Legislative Council,

Thursday, 20th October, 1910.

The PRESIDENT took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION — PUBLIC SERVANTS AND DEFENCE FORCES.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I desire to ask the leader of the House some questions in connection with a reply he made yesterday to a question I asked regarding Warder Wise. I regret there has been no opportunity to give notice of this new question, but I take it the Colonial Secretary will be glad of the opportunity of replying to statements made in the Federal Parliament yesterday which are reported in to-day's *West Australian*. The question I asked the Colonial Secretary yesterday was in connection with a warder named Wise, in the Fremantle gaol, who, with another warder, was asked to resign either from his position in the prison or from his position in the defence force. One of the warders refused to resign, and the Colonial Secretary, in reply to my question yesterday, said his services were dispensed with because it interfered with his duties as a warder. I presume the Colonial Secretary has read the report that appears in to-day's *West Australian*. In dealing with this matter there are certain statements regarding the correctness of which I would like to ask the Colonial Secretary. The statements in question are—

The PRESIDENT: You are asking a question without notice, I suppose?

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Yes.

The PRESIDENT: It would be as well to be as brief as possible in the matter.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: I am endeavouring to do that. I am not using any more words than are necessary to explain the question. The particular statements regarding the correctness of which I wish to ask the Colonial Secretary are as follows:—A statement was made by Senator Needham, who, referring to Warder Wise, is reported to have said—

> The man in question had been employed as a warder in the Fremantle prison for three years and a half, and two years ago he joined the Australian Garrison Artillery. Sometimes he was on night duty and sometimes on day duty. When on the former he attended parades on Saturday afternoon, and when on the latter he attended parades one night in the week.

That is the point I particularly wish to draw attention to.

> During his period of service as a soldier he had not asked for one minute's leave to attend to his duties as a member of his corps.

Furthermore it is stated that he had discharged his duties as a member of the Garrison Artillery during his leisure hours. I would like the Colonial Secretary to tell us whether that was correct or not. Furthermore I would call the Colonial Secretary's attention to the fact that it is all in conflict with the statement he made yesterday when he said, in reply to my question, that the amending Defence Bill provides, *inter alia*, for the exemption from service of persons employed in the police or prison service, etcetera. The Minister for Defence stated that warders are not exempt from training under the Defence Act, and that if Warder Wise is under 26 years of age he is liable to be trained under the Commonwealth law. I would like the Colonial Secretary to explain which of the two statements is correct, that of the Minister for Defence, or that of the Colonial Secretary. And if the Colonial Secretary's statement is incorrect I would like him to explain how he got his information, and why he did not make the necessary inquiries before supplying the House with incorrect information. Another statement which the Colonial Secretary, I am sure, will be glad of an opportunity of explain-

ing is made by the Minister for Defence, who said—

> On the 13th inst. he had telegraphed to the West Australian Government respectfully urging reconsideration of the case in the interests of the defence of the Commonwealth. He had not yet received any reply.

That debate took place yesterday, October 19th. The telegram was sent on the 13th instant. I would like the Colonial Secretary to explain why that delay took place, and also whether he considers it in the interests of that good feeling we all wish to see established between the Commonwealth and State authorities that such a lengthy period should elapse before any acknowledgment is made of a telegram from the Minster for Defence.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The hon. member has made a very long statement which he classes as a question without notice. I will not attempt to give an official reply to a long statement of that kind without notice. I will ask the hon. member to give notice of the question.

QUESTION—PROPERTIES TRANSFERRED TO THE COMMONWEALTH.

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD asked the Colonial Secretary: 1, What is the capital value of the land and buildings in this State taken over by the Commonwealth in connection with the transferred departments? 2, Has any amount been paid on account of such premises; if so, how much—(a) capital expenditure, (b) annual rental? 3, Does the State continue to pay interest and sinking fund contribution, on amounts spent out of loan funds on premises now occupied by Commonwealth departments? 4, How long will this continue? 5, Is an account kept by the Government of the amounts owing, and what is the total as at 30th June, 1910?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY replied: 1, £704,286—including technical stores and furniture. 2, No. 3, Yes. 4, Until redemption of the loans concerned the Federal Government is bound under Section 85 of the Commonwealth Constitution Act to compensate the States for these transferred properties. Under the terms of the Financial Agreement this question was to have been investigated by the Commonwealth and States in conference. 5, Account is kept of the principal sum. Payment of interest and sinking fund thereon will be a matter of arrangement with the Federal Government.

BILL—ABORIGINES ACT AMENDMENT.

Introduced by the Colonial Secretary and read a first time.

BILL—SUPPLY (£719,410).

Read a third time and *passed*.

BILL—PARKS AND RESERVES ACT AMENDMENT.

Report stage, etcetera.

Report of Committee adopted.

Bill read a third time and transmitted to the Legislative Assembly.

BILL—LEEDERVILLE AND COTTESLOE MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES ALTERATION.

Second Reading.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (Hon. J. D. Connolly) in moving the second reading said: This is a small measure to amend the boundaries of the municipalities of Leederville and Cottesloe. I may preface my remarks by saying that all municipalities embrace any railway line which passes through their boundary; that is to say, if a municipality were on the North side of a railway line its boundaries would come to the Southern boundary of the railway so that the ground of the railway would be embraced in either one or the other municipality. That is the case in the City, but in the case of the Leederville municipality by an inadvertence when the boundaries were fixed, they ended on the northern side of the Perth-Fremantle railway while the boundary of Subiaco—the adjoining municipality—came up to the Southern boundary; therefore it left that por-

tion of the Perth-Fremantle railway which passes through Leederville in no municipality. Boundaries of Perth and Leederville join at the Thomas-street bridge, but while the Eastern half of the Thomas-street bridge is in the Perth municipality, the Western half is in no municipality, consequently there is no local authority in control over it and no power to spend money.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: And no rates.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: And no rates. This Bill will fill the purpose of covering that overhead bridge and I think there is another bridge which the amendment, so far as Leederville is concerned, will deal with. There was no other way to have the boundaries amended than by Act of Parliament. The Leederville Council have no particular desire for the boundaries to be altered but they raise no objection to the Bill. The same thing applies to the boundaries of Cottesloe. At the time Cottesloe was formed a municipality their boundary ended on the Southern side of the railway while the adjoining roads board, Peppermint Grove, ended on the Northern side, so that one-half of the railway line was left between the two municipalities. There is an overhead bridge there also and in order to bring it within the municipality it is proposed to alter the boundaries accordingly. The Bill does not make municipalities in any way responsible for the railway line, for that is covered by the Railways Act, but it simply brings the two municipalities into line with all others in the State through which a railway line passes. I have a litho. of the line which members can see. I beg to move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

On motion by Hon. J. W. Langsford, debate adjourned.

BILL—GERALDTON MUNICIPAL GAS SUPPLY.

Second Reading.

Hon. W. PATRICK (Central) in moving the second reading said: This is a small measure to enable the municipality of Geraldton to acquire certain gas works and plant in the town of Geraldton, and to borrow money for the purpose of paying for them. I dare say most members will agree that an important town such as Geraldton, with its possibilities of becoming a city in a very few years, should have a lighting plant of its own; this measure will enable that result to be brought about. In 1896 the municipality entered into an agreement for 21 years with a company in Melbourne called the Colonial Gas Association, empowering that company to light the town of Geraldton. In that agreement there was a clause which enabled the municipality to give notice, after ten years, to resume the works and pay for them under certain conditions. In the Schedule of this Bill there is an agreement which the municipality have entered into with the company in Melbourne, for the purchase of the works and plant. Clause 1 of the Bill gives the municipality power to acquire by purchase the works of the Colonial Gas Association, Limited, while Clause 3 enables them to light the town with gas. Under the Municipal Act the powers are not so full as they should be to enable a municipality to light a town, and under Clause 3 the same powers are provided as are contained in the Electric Lighting Act, 1892, which empowers a municipality to enter into gas lighting as well as lighting by electricity. Clause 4 gives power to borrow money for the purchase of the works. This will be an excellent bargain for the town of Geraldton. The amount agreed on for the purchase is £12,000. During the three years ended 31st December last the company made a profit of £1,190 per annum. At present the town is not half lighted, but there is no doubt that under municipal management the lighting of the town will be of a very superior character and probably, instead of making £1,190 a year, the municipality will soon be making two or three times that amount, or, what will come to the same thing, they will be able to supply light at a much lower figure. It is unnecessary to say anything more at this stage. The Bill is in the interests of the town of Geraldton, the people want the measure to be passed, and they have no diffi-

culty in raising the money. I therefore move—

That the Bill be now read a second time.

Hon. B. C. O'BRIEN (Central): In seconding the motion I desire to say that for the reasons given by Mr. Patrick, I heartily agree with the measure.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair; Hon. W. Patrick in charge of the Bill.

Clauses 1, 2—agreed to.

Clause 3—Interpretation of provisions of Electric Lighting Act, 1892:

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: Whether or not the municipal council desired power to instal fittings in the houses at Geraldton he did not know, but it was doubtful whether, if they desired to do so, power was given to that end in the clause.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: The word "works" includes "fittings."

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: Power was given to supply gas but not to instal fittings necessary, and it had been held in connection with another lighting plant in the State run by a municipal council that the council had not the right to instal fittings. Perhaps that point might be considered by Mr. Patrick before the third reading stage was reached.

Hon. W. PATRICK: The municipality had consulted legal authorities on the question and were quite satisfied that the Bill as printed was sufficient for the purpose.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 4—agreed to.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported without amendment, the report adopted.

BILL—GAME ACT AMENDMENT.

Second Reading.

Debate resumed from the previous day.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL (Metropolitan): I moved the adjournment of the debate of this Bill, not from any spirit of hostility, but so as to make myself more conversant with the subject with which the Bill deals. I recognise that the Bill is a further attempt to deal with a question always somewhat difficult, and which always will be until a slightly different mode of procedure of administration of the Game Acts of the State is embarked upon. The principal onus of carrying out the Game Acts devolves on the shoulders of that already overworked body, the police. As a matter of fact—I know I must plead guilty myself—whenever further duties are imposed by Act of Parliament, there is a tendency shown of entrusting their administration into the hands of this body, which, as I have already said, has too much to do. I had hoped that when an amendment of the Game Acts of the State was introduced it would perhaps be a little more comprehensive than the Bill before us. I hoped it might to some extent follow the system adopted in other States, not only with regard to the administration of the Game Act, but also the administration of the Fisheries Act, by the creation, as is the case in New South Wales, of advisory boards and, in the case of the Fisheries Act in this State, the possibility of the creation of honorary inspectors whom I am sure we would be able to find willing to act in various parts of the State so as to assist the Government in carrying out this most laudable object; whether we consider this Game Act of ours and its amendments is for the purpose of protecting our native game or for the purpose of protecting that game introduced into the State—the acclimatised game.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: This Bill does not touch that.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: This Bill deals with the native game. The main Act recognises the acclimatised game, although in 1892, when that Act was passed, there was very little acclimatised game in the State. It must be apparent, perhaps, that too little importance is attached to the significance to the question, which has a big bearing, not only a scientific bearing, but an important bearing on the source of food supply to the people of the State. And every effort should be made to protect the game we have, and more so protect the game, animals, beasts, birds, and fishes introduced by the efforts

of the Acclimatisation Committee, and may I say by the altogether inadequate amount of money supplied to them by the Government. I have been talking in various places a good deal lately on this question, but I do not propose, on this occasion, to let my feelings run away with me to any great extent, but I would like to ask the leader of the House on whose shoulders the administration of the Act devolves, whether during the recess he will slightly alter the system of the administration of the Game Act, and introduce a system which will place the administration in the hands of persons who would take more interest in it from, perhaps, a love of the pursuit than those persons at present intrusted with the administration. I think it would be possible not only to get an advisory body, but also to obtain in various portions of the State honorary inspectors, such as we have under the Fisheries Act, to see that the close seasons relating to game, are observed, and that every means of protecting the game are carried out. Clause 3, if carried into effect, will be one of the best steps taken for that purpose; that is, that the Railway Commissioner may refuse to carry any game on the railway which is reasonably suspected to have been illegally bought, sold, or is illegally in the possession or control of any person. Those persons who go away from the City at holiday times are very often the greatest offenders against the close season, and when they discover that they are liable to be fined for carying dead game on the railways, that will act as a deterrent, and they will know that there is another medium of being found out, therefore they will think twice before embarking upon such an undertaking. I beg to support this Bill, and to ask the Colonial Secretary if he will take into consideration the fact that the Game Act of the State needs amendment further than this Bill goes. Another aspect of the question I had almost forgotten, and I think it is more important than any which I have touched upon. I consider those persons administering the Game Act of the State should be provided with funds to offer rewards for the destruction of noxious animals which exist to the detriment of the acclimatised game. It will be impossible for us to acclimatise any small ground game, such as partridges and pheasants, until some steps are taken to reduce the nuisance of the domestic cat in the wild state which obtains here, and throughout other parts of Australia. These cats are to be found in places where white people have never been. I have seen tracks of them years ago in remote parts of the North-West, and it is almost impossible for the native game, and the acclimatised game to exist while these animals have their sway.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: They are useful to keep the rabbits down.

Hon. W. KINGSMILL: That is altogether a fallacy. The number of rabbits destroyed by the cats in infinitesimal. I speak with a good deal of experience. In New South Wales and South Australia the cats which are supposed to be the natural enemies of the rabbits live in the burrows with the rabbits, and if they want a rabbit they simply stretch out and get one; they do not kill for sport, they simply kill for food. If we are to depend for the destruction of rabbits on cats then Lord help the pastoralists. I am reminded that the first experiment in the way of sending cats out to destroy rabbits was a great failure. There was a laceration of the feelings of people in private families in Albany when a number of cats was sent away in the "Grace Darling" schooner, and landed at Eucla. These cats were found afterwards in an emaciated and half starving condition, unable to catch rabbits, and they went into the houses, almost demanding to be fed. I am afraid I am getting away from the point at issue. These cats, I claim are the greatest enemy of the native game and the aclimatised game. I hope in any Bill brought in, and I hope it will be brought in at an early date, that this most important question will not be omitted, and I can assure the Colonial Secretary that any assistance I can give him in supporting such a measure will be at his disposal.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER (Metropolitan-Suburban): I sympathise with the objects of the Bill. The original Act, apparently, only provided against the killing

and destroying of game. I think it is essential that the objects of the Act should be thoroughly followed up. I have seen over and over again, and numbers of others have seen it also, game brought into towns and sold under the eyes of the authorities during the close season, and no notice has been taken. I would like to see the Act extended in this direction to prevent the wholesale slaughter of game that goes on, especially amongst wild ducks. Some little time ago it was quite a common thing for men to use very large bore guns, mount them on swivels on punts and mow the game down.

The Colonial Secretary: That is prohibited now under the amending Act of 1897.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: I am glad to hear it. I have much pleasure in supporting the second reading of the Bill.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY (in reply): I desire to say this Bill is only brought in as a temporary expedient in order to better carry out the closure, as I explained when introducing the Bill. From my experience in the administration of the Act, I quite agree with Mr. Kingsmill, who has had a great deal of experience in acclimatisation work and of native game, that more attention is warranted to our native game than, possibly, has been given in the past. This is a question that I have under consideration, and during the recess I intend, if possible, to have a consolidating measure drafted, covering the native game, and a great many of the points that Mr. Kingsmill has mentioned. Perhaps I, amongst a number of others, have not appreciated to the fullest extent the value of our native game and acclimatised game. There is no doubt it warrants more attention and will, perhaps, have more in the future.

Question put and passed.

Bill read a second time.

BILL—HOSPITALS.

In Committee.

Resumed from the previous day; Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair.

Clause 40—Contracts by board:

The CHAIRMAN: In Subclause 2 an amendment had been moved by Mr. Gawler to strike out in line 3 the word "may" with a view to inserting the word "shall."

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the hon. member would read the clause again he would see it was perfectly in order and in keeping with similar clauses in other Bills. The board "may" make similar contracts to ordinary individuals, and the contracts must be in writing.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: There were certain contracts which by law must be made in writing, those under the Statute of Frauds. The board should be placed under the same obligations as private persons, therefore, we should not say the board "may" put a contract in writing, but we should use the word "shall," putting the obligation on the board as we did on a private person.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The wording of the clause appeared clear enough. The point was that a contract might be signed by some officer on behalf of the board.

Hon. A. G. JENKINS: Mr. Gawler had misread the clause. It simply provided that a contract which must be in writing could be signed by a person duly authorised by the board to do so.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: The significance of the clause was that a document must be in writing. There should be no permissive power given to the board in this regard.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: If the point were so involved that two lawyers could not understand it it should be redrafted.

Hon. D. G. GAWLER: Perhaps the clause might be allowed to stand over until the Parliamentary Draftsman was consulted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The view taken by the Parliamentary Draftsman, to whom the matter had already been submitted, was the same as that expressed by Mr. Jenkins. No alteration was needed. The provisioin was in the Municipalities Act.

Hon. D. G. Gawler: If necessary the Bill could be recommitted.

Amendment withdrawn.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 41 to 43—agreed to.

Clause 44—Subsidies to boards in respect to moneys received:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved an amendment—

That the words "unless the Minister is satisfied that the board has sufficient funds to carry out the administration of this Act during the year" be struck out.

The words were unnecessary and rather gave to the boards an idea of insecurity. The clause when amended would provide that during each financial year there might be paid to every board by the Minister out of moneys appropriated by Parliament for the purpose such sums as the Minister thought sufficient by way of subsidy.

Amendment passed.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: Should not the word "may" be altered to "shall?" It should be compulsory for the Minister to pay the money to a board. The Minister might withhold money from a board that was out of favour with him. It should be the duty of the Minister to pay the money.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The money was voted in a lump sum by Parliament.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The impression conveyed to him was that each hospital would be mentioned.

Clause as amended put and passed.

Clause 45—agreed to.

Clause 46—Moneys to be paid into bank:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved an amendment—

That Subclause 2 be struck out.

This subclause provided that any moneys of a board requiring investment should be invested by the trustees, and that the Governor could order a board to hand over any such moneys to the trustees. If retained it would have the effect of compelling a board to hand over any savings made during the year, and that was not intended. The trustees would only deal with endowments, and any money the boards could save out of the administration of their funds had nothing to do with the trustees.

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

Clauses 47 to 48—agreed to.

Clause 49—Board may borrow on security for building and other purposes:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: This clause was found to be unnecessary. If boards could borrow on their own security there was no reason why they should not do so, but they could not borrow on any security held by the trustees without the consent of the trustees. The clause would hamper the boards in the administration of the respective hospitals and should be struck out.

Clause put and negatived.

Clause 50—Expenditure by board of moneys under its control:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved an amendment—

That in paragraph (d) the words "with the consent of the trustees" be struck out.

This paragraph referred to making repairs and additions to buildings. The words "with the consent of the trustees" were unnecessary. The boards could spend their own funds on buildings if they had the money for the purpose.

Amendment passed.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY the clause was further amended by striking out the proviso and inserting in lieu "Provided that all real property acquired by a board hereunder shall be vested in the trustees," and the clause as amended was agreed to.

Clause 51—Board to make adequate provision for persons suffering from disease:

Hon. J. E. DODD: Would a person suffering from a disease of the mind come under the provision of this clause? There might be provision in some other Act to deal with such a person but at the present time the position with regard to those unfortunate people was a difficult one. They were sent to the lock-up and from there to the Hospital for the Insane. It might be that some of them were only afflicted temporarily and it would be wise to include a provision in the definition so that these people could be taken to the hospital.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The definition of "hospital" did not cover

Hospital for Insane. That of course would not prevent a general hospital from taking in a person of unsound mind. It was frequently done at the present time. At times these unfortunate patients required such care that they could not be kept in a hospital except to the detriment of other patients there, in which case special provision was made for them. At times they were taken to a lock-up for their own safety. In the case of the Perth hospital there was a fine reception ward there which had been established for two or three years and which had been favourably commented on by the medical journals throughout Australasia. The same thing was in course of preparation in Kalgoorlie. Later on wards would be built in other centres. In Kalgoorlie these patients did not in the past come into contact with prisoners when they had been taken to a lock-up; they had been put into cells specially provided for them.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 52—Board may make by-laws:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved an amendment—

That in line 2 the word "Governor" be struck out and "Minister" inserted in lieu.

Amendment passed; the clause as amended agreed to.

Clauses 53 and 54—agreed to.

Clause 55—Powers of auditors of boards' accounts:

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: In this clause an auditor was given great powers. In the country hospitals it devolved upon the community to get the hospitals run as cheaply as possible and sometimes the secretarial duties were carried out in an honorary capacity. It was rather drastic to have an auditor come round, probably once a month, and demand at inconvenient times that the honorary secretary, who might be engaged in private business, should produce his books. The clause provided that an auditor could without notice demand the production of books and auditors had been known to do that kind of thing at inconvenient times.

Hon. Sir E. H. Wittenoom: Do you not think that the words "reasonable times" mentioned in the clause will cover the situation?

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The words "without notice" should be omitted. The clause unless amended would prejudice the hospital boards. It would be found that they would have to pay a secretary. In view of the fact that it was desired to reduce the expenses as much as possible, the words should be deleted. He moved an amendment—

That in line 3 the words "and without notice" be struck out.

Hon. Sir E. H. WITTENOOM: The hon. member would find that the words "reasonable times" would cover the position to such an extent that the auditor would not undertake to make his visits at times that would be not as inconvenient as the hon. member had described. It would not be wise to strike out the words referred to because the object of an auditor coming in was not to wait for the books and papers to be prepared and put into position, but to go and see that everything was in order and that the accounts and papers and moneys were correct. When the hon. member reflected upon the effect of the amendment he would surely agree to withdraw it.

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY: The very words there reflected directly upon the honesty of the men who were going to carry on the duties of secretary.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The clause was an ordinary machinery one and it was necessary to provide for the worst cases.

Amendment put and negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 56—Cost of relief granted by board to constitute a debt and to be recoverable by action:

Hon. V. HAMERSLEY moved an amendment—

That the words "aboriginal native" in line 2 of Subclause 5 be struck out.

There was no need to include these natives, many of whom were well able to pay for attention at hospitals. Those that were destitute were otherwise provided for.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: No objection would be offered to the striking out of the words. The leaving of the words in the clause might result in hardship on certain hospitals in whose dis-

tricts were large numbers of aboriginal natives. Moreover, the clause as proposed to be amended, would provide for all destitute persons, included among whom would be aboriginals. Again, under the Aborigines Act permits given to the employers of natives provided that those employers should furnish hospital attention when such natives fell sick.

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

Clauses 57 to 60—agreed to.

Clause 61—Provisions to apply if board fails to perform its duty or otherwise makes default:

The COLONIAL SECRETARY moved an amendment—

That the following words after "to" in line 6 of Subclause 1 be struck out:—"do either or both of the following things: (a) to direct the Minister to withhold the whole or any part of the subsidy payable to the board for the current or the next succeeding financial year; (b) to direct or authorise the Principal Medical Officer to . . ."

Amendment passed.

On motion by the COLONIAL SECRETARY Subclause 2 consequentially struck out.

Clause as amended put and passed.

Clauses 62, 63, 64—agreed to.

Schedule, Title—agreed to.

Bill reported with amendments.

BILL—ELECTORAL ACT AMENDMENT.

In Committee.

Hon. W. Kingsmill in the Chair.

Clause 1—agreed to.

Clause 2—Amendment of Section 4:

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: Surely Subclauses (b) and (c) should be transposed to bring them into alphabetical order.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: Probably the hon. member was right. The anomaly would be treated as a clerical error.

The CHAIRMAN: The Clerks had been instructed to effect the transposition.

Clause put and passed.

Clause 3—Amendment of Section 6:

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: The wording of Subclause 2 was somewhat confusing. He moved an amendment—

That after "date" in line 4 the words "of the notification" be inserted.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: The clause was all right as printed. There might never be a notification. The date of appointment meant the date of the order of the Governor-in-Council.

Amendment negatived.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 4 to 9—agreed to.

Clause 10—Amendment of Section 26:

Hon. J. E. DODD: An alteration was being made to the original Bill by giving the Chief Electoral Officer power to issue supplementary rolls when he thought fit. That was a mistake. The passing of the clause would mean that the custom of issuing the rolls every quarter would be done away with. Especially in a new place, whether a farming or mining district, there was a large number of electors continually coming and going and if it would be 12 months before the electors could see whether or not they were on the roll great inconvenience would result There was not much expense in issuing the rolls each three months. Sometimes all that was distributed was a small slip and this had been found very convenient to him in his capacity as an honorary electoral agent.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: True the amendment would do away with the compulsory printing of supplementary rolls each quarter, but it would not follow that such rolls would not be printed whenever required. There was a good deal of expense in issuing these rolls. What would be done was that the supplementary rolls would be printed at comparatively short intervals in the populous districts. The adoption of the clause would mean bringing the measure into line with the Federal Act. However, it was not a very important matter and if the Committee desired the clause to be struck out he would raise no serious objection.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: What is the cost of issuing these supplementary rolls quarterly?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: It would be impossible to give that infor-

mation. It would be quite safe to leave it to the department to decide when the rolls should be issued.

Hon. J. E. DODD: If the clause were passed it might mean that many names would be sent in three or four times and possibly confusion would result. It would be far better to have the returns issued quarterly.

Hon. J. W. KIRWAN: The Minister should agree to the proposal for the retention of the existing system. There were many reasons in favour of that plan. The cost of the publication each quarter would be very small and the periodical rolls served a very useful purpose.

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the clause were passed the result might well be that the rolls would be issued even more frequently than once a quarter; certainly they would be if it were found necessary.

Hon. J. W. Kirwan: It was far better to have the slips issued regularly.

Hon. J. W. Hackett: What is the Commonwealth practice?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: If the clause were passed the measure would be brought into line with the Commonwealth Act. The whole thing might well be left in the hands of the department.

Clause put and passed.

Clauses 11 and 12—agreed to.

Clause 13—Amendment of Section 33:

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: What did the clause foreshadow? The cost of the rolls at present was 1s.; was it intended to make a profit on the printing of the rolls?

The COLONIAL SECRETARY: All the portion of the Bill now being dealt with was introduced for the purpose of bringing the measure into line with the Commonwealth Act. The Commonwealth had different prices for different rolls, the charge being according to the size of the roll. It did not follow that if the clause were passed a charge of more than 1s. would be made for a roll?

Hon. J. W. LANGSFORD: It would be wise to insert a maximum amount as the cost of the rolls. It was his intention to vote against the clause.

Hon. J. E. DODD: There was no possibility of any of the State electoral rolls being as large as any Commonwealth roll; there was no necessity for the clause.

Progress reported.

House adjourned at 6.13 p.m.

Legislative Assembly,

Thursday, 20th October, 1910.

The SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 p.m., and read prayers.

QUESTION—ASIATIC EMPLOYERS.

Mr. PRICE (without notice) asked the Premier: Will he have any objection to laying on the Table the papers relating to the engagement of a married couple by one Charr Singh, an Afghan farmer, arranged from the Immigrants' Home?

The PREMIER replied: I do not know that there will be much trouble in getting the papers, but I would be obliged if the hon. member would give notice of motion and I will inquire into the matter. I really do not know to what he refers. I shall treat the motion as formal.

Mr. Price: I will give notice of motion.