase the salaries of the judges, and he would propose an amendment reducing the amount of the increases to the extent of £600. That reduction would give the Chief Justice £1,500 a year, and each of the puisne judges £1,200. When dealing with matters of that kind they had, of course, the right to pay grave respect to the opinions of members of the profession; but, at the same time, they must remember there was no profession so profoundly protected as that of the law. They must remember that the £1,500 would always have to be paid, in good years and in bad years. A professional man not on the bench would get £1,500 a year only if he made it, and would get only what he made in good times and in bad times; for a professional man was to some extent dependent for his income upon the condition of the country. In addition to that, he (Mr. Simpson) did not think the judges were worked to death; he did not think any of them exhibited the marks of early decay from extreme work put through in the last few years. The Ministry were harder worked than the judges, and he quite agreed with the remarks of the Attorney General that they were fixing the salary according to the position. He thought that, in fixing the salaries as proposed in the schedule, they were legislating for the future rather than the present. He would move a motion for the striking out of the words "Fifteen thousand four hundred," and the insertion of the words "Fourteen thousand eight hundred."

At 6:30 p.m., the CHAIRMAN left the chair.

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

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said that in order that members might have an opportunity of dealing separately with the items in the fourth schedule, he proposed that the further discussion of the proposed new clause, No. 14, be postponed until after the consideration of the schedule relating to it.

THE CHAIRMAN explained that he had allowed the discussion of the new clause to go on, upon the principle which obtained in the Standing Orders, that when it had once been decided a certain word should stand, it could not afterwards be struck out. No such difficulty might arise in this case, but there was a possibility. On that understanding he would put the motion which had been moved by the Premier.

Motion put and passed, and the new clause postponed accordingly.

Amendments Nos. 9 and 10:

On the motion of the Premier, the words "Suspension of Act" were inserted as a heading to the last clause of the Bill. The words "Schedule A" in the first line of the third column of the first schedule were struck out, and the words "Schedule A and B and section 69" were inserted in lieu thereof. Also the following title was added to the second column of the first schedule, namely, "An Act to apply out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund the annual sum of £1,000 in augmentation of Ministerial salaries (55 Vic., No. 23)," and the words "The whole" were inserted in the third column.

New schedule:

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) moved, That the following new schedule be added to the Bill:—

"FOURTH SCHEDULE (Section 14).

"Governor	£4,000
"Private Secretary	350
"Clerk of the Executive Council	350
"Chief Justice	1,700
"First Puisne Judge	1,400
"Second Puisne Judge	1,400
"Six Ministerial Salaries	6,200
	£15,400 "

[Agreed that discussion be taken on the items separately, prior to the schedule being put.]

First Item, *Governor*, £4,000:

MR. GEORGE asked whether the only increases in the schedule were in the salaries of Ministers and Judges.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said the Governor's salary remained the same as before. There were other increases.

MR. GEORGE said that salary ought to be increased.

Item agreed to.

Second Item, *Private Secretary*, £350:

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said £300 was provided for this salary in in the Civil List by the Constitution Act of 1889, and it was now proposed to increase the amount by £50 a year. The salary of the clerk of the Executive Council had been £250 a year, and it was now proposed to increase the amount to £350. The Chief Justice, by the Constitution Act of 1889, and by the Estimates of last year, was receiving at the rate of £1,300, and the two puisne judges were each receiving £1,000 a year. It was now proposed to increase the salaries of the judges by £400 each, making the Chief Justice's salary £1,700, and that of each of the other judges £1,400. The last item in the schedule provided £6,200 for Ministerial salaries, there being also an increase of one Minister. It was now proposed to give the Ministers £1,000 a year each, and the Premier £1,200, the increase being at the rate of £200 a year upon the amount of each salary as previously fixed.

MR. R. F. SHOLL, referring to the second item, "Private Secretary, £350," proposed, as an amendment, to strike it out, for the reason that, while not wishing to cut down salaries in the least, this item should be removed from the Civil List with the view of placing it in the annual Estimates, so that it might become subject to annual review, and to reduction if necessary.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said there was no necessity for this amendment, and he hoped the hon. member would not press it. The salary was provided for in "The Constitution Act of 1889," and to that extent the present holder was protected. This House could discuss the merits or demerits of any officer, even if his salary was not on the annual Estimates.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said if this item was once placed on the Civil List, though members might discuss it, or discuss any salary, they would not have power to reduce a salary on the Civil List. The House should have power, if necessary, to reduce any salary, and he did not see the object of placing this particular item on the Civil List. They might as well put the salary of the Engineer-in-Chief, or any other civil servant, on the Civil List, and then the Government need not

bring down Estimates at all. He would not press his amendment unless there was some support, but he was contending for a principle.

MR. GEORGE asked whether this officer was private secretary to the Governor, because, if so, what had this House to do with him or his salary? If they indulged in the luxury of a Governor, they need not object to pay for his having a private secretary.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said his objection was to putting this officer on the Civil List.

MR. GEORGE said he did not know whether this officer was civil or not.

Amendment put and negatived, and the item passed.

Third Item, *Clerk to the Executive Council, £350*:

MR. R. F. SHOLL moved that this item be struck out of the schedule, in order that the salary might be removed from the Civil List, with a view of placing it on the annual Estimates. If this salary were once placed on the Civil List, the House would not be able to remove the officer, although Parliament had power, by a certain procedure, to remove a judge; or, by another procedure, to remove a Minister.

MR. A. FORREST said this officer held the position during good behaviour.

MR. R. F. SHOLL said he did not mean anything personal as regards any officer, in the remarks he had made.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said the hon. member for the Gascoyne was under some misapprehension as to the position which the clerk of the Executive Council held. This officer was secretary of the Executive Council, presided over by the Governor, and was not in the position of secretary to the Ministry, or secretary to the Premier. In other colonies it had been found desirable that the Governor and the officers of his establishment should be placed on the Civil List, in order that they might be removed as far as possible from Parliamentary criticism, which might be indulged in if these salaries were placed on the annual Estimates; and this being the custom adopted in all British communities, he thought it well to follow the practice here. He hoped the hon. member would not press the amendment.

MR. GEORGE said he wanted a little information, as usual.

MR. ILLINGWORTH: Buy "Chambers' Information for the People."

MR. GEORGE: No. Firstly, because he had got no money; and, secondly, because it would not give the information he wanted. Last year he had considered it his duty to make various inquiries with regard to the Estimates, because he found that certain officers held more than one position—some of them several positions—for which they received separate salaries, making up a pretty fair total; therefore he wished to know if the holder of this office was receiving a salary or allowance for any other position he held.

THE CHAIRMAN said the question before the House was whether this item was to be removed from the Civil List.

MR. GEORGE said his reason in asking for the information was to avoid debate. If he could not get the information, he would have to take another course.

Amendment put and negatived, and the item passed.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest), in explanation, informed the hon. member, in reference to the item just passed, that the officer also received £50 a year as private secretary to him (the Premier). That was all the emolument the private secretary received, in addition to the salary on the Civil List.

MR. GEORGE said that was all right, and the officer was paid very well.

Fourth item, *Chief Justice, £1,700*:

MR. SIMPSON said he had an amendment to move. He agreed with a remark made by the Attorney General, that the House should fix the remuneration of an office without regard to the person holding it at any particular time. If they fixed the salary of the Chief Justice at £1,500 a year, it would be an assured income placed on the Civil List, and therefore a certainty, with a pension accruing. The professional income made by a practitioner outside was largely dependent on the position of affairs; but in this case there was an absolutely sure salary of £1,500 per annum, with a pension. He did not believe in obtaining first-class services for second-class pay, but believed in paying accomplished professional gentlemen in such a way that they would be placed in an independent position. With £1,500 for the Chief Justice, and

£1,200 for each of the puisne judges, the salaries would be very fair, while it had to be considered that the Chief Justice had received additional income, occasionally, from his position as deputy Governor. He moved that the item "Chief Justice, £1,700," be reduced by £200.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) explained the reasons for the Government having acted as they had done in the matter. There was no doubt that the judges of the Supreme Court had, for some time, not been satisfied with the salaries they received. Some time ago, the Government placed on the Estimates £100 additional for each of the judges, which brought up the salary of the Chief Justice to £1,300, and the salaries of the puisne judges to £1,000 each. There was thus a difference of £300 between the salary of the Chief Justice and that of the other judges, and the Government had adhered to that all along. Some members of this House had complained that the judges' salaries were placed on the Estimates and not provided for by Act; but there was not much in that argument, as, under the Constitution Act, money voted on the Estimates for a judge could not be withdrawn from him in the next year, and therefore the judges were perfectly secure in the amount voted to them. The colony was increasing in importance, and during the last two years the work of the judges, he believed, had been greater than it used to be. Apart from that, hon. members could not wonder at the judges not being satisfied, when they compared their salaries with the salaries paid even to district court judges in other colonies of Australia. Another reason influencing the Government was that, should a vacancy occur, or another judgeship become necessary, with the present salaries it would be impossible to get any person of standing in the profession to take the position. He did not think many juniors at the bar would change their financial position for the salary paid to the judges; and that being the case, it was time the Government considered whether the salaries were sufficient or not. The emoluments received by the leaders of the profession were far greater than the salaries received by the judges, and though there was no doubt the income of a practising barrister was not so certain, still the Government

had the fact before them that, if they had a judgeship to bestow to-morrow, they would have great difficulty in filling it. They should make the position of judge in the colony one that lawyers could look forward to when they got a little grey-headed. He would be sorry if they had to import judges, as the time had gone by when they should send to England for their judges. He would rather see the judgeship a prize for the legal profession in the colony. If judges were promoted from the bar here, as a rule they would be in sympathy with the people and their aspirations in the colony, and would understand the position of affairs. He knew there was a difficulty in obtaining the services of competent gentlemen to fill the position; but if they made the salaries more consistent with the position and dignity of the office, he hoped that when any vacancy occurred, some leader of the bar in the colony would be willing to accept the position. He hoped these arguments would commend themselves to the committee.

MR. JAMES regretted the arguments of the Premier did not commend themselves to every member of the House. He wished it were true that the junior members of the bar obtained incomes equal to £1,500 a year, with the prospect of a pension of £800. If one got an honourable position with £1,500 a year and comparatively light duties, it should be enough. The judges complained about hard work, but those who had to work from nine to five laughed at that; and £1,500 a year, under circumstances like that, would commend itself more strongly to every person than £3,000 that had to be earned, and at the same time earned with the risk of breaking down and losing a practice. The time had not arrived when members of the bar in the colony could make the money they were supposed to be making. A very honourable position, the certainty of a pension, and light duties, were arguments that commended themselves to anyone seeking the position. Every judge ought to get the same salary—£1,500 a year—except that a nominal increase to the Chief Justice, of £100, might suffice to indicate in a practical manner that he was Chief Justice. It was the survival of an unreasonable custom that the Chief Justice should get

so much more than the other judges, for the puisne judges had to be as good men as he who filled the position of Chief Justice, because as judges they had the same responsibilities. In England the Chief Justice had important duties in organising the work of judges in connection with the circuits; but in the colonies the Chief Justice had no more duties to perform than the other judges, and it was hardly fair that the puisne judges should have lesser salaries than that received by the Chief Justice.

MR. MOSS said he would vote for the schedule as printed. The salaries set down for the judges were in fair comparison with that of the Chief Justice, but the amounts on the schedule were less than those paid in many other parts of Australia. In New Zealand the Chief Justice received £1,700 and the puisne judges £1,500; and seeing the increased duties the judges performed here, the amount of increase was not out of proportion with the amount of increase which members of the bar were making. When a second puisne judge was appointed, he believed a promise was made in the House that the judges should go to the large centres of population on circuit; therefore he hoped the Government would make provision so that circuit courts could be held at those centres, as this course would mean a great saving to the country. He understood £750 was paid for witnesses in two murder cases tried in Perth and Coolgardie; whereas, if the judges were compelled to hold circuit courts, there would be a large saving to the colony in expenses now incurred.

MR. ILLINGWORTH said he had no objection to the increase in the salaries of judges; but increase ought to bear some relation to the circumstances. It would be remembered there was an increase last year in the salaries of the judges; and even if the motion of the hon. member for Geraldton were now accepted, it would mean an increase of £300 during the last two years. They ought to be in a position to meet further increases which would be required in connection with the judges, owing to the changing circumstances of the colony. In a community of 125,000, the position of a judge or barrister was nothing like the position of a judge or barrister in a colony with a population of a million.

They hoped and expected the colony would increase in population; though he did not think the prophecy would be fulfilled, that within two years the population would number half-a-million, still the larger population would force them to increase the judges' salaries, or at least increase the number of the judges. So large an advance, following on the advance of £100, was not in accordance with the progress the country was making. They were going in the right direction, but on the present occasion, if they gave an advance of £200, that was as much as the judges could reasonably expect or reasonably ask members to grant. It would be difficult to decrease those salaries; for in other colonies, when reductions in the public service had become imperative, it was found impossible to touch the salaries of judges. The proposal of the Government was going a little too fast and a little too far. He thought the judges would be satisfied with the advance provided in the amendment of the hon. member for Geraldton, and he felt it his duty to support that amendment.

Question—That the item be so reduced—put and negatived on the voices.

A division being called for, the result was as follows:—

Ayes	4
Noes	16
<hr/>			
Majority against			12

AYES.
Mr. Illingworth
Mr. Simpson
Mr. Solomon
Mr. George (Teller).

NOES.
Mr. Burt
Mr. Clarkson
Sir John Forrest
Mr. A. Forrest
Mr. Higham
Mr. James
Mr. Lefroy
Mr. Loton
Mr. Moss
Mr. Phillips
Mr. Piesse
Mr. Randell
Mr. Richardson
Mr. Venn
Mr. Wood
Mr. Moran (Teller).

Amendment negatived.

MR. GEORGE, in further moving for a reduction, said he was quite certain a number of members on the other side, who had voted against the amendment, had allowed considerations which they should not have allowed to influence them. He moved that the salaries of judges be reduced by £100 each. He would take the items one by one.

Question—That the item “Chief Justice, £1,700,” be so reduced—put and negatived.

MR. GEORGE: Divide.

THE CHAIRMAN: There is only one voice.

Item passed.

Fifth Item, *First Puisne Judge*, £1,400:

MR. GEORGE moved that the item “First Puisne Judge, £1,400,” be reduced by £100.

Amendment negatived; item passed.

MR. GEORGE moved that the salary of the Chief Justice be reduced by £50.

THE CHAIRMAN ruled that this could not be done, as the item had been passed.

MR. GEORGE asked if he could not move that the item, “First Puisne Judge, £1,400,” be reduced by £50.

THE CHAIRMAN ruled against the hon. member as to this item, and said the question was one of a reasonable amount. The committee had decided so strongly against a decrease of £100, that he did not think the hon. member could now move as indicated.

MR. GEORGE said he did not think the ruling was constitutional, but he supposed he must bow to it. He further moved that the item, “Second Puisne Judge, £1,400,” be reduced by £100.

Amendment put and negatived.

Remaining items put and passed.

Schedule put:

MR. GEORGE again moved that the salary of the Chief Justice be reduced by £50.

THE CHAIRMAN ruled the amendment was inadmissible, as not being a reasonable one, after the decisions of the Committee.

MR. GEORGE said that the ruling of the Chair was very unconstitutional.

Schedule passed.

New clause (postponed) put and passed.

Preamble and title—agreed to.

Bill reported, with the further amendments.

STREETS AND ROADS CLOSURE (GREENMOUNT AND MARBLE BAR) BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL, (Hon. S. Burt), in moving the second reading, said: This Bill has for its purpose the

closing of certain streets and roads in the Greenmount and Marble Bar districts, which are not now required. With regard to Greenmount, I think the closure is necessitated by the railway deviations. It is a good practice that, before roads are closed, Parliamentary sanction should be given to the procedure, so that hon. members may be able to express their opinion as to whether that course should be taken. I remember that great discussion took place two years ago upon certain roads which the Government proposed to close, but they did not get permission to do so, and some of those roads are now open. I beg to move the second reading of this Bill.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piessé): It is perhaps unnecessary for me to add anything to what the Attorney General has said in regard to this Bill. The closing of the roads named in the Bill is only a formal matter. One of the roads is wanted for railway purposes, and has already been closed. I have laid plans on the table showing the position of the roads referred to, so that hon. members may look into the matter for themselves before the Bill goes into committee. No inconvenience will be occasioned to the public owing to these roads being closed, as proper arrangements have been made for the deviation of the thoroughfares, and also to preserve the rights of those persons who might be in any way affected by the operation of this Bill.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: The Government are adopting a system which is very pernicious and dangerous with reference to the closing of roads. When the Government proposes to close roads, I think due notice should be given to the public in a local paper, as well as in the *Government Gazette*, which is very little read, and that notice of what it is intended to do should be served upon neighbouring landholders. I do not think the Government should close roads without giving the landowners any notice whatever. The passing of this Bill will place a very great power in the hands of the Government. I hope we shall, by resolution, if we cannot do so by Bill, call upon the Government to give notice in the way I have described, whenever they mean to close a public road. There is another thing that might be made more clear, and that is in regard

to the boundaries. I think it would be better, in defining distances, to put the measurements in chains instead of using the words "degrees" and "minutes." [THE PREMIER: Those are the bearings.] Well, this may be very clear to a surveyor, but everyone does not understand it. I think that, as guardians of the public interests, hon. members should look closely into the matter of closing of roads, and I am afraid we do not look as closely as we ought to do. We should take care that there should be no injury to private interests. The notices and the plans should be published, and information given to those who may be using the portions of the streets or roads which it is proposed to close.

THE ATTORNEY GENERAL: The plans are on the table.

MR. R. F. SHOLL: The plans have only just been laid upon the table.

MR. GEORGE: I quite agree with the hon. member for the Gascoyne, that this is a matter which the House should very seriously consider. I do not think we ought to give any powers to the Government which we would not give to the owners of private railways. Everyone who has any interest at all should be given a full opportunity to see whether his interest is likely to be seriously affected. In Perth the Government have taken possession of land and property, and the tenants have been peremptorily told to pay rent only to the Government, so that the owners of the property who have been depending upon the rents cannot get them.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: That is not true.

MR. GEORGE: It is perfectly true, and I will take no denial about it. In the case of the roads named in the Bill, there should have been full notice given in the public press as well as in the *Government Gazette*, and also notice to owners of property in the localities of those roads.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS: There is no one living there.

MR. GEORGE: I say it is most unjust to close these roads without notice, whether there is anyone living there or not. I am against giving any power in this Bill which would not be given in a private Bill.

MR. CLARKSON: I agree with the hon. members for the Gascoyne and the Murray that, when roads are closed, notice of the intention to do so should be fully given; but I believe the hon. members are under a misapprehension in this particular case, because I understand that one of the roads referred to in the Bill has already been closed for the Eastern Railway, and the other one has not been used.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): I beg to say that, while quite agreeing with the principle enunciated by the hon. members for the Gascoyne and the Murray about notice being given when roads are to be closed, we do not do things in a moment in this House. This Bill cannot go through the House and be passed into law without there being time for attention to be called to it; but, as a matter of fact, these roads have already been stopped up—the one at Marble Bar by some buildings being erected upon it, and the one at Greenmount, as we all know, has been taken up by a deviation of the Eastern Railway. I think, therefore, that the House may let the Bill pass. I may say, however, that I think it is quite right that owners of land, where roads are to be stopped, should have notice, and no doubt my friend the Commissioner of Railways will take a note of the matter.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

FEDERAL COUNCIL REFERENCE BILL.

SECOND READING.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest): This little Bill has had some little experience. It is one of those Bills which were laid aside last session by the Legislative Council. The Government, in their innocence, gave this Bill to a gentleman representing the Government in the Upper House as a privilege Bill. They knew it was a very innocent Bill, and that it was likely to be acceptable; but the Legislative Council refused to have anything to do with it, for some reason or other, and it was laid aside. So the Government, being represented on the Federal Council, and wishing to conform to what has been done by other colonies represented at the Federal Council, submit the Bill again this session to this

House, in the hope that, if it be passed by this House, then when it gets to another place those members will take a more reasonable view of the matter. Under the Federal Council Act, this colony has to refer any questions that it is desired the Federal Council shall deal with, by passing a Bill for that purpose. If the House does not do that, of course it runs the risk of not having the matter considered by the Federal Council, because two colonies at least must enter a subject together before it can be considered by that Council. Of these matters that it is proposed to deal with at the Federal Council, there is the very important one of the establishment of an effectual system of federal quarantine; there is the question of the status of joint stock companies and other corporations in the colonies, also the question of the uniformity of banking laws throughout Australasia, and there is the legislation for the colonies on the lines of the Imperial Act, entitled the Infectious Diseases Act, providing precautions against and remedial measures for tuberculosis. All these matters are very important, and are subjects upon which we very much want federal action; so that I am sorry for the way in which this matter was treated by the Upper House in the last session. I suppose those members did not look upon the importance of the measure, but merely had some little grievances to deal with. It seems to me that, if we could get any joint federal action in regard to these matters, it would be a good thing indeed. I may say there is a better chance of getting good legislation in the Federal Council now than there used to be, when the number of the members of the Council was small. Under existing circumstances, there are 20 members in the Federal Council—that is to say, four colonies are represented, each having five members—so that there will probably be some very able men amongst those 20, who would be able to bring a great deal of important experience to bear upon these subjects, and some good might result. Of course hon. members know that the Federal Council has not been very much to the front. As an institution it has not had much life. It has suffered from a want of vitality from the beginning, owing, as the principal reason, to one of the colonies,

New South Wales, not being represented. Then we had South Australia not applying to be represented last year, the proposal that she should join the Federal Council being lost by one vote. Thus it comes to pass that only four of the Australian colonies are represented in the Federal Council; but I think that perhaps South Australia will join, and we may hope New South Wales will do so. I think that if this federation movement does go forward, we may hope that the other colonies will join the Federal Council. I know that is the view expressed by Mr. Reid, Premier of New South Wales; and there is no doubt that if all the colonies of Australasia were represented in the Federal Council, it would be a very important body, and be able to pass federal laws that would be of the greatest good to the community. That being so, I am sure hon. members will assent to this Bill, which will have the effect of placing the matters named in it before the Federal Council. At any rate, it will show we are anxious that some federal legislation should take place. It is necessary, in order to keep the Federal Council alive, that there should be a meeting once every two years. Of course, as hon. members are aware, it is absolutely necessary, if the Federal Council is to continue its existence, that there should be a meeting next January; and, if this Bill is passed, we shall then have an opportunity of dealing with these very pressing matters. At any rate, we shall be prepared, and we shall have the mandate from the Parliament of this country to lay these questions before the Federal Council. I have much pleasure in moving the second reading of this Bill.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

IN COMMITTEE:

The House having gone into committee on the Bill:

MR. GEORGE said he would like to get an expression of opinion from the Federal Council on the Asiatic question, as to the adoption of a federal law relating to Chinese.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Sir J. Forrest) said it would only be possible to get a uniform bill relating to Chinese through the legislature of each of the colonies.

That was too disputative a question for the Federal Council to deal with.

MR. GEORGE said he did not want to throw any difficulties in the way of the Federal Bill, and he would withdraw his suggestion.

Bill passed through committee without amendment, and reported to the House.

ADJOURNMENT.

The House adjourned at 9 o'clock, p.m., until the next Tuesday.

Legislative Assembly,

Tuesday, 18th August, 1896.

Motions: Leave of absence—Post Office Savings Bank Bill: first reading—Criminal Evidence Bill: first reading—Motion: Inquiries into railway collisions—Federal Council Reference Bill: third reading—Constitution Act Amendment Bill: re-committed—Married Women's Property Act Amendment Bill: second reading: in committee—Bankruptcy Act Amendment Bill: second reading: in committee—Statutory Declaration Bill: second reading—Adjournment.

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

PRAYERS.

MOTIONS—LEAVE OF ABSENCE.

On the motion of the PREMIER, leave of absence for one fortnight was granted to the member for East Kimberley (Mr. Connor).

On the motion of MR. ILLINGWORTH, leave of absence for one fortnight was granted to the members for Albany (Mr. Leake), and Pilbarra (Mr. Keep).

POST OFFICE SAVINGS BANK BILL.

Introduced by the PREMIER, and read a first time.

CRIMINAL EVIDENCE BILL.

Introduced by MR. JAMES, and read a first time.

MOTION—INQUIRIES INTO RAILWAY COLLISIONS.

MR. RANDELL, in accordance with notice, moved "That this House is of opinion that the minutes and evidence, or, at least, the results of the departmental inquiries into the recent collisions on the railways, should be laid on the table of the House." He said his desire in submitting this motion was to afford the Commissioner of Railways an opportunity of removing the alarm from the public mind which had been caused by recent accidents or collisions on the railway, and to enable the Commissioner to state what action the Government were taking for inquiring thoroughly into the causes of recent railway accidents, and for preventing their recurrence. A public opportunity, such as that afforded by this motion, would enable the Commissioner, if he so desired, to make an authoritative statement on the subject which might have a distinctly reassuring effect.

THE COMMISSIONER OF RAILWAYS (Hon. F. H. Piesse) said no doubt the hon. member for Perth was prompted by a desire to obtain all particulars as to the reasons or causes of certain accidents which had taken place recently on the railway. It was pretty well known there had been one or two accidents lately which certainly had alarmed the public mind; but, with the exception of the unfortunate accident at Lion Mill, on the Eastern line, there had been no loss of life. The recent accident at the Midland Junction was one which he was about to inquire into, commencing on the next day. With reference to the accident at the Lion Mill, as he had pointed out before, a conference of officers of the department had been dealing with that matter, and an inquiry had also been made into the circumstances, with the result that certain resolutions were arrived at in that conference, and effect had been since given to them. He would read, for the information of the House, the resolutions agreed to at that conference. The conference was held on Wednesday, 15th July, 1896, and there were present