

mittee. It seems to me to be almost all that could be desired. Anyway, I must admit the need for a Bill dealing with noxious weeds. I am sorry the Government have not seen their way to mention some of the weeds in the Bill, for the sake of defining them. They were defined in the schedule to the old Act. The only dangerous points are those to which Mr. Richardson referred. Much power is placed in the hands of the Minister. However, I suppose the Colonial Secretary will be assisted by an advisory board of practical men, whose advice will doubtless be taken in the administration of the Act.

HON. J. W. HACKETT (South-West): There is one point to which I should like to draw the Colonial Secretary's attention, in addition to the fact that the importance or the worthlessness of this Bill will entirely depend not so much on the proclamation, at which Mr. Richardson looks with so much alarm, as on the districts to which the Bill applies—whether it is made general or made partial in its effect. Legislation of this kind can easily be made unnecessarily harassing; and it can only be effective if made to apply to all districts in which the pests flourish. There is one seed-bed for these noxious plants to which I cannot find any reference in the Bill; and that is the towns of the State. Anyone who walks about the streets of Perth during two or three months of the year will find them covered with these noxious weeds, chiefly the stinkwort; and it is absolutely useless punishing the farmer and putting him to expense when the municipalities of the State are allowed to breed these weeds at their own sweet will. I know that some municipalities, a little more far-seeing than others, take steps to eradicate the weeds; but in the larger towns, which are most frequented and which we must surely blame for these pests spreading from the streets into the country, the precautions taken are wholly insignificant. I hope the Minister will see whether anything can be done in the Bill to meet the want. The only clause which can be supposed to apply to this is Clause 12:—

Where land abuts on a road, or is intersected by a road, the boundaries of the land on each side of the road shall, for the purposes of this Act relating to the clearing of noxious weeds,

be deemed to be extended to the centre of the road, and the occupier of the land shall accordingly be deemed to be the occupier of so much of the road as is within such extended boundaries.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: We can add a subclause making municipalities responsible for doing their own cleaning-up.

HON. J. W. HACKETT: There is some such provision in the Municipalities Act, but there is no person to see it enforced. We shall have to give the inspector power to call on municipalities to keep their streets clean.

Question passed.

Bill read a second time.

ADJOURNMENT.

THE COLONIAL SECRETARY: As several members have intimated to me an inclination to pause where we are, and before going farther to avail themselves of an opportunity of examining closely and in some cases I believe of laying before their constituents the Bills we have introduced, I move that the House at its rising adjourn until Tuesday, the 11th August.

Question passed.

The House accordingly adjourned at 8 minutes past 6 o'clock, until Tuesday, the 11th August.

JOINT SITTING.

Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly.

Wednesday, 29th July, 1903.

Federal Senate Vacancy, an Election

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In accordance with the Standing Orders passed by both Houses of Parliament and approved by His Excellency the Governor, the members of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assem-

bly met in joint sitting at Government House, in the Ballroom, to elect a person to fill the vacancy of a representative of Western Australia in the Senate House of the Federal Parliament, caused by the resignation of Mr. Norman K. Ewing.

The SPEAKER of the Legislative Assembly (Hon. Sir James George Lee Steere, K.C.M.G.) took the Chair at 4.45 o'clock, p.m.; in the absence (through illness) of the President of the Council, and in accordance with Standing Orders.

ELECTION.

THE SPEAKER said: Hon. members of both Houses of Parliament,—We have met here this afternoon for the purpose of electing a Senator in the place of Mr. Norman Kirkwood Ewing, resigned. In the absence of the President of the Legislative Council, and in accordance with the Joint Standing Orders agreed to by both Houses recently, it becomes my duty to preside over the meeting held this afternoon. I am now ready to receive any nomination for the vacancy.

MR. W. M. PURKISS (M.L.A., Perth): I have very much pleasure in proposing Mr. John Henry Saunders as a Senator during the remainder of the term of the Federal Parliament. We are all aware of the procedure to be followed when a vacancy occurs in the Federal Parliament. Mr. Norman Kirkwood Ewing, one of the representatives of this State in the Senate, some two months ago resigned. This Parliament was not then sitting, and in accordance with the law the Government were called on to nominate someone to fill the vacancy; and the nomination fell on Mr. John Henry Saunders, who has been acting as Senator during the last few weeks or during the last month. The term of office for which Mr. Saunders was appointed will expire in about four or five months, as the new elections for the Federal Parliament will take place in about that time. Inasmuch as Mr. Saunders was selected to fill the gap by reason of the fact that he was next on the poll at the Federal elections—Mr. Thomson having declined to act—it is only fitting that we should elect him as a Senator in the place of Mr. Ewing, without protest and without opposition. I think, during the five months which

remain, the interests of the State, so far as the Senate is concerned, will be very safe in the hands of Mr. Henry John Saunders. He is a man who has been identified with this State for a number of years. He has a good reputation and a stake in the country. He is a man who remains in the country; who has spent a large sum of money in the country; he is always here, and his interests are here also. No doubt if Mr. Saunders studied his own interests, he would remain in the State. For the balance of the term for which the Federal Parliament has been elected, he may be trusted to act as our representative in the Senate. I may state that I am in receipt of a telegram informing me that Mr. Saunders consents to act as our representative if elected. I am informed that the President of the Legislative Council has also received a communication from Mr. Saunders to the same effect. It is not necessary for me to say anything farther.

HON. G. RANDELL (M.L.C., Metropolitan Province): I have much pleasure in seconding the nomination of Mr. Saunders.

THE SPEAKER: I may say that I have had placed in my hands a telegram to the President of the Legislative Council, from Mr. Saunders, saying he is willing to serve if elected.

MR. R. HASTIE (M.L.A., Kanowna): As it is improbable that any other candidate for this vacancy will be proposed, I wish simply to say that many members of the Lower House at any rate, and I presume of the other House also, much regret the position in which we find ourselves. Whoever is elected to fill this seat will be looked on as the representative of the Parliament of Western Australia. That being so, we think it only fair that members should have an opportunity of voting for and selecting a man to fill that position, altogether apart from the qualifications of the gentleman who has been proposed. However, as it is, the gentleman about to be elected will be able to occupy the seat for three months only; and very few members consider it advisable that we should send to Melbourne a fresh Senator. But I take this opportunity specially to protest against this selection being made a precedent. It may happen in future, for I expect we shall have many joint sittings,

that the next member on the roll will be some gentleman whom the members of Parliament will not consider representative; so it may fairly be expected that when another vacancy occurs members will find several candidates soliciting their suffrages. If Mr. Saunders is elected unanimously, as I believe he will be, we all wish that he may fill his position satisfactorily. But again I say that I speak in protest only, against making a precedent of this system of always electing the next man on the roll.

THE SPEAKER: If no gentleman is nominated other than the candidate proposed by Mr. Purkiss, it devolves upon me to declare that candidate duly elected.

MR. G. TAYLOR (M.L.A., Mount Margaret): Before he is declared elected, I should like to know whether the selection to-day will be taken as an expression of the unanimous opinion of both Houses. Though there is no other nomination, I should like to record my vote against the candidate. It seems to me, as has been pointed out by the leader of the Labour party (Mr. Hastie), that this is not a desirable mode of filling the vacancy; and the fact that there is no contest for the position only shows the apathy of both Houses of this Parliament. I am sorry the position is so unsatisfactory; and if there is any opportunity of recording my vote, I should like to record it, or, as the leader of the Labour party says, Mr. Saunders will be elected unanimously. He will not be elected unanimously so far as I am concerned, because when the elections take place in December next I shall in all probability have to oppose Mr. Saunders at the hustings; and as I feel that I shall be justified in so doing, I do not wish him to think that I am satisfied with to-day's nomination.

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James): Particularly in the Assembly, we constantly have the privilege of listening to members who tell us what Parliament should do and in what manner it should discharge its duties. We are here to-day enjoying the unique privilege of holding our first joint sitting. The laws of this country are free. If any individual member desires to propose any person as a candidate, he has a full right so to do. The only condition necessary is that he obtain someone to second his proposition. We are here, I think, as a body of men

prepared to give our votes honestly for or against any candidate brought forward; and for myself, occupying as I do the position of leader of the Lower House, I desire to enter my emphatic protest against members who constantly tell us that there is an apathetic feeling pervading Parliament, when if people wish to test the feeling of Parliament they have ample machinery provided in the existing Standing Orders. May I submit to you, Mr. Speaker, and to this joint sitting, that it is indeed ungracious, when no other candidate than Mr. Saunders is proposed, to attack the personal qualifications of that candidate. Whatever may be Mr. Saunders's shortcomings or defects, I should say that if he does stand for re-election in the course of a few months, and the only opposition is that of my friend the member for Mount Margaret (Mr. Taylor), then I hope that in the best interests of the State Mr. Saunders will receive an overwhelming majority.

MR. H. DAGLISH (M.L.A., Subiaco): I did not intend to say anything on this occasion; but I contend that as the Premier ventured to lecture this assembly on the course it should take, and to criticise those who happen to dissent from the selection of the Government—

THE PREMIER: I protest against that statement.

MR. DAGLISH: I have the right to say, as one who thinks the selection made by the Government an unfortunate selection, that I believe it is my duty, in the interests of the State, to lodge a protest against it.

THE PREMIER: I should like to rise to a point of order. This is no selection of the Government. The statement is absolutely and wholly inaccurate.

MR. DAGLISH: I should like to know whether I have a right to reply to the Premier's remarks.

THE SPEAKER: Yes. The Premier, I understand, denied that Mr. Saunders was nominated by the Government.

MR. DAGLISH: No, sir. I venture to think the Premier went farther, and lectured members who chose to express the opinion that the selection being made is not the very best in the interests of the country. I contend that it is our bounden duty to consider the interests of this State in selecting a member to represent us in the Senate; and I argue, farther,

that considering our distance from the seat of Government, considering likewise the paucity of our representation in the Lower House of the Federal Parliament, we are doing a grievous injustice to the State if we send to represent us in the Senate any but the very strongest man available. I should have liked to have the privilege of nominating a candidate; but I have been unable to find a candidate suitable for the position [general laughter] who was willing to be put up in a hopeless fight. And that is the position. The selection has been cut-and-dried beforehand; and any other person nominated, no matter how highly qualified he may be, will not have the ghost of a chance of winning the seat in view of the majority who have already determined how they will cast their votes. At the same time, I join in the protest against the selection.

MR. A. E. THOMAS (M.L.A., Dundas) : I rise to a point of order. Is the hon. member right in his assumption that the majority of the members sitting here to-day have already decided how they will cast their votes?

THE SPEAKER: I do not see that he is out of order in saying so. Of course, as far as I am personally concerned I do not think his statement is correct.

HON. F. H. PIESSE (M.L.A., Williams) : I should like to say, as an Assembly member, that I think the remarks of Mr. Daglish uncalled for. As to his assertion that the result has been cut-and-dried, I may say no one has approached me on the subject, nor have I heard of anyone canvassing in respect of the selection of the gentleman proposed. Therefore I think the hon. member's statement that the selection has been cut-and-dried is uncalled for.

HON. B. C. O'BRIEN (M.L.C., Central Province) : I also beg to differ from the Premier and Mr. Piesse in respect of their remarks criticising those gentlemen, members of the Labour party, who have ventured to offer a slight protest in regard to this election.

THE PREMIER: I object to their lecturing Parliament.

HON. B. C. O'BRIEN: I take it they do not object to the candidate; but what they do object to is Mr. Saunders being declared elected unanimously. Those gentlemen have, I consider, a perfect

right to say they differ from the Government in their opinion of Mr. Saunders as a representative in the Senate; and I think that if they desire to vote in the negative they should have absolute freedom to do so.

THE SPEAKER: We have to be guided by the Standing Orders, which have been approved of by both Houses. They say that if only one person be proposed and seconded, the President shall declare that the candidate has been chosen to hold the vacant place in the Senate. There has been only one person proposed to-day, and it becomes my duty to declare Mr. H. J. Saunders to be duly elected a Senator. (Applause.)

THE PREMIER (Hon. Walter James, M.L.A., East Perth) : Before the proceedings close, I wish to express the regret we all feel at the absence of the President to-day. Under the Standing Orders the President would have taken the Chair, but unhappily on account of illness he has not been able to be present. I am certain he must feel deep regret, having regard to the fact that this is the first occasion in this State on which we have had a joint sitting of both Houses. With the exception of a joint sitting in Melbourne held on a similar occasion, I think this is the first time in which a British-speaking community has ever had a joint sitting of both Houses of Parliament. It may be possible, if members of both Houses agree to the present Constitution Bill, that we shall have occasion more frequently in future to meet together in joint sittings; and I hope on those occasions the propositions will be carried, I will not say unanimously out of respect for some members, but nearly as unanimously as this proposition to-day was carried. Whilst expressing regret at the absence of the President, I also express our thanks to you, Sir, for your presence here to-day in presiding over the meeting. (Applause.)

THE SPEAKER: I regret very much indeed with the Premier, Mr. James, that the President of the Legislative Council has not been able to be present here to-day, and to preside at this sitting; but in his absence I have been very pleased to do so. I think this has been a very interesting occasion, our meeting here to-day to select a Senator, because, as the Premier has said, it is the first time

in this State that the two Houses of Parliament have met together to perform any duty. I am much obliged to hon. members for according to me a vote of thanks. I ask members to kindly sit a little longer, as there is a photographer present who is anxious to take a photograph of the members assembled here.

[Members accordingly adjusted their chairs to suit the position of the camera; artificial flash-light was used, and a photograph of the assembled group was taken.]

The joint sitting terminated shortly after 5 o'clock, and hon. members returned to their respective Chambers.

The Clerk of Parliaments and the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly acted jointly during the sitting.

The number of members present was: Legislative Council 22, Legislative Assembly 42, total 64.

Legislative Assembly,

Wednesday, 29th July, 1903.

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THE SPEAKER took the Chair at 4.30 o'clock, p.m.

PRAYERS.

Mr. Speaker and hon. members proceeded to Government House for a joint sitting of the Legislative Council and the Legislative Assembly.

At 5.10, Chair resumed.

THE SPEAKER informed the House of the election made at the joint sitting. [See report of joint sitting.]

PAPERS PRESENTED.

By the MINISTER FOR LANDS: Papers relating to repurchase by the Government of land near Arrino; Papers relating to the exchange of certain Crown lands in the catchment area of the Goldfields Water Supply; Papers relating to repurchase of the Mount Erin Estate.

Ordered, to lie on the table.

QUESTION—MOTOR WAGONS FOR HAULAGE OF PRODUCE.

HON. G. THROSSELL asked the Premier: 1, Whether he has received information as to the utility of motor wagons for haulage of produce on ordinary roads. 2, Whether it is the intention of the Government to introduce one or more of these wagons for use in the country districts. 3, What is the carrying power, speed, and approximate cost of each complete wagon.

THE PREMIER replied: 1, Yes. 2, Yes. 3, The type which is to be purchased is not yet determined, but is being carefully considered.

ADDRESS-IN-REPLY.

FIFTH DAY OF DEBATE.

Resumed from the previous day.

MR. C. HARPER (Beverley): I shall confine my remarks on His Excellency's Speech to a few subjects which I think very important. The first one is the question of preferential trade. Various members have expressed a certain disapproval of the manner in which that subject has been introduced into the Speech. I think that possibly the reference might have been better phrased; but nevertheless, I believe that it really does express the unformed opinion of the people of this State; I mean "unformed" in the sense that the people have not yet had an opportunity of studying the question, and are therefore unable to give an opinion on it. I put preferential trade in the same category as the sentiment adopted by Australasia in the late South African war. If any man a year or two before that war broke out had ventured to predict that this State would send five Contingents out of its borders to an over-sea war, he would have been laughed at and called a fool. The war however gave opportunity for the expression of a sentiment latent in the people; and that